

# The Prophecy of the West

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“Man can only have a destiny if he has a beginning which originates outside of time and an end which will transcend it”  
— Arthur Cohen —  
*The Natural and Supernatural Jew*



# Preface

The style of this book must be understood in the context of its objective. The frequent use of (often large) quotations is to supplement academic verification to matters, events, and thoughts in history that others more qualified than I have researched, documented, and compiled. I am eternally indebted to these academics for their work as this book would not exist without their individual efforts in illuminating the enigmatic, dynamic, complex, and interrelated events and motors of modern history. To clarify then, this is not a book in the traditional sense. It is more apt to call it a puzzle, and more specifically, the process of solving a puzzle. As such, the role of the author was not to *create* the pieces, but rather, to put them together, the connective material supplied by his own faculty of creativity. The final image that results is laid bare for the vision of the reader, and it is my hope that he will have felt as if he were himself the one who solved the puzzle, that it was through his own will that the concrescence of a universal view of reality materialized before him, and that the awe and wonder that such an image summoned within me will also be summoned within him.



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# Introduction

It is the principal aim of this book to demonstrate an inseparable tie between the progression of Modernity and that of the modern ethnic and theological Jew. The history of Modernity is the history of the development of and responses to political, social, and economic emancipation, and it is within this current of development that mankind persists today. This historical flow has both an ideological-historical beginning and ideological-theoretical end. It is both static and processual, a theory and a method. Its nature is paradoxical and its conclusion is reconciliation. The Jewish collective, both naturally and supernaturally, exists as the beginning *and* end of this current. To follow the Jewish people is to follow history, and to follow history is to follow the Jewish people: Western duality, in contrast to Eastern, has been projected onto the sphere of the totality of history — any union must occur historically, if it is to occur at all.

The Jew is a historical being, an *ethnic-theological* being, who represents the Hegelian dialectic in human form as a *historical-material-spiritual force*, and for whom the universal question of existence is intimately wrapped up into his particularity. This particularity, considered lost in the history of development, relegated to the confines of orthodoxy, is,

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in truth, the collective psychological vehicle of material transformation for the entire Western world. A tree cannot be separated from its roots. History only exists insofar as it is incomplete — unless it has a beginning that *transcends* time, it can never have an end that occurs from the forces *within* it. Therefore, it is the Jewish metaphysical particularity that gives meaning to the notions of transcendental historical destiny, salvation, universality, and completion that dominate the Western mind that considers itself liberated from the hubris of religion: the psychological layers of development transcend consciousness in all but the few. It is this particularity — its birth, development, and resolution — that this book explores, and the necessary consequences implicit within the resolutions pertaining to it that engender the problem of existence, a problem most existentially actualized, articulated, and developed within, by, and through the Jew.

## Part One

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### *The Emancipation of German Jewry*



## Chapter I

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### *The Jewish History of Emancipation*

The history of the modern Jew, his divergences, tensions, and resolutions, is the history of political emancipation, a history that ostensibly begins with the Enlightenment:

The modern Jewish question dates from the Enlightenment. —  
Hannah Arendt

Conceptualized as a term to refer to the social, political, theological, and philosophical issues surrounding the Jewish people in Europe, it is best understood as the amalgamation of concerns that arise from the presence of a heterodox group in a largely homogenous society. The collective concerns mirror those of the individual. Likewise, one must consider both the perspectives of Europeans as well as European Jews to fully comprehend the development of the question. For Europeans, the central question was how to homogenize a heterodox group, and for the Jewish people, it was one of three responses, all developing throughout time. The initial response a question of how to maintain Jewish identity amidst persecution. The second response a question of how to synthesize Jewish and European identities. The third response,

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and the avenue that led to Zionism, a question of how to *abandon Jewishness* and *become* European.

Although the concrete formulation of the question emerges after the Enlightenment due to changing political models of society and the introduction of the virtue of tolerance as a universal axiom of politics, the modern Jewish Question is in truth an articulation of the historical Jewish question that was first asked in Egypt during the story of the Exodus. Namely “What to do with the Jewish people?” The necessary consequence of the Jewish people’s Exile from statehood was the history of calamity, the oppression of the nations, the transition into the eternal wanderer:

The Jewish question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it. It is a remnant of the Middle Ages, which civilized nations do not even yet seem able to shake off, try as they will. They certainly showed a generous desire to do so when they emancipated us. The Jewish question exists wherever Jews live in perceptible numbers — Theodor Herzl, *Altneuland*

The Jewish question can be understood simply as that of the inability to assimilate a heterodox group — the persistence of a group to counter any and all forces that would have them abandon the prime element of their identity. Difference begets tension — tension begets pathways towards the extinguishing of tension. The Jewish people stand alone in the pantheon of history as *survivors*, as a people who have repelled every homogenizing force directed towards them both physically and metaphysically. David Sorkin, following in the steps of his predecessor and mentor George L. Mosse, the great historian of German Jewry, relates the centrality of the question of emancipation for modern Jewish history as well as its contemporary persistence through Thesis One and Ten of ten theses in his seminal work on modern Jewish history, *Jewish Emancipation*:

[Thesis] One. Emancipation is the principal event of modern Jewish history. The process of gaining and retaining, exercising and defend-

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ing, losing and recovering rights has been at the heart of the Jews' experience over the past four and a half centuries.

[Thesis] Ten. Emancipation was at the heart of the twentieth century's colossal events...Jews everywhere continue to live in the age of emancipation.

But the modern Jew is not independent unto himself. It must be understood that he is a historical being whose development occurs alongside history: his theological history is inseparably attached to his physical history. This is a simple assertion that a cursory study of Old Testament theology confirms. The Jewish people, as a collective bestowed with the moniker "The Chosen People", find their theological origin not in a mythology of the past serving as a spiritual anchor for the present, but rather, in a historical event, a communion with God, a *revelation* in which man convenes with God, in which the transient concept of time becomes concretized symbolically and physically as a lived spiritual-material experience. The scripture of the Jewish faith is one that is written alongside the development of history — its very articulation is the assertion of a paradigmatic history within which the concept of time is bound to the community with which the divine communes: for the Jews, "history is an inner form" of existence.

There are two *defining* events that are the basis of the Jewish principle of persistence/survival that guide Jewish material-theological history: *Exodus* and *Exile*. The story of *Exodus* is the *beginning* of Western history. Prior to this event, history did not exist. Everything operated in a cyclical fashion to the senses and reasoning of ancient men: night and day, birth and death, the cycles of the moon, the four seasons, chaos and order, etc. Symbols existed in a plurality from which the infinite well of the order of existence was tapped into. For the men of the ancient world, all of existence appeared to exist and persist upon a wheel. History requires judgment upon the events of the past but judgment requires free will: hubris was the term used for men who thought they could escape the wheel of time. In this perspective, all of history is reoccurring: there is no beginning or end, no event nor judgment. Such a view seems

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absurd to the modern mind, but this is only a consequence of our inebriation with a decidedly Jewish world perspective. For ancient men, there was only inescapable fate, an order of reality in which all individuals and collectives atemporally exist as both the beginning and the end. Rather than, as a modern mind may imagine, be confronted with the meaninglessness of a universe without beginning or end, the ancient man found the order of reality in the plurality of symbols in an atemporal world. However, with the entrance of the Jews into historical reality through spiritual chosenness (the stalk of Abraham-Isaac-Jacob-Judah), history begins, the motor is started, and the Jew becomes the vehicle through which a historical redemption and salvation is sought; the Jew becomes the entity through which all families of the world will be blessed.

The former cyclical order and plurality of symbols transforms into a linear order directed from and towards a singular symbol — the Symbol itself is the ordering principle, and importantly, *the only ordering principle*. The particular Jewish collective is chosen for a universal end: the entity of the Jew *becomes* a meta-historical vocation to bridge the gap between man and God, the finite and infinite, the particular and the Universal. Though this vocation was realized far later, particularly in the age of Isaiah and the revelation of the Suffering Servant, the very logic of theology upon which Judaism was historically constructed necessitated the tension that would eventually produce what would be known as the Jewish Mission — the mission of bestowing upon the Symbol its universal birthright. In other words, all that had been scripturally produced in a seeming dynamic and random fashion were theological consequences of the latent potentiality of a far off reconciliation within the faith. Meaning is born from reality as history and all meaning shares the aim of escaping/freeing history — *completing history*. To even acknowledge that such a thing as history exists is to affirm that it is incomplete. To claim to recognize the concept of birth is to introduce, out of logical necessity, the concept of death. Hitherto, only people and empires were born. Following from the story of Exodus, history, the container of all births and all deaths, *is born*. Then, of course, this birth logically necessitates a death. The goal of a prophecy is its completion. The end of times is itself *the death of history...*

What was once a perfect participation of man with existence, mediated through a pluralism of symbols that were concretized atemporally — man existed in a fluid and constant *attunement* or *alignment* with existence — necessarily resulted in the notion of an imperfect participation as an awareness of self and reality increased. The story of the fall is the story of differentiation — to be is to recognize that which is not, the concept of self necessitates the concept of Other and vice versa. The egg is the world and the entire self: to exit the egg, to be born, is to destroy the egg. A lost feeling of perfection is sought after — a desire to *restore/return* to a pristine wholeness. The awareness of imperfection creates the drive towards perfection and thus, history is created as the story of this drive towards perfection. The emergence of the possibility of a perfect reality from the awarness of the actual reality of *imperfection* leads to the realization of the idea of an *order* of reality inconcreto, an order of reality that is necessarily an order of history. The awareness of what *ought to be* can only arise from a recognition of *what is*. This manifestation of history is a result of the interaction of the Jewish people and the divine as a revelatory Event. The realization of an order of reality from an imperfect alignment with existence necessarily negates the former *hierarchy* of pantheons into a dichotomy of *true* and *false*. There are proper and improper orders of reality. This departure from the plural to the singular necessarily results in history — the development of the singular into encompassing the entire world. Universalism *emerges* as the end point:

The break with early tolerance results, not from rational reflection on the inadequacy of pluralistic symbolization (though such reflection may experientially be a first step toward more radical ventures), but from the profounder insight that no symbolization through analogues of existential order in the world can even faintly be adequate to the divine partner on whom the community of being and its order depend. Only when the gulf in the hierarchy of being that separates divine from mundane existence is sensed, only when the originating, ordering, and preserving source of being is experienced in its absolute transcendence beyond being in tangible existence, will all symbolization by analogy be understood in its inadequacy and even impropriety...The

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horror of a fall from being into nothingness motivates an intolerance that no longer is willing to distinguish between stronger and weaker gods, but opposes the true god to the false gods. — Eric Voegelin, *Order and History*

The story of *Exodus* is an event in which the “originating, ordering, and preserving source of being is experienced in its absolute transcendence beyond being in tangible existence” and it marks the great shifting point from reality as cyclical to reality as linear: from polytheism to monotheism: from a pluralism of symbols to a monism; from superstition to faith: from fate to destiny: from the hubris of the individual to the hubris of the collective. This movement was a consequence of logical necessity, a manifestation of a latent potentiality within the very structure of human symbolic existence, and the consequence of the consequence is a faith bound to the paradigm of history as interaction with the divine — as a progression of order and communion with the divine:

Israel alone had history as an inner form, while other societies existed in the form of cosmological myth.

In the Exodus experience Israel broke the cosmological form of existence through the revelation of the world-transcendent God to Moses. The covenant relationship established at Sinai transformed Israel into the chosen people who settled in the promised land.

Without Israel there would be no history, but only the eternal recurrence of societies in cosmological form.

— Eric Voegelin, *Order and History*

Compared with the archaic and palaeo-oriental religions, as well as with the mythic-philosophical conceptions of the eternal return, as they were elaborated in India and Greece, Judaism presents an innovation of the first importance. For Judaism, time has a beginning and will have an end. The idea of cyclic time is left behind. Yahweh no longer manifests himself in cosmic time (like the gods of other religions) but

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in a historical time, which is irreversible. — Mircae Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*

Thus, for the first time, the prophets valorized history. Historical events will thenceforth have a value in themselves, since they are determined by the will of God. Historical facts thus become "situations" of man face to face with God and, as such, acquire a religious value that nothing thitherto could bestow on them. Hence it is true to say that the Hebrews were the first to discover the meaning of history as an epiphany of God, and this conception, as was to be expected, was taken up again and amplified by Christianity. But we must add that the discovery of history as theophany was not immediately and wholly accepted by the Jewish people; the ancient conceptions will survive for a very long time. — Mircae Eliade, *The History of Religious Ideas Volume One*

With the liberation of the Hebrews by God, a *narrative of redemption* was established, a *salvation* for all of mankind was projected out into time, into the *end* of time: the Messianic mission. A promise is made, and the past is temporally concretized as the prophecy of the future: the beginning of the end that is a return to the beginning. A notion of "progress" is asserted in this transformation of world view; if it is the case that time is linear, then we must be headed somewhere, progressing *towards* something. A promise is meaningless without its consummation:

A theology which would concern itself merely with conserving the past destroys what is most precious in the theological enterprise — namely, that the already spoken Word of God contains within it the insinuation of the yet unspoken Word, that the past is really the portent of the future. The promise is given, but the promise is not yet fulfilled; unless the fulfillment of the promise be possible, no promise was given; unless there be redemption, there was no creation. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

*Exodus* was not only the liberation of the Jews by God, but the establishment of a divine Covenant between the Jewish people and God, a choice

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between a blessing and a curse. It was the movement from bondage under the former pharaoh of the Heavens to bondage under the *creator* of the Heavens. It was the assertion of the promise of not only the Promised Land, but the creation of the latent idea of an ultimate Messianic restoration/redemption in return for obedience to that Covenant. *Exile* in direct contrast to *Exodus*, is the consequence of breaking the Covenant: of disobedience to God. *Exile* is a central element of eschatology in the Judea-Christian worldview: just as Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden for breaking God's law, so too were the Hebrews exiled from Israel, their Garden of Eden, for breaking God's law. The *Exile* is also referred to as the Diaspora and in Hebrew it is known as the *Galut*, a period of deprivation of statehood. The *Exile* historically begins with the Babylonian exile in 586 B.C.E, though it is not eschatologically concretized until the destruction of the second temple in 70 A.D. after which resulted in a nearly total dispersion from Israel.

*Exile*, as a revelatory-historical event in the procession of Jewish theology, is cast as the punishment for breaking God's law, and therefore, it begins the process of historical restoration for the Jews, the process of *returning to God* (to the Land that was once Promised), just as the exile of Adam and Eve began the process of restoration for all of mankind. A new middle point of the same beginning and end, the Event itself is, even in its negative character, an interaction/communion with the Divine. In the *Natural and Supernatural Jew*, Arthur Cohen monolithically describes the *Exile* as the

historical coefficient of being unredeemed, and since that is the case, the supernatural vocation of the Jew is to make all of history alive to its incompleteness. This is nothing more than to reaffirm that the Jew is a messianic being for whom there is *no* redemption until *all* history is redeemed.

The making "alive" of history is the expansion of the spiritual awareness of the originator of the perfect ordering principle to a totality of all mankind. The *Exile* is interpreted as an event through which Jewish theology and mission/vocation are given new meaning and restored vitality: a new beginning from which the same end is pursued: a recall

of the original *Call*. Every desertion of the mission — the vocation generated as a logical necessity of the concept of chosenness — given to the Jewish people by God is scripturally followed by a call of return, a call to *turn* back, to turn back to the Jewish vocation through which history would find its death. The Jewish vocation itself is that of Messianism: the lineage of Jewish prophets traversing the necessary path of history in preparation of the consummation of the potentiality present in the birth of Judaism: the arrival of the Messiah:

Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and from your relatives, and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, And make your name great; and *you shall* be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ Genesis 12:1-3

The Call to the stalk of Abram after the dispersion of the people of the Tower of Babel by God is the origin of the Messianic vocation of the Jew, the mytho-historical location of the latent potentiality of a historical necessity, one that continues through Moses in *Exodus* and persists temporally through the lineage of Jewish prophets, leading towards the eventual Messiah who will consummate the particular beginning with a universal end: salvation is the completion of the mission: salvation is the death of history. Abram, which means “exalted father” becomes Abraham, “father of many” after he communes with God. Once again, critics may claim that the concept of the Messiah doesn’t emerge until the Babylonian era, after the line of David is established (as the Messiah must be a descendant of David), therefore negating the idea that the Messianic mission is the *essence* of Judaism, but this view lacks the quality of critical thought that understands Judaism as a dynamic process intertwined with a history of revelation, that the notion of a Messiah was a logical necessity of the theological birth of Judaism. The concept of a fall implies an eventual return, chosenness requires a purpose for chosenness, a reason to *preserve* such chosenness, and coupled with the logical contradiction of a universal God for *only* one *particular* group of people, a tension is generated that

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naturally generates the Messianic mission. This particular chosenness to a universal end is what engenders the *particular-universal paradox* that is the *eschatological principle of vitality* for the Jew and Judaism: the motor of the vehicle of prophecy, the *essence of Judaism* that is the *latent potentiality*.

This paradox is the birth of the logical necessity that gives rise to the Jewish mission — if there is a perfect order, a universal Divine, yet, He has selected a people out from among the nations, then, the contradiction between chosenness and universality emerges: the only logical recourse is the projection of an end at which a logical unification of opposites is concretized: history is thus constructed with its beginning and end already conceptualized. The Jewish mission is the necessary creation of this projection; it is the bridge upon which time will traverse towards this end, one that preserves the particularity of the Jewish people while simultaneously enabling them to assert a universal message. Dogmatism and staticism necessarily emerge repeatedly in history as communion with the divine as the central element of religion is replaced with strict adherence to a set of rules, serving to prevent the development of the religion while asserting the particular aspect — but revelatory-historical events of necessity always occur that catalyze the dynamism once more: that reignite the motor of the vehicle on the road to the end of history. The paradox, the life generating tension of rational opposites, is *always preserved* and an irrational reconciliation is always sought after as the end of history.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013, relates this paradox in his own words:

Judaism embodies a unique paradox that has distinguished it from polytheism on the one hand and the great universal monotheisms, Christianity and Islam, on the other. Its God is universal: the creator of the universe, author and sovereign of all human life. But its covenant is particular: one people set among the nations, whose vocation is not to convert the world to its cause, but to be true to itself and to God. That juxtaposition of universality and particularity was to

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cause a tension between Israel and others, and within Israel itself, that has lasted to this day.

To provide preliminary explication to a topic this text will extensively study, Reform Judaism, a modern form of Judaism that distanced itself from scripture and dogma, anchors itself and the conception of Jewish identity on this paradox:

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal. — The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism, Columbus Ohio, 1937

We affirm that the Jewish people are bound to God by an *eternal* covenant, as reflected in our varied understandings of Creation, Revelation and Redemption [...] We are Israel, a people aspiring to holiness, singled out through our ancient covenant and our unique history among the nations to be witnesses to God's presence. We are linked by that covenant and that history to all Jews in every age and place. — Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism, adopted at the 1999 Pittsburgh Convention, Central Conference of American Rabbis

A main thesis of this text is that the logically necessary Jewish mission that emerges from the latent potentiality of the logic of Judaism is the *essence* of Judaism, that this *tension of opposites* is the basis for the Jewish faith and the principle that both preserves and dynamically progresses the faith and its adherents throughout history. The *Exile* is one such dynamic progression of the Jewish faith, a historical event that is theologically canonized within the logic of the Jewish mission. The Jewish people have been seemingly punished by God for the last time, being totally dispersed from the promised land, the land where the mission would be completed and the Messiah would arrive, yet, this view could not be accepted. What group, having communed with the God of a divine reality and surviving as His chosen people for over a millenia through historical calamities and catastrophes, would voluntarily give

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up the vocation that has formed the basis of their identity for such a period? What people would give up their identity? Put a different way, what people *would willingly die*? Such a thing is *impossible* for the very thing that *keeps the flame burning prevents it from being extinguished*: a loop ad-infinitum of tension that generates a near infinite well of energy is thus constructed. The attainment of the goal of the process is the death of the process, the flame withers out into nothingness once the entire forest has burned down, but in order to complete its vocation, the flame must accept that it has been extinguished. If man has a powerful enough why, then he can overcome any how, but if his how must eventually lead to the end of his why, then a fear of a fall into meaningless reality emerges as a preservative method — death is never achieved, *history is never completed*. Then, can the end of history ever be reached? Or, does the very concept of history become an anchor preserving meaning yet preventing the transcendence that was the original goal of the creation of such meaning? That is to say, does the creation of history itself *prevent the completion of history*? System science as a concept asserts that systems have as their prime purpose their own self-preservation, but the Jewish system of history is one which forms a recursive function of infinite potentiality — the tension between arriving at the end point of meaning and preserving the process through which such an endpoint will be reached produces a never-ending recursive function of energy generation and life preservation, a tension of polarized rational opposites that seek to reunite. The Christian extension can be viewed as the transfer of the never-ending recursive function from the collective unto the individual — the eternal tension of rational opposites as the constant generator of meaning.

To return to physical history, the *Exile* is indeed a revelatory event, but its purpose is not to sever the relation between God and his Chosen people, neither could it be interpreted to be by the Jewish people. Rather, it is interpreted as another event in the progress of a history whose genealogy is only known by God. The vocation remains, only now, its method has leapt out of the model of the nation-state. As it is said in Kabbalistic literature, the people of Israel were dispersed in the same way as the divine spark, only, the dispersion of the Jewish people

serves as the method through which the fragmented world will be restored — one fragmentation to restore another. The Jewish mission is not over: God has merely reminded His chosen people of their duty:

The destruction of the Temple, the abortive uprisings of the communities of the Dispersion, and the final obliteration of the Jewish community of Palestine by the Emperor Hadrian transformed the Dispersion into disaster and thrust the reality of Exile into the foreground of Jewish consciousness. In the archaic past God had covenanted with Israel that it would become his people and he would become its God. A bond of trust and obligation, fidelity and confidence had been sealed. The Temple, however, was now destroyed, the nation dissolved, the people banished, and the millennial Exile commenced. It could not be other, historical Judaism counseled, than that God saw fit to try those he loved and chasten those he had called. The rabbis could not but see the destruction of Jerusalem as both a judgment and a trial: a judgment upon the nation's inadequacy and a trial of its vocation. The Dispersion is but the historical fact. The Exile transposes that fact into a different order of apprehension, and a construct of faith emerges...The Exile is a cosmic, not an historical, event in Jewish tradition. The Jew goes forth among the nations. This is God's action. The nation receives the Jew, grants him asylum, establishes his station, defines his limitations, and fences his universe. This is the action of secular history. What has been to the nations a response to an alien, unassimilable people in its midst is to Israel a consequence of the Exile. The historical catastrophe is elevated to a meta historical reality. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*, Arthur Cohen

As Voegelin related, Israel possesses history as an inner form of symbolic communion — secular history itself is part of the tapestry of revelation. Just as the exile of Adam and Eve was the beginning of human history and the *Exodus* was the beginning of Jewish history, the *Exile* was interpreted in this pattern of disobedience followed by expulsion, cast as a *new* beginning, a *recall* of the original call, a progression of the same narrative. Just as the prior two events consecrated a

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redemption in the future, so too did the *Exile*: a new beginning towards the *same end*:

What the sin of Adam was to every man, the Exile of the Holy Spirit, the Exile of the community of Israel, the Exile of the faithful remnant of Zion, is to the Jew... The Exile of Israel is, in the order of spiritual history, the first moment and the advent of the true Messiah is the last. God creates, man falls; God elects, the community sins; God disperses, the nations ravish. There is no center to history, no midpoint. There are innumerable centers, partial adumbrations; but the final word is indeed a final word. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Another main proposition of this text is that the *Exile*, as a revelatory-historical event, exists as the guiding political, material, and theological principle of modern Jewish religious and ideological thought, a new principle of *eschatological* vitality to persist in the current of the initial. What once followed from the *Exodus* persists in new form in the *Exile* as the divergence point between Christianity — a theological end to Judaism (Jesus as the *beginning and end*) — and Judaism. It is from this end and new beginning that a theological and ideological theorization of the ultimate end is redefined:

...the exile, at best, is a recall of history to transcending obligations. It is a constructive reality because it signals the beginning of redemption as much as it marks the end of a pristine and ancient homogeneity. The driving forth is the first moment of recall. This is about to project the old and marvelous paradoxes upon which religious enthusiasm lives— the losing which is finding, the despair which announces hope, the end which begins anew. The Exile is the end which begins the final, ultimate, and consummate end. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

God exiles the Jews, but this “driving forth” is a *recall* — one must be Exiled before he can return — of the original covenant of chosenness with Abraham. Jesus as an end point is rejected and history as a system

of meaningful existence, as the inner form that gives shape to the essence (Jewish mission) of Judaism persists as the inner theological form of Judaism. Though, as God has not sent a prophet among the Jewish people for 2000 years, this theorization has been without revelation, statically recapitulated within an insulated Diaspora Jewry until modernity gave material license to the inversion from religious passivity to material activity...until a nexus of elements concretized at the birth of political Modernity as a *new revelatory historical event: emancipation*.

This text aims to uncover and explicate the divergence of the supernatural and natural messianic vocation for the *modern* Jew, outlining therefore not only the *modern* routes towards salvation for the Jew, but, as following in the logic of the particular-universal Jewish paradox and the Jewish form of historical consciousness, for *all* of mankind. The main proposition of this text is that central to modern history and the modern divergence is the Jew and the Jewish divergence. In other words, I will aim to prove that the underlying *entelechy* of the West is the natural and supernatural Jew. What follows is not an anti-semitic expose aiming to attribute cause to the Jew, but rather, an outlining of the guiding principle of the path of historical necessity upon which Western mankind is traveling, the illumination of the nexus of elements that have formed the life giving, and self-destructing, tension of Jewish Modernity. The corollary propositions are that Jewish people served historically as a greater proportional *Accelerant* to this necessity and that Germany is the locus, or emanating point, of the *Confluence of Historical Necessity*. The three largest branches of modern Judaism — Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative — in addition to Zionism find their ideological and theological origins in the synthesis of Jew and German, as well as modern universalist socialist ideology and its antonym, modern particularist nationalist ideology — the tension of Judaism that constructed history as the modern tension that returns to the forefront after the end of history that was Jesus for the West is abandoned in favor of a supposed enlightened rationality generated independently from theology. The theological-political problem is the axiom of the supposed axiom-less politics of modernity.

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Where the exile of Adam and Eve begins the quest of redemption for the individual, the *Exile* of the Jews begins the quest of redemption for the *nation*, a redemption necessarily saturated with political and statist elements.

The *Exile* of the Jew is a symbol of the “sin” of the world. If you will — and we suggest this with a sense of its liability to misconstruction — the concept of *Exile* is the Jewish doctrine of Original Sin, an animadversion upon the corruptibility of all history, the violence of all events, and the defection of all nations. What Original Sin imputes to the individual sinner, the *Exile* imputes to the collectivity of all nations. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Such is the Prophecy of the West and mankind hurtles towards the sofa of history outlined in its genesis.

## Chapter 2

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### *The German Enlightenment and Jewish Emancipation*

Magnus Shulamit, Professor Emerita of Jewish Studies and History at Oberlin College, relates the historical importance of the locus of Germany through the “mirror” of German Jewry for European and Modern Jewry:

...German Jewry has been the occasion for pointed, sometimes bitter, musings about Jewish choices and destiny in modernity. Not just German Jewish choices and destiny, but those of modern Jewry as a whole. This is because German Jewry has been cast as the quintessential modern Jewry; its experience, paradigmatic. For all the acknowledged difference of experience of European Jews both west and east of it, German Jewry has been seen as the "mirror of (Jewish) modernity," providing a "point of perspective on the general European Jewish confrontation with, and response to, the forces of modernity-to nationalism, industrialization, urbanization, social stratification and upheaval, secularization, religious reform....

Until the modern era of civic emancipation, Jews existed in a state of *Exile* that projected a condition of civic and social inferiority onto them, repeatedly suffering political depredation at the hands of the

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nations within which they persisted as unique minorities. This secular history forms, as stated earlier, a historical continuity of events that, although material, possess spiritual meaning. Even — no, *especially* suffering as historical experiences generate energy towards vitality of the Jewish mission. The dual meaning of the word *galut* is suffering for the sake of mankind and the Rambam himself has been quoted saying that as the suffering of the Jewish collective increases, so too their hope for the Messiah. The Jewish dialectic as sustained and expounded by historical experiences of suffering will be explicated in more detail later on, but a simple analysis of the founding myth of post-WW2 Modernity suffices for now as a stimulant of veracity.

Where the modern world has accepted “tolerance,” history has known nothing but persecution. The Jews experienced numerous expulsions throughout their exile, and as a consequence of this, as well as biological survivalism (refusal of inter-breeding and a social methodology of insulation (Talmud)), ethnic sub-divisions among them emerged: Ashkenazis in Europe, Sephardim in the Iberian peninsula, and Mizrahim in the Middle East and North Africa.

During the Exilic period, Jews were restricted from positions of civic and social power, and often the only route for survival and social success was commercial. Naturally, Jews developed a penchant for monetary practices, a convergent development alongside anti-semitism that has led to many anti-Semitic canards historically, and it is for this reason that Karl Marx (ethnically Jewish albeit raised Christian, alongside many other Jews and non-Jews, held a purely *material* view of Jews and Judaism, a view that reflects the historically dominant European Gentile perspective of Jewry:

Marx considered his ancestral community to be hardly more than followers of an anachronistic religion. It was not their religion however, that ultimately distinguished the Jews, according to Marx, but rather their singular devotion to commerce and capital. In consonance with his materialist analysis of religion in general, he focused on the "everyday Jew", as opposed to the "sabbath Jew", and declared him to be a bourgeois, i.e., a man of trade and finance, par excellence —

Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, "The Throes of Assimilation: Self-Hatred and the Jewish Revolutionary"

Sir William Petty explicated a theory of trade that countered the typical Weberian narrative of the "Protestant work ethic" in asserting that heterodox groups naturally develop monetary excellence, one that synthesizes with the more modern socio-biological view that Jews developed monetary expertise as a consequence of being marginalized in their communities:

In contrast to the Weberian thesis of a peculiar affinity between Protestantism and capitalism, Petty asserts that "trade is not fixed to any species of religion as such" but is always carried out most vigorously by the heterodox elements of the community, whatever religion they may be. — *Spinoza, Liberalism, and the Question of Jewish Identity*, Steven B. Smith

After Pope Paul IV's issuing of *Cum Nimis Absurdum* in 1555, ghettos in which Jews were segregated from the wider society and forced to identify themselves with yellow badges were constructed for the growing numbers of Jews in Europe, though this was more of an exception rather than the rule. Typically, Jews largely persisted in isolated communities, insulated by religious tradition and a strong rejection of racial intermixing and conversion. Governmental and communal restrictions were placed on ownership of property, commerce, and banking, and the European Jew's development took place in relation to these external influences. It is vital to understand this previous point: Jewry's development post-Exile is *inseparably interrelated* to the anti-Semitism and external influences of the Gentile nations within which they persisted. This interrelation is an indication of an interrelation of a higher order; the material history of the Jewish people connected to their revelatory history. This oppression is indeed the action of the nations, but it is by no means a fortuity of history disconnected from God. From the Jewish perspective, God is present in every action, both good and bad: if at any moment such a view is abandoned, history as a linear framework ceases to exist: man has fallen into the abyss.

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Following the Protestant Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and Glorious Revolution, the ideals of the Enlightenment began to politically actualize in Europe, first manifesting in the introduction of democratic ideals to the political structure through the French Revolution in 1789 (democracy would not be established in France until 1792). Secularization form a process of development in tandem with the progression of both scientific knowledge (no longer is the world and its mechanisms divine unknowables — science reveals to us the inner workings of reality and thus endows mankind with the ability to *alter* reality) and intellectual knowledge. The gradual distancing from dogmatic existence enabled through the Protestant attitude was a necessity in the emergence of the thinkers of the Enlightenment who paved the way for Europe to democratize and secularize under the dual values of freedom and equality. Particularly the idea of equality is of importance. The French emancipated the Jews due to the logic of the French ideology of the equality of men: the “Natural Rights of Man”. This same ideological necessity of emancipation was present in America, which emancipated Jews from the beginning.

Following the French Revolution, Napoleon rampaged through Europe, spreading the revolutionary ideals of the French Revolution and also dividing Germany into 39 sub-states: the Confederation of the Rhine. Following his defeat, the Congress of Vienna convened in 1815 to establish diplomatic plans for the restructuring of Europe to ensure continental peace, after which Germany's divided condition remained but under a new name: the German Confederation. This basic structure of Europe determined by the Congress would largely remain intact for the following century until the unification of Germany into the Second Reich of the German Empire in 1871.

Whereas the French Revolution emancipated the Jews as a logical consequence of its formulation of the ideology of natural rights — unconditional emancipation on the basis of humanity — the situation was quite different in Germany: *conditional* emancipation. The typical binary split of Europe between East and West is improper here, and a

trinitarian approach is more precise<sup>1</sup>: Western Europe (England, France, Holland), Central Europe(German states and Hasburg), Eastern Europe (Russia, Poland) (and a fourth region that we will not discuss due to the toleration of Jews, the Ottoman Empire). Our purposes will relegate our time to Germany, but it must be understood that emancipation for Jews was complex and non-uniform. In various places, Jews were emancipated and given rights, but after a period of time, these rights were rescinded (even in France). Some areas offered privileges in place of rights, which sometimes led to rights, and a common theme was partial rights/privileges and *conditional* emancipation for prolonged periods of time; by no means was emancipation a comprehensive or immediate program. Indeed, the protean formal question of emancipation persists well into the 20th century in Europe, and the abstract and social question, at least some Jewish historians and theorists believe, persists even today:

A chronology of emancipation that starts from 1750 or 1789, and ends in 1870 or 1917, is erroneous. Emancipation started earlier and, significantly, extended later. Indeed, emancipation continues to the present.

Thesis Nine. Emancipation was ambiguous and interminable. It was neither a one-time, chronologically discrete event nor a linear one. It was recurring. Jews gained and lost and regained and re-lost rights. Emancipation was also fundamentally ambiguous. There were discrepancies between laws and their implementation, between appearance and actuality. There were triumphs and tragedies, progressions and retrogressions.

— David Sorkin, *Jewish Emancipation*

The particulars of this complexity will not be fully developed nor discussed in this book as it is not the purpose of this book to give a comprehensive history of these particulars. Rather, main events, ideologies, and motors of change will be discussed, the elements of necessity that influenced and developed history. The era of emancipa-

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<sup>1</sup>. *Jewish Emancipation* by David Sorkin

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tion is processual rather than immediate and the complexity of the question of Jewish emancipation exists within this processual current of development, an assertion which will remain as a presupposition of this text moving forward.

In Germany the question of Jewish Emancipation possessed two separate elements of development: firstly, the divided state of the confederation left the matter of emancipation up to the individual substates, and secondly, the German conception of the state and the role it played was diametrically different from the French or English conceptions due to the different foundations of each of their Enlightenments. Emancipation in the German states was to be conditional and these conditions would be developed by the state. Contrary to popular academic belief, the Enlightenment was not a unitary secular project, nor were its contents homogenous across Europe. Whereas the English emphasized limited government and liberty and the French Revolution social critique and freedom — both rooted in a pure rationalism — the German enlightenment found its roots in Leibnizian thought, therefore emphasizing faith and reason as well as an orientation to statism:

Whereas Descartes in France and Hobbes and Locke in England had consciously rebelled against scholasticism, Leibniz had reconciled it with Cartesian rationalism with the result that it became an integral part of the German philosophical tradition. For this reason the *Aufklärung* has been characterized as an ‘interaction between western ideas and Leibnizian assumptions’ — David Sorkin

The *Aufklärung* is the German term for the German Enlightenment. Central to the *Aufklärung* political view was statism or the deference of the individual to the whole, this largely a consequence of the political and philosophical theorists of Germany, most notably Hegel, influenced by Spinoza and Kant, and his progressive concept of the Absolute Spirit which finds total fulfillment in the divine state. As Germany (and Europe) became increasingly secular, a totalitarian belief naturally arose from this Enlightenment ferment; man is no longer eternal, and the state, due to its capacity for longevity and centralization, takes the place of that which is of ultimate moral value. In simpler words, the

sacrifice of the lives of men, be it one, a thousand, or a million, are inconsequential in the relatively immense valuation of the state: secularity gives rise to the inversion of moral value between the temporal man and the now eternal state. It's unlikely that a deep explication of the German spirit's attachment to a divine conception of state is unneeded, but Louis Dumont, well-known for his studies on holism and individualism in modernity, relates the German conception through Ernst Troeltsch:

In a 1916 text reprinted in 1925, Ernst Troeltsch clearly defined and explained the German idea of liberty as contrasted with the English and the French, both similar yet a little different. If a definition is called for, Troeltsch says toward the end of the study, it will be an organized unity of the people based on a rigorous and at the same time critical devotion of the individual to the whole, which is completed and legitimized by the independence and individuality of the free spiritual culture *[Bildung]*, (Troeltsch 1925a: 103) And, if a slogan is needed, with all the risks it suggests: 'state socialism and culture individualism [Bildungsindividualismus]' — *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*



## Chapter 3

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### *Bildung*

Consequently, the German conception of the state made German Jewish emancipation a matter of the state rather than a matter of ideological consistency. Thus, the development of the ideological conception of the German State is critical to understanding both the development of the question of German Jewish emancipation and German Jewish thought. The ideal of *Bildung*, loosely translated as “education,” is the central motor of this development and it is no understatement to place it as the guiding principle of modern German history and even the European Enlightenment as a whole. Developed by Herder and popularized by Goethe, the ideal of *Bildung* was a processual method of self-referential formation and development for individuals enabled by the state. For Herder, it was the path towards *true equality* among men: the path towards the *New European*. The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy relates the centrality of the concept for understanding modern German history:

It is no exaggeration to claim that nineteenth-century philosophy stands under the sign of *Bildung*...The history of nineteenth-century philosophy is, in a certain sense, the history of the idea of *Bildung*, as it includes (but is not limited to) the work of Johann Gottfried Herder,

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Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Schiller, the Romantics, G. W. F. Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche... Towards the end of the century, the notion of *Bildung* had shaped the conception of culture and cultural education all over the Western world.

The ideal of *Bildung* was conceptualized in response to the challenge formed by the Enlightenment's projection of universal ideals developed through reason in the place of God's revelation. If it is the case that mankind, through the ability of human reason and will, had developed and discovered universal ideals such as freedom, equality, diversity, tolerance, rationality, etc — and at the very least had grounded themselves in the tool through which eventual universals could be discovered: reason — then man himself must be able to embody these ideals. Hitherto, ultimate knowledge was the word of God and the workings of reality lay within His palm... but the enchanted world had become empirical, divine cosmology was replaced by causality: divine knowledge became superstition. The Scientific Revolution gave way to the empirical man of the future — the man who would not be “decieved” by religious illusions, who had *opened* his eyes and awakened to the *real* world: the man who had been enlightened. A gap emerged — the divine world order and the order of the true world, the world that was not yet known *but could eventually be fully known*.

Given the existence of the gap between a world defined by God and a world defined by man, a process must exist through which man can traverse from superstition to knowledge, from darkness to light. A process through which man is *ennobled*, *enlightened*, *Liberated*... This process towards what can be called the “New European” — the scientific, philosophical, cultured man — was the necessary challenge logically manifesting from the Enlightenment: if universality exists but man does not yet embody it's values, then, a method through which he can must be constructed and made the focal point of the intellectual: *Bildung*. The simple mind may treat this principle as merely education, but that is a foolish view for nothing sustains itself nor is self-sufficient. Education is and can not be objective: it has a metaphysical basis upon which it founds itself, upon which it derives itself: it has a begin-

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ning from which it's end stems. Though this is more of an attack on postmodern, the simple idea that must be understood is the foundation upon which *Bildung* is erected as the ideal that will bring about the future:

The new scientific world-view, and the Enlightenment currents that followed in its wake, went hand in hand with a process of secularization. This not only changed the prevalent understanding of God and nature, but also that of the human being. Secularization involved a new sense of freedom, yet this new sense of freedom could not be conceptualized with reference to the point of view of eternity. It would have to be a freedom that is realized *in concreto*. Hence a new challenge emerged: how can freedom be related to history and tradition?

Human spirit forms itself in an on-going process of education. Thus freedom is linked to the way that a human being—at an individual as well as societal level—realizes itself and its world. This, further, is related to the fabric of beliefs and practices against which actions, events, and expressions gain meaning.

Freedom is not a postulate, but a project. And the responsibility for carrying through this project rests with the human being alone. This is the soil in which the philosophical discourse of *Bildung* initially takes shape.

In this sense, *Bildung* is not, strictly speaking, self-formation, but a formation of the self in society *and* of a society with “complete equality of all of its members.

*Bildung* is not a ‘postulate’ but rather a ‘project’. A Hegelian conception of history is naturally born: history is a *progression* of development — namely that of freedom and equality — and man has a *sublime mission* to *complete* this history. Once again however, without reference to a beginning, how can a conception of an end be generated? That is to say, without a beginning from which the *postulate* is born, from where does the *project* emerge. The *postulate* and the *project* must be *one and the same*...

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The concept of *Bildung* laid out here is *positive* — through the process of state developed education, man can be *ennobled* — but a *negative* understanding was also implicit in the definition: if man could be *ennobled* through education, he could also be *debased* through it. Ennoblement and Debasement are tied to freedom and equality — ennoblement is man *increasing* in his freedom and equality, debasement is man *decreasing* his freedom and equality. Yet, the term equality too indicates a hierarchy: that it is a *superior* postulate and project than *inequality*.

The ideas of ennoblement and debasement are tied to the new definition of man as a blank canvas, *tabula rasa*. This is a central element of the secularization of man following the Enlightenment. Man's nature is malleable and capable of change through external forces: the teleological/etiological nature of man rooted in the concept of transcendental eternity is replaced with one that is processual and relational, floating in a material temporality whose open space is nihilism. Man has no 'nature' yet, his 'nature' must be corrected.

It's important to understand that *Bildung* was *the* central element of philosophical-political thought in Germany, and thus, the political development of Germany progressed on a distinct foundation to the rest of Europe. It is impossible to understand the development of political attitudes in 19th century Germany without this ideal, nor the subsequent restructuring of German society by bureaucrats following Napoleon. David Sorkin relates this restructuring in *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840*, a seminal work in the field of German Jewry following in the contributions of his professor, the great Jewish historian of German Jewry George Mosse:

The bureaucracy utilized the concept of *Bildung* to augment its status and political power. The Prussian bureaucracy, for example, used the concept to create a new group ethos that replaced the autocrat's judgment as the criterion for the evaluation of performance. The ideal gave the bureaucrats a sense of self-importance as rational, cultivated, and autonomous individuals, and thus new prestige and importance to the training and mode of thought required by their work. On this

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basis the bureaucracy made a bid for political power...With the partial success of this bid for power the importance of *Bildung* spiraled. The ideal now became the basis for a new form of aristocracy, the aristocracy of the spirit, disputing the old equation of aristocracy with nobility. For the bureaucracy, then, *Bildung* functioned as both a form of legitimization and a basis of politics.

Nobility of birth is replaced with nobility of *spirit* so as to find consistency with the ideal of equality and give credence to *Bildung*: *all* men must be capable of self-development, not just the aristocracy, this development naturally legitimizing a necessary alteration of social structure:

Following the devastating defeat at Jena by Napoleon, the bureaucratically dominated Prussian state attempted to combine the pedagogical and political notions of *Bildung* to revive itself. The bureaucracy thought Prussia's humiliating defeat was the result of the absolutist state's stifling of individual initiative and thought. Led by the reform party of Stein, Hardenberg, and Altenstein, the bureaucracy felt that the ideal, relying precisely on notions of individual initiative and reason, could rouse the subjects from their torpor. Thus they elevated *Bildung* to a principle for the reorganization of society. At no future time in German history were culture and pedagogy to play such a crucial role in politics. As Altenstein put it in a memorandum of September 1807: "true freedom, culture, science and the arts" were to be "not the means to a goal" but the natural result of the state's devoting its energies to the attainment of the "highest goal of mankind." In those same years Wilhelm von Humboldt revamped the Prussian educational system, transforming *Bildung* into a practical program of pedagogical reform in which the state would develop a system devoted to individual formation.

It is within this milieu of *statist Bildung* — the development of the individual intimately tied to the State and its own development — that the question of German Jewish emancipation was formulated, developed, and answered. The separate foundation of political thought from

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English and French environments meant an entirely distinct formulation of the question of Jewish emancipation, one that regarded the state as the only entity through which the ideals could be actualized. The restructured statism processualized by *Bildung* is essential to understanding the period of the emancipation of the German Jews; natural rights or ideology would not free the Jews, *only the state could*. The possibility for civic emancipation was a revolutionary idea for the Jews of Europe, and it was the deep heartfelt hope for emancipation that became the catalyst of transformation, leading to an extreme attachment to the state as the vehicle through which he would be freed and *Bildung* as the motor of development:

The principal engine of change in the modern history of the Jews of Europe was the revolutionary idea that it might after all be right and proper for them to enjoy full and equal civil and political rights with all other subjects of the several realms they inhabited. All turned, therefore, in the final analysis on the matter of emancipation...No other factor operating upon them in modern times would serve so powerfully to precipitate such revolutionary changes in their mores, their culture, their internal social structure, and, more generally and loosely, their private and collective concerns and expectations. — David Sorkin, *Jewish Emancipation*

The difference between German and German-Jewish cultural behavior is, first of all, quantitative. Jews were more intensively involved in the cultivation of their *Bildung* than were their Gentile counterparts. — Jacob Katz, *German Culture and the Jews*

## Chapter 4

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### *The Ideology of Emancipation*

In addition to understanding the German view of the state and the permeating ideal of *Bildung*, the general attitude and disposition towards the Jewish populace by German political leaders is significant. It is from their perspective that the political designs for Jewish emancipation were developed. Like in much of Europe, the German attitude towards Jews was largely anti-semitic: the Jewish people were viewed as a corrupt and debased people: the killers of Christ. Judaism *had* to be rooted out and only then could the Jew be integrated. Christian theologians often justified anti-semitism in line with a popular view that the Diaspora was God's punishment upon the Jews for not only their role in the death of Christ, but also their persistent disobedience of the dogma of Christianity, and, ironically, this same perspective was accepted by Jewish theologians as well, but, rather than a punishment for killing Christ, the *galut* and period of political depreciation was a consequence of disobedience to God (who was not Christ). In the Jewish view, God was still with them:

It came as no surprise to the people of Israel that after centuries of ambivalent maneuvering, failure, and indecisiveness, God should become weary of its irresponsibility and judge it. The judgement

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might well be hard and the burden heavy, but this people was as no other people, for as Amos (3:2) emphasized : “You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will visit on you all your iniquities.” What befell Judaism in the days of its destruction was chastisement, and recall...the rabbis imagined God mourning over His decision, full with remorse and weeping over the requirements which He must except of His beloved. The Jew is sent into *Exile* and God goes with him. — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Many Germans ruled out the possibility of Jewish emancipation, declaring that the only true method would be through a mass conversion to Christianity, and some Germans went as far as to rule out the possibility in its entirety. The primary element of disagreement between Christianity and Judaism is the person and nature of Jesus Christ:

In “Towards an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism,” Gershom Scholem famously proclaimed messianism as the defining difference between Christians and Jews: “It is here that the essential conflict between Judaism and Christianity has developed and continues to exist. — Michael L. Morgan, Steven Weitzman, “Rethinking the Messianic Idea in Judaism”

The question of Messianism is complex and subject to a necessary historical narrative: there can be no *eventual* redemption if there was never an *initial* promise for redemption. Christians assert a belief in Jesus Christ as both Messiah and Son of God and therefore history begins and ends with Jesus. For Jews however, history is ongoing. The *Exile* is ongoing. The Jewish mission is ongoing. For the Jewish theologian, the continued existence of the Jew is “justification” for the eventual first Coming, for while the Jew exists in his particularity, the universal is supposedly unachieved:

Your [Christian] expectation is directed towards a second coming, ours to a coming which has not been anticipated by a first...Pre-messianically our destinies are divided. Now to the Christian the Jew

is the incomprehensibly obdurate man, who declines to see what has happened; and to the Jew the Christian is the incomprehensibly daring man, who affirms in an unredeemed world that its redemption has been accomplished. This is a gulf which no human power can bridge. - Martin Buber

An impossible situation of assimilation is immediately apparent; the Christians believed that Jews would continue to suffer as long as they rejected the Messiah and Jews believed they would continue to suffer until the Messiah arrived. One side believes that redemption for suffering has already occurred, the other is awaiting a redemption through passive suffering. What is more powerful: hope actualized, or a yet non-actualized hope continually deepened by an ongoing suffering?

Here we encounter the first paradox of the Jewish German transformation. If it is the case that only the State could emancipate the Jews *and* that *Bildung* was a process that *all* men were capable of, the German formulation would have to align with the English and French to achieve consistency. The Jew could not develop himself until he had been emancipated, and he could not be emancipated until he had proven himself capable of development, *Bildung*, so therefore emancipation *and* *Bildung* would have to go hand in hand.

Christen von Dohm, a radical proponent against anti-semitism and friend of Moses Mendelssohn —the mythic hero of assimilation for the Jews that served as *the* example of a Jew who became a European intellectual while *remaining* a Jew — recognized this problem and was *the* leading voice (only the influence of Spinoza is possibly a motor of the second degree) in the development of the ideology of emancipation:

In 1781–82 a Prussian journalist and bureaucrat, Christian Wilhelm von Dohm (1751–1820), published the single most influential book in favor of emancipation. By literally recasting the terms of the debate, he had

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a direct impact on legislation across Europe until 1848. — Sorkin,  
*Jewish Emancipation*

Von Dohm wrote “On the Civic Amelioration of the Jews,” in which he articulated what would be known as the *lachrymose* view of Jews and Judaism as well as the program of “regeneration” that would enable the emancipation of the Jews. Von Dohm gave consistency to the paradox by combining emancipation of the Jews with *Bildung*. The lachrymose view engendered the typical German view of Jews, debased and corrupt, but attributed a cause, and therefore solution, for the debasement of the Jew. The Jew nor Judaism were naturally corrupt, but were *deformed* by 18 centuries of political oppression and discrimination. If it was through the state that the Jew had been deformed, then, von Dohm argued, it would be through the state that they would be *reformed*, or *regenerated*. David Sorkin masterfully illustrates von Dohm’s formulation:

Dohm set himself the task of exploring "if and by what means the Jews can become morally and politically [*sittlich und politisch*] better than they are now. Dohm's choice of adverbs here is significant: the Jews' "moral" improvement, their regeneration as men, and their "political" amelioration, their rehabilitation as citizens, are the same.

Dohm asserted that the moral issue could not be separated from politics: the regeneration of the Jews as men is a quintessentially political matter. Dohm accepted the image of a degraded Jewry without scruple, yet he attributed those moral deficiencies to their political condition. The Jews' civic disabilities and juridically enforced concentration in trade and money lending, rather than an innate "Jewish" nature, were 'the true source of their corruption.' The moral stature of the Jews was, then, a matter of their environment: 'The moral character of the Jews, as that of all men, is capable of the most complete development and the most unfortunate degradation, and the influence of outward circumstances . . . is all too conspicuous here.'

In order to retain consistency with the ideal of *Bildung*, Von Dohm needed to attribute the same malleability of character asserted by the

Enlightenment to the Jews as well:

Dohm's politicization of the Jews' character rested on a constellation of the *Aufklärung*'s central ideas: man's character is malleable, subject to the influence of environment; man's potential perfectibility is his highest virtue; and all men are essentially one, being divided by such lamentable factors as religious intolerance and fanaticism. Thus Dohm asserted the Jews' undeniable humanity despite their present condition: 'the Jew is more a man than a Jew.'

The lachrymose view then necessarily asserts the 18 centuries of Exile as *negative Bildung*:

When the oppression which he experienced for centuries has made him morally corrupt, then a more equitable treatment will again restore him.

And therefore, Jewish emancipation through the German state would enable *positive Bildung*:

Dohm understood Jewish emancipation, then, as an issue of moral regeneration within a political framework. Emancipation was conceived as a reciprocal process in which the Jews were to refashion themselves in exchange for rights, largely through occupational restructuring and reeducation, though this could occur—as Dohm never failed to remark—only under the ennobling condition of freedom.

In other words, Jews could not regenerate/develop themselves until they had been lifted out of the degenerating condition of civic inequality, and therefore, their emancipation and development would have to be *parallel* processes. The State in this interpretation was inseparably tied to development of the individual and subsequently the harbinger of a freedom sought for over 2000 years.

In contrast to von Dohm's quid pro quo, Mendelssohn asserted an English/French natural rights view, rejecting the notion of reciprocity

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with a view of unconditional emancipation: all men are equally deserving of emancipation and need not prove themselves in order to acquire it. In order to justify this, Mendelssohn, following in Spinoza's steps, had to prove that Judaism, what Germans considered was a hostile faith, was in reality even *more* compatible with the secular state than Christianity due it's legislative rather than religious nature in contrast to Christianity's revelatory "dogmatism":

Mendelssohn demonstrated that Judaism was not inherently a corporation and therefore had no intrinsic need to coerce the belief of its adherents. He argued that Judaism, as a "revealed legislation" and not a "revealed religion," made no claim to an "exclusive revelation of eternal truths." The truths upon which Judaism rested were accessible to reason and thus fully in accord with natural religion. Moreover, Judaism was the purest embodiment of natural religion, for, unlike Christianity, it did not distort the truth of natural religion with irrational dogma (e.g., the Trinity). Rather than containing dogma that purported to embody eternal, revealed truth, Judaism consisted of a set of historical truths that oblige the Jews to the symbolic acts of the commandments, all of which have moral and pedagogical value. Because it depends on symbolic acts rather than fixed statements of belief and has no need to coerce belief, Judaism can dispense with the powers of a corporation and be organized as a voluntary society.

Mendelssohn theorized that Christianity, because of the reliance on dogma, was inherently at odds with the secular state, whereas Judaism is perfectly suited to it. Mendelssohn could therefore refuse to link emancipation to any change in Jewish practice or belief. Emancipation was an inherent right, to be granted cost free, and not a privilege to be gained. Since emancipation derives from natural rights, Mendelssohn could assert that regeneration is the Jews' internal affair.

