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# To Enter Without Disappearing Ambivalence, Value, and Continuity in the Modern Jewish Self

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## Abstract

*The modern Jewish encounter with European civilization is usually narrated as a contest between fidelity and betrayal, with assimilation cast as moral failure and continuity as moral achievement. This essay argues that the framing is wrong, and that its wrongness has consequences we are still paying for. Drawing on Jacob Katz, Arthur Hertzberg, Zygmunt Bauman, Steven Aschheim, Shulamit Volkov, David Sorkin, Todd Endelman, Michael Herzfeld, and Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin, I reconstruct assimilation not as a defect of loyalty but as a structurally induced ambivalence: the predictable psychological residue of an emancipation contract whose terms were never fully written down.*

*I then press a second question that the historiography tends to leave unasked. Granting that Jewish continuity is desirable, what makes it desirable? PostHolocaust survivalism answered by making continuity self-justifying, and in doing so risked handing the antisemite authorship of Jewish identity.*

*Contemporary "continuity" discourse inherited that structure and largely secularized it into demography. I argue instead for a value-first account: a tradition earns transmission by the quality of attention it forms in those who receive it, and Jewish continuity is worth wanting because the interpretive discipline it produces is worth having — a claim I test against my own clinical hermeneutics.*

*The essay closes with the Soloveitchikian figure of ger ve-toshav, stranger and resident, read not as a problem awaiting resolution but as the permanent structure of a mature modern Jewish self, and with the Jungian and Neumannian claim that the visibly traditional Jew and the acculturated Jew function as each other's shadow rather than as each other's refutation.*

**Keywords:** assimilation, emancipation, Haskalah, Ostjuden, Jewish continuity, shadow, Vienna, hermeneutics.

**Louise Nevelson: Self Portrait 1935**

## The Question Beneath the Question

There is a sentence that has followed European Jewry for more than two centuries: Can I enter the modern world without ceasing to be a Jew? Behind it lies a more intimate one: Can I simply be a human being without being identified first as a Jew? And behind that lies an anxiety that history has made impossible to dismiss: If I stop insisting upon my difference, will the surrounding world accept me — or will it identify me as a Jew anyway?

These are not merely questions about Haskalah, Reform, Orthodoxy, Zionism, Bundism, or Hasidism. They describe an unresolved psychological drama, and the scholarship that treats them as a sequence of ideological platforms tends to miss what the platforms were for. Each was an attempt to answer a question that could not be answered on the terms in which it was posed.

Zygmunt Bauman put the structural point most sharply. Modernity, he argued, is a project of classification, and its characteristic anxiety is directed not at the clearly foreign but at the ambiguous — the entity that will not stay in its box (1). The assimilating Jew was precisely such an entity. He was neither the licensed stranger of the old corporate order nor a full member of the new national one; he occupied, and by occupying destabilized, the boundary. Bauman's essay on exit visas and entry tickets shows why the bargain was structurally unfulfillable: assimilation was offered as a task rather than a status, and a task can always be judged incomplete (2). The Jew could be told he had not yet arrived, indefinitely, without the host society ever having to admit that arrival was not on offer.

That is the first claim of this essay. Modern Jewish ambivalence is not a character flaw distributed unevenly among weak-willed individuals. It is the expectable psychological consequence of an emancipation whose terms were asymmetric, and it appears with remarkable regularity across communities that shared little else — Berlin and Budapest, Vienna and Vilna, London and New York.

The second claim is harder, and it is the one the essay exists to make.

Suppose we grant, as I do, that Jewish continuity is desirable. On what grounds? The question sounds impious in a communal culture that has spent eighty years treating continuity as axiomatic. But an axiom is exactly what it must not be. Emil Fackenheim's 614th commandment — that Jews are forbidden to grant Hitler posthumous victories — was formulated as a response to catastrophe and

has functioned since as the unstated ground of nearly every continuity appeal made in the English-speaking Jewish world (3).

Its logic is impeccable and its long-term cost is severe: it makes the persistence of Jewish identity a function of the enemy's intention rather than of the tradition's worth. If I remain a Jew principally in order to deny Hitler a victory, I have made him the author of my identity by inversion. He does not need to be obeyed to be authoritative.

Jacob Katz's social history and Arthur Hertzberg's intellectual history both, in different registers, expose the machinery that produced the modern dilemma (4,5). Neither, however, resolves the normative question of what makes the object of transmission worth transmitting. Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin's intervention on diaspora and genealogy comes closest to naming the problem, precisely because it refuses to let Jewish identity rest on either territorial sovereignty or blood descent alone (6). Jonathan Sacks, writing from the other end of the ideological spectrum, saw the same lacuna and named it in the title of a book that asked whether we would have Jewish grandchildren and, more pointedly, why it should matter (7).

I want to answer that question in a particular way. Not through demography, and not through the memory of persecution, but through what the tradition does to the person who submits to it — the kind of reader, and the kind of attender, it makes. That is a claim I have argued elsewhere in a clinical register, where the patient is approached as a text requiring interpretive humility rather than as an object requiring classification (8). I now want to argue it in a communal register: the discipline is worth continuing because the attention it forms is worth having, and this is a better reason than survival.

Between these two claims — ambivalence as structure, and value as the ground of continuity — sits a third that binds them. The visibly traditional Jew and the thoroughly acculturated Jew are not two answers of which one is correct. They are two positions in a single psychological field, each carrying what the other has disowned. That is the argument of the last third of the essay, and it requires Erich Neumann rather than Jacob Katz.

## Method, Terms, and a Note on the First Person

A short lexical discipline is necessary, because the word assimilation has been doing at least four jobs at once.

Milton Gordon's typology, imperfect as it is, remains the cleanest starting point: he distinguished cultural assimilation (acculturation) from structural assimilation, marital assimilation, identificational assimilation, and several further stages, and observed that the first can proceed almost completely while the others stall (9). This is exactly what happened in Central Europe. German Jews acculturated with extraordinary speed and thoroughness while remaining, socially and maritally, a distinct group — a fact which the host society read as evidence of bad faith rather than as evidence of its own closed doors.

Todd Endelman's term radical assimilation is more useful for the endpoint: conversion, name change, marriage out, and the deliberate severance of communal ties (10). Endelman's work matters here for an unwelcome reason. He shows that radical assimilation was far more common than communal memory admits, that it was usually undertaken for career and social access rather than conviction, and

that it frequently worked — which is to say that a considerable number of families simply left and were absorbed, leaving no descendants to be counted in anyone's continuity survey. Any honest account must concede that assimilation is not merely a temptation but a live historical solution, one that has been chosen successfully by very large numbers of people. The question is not whether it works. It is whether what it costs is worth what it buys.

Shulamit Volkov supplies the counter-motion with her concept of dissimilation: the observation that German Jews, at the very moment of maximal acculturation, generated new and self-consciously Jewish cultural forms, so that acculturation and Jewish self-assertion rose together rather than trading off (11). This is one of the most important findings in the field, and it demolishes the simple zero-sum model in which every step toward Goethe is a step away from the Vilna Gaon.

To these I add Michael Herzfeld's cultural intimacy: the domain of embarrassment, the practices and self-recognitions that a group regards as sources of external ridicule and internal solidarity (12). Herzfeld's category, developed for the nation-state, is startlingly apt for the acculturated Jew's relation to the visibly traditional one. What is at stake in that encounter is not doctrine. It is the exposure to outside eyes of something the acculturated Jew recognises as ours, and would prefer not to have on display.

