FAITH AT THE CROSSROADS: A Theological Profile of Religious Zionism

Dov Schwartz

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VOLUME 7

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A Theological Profile of Religious Zionism

BY

DOV SCHWARTZ

TRANSLATED BY

BATYA STEIN

BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN
2002

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Cover design: Robert Nix, Badhoevedorp, The Netherlands

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Schwartz, Dov:
Faith at the crossroads : a theological profile of religious Zionism / by Dov Schwartz. Transl. by Batya Stein. – Leiden ; Boston ;Köln : Brill, 2002
(The Brill reference library of ancient Judaism ; Vol. 7)
ISBN 90–04–12461-6

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is also available

ISSN 1566-1237
ISBN 90 04 12461 6

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

To my wife Gila,

sheli ve-shelakhem—shelah hu

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FOREWORD

I

This book deals with theological, philosophical, and ideological approaches in the works of religious-Zionist writers, attempting to expose the common theological foundations underlying religious-Zionist thought. The hypothesis this work seeks to demonstrate is that, for religious-Zionist thinkers, their affiliation involves unique theological implications. In other words, the practical ideology of religious Zionism develops and crystallizes in the wake of defined theological assumptions. This claim indicates that religious Zionism necessarily includes a re-examination of traditional and accepted theological views (the concept of God, divine providence, historiography, the status of religious law, and so forth). Religious-Zionism tends to undertake the re-examination of basic issues of Jewish faith either from a kabbalistic perspective or from a general, philosophical-cultural perspective, whether deep or superficial. Hence, affiliation with religious-Zionism, in and by itself, implies a theological reconceptualization.

Writings on the history of Jewish philosophy in this century do not devote special attention to religious-Zionism. For instance, Nathan Rotenstreich's *Contemporary Jewish Thought* includes a deep discussion of the thought of Abraham Itzhak Kook, but makes no mention of other religious-Zionist thinkers.[1] In this sense, Eliezer Schweid's *A History of Jewish Thought in the Twentieth Century* constitutes genuine progress. Besides a thorough analysis of the thought of Isaac Reines, Abraham Itzhak Kook, and Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, it also includes a number of specific discussions, tracing a general

[1] Nathan Rotenstreich, *Contemporary Jewish Thought* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1966). Several years after the publication of this book, Rotenstreich collected several articles in a book entitled *Contemporary Studies in Jewish Thought* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1978). This work includes an article by Joseph Dov Soloveitchik (pp. 57-83), and another analyzing the ethical doctrine of Abraham Itzhak Kook. Other articles associated with this topic appear in the bibliography found in Yirmiyahu Yovel and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds., *Between Theory and Practice: Essays in Honor of Nathan Rotenstreich* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984).

outline of religious-Zionist thought.[2] An important work dealing with various aspects of religious-Zionist thought on the eve of the founding of the Mizrahi is *Parallels Meet*, by Ehud Luz. This book is more concerned with ideological questions than with their underlying abstract theological foundations, but it does further our understanding of the ideological background of religious-Zionism. The same applies to Ariey Fishman's book, *Between Religion and Ideology*, which focuses on ideological issues in the thought of the religious kibbutz movement but lacks an independent theological discussion. The present book, then, aims to offer an initial proposal concerning the theological foundations of religious-Zionist thought, beginning with the appearance of the Mizrahi.

II

This book claims that to be a religious-Zionist means to re-examine the traditional theology and aspire to a new type of religious Jew. A religious-Zionist thinker, then, pretends to offer a new and different interpretation of well-known principles. Furthermore, a religious-Zionist thinker feels that he must contend with the most abstract theological questions and with the relationship between God and the world. Religious-Zionist scholars return time after time to incisive questions such as: What is faith? What are Judaism's articles of faith? How should we define divine providence in light of current events? Religious-Zionist thinkers feel they cannot ignore these philosophical issues, as had so far been the practice in the non-Zionist ultra-Orthodox camp, and must confront them with modern tools and terminology,. Even when unsuccessful, namely, even if they failed to present a coherent and consistent theological construct that integrates religion and nationality, the very engagement in this endeavor exposes its theological uniqueness and its attempt to place old contents in a new structure.

