

What is the Meaning of the New Thinking?¹

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Dear ladies and gentlemen,

It's in four keys I would like to speak. The first has the tone of an exclamation. The second that of a criticism concerning the theme of our meeting. The third is that of a story. The fourth is in the tone of a comparison.

I. The exclamation is a quotation from Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy's series of lectures "Die Gesetze der christlichen Zeitrechnung" (The laws of the Christian Era) 1958. Some different sentence would do equally well. I'm confiding my shyness and my being caught by the men, with whom I'm dealing. It's something like the exclamation of Ingrid Betancourt at her delivery from her imprisonment as a hostage by the Farc in Colombia a few years ago: "What I feel now, must be like arriving in nirvana, in paradise."

Do we know then what nirvana or paradise is? Isn't it the other way around? Isn't this experience telling us what perhaps nirvana or paradise may mean? Nevertheless the experience happens as for that matter hell is an experience here below as well.

To be caught – that is what comes first. Without this confession it seems to me almost impossible to say the right thing concerning our theme.

Here comes the EXCLAMATION:

Die Sprache kommt von weither,
 sie strömt,
 sie ist derselbe Strom
 wie der Gebirgstrom vom Berge:
 wir strömen durch die Zeit!
 Der Strom der menschlichen Sprache
 geht von den Quellen der Urzeit
 bis an das Meer des Endes.
 Und nur,
 wenn ihr von diesen Wellen
 euren Willen (euch) umspülen läßt,
 dann läßt ihr Gott
 in euren eigenen Geschichte
 walten.

Language is coming from far away,
 it's streaming,
 it's the same stream

¹ Translation of Was heißt Neues Denken? My contribution to the Internationale Tagung 6. bis 9. Juli 2008 (8. Juli) "Kreuz der Wirklichkeit" und "Stern der Erlösung" Die Glaubens-Metaphysik von Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy und Franz Rosenzweig - Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main.

as the mountain-stream from the mountain:
 we are streaming through the time!
 The stream of human language
 is going from the sources of original time
 till the sea of the end.
 And only,
 when by these waves
 you allow to rinse your will (yourselves),
 then God allows you
 in your own history
 to be steering.”²

My being caught concerns Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy’s teachings on *Speech and Time*.

It was the case in the past and it’s now still the case. It happened when I didn’t know anything about it. Endlessly I had been taught in the language of space, in its methods and problems. It stayed even when I had a heart-operation last year (2007) and I entered a totally new phase of my life.

To me Franz Rosenzweig belongs wholly to the new teachings on time.

But I ask myself whether or not I ‘m able to bring some clarity in all this.

II, My CRITICISM CONCERNING THE THEME OF THE MEETING is that I think: on *Speech and Time* one should speak, when the works of these men are put before us and that it is ridiculous to speak of Glaubens-Metaphysik (Metaphysics of the Faith) in their case.

On physics and meta-physics it is possible to speak. But what might mean metaphysics of the faith? Isn’t the theme of today disclosing that still we here are totally in the era of modern times?

In encountering Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy I thought to have learned that physics in modern times is a knowledge that merely uses categories of space and that therefore philosophy of the modern times doesn’t have any ability to deal with time. In “*Out of Revolution*” you can read this sentence: “*Physics deals with corpses and metaphysics with formulas from which the life has passed away. Both sciences are concerned with secondary forms of existence, remnants of life*”.³ So physics is dealing with corpses and metaphysics with concepts, from which life has evaded. Both are dealing with secondary forms of existence, with remnants of life.⁴

² Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Die Gesetze der christlichen Zeitrechnung*, agenda Verlag, Münster S. 466

³ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution* Autobiography of Western Man. 1938 Reprint Providence/Oxford 1993 p. 743

⁴ You can say that modern science and modern philosophy are in a double way coined by death and are double obsessed by death: in its object and in its subject. In modern times even a human being is treated as an object and the original meaning of subject in English has changed 180 degrees. The original meaning of ‘subject’: the thing which is under you, what now is called object. Originally object meant “the thing against you”.

This sounds perhaps like a joke, but it isn't. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy has profoundly dealt with physics in modern times. You can find that in his works on Paracelsus and Faraday 1937 and 1947 and elsewhere.⁵ It must be stressed that in "Out of Revolution" the acquisitions of physics in modern times are praised nevertheless. One should give to Descartes the honour that he with his manner of thinking has called into life an alliance of scientists, in which the scientist is composing himself out of an observer with his senses and a calculator. In working together in their alliance they are transcending/overcoming all boundaries on earth. They are splitting themselves as scientists in it's and egos. But in their bond they reach and join others over generations.