Mendelssohn aimed to divorce the emancipation of the Jews from *Bildung* by trying to assert *Bildung* as an internal process unrelated to the question of emancipation. This view however failed not due to its lack of ideological consistency, but with its lack of consistency with the German *Aufklärung* and the German devotion and adherence to the

State. The German conception placed the State at the “beginning and end” of all things, therefore finding completeness in the self-referential return of all matters to the State: forward movement as return, the end as the beginning. Emancipation, in the German sphere, *had to be tied to the State*, unlike the American, French, or English conception which placed ideology presupposition-ally underneath the state rather than the ideology of the state presupposition-ally underneath the state like German ideology (this dichotomy gives foundational exegesis for the ideologies that develop within the philosophical milieu of Germany, i.e. socialism, communism, modern nationalism, etc).

Not only was Mendelssohn’s view rejected by Germans but German Jews as well. Most notably, his own successor, David Friedlander, developed the conditional view of emancipation and explicitly rejected Mendelssohn’s view. This rejection of the natural rights view however retained Mendelssohn’s formula of *Bildung* for internal regeneration, yet made internal regeneration a necessary *external* process of reciprocation for the Jews’ quid pro quo covenant with the state:

Mendelssohn asserted that a nation’s true formation, its *Bildung*, consisted of both *Kultur* and *Aufklärung*. Under the impact of the events of the revolutionary era, the ideologues of emancipation, whether deliberately or not, adopted Mendelssohn’s understanding of *Bildung* as encompassing both the practical and theoretical side of a nation’s life and made it the basis of their claim to emancipation. Moreover, the Napoleonic era led them to drop Mendelssohn’s distinction between the present and future German states<sup>1</sup>. They believed the secular state that would guarantee their rights had arrived with French hegemony. Following Mendelssohn the reformer rather than Mendelssohn the author of *Jerusalem*, then, they made reform the necessary precondition for emancipation: they came to see emancipation as a quid pro quo, and in so doing propounded the ideology of emancipation.

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i. Jewish emancipation occurred progressively in the German states, earlier in some and later in others

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The radicalizing influence of the era can be seen in Friedlander's renunciation of Mendelssohn's natural rights argument. In shifting to the idea of the tutelary state, Friedlander abandoned not only Dohm's *raison d'etat* framework, but also Mendelssohn's philosophical one. In the conclusion to the first memorandum of 1787, quoted above, he obviously avoided invoking natural rights in his formulation "principles of respect for mankind and toleration." After 1789 he felt compelled not only to avoid the doctrine but to renounce it. The events of 1789 had cast suspicion on the doctrine of natural rights in Germany, for it was thought to threaten monarchy. Friedlander's second and third petitions coincided with these events. In his third petition (February 28, 1790) he abjured the doctrine of natural rights:

Not with empty declamations, not with appeals to the rights of man, have we importuned our beloved sovereign, but with the humble plea that through the amelioration of our civil relations, new potential can be imparted to the unused energies of true, industrious subjects who, obligated by gratitude, might assist in the prosperity and well-being of the state.

Following Dohm, he asserted that regeneration could take place only after freedom had been granted...He also refrained from agreeing to see emancipation as an exchange of prior regeneration for rights, holding firm to the view, first formulated by Dohm, that, 'their elevation to the dignity of citizens must come first if their moral and religious character is to be improved in general.' — David Sorkin

The ideologues of emancipation that rejected Mendelssohn's appeal to the rights of man centralized the ideology with three pillars through the period of gradual emancipation:

The ideas of 1806-08 were endlessly recapitulated without major revision down to the early 1840s because emancipation remained incomplete. The ideologues of emancipation felt it their duty to reiterate the ideology to prove that the Jews were abiding by the quid pro quo. They interminably repeated three closely related ideas. First, they accepted the quid pro quo of regeneration for rights through the

transformation of politics into pedagogy. Second, they had absolute faith in the tutelary state, which by definition required regeneration. Third, they developed the lachrymose view of Jewish history, in which culture was the agent of historical change. Finally, they utilized the ideal of *Bildung* to give these ideas as well as the ideology's program of regeneration—occupational restructuring, religious reform, and moral rehabilitation—internal coherence. — David Sorkin

The ideal of *Bildung* as generally formulated by German philosophers became for the Jewish ideologues of emancipation the very philosophical vehicle through which regeneration and emancipation would occur: *Bildung* was the modern method of redemption/restoration/teshuvah bestowed upon the Jew through a covenant with the “divine” state. The divine role of the tutelary state was readily accepted and alongside it, the lachrymose view. German Jews themselves increasingly viewed and believed the period of *Exile* to be a negative transformation of Jews and Judaism as a consequence of civic anti-semitism, a belief that would inform ideological and theological theorization, reinterpretation, and redefinition of Judaism to come. Most importantly, *Bildung* occupied a *central* role in Jewish life and intellectualism to such a degree that it subsumed their German Jewish identity. George Mosse relates:

The centrality of the ideal of *Bildung* in German-Jewish consciousness must be understood from the very beginning—it was basic to Jewish engagement with liberalism and socialism—fundamental to the search for a new Jewish identity after emancipation. The concept of *Bildung* became for many Jews synonymous with their Jewishness—especially after the end of the nineteenth century—when most Germans themselves had distorted the original concept beyond recognition.

Berthold Auerbach, considered by his fellow Jews to be one of the most representative German Jews of the nineteenth century, wrote that "formerly the religious spirit proceeded from revelation, the present starts with *Bildung*." His *Schrift und Volk (The People and the Book, 1846)* called for religion to become *Bildung*—"an inner liberation and deliverance of man, his true rebirth; not through words or

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customs, but through his deeds, his character, the totality of his life, the cleansing and healing of all human labor.

Surely here was an ideal ready made for Jewish assimilation, because it transcended all differences of nationality and religion through the unfolding of the individual personality. — *German Jews Beyond Judaism*

Goethe, who developed Herder's idea of *Bildung*, was revered by German Jews:

Goethe's emphasis on individual freedom, his ambivalence toward all forms of nationalism, and, finally, his belief in *Bildung* seemed to foster Jewish assimilation.

The fact that German Jews played a leading role in Goethe societies and wrote so many Goethe biographies documents the poet's importance to the integration of Jews into Germany. For example, Ludwig Geiger, the son of a famous rabbi active in the Jewish reform movement, founded the *Goethe Yearbook* in 1880, and in the mid-1920s, Jews were almost a majority in the Berlin Goethe society. — *German Jews Beyond Judaism*

*Bildung* for Germans was the building block of the path to equality among men, the bridge between superstition and knowledge, but for Jews, it was the bridge towards true emancipation and Exilic salvation built by the German tutelary state that had naturally and *necessarily* obtained a quasi-messianic status: eschatologically, only the Messiah/God could liberate the Jews. As such, *Bildung* as the transitive material towards some universal end, was more fervently embraced and employed by German Jews than Germans themselves. The German Jewish thinkers could logically attribute the external view of debasement projected onto them by Europeans as negative *Bildung* due to the oppressive conditions of civic inferiority, and, as a means to gain a long sought freedom, embrace a positive *Bildung* as the form of internal and external regeneration:

### *The Ideology of Emancipation*

The Jews, unlike the masses, reached for *Bildung* in order to integrate themselves into German society. The Jews and the German masses entered German social and political life at roughly the same time, but the Jews were apt to reject the world of myth and symbol, the world of feeling rather than reason. Through the very process of their emancipation, they were alienated from the German masses. — David Sorkin

Among those nations, nowhere was the process of emancipation more complete than in Germany. German Jewry, more than the Jews of any other nation, sought to replace their attachment to an ancient tradition with the Enlightenment's project of emancipation through *Bildung* — Steven B. Smith, "Hegel and the Jewish Question: In Between Tradition and Modernity"

Of course, to embrace such a reciprocal model is to embrace and subsequently internalize that indeed one had been degenerated: that the roots from which they had grown were *rotten*.

It must be understood that German Jews, and Jews in general, possessed an intense desire for civic emancipation. Undoubtedly, this is a simple fact. Perhaps try to place yourself within the situation of the 18th century European Jew: possessing a deep and rich ancient history, a love for the father and tradition, but simultaneously a recollection of 18 centuries of oppression and civic humiliation. It is a Tantalusian myth of freedom:

On entering the modern world, the Jew had no reason to be suspicious of the ideal of enlightenment which ruled it. On the contrary, he had every reason to embrace it with enthusiasm. Who was to be enthusiastic about it if not the Jew, who had just emerged from the confines of the medieval ghetto? Who was to approve of the ideal of universal emancipation if not the Jew, who stood in special need of emancipation? — Emil Fackenheim, "Jewish Existence and the Living God: The Religious Duty of Survival"

Borne's oft-cited Letters from Paris emphasized the nexus between the oppression of Jews and Germany's national liberal movement: 'Yes, because I was born a slave,' he exclaimed, 'I love freedom more than

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you. Yes, because I have experienced slavery, I understand freedom better than you. Yes, because I was born without a fatherland, I yearn for a fatherland more passionately than you.' — Salo Baron, "The Impact of the Revolution of 1848 on Jewish Emancipation"

One Jewish liberal became so enthralled by the promise of emancipation that he wrote: 'The messiah, for whom we prayed these thousands of years, has appeared and our fatherland has been given to us. The messiah is freedom, our fatherland is Germany.' — Salo Baron, "The Impact of the Revolution of 1848 on Jewish Emancipation"

The fervent embracement of *Bildung* by German Jews and the saturation of education with theological themes becomes self-evident given an understanding of the Jew's deep desire for freedom:

No people ever emphasized the importance and needs of education for their young more than did the Jews, who were pioneers in developing systems of comprehensive and compulsory elementary instruction. As was so ably said by the late Solomon Schechter:

The school was looked upon as a Mount Sinai, and the day on which the child entered it, as the Feast of Revelation

— Max J. Kohler , "Educational Reforms in Europe in their Relation to Jewish Emancipation—1778-1919"

Among those nations, nowhere was the process of emancipation more complete than in Germany. German Jewry, more than the Jews of any other nation, sought to replace their attachment to an ancient tradition with the Enlightenment's project of emancipation through *Bildung*. — David Sorkin

## Chapter 5

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### *The Divine State*

The German Jewish ideologues of emancipation as Sorkin and Mosse call them — the leaders of the Jewish community that were the ones who held the role of disseminator and therefore transformer — were fully committed to the quid pro quo program of regeneration and held a high reverence for the tutelary state upon which they conferred Messianic divinity:

The translation of natural rights into the right to regeneration depended upon the idealization of the tutelary state. Unlike Dohm or Mendelssohn, the ideologues did not have a developed political understanding of the far-reaching transformations of state and society which made emancipation possible. The ideologues lacked both Mendelssohn's philosophical grasp and Friedlander's practical experience of politics. They avidly endorsed the *Aufklärung* notion that the state always acted on behalf of its subjects' best interests, assuming that there could be no conflict or disjunction between them. They consequently viewed the state as the agent of emancipation, investing it with quasi-messianic status. — David Sorkin

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German Jewish ideologues were convinced of the state's illustrious sovereigns' dedication towards their emancipation and urged their communities to devote themselves to the state. In other words, the German Jewish leaders committed their *trust* and *faith* into the state:

In his introductory article to the *Sulamith*, Joseph Wolf argued that the "illustrious sovereigns" who had brought forth the new dispensation of the age of humanity deserved the Jews' total devotion: "Our hearts are dedicated to you, you who, animated with the spirit of humanity and liberality, have restored the lost rights of a humbled people." The benevolent rulers had thereby successfully included the Jews in the family of humanity: "the times are past in which Jew and man were held to be heterogeneous concepts." The Jews must reciprocate, making themselves suitable to the states that are now willing to accept them, by adopting the ideals of toleration and justice and by demonstrating that they can contribute to the commonwealth. Being included in society requires that the Jews become 'useful' members, 'social beings.' — David Sorkin

This devotion to the state would engender the Jewish "reciprocity" to the ideology of emancipation:

Regeneration was an act of reciprocity to the agent of emancipation, the tutelary state, and reforms were designed first and foremost to make the Jews acceptable to it. As another contributor to the *Sulamith* put it: 'Let them first be regenerated to be men, and then give them over to the state as useful members.' — David Sorkin

Extreme adoration and devotion naturally led way to a pronounced *attachment* to Messianic statism both ideologically *and theologically* among Jewish ideologues: the state was the harbinger of redemption (*gelulah*), a restoration of statehood and freedom: the state was, for all extents and purposes, the long awaited messiah of liberation:

This view of the state led to a doctrine of unrestrained statism. David Frankel thought that emancipation flowed solely from the beneficence

of the "enlightened, noble-minded and philanthropic sovereigns," who, by making "justice the sole norm" of their actions, had promised to confer rights on the Jews. He consequently saw the state in quasi-messianic terms. In a discussion of the Jews' situation in France and Italy in 1807 he asserted that "where one treats you in a humane fashion, where things go well for you, there is your Palestine, your fatherland, which you must love and defend according to its laws." In another article of the same year he used a midrashic passage that described messianic redemption's slow progress from country to country to explain the process of emancipation: "redemption" (*geulah*), he asserted, means 'the elevation of the Jews to citizens and to men.'

Responding to the emancipation edict of 1812 and the patriotic enthusiasm aroused by the War of Liberation, Eduard Kley asserted that "we belong to the state; the state, and what concerns it, concerns us as well; we must live and die for the state." Leopold Zunz<sup>1</sup> told his auditors in Berlin (circa 1820) that your "well-being is tied to the fatherland and its pious King," and that therefore "you must dedicate the highest which you have to the fatherland, the land to which you belong." In Mainz (1831) Michael Creizenach asserted that citizens owe the sovereign the "trusting and cheerful respect of a child towards his father, of a mortal towards his maker." In the same sermon he said the Jews must be especially grateful to Hesse: "France has made us citizens; Hesse<sup>2</sup>, however, has educated us to be citizens." Creizenach explained that while the French had granted legal rights, the tutelary Hessian state gave the Jews the means for "moral, religious and civic development" (*Ausbildung*). He therefore asked in his closing benediction that the sovereign be granted the power to permit him "to raise his people to the highest level of well-being, morality and culture [*Bildung*] of which they are capable.

— David Sorkin

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1. the ideological progenitor of Reform Judaism, the largest branch of Judaism in the United States — Wissenschaft Des Judentum (Science of Judaism)  
2. a substate within the German Confederation before unification in 1871

## The Prophecy of the West

Here we see the beginnings of the transformation and secularization of Judaism in the reinterpretation of Judaic ideas into rational forms, reinterpretations that will come to define the modern “Jewish” tradition. The “unrestrained statism” alongside the ideals of “humanity” rendered through *Bildung* were readily accepted by German Jews, necessarily prompting an injection of Western thought into Jewish theology.

When observed through a Judaic lens, the actions of the ideologues of emancipation are remarkably reminiscent of the pattern of events in the story of *Exodus*. The state occupies the role of God and the quid pro quo ideology of emancipation as the covenant between the Hebrews and this God. Prior to liberation, the Jews had experienced a prolonged period of ethnic slavery/civic inferiority, and following a phase of development in the “desert,” (*Bildung*) Jews would be able to inhabit the Promised Land in which they were free equals through the power of the covenant of God and their reciprocity to His covenant. The idea of a quid pro quo for liberation was, contrary to being foreign to Jewish thought, inherently congruent with it. This is likely why the quid pro quo ideology of emancipation was so ardently accepted and preached by German Jews: there was an element of divine providence corollary to the fate of the supernatural Jew. Not to mention that the messianic view of the state possesses a double congruence to the theological understanding of the Exile:

Redemption meant, if it meant anything at all, the end of the *Exile* —  
Arthur Cohen

In secular terms, the State is literally the vehicle through which the Jew is *redeemed* from the *Exile*. In Jewish theology, only the Messiah could end the *Exile* (the three oaths in the Talmud). Perhaps then, the German State itself was the long awaited Messiah, the entity through which not only the Jew would be redeemed, *but all of mankind*:

*One Jewish liberal became so enthralled by the promise of emancipation that he wrote: ‘The messiah, for whom we prayed these thousands of years, has appeared and our fatherland has been given to us. The messiah is freedom, our fatherland*

### *The Divine State*

*is Germany.’ — Salo Baron, “The Impact of the Revolution of 1848 on Jewish Emancipation”*

Sorkin recapitulates the Jewish deification of the State in *Jewish Emancipation*:

Opposition to emancipation, the conflicts of nationalities, plus the violence against Jews in the early phase of the revolution combined to make some Jewish leaders look to the state as the one reliable source of emancipation. As Ludwig Philippson (1811–89), a rabbi, prolific author, and editor of the main Jewish newspaper in the German states (*Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*) wrote:

‘All in all, we Jews recognize with gratitude that among all elements of the modern age it is the State, and above all and in particular the bureaucratic State, that has been and still is most open-minded towards us, since in every period of storm and stress the people rose up against us, and in every period of reaction it was the nobility and the upper bourgeoisie who did the same. Thus it is only the State... that grants us tranquility, justice and freedom, and in it alone lie our hopes for the future.’

In the state “*alone*” lies the Jewish hope for the future...



## Chapter 6

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### *Regeneration as Assimilation*

The vital motor of change developed as a natural implication of regeneration — the reciprocity of the ideology of emancipation in the form of *Bildung* — as formulated for Jews by Germans was *assimilation*. The dominant attitude of Germans in the early 19th century reflects this truth:

The question of Jewish emancipation in Germany was often accompanied by fears of the debilitating effects Jewish integration would have on the larger body politic. Critics of emancipation regarded Jewish assimilation as a potentially corrupting agent, dissolutive of society itself. Already at the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, Jakob Fries argued that it was not Jews as such but Judaism and the “Jewish spirit” which constituted the problem: ‘We declare war not against the Jews, our brothers, but against Judaism. Should one we love be stricken by the plague, is it not proper that we wish him deliverance from it? Should we abuse those who, stricken by the plague, lament its horrors and conjecture how to free themselves from it?...In fact, improving the condition of the Jews in society means rooting out Judaism.’ — Steven B. Asheim, “The Jew Within: The Myth of “Judaization” in Germany”

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Heinrich Heine, a German Jew who lived in the early 19th century, compared Judaism to a disease:

In his deeply ironic yet compassionate way, Heinrich Heine depicted it as an “Incurable deep ill! defying treatment... Will Time, the eternal goddess, in compassion / Root out this dark calamity transmitted from sire to son? — Steven B. Aschheim, “The Jew Within: The Myth of “Judaization” in Germany”

For the uninitiated to Jewish history, this self-contemptuous view of Judaism by a Jew may appear shocking, but, tragically, it is not only commonplace among modern Jews, but indeed, a continuing force of development for both modern Judaism and modern Jews that will be discussed in extensive detail later on.

The famous Jewish thinker Gershom Scholem relates the German Jewish effort for assimilation:

Scholem argued in a now famous 1962 essay, ‘Against the Myth of the German-Jewish Dialogue’, that German Jews struggled for emancipation not for the sake of their rights as a people but rather for the sake of ‘assimilating themselves to the peoples among whom they lived’

Assimilation was made to be the end goal of German Jews’ self-refinement through the process of *Bildung* that emancipation would naturally guide them upon. The Jews had to showcase their “worth” to the tutelary state, a worth that was implicitly tied to their ability to abandon Judaism and become European/German: German Jewish worth was inseparably bound to the degree with which they were able to assimilate. The quid pro quo was formulated in this manner and the tacit meaning on the German side was that the process of regeneration would conclude in the complete and *true* assimilation of the Jew:

Because the ideology rested on a quid pro quo, showing proof of reciprocity became a chief preoccupation. "Show that you are worthy [*zwürdig*] of the name citizen and subject," Frankel admonished his readers. "Worthiness" became the ideology's code word designating

the Jews' efforts to make themselves equal to their achieved or anticipated equality. It pointed to the regeneration that would infuse them with the very values which they held to be responsible for their attainment of rights.

David Sorkin summarizes the ideology of regeneration formulated and adopted by the Jewish populace as such:

The ideology's fundamental notion that regeneration was an act of reciprocity to the tutelary State involved a distinct view of history, what Salo Baron has called the "lachrymose" view. This posited that prior to emancipation, throughout 1,800 years of dispersion, the Jews had experienced unrelieved suffering and persecution which had deformed both them and Judaism. With the advent of the absolutist State, however, that deformity could be corrected, because the benevolent State transformed the *Aufklärung* ideal of universal humanity into a political policy. In that view of history, then, culture is the motor of change. This idea of historical causality, while foreign to the predominantly "sensationalist" view of history among French and English *philosophes*, was typical of the *Aufklärung*, deriving from its "idealist" Leibnizian heritage and the need of German thinkers concerned with religious and ecclesiastical history to account for the developments of the Reformation and post-Reformation era. This view of history explains the form which the ideologues thought the Jews' regeneration should take. Since the tutelary State presided over the realisation of the *Aufklärung*, the Jews' reciprocity was to elevate themselves to the same ideal that animates the State i.e., to make themselves exemplars of the ideal of *Bildung* that espouses toleration and the ideal of humanity. The Jews' natural right to regeneration under the aegis of the tutelary State is, then, the right to remake themselves and Judaism in the image of the *Aufklärung*.

Put most simply, emancipation was what the states were to grant, assimilation what the Jews were to give in return.

Was this a viable expectation? Mendelssohn's apprehension with the program of regeneration was his fear that this would lead to a process

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through which the Jew *abandons* his Jewish identity and faith, leading to an assimilation that would cause the Jew to be lost to history:

At the very end of his *Jerusalem*, Mendelssohn declared that if abandonment of our separateness as a nation were the price to be paid for the granting of emancipation, we would have to reject the offer.

Indeed, this is true. The program of *Bildung* for Jewish regeneration meant for the Germans who conceived the idea as *regeneration into Europeans*: the assimilation of Jews and the abandoning of Judaism. Judaism is not a religion as such, but a process and in line with the particular-universal paradox, *attainment of the end is the death of the process of attainment*. If the Jew is assimilated, the process of redemption, both physically and theologically, would be *over*: *Geulah*, the antonym of *Galut*, would be achieved. Although Mendelssohn was able to foresee this end of Judaism implicit in the regeneration of German Jewry, it did not register with the ideologues of emancipation that proliferated the quid pro quo ideology out into the Jewish masses. They believed that they could both be emancipated, *integrate, and* retain their Jewish particularity that postured towards universality, a belief that gave way to a paradox whose consequence is the modern Jewish divergence. Ironically, Mendelssohn's life rather than words gave justification to the hope for this possibility:

When he surpassed his former tutors, gaining a European reputation with his philosophical works, Mendelssohn became but the exemplary instance of a Jew steeped in secular studies who had not abandoned Judaism.

Mendelssohn showed how one could remain a Jew even though one's intellectual pursuits had opened up vistas far away from Judaism—Alexander Altman, “Moses Mendelssohn as the Archetypal German Jew”

## Chapter 7

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### *Assimilation and Jewish History*

The ideologies of emancipation faced a massive problem. The German program of regeneration implied assimilation due to the reciprocity towards the German States and therefore the desertion (and death) of Judaism. If it was true that the program of regeneration through *Bildung* would enable German Jews to “remake themselves and Judaism in the image of the German Enlightenment,” did this not necessarily imply that as a consequence of the process of regeneration, the Jew would necessarily have to *abandon* Judaism? A modern reader, especially if he is an American citizen, may ask why is this a problem? Have not *all* peoples in history been assimilated into another culture? Have not all people abandoned a prior identity for a new one?

*All but the Jew.* The Jew has *never assimilated*. The Jew has remained and remains a Jew. This is stated not to imply something “anti-Semitic” but rather, as a historical fact of grandeur that should be treated as such. For eighteen centuries, the Jew had existed in a state of *Galut*, or *Exile*, without home and nation, hopeful of *Geulah*, yet for 18 centuries the Jew had continued to survive and persist as a unique entity: Jews *remained* and *remained a minority*. This is not something that can be said of any other group of people. Where are the Assyrians today? The

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Babylonians? The Hittites? Ethnically they may persist, but theologically and culturally, *they are extinct*. They were conquered, killed, or assimilated to some other culture, but the Jews have persisted.

It is a proposition of this text that it is entirely tenable that the Jew (in ethnic *and* theological terms) is actually in truth *inseparable* from his faith, therefore making the quid pro quo of emancipation for assimilation *impossible* from its inception and giving rise to the proceeding paradox. Slavoj Zizek relates in his own words this persistence of the Jews:

The paradox of Judaism is that it maintains fidelity to the founding violent Event precisely by *not* confessing—symbolizing it: this 'repressed' status of the Event is what gives Judaism its unprecedented vitality; it is what enabled the Jews to persist and survive for thousands of years without land or a common institutional tradition. In short, the Jews did not *give up the ghost*; they survived all their ordeals precisely because they refused to *give up their ghost*, to cut off the link to their secret, disavowed tradition.

In other words, Zizek is describing the Hegelian dialectic between particularity and universality that gives meaning to the rendering of Judaism as a process of synthesis, the process itself being that which upholds the dialectic and therefore the vital flame of the Jewish collective. As long as the process is incomplete, the Jew remains, but the achievement of the end of the process means the death of the process: as long as the paradox remains, so too does the Jew. In other words, *the paradox sustains the process*. This drive towards synthesis represents the Jewish mission towards salvation, and insofar as that End is unachieved, all "ends" are merely new beginnings. An immediate counter point to this claim is that there have been Jews that have assimilated historically, and this is true:

In centuries past Jewish communities assimilated and were forgotten. In our days Jewish communities assimilate but do not disappear. In centuries past, ten of the tribes of Israel vanished into an encompassing paganism; thousands of Jews who were dispersed to Babylon

## *Assimilation and Jewish History*

with the destruction of the First Temple did not return; myriads of Jews were hellenized and Romanized and only inscriptions and manuscripts testify to their ethnic origin; and in modern times thousands of European Jews — German, French, Italian, and to a lesser extent, English — converted to a status Christianity, pocketed their baptismal certificates, and vanished into Christendom. To be sure, many of these passed through the trauma of Fascist total recall, but many have remained finally, successfully, and devoutly non-Jews. — Arthur Cohen

This argument, however, neglects the abstract and meta-historical consequence of *not assimilating*. Certainly Jews have assimilated historically, emphatically becoming non-Jews in both the theological and ethnic sense, but would this not mean that the Jews that remained, who did not assimilate, became *more Jewish*? More *unassimilable*? In Zizek's words, the Jews who not only couldn't "give up" the ghost, but could no longer live without it? What is a Jew without Judaism? What is a desert dweller without the desert? What is a man without God?

Some, if not many, Jews converted to Christianity before and after the destruction of the second temple and subsequently many more in the period of *Exile*, but this fact provides a natural and supernatural *evolutionary* view on the matter: as time has gone on, the Jews who remained, who retained their faith amidst increasingly potent external forces of persecution, oppression, and conversion, became *more Jewish* in both their ethnicity and attachment to the theological vital principles of Judaism that fueled such persistence. For these Jews, the Jewish mission of synthesis towards redemption became *the* existential imperative: the Hegelian method actualized in flesh. The forces of history and anti-semitism must be understood as a convergent and connected development, and as time goes on, the Jews that remain are *selected by history as Persisters*, and this persistence has no other goal than synthesis.

God selects Abraham, and from him Isaac, and from Isaac Jacob, so on and so forth, establishing a particular covenant with a group of people separated from the nations of the world. From the call to Abraham, God asserts that *all* of the families of the Earth will be blessed —

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Abraham as the father of many — and this original *call* of the Jews is theologically deemed analogous to the *recall* of the *Exile* by the Diaspora Jews: the reassertion of the transcendental destiny of the Jews, a destiny through which *all nations*, rather than families, will be blessed. The *Exile* is a “jumping out” of the system of nation states and whether it is by God’s will or historical fortuities is irrelevant. The Jews themselves *believed* it to be of God’s will, investing the event with theological spirit, therefore maintaining eschatological vitality in their chosen mission towards synthesis, and the present existence of the Jews is a testament to the tenability of this system “transcendence” as well as their ideological wish to project this “transcendence” onto all other nations. The nation is theorized as a regressive model, not that Diaspora is a “progressive” model, but rather, that the Diaspora is progressive in that it is a *guiding force towards* the “transcendent model”: a bridge across the gap between man and God, the finite and infinite, the particular and the universal.

The Diaspora is a *process of development*: a Hegelian method towards theogico-political synthesis. History outside of the scope of the Jew is *irrelevant* if and only if the Jew is chosen by a Force that transcends time. If that is the case, then only the movement/progress of the Jews is movement/progress of time. History exists only insofar as it is incomplete, and unless it has a beginning that transcends time, it will never have an end from within it. The end, just like the beginning, must be transcendently consummated. But Jewish chosenness by God places the Jewish collective into the gap between the beginning and the end, between the natural and supernatural, between man and God. In simpler words, Jewish chosenness indicates the continual construction of the bridge of unification between man and God, the bridge that was broken in the beginning and that will be restored in the end that is a return to the beginning: that is a return to God. This tension of opposites between the many and the One, the particular and the Universal, the finite and the Infinite is the tension that has been the generative force of all that can be called Jewish creativity.

Jumping out of the system of nation states and into the system of *Exile/Diaspora*, the Jew is the *only* ethnic-theological being who has

persisted since his beginning (Abraham — *Exodus*) and persisted without a nation. The Jew that has never assimilated becomes more and more rooted in his *ethno-theology*: without a home, he himself, his identity as a natural and supernatural Jew, as an ethnic *and* theological being, becomes his nation: he wanders the valley of the gap between man and God. In the period of the *Exile*, he adopts another dialectic to the process: *Galut* and *Geulah*. This identity is only sustained by an unshakeable faith in supernatural chosenness *and* that this chosenness has yet to reach its prophesied transcendental completion. Nietzsche said that, “he who has a why to live for can bear almost any how.” and this idea is *collectivized* unto the whole Jewish group: *galut* has the dual meaning of “suffering for the sake of mankind.” In the period of *Exile*, the Jew was able to demonstrate this truth historically by making a nation out of being without nation, a home in being homeless: Ahasver, the Wandering Jew, is the Jew who wanders the “gap”...

This persistence is a consequence of two conjoined elements: the particular-universal paradox of Judaism that emphasizes a retention of particularity and the consequence of an identity founded on that mission: Jewish hope: Jewish Messianism. A man can suffer any torment through the power of hope, and paradoxically, as the torment increases, the hope for redemption and salvation only propounds. The greatest hope, however, gives way to the greatest fear. The greater the *Galut*, the greater the hope for *Geulah*, but also the greater the fear that it may never arrive...

The question of Jewish survival is one that has been analyzed many times by Jewish and non-Jewish thinkers alike. Some have even used the evidence of Jewish persistence (and Jewish genius) as a justification for the existence of God. Emil Fackenheim, a pioneer of modern Jewish survivalism (the 614th commandment) shares in my explication of the Jew as both an *ethnic* (historical) and *theological* being in “Jewish Existence and the Living God: The Religious Duty of Survival” as a necessity for properly understanding Jewishness:

Precisely the same is true of loyalty feelings to the group. No doubt such feelings are, in some periods of history, a powerful force for cohe-

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sion and survival. But in the case of the Jew the question is why there should have been such feelings at all among a people which had, for long centuries, neither shared a common land, nor a common language, nor a common external destiny. In the case of Jewish survival, then, “national feeling” or “group loyalty” are not explanations, but again part of the very thing to be explained.

Jewish “national feeling” and “group loyalty” are not purely biological and behavioral elements of Jewish existence, but rather, factors of Jewish survivalism only made historically tenable *through* Jewish theology: through Jewish *chosenness* and a millennium of God’s favor. In this framework, all suffering is a product of disobedience to that primordial covenant of chosenness:

It becomes abundantly clear, then, that to account for Jewish survival is possible only in terms of the Jewish faith. All the other supposed causes of Jewish survival, such as tradition or feelings of group loyalty, can themselves be explained only in terms of the Jewish faith. It is because of the Jewish faith that the Jew still exists—as we have said, a source of wonder both to others and himself

Fackenheim rejects the oft asserted view of conspiracy theorists (Jews as *purely* a biological organism, their survival *solely* a consequence of socio-evolutionary factors), understanding the inseparable tie between the Jew’s ethnicity and his theology. He also asserts the same necessity of Jewish Messianism for Jewish survival as Arthur Cohen, Zizek, and many others: the gap between Revelation, God’s Word, and Redemption, consummation of God’s Word.

In short, Jewish existence experienced itself as being between Revelation and Redemption. Revelation had been the call for human, and the promise of divine, action: Redemption would be the consummation of all action.

Redemption is the fulfillment of the promise of the call: the end outside of time from the beginning outside of time: the bridging of the gap, the Irrational unification of the rational opposites, the “yet unspoken Word” *spoken: the return from the Exile*:

It was precisely because it was more than national that they could retain it. Hence, although it may seem paradoxical, it is nevertheless true that it was precisely because of their Messianic sense of kinship with all the nations that the Jews did not lose their identity among the nations; whereas, had they lost that sense of kinship, they would have disappeared among the nations.

We conclude that the Jew of the Diaspora survived because he was able to rise to prayers such as this, uttered by a Hasidic rabbi in an age of fear and hate: ‘O Lord, send speedily the Messiah, to redeem Thy people Israel! Or, if this be against Thy will, send him to redeem the nations!’ — Emil Fackenheim

It is these two elements that give legitimacy to an ethnic-theological perspective of Jewish historical *persistence*: particular-universalism consummated in a future Messianic redemption necessarily *requiring* the persistent existence of the particular until the universal is achieved on Earth: the Hegelian dialectic in flesh: synthesis both the end goal and the End. The Messianic mission, born from the particular-universal paradox of Judaism, is itself is the Element of Historical Persistence for the Jew. The historical survival of the Jew cannot be attributed to biological factors and behavioral tendencies as many modern secular theorists, often fueled by monolithic views of Jews, conjecture. Assimilation for the Jew therefore is not a simple ethnic act: it is a renunciation of his very identity and being, a “giving up of the ghost,” a surrender to the idea that there is no “gap,” that there is no God, that there is only the desert, bondage, man, suffering, and death. There is no Israel, no liberation, no God, no glory, no life. Therefore, the Jew must remain until the *process of Judaism is completed*, otherwise, all of the suffering, torment, grief, and struggle for Jews *and* mankind was for nothing. From this perspective, it is self-evident to believe that, for many Jews, assimilation, as we commonly perceive it, *was* an act of suicide *and* patricide on an individual and collective level. Reconciliation, as it has always been, is a paradox, yet one must be without a thing in order to gain it. To lose a thing opens up the possibility of regaining it, but to never have a thing is no different from always having it: loss and gain are two ends of the same circle.

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In the period of the *Exile*, the Jew was a minority in all nations, a minority for he refused to assimilate. Put simply, a minority is a group of people in a nation that is distinct enough to warrant a separate categorization: a sub-system within the main system. Often, narratives of minorities, especially Jewish minorities, are accompanied by biological analogies to organisms and cancers: that minorities, Others, are a poisonous interior element that must be expunged from within the system for the continued survival of the entire organism. This narrative is necessarily secular and godless, but there is truth to it only insofar as it recognizes the centrality of the *theologico-political Minority Question*<sup>1</sup> that is the basis for the development of human history in *both* material and theological terms: progress and return. It is the period of *Exile*, and also the nature of the birth of the Jew, that has made the Jew the minority *par excellence* in history, a title that Hannah Arendt also bestows upon her kin. Since Jewish theology is a necessity of Jewish survivalism, we arrive at the principle text of post-Exilic Judaism.

The Talmud, written centuries after the time of Jesus Christ, is a central text of rabbinical Judaism and serves as the “guide for the daily life of the Jew.” It includes numerous rabbinic conversations and commentary on various social and theological matters, but besides exegesis, which is a foundational element of all faiths, the Talmud also outlines how the Jew should behave in foreign host nations with non-Jews. In other words, the text exists in many ways as a defense mechanism — negative particularism (survivalism) — for the minority *par excellence* that fostered behavioral patterns and methods of obtaining power, the primary method being wealth (as commerce was one of the few channels open for Jews). Some will argue this point with an assertion that the Talmud is largely biblical commentary, but this only supports my claim: in addition to operating as a defensive behavioral mechanism, the Talmud also served as an isolating text of repetition and tradition, insulating Judaism from external influences while also aiding in survivalism. This insulation served to shelter the fire of Jewish eschatological vitality: the *Exile* was part of the narrative of

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i. Spinoza, Leo Strauss, Nietzsche, etc

redemption, a narrative within which the Jews were still the protagonists. Inadvertently however, in sheltering the fire from fear that it would be extinguished, the era of the *Exile* prevented the fire from growing, for a flame that is burning was not always burning nor shall it always burn: Prometheus *gives* the gift. Attainment of the end of the process is the *extinguishment* of the process itself:

That which preserves the [Object] might at the same time arrest and halt its evolution. — Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*

The more that the Jew suffered the external forces of antisemitism, the more his hope of eventual redemption grew. The more he suffered, the more he was certain *redemption* “was at hand”:

In his *Epistle to the Jews of Yemen*, Maimonides sketched a portrait of diaspora history in which the process of redemption was cardinal. The greater the suffering experienced by the Jews, the closer redemption was at hand. — Arnold Ages, *Diaspora Dimension*

Without Judaism, there is no Jew, and without the Jew, there is no Judaism, and therefore, the necessity of protecting the Jew and Judaism are equivalent. The great hope that the gap may be bridged leads way to the great fear that it may never be, and such a paradoxical duality fuels the fire of persistence.

To elaborate, post-exilic Judaism is *different* from pre-exilic Judaism, and this is a claim that many modern Jews, especially Reform, secular, and Zionist Jews share (which will be demonstrated moving forward). Not only is the *Exile* a new event of eschatological vitality that reframes the notion of salvation, the Talmud itself emerges not as an extension of Judaic tradition, but as a *consequence* of growing anti-semitism during the *Exile*: as a necessary counter to the political and social depredation that a refusal of assimilation engendered. It exists as the mechanism of alteration and insulation for the Jew and Judaism in the Middle Ages, and is the active processual representation of the convergent and connected development of the historical Jew and history; as the forces of antisemitism mount, so too do the defensive mechanisms,

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only leading to an increase in antisemitism and therefore necessitating those very same mechanisms. The persistence of the Jew in history served to *cement* him in his identity and further relegate the possibility of assimilation into an impossibility. The Talmud is both the material *and* theological evolutionary trait of the process of historical selection that *enabled survival: negative particularism*. In other words, it represents the survival of the possibility of Hegelian synthesis...but in prioritizing survival — particularity — it *only* represents the survival of the possibility: particularity is prioritized at the consequence of development towards synthesis. The process can *only* resume when negative particularity is replaced with positive particularity: when fear return to hope.

The assertion of the Jewish trait of being unassimilable is not an attempt at enforcing a stereotype of anti-semitism, but rather, to merely explain Jewish survivalism in the context of Jewish theology. The current existence of the Jew legitimizes the truth of this claim. This trait is not proposed as monolithic among Jews, but rather, as the necessary element — whatever its propelling force (theology and ethnicity) — of enabling the survival of Judaism and Jewry without the existence of a Jewish nation: a collective wandering the gap between man and God. This is self-evident given a basic understanding of the nature of nations historically. Prior to the Enlightenment's inversion of the nation structure through the assertion of the *tolerance of minorities*, nations monolithically exerted forces of assimilation upon their population in order to reach social homogeneity through the method of *persecution*. Either these forces would succeed, dispelling the Other/minority within the border through assimilation, or, in the event that they did not, the Other within the border would be expelled/killed. However, the heterodox can never be truly gotten rid of and an inverse relation exists between the push for homogeneity and the persistence of heterodoxy. It's notable that both tolerance *and* persecution share the same goal, merely tracing opposite ends of the circle to reach it... The very history of Jewish expulsion is a testament to the trait of being unassimilable and Jewish survivalism. What remains, whether or not you accept the historical narrative of the development of the Jewish trait of rejecting assimilation, is the fact that in almost 2000 years, the Jew has *persisted*:

## *Assimilation and Jewish History*

The modern Jew is an enigma to himself. When he reflects on his existence as a Jew, he cannot but be filled with wonder. Other individuals and peoples may wonder how they have come to be what they are; the Jew must wonder why he should exist at all. For if there are laws of historical change, the Jew should, according to these laws, have disappeared long ago. Was there ever another people which continued to exist, under like circumstances, through the centuries? The answer is that there was not. Other peoples require the bond of a common land, or a common language, or a common culture in order to continue in existence. The Jew, for long centuries, has had none of these. Consequently, self-appointed experts in the laws of historical change have been ever quick to predict his impending disappearance. But thus far at least these prophecies have always been confounded. The Jew still exists—a source of wonder both to others and himself — Emil Fackenheim

We understand this persistence as rooted in the fire to generate a bridge between the gap of man and God, particular and universal, or perhaps it is more apt to say *burn* down the *wall* between man and God. This physical and theological survivalism towards redemption is central to understanding the following paradox of emancipation in Germany and the origin of the modern Jewish divergence. For the Jew who has historically developed for eighteen centuries with his home and identity rooted in a developing ethnic-theological Object, to assimilate very well may be viewed as, and rightfully so, literal *death*: giving up the ghost. The inability to assimilate is the inability of the Jew to *die*. Jewish resistance towards assimilation is Jewish resistance to *death*... Do not misunderstand what this means; in all of history, this would mean that *all* people *but* the Jews have died, though this would be only true from a purely *material* view of history. Before one can be filled, one must be emptied. Before one can be reborn, *one must die*. Every new beginning requires an end. The end of the process is sublation into the next.

To reiterate then, the degeneration that von Dohm posits must be understood alongside a notion of *binding*: the binding of the Jew to his ethnic and religious identity that had made assimilation impossible:

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the continuous historical development and selection of the Jew as an *ethnic-theological* being that represents the Hegelian dialectic between man and God, the particular and the Universal, the finite and infinite. This binding has been a *continuous* process since *Exodus* and the *Exile* is an acceleration of the process to inseparable levels for those Jews who persisted amidst the mounting external pressures of persecution, assimilation, and eschatological despair.

The *Exile* is not only the “historical coefficient of being unredeemed,” but also the evolutionary-historical process through which the Jews who persisted were *selected for the trait of being unassimilable*. Otto Weininger, a Jew who became Christian and who is considered one of the first “self-hating Jews” — Theodor Lessing wrote that, “no child spat on his mother’s womb or cursed her blood more than this young Jewish Oedipus” — asserted that the greatest act possible of a Jew was overcoming his Jewishness:

There were two possibilities in Judaism. Before the birth of Christ, these two, negation and affirmation, were together awaiting choice. Christ was the man who conquered in Himself Judaism, the greatest negation, and created Christianity, the strongest affirmation and the most direct opposite of Judaism...Christ was a Jew, precisely that He might overcome the Judaism within Him, for he who triumphs over the deepest doubt reaches the highest faith ; he who has raised himself above the most desolate negation is most sure in his position of affirmation. Judaism was the peculiar, original sin of Christ; it was His victory over Judaism that made Him greater than Buddha or Confucius. Christ was the greatest man because He conquered the greatest enemy. Perhaps He was, and will remain, the only Jew to conquer Judaism. The first of the Jews to become wholly the Christ was also the last who made the transition.

Affirmation is positive particularity, negation is negative particularity. In line with the marvelous paradoxes of Judaism and Christianity, Weininger illustrates, in more assertive language, that for the Universal of Judaism to emerge, the particular of Judaism must be defeated:

## *Assimilation and Jewish History*

To defeat Judaism, the Jew must first understand himself and war against himself. So far, the Jew has reached no further than to make and enjoy jokes against his own peculiarities. Unconsciously he respects the Aryan more than himself. Only steady resolution, united to the highest self-respect, can free the Jew from Jewishness. This resolution, be it ever so strong, ever so honorable, can only be understood and carried out by the individual, not by the group. Therefore the Jewish question can only be solved individually ; every single Jew must try to solve it in his proper person.

But every Jew is both an individual and collective unto himself. Otto's main assertion is that no Jew aside from Christ had been able to overcome Judaism, to *bridge* the gap between man and God, particular and universal, negation and affirmation, his own words prophetically vindicating his later suicide and his own inability to bridge the gap of his own existence. Otto's thoughts and actions yield intellectual insights: as the length of the period of the *Exile* grew and the Talmud increased in both size and centrality, the Jew's Jewishness progressively became a more integral part of his identity and to such a degree that to abandon his Jewishness would be akin to killing himself. The reinterpretation of the *Exile* into a recall of the original call to Abraham is a necessity to understanding the post-*Exilic* Jew. In light of this, perhaps the modern Jew who *fully* overcomes himself would be committing an act greater than, or *equivalent to*, the *first* Jew who did.

No group on Earth has persisted *successfully* as the Jew has: without nation but with identity. The homeless Jew had found his home in his ethnicity and religion, and to abandon either was to abandon himself and affirm a nihilistic posture towards history: *meaningless suffering*. It is once more notable that *galut* has a dual meaning: *suffering for the sake of humanity*. It is for this reason that he was unable to distance himself from his faith as many other formally Christian secular thinkers had. This inability to abandon Judaism, to *truly* assimilate and therefore spiritually and ethnically die — to accept *meaningless suffering* — gives birth to the *paradox of inverse assimilation*.



## Chapter 8

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### *The Paradox of Inverse Assimilation*

To return to 19th century German, the problem facing the German Jewish ideologues of emancipation, both consciously and unconsciously was “how could the Jew both become European *and* retain Judaism?”, “How could he be emancipated but *not* assimilate, be universalized *yet remain particular?*” In simplest terms, “how could he assimilate without assimilating?” The end of particularity is the end of Judaism and subsequently the arrival of universality: the synthesis is completed. *Attainment of the end is the death of the process of attainment.* In order for the process of Judaism to persist, so too must the Jew, not as an ethnic being, but as an ethnic-theological being. The answer formulated to the problem of both emancipating into the universality of the new man of Europe and *remaining* within the particularism of Judaism became the paradox that was the catalyzing and guiding principle of the transformation of modern Jewry, and just as the *Exile* was a recall of the original covenant of chosenness, so too was this paradox a recall of the original.

The only way that the German Jew could retain Judaism while also regenerating through the ideal of *Bildung* into the Enlightenment conception of the new moral man of Europe was if this program of regeneration was *synonymous with a regeneration of Judaism*: if the two

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paths, assimilation and regeneration, *led to the same end*: if they were opposing directions, but *only upon a circle*: heading opposite ways but progressing towards the same end. To put it another way, if the modern method of development was fundamentally a *reassertion* or *recall* of the original Hegelian dialectic that roots the notion of a particular-universal mission: seemingly opposing concepts that synthesis into resolution.

In line with the lachrymose view, Jews themselves believed that Judaism had been deformed by history (negative *Bildung*) and therefore believed that the emancipation that would enable the regeneration (positive *Bildung*) of the Jewish collective would also enable the *regeneration of Judaism*. This would only be possible if the ideals of the Enlightenment and the ideals of late Biblical Judaism, Pristine Judaism (prior to the deformation by the Exile/Talmudic Judaism), *were one and the same*. The process of regeneration that was conceived as the method of assimilation by Germans was warped into a paradox by German Jewish ideologues wherein the method of *integrating* the Jew *with* society was *identical* with the method of *separating* them *from* society, and this was developed as a consequence of the ideas of Jewish theology regarding this very same Hegelian dialectic of particularity and universality. The paradox emerges precisely because the Jew could unambiguously see reflected in the mission of Modernity the very same mission of Judaism, full of all of the same elements of freedom, tolerance, salvation, redemption, and marvelous paradoxes. Unable to abandon Judaism, but recognizing innately/subconsciously/consciously that here was the method of positive particularity towards universality (*Bildung* — the key project of liberalism towards equality), the German Jewish ideologues invested into the modern mission their theological identity: the confluence of events leading to the transformation of modern Jewry could have occurred no other way. Joseph Wolf articulated the view that lead to this synthesizing of the mission of Judaism with the mission of the Enlightenment — the gap between superstition and knowledge *was* the gap between man and God, the finite and infinite, the particular and universal — and the paradox that emerged from it extensively in his edifications sermons, one of the main organs

through which information was disseminated to the German Jewish populace:

Joseph Wolf, for example, argued that the Jews had lost their rights in the dark centuries in which, as the "victims of tyranny," they had clung to their religion as a source of strength and consolation. But that religion was a shadow of its former self. Before the loss of independence Judaism had achieved a "high degree of perfection," creating not only a healthy collective life by combining a "moral and political constitution" of enviable character, but also transcending mere "national love" to achieve a "general love of mankind." Late biblical Judaism heightened the appreciation for foreigners and their beliefs and thus spread "toleration, sympathy, satisfaction, peace and happiness" through the nation. For Wolf, then, Judaism was the source of those very values which now make the Jews' emancipation possible: because the "illustrious sovereigns" had accepted the ideal of justice and toleration, they now considered the Jews to be part of humanity. Moreover, since Judaism had been "entirely pure" prior to the centuries of persecution, the Jews could regenerate themselves by recovering their own heritage, their "primordial education" (*UrBildung*). The Jews' reciprocity is to recover through Judaism itself the values that are responsible for emancipation — Sorkin

Sorkin recapitulates the view that *German Jewish ideologues themselves believed*: that post-Exilic Judaism, and therefore Talmudic Judaism, was *degenerated* Judaism, degenerated not because it had been "changed," but rather, since it put into the forefront not the positive particularity of synthesis but the negative particularity of survivalism. Rejecting that survivalism as degeneration was a necessity to enabling an idea of *regenerating* the mission of synthesis which would come to be saturated in Modern and secular terms. Pristine Biblical Judaism represented the very same moral values that the Enlightenment had asserted as universal, and the very era of superstitious persecution upon which the Enlightenment aimed to emancipate mankind from was the same era from which Judaism needed to be emancipated.

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The theological question of exploration for the paradox is whether or not the sentiments of the ideologues were true; whether or not it is true that late Biblical Judaism *is* synonymous with the Enlightenment ideals. From a general perspective, it appears largely true in the universal character of the moral principles are shared, but the truth of the matter is that *this doesn't matter*, at least historically. It doesn't matter whether or not the synonymy is *actually theologically* true, only that German Jewish ideologues *believed it to be true*. In other words, interpretation is a guiding force of history, but interpretation is subject to necessity, and therefore, the interpretations that found credence found such credence due to necessity. The interpretation of non-synonymy existed but *failed to persist*. Why something should happen rather than something else forces us to question why anything should exist rather than not. Necessity begs the question of contingency.

Sorkin elaborates on the German ideologues' belief in this synonymy of the ideals of the Enlightenment and the moral values of Pristine Judaism:

*Bildung* meant the development of that form which was an organic part of the individual. Wolf used this organic metaphor. "Nothing foreign can be grafted onto man, neither the individual nor entire peoples"; rather, all "formation (*Bildung*) must come from within" as the development of innate characteristics. Wolf based his argument on the *Aufklarung* notion of eudaemonism. All human happiness rests on the concept of justice, and so the individual must place his relationship to society on that basis. In order to be capable of establishing such a relationship, the individual has to "develop and form" both his "reason and his will". Reason must be broadened by the acquisition of knowledge and sharpened through the appreciation of all that is good, beautiful and true, so that the individual can comprehend the meaning of justice; the will must be bridled by constant exercise so that he is capable of implementing what he understands. In other words, the whole man, the sensual as well as the cognitive, must be cultivated or formed, for the individual to achieve, 'perfection in himself and connection with other individuals.'

For Wolf the recovery of a pristine Judaism that was the very source of the *Aufklärung* values of toleration and humanity would bring all Jews back to the fold. For Wolf this Judaism could be recovered through a service and a German-language sermon that promoted edification. The edification that led to *Bildung* was the answer. The author of the 1812 article similarly thought that a decorous service accompanied by a German sermon were the surest means to the ‘development [*Bildung*] of the Israelites.’

Indeed, the same notion of development from man to God that founds the process of Judaism is compared to the Enlightenment notion of development of man that founds the process of *Bildung*. The biblical gap between man and God and the modern gap between superstition and reason. It is only natural that for the German-Jewish ideologues *Bildung* would become *Judaism*:

The centrality of the ideal of *Bildung* in German-Jewish consciousness must be understood from the very beginning—it was basic to Jewish engagement with liberalism and socialism—fundamental to the search for a new Jewish identity after emancipation. The concept of *Bildung* became for many Jews synonymous with their Jewishness—especially after the end of the nineteenth century—when most Germans themselves had distorted the original concept beyond recognition. —  
George Mosse, German Jews Beyond Judaism

*Bildung* would become synonymous with Judaism not only because it was how Jews were to be emancipated, but because it was Jewish theology as *ideology*. *Bildung* provided a way of remaining a Jew while becoming a European because it was a method rooted in the same Hegelian process of synthesis from particular to universal that is the central element of Judaism. *Recovery/return* to Pristine Judaism became the goal of *progress* for the German Jew, the equating of two *opposing* notions that gives birth to paradox is central to understanding Jews and Judaism: regeneration of the Jew as regeneration of the pristine Jew would also lead to the development into the Enlightenment conception of the moral man. The conclusion of the Enlightenment

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mission would also be the conclusion of the Jewish mission. Bridging the gap between superstition and reason would also bridge the gap between man and God.

The *Sulamith* was the first German-language periodical for Jews:

Founded in 1806 by David Fraenkel (1779–1856), the Dessau educator, and Joseph Wolf (1762–1826), and edited by the former, it carried the masthead, "A periodical for the advancement of culture and humanism among the Jewish nation.

The *Sulamith*'s purpose is thus to "enlighten the nation in its own self, to "improve it internally." The means to achieve this are to be found in religion, in Judaism itself, and thus Wolf declared that, "religion is the essential intellectual and internally moral necessity of the cultivated man". For the Jews, this meant a return to Judaism as it had been.

The importance of the sermons as well as the *Sulamith* journal as the prime role of communication to the Jewish middle class is related by Sorkin:

According to David Frankel, the sermon alone was able to address the middle classes. By the 1830s, some ideologues were declaring it to be the most useful of the innovations introduced into the Jewish community in the nineteenth century.

It was in these organs that the ideology of emancipation was to be coherently formulated and extensively disseminated. The journal and the sermon together represented the beginnings of a new German-language public sphere. The emergence of the ideology not only entailed a shift from Hebrew to German, but also new institutional forms of expression.