The first three chapters of this book are directly concerned with theology. Chapter One discusses the various approaches to the concept of faith in religious-Zionist thought, which developed in the course of the contest with unfolding events. Chapter Two claims that theological discussions in religious-Zionist writings characteristical-

[2] Eliezer Schweid, *A History of Jewish Thought in the Twentieth Century* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1990). See, for instance, pp. 178-179.

ly involve a re-examination of the immanent conception of God. Chapter Three continues this discussion, and deals with the critique of Spinoza's metaphysics contained in these writings, which involves a distinctive immanent dimension. Chapter Four is in fact the conclusion drawn from the three previous ones. This chapter aims to demonstrate the claim that religious-Zionism had strived to create a religious-Zionist theology, and examines the motivations and the causes behind this theological reconceptualization. Chapter Five presents the links between abstract theology and practical ideology in religious-Zionist thought. This chapter presents various aspects of the national-religious idea, which developed in the wake of the theological assumptions considered here. Chapter Six deals with unconventional approaches within religious-Zionist thought, which are critical of the all-encompassing structure erected by religious-Zionist thinkers. Finally, and contrary to the academic framework of the book, the postscript offers my personal impressions, as concluded from the study, concerning the future perspectives of religious-Zionism.

III

The present discussion relies on a sample of several ideological trends within religious-Zionism (the Mizrahi, Hapoel Hamizrahi, the *Torah va-Avodah* movement, messianic circles, and so forth). Special emphasis was placed on philosophical and theological writings, as opposed to pragmatic ideological ones, when such a division indeed exists in the writings of one or another religious-Zionist thinker.[3] Systematic discussions on theological questions emerged mainly in the second generation of the Mizrahi, but their foundations had already been laid in the writings of such thinkers as Isaac Reines, Zeev Jawitz, Moses Samuel Glasner, and others. In order to confine the parameters of this study, I have focused on a defined period, beginning with thinkers who were active at the time the Mizrahi was established as a party in the secular World Zionist Organization in 1902, and up to contemporary thinkers. I do not discuss thinkers usually placed in the category of "harbingers of Zionism" or the "Hibbat Zion" period. Many aspects of their thought

[3] See Itzhak Raphael, *Bibliographic Guide to Religious-Zionist Literature* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem-New York: Moriah, 1960).

are discussed, as noted, in *Parallels Meet*. I have also refrained from discussing thinkers focusing either on the Holocaust period or on the creation of the State of Israel, which represent a category on its own.[4] As noted, the study of this period shows that, despite the variety of approaches within religious-Zionism, a shared theological basis of re-examination and reconceptualization, as well as links between abstract ideological speculation and actual practice, are evident in the various discussions.

My deep thanks to Jacob Neusner, who showed interest in this topic and recommended the publication of the book in Academic Studies in the History of Judaism. Thanks to Eliezer Schweid and Abraham Shapira, who patiently read several versions of the entire manuscript, and made extensive, insightful and useful comments. Moshe Idel and Avi Sagi also kindly agreed to read the manuscript. I conducted long discussions with Aviezer Ravitzky about the subject and about specific issues that, as always, were fruitful and valuable. I also thank the editorial board of *Studies in Zionism* for their agreement to publish an enlarged version of the article dealing with the religious-Zionist critique of Spinoza, and to the editorial board of BDD (Bar-Ilan University) for their permission to publish the discussion on divine immanence, which first appeared in 1996. Finally, thanks to my translator, Batya Stein, who wrestled with a complex text, and prevailed.

[4] On this question see Ella Belfer, "*Malkhut Shamayim" and the State of Israel* [Hebrew], (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1991); Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, translated by Michael Swirsky and Jonathan Chipman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

CHAPTER ONE

FAITH: SOURCES AND PROBLEMS

1. *Scope and Definition*

Seventy-five years after the foundation of the Mizrahi movement, Shlomo Zalman Shragai (1899-1995), a well-known journalist and writer and one of the founders of the Hapoel Hamizrahi movement, published a list of the philosophical foundations—or articles of faith, as it were—of religious-Zionism. One of them reads: "The faith constituent of the Torah is the basis and foundation of Jewish nationalism, which includes Jews and all those who enter into the covenant of Jewish faith and its Torah through lawful conversion."[1] Shragai was a prominent theorist of religious-Zionism. He also used the term "faith" when formulating other articles included in this list, a priori assuming that the theoretical stratum of Jewish sources ("the faith constituent") serves as the ultimate justification of religious-Zionism. But is this indeed the case? Can religious-Zionist thinkers be characterized as sharing a perception whereby "the faith of Judaism" or "the faith of the Torah" actually compels their view? Did all these thinkers agree on the meaning of the concept of "faith," its sources, and its program? Finally, does consensus prevail among religious-Zionists concerning the presence of a compelling philosophical layer in the Torah, beside praxis?