Now just in this quality they themselves are exceptions in society. As single human beings they are, as all of us, called souls: You!⁶

By the way: here you can read, what philosophers of phenomenology mean when they speak of their "transcendental ego": what sort of ego that is, certainly not yours!

These people have to listen at a wider or more comprehensive community! Within the alliance of scientists they even only have a limited knowledge of nature. They are exploring merely the dead nature, i.e. they are nearing nature in so far as it is repeatable in experiment. Their knowledge is inappropriate both for living nature and for society.⁷ The science of nature in modern times is calling for a new social science ever more, the deeper this science of nature is interrupting and destroying social orders and connections. Through the World War, through the World Wars – they are two phases in one World Revolution – the hour of this new science has rung. The new science has become a necessity. *In its fundamental structures it is not allowed to squint either in the direction of scholastics or that of academics (= modern natural science and modern philosophy).*

⁵ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *A Classic and A Founder*, Dartmouth College 1937. *The Science of Bodies and the Appeal to Somebody*, Rosenstock-Huessy Papers Vol. I Ch. 2 p. (a – b) 1 -24 Argo Books 1981.

The Metabolism of Science, Argo Books Archive 1947. Last item is further elaborated in: *Atem des Geistes*, Frankfurter Hefte, Frankfurt aM 1951: *Unser Anspruch auf Wissenschaft oder der Rechtstitel der Physik* S. 167 – 235. Idem in: *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts* Bd. 2, Lambert Schneider Verlag, Heidelberg 1964: *In die Zahlensprache der Physik* S. 221 – 273. Vgl. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Heilkraft und Wahrheit, Konkordanz der politischen und der kosmischen Zeit*, Evangelisches Verlagswerk GmbH, Stuttgart 1952 Kap. VI, VII, VIII. (Reprint: Amandus-Verlag, Wien und Brendow Verlag D-4130 Moers 1, 1990. I recommend to read and to master the details of the pp. 160ff.

I also recommend to compare this with a great work of my teacher, today also almost forgotten and put aside by journalists, editors of our newspapers and leaders in our universities, Arnold Ewout Loen, *Säkularisation Von der wahren Voraussetzung und angeblichen Gottlosigkeit der Wissenschaft*, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, München 1965, translated in English: *Secularization: Science without God?* Westminster Press 1967.

⁶ *Out of Revolution* p. 748

⁷ Again and again in the circles of modern scientists the attempt is made to explain herbs, plants, trees by deriving their nature from the atoms or even smaller parts than the atoms of dead nature'. And of course after having done so they try to deal with human beings in the same way.

In doing this they are as superstitious as the Egyptians were. They derived everything from the sky, the constellations of the stars. See Rosenstock-Huessy's chapters on Egypt in the volumes 2 and 3 of *Im Kreuz der Wirklichkeit*. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy therefore is calling these modern philosophers "philosophers of the ashcan". This is clearly offending editors of news=papers that much, that you're ostracized when you only mention his name in a letter to the editor..

III. My STORY is about a course, which Adri Sevenster and I arranged in Winsum, Holland, in the autumn of 2007 and in the spring of 2008. Six evenings of two hours. We wanted to tell something about Eugen and Franz and we choose as title of the course: Break-through of western patterns of thinking in the work of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Franz Rosenzweig.

At once we had the pains to give an outline of these two patterns of thinking. Next to the pattern of physics in modern age we had to outline the former age of the republic of scholars. Therefore we dealt with scholastics. And we took our refuge to what Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy tells us in his chapter on the Papal Revolution (mostly called in our history-books “the Struggle of Investiture”). It’s about the foundation of the University in the West (before there was no university at all) by Gratian and Peter Abelard and about the new method of scholarship.⁸ That method was invented at that time and existed in: gathering and establishing the Summae of the Patres (Church Fathers and other authorities of old) and in dealing with their contradictions according to the method of dialectic: yes and no, weighing pro and contra.

The doctors in scholastics became Councillors of the bishops. In the German reformation they became Councillors of the Sovereigns (monarch or prince). There were some other differences. You can read about them in *Das Geheimnis der Universität*.⁹

Next to this the participants of the course were informed about the biography of both men.