A word on evidence. Samuel Sandmel's warning against parallelomania — the inflation of surface resemblance into causal or literary dependence — governs the comparative moves throughout (13). When I place Neumann's shadow beside Volkov's dissimilation, I am claiming an illuminating analogy, not a genealogy. Where I claim influence, I say so and show the line.

Finally, the first person. This essay uses it, and does so deliberately. My own biography sits inside the material: a physician-scholar formed simultaneously by Talmudic study and by Western medicine and music; a son who returned to the Vienna his father lost; a man who has felt, standing on a European street, the flicker of embarrassment at the sight of a Hasidic family and has had to ask what that flicker was. Michael Stanislawski has shown how carefully Jewish autobiographical writing must be read, since the self it presents is a construction serving the argument it accompanies (14). I accept the caution. The autobiographical passages here are offered as data of a particular kind — reports of an interior state that the historiography predicts and rarely documents — and not as proof of anything beyond themselves. Where the personal material is doing argumentative work, I mark it.

## Before the Walls: What Katz Saw and What He Overstated

For most of European Jewish history, assimilation in the modern sense was scarcely available. The Jew belonged to a corporate body. Law, residence, taxation, occupation, dress, and worship marked him. Christianity had constructed him theologically as witness, rival, and superseded predecessor; Jewish law had constructed, in reply, a remarkably complete internal civilization.

One inhabited Jewish time. Shabbat and the festivals interrupted the Christian calendar. Kashrut organized the kitchen. Hebrew and Aramaic governed sacred study; Yiddish, Ladino, and Judeo-Arabic governed daily speech. Marriage occurred

overwhelmingly within the community. Difference was not primarily an ideological choice but an ecological fact.

Jacob Katz's Tradition and Crisis remains the classic account of that world and of its internal strains (15). Katz described a traditional society already under pressure before modernity arrived: a rabbinic elite whose authority rested on a communal structure that early capitalism was eroding, and a kehillah whose coercive powers were being hollowed out from within. In Out of the Ghetto he traced what followed — the emergence of what he called a "semi-neutral society," the salons and Masonic lodges and coffeehouses of the late eighteenth century where Jew and Christian could meet as neither wholly Jew nor wholly Christian, and where the first generation of assimilating Jews learned that such neutrality was partial and revocable (4).

Katz's model has been substantially revised, and the revisions matter for the argument. Salo Baron's older polemic against the "lachrymose conception" of Jewish history warned that the ghetto was not simply a prison and emancipation not simply a liberation; the corporate community afforded autonomies that the modern state withdrew in exchange for individual rights (16). Moshe Rosman has pressed the methodological question further, asking whether the very categories of "tradition" and "crisis" import a modernization narrative that the sources do not require (17). Shmuel Feiner's history of the Haskalah shows a movement far less unified and far more internally contested than the textbook version allows (18), while Olga Litvak has argued that the Haskalah is better understood as a Romantic movement — an attempt to recover an authentic Jewish interiority — than as a rationalist assault upon tradition (19). Israel Bartal's survey of Eastern European Jewry demonstrates how differently the whole sequence ran east of the Habsburg frontier, where emancipation arrived late, partially, or not at all, and where Jewish nationalism therefore developed as a live alternative rather than as a reaction to a completed integration (20).

What survives the revisions is the essential structural point. Before emancipation, Jewish difference was a condition; after emancipation, it became a decision. That transformation is the hinge on which everything in this essay turns, and it operated on the traditionalists as thoroughly as on the reformers.

Then the walls fell — sometimes literal, sometimes juridical — and an extraordinary possibility appeared: perhaps I can belong.

It is easy, from the security of retrospective Orthodoxy, to describe what followed as rebellion. That description misses the emotional facts. European civilization was offering philosophy, science, universities, music, literature, citizenship, and participation in a world from which Jews had been formally excluded. The attraction was not, in the main, hatred of Judaism. It was love of the world. Any account of the Haskalah that cannot represent that love has not understood its object.

## The Contract with an Unwritten Clause

Emancipation is usually taught as an event and was in fact a process — protracted, reversible, and negotiated differently in every jurisdiction. David Sorkin's recent synthesis across five centuries dismantles the tidy narrative in which 1791 in France or 1871 in Germany marks a threshold (21). Emancipation was granted, rescinded, re-granted, and conditioned; it was bound up with the confessional

politics of states seeking to standardize their subjects; and it was as much an instrument of state-building as a triumph of Enlightenment principle. Jacob Katz had already shown that the very term acquired its Jewish meaning belatedly, imported from other emancipation struggles and applied retroactively to a process whose participants had used other words (22).

Everything turns on the terms. The formula attributed to Clermont-Tonnerre in the French National Assembly in December 1789 has become emblematic precisely because it is honest: to the Jews as individuals, everything; to the Jews as a nation, nothing (23). Read charitably, this is the universalist offer at its most generous — full civic personhood, unconditioned by descent. Read structurally, it is a demand for the dissolution of the corporate Jewish body as the price of admission for its members. The Jew may enter; Jewry may not.

Arthur Hertzberg's thesis in The French Enlightenment and the Jews remains the most disturbing account of what lay underneath (5). Hertzberg argued that a secular, post-Christian antisemitism was generated within the Enlightenment itself — in Voltaire above all — and that it was therefore not a residue of religious prejudice destined to dissolve as reason advanced, but a new formation with its own logic. If Hertzberg is right, the Jew who staked everything on the Enlightenment proposition was betting on a horse that carried, in its own bloodline, the disease that would eventually be turned against him. The thesis has been contested on questions of emphasis and causation, but its structural claim has proven difficult to dislodge: the universalism on offer had a particular content, and that content had a history.

Jonathan Hess sharpens the point for the German case, showing how the Enlightenment debate over Jewish "improvement" was from the outset a debate about the state's right to reconstruct a population (24). The Jew was to be admitted on the condition of being remade, and the criteria of remaking were set unilaterally.

This is the unwritten clause. The emancipation contract stipulated civic equality in exchange for the privatization of difference, and it left unstated both the extent of privatization required and the identity of the party competent to judge whether it had been achieved. Both were retained by the host. A contract in which one party defines performance and also adjudicates it is not a contract between equals; it is a probation.

Moses Mendelssohn understood more of this than he is usually credited with. Jerusalem is not a program of assimilation but an argument for a separation of powers — the state may compel action, religion may not; Judaism is revealed legislation binding upon Jews and makes no claim on anyone else — precisely in order to secure a space in which Jews could be citizens and remain observant (25). Sorkin's study places him within a religious rather than a radical Enlightenment, retrieving a Mendelssohn whose Hebrew writings are continuous with his German ones (26). The maskilic project, at least initially, promoted vernacular language, secular learning, and civic participation while attempting to preserve Jewish religious commitment. Its question was not why be Jewish but why must Judaism require cultural isolation.

That question has never disappeared. Nor has the difficulty it created.

Leora Batnitzky has traced the deepest structural consequence: in order to fit the emancipation settlement, Judaism had to be reconceived as a religion in the modern Protestant-inflected sense — a matter of belief and conscience, private, separable from nationality, law, and peoplehood (27). This was not a neutral translation. It amputated exactly those features of Judaism that made it unlike a confession, and it created the modern situation in which every Jewish movement, including the anti-modern ones, must position itself with respect to a category that Judaism did not generate.

