

From Wonder to ‘Co-Existence’: Rosenzweig’s Concepts of Monologue and Dialogue ¹

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***Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our ‘co-existence’ in a philosophical dialogue, specifically ‘philosophy for children’. Elucidating the difference between a ‘monologue’ and a ‘dialogue’ of Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), revealed why people speak to one another about a single truth. In the German context of the time, Rosenzweig, who as a Jew sought neither assimilation nor Zionism, but a path between the two, thought of truth as a connection of the Jewish community. This truth itself belongs to God, but man can experience it as a gift from God. By overlapping such Rosenzweig’s truth and questions in dialogue, it became clear that people with different backgrounds can be as equals each time they speak in a process of dialogue.*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our ‘co-existence’ in a philosophical dialogue, specifically ‘philosophy for children’ (P4C). That is to say that we shall also be discussing why we talk to one other about one truth by elucidating the difference between a ‘monologue’ and a ‘dialogue’ with respect to Franz Rosenzweig’s (1886–1929) thought.

What is dialogue? Or what is the difference between monologues and dialogues? When talking to someone, is it a dialogue for as long as you understand what the other person is saying? Is it still a dialogue if the speakers’ respective languages are not the same? What about in the case of an interaction between a baby and an adult—a baby’s linguistic prowess is presumably not as advanced as an adult,

¹ This paper is a substantially revised version of a presentation at the conference in August 2022 (International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children: The 20th Biennial International ICPIIC) in English and partially at the conference (Japanese Society for Philosophical Practice) in August 2022 in Japanese.

so with that, are they able to have a dialogue? Furthermore, is a deliberation to solve a problem among a group of citizens considered a dialogue? Is it, too, a dialogue when a Priestess listens to someone's sins or their troubles? What's more, why is it that we choose to talk to others in the first place? We may also wonder what it could be that influences the driving force of a dialogue.

If we pay close attention, we may find that the content of any dialogue would largely depend on its purpose, and it could be even said that we talk to others because we have an underlying agenda or an intended purpose that enables us to pursue a dialogue. If so, then does the significance of dialogues lie in the effects that result from them, such as problem solving, consensus building, and emotional healing?

It is difficult to define dialogue in general, so, allow us to consider 'philosophy for children' as an example for a dialogue. One of the main differences between a dialogue and a chat is whether rules have been set or not, but talking about a single question is also a defining characteristic of dialogue. More concretely, whenever I facilitate a dialogue with my students at our university, we always decide together on a question that will drive the course of our dialogue. That being said, the question decided on would serve as the very prompt that we shall wonder about more profoundly; at the same time, it is the truth that we search for intently, assuming that there is an answer to such question. The participants in the dialogue cooperate in searching for the assumed common truth.

The "community of inquiry" in the process of truth-seeking has been discussed with reference to pragmatism, for example, C. Peirce's "inquiry" and Dewey's "reflective thought".²

It may not be possible to fully grasp the P4C dialogue simply by viewing it as grounded in pragmatism, which determines truth by the usefulness of results. For example, Lipman and Kono use Socrates to argue for breaking down truth (the system of knowledge that is considered correct) and moving toward 'unlearning'.³ In fact, participants may often experience their knowledge and stereotypes being provoked in the dialogue.

In P4C, however, when interlocutors share truth as a question, in other words, in the moment of receiving unknown truth, that truth may not necessarily be pragmatic truth or truth as a system of knowledge. Rather, they may be exploring truth as a

² Cf. M. Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (2nd edition), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

³ Cf. Tetsuya, Kono, *When People Keep Talking, They Are Not Thinking : A Philosophy of Dialogue and Thought*, Iwanami, 2019. (The title is originally Japanese and there is no English title, but considering other Japanese works, this title is translated into English.)

question, viewing truth not as a system of knowledge that people can grasp, but as something that no one can know as knowledge.

In this paper, I would like to discuss the significance and necessity of dialogue by reconsidering P4C from such a truth perspective. Philosophers who discuss dialogue from the perspective of ‘unknown truth’ include E. Levinas,⁴ but this paper will focus on Franz Rosenzweig, who had an influence on the philosopher and described the dialogical thought earlier than Buber, who is known as the philosopher of dialogue.⁵

By focusing on Rosenzweig, who has not been discussed in relation to P4C, it will help to clarify dialogical theory from an ideological perspective, including not only its relationship with theories based on Levinas and Derrida, but also philosophers with different views of truth, such as Heidegger.