Specifically we told about the new beginnings in the twenties: about adult education and the ‘Lehrhaus’ in Frankfurt aM (the house of Jewish adult education). Last one had to do with the Jews who should know something more about their own origin and history, because their emancipation in and after the French revolution had alienated them too much from their tradition. It was after the model of the ‘bet hamidrash’ which has its origin in the Diaspora. In the dispersion again and again adults had to adapt their behaviour to their new environment and to see how they could save their loyalty to the past. In a new way Franz Rosenzweig tried to do so after the World War. The Jews shouldn’t pay their tribute merely to Haskalah (Enlightenment), but bring their new freedom in accordance with their origins.

At the other side Eugen Rosenstock made his experiments in adult education in order to find a new form of citizenship, more than the old one, but not without it. He participated in a movement which called itself “Die Neue Richtung” (the New Direction). It had roots in Denmark of the 19th century in circles of pastor Nikolaj F.S. Grundtvig (1783 – 1872) who

⁸ We also could refer to the book of Harold J. Berman, *Law and Revolution The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition*, Harvard, University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England 1983. Especially *The Application of the Scholastic Dialectic to Legal Science* pp. 143 - 164

⁹ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Das Geheimnis der Universität Wider den Verfall von Zeitsinn und Sprachkraft*, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart 1958. I mean the first speech for professors and students p. 17 – 34.

for the first time came to adult education next to preaching. *New* and also *intensive* they called their direction over against the old direction which was *extensive*: tried to popularize scientific insights. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and the people around him tried to use forms of the Jewish Lehrhaus: let the people be involved in finding their ways of adaptation to new situations.

Now it is important to know that between Franz Rosenzweig's Lehrhaus in Frankfurt and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy's adult education there was a lively intercourse.¹⁰

So the New Thinking is a fruit of the turn of times, when Germany had lost the World War. New Thinking is thinking after the epoch of the philosophy of modern times and after the epoch of domination of the theology of the Church in the West. It is post-scholastic and post-academic.

Adri Sevenster's book on Franz Rosenzweig has the best description of the affinity between both men. Better than what you find somewhere else. The book has the title: Sabbatsrust voor een zondagskind (sabbathrest for a sundaychild)¹¹

Sevenster is a pupil of the Dutch professor Dr. Kornelis Heiko Miskotte (1894 – 1976) whose works are filled to the brim with the teachings of Rosenzweig and Rosenstock. The remarkable distance to Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, which German scholars in the work Rosenzweig have construed in the time after the second World War, doesn't exist in Holland at all.¹²

In Sevenster's book is clearly explained that Franz Rosenzweig himself saw *The Star of Redemption* as being in its character an example of the new thinking in a new epoch.

Franz Rosenzweig had been coined by the idealistic philosophy of Fichte, of Hegel and of Schelling. His dissertation was titled *Hegel und der Staat*, defended in 1913, only published

¹⁰ See for this feature the very good and beautiful dissertation of Regina Burkhardt-Riedmiller, *Franz Rosenzweigs Sprachdenken und seine Erneuerung humanistischer und jüdischer Lerntraditionen*, Haag + Herchen Verlag GmbH, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

¹¹ A. Sevenster, *Sabbatsrust voor een zondagskind Over Der Stern der Erlösung van Franz Rosenzweig*, Agora, Baarn 1998. Franz Rosenzweig was born on a Sunday, 25th of December 1886. So even as a Sundayschild he was a Christmaschild.

¹² Representative for this distance is at one side Bernhard Casper (roman catholic) who wants to render Franz' work in an Heideggerian vocabulary; at another side Reinhold Mayer (protestant), who doesn't take any notion of the Dutch pioneering of Miskotte and people around him. The work of Miskotte c.s. came true and bore fruit in the form of the new articulation of the relationship between Jews and Christians. See the Church Order of the Dutch Reformed Church 1951, which had a follower in the Rheinland-Westfälischen Lutheran Church Order in 1980 (Beschlúß der Rheinischen Landessynode von Bad Neuenahr *Zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden* 1980. On this see: Wolfram Liebster, Franz Rosenzweig und Kornelis Miskotte usw. in: *Der Philosoph Franz Rosenzweig (1886 – 1929)* Hrsg. Von Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik, Verlag Karl Alber, Freiburg/München.) Even in the years Ninety had it a successful follower in the Vatican of the Roman Catholic Church.

In stead of this you find the German scholars inventing some sterile sort of German philo-Semitism. Confer for this the early striking criticism of Dr. Georg Müller in: *Mitteilungen der Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy-Gesellschaft* 7. Folge, Nov. 1967 S. 5f. und 8. Folge, Juni 1968 S.3f. (on Casper) and 19. u. 20. Folge, Frühjahr 1974 S. 23ff. (on Mayer's book: *Franz Rosenzweig Eine Philosophie der dialogischen Erfahrung*, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, München 1973.)

in 1920. Called away from it by Eugen in the Nightly Conversation of the 7th of July 1913 and by their correspondence of 1916 he arrived at new insights: he found his new method in a dialectical answer to Eugen Rosenstock's new approach in starting from language. In an article in the periodical *Der Morgen* 1925 he confesses this.¹³ The ordering in the Star is: Creation, Revelation and Redemption, of which the second book is the central one.