Hannah Arendt's early work registered the psychological cost with unusual precision. Her essay on the Jew as pariah distinguishes the pariah, who accepts marginality and sees clearly from it, from the parvenu, who purchases entry by a series of small self-betrayals and never stops paying (28). Her biography of Rahel Varnhagen is the anatomy of a woman who tried to become "a human being" without qualification and discovered that the world would not permit the abstraction (29). Arendt's judgment is severe and occasionally unjust to her subject, but she identified something the social historians can only infer: that the exchange rate for admission was set in the currency of self-regard.

## Bildung and the Migration of the Interpretive Energies

German-Jewish modernity invested enormously in Bildung — self-cultivation through literature, philosophy, music, and intellectual refinement. George Mosse's account remains definitive: German Jews adopted the humanistic ideal of Bildung at precisely the moment when the German bourgeoisie was abandoning it for nationalism, and they went on holding it long after their neighbours had let it go (30). What had been a shared civic ideal became, without anyone intending it, a specifically Jewish inheritance. There is something almost unbearable in Mosse's finding: the Jews were the last German idealists.

David Sorkin's account of the transformation of German Jewry adds the sociological mechanism, showing how an emancipation that was granted slowly produced not integration but a distinct Jewish subculture — bourgeois, German-speaking, self-consciously modern, and unmistakably Jewish (31). Marion Kaplan demonstrated that the household was the engine of this formation, and that women bore the labour of maintaining both the German bourgeois form and the Jewish content within it (32). Michael Meyer's earlier study of the first generation traced the emergence of a specifically modern Jewish self-consciousness in Germany between 1749 and 1824 (33).

Why was the attraction so powerful? Because Judaism had already sanctified learning. When European civilization opened its libraries and its concert halls, Jews entered with an intellectual appetite that centuries of textual study had cultivated. The transition from beit midrash to university was rupture and strange continuity at once.

The Talmudist became a lawyer. The darshan became a literary critic. The pilpulist became a scientist or a psychoanalyst. The biblical exegete became a historian. The intellectual energies of Jewish civilization did not evaporate under secularization; frequently they changed their object. Yuri Slezkine's provocative account of the modern century as the century of the Mercurians — mobile, literate, service-nomadic populations whose skills modernity suddenly required in bulk — supplies the macro-historical frame, though it should be

read with caution where it slides toward a functionalist explanation of a cultural inheritance (34).

Peter Gay's studies of the German-Jewish intelligentsia insisted, against the retrospective temptation, that these figures did not experience themselves as Jewish thinkers in disguise; they experienced themselves as Germans doing German work (35). Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's reading of Freud complicates this beautifully: the most secularized of all, the man who described himself as a godless Jew, produced in Moses and Monotheism a book that Yerushalmi reads as an intensely Jewish act of transmission — an inheritance disavowed at the level of content and enacted at the level of form (36).

That distinction — content disavowed, form transmitted — is one I want to hold onto, because it will do serious work later in this essay. It suggests that the question of continuity may be badly posed when it is posed as a question about beliefs held or rituals performed, and better posed as a question about habits of attention acquired.

I can testify to the same migration from inside. My own listening to a patient's history is not, in its structure, the product of my medical training. It is the product of a Talmudic apprenticeship in which no text may be dismissed as redundant, no anomaly waved away, and every apparent contradiction treated as a summons rather than an embarrassment (8). When I have written about Bach's Partitas as a theological problem, or about Rashi's appeal to intuition — ve-libi omer li, and my heart tells me — as an epistemology with clinical consequences, I was not decorating medicine with Jewish ornament (37,38). I was reporting the actual provenance of a method.

Michael Meyer's history of the Reform movement shows how the same energies could be turned upon Judaism itself, producing a reconstruction of the tradition on the assumptions of modern citizenship and historical development (39). The Reform project deserves to be evaluated on its arguments rather than through the polemics of its opponents; whatever else it was, it was a serious attempt to state what in Judaism was essential and what was contingent — which is to say, an attempt to answer the value question directly.

## Orthodoxy as a Modern Formation

Against this movement stood one of the most formidable architects of traditionalist resistance, Rabbi Moses Sofer of Pressburg, the Chatam Sofer. His celebrated formulation — chadash assur min ha-Torah, the new is forbidden by the Torah — belongs originally to a technical halakhic context concerning new grain, and its redeployment as a general posture toward innovation is itself a modern act (40).

Michael Silber's essay on the emergence of ultra-Orthodoxy remains the decisive treatment: what looks like the mere persistence of the old is in fact the invention of a tradition, a self-conscious construction of boundaries, institutions, and rhetoric adequate to a situation in which the boundaries no longer maintained themselves (40). Moshe Samet argued the same thesis independently for the beginnings of Orthodoxy more broadly (41). Jacob Katz's A House Divided traced the institutional consequence — the secession controversies of nineteenth-century Central Europe, in which Orthodox communities chose formal separation over shared communal structures with the non-Orthodox (42) — while his case studies in halakhic flexibility demonstrated that the same authorities who forbade

the new were, in other files, capable of considerable creativity (43). Mordechai Breuer's social history of German Orthodoxy carries the argument furthest in its title alone: modernity within tradition (44).

What the Chatam Sofer understood, perhaps more clearly than the moderates, was that modernity was not offering Jews additional information. It was constructing an alternative civilization. The university was not another yeshiva. The nation-state was not another kehillah. Romanticism, nationalism, historical criticism, and liberal individualism carried implicit anthropologies — claims about what a human being is and where authority resides. Once the individual could stand outside the tradition and evaluate it, something irreversible had occurred.

Samson Raphael Hirsch's Nineteen Letters attempted the alternative: neither surrender nor quarantine, but Torah im derech eretz, a Judaism confident enough to appropriate European culture on its own terms (45). Hirsch is often read as a compromise; he is better read as a maximalist who believed the tradition strong enough to survive contact.

Peter Berger named the general condition with a phrase that ought to be more widely used in Jewish discussion: the heretical imperative (46). Hairesis means choice. In a situation of pluralism, even the decision to remain within a tradition is a chosen decision, and therefore structurally different from the inherited condition it aims to reproduce. Charles Taylor's account of the modern "nova effect" — the proliferation of live options that renders every position one among many — describes the same transformation on a larger canvas (47).

The implication is uncomfortable for every party. Modern Orthodoxy and Haredism are themselves products of modernity, not because their beliefs are modern but because they developed institutional and ideological machinery for defending a tradition that could no longer be taken for granted. Haym Soloveitchik's "Rupture and Reconstruction" documents the late phase of this development with unmatched precision: the displacement of a mimetic tradition, learned from the home and the street, by a text-based one, learned from the book and the stringency, with all the anxieties that a purely textual authority generates (48). The stringent Judaism of the present is not the Judaism of the shtetl continued; it is a reconstruction undertaken after the mimetic chain broke.

I have argued elsewhere, comparing the Netziv, Reb Zadok, and Ramchal, that the traditional world contained within itself resources for thinking historically about revelation that were far richer than the polemical stance of the nineteenth century allowed to surface (49). The counter-revolution was a choice, not a necessity, and it foreclosed options that were internally available.