These questions suggest that the term "faith" covers a broad spectrum of meanings, as the study of relevant writings by religious-Zionists will indeed attest. The term "faith" had already assumed several denotations in the medieval thought of the three great religions, among them: awareness of the other's existence; inner certainty [*fiduica* and *fides*]; rational apprehension; understanding of information attained through revelation; grasping non-demonstrative contents, and a comprehensive world view. Furthermore, religious-Zionist thinkers functioned in a modern context, both cultur-

[1] Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "Religious-Zionism and the *Torah va-Avodah* Movement" [Hebrew], in *The Book of Religious-Zionism*, edited by Itzhak Raphael and Shlomo Zalman Shragai (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1977), vol. 1, p. 241.

al and philosophical, which also uses the concept of "faith" in multivalent denotations. Schleiermacher's perception of faith, for instance, is not exactly that of Karl Barth. The Jewish perspective adds a new dimension to the discussion, namely, the central place of Halakha as an ethos or as an institutionalized layer, and its relationship with the theoretical stratum. In this chapter, therefore, we will discuss the meaning of "faith" as a metaphysical, philosophical layer coexisting with Halakha, on the one hand, and as an inner emotional and mental realm, on the other hand. This chapter is thus devoted to the clarification of several dimensions of "faith" in the writings of religious-Zionist thinkers.

A caveat is in place here. Just as the views of religious-Zionist thinkers concerning such concepts as redemption, or the establishment of an autonomous polity, or the centrality of the land of Israel, extend over a wide spectrum, a similar variety prevails concerning their attitudes to metaphysical questions. Let us take, for instance, the issue of the land of Israel and its messianic connotations. Views on this matter could be perfunctorily split into two models, both deeply rooted in medieval thought. One model relies, either directly or indirectly, on the thought of Judah Halevi (c. 1075-1140), for whom the land of Israel, in and of itself, is a unique, chosen entity. This model also tends to understand miraculous redemption in an apocalyptic sense, namely, as unfolding through consistent and wondrous divine intervention. The link between the people and their land is thus perceived as a relationship transcending natural bounds. The chosen land is irrationally transformed into an essential and integral part of the people's being. The other model relies on Maimonides (1138-1204), who represents a countervailing force in Judah Halevi's times. According to this model, the link between a people and their land is measured in political and halakhic categories. This model tends to construe a naturalistic redemption, perfected through a gradual, developmental process. Generally, ideological and metaphysical models emerge in the wake of the legacies left by both Judah Halevi and Maimonides. Some prove averse to rational inquiry into metaphysical and theological issues, and persistently claim that only the practical implications of these ideas may be investigated. They seem to be preserving Halevi's critical view of rational inquiry, as well as his tendency to equate religious perfection with the dimension of practice. This direction is faithfully represented by Isaac Jacob Reines (1839-1915), rabbi and prolific writer, a founder of the

Mizrahi and its leader until World War I. Others fervently endorse an approach supporting the abstract investigation of metaphysical and theological concerns, viewing it as the pinnacle of human faith. Supporters of these views rely on Maimonides' philosophical legacy, resting on concepts from the *Guide of the Perplexed* to shape their notion of faith, undeterred by the entailing anachronism. This direction is authentically represented in the writings of Hayyim Hirschensohn (1857-1935), who encouraged secular studies together with Torah study, wrote extensively, and served for his last thirty years as a rabbi in Hoboken, New Jersey. To some extent, echoes of this approach are also found in the works of Isaiah Bernstein (1902-1988), writer, journalist, educator, and a leading ideologue of Hapoel Hamizrahi.