Speaking about their spiritual relationship Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy said to the friend of his later years Dr. Georg Müller that he had to notice the sequence: *Vom Kreuz zum Stern und vom Stern zum Kreuz* (from cross to star and from star to cross). This he wrote in a letter about his second volume of the Sociology: *Die Vollzahl der Zeiten* (1958). He had pushed Franz first and then Franz had pushed him by his Star to his Vollzahl. Eugen's answer to Franz was almost 30 years after his death and 37 years after the publication of the Star.¹⁴

In Vollzahl we find the unique chapter on the epochs of the Western university.¹⁵ Its title is *Die Bemanning der Hochschule* (the crew of the upper school) and the name of the new epoch after World War I is *Argonautik* (argonautic). This epoch has to replace the epochs of the university of former times, that of the scholastic period and that of the academic period. Argonautic therefore refers to the basic form of sociology, i.e. the grammatical method of Eugen's doctrine on Speech.

The Yearbook of the Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy Gesellschaft, Stimmstein Heft 5 *Wissenschaft, Aberglaube, Erziehung und die drei Stockwerke einer Universität/ Science, Superstition, Education and The three Soreys of a University* we have dedicated to Rosenstock-Huessy's efforts to renew the university in the years 1938 till 1940. It's only a small part from the papers of the Richard Cabot Lectures.¹⁶ In it you find the application of his teachings on Speech on the great Western institution, called University. His efforts failed and he has pronounced more than once in articles, speeches and radio-talks that his conclusion is: nowadays the university doesn't exist (es gibt heute keine Universität). They still bear the name, but in reality they are only concentrations of higher professional schools.

¹³ Now in: Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Mensch und sein Werk* Gesammelte Schriften 3 Zweistromland Kleinere Schriften zu Glauben und Denken, Hrsg. Reinhold und Annemarie Mayer, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht etc. 1984 S. 139 – 161. Statement on p. 152. In the edition 1926 Zweistromland Kleinere Schriften zu Religion und Philosophie, Berlin, Philo Verlag und Buchhandlung is the last chapter in the fourth and last part called: *Altes und Neues Denken* (Old and New Thinking).

¹⁴ *Mitteilungen der Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy-Gesellschaft* 18. Folge, Mai 1973 S. 8

¹⁵ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Soziologie* Bd. 2 *Die Vollzahl der Zeiten*, Dritter Teil Abschnitt 9 S. 683 - 709 = New edition *Im Kreuz der Wirklichkeit Eine nach-goethische Soziologie* Band 3 *Die Vollzahl der Zeiten*, Talheim Verlag, Mössingen-Talheim 2008/2009 S. 427 – 455.

¹⁶ *Jahrbuch der Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy-Gesellschaft*, Stimmstein 5, Talheim Verlag, Mössingen-Talheim 2000. It's tempting to me, to tell something about the discussion following this speech of mine. A professor Michael Zank from Boston used up almost all the time we had, deriding Eugen's thesis: es gibt heute keine Universität. All without any question on the scope of the Richard Cabot Lectures. I waited and waited... And of course no fundamental thing got any attention. What is in a name? Zank means quarrel or row. Afterwards he whispered in my ear: "no hard feelings?" Very! But wounded I answered lying: not at all! Nowadays we have that hissing voice in our own ranks, where one excommunicates! And in the book out of the conference my contribution is failing!

The method of the teachings of Speech: the Grammatical Method which should include and integrate Scholastic and Academic Ways remains a challenge, because this method is a promise in pointing the way for (1) supranational law: *World Law*¹⁷ says the pupil of Rosenstock-Huessy and famous historian of Law Harold Berman and for (2) the direction of our global economy, and not to forget (3) for real university education in the third millennium, a universal language which bridges the abysses between the professions.

Against the background of these outlines - sketched here so much later - the motto's of the three books of *The Star of Redemption* get a still sharper meaning. *In Philosophos* is accompanying the first book. This is hitting the natural science of modern times, "Was wissen wir denn von der Welt? Von der Welt wissen wir nichts!" (What do we then really know of the world? Of the world we know nothing!) *In Theologos* we find as company to the second book. This hits scholastics. Challenged is here the Roman Catholic Church and its scholastic and neo-scholastic theology in the first place. *In Tyrannos* as partner of the third book is confronting the social sciences. In the work of Franz the 'Sociology' is attacked from the centre of the Jewish and Christian liturgy and calendar.