Samuel Heilman's study of the American case shows the trajectory continuing: a communal centre of gravity sliding rightward, with the modern Orthodox synthesis increasingly treated by its own children as a compromise rather than an ideal (50). Whatever else this demonstrates, it demonstrates that the boundary strategy has been the more successful demographic strategy. That fact will have to be confronted directly when we reach the question of value.

## Hasidism, or the Securely Symbolic World

The Hasidic response was of a different order. Hasidism preceded the mature Haskalah and cannot be described simply as a reaction to it; Moshe

Rosman's recovery of the historical Ba'al Shem Tov from the hagiography, and the collaborative Hasidism: A New History, have made the older reactive model untenable (51,52). Marcin Wodziński's work on the movement's demography and politics has similarly displaced the assumption that Hasidism was a monolith with a single stance toward the modern state (53).

Yet the later Hasidic world did become one of the most effective vehicles of resistance to secular modernity, and its method was not primarily philosophical. It was existential. Do not merely defend Judaism; inhabit it. The rebbe, devekut, the niggun, the tale, ecstatic prayer, the dense sociality of the court, and a hermeneutic in which every verse opens inward — these produced a world thick with meaning, in which the question of whether Judaism was true rarely presented itself in the form that the maskil found so urgent.

Erich Neumann's engagement with this material is, for my purposes, the most interesting episode in twentieth-century Jewish psychology. Writing in Tel Aviv during the destruction of European Jewry, Neumann composed a large body of Jewish work — published only in 2019, in Ann Conrad Lammers's edition and translation, as The Roots of Jewish Consciousness — in which Hasidism appears not as psychological primitivism but as a repository of resources for the development of an integrated personality (54). Lammers's introduction documents something that ought to be better known: a thirty-six page section of Part Two, treating the Hasidic theodicy, was excised by Neumann himself and never recovered, though the table of contents and the surviving crossreferences still point at the hole where it stood. The excision appears to date from the period in which the camps were liberated. His correspondence with Jung from that period, edited by Martin Liebscher, shows a man for whom the material had become unbearable rather than merely unpersuasive (55).

I record this because it is the most exact available image of what the whole encounter costs. Neumann kept the ethics and cut the theodicy. He continued to argue, in Depth Psychology and a New Ethic, that the great moral task of the age was the withdrawal of shadow projections and the refusal of scapegoating (56). But the Hasidic claim that evil is a lower level of the good — that, in the Ba'al Shem's formulation and Buber's gloss, the world may be accepted exactly as it happens to be — was something he could no longer put his name to. The universal books went to Eranos and Princeton. The Jewish books stayed in the drawer.

There is an irony here that bears directly on my subject. The Hasid whom the acculturated Jew may regard as an embarrassing remnant possesses something the acculturated Jew has lost: an internally secure symbolic world. He does not require Vienna to tell him who he is. That independence is enviable, and it is irritating precisely because it is enviable. I have argued elsewhere that the relational theology of the Hasidic sources — a God addressed rather than contemplated — has clinical consequences that the archetypal tradition cannot supply on its own (57).

None of this requires romanticizing Hasidic society, and I do not. Ayala Fader's ethnography of Hasidic girls' education in Brooklyn describes with great care the costs of the boundary work, particularly for women, and the elaborate labour by which a community reproduces both its language and its distance (58). The achievement I am naming is psy-

chological and hermeneutic, and it is real; it is purchased at a price that its members pay and that outsiders should not be quick to assess on their behalf. The temptation to read another Jew's stringency as pathology, or another Jew's freedom as betrayal, is itself a shadow operation, and I have examined its clinical analogue at length elsewhere (59).

## The Ostjude in the Mirror

Now the difficult part.

Steven Aschheim's Brothers and Strangers is the indispensable book here (60). It documents, with an evenness that never becomes indulgence, how the Eastern European Jew functioned in the German and German-Jewish imagination between 1800 and 1923: as the ghetto self that the emancipated German Jew had escaped and feared to resemble, as the caftaned refugee whose arrival threatened the settlement, and — in a remarkable reversal after 1900 — as the bearer of an authenticity that acculturated Jews had come to feel they lacked. Buber's Hasidic tales and the German-Jewish cult of the Ostjude belong to the second phase; the first phase never disappeared.

Aschheim's finding is that the same object could carry contempt and longing, often in the same person and sometimes in the same sentence. That is a description of ambivalence in the technical sense: not vacillation between two attitudes but the simultaneous presence of both, directed at a single object, with each intensifying the other.

I know this from the inside. Standing in Vienna at my great-grandfather's grave and encountering a Hasidic man on the street a few hours later, I felt something I did not choose and did not admire: a flicker of inherited embarrassment. His clothing announced what I sometimes prefer to leave unstated. The kapote refuses camouflage; the peyot refuse anonymity. Part of me asked: must we advertise? And then a second and more disturbing question arrived: why should his visibility embarrass me?

The available vocabulary for this experience is poor, and it is poor for instructive reasons. Sander Gilman's Jewish Self-Hatred offered the most influential account, tracing a long history in which Jews internalized the majority's construction of Jewish language and Jewish bodies and turned it against themselves and against other Jews (61). The genealogy runs back through Theodor Lessing's Der jüdische Selbsthaß, a book whose author was murdered by Nazi agents three years after publishing it (62), and through Kurt Lewin's rather different social-psychological formulation, in which "selfhatred" names the predictable behaviour of members of an underprivileged group who cannot leave it and therefore turn their frustration inward and downward, toward the members who most visibly mark the group (63).

Lewin's version is the more useful, because it locates the phenomenon in a structure rather than in a character. But the term itself has become useless. It is now almost exclusively a weapon, deployed to discredit Jews whose politics or practice the speaker dislikes, and it carries an accusation of pathology that forecloses the analysis it purports to perform. Amos Funkenstein's critique goes further and, I think, decisively: the assimilating Jew was not a passive absorber of majority contempt but an active agent constructing a new self-understanding, and reading the entire nineteenth century as an exercise in self-hatred is both empirically false and condescending toward its subjects (64).

Better instruments exist. Erving Goffman's Stigma supplies passing — the management of discreditable information by those whose stigma is not visible — and the associated observation that the passer's greatest anxiety is directed at the visibly stigmatized member of his own group, whose presence threatens to disclose him (65). Kenji Yoshino's covering names the further demand made of those who are already known: not that they hide what they are, but that they refrain from making it salient (66). This is exactly the modern liberal settlement's actual requirement, and it explains why the acculturated Jew feels the kapote as a violation of an agreement he never signed but has been keeping.

Homi Bhabha's analysis of colonial mimicry adds the final term: the mimic is required to become "almost the same, but not quite," since a fully successful assimilation would eliminate the difference on which the hierarchy depends (67). The near-miss is not a failure of the mimicry; it is its purpose. Frantz Fanon's account of the same structure from the inside remains the most searing description of what it does to a person to be looked at through categories he did not author (68).

What follows from these instruments is a reframing that I regard as the pivot of this essay. My discomfort on that Viennese street was not evidence of insufficient Jewish loyalty, and calling it self-hatred explains nothing. It was the predictable response of a man who has kept a covering agreement to the sight of someone who has not — and, underneath that, the response of a man encountering in another the possibility he has declined in himself. The Hasid is not my shadow. He carries it. The distinction matters, and I have argued its clinical analogue in reading the Joseph narrative, where the brother who cannot be looked at is the site of the family's undigested material rather than its cause (69).