Beside these two approaches, one negating and one supporting the rational analysis of issues of faith, a third approach emerges, basically as part of the first but also adopting features of the second. This approach places the immediate and intuitive experience of understanding God at the center, but also strives to locate rational inquiry within productive and useful boundaries. This unifying approach emerges in the writings of Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), the great halakhic and spiritual authority and the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi, and even more so in the systematic doctrine of his disciple David Cohen (1887-1972), known as the Nazir, whose academic philosophical training is evident in the breadth and boldness of his intellectual endeavor. These thinkers did not confine themselves to the grounding of faith on a specific emotional state or solely on inner certainty; rather, they tended to extend the concept of faith to many realms, and actually present it as a central element in *all* ways of life. An extreme version of this view appears in the teachings of Jacob Moses Harlap (1883-1951), the most systematic, radical, and cogent of Kook's disciples, prolific thinker and halakhist, who views faith as a national characteristic unique to the Jewish people.

The concern with the question of faith and its boundaries leads to another problem, namely, the balance between faith and praxis in Judaism, an issue that some scholars have not hesitated to tackle: Is there altogether a realm defined as "faith" within Judaism, beyond the halakhic ethos? On this question as well, three main approaches emerge. One, represented by Hayyim Hirschensohn, makes a radical argument for the exclusivity of praxis. According to this

view, Judaism has no bearing whatsoever on purely creedal or ideological decisions, and is exclusively focused on the practical-ritual realm. The second approach is represented by Isaac Nissenbaum (1868-1942). Nissenbaum, one of the original "preachers for Zion" who perished in the Warsaw ghetto, was one of the founders of the Mizrahi but joined the movement only after World War I, believing he could exert greater influence from the outside. He adopted a pragmatic attitude, whereby the ideal structure of Judaism fits the characteristics outlined by Hirschensohn; reality, however— namely, Zionist activism—demands a solid and authoritative framework of faith and ideology. A third, widespread approach, is represented in this discussion by Moshe Avigdor Amiel (1882-1945), a creative and multifaceted thinker as well as a renowned preacher, who served as chief rabbi of Tel-Aviv. This approach claims that, in principle, a distinct structure of faith exists in Judaism, directly affirming the religious-Zionist endeavor. The school of Kook and his disciples on the one hand, and the ideologues of Hapoel Hamizrahi on the other, should obviously be included under this rubric.

True, the doctrines of modern thinkers cannot be fully understood simply by placing them against the backdrop of such figures as Halevi and Maimonides. Religious-Zionist thinkers absorbed cultural and philosophical influences in the course of their education, and they had access to the current literature. They approach faith also in its meaning within the philosophy of religion, as an emotional and intuitive construct. Nevertheless, some of them did not renounce the intellectual implication of religion, while others extolled only the emotional, experiential dimension. In their views, religious-Zionist thinkers represent variations along the ideological spectrum concerning faith.

2. *Faith as Feeling*

Faith is an emotional feature for Reines, a matter of feeling ("the feeling of faith"); he therefore dismisses the rational overtones that rationalist doctrines had imposed on it. Reason is an efficient critical tool that shields us from false beliefs, and even helps to internalize the contents of faith and impress them on the believer's soul; but faith, as such, "is only found where reason fails to grasp and apprehend the matter, and where reason does, there is no room for

faith,"[2] and also—"its effect is great on the heart."[3] Reines suggests a simple division into two kinds of knowledge: scientific, theoretical knowledge, which is deductive, and experimental knowledge, which is inductive. Scientific knowledge formulates a hypothesis, which it later corroborates in reality. In contrast, the starting point in experimental knowledge is the phenomenon, and the theoretical rule is formulated later. According to Reines, faith is acquired only through pure experience rather than through scientific knowledge:

> Whoever understands that faith transcends the boundaries of human wisdom will understand that discussions about faith based on scientific premises are redundant and detrimental, because these matters can only be understood through experience. Genuine divine faith aims to instill in its believers an honest and generous spirit, inspiring them to tie themselves to faith bravely and courageously, through a spiritual bond, until all the different ploys designed to lead them astray end in failure.[4]

Faith, then, is an emotional and cognitive construct, which the believer acquires through inner perfection, as well as through a certitude based on experience. Perfection is attained in three areas: (1) Knowing that God is one. (2) Living a life of asceticism and sanctity. (3) Developing a noble attitude toward the other ("love and fellowship").[5] Elsewhere, Reines suggests four "forms of knowledge," or principles as it were, which represent Abraham's religious and creedal endeavor: "(1) Knowing God; (2) Knowing humanity and