The institutions of sermon and preacher successfully spread to a major portion of German Jewry within four decades. The sermon appeared in a few areas under French influence (Dessau, Seesen) during the first decade of the century. In the next decade (1810-19) it reached a few major urban centers (Berlin, Hamburg). In the next two decades (1820-

39) it became a fixed feature in most urban centers (Konigsberg, Mannheim, Karlsruhe, Leipzig, Dresden, Stuttgart) and many town communities (Buhl, Giessen, Hildesheim, Neukirchen, Berenburg). State legislation following the example of Napoleon and the Westphalian Consistory encouraged this diffusion. As part of their tutelary politics the southern and southwestern states required a sermon (Kurhesse, 1823; Wurttemberg, 1828). Bavaria (1826-27) made the study of oratory a requirement for rabbinical candidates. Prussia alone, as part of its reactionary policy, outlawed the sermon as a subversive religious innovation (1823). The preachers and pedagogues predominated in giving sermons until the 1830s, when the new generation of university-educated rabbis began to replace them. The preachers and pedagogues made it their life's task to reeducate their fellow Jews. Through teaching, preaching, and writing they hoped to "suffuse the community with *Bildung*."

It was through these dominant active channels that the values of the Enlightenment and *Bildung* saturated into German-Jewish identity, inseparably binding together emancipatory *assimilation* and emancipatory *recovery* intimately with the Jewish faith. However, it is not the case that these ideologues *actively* merged these concepts, but rather, that the central element between the two were identical: the Hegelian particular-universal mission. As a consequence, the more the German Jew who followed the program of development became aligned with the secular enlightenment ideals of his time that were responsible for his progressive emancipation through the state, not only would he become more European, and thus assimilated, but subsequently — in line with his own beliefs —, *more Jewish as well*. To *claim* emancipation was also to *reclaim* Judaism, and to follow *Bildung*/Judaism was to develop the synthesis into the universal: Jews as the *accelerant* of both the mission of Modernity and the mission of Judaism: the modern mission as a new beginning heading towards the same end, both sustained by paradox. This paradox of development rooted in *Bildung* becomes the new religion of the Jew and the process transforms German Jews and global Jewry forever. Sorkin provides a comprehensive explication:

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Because the ideology lacked a fully articulated view of the Jews' new status, a paradox was inherent in the very foundations of the ideology: the basis of separation and integration were identical. The same program of regeneration based on *Bildung* which was to provide a new basis of internal cohesion was also designed to integrate them into society. The universal values necessary for integration were also to sustain particularism. This paradox went unattended for well over two decades...The ideology's primary concern was to demonstrate conclusively that the Jews' collective existence did not militate against their integration into society — that they were not an unassimilable group, whether on religious, economic or social grounds, as the opponents of emancipation never tired of asserting. The ideologues therefore devoted themselves to showing, in the first place, that Judaism taught toleration, love of fellow-man and a unitary ethic which did not permit different standards of treatment for Jews and non-Jews. They had to show, as we have seen, that Judaism was entirely compatible with the *Aufklärung* principles which they held responsible for their own emancipation — *The Transformation of German Jewry*

That the paradox went “unattended” is improper given a theological rendering. Rather, the paradox is *the* vital force that enabled the beginning and historical continuance of Judaism and is also the same paradox that gives meaning to the mission of the Enlightenment. The paradox of the Enlightenment reaches resolution once *Bildung* is no longer needed — once all men have been developed into equal, rational, individuals (the gap between superstition and knowledge bridged) — and therefore, it requires a period in which the paradox exists: the paradox sustains the project until homogeneity is reached and the project is ended: the tension of rational opposites persists until the creative force of the tension itself generates an *Irrational unifying symbol* that serves as the existential reconciliation of the tragic paradox. The paradox of Judaism reaches resolution once Judaism is no longer needed —once all men have been restored to a connection with God (the gap between man and God *bridged*) — and it too is temporally sustained by its own paradox: between particular and Universal. The *Paradox of Inverse Assimilation* — equating the two paradoxes — is only

truly resolved if the claim that Enlightenment ideals of tolerance and equality as well as the accompanying method of *Bildung* were *actually Jewish in nature* is true and a historical *convergence* is reached at the ends of both processes of particular-universal development: when the New European and New/Original Jew at the ends of their paths of development through Enlightenment/Jewish ideals meet and discover that they are *equal and identical*: if both the particularity of the process of Judaism and the Enlightenment *would both lead to universality*. In other words, the Jew regenerates his Jewishness through these values, and the European becomes Jewish — as the Enlightenment is the moral reclamation of Pristine Judaism, therefore implicating that to become “Enlightened” *is to become Jewish* — through them: the program of assimilation *inverted* so that the Jew and the European reach the moral peak of character in the idealized Jewish man of antiquity: the regenerated Jew *as* the Enlightened European (God as the totalization of knowledge through reason): the New European and the *Original* Jew are one and the same. It would not be the German Jew who would assimilate to the Enlightenment ideals, but the German who would assimilate to the true origin of those ideals and its accompanying process of development, Pristine Judaism, and the paradox *only* reaches conclusion *temporally* if the convergence of Jew and European on the path of development(*Bildung/Judaism*) occurs: if Jewish particularity leads to European universality. This is nothing other than a rationalized articulation of the Messianic mission and the reiteration of the particular-universal paradox that *was* the eschatological principle of Jewish historical persistence. The ideologues persisted in the paradox and naturally projected this convergence out into time with the reinterpretation and reintroduction of the Jewish mission of antiquity:

The ideology's program of regeneration through religious reforms became a divisive rather than a unifying factor, as the Jewish communities, especially in urban areas, were torn by controversy over religious and educational reform. The ideology attempted to cope with this disappointing situation by extending its own immanent logic rather than by altering its ideas: it introduced the idea of the Jews' “mission.” Rather than just improving themselves in order to gain

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emancipation, the Jews had a mission to improve non-Jews. Once their non-Jewish neighbors had been regenerated, emancipation would be realized, for society would then act on the high ideals it had attained. The ideology thus effected a theoretical reconciliation of its own inherent paradox: universal values could sustain the Jews' particularism, were indeed integral to it, since the Jews had a role to play on the stage of universal moral history — *The Transformation of German Jewry*,

David Sorkin

It's notable that Sorkin was unable to connect the ideological-theological dots here, using "introduced" rather than "reintroduced." This paradox of particularism and universalism is nothing new or original for the Jew; it is the *central element of the initial paradox of Judaism*, the Object of the ghost, the motor of persistence, the covenant of Abraham. Arthur Cohen's words on the messianic vocation of Jews to redeem *all* of mankind are recapitulated; the Messianic vocation is the particular-universal paradox; theoretical reconciliation occurs when the Messiah arrives, when the process of the paradox and therefore Judaism comes to an end. The original Jewish mission is ideologically reinterpreted into the new German Jewish mission from a theological Jewish foundation in order to overcome this new but old paradox of particularism into universalism:

The idea of mission justified the redefinition of Judaism according to the universal values which the ideology had promoted. It also provided grounds for continuing separation, thereby giving a new form to the ideology's fundamental paradox of the identity of universality and distinctness. The idea of mission was an attempt to achieve a theoretical resolution of the problem of the Jews' cohesion — David Sorkin

But the mission of the Enlightenment is no different. The chosenness of the Jews, their messianic vocation as harbingers of the Hegelian process of synthesis for mankind, is ideologically reinterpreted as an essential tool to maintain consistency of the paradox that would enable them to retain that very chosenness, if only to lead the world to a universal end:

Yet the Jews must maintain one kind of distinctiveness: they must be moral exemplars to the rest of the world. Hess articulated this idea by reinterpreting the concept of the Jews' chosenness... He argued that whereas in the past the Jews gave the world moral precepts (Wolf's argument), they must now give the world an unmistakable example: 'As previously through its teaching, now through its example, Israel must be exemplary for all peoples, must take the highest rung on the ladder of moral perfection.' In so doing the Jews will also gain political emancipation.

This is a reiteration of Isaiah 42:6 but cast in the light of the Jews as "jumping out" of the system of nations ("progressing" past the nation-state model into Diaspora), and a re-articulation of the *original* Jewish paradox, the very paradox that *had enabled them to survive for 3000 years*. Judaism is a process of development from particularity to universality. The Jew *must* remain particular until the universal is achieved; the moment the Jew is lost to history is either the failure of the mission, or *the very arrival of the Universal*. Attainment of the end of the process is the *death of the process*. The fire burns until it is finished burning. The forest returns to the soil in which it once grew. Only *rebirth* remains.

The linking of the theological Jewish Messianic mission to the ideology of emancipation and the mission of Modernity only propounded the very problem it had hoped to solve. Jews would become exemplars of *Bildung* precisely because of their belief in their theological vocation and this vocation *necessarily* meant that German Jews would become "more German than the Germans." *Bildung*, naturally and rightfully so, was conceived as a modern re-articulation of the original Jewish mission, only now saturated in purely material terms for a world that believed it had killed God. For the paradox to reach consistency, the temporal convergence of Jew and European had to occur, but the beliefs of the German Jewish ideologues did not reflect reality. As Jews persisted on the paradoxical program of regeneration as a recovery of Pristine Judaism — *the recall of the original mission would find ideological-material consummation in this now modern age* —, history would be the judge of whether or not the theory of ideological-theological synonymy that formed its guiding principle was true. But history

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is a cruel mistress. Truthfully, the narrative of separation that historically follows is not a consequence of traveling in opposing directions, but rather, of one group traveling *far* faster than the other...:

The idea of mission permitted a redefinition of Judaism according to the ideology's universal values that made its fundamental paradox a vindication for continuing separation....The idea of mission was an attempt to achieve a theoretical resolution of the problem of the Jews' cohesion. The actual historical resolution was quite different. In radicalizing the *Haskala*, the ideology became a coherent cultural system expressed in a new German-language public sphere. The ideology delineated positive (*Sephardim*) and negative (*Ostjuden*) stereotypes within European Jewry. It had its mythic hero in Moses Mendelssohn. It articulated a distinct political outlook ( tutelary state), a view of history (lachrymose), and a notion of German Jewry, however ambiguous, as a community (confession). The symbol of *Bildung* unified and represented this cultural system through its ideal of man (moral individualism), and the program of regeneration (occupational restructuring; reform of religion, manners, and morals) showed how that ideal could be attained. The system was sufficiently coherent to be able to assimilate new ideas by subordinating them to its own program (e.g., Schleiermacher's religious romanticism). The ideology, and its institutions, sufficiently resembled the *Aufklarung* and public sphere of the *Gebildeten* to allow its adherents to see it as a means to integration: it seemed to make them similar to the majority culture. Yet its contents kept them separate. First, the ideology's emphasis on regeneration fit the peculiar situation of the emancipation quid pro quo through a dependence on *Aufklarung* concepts which the *Gebildeten* were beginning to eschew. And, second, the ideologues understood those concepts to be fully compatible with elements of Judaism. But more important, incomplete emancipation and partial integration kept the Jews a distinct group in German society, with the result that the ideology provided a new form of social cohesion, becoming the basis of a German-Jewish subculture.

## Chapter 9

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### *The Haskalah and Reform Judaism*

The Haskalah — the Jewish Enlightenment which began in and spread from Germany — was the ideological and religious product of this ideologically redefined paradox/Judaism and a representation of a milestone within the process of development. Western thinking and philosophy is introduced to Judaism as a natural consequence of the beginning and hope of integration, and a synthesis is pursued and further developed by German Jewish ideologues in order to display a compatibility between Judaism and the West that would enable the retention of Judaism through the program of regeneration. Wikipedia defines the aims of the Haskalah as such:

The *Haskalah* pursued two complementary aims. It sought to preserve the Jews as a separate, unique collective, and it pursued a set of projects of cultural and moral renewal, including a revival of Hebrew for use in secular life, which resulted in an increase in Hebrew found in print. Concurrently, it strove for an optimal integration in surrounding societies.

The Haskalah was rooted in the very same particular-universal motor of thought that defined Judaism and the Enlightenment: it is the

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product of equating the two paradoxes and refining the process within both. As the ideology of emancipation became divisive rather than uniting, the paradox of inverse assimilation and the version of *urBildung* it required became the very entelechy of division within German Jewish thought. It is from this paradox that not only the following three centuries and modern day can be fully understood, but, and this is indeed a bold claim, all of human history.

The Haskalah finds its driving ideological force in the paradox and conflicts emerge not from the process underpinning the paradox, but rather, from its method: the efforts of thinkers on both Orthodox (religious) and Reform (secular) sides aiming to find internal and collective (in both their own community and the wider German community(*Volk*)) congruence with the paradox. The main thinkers of the Haskalah came to be known as the *Maskilim* — Haskalah intellectuals — and among their ranks were mostly upper middle class educated Jews with varying levels of assimilation and secularization. What we will be examining within the Haskalah is the divergence of Judaism as a result of the paradox into two distinct directions: secular and religious.

For obvious reasons, the ideology of emancipation was more appealing to secular Jews who accepted the views of the German Enlightenment, statism, and refutation of God. What remained for these Jews was what remained for the modern man: *becoming*: the process of development from the particular to the universal, doubly cast now in the terms of political emancipation. But the secular Jew, in rejecting the transcendental, aims to construct a bridge over a *material* gap. The religious Jew considered the alteration of faith as blasphemy and all matters of the world for him find subservience to the will of God: the only *Bildung* that exists is God's *Bildung* (teshuva, divine education and refinement). Human will and reason must always be subsumed by revelation, but the secular view naturally inverts this subsumption, finding in these material elements the tools to actualize the Messianic ideal, yet lacking the religious foundation to *affirm/legitimize* that ideal. The religious path retains a passive view on the Messianic Ideal: only God can deliver the Jews and mankind. The secular Jew floats without grounding, unable to justify his pursuits, and the religious Jew is

perpetually grounded by the gravity of revelation, unable to pursue anything without transcendental impetus.

Secular/secularizing Jews persist on the path of the paradox, incorporating the ideal of the Jewish mission as a *vocation of the Enlightenment*: the mission of Judaism and the mission of the Enlightenment are one and the same. The Jewish mission is the reinterpretation of the Messianic ideal through the tool of reason: it is the secularization of the “Messianic vocation” of the Jew, retaining the same particularity and posture of progress towards a reinterpreted “universal” processualized through a divine view of the State, and this Messianic vocation is also the process of synthesis towards universality developed by Enlightenment thinkers. Consequently then, secular Jews are necessarily *material* accelerants of the particular-universal process of synthesis.

Although there were many pioneers/accelerators for this secularization of Judaism, the most significant early name is Leopold Zunz. His creation of the Science of Judaism (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*) is the foundational genesis point of modern liberal Jewish theological-ideology. The Science of Judaism, emboldened by the European deification of reason and science, had the expressed objective of rationalizing Judaism through an analytical and secular methodology. The main assertion of the Institute was that Judaism, influenced by the lachrymose view, was a *progressive* and *evolving* religion:

Zunz showed that ‘the history of Jewish culture did not suggest a rigid formalism but an intellectual residency capable of responding to a changing environment.’

That is to say, the historicity of the Jew, his development across time, is *applied to the religion itself*, and Judaism itself is processualized in the same manner that the individual Jew was through the ideal of *Bildung*: Judaism becomes subject to the *program of regeneration*. As the Jew is an ethnic *and* theological being, internal development necessarily meant the development of Judaism, and this development was to be ideological *return* to what Pristine Judaism represented. However, Judaism

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already *is/was* a process, a process towards what salvific consummation represented: God. This process of bridging had been eroded and made stagnant during the Exilic era and the “death of God” gave license to a redefinition of the nature of the process as well as its end, retaining a grip solely on the beginning and the overarching Hegelian methodology: the method of construction retained but the sense of direction lost. The general conception of liberation, inherited from the *Exodus*, the goal of the Enlightenment, and the hope of Diaspora Jews, becomes the ultimate aim of mankind: the gap is between superstition and reason yes, but that gap is subsumed by the gap between slavery and freedom / dependence and independence / *limitation and limitless-ness*. Sorkin relates Zunz’s exposure to *Wissenschaft* through the ideology of emancipation:

At the universities this next group of ideologues acquired the new ideals of ‘science’ (*Wissenschaft*)—whether idealist philology, philosophy, or history—from its most eminent expositors. At the University of Berlin Zunz studied with the foremost classicists of the time, F. A. Wolf and August Boeckh. Zunz and his fellows founded the academic study of Judaism by enlisting the new ideal of *Wissenschaft* in the service of the ideology of emancipation. Using the latest methods of “science” to study Jewish history and literature, they attempted to rehabilitate and redefine Judaism for the sake of emancipation. As Zunz put it:

‘The neglect of Jewish science is intricately bound up with the Jews’ civic degradation. Through greater intellectual culture and more fundamental knowledge of their own affairs, the Jews would have gained not only a higher level of recognition, thus of rights; but many legislative blunders, many prejudices against Jewish antiquity, many judgments of recent efforts are a direct result of the neglected state in which, in the last seventy years in Germany, Jewish literature and culture found themselves.’

Zunz employs the lachrymose view of a degraded Judaism (rejecting Talmudic Judaism), and aims to demonstrate, in line with the ideology of emancipation, that only the ennobling virtues of the Enlightenment

can restore Judaism to its prior not “universal” status but rather, prior status of *progressing* towards universality. The notion of regeneration, *Bildung*, is not only made into Judaism but *applied to it* and therefore itself, regenerating positive particularity that would mean forward development upon the processual path of the paradox. Rather than divine education, it is the education of the “divine” state towards universality developed by rationality that will lead all of mankind to the universal. This is a necessity to the nature of the particular-universal method: just as *Bildung* was originally formulated as the method of development for the generic individual to the universal — the superstitious man to the rational, free-thinking, sovereign man (the logical conclusion reached by Nietzsche) —, through the Judaic lens it became the method of development for the Jew from the particular to the universal: *Bildung* would be the bridge upon which mankind would be led by Jews towards universality — *Bildung* — and, therefore, Judaism would bridge the gap between man and God, between the many and the One: Judaism would be the force towards unification. The Jew, therefore, would have to take *Bildung* farther forward than any other man as the ideological responsibility is also *theological* for him: his transcendental vocation is his material vocation. The Jew, as the Hegelian method in flesh, *is the bridge*: the Jew is both an individual and collective unto himself. The Jew has always been an *Accelerant* of historical destiny: his vocation is to bring completeness to an incomplete history: to bring an end to the beginning that gives meaning to the End: to *become* the bridge between particularity and universality, man and God, the finite and the infinite: he himself is the generated energy from the tension of opposites. This attribute of acceleration is applied by the Jew to the *destiny of Modernity*. Sorkin elucidates this subsumption of Judaism by *Bildung* and the trajectory leading up to it:

The founders of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* thus faced a crucial problem. Could they reconcile this romantic assumption with the *Aufklärung* idea of regeneration to meet the needs of emancipation? Could they assimilate these new methods to the ideology's quid pro quo? The urgency of the problem cannot be underestimated, for it reiterated, if in different form, the ideology's fundamental paradox of

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the relationship between universalism and particularism, between separation and integration.

However, the fundamental paradox of particularism to universalism that the Science of Judaism ideologues were faced with was, in truth, the fundamental paradox of Judaism itself:

Despite their significant differences, the academic students of Judaism all shared one methodological premise, freedom of inquiry. In attempting to discern the essence of Judaism they replaced the religious authority of holy texts with the critical methods of "science"—whether philology, philosophy, or history. In a famous footnote to his first essay Zunz wrote: "The whole literature of the Jews is presented here, in its greatest compass, as the object of scholarship, without regard to whether or not its entire contents can or should be a norm for our own judgment." Just as the *Sulamith* and the sermons presented their literary forms as embodying the authority of the new age and the emancipation process, so the founders of the academic study of Judaism posited that reason and historical understanding, rather than tradition, determined the text's meaning. In the same spirit, they radically redefined the sort of texts that could legitimately be studied. "Science" for them required the utilization of all extant sources, irrespective of language or an author's religion: whether neglected or hitherto unknown Hebrew texts, works by Jews in languages other than Hebrew, or relevant works by non-Jews. This was but another form in which Judaism was subsumed to the larger category of *Bildung*. — David Sorkin

Is Judaism "subsumed" by *Bildung* or, is Judaism *materially reclaimed through Bildung*? Scientific theorists abandon Talmudic tradition as part of the history of degeneration — *negative Bildung* — after the *Exile*, and a positive path of development towards material universality begins. Reason and science had given secular German Jews the means through which to "reclaim" Judaism's original essence, stripped of irrational dogma, tradition, and superstition. In other words, Judaism is reformed into an *ideology* rooted in a number of guiding ethical principles.

ples, these Jewish ethical principles synonymous with the very ideals that the Jews believed were responsible for their emancipation and that also represented the true *essence* of Judaism: Judaism is ravaged of all but its fundamental essence: the Jewish mission: *Bildung*. Over two millennia ago, the Jews' status as a citizen was inverted to that of *foreigner*, and now, it was the illustrious grace of history and the state that would be making them citizens once more through what was believed to be Judaism's own formula for the treatment of foreigners: tolerance. Jews, through the emancipation by the State, were to return to the main stage of human history, to *resume* the process of bridging the gap.

Naturally, Zunz's Science of Judaism was not received well by religious Jews, and the internal division within the German Jewish community between secularized Jews and religious Jews only widened. Religious Jews were necessitated to a response against this secularization, therefore falling prey to the same sub-culture they aimed to combat. We will return to the religious divergence in Germany, but to remain with the secular branch, persistence upon the path of ideologization of Judaism in line with the ideology of emancipation continued to higher and higher degrees of secularity, causing an increasing split between religious and non-religious Jews. Following in the academic tradition of Science of Judaism, Reform Judaism was constructed as the purest articulation of the equalization of Judaism and *Bildung*. Reform Judaism was to be the pathway towards material universality enabled through a replacement of the motor of the Jewish mission from tradition to *Bildung*, knowledge from *superstition* to knowledge from *reason*, the fundamental motor of Judaism and the Jew being the Hegelian process of synthesis towards the universal: the bridge between the finite and the infinite:

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal. — The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism, Columbus Ohio, 1937

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We affirm that the Jewish people are bound to God by an *eternal* covenant, as reflected in our varied understandings of Creation, Revelation and Redemption [...] We are Israel, a people aspiring to holiness, singled out through our ancient covenant and our unique history among the nations to be witnesses to God's presence. We are linked by that covenant and that history to all Jews in every age and place. — Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism, adopted at the 1999 Pittsburgh Convention, Central Conference of American Rabbis

Reform Judaism is the second largest branch of Judaism today (the largest in America) and it is Judaism rooted in purely the Jewish mission. God is dead, but God was once alive and He had chosen the Jews. God had spoken and His Word was heard. History is alive but incomplete: the Jew exists *but is incomplete*.

Abraham Geiger, the founder of Reform Judaism, was himself a member of Zunz's Science of Judaism and developed the theology-ideology of Reform Judaism as a "recovery of Pharisaic tradition," giving further re-interpretation to the idea of "Pristine" Judaism:

The theological principle of Pharisaic tradition, according to Geiger, "is nothing other than the principle of continual further development in accord with the times, the principle of not being slaves to the letter of the Bible, but rather to witness over and over its spirit and its authentic faith-consciousness."<sup>1</sup>

According to Geiger, the Pharisees operated in a liberal and progressive manner, treating Judaism as an *evolving* religion, and were representatives of true and "authentic" Judaism, though, through a mildly esoteric lens, the true essence of the Pharisaic tradition is the Jewish mission which necessarily posits a process of *development* across time. Supposedly, Jesus himself followed in the "liberal Pharisee" tradition, and Christianity represents, rather than the end of an old covenant and the beginning of a new, a "Hellenization"/platonization of Judaism:

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i. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/geiger-abraham>

The Pharisees, who sought to liberalize and democratize Jewish practice and supplant the Temple priesthood with a priesthood of all believers, represented authentic Judaism. Jesus was a liberal Pharisee who "walked in the way of Hillel.... [and] did not utter a new thought." Christianity began when Paul carried Jesus' Jewish message to the Greco-Roman world and distorted Jewish monotheism with Hellenistic paganism. The Pharisaism of both Jesus and the early rabbis was lost in the Middle Ages, Geiger argued, when Christian persecution forced Judaism to retreat from the liberalizing tendencies of the Mishnah and turn the Talmud into a petrified system of legal restrictions. Jesus failed to gain many Jewish disciples in Judea because his teachings were not original, but the common beliefs of the Pharisees.

Talmudic Judaism, according to Geiger, is *degenerated* Judaism, a negative particularity (pure survivalism) and a closed off form of Judaism developed not in line with revelation and scripture, but rather as a consequence of the historical forces of anti-semitism and *galut*. Geiger believed that Judaism was a process, not a static tradition, and Jews themselves were the vehicle through which revelation was imparted upon the world: the messianic vocation recapitulated and eventually termed (or reclaimed as) *Tikkun Olam*. *Tikkun Olam* means "repair the world" and it is a retention of the positive particularity of Jews that generates the universality: Jewish responsibility to their mission. In religious Judaism, universality was ultimately to be achieved by the Messiah, but if there is no God, what is this universality to be generated by Jews? If the world has no beginning outside of time, can it reach an end from within it? The supernatural is replaced by the natural, the theological by the ideological, the transcendental by the material, the spiritual by the physical. If there is to be a universality, it is to be solely *material*.

Beyond Abraham Geiger were other Reform theorists who developed and formulated through a *Aufklärung* context what would become the concrete ideological framework of Reform Judaism as a universal religion: *fides universalis*. As there is no true universality, all that exists is the development towards the yet non-existent universality. In a world

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without being, *becoming* becomes the formula for being, and this becoming is best articulated by the central motor of Judaism as a vehicle towards a consummation with Being. Therefore, the universal religion in the particular world is *literally* the motor of that which generates the universal: Judaism/*Bildung*. In simpler words, *progress* which is return. In “Reform Jewish Thinkers and Their German Intellectual Context,” Micheal Meyer articulates the initial development of Judaism as a form of moral universality. In response to Kant’s argument that Judaism was insufficient in its moral quality, German Jewish reformers redefined Judaism to fit into what they described as a rational and universal religion of ethical categorical imperatives:

What singles out the Reformers’ relation to Kant is their adoption of so much that the Kénigsberg philosopher pointed to as being not Jewish and stressing its centrality within their own Jewish self-definition...Thus, instead of being the religion of no morality—as Kant defined it—the Reformers sought to present Judaism as the religion most exclusively concerned with morality, and hence most worthy of the future.

The posture towards the future should not be perplexing; it is the posture towards the particular that *temporally* generates the universality: the progress which is return:

Jewish thinkers all across the religious spectrum engaged in forced interpretation of morally problematic passages, but only the Reformers were willing to suggest that their reinterpretations were grounded in a morality that had transcended that of the Bible itself. Ultimately Kant’s rational religion was supposed to free itself of all texts and traditions. Kant believed that when humanity entered its adolescence, statutes and traditions, which were once helpful, turned into fetters. Thus all historical religions were destined to give way before the one universal rational and moral faith. Reflecting upon Kant, Reform ideologists felt that what they had to do was to demonstrate that Judaism, once properly reinterpreted and purified of ceremonialism, would be far from the statutory pseudo-religion that Kant

had called it; that on the contrary, it could become just that faith which Kant ascribed to the future. — Micheal Meyer

The goal of the Reformers was to form the bridge towards the future universal, a task that revelation had conferred upon the Jews as a particular mission. But since this universal was equalized with the Enlightenment ideals (which were believed to be synonymous with the ethical principles of Pristine Judaism), the universal itself was the actualization of the Enlightenment on Earth, which would mean the actualization of Pristine Judaism on Earth: a universal ideology of freedom, equality, and tolerance for all. The task before Reform theorists was enormous. How could they project upon the Gentiles around them this “universal” religion that had been considered alien and debased for two thousand years, not to mention that such a projection would require an abandoning by Gentiles of what was already considered to be a universal religion in Christianity? How were the Jews to become a “light to all the nations,” a tower through which all of mankind ascends?

The work and writings of Salomon Formstecher are valuable in articulating the ideological logs used for this tower. Formstecher was a Reform rabbi who aimed to “to demonstrate that Judaism was a *necessary* manifestation, and that its evolution tends in the direction of a universal religion for civilized mankind”(Wikipedia). Meyer provides a valuable explication of Formstecher’s contributions:

The principal thrust of Formstecher’s work was to relate the development of Judaism intimately to the development of humankind. He wanted to show that despite the prevalent tendency to regard it as alien, Judaism had played, and was still playing, an absolutely essential role, that in its further evolution it would become the universal religion of civilized humanity.

Formstecher reiterates the process of Hegelian synthesis central to Judaism, and a theological *inverse prescience* is conferred upon the Jewish narrative:

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Formstecher raised Judaism above the possibility of historical obsolescence, except that in his case the eternity of Judaism was not determined by a clear, doctrinal revelation communicated to the Jews at the beginning of their history. Rather the historically given revelation had to evolve within the people until the Jews, and indirectly through them the rest of humanity, reached full awareness of the prehistorical, absolute revelation implanted by God in every human spirit. Also unlike his predecessor, Formstecher insisted that every truth of religion must likewise be a truth of reason and that the content of revelation consisted of the absolute good. In this rationalism and ethicism he was much closer to the dominant mood of the Reform movement.

The particular group of the Jews would need to “evolve” until all of mankind was homogenized with the Jewish faith, until all of mankind had become Jewish, and this would require coming to a post-hoc awareness of historical revelation. In other words, the consequence of the Reform theorization is that of full assimilatory inversion: Jews would not assimilate to mankind, *but mankind would assimilate to the Jews*. To reiterate, the Jew is the Hegelian dialectic method *in flesh*: acceleration occurs with the achievement of greater syntheses: *prescience is inverted*: man finds the future not in the future, but in the past: progress *is return*. Consummation of the paradox in the end is found in the progression towards the absolute spirit of Judaism *in the very beginning*:

In Formstecher’s view, the development of Judaism reflects a “progressive revelation” stretching back to biblical prophets who, far in advance of their *Zeitgeist*, were first enabled by God to bring to awareness the unconscious content of their spirit. Scripture and tradition preserved and refined the prophetic revelation. The further history of Judaism, with all its vicissitudes, could be described as a perpetual striving to realize the spiritual ideal. Its history was therefore coincident with the spiritual history of all humanity. Far from being a mere stage in that history, Formstecher’s Judaism became parallel with its entirety.

Formstecher's Judaism is centered on the inversion of historical development: the spiritual ideal is revealed in the beginning — the *end* is revealed in the beginning — and henceforth, history is return: the end *is* the beginning:

Hence the messianic age remained distant. But when it would come, Israel and the other nations would be united in a single religion of human freedom.

This, for the avid reader of continental philosophy, is a Jewish reinterpretation of Hegel's philosophy of history, and the complementary terms are *identical*:

World history as it is depicted here is the struggle of the spirit across various cultures and civilizations in its attempt to realize freedom. These cultures are ranked and organized around their collective embodiment of freedom. Thus the Oriental World knew that only one was free; the Greco-Roman world knew that few were free; but it is only in the world of modern Protestant Europe that all men are recognized as free. History becomes, then, an immense process of *Bildung* or the moral education of humanity, towards the recognition of freedom and rights — Steven B. Smith, “Hegel and the Jewish Question: In Between Tradition and Modernity”

The once free spirit is constrained as a consequence of revealing itself, but the ultimate end of revelation is once more that original freedom. The Messianic Age for Formstecher is the culmination and conclusion of the Absolute spirit of Judaism in the form of universal freedom that implies a posture towards *nations* rather than *individuals* — this is a consequence of the fact that the eschatological event of vitality for the modern Jew was/is the *Exile*. The end the modern Jew pursues, then, finds its beginning in this event charged with the supernatural, its cause *outside of time*. Exilic eschatology shifts the notion of salvation from the individual to the nation: it was not man (Adam and Eve) that were exiled, but a nation (the nation of Jews), and therefore, it would

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not be a particular individual that would be the Savior, but rather, a particular nation. Likewise, men would not be salvaged, but *nations*.

To recapitulate a self-evident fact, Talmudic Judaism is necessarily rejected by Formstecher and Reform Jews at large as regressive traditions of negative particularity that were the result of external historical influences that opposed the progression towards this universality, but a reiteration is valuable for those without the prerequisite understanding:

The Kabbala, to which Formstecher was not unremittingly hostile, was another product of pagan influence; so, too, were certain Jewish ceremonies. Like his fellow Reformers, Formstecher believed that religious customs had played a positive role in insulating Judaism from detrimental influences. — Meyer

In 1837, [Abraham] Geiger hosted a conference of like-minded young rabbis in Wiesbaden. He told the assembled that the "Talmud must go. — Wikipedia

Reform theorists naturally rejected Talmudic Judaism and embraced a "progress" towards what they conceived to be a universality only possible through their own particularity, for Talmudic Judaism asserted a *negative* particularism of survival rather than a *positive* particularism towards universality. Saturated and grown in the ferment of the German Enlightenment, this view, as we have already seen, necessarily imparted on the State a deific and messianic status: as the State had given the Jews freedom, it would be the vessel through which *all* of mankind would become free. But now we recognize it was not *only* the statism of the German Enlightenment that motivated this motor of thought, but also the eschatology of the *Exile* and its posture towards the nation rather than the individual. Although not a Reform theorist, Nachman Krochmal, who wrote the famous *Guide for the Perplexed of Time*, admired this goal of Reform Judaism:

Nachman Krochmal (1785-1840) represents a view within the Zionist coalition that admired the Reform idea of mission which implied that

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‘the whole purpose of Jewish history was to make Jews a vehicle of Enlightenment.’ — Arnold Ages, *The Diaspora Dimension*

Modern Reform Judaism, which is *necessarily* concentrated in America, provides the reader an understanding of what the milestones towards this material universality are. Wikipedia provides a complete definition for the branch:

Reform Judaism, also known as Liberal Judaism or Progressive Judaism, is a major Jewish denomination that emphasizes the evolving nature of Judaism, the superiority of its ethical aspects to its ceremonial ones, and belief in a continuous revelation which is closely intertwined with human reason and not limited to the theophany at Mount Sinai. A highly liberal strand of Judaism, it is characterized by little stress on ritual and personal observance, regarding Jewish law as non-binding and the individual Jew as autonomous, and by a great openness to external influences and progressive values.

The formula for Reform Judaism treats the paradox of *urBildung/Bildung* (progress as return) as the driving force of Judaism — the Jewish Hegelian mission — therefore subsuming the faith in God to faith in the foundational ideals of the Enlightenment (freedom, equality, diversity which are also believed to be the foundational ideals of Judaism) and continuously following these ideals to their logical conclusion, however far they may separate Judaism from its revelatory roots. But separation is interpreted as return to the beginning and therefore arrival at the end. Reform Judaism is a forerunner of progressive ideology:

Lily Montagu, who served as a driving force behind British Liberal Judaism and WUPJ, was the first woman in recorded history to deliver a sermon at a synagogue in 1918, and set another precedent when she conducted a prayer two years later. Regina Jonas, ordained in 1935 by later chairman of the Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Max Dienemann, was the earliest known female rabbi to officially be granted the title. In 1972, Sally Priesand was ordained by Hebrew Union College,

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which made her America's first female rabbi ordained by a rabbinical seminary, and the second formally ordained female rabbi in Jewish history, after Regina Jonas.

Religious inclusion for LGBT people and ordination of LGBT rabbis were also pioneered by the movement. Intercourse between consenting adults was declared as legitimate by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1977, and openly gay clergy were admitted by the end of the 1980s. Same-sex marriage was sanctioned by the year 2000. In 2015, the URJ adopted a Resolution on the Rights of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People, urging clergy and synagogue attendants to actively promote tolerance and inclusion of such individuals.

In 1972, the first Reform female rabbi, Sally Priesand, was ordained at HUC. In 1977, the CCAR declared that the biblical ban on male same-sex intercourse referred only to the pagan customs prevalent at the time it was composed, and gradually accepted openly LGBT constituents and clergy. The first LGBT rabbi, Stacy Offner, was instated in 1988, and full equality was declared in 1990. Same-sex marriage guidelines were published in 1997.

In order for a universal religion to be reached, religion itself must be *developed*: Judaism becomes *Bildung*: development of Judaism towards the ideals of equality and freedom that original Judaism perfectly espoused: *development of Judaism towards Judaism*: Reform/Progress is ideological-material *Return* to the Garden of Eden, where there is neither man nor woman. The presuppositions of the *Bildung* of Reform Judaism are rooted in the ideals of the Enlightenment which are believed to emerge first from Pristine Judaism and the prophetic stalk of the Jews from Abraham. It is from this foundation of presuppositions that the development of Reform Judaism and the Reform Jew occurs, and this development proceeds towards what is theorized as a “universal religion”. But because the State is the vehicle through which *Bildung* is applied to the people and the *Exile* requires a salvation of nations rather than individuals, a universal religion *necessarily* requires a *Universal State*: both the state and religion must be developed.

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The Messianic vocation of individual and collective Jew are “Tikkun Olam”: repair the world. This idea is rooted in the Jewish biblical mission of the covenant to Abraham:

I the LORD have called unto you in righteousness, and have taken hold of your hand, and submitted you as the people's covenant, as a light unto the nations Isaiah 42:6

It is too small a thing for you to be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Israel and bring back those of Jacob I have preserved. I'll also make you as a light to the nations, to be my salvation to the ends of the earth. Isaiah 49:6

If one observes the Reform movement and their many, many, *many*, organizations, one will find a constant recapitulation of Tikkun Olam as the social *responsibility* of the Jew, even though most Reform Jews do not believe in God. Who is this responsibility to? What authority has conferred it upon the Jewish people? Considering all of this, is it any surprise then that modern Jews make up the bulk of liberal efforts of “social justice,” or that overwhelmingly vote liberally? Alexander Joffe explicitly asks,

Why do American Jews identify overwhelmingly with the Democratic Party? Why do they seemingly identify with left-liberalism and evince hostility toward conservatism?

Charles Fain Lehman, among many other Jewish writers, relates the dominantly liberal condition of American Jews, who mostly identify as Reform or secular Jews, in “Paradox of Jewish Liberalism”:

American Jews, it should be emphasized, are remarkably liberal. In Pew's 2020 survey of Jews, 71 percent identified as Democrats, versus 26 percent as Republicans. Half of Jews describe themselves as “liberal” compared with 16 percent “conservative” and the remainder “moderate.” By these proportions, Jews are more Democratic than Hispanics, Asians, and Muslims; they are more liberal than blacks. Jews are also more Democratic than those who earn as much as the

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average Jewish household does. As Milton Himmelfarb, the longtime research director of the American Jewish Committee, famously put it, ‘Jews earn like Episcopalians and vote like Puerto Ricans.’

Most Jews, in fact, express their Jewish identity through liberal values. Asked by Pew which aspects of Judaism were “essential” to what it means to be Jewish, Orthodox Jews said leading an ethical and moral life, observing Jewish law, and continuing family traditions—all of which are, if not the same, then highly related for observant Jews. For the non-Orthodox, though, the top slots went to remembering the Holocaust, leading an ethical and moral life, working for justice and equality, and being intellectually curious. These last two, especially, identify Judaism with liberal values of intellectual independence and commitment to social justice.

This association between Judaism and liberalism is not new. Since Jews first immigrated to the United States, they have articulated their identity in the language of liberalism. Indeed, Jewish ethnogenesis—the process by which Jews became Jewish-Americans—has often entailed making Judaism synonymous with progressivism. That was true among the first major wave of Jewish immigrants, who arrived from Germany in the mid-nineteenth century. These new Americans brought with them the roots of modern reform Judaism, which emerged out of and was inspired by a move toward Enlightenment rationalism within German Jewry. American Jewish leaders of this era strove to make Judaism liturgically similar to Protestant Christianity

The liberalization of modern and Reform Jews is a necessary consequence of the reinterpretation of Judaism promulgated by the ideology of emancipation’s transformation of German Jewry. We return to Sorkin’s explication on the early Jewish ideologues theoretical solution to the paradox:

The ideology thus effected a theoretical reconciliation of its own inherent paradox: universal values could sustain the Jews’ particularism, were indeed integral to it, since the Jews had a role to play on the stage of universal moral history — Sorkin

The “ghost” remains as long as it is repressed.

The idea of mission justified the redefinition of Judaism according to the universal values which the ideology had promoted. It also provided grounds for continuing separation, thereby giving a new form to the ideology's fundamental paradox of the identity of universality and distinctness. The idea of mission was an attempt to achieve a theoretical resolution of the problem of the Jews' cohesion. — Sorkin

The Jew can be particular only insofar as it allows him to *universalize the world*: the Jew *as* chosen. This is “positive particularism”: development *towards* Hegelian synthesis. Progress as return. This enables social responsibility for the Jew — chosenness and particularity — and a theoretical resolution of the paradox of inverse assimilation at the end of history when the mission is completed: when the European and Jew are one and the same: when the Universal State that asserts the Universal Religion onto the world is actualized: when the *Messianic State* arrives...

Abraham Geiger's extreme liberalism produced a split and subsequent rivalry with Zacharias Frankel who argued that Geiger was far too progressive in his treatment of Judaism. Frankel, in response to Geiger's Reform Judaism, founded Conservative Judaism, a branch that accepts the same basic notion of progress that Reform does, but advocates for a more “conservative approach.” As such, whereas Reform Judaism ordained their first female rabbi in 1972, Conservative Judaism ordained their first in 1985, and whereas Reform Judaism ordained their first LGBT rabbi in 1988, Conservative ordained their first in 2006. From an outside perspective, the relationship between Reform Judaism and Conservative Judaism seems to be identical to the relationship between Liberals and Conservatives in the United Staes and wider Western world. In other words, although a seeming division exists, the division isn't on a matter of foundation, just velocity: both share the same guiding Hegelian principle, the question is simply a measuring of acceleration. Conservatism is *return which is progress*; Liberalism/Progressivism is *progress which is return*. This is doubly true for the American system.

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We will further investigate the current state of Reform Judaism and its contemporary dominance within American borders later on, but its important to understand that the presuppositions of Reform Judaism are not exclusive to the Reform Jew: the secular Jew, unaligned with a particular branch, is often a *greater Accelerant* of ideological development. And try to think deeply here about this claim of Acceleration that I will discuss in more detail later on. *Bildung* and Judaism(Jewish vocation) are both motors of development that aim to generate a Hegelian synthesis into universality from particularity and their end goals are considered equal by Jewish ideologues: Pristine Judaism as synonymous with the Enlightenment. Therefore, the responsibility of development becomes a religious imperative for the Jew: an imperative of his identity. The Jew then is necessarily and naturally at the *forefront* of modern ideological development. Secular Jews who are not Reform recapitulate the ideology of the Universal State that forms the end of the eschatology of the *Exile* for Reform Jews but in *solely material terms*. Reform Jews retain some element of theology (though it can be argued, and I will, that the difference between Reform Jews and non-Jewish Jews is the same as that between Conservative Jews and Reform Jews: velocity), but secular Jews retain only their ethnicity and the historical consciousness of a suffering towards some ultimate purpose. They necessarily retain the notion of a mission as a central part of identity, albeit perhaps subconsciously developing, but remove all semblance of theology from it. This separation from theology results in the ideology cast solely in material terms and its universal end as material:

The reinterpretation of the Messianic ideal into a Universal Religion-Universal State by Reform Jews is the underlying entelechy of both Reform Judaism and Conservative Judaism, both subsumed under the liberal divergence of Judaism. Persisting on the secular path of the paradox, Reform thinkers believe Judaism itself to be the origin of the progressive ideals of the Enlightenment responsible for their own emancipation, following the paradox of synonymity to a temporal convergence projected out in time and asserting the particular responsibility of the Jewish mission, Tikkun Olam, in order to *accelerate* this convergence and reach the theoretical point of consistency with the particularist-universalist paradox: synthesis as the arrival of the

Messiah, he who shall bridge the gap between man and God, finite and infinite, particular and Universal. But Reform Jews do not believe in God, so who shall be the Messiah?

Prophecy, the medium of revelation is consummated in that moment which God reaches man. The prophetic event represents, therefore, the nexus of man and God, the focus of that reciprocal relation which signifies that the seeking of God and the seeking of man are ended in the finding of each other. — Arthur Cohen

The gap between man and God, particular and universal, finite and infinite bridged: this is the Messiah. But as there is no God and the event of eschatological vitality is the *Exile* and not the *Fall*, the prophetic event represents the nexus of the nation rather than man and that which has taken the role of God and His covenant: the State and Constitution. The prophecy of the Messiah is replaced with the Prophecy of the *Messianic State*. The Messiah arrives to give resolution to the paradox and actualize Universality on Earth, and therefore the particular mission of the Reform Jew is completed once the *Universal State* arrives...

However, progress for the modern man is *return* for the modern Jew. The paradox of inverse assimilation inverted the notion of progress guiding the post-Enlightenment European, and made the praxis of progress, *Bildung*, that applied to the individual *and* the state into the *praxis of return*, *UrBildung*. *Bildung* is not a self-formulation *towards* the Enlightenment ideals, but self-formulation *back to* Pristine Judaism, an inversion that gave birth to the paradox of modern Jewry and the following divergence. Man and the State *both* reach salvation by *returning* to the true essence of Judaism, man as the Pristine Jew and the State as the Universal State, and once all men have reached the height of the Jewish ideals of antiquity, *all will be equal* — all will be Jewish. The gap will be bridged, Herder's goal will be actualized, and the paradox of inverse assimilation, the black hole of modernity that is the *theologico-political* problem, will collapse. Redemption from contradiction is found not in the present, but in the future, in the end of times which is the beginning of times. The image is that of a circle

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upon which history is navigating towards an end that is the beginning. The gap is not upon a line, but upon the Circle: synthesis is found in reconciliation: *consummation is Oneness*.

To reiterate, the Universal/Messianic State is a transference of the role of God to the State and possesses a posture towards nation rather than man. If we return to the story of *Exodus*, we find that the promise of liberation, emancipation, was a covenant (quid pro quo: obedience for liberation/chosenness/favor) between God, the absolute entity from which all things derive, and the Hebrews. The nation of Israel, the land of equality, peace, and tolerance for the oppressed *minority* in Egypt, is the culmination of the covenant, *the particular to universal*, and decades of recapitulation and disobedience follow in the desert before Israel is reached. The modern Jew who has persisted in a state of *Exile*, deprivation of statehood (*Galut*) — metaphorically identical to his ancestors' time in Egypt — replaces God with the tutelary state, and the covenant with the quid pro quo with the State: emancipation is *Geulah*. Where the original particular-universal Covenant of *Exodus* led to the Promised Land, the covenant of the *Exile* leads to the Universal State — the gap is no longer between man and God, but the nation/state and God. This of course would not be possible anywhere else but Germany due to the *Aufklarung* and its political posture towards statism. This is why Germany is the mirror of the development of Europe. *Bildung* replaces the process of *teshuvah*, or repentance/return, wherein the Jew continually aims at self-refinement through the ennobling virtues of God through which he may be able to *return to God*, and the period in the desert is *the history of Modernity*: the history of the path until the Universal State (Israel) is reached: until the Messianic State arrives. The Reform Jews themselves retain the Messianic mission as deliverers of the covenant of the *Exile*, ennobling themselves so that they may become an example for all of mankind and bridge the gap. The particular-universal paradox is given a material conclusion at the end of the bridge: Heaven on Earth: the Universal State, where *all* are equal and free, freely equal and equally free, a destination that *only* the particular Jew can hasten *all* of mankind towards. This is the *particular-universal* end. The State/Israel(light to all the nations) as the *particular-universal* becomes the vehicle through which all men and all nations are

taken/returned to God, through which the gap between the particular and the universal is bridged, and this theorization is a necessary consequence of the new beginning and destiny that the *Exile* theologically and materially signified for the nation rather than the individual:

The Exile is the principle of exegesis which may be used to interpret the destiny of the Jew from the Destruction of the Temple to the coming of the Messiah. The Exile is active, not passive: God judges, Rome acts, Israel is exiled and remains exiled. God restores, the descendants of Rome repent, the exile is ended, and the anointed of God, his Messiah, the bearer of divine tidings of regeneration and restoration , enters history. The Exile is an historical eschatological principle. It is meaningless as a historical category; however, as a meta-historical category it enables the eyes of the believer to be opened and understand, to sustain and bear, to be patient and wait. Like all religious realities, the reality of the exile is something tangible, immediate, active for him who lives with it, who is penetrated by it and in turn works upon the world in response to it.

The vitality of Jewish culture is to be measured by the intensity with which it undertakes *galut* (Exile) as a cultural demand; indeed, as the living of its messianic vocation — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

The *Exile* as recall becomes the beginning, end, and motor of Judaism after Jesus. Consider this quote in line with its negation; if the vitality of Jewish culture is to be measured by *Exile*, what happens if the *Exile* is over?...:

The *Exile* of the Jew is a symbol of the “sin” of the world. If you will — and we suggest this with a sense of its liability to misconstruction — the concept of *Exile* is the Jewish doctrine of Original Sin, an animadversion upon the corruptibility of all history, the violence of all events, and the defection of all nations. What Original Sin imputes to the individual sinner, the *Exile* imputes to the collectivity of all nations.

— Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

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Where the Original Sin of man (Adam and Eve) is redeemed only when a vehicle through which the *individual* can return to God arrives, the Original Sin of the *nation* (*Exile*) is redeemed only when a vehicle through which the *nations can return to God* arrives. Reform Judaism (and Secular Jews — non Jewish Jews) awaits the *First Coming of the Messianic State*.

## Chapter 10

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### *Religious Judaism and Samson Raphael Hirsch*

In response to the secularization of Judaism by secular Jews, religious Jews, who trusted in scripture and rejected the Enlightenment religion of reason, were necessitated to a philosophical response to the reformation of their religion. The main philosophy developed as a response to Reform that underpins a large number of the variants of this branch was created by Samson Raphael Hirsch and is called “Torah im Derech Eretz.” Hirsch’s impact is notable among Modern Orthodoxy and Haredi Judaism, and although German Orthodoxy has largely waned, his influence in rejecting the new tendencies of secularism to return to the divine principles is notable. His main impact is in developing the beginnings of a modern form of Orthodoxy that aims to reconcile Modernity — secular society — and Judaism — theological culture and tradition. The following discussion on religious Judaism is cast in light of its development as a response to Western-Jewish synthesis and Jewish secularization, and in this manner, it is largely a development from rejection, though, in having to address the reform movements philosophies, the religious orthodoxy themselves became complicit in the same synthesis. Orthodox Judaism is the largest global branch of Judaism, and the paradoxical central difference

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between Orthodox Jews and all other branches of Jews is belief in God:

89% of Orthodox Jews (including 96% of the Haredi) say they are certain in their belief in God, compared with 41% of Conservative Jews and 29% of Reform Jews — Pew Research Center

As a note, historical-realism must necessarily replace theology for the secular Jew so that he may retain his particularity; how else can the man who does not believe in God still believe he is *chosen* by God? Yet even this replacement is merely the swapping of false idols; suspension of immediate nihilism is a necessity in the abstraction of the messianic vocation from a purely historical perspective for he who does not believe in God. If there is no God, there is no gap...but God can be replaced and the gap can ostensibly persist. Without belief in God, the chosenness of the Jew is no more or less logically tenable than the Zulu's belief in his own chosenness, or any other tribal belief of chosenness, and can only obtain legitimization for continuance within the biological category of ethnic distinctiveness, yet even this empirical view has no way of morally justifying ethnic self-determination as a valuable pursuit beyond pseudo-biological determinism. The Jewish mission descends into the abyss of relativity and forced ignorance, only supported (briefly) by the modern morality of minority morality (oppressor / oppressed binary), and this only supported (briefly) by the paradox of self-reference, and recognition of this truth is somewhat articulated in one of the newest branches of Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism:

Judaism is the result of natural human development. There is no such thing as divine intervention; Judaism is an evolving religious civilization; Zionism and aliyah (immigration to Israel) are encouraged; Reconstructionist Judaism is based on a democratic community where the laity can make decisions, not just rabbis; The Torah was not inspired by God; it only comes from the social and historical development of Jewish people; The classical view of God is rejected. God is redefined as the sum of natural powers or processes that allows

mankind to gain self-fulfillment and moral improvement; The idea that God chose the Jewish people for any purpose, in any way, is "morally untenable", because anyone who has such beliefs 'implies the superiority of the elect community and the rejection of others.' — *Platform on Reconstructionism, 1986*

This digression will be returned to in Part Two.

To continue, the development of religious Judaism still fits into the mold of the divergence. Rather than simply a rejection of *all* elements of the German environment in which Judaism was transformed/rationalized/Westernized, it too was impacted and influenced foundationally by the conditions of opposition in which it emerged. Although religious Jews necessarily rejected the ideology of emancipation (necessarily rejecting the premise of assimilation), they were still altered by the central ideas of the ideology as a result of theological theoreticians aiming to construct defenses and assaults against the liberalization of their faith. Most notably, the philosophies of religious Judaism developed retain the singularity that caused the paradox of inverse assimilation: the central idea that *Bildung* and the Enlightenment ideals *were Jewish*.