Therefore, in this paper, I would like to explore that sharing unknowability can bring us to our ‘co-existence’ in a philosophical dialogue, specifically ‘philosophy for children’ (P4C), by answering the following three questions:

- 1 What is truth?
- 2 Who does the ‘dialogue’ begin with?
- 3 Who determines that assumed common truth is the absolute truth?

1 What is the Truth?

1.1. Truth that can be thought and answered only by Myself

Franz Rosenzweig, a German-Jewish and Hermann Cohen’s successor, used dialogue as a key concept in his work on how to live with Germans while maintaining a Jewish identity, rather than the extremes of totally refusing to assimilate into German culture or totally withdrawing from the Jewish community.⁶

⁴ Cf.) Ann Margaret Sharp and Megan Jane Lavery, “Looking at Others’ Faces” in *In Community of Inquiry with Ann Margaret Sharp: Childhood, Philosophy and Education*, ed. By Maughn Gregory, Megan Jane Lavery, New York: Routledge, 2018.

⁵ Bernhard Casper, *Das dialogische Denken : Franz Rosenzweig, Ferdinand Ebner und Martin Buber*, Verlag Karl Alber, 2002.

⁶ About Rosenzweig’s opposition to Zionism while attempting to catabolize rather than assimilate, see, for example, Pierre Bouretz, *Témoins du future. Philosophie et messianisme*, Éditions Gallimard, 2003, 126–145. See also Rosenzweig’s letter to Hermann Cohen, in

In *the Star of Redemption* and his own writings, Rosenzweig criticizes philosophers up to Hegel as follows:

All philosophy asked about “essence”. It is by this question that it distinguishes itself from the unphilosophical thinking of healthy human understanding. For the latter does not ask about what a thing “really” [*eigentlich*] is.⁷

For example, Thales asked what all is and answered that “All is water”.⁸ Even though this question seems to be asking someone else, it is simply like that of a rhetoric query and just philosophers thinking alone or to themselves.⁹ As Muraoka states, the thinking of these philosophers is monologic. Especially as discussed in detail in *the Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, as Muraoka exemplifies, when we go to a cake shop to buy a cake, we may ask the price of the cake or the type of cake, but we would never ask, “What is essentially (*eigentlich*) a cake?”. If people ask in such a way, the shopkeeper would think he is crazy. But a philosopher, on the other hand, would take the cake in the store as the object (*Gegenstand*) of his consideration, and consider it as an eternal and timeless truth. The philosopher, who is hostile to life and its flow of time, would ask; what is cake “essentially”?¹⁰

The philosopher is searching for truth without regard to the context of the cake, such as someone’s birthday cake or a homemade cake. It is possible to search for truth alone and get the answer by himself, without asking anyone’s opinion, without questioning its merits or demerits.

Here, however, Rosenzweig criticizes the atemporal, detached-from-individual-context truth-seeking and at the same time criticizes the hasty answer. This is because this truth is not lively, in other words, the truth is not in this our world.

which he calls for Jewish education: “Zeit ists. . . : Gedanken über das jüdische Bildungsproblem des Augenblicks an Hermann Cohen”, in Cf. *Zweistromland: Kleinere Schriften zu Glauben und Denken*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd.III. Martinus Nijhoff, 1984 (hereafter: *GS III*), 461–481.

⁷ *GS III*, 143. “The New Thinking”, in *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings*, transl. Paul W. Franks and Micael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000, 109–139, (hereafter *NT*) here, p.115.

⁸ Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, 1921, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd.II. Martinus Nijhoff, 1976 (hereafter: *GS II*), 13, *The Star of Redemption*, transl. Barbara E. Galli, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005(hereafter: *Star*),18.

⁹ Muraoka, *Philosophy of Dialogue. The Hidden Genealogy of German Jewry*, Tokyo: Kodansha, 2008, 92.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 88–91. Rosenzweig’s example is cheese in *das Büchlein vom gesunden und kranken Menschenverstand*, which he wrote in 1921 as a commentary of *the Star of Redemption*.

When we talk about a cake in our daily lives, we can only talk about a cake in relation to ourselves. For example, “My sister ate the cake I prepared for my brother’s birthday before he did”, or “I ate so much cake that I gained three kilograms of weight”. I can only speak of how I perceived the cake, that is, how the cake happened in reality in relation to me. Also to the question of what cake is, it is not necessary to answer, “cake is flour” for example, because he will know what cake is through practical encounters, more specifically, by actually making it, eating it, giving it as a gift or experiencing it in some other way.