## Vienna as Laboratory

Vienna is where the argument becomes unavoidable for me, because Vienna is the city my father lost, and because it is the purest available specimen of the whole experiment.

Carl Schorske's Fin-de-Siècle Vienna established the interpretive frame: a liberal bourgeois culture that, blocked politically, redirected its energies into aesthetics and psychology, producing an extraordinary flowering at the precise moment its political foundations were collapsing (70). Steven Beller's demographic and cultural study made the Jewish component of that flowering explicit and unignorable, showing how disproportionately Jewish the educated liberal Viennese public was and how much of what the world calls Viennese modernism was produced by people whom Vienna would shortly define as foreign (71).

Marsha Rozenblit's study of Viennese Jewry between 1867 and 1914 supplies the corrective to any simple story of dissolution: Viennese Jews acculturated intensively while continuing to live in identifiable neighbourhoods, marry one another, and maintain communal institutions — assimilation and identity together, not in sequence (72). Robert Wistrich's survey of the same community in the age of Franz Joseph documents both the achievement and the gathering antisemitic reaction, including the political innovation of Karl Lueger, who demonstrated that antisemitism could be an electoral technology rather than merely a prejudice (73). Jacques Le Rider reads the resulting crisis of identity as constitutive of Viennese modernism it-

self (74).

And then there is Hugo Bettauer's Die Stadt ohne Juden of 1922, a satire in which Vienna expels its Jews, discovers that its coffeehouses, its theatre, its commerce, and its wit have gone with them, and invites them back (75). Bettauer was shot dead by a Nazi sympathizer in 1925. The novel's premise is a fantasy of indispensability — they will find they cannot do without us — and its author's murder is the historical refutation of that fantasy, delivered within three years.

The Habsburg case has one further feature that matters. Rozenblit's later work shows that Austrian Jews had constructed a tripartite identity — Austrian by political loyalty, German or Czech or Polish by culture, Jewish by ethnicity — which the supranational empire uniquely permitted (76). The collapse of that empire in 1918 destroyed the political container in which the arrangement made sense, and the successor states offered nothing comparable. A great deal of what is usually attributed to Jewish ambivalence was in fact the disappearance of a political structure that had made a complex identity liveable.

To walk through Vienna now is to encounter seduction and betrayal at once. The temptation is to imagine that one could simply have been Viennese without qualification. History whispers otherwise. But the opposite conclusion is equally unwarranted. The tragedy was not that Viennese Jews loved Vienna; their love was real, and it was not naive. Their error, if it must be named, was structural rather than moral: they had no way of knowing that cultural intimacy does not guarantee acceptance, because no prior case had tested the proposition at that scale.

One may love a civilization more deeply than that civilization loves you. That sentence is the whole lesson, and I have written elsewhere about what it means to hold it without letting it become a theodicy (77).

## Doikayt, Hebrew, and the Two Normalizations

Between the poles of retreat and dissolution, modern Jewry generated two great political answers, and both deserve to be read as responses to the same ambivalence rather than as its opposites.

The Bund's answer was doikayt, hereness. Jonathan Frankel's Prophecy and Politics remains the essential account of how socialism, nationalism, and Jewish mass politics interpenetrated in the Russian Empire (78); Jack Jacobs has documented the extraordinary institutional density of Bundist counterculture in interwar Poland — youth movements, sports clubs, schools, a press (79); David Fishman has traced the emergence of a modern Yiddish culture with its own canon and prestige (80). The Bundist claim was that the Jewish worker need neither emigrate to Palestine nor disappear into Polish society. He could demand dignity here, in his own language. Yiddish mattered because Jewish life already existed and required no metaphysical warrant.

The Bund therefore proves something important: secularization does not entail assimilation. One could abandon Orthodoxy and become more fiercely Jewish, not less. God could disappear while Jewish peoplehood remained. This is among the central paradoxes of Jewish modernity, and it should chasten any account that treats religious observance as the sole index of continuity.

Zionism appears at first to be assimilation's oppo-

site. Psychologically the relation is more intricate. Gideon Shimoni's analysis of Zionist ideology shows how thoroughly the movement absorbed the surrounding European nationalist grammar even as it turned that grammar against the European settlement (81). Many early Zionists accepted a fundamental criticism of diaspora Jewish existence: that the Jew had become abnormal. The remedy was transformation — the Jew would cease petitioning Europeans for admission and would become farmer, worker, soldier, and sovereign; Hebrew would cease to be principally the language of sacred texts and become the language in which one orders breakfast.

If assimilation sought normalization by entry into another nation, Zionism sought normalization by constituting a nation. That is an enormous difference. But the yearning for normality is common to both, and Ahad Ha'am saw this with painful clarity in 1891. His essay "Slavery in Freedom" describes the emancipated Western Jew as a slave within freedom, contorting his selfunderstanding to satisfy a host society, and contrasts him with the unemancipated Eastern Jew who is free within slavery because his inner world is not held hostage to another's approval (82). Steven Zipperstein's biography situates the essay within Ahad Ha'am's larger project of a cultural rather than political Zionism, whose diagnosis of the emancipation bargain remains the sharpest ever offered from within the Jewish world (83).

The critique has a further edge that later Israeli thought made explicit. Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin's argument concerning "exile within sovereignty" contends that the negation of exile carried into Israeli culture a European standard of normality that ought to have been the object of criticism rather than the criterion of success (84). Whatever one makes of its politics, the observation identifies a genuine irony: a movement founded to end the humiliation of seeking European approval may have internalized European norms of what a people should look like.

Religious Zionism attempted a third path. Ehud Luz's study of the encounter between religion and nationalism in the movement's first decades documents how contested and how creative that encounter was (85), and Dov Schwartz's history traces the ideological developments that followed (86). Mizrachi emerged because religious Jews recognized that a national awakening of that magnitude could not be left to secularists — which is to say that its very existence was an act of participation in a movement whose leadership was largely not observant.

Against all of these, Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin proposed something else. Their essay on diaspora argues that Jewish identity has been generated historically not by autochthony or sovereignty but by the productive tension of a people with a memory of a land and a life somewhere else, and that diaspora is therefore not a deficiency awaiting correction but a distinctive and defensible mode of collective existence (6). Powers of Diaspora develops the claim into an account of diasporic cultural creativity as a resource rather than a compensation (87). Jonathan Boyarin's Storm from Paradise had already argued that Jewish memory practices constitute a politics in their own right (88), and Thinking in Jewish pressed the methodological question of what it would mean to theorize from within a Jewish idiom rather than about Jews as an object (89). His ethnography of Polish Jews in Paris demonstrates the method: a community whose Jewishness

is constituted through the ongoing labour of remembering, in a language and a locale that no ideology had assigned it (90). Daniel Boyarin's work on the invention of the Jewish man supplies the gendered dimension, showing how the assimilation debate was also a debate about masculinity, and how the "new Jew" of both Zionism and bourgeois respectability was defined against a rabbinic ideal that had valued gentleness and study over martial bearing (91).

I find the Boyarins persuasive on the descriptive question and incomplete on the normative one. They show convincingly that diaspora generates value. They are less clear about what makes the specific content worth generating, which is where this essay is headed.

## The Answer Europe Supplied

European Jews spent generations debating what kind of Jews they wished to become: Orthodox, Neolog, Reform, Zionist, Bundist, assimilationist, socialist, German, Hungarian, Austrian, cosmopolitan.