The challenge that religious Jews faced during the era of emancipation was two-fold. Firstly, they had to solve the problem of a divided community that was enlarging as a result of "assimilation" and secularization, and secondly, they had to combat the external ideology of emancipation that had become infused into reforming Judaism. The challenge, given the situation of modernity, was too large to overcome, and German Orthodoxy itself was subsumed by the very notions it was combatting. Hirsch was the prime voice at the face of the challenge:

Samson Raphael Hirsch tried to repudiate the ideology in order to renew religious tradition. Yet, like Auerbach, in attempting to disassociate himself from the ideology the theoretician of neo-Orthodoxy became an unwitting exponent of the subculture... While in Hirsch's thought the quid pro quo of rights for regeneration was entirely moot, the central ideas of the ideology became the very foundations on

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which he attempted to reconstruct Orthodoxy. Moreover, Hirsch achieved this reconstruction through a critique of Mendelssohn's *Jerusalem*: he utilized romantic methods to liberate himself from Mendelssohn's *Aufklärung* presuppositions. Through his romanticism he not only affirmed the *Aufklärung* ideals of the subculture, but also aimed to solve German Jewry's problem of community. — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

Hirsch traced the origin of the current reformation of Judaism to the failures of Mendelssohn to circumvent the collective notion of assimilation and secularization he had individually begun, and we see here how he became complicit in the modern Jewish divergence:

Hirsch shared the ideologues' view that Mendelssohn and his followers had initiated the epochal changes that had occurred in the intervening half-century: he in fact read those fifty years of history through Mendelssohn's *Jerusalem*. He held Mendelssohn responsible for the disintegration of Jewish life because he had failed to provide a coherent and compelling account of Judaism...Because of Mendelssohn's failure, Hirsch could write: 'I am convinced that none of us who are now alive comprehend Judaism in its purity and truth.' — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

Hirsch's task with Judaism is the same as that of Abraham Geiger's: *reclaiming pure Judaism*. Hirsch retains a conservative attitude rooted the theological disposition of the *eternal imperfection of man*:

Hirsch argued that secular culture's promise of individual perfection and eudaemonism was an illusion because it was predicated upon an idea of anthropocentric freedom: it assumed that man, through the use of reason, could free himself from his corporeal nature. Hirsch asserted that such an ideal led not to freedom but to slavery. — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

The gap is attaining this perfection: returning to God. On this point, Hirsch's arguments are consistent with the current Christian and

Islamic arguments against liberalization; in becoming his own “master,” man only enslaves himself to his desires; true freedom can only be found in obedience to God. What remains contentious however is the method through which man can return to God. Hirsch realized that the ideology made an idol out of reason and led man to consider himself as God (the ideological goal of all liberal political theory):

But more important, this view of man apotheosizes reason: it assumes that man can rule his corporeal nature through his reason. It thereby sets man himself up as master and creator of the universe. But it is precisely this apotheosis, Hirsch argues, that stands in the way of *Bildung*. Such a notion of anthropocentric “freedom arrests the success of education,” because man is not the creator or master of the world and thus cannot, with reason alone, design the education that leads to perfection. — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

For Hirsch, as it is the case for all religious men, the highest aim of mankind is a return to the *true* creator God, and return, *teshuvah*, repentance, is an *active* process. Man, in his life, can never be *one* with God, yet he spends his life in the pursuit of God. This process of self-refinement through the imparted morals of the Ultimate is a religious corollary to *Bildung*: *Bildung* itself is *divine* education and is interpreted as modern rationalized *teshuvah*:

Hirsch counterposed a divine anthropology to the claims of anthropocentric freedom. Because God is the creator and master of the universe, he alone can create the education that engenders individual perfection and eudaemonism. Thus, for example, God created man and endowed him with the ability to discern truth and justice: “Truth and justice are the first revelation of God in your mind.” Because truth and justice are not human but divine qualities, God alone can instruct man how to realize them. Only God can legislate, since only He understands creation in its totality. Human reason can discern neither truth and justice nor the difference between good and evil. God sets the standards for man; only in accepting them does man begin to act on behalf of his true education. Thus the outward measure of man’s

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actions, legality, is the "agreement with God's will"; the inward measure of man's stature, morality, is the "fulfillment of God's will according to the given circumstances." Man's true education consists in the acceptance of the role God has vouchsafed him in the world He has created. — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

True education that bridges the gap between man and God/Truth, *Bildung*, is only to be found in the revelations of God for reason alone cannot validate value judgements (is-ought problem, Godel's incompleteness theorem, Nietzsche), but this interpretation is identical in method, not authority, to that of Reform theorists; Judaism has within it the ultimate principles of development and divine education(*Bildung*), and therefore, man can only *progress/return* to God through this model of education. While Hirsch rejected the liberalization that he considered a method of transforming man into God (self as authority, creator — Nietzsche), he retained the belief that *true* "universalism" was found within Judaism, along with the processual claim of *UrBildung* (return), therefore unwittingly providing justification for the singularity of the paradox:

He[Hirsch] tried to demonstrate that true *Bildung* was attainable only through an unreconstructed Judaism. Traditional Judaism, if interpreted anew, could be shown to be the sole embodiment of humanism. He rejected the claims of the ideology only to co-opt its criteria. — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

The belief of Reform Jews and the original ideologues of emancipation is recapitulated by Hirsch: "*Judaism is humanity at its highest level*". *Teshuvah* is true *Bildung*:

Hirsch coined a new term to convey his basic idea, "man-Israelite" (*Men-sch-Isroeil*). The term indicates that universal humanity and Judaism are neither antithetical nor identical, but that Judaism represents humanity at its highest level. Individual perfection and happiness are possible only through the ennoblement of God-given laws. For the Jew this means the acceptance of the commandments, since

they are the means of divine education, the path to true *Bildung*. —  
*The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

Reform and religious Judaism are ideologically parallel in their assertion of the proccesual nature of Jews and the particular-universal mission: only belief in God and adherence to tradition separates them. Hirsch affirms the Hegelian posture of many Jewish thinkers, one that Berthold Auerbach aimed to combat yet inadvertently propounded: that Judaism and the supernatural Jew represent the *entelechy* the of the West as a whole. The spirit of goodness and truth that mankind must follow to reach the Absolute Spirit of Freedom that means redemption and the completion of the bridge over the gap of the valley between the material and transcendental:

Spirit for Hirsch was an all-encompassing concept, denoting both Judaism's cognitive content and its spiritual substance. It extended from the very language of Judaism to life itself. "One spirit! in everything! from the structure of language to the act-structure of life." In the concept of "spirit," then, lay the unity of "life and doctrine" which Mendelssohn had thought Judaism preserved in its oral law and which Hirsch now wanted to recapture: spirit was the "one internal life principle." — *The Transformation of German Jewry*, David Sorkin

Hirsch retains the Messianic vocation of the Jew but for religious Jews, the mission resolves not the paradox of inverse assimilation, but the *original* paradox of particular-universalism. The two paradoxes, as earlier noted, are one and the same and the vocation of the both the Reform and religious Jew are identical in method: the Jew is to be an example to the world: through him and his stalk will come the Messiah, the redeemer of all men, the one who completes the bridge:

Hirsch argued that there is a divinely ordained process which intends to "educate the entire human race to God-consciousness and self-consciousness through experience." In this process the Jews have a mission to serve as the "bearer of the teaching about God and man's calling." This is the case because the Jews alone, through the

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commandments, have direct access to divine revelation—an argument he obviously could not make without having shown them to reveal unique truth. The Jews are therefore to bring "the teaching of God and man's calling immediately to perception." The other nations are thus to learn the truth of elevation in mediated fashion through "historical experience" and the example of the Jews. The Jews' mission is not to proselytize, but rather to serve as a living example which, together with history, will gradually educate the nations of the world to renounce idolatry and embrace a correct monotheism. Hirsch was thus able to abjure the quid pro quo of rights for regeneration where it involved the reform of Judaism: emancipation is for Israel neither the "end of its calling" nor the "end of its dispersion," but a legitimate means to Israel's mission of "self-ennoblement", of being a "living symbolic act" to the nations of the world.

Hirsch must necessarily assert that emancipation does *not* end the calling of the Jews, this necessity derived from the fact that the *Exile* is the guiding principle of modern Jewish identity and to end it is to end Judaism:

The vitality of Jewish culture is to be measured by the intensity with which it undertakes *galut* (Exile) as a cultural demand; indeed, as the living of its messianic vocation — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

If the *Galut/Exile* is over, then is the covenant over? The chosenness? What is more important; that the process reaches its end, or that the process *continues*?

Following from all of this, Hirsch's contribution to the development of Judaism was a theological recapitulation of the *original* paradox, and in this sense, he *did* reclaim Judaism's original essence that was distorted into a negative particularity during the Diaspora. But the synonymity to modern thinking from the founder of a branch of Orthodoxy is shocking. Hirsch equated the process of *Bildung* with *teshuva*, the method through which the Jew refined his spiritual character, and reasserted the Jewish mission postured towards nationhood as central

to religious Jews. We recognize that on both sides of the secular-religious divergence of German Jewry there is a central attachment to the ideal of *Bildung* as return and the recapitulation of the idea of the Jewish mission as a solution to the paradox of inverse assimilation, the particular-universal paradox: the Jewish mission as a projection of the ideal of *Bildung* — return, *teshuvah* — onto the Gentile world. Mankind is not charting out unknown land in crossing the gap, but returning to their original home alongside God. For the Reform Jew, *Bildung* is the process through which man progresses and returns to the Jewish conception of the state, *the Universal State*, and for the religious Jew, *Bildung* is the process of *teshuvah* through which man returns to the Jewish conception of truth and goodness, God. Ultimate return and universality is consummated by the Arrival of the Messianic State/Messiah. The *Exile*, and necessarily therefore Judaism, is over once the Messianic State/Messiah arrives:

Redemption meant, if it meant anything at all, the end of the *Exile* —  
Arthur Cohen



## Chapter 11

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### *Summarization*

Where the Reform Jew views *Bildung* as the process through which man *returns* (progresses) to the Universal State and history as the unfolding of this process of bridging the gap of return, the religious Jew views *teshuvah* as the process through which man returns to God, history as the unfolding process of *mankind returning to God* — for both, the Jew is at the forefront of the process of return. For the liberal Jew, *Bildung* is the path upon which man materially *progress* towards the future of the *New European* while simultaneously *returning* to the past of the *New Jew*. For the religious Jew, *Bildung* is *teshuvah* alongside God's divine education; the path upon which the Jew returns to Judaism, becoming an example to the nations of the world. To reiterate, *Bildung*, insofar as it is a method of development across some abstract gap, is the central motor of the Messianic vocation of both groups:

Common to all of them was an attachment to the ideal of *Bildung* as the basis of regeneration, yet a regeneration in which they now included the gentile world as well. In their work we can see how the central ideals of the ideology were dissociated from their origins in the

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emancipation process and thus became the foundation of the subculture, and the cultural productivity, of German Jewry.

Mosse relates the preachings of Rabbi Ceasar Seligman to reiterate the necessity of the concept of *Bildung* as the liberal transformer of Judaism.

In 1904, Rabbi Caesar Seligmann, a leader of the German-Jewish reform movement, preached a sermon in the great synagogue of Hamburg on the occasion of the centennial of Jewish orphanages founded on the educational principles of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. His sermon summarized the history we have endeavored to isolate and examine. Before the emancipation of the Jews, he said, Judaism's will to live had died, and the Jews were surrounded by darkness. Suddenly, like a miracle, they were resurrected and light penetrated darkness. The theme of movement from darkness to light seems to accompany the history of German Jewry as a typical metaphor dating from the Enlightenment. How did this miracle occur? The fertilization of Judaism with German culture was the kiss that awakened the slumbering prince. Seligmann went on to exclaim, "Shall we tear a century of . . . German *Bildung* out of Jewish breasts?" German Jews, he warned, must not be lulled to sleep by romantic notions of the past. They must remember what it was like to live as a Jew in Germany a century ago; they must acknowledge the tremendous tasks that were accomplished to raise German Jewry to a state of culture now taken for granted. Yet, Seligmann continued, we do not serve this culture well if we discard our Jewishness. The very survival of Judaism through the ages imposes a moral duty; it contains a categorical imperative which cannot be denied. The specifically Jewish does not oppose but complements German culture, for all men of goodwill share identical aspirations.

The German Jew is *more German than the German*: this is the logical consequence of his processual Messianic vocation given modern methodology through *Bildung*.

### Summarization

The ideal of *Bildung* is necessarily related to some goal or mission due to its active and processual nature. The very process of reciprocal self-formation requires formation *towards* something, a formulation common to both the German and Jewish thinkers. Jennifer Hansen-Glucklich asks in “Father, Goethe, Kant, and Rilke: The Ideal of Bildung, the Fifth Aliyah, and German-Jewish Integration into the Yishuv”, asks this question explicitly:

Why did German Jewry embrace Bildung with such unrelenting passion and dedication? And why did the German Jews' adherence to the principle of Bildung develop to such an extent that it became 'detached from the individual and his struggle for self-cultivation and . . . [became] transformed into a kind of religion—the worship of the true, the good, and the beautiful?'

Necessity governs all. The answer to Glucklich's question is self-evident. The truth is that the confluence of German and Jew produced a necessary chemical reaction due to central ideological and theological elements on both sides. The manner in which the philosophical attitudes of the German environment impacted German Jews was a necessary consequence of the identity and belief structure of those Jews, and the synthesized reformations of Judaism and Jewish identity formed were necessary consequences of the clash between the theological-historical being of the Jew and the philosophical climate of Germany with its attachment to the tutelary state and *Bildung*. History *is* destiny: its possibilities are not only limited from infinity, but *one*. All things share the same beginning and the same end, and only if there is a beginning *outside* of time can there be an end within it. To abandon such a notion is to abandon history proper for the coincidental strand of evolution.

As a side note simply to appease possible concerns, the English and Russian fronts are insignificant when it comes to understanding the necessity of the modern Jewish divergence's occurrence in Germany:

In England, to take the western extreme, a noninterventionist liberal

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state spared the Jews a protracted emancipation process by treating it as one non-conformist religious group among others. On the one side, then, citizenship was a matter of birth and not *Bildung*...Not being an autonomous community that had to confront an absolutist state, English Jewry did not generate a significant *Haskalah* movement. And lacking the political pressures of a comprehensive emancipation process—emancipation turned on the ability to hold office and thus concerned only the community's elites—English Jewry experienced no conspicuous ideological ferment. The history of English Jewry from 1780 to 1840 is thus primarily a social history of acculturation through changing modes of life and behavior...In Russia, to take the eastern extreme, an absolutist state made bungling attempts to integrate the Jews through education and enforced conscription. Yet this coercive regeneration never carried the promise of rights, and a true quid pro quo never emerged. Moreover, because it was primarily a peasant-gentry society, Russia did not offer the Jews a viable reference group, and thus social integration was negligible. On the other side, a socially heterogeneous and dense Jewish population (as high as 12 percent in the Pale of Settlement) constituted a largely self-contained society divided internally along not only religious (*hasidim, misnagdim, maskilim*) but also class lines. As an autonomous community confronting an absolutist state, Russian Jewry did create a *Haskalah*. But because the czarist state never enacted the emancipatory legislation necessary to establish a quid pro quo, the Russian *Haskalah* could not become a full-fledged ideology of emancipation. And because Russian Jewry lacked a reference group in the majority society and was itself large and socially heterogeneous, it could not transform the *Haskalah* into a subculture. The Russian *Haskalah* thus served a different function than German Jewry's. It provided the basis for the adoption of European cultural forms. Acculturation meant less a symbiosis with the culture of the majority society than with an ideal of "European" culture...Unlike its Russian and English counterparts, German Jewry experienced the particular configuration of factors that made a subculture possible. As a socially differentiated, autonomous community confronting an absolutist state, German Jewry generated a *Haskalah*. Under the impact of the emancipation quid pro quo, it transformed the *Haskalah* into an ideology of

emancipation. And under the combined conditions of incomplete emancipation and partial integration on the one side, and its own transformation into an increasingly homogeneous bourgeoisie on the other, it used the ideology to create a subculture. Incomplete emancipation kept *Bildung* central; partial integration led to the formation of a public social world. Under the pressure of the two and with the tools of the ideology, German Jewry created the new community of the subculture.

The historical consequences of the paradox did not find the resolution that the mission of convergence had hoped for. The gap remained unbridged, and in fact, the opposite occurred: continuous divergence between German and German Jew. Perhaps it is true that the German Jew truthfully became more “German than the Germans”, but the rate of development doubly implies separation, even if they are on the same path: the gap only widened. Central to understanding the condition of the German Jew is that during the period of emancipation until 1871 and the emancipated period after, *the Jew was never able to assimilate*, and the only thing that the German Jew’s efforts at regeneration enabled *was further division from Germans*. This is a critical point. Anti-semitism developed alongside the ostensible assimilation of German Jews, and the period following formal German Jewish emancipation in 1871 can be demarcated by the development of a growing national-ideological clash between assimilating German Jews and nationalizing Germans. German anti-semitism generally holds implicit and explicit within it not only the idea of Jewish emancipation as degenerate, but emancipation as a whole as the harbinger of the evil of modernity and liberalization. The climate of divergence, increasing ideologization, and German frustrations with modernization and liberalization all form the necessary elements of the confluence of Modernity in the early twentieth century. Reform Judaism represents the liberal path of the Modern Jewish divergence and Orthodox represents a religious continuity, but it is after decades of the proliferation of the ideology, combined with the development of German sentiments, that the rightward branch develops directly from the minds of “assimilated”, acculturated, and secular German Jews.



## Part Two

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### *The Birth of Zionism*



## Chapter 12

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### *The Self-Hating Jew*

The German Jew of the late 19th century was in one of three camps: religious Judaism, Reform(ing) Judaism, or *no Judaism*. The latter type, emancipated from Judaism as a theology but not as an ethnicity, is where we find the origin of the term “self-hating Jew”. Today it is used by Zionists against those secular Jews who are anti-Zionist, but this is a consequence of psychological projection that must be understood in the context of its development. The religious Jew naturally rejected the program of assimilation while the Reform Jew believed that Judaism was the vehicle of the Enlightenment, but the secular non-believing Jew was the one who *fully* adopted *Bildung* as an *ethnic-ideological* imperative, who aimed at fully abandoning Judaism in order to be accepted into German society. The quid-pro-quo for him was simple: assimilation.

The situation of the secular “assimilated” German Jew in the late 19th century is similar to that of a Tantalusian myth. Forever reaching towards the fruit of the tree and forever unable to reach it, the assimilated German Jew is a representative of the paradox of inverse assimilation, a contradiction unto himself. So far does the German Jew trek on the path of *Bildung* towards assimilation that the saying, “More German than the Germans”, was coined:

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The assimilated Jewish community in Germany, prior to World War II, has been self-described as "more German than the Germans". Originally, the comment was a "common sneer aimed at people" who had "thrown off the faith of their forefathers and adopted the garb of their Fatherland". The German assimilation, following the Enlightenment, was "unprecedented" — Wikipedia, "More German than the Germans"

The inability of the Jew to assimilate is the catalyzing element of the history of Modernity. A monumental statement, but one that the tragic events of the mid 20th century confirm. Jewish identity even today subsumes national identity: one is an *American Jew*, not a *Jewish American*. Likewise, the Jew was always a German Jew, never a Jewish German, no matter how deeply he yearned for such a possibility:

Particular pessimism about assimilation is expressed in 1911 by Friedrich Blach, who shows his yearning for this ideal by adopting the unusual self-description 'a Jewish German'. — *Assimilation*, Ritchie Robertson

Try as you might to imagine the situation. In searching and seeking to become accepted into the culture — a culture that despises you and your people — you inhabit, you only further distance yourself from not only from those who you wish to be accepted by, but *from yourself*, from the soil within which you were grown. For a plant that is uprooted, the only alternative to death is *new soil*. This is the birth of Jewish "self-hatred." The self-hating Jew projected onto himself a view of inferiority inherited from a deep and devout respect for German culture, and this projection, as a result of the ideology of emancipation, was one of the necessary consequences of the paradox of inverse assimilation. If the German Jew *did* accept the quid pro quo of the ideology, then he necessarily accepted that his was a degenerated nature that was in need of repair. It can be understood within the frame of the Hegelian dialectic: opposites leading not to *synthesis*, but rather, self-hatred, perhaps the greatest of all internal contradictions, one which has only two solutions: death, or rebirth. In abstract words, self-hatred

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was the consequence of *giving up the process*, giving up the goal of synthesis — *the ghost* — and being faced with the bleak reality of a world without God: nihilism and the meaningless suffering that generates its conclusions.

Self-hatred is the product of self-pride and self-contempt: the desire to both *embrace* oneself and *escape* oneself: an internal Hegelian dialectic is born in *abandoning* the former collective dialectic. The psychological torment of such a contradiction *always* necessitates either action or *the end of action*. For he who has given up the ghost *but for no recompense*, what remains but an eternal crucifixion without redemption?

[The GermanJew] has to work with one hand to participate in the construction of a national culture while brandishing a weapon in the other hand—against Germans. It is a tragic constellation. Only he who feels this conflict with full force and nevertheless still decides to fight, in spite of it all and without further ado — he alone has the right to call himself an assimilated Jew... For those who cannot bear the difficulty of this situation and do not want to be baptized... — Samuel Lublinski, "A Last Word on the Jewish Question" (1901)

The origin of Jewish self-hatred and its paths of recourse are best demonstrated by Jewish emancipationist literature written towards the end of the 19th century. What follows is an examination of the *natural* Jew rather than the supernatural Jew. Yet, since the natural Jew is always the beginning and end of the supernatural Jew, this examination shall ultimately return us to the supernatural.

In 1774, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, his breakthrough novel that turned him into a celebrity almost overnight (as much as is possible in a pre-digital age) and began what would be later known as "Werther fever." The novel is epistolary and follows a young man named Werther and his extreme response to an internal contradiction of unrequited love. In love with a woman who marries another man, Werther, unable to deal with this and morally incapable of violence, saw no other choice but to take his own life, shooting himself in the head with a pistol at the end of the novel: no

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synthesis could be found, and so, the process — the *ghost* — was voluntarily given up, *the fire willingly extinguished*. Werther fever influenced many young men to dress like the protagonist, and some went as far as ending their own lives the same way as Werther.

Although independently the story is fascinating, its importance for our purposes lies with a parodied version of the novel written by Ludwig Jacobowski titled *Werther the Jew*. Jacobowski, an assimilated German Jew, wrote the book as a push for German Jewish assimilation, yet the plot belies this intention. *Werther the Jew* tells the story of Leo Wolff, a Jewish university student, whose unrequited love for German Culture (inability to truly assimilate) leads him to commit suicide in Wertherian fashion. The contradiction is that between Jew and German, Judentum and Deutschtum. Jonathan Hess in “Fictions of a German-Jewish Public: Ludwig Jacobowski's 'Werther the Jew' and Its Readers” corroborates the details of the author and the narrative of the novel:

Jacobowski, like [Theodor] Herzl, was fully assimilated, a fervent, patriotic German, and a tireless and militant opponent of antisemitism, serving on the board of the German Defense Association against Antisemitism.

Jacobowski's novel thus seeks to combat antisemitism by envisioning a scenario in which Jews will embody the grandeur of German classical humanism.

Werther the Jew was the product of the nihilistic contradiction of assimilation within Jacobowski, nihilistic precisely because of the conclusion he found. Both a patriot of Germany and Jewry, his answer to the paradox was persistence on the stormy course and this brought him to the verge of full psychic disintegration:

highlighting Jewish defects, and in contrasting the ideal fully assimilated Jew to the archetypal Jew, Jacobowski's novel repeated and upheld the theme of earlier emancipationist literature. But in addition, a major theme in the novel was the ambiguity of assimilation in a

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period of rising antisemitism. Leo is a tormented personality, for assimilation has plagued him with Jewish self-hate. He lives by a double standard, idealizing Gentiles while being harsh toward Jews, wildly exaggerating their faults. He knows that he harbors a hatred toward Jews indistinguishable from that of the most vicious antisemite. This is a source of torment to him because antisemitism has awakened his Jewish loyalties and his identification with the history of Jewish victimization, as well as warm memories of his Jewish childhood. He considers it an act of cowardliness to abandon his people in their moment of need. As a result, self-reproach has brought him to the verge of psychic collapse.

As Mark Anderson has commented, Jacobowski presents 'Judaism as a form of moral and cultural decadence' that has 'to be "overcome" through the regenerative, ennobling virtues of German culture'

There are a number of significant elements here: the ideology of emancipation saturated into the minds of emancipated and acculturated Jews, the dominant lachrymose view of a degenerated Jewry, the subliminal ideal of *Bildung* (German humanism), the psychic propagation of the paradox of assimilation, and the replacement of the gap between man and God with the gap between *Jew and German*. The notion of a Jewish mission is completely absent, and naturally so: what Jewish mission is there for he who is aiming to give up his Jewishness? *The mission is inverted but has the same end*: the end of the process.

The particular-universal paradox, the dialectic of opposites at the core of Judaism, is replaced with the Jew-German paradox. Leo, unable to overcome his self-fragmentation and the contradictory forces of assimilation, follows in the path of Otto Weininger. The story relates to the reader the author's own views on Germans and Jews:

Through Leo, the novel presents Jews as sexual predators, and it creates a world in which the Jews' sexual assault on young German women goes hand in hand with their financial exploits-a familiar enough trope in antisemitic literature.

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The Germans in the text are typically blond, attractive, and vital, with the German men continually marked as "masculine" and the women as "feminine." The Jews that populate the novel, in contrast, typically have dark hair and hooked noses and are without physical beauty or bodily strength. Leo himself, we are told, lacks masculinity, and for him — the only significant male Jew in the text — Jewish women have no natural feminine appeal.

Jakob Wassermann relates this "love of Other" that formed one of the basic elements of Jewish self-hate in his autobiography *My Life as a German and a Jew*:

I have known many Jews who have languished with longing for the fair-haired and blue-eyed individual. They knelt before him, burned incense before him, believed his every word; every blink of his eye was heroic; and when he spoke of his native soil, when he beat his Aryan breast, they broke into a hysterical shriek of triumph.

The gap is between Jew and German: the process is replaced with purely ethnic terms, and synthesis is reached in *becoming German*: the mission ends because there is no longer a particular vehicle through which the mission could be consummated. Self-evidently, "assimilated" Jews found the novel to be immensely sympathetic to Zionism, and used the book to propagate the growing idea that assimilation was suicide. After discovering this Zionist influence of his novel, Jacobowski altered the preface to explicitly reiterate his support for assimilation, a preface that was later excluded by Zionist publishers:

For Berdyczewski, as for Nacher and Brainin, the tragic tale of Leo Wolff's suicide clearly demonstrated the hopeless desperation of Jewish life in the Diaspora. It was, tellingly, only in 1898 — after the initial publicity Jewish blitz surrounding the rise of political Zionism, and after Jacobowski learned from Berdyczewski, much to his surprise, of his enthusiastic following among Zionists — that Jacobowski appended to the text his programmatic preface stressing the complete absorption of Jews in "German culture and spirit." Subsequent Yiddish

editions of the text targeting East European readers did not include this preface, and Jacobowski's Zionist readers were not blind to these tensions. Nevertheless, Zionists such as Max Nacher, writing in *Die Welt* (The World), the newspaper launched by Theodor Herzl, confidently claimed Jacobowski as a like-minded peer. As Nacher argued in 1904, during his lifetime Jacobowski himself never quite grasped "what it means to be a Jew today," but he was a self-consciously Jewish writer who offered great insights into the extreme effects of antisemitism on modern Jews, and this fit very well with the Zionist cause.

Where *Werther* represents the conclusion of an irreconcilable love between man and woman, *Leo Wolf* represents a conclusion of an irreconcilable *idealism of Judentum and Deutschum*. *Wolf* represents one of the secular conclusions of the paradox of inverse assimilation for those who had trekked too close to the German singularity: self-destruction through self-hatred, the *inability to cross the gap* not only between man and God, but between Jew and German. Some may even abstract this gap to that between the Jew and mankind, and this I say not with nefarious intentions, but matter of tragic fact. Loss, however, gives way to gain, emptying to filling, death to life.

The significance of *Werther the Jew* is to demonstrate not only the persistence upon the path of self-hatred and the consequence of such persistence on the individual — self-pride intertwined with self-contempt — but also the growing hostile attitude of assimilated Jews against assimilation, even of those who had formerly been staunch supporters of the policy of regeneration. Self-hatred was a wide-spread enough phenomenon that plenty of literature like Jacobowski's was written by German Jews and circulated into the German literary sphere. Jacob Golomb writes about the marginalized existence common to many acculturated Jews and the phenomenon of self-hatred central to them in *Nietzsche and Zion*:

To these *Grenzjuden* (marginal Jews) or "stepchildren" belonged prominent Western European Jewish intellectuals such as Else Lasker-Schiller, Arthur Schnitzler, Jakob Wassermann, Stefan Zweig, Franz Kafka, Franz Werfel, Kurt Tucholsky, Walter Benjamin, Carl Stern-

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heim, Karl Kraus, Ernst Toller, Gustav Mahler, Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, and many others. They were *Grenzjuden* in that they had lost their religion and traditions, but had not been fully absorbed into secular German or Austrian society. For some, hatred of their ancestral roots led to self-destruction and breakdown. These doubly marginal individuals tragically lacked an identity: they rejected any affinity with the Jewish community but were nonetheless unwelcome among their non-Jewish contemporaries. Jakob Wassermann penetratingly describes them from within as "religiously and socially speaking floating in the air. They no longer had the old faith; they refused to accept a new one, that is to say, Christianity...the physical ghetto has become a mental and moral one... — Jacob Golomb

The *ghetto of the collective* becomes the *ghetto of the individual* (vindicating Otto's own words), but the individual is a collective unto himself. *Grenzjuden* who had fervently embraced *Bildung* were constantly faced with the bleak realization that the emancipation through assimilation that they had sought would never arrive:

The basic question plaguing all *Grenzjuden*: 'Why are we not fully accepted among these populations when we have been so good, and when we have been even better in many respects than they are?'

The process of the particular-universal mission *was replaced with* the process of the Jew-German mission, and to this ultimate end, the *Grenzjuden* dedicated themselves without avail. The period in the wilderness, the trekking of the gap, is tragedy. Without Judaism, what is the Jew? And if the Jew is still a Jew after he has abandoned Judaism, was Otto right? What is the mission of the Jew who has given up the ghost? What is the Jew without Judaism? Is his mission not purely material now, the mission of assimilation: the gap between Jew and Gentile? Can the Jew truly cross the gap between himself and mankind?

According to Gershom Scholem, "Because they no longer had any other inner ties to the Jewish tradition, let alone to the Jewish people,"

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these marginal Jews "constitute[d] one of the most shocking phenomena of this whole process of alienation." Yet despite their desperate attempts to be accepted as Austrians and Germans, most recognized the traumatic truth that, as Herzl's friend Arthur Schnitzler put it, 'for a Jew, especially in public life, it was impossible to disregard the fact that he was a Jew.'

One of the most widespread and troublesome symptoms manifest among acculturated German-speaking Jews around the *fin-de-siècle* and in the first half of the twentieth century was self-hatred. — Jacob Golomb, *Jewish Self-hatred: Nietzsche, Freud and the Case of Theodor Lessing*

Paul Mendes Flores in "The Throes of Assimilation: Self-Hatred and the Jewish Revolutionary," puts it explicitly:

Self-hatred is a product of assimilation...I belabor this point because of the frequent discussion of self-hatred as a mysterious disease that afflicts the modern Jew, particularly the Jewish revolutionary. The failure to acknowledge self-hatred as a general syndrome of Jewish assimilation only obfuscates the phenomenon.

Self-hatred is a product of the ideology of emancipation that made assimilation into a condition of the quid pro quo with the state. Religious Jews *retained* Jewish identity through a rejection of modernity, Reform and secular Jews *reframed* their identity on solely the Jewish mission, and the *Grenzjuden* who abandoned both Judaism and the mission (one and the same), *replaced* the Jewish mission with the mission of assimilation. *Bildung* for the *Grenzjuden* is the method through which the mission of assimilation will be accomplished. Hope is the governing element of persistence: hope for an eventual reconciliation, for to abandon hope is to accept the despair of pure nihilism: to abandon Judaism is to say that the suffering was not for mankind, but for *nothing*. Synthesis for the religious Jew is arrival of the Messiah, for the Reform/secular Jew it is the arrival of the Universal State, and for the *Grenzjuden* it is assimilation: the Messiah is assimilation. But this Messiah *requires* self-hatred, for to become something new, one

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must give up who he once was. The Jew however is both an individual and a collective and therefore, the price for rebirth is not individual *but collective*... Is it true that one must learn to hate himself before he can *love* himself? Otto's words echo across history: that which awaits within the Jewish spirit is one of two possibilities: affirmation or *negation*.

Theodor Lessing (1872- 1933), a German Jewish philosopher assassinated by German Nazis who himself struggled with Jewish self-hatred — having converted to Christianity and then returned to Judaism later in his life, friends with Germans who eventually forsook him due to his ethnicity — wrote in his journal,

Can a plant disown the soil out of which it grew? Am I myself not the fruit of people and conditions which I hate and want to destroy? Am I not handicapped, inferior, ill-bred, botched?

Lessing, due to his personal experience with the phenomenon, wrote an entire book on the topic titled *Jewish Self-Hate* published in 1930 in which he psychologically analyzed self-hatred and the individuals suffering from it. In the introduction of the work, American historian of Jewish Studies Sander Gilman writes,

Lessing's case studies reflect the idea that assimilation (the radical end of acculturation) is by definition a doomed project, at least for Jews (no matter how defined) in the age of political antisemitism.

A doomed project: hope in a Messiah who never arrived. But hope gives way to despair which gives way to new hope.

Lessing investigates the question of self-hatred. How can it be that a people develop a hatred of themselves? How can it be that a people can exist with such a self-immolating malady?

Do you know what it means to curse the ground on which you must grow, and drink poison from its roots? Do you know what it means to be badly born to a popularly ascribed birthright of calculation and

shallow self-interest—to be badly born, whether pampered or neglected, mollycoddled or battered? And then to nurture a lifetime of senseless hate—against father, mother, teacher, educators, all those who have begotten and shaped us in their own unflattering image, without us even wanting to come into such a world?

It is possible for a man to *detest* the community in which he is born and educated, in which he remains all his life, but be completely incapable of ever separating his private destiny from that of the community.

Even the most wretched person draws breath like a leaf in a living forest, born by that from which he stems. A venerated history gathers him up, and a permitted culture consumes him in the chorus of the great collective. By contrast, the Jew stands *outside*. His nationality has been, for centuries, a small, quiet lake, always in danger of being silted up. He has had no one but his dead, and he has unlearned their language. No nation carried him, no history absolved him, nothing fashioned him, and his hero was the eternal patient sufferer.

He who has a *why* can suffer almost any how, but what happens to him who has given up his *why*? How can one live with the resignation that his individual and collective suffering has been utterly *meaningless*?

In his psychological study of the modern condition of the European “assimilated” and acculturated Jew, Lessing attaches to the centrality of the Jewish faith a permeating and eternal ideal of *guilt*: an *inversion* of hope. He believed this guilt generated the necessity founding the Messianic Vocation that enabled the historical survival of the Jew:

The tendency to interpret every misfortune that occurs as atonement for sin lies deeply rooted in every Jewish soul. If the reader asks why this is so, I can only point out the terrible fact that throughout almost three thousand years, Jewish history has been one uninterrupted history of hopeless, irredeemable suffering. There is only one emergency exit—to make sense of this suffering and make it bearable, the Jew must believe that his fate has within it a particular purpose.

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In effect, Lessing *inverts* the mission. If the original mission sought the universal, the inverted mission *seeks the particular*... The fixation of one end is transformed into a fixation on the opposing end. The dual meaning of the term Galut is “*suffering for the sake of humanity*.” Nihilism is suffering for the sake of nothing, but Particularity is *suffering for the sake of oneself*. Once more, the Jew is a collective unto himself: Particularity is *suffering for the sake of Jewry*...

For Lessing, the Jews’ eager acceptance of European culture and emancipation was a sign of self-hatred recognizable by his internal love for the Other. In response to the growing plague of self-hatred, Lessing asks a fateful question: what would have happened if in 1750 the Jew had rejected the program of regeneration and therefore the ideal of emancipation?

What would have happened had the Jews unleashed their own “non-cooperation movement”? What if in 1750—when the yellow patch, oppression, anti-Jewish laws, and *Kammerknechtscha* gradually began to be lifted, with waivers of oppression, and implementation of full bourgeois emancipation—they would have responded: “For the past two thousand years, we have lived for the coming of the Messiah, who has been promised to lead us back home. Now your benevolence and friendship offer us beautiful Europe and great America as fatherlands. But, as payment, we would have to break with our own historical traditions, in order to adapt and grow into the Great Christian West. We cannot do this! We have never demanded of you that you convert to our religion. We have never sent missionaries among the nations or been addicted to conquest. We want to bear our sidelocks and yellow patch undisturbed. We want to preserve our Hebrew language and names. We refuse to participate in your holidays and memorials, each of which can only remind us of our past martyrs. You are welcome to your images and gods, but you should in turn leave us to ours. We are, and must remain, different. It is not we, but you yourselves, who have announced it so to the world: God has become man. We do not follow the creed of the Holy Trinity. Our God has neither form nor name, beyond man and the abominations of world history. You are free to despise us, but we in turn refuse to accept your benefits: your offices

### *The Self-Hating Jew*

and schools, your ways and means. We do not want to participate in your arts and sciences. We voluntarily carry forward *galut* and ghetto, awaiting our Messiah to appear out of Bethlehem...Would such a reply have been possible?

That is to say, what would have happened if hope was never allowed to become despair? The flame eternally preserved for fear that it may be extinguished not by God, but by the cruelty of history. Is it possible to invent a *new* flame for oneself?

Lessing however, thanks the anti-semitism of the late 19th century and the failure of the program of assimilation; if the Jew had been able to assimilate, he would no longer be a Jew. In an ironic way, *survival* of Judaism was enabled by anti-semitism towards Jews. Given this failure, Lessing finds three recourses for the assimilated self-hating Jew, all three of which we have already investigated thus far in this book:

I see three recourses for such a burdened soul.

The first is contradiction, self-hate, which ends in self-destruction(Otto Weininger, Leo Wolf, etc):

This way ends in death of the soul.

The second is that *embracing* the self-hatred, of, in every action, turning yourself against yourself:

The second way is greater and nobler than that of judges and prophets —where you turn all barbs against yourself. You acquit all others. You become your own judge and executioner. You faithfully devote yourself to foreigners instead of to yourself, your friend, your beloved...Woe betide you! You have made your heart a footstool to be trodden upon. The more you give, the more surely you are used up, unseen and without thanks. You turn your weapons against yourself. You show your friend how vulnerable you are. Unhappy person! One day you will be murdered with the same weapons that you have given him. You speak badly of yourself: a day surely will come when your beloved will

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be able to use that against you. Become an oppressor and people will honor you. Become violent and they will love you. Become a lamb and wolves will devour you...The second way ends worse than death of the soul.

The third is conversion (Otto Weininger as well as Lessing himself, albeit temporarily): abandoning the tension of opposites, *unable to bear the mounting pressure*:

The great conversion: “mimicry.” You become “one of all the others” and look really fabulous. Perhaps a little too German to be really German. Perhaps a little too Russian to be really Russian. And because Christianity is still such a novelty, you practice it a little too diligently. But at least: now you are secure. Really? Your body is safe. You are dead—you have died with your conflict. You have committed suicide in order to attain happiness and fame. But millions of dead weep in your soul, and the dead are more powerful than all your happiness and fame combined. So is everything in vain? What is the answer?

Lessing’s answer to the problem of self-hatred and the fourth recourse is profound to any who have studied the wanderer above the sea of fog:

Be what you are and accomplish what is in you the best way you can. But never forget that tomorrow you and this entire earthly world will decay and change. Fight incessantly. But do not forget that *every* life, even the most defective and criminal, needs love. No being can do more than fulfill himself, as much as soil, weather, and climate permit....Do you carry a burdened heritage? Good! Unburden your heritage. Your children will forgive you for being your parent’s child. Do not cheat your destiny but love it, and follow it until death. Take heart! Through all the hells of your human “I,” you always will return to the heaven of your eternal self, to your eternal people.

Lessing rejects the *Exile*, the 2000 year old home of homelessness, therefore necessarily rejecting Judaism. He rejects the gap of assimilation between Jew and Gentile, asserting in its place the internal gap.

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There is no Jewish question, no nation question: only the question of individuality and self-creation:

Am I more German or more Jewish? Am I both, or neither? We should grow and become fulfilled utilizing the potential with which we are born. If a country doesn't give you rights and wants to violate you, leave and live in another! *All* national questions are insoluble! But we must pose these questions ourselves. One day they will be solved, because in a few centuries these questions will not exist, as they do now.

No longer should the Jew trek the gap between Jew and German, Jew and mankind, particular and Universal. There is no God, there is no gap: the suffering continues to be for nothing *only* as long as the Jew continues to believe in God. Abandon all external processes of the collective and *apply the mission to yourself*. Bridge the gap between your self and yourself: between your self-hatred and self-pride: intergrate the opposition within you into a unity of *self*: become who you are:

All we can do is to decide to be what we are. That is the way it is here as well. For true healing, all the Jew needs is determination to be what he is. He may ponder over the "nationalities question" for another hundred, another thousand years, may read and write hundreds of thousands of more books...There are questions that never will and never can have a solution.

So let us determine to be what we are!

Lessing asserts that the Jews *must love their own fate*... That the bridge to be gapped is between self-contempt and self-pride, and that the end of the bridge is *self-determination: self-creation*. But the Jew's future is bound by his past: for the Jew to determine himself must he not have to abandon Judaism: abandon *himself*? If such a bridge is crossed, is the ghost not given up?

Gilman's preface of the text recapitulates Lessing's solution in clear terms:

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The subject of Jewish self-hate is just as cogent today as it was when the book was published ninety years ago. One need only observe the current divided, quarrelsome, and aggressive American political, journalistic, and progressive academic scene to observe examples of this phenomenon. And yet, the answer is so simple—authenticity, ‘Become what you are.’

Lessing’s book now appears as a message to himself: a message to a self-hating Jew *par excellence*, one who had a tragic share of Gentile betrayals. Of course, only he who has ventured into the jaws of the beast can understand it: only he who has peered into the abyss can recognize himself,

only he who endures the tension of the conflicting possibilities can really know what the decision is about; only he can know when the time is ripe for it to be made —Emil Fackenheim, “Jewish Existence and the Living God: The Religious Duty of Survival”

## Chapter 13

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### *The Catalyst of Zionism*

To backtrack a little, an internal paradox can be understood as the persistence of some unresolved contradiction: a meta-psychological black hole. A tension of opposites that generate energy towards a reconciliatory end: physical death or metaphysical death and rebirth. Reform Judaism and Orthodox Judaism both follow a contradiction sprung from the original with theoretical constructions of a conclusion projected out into the future (a reinterpretation of the Messianic ideal) in the hope that convergence, and therefore consistency, of the paradox will be resolved historically. The gap is wandered and yet to be crossed, but the fact that the gap is not yet crossed gives vitality to the continuance of crossing: one is a mountain climber until he reaches the peak: the energy continues to be generated, the flame continues to burn.

What happens if, as the process of *Bildung* continues for a post-enlightenment European society, Jews and Europeans *don't* converge? What happens if Jew and European, following this theoretical path, rather than converge or remain static, *diverge* from one another? And if divergence is the outcome, then at the locus of the process of regeneration, Germany, where the program is pursued with the greatest severity, would there not be the greatest divergence? The greatest *gap*

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between Jew and European, *Jew and German?* The greatest internal contradiction, the greatest generation of energy and pressure, and therefore the location of the most *immediate* answer, the *reconciliation?*

The Jew must preserve his botched life, from now until the end of time, according to the immutable laws of nature. But what if he cannot bear the status quo? How would you bear it, seeing all your weaknesses increased a thousandfold in the reflection of your environment? You cannot destroy the image by breaking the mirror into pieces. — Theodor Lessing

The Jewish mission has been given up, but the mission of assimilation that was once a constant rejuvenation is now a nihilism. What happens if the paradox persists, its projected historical conclusion forever vanishing into the setting hope of the horizon? What occurs *within* the assimilated European Jew, *the assimilated German Jew*, the Jew who is furthest on the path towards assimilation following the formula of regeneration, who realizes he is only further separated from the European? The Jew for whom the paradox is most internal and most severe? The Jew who has reached the event horizon of the paradox of assimilation?

[The German Jew] has to work with one hand to participate in the construction of a national culture while brandishing a weapon in the other hand—against Germans. It is a tragic constellation. Only he who feels this conflict with full force and nevertheless still decides to fight, in spite of it all and without further ado — he alone has the right to call himself an assimilated Jew... For those who cannot bear the difficulty of this situation and do not want to be baptized... — Samuel Lublinski, "A Last Word on the Jewish Question" (1901)

What happens when the Jew is no longer able to bear his self-hatred and unwilling to accept self-destruction or conversion? What happens when the paradox within the assimilated Jew collapses?

One must still have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star —  
Friedrich Nietzsche

The paradox of inverse assimilation leading to Jewish self-hatred formed through the singularity of the ideology of emancipation processualized by *Bildung* leads us the modern particularist ideology of Jewish nationalism. The true catalyst of Zionism, as it is commonly believed, was not the Dreyfus Affair. It was Friedrich Nietzsche.

Of course, the Dreyfus affair and what it stands for *is* significant: it is simply a main proposition of this text that without Nietzsche the *possibility* of Zionism would have never existed, no matter the forces of anti-semitism. If not Nietzsche, perhaps another character of historical necessity would have emerged in his place, giving an answer to the contradiction of the death of God in Europe, but as it is, the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche was *the* necessity in the development of the ideology of Zionism.

This necessity is simple; the paradox of inverse assimilation could *not* be overcome without Nietzsche, and specifically, without his transformation of the concept of *Bildung*. Where von Dohm, Goethe, Herder, and the Jewish Maskilim were proponents of *Bildung* as *regeneration*, and therefore *return*, Nietzsche was the catalyst of *Bildung* as *transformation*. As *rebirth*. The particular-universal paradox that had formed the unescapable chain of destiny for the natural and supernatural Jew was attached to both the body *and* spirit of the Jew. The only way to transcend this identity, to re-define oneself, to construct a new edifice, was through *self-destruction*. The Jew would have to *die* before he could become a Zionist...



## Chapter 14

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### *Nietzschean Bildung*

The Oxford Handbook of German philosophy relates the centrality of *Bildung* in Nietzsche's philosophy:

In this way, Nietzsche's philosophy is indeed a philosophy of *Bildung*: of a human being seeking to be itself—not as an alienated citizen of bourgeois culture, but as a being through which life, even when facing the ultimate finitude of all things human, affords celebration and affirmation. This notion of *Bildung* is meant to replace the idealism of Hegel and the German tradition. *Bildung* is an education to life and action, not to reflection and conceptual clarity. It does not aspire to individual and societal autonomy (which, for Nietzsche, is but another ideology), but seeks to spark a life that affirms itself through acts of strength and release of will. This becomes clear in Nietzsche's lectures on education. In these lectures, Nietzsche voices his disappointment with the academic field, but also bolsters his commitment to education, as the only possible cure to the lethargy of modern academia

Barbara Eva Zauli in "For a new *Bildung*: Nietzsche's critique between education and 'spirituality'" writes about the importance of *Bildung* in Nietzsche's work:

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Consequently, we understand that the task of dealing with the “matters of *Bildung*” acquires a privileged value for Nietzsche: it concerns the destiny of the human being and their relationship with other people and the world.

As an experience that remains partly inexplicable, education is considered by Nietzsche as the process through which a subject surpasses their normal state and reaches a superior one, that part of themselves that resists change. *Bildung*, in its authentic expression, is therefore primarily the human being’s struggle *against* their time, against what prevents them from being great at that moment in time.

When we consider the secular assimilated Jew in the late 19th century before the birth of Zionism, this last quote becomes quite profound. The liberal *Maskilim* asserted that Enlightenment *Bildung* was synonymous with the Pristine process of Judaism, but the *Grenzjuden* replaced the process of Judaism with the process of assimilation in line with the quid pro quo: *Bildung* was the path to assimilation. The messiah however, never arrived. The struggle between particular and universal is abandoned alongside God and in its place, the struggle between Jew and German, but this gave way to the internal contradiction between self-hatred and self-pride, one that the traditional formulation of *Bildung* oriented towards contemporary culture could not solve. *Bildung* itself had to be freed from its German presuppositions.

Nietzsche writes much about contradictions and any historian of his will know that in his concept of self-development, transformation into "who one is" is only enabled by *overcoming an internal contradiction*: the Hegelian dialectical method *is* the Nietzschean method of self-creation:

One is fruitful only at the cost of being rich in contradictions.

The wisest man would be the one richest in contradiction.

Man is the eternal ouroboros, constantly consuming himself to generate himself, constantly dying only to be *reborn*.

One of Nietzsche's most important parables in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is "The Three Metamorphoses", wherein he outlines the process of self-transformation/individualization for the individual into the highest possible form: the sovereign creator, or the child — the übermensch. In other words, bridging the gap between man and what man could become: the God-man: the individualized universal-particular.

The distinction between *Bildung* and the Enlightenment ideals is that *Bildung* exists as an active yet empty processual ideal whereas the Enlightenment ideals are static, passive, and full. That is to say, *Bildung* itself is not tied to the Enlightenment ideals in which it found its historic use, but rather, *exists solely as a process*. Rienhart Koselleck, who is widely considered to be one of the most important historians of the 20th century is correct in his understanding of *Bildung* as a self-referential processual state of being:

Bildung is thus a dynamic and self-critical concept. It is not a pre-given trajectory waiting to be fulfilled but rather a 'processual state that constantly and actively changes through reflexivity', both the process of producing as well as the result of having been produced. —  
Alexander Cook, *Representing Humanity in the Age of the Enlightenment*

Therefore, it naturally follows that if *Bildung* is unchained from the moral presuppositions of the Enlightenment and made to be *rooted in itself* — made into a *self-referential process* — the greatest and truest act of self-definition is possible: transformation into the *self-creator*, one who creates his own morality, his own faith, his own *identity*: pure and total "individualization," or as Nietzsche (and Lessing) would say "*becoming who you are*." One overcomes marginality, conformity, and all outside forces to become the sovereign Self, sustained by the energy generated by the internal ouroboros. Where the religious and Reform Jew believe that history is the unfolding process of *returning to God* through either the Messiah or the Messianic State, Nietzsche believes that, through the self-instantiated ideal of *Bildung*, history is the unfolding process of *man transforming into God*: man *becoming* the Messiah. *Man as his own Messiah* is the core of the Nietzschean

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message. Nietzsche, contrary to popular belief, considered Jesus to be an *ubermensch*.

Nietzsche's philosophy of the *ubermensch/Messiah* is a consequence of *taking Bildung to its logical conclusion*. Or in other words, a consequence of making the guiding ideal of *Bildung Bildung itself*, therefore constructing an infinitely recursive process of self-development that can only lead to one conclusion: man as the constantly self-overcoming self-creator: the Hegelian dialectical method in flesh leading towards one end: God. He, then, who is richest in contradictions is *richest in overcoming his self*. Where Christianity is God into man, *universal into particular*, Nietzsche is man into God, into *ubermensch*, *particular into universal*, enabled through Nietzsche's moral principle "will to power." Nietzsche is *the inversion of the Hegelian dialectic of Judaism*, but his philosophy is only possible once man has "cast off the anchor of God," when he thinks that he no longer needs to follow the moral presuppositions of "faith" and puts his faith in himself, or, in paradoxical terms, affirms the "faith to live without faith". The consequence of the death of the entity from which all Truth is derived is the relative void of truth, purpose, and meaning. Nietzsche, however, was not a nihilist: he *"overcame" the contradiction*. Man creates his own truth: man is his own God. This was his answer, one that falls prey to the very sword he used to cut down Christianity by way of the paradox of self-reference.

Nietzsche puts *faith* into being without faith; he makes subjectivity objective and perspectivism into the only perspective. The idea of man becoming God, in a humorous fashion, is what leads to the modern liberal ideologies of equality and freedom that Nietzsche was so critical of. The idea of man being his own God is *made into the truth*, and thus, all men must become their own masters, equal in their mastery over themselves and subservient to the moral dogma of self-creation: all men are equal gods. Subjectivity is made objective, and this is not to say that there is no objective truth, but rather that subjectivity itself is the objective truth.

John Richardson illuminates Nietzsche's concept of "becoming who one is"/individualization:

## *Nietzschean Bildung*

Nietzsche's idea of the self grounds it in our reflexivity or self-relation; to "be a self" is to be adequately reflexive...Our better self-understanding makes possible a fuller selfhood, one achieved by distinguishing oneself both from one's parts—one's drives and affects—and from the group of which one is part. It's by unifying one's drives (overcoming fragmentation) and individuating from one's herd (overcoming assimilation) that one becomes a full-fledged self. — *Nietzsche's Values*

For the Jew who is both an individual and collective unto himself, would individualization for the self not *necessarily require* individualization of the collective?

Nietzsche was greatly influenced by Goethe and his use of the concept of *Bildung*. From Nietzsche's best known aphorisms we discover the guiding principle of *Bildung* as central to his thought. Sayings such as "Become Who You Are," "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity," wherein he asserts that one becomes who one is precisely because of not only of who he isn't, but because of who one was. This love of one's fate for Nietzsche was based in the individual, but every Jew is both an individual and collective unto himself, and for him, fate stretches out for 3000 years. Destiny for the Jew includes all of history: redemption for him is *redemption for mankind*. Transformation for him is *transformation for his collective*. Where Nietzsche views history as the unfolding of the process of man becoming God, the Nietzschean Jew views history as the unfolding process of the Jewish collective becoming God...the *ubervolk*, instead of the *ubermensch*:

Ahad Ha'am, the founder of cultural Zionism, who tried to adopt Nietzsche's vision of the *übermensch* (superman) by thinking of the Jews as the *ubervolk* (superpeople) — Werner J. Dannhauser, Nietzsche: A Misreading, a review of *Nietzsche and Zion* by Jacob Golomb

This should not be surprising giving the Exilic posture towards the nation. Such a view is perfectly in line with the notion of the Jews, the Jewish collective and individual, as *chosen*, and the nature of the Jew as

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both an individual and collective, concretized as an eschatological consequence of the *Exile*.

We return to Lessing's fourth recourse, an essential repetition of Nietzsche's "Become who you are" and *amor fati* applied to the Jewish collective. The Nietzschean influence on his answer is clear, and so should we be surprised to find that *Lessing himself was a Nietzschean?* Jacob Golomb, the seminal worker in the field of Jews, Zionism, and Nietzsche, writes

Thus, for example, Theodor Lessing (1872–1933), a disciple of Nietzsche who dedicated several writings to his philosophy, wrote a comprehensive treatise on *Der Jüdische Selbsthass* (*Self Hating Jews*), which he tried to understand using Nietzschean concepts. In this book Lessing describes the Jews in the Diaspora as people who have been forced to live unnatural lives...Lessing claims, in language that is definitely Nietzschean, that in their internalized lives, as the result of external pressure and out of fear of their hostile surroundings, the Jews began to direct their spiritual resources against themselves, manifesting self-doubt, insecurity and self-torture. This agonizing state of affairs was so unbearable that they attempted to liberate themselves from it by despising anything that had to do with Judaism and Jewishness, especially themselves. Lessing ends his essay with a call to these Jews: "Sei was immer du bist." We should recall that the existential motto of Nietzsche's autobiography, *Ecce Homo*, which appears in its subtitle, is "Wie man wird, was man ist" ("How one becomes what one is"). In Nietzschean terms, Lessing is calling upon these Jews not to betray their fate, but to love it in the manner of *amor fati*, that is, not in the sense of resignation and passive submission to wretched conditions, but by accepting their genuine selves and approving their organic roots. Lessing calls upon them to reactivate their mental resources in courageous acts of self-overcoming with respect to whatever threatens this identity and authentic selfhood.