In this Franz' inspiration also comes from Eugen Rosenstock. But he himself had the feeling that this third book was only a preliminary exercise to what had to be said of faith and law.¹⁸

IV. At the end a few OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE COMPARISON.

This last part will be restricted to a few remarks. For this meeting I read once more next to the article of Franz Rosenzweig (1925) the letter of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy to Rev. Mac. Nair:

*Metanoia: To think Anew.*¹⁹ The letter is an answer to a question of a minister, a friend of Eugen, about his 'conversion'. In the letter Eugen is exposing that the word "conversion" from the tradition of the Church isn't the right word, because "metanoia" means the beginning of a new era and of a new thinking. It's remarkable! For that's the way Franz Rosenzweig was naming his turn to his Jewish roots: Neues Denken. New Beginning, so explains Eugen, is a "decision" which means being cut off, cut off from an earlier order of things.²⁰

¹⁷ Harold J. Berman, *World Law* in: *Fordham International Law Journal*, Vol. 18 Number 5, May 1995 p. 1617 – 1622.

¹⁸ Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Mensch und sein Werk Gesammelte Schriften 1 Briefe und Tagebücher 2. Band 1918 – 1929*, Martinus Nijhoff, Haag 1979, Brief 914 An Isaak Breuer 28.3.24 S. 951

¹⁹ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *I am an impure thinker*, Argo Books Inc., Norwich Vt. 1970. Reprint 2001 p. 182 – 190.

²⁰ This **turnover** became later the title of Rosenstock-Huessy's German version of *The Fruit of Lips or Why four Gospels* (1978) and *Die Frucht der Lippen* in: *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts B.II* S. 797 – 903 (1964): *Die Umwandlung* Die Umwandlung des Wortes Gottes in die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts,

Franz Rosenzweig had that experience in 1913 in the Nightly Conversation in Leipzig. Eugen had that experience in 1918, when Germany had lost the War.

Before Franz Rosenzweig wrote his article, he did read Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy's exposé *Angewandte Seelenkunde* (applied psychology)²¹, but he didn't follow the new method, in any case only very initially. Rosenstock-Huessy himself has only much later developed his method further. Indeed he never stopped in doing so. There are several never published files!

So it is true, that Franz Rosenzweig called his procedure 'grammatical' in his great book, but the book knows of 'grammatical applications' (grammatische Anwendungen) only.

And it's true that Franz Rosenzweig wanted to proceed from the future also. You can find that in the introductions to book II and book III (On the possibility to experience the 'Empire' and On the possibility to bring about the 'Empire' by prayer).

But he makes no use of the sequence of the moods of the verb: imperative – optative/conjunctive – narrative – substantive. It's a quite different sequence when for creation the past, for revelation the dialogue's present and for redemption the choir's future are significant.

In Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy teachings there is less danger that creation and past, revelation and present, redemption and future are associated. In Eugen's writings creation can have the meaning of the present and of the future as well as the past.

Therefore in the first place we should have to talk about the 'perichoresis'²² of creation, revelation and redemption.

In the second place we should compare the Star of Redemption and the Full Count of Times,

Rosenstock-Huessy's universal history. That's a so far reaching enterprise that I will not undertake it here. In any case, as far as I know, no one on the Jewish side has made this attempt.

But when this speech will be printed, I will add an overview of the article "The New Thinking" of Franz Rosenzweig which he published 1925 in the periodical *Der Morgen*.

It shows the structure. I made it in 2003 and translated it now (2014).

Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg 1968. It is here the name of the beginning of the Christian Era. To turn to the Hebrew origin (shub) is to turn to the future for both Franz and Eugen.

²¹ Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Angewandte Seelenkunde: Eine programmatische Übersetzung*, Darmstadt, Röther-Verlag 1914. Also in: *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts* Bd. 1, Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg Bd. 1 S. 748 – 810. The title of the book was taken from Karl Haase's book *Angewandte Seelenkunde*, Gotha 1921. Chapter 5 *Die Grammatik der Seele* (Grammar of the Soul) was echoing 'the letter on speech' to Franz Rosenzweig of 1917. See: *Judaism Despite Christianity*, University Press, Alabama 1969 p. 70

²² The term is from bishop Gregor of Naziance (329/30 – 390/1) and means 'dancing together'.