If there is a truth called ‘cake’, rather than the so-called eternal and universal truth that “all is water”, that truth is the truth for someone in this real world, and it may be experienced and spoken in a different way than the truth for me. However, while the truth is experienced and spoken individually and concretely, there are not many relative truths that are separate for each person, nor is there some absolute truth that gives rise to the truth. For example, in the case of the cake, each individual can only speak of the truth of the cake in terms of his or her own experience of the cake in front of him or her in the real world. However, without the concept of some kind of pure cake, one that makes it possible to recognize that the Christmas cake, my birthday cake, and the cake I eat for snacks are all different but still ideally the same, I would not be able to tell others that what I am talking about is a cake.

This concept of pure cake is something one level higher than our individual experience of it, something that can be shared with others because it has no individual concrete content. However, even though this concept can be shared with others, it does not mean that I and others are connected by sameness. Rather, it is something that is given to us as a gift to be experienced individually, even though we don’t know exactly what it is.

1.2. Truth as experienced by the individual

The reason why Rosenzweig sees that truth as a gift is because truth is the seal of God, and “for it is only through what one receives as a gift that one can recognize the one who gives it”,¹¹ and this truth was considered as the connection among Jews.

¹¹ *GS II*, 437/*Star*,415. Naomi Tanaka discusses ‘truth as a gift’ as a chance for a dialogue between God and man, but here we treat it as God’s call to Adam. Cf) Naomi Tanaka, “Die Bedeutung von »Erlösung« in sozialer Dimension: Zur Akzeptanz des Rosenzweig-Gedankens in nichtjüdischen Kulturbereiche”, in *Rosenzweig Jahrbuch*12, 2021, 150–152.

Rosenzweig was not trying to secure an own land for the Jewish people like Zionism nor to simply attempt to assimilate into German culture¹² but to reconstruct Jewish singularity with the connection to the only one God at its core. In particular, when the Jewish people retain their identity in the form of a diaspora, rather than strengthening it in the form of a nation-state like Zionism, and when they abandon their own land and language,¹³ only one God becomes important as the bond of their people.

This God as a Jewish connection is not, for example, a Christian connection in which God appears to this world as Jesus, that is, with substance, and in which only those who believe in him can become Christians. Even though it is a Jewish connection, it is open to all mankind. Rosenzweig describes it as a gift not only because it is assumed that there is only one God, but also because it is insubstantial; it is experienced as truth by every human being in different ways.

No one can know what the only God is, but everyone can experience God in the form of truth for each individual. This is a revelation, a manifestation of God in a hidden way. This truth is not an eternal and universal truth that philosophers can grasp even though it transcends this world, but this truth, which is like a trace of that God, is something that each of us can experience within this world. In other words, the truth, that is, a hidden yet present God is omnipresent in our daily lives and it is experienced with reality.¹⁴

Although we cannot gain absolute knowledge, this unknowability become the knowledge that enables us to think with others, if it is shared by all human beings in general. Truth itself is the highest form of otherness in the sense that it is absolutely unknowable, and it is also the concept of God as something that can be shared with others through the telling of each truth experience, that is, as the principle that generates dialogue. If we experience truth, even though we do not know the truth itself, we will wonder what this experience is, and we will want to share this question with someone else and explore what it is. For example, when we have an experience of “something that cannot be explained from life itself and which precisely is that which is the most alive in life”, such as “[g]reat suffering, great joy, great evil and great loving-kindness, the most extreme ugliness and the highest beauty”.¹⁵ It is an

¹² Cf) *GSI-1: Briefe und Tagebücher*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 1–1. Martinus Nijhoff, 1979, 506, Letter an Helene Sommer, 1918. Jan.16.

¹³ Cf) *GS II*, 332–336/Star, 317–321.

¹⁴ Rosenzweig argues, based on the mystical Shekinah, that Jewish people are with such a hidden yet appear God everywhere in the real world.(*GSII*, 455/Star, 409).

¹⁵ *GSIII*, 632. “Science of God”, translated by Barbara E. Galli, in *God, Man, and the World: Lectures and Essays*, Syracuse Univ Press, 1998, 59.

experience as if something has been given to my life as a gift, in other words, something other than ourselves is *with* our lives. “Truth must be the property of someone other than me, that is, ‘you’, and it must be mine at the same time”.¹⁶ When something external to us such as this is given to an individual, we wonder why. When we wonder, we are being called and questioned by others who/which we do not know of, and we are trying to respond to the question by wondering why. It is through this gift of something external to us that each of us can begin the dialogue, i.e. the process of working with others toward God or truth itself.