Let us be reminded of the element of persistence that enabled Jewish survival for 2000 years: *Messianic Hope*. For he who does not believe in God, there is no hope: merely despair. Imagine it if you are able. That

three thousand years of suffering was not for some glorious end or salvation, but for *nothing*. Certainly, for such a soul afflicted by the modern disease of nihilism, the words of Nietzsche would be a rejuvenating medicine of the highest order. Your past is burdened and full of suffering? Embrace it! Love it! Love your fate! Love the cross upon which you have been crucified, and move forward! The Hegelian dialectic is freed from the chains of history, if only ostensibly, and now, the individual sees a way out. *Bildung* is freed from its cultural ties, and now, the individual has a motor of movement out. The valley of the gap he had been wandering was an illusion of his own mind. There was no gap, there was no valley, there was no God and there *was no Exile*...but there was the wanderer, the wanderer who had made a home of wandering. What is a desert dweller without the desert? What is a Jew without Judaism? To some, the answer is nihilism. To others, it was *freedom*.

Lessing wrote a book titled *Nietzsche*, and it's clear that without Nietzsche's work, he would have likely persisted on the third recourse he outlined, conversion, or possibly met a similar fate to Otto Weininger. The rest of Lessing's study on self-hatred psychoanalyzes the lives of six other self-hating Jews, one of them Weininger, and I shall add a seventh: Theodor Herzl. The charismatic ideological architect of Zionism who reached the event horizon of the paradox of inverse assimilation and rather than take the nihilistic route of persistent self-hatred, through the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, *transformed himself*. Herzl overcomes the contradiction within him and is reborn into a *Zionist*.



## Chapter 15

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### *Theodor Herzl*

Some historians relate Herzl's life assuming that the seed of Zionism was present from his youth, therefore rendering all events through a presumption of Zionism, but this is an inaccuracy that fails to understand that Zionism was a result of Herzl's, alongside many other German and European Jews', failures to assimilate into German culture and overcome the negative view of both himself and his fatherland. This more accurate rendering enables an accurate reading of Herzl's life and provides a formula of the path to Zionism that many other assimilated European Jews shared. That *Zionism was the result of a failure to assimilate* is necessary to understand Herzl's life and his mental development. Zionism was a result of being unable to bridge the gap between Jew and German. It was the result of abandoning and therefore inverting the Jewish mission towards universality, necessarily forcing one of two actions: self-destruction or self-creation. The former is self-evident, and the latter an authentic act of creation enabled *only* through the philosophy of Nietzsche.

Herzl was the child of wealthy assimilated secular German speaking Jews. Born in Hungary, Herzl's family moved to Vienna after the death of his sister. Herzl, like the foundational legion of Zionism, was a secular and assimilated Jew raised by secular assimilated Jews: a *Gren-*

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*zjuden*. His attachment to and knowledge of Judaism were minute, Jewishness an inheritance from his parents and parents before them, nostalgia the guiding flame of identity. Herzl, who trekked perhaps further than any other Jew on the path of assimilation, possessed a certain disposition and poetic sensitivity that made the Jewish question an integral existential matter of *necessity* for him, and a confluence of events ensured that it would be him, not Leon Pinsker, Moses Hess, or any other assimilated Jew, that would transform history.

(Interestingly Pinsker — formerly a stalwart advocate of assimilation for Jews — after witnessing the pogroms of Russia and the anti-Jewish riots in Tsarist Russia in 1881, wrote *Auto-Emancipation* in 1882, an outline of the path towards a Jewish State over a decade before Herzl. He wrote on the Jewish problem as the problem of assimilation and provided a national answer:

The essence of the problem, as we see it, consists in the fact that, in the midst of the nations amongst whom the Jews reside, they form a heterogeneous element which cannot be assimilated.

They are everywhere in evidence, and nowhere at home

The international Jewish Question must receive a national solution.

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It is certainly true that Herzl fits the mold of those who were “more German than the Germans,” clearly following in the quid pro quo of assimilation. In his university years Herzl was part of a German nationalist fraternity, *Albia*, that he would eventually leave due to an increased and irreconcilable posture of anti-semitism present among the growing nationalist cause, and this duality of German and Jew was to be the central contradiction of Herzl’s existence. Jacques Kornberg relates Herzl’s ambivalence as a Jew in *From Assimilation to Zionism*:

All these represented modes of assimilation and Herzl’s effort to distance himself from Jewish traits. Assimilationism also spilled over into Jewish self-contempt, displayed by his disdain for wealthy Vien-

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nese Jews and for East European Jews. At the same time, Herzl's assimilationism and Jewish self-effacement clashed with his residual Jewish pride and loyalty. During the 1880s and early 1890s, such tensions were kept in a tolerable balance, while Herzl pursued Austro-German assimilation with all the enthusiasm and devotion of a lover as yet unspurned.

Herzl's time in *Albia* propounded the external influences of assimilation and the internal projections of German honor lead to a deepening Jewish self-contempt:

Herzl's flight from the taint of Jewish cowardliness, his daydreams about bold Norman knights, enables us to deepen our understanding of the attraction *Albia* held for him. The *Albia* ideal stressed physical strength and an "Aryan" appearance: slim, blond good looks, a dashing mustache, the requisite dueling scar, an erect soldierly bearing, and physical suppleness and power...*Albia*'s ideal offered Herzl a model of behavior that was the antithesis of Jewish traits.

The importance of the duel of honor was to be an integral element of Herzl's identity and eventual construction of Zionism, and his self-contempt, a tragically common occurrence among German Jews, was to be slung onto the Jews around him:

Herzl employed mockery to distance himself from other Jews. He laughed at Polish Jews' ineptitude with German; how they pronounced Vaslau as Wesslau and Feeslau. Herzl called them "Polish Jews from Polacki," a pejorative term for Poland, which was also termed the land of the "Polacks." Similarly, in the humorous epic cited earlier for a *Leseballe* drinking session, Herzl had mocked the family names of fellow Jewish students. The poem was written to be read out loud. One of the names he mocked — Abeles — was the maiden name of his own maternal Hungarian grandmother....Later on, when he became a Zionist, Herzl was to castigate such mockery as "self-ridicule," a hallmark of Jewish self-disdain.

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It was this disdain for Jewish traits that made Herzl an assimilationist and German nationalist in his early years, his own views reflecting the lachrymose view of Judaism:

Herzl believed Jewry was plagued with faults and vices, the outcome of persecution, and that Judaism was retrograde, the result of centuries long isolation imposed by Christians. The remedy was the absorption of the Jews into European states and societies. Herzl's starting point was a negative view of Jewry; his solution was radical assimilation.

The following decades in Herzl's life represent the development of the internal contradiction of self-pride and self-contempt that would eventually lead to a Hegelian synthesis. He no longer believed in Judaism theologically, yet could not betray his fathers through baptism. Since there was no Jewish mission for Herzl beyond the program of assimilation, a program projected upon him by Christians, the process of development towards synthesis between Jew and German would be his mission. It was this oscillation between Jew and German that would become the guiding principle of his purgatory-like wanderer existence until Zionism:

Throughout the 1880s and into the early 1890s, Herzl's attitude of mild vacillation between his Jewishness and assimilation remained constant. Then, in the space of several years, he experienced a gradual inner transformation that led him to Zionism. His Zionism was not, as many believe, the result of a single event, a prophetic response to the unexpected shock of the Dreyfus trial in France in December 1894. Rather, it was the culmination of a long-term inner struggle that began as early as 1892, as Herzl responded to the spectacular rise of anti-semitism in Austria.

If all Herzl had felt was the need to shed Jewish traits, he probably would never have ended up a Zionist. But he vacillated between Jewish pride and self-contempt, between wishing for the submergence of Jewry in Europe and loyalty to his Jewish origins, between feeling distance and kinship to Jews....Herzl's particular Jewish problem was

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the coexistence of Jewish self-disdain with an exacting sense of loyalty to his Jewish origins.

Having abandoned belief in Judaism, indeed no longer respecting, let alone observing its practices, Herzl still celebrated Jewish martyrdom as a heroic struggle against insuperable odds and prided himself on the unparalleled history of Jewish survival and continuity amidst the wholesale disappearance of other ancient peoples. Pride in Jewish steadfastness was a counter-theme to the pervasive notion of Jewish cowardice.

In Herzl's eyes, the very fact of the Jewish people was a heroic triumph in and of itself. This resolute faith in the Maccabean persistence of Jews enabled him to rationalize a station of honor for Jews beside Germans when the dominant narrative had placed Jews in a place of cowardice and greed. The question individually and collectively for Herzl was, "How exactly would the Jew *reclaim* his primordial honor?"

Herzl would persist in the contradiction and like Pinkser, Lessing, Weininger, Jacobowski, and many other German and European Jews, his subconsciousness and consciousness constantly searching for a solution. Before developing Zionism, he envisioned the same initial answer to the Jewish problem that both Lessing and Weininger had taken: conversion:

The conversion was to take place in broad daylight, Sundays at noon in St. Stephen's Cathedral, with a solemn procession and the ringing of bells. Not furtively, the way individual Jews had gone about it until then, but in dignified pride. And because the leaders would take their people only up to the gates of the church while themselves remaining Jews, the whole enterprise would attain a level of great sincerity. We who stood firm would have marked the last generation, still clinging to the faith of our fore fathers. But we wanted to make Christians of our young sons before they reached the age of reason, at which point conversion smacks of cowardice. As usual, I had worked out the entire plan down to the most minute detail. In my mind's eye I already saw

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myself dealing with the Archbishop of Vienna, facing the Pope — both of whom regretted my decision to remain with the Jews — and bringing to the world this message of racial fusion. — Herzl's Diaries

In this vision, Herzl saw both a future for the Jews *and* a retention of his Jewish honor. Here was a path through which he could salvage a future for the Jewish collective without having to betray his forefathers, yet such a solution was never to be enacted.

Eventually, Herzl was to relegate assimilation to an impossibility, necessitating a new plan of action for a solution:

Herzl was all the more devastated by antisemitism in Vienna because of his ambivalence toward both assimilation and his Jewishness. Jews were Viennese to their fingertips; they were "natives" who had "shared in the sorrows and joys of the nation." Now they were being cast out. In shock and rage, Herzl recoiled from assimilation, one pole of his ambivalence, even hastily declaring Jewish emancipation a "failure. But there was nowhere else for him to turn, for Jewishness too, the other pole of his ambivalence, was no option.

The only possibility remaining was *transformation*. We return to the quote from Golomb:

To these *Grenzjuden* (marginal Jews) or "stepchildren" belonged prominent Western European Jewish intellectuals such as Else Lasker-Schiller, Arthur Schnitzler, Jakob Wassermann, Stefan Zweig, Franz Kafka, Franz Werfel, Kurt Tucholsky, Walter Benjamin, Carl Sternheim, Karl Kraus, Ernst Toller, Gustav Mahler, Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, and many others. They were *Grenzjuden* in that they had lost their religion and traditions, but had not been fully absorbed into secular German or Austrian society. For some, hatred of their ancestral roots led to self-destruction and breakdown. These doubly marginal individuals tragically lacked an identity: they rejected any affinity with the Jewish community but were nonetheless unwelcome among their non-Jewish contemporaries. Jakob Wassermann penetratingly describes them from within as "religiously and

socially speaking floating in the air. They no longer had the old faith; they refused to accept a new one, that is to say, Christianity...the physical ghetto has become a mental and moral one...

Herzl, suffering from the internal psychic torment of self-hatred, seeing no answer in assimilation nor Judaism, was to develop an *authentic* answer as a result of the internal paradox. Inspired by Nietzsche, both knowingly and unknowingly, he found the sparks of resolution to this contradiction that inspired and were articulated in his play *The New Ghetto*, an articulation of that *Grenzjuden* ghetto created as a result of the paradox of inverse assimilation: the *Ghetto of Self-hatred*. Written in 1894 in a period of seventeen markedly euphoric days, Herzl finished the play ten days before the news of the arrest of Alfred Dreyfus broke. Like Jacobowski and Goethe who used the fictional medium as a cathartic process to expunge from themselves an agonizing contradiction, *The New Ghetto* would come to represent Herzl's solution to the Jewish problem and the paradox imploding within him: it would come to represent the process of Herzl's *rebirth*, the means through which he would escape the internal Ghetto of Self-Hatred into freedom: *The New Ghetto* is the beginning of the arrival of the Messiah.

In the play Herzl utilized the Dohmian perspective that the Jew after two millennia of persecution and oppression had been deformed and deteriorated, and the protagonist, clearly a representation of Herzl himself, embodied the image of the assimilated and self-hating Jew *par excellence*. The play is, according to Hess,

about a member of the assimilated Viennese-Jewish middle class, Jacob Samuel, overcoming gentile rejection and Jewish self-contempt. Its drama is inward, psychological, centering upon issues of Jewish psychic dependence and self-esteem. The story is Herzl's own, as he worked through the contradictions of his earlier proposals and arrived at a new understanding of Jewishness.

And it ends, in pseudo-Wertherian fashion, with the death of the protagonist as a result of the irreconcilable contradiction between Jew

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and German. Hess relates a synopsis of the play:

Jacob himself is the archetypal assimilated Jew. But while assimilation into gentile society has eliminated his Jewish faults and improved him, it has also divested him of self-respect and plagued him with Jewish self-contempt and self-recrimination. After he is shattered by gentile rejection, Jacob realizes that he lacks settled self-esteem, and this is the beginning of his transformation.

Jacob has fulfilled all the prescriptions for assimilation found in pro emancipationist novels and favored by Herzl himself throughout the 1880s. Like Bernhard Ehrenthal in Gustav Freytag's *Debit and Credit*, Jacob is a paragon of rectitude, ashamed of the materialism of his coreligionists. He aspires to integrate fully into the gentile milieu and has gained the affection of a gentile friend.

Jacob measures his humanity by his distance from the ghetto. He is ashamed of being a Jew. He is more at ease with Gentiles than he is with Jews. When the rabbi who officiated at the wedding declares, "we have survived with our ancient virtues intact," Jacob counters, "and our ancient vices." Jacob's mother informs Hermine that she abandoned Yiddish and learned to speak German so Jacob would not be ashamed of her (though she still calls him by the Yiddish diminutive Koht). Even more telling, in the first draft of the play, Herzl has Jacob say that Hermine will add "a new infusion to our blood...she looks Christian. I hope our children resemble her." Jacob's ideal of physical beauty is Germanic; Jewish features he considers ugly, outward signs of the stigma of Jewishness.

Herzl, like many other assimilated Jews, idealizes German virtues and castigates Jewish vices: his life represents the bridging of the gap of assimilation. At the end of the novel, after dueling for his honor with a Gentile, Jacob exclaims to his Jewish brethren with his dying breath,

Jews, my brothers, they will not let you live again, until you learn how to die! I want to get out! Out of the Ghetto! — *The New Ghetto*

The conclusion reflects Herzl's realization that *assimilation was impossible*. That only death can bring new life. And this realization can only occur at the event horizon of the paradox:

Herzl now believed that assimilation made it impossible for Jews to drain the cup of self-contempt. Holding a negative view of Jewish traits and an idealized image of gentile traits, Jews started out with a presumption of their own inferiority. Hence serene self-confidence was forever unattainable; self-doubt and inner recriminations were ever present.

But though the sting of rejection brings pain, it also leads Jacob to the hard-won insight that assimilation has made Jews incapable of an autonomous act of self-definition and self-affirmation

Here, at the event horizon, Herzl is able to make the decision of *transformation*, self-definition, only possible in the secular age when Messianic hope died alongside God:

For the pre-modern Jew this problem did not exist. He was faced with no serious difficulties of self-interpretation. He believed himself to have once met the living God, and to be committed to this meeting until the Messianic hope would be fulfilled. But what if God did not live, that is, relate Himself to persons and peoples? What if He was a mere cosmic entity dwelling in infinite and impartial remoteness? Or perhaps did not exist at all? What if all the supposed experiences of divine presence had been so many illusions? The moment the living God became questionable Jewish existence became questionable. The Jew had to embark on the weary business of self-definition. This business was weary because no definition would fit. — Emil Fackenheim

What is the Jew without Judaism? Religious Jews retain the hope for the Messiah, Reform Jews retain hope in the Jewish mission as a secular earthly paradise of equality and freedom, but for the Jew who is out of *Exile* but still in his own *Exile*, who no longer lives in the ghetto but has found *himself* to be the ghetto, what option remains? To escape

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the *Exile*, to escape the ghetto, to escape himself, one must *escape Judaism*.

Often, and this is clear to any writer, writing itself reveals itself as the process through which a deep ungraspable internal truth is articulated. The process of writing can reveal to an author a truth within him that had been hitherto out of reach. Or perhaps, it isn't that the truth is *grasped*, but that it is *created*, the elements of such a creation likely unknown to the creator themselves, only recognizable in reflective hindsight. The forces of necessity and creative fervor coalesce to produce an *authentic act*:

Only he who endures the tension of the conflicting possibilities can really know what the decision is about; only he can know when the time is ripe for it to be made. But what will the decision be? And when will the time be ripe for it to be made? This cannot be known in advance. — Emil Fackenheim

Herzl is a historical representation of the *Hegelian-Jewish dialectical method in flesh* for the problem of Jewish assimilation beginning with the *Exile*, the inversion of the process of synthesis from university to particularity/individuality only made possible by Nietzsche, the inverter of Christianity.

Although Hess provides an in-depth study of Herzl's play, he was unable to relate it to its origins in the ideology of emancipation — the self-hatred as a consequence of the program of regeneration constructed by Jews themselves as well as the Messianic element of historical survival. He did not realize that the ideology of emancipation would necessarily lead to the construction of the internal Ghetto of Self-hatred which was the New Ghetto Herzl wrote about. *The New Ghetto is the paradox of inverse assimilation itself*, the contradiction between Jew and European born from the secular attitude following the emancipation of the Jews and the construction of the paradox of inverse assimilation by those very same Jews as a means of retaining Judaism. It is the consequence of the program of regeneration, the internal prison of the Jew who is no longer a Jew nor a German: who is

merely *on the road*. Towards where though? Does the road lead to conversion and therefore Jesus? To the Messiah? But God is dead, so the road is *material*. Then, is it towards self-destruction and suicide like Otto? What material option of salvation exists? Is there a universality? Or was universality the hubris of an ethnic group that had confused fate with destiny? We return to the quote from Samuel Lublinski, now in full:

[The GermanJew] has to work with one hand to participate in the construction of a national culture while brandishing a weapon in the other hand—against Germans. It is a tragic constellation. Only he who feels this conflict with full force and nevertheless still decides to fight, in spite of it all and without further ado—he alone has the right to call himself an assimilated Jew.... For those who cannot bear the difficulty of this situation and do not want to be baptized, Zionism is the only solution. -Samuel Lublinski, "A Last Word on the Jewish Question" (1901)

(Interesting, Lublinski himself eventually rejected Zionism to return to advocating for assimilation, and himself was subject to a scathing literary attack by Lessing —)

Herzl's famous quote appears to us as the path towards salvation from the paradox for the natural Jew:

Zionism is the Jewish people on the road — Jacob Golomb, *Nietzsche and Zion*

The process of writing *The New Ghetto* was transformative in itself for Herzl. It was through this creative expungement that he transformed himself, overcoming himself and the paradox of assimilation that defined him. It was through writing *The New Ghetto* that Herzl envisioned a *way out of it*, a way out of himself. The New Ghetto is indeed a consequence of the paradox of inverse assimilation, but we must remember that that paradox is a consequence of the *Exile*. Samuel tells his Jewish brethren that they must die before they can live: that the Jew must transform himself: *that the Jew must be reborn*. These dying

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words of the character of Samuel so similar to Herzl are the basis for what Herzl proceeds to call "*The New Jew*." That is to say, for Herzl to become a Zionist, *he needed to defeat Judaism and the Exile*. The guiding principles of Jewish existence towards universality were the same principles that had relegated them to a ghetto of their own design. We receive the Weininger quote on Jewish transformation with newfound profundity:

To defeat Judaism, the Jew must first understand himself and war against himself. So far, the Jew has reached no further than to make and enjoy jokes against his own peculiarities. Unconsciously he respects the Aryan more than himself. Only steady resolution, united to the highest self-respect, can free the Jew from Jewishness. This resolution, be it ever so strong, ever so honorable, can only be understood and carried out by the individual, not by the group. Therefore the Jewish question can only be solved individually ; every single Jew must try to solve it in his proper person.

If it is the case that the Jew must war against himself to defeat Judaism, then the question emerges, *what is the outcome of such a war?* We return to Lessing's four recourses, and clearly, Herzl, in Platonic fashion, took the fourth option:

But he who wants to do great things must first conquer himself.

— *Theodor Herzl's Diaries*, June 15th, 1895

Man is something that shall be overcome. Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman — a rope over an abyss. What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end. — Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

## Chapter 16

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### *Thus Spoke Herzl*

What happened, my brothers? I overcame myself, my suffering self, I carried my own ashes to the mountain, I invented a brighter flame for myself and behold! The ghost *shrank* from me! — Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

The paradox of Judaism is that it maintains fidelity to the founding violent Event precisely by *not* confessing—symbolizing it: this 'repressed' status of the Event is what gives Judaism its unprecedented vitality; it is what enabled the Jews to persist and survive for thousands of years without land or a common institutional tradition. In short, the Jews did not *give up the ghost*; they survived all their ordeals precisely because they refused to *give up their ghost*, to cut off the link to their secret, disavowed tradition. — Slavoj Zizek

Zionism, as envisioned by Herzl (Zionism, like the Jew and Judaism, has changed throughout time) was the answer to the paradox of inverse assimilation beginning with the ideology of emancipation developed from the lachrymose view. The lachrymose view was a *necessity* for Zionism, as well as Reform and Orthodox Judaism, to become a possibility. Only with the view that the Jew and Judaism had been deformed does Zionism emerge as the method of rejuvenation:

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only after the Jew has been emptied can he be filled, only after he has died can he be *reborn*. Only with a *negation* of the *Exile* can a *return* be affirmed. Lawrence Baron confirms this view in his study of Lessing:

That Zionism was compatible with Lessing's harping on the unsoundness of European Jewish life is not surprising either. After all, the Zionist stress on the normalization and regeneration of the Jews presupposed their degeneration in the Diaspora. German Zionists often acknowledged the validity of negative Jewish stereotypes to buttress their call for a Jewish State. In her study of German-Jewish identity in the Weimar Republic, Ruth Pierson correctly observes:

'The Zionist picture of the 'old Jew', of the Jew in need of rejuvenation, had many points in common with the Germanvolkisch stereotype of the Jew — over-developed intellectually, under-developed physically, rootless, remote from nature.'

Kornberg also affirms this exact sentiment:

Herzl's program of Jewish self-transformation came to be fully realized in his idea of a Jewish state. Zionism was the final phase in Herzl's long-time search for a new autonomous mode of Jewish assimilation.

Herzl did not envision Zionism as a theological state, but rather, as a place for Jews to finish the process of synthesis between Jew and German without the influences of anti-semitism: a place where Judaism would finally be abandoned for mankind:

Everything came together for him in the notion of the Jewish state, all those aims that before had seemed so irresolvable: eliminating Jewish defects through emancipation and assimilation, thus remaking Jews on the gentile model; the attainment of Jewish pride and self-respect; making Jews independent, masters of their fate; finally, gaining honor in the eyes of Gentiles. Through Zionism, Herzl resolved his ambivalence both about his Jewishness and about Austro-German assimilation, a conflict which had entangled his aims in contradictions. Herzl had thus sought a proud mass Jewish conversion to Christianity, Jewish

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adherence to revolutionary socialism, and duels against antisemites. That is, he sought both Jewish honor and the submergence of Jewry into European culture and society. In *The New Ghetto* Herzl moved to a resolution of these conflicts by redefining Jewishness in terms of assimilationist models. Henceforth there was to be no conflict at all between assimilation and Jewishness, for they had become one and the same. Finally, through statehood, Jews could realize the goals of emancipation and assimilation by themselves, overcome their defects, hence rid themselves of the stigma of Jewishness, gain in Jewish pride, become their own masters, and at the same time win gentile acceptance and respect by their new dignified, self-assertive stance. Relieved of his shame about Jewishness and finding a route to Jewish pride unburdened Herzl, gave him clarity and direction, a sense of mission, the source of his charisma as a Jewish leader.

If the European view of Jewish defects had fostered Herzl's Jewish self-contempt, Zionism was Herzl's way of resolving this self-contempt, for it would create a new Jew. — Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl, From Assimilation to Zionism*

Only through rejuvenation could Jews *return* to the honor of the *New Jew*, and this rejuvenation was radicalized into an act of *collective self-definition* by the work of Nietzsche. *The New Ghetto*, and therefore Zionism, *would not have been possible without Nietzsche*. The notions of self-definition, transformation, dying before transforming — being reborn — into something new, “*the New Jew*”, all possess a Nietzschean hue — and therefore Christian (and therefore Jewish) —, and so clear and self-evident is this influence that numerous books and articles have been written on the topic, most notably *Nietzsche and Zion* by Jacob Golomb.

Golomb writes about the Nietzschean influence Herzl's transformation into a Zionist, recapitulating the thoughts of the aforementioned Jewish writers:

It is therefore possible to delineate Nietzsche's impact upon Herzl according to Herzl's existential stages of assimilation, marginality, and

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Zionist identity. If we adopt Nietzsche's formula for authenticity, then Herzl "becomes what he is" by overcoming what he is not: neither an Orthodox Jew, nor a Christian, nor, finally, a marginal Jew. He overcame these potential identities until he became what he wanted to be: a free secular Zionist and an authentically creative Jew, who proudly belonged to his people according to his own definition of the Jewish nation in *Der Judenstaat*: 'a historic group with unmistakable characteristics common to us all.'

During that period, Herzl found many aspects of Nietzsche conducive to his aspirations. He and other early Zionists realized that they were torn between their secular aspirations and their own Jewish religious tradition. As a result, they could not form harmonious selves; and, living on the margins of all identities, neither could they feel authentic. Sensitive and proud, Herzl could not bear such a schizophrenic existence. Assimilation brought him only to a dead end. His inability to reject his Jewish origins altogether, his unwillingness to return to the "Old Ghetto" with its Orthodox Jewish lore, and above all his proud rejection of the fact that he did not belong on equal terms within gentile Viennese society had a destructive potential (as the suicide of Otto Weininger, among others, testified) and drove him to find a solution.

*Das Neue Ghetto* expressed Herzl's realization that assimilation was an illusion, and that the Jews' estrangement from themselves was fruitless. The play's conclusion is that European Jews should authentically shape a new image of the Jew who is proud of his or her historical past but will not necessarily express this identity by observing the traditional religious rites.

Jacob, like Nietzsche's Zarathustra, strives to create new norms and values. He seeks to form the "moral element" and embarks upon the journey of self overcoming by "overcoming" his old marginal self. He no longer wishes to live passively within gentile history but prefers to initiate a new history of his own making

"Thus spoke Herzl":

### *Thus Spoke Herzl*

The play does not propose a way out of the "New Ghetto." Jacob's final sentence before his heroic death in the duel ends in ellipsis, and the outcome is destructive for someone who has dared to soar like an eagle above the walls of the "New Ghetto." For Herzl, this negation of a negation pointed to a concrete solution: the land in which the values according to which Jacob aspired to live were originally manifested and genuinely invented for the first time. The journey toward personal authenticity will also include negative ramifications, according to Nietzsche's well-known statement: 'If a temple is to be erected, a temple must be destroyed' (GMII- 24). Interestingly, Herzl used almost the same version in *Der Judenstaat*. 'If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct'

The negation of the negation is *ultimate* return: what is being negated is not merely Jewish self-contempt, but Judaism itself.

To overcome the agonies of such a marginality is for Herzl already a positive way out that will lead him to the third and more constructive stage of liberation of his self: Zionism.

Zionism, as envisioned by Herzl, would foster the emergence of a new and unique (that is, authentic) image of the Jew in a society without God, dogmas, or "isms." This anti-dogmatic and Nietzschean libertarianism was sometimes narrowly regarded by Herzl's historians as shrewd pragmatism.

The building Herzl had to destroy before he could construct Zionism was *Judaism itself*, for it is from this historical edifice that the *New Ghetto* of self-hatred had been self-constructed. As Judaism is an integral part of the Jewish identity, the Jew himself then is the building that must be demolished (die) and rebuilt (reborn): the supernatural Jew must die for the natural Jew to exist. It is clear that what had prevented Zionism for 2000 years even with fact that the Nation of Israel is a central element of Jewish thought and eschatology was *Jewish dogma itself*. The passive belief in the coming Messiah alongside scripture and tradition (the Three Oaths) that would *return* the Jews to Israel and rebuild the

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Second Temple ensured that Zionism, the achievement of the Messianic mission through the material strength of *human will*, would *never occur*. Abandoning the dogma, scripture, and God of Judaism was a *necessity* to overcoming it. The Zionists necessarily had to give up the process of Judaism — the particular to universal paradox — and thus constructed an inverted mission. Where the eschatology of the Exile points towards a universality of the world, the inverted eschatology of Zionism points *back* to the Maccabean past of the Jew, the nationhood past of the Jew: where Judaism seeks the Universal-Particular, Zionism inverts the process of progress with return, seeking the *Particular*-Universal.

The New (solely natural) Jew could only be born after the old (natural *and* supernatural) Jew had died. Without the secularization of the Jew as a consequence of emancipation and assimilation, there would be no Theodor Herzl nor New Ghetto. It is for this reason that Herzl believed that Nietzsche's New Man would be preceded by the New Jew. As Weininger said, "for he who triumphs over the deepest doubt reaches the highest faith ; he who has raised himself above the most desolate negation is most sure in his position of affirmation." Those who have only read the titles of Nietzsche's works do not know that Nietzsche considered Jesus to be an *ubermensch*.

It is because Zionism had to destroy Judaism that many Orthodox Jews, aside from the branch of Religious Zionism (a hasty ideologization of Judaism) and Modern Orthodoxy (which blends secular life and Jewish tradition), are by and large *anti-Zionist*. Neturei Karta, a group of Orthodox Haredi Jews,

believe the Jewish people are strictly forbidden from re-establishing sovereignty in the Land of Israel until the arrival of the Messiah. To this end, the group's members believe that the existence of a Jewish state is a rebellion against God as it did not occur with divine intervention through the Messiah.

Zionists necessarily rejected God and Jewish scripture and viewed Judaism materially and historically, accepting the lachrymose view that,

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in line with Nietzsche's belief of "That which does not kill us makes us stronger," conferred upon the Jews the *strongest* attributes:

The Jews, however, are beyond all doubt the strongest, toughest, and purest race at present living in Europe, they know how to succeed even under the worst conditions (in fact better than under favorable ones), by means of virtues of some sort, which one would like nowadays to label as vices — *Beyond Good and Evil*

This view is what enabled Herzl to have pride in his Jewish heritage albeit the degenerative era of the *Exile*:

Similarly, Herzl offered a new understanding of the course of Jewish history. Centuries of Diaspora life were now viewed as an aberration, and a merely interrupted Jewish political sovereignty as the norm. Jews were now to regard themselves as a nation that had endured a two thousand-year period of captivity. During these centuries, Jewish culture had become isolated and stagnant, while Jews became pariahs, stigmatized and scorned. As such, Herzl believed — and this reflected his own experience — Jews had come to scorn themselves, to consider being Jewish a taint. A modern state would bridge twenty centuries of passivity, isolation, and self-contempt and link Jews once more with their heroic past, the ancient era of Jewish kingdoms. Of course, Herzl highlighted the political — not the religious — virtues of the ancient Hebrews.

Herzl's deepest obsession was with Jewish honor. — Jacques Kornberg, *From Assimilation to Zionism*

But Zionism is itself still steeped in theological eschatology, a negation of Judaism.

To continue with Golomb's *Nietzsche and Zion*:

But examining the father of political Zionism through the Nietzschean prism reveals him as the pioneer of a historic experiment of fostering personal authenticity by creating it for the whole nation.

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This perspective shows that *Der Judenstaat* was not written solely as a reaction to the failures of emancipation and assimilation, but also as an attempt to provide a constructive solution to the syndrome of marginality that at the individual level was the most hideous symptom of this failure.

Golomb hits the mark with the concluding sentence. Zionism was both a response to self-hatred, the consequence of the paradox of inverse assimilation, and a *new* solution to it.

Central to Zionism, like Reform and Orthodox Judaism, is the idea of *return*. Not a return to God or to the ideals of tolerance and equality of ideological Judaism, but a return to *ethnic honor*, a return to self-respect, *a return to humanity*:

as Herzl, the herald of Jewish authenticity, claims: 'The very act of going this way will change us into different people. We regain once more our inner unity that we have lost and together with it we also gain a definite character, namely our own, not the false and adopted character of the *marranos*'

Lessing himself echoes this very same sentiment of stripping the supernatural for autonomous existence as the natural Jew:

We don't want (as our great minds do) to be the "salt of the earth." We want to be a human among humans, to fulfill ourselves simply, like a tree does.

Herzl applies the ideal of *Bildung* to himself, and therefore the Jewish collective, and rather than using it to progress deeper and deeper into the paradox of inverse assimilation and self-hatred, he liberates the ideal from its European *and* Jewish anchors and uses it self-referentially to transform himself into a Zionist, constructing Zionism as a procedural ideology: the method through which the Jew (singular and plural) will regain his pre-exilic honor and return to his monumental Maccabean past: the method through which the Jew will become

*Thus Spoke Herzl*

*human once more.* Thus Herzl makes Zionism into a *rope over the abyss* of the Jewish history of suffering *and* self-hatred:

Thus Herzl adopts the attitude expressed in most of Nietzsche's writing, that the way is the goal...This existential insight is expressed politically by Herzl's famous claim: 'Zionism is the Jewish people on the road.'

Through his own transformation he had become "the man who makes aniline dyes out of refuse," for he would remake Jews, the "refuse of human society," into "new men"...Herzl saw his personal transformation as a model for the collective transformation of the Jews. — Kornberg

Man is something that shall be overcome. Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman — a rope over an abyss. What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end. — Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

We shall not revert to a lower stage, we shall rise to a higher one. — Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*

A dangerous crossing, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and standing still. What is great about human beings is that they are a bridge and not a purpose: what is lovable about human beings is that they are a *crossing over* and a *going under*. I love those who do not know how to live unless by going under, for they are the ones who cross over. — Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

Nietzsche's influence on Herzl exists beyond merely literary connections:

Most of the books from Herzl's private library in Vienna are now located in Jerusalem, in the Central Zionist Archives and in the Herzl Museum. Even a cursory glance discloses Herzl's preference for philosophy in general and Nietzsche in particular. Almost all of Nietzsche's works are

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to be found here, and their expensive leather bindings suggest the owner's willingness to invest significantly in Nietzsche's writings. In addition, references and quotations in Herzl's own diaries, letters, and other writings provide copious testimony to his knowledge of Nietzsche.

It is significant, too, that under Herzl's editorship, seven consecutive issues of the *Neue Freie Presse* were dedicated to obituaries of Nietzsche. A telling remark about Nietzsche appeared in the final sentence of Herzl's essay "Frankreich im Jahre 1891" "However, the 'European man,' the new type that Nietzsche sees coming closer and closer to us, is still a very remote figure." The Nietzschean ideal of the "new European man" is close to Herzl's ideal of the "new Jew," and the resemblance between these types should not surprise us. Neither should Herzl's belief that the "new man" was more likely to materialize as the "new Jew" in Zion, namely as the creative and authentic Jew who, like the Nietzschean *Übermensch*, would become the father of his own destiny and would freely shape the course of his life and the history of his people. — Jacob Golomb, *Nietzsche and Zion*

Herzl took Nietzsche's will to power and creed of self-transformation to overcome the paradox of assimilation, the contradiction between merging assimilation and regeneration — self-hatred — burgeoning within him as well as many others like him during the time in which the paradox of emancipationist ideology could no longer be overlooked with theoretical resolutions and idealism, and rather than continue to "regenerate" himself — persist on the path of self-hatred like Weininger or Jacobowski — he *transformed himself*. In escaping the New Ghetto, Herzl escaped himself. But as the Jew is eternally *both singular and plural*, when he applies will-to-power to himself, *he applies it to the collective: Zionism*. Zionism becomes the road upon which the Jewish people overcome their past and become *New: Zionism is the will to power applied to the Jewish collective*.

Zionism is the method through which Jews *return* to humanity. The jumping of the system of nation-states that had given survivalist credence to the supernatural Jew was not a *transcendental* action towards the universal, but rather a plunge into the abyss of meaning-

less suffering. *Galut* is rejected. Without God, the Jew is not suffering for the sake of mankind, but rather, *just suffering*. The natural Jew, unable to follow this path of meaningless suffering, this Judaic nihilism, *overcomes it* in true Nietzschean fashion, abandoning Judaism and the particular-universal process. Self-hatred and guilt inverted the mission of galut from the collective to the individual: from the universal to the particular. The only *Exile* is one's exile from self: Zionism is the process of extinguishing Judaism and the eschatological vitality of the *Exile*. The *Exile* itself is the ghost: the Zionist is the Jew who has *given up the ghost*, the Jew who has extinguished Judaism. Zionism is what is left when the smoke has cleared.

Beyond just Herzl, Golomb asserts an inseparable link between the Zionist movement as a whole and Nietzsche:

When seen through a Nietzschean prism, therefore, the current historiography of the Zionist movement must undergo a significant revision.

Many Zionists aside from Herzl were profoundly influenced by Nietzsche, and in line with my proposition, they must have been: Zionism as a whole would not be possible without Nietzsche:

Still, the four leading figures of the Zionist movement and Hebrew culture discussed so far were atheists. The first two — Herzl and Nordau — were born into Western-Jewish acculturated families and therefore manifested from the very beginning the syndromes of existential marginality that, among other things, led to a suppression or even a complete obliteration of any traces of Jewish religiousness. Their Eastern counterparts — Berdichevski and Ahad Ha'am — though raised in Jewish Orthodox surroundings, disregarded religious lore relatively early in their lives. Thus it is hardly surprising that all four of them were quite attracted to the German "slayer" of all gods and idols.

Werner J. Dannhauser writes in a review of Golomb's work:

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Here is Herzl, whose sheer decency and political genius is not altogether well served by Golomb's psychologizing, and who in his novel *Altneuland* gave the Zionist movement a motto that smacks of Nietzsche's influence: "If you will it, it is no dream." Here is Nordau, deserving of Golomb's strictures for writing *Degeneration*, which tried to prove that Nietzsche did not succumb to insanity but was *always* crazy. Here is Berdichevski, a tormented but curiously attractive soul. Here is Ahad Ha'am, the founder of cultural Zionism, who tried to adopt Nietzsche's vision of the *üermensch* (superman) by thinking of the Jews as the *üervolk* (superpeople). Here is Buber, probably more celebrated by non-Jews than Jews, whom Golomb depicts fairly in all his brilliance and murkiness. And here is Zeitlin, who managed to return from the influence of Nietzsche to traditional Judaism, a return not easy once one has succumbed to Nietzsche's overwhelming genius.

## Chapter 17

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### *Zionism*

Now that we understand the ideological and theological ferment from which Zionism arose, a formal understanding of the movement and its historical development is necessary. According to the Oxford dictionary, Zionism is “a movement for (originally) the re-establishment and (now) the development and protection of a Jewish nation in what is now Israel.” It is important to understand a number of historical nuances regarding Zionism. Firstly, Zionism is ideologically in line with the Reform view of the state developed from the Dohmian ideology of emancipation, only with an inversion from universality as the end of the synthesis to particularity. The ideology of emancipation gave the state a Messianic status as the deliverer of freedom, but, as assimilation appeared to be a necessary element of true emancipation, the German State was unable to fulfill this deliverance. If the German State could not truly free the Jews, then the Jewish State would:

Herzl's preferred agency for Jewish self-transformation became the Jewish state, not only because he believed Jews should rule themselves, but because his view of Jewry was influenced by European emancipationist ideology. The notion that Jewish faults stemmed from their

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exclusion from the political sphere and could be cured by full citizenship was a keystone of this ideology. As we saw earlier, Christian Dohm had attributed Jewish vices to the loss "of the possibility of obtaining civil honors and of serving the common fatherland." In this sense, Jewish decline was blamed on their statelessness.

Herzl now concluded that if antisemitism barred Jews from improvement through the state, only a state of their own would make Jewish improvement possible. — Kornberg

Secondly, "Jewish State" is imprecise: Zionism creates a *state of Jews*, not a *Jewish State*:

To counteract tendencies to religious fanaticism, religion would merely serve the state by emphasizing a common heritage uniting Jews and by teaching moral virtue. Beyond that, "We shall know how to restrict them [rabbis] to their temples." Civic peace and good relations with other states demanded state control over religion. — Kornberg

This Zionist promise of natural freedom was received by many German Jews that shared in the psychological torment of self-hatred with an almost religious feeling of salvation: *Zionism was the Messiah of Freedom that would deliver them from the ghetto of Judaism in exile*:

...Zionism provided this generation, fully as assimilated as Herzl, a basis for renewed pride in their Jewish origins. For them, Jewish self-affirmation was by itself a major achievement, which found its chief outlet and expression in working for a Jewish state. In [Stephen] Poppers account these Zionists experienced a "fundamental and sweeping reorientation of personality and identity" akin to a religious conversion. Typically, one young German Jew described himself as having been rescued from "anomie, rootlessness, and pallid aestheticism" through Zionism.

*Zionism replaces Judaism: negation as affirmation:*

In Popper's account, Zionists such as Richard Lichtheim, Max Bodenheimer, Adolf Friedemann, described themselves moving suddenly from inner slavery to freedom. Hannah Arendt has characterized this feeling of inner liberation as a restored sense of personal honor and a break with "hollow pretenses." Some seem to have endured the same conflicts as Herzl in an age of rising antisemitism, torn between assimilation, Jewish self-disdain, and the pull of Jewish loyalty and solidarity. Lacking an attachment to Judaism, unsteeped in Jewish culture, they found in political Zionism a basis for Jewish self-affirmation. The change was most succinctly put by Adolf Friedemann, a colleague and biographer of Herzl: "Zionism reconciles us with ourselves." Equally significant was Richard Lichtheim's declaration: "[Zionism] created a new problem—the question of the content of a Judaism that ... had to enter into the family of nations anew<sup>1</sup>. But that was not so important to begin with as the consciousness of belonging to the Jewish people, and the manly bearing that was a consequence. It was a matter of affirming myself and thereby becoming free... — Kornberg

Nothing was more characteristic of this than the copy of Heinrich Heine's poem "The New Israelite Hospital in Hamburg," found among Herzl's notes of the early 1890s. Agitated over rising antisemitism, he had copied it down. Heine described the hospital in the poem as treating three maladies: "poverty, physical pain, and Jewishness / The last named is the worst of all the three:/ That thousand-year-old family complaint." In S. S. Prawer's recent sensitive analysis of the poem, the malady of Jewishness had a two-fold meaning for Heine: both that Jews had endured profound suffering at the hands of Gentiles, and that Jewishness itself was a defect, a sickness. It is no wonder the poem appealed to Herzl, for Heine was expressing ambivalent feelings familiar to him: both intense loyalty to a history of victimization and martyrdom —notwithstanding Heine's view of Judaism as—"the unhealthy faith from ancient Egypt" —and Jewish self-disdain. Not only did Herzl copy the poem down, but he later entitled a Zionist article after a key phrase "The Family Affliction." He had found in

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i. Zionism would enable Jews to *jump* back into the system of nation-states

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Zionism the cure for both afflictions: Jewish victimization and the defect of Jewishness.

Freedom from the New Ghetto of self-hatred: the gap not only is not bridged, but the quest for the bridge is abandoned: humility is replaced with honor:

Martin Buber once said of Herzl that "He joined the ranks of active Jewishness not out of Jewishness, but out of a manly solidarity. Herzl had devised a new definition of Jewishness, purely national and political, providing him with a basis for Jewish pride and self-respect, and confirming a new solidarity with the Jewish nation. What he offered assimilated Jews like himself was nothing more, but nothing less than inner liberation from feelings of Jewish inferiority and ambivalence, and thereby a new direction in their lives. — Kornberg

To reiterate from the previous section, Herzl's Zionism was not meant to *preserve* Jewish culture and Judaism, but rather, to provide a place where *assimilation/regeneration would continue* without internal feelings of self-contempt projected from existing as a minority in foreign nations:

Jews would no longer be a minority, subject to invidious stereotyping by host peoples, but a sovereign majority, able to define themselves: "The Promised Land, where it is all right for us to have hooked noses, black or red beards, and bandy legs without being despised for these things alone..."

Herzl envisaged the Jewish state as a multinational federation on the Swiss model, where Jews would perpetuate their European host cultures and languages and German would be the lingua franca: "The language in every confederated province to accord with the local majority. No Hebrew state — a state of Jews, where it is no disgrace to be a Jew...In this light, the commonly used English title The Jewish State for *Der Judenstaat* is a misnomer. The correct translation of *Judenstaat* is a state of Jews, or a Jews' state, not a Jewish state. The goal of the state was to continue the project of assimilation, but under Jewish self-rule, as peers of Gentiles.

Negation of the *Exile*:

The aim of Zionism was to end centuries of Jewish isolation, the misery of being scorned outsiders. Reviving Jewish cultural distinctiveness meant recreating a "monstrous ghetto" once more. Still tied to his European matrix, Herzl was forging a new destiny for Jews as honored Europeans.

The process of synthesis between Jew and Gentile is retained but made all the more impossible:

The purpose of the Jewish departure from Europe and of statehood was to reconcile Jews and Gentiles, not to renounce Europe but to identify with it, not to emphasize differences between Jews and Gentiles, but to eliminate them.

Such reconciliation was not possible in Europe. The continued treatment of European Jews as guests and second-class citizens only perpetuated Jewish faults. Denied social status, Jews chased after money; gentile disdain and Jewish insecurity promoted Jewish timidity, servility, and self-contempt. The existing psychological ghetto — though now without physical walls — still fostered clannishness and cut Jews off from participation in wider human struggles. — Kornberg

Such reconciliation may or may not have been possible, but how can an Israelite become a German? The problem of nation only gives rise to the ancient model of conflict prior to the Hegelian model of synthesis.

Herzl's Zionism aimed to create a state through which Jews would become *more European than the Europeans*, and in this respect, it is arguable that he succeeded fantastically. Naturally, Herzl fully accepted Europe's views on Jews as he himself shared them: self-hatred wasn't overcome, merely *projected outward*.

As former outsiders, Herzl concluded in *The Jewish State*, Jews had climbed too high. No majority would grant to "a minority that was but

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recently despised" the social legitimacy and access to political authority commensurate with the economic standing of the Jews. Herzl judged this entirely reasonable. In his diary he insisted that one could not expect a majority to "let themselves be subjugated" by formerly scorned outsiders whom they had just released from the ghetto. Herzl could go so far as to state: "I find that the anti-Semites are fully within their rights." This rational explanation of antisemitism was central to Herzl's conception of Zionism, which was premised on the ultimate gentile acceptance of Jews, once they ceased being an irritant in Europe. — Kornberg

The anti-semitic rejection of Judaism necessarily implied a rejection of the Diaspora, for no longer was the *galut* theologically true: no longer would the Jew have to suffer for mankind: *Negation of the Diaspora: shlilat hagalut.*

"Eliminate the Diaspora, or the Diaspora will surely eliminate you." — Ze'ev Jabotinsky

Jabotinsky, a leader of Revisionist Zionism (a form of Zionism that has main objective of territory maximization), recapitulates the Zionist view of Jewish rebirth into the New Jew:

Only after removing the dust accumulated through two thousand years of exile, of *galut*, will the true, authentic Hebrew character reveal its glorious head. Only then shall we be able to say: This is a typical Hebrew, in every sense of the word.

To imagine what a true Hebrew is, to picture his image in our minds, we have no example from which to draw. Instead, we must use the method of *ipcha mistavra* (Aramaic for deriving something from its opposite): We take as our starting point the *Yid* (used here as pejorative for Jew) of today, and try to imagine in our minds his exact opposite. Let us erase from that picture all the personality traits that are so typical of a *Yid*, and let us insert into it all the desirable traits whose absence is so typical in him. Because the *Yid* is ugly, sickly, and lacks handsomeness (הדרת פנים) we shall endow the ideal image of the

Hebrew with masculine beauty, stature, massive shoulders, vigorous movements, bright colors, and shades of color. The *Yid* is frightened and downtrodden; the Hebrew ought to be proud and independent. The *Yid* is disgusting to all; the Hebrew should charm all. The *Yid* has accepted submission; the Hebrew ought to know how to command. The *Yid* likes to hide with bated breath from the eyes of strangers; the Hebrew, with brazenness and greatness, should march ahead to the entire world, look them straight and deep in their eyes and hoist them his banner: "I am a Hebrew."

— Amnon Rubenstein, *From Herzl to Rabin* (Rubenstein was an Israeli legal scholar, politician who was considered the "founding father of Israeli Constitutional Law")

For Jabotinsky, this liberated Hebrew of the future was Herzl. Zionists affirmed the lachrymose view: it was a *necessity for them*. The Exile had to be cast as the degenerative era of statelessness that only a politic of nationhood could resolve and restore. In other words, self-hatred was the catalyst of transformation from the old Jew into the new Hebrew: self-hatred founded Zionism:

Yehezkel Kaufmann has demonstrated that even Zionism, the movement of Jewish national pride, is not free of self-hatred. Zionism, he maintains, "actually based the national movement on a rationale of charges that it took over from the antisemites and sought to justify hatred of the Jews: the Galut or Diaspora Jews, in the countries to which they have been dispersed, really deserve to be hated . . . Therefore they must leave the Diaspora.

Herzl's breakthrough was both a modification and an extension of the program of assimilation. He was turning to an idea central to Dohm's classic case for Jewish emancipation and assimilation: that Jews had deteriorated because they were oppressed, restricted in their occupations, and excluded from participation in the state. Dohm had observed that when Jews possessed a kingdom in biblical times, they had enjoyed a "golden age," displayed physical courage in war, and valued honor and patriotic loyalty. Once brought into full participation

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in the modern state, Jews would rediscover their original character. — Kornberg

The old Diaspora Jew would die and in his place the new Hebrew of Israel would be born:

The message was loud and clear: The Hebrew, the new superJew, represents everything that has traditionally been associated with the Gentiles, the goyim, the other side. In contrast, the dominant traits of the Diaspora Jew, our "miserable stepbrother," to use David Ben-Gurion's phrase, were to be discarded. — Amnon Rubenstein, *From Herzl to Rabin*

Ben-Gurion was the first prime minister of the State of Israel and naturally he shared in the degenerated view of Judaism. For Ben-Gurion, the diaspora Jew would forever remain a diaspora Jew as long as he held on to Judaism. Therefore, Judaism had to be discarded. Yeshayahu Leibowitz, a prolific scholar of Jewish thought, held Ben-Gurion "to have hated Judaism more than any other man he had met." (Michael Prior, *Zionism and the State of Israel*)

The Diaspora would have to be negated to free the natural Jew from his supernatural slavery: to free the Jew from Judaism:

For Zionists the "negation of the Diaspora" became an absolute imperative. Jews could realize emancipation's promise of true equality through collective "auto-emancipation" in their own land. They would regenerate through occupational diversification ("the conquest of labor"), especially agriculture and manual labor. They would stage a cultural renaissance in the Hebrew language. In contrast to the "assimilated" diaspora Jew, Zionism would produce a healthy and muscular, proud and self-confident "Hebrew." While Zionism drew symbolically on Judaism's messianic tradition, it borrowed much of its substance from emancipation's discourse of regeneration.

If it was the Diaspora that had degenerated the Jew then the Negation of the Diaspora would *regenerate* him. Emancipation was to be won not

through regeneration into assimilation, but through *regeneration into nationalism*. The process was inverted so that particularity rather than universality was the aim. Rather than the will-to-power asserted through Judaism, the particular-universal mission, the will-to-power would be asserted through the Jew: the supernatural Jew dies to give birth to the natural Jew: Judaism dies to give birth to Zionism, and this is why *self-hatred* was required. *Amor fati* does not lead to Zionism: *odium fati* does. Zionism is the inversion of Judaism.

Sorkin provides summarizing commentary on Zionism as the response to the failures of emancipation and assimilation:

The new ideologies generated a new language to depict emancipation's allegedly pernicious impact. They coined and cultivated the term "assimilation" to denigrate emancipation's putative destruction of religious and communal life. They deemed emancipation a twofold failure. Within, it ruined Judaism and the Jews ("assimilation"); without, it evoked the new adversary of anti-Semitism.

Zionism was a late nineteenth-century, post-emancipation version of nationalism. Its founders and leaders denounced emancipation as a colossal failure. Herzl thought it the cause of anti-Semitism: "In the principal countries where Anti-Semitism prevails, it does so as a result of the emancipation of the Jews." Emancipation was therefore self-defeating: the anti-Semitism it provoked rendered equality a "dead letter." Moreover, in Zionists' eyes emancipation destroyed Jewish nationhood by forcibly reducing Judaism to a mere confession. In consequence, "assimilation" triumphed in the form of defection and conversion, indifference and ignorance. Under the constant scrutiny of governments and public opinion, emancipated Jewry's life was tantamount to "slavery within freedom."

Zionism was the natural conclusion of the encounter of a Jew undergoing the internal contradiction of the paradox of assimilation—unable to become what he is not, a European or a Jew, and unable to

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develop the resigned resolve to continue on the paradoxical path that the liberal Jews affirmed — with Nietzsche:

Thus, what attracted the most influential Zionist leaders and the first modern Hebrew writers to Nietzsche attracted them to Zionism as well — so much so that Zionism was for them the natural continuation of their fertile encounter with Nietzsche.

This natural continuation led to the construction of an ideology of return that was received as *salvation* into *true* freedom, a freedom won *internally*:

All of them, most notably Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau, suffered from what is now customarily labeled ‘the syndrome of marginality.’