The Nazis supplied their own answer. Jew.

The distinctions that had consumed Jewish intellectual life for a century became irrelevant to the persecutor. The baptized Jew was a Jew. The decorated patriot was a Jew. The secular professor was a Jew. The Orthodox rabbi was a Jew. The socialist was a Jew. The industrialist was a Jew. The assimilated Viennese intellectual was a Jew, and so was the Ostjude whom that intellectual had found embarrassing. Raul Hilberg's anatomy of the destruction process shows how the machinery of definition worked: before deportation there is registration, and before registration there is a definition, and the definition was genealogical (92). Saul Friedländer's account of the years of persecution documents the speed with which the legal apparatus converted a century of self-fashioning into a line on a form (93).

Shulamit Volkov's account of antisemitism as a cultural code helps explain how the ground had been prepared: by the late nineteenth century, in Germany, declaring oneself an antisemite signalled membership in a whole cultural and political camp — anti-modern, anti-liberal, anti-urban — so that antisemitism functioned less as a specific belief about Jews than as an identity marker for the people who held it (94,95). This is why Jewish behaviour was so nearly irrelevant to its intensity. Nothing Jews did could have altered a code whose function lay elsewhere.

Jung's 1936 essay on Wotan is the most compromised and most suggestive document in the psychological literature: an attempt to describe a nation seized by an archetype, written by a man who did not adequately distinguish description from fascination (96). I cite it with that caveat and for one purpose only. An archetypal grammar may describe the operation performed upon persons; it may never describe the persons. The moment the analysis migrates from the perpetrator's psychology to the victim's essence, it has become the thing it was meant to explain.

This is the darkest lesson of assimilation, and it must be stated precisely, because the imprecise version has done real damage. One may resign from one's own identity without receiving permission to resign from the identity imposed by others.

But here I want to make a move that the standard

telling does not make, and that I regard as indispensable.

It is tempting to conclude: Auschwitz collapsed the distinction between assimilated and traditional Jew; therefore the distinction was always void. That conclusion is donated by the murderer. It takes the racial state's definition, notes that it captured everyone, and elevates it into a truth about Jewish existence. I decline it. The distinctions Jews argued over were real, they concerned genuinely different visions of the good, and the fact that a genocidal bureaucracy was indifferent to them tells us about the bureaucracy, not about the arguments. To say otherwise is to grant the perpetrator retroactive jurisdiction over the meaning of Jewish life — precisely the jurisdiction I have argued elsewhere was the decisive step in the destruction itself, the removal of a population from the category of those whose selfdescriptions count (97,98).

The distinction survives. What does not survive is the belief that any position on the spectrum purchased safety.

## The Structure of Survivalism

Emil Fackenheim's formulation deserves to be quoted in its structure rather than its slogan. Writing in 1967 and elaborating the position in God's Presence in History, he proposed that a commanding Voice speaks from Auschwitz, and that its content is fourfold: Jews are commanded to survive as Jews; to remember the victims; not to deny or despair of God however one must contend with Him; and not to despair of the world as the place of redemption, lest the world be surrendered to the forces of Auschwitz (3). The compression into a single phrase — that Jews are forbidden to hand Hitler posthumous victories — has done what compressions do.

Fackenheim was not a shallow thinker, and To Mend the World is a far more demanding book than the slogan suggests, wrestling with whether tikkun is possible after a rupture he insists is unassimilable to prior categories (99). But the slogan travelled, and it travelled because it solved an institutional problem. It supplied a ground for communal mobilization that required no theological agreement, no halakhic commitment, and no positive account of Jewish content. Anyone could accept it. That was its genius and its defect.

Michael Wyschogrod's critique, published in 1971, identified the defect immediately and has never been adequately answered (100). If the ground of Jewish obligation is the refusal to grant Hitler a victory, then Hitler has been installed at the foundation of Jewish existence. Judaism, Wyschogrod argued, cannot be constructed on the negation of an enemy; it must rest on the covenant and on the God who gives it, or it rests on nothing that can bear weight across generations. He also warned that a Judaism organized around catastrophe would transmit catastrophe, and that children raised on the Holocaust as the primary content of their Jewishness would receive an identity whose principal emotional register is dread.

Jonathan Woocher's Sacred Survival documented what happened next in the American case with anthropological precision: the emergence of a civil religion in which the Holocaust and the State of Israel functioned as the central sacred narrative, federation philanthropy as the central practice, and "survival" as the central theological term (101). Jacob Neusner made the parallel argument more polemically, contending that American Jews had

constructed a Judaism of Holocaust and redemption that met their own psychological needs while bearing an uncertain relation to the tradition it claimed to continue (102).

I want to be careful here, because the criticism is easy to make from a comfortable distance and the people being criticized had just buried a civilization. Survivalism was a response to an emergency, and emergencies license improvisation. My claim is not that it was wrong in 1967. My claim is that a framework adequate to an emergency is not thereby adequate to a century, and that the emergency framework has now been in place for three generations without ever being converted into a positive account.

There is a theological version of the same problem that I have pursued elsewhere. A post-Holocaust theology organized entirely around divine absence — hester panim as the master category — tends to make God's hiddenness into the content of faith rather than its trial, and thereby reproduces at the level of theology exactly what survivalism does at the level of communal policy: it derives the positive from the negative (103). The Chabad reordering, in which withdrawal precedes sin and is therefore constitutive of creation rather than punitive, offers a different grammar in which concealment is the condition of relationship rather than its rupture (104). I do not think the two grammars can be synthesized, and I have argued that they should be held unsynthesized rather than forced. But their difference is instructive for the communal question: a tradition can be grounded in what it is for, or in what it is against, and the second is always cheaper and always weaker.

## The Continuity Crisis and the Sovereign Self

The survivalist framework produced, in due course, a discourse of "continuity" that dominated American Jewish institutional life from roughly 1990 onward and has since been extensively criticized by scholars who grew up inside it.

The immediate trigger was demographic — an intermarriage figure, disputed almost from the moment it appeared, that was received as an emergency and converted into a funding priority. What deserves attention is not the number but the grammar. The discourse treated Jewish continuity as a quantity to be maximized, and Jewish content as instrumentally valuable insofar as it produced the quantity. Programs were justified by their retention effects. The question of what was being retained, and why it merited retention, was not so much answered as postponed.

Steven Cohen and Arnold Eisen's The Jew Within provided the most searching description of the moderately affiliated American Jew of that era: a person for whom Jewishness was intensely meaningful and entirely voluntary, located in the self and the family rather than in the community or the commandment, assembled from selected practices, and resistant to any authority claiming the power to prescribe (105). Their subjects were not assimilating in Endelman's sense. They were Jewish on their own terms and would have been baffled by the suggestion that this was a failure. The sovereign self was not a defection from the tradition; it was the tradition as processed by a culture of autonomy.

Lila Corwin Berman has shown how the categories in which American Jews described themselves publicly were shaped by the sociological vocabu-

lary of the mid-century, so that the discourse of Jewish "identity" was itself a historical artifact rather than a neutral description (106). Noam Pianko has demonstrated that "peoplehood," now treated as the most traditional of terms, was in fact an American innovation of the twentieth century, coined to solve a specific problem — how to speak of Jewish collectivity in a country where nationalism was unavailable and religion was the only respectable category (107). Shaul Magid's American Post-Judaism argues that the ethnic frame that carried mid-century American Judaism has already dissolved, and that what follows will look less like continuity and more like reconstruction on postethnic ground (108). Michal Kravel-Tovi's study of state conversion in Israel documents the same problematic in its most bureaucratic form, where the boundary of Jewishness is administered by an apparatus whose incentives are demographic (109).