2 Who does the Dialogue begin with?

2.1. Asked by the Other

Rosenzweig discusses this searching process for truth as a dialogue with God in his main work, *The Star of Redemption*, where Adam is asked, “Where are you?”¹⁷

As is well known, in this scene in Genesis 3:9, Adam attributes the sin of eating the fruit of the tree, which God commanded him not to take and eat, to the woman, who further answers that the serpent did it. What emanates from the mouth of the one who answers God’s question is not “I am” or “I did it”, i.e., the answer is not in the first person I but in the third person he-she-it. Rosenzweig, therefore, sees this state of Adam, who does not admit guilt and shifts the blame, as “still a rebellious and stubborn Self”.¹⁸

“The Self (*das Selbst*) is simply closed in itself”¹⁹ and has no relation to the “children of man” (*Menschenkinder*).²⁰ It relates to only one person, the ‘self’. The ‘self’ is alone, Adam, and the man himself.²¹

God called out to Adam, ‘you’, but there was no first-person response from Adam. Therefore, God called him not with ‘you’, that is, not with the universal human concept that can hide himself behind a woman or a serpent, but now with something inescapable, a proper name. Here, the proper name is not ‘Adam’, but Abraham,

¹⁶ Shinichi Muraoka. *Philosophy of Name*, Tokyo: Kodansha, 2020, 134.

¹⁷ *GS II*, 195/*Star*, 189.

¹⁸ *GS II*, 196/*Star*, 189.

¹⁹ *GS II*, 74/*Star*, 77.

²⁰ *GS II*, 74/*Star*, 77.

²¹ *GS II*, 74/*Star*, 77.

according to Rosenzweig's interpretation. In fact, in Genesis 3, God calls him only with 'you', never once with 'Adam'. Rosenzweig sees the proper name that God called out to Adam, the Hebrew word for man, as being not Adam but 'Abraham', who answered the call in Genesis 22. He was "called by name twice, with the strongest fixity of purpose to which one cannot remain deaf, the man, totally open, totally unfold, totally ready, totally—soul, now answers: 'I am here'".²²

The man called 'you' by God was a 'self' without any relationship with anyone other than himself, but by being called by his proper name, he became a soul that is "the ready, opened soul, the soul that is watchful in the uttermost of silence".²³ The first content to descend from self to soul in Abraham's attitude of "obedient listening"²⁴ is the command, "You shall love the Eternal your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might".²⁵

In response to this command to 'love me', the soul can only confess its love if it confesses "I have sinned" along with its weakness and responds, "I am a sinner". This first confession, "I have sinned", is not a full confession of love, because it remains in the past, and there is room for doubt that there may not be a response from oneself. God has commanded 'love me', but no explanation or any "I love you" has yet been uttered.²⁶ Nevertheless, God does not confess His love. For if God confesses His love before He has finished confessing it, it is already past and no longer present. The authenticity of God's love lies in its connection with this moment, and that love is groundless.²⁷

Therefore, even if God does not say that He loves the soul, and even if no explanation is given for this, the soul must boldly step from the confession of the past

²² *GS II*, 196/*Star*, 190. As Putnam correctly points out, in *Genesis* chapter 3, God calls Adam only once, not twice, and moreover, Adam does not respond, "I am here". Rosenzweig sees the two calls in Genesis 3 and 22:1 as two events in the life of Adam, or man, and speaks of Abraham's "I am here" as Adam's true response. This understanding is made possible by the fact that Adam in Hebrew means man. (H. Putnam, *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life: Rosenzweig, Buber, Levinas, Wittgenstein*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008, 44.) Cf Naomi Tanaka, The dialogical thinking of Franz Rosenzweig: Overlooking his terms "Love" and "Proper Name", in *Journal of the graduate school of humanities and sciences, Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences Ochanomizu University*, vol.18, 2015, 137–146, note25. In this paper, Tanaka discusses the Call to Adam by God relating with naming.

²³ *GS II*, 198/*Star*, 192–193.

²⁴ *GS II*, 196/*Star*, 190.

²⁵ *GS II*, 196/*Star*, 190.

²⁶ *GS II*, 199–201/*Star*, 194–195.