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[2] Isaac Jacob Reines, "Faith and Reason" [Hebrew], in *The Book of Values* (New York: R. Isaac Jacob Reines Publication Society, 1926), p. 20; *idem*, *The Two Lights* [Hebrew], (Pieterkov: S. Belkhatovsky, 1913), vol. 1, ch. 3, 18b-19a (with changes). Judah Halevi's approach, stating that prophecy can grasp what the intellect cannot, resonates in this formulation: the Tetragrammaton, a private and intimate name, is grasped through prophetic understanding, whereas rational cognition is impotent in these circumstances (*The Kuzari* 4:3). Indeed, as I show, Isaiah Aviad (Wolfsberg), whose approach is similar to that of Reines, relies on evidence from *The Kuzari*. Furthermore, Reines's approach is consistent with trends within modern Judaism that expand the concept of faith beyond the realm of cognition. See, for instance, Louis Jacobs, "Faith," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Beliefs*, edited by Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987), pp. 233-238.

[3] Reines, *The Book of Values*, p. 20. Compare with Isaac Jacob Reines, *A New Light on Zion* [Hebrew], (Vilnius: n.p., 1902) p. 54a.

[4] Reines, *The Two Lights*, vol. 1, ch. 3. p. 17b. Reines adopts a definitely nonmodern approach to science. The division between theoretical science and experientialism is typical of antiquity and the Middle Ages.

[5] Reines, *The Book of Values*, p. 21.

humanness (3) Raising physical matters to the level of mental and spiritual matters, because God has shown us the path for dealing with physical matters in pure holiness; (4) Knowing the virtues of compassion and grace."[6] Reines's dogmatic formulation ("Foundations and Roots") attests to the link between these four issues and the development of a Jewish *Weltanschauung*. Clearly, then, faith is not only a rational matter, but is also fully—and mainly—expressed at the level of feeling and ethos.

Reines draws a sharp distinction between the feeling of faith and natural feeling. In his view, faith and natural feeling are not mutually bound, nor can they both be dominant at the same time. Hence, the individual must find the appropriate balance between them. Reines brings two relevant examples from daily life for favoring one over the other; in these examples, philanthropy represents natural feeling, which is counterposed to the feeling of faith. One example points to observant Jews, for whom the centrality of the feeling of faith precludes their concern with "matters of charity and the cultivation of friendship." The second points to secular Jews, who have broken the yoke of the Torah, for whom the feeling of fellowship ("the passion to influence others") is central, and necessarily harmful to faith.[7] The individual is thus engaged in a struggle between two types of feeling: creedal and natural. It is clear that faith, as a dominant feeling, is not natural to human beings.

After asserting that faith is not merely the understanding of cognitive contents but rather an emotional and cognitive quality to be acquired, Reines relates suspiciously to any inquiry into matters that are clearly theological; abstract inquiry into the idea of God disturbs mental perfection. Evidence of the uselessness of such inquiries is that the system of conceptual absolutes is entirely beyond human

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[6] Isaac Jacob Reines, *The Light of the Seven Days* [Hebrew], (Vilnius: Widow and Brothers Rom Press, 1896), Part 4, ch. 4, p. 58a (with elisions).

[7] Reines, "Faith and Feeling," *The Book of Values*, pp. 18-20. This psychological explanation helps Reines understand a problem he had found extremely troublesome, namely, the broad mobilization of secular Jews, from the very beginning and contrary to religious Jews, behind the idea of the return to Zion. On this point, see Eliezer Schweid, "The Beginnings of a Zionist-National Theology: The Philosophy of R. Isaac Jacob Reines" [Hebrew], in *Studies in Jewish Mysticism, Philosophy and Ethical Literature Presented to Isaiah Tishby on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, edited by Joseph Dan and Joseph Hecker (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1986), p. 702; Eliezer Don-Yehiyah, "Ideology and Policy in Religious-Zionism: R. Isaac Jacob Reines's Conception of Zionism and the Policy of the Mizrahi under His Leadership" [Hebrew], *Ha-Zionut*, 8 (1983), pp. 103-146.