Jonathan Sacks, whose 1994 book gave the British debate its title, was more theologically alert than most participants and understood that the demographic question could not be answered demographically (7). His earlier One People? had already argued that the deepest challenge was not attrition but fragmentation — the inability of the various Jewish worlds to recognize one another as parties to a single conversation (110). His answer was inclusivism grounded in covenant: continuity is possible only where there is something to be continuous with, and that something must be describable in terms that make claims on people rather than in terms that merely count them.

The historical work supports his instinct. Endelman's account of English Jewry shows that attrition has been continuous for three centuries, running not through ideological apostasy but through gradual social absorption at the edges, and that communal panic about it is nearly as old as the community itself (111). If the boundary has always been permeable, then continuity has never been secured by boundary maintenance alone, and no program of boundary maintenance is going to secure it now.

I have my own small piece of this history. Forty years ago I published an essay on the agony of the yarmulke — on what it is to wear, or not wear, a visible marker in a society that permits you to remove it (112). I recognize the young man who wrote it. He was negotiating the covering agreement in real time and had not yet found the words that Goffman and Yoshino would have supplied. What strikes me now is that the essay assumed the question was about courage. It is not principally about courage. It is about what one takes the marker to be marking, and whether that thing is worth marking.

## Value Before Continuity

Here is the argument this essay exists to make.

Continuity arguments come in two forms, and both are unstable on their own.

The first is survivalist: we should continue because we were nearly destroyed, and to fail to continue would complete the destruction. This grounds identity in the enemy. It is emotionally powerful, historically intelligible, and selfundermining across generations, since each successive cohort stands further from the event and the affective charge decays while the argument's whole force depends on that charge. Wyschogrod's objection has only strengthened with time (100).

The second is genealogical: we should continue because we are descendants, and descent obliges. This grounds identity in blood, which is exactly the ground the racial state chose, and it has the further defect of being unable to explain why anyone should value what is being transmitted. The Boyarins' critique of autochthony and genealogy as grounds for identity applies here with full force, and their alternative — generation, in the sense of ongoing productive practice — points in the right direction without quite arriving (6,87).

The third form, which I want to defend, is value-first: we should continue because what is transmitted is worth having, and the argument for continuity is therefore an argument about the quality of a life and a mind. This has an obvious cost. It exposes the tradition to evaluation, and evaluation might go badly. A community that says "continue us because we are worth continuing" has accepted a burden of proof that "continue us because they tried to kill us" evades.

I accept the burden, and I want to state as precisely as I can what I think the goods are.

First, a discipline of reading. The tradition trains a specific and unusual relation to a text: nothing is redundant, every anomaly is a summons, contradiction is an invitation rather than an embarrassment, and the reader is obligated to the text before he is entitled to judge it. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi showed how differently this operates from historical memory as the modern West understands it — the tradition remembers by liturgical and interpretive re-enactment rather than by historiography, and this is a different cognitive achievement rather than a defective version of ours (113). One may value that discipline without accepting the metaphysics that generated it; David Biale's history of Jewish secular thought is largely the story of people who did exactly that (114).

Second, a form of moral seriousness about the ordinary. A tradition that legislates the kitchen, the calendar, the field, the wage, the bed, and the deathbed is making a claim that the moral life is not principally a matter of great decisions but of small ones, endlessly repeated. Alasdair MacIntyre's account of a practice as an activity with internal goods, standards of excellence, and a living argument extending through time is the best available secular description of what halakhah is from the inside (115).

Third, a theological grammar for catastrophe that does not lie. This is the point at which I part company with a great deal of what is popularly transmitted. The tradition's most serious resources for suffering are not consolations; they are refusals of premature consolation — Job's, and the Rebbe's, and the anti-theodicy strand of the Kabbalistic material I have worked with for years (77). A tradition that can hold catastrophe without explaining it away is worth transmitting to people who will, without exception, encounter catastrophe.

Fourth, a stance toward universal knowledge that is neither defensive nor capitulating. In a recent essay responding to Harari's secular account of Jewish history, I argued that the choice between a scientific-historical reading and a mystical one is falsely posed, and that the tradition is better served by contesting the framing than by conceding the field and retreating to the private (116).

Now the crucial move. These goods are not abstractions to me. They constitute my working meth-

od as a physician. The patient as a text requiring interpretive humility; the history as a narrative whose anomalies are the diagnostic material; the refusal to be satisfied by the classification that terminates inquiry; the willingness to sit with an unexplained suffering rather than to explain it prematurely — this is what forty years of Talmudic apprenticeship produced in a clinic, and it is not what medical training produces (8,117). I have argued at length that the am ha'aretz and the talmid chacham are distinguished less by information than by a disciplined quality of attention that can be acquired only by long submission to a demanding text (118).

If that is right, then the continuity question can be reformulated. The tradition earns transmission by the readers it produces. Its claim on the next generation is not that they owe it to the dead, and not that their blood requires it, but that submitting to this particular discipline will make them capable of a quality of attention they will not otherwise acquire and will need.

This reformulation has three consequences worth stating plainly.

It makes continuity conditional on content. A Jewish institution that produces affiliation without attention has not succeeded; it has produced a demographic result and missed the point.

It makes the assimilationist impulse partly legitimate. If the goods are goods, they are goods for anyone, and the desire to participate in the wider human conversation is not a betrayal of a tradition whose own texts are a twothousand-year argument conducted in dialogue with every civilization Jews have inhabited.

And it disarms the enemy's authorship. On a value-first account, the antisemite is not the reason for Jewish existence. He is an obstacle to it, which is a much smaller thing to be.

## Ger ve-Toshav: Ambivalence as Structure

If the ambivalence is structural rather than pathological, then the correct response is not to cure it but to inhabit it well. The tradition supplies a formula for this, and it is older than the problem.

Abraham, standing before the Hittites to purchase a burial plot for Sarah, describes himself as ger ve-toshav anokhi imakhem — I am a stranger and a resident among you (Genesis 23:4). The phrase is a legal self-description and a theological one at once, and Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik made it the hinge of his account of the Jew in the modern world. In "Confrontation" he argued that the Jewish community meets the wider world as a faith community whose innermost commitments are untranslatable, while collaborating fully with that world in the human and civic realm — a double stance that he refused to collapse in either direction (119). The Lonely Man of Faith generalizes the structure into the two Adams: majestic Adam, who subdues and creates and belongs to the world of achievement; and covenantal Adam, who seeks redemption and belongs to a community of the lonely (120). The point that is most often missed is that Soloveitchik does not resolve the dialectic. He insists that the modern man of faith must oscillate, and that the oscillation is his vocation rather than his failure. I have argued in a recent reassessment that this refusal of synthesis is the most durable thing in the essay and the part least honoured by his interpreters, who tend to want one Adam to win (121).