²⁷ *GS II*, 199–201/*Star*, 194–195.

to the confession of the present. This second confession, “I am a sinner”, is the confession of perfect love, and this confession is a complete surrender to the love of the beloved man: God.²⁸ Such total surrender is the belief that one’s confession is acceptable to God, the certainty of God’s love; the certainty that God is present in this moment in relation to oneself, but not as a substance.

2.2. Surrender Myself to the Other

God’s call to Adam, “Where are you?”,²⁹ challenges Adam to make a choice of responding or not. Adam did not respond to God because he “hesitated, not knowing whether its confession would be accepted”,³⁰ that is, he did not know whether his sins would be forgiven and whether he, himself, would be forgiven by God for being a sinner. On the other hand, Abraham—despite the challenges of his situation—responded to God.

This dialogue with God may seem like a dialogue peculiar to the Bible, yet, in reality, this is what dialogue is about in the first place as Rosenzweig posits.

Speaking is time-bound, time-nourished; it neither can nor will abandon this, its nourishing environment; it does not know in advance where it will arrive; it lets its cues be given by others³¹.

More often than not, when I find myself speaking on something, it is probably in response to a particular stimulus; specifically, for example, when another person calls out to me with their words or with their body language. Additionally, this other person is someone whose reactions, general existence, and whole being I cannot fully grasp. This is because even if I respond to the call of another, I have no exact way of knowing everything that there is to know about such a person, including how the other will respond or whether they will respond or not at all. Relating to all of this, in the case of Abraham who responded, it can be noted that he also did not necessarily know why this ‘other person’ called out to him. But if we follow Rosenzweig’s understanding that all dialogue begins with the infamous call to Adam, then either all

²⁸ *GS II*, 200/*Star*, 194.

²⁹ *GS II*, 195/*Star*, 189.

³⁰ *GS II*, 200–201/*Star*, 194–195.

³¹ *GS III*, 151/NT .125–126.

human beings are called by God because they are sinners, or God's calling to people is extended through those that have already been living in this world before them. To enrich this idea, we can look at the calling of newborns by God through the mediation of predecessors who are also called by God. In any case, we arise only when we surrender ourselves to the uncertainty of our interlocutors' responses to the call of the others, which, as we have discussed, cannot be fully grasped in totality.

It is not only at the beginning of a dialogue that I shall make some kind of statement in response to another person's call, with the belief that I will receive a response from the other after. When the dialogue continues, I shall always speak in response to the other's call, then in response to the other's reaction; at the same time, I will continue to speak having the same belief that the other will also continue to respond, even though I still do not know how they will speak next. In this kind of dialogue, each time I respond to the other's call, it shall come from, in a sense, a "one-time" version of myself that cannot re-exist to react again: I would speak differently depending on the other person's reaction.

From the point of view of the calling other, the other also exists only when I respond. In other words, if I do not respond, the other also does not exist. In God's call to "love me", God does not know how I will respond to Him, but He is calling me while believing that I will respond, and only when I respond in some way—in the form of love for my neighbor, *per se*—does it prove God's existence. This is true even when we think of our confessions or professions of love for others. When I tell someone, "I love you! Please go out with me!", I do not know if the other person will say "Yes!" right away. If they refuse, then I cannot be with that person, and, thus, I am alone. Other dialogues could be observed to follow the same pattern, though having different contexts. Without the other, there is no me; the call and the response are a set.

3 Who determines that Assumed Common Truth is the Absolute Truth?

3.1. Sharing the Unknowable

In Rosenzweig's thought, it was God who initiated the dialogue, and God did not appear as a visible entity, but was experienced to each person as truth. People can share this uncertainty for no one knows what/who God is.

This unknowable God (truth itself) is the common question in the case of p4c. The question that can be discussed in one dialogue may be the question of one participant, decided by majority of votes which question we want to discuss. This question is a question that arises from something that each of us wonders about in our daily lives. Children, including adults, are being asked questions based on their daily life. This uncertainty will be the principle that allows us to have a dialogue and coexist with others.

This experience of being asked questions may be created by setting up the environment. This is the case, for example, when questions are set after reading a picture book. Many people read picture books when they are young, and stories such as Cinderella, for example, will have become part of children’s daily lives, partly as a lesson and partly as an aspiration. I read *Cinderella* with my students and we talked about what we wondered about it. As we did so, many things that we took for granted when we were children came up as questions when we thought about them more carefully. For example, “Was Cinderella really beautiful?” “Why did the prince choose Cinderella?” “Why did the witch help Cinderella?” We are actually being asked questions every day by someone or some things, though we do not know who or what they are, but we may be living our daily lives without realizing it and taking it for granted. Perhaps we need time to think about the questions that arise from what we find strange or wonder in our daily lives.