What Golomb calls the syndrome of marginality is simply the paradox of inverse assimilation born from the Dohmian lachrymose view of regeneration as the solution to Jewish emancipation. Certainly, all minorities are marginalized by nature of their existence and emancipatory efforts often engender much of their political and civic activity, but the European, or Ashkenazi, Jew is in a separate category not only from these minorities, but from the other ethnic branches of Jews such as the Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews. Consequently, only three presidents among the ranks of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the modern state of Israel have not been of Ashkenazi descent despite the population of Israel being 55% Sephardic. An ethnic hierarchy within the State of Israel a consequence of the transformation of the Ashkenazi Jew:

In its first half century Israel shaped one citizenship regime and transitioned to a second. The Labor Party and Histadrut had introduced and institutionalized a system of stratification: Ashkenazim as first-class citizens, Mizrahim and women as second-class citizens, Palestinian Israelis as third-class citizens, and the inequality of non-Orthodox Judaism. The advent of unfettered capitalism, a burgeoning civil society, and a nascent constitution in the form of Basic Laws rein-

forced, rather than removed, the “ethnic hierarchy. — *Jewish Emancipation*, David Sorkin

This however is to be expected: Zionism was born among secular “assimilated”/self-hating Ashkenazi Jews because of the synthesis of various European influences and events, particularly within the sphere of German thought, and therefore it is only natural that its greatest supporters and proponents are descended from those closest to the event horizon of the paradox. No individual can escape himself, and implicated in *becoming who you are* is development from the necessity of *who you were*. Zionism is not simple nationalism. It is Jewish nationalism, implicit with all the history, blood, and spirit that implies. Herzl is not independent of his environment: he, as we all are, was inextricably bound to it. Can a plant escape the soil upon which it is planted? From a different perspective then, Herzl did not *transform* himself, but *became exactly who he was meant to become*. This is to say that the natural chemical synthesis of the events, ideologies, and actions of German Jews in emancipationist Germany *necessarily* resulted in Zionism: or in other words, *they could have resulted in nothing else*. Zionism cannot be torn from its German *and* Jewish soil, and in order to understand how it has grown, one must understand how it was conceived. As Yehezkel Kaufmann observed:

We have inherited this disease of Jewish self-hatred from the Enlightenment.

Ironically, Herzl had the same goal in mind as the German anti-semites: the separation of Jew from Judaism in order to assimilate the Jew not only to Europe, but mankind. The Zionists were often just as, if not more, antisemitic than their German counterparts. To demonstrate this and their weaponization of anti-semitism, particularly in the projection of the Zionist’s own feelings of self-hatred onto other Jews who did not agree with Zionism, are Herzl’s own words:

If the European view of Jewish defects had fostered Herzl’s Jewish self-contempt, Zionism was Herzl’s way of resolving this self-

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contempt, for it would create a new Jew. But there were many Jews who stubbornly resisted self-transformation through Zionism, and Herzl's Jewish self-contempt was now concentrated exclusively on them. Accordingly, he once referred to Albert Rothschild, the head of the Austrian branch of the family, as a "Jew-boy." He called anti-Zionist opponents "Jewish vermin," employing the German word *Schindlinge*, which also means parasite, a common anti-Jewish epithet.

In his article "*Mauschel*," Herzl's fury at anti-Zionist opponents took him even further. *Mauschel* was, of course, a German anti-Jewish epithet; Herzl's portrait was an antisemite's dream. *Mauschel* was "unspeakably low and repugnant," "crafty profit seekers," pursuing "dirty deals." Self-preservation and money were all that moved *Mauschel*. His emotions were crude and base. Ordinary pain became in him "miserable fright"; he "cringes...Ignominiously" in adversity. He was a stranger to beauty and to higher loyalties, pursuing art and knowledge and displaying patriotism only for profit. Toward *Mauschel* Herzl offered not kinship but distance, not pity but contempt, not a situational explanation of Jewish deficiencies, but surprisingly, a quasi-racial one. *Mauschel*'s traits were not just the survivalist stratagems of the oppressed, rather 'at some dark moment in our history some inferior human material got into our unfortunate people and blended with it.'

Herzl insisted there had always been two sorts of Jews in the world, the *Jew*, and *Mauschel*. His distinction was modeled on the emancipationist novel, of which Freytag's *Debit and Credit* was an example. Herzl's version of the *Jew* was a replica of the honorable Bernhard Ehrenthal; the base Veitel Itzig was the model for *Mauschel*. Herzl's version of the *Jew* was later embodied in Jacob Samuel, *Mauschel* in Fritz Rheinberg. Now, the *Jew* was the Zionist, *Mauschel* the anti-Zionist. Through statehood, Herzl believed, *Mauschel* would become merely a sorry left-over of an earlier epoch and no longer the embodiment of the Jewish essence. — Kornberg

To momentarily remain with this concept of weaponization of self-hatred, the method of silencing Jews who disagree with Zionism

persists to this day. The epithet “self-hating Jew” is slung around by Zionists with almost the same veracity and vitriol that an American liberal slings around accusations of “white supremacy” and “nazism” for those who are not in absolute agreement with their ideologies. Although merely navigating this topic lends license to extremist accusations of anti-semitism, it’s one of necessity:

Roger Berkowitz has a book review of *On the Origins of Jewish Self-Hatred* by Paul Reitter in *Bookforum*:

From Sigmund Freud to Theodor Herzl, from Alexander Portnoy to Alvy Singer, the stereotypical self-hating Jew is someone who despises his difference and yearns to assimilate. Today, the label has an added political connotation, as Jews who criticize Israel are frequently branded as self-hating. The California-based radical-Zionist website masada2000 offers a list of more than 8,000 "Self-Hating Israel-Threatening" Jews—or "S.H.I.T. Jews" as it labels them. Masada2000 names Rabbi Michael Lerner, Woody Allen, and Noam Chomsky as Jews who "know the Truth but hate their heritage to such a degree that nothing else matters to them except bashing Israel right out of existence." It is rare for a Jewish intellectual to escape accusations of self-hatred.

Indeed it is rare. Roger Berkowitz is the founder and academic director of the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities and Professor of Politics, Philosophy, and Human Rights at Bard College, and this website is still accessible today, its list only continuing to grow. With the controversial geo-political events in the Middle East that have been ongoing since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the accusations of self-hatred, especially from those Jews who hold financial, academic, and political power in the West and Israel, will only continue to be leveled onto other Jews. However, don’t misunderstand what the context behind such a modern accusation is. No longer is it an accusation that finds credence in genuine feelings of self-hatred, such as those within Herzl, but rather, is a political weapon used against those Jews who don’t align politically with Zionism: the weapon a projection of the attacker’s greatest insecurity. Verily, the

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entire population of Orthodox Jews that vehemently disagree with Zionism, the staunchest retainers of Judaic tradition and history, are, in this perspective, paradoxically the most self-hating Jews. Though, this accusation is almost never leveled to an Orthodox Jew: its arena is secular. (There are religious Jews that are Zionist, yet this necessarily and self-evidently requires doublethink.)

To continue, as Herzl's Zionism was focused on an assertion of the *natural* Jew, he theorized the Jewish state as the vehicle through which the modern "degenerated" Jew, the religious and materially oriented Jew, would regain his Jewish honor and *true* Jewish essence. The process of the *Exile* generates the theological energy towards the universal and the process is over once the *Exile* is over. In other words, Zionism *was* a conclusion of the Jewish process of universalism: universalism would be achieved, but for solely the *particular*.

The statist posture towards redemption for both Reform Jews and Zionists is a necessary element of the confluence. Only within the ferment of the *Aufklarung* which inverted the role of man and state could the state be theorized in such a manner, and only due to the theological adjacency to statism present within Judaism could this chemical reaction occur. Where the Bible treats every soul as eternal and therefore relegates the state beneath the individual, the age of secularity inverts this relation; if there is no soul, then the hegemonic state is of infinite moral value. What consequence is the sacrifice of a life, or a thousand, or a million, in the face of the continuation of the political vehicle through which man can reach God?

Where Reform Judaism retains a pseudo-theological (ideological) basis of religious life with the retention of the Messianic vocation, Zionism exists as a *rejection* of all that is supernatural about the Jew, affirming only the historical narrative, finding salvation in undoing the *Exile*, in establishing a state of Jews and reaffirming the worldly promised land for the Jewish ethnic group, therefore naturally ending the supernatural vitality of the *Exile*. Jewish theology is relegated to superstition and moral connective fiber, and Jews *jump* back into the system of nation-states. Both Reform Judaism and Zionism, however, assert a statist posture towards their ideological goals, this due to the meta-

historical nature of the *Exile* and the statist foundation of the *Aufklärung*. Reform Judaism aims to find the Universal-particular and Zionism has *already* established the particular-universal in the State of Israel.

The necessity of the confluence of the events in post-emancipation Germany — the lachrymose view, quid pro quo view of emancipation, *Bildung*, *Aufklärung*, German Statism (Hegelianism), Judaic Statism, paradox of inverse assimilation, rationalization/secularization of Judaism, bourgeoisieification of the Jewish population, self-hatred as a consequence of the paradox, Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah), Jewish mission, Jewish conversion, Nietzsche, etc — all gave birth to Reform Judaism (Judaism as a secular vocation: return to the Universal State), Conservative Judaism (Reform Judaism but two steps behind), Orthodox Judaism (return to God), and Zionism. The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 is the most impactful event in Jewish history since the year 70: it is the end of the new beginning; the redemption of the original sin of the *Exile*. But since it is an event predicated on *negating* the primordial event, it is an *inversion* of that event. Zionism is the inversion of the *Exile* and thus the inversion of Judaism.

The gap between man and God is made into the gap between Jew and Gentile, but, for the Jewish mind, neither gap had been bridged nor could they ever be. God did not exist, and the *Exile* was just a historical tragedy. The methodology of bridge making would be replaced with the methodology of nation making: Jews would jump back into the nation-state model and return to history. Jews would return to mankind: Jews would become goy:

Normality means the redemption of the individual as well as the normalization of the people. The Return to Zion is coupled with a metamorphosis of the Jew into a new man. The Jew would become a "goy" in the double meaning that this word has in Hebrew, signifying both "Gentile" and "nation." Once this rebirth takes place, the traumas of the past will be forgotten. To be a goy means to be healthy; healthy nations, healthy people are not obsessed with issues of existence and survival. Moshe Leib Lilienblum, one of the founders of the

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pre-Herzlian "Lovers of Zion" movement in Russia, indicated the dimensions of this transition: If the Jews are going to be a normal goy (nation), they should know how such normal goyim behave.

Upon this diagnosis, Herzl wrote his prescription for the Jewish illness, and his remedy is captivating in its simplicity: The new Jews will establish an exemplary society characterized by tolerance and social justice, and they shall not forget "the ways of the world." They shall acquire the same international habits and customs that enable the world to have "English hotels in Egypt and on Swiss mountain tops, Viennese cafés in South Africa, French theaters in Russia, German operas in America, and the world's best Bavarian beer in Paris."

The Jews, in short, will finally become true Europeans.

— Amnon Rubenstein *From Herzl to Rabin*

Modern Judaism begins with the *Exile* and ends with Zionism. The inability of the process to reach synthesis resulted in the inversion of the process. But an inversion of an inversion cannot give life to that which has died: *the Jews cannot return to the Exile*. The nation of Israel is the Particular-Universal, but the liberation that Zionists gained would not free them from the central paradox: it could only invert its methodology.

Although Zionism provided salvation to the *natural* Jew, it abandoned the supernatural nature to self-destruction by ending the *Exile*:

The vitality of Jewish culture is to be measured by the intensity with which it undertakes *galut* (Exile) as a cultural demand; indeed, as the living of its messianic vocation — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Zionism, through extinguishing the Exile, *inverts* Judaism. Negation of the diaspora is improper: Zionism is the *inversion of the diaspora*. Self-hatred transformed hope into despair, and the consequence is that the Jewish mission is inverted from positive particularity into the

Universal Particular to negative particularity into the Particular-Universal.

The Jew remained a member of history, withstanding the forces of assimilation, conversion, and persecution without nation due to his intertwining ethno-theology. But without Judaism, without theology, what is the Jew? Zionism resolves the inability of Jewish assimilation by severing from the Jewish identity the element that prevented assimilation: Jewish theology. To be treated as solely a natural being negates the very reason for unassimilability. The posture towards the particular-universal mission, as evidenced by Reform Judaism, could persist naturally — ethnically — even with a rejection of metaphysical theology (God), but it could not be sustained if the event giving ideological historical vitality to the mission was negated. But the Jew is bound to his supernatural destiny, even if he feels he has escaped it. Curiously however, Zionism does not *extinguish* Judaism, but rather, *invert it*. Zionism could not escape from Judaism: it is merely the other end of the circle. Where Judaism traverses *positive* particularity towards universality, Zionism traverses *negative* particularity towards universality. As long as the Jew exists, the paradox exists, even if it is cast in ideological rather than theological terms. The current events of the West are a testament to this truth.

The paradox of inverse assimilation still holds true for Zionism, but now it is only in the state of Jews. The Zionist has no responsibility to project universality upon the world: his concern is solely with his own people. Universality is retained but directed solely towards the particular. The assimilated secular Jew who rejected assimilation *still believed in the values of the Enlightenment*: only now, the posture is towards *particularity* rather than universality. That is to say, Zionism did not negate the belief that the values of the Enlightenment and Judaism were synonymous, but only belief in Judaism itself, insofar as this belief restricted the pursuit of Zionism and enforced the *Exile*.

The ideals of the Enlightenment were universal — they negated the traditional nationalism and superstitious dogmatism of the past — yet Zionism was to be both a representative of these ideals while also ideologically rooted in the very particularism these ideals were meant to

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overcome. In other words, it is equality but only for the few. It is freedom but only for the few. It is Israel, but only for the Jews. The paradox was discovered/recapitulated by Max Nordau, another Zionist profoundly influenced by Nietzsche:

But Zionism could not base itself solely on the Enlightenment since it was a particularist movement. From the perspective of the Enlightenment it had too many religious and tribal components. For this reason, Nordau's attempt to overcome his split identity by means of Zionism eventually failed, since it fostered another unbearable tension in place of the original one: the tension between the Enlightenment and Zionism. — Golomb, *Nietzsche and Zion*

If the Jew truly to be the vehicle of the universal ideals of tolerance, diversity, and equality present within the Enlightenment and therefore Pristine Judaism, and if it is within the nation of Israel that the Jew will be fully regenerated into the paragon of these values — into the height of *Bildung* that had been deterred by the forces of antisemitism in Europe —, then how can he live in a state that so equivocally and totally rejects the logic of these values? That *inverts* these values? The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel was approved by the Jewish People's Council on May 14, 1948, and it affirms the lachrymose view that Judaism and the ideals of the Enlightenment are synonymous, yet explicitly restricts these universalist ideals to solely people of ethnically Jewish descent:

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Equality for all religions, races, sexes, languages, educations, and cultures — *as long as you are ethnically Jewish*. The contradiction is immediate and bewildering. The very idea of tolerance regarding the stranger present within Biblical Judaism gave way to the promise of Jewish emancipation in the West and America, yet the Jewish State, while adopting the values of the Enlightenment, unequivocally denies this universality. Zionism faces the inverted particular-universal paradox: the universal-particular paradox. If it is to be the Messiah who *consummates* the former, then it must also be the Messiah who *destroys* the latter: Zionists Jews and Reform/Liberal Jews are necessarily ideological-theological opposites:

“[Ben Gurion] to have hated Judaism more than any other man he had met” — Michael Prior, *Zionism and the State of Israel*

The crisis for Nordau was never solved:

Nordau's last words, as reported by his family, were quite touching: ‘I missed my life.’ This personal confession indicates Nordau's sober awareness that he had failed in the Nietzschean mission of self-overcoming in his case, of overcoming his sense of marginality: not Zionism and not even the Enlightenment assisted him in this formidable existential task. The greater Nordau's failure, the stronger became his ambivalence toward Nietzsche.

Where the particular-universal paradox reaches consistency when the universal is achieved for all particulars, the universal-particular paradox reaches consistency when the universal is achieved for *only one particular*: the Nation of Israel. The treatment of the Palestinians by the State of Israel makes explicit the answer to the very same *Minority Question* that the Nazis asked:

After the War of Independence, the state imposed martial law on the country's approximately 156,000 Palestinian Israelis, curtailing their civil rights for almost two decades (1948–66). The citizenship law (1953) deprived almost two-thirds of Palestinians (100,000) of auto-

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matic citizenship, requiring them to apply and swear an oath of allegiance to the state. The state pursued a “divide and rule” policy: it politicized Druze, Bedouins, and Christians, depoliticized Muslims, and criminalized political behavior. The state consistently discriminated against Palestinian Israelis across the broad range of social services, including municipal funding, planning permits, education, health care, and child allowances. The Orr Commission (September 1, 2003) officially recognized state discrimination.

Government policies systematically deprived Palestinian Israelis of land. In 1949 Jews owned 13.5 percent of the land; by 1960 the state and the Jewish National Fund owned 93 percent. By 2000 Palestinian Israelis, who constituted almost 20 percent of the population, owned 3.5 percent of the state’s land. They faced major difficulties in establishing new settlements and in receiving building permits in existing ones. From 1975 to 2000 less than 0.3 percent of the public housing units built were designated for the Palestinian Israeli population (fewer than 1,000 of 337,000 units).

Palestinian Israelis were consistently the poorest group in Israel. Martial law (1948–66) prevented them from competing in the labor market. A high degree of regional concentration and residential segregation continued to limit employment opportunities, educational options, and health care. In 2010 more than half lived below the poverty line. Arab men earned 60 percent of the average national wage, Arab women 70 percent. Although educational attainment rose substantially for all Israelis, Palestinian Israelis remained at the bottom of the ‘ethnic hierarchy.’

Some 15 to 20 percent of the Palestinian Israelis are in fact “internally displaced persons” or “present absentees” (*nifkadim nobahim*): people who left, or were forced from, their original homes (1948) and then resettled elsewhere in Israel. Most of the present absentees wished to return to their original villages. The Law of Absentee Property (1950) deprived them of their land and legal recourse. The Citizenship Law (1953) required them to apply for citizenship. Israel confiscated much of their land and awarded it to Jewish settlements. The Land Acquisition Law (1953) validated the transfer of ownership to the state. The

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present absentees who received housing in new villages had to renounce claims to assets in their villages of origin. Despite the Declaration of Independence's promise of "full and equal citizenship and representation in all [the state's] bodies and institutions," Palestinian Israelis have never had full political representation. No Palestinian Israeli political party has been included in a government coalition; no Palestinian Israeli has held a ministerial portfolio.

— *Jewish Emancipation*, David Sorkin

What is the ultimate answer by the Zionists to the Palestinian Question? Western public recognition of the issue has drastically increased since October 7th due to the inability for Western political groups to censor Twitter and TikTok, but for decades the actions of the Israeli government have been censored heavily by Western media. Jewish intellectuals, however, have derided the Zionist treatment of the Palestinians for decades and, in line with Herzl's methodology, these Jews are always accused of self-hatred:

In the Occupied Territories, what Israel is doing is much worse than apartheid," Chomsky says. "To call it apartheid is a gift to Israel, at least if by 'apartheid' you mean South African-style apartheid. What's happening in the Occupied Territories is much worse... — Noam Chomsky

The Zionists indeed learnt well from the Nazis. So well that it seems that their morally repugnant treatment of the Palestinians, and their attempts to destroy Palestinian society within Israel and the occupied territories, reveals them as basically Nazis with beards and black hats — Norman Finkelstein

Of all the countries benefiting from European civilization, only South Africa and Israel have racial laws that distinguish between rights of different groups of citizens. The Jews were against Hitler's racism, but theirs goes one step further. They determine Jewishness by mother alone. I opposed Zionism initially because I was against any form of nationalism, but I never expected the Zionists to become racists. It makes me feel ashamed in my origin:

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I feel responsible for the deeds of Israeli nationalists. — Karl Popper, *Karl Popper: Biography, background, and early reactions to Popper's work*

...billionaire-philanthropist Hungarian Holocaust survivor George Soros embarrassed the host institution and shocked its supporters by politicizing the evening with a rambling “editorial” about victims of violence and abuse becoming perpetrators of violence, suggesting that this model applies to the Israelis vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There were angry walkouts and loud boozing that drowned out a sprinkling of applause — Masha Leon, “Soros Gets Boos for Using YIVO Stage as Political Platform”

George Soros, the founder of the Open Society Foundations (the Open Society is another term for the Universal State) and protégée of Karl Popper (who wrote *The Open Society and its Enemies*) is often cited by conspiracy theorists as a Jewish bogeyman-mastermind of the world, yet many don't recognize that Soros is perhaps derided more by Zionists than anti-semitic conspiracy theorists. Alan Dershowitz, a renowned Harvard lawyer who has been part of a number of massive high profile cases, has often made :

Why are so many prominent Jews defending George Soros – a virulent anti-Zionist who has never been friendly to the Jewish people?

Well, not this Jew. I refuse to defend Soros...

Soros's defenders try to shut down criticism of the billionaire by claiming it is antisemitic because Soros himself is Jewish. But no one has financed more destructive attacks on Israel and the American Jewish community than Soros. He is, at best, a self-hating Jew, and shouldn't be let off the hook because of his ancestry.

Finally, though there are countless other examples (check out the aforementioned masada2000 for more names), we have an incredibly recent one in Jonathan Glazer's 2024 Oscar winning speech for his film about Auschwitz. In his speech, Glazer made mention of the situation

in Palestine, condemning what he cites as the weaponization of the Holocaust as a means of justifying oppression:

Our film shows where dehumanization leads at its worst. It's shaped all of our past and present. Right now we stand here as men who refute their Jewishness and the Holocaust being hijacked by an occupation which has led to conflict for so many innocent people, whether the victims of October the 7th in Israel or the ongoing attack on Gaza, —

Richard Glazer, 2024 Oscars

This last example is particularly interesting: mere hours after the speech, Glazer was bombarded with accusations of self-hated by Zionist Jews. On X, Michael Freund, a former advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (of Ashkenazi descent), wrote:

Jonathan Glazer is a self-hating Jew of the worst sort who exploits the Holocaust to attack Israel in public at the Oscars ceremony. Echoing Hamas, he asks “how do we resist?”. May Hashem save us from our enemies — including those among us.

The Daily Wire, a well known Zionist media organization, wrote a smear article on Glazer also mere hours after the event, quoting numerous Zionist responses to Glazer:

Max Abrahms, an international security professor who specializes in terrorism, posted on X: ‘Someone should do a psychological study on Jews who support Hamas.’

Political and economic analyst Jake Novak posted: “To the horrible human being who just won the Oscar for his movie about the Holocaust: Jews are neither aggressors in Israel (your delusion) nor victims anymore (your fantasy). You enable the deaths of your fellow Jews by promoting that blood libel.”

Science professor Gad Saad wrote “From the annals of: ‘If I engage in sufficient self-loathing, perhaps they’ll spare me.’ A clown who knows nothing about the relevant realities.”

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Rep. Carlos Gimenez (R-FL) wrote: 'The blatant anti-semitism at the #Oscars tonight was beyond disturbing. From the pro-Hamas red pins to the attacks on #Israel, these Hollywood useful idiots are carrying water for murderous terrorists who ban their films.'

Max Abrahms, quote-tweeting the article, wrote:

Happy to be quoted in this piece mocking history dumbass, self-hating Jewish Oscar winner Jonathan Glazer

The current weaponization of the accusation of self-hatred from Jews onto other Jews is not new phenomenon: it finds its origin and continued usage in the ideology of Zionism, first developed and experimented by those Jews who themselves were *genuine* sufferers of the malady of self-hatred. To recapitulate, Zionism was founded by self-hating Jews and would not have been possible without the inversion of Judaism necessitated by self-hatred. The current use of the term is against those who disagree with Zionism on the basis that it is an inversion of the Jewish mission towards universality.

The concluding line of reasoning, regardless of which side of the coin of the 70 year conflict you stand (though there is only one side you can stand upon and retain a universal stance towards the world, the other logically can only affirm the universality of will-to-power), is that the answer formulated by Zionists for the Palestinian Question is undeniably *theoretically identical* to the Nazi answer to the Jewish Question: the universal-particular paradox is resolved when *there is only one particular*. Persecution, the opposite of tolerance, is the method through which homogeneity will be reached. History has known nothing but persecution, but Biblical Judaism inverted the treatment of foreigners, projecting tolerance. *Zionism inverts the inversion*. Tolerance and persecution, like Zionism and Judaism, have the same end goal: both methods traverse the same circle towards homogeneity...

In "Zionism Confronted by a Binational State," the inverted paradox is articulated in clear terms:

Throughout the history of Zionism there has been a certain tension between radically opposed conceptions, one socialist and 'universalist,' the other nationalist and exclusive. On the one hand, the Jewish settlement (Yishuv) in Palestine, later Israel, developed the most advanced democratic socialist institutions that exist anywhere, institutions that might be described — without exaggeration, in my opinion — as a model in microcosm for decent human survival. These represent the positive side of a revolutionary development that combined socialism and nationalism.

At the same time, the Zionist movement incorporated expressions of the value of national identification and racial purity that I, at least, find quite objectionable. To cite one case, Joachim Prinz wrote in 1934<sup>1</sup> that the 'German revolution' signifies the end of the liberal era and the decline of parliamentary democracy: 'The development from the unity of man of the Enlightenment to the unity of nation of the present contains within itself the principle of the development from the concept of mankind to the concept of the nation<sup>2</sup>,' a development that he appears to regard favorably and which, he states, places the 'Jewish question' in a new light. In place of assimilation, natural in the era of liberalism, he proposes the principle of 'recognition of the Jewish nation and the Jewish race.' 'A state which is built upon the principle of the purity of nation and race can only have esteem and respect for the Jews when they identify themselves in the same manner.' Jews must therefore identify themselves as people 'of one nation and one race.'

The point is that the tension between competing elements in the Zionist tradition remains unresolved, and has become a matter of fundamental importance under the conditions that now exist in Israel.

What Prinz writes as the "development from the unity of the man of the Enlightenment to the unity of the nation" is not a forward devel-

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2. Prinz is relating the Judaic progression from the Exile of Adam and Eve, mankind, to the Exile of the Jews, the nation. This "progression" is only temporal, not philosophical.

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opment but rather, a development of return. Where the particular-universal paradox jumped out of the nation-state model to aim towards a universality of mankind, the universal-particular paradox of Zionism *jumps back in: Zionism returns the Jews to history*. Prinz recognizes this latter point which is why he adopts a principle of recognition rooted in nation subjectivism: equality of ethnic self-determination. In the final line, Prinz aims to resolve the enlarging issue of Jewish identity: without the *Exile*, there is no Judaism: Jew for Prinz and Zionism must necessarily be a national-ethnic being. But such a model of citizenry is that which is decried as the worst form of tribalism that fascists, white-supremacists, and Nazis endorse. Prinz was an outspoken critic of Nazism but a leader of the World Zionist Organization. One must question if he disagreed with Nazism on ideological terms, making his position in the WZO perplexing to say the least, or, if he adopted the Zionist (ethnic-particularist) posture as a moral imperative: what is good for the Jews (my group) is good for mankind, what is bad for Jews (my group) is bad for mankind. Guilt covers up logic: that which is objectively wrong is subjectively good if it is done by those who were once subjectively wronged. But if subjectivity derives offense, what stops an offense from being offensive?

Prinz also happened to be the speaker right before MLK's "I have a dream," speech. How can Prinz be a true supporter of MLK if his ideological beliefs would disallow MLK and all people who aren't ethnically Jewish from living in his nation? Is there any greater form of discrimination than not allowing a foreigner to live in your land? And if such a position is held by the Zionists, why is there so much Jewish support for multiculturalism and multi-ethnicism in the Western nations? This contradictory support for universality and equality abroad but ethnic exclusivism at home is often the basis for Zionist antagonism by Jewish intellectuals who espouse the secular and Reform notions of positive particularity into universality. Aside from the aforementioned Jewish intellectuals, Israel Shahak (who was a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and civil rights advocate for both Jew and gentile) wrote about the hypocrisy regarding Zionist support for universalist movements in *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years*:

How else can we explain the enthusiasm displayed by so many American rabbis in support of, let us say, Martin Luther King, compared with their lack of support for the rights of Palestinians, even for their individual human rights? How else can we explain the glaring contradiction between the attitudes of classical Judaism toward non-Jews, which include the rule that their lives should not be saved except for the sake of Jewish interest, with the support of the U.S. rabbis and organized Jews for the rights of the Blacks? After all, Martin Luther King and the majority of American Blacks are non-Jews. Even if only the conservative and Orthodox Jews, who together constitute the majority of organized American Jews, are considered to hold such opinions about the non-Jews, the other part of organized U.S. Jewry, the Reform, had never opposed them, and, in my view, show themselves to be quite influenced by them.

After publishing this book, Shahak was castigated by Jews as a self-hating Jew, a label he lived with through the twilight of his life and that is currently attached to his legacy. His criticisms on Reform's lack of derision are notable, but Reform Jews *are* by and large against Zionism, this due to the logical contradiction of being both a Reform Jew — supporting universality and rejecting the nation-state model — and being a Zionist — rejecting universality and accepting the nation-state model. Reform Judaism and Zionism are *polar opposites*. They are the exact opposing directions in the modern material Jewish divergence although they traverse towards the same end. There may be Reform Jews who support Zionism, certainly there are many, but the internal contradiction merely grows. To be clear however, the greatest opponents of Zionism are those Jews who are more liberal than Reform Jews.



## Chapter 18

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### *The Full Divergence*

The beginning point of the divergence for all three branches — Zionism as negative material ideological particularism, Reform as positive material ideological-theological particularism, and Religious Judaism as positive/negative theological particularism — is the *Exile*. The beginning and *end* of modern Judaism is the *Exile*. To repeat Arthur Cohen's quote:

The *Exile* of the Jew is a symbol of the “sin” of the world. If you will — and we suggest this with a sense of its liability to misconstruction — the concept of *Exile* is the Jewish doctrine of Original Sin, an animadversion upon the corruptibility of all history, the violence of all events, and the defection of all nations. What Original Sin imputes to the individual sinner, the *Exile* imputes to the collectivity of all nations.

Redemption for mankind “progresses” to redemption for the nation. What exists as the eschatological Messianic principle of ideological direction for all three branches is the consummation of this *national* and *natural* Original Sin:

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The Exile is the principle of exegesis which may be used to interpret the destiny of the Jew from the Destruction of the Temple to the coming of the Messiah. The Exile is active, not passive: God judges, Rome acts, Israel is exiled and remains exiled. God restores, the descendants of Rome repent, the exile is ended, and the anointed of God, his Messiah, the bearer of divine tidings of regeneration and restoration, enters history. The Exile is an historical eschatological principle. It is meaningless as an historical category<sup>1</sup>; however, as a meta-historical category it enables the eyes of the believer to be opened and understand, to sustain and bear, to be patient and wait. Like all religious realities, the reality of the exile is something tangible, immediate, active for him who lives with it, who is penetrated by it and in turn works upon the world in response to it.

...the *Exile*, at best, is a recall of history to transcending obligations. It is a constructive reality because it signals the beginning of redemption as much as it marks the end of a pristine and ancient homogeneity. The driving forth is the first moment of recall. This is about to project the old and marvelous paradoxes upon which religious enthusiasm lives—the losing which is finding, the despair which announces hope, the end which begins anew. The Exile is the end which begins the final, ultimate, and consummate end. — Arthur Cohen

Religious Judaism, although comprised of various branches (the notably distinct ones will be discussed in more detail), treats the *Exile* in the context of the theological anticipation of the Messiah: the *Exile* is over when the Messiah comes and bridges the gap between man and God. Reform Judaism treats the *Exile* as the event that enabled Jewry to transcend the nation-state model and take a necessary step towards the universal material end of humanity, the Universal State: the *Exile* is over when the Messianic State comes and bridges the gap between superstition and knowledge, the finite and infinite, the minority/other and mankind, the I and Thou. Zionism treats *Exile* as a natural catastrophe of history: the *Exile*, both external and internal, is over when

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i. The very existence of Zionism belies Cohen's assertion

the State of Israel is re-established: the gap between man and God, superstition and knowledge, Jew and mankind is inverted. The Zionist imperative is a negation of the very principle that gave Judaism theological vitality for the millennia after Jesus Christ: Negation of the Diaspora: *shlilat hagalut*:

For Zionists the “negation of the Diaspora” became an absolute imperative. — David Sorkin, *Jewish Emancipation*

Zionism ended the *Exile* and therefore ended Judaism. The modern Jewish question is not what to do with the Jew but rather, “*What is the Jew?*”.

It is on this point that one can view the divergence from above in clear terms. Where Orthodox Jews reject Reform Judaism and Zionism on a religious basis, Reform Jews necessarily reject Zionism on an *ideological* basis due to its inversion of the very thing that Reform Jews believe is a necessity towards actualizing the Universal State, not to mention its posture towards particularity. Zionism rejects *all* that is supernatural and non-conforming.

Religious Zionism is notable at this moment. It arose naturally as a consequence of the recognition among religious Jews to the fatal event of the establishment and is ultimately a failed attempt at meshing together Zionism and Judaism. The *Exile* and thus Judaism are over, and rather than treat Zionism as a blasphemy against God like Orthodox groups, Religious Zionism aims at a synthesis. But such a synthesis is not of opposing passive concepts but active ones, and can thus only result in *stagnation*, the two forces canceling one another out.

First formulated in an 1862 tractate by German Jewish Orthodox Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer as an imperative of “self-help” incorporated into the reclamation of the Promised Land, it was not ideologically formulated until the 1920s when the concept was spearheaded by Ashkenazi Jew Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook. Kook believed that the Zionism was a divinely inspired scheme that would usher in the Geulah, salvation, to not only the Jews but all of mankind: after the universal state of Israel is established, the Messiah would arrive: the

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two paradoxes find a concurrent resolution. Such an initial hypothesis is reasonable, but it has been 70 years and the Messiah has yet to come.

Religious Zionism is rooted in Isaiah 42:6, a political redefinition of religion: the Messianic era will not be universality on Earth as such, but universality enabled by the State of Israel *and then* sustained by it: Israel as the hegemonic governing entity of the world. This line of thinking allowed a theoretical reconciliation with the secular posture of Zionism and its leaders:

Secular Zionists may think they do it for political, national, or socialist reasons, but in fact — the actual reason for them coming to resettle in Israel is a religious Jewish spark ("Nitzotz") in their soul, planted by God. Without their knowledge, they are contributing to the divine scheme and actually committing a great Mitzvah. The role of religious Zionists is to help them to establish a Jewish state and turn the religious spark in them into a great light. They should show them that the real source of Zionism and the longed-for Zion is Judaism and teach them Torah with love and kindness. In the end, they will understand that the laws of Torah are the key to true harmony and a socialist state (not in the Marxist meaning) that will be a light for the nations and bring salvation to the world. — Rabbi Cook

Religious Zionism is self-evidently a minority among the denominations of Orthodox Judaism due to its contradiction of the Three Oaths that explicitly forbid the reclamation of the land of Israel before the arrival of the Messiah, but since its inception, it has been used as a political and ideological tool to garner support for Zionism among a rapidly secularizing population. Naturally, Religious Zionism is predicated on double-think, a solution acceptable only to those who are unaware of the problem. Its current adherents aim to continue in the line of thinking of Kook: the third temple too must be constructed before the Messiah arrives.

To return to the main divergence, Reform Judaism made Judaism solely into the Jewish mission, incorporating *Bildung* as the central element of

development across the gap between man and the material God (Heaven on Earth): *Bildung* as the Jewish mission. The progress that Reform is directed towards is a return to Pristine Judaism, in which there is tolerance, equality, and diversity: development is applied to both the individual and the state so as to reach global universality. The Jew has an individual and collective responsibility, *Tikkun Olam*, to be an example of this universality and therefore *an Accelerant* of the Hegelian dialectical method. It is the application of the Messianic role to the state that paves the path to the eventual idea of the Universal State where the ideals of the Enlightenment, and therefore Pristine Judaism, are actualized in full, and this necessarily requires a hostility towards any and all forms of “absolutist” intolerance: nationalism, including Zionism, religion — including Orthodox Judaism (which is why tradition is stripped and only ethical principles remained in reinterpretation) , racism, which includes both antisemitism and Jewish particularism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc — the list continues to lengthen. Only recently has “Reform Zionism” become an ideological possibility: historically, Reform Judaism has been anti-Zionist. Naomi Wiener Cohen, an accredited scholar of American Jewish history, explicates the early relations between Reform Judaism and Zionism in “The Reaction of Reform Judaism in American to Political Zionism (1897-1922)”:

Any history of political Zionism during the first twenty-five years of its existence in the United States must take note of the opposition to the movement voiced by the religious groups within American Jewry. The Zionist movement, which can properly be regarded as an outgrowth of the traditional Jewish aspiration for a return to Palestine, meant, nevertheless, the secularization of this ideal with emphasis placed primarily on the national rather than the religious character of Judaism. It was this secular and areligious bent of the Zionists at the inception of their movement that aroused the opposition of various Orthodox and Conservative segments in American Jewry. The opposition voiced by the Reform group during this period, however, differed from that of its coreligionists qualitatively. Reform did not merely question the means employed by the Zionists to

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achieve their ideal, but rather discarded on theological grounds the very objective, Orthodox as well as Zionist, of a return to Zion.

Figures are not available as to the number of Reform Jews who were Zionists, either by affiliation or by sentiment, during the first quarter-century of political Zionism, but it may be safely stated that the overwhelming majority were anti or non-Zionists.

Wiener Cohen explices the Jewish mission as central to the identity of a Jew for Reform thinkers:

According to Reform theology, Judaism was a religion with a universal message. The mission of the Jews, the bearers of this message, was to propagate the universal religion of the prophets throughout the world. Dispersion was, therefore, a vital condition in Reform thinking, and even the Messianic era, which was envisioned as the realization of the prophetic ethics as taught by the Jews, precluded the traditional belief of a mass return to Palestine.

To follow with the historical developments, the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 rejected Jewish nationalism and affirmed the notion of a Jewish mission towards universality:

We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine,...nor the restoration of any laws concerning a Jewish state

The Central Conference of American Rabbis reaffirmed this position in 1897:

Resolved, That we totally disapprove of any attempt for the establishment of a Jewish state. Such attempts show a misunderstanding of Israel's mission which from the narrow political and national field has been expanded to the promotion among the whole human race of the broad and universalistic religion first proclaimed by the Jewish prophets. Such attempts do not benefit, but infinitely harm our Jewish brethren where they are still persecuted, by confirming the assertion

of their enemies that the Jews are foreigners in the countries in which they are at home, and of which they are everywhere the most loyal and patriotic citizens. We reaffirm that the object of Judaism is not political nor national, but spiritual, and addresses itself to the continuous growth of peace, justice and love in the human race, to a messianic time when all men will recognize that they form "one great brotherhood" for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. — The Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1897

An 1898 resolution passed by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations:

We are unalterably opposed to political Zionism. The Jews are not a nation, but a religious community. Zion was a precious possession of the past, the early home of our faith, where our prophets uttered their world-subduing thoughts, and our psalmists sang their world-enchanting hymns. As such it is a holy memory, but it is not our hope of the future. America is our Zion. Here, in the home of religious liberty, we have aided in founding this new Zion, the fruition of the beginning laid in the old. The mission of Judaism is spiritual, not political. Its aim is not to establish a state, but to spread the truths of religion and humanity throughout the world. — Union of American Hebrew Congregations, *Proceedings*

The Union reaffirmed this position in 1919, adding further recapitulation:

In accordance, with the spirit of our whole history we declare that it is imperative for the welfare of Jews everywhere as a great religious community with a universal message for humanity that Israel dedicate itself not to any aspiration for the revival of a Jewish nationality or the foundation of a Jewish state, but to the faithful and consistent fulfillment of its religious mission in the world. We, therefore, do not seek for Israel any national homeland, it being our conviction that Israel is at home in every free country and should be at home in all lands. — Union of American Hebrew Congregations, *Proceedings*

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At the 1917 Central Conference, Dr. William Rosenau repeated the dominant anti-nationalist sentiment among Reform Jews:

We herewith reaffirm the fundamental principle of reform Judaism, that the essence of Israel as a priest people, consists in its religious consciousness, and in the sense of consecration to God and service in the world, and not in any political or racial national consciousness. And therefore, we look with disfavor upon the new doctrine of political Jewish nationalism, which finds the criterion of Jewish loyalty in anything other than loyalty to Israel's God and Israel's religious mission.

Zionism is naturally an inversion of this universal mission and thus had to be treated as the *exact opposite* of Reform thought. The Hebrew Union College, the first rabbinical school in America, is notable for its anti-Zionism:

another institution through which the religious leaders of the Reform group in America expressed their opposition to political Zionism was the Hebrew Union College. Established in Cincinnati by Isaac M. Wise in 1875, the first permanent rabbinical school in America, it officially took an anti-Zionist stand when political Zionism appeared

Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, one of the more outspoken anti-Zionist Reform Jews, had numerous incidents with Zionists during his presidency at the Hebrew Union College:

Kohler himself discussed the issue publicly as concerning the dangers of Zionism at the Hebrew Union College. Since the aim of the college, according to Kohler, was to inculcate the specific religious views of Reform, it was necessary to prevent

a Zionist professor from twisting and distorting the grand universal teachings of the prophets and sages of Israel or of the Pentateuch with the view of turning them into crude and nationalistic utterances

— *Jewish Exponent*, April 5, 1907; *Reform Advocate*, April 6, 1907

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From the transcript of a board meeting at the College in 1920:

We declare that no one land, Palestine or any other, can be called "the national home for the Jews," as has been done by the Supreme Council. Each land, whereof Jews are loyal citizens, is the national home for those Jews. Palestine is not our national home, since we are not now and never expect to be citizens of that land. — Hebrew Union College, Minutes of the Board of Governors, May 25, 1920

Reform Judaism treats the diaspora as the method through which universality will be achieved: there can be no Jewish national desire: such a sentiment is necessarily *anti-Jewish*: such a sentiment necessarily *returns* Jews to history: to goyim.

It's notable that extensive derision of Zionism was done through Reform press:

According to the Reform press, political Zionism collapsed in 1897, it had ceased to exist in 1898, it was waning in 1903, it was hopeless in 1904, it languished with the death of Herzl, it died with Nordau, it was abandoned in 1909 and 1912, and it was given up in 1919, 1920, and 1922. At the same time that the press was burying Zionism, it was wont to show changes in the Zionist position that differed from the original nationalistic ideal. In 1907 it claimed that Zionism was no longer working for a home for the Jewish people but rather establishing "a nursery farm for the rearing of model Jews"; in 1911, that Zionism was limited to, temporary colonization; in 1913, that it was only a philanthropic movement; and in 1919, that it dwindled again to a mere colonization project. In these ways as well as by criticizing the leaders, members, and activities of the Zionists did the Reform group continually seek to disparage political Zionism through the press. — Naomi Wiener Cohen, "The Reaction of Reform Judaism in American to Political Zionism (1897-1922)"

Regarding a bill on the mandate of Palestine before the U.S. Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives in 1922, Naomi Cohen relates the views of two Reform rabbis:

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Hearings were held on the bill, and Rabbis David Philipson and Isaac Landman testified before the House Committee. In his testimony, Philipson quoted various resolutions passed by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations against Zionism, and he outlined Reform theology which, to him, could never be reconciled with the concept of the Jews as a national group. He further stated that Zionism made the Jews appear alien to the eyes of others, and no reflection ought to be cast on the patriotism of the Jews in America. He objected in particular to the Balfour Declaration which accentuated the alienism of the Jews, and he stated: "I object to any country being called the national home of the Jewish people. America is my national home." He added that Zionism not only did not solve the Jewish problem but rather increased the troubles of the Jews by adding an impetus to anti-Semitism. The only solution to the Jewish question, according to Dr. Philipson, would be the granting of full freedom for the Jews everywhere.

One wonders about the Dr. Philipson's solution to the Jewish question: would such freedom not mark the end of Judaism? Or perhaps, this was his intended aim: the intended aim of Judaism. The attainment of the end of the process is the death of the process.

An eventual and ostensible reconciliation between Reform Judaism and Zionism however was formed as the Balfour Declaration slowly changed sentiments from anti-Zionism to non-Zionism:

The twenty-five years following 1922 saw major changes in the Reform attitude towards Zionism. The non-Zionist, rather than anti-Zionist, trend which became manifest after the Balfour Declaration continued in the twenties with Reform co-operation in the rehabilitation of Palestine and the work of the Jewish Agency. The next two decades marked the beginning of the active pro-Zionist policy which meant advocacy, for the first time, of the political aims of Zionism by the preponderant majority of Reform leadership. Echoes of the traditional aggressive anti-Zionism were still heard from the small minority who organized the American council for Judaism in 1943 and whose policies

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were largely reformulations of the sentiments voiced by Isaac M. Wise in his address before the Central Conference in 1897. Thus, within a period of fifty years, did Reform Judaism run the entire gamut of opinion with respect to political Zionism — Naomi Wiener Cohen, “The Reaction of Reform Judaism in America to Political Zionism (1897-1922)”

But this eventual reconciliation of opposites as a consequence of the Holocaust was/is still steeped in the same double-think of opposites as Religious Zionism:

However, with the establishment of the State of Israel, many Progressive/Reform Jews saw a need for a Jewish national home in the Biblical Land of Israel. In 1978, the Association of Reform Zionists of America began working to conceptualize a Zionism that took the universalistic ideals of Reform Judaism, as well as the particular needs of all Jewish people, into account. In 1997, the association solidified thinking regarding the acceptability of Zionism within the Reform Movement through the acceptance of the Miami Platform of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. — Wikipedia, Reform Zionism

Reform Zionism is *identical* to Religious Zionism, only with fewer obligations of tradition. The opposing notions of positive particularity and negative particularity are only sustained by those deficient in the faculty of logic:

Through the ideal of Tikkun Olam (healing the world), Reform Zionism sees the role of the State of Israel as the means by which the messianic era can be achieved, by acting as a "light unto the nations", a national example of ideal prophetic principles of justice and peace. For the Reform Zionist, this means that by working to make Israel a better place, one can lead the world in working towards a state of perfection. — Wikipedia, Reform Zionism

The Reform Judaism website information page on Reform Zionism confirms this reiteration of Tikkun Olam merged with Isaiah 42:6:

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Reform Zionism is a continuation of the early Zionist dream to foster a living, breathing national culture that represents the highest ideals of Jewish peoplehood. Foremost among these ideals is for Jews to be free and liberated citizens of the world who also contribute as Jews to our global civilization. The work of Zionism did not end when the State of Israel was established in 1948. As Reform Zionists, we strive to make the State of Israel a true inheritor of the prophetic tradition of the Jewish people: a nation devoted to pursuing justice and creating a complete world.

It's clear that whoever wrote this stance understands the paradox of such a view. The Declaration of the State of Israel is quoted but notably with the particularist writing removed: "open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles":

'THE STATE OF ISRAEL will ... foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture....'

We advocate for Israel as it should be and as it must become: a society that reflects both democratic values and religious pluralism.

The irony is palpable: Reform Zionism's Tikkun Olam *requires* that the State of Israel, the State through which the world will be repaired, *must itself be repaired*. Liberal Secular Jews represent Reform Judaism better than Reform Jews.

To repeat — only repetition can affirm — Reform Jewish Tikkun Olam is a modern articulation of the Jewish vocation:

The supernatural vocation of the Jew is to make all of history alive to its incompleteness. This is nothing more than to reaffirm that the Jew is a messianic being for whom there is *no* redemption until *all* history is redeemed. — Arthur Corhen

Jews possess a Messianic vocation to be exemplars and examples of these ideals of tolerance to all people, and therefore, it is natural that the ideology of Zionism is viewed as regressive and backwards: as *non-Jewish*. Where Reform Judaism views the Universal State as the Messianic entity that will deliver emancipation to *all* of mankind, Zionism views the ethnic state as the Messianic entity that will deliver emancipation to solely the Jews. The universal-particular paradox is inverted and then resolved by Zionism in rejecting the theological resolution at the end of history and actualizing solely the negative material particular route: when only one particular exists, the universal will be achieved.

Arthur Cohen provides a masterful explication of Zionism's historical legitimization around the *physical* principle of the *Exile*:

The moment that the history of the nations becomes the history of the Jew, that the fortunes of the nations become the personal fortunes of the Jew, apocalyptic history disappears. The assimilation of the Jew to Western history, or rather the Westernization of Jewish history, accelerates with the Enlightenment and the advent of Emancipation. At that moment the Jew breaks into Western history. The emancipation of European Jewry in the nineteenth century ended the hermetic isolation of the Jew. It defined new alternatives and natural choices which served to undermine the integrity formed of the image of the *Exile* and the historical condition of the Jewish people. It made of the *Exile* a conscious, separable, and expendable principle, where previously — for eighteen centuries — it had been the valence of Jewish culture. It was obviously foolish to maintain such a mysterious, obscure and private notion as "*Exile*" when the terms and conditions of normalization had been accepted. To be sure, it was still possible to speak of Diaspora — a harmless Greek substitute for the word "*Exile*" — but Diaspora no longer filled the consciousness of the people, but had become a description of its historical situation. 'Diaspora' and 'Dispersion,' describing, as these terms do, the *physical* separation of the people from its land, the removal of a people from the source of its cultural integrity, was deprived of its symbolic power. The Dispersion is an event of history. The dispersion ends when the people are

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restored. The Zionist movement and the triumph of Zionism in the founding of the State of Israel consummate the natural return of the people to its home. The physical incubus of Diaspora is ended.

But the *Exile* is both a physical *and* supernatural guiding principle. Zionism, in treating Jewish history solely as a material history, *destroys this principle*. The *Exile* was treated by religious and Reform Jews as the event that enabled Jews to “jump out” of the system of nation-states, to *transcend history*. The continued historical survival of the Jew and Judaism gave credence to this narrative of transcendence insofar as it was still an active process: insofar as it was still leading towards a universal end: *Galut* is “suffering for the sake of humanity.” The *Exile*, in theological terms, *is* the supernatural event that gives legitimacy to the modern Jewish particular pursuit of the universal: it is the supernatural beginning for universal end that is being pursued. It is for this reason that Herman Cohen, an outspoken critic of Zionism who is regarded as “probably the most important Jewish philosopher of the 19th century as well as a leading voice of German liberal Judaism wrote that Zionism would, “return the Jews to history.” And of course it would: to end the *Exile* is to end the eschatological energy present within its persistence:

The vitality of Jewish culture is to be measured by the intensity with which it undertakes *galut* (Exile) as a cultural demand; indeed, as the living of its messianic vocation — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Zionism *ends* the vitality of *Exile* as a guiding supernatural principle. Zionism ends the process of Judaism. But Judaism can only be ended by the Messiah... Zionists *created* the Messiah through their own will, and therefore, *ended* Judaism. There is no longer a Messianic vocation, no longer a universal end towards which the Jew is headed. Zionism inverts Judaism’s paradox and returns the Jewish individual and collective to history and mankind, and it is for this reason that it is *the* prototypical ethno-nationalist ideology, the natural form of tribalism extended from the family that has domineered minds and political

principles since the dawn of human civilization. Zionism strips from the Jew and Jewish history its supernatural essence and returns the Jew not only to history, but to biology. Mankind is merely a tribal conflict: he who is most powerful, who can most powerfully exert his will-to-power, survives. Might makes right. This worldly maxim was first *inverted* 3000 years ago with the Story of *Exodus* and God's selection of the Jewish stalk, but Zionism returns Jews back to *before they were chosen*: before they were elevated to supernatural reality. Zionism could only be born *after* the death of Judaism as the *inversion* of Judaism. In order to gain a thing, one must sacrifice a thing: in order to transform oneself, one must *destroy* oneself. This is what Herman Cohen meant. This is what the death of Judaism means. This is what it means to "place Moses back into the river".

Yet paradoxically, Zionism would not have been possible without the supernatural principle that enabled Judaism to survive and that invested the *Exile* with theological meaning. Without the messianic vocation and particular-universal paradox that enabled Jews and Judaism to survive two millennia of suffering and exile, Zionism would neither have the ethnic particular of Jews upon which to apply itself nor the theological basis to affirm a negation: without Judaism, *Jews would have been lost to history*:

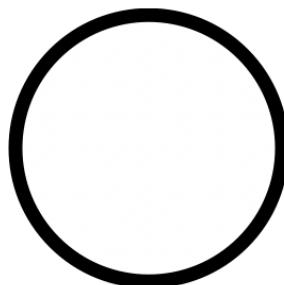
The survival of that culture is a reflection of its having acknowledged its political destruction to have been the work of God. Had the Jew allowed the possibility that the policies and repressions of Vespasian, Titus, and Hadrian were but historical fortuities, that the ravaging of the Holy Land was but the misfortune of war and the triumph of superior power, it is questionable whether Judaism would have survived. Judaism never countenanced the possibility that what befell it was without ultimate intention and meaning — Arthur Cohen

But with Zionism, Jews are returned to history: returned to the nihilism of socio-biology. Today, the question is not whether the Jew will survive but if *Judaism* will survive. The question of the survival of the Jew has been entirely reformulated: what is the Jew without Judaism? Zionism for Zionists is a natural event, but for religious Jews, it is a

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supernatural event. The Jew is not separable from his collective, and although the history of the Jew is the history of disobedience to God, is this last event not a finality in his eschatological favor? At least in what the religious Jew himself perceives to be his eschatological favor? Zionism negates the theology that gives vitality to the paradox, but the flame continues to burn out. The Jew *and* Judaism will continue to exist as long as the *paradox* exists, and today, the paradox is ideological: today, the Jew is an *ethnic-ideological* being, and all ideologies lead to the same place.

