

Intro to the Maggid

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Source: Jayce Koester

To think of time as both queer and Jewish, existing in cycles that rise, fall, fold over and under themselves, means acknowledging that there always has been and will be a place for us. The work of seder, the work of reliving time in tangible and real ways means connecting with an inherently queer sense of time. We can see past propaganda that tells us there was no room in the traditions we came from, and that the only hope for us in the future is assimilation. Both lies seek to take something from us, and celebrating pesach in community is direct resistance. Both queer and Jewish time is tactile and embodied, in our blood and skin and bones and external senses. Seder allows us to sit in the warm embrace of our ancestors (Jewish or not), to relearn and unlearn, to be our whole selves at the communal table.

As we reach backwards and forwards, we move throughout time in its entirety and wholeness. We reach all the way back to our ancestors' first breaths, and forward to a world whole, repaired, and healed. Tonight we're both here in St. Paul in 2019, and all the way back with our ancestors by blood or choice as they crossed out of Mitzrayim into the vast desert.

I invite everyone to reach out, and find an ancestor in your line. It doesn't have to be someone you know, or someone's name you have. It doesn't have to be someone you have hard evidence of. It can be an unnamed gender transgressor from the shtetl, or a long long long passed relative who gave birth to a great great great grandparent. Find a presence to carry with you, to hold your hands and rest with you. Take in the magnitude of sitting at a table with your ancestors, and with the ancestors of everyone else here. Invite them into your journey through time with you. Invite them into the turning and the turning, into the retelling of the *maggid*. The weight of generations brought us here to do this powerful work, and we all have a crucial place in it.

Raise the glass of wine and say:

וְהִיא שְׁעָמְדָה לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ

V'hi she-amda l'avoteinu v'lanu.

This promise has sustained our ancestors and us.

The glass of wine is put down.