Franz Rosenzweig arrived at a related position

from the far side. He came to the brink of baptism in 1913, resolved to enter Christianity as a Jew rather than as a pagan, attended a Yom Kippur service, and did not convert (122,123). What he built afterward was not a defence of Jewish particularism against Christian universalism but an account in which each stands in a distinct relation to the same truth — a structure that permits full seriousness about the other without dissolving one's own position. Nahum Glatzer's biography documents how much of Rosenzweig's later work was an attempt to make Jewish learning available to precisely the acculturated German Jews who had been my subject in Sections IV and V (123).

Emmanuel Levinas gave the ethical version: the Judaism he called a difficult freedom is one in which election means obligation rather than privilege, and in which the universal is reached through the particular rather than by leaving it (124). Paul Mendes-Flohr's phrase for the whole German-Jewish situation — a dual identity — is not a diagnosis of confusion but a description of a structure that its bearers experienced as coherent even when their neighbours did not (125).

Here is the position I take. The demand that I choose is a demand I decline, not out of indecision but because the demand misdescribes the object. I belong, and I do not entirely belong. I participate, and I stand apart. I speak the language of the surrounding civilization, and another language echoes beneath it. Modernity promised to eliminate this tension; maturity may consist in ceasing to require that it do so. I have written about the provisional as a theological condition rather than a temporary inconvenience — the umbilical state of living tethered to something one has not resolved — and about tzimtzum as the withdrawal that makes room rather than the wound that must be healed (126,127).

Ambivalence, on this account, is not the residue of an incomplete decision. It is the shape a serious life takes when two genuine belongings are held at once, and the attempt to eliminate it by amputation produces not integrity but a narrower person.

## Integration Rather Than Amputation: Neumann's Discipline

The psychological apparatus for holding the tension without resolving it is available, and it comes from a Jewish analyst who spent the war years in Tel Aviv thinking about exactly this.

Neumann's Depth Psychology and a New Ethic argues that the old ethic of moral perfection operates by suppression — the person becomes good by exiling what is unacceptable — and that the exiled material does not disappear but is projected outward onto a carrier, who is then persecuted for possessing it (56). The new ethic he proposed substitutes integration for suppression: the withdrawal of the projection and the acknowledgment of the disowned material as one's own. He wrote this in 1942 and 1943, with Rommel at the door, which is to say that he was not theorizing scapegoating from a distance. Jung's account of the shadow in Aion supplies the general structure, in which the shadow is not evil as such but the unlived and the disowned, and in which the affect that accompanies a projection is the diagnostic sign that a projection is occurring (128).

Applied to my subject, the framework yields a proposition I regard as the essay's psychological core.

The acculturated Jew and the visibly traditional Jew function as each other's shadow carriers.

The acculturated Jew looks at the Hasid and sees the parochialism he escaped — and beneath that, the unlived possibility of an unnegotiated belonging. The Hasid looks at the acculturated Jew and sees the betrayal he resisted — and beneath that, the unlived possibility of the wider world. Each carries for the other something that the other has declined. This is why the encounter generates affect out of all proportion to its content. Nobody is that upset about a coat.

Three qualifications are essential, or the framework becomes an excuse.

First, the shadow relation is symmetrical in structure but not in power. The two parties do not have equal capacity to define the terms of Jewish public life in any given setting, and an analysis that ignores the asymmetry becomes a way of avoiding the political question.

Second, the framework describes an operation performed within a psyche; it must never be exported into a claim about what the other person essentially is. The Hasid is not my shadow. He is a man with his own interiority who happens to carry mine. I have argued the same point about the mutual wounding of perpetrator and victim, where an ethics of reconciliation is possible only if the archetypal grammar is kept strictly on the side of the operation and away from the persons (129).

Third — and this is the hardest — integration is not synthesis. Erik Erikson's account of identity formation is sometimes read as though the goal were a unified self in which all elements are reconciled (130). I do not think that is available here, and I do not think Soloveitchik thought so either. What is available is a discipline: the capacity to hold two commitments that do not resolve, to notice when one is being used to attack the other, and to withdraw the projection each time it forms. That is a practice rather than an achievement, and like all practices it must be repeated.

I return imaginatively to the Hasid on the Viennese street. Initially I see someone radically unlike me. Then I wonder whether he is carrying something for me. He carries unapologetic Jewish visibility. Perhaps I carry something for him: an openness to what lies beyond the walls of the community, and the heretical willingness to look for holiness in strange clothes (131). Neither of us exhausts Judaism. He need not become me and I need not become him. But my discomfort deserves examination, because discomfort marks the location of the shadow with more reliability than any argument.

And there is a detail I did not notice at first. His cultural choices are visible; mine have become invisible because they match the majority. My suit is also a uniform. The kapote is only more honest about it.

## Conclusion: Encounter

I no longer find it useful to ask whether my attraction to Western civilization indicates insufficient Jewish loyalty. The question is too crude to generate an answer worth having. My attraction belongs to the same historical encounter that produced Mendelssohn, Hirsch, Freud, Herzl, Buber, Soloveitchik, and Neumann, and it is a poor sort of loyalty that would disown all of them.

The better question is what I am seeking through it.

If assimilation means shame at being Jewish, I reject it, and the historical record suggests that shame is in any case a bad investment. If it means the belief that acceptance requires disappearance, Vienna has already refuted the proposition at a cost I will not describe again. But if it means entering the languages, sciences, arts, and relationships of humanity without fear, then I do not condemn the desire, and I would give it a different name. Encounter — which requires two identities capable of meeting without either consuming the other (132).

That formulation returns me to the essay's central claim. Encounter is possible only where there is something to bring. A Jew who has retained affiliation without content arrives at the meeting with nothing to say; a Jew who has retained content without openness does not arrive at all. Continuity that is justified by survival alone produces the first. Withdrawal justified by the enemy's malice produces the second. Only a value-first account produces a person who has something to offer and a reason to listen, and this is why the question why continue is not a threat to Jewish continuity but its precondition.

Hitler does not deserve the last word on whether Jews may love German music. If I withdraw from Western civilization because antisemites once excluded my ancestors from it, they have achieved a posthumous victory; if I erase my Jewishness to gain admission, they have achieved a different one. The task is harder than either: to enter without disappearing.

Arthur Hertzberg, at the end of a life spent arguing about exactly this, concluded that what has held Jews together across every rupture is not a doctrine, a territory, or a persecution, but a stubborn, quarrelsome, and unfinished conversation about what the community is for (133). Ruth Wisse's account of the modern Jewish literary canon shows the same thing from the side of the writers, who were rarely observant and almost never obedient and who nonetheless produced a body of work unmistakably continuous with the tradition they had left (134). That is not a consoling conclusion. It is, I think, an accurate one.

So: I can walk through Vienna as a Jew without asking Vienna's permission. I can study Torah without fearing Shakespeare. I can read Christian theology, psychoanalysis, and secular philosophy without imagining that curiosity constitutes betrayal. And I can look at the Hasid in his kapote without demanding that either he remove it or I put one on.

Wholeness is not purity. Purity would require me to decide which half of myself is authentic. Wholeness permits me to recognize that the conflict itself is part of the inheritance — that I am the descendant both of Jews who entered European civilization and of Jews whom that civilization rejected, attracted by the universal and claimed by the particular, ger ve-toshav, stranger and resident.

Perhaps I do harbour a secret desire to assimilate. Beneath it I now recognize a deeper one: not to disappear, but to belong without having to disappear. And perhaps that has been the Jewish question all along.

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