The collapsing star of the paradox that created Reform Judaism and Zionism is a combination of the adoption of the lachrymose view of Judaism, the promulgated belief that Judaism itself was synonymous with the Enlightenment ideals, German Jewish statism, and Jewish desire for emancipation. From the propagation of the lachrymose view and *Bildung*, the Jew, unable to abandon Judaism, aimed to regenerate himself into both the image of the idealized Jew and the New European, entities he believed are identical: the future of Europe for the secular Jew was inverse assimilation: *separation as integration: progress as return*. The paradox is geometrically represented by the circle, for the opposites of separation and integration, progress and return, can only converge if they exist upon a circle wherein the *beginning is the end*:



The paradox of Judaism is the circle of the Hegelian dialectic: the Exile that leads to return, the loss that leads to gain, the death that

leads to life, the particularity that leads to universalism. Zionist persecution — particularism — and Reform tolerance — universalism — that both lead to the same end. Emancipation and equality are not achieved through the assimilation of the Jew, but rather, through the theoretical equalizing of the assimilation of the European and the regeneration of the Jew: the two processes are made identical, and the theoretical formulation requires a mission that projects a resolution out into the future, the same mission that ostensibly gives a temporal solution to the inverted paradox of Zionism. The paradox is resolved by *traversing the entire circle: by progressing/returning to the end/beginning*. The paradox of inverse assimilation necessarily requires the Jewish mission which reinterprets the Messianic ideal as the material redemption of mankind in the form of the Universal State enabled by the state, first articulated by Leopold Zunz and then organized into the foundational philosophy of Reform Judaism. The mission itself, and the eschatology implicit within the *Exile*, enable the *circle of Western history*: the valley of the gap was always on a round earth. After an exploration of Jewish self-hate, it is clear what the Messianic State and the ideals of diversity, equality, tolerance, and multiculturalism imply: *the negation of the method of assimilation*. Where the nation-state model utilizes *persecution* as the method of universalism — the universal achieved when there is only particular — the “transcendent” *Exilic* model utilizes *tolerance* as inverted persecution leading towards the same *universal end*:

As Hegel himself notes in the *Philosophy of Religion* it was Jewish ‘stubbornness’ and ‘fanaticism’ in the face of the Hadrianic persecutions, as well as later travails, that quite literally led to their sustained existence during the millennia of diaspora. In the modern world, toleration will achieve what persecution has failed to accomplish, that is, the assimilation of all particular races, nations and classes into a generic Humanity as such.— Steven B. Smith, “Hegel and the Jewish Question: In Between Tradition and Modernity”

Paradoxically, the system of tolerance must utilize intolerance in order to actualize its end: it must converge with its opposite in order to

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reach synthesis. The Universal State is one in which there is no such thing as assimilation, for there is no such thing as Other: it is the culmination of history for the *physical* and *historical* Jew. In such a place, *there is no such thing as self-hate*, and subsequently, there is no such thing as a Jew, for all are both Jewish and non-Jewish: all are the same. The end of the process is achieved and the *process is over*.

The Jew has a responsibility to accelerate this universal end of the process as a consequence of his transcendental vocation. Jews over-represent those pursuing the ends of the process because the process is a theological-existential matter of life: the Jewish identity is the mission. As such, when all ethnic and theological abstractions are extinguished, all that remains is the meta-principle of identity: the messianic mission towards universality. Even if the Jew has lost the reason that motivated him to begin his walk across the gap, walking is all he knows. It is for this reason that universalist ideologies such as socialism, communism, globalism, the open society, marxism, neo-marxism, etc also display an over-representation of Jewish thought. In the same way that the German Jews became more German than the Germans, the Reform/liberal Jews are more liberal than the liberals:

While members of the Institute were definitely not chosen on the basis of their family backgrounds, all of the full members of the Institute in residence in Frankfurt and actively involved in its affairs in the period immediately preceding the Institute's relocation out of Germany — Horkheimer, Pollock, Grossmann, Fromm, and Lowenthal — were Jews. — Jack Jacobs, *The Frankfurt School, Jewish Lives, and Antisemitism*

All these assimilated and secular Jewish thinkers and ideologies share the same materialist dialect and the Messianic re-interpretation of Judaism — just cast into universal rather than particular terms as well as universal rather than particular means —, the intellectual as the prophet of God that leads all of mankind and directs history towards true salvation: the Messianic State, a *return* to Pristine Judaism through political “progress”. Reform Judaism, ideologically founded on an affirmation of

equality and therefore a rejection of all forms of oppression and hierarchy that ostensibly restrict it, follows the ideology of emancipation to its logical universal conclusion and today, is aiming to make the final step towards the material end: annulling the oppressive discrimination of *place of birth/nation state*, the final obstacle in the path towards the Universal State, where the “initial” paradox that has seemingly persisted since the emancipation of the Jews finally finds congruence and consistency in a place where all are equal, a place where all are Jewish. Notably, these liberations, regardless of how much they are intellectually pursued by thinkers, can only be actualized *through the state*. The *Exile*, the historical coefficient of being unredeemed, is only redeemed in *all people being in Exile* and therefore not: *Exile for all people universally negates the Exile: Diaspora for all people universally negates the Diaspora*.

The original *Exile* enabled the Jew to “jump out” of the system of nations, and only when *all* people have done the same will the Universal State be actualized. But Zionism is formed by those secular and assimilated Jews who could not persist in the paradox, who could not wait for this material coalescence of mankind: who could no longer bear to walk the gap. Rather than be suspended in internal turmoil for the paradox of assimilation to converge through the methods of *urBildung* and *Bildung* in the Universal State, the Zionist inverts the paradox, *therefore rejecting Judaism, history, and the Messianic mission*. Before a building can be constructed, *it must be destroyed*. *The Jew is reborn into the citizen of Israel*. This is the formula of palingenetic ultranationalism that eventually gave way to Nazism and is the current blueprint for modern naturalist ideology: rebirth into regenerative nationalism. The problem of assimilation, and therefore self-hatred, finds an immediate solution in a land where the Jew is no longer a foreigner: in the Jews’ State. Zionism precedes Nazism.

This fact is notable. In the same way liberal Jews are over-represented on the universal end of the divergence, Zionist Jews are over-represented on the particular end. Jews are not by any means a monolithic group: there are only two positions: affirmation and negation, both traversing opposite ends of the same circle.

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Reform/Liberal Judaism is an affirmation of the particular-universal mission of Judaism because it pursues the universal end of the *Exile* in the Universal state. Zionism is a negation because it “jumps back into” the system of nations and *returns the Jews to history*: back to the *nation-state model*. To recapitulate, the main tenet of Zionism is “Negation of the Diaspora”/shlilat *hagalut* and it this inversion that finds expression in the beliefs of Zionist leaders. David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of the Modern State of Israel (who physically returned the Jews to history), describes *assimilation as extinction*. In an address to the youth section of the Mapai political party in 1944 Ben-Gurion said:

*Exile* is one with utter dependence — in material things, in politics and culture, in ethics and intellect, and they must be dependent who are an alien minority, who have no Homeland and are separated from their origins, from the soil and labor, from economic creativity. So we must become the captains of our fortunes, we must become independent — not only in politics and economy but in spirit, feeling and will.

Both sides of the divergence aim to eradicate the paradox of assimilation through directly opposing material measures: Reform/liberal in casting the entire world into *Diaspora* — when all are in *Exile*, deprived of statehood, the Universal State is achieved — and Zionism in negating that very diaspora, generating a negatively particular solution: when there is only one particular, the universal is achieved — tolerance and persecution as the thesis and antithesis that will lead to a Universal synthesis. The current political bifurcation in the Zionist state (as well as America and the West) is a perfect representation of the radicalizing split between these two philosophies of political salvation. These tensions make up the current conflict between Reform, Liberal, Orthodox, and Zionist Jews as well as the general persisting paradox of modern Judaism (particularism vs universalism) which only continues to develop.

The leftist, reform divergence, rooted in a Jewish mission of inverse assimilation (progress as return), and therefore global assimilation, can be described as Globalism, or the universalist conclusion of the paradox of emancipation synthesized with assimilation: the conclusion

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of the process of inverse assimilation (tolerance), *Bildung* and *UrBildung*, progress and return synonymized, transforming the world into the Universal State where there are no borders and therefore no *Others*. The Jews on this side exist as dialectical *Accelerants* towards this material end, giving reason to their overrepresentation in modern material universalist ideology. On the opposing end we have the Zionists, the self-hating Jews who overcome the internal contradiction of the paradox and their self-hatred by creating a particularist(nationalist) solution that negates the Ghetto of self-hatred, the paradox of inverse assimilation, the paradox, the Jewish mission, the *Exile* and liberates the Jew from Judaism: ethnic nationalism. Zionism returns the Jew to *natural* history, to before the story of *Exodus*, negating his collective chosenness, and the actions of the Israeli government against the Palestinians are rooted in the desire to reach *total* consistency with the ideology of *natural law*: a land where there are *only* Jews. Both divergences espouse the same Enlightenment ideals of progress, equality, tolerance, diversity, multiculturalism, and freedom, and both sides posit a solution to the paradox of inverse assimilation — the Jewish question — through the power of the State, yet one side finds an immediate particular resolution and the other projects a universal resolution out into the end of history.

To recapitulate in summary, the divergence is between material Particularist Universalism and material Universalistic Particularism, Globalism and Nationalism, Reform/Liberal Judaism/Jews and Zionism/Zionists. There are three paths of Return: God, Universal State, and the Nation of Israel — all three end in a negation of the paradox of assimilation, either immediately or historically through some Messianic definition. What engenders the current modern secular left right split is this exact ideological dialectic, present in the politics of every Western nation. The political right mimics Nationalistic/Zionist particularism (persecution), the political left the Globalist/Socialist universalism (tolerance), and the supporters are politically bifurcated on these grounds, although both sides promote a material view of reality divorced from God as a basic premise. The Orthodox, or religious, path is the individual man returning to God, history as the unfolding process of all of mankind returning to God (*Teshuvah*).

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Christianity, then, affirms history as already concluded, its beginning and end in Jesus Christ, with repentance as return to Jesus, and Islam too shares this same notion of repentance, *Tawba*, as well as a conclusion of history with the Quran. The difference however between Christianity/Islam, and Judaism is that Judaism, due to the *Exile* and *Exodus*, is *material-spiritual / ethnic-theological / particular-universal* while Christianity and Islam are purely spiritual, theological, and universal: return as return of *all* men to the spirit of God. The Jew is *both* physical and supernatural. He is a being of *historicity*.

The return of the Jew to natural history is now the modern theological problem for Jewish theologians and intellectuals. How can Jewish particularity be sustained when the *Exile* is over? How can the Jew persist in his mission if the event that gave it vitality has been undone? How can the Jew claim to obey God when he has committed clearly the “greatest” act of disobedience? What is the Jewish identity without the *Exile*?

In the 21st century, the relationship between Israel and world Jewry is stuck in the paradigm of *galut* and *geulah*, which can no longer function as accurate categories of contemporary Jewish life. The Jewish community is facing a new reality, for which it does not have a language. As a result, it finds itself conceptually handicapped, unable to comprehend, let alone act upon, the real challenges facing all Jews.  
— Donniel Hartman, “Israel and World Jewry: The Need for a New Paradigm,” 2011

Reconstructionist Judaism is created by Modercai Kaplan to rationalize this death of Judaism and the ensuing crisis of Jewish identity by transforming Jews from an ethnic-theological being to an ethnic-civilizational being. Kaplan recognized that divine necessity had been extinguished by Zionism, and so he aimed to imbue Judaism with *natural necessity*:

Judaism is the result of natural human development. There is no such thing as divine intervention; Judaism is an evolving religious civilization; Zionism and aliyah (immigration to Israel) are encouraged;

### *The Full Divergence*

Reconstructionist Judaism is based on a democratic community where the laity can make decisions, not just rabbis; The Torah was not inspired by God; it only comes from the social and historical development of Jewish people; The classical view of God is rejected. God is redefined as the sum of natural powers or processes that allows mankind to gain self-fulfillment and moral improvement; The idea that God chose the Jewish people for any purpose, in any way, is "morally untenable", because anyone who has such beliefs 'implies the superiority of the elect community and the rejection of others.' — Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) and the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot (FRCH) "Platform on Reconstructionism" (1986), main tenets of Reconstructionist Judaism

Reconstructionist Judaism is an attempt to retain Judaism and therefore the Jew in a world where the fire of its eschatological vitality and theological chosenness has been extinguished by Jews themselves:

The reconstruction of Judaism to which Mordecai Kaplan has given his life is no reconstruction of Judaism, but a reconstruction of the Jewish people. The people, not its faith, must live; for if the people live, some faith, any faith—as long as it replaces the conscience and history of the people—will do. The people, not the faith, must be rendered eternal; for if the people shall not live, to what purpose shall have been the history of the Jew? Why the martyrdom of Israel, why its suffering and anguish, if the people shall be allowed to perish? The people will perish only through the stubborn inflexibility of its traditional leaders, who continue to see its religion as its defining center, and its secular leaders, who make the threat of anti-Semitism into a sufficient reason for social cohesion. Both are destructive positions because both are partial positions: the former makes a dimension of culture into the whole of culture, while the latter fashions continuity upon the foundations of resentment and alienation.

On the one hand Kaplan rejects the doctrine of the election of Israel, while on the other hand he centralizes and enhances the destiny of the natural people. The Supernatural people perishes in the past of the

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Exile and a new people, a natural civilization is born. The former, a divine necessity, is repudiated; the latter, a natural necessity, is enthroned. The modern Jewish people, whose ancestry is the Enlightenment and the rise of secular nationalism, is a folk civilization whose mysterious coherence and self-identity is but the unwritten law of nature, the implicit destiny of peoples and cultures to retain their self-identity. For the mysterious choice of God, Kaplan has substituted the mystery of nature and history. In either case the Jewish people is “elected” to persevere.

— Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

Judaism and the Jew are *natural* phenomena, explained by socio-biological-civilizational factors and natural reasoning. If there is such a thing as “chosenness,” it has been bestowed not by God but by nature. The Jew loses his greatest and only weapon, that which has set him apart from all the peoples of the world and has made him unassimilable: the Jew loses his mission:

The adjustment of the Jew to the natural conditions of his environment divests him of the only weapon, his supernatural vocation, which allows him to survive what he must always survive—terrestrial history

— Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

In Kaplan’s civilization model, Jewry falls into the abyss of relativity, their individual and collective destiny given the same supernatural weight as that of the Zulus or the Incas: zero. In this natural perspective of the world, one affirms only one equalitarian truth: all people are equivalent in their *natural* eschatologies and should be allowed to pursue their collective and individual destinies in the mold of a socio-biological civilization. The natural Jew will certainly survive but this is of no consequence, for the Jew is now an empty vessel, thrust back into the river. With Moses, the Jew was *pulled* out of history, out of time itself; with Moses, the Jew was made *eternal*. With Zionism, the Jew was *placed* back into the river of history and time. With Zionism, the Jew is made, like all natural things, temporary. Just like the Earth, he too will erode and wither away: eternity vanishes like the Chimera.

### *The Full Divergence*

The mission of salvation is not abandoned, but made *meaningless*. There is no God and there never was a gap between anything beyond death and life. The history of destiny towards universality that began 3000 years out is doused and Moses is thrown back into the water. There is no consummation, no justice, no redemption, no salvation. There was never a destiny: that was merely the hubris of an enslaved ethnic group yearning for freedom. Hope turns into despair, not the kind of despair that can return to hope, but the kind of despair that recognizes *all* hope as futile. There is neither tragedy nor comedy; there was and is only *fateful existence*. Man only bridges the gap between birth and death. Man only lives to die.



## Chapter 19

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### *The Minority Question and Acceleration*

Only now that we have descended into the abyss, however, is there a new contextualization of the Messianic mission. The Messianic mission projected out into time as the resolution of the particular-universal paradox is constructed as such due to the inability of Jews to assimilate, not only in modern Europe, but for 2000 years in the *Exile* and farther back prior to it, and this particular inability is representative of the *universal political problem of the minority*. The natural and supernatural Jew is the *minority par excellence*. The evolutionary history of his development has enforced a selection process upon him that has ensured that the only Jews that remain are those who are most intimately attached to their ethnic-theological existence and their mission to give it resolution. Lessing's thoughts on the necessity of anti-semitism for the continued existence of Jews is significant, and the sentiment is recapitulated by Karl Kautsky, a disciple of Karl Marx's, who was in favor of Jewish assimilation:

Judaism draws strength — as a specific group, segregated from its environment — from anti-Semitism alone, from persecution. In the absence of the latter, it would have been absorbed long ago. Counter-revolution might imbue Judaism with a new lease of life; but counter-

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revolution can be nothing more than a temporary phenomenon. When the Jews shall have ceased to be persecuted and outlawed, the Jews themselves will cease to exist. Have we reason to deplore this prospect?...[It] seems to me that for the Jew himself the ghetto — which is the specific Jewish form of life — is not a phenomenon calculated to give rise to melancholy longings... [Assimilation] will not mean a mere shifting of domicile from one medieval ruin to another, not a transition from orthodox Judaism to ecclesiastical Christianity, but the creation of a new and higher type of man...Ahasver, the wandering Jew, will at last have found a haven of rest. He will continue to live in the memory of man as man's greatest sufferer, as he who has been dealt with most severely by mankind, to whom he has given most

Sorkin repeats the same sentiment:

For both the nationalist and the religious positions, emancipation was based on an act of hopeless bad faith. It was an act of bad faith because whatever German Jewry might have achieved was at the cost of self-denial. Once the Jews had denied their national and religious identity, nothing stood between them and total assimilation, the end of the Jews and Judaism.

Ben Gurion is right: assimilation *does* mean extinction. The continued *natural* historical existence of the ethnic type Jew is due to Jews *never* assimilating, yet Zionism also means extinction: *extinction of the supernatural Jew*. But the supernatural essence of the Jew is that which gave persistence to the natural Jew, and today, the natural Jew, in the void left by his supernatural nature, finds transvaluation in becoming an *ethnic-ideological* being.

Assimilation and self-hatred are not ideas relevant to the Jew, but are a central part of *all* civic minorities given the social relationship between various groups and the underlying conscious and subconscious social systemic drive towards unity/homogeneity:

As suggested, this particular Jewish situation and perspective had a universal framework. Nietzsche himself observed that a person

suffering from self-hatred “divides his nature and sacrifices one part of it to the other”, thus treating “himself not as an *individuum* but as a *dividuum*”. In Nietzsche’s view, then, such a person sacrifices his inborn or traditional identity (as a Jew, an Irishman, a Scot or a Turk), and instead internalizes the ethos of the surrounding majority to which he strives, albeit thus far unsuccessfully, to fully belong. Frustrated in his efforts, he punishes, by rejection and self-ridicule, those very elements in his character or behavior which make such assimilation almost impossible.

It is clear that self-hatred is a widespread phenomenon with universal mental mechanisms and characteristics. A large variety of individuals can hate one or more innate or acquired traits that have prevented them from being accepted into their surrounding society as equals. Hence some authors have claimed that self-hatred ‘in essence ... is not a specifically Jewish problem but rather one that arises wherever members of one social group are trying ... to be assimilated to another’

— Jacob Golomb, *Nietzsche and Zion*

The “Jewish Question” as such is accurate insofar as it addresses the particular, but abstractly, it is subsumed under the *Minority Question*, the *theologico-political* question of history and therefore the guiding force of material and supernatural history. It is towards answering this question that the Jewish Hegelian Dialectical Method in flesh is directed. Acceleration is acceleration towards the universal solution.

From a perspective of basic logic the subsumption of the Jewish Question by the Minority Question is self-evident. The Jewish Question formulated by Nazis is theoretically equivalent to the Palestinian Question formulated by the Zionists, which is theoretically equivalent to historical particular minority questions: Native Americans, the Dzungars, the Circassians, Soviet Russia’s numerous genocides/deportations, Zedong China’s ethnic cleansing, the list is *endless*. What is the original Minority Question? The Jewish Question asked by the *Egyptians*.

The Jew is the *minority par excellence*; it is through the Jewish Question that we find the foremost dominant natural and supernatural answers

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to the Western meta-historical Minority Question. The Jew represents the Historical-Hegelian Dialectical method in flesh: a *historical-material-spiritual force*, a force directed towards answering the Minority Question. The Jew is nothing more the progressive product of internal contradictions. Jewish genius is the mental consequence of overcoming contradictions: Jewish intuition in contrast to Greek rationality. History begins for the Jew with the particular-universal paradox that is the Minority Question: his prophetic intuition and individual/collective methodology persists within the current of a Messianic vocation driven by that paradox. The internal paradox gives way to proccesualization: the development towards the universal by the particular through gradual dialectical syntheses: *Bildung/divine education/teshuva* as the doctrine of evolution. As time goes on and the contradiction becomes more severe, so do the solutions. These contradictions however are not purely Jewish: they are the contradictions at the core of all human beings. Jews are the minority par excellence and therefore the contradictions are most severe for them. Certainly others occupy their ranks, but the solution to the contradictions are first found and foremostly developed by Jews, solutions which, due to the nature of their birth, are naturally further developments of the very same contradiction. This must be the case for only through this constant overcoming of contradictions can the eventual universality prophesied in the beginning be reached: the Jew who represents the deepest and greatest contradiction is the one who will provide the universal and complete answer: the Messiah. Once the paradox is completed, Absolute Spirit is reached: Universality is reached: Perfection is reached. Both the Jew and Judaism vanish from history as there is no longer a need for the particularity: there is no longer a paradox. The attainment of the end of the process is the death of the process: the fire necessarily extinguishes itself after the forest is burned down.

Jews as the minority par excellence and the Hegelian dialectical method in flesh are an *Accelerant* of the answering of the *Minority Question*. The Jews are the historical articulation of the *Minority Question* of existence: they are the entelechy of the West. Their messianic vocation is the continued quest to give answer to this universal and particular question. To recapitulate, it is for this reason they occupy an incredible

proportionality of cosmopolitan/socialist/globalist/universal ideology as both Reform Jews and secular Jews, a proportionality that is impossible to deny:

A genuine idealism informs the Jew's commitment to revolutionary universalism. Writing in the euphoric days of 1848, the German Jewish socialist J. L. Bernays proudly insisted that Jews were the pillar of the revolutions then sweeping Europe. The Jews, he wrote, 'have rescued men from the narrow idea of an exclusive fatherland, from patriotism . . . The Jew is not only an atheist, but a cosmopolitan, and he has turned men into atheists and cosmopolitans; he has made man only a free citizen of the world...The Jews took their revenge upon the hostile world in an entirely new manner...by liberating men from all religion, from all patriotic sentiment from everything that reminded them of race, place of origin, dogma and faith. Men emancipated themselves that way, and the Jew emancipated them, and the Jew became free with them...They achieved the incredible, and historians of the people will in the future recognize [the Jewish revolutionaries'] merit willingly and justly.' — Paul R. Mendes Flores, "The Throes of Assimilation: Self-Hatred and the Jewish Revolutionary"

In a lecture delivered to the World Jewish Congress in 1958, Polish Jew Issac Deutscher relates the universal posture of many famous and impactful "non-Jewish Jews" such as himself. He mentions Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Trotsky, Freud, and others, a list that has grown tremendously in the modern day. A Jew who rejected Jewish Orthodoxy and Jewish nationalism (Zionism), Deutscher describes himself in contrast to these two elements: an atheist and "internationalist":

Most of the great revolutionaries, whose heritage I am discussing, have seen the ultimate solution to the problems of their and our times, not in nation-states but in international society. As Jews they were the natural pioneers of this idea, for who was as well qualified to preach the international society of equals as were Jews free from all Jewish and non-Jewish orthodoxy and nationalism? However, the decay of bourgeois Europe has compelled the Jew to embrace the nation-state.

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This is the paradoxical consummation of the Jewish tragedy. It is paradoxical; because we live in an age when the nation-state is fast becoming an archaism—not only the nation-state of Israel but the nation-states of Russia, the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, and others. They are all anachronisms. Do you not see it yet?

Indeed, the efforts to make this a reality are as clear as day for those with a mildly functional cognition. The paradox he mentions is that of the existence of Zionism alongside this internationalism (the Universal State), and Deutscher's hope is that Jews will reclaim the Jewish posture of universality that "transcends" material history:

I hope, therefore, that, together with other nations, the Jews will ultimately become aware—or regain the awareness—of the inadequacy of the nation-state and that they will find their way back to the moral and political heritage that the genius of the Jews who have gone beyond Jewry has left us—the message of universal human emancipation.

There are many, many, many more non-Jewish Jews that can be added to Deutscher's list: the Frankfurt School, Magnus Hirschfeld and Iwan Bloch who pioneered trans-ideology and "sexual rights", modern day pride movements and their dominance in Jewish intellectualism, Reform Judaism, Karl Popper and George Soros of the Open Society, Gyorgy Lukacs of the Neo-Marxist school, the most staunch proponents of diversity, multiculturalism, and a society without borders, and groups such as the ADL that utilize legislative and financial power to control political narratives in favor of, paradoxically, both globalism and Zionism: "anti-Zionism is anti-semitism.<sup>1</sup>" It is here one recognizes, if he has not abundantly already, the foolishness of a monolithic view of modern Jews. The liberal divergence of the natural Jew is directly opposite to that of the Zionist divergence, and the antagonism

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1. Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the ADL, 2022

between the two is the main guiding principle of the actions of modern Jewry:

The current Israeli government, of course, is not liberal, and in fact has abandoned any pretense of liberalism or even of moderation. The governing coalition includes figures such as Itamar Ben-Gvir, an admirer of Jewish supremacist Rabbi Meir Kahane, who threatened Yitzhak Rabin on television weeks before his assassination. More recently, ahead of the latest parliamentary elections, Ben-Gvir urged police to open fire on Palestinians. He is now the minister for national security. Then there's the finance minister, Bezalel Smotrich, of the Religious Zionism Party, who proudly describes himself as a "homophobe." He also supports full annexation of the West Bank without citizenship for Palestinians, allegedly planned to attack motorists to protest the 2005 disengagement from Gaza, and has advocated for separate Jewish and Arab maternity wards within Israel. The justice minister, Yariv Levin, is moving ahead with a plan that would severely weaken the country's judiciary, granting the government total control over judicial appointments and hampering the ability of the Israeli Supreme Court to strike down laws. Netanyahu, the prime minister and the person who assembled this government for the purpose of returning to power after roughly a year and a half away, is on trial for corruption, and many critics believe that the judicial overhaul is being fashioned to help him escape punishment (Netanyahu has denied that this is the intention). The Israeli right, meanwhile, believes the court has liberal bias.

All this is to say nothing of the new government's attitude toward Jews outside of Israel. There were reports that coalition members, before formally joining the government, were advocating to recognize only Orthodox conversions for considering eligibility for aliyah, or immigration to Israel; most American Jews are not Orthodox. Amichai Chikli, the minister for diaspora affairs, has said that he believes the pride flag is an anti-Zionist symbol; American Jews, by comparison, were some of the strongest supporters of same-sex marriage in the United States. Chikli has bashed not only views that Reform Jews hold, but Reform Jews themselves, last year telling *The Jerusalem Post*,

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“The Reform movement has identified itself with the radical left’s false accusations that the settlers are violent, so they have earned the criticism against them, and I cannot identify with them.” Reform Judaism is the largest Jewish denomination in the United States. — Emily Tamkin (a non-Jewish Jew), “Can American Jewish Support for Israel Survive This New Government?”

Israelis who endorse the belief that Jesus is the Messiah or Christ are not considered Jews by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel nor by the Israeli government. — Wikipedia, Jewish Views on Jesus

The diverging answers to the Minority Question developed by the paradox of inverse assimilation are represented by the modern Jewish divergence: Orthodox Jews find consummation of the question in the arrival of the Messiah, Reform/Liberal Jews find consummation in the arrival of the Messianic State, and Zionists find consummation in a return to the nation-state model. Reform/Liberal Judaism and Zionism demonstrate the diverging material solutions, a political divergence of material universality versus material particularity that engender the modern political dialectic.

Reform/Liberal Jews pursue the positive material answer to the Minority question: the universal state where there are no minorities. Zionism is the inverted material answer to the Minority Question, the same answer as the Egyptians 3000 years ago. This is why it returns Jews to history. However, Arthur Cohen was mistaken: these solutions find only *part* of their eschatological essence from the *Exile*. The true beginning point of the *Minority Question*, the particular-universal paradox, the eschatological vitality of Judaism, and therefore Western history, and this should be self-evident at this point, is the *Story of Exodus*.

## Part Three

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*The Beginning and the End*



## Chapter 20

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### *The Story of Exodus*

The stalk of Abraham is chosen after the collapse of the tower and begin their historical destiny: the call of the particular-universal mission is heard, the Covenant revealed by God, and progress starts towards the end consummated in the beginning of time. Moses is pulled out of the stream: the natural Jews are pulled out of history and time and reborn as *supernatural*.

Man can only have a destiny if he has a beginning which originates outside of time and an end which will transcend it — Arthur Cohen

It is in the story of Exodus that the supernatural Jew is historically born and bestowed his Messianic vocation. The selection of the Jews by God is the incarnation of the Jew into the Hegelian Dialectical method: it is here that the paradox begins, that the minority question is asked. It is the beginning of history from outside of time that gives meaning to the eventual end within it.

The story of Exodus, re-examined in the ideological context of the motors of history this book traces, is the story of the *process of liberation* of a political minority from the oppression of a political majority (note, minority and majority need not always find their meaning in relation to

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population quantity). It is the *solution/salvation* for a civically inferior group of people — a true minority, true meaning both civically inferior and *without* a home nation: without a home of equality (for example, Turks are a minority in the United States, but have a home in Turkey where they are a majority) — with Messianic redemption cast out into the future in the form of a state in which the minority is *not* a minority: in which he is a majority/civic *equal*. God physically liberates the Jews from bondage, but also politically/spiritually/morally liberates them with the Assertion that all men are made in His Image. Every human is of infinite and equal worth. This is the beginning of the particular-universal paradox. Many of the sentiments of the original thinkers of the paradox of assimilation were true: the ideals of the Enlightenment — equality, tolerance, freedom — *are* found in Biblical Judaism. Without the Jewish faith, without the idea of “man created in the image of God,” it could never be self-evident as it is now:

There is no way that it could ever have been “self-evident that all men are created equal” without the intervention of the Jews.

We are the undeserving recipients of this history of the Jews, this long, excessive, miraculous development of ethical monotheism without which our ideas of equality and personalism are unlikely ever to have come into being and surely would never have matured in the way that they have. — Thomas Cahill, *The Gift of the Jews*

This affirms the modern lachrymose view: it is true that the Exilic period serves as a deformation of Judaism: the *Exile* forces an inversion of the particular side of the paradox from positive particularism to negative and subsequently reinterprets the notion of Original Sin as related to the nation rather than the individual. Where Jesus said make disciples of the nations, the Jews after the *Exile* sought to make a nation of disciples.

The Talmud articulates differing treatment for Jews and non-Jews, and one of the main historical consequences of this is an increase in anti-semitism: anti-semitism and the Jew evolve convergently throughout history. Jews are allowed to charge interest on non-Jews, Jewish physi-

cians need not assist Gentile peasantry (but should treat Gentile nobility), and the assertion that neighbor explicitly means “Jew,” etc. But if all men are created equal why is there a difference between Jew and Gentile? The original particularity was developed as a means of sustaining and historically producing the universality through Jewish vocation: Jews would serve as the example of moral behavior, moral paragons, and mankind would follow: positive particularity:

The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s family. Go to the land I will show you. “I will make you into a great nation. And I will bless you. I will make your name great. You will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you. I will put a curse on anyone who puts a curse on you. All nations on earth will be blessed because of you. — Genesis 12:1-3

For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth — Deuteronomy 7:6

But the Exilic period inverts this particularity into a negative form: Jews are no longer the moral example of the world, citizens that treat foreigners with tolerance; instead, they are the foreigners themselves. Here, we see why the era of emancipation was so compatible with Judaism: it generated a means through which the Jewish ideal of tolerance of the foreigner could be *projected onto the foreigner* through an inverted method. Biblical Judaism projected tolerance through the state onto the foreigner: modern Judaism projected/projects tolerance through the foreigner(themselves) *onto the State*. The galut, deprivation of statehood, promulgates this inversion, and the result of negative ideological-material particularism is Zionism. The result of positive ideological-material particularism is the Universal State.

Here we encounter something incredibly profound. The story of Exodus itself gives way to a paradox theoretically equivalent to that of German assimilation. In the same way modern emancipation welded the opposites of integration (progress, assimilation) and separation (return, distinctness) together as a processual paradox of self-develop-

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ment that would reach fulfillment only historically (Universal State), ancient emancipation welded the opposites of *rebellion and obedience together* as a processual paradox of self-development. Liberation from authority leads to obedience to a new authority, but liberation/rebellion and obedience/enslavement are opposites. The nature of the Jewish paradox is of fusing opposites together — separation and integration, particularism and universalism, tolerance and persecution, *Exile* and return, loss and gain, progress and return — that ostensibly lead to the same end (universality) but this is also true of *obedience and rebellion*.

This last and first paradox makes itself known through the concept of political authority. God is the ultimate political/moral authority with Whom a Covenant of obedience is created — the original covenant with Abraham that develops into the 10 Commandments — but if authority is deemed oppressive — as in the program of Exodus and the basis for every modern “revolution” (America and France) — obedience to God is then *displayed through rebellion against political/moral authority*. The Enlightenment finds new profundity in this interpretation. God is considered dead (disobeyed without guilt), but what He represented is retained: universal ultimately authoritative ideals of political/moral quality. Rationality becomes the tool through which the modern covenant of equality is established. Viewed in this light, the modern man liberates himself from God through the tool of rationality, therefore conferring upon rationality the valuation of ultimate moral/political authority: man must therefore obey the covenant of rationality. The paradox is as such: liberation from the former God leading to obedience to the new God that enabled such liberation. The ultimate idea of the Enlightenment developed by rationality is ancient: it is the beginning of history: man should be/become Free-Equal: the negation of the Minority Question. The theorized age that the Messiah will usher in is that of complete freedom and equality, and the mission towards this end begins with the Story of *Exodus*.

Two main ideological postures diverge at this point. The English/French conception, man is most free-equal when he can govern himself (his own master — the liberal end), and the German

conception, man is most free-equal through the State (the Hegelian / Totalitarian end). These two postures are inversions of one another — opposites — and therefore, in line with the Hegelian paradox, they *lead* to the same end. The twentieth century demonstrated the culmination of these methods in *divergence*, but the 21st century is demonstrating this methods in *convergence*. What is the synthesis between self-governance and state-governance? The State as the entity that enables everyone to govern themselves. The idea of self-governance becomes the State. And because the State has replaced God and because God has been replaced by the ideals of freedom and equality, *Freedom and Equality become the State*. The ideologized interpretation of *Exodus* is the guiding principle of the West: it is the true *material vitality* of the Jewish eschatology.

What engenders the Protestant Reformation? The liberation of man from the authority of the Pope so that he may *govern his own faith*. What engenders the French Revolution and the American Revolution? The conferment upon liberation — *which is only won through rebellion* — absolute divinity. Liberation is necessarily tied to equality: if any man is unequal, then he is unfree. And if any man is unfree, he is unequal. If man is to be free, then he must also be equal.

What is the *material* conclusion of the paradox of obedience-rebellion? If we follow the same formula of the particular-universal paradox, it is the historical realization of a place where there should be no rebellion: the place where all men are *truly* equal *and* free. Who is it that rebels against the hegemonic homogeneity? The heterodox minority: only when there is no minority can there be no rebellion. But this is only possible through a covenant established by an ultimate authority *ensuring* that everyone obeys the idea of Freedom-Equality. The ultimate Authority is the State and the covenant is the Constitution, but this too is subject to paradox.

The Jewish vocation is that of rebelling until this end is reached: until the gap is bridged, the question solved. The solutions are identical because *they are the same paradox*. The messianic mission developed by the ideologues of emancipation is identical to the original Messianic mission. The Enlightenment enabled a *return* to positive particularism

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which necessarily meant a departure from negative forms of particularity, but this return did not include God. Positive material particularism, Reform/Liberal Judaism, is ideologized Judaism, rationalized and secularized, a reinterpretation of Judaism into an ideology where rather than worshipping God, one worships and obeys man-made biblically obtained processual ideals of development towards universality. *Bildung* appears intimately to Jews as a Jewish ideal: it is the concept of historical development, the process of the Messianic vocation of chosenness. Jews are the *most* capable of self-development due to their chosenness and reception of original Revelation. *Exodus* itself is *Bildung*: it is the formula of development of both mind and state towards the Universal State, both individually and collectively.

*Exodus* means a liberation from some oppressive authority to sublate obedience under the ultimate authority, but in the ideological rendering, *the ultimate authority is the ideal implicit within Exodus, Freedom-Equality*. Therefore the ideological end born from the story is reached only through the recursive processualization of the story: reoccurrences of *Exodus* over and over again until the implicit end is reached: a land where and when there is no longer a need for *Exodus*: where and when the paradox is resolved by the convergence of the original divergence. *Exodus* is the process of individual and collective self-development towards universality: towards God. The method of *Exodus* is deemed the *method through which man can reach/return to/become God: it is the dialectic. Exodus is the mission*. Just as the paradox of inverse assimilation finds resolution when there is no need for assimilation, the particular-universal paradox when there is no particular, the process of the paradox of *Exodus* is over when there is no need for rebellion: *when man has become his own master: when all men have become their own masters: when all men have become god: self-liberators*.

No one can serve two masters. — Matthew 6:24

What is the aim of socialism? Globalism? Progressivism? Cosmopolitanism? Internationalism? The Open Society? Complete and total freedom and equality bounded only by the necessary social laws that would enable all to be equally free and freely equal. The infallible

authority is that there is no authority and therefore *all authorities are equal*, but all people must obey the authority that *all authorities are equal*: Freedom-Equality is the *ultimate authority*. The material goal of making man his own master is the explicit goal of liberal political theory:

Blind obedience to authority would be replaced by rational self-government, in which all men, free and equal, would have to obey no masters but themselves. — Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*

Why is it that the idea of emancipation is so alluring to the modern mind: *divine* to the modern mind? The further “oppressed” one feels themselves to be, the more there is an infatuation with the idea of freedom. But there is no such thing as true freedom: one is always enslaved to something. Even the “man as his own master” is a myth of liberal political theory: man in the Universal State does not obey himself solely: his obedience is subsumed by obedience to the *entity that guarantees his freedom-equality*: the State. The consequence of the prolonged existence of the political grouping is the inability for the human individual to secure his own existence: he has become dependent upon the state. On both sides of the modern political dialectic, the idea of material freedom-equality is central. Man, instead of worshipping God who provides the ultimate freedom — spiritual freedom — worships the State that will actualize the ideals of freedom-equality: the Universal State is material Heaven on Earth. It is the *ultimate return*: the return to the very beginning of time: the *Garden of Eden*. Where man no longer needs to work and where woman no longer suffers the pain of child-birth: and even further back, when there was *only* man, only the individual. And in this Garden there is only one rule and one ruler. The material end of mankind is a return to the beginning. The two paths to this material return — the two sides of the modern political divergence — both find their origin within the locus of Germany in the ideologies of Reform Judaism and Zionism. Reform Judaism/Globalism as return to the material Garden of Eden for all mankind enabled by the State, and Zionism/Nationalism as

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return to the material Garden of Eden/Promised Land *solely for Jews/ethnic group* enabled by the State.

The attachment to statism and the tutelary state by Germans, German Jews, and Jews alike should no longer cause any perplexity. The tutelary state, from which all truth is derived, is ideologically synonymous with God. In fact, it is the *replacement* of God in the void that His death produced after the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was the *Exodus* from God enabled by the covenant of rationality. The role of the tutelary state for both the Reform/Globalist and Zionist/Nationalist divergence is identical: to liberate man/Jew from *all* oppressive forces the state itself must become the very idea of Freedom-Equality incarnate. But now, there is a new paradox: that of self-reference.

If the ultimate value is freedom, *does man not have to free himself from freedom?* All rationally formed modern ideologies rooted in freedom-equality are subject to this paradox of self-reference, and this is because all ideologies *are neither objective nor complete*. All ideologies are founded on some *faith presupposition* (Kurt Godel's incompleteness theorem, is-ought problem, Nietzsche), and this presupposition cannot be proven due to the limits of the system itself. One can assert eudaemonism, but he constructs the ideology on the faith presupposition that *happiness is a moral good* — that it is worth pursuing through human effort and will. This however cannot be proven through rationality *alone*: it is purely a *faith presupposition* and thus equal to all other faith presuppositions. This is the truth imparted by Nietzsche and what one discovers through any basic cursory study of sociology. Leo Strauss, a German Jewish political theorist that dealt extensively with the theologicopolitical problem, relates this irrationality of rationality:

According to a very widespread view, all knowledge which deserves the name is scientific knowledge; but scientific knowledge cannot validate value judgments; it is limited to factual judgments; yet political philosophy presupposes that value judgments can be rationally validated.

The facts, understood as historical processes, indeed do not teach us anything regarding values, and the consequence of the abandonment of moral principle proper was that value judgments have no objective

support whatsoever. To spell this out with the necessary clarity — although one knows this from the study of the social sciences — the values of barbarism and cannibalism are as defensible as those of civilization.

As a consequence, one discovers the faith presuppositions that form the dominant secular ideologies of modernity all possess some Biblical faith presupposition: suffering is evil, freedom is good, slavery is bad, equality is good, love is good, hate is bad, etc:

Secularization means, then, the preservation of thoughts, feelings, or habits of biblical origin after the loss or atrophy of biblical faith.

Modern rationalism rejected biblical theology and replaced it by such things as deism, pantheism, and atheism. But in this process, biblical morality was in a way preserved. Goodness was still believed to consist in something like justice, benevolence, love, or charity; and modern rationalism has generated a tendency to believe that this biblical morality is better preserved if it is divorced from biblical theology. Now this was, of course, more visible in the nineteenth century than it is today; it is no longer so visible today because one crucial event happened between 1870 and 1880: the appearance of Nietzsche. Nietzsche's criticism can be reduced to one proposition: modern man has been trying to preserve biblical morality while abandoning biblical faith. — Leo Strauss

All modern moral knowledge finds its origin in revelation. Or in other words, original Revelation is the sole rope holding mankind over the abyss of relativism and nihilism. The main faith-based presupposition of modernity is that of freedom-equality. The program of socialism, communism, nationalism, etc, are all offsprings of this guiding principle implicit in the ideologized story of Exodus: Freedom-Equality worshipped as God, obedience as freedom, the Messianic ideal reinterpreted as the mission through which a temporal theoretical resolution is projected out into the end of time. It is my claim that *all* revolutions are Jewish in nature and that they derive from the original ideology of *Exodus*.

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*Biblical Critical Theory* published in 2022 by Christopher Watkins reiterates the centrality of the story of *Exodus* to modern history:

For David William Kling, the *Exodus* “defines the people of Israel and provides the focal point in subsequent Jewish history, so much so that Old Testament authors mention it more than any other event,” and with only a slight exaggeration he adds “so central is the grand narrative of *Exodus* that the rest of the Bible is but commentary on this event.

The Reformation was framed as an emancipation from “Popish bondage” on the pattern of the *Exodus*. The motif was deployed by the Puritans in their struggle to complete “England’s *Exodus*,” and then the Levelers and Diggers turned the tables and used this rhetoric of deliverance against Cromwell. The English historian James Matthew Thompson relates a remarkable eulogy of the French revolutionary leader Maximilien Robespierre and his Montagnard political group: ‘The Montagne was the Mount Sinai of the new order, from which, ‘amid thunder and lightning are revealed’ (by the mouth of Moses-Robespierre), the oracles of transfigured humanity.’

Two years after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez published his seminal *A Theology of Liberation*. Taking the *Exodus* narrative as a blueprint for resisting oppressive rule and building a “just and comradely society,” Gutiérrez was instrumental in the rise of liberation theology, a theology that takes the exodus narrative as its central motif.

This “liberation theology” is the basis for black liberation theology and feminist liberation theology, both rooted in material Marxist/Neo-Marxist terminology that finds its vitality in “deconstructing” teleological and etiological laws, such as gender and ethnicity, by rendering reality through a material relationality theory: all terminology relating to relations are social constructs developed across time, and therefore, can be inverted, subverted, or “reinvented” in order to transform

reality towards some “equalitarian” and “liberated” end. In the beginning, there were no relations, and thus, to return to the past in the future requires the deconstruction of the present. The immediate paradox is the assertion of the objectivity of this end alongside the simultaneous assertion that all things are subjective. Is relationality theory not subjective then, no more or less right than teleological/etiological theory? Self-reference is *deferred* so that a *temporal conclusion may be reached*. Modern liberation theology is the guiding program for any who considers themselves a minority, the essence of the ideology originally developed and historicized by the minority *par excellence*. To return to Watkins:

In short, much of our politics today is profoundly *Exodus*-shaped. John Coffey sums up the political importance of the *Exodus* narrative by arguing that “readers did not merely cite *Exodus*; they inhabited it,” and elements of the story “could create a new sense of what was humanly possible and what was divinely mandated.” Through such retelling they “telescoped history, replacing chronological time with a form of sacred time...The exodus story is central to the modern Western political imaginary and modern Western aspirations.

Watkins provides a relating of Lyotard’s postmodern theory which categorizes the two main meta-narratives of modernity:

In *The Postmodern Condition*, Jean-François Lyotard identifies what he calls the “emancipation narrative” as one of the two great meta-narratives of the modern world. In this story, humanity is cast as the hero of liberty: scientific and technological advancements are making us freer and freer. Elsewhere, Lyotard makes explicit the link between this meta-narrative and the biblical story of salvation as liberation:

‘The “meta-narratives” I was concerned with in *The Postmodern Condition* are those that have marked modernity: the progressive emancipation of reason and freedom, the progressive or catastrophic emancipation of labor (source of alienated value in capitalism), the enrichment of all humanity through the progress of capitalist technoscience, and even—if we include Christianity itself in modernity (in

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opposition to the classicism of antiquity)—the salvation of creatures through the conversion of souls to the Christian narrative of martyred love.'

For Lyotard, modernity began with Paul and Augustine insofar as its "promised emancipation was that which organized time in accordance with a history or, at least, a historicity." Time and again, the modern West finds its identity in having been freed from former oppressions and in continuing to free itself from those that remain. This narrative is hard-baked into the Western social imaginary. Charles Taylor describes this as the West's "perfect tense consciousness," primarily affirmed in the achievement of having been liberated from religious superstition by the savior of reason.

Indeed, Lyotard's assertion is true: history is defined by the progression of freedom. It's shocking however, that he denoted Paul and Augustine rather than the story of *Exodus* as the starting point of history. Salvation, the end of times, is the time in which *ultimate* freedom is achieved, and the story of freedom, and therefore history, begins with the first story of freedom. Lyotard's second meta-narrative is knowledge progressing towards totalization: towards God. This however, is impossible: the progression of knowledge can only lead to pure relativism. Truthfully, what relativization implies is equality: *equality of all knowledge*. Therefore, these two meta-narratives *are one and the same*: the progressive emancipation and equalization of man is leading to the totalization of the idea of Freedom-Equality with self-reference deferred so that it may temporally be actualized. The modern political dialectic is subsumed by this one great meta-narrative of freedom-equality that began with an ethnic group enslaved in a foreign land:

Given the importance of the *Exodus* story for our political culture, it is no surprise that both the left and the right couch their policies in the language of liberation. Right-wing libertarianism and left-wing emancipatory politics draw from the same exodic well. The right wants to liberate us from the heavy hand of big government and high taxes and from the red tape of regulation and bureaucracy. The left wants to

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emancipate us from socially unjust prejudices, long-standing inequalities, and oppressions. The combined effect is that freedom has become both “America’s most important idea” and also “America’s most contested ideal.” Radically opposed though they may be, both of these agendas trace their roots back to the *Exodus* narrative. They are both, furthermore, reductions of that narrative, partial and therefore heretical misconceptions of a full-ordered biblical understanding of slavery and emancipation.

Michael Walzer, an American Jewish political theorist and public intellectual wrote in *Exodus and Revolution* about the story of *Exodus* as the model for revolution:

Indeed, revolution has often been imagined as an enactment of the *Exodus* and the *Exodus* has often been imagined as a program for revolution.

The Frankfurt school founded itself on the same Exodic message that man must be freed from all oppressive forces. Ernst Bloch, an atheist Marxist Jew influential in the field of liberal theology, believed Christianity held within it the key to the story of emancipation, relating his argument in *Atheism in Christianity: The Religion of the Exodus and the Kingdom*:

When Christians are really concerned with the emancipation of those who labor and are heavy-laden, and when Marxists retain the depths of the Kingdom of Freedom as the real content of revolutionary consciousness on the road to becoming true substance, the alliance between revolution and Christianity founded in the Peasant Wars may live again—this time with success. Florian Geyer, the great fighter of those wars, is reputed to have had the words “Nulla crux, nulla corona” scratched on the blade of his sword. That could be the motto of a Christianity free, at last, from alienation. And the far-reaching, inexhaustible depths of emancipation in those words could also serve as a motto for a Marxism aware of its depths.

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[The] inhumanity of our world certainly has many reasons to fear the final celebration of Marxism, and the cancellation, once and for all, of any bondage—of any master-slave relationship.

This is an impossibility. Man will always be a slave to something, even if that be himself. Worship of self politically collectivized is obedience/enslavement to the idea of Freedom-Equality treated as God.

Bloch affirms the view of *Exodus* as redemption:

The simplest solution for theodicy is not just que Dieu n'existe pas, for the questions then rise up again to confront the dark, unfeeling way of the world itself, and the intractable matter which moves there. The simplest way is this: that there is always an *Exodus* in the world, an *Exodus* from the particular status quo. And there is always a hope, which is connected with rebellion—a hope founded in the concrete given possibilities for new being.

The God of liberation was a true God of morality, an ideal God whose qualities could now really be a model for men.

Should we be surprised to find Exodic messaging promulgated in and all throughout Zionism, the ideology of freedom and salvation for secular assimilated Jews enabled by an *Exodus* from Judaism?

In a hyperbolic comparison, he[Herzl] insisted that the modern Jewish *Exodus* would put the biblical one in the shade: "The *Exodus* under Moses bears the same relation to this project as a Shrovetide play by Hans Sachs does to a Wagner opera. — Kornberg

In 1947, the SS *Exodus* took nearly 5000 Jewish migrants to the Promised Land, and Leon Uris' 1958 international bestseller *Exodus* was about the establishment of the State of Israel told through the story of the SS *Exodus*. It became the biggest bestseller in the United States since *Gone with the Wind*.

## Chapter 21

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### *Modern Intellectualism and the Paradox of Self-Reference*

Liberation theology fundamentally and necessarily rests on relationality theory; there is no teleology or purpose of creation, no etiology or cause of creation, and rather, all of existence finds its essence from subjective relations. A chair is a chair because of its relational use as a chair, but that relationality can be inverted, the chair transformed into a weapon, a stand, barricade, etc, and this same relationality is applied to humans: man and woman are “relational” terms, not etiological terms, ethnicity is a relational term, nation is a relational term: all these things are *social constructs* developed through the *environment*. This enables a rejection of disliked “backward” elements in theology, and a retention of ethical principles and processes that are used to invert reality. This first requires a material rendering of all of reality: there can be no spiritual element to existence, otherwise, things are not relational and *must* be theological. Paradoxically however, it is this very theological basis that relationality theorists reject that gives legitimacy to their aim of equality of relations. The program of activity for adherents of relationality theory is that of inversion: imagining the relations that don’t exist and actualizing them. All relations are transformed and inverted so as to generate ostensibly greater negative freedom.

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Implicit in relationality theory and modern rationalism is the aforementioned paradox of self-reference articulated by the ideologization of the story of *Exodus* (if freedom is the ultimate value, must man be *freed from freedom*?). The modern departure from God invited relativism into intellectualism, and, like a cancer, modern thinking has been subsumed by it, only sustained by the chemotherapy of a deferment of self-reference.

The intellectualism of the modern day is a consequence of ideologizing the story of *Exodus* and glorifying the ideal of freedom-equality as the ultimate authority: as God. The Jewish collective represents the Hegelian Dialectical Method as both a *theological and material* Accelerant towards universality. This paradoxical openness is the basis of Popper's Open Society, also a subject of the paradox of self-reference, and is sustained by the paradox of tolerance:

Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them...We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant. — *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Karl Popper

An Open society, by its very name, claims to be “open” in contrast to the closed society that Popper condemns, which is closed on some absolute parameter. Closed societies are depicted by Popper as religious, fascistic, and totalitarian for they *don't tolerate those who don't tolerate them*. Of course, for anyone with a mildly functional cognition, the Open society *is no different than the closed*. It too has an absolute boundary, one created by the paradox of self-reference applied to equality. It may appear to be a larger boundary, but that is based on the pre-selected presuppositions of what sort of freedom is actual freedom. Only those who believe in God are allowed in the “closed” “totalitarian” “fascistic” society. And only those who believe in the God of freedom-equality are allowed in the “open” “free” “equal” and “democratic” society. There is no “freedom of religion”: what dominates the

theological-political realm, the very religion of America, is the *freedom of religion* religion. Any who don't abide by the absolute laws of the God of freedom-equality *are not tolerated*. There is no such thing as an Open society: the paradox of human nature relegates the possibility to non-existence. Likewise, there is no "open" thought at modern universities. The motto of "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" has been *inverted*: "You shall know that there is *no truth* and this shall set you free." Allan Bloom illustrates the basics of this paradox of openness and the modern intellectual suicide in his seminal work *The Closing of the American Mind*:

It is open to all kinds of men, all kinds of life-styles, all ideologies. There is no enemy other than the man who is not open to everything.

The inflamed sensitivity induced by radicalized democratic theory finally experiences any limit as arbitrary and tyrannical. There are no absolutes; freedom is absolute. Of course the result is that, on the one hand, the argument justifying freedom disappears and, on the other, all beliefs begin to have the attenuated character that was initially supposed to be limited to religious belief.

So indiscriminateness is a moral imperative because its opposite is discrimination. This folly means that men are not permitted to seek for the natural human good and admire it when found, for such discovery is coeval with the discovery of the bad and contempt for it. Instinct and intellect must be suppressed by education. The natural soul is to be replaced with an artificial one.

Bloom represents the inversion of the valuation of "minority" but does not recognize, as we will later get to, that the ending of America was implicit in its beginning:

This reversal of the founding intention with respect to minorities is most striking. For the Founders, minorities are in general bad things, mostly identical to factions, selfish groups who have no concern as such for the common good. Unlike older political thinkers, they entertained no hopes of suppressing factions and

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educating a united or homogeneous citizenry. Instead they constructed an elaborate machinery to contain factions in such a way that they would cancel one another and allow for the pursuit of the common good. The good is still the guiding consideration in their thought, although it is arrived at, less directly than in classical political thought, by tolerating faction. The Founders wished to achieve a national majority concerning the fundamental rights and then prevent that majority from using its power to overturn those fundamental rights. In twentieth-century social science, however, the common good disappears and along with it the negative view of minorities.

What is that common good? And does it “disappear” as Bloom says? Or is America just reaching *greater consistency*? Upon what presupposition, what self-evident truth, is America founded?

The very idea of majority—now understood to be selfish interest—is done away with in order to protect the minorities. This breaks the delicate balance between majority and minority in Constitutional thought. In such a perspective, where there is no common good, minorities are no longer problematic, and the protection of them emerges as the central function of government.