While it is certainly important to set aside time to think about these questions, what is important for dialogue to take place is that there is a truth among us that no one can grasp. And because we do not know what this truth is, we can think together, but no one can conclude it. As Rosenzweig criticized philosophers who say, “all is water”, the problem with them is that I alone have concluded the truth, not as my truth, but as the truth common to all. How can I be the only one to know it is the truth and to decide that it is the truth? Who can determine the answer? It’s the only one God, whom man cannot entirely know. The only truth is the truth for only one God.

There, verification stands only with God Himself, the truth is one only before Him.³²

Therefore, we human beings, who experience truth in many different ways, can and must continue to engage in dialogue because we will never know what the only truth is. Even if we stop in amazement and wonder when we have an experience

³² *GSIII*, 159/NT, 136.

that touches the truth, we must continue to search for it, in the way that each individual experiences God as truth in his or her own way, believing that only one God, though invisible, is in our midst. If, like the philosophers, we encounter this wonder and stop alone to come to a conclusion and ‘own’ the truth, it is only a truth for him, a closed truth that is not shared by others at all, and therefore there would not be a dialogue and it would be a denial of the others.

In effect, the new philosophy does nothing else but make the “method” of healthy human understanding into the method of scientific thinking. Wherein, then, lies the difference between healthy human understanding and sick human understanding which, exactly like the old philosophy, the philosophy of “philosophical astonishment” —astonishment means standstill—sinks its teeth into something that it will not let go before it “has” it in its entirety? [Healthy human understanding] can wait, can keep on living, has no “*idée fixe*”, advice comes when the time comes. This secret is the whole wisdom of the new philosophy. It teaches, to speak with Goethe, the “understanding at the right time” —.³³

3.2. Truth and Others that cannot be Completely Known

The unknowable truth that exists among us is not only the question in p4c. It is also what someone speaks in a dialogue for “[i]n actual conversation, something happens”.³⁴ No one knows not only what others will say in the process of seeking answers to the question, but also how others will respond. They may wonder about another person’s speech. Even so, we interact with others on the assumption that we may learn something. We may think that we can talk with others because we share some common understanding with them, but it is precisely because we share something that we do not understand that dialogue becomes possible. We speak with others not because we recognize each other, but because we believe in their uncertainty.

If this is the case, then dialogue with others is possible even if the content of the dialogue is not a philosophical question. The very fact that a participant engages in a dialogue premised on uncertainty confirms that the other party to the dialogue is

³³ *GSIII*, 149/NT, 123.

³⁴ *GSIII*, 151/NT, 126.

an equivalent being to oneself. This means, even though the individual’s background and experience of truth are not equivalent, in carrying out a dialogue that assumes uncertainty, we confirm each time that we exist in equivalence with the other. In other words, they are equivalent in the sense that they share what they cannot know completely.

Summary

With Rosenzweig’s thought, we have seen that we do not know what the truth itself is or who God is, but because truth is considered as a gift from the only one God, we, humans can share that truth with others. Moreover, this truth itself, which cannot be fully known, is the reason for our dialogue. It is because this truth is not completely known that we wonder about it when we experience it in our daily lives. It is certainly possible to think about this wonder (this truth) by myself and conclude what it is. However, if someone gives an answer, the truth would become a single truth, and it would only be the truth of the person who gave the answer. Thus, while “essential” questions such as those formulated by philosophers may arise also in the P4C and everyday dialogue, it is necessary not to rush to conclusions, but take some time to talk with others about their own experiences and to actually live their lives.

As we have seen, since we can only tell our experience of the truth given by God individually, and since the truth itself belongs to God, this truth itself cannot be determined by anyone. Though, with this fully unknowable truth itself, we can exist with others as equivalent interlocutors. When we are confronted with something that we cannot grasp immediately, we may be in a hurry to solve it, but in the process of our dialogue deepening our wonder, we can be with other equal beings in carrying the dialogue, we come from different back grounds. By continuing through dialogue, the unknowability of the question of dialogue, and the unknowability generated by the experience of being called and also questioned by someone’s speech, we can share this unknowability with others to imply that truth itself (the unknowable) ‘exists’, and at the same time, we can ‘co-exist’ with others in the process of carrying out such a dialogue.

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