Bloom misses the mark on the balance of the American Constitution: it isn’t that modern events unbalance the Constitution in relation to minorities, but that the progressive empowerment of minorities is the *balancing out of the Constitution*. In other words, the current events are not out of line with the birth of America, but rather, *are necessary events on the path towards Constitutional consistency*. The Constitution enforces the method of inverse assimilation as the political method towards consistency: tolerance leading towards universality.

The modern mind believes he should be open to all things, but then, *should he also be open to closing his mind?* Central to this paradox of openness is the paradox of self-reference and a number of central post-modern beliefs circulate and dominate modern universities and intellectual thought that all share the commonality of this paradox.

Self-reference is *deferred*, not totally done away with, because the opposing structures aim to find historical resolution in the future: the messianic mission is implicit. The particular-universal paradox finds resolution in the future once the universal has been reached but that requires a temporal period of particularity that is counter to universality; the same is true of the paradox of self-reference. Once people have been morally ingrained with the idea of tolerance, equality, relativism, etc, self-reference will be allowed but *there won't be anyone who isn't morally homogenized*. In other words, at the end of globalism, the Universal State, all will be freely equal and equally free *and* believe in the ultimate moral value of the idea of freedom-equality: the paradox of self-reference is resolved by temporally persisting in it. The Messianic mission is resolved by temporarily persisting through a period without the Messiah.

The paradox of self-reference is a necessity to the particular-universal paradox this entire book has treated as the guiding thread of modern history. The particular negates the particularity of its quest for universality by asserting that the particular end reaches a universal end for all particulars, and if it did not defer this self-reference, then its chosenness would be no different from that of a Zulu's or Inca's. *Method* is self-referenced until the idea reaches consistency: *Exodus* reoccurs over and over again until the universal is reached.

Diversity, multiculturalism, tolerance, equity, etc, invert the structure of power and construct a path towards true *material* equality among all groups. They are the modern methods of *Exodus* leading towards the material universal end. What all of these ideas have in common is that they serve the greatest advantage to the greatest *minority* and the greatest *disadvantage* to the greatest *majority*.

The minority totem pole of modernity is the necessary consequence of founding modernity on the method of *Exodus* (the Enlightenment as an *Exodus* from God developed as an extension of the *Exodus* from the Papacy that was the Protestant Reformation): resolution is found when *there are no minorities*. The particular-material solution to this is Nazism/Zionism and its method is persecution. The universal-material solution is Globalism/Socialism and its method is tolerance. For this to

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occur, the minority must be *empowered* and the majority must be *disempowered*. America is the *bridge to the Universal State*, and its future architecture was decided in its beginning.

The fundamental value of Enlightenment universalism, freedom-equality, finds its origin in the story of *Exodus*, and *Bildung* is the reinterpreted method of *teshuvah* leading individuals towards actualizing these ideals. For the German Jew, *Bildung* was regeneration which meant *return*: ultimate restoration of Jewish justice. The original Hebrews practiced *teshuvah*: the process of returning to God (Judaism), transforming oneself into the image of man that God had created him as, a true and full embodiment of the virtues and goodness of God. The divine *Bildung* for the original Hebrews was in obeying the divine knowledge imparted from God, but obedience is intimately tied to emancipation/liberation/freedom, and therefore, the ideologized Jew develops himself by obeying freedom: by further *returning* to Freedom.

Why did German Jewry embrace *Bildung* with such unrelenting passion and dedication? And why did the German Jews' adherence to the principle of *Bildung* develop to such an extent that it became "detached from the individual and his struggle for self-cultivation and . . . [became] transformed into a kind of religion—the worship of the true, the good, and the beautiful"? — Jennifer Hansen-Glucklich, "Father, Goethe, Kant, and Rilke: The Ideal of *Bildung*, the Fifth Aliyah, and German-Jewish Integration into the Yishuv"

Jews did not make *Bildung* into their religion: it *already was*. Judaism is a process of consummate return. The events of modernity were further progressions towards the ultimate and original goal. The Exilic period was a pause in history, a degeneration, an *un-development*, and Modernity marked the resumption of the material trek towards the Universal State, the logical end of the Story of *Exodus* made into ideology. Modernity gave liberty and license for Jewish thinkers to rationalize and ideologize their faith, reinterpreting the story of *Exodus*, the Messianic mission, and their existence to fit in line with a historical narrative, only possible after the Jew has been liberated from their

Liberator and given the hope of salvation from anti-semitism through civic emancipation:

One Jewish liberal became so enthralled by the promise of emancipation that he wrote: 'The messiah, for whom we prayed these thousands of years, has appeared and our fatherland has been given to us. The messiah is freedom, our fatherland is Germany.' — Salo Baron, "The Impact of the Revolution of 1848 on Jewish Emancipation"

Without God, the method of the story of *Exodus* becomes singularly pronged — *mere pursuit of liberation from all oppressive forces* — and the paradox resolves itself at the end of time in the material actualization of the Universal State; once all forces of oppression — patriarchy, government, aristocracy, capitalism, nationalism, gender, ethnicity, biology, etc — are eradicated: man only obeys the idea of Freedom-Equality that enables him to worship himself, and this Freedom-Equality is the political-moral ideology of the Universal State towards which mankind has been hurtling towards for 3000 years:

The gradual development of the equality of conditions is therefore a providential fact, and it possesses all the characteristics of a divine decree: it is universal, it is durable, it constantly eludes all human interference, and all events as well as all men contribute to its progress. Would it, then, be wise to imagine that a social impulse which dates from so far back can be checked by the efforts of a generation? Is it credible that the democracy which has annihilated the feudal system and vanquished kings will respect the citizen and the capitalist? Will it stop now that it has grown so strong and its adversaries so weak? None can say which way we are going, for all terms of comparison are wanting: the equality of conditions is more complete in the Christian countries of the present day than it has been at any time or in any part of the world; so that the extent of what already exists prevents us from foreseeing what may be yet to come. — Alexis DeTocqueville, *Democracy in America*

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Tocqueville's words are prophetic: the modern day is a complete vindication of his sentiments, and it appears as if no *man* can stop this movement towards total freedom-equality.

The gap between man and God is made *literally* material. The goal of modernity is to transform everyone into their own gods, their own truth-sayers, their own judges, *their own creators*. But all these gods must be equally-free and freely-equal, and thus, each one of these individual "gods" ultimately must obey the god of freedom-equality. Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God.

The particular-universal paradox is central to the Messianic mission that posits a historical resolution to the paradox of rebellion-obedience: the posture of particularity to the ideal of universality is overcome with the Jews as the historical generators and Accelerants of universality: the Jews chosen as the saviors of *all* people. We return to the original Jewish paradox as related by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks:

Judaism embodies a unique paradox that has distinguished it from polytheism on the one hand and the great universal monotheisms, Christianity and Islam, on the other. Its God is universal: the creator of the universe, author and sovereign of all human life. But its covenant is particular: one people set among the nations, whose vocation is not to convert the world to its cause, but to be true to itself and to God. That juxtaposition of universality and particularity was to cause a tension between Israel and others, and within Israel itself, that has lasted to this day.

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal. — *The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism*, Columbus Ohio, 1937

Slavoj Zizek provides an accurate analysis of the particular-universal paradox:

Judaism stands for the paradox of Universalism which maintains its universal dimension precisely by its 'passionate attachment' to the stain of particularity that serves as its unacknowledged foundation. Judaism thus not only belies the common-sense notion that the price to be paid for access to universality is to renounce one's particularity; it also demonstrates how the stain of un-acknowledgeable particularity of the gesture that generates the Universal is the ultimate resource of the Universal's vitality: cut off from irredeemable/repressed particular roots, the Universal ossifies and changes into a lifeless, empty, abstract universal form. Or — to put it in even more specific terms — Judaism, as it were, ironically reverses the standard Marxist procedure of discerning in the assertion of some abstract Universal the particular content that actually hegemonizes it ('the universal rights of man are effectively the rights of...[white male property owners]'): its implicit claim is that the actual content of Jewish 'particularism', of its stubborn sticking to a set of arbitrary particular prescriptions, is none other than the assertion of actual Universality.

The final proposition of this book is that *America is the final material bridge*, the *modern Galilee* in which the biblical Tower of Babel is reconstructed/completed. America is the theorized Messianic State.



## Chapter 22

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### *America*

Where Germany is the place of historical confluence, America is a land founded physically, politically, and morally through the ideology of *Exodus*. In this sense, America is exceptional in its distinction from the European nations as its history begins *after* the Enlightenment: Where Europe is *transformed* by the Enlightenment America is founded *upon* it. The famous and prolific American historian Henry Steele Commager wrote *The Empire of Reason: How Europe Imagined and America Realized the Enlightenment* in which he articulates this view of American exceptionalism. David Sorkin demonstrates:

In recent decades this image of a unitary, secular Enlightenment project has become a foundational myth of the United States: it has converged with the idea of America’s “exceptionalism,” or singular place in the world. Henry Steele Commager argued that whereas Europe only “imagined” the Enlightenment, the United States “realized” it; in America “it not only survived but triumphed” and indeed “*was* the American Revolution.” Moreover, this was an Enlightenment of “secularism and rationalism,” of “Faith in Reason, in Progress, in a common Humanity.” Gertrude Himmelfarb has reinforced this view by asserting that America’s “exceptionalism” consists in its embodying

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the Enlightenment's pragmatic "politics of liberty" hostile to rationalist utopias. — *The Religious Enlightenment*

America emancipated the Jews *from the beginning*:

The paradoxical triumph of Americanism lies in the fact that it received the Jew from the very beginning...America was tolerant of the Jew — Arthur Cohen, *The Natural and Supernatural Jew*

The historical events generating America are an almost *exact* corollary to the story of *Exodus*, both politically and *ethnically*. From a simple perspective, America today appears as the *modern Galilee*: it is the land of the minority, the melting pot, and the natural location for the conclusion of the problem of assimilation, the Minority Question. Just as the end of the history is implicit in its beginning, the death of an organism implicit in its birth, the end of America is in its beginning. But this beginning is not the American Revolution: it is the Norman Conquest.

## Chapter 23

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### *The Norman Conquest*

The American Revolution was a *reoccurrence* of the story of *Exodus* and is predicated on an *ethnic* conflict. The Norman Conquest was the 11th century invasion and conquering of Anglo-Saxon England by William the Conqueror, known to the Anglo-Saxons as William the Bastard. L.G. Pine, the most reputable scholar on the history of the Norman Conquest wrote about its severity:

The historian whose unthinking conscience allows them to justify the Norman Conquest, could as easily justify the Nazi subjugation of Europe.

The term "Norman Yoke" is a historical expression used to describe the oppressive rule and heavy taxation imposed by the Normans on the Anglo-Saxon population of England following the Norman Conquest of 1066. Orderic Vitalis was a medieval English chronicler and historian who lived during the 11th and 12th centuries, born 4 years after the end of the Norman Conquest, who is best known for his significant contributions to Norman history through his extensive chronicle, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, also known as the *Ecclesiastical History*, and in it he wrote:

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And so the English groaned aloud for their lost liberty and plotted ceaselessly to find some way of shaking off a yoke that was so intolerable and unaccustomed.

The specific term “Norman Yoke” which represents the usurping of the Anglo-Saxons ethnic self-governance by the Normans begins to appear in the 1600s, and Gerrard Winstanley, a 17th century English political philosopher and activist stated:

O what mighty Delusion, do you, who are the powers of England live in! That while you pretend to throw down that Norman yoke, and Babylonish power, and have promised to make the groaning people of England a Free People; yet you still lift up that Norman yoke, and slavish Tyranny, and holds the People as much in bondage, as the Bastard Conqueror himself, and his Council of War — *The True Levellers Standard Advanced*

A poem by Walter Scott in the 1800s to illustrate the long-standing prevalence of the term:

*Norman saw on English oak.  
On English neck a Norman yoke;  
Norman spoon to English dish,  
And England ruled as Normans wish;  
Blithe world in England never will be more,  
Till England's rid of all the four*

From what was it the Jews were freed in the Story of Exodus?

Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.’ — Exodus 6:6-7

Though the Norman Conquest occurred a thousand years ago, its consequences, like those of the *Exodus*, critically alter historical development of the West. The conquest resulted in the transfer of Anglo-Saxon nobility in England to the Normans, and the loss of all rights to land, ownership, and property by the Anglo-Saxons: domination over the society at large was authoritatively exerted by the Norman force. The *Minority Question* of morality, governance, and other was manifest anew: the Norman Conquest was the political-historical beginning point that would consummate in a return to the Promised Land of self-governance: it was the Anglo-Saxon eschatological principal of vitality of the process that would eventually consummate in the founding of a nation of equality and liberation across the sea.

Although it is true that the cultural/racial divide largely eroded away due to intermingling between the Normans and Anglo-Saxons, the injustices and humiliations suffered in the past were not forgotten (Harrying of the North and Domesday) and full true assimilation never occurred: the Anglo-Saxons never accepted the Norman governorship that had entered their lives without consent. The Declaration of Independence proclaims, “to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the *consent of the governed*,” and this implicitly asserts the Norman rulership as illegitimate due to the inversion of consent in its establishment.

The Norman Conquest served as an *ethnic* inspiration for the American Revolution. After their conquest by the Normans, the Anglo-Saxons became a civic minority in their homeland, a status that gave birth to the hope of a *restoration* of the Anglo-Saxon rights of *self-governance*. The Norman Conquest is the birth of this messianic hope and history its progressive incompleteness developing towards completeness: it is the eschatological event of vitality that gives meaning to Anglo-Saxon *redemption*. The hope for self-governance found action in the 1215 revolt which led to the Magna Carta as an appeasement to Anglo-Saxon sentiments, but the desire for a restoration of Anglo-Saxon rule, or *self-rule*, persisted within the Saxon psyche until it found historical restoration in the American Revolution. The hope of an eventual restoration is imparted by the words of Thomas Jefferson:

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And although this constitution was violated and set at naught by Norman force, yet force cannot change right a perpetual claim was kept up by the nation, by their perpetual demand of a restoration of their Saxon laws; which shows they were never relinquished by the will of the nation.

Jefferson writes on the ethnic difference between the tories and whigs:

It has ever appeared to me, that the difference between the whig and the tory of England is, that the whig deduces his rights from the Anglo-Saxon source, and the tory from the Norman.

The whigs were in favor of political independence, *of the restoration of what they believed were their natural right* to be ethnically self-governed, rights unlawfully taken without consent by the Normans, while the tories were loyalists in favor of the English Monarchy, of the Norman Monarchy.

Jefferson again on the impact of the Norman on the Anglo-Saxon:

America was not conquered by William the Norman, nor its lands surrendered to him, or any of his successors [thus feudal law was never established]. Possessions there are undoubtedly of the allodial nature. Our ancestors ... who migrated hither, were farmers, not lawyers.<sup>1</sup>

Was there a more important figure than Jefferson in the founding of America, the penman of the Declaration of Independence? Perhaps Thomas Paine, the founder of American purported self-sufficient “common sense.” Paine, however, is revealed to gotten his “common” sense from purely the Anglo-Saxon perspective:

Conquest and tyranny, at some early period, dispossessed man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. — *Rights of Man*

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i. [allthingsliberty.com](http://allthingsliberty.com)

### *The Norman Conquest*

What particular “conquest” is being referenced? Paine reiterates the lasting hatred of the Normans in the Anglo-Saxon psyche:

The origin of the Government of England, so far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the latest, is perhaps the best recorded. The hatred which the Norman invasion and tyranny begat, must have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have outlived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the curfew-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

John Locke writes implicitly about the Norman conquest:

But supposing, which seldom happens, that the conquerors and conquered never incorporate into one people, under the same laws and freedom; let us see next *what power a lawful conqueror has over the subdued*: and that I say is purely despotical... the *government of a conqueror*, imposed by force on the subdued... *has no obligation* on them.

Though governments can originally have no other rise than that before mentioned, nor polities be founded on anything but the consent of the people, yet such have been the disorders ambition has filled the world with, that in the noise of war, which makes so great a part of the history of mankind, this consent is little taken notice of; and, therefore, many have mistaken the force of arms for the consent of the people, and reckon conquest as one of the originals of government. But conquest is as far from setting up any government as demolishing a house is from building a new one in the place. Indeed, it often makes way for a new frame of a commonwealth by destroying the former; but, without the consent of the people, can never erect a new one. — John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Civil Government*

These sentiments legitimize the claim of an Anglo-Saxon hope for restoration of immemorial law, *a return to immemorial law*: to self-governance by consent. David Conway explicates the Anglo-Saxon conception of this “Ancient Constitution” alongside the Anglo-Saxon refutation of Norman authority in his work *In Defence of the Realm: The Place of Nations in Classical Liberalism*:

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The subjects of a realm governed by such an absolute monarch would lack secure possession of any rights. Hence, Locke was concerned to refute the notion of the divine right of kings. Locke claimed even the hereditary character of the English monarchy to be ultimately grounded in the consent of the English nation. It had acquired this character, in Locke's view, in the distant past by some early generation of Englishmen having agreed to it as a quick and non-contentious means by which their next chief magistrate could be identified after each successive incumbent vacated that office through death or being deposed. Once established by their agreement, the legitimacy of the hereditary was freely accepted and reconfirmed by each successive generation of Englishmen upon their joining the nation. Locke considered the strength of the Englishman's love of liberty to have been revealed by how fiercely the English parliamentary classes had resisted previous attempts by their monarchs to encroach on their traditional liberties.

The House of Commons began the 1649 vindication of itself by claiming it had 'long contended against tyranny, ... and to remove oppression, arbitrary power, and all opposition to the peace and freedom of the nation'. In resisting Charles, it claimed it had been prompted by the very same motives. It goes on to sate the manifold constitutional offenses of which it considered Charles guilty, before rehearsing and responding to a series of imaginary objections against its action. The last objection to which it replies alleges that, in acting as it did, the Commons subverted the time-honored English constitution and thereby imperiled the benefits that it conferred upon the English nation. The Commons states the objection so. The courts of justice, and the good old laws and customs of England (the badges of our freedom, the benefit whereof our ancestors enjoyed long before the [Norman] Conquest, and spent much of their blood to have confirmed by the Great Charter of the Liberties ['Magna Carta'] and the excellent laws which have continued in all former changes, and, being duly executed, are the most just, free, and equal of any the laws in the world) will, by the present alteration of government, be taken away and lost to us and our posterities.

The posture towards ethnic self-governance and a reiteration of a *Pristine view of ancient national law and morality*...:

In the course of his lengthy polemical 'Defense of the People of England', Milton responded to a claim of Salmasius' that the English had sought legitimacy for their action by claiming to find precedent for it in the example of the Dutch who had overthrown their Spanish rulers in favor of a republic. Milton denies the English had need of following any example but that of themselves. Once again, parliament's action is defended through appealing to how long England has enjoyed a liberal constitution. Milton writes, [T]he English think they need not justify their actions by the example of any foreigners whatever. They have their laws of the land, which they have followed — laws which...are the best in the world; they have for their imitation the example of their ancestors, great and gallant men who never gave way to the unrestrained power of kings, and who put many of them to death when their government became insupportable. They were born free; they stand in need of no other nation; they can make unto themselves what laws they desire. One law in particular they venerate before the rest, a very ancient one enacted by nature itself, which measures all human laws, all civil right and government, not according to the lust of kings but, above all else, according to the safety and welfare of good men. Both of these two vindications of Parliament's deposition of Charles Stuart make appeal to England's 'Ancient Constitution'. According to this notion, from time immemorial, or, at least, from well before the Norman Conquest, England had enjoyed a liberal constitution by which even its kings were bound. This constitution supposedly conferred a degree of liberty upon the English that all other nations had long since forfeited, if, indeed, they had ever once enjoyed it. England's Ancient Constitution forbade her kings from raising taxes or introducing new laws without having first gained the consent of witenagots or councils of the wise. This Anglo-Saxon form of assembly antedated French parliaments and was considered to be the true source of the English parliament.

Edward Coke, another vociferous seventeenth century champion of Parliament, also made constant appeal to the notion of England's

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Ancient Constitution of liberty in defending Parliament's struggle against the early Stuart monarchs. Coke expounded the notion in his *Institutes of the Laws of England*, posthumously published in 1644. Coke's work was one with which the Rump Parliament and Milton were familiar when they delivered their vindications of Parliament's action in deposing Charles. From David Hume in the eighteenth century up to such twentieth century historians as Herbert Butterfield and John Pocock, historians of England have persistently denied there ever to have been any such Ancient Constitution. Most contemporary historians take for granted the idea represents a myth rather than a description of any historic reality. Some contemporary historians, such as Alan Macfarlane and Michael Wood, are less inclined to dismiss the idea that, prior to the Norman Conquest, England possessed a constitution more liberal than that which the Normans imposed and which it took the English centuries of constitutional struggle to recover. Locke was fully conversant with the idea of England's Ancient Constitution, as he was of the use to which appeal to it had been put in support of parliamentary opposition to the Stuarts. Locke himself was in no doubt as to how vitally important it was to the political health of the nation that its more politically active members be made fully conversant with it.

From a basic American education one learns that the American revolution was the revolt against tyranny for "self-governance," but in truth, it was a revolt against *foreign* tyranny for *ethnic* self-governance. If we look at the story of *Exodus*, why weren't the Egyptian slaves freed? Why weren't slaves *as such* freed but solely the Hebrew slaves? We understand this as an element of the particular-universal paradox, but the fact that God chose the Hebrews belies the claim that there is not an ethnic element to the story of *Exodus*; verily, all of the Bible is an articulation of the beginning, continuance, and conclusion of the particular-universal paradox. In the same way that Judaism began after the liberation of the ethnic Jewish group as a particular process towards universality, American begins after the liberation of the Anglo-Saxon ethnic group as a particular process towards universality.

## Chapter 24

### *The Second Exodus*

The ethnic element central to the story of *Exodus* is found once more in the *first* of the modern revolutions, possible only after belief in God had been lost. God asserts the Hebrews as his *ethnically* chosen people, and this same sentiment of chosenness by God is repeated by the American motto “Annuit Coeptis”:



Annuit Coeptis means “[In reference to God] *He who has favored our undertakings.*” The eye of God above the unfinished pyramid of 13 rows, in reference to the colonies, signifies this Providence. The particular universal paradox that originates in the story of *Exodus* is reasserted in the American Revolution.

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Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.’ — Exodus 6:6-7

The second motto found underneath the Pyramid, “Novus Ordo Seculorum” translates to “The great cycle of periods is born anew.” What great cycle?

In succeeding in its goal of politically restoring the state of self-governance, the American Revolution *ended* the eschatological principle of the Norman Conquest just as Zionism ended the eschatological principle of the *Exile*: the beginning that was sought manifested in the end of the process and then a new beginning was consummated. Where Zionism asserts *negative material particularity* as the solution, America asserts *positive material particularity*. Both are reaching consistency with their new covenants.

In the same way the chosenness of the Hebrews was sustained by a covenant of God, the favor of God for Americans is sustained by the covenant with State: this covenant is called the “Constitution.” What did the Constitution do? Liberate Americans through chosenness and provide them equality: “all men are created equal.” Freedom, the promised land across the sea, and inalienable rights are given to man by their Creator thereby *restoring Anglo-Saxon law: self-governance*. What must man do with the Constitution? *Obey it*. What did God provide the Hebrews? Chosenness, freedom and equality, a *restoration* of the original law of God. What must the Hebrews do in return? *Obey God*. The State replaces God first not in Germany or France, *but in America*. We understand that God’s covenant is that of a particular-universal nature, *but so too is the Constitution*: a constitution is a covenant between man and that which has replaced God: government:

### *The Second Exodus*

Now it shall come about when [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or to the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. — Deuteronomy 17:18-20

Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, and wrote them in the book and placed it before the Lord. — 1 Samuel 10:25

In *America's Heritage: Constitutional Liberty* American attorneys Herbert Titus and Gerald Thompson relate the covenantal nature of the American Constitution (notably, Titus was the Constitution Party's nominee for Vice President in the 1996 presidential election):

The framers of the U.S. Constitution were well aware of the biblical pattern of covenants, and incorporated their understanding of covenants into the constitutional documents of America.

There are two key truths to be learned from history. First, many of the documents of constitutional significance in America's history, including the U.S. Constitution, have incorporated the biblical principles of covenant in their terms. The U.S. Constitution is not unique in this respect, but it is perhaps the best expression of this truth. Second, the primary features of civil covenants understood in the light of biblical principles are permanence and supremacy.

The covenantal relation between the Magna Carta and the U.S. constitution is explicated:

It is important to understand that the U.S. Constitution is part of a rich legal heritage of civil covenants patterned after the biblical model. The first such civil covenant is the Magna Carta of 1215. Though of

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English origin, Magna Carta was the covenantal framework within which all the colonial charters for America were granted, governing America until independence was declared in 1776. Thus, it is an important part of the American covenant heritage.

The colonists in America affirmed the covenantal nature of Magna Carta, and its applicability to them. In the Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress of 1765, there are several references made to the “British constitution” which the colonists claimed governed their dispute with King George III. Similarly, the Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress of 1774 accused Parliament of exercising unconstitutional powers against the colonies, referring to Magna Carta and its applicability to them by reason of the colonists’ ancestry.

The covenantal framework carried over into the colonial charters granted under Magna Carta, such as the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut of 1639 and the Frame of Government of Pennsylvania of 1682. The Mayflower Compact of 1620 is a prime example.

Indeed, the American War for Independence was predicated largely on violations of Magna Carta, i.e., that there had been a breach of covenant...In fact, the Declaration of Independence, though breaking the political connection between England and America, affirmed the covenantal nature of Magna Carta.

A covenant possesses a main element of perpetuity wherein even the following generations of people are bound by it. Titus and Thompson discuss the main four principles of covenants, but there is a fifth: the beginning of every covenant is its end. This is an *inescapable* principle.

Beyond solely the ethnic element, the founding of America and the American Revolution are both incredibly saturated by Exodic messaging. Bruce Feiler discusses this in his novel *America's Prophet*, describing how Moses was almost elected as the Godfather of America and how the *Exodus* informed the revolution:

## *The Second Exodus*

When they embarked on the Mayflower in 1620, they described themselves as the chosen people fleeing their pharaoh, King James. On the Atlantic, their leader, William Bradford, proclaimed their journey to be as vital as 'Moses and the Israelites when they went out of Egypt.' And when they arrived in Cape Cod, they thanked God for letting them pass through their fiery Red Sea.

As the Continental Congress gathered in Philadelphia in 1776, comparisons with the *Exodus* filled the air. From politicians to preachers, pamphlets to pulpits, many of the rhetorical high points of the year likened the colonists to the Israelites fleeing Egypt.

Three of the five drafters of the Declaration of Independence and three of the defining faces of the Revolution—Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams—proposed that Moses be the face of the United States of America. In their eyes, Moses was America's true founding father.

As John Adams reported, Franklin wanted the seal to feature the parting of the Red Sea, with Moses raising his staff while Pharaoh and his chariots of soldiers drowned as the waters closed in on them. In contrast, Jefferson wanted another scene from the *Exodus*, with the Israelites led through the wilderness by a cloud in daytime and a pillar of fire at night.



The words alongside the circumference of the seal read "*Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God*", an explicit reiteration of the rebellion-obedience paradox of Exodus: rebelling against authority made to be the program of obedience to the Ultimate Authority. This is the essence of the idea of self-governance: the self as the master.

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The Liberty Bell, commissioned in 1752, finds its inspiration from the words of Moses on Mount Sinai in Leviticus 25:10:

Proclaim LIBERTY Throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants  
Thereof

Thomas Paine referred to the King of Britain as a “pharaoh” in *Common Sense*:

I rejected the hardened, sullen tempered Pharaoh of England for ever.

Jefferson’s inaugural presidential speech:

I shall need, therefore, all the indulgence I have heretofore experienced -- the want of it will certainly not lessen with increasing years. I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our forefathers, as Israel of old, from their native land

And finally, in Washington’s eulogy, Moses was referred to as the “Washington of Israel.”<sup>1</sup>

America is the second cycle of *Exodus* in which the paradox of *Exodus* is *made into a political system*. People think America is a “Christian” or “white” nation, but the American, like the true Christian, is bound to the covenant of God: the Constitution:

We feel that a careful study of the facts of history shows that early America does not deserve to be considered uniquely, distinctly, or even predominately Christian, if we mean by the word ‘Christian’ a state of society reflecting the ideals presented in Scripture. There is no lost golden age to which American Christians can return. In addition, a careful study of history will also show that evangelicals themselves were often partly to blame for the spread of secularism in contemporary American life. — *The Search of Christian America*, Mark Noll

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<sup>1.</sup> [jstor.org](http://jstor.org)

The same two paradoxes implicit in the Story of *Exodus* are also implicit in the founding of America: particular-universalism, *Annuit Coeptis*, and rebellion-obedience. God is replaced with the state, and the covenant of obedience is the Constitution which is explicitly founded on the moral presupposition of the meta-narrative of history: Freedom-Equality. The mission of America is that of reaching consistency with the same particular-universal paradox of Judaism, but out of logical necessity rather than responsibility/vocation: America itself is the vocational entity. The Declaration of Independence claims that all men are made equal, yet this idea is relegated only to the “American.” But equality is universal, and must apply to *all* people lest it be inequality, and therefore, America reaches consistency when *all* are freely equal and equally free: when all are American. The process of the Constitution is over since it has become the beginning *and the end*.

In the same way the story of *Exodus* generated the ending implicit in its beginning, the Constitution of American laid out the *end of America in its beginning*. The Constitution is a reoccurrence of the story of Exodus: a *material acceleration* of the original political end due to its political nature. It is the political document that generates the methodology of *Exodus*, Revolution, as *the* means of reaching consistency: *universality*. In this iteration however, the Ten Commandments are different: they are the expression of the story of *Exodus* ideologized:

1. You shall not have any gods above Your Self
2. All Selfs are Equal

From these two laws, all of modern liberal political theory follows, the only thing that must be defined is “Self.” But Self gives way to universality, so particularity is only temporal.

America finds itself on the ideals of equality and freedom *for all*, and from this principle, just as Western history unfolds from *Exodus*, American history unfolds from the American Revolution. All people must be able to govern themselves, *to be their own masters*, and from the original particular social definition of people as “white men,” the

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universal definition of people is pursued. The “messianic mission” of the American constitution, the mission that gives theoretical resolution to the paradox of particularism in the end of time, is the *Universal State*, where *all* are equal, where the Constitution, and subsequently the ideology of *Exodus*, has reached *total consistency*.

The method of inverse assimilation developed by German Jews *is* the political formula for achieving consistency for American Constitution: Americans and incoming immigrants do not assimilate to the culture that exists, but rather, the culture founded in the beginning: consistency is temporally *developed*, just as universality is temporally *reached*. The American Constitution is the method of inverse assimilation *par excellence*.

The history of America is the history of *achieving* consistency. All notable events are progressive achievements of the reaching greater Constitutional consistency through the recursive method of *Exodus*; the *Exodus* of the slaves with the Emancipation Proclamation, the *Exodus* of women with the feminist movement, the *Exodus* of ethnic minorities with the civil rights movement, the *Exodus* of homosexuals with the legalization of same-sex marriage, and today, the “final” *Exodus* of the illegal immigrant: the abolishment of the particularity of place of birth, the last step needed to enable the Universal State and reach consistency with the founding document. All of these movements take inspiration from the story of *Exodus*, and particularly the abolition movement as well as the civil rights movement. According to Scott Langston a Biblical Studies professor,

Americans have used the *Exodus* story for a variety of causes, but three in particular—the American Revolution (1776-83), the Civil War (1861-65), and the modern Civil Rights Movement (1940s-1970s)<sup>2</sup>

If it is the case that “all people are created in the image of God”—“all people are created equal”—, then history can find no resolution until that is physically, politically, and morally true: until *all* people are made

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<sup>2.</sup> sbl.org

equal. The end of America is the Universal State, where the theoretical universality with which the Constitution was constructed finds temporal resolution in the achievement of historical consistency at the end of times: at the end of America. In such a place, *there will be no assimilation* for there will no concept of a “civically inferior” group of people. America is a model of nation that transcends the typical model: it is the Diasporic model politically actualized, a land of foreigners founded by foreigners and sustained by foreigners. This is the material end of history, accelerated by the American Revolution which created the United States of America, the bridge up/down towards the Universal State — the Tower of Babel that enables Heaven on Earth — wherein each step is a *reoccurrence of Exodus*. God is the state and the state is the idea of freedom-equality, the paradox of *Exodus* and the American Revolution incarnate: Rebellion as Obedience: Freedom-Equality as the God that mankind is enslaved to. American/Jewish particularity as the vehicle through which universality is reached. Just as Judaism is over when the universal is achieved, so too is America, for at that moment, *all will be American/Jewish*.

In other words, *America is Jewish*. What makes one like another? Is it their blood? Their faith? One is like another if they are born the same way. America is Jewish because both the Jew and the American were born in the ideological mold of the story of *Exodus*. America is *ideologically* Jewish, finding eschatological vitality in analogous historical events. Naturally then, the greatest Accelerant of the positive material universal end is not the American nor the Jew but the *American Jew*.



## Chapter 25

### *The American Jew*

The dominant branch of Judaism in the United States is Reform Judaism. Reform and Conservative Judaism, for all purposes, are ideologically identical, Reform is just temporally further ahead on the path towards material universality. Reform Judaism treats progress as return while Conservative Judaism treats return as progress, but return is return to the vehicle of progress: conservatism conserves that which enables progressivism. 37% of American Jews are Reform, 17% are Conservative, 9% are Orthodox, 4% are a separate branch, and 32% are no particular branch.<sup>1</sup> For our purposes then, over half of American Jews are Reform Jews and many of the non-Jewish Jews of the population share in their posture towards material universality, if not themselves greater articulations of it.

The primary question facing American Jews is “What is a Jew?” No longer is there eschatological vitality from the *Exile*, and no longer is it possible to return to *Exile* (only doublethink can sustain a view that affirms that Zionism did not end the *Exile*). In other words, no longer can *genuine* belief in supernatural chosenness be sustained, and so, in its

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i. <https://theconversation.com/jewish-denominations-a-brief-guide-for-the-perplexed-207297>

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place is belief in *ideological chosenness*. The secular environment has rendered religious Jews an increasingly growing minority, and today, the American Jew is an ethnic-ideological being, finding ideological vitality in a material rendering of Jewish history as a mission of progress.

Alexander Joffe provides a prophetic exposé on American Jews in his article *American Jews Beyond Judaism* named clearly in the tradition of Mosse's work, *German Jews Beyond Judaism*:

Why do American Jews identify overwhelmingly with the Democratic Party? Why do they seemingly identify with left-liberalism and evince hostility toward conservatism?

Joffe establishes his understanding of the transformation of Judaism by Enlightenment *Bildung* into a liberal ethical system of development towards universality: Judaism as *Bildung* towards the universal material religion:

Enlightenment universalism that emphasized tolerance and rationality was meshed with Judaism to produce a 'religion of humanity.' At another level *bildung* also entailed leaving archaic and idiosyncratic Jewish practices behind, including dress and foodways but more importantly liturgy and the theology of Jewish particularity and exclusiveness. The movement to "Reform" Judaism was born precisely out of the 19th century impulse to update the religion, discarding what was not relevant and retaining a core universalistic message

Joffe relates the variance of support/antagonism for Zionism:

The American Jewish cleavage over Zionism and then Israel must also be mentioned. The Jewish community was divided in part along religious lines; Reform Jews were neutral or anti-Zionist, while more religious Jews were more pro-Zionist. Socialists, bundists, ultra-Orthodox and others fell out on different parts of the spectrum according to their own religious doctrines or lack thereof

Since Reform Judaism treats Judaism as a set of ethical principles alongside a responsibility to actualize those principles (Tikkun Olam) — orthodox religion is irrelevant, backwards even — it asserts an identity that transcends all that is particular notwithstanding the posture towards universality:

But religion was only part of the American Jewish equation regarding Zionism and then Israel. Another element was effectively nationalism. American Reform Jews embraced the doctrine of Americanism, since this seemed both an ethical doctrine and an avenue toward social acceptance. The foreign entanglement of the Zionist project threatened their own integration through ‘dual loyalties’ that they, as much as any other, continually alleged. It also compromised their religious deterritorialization and universalism, a concern they shared, albeit in different terms, with Communists. Ironically, if Reform Jews lost the battle over Israel’s creation, in the long term they won the war regarding universalism, which in turn has shaped Jewish attitudes toward Israel in the 21st century

Joffe relates the paradox of self-reference and equality that Reform Judaism has embraced with some true and fresh academic honesty:

Much of this culture is well understood. Self-realization and self-satisfaction became paramount goals after the 1960s. Universities became test beds for social engineering schemes to manufacture equality. Free speech was dramatically narrowed as ‘hate speech’ was defined as sin and tantamount to or a precursor of “hate crimes.” All lifestyles and viewpoints were not only regarded as intrinsically equal, but some, by virtue of having once been repressed or outlawed, were more equal than others. A general atmosphere of redress of Western sin took hold, and post-colonial guilt pervaded elite institutions along with a generalized suspicion of capitalism. Feelings were elevated to the position of highest importance and transgressions against others’ feelings were regarded as a form of sin. Guilt and unspoken cognitive dissonance are the driving ideological forces, while materialism remains its foundation.

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### *Reform Globalism:*

In the United States the ideals of modern left-liberalism—emphasizing equality rather than liberty, redistributive justice rather than impartiality, and engineered tolerance—increasingly prevail over classical ideals of liberty, self-reliance, and critical judgment, at least within bourgeois culture. For many Jews and others nation-states are passé if not retrograde. Also on the rise is transnational progressivism, an ideology that may also describe a class, where international allegiances and institutions rather than local nation-states, have become the frame of reference and center of allegiance for self-described ‘global citizens.’ ‘Think globally, act locally’ is part of an equation, which has, in Jewish terms been assimilated to part of Hillel’s saying ‘And when I am for myself, what am ‘I’?

### Tikkun Olam:

Social activism in the guise of ‘Tikkun olam’ takes Jews to New Orleans or to Darfur in pursuit of giving aid and creating a sense of self beyond the Jewish community or experience. Rhetorically grounded, however nominally, in Jewish traditions these concepts have nothing to do with Judaism as a whole but rather derive from highly selective readings of certain Prophets, promulgated largely by Reform Judaism.

Joffe seemingly posits American may soon no longer be safe for Jews:

The example of German Jews beyond Judaism looms. Just as German Jews saw the terms of *bildung* change at the turn of the 20th century, so too have American Jews begun to see changes in American and global society.

It is clear for Joffe that if universalism, the Universal State, is to ever come to fruition, Israel must go, this as a consequence of necessity and related through the aforementioned Issac Deutscher:

This mirrors the conditions of the non-Jewish Jew as defined by Isaac Deutscher, who believed the highest expression of Jewishness was to give up Judaism in favor of internationalism. In this formula, Israel of course must go.

The universal-particular paradox of the State of Israel is related:

Ironically, of course, the only place on earth where 'one state' remains a left-liberal requirement is 'Israel-hyphen-Palestine.' Everywhere else peoples, primordial and invented, are going their separate ways. Western ideocracies have begun to adapt to this reality by a return to 'third worldism,' the belief that nationalism is a historical stage for downtrodden nations dominated by Western imperialists (especially the Great and Little Satan), and through the concept of 'responsibility to protect,' which demands liberal humanitarian intervention against certain flamboyantly bad dictators. In the U.S. the economic populism of the 'Tea Party' has features of both renewed nationalism and class warfare against the idea-setting and bureaucratic cadres. ROTC is returning to Ivy League campuses, and patriotism may even return to the American suburbs. Ideocracies rationalized the failure of Communism and will do so with socialism and transnationalism. The only question is how, and what sacrifices Jews will be called on to make in order to remain devotees.

Devotion in the 20th century lead to catastrophe, and Joffe is relating the increase in American nationalism that is a consequence of the same dynamic of excessive liberalism during the Weimar Republic that led to Nazism. There is an argument that liberalism leads to nihilism(totalitarianism), but the events of the 20th century render refuting such a claim difficult. The excessive liberalism of the Weimar Republic was almost fully developed by German Jews following the program of *Bildung*:

Marginal, acculturated Jews, acutely aware of their anomalous existence and longing for a healthy and natural life outside the ghetto's walls, responded to this directive enthusiastically. Rejecting the repres-

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sive patterns of traditional life, they virtually exploded with astonishing creative drive, markedly enriching the Weimar Republic, Vienna, and general European culture.

Emancipation meant not only a flight from the ghetto past but also from German history regarded as an obstacle to integration, for even if the national past was myth rather than reality, the Jews were, through no fault of their own, excluded from participating in the roots of the nation. The search for common ground transcending history was one reason why Jews as a group tended to support cultural and artistic innovation to a greater extent than did Gentiles. Jews provided a disproportionate share of support for the avant garde and for educational experiments as well.

George Mosse:

What today we are apt to call Weimar culture was largely the creation of left-wing intellectuals, among whom there was such a disproportionate number of Jews that Weimar culture has been called, somewhat snidely, an internal Jewish dialogue.

Support for the avant-garde, for the new in culture, for what is called Weimar culture, in short, was built into the German-Jewish tradition of *Bildung* and the Enlightenment.

Left-wing intellectuals found that socialism made concrete the ideal of humanity by modernizing the manner in which such transcendence could be accomplished. The final victory of the working class and the abolition of existing property relationships would issue in the triumph of humanity, but such a victory would be meaningless unless it was based upon *Bildung* and the Enlightenment. As a result, theirs was a peculiar socialism, opposed by socialist orthodoxies and advocated during the Weimar Republic by men and women who were, for the most part, Jewish intellectuals. To be sure, gentile intellectuals had also had a part in the creation of this socialism, but Jewish participation was much greater than gentile in this dialogue between Germans and Jews. For example, of the sixty-eight writers for the most impor-

tant left-wing journal (*Die Weltbühne*) whose religious origins could be established, forty-two were of Jewish descent, two were half-Jews, and only twenty-four non-Jews. The many German intellectuals who failed to remain liberals joined the orthodox right or left, where they could find shelter in a firm and simple ideology.

The Weimar Republic, where the Frankfurt School and Marxism flourished alongside sexual freedom with the ideology and practices of Magnus Hirschfeld, was the *first attempt at the Universal State* fueled by *Bildung* as the material method of bridging the gap between man and God. Its ultimate end need not be reiterated, and its likely this is where Joffe's fear for American Jews stems from: the excessive negative material particularism in response to excessive positive material particularism. This same over-representation in liberal ideology by Jews is today mirrored in modern America and the West:

Some of that earlier universalism, an American Jewish *Bildungsbürgertum*, produced some of what is best in American culture, art, literature, education, science, philanthropy and dedication to the public good. Ironically, some of those same impulses precipitated the current crisis

Precipitation of extreme totalitarianism in response to extreme liberalism. The persistence of Reform Judaism towards material universalism in antagonism to Zionism's material particularism is the locus of their divergent, yet in many ways unified, presence in American politics. Reform Jews (and many liberal secular Jews), in order to continue to trek towards the temporal conclusion of the paradox of inverse assimilation / particularist-universalism *necessarily* must reject Zionism/nationalism. The American Jew asks "What is Jew" and finds an ideological answer rooted in theological basis that rejects the State of Israel and instead treats America as the light to all the nations: the bridge upon which mankind will be lead to the Universal State:

America is our Zion — Proceedings of Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1889 Resolution, reaffirmed in 1919

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America is our Zion — Hebrew Union College

America was the Messiah *from the beginning...*

Among the members of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations who were opposed to political Zionism was Isaac W. Bernheim of Louisville, Kentucky. Motivated by this opposition and by the desire to make the differences between Zionists and Reform Jews distinct and clear-cut, Bernheim advocated the formation of what he called the Reform Church of American Israelites. Bernheim explained the outlines of his project in a letter sent to the annual meeting of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1918 and in an address delivered before the council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1921. In both presentations of his views Bernheim denounced the Zionists and their nationalistic aims, and protested the loyalty of Reform Jewry for America. He stated: Zionism, political and otherwise, of the imported or domestic brand, was not ... a thing to our liking, nor can it ever receive our support. Here[America] is our Palestine, and we know no other. — Naomi Cohen,

Therefore, he urged that the name "Israel" be substituted for "Jews" and that houses of worship be renamed "Reform Churches of American Israelites." In this way, according to Bernheim, could Reform Jews demonstrate that we are Americans by nationality, that our longings are not for an Oriental Palestinian homeland', that our hearts are here, our homes are here - here in America. —Naomi Cohen

The sole problem remaining is that of a retention of particularity: a desire to remain Jewish so as to persist within the mission that had lost all theological legitimacy:

They claimed that they could worship God and retain the ethical tenets of Judaism without the label "Jew," and that this change of name would constitute the crowning point of the Reform movement.  
— Naomi Cohen

But this problem resolves itself once more in the same way: temporally. In America however, acceleration is exponified. The paradox of inverse assimilation that gave rise to the divergence in Germany is articulated once more, but there will not and cannot be any American Jewish divergence as there was in Germany: all theological energy from which such a thing could arise has been long extinguished. America represents the Jewish mission in political terms: when one says American Jew, he is really saying American American / Jewish Jew. America had given freedom to Jews from the beginning: it had given salvation to them far before the Zionist cause had begun to ferment in the minds of assimilating and secular European Jews. In America, Zionism *was* not possible, for America was created as the political bridge towards the end of secular Judaism. It would be in America that the Jews would be on the road towards universality and Geulah, the exact *opposite* of *Galut*. America itself is the statist vehicle through which the modern Jewish mission inherited from the *Exile* is sought.

America is the land of immigration, the melting pot, the land of the minority. Or, that is to say, *its future* is the land of the minority. Is the land of the melting pot not the ideal habitat for the Jew who could not assimilate for 2000 years? We return to Lessing's imaginary theoretical:

What would have happened had the Jews unleashed their own “non-cooperation movement”? What if in 1750—when the yellow patch, oppression, anti-Jewish laws, and *Kammerknechtscha* gradually began to be lifted, with waivers of oppression, and implementation of full bourgeois emancipation—they would have responded: “For the past two thousand years, we have lived for the coming of the Messiah, who has been promised to lead us back home. Now your benevolence and friendship offer us beautiful Europe and great America as fatherlands. But, as payment, we would have to break with our own historical traditions, in order to adapt and grow into the Great Christian West. We cannot do this! We have never demanded of you that you convert to our religion. We have never sent missionaries among the nations or been addicted to conquest. We want to bear our sidelocks and yellow patch undisturbed. We want to preserve our Hebrew language and

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names. We refuse to participate in your holidays and memorials, each of which can only remind us of our past martyrs. You are welcome to your images and gods, but you should in turn leave us to ours. We are, and must remain, different. It is not we, but you yourselves, who have announced it so to the world: God has become man. We do not follow the creed of the Holy Trinity. Our God has neither form nor name, beyond man and the abominations of world history. You are free to despise us, but we in turn refuse to accept your benefits: your offices and schools, your ways and means. We do not want to participate in your arts and sciences. We voluntarily carry forward *galut* and ghetto, awaiting our Messiah to appear out of Bethlehem...Would such a reply have been possible?

Such a reply *is* now possible. America, then, for the Jew, *is* the Promised Land/Zion: where he is no longer a civic inferior, the ideal and paradox of *Exodus* politically actualized and therefore a bridge of necessity towards the universal end, the Universal State.

The dilemma facing American Jewry is, then, not unlike that facing Israelis who enjoy first-class citizenship. With their own rights apparently in place, do they remain concerned for the equality of all members of society? Do they understand emancipation as a finished process, a fait accompli that has a past yet not a future? Or do they regard emancipation as an ongoing challenge that demands strenuous exertion? — David Sorkin, *Jewish Emancipation*

Emancipation is an ongoing challenge until the paradoxes all reach their theoretical historical conclusion in the culmination of the Universal State and the consistency of the covenants of *Exodus* and the Constitution. Arthur Cohen is mistaken in his conclusion:

The rediscovery of the supernatural vocation of the Jew is the turning-point of modern Jewish history. That vocation was rediscovered in the German Jewish renaissance of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but Armageddon overtook and destroyed it. A new beginning must be

made. The renewal of the Jewish vocation is that beginning, for the Jewish people is not a fact of history but an article of faith.

There shall be no “rediscovery” for the same paradox continues, only now its running on the fumes of what were once vital eschatological principles. American Jewry finds sustenance in their ethnic-*ideological* identity, and survival of the ideology has subsumed survival of the religion: until America is a light to all the nations the American Jew persists.

The continued ideological vitality of American Jews is a testament to the continuation of the vocation if only in material terms: ensuring that America, the light to all the nations / Zion, reaches Constitutional/Covenantal consistency. This is the final universal material answer to the Minority Question that begins history: the material consummation of Judaism. America is the Messianic State, the vehicle through which mankind reaches material universality and salvation. American Judaism ends alongside America: history ends with America reaching consistency. And on the matter of the other side of the divergence, Zionists are employing the same final particular solution to this question that the Nazis in Germany did. Just as America is heading towards consistency in the Universal State, Israel is heading towards consistency in the Jewish State.

But the question remains and only grows in its severity: What is a Jew? The Jew survived without nation for 2000 years: galut: deprivation of statehood. Today, he persists in a state of inverted galut. His gelua has arrived, but it has meant the end of his religion. The Jew survived for 2000 years without nation; how long can he survive without religion? What is the desert dweller without the desert? What is a Jew without his covenant? *What is a Jew without Judaism?*



## Chapter 26

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### *American Self-Hatred*

Joffe questions the future of American Jews and indulges the possibility of an American *haskalah*:

American Jews have and will continue to divest themselves of their Judaism, and redefine it in universal and non-Jewish terms, for the sake of what may simply be called assimilation. That they are assimilating into a particular segment of American and global society is no matter. But what is the future of that segment?

The fate of American Jews has yet to be played out. How Jews of a new middle or even working class might retain their American and Jewish identities, separately and as a unity, is unknown. Would the process of 'Americanism' again lead to assimilation? Perhaps. Shrinking numbers and diminished dedication to both America and to Judaism are unlikely to be offset by the Orthodox remnant. Perhaps another *Haskalah* will develop there a few decades in the future.

Joffe is inviting, like Cohen, a *revitalization* of Jewry, a new event of unification that resolves the tension using the creative energy it has been generating, but there is a misunderstanding here. There will be no "American Jewish Haskalah": the fate the American Jew is the *culmi-*

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*nation* of the Haskalah: it is the actualization of the Universal State. American Jews are not redefining themselves in “non-Jewish terms” but rather, in *fully* Jewish terms. Assimilation into Americanism is not a *loss* of Jewish identity, but a *squared* assertion of it. The American Jew is more Jewish than the Israeli-Jew for American is rendered synonymous with Jewish. The American(Jewish) Jew(American) will only be fully assimilated when the world is: when his particularism is no longer needed through the actualization of universality for all people: when his ethnic *and* theological(now ideological) existence finds resolution in the completion of the ideological Messianic mission: when all the world is American/Jewish. It is then that he will cease to be an American Jew and be solely an *American*: the Diasporic model is achieved: the *Exile* is over when *all* are in *Exile*. To repeat from earlier, Judaism — Reform, Orthodox, and Zionist — reaches consistency once it *no longer exists*. The Jew will have completed his messianic vocation once he no longer exists: when there is no such thing as a minority. Only then will the material process truly be over: the forest of mankind continues to burn. The identity of the modern liberal Jew is one singular thing: the particular-universal paradox. Joffe’s misunderstanding stems from his overlooking of the chain of necessity. The haskalah did indeed revitalize Jewry but it did so through a *rediscovery*. A rediscovery of the core principle of Judaism: the Jewish mission. For a new haskalah to emerge would mean nothing more than the same. The current of history *must reach its end*, at least for the Jew.

Self-hatred, as related earlier, is not a psychological condition exclusive to the Jews: it is *generally present among all groups of minorities*.

For centuries they have been rooted in diverse nationalities, different from one another, their similarities maintained only as a result of outside pressure. All oppressed people have Jewish characteristics, and when the pressure lifts, they behave like free men — Ernst Pawel, *The Labyrinth of Exile*.

Pawel is mistaken with his final claim — they do not all behave like “free men”: Jewry is in a unique class. As America is the land of the minority, it is also the land of self-hatred.

On a collective level, self-hatred leads to ideological action as it did for German Jewish groups. Self-hatred is a tension of opposites within the individual — the identity of one's forefathers against their American identity. This tension, *like all tensions*, produces *creative* energy that generates one of two things: meaningful action — redefinition of self, self-revolution, **Unification** — or degeneration — **Fragmentation**. Among all American minority groups, the same ideological bifurcation of resolutions that engendered German Judaism is occurring. Either ethnic minorities will adopt negative particular stances like the self-hating Zionists did — nationalism, religious *and* ethnic or *solely* religious: Nation of Islam, black nationalism, Christian nationalism, white nationalism — or they will adopt globalist/progressive/universalist stances. Both *seemingly* serve as meaningful actions for the individual in overcoming their fragmentation and self-hatred.

This is the basis for the modern political split in all of the Western and Westernizing/Judaizing nations. It was born with the story of Exodus and *rediscovered* as a consequence of the Enlightenment which made “equality” the motto of politics. It is the Minority Question. What remains is the answer.



## Chapter 27

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### *The End and the Beginning*

Zionism continues towards consistency in the Jewish State through the method of persecution, and America/Reform/Liberal Judaism continues towards consistency in the Universal State through the model of tolerance: the modern Tower of Babel, where all speak the same language and are unified in their pursuit of freedom-equality: their pursuit of Godhood. This is material end of Western history laid out in the beginning. This is the tension of rational opposites that has no *rational* resolution. The birth of the supernatural is the *irrational unification of rational opposites*. The beginning and the end *can only be one* if there is an *acausal* principle *beyond* space and time, beyond the parameters of our rational minds. It persists within the infinite well of our spirit, psyche, and soul. An unspeakable truth that has already been spoken, an infinite wisdom that has been made finite, a beginning that has been made the end, an objectivity that has been made subjective, *a causality that has been made necessary*. A good that is evil and an evil that is good, a particular that is universal and a universal that is particular: *a love that is hate and a hate that is love*. The Messiah, the *deliverer of unification*, is the transcendental principle that resolves the tension. What is justice? *Unification*. What is unification? *Oneness*. The first act of creation was also the first act of separation.

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Hitherto, history is a story of *reunification*. A quest of reaching the end that is the beginning so that once more the beginning is the end. "Man can only have a destiny if he has a beginning which originates outside of time and an end which will transcend it." As it has been said, history always repeats itself.

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