perception: the human mind cannot apprehend primordiality, eternity, and other synonymous notions, rendering any realistic and rational discussion of God's attributes useless. "And what you learn from this [misunderstanding of the concept of eternity] is that this issue should not be investigated at all, and anyone delving into it will go astray and sever the path of truth."[8] Reines lists the "principles" [*hathalot*]" of existence, namely, the problem of creation itself, under the category of useless—and even forbidden—inquiries, formulating a general rule as follows: "The principles are not subject to the ruling of reason, nor can they be grasped through human understanding, and only the consequences of these principles enter the realm of human reason. This is what the Creator determined in advance."[9]

Whereas neither God's attributes nor the principles of reality should be investigated at all, the attributes reflecting God's attitude to the physical world in general, and to human history ("the consequences of the principles") in particular, do deserve careful examination. In other words, effective inquiry into divine providence is possible by searching for traces of God in reality,[10] because such an inquiry is supported and corroborated by two powerful elements: actual reality and its rational analysis working in an inductive manner, as in experimental inquiry. Reines again illustrates this principle with a relevant example. The analysis of factual reality demonstrates two rules: (1) "Whatever is more tangible, controls and dominates the tender and the subtle, supports it, and sustains it"; thus, for instance, "the inanimate sustains the vegetable," and, at the human level, the exalted are sustained by those inferior to them, as is true of Issachar and Zevulun, or of Israel and other nations. (2) Attaining a noble aim involves suffering, which is greater the

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[8] Reines, "Faith and Inquiry," *The Book of Values*, p. 18.

[9] Reines, "Nature and Reason," *The Book of Values*, p. 233.

[10] Reines's suggestion to engage in a serious inquiry of the two divine attributes of "mighty" [*gibbor*] and "terrible" [*nora*], because they represent the doctrine of Providence, shows that he considered this research productive. See Reines, *The Light of Seven Days*, Part 2, ch. 9, pp. 20b-21a. He also writes: "Apprehending the Creator, may He be blessed, as far as human beings are able to grasp and understand the Creator, is only possible through the holy Torah, because latent and hidden in it are the greatness and might of the Holy One, blessed be He" (*ibid.*, Part 3, ch. 4, p. 34b; and compare *ibid.*, p. 36b). Hence, if God can be apprehended at all, it is not through rational inquiry but through the Torah. Furthermore, the focus of apprehension is on "might" and "greatness," namely, on God's actions rather than on His essence.

greater the aim. The Jews scattered among the nations to fulfill their purpose, and thereby undertook a heavy burden upon their livelihood. The people of Israel are persecuted and victimized in line with the nobility of their aim—"mending the world in the kingdom of God."[11] A conclusion, which reflects factual reality, follows from these two natural rules:

> These two rules strengthen the faith of Israel, and will brace this ancient people to bear in silence the burden that they assumed in exile, accepting all their afflictions and sufferings lovingly, well knowing that these are only means for achieving the noble and sublime aim set by divine providence.[12]

Reality thus serves to validate the two crucial foundations of faith according to Reines: the election of the Jewish people, and their mission. He emphasizes that this faith, just like others, enlists the facts of reality and their cognitive analysis in its support; ultimately, however, faith is not a cognitive understanding, or even a factual understanding. Faith is an emotional and mental state, to be acquired and internalized after cognitive processes have been completed.

Clearly, then, Reines rejects metaphysical inquiry for its own sake, but approves of "creedal" inquiry into the ways of Providence and into the link between divine and historical developments. Note that Reines includes the possibility of a Jewish return to the land of Israel among the dogmatic contents amenable to inquiry:

> A fundamental basis of faith is to believe in the return of the people of Israel to their land. We cannot construe a unique people that will forever be dispersed and scattered among the nations, without a land of their own. Nationalism, then, is the central foundation of Jewish faith, and even when the Jews are scattered among the nations they are known as a special people because of their hope to return to their land. A special people, with a special faith and a special religion, can only be construed if they have a special land, or a hope to return to their land, because a religion and a faith emanating from the Holy One, blessed be He, will not command a people to suffer everlastingly. On this assumption, then, we conclude that faith in general and faith in redemption will be joined together, since one cannot exist without the other.[13]

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[11] Reines, "Faith, Reason, and Reality," *The Book of Values*, pp. 22-23.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 23. Note that Reines describes the ways of divine providence in clearly materialistic terms, following both the natural and the human orders. For the centrality of the concept of providence in Reines's doctrine see Schweid, "The Beginnings of a Zionist-National Theology," pp. 700 ff..

[13] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 4, ch. 10, p. 31a.

This, then, is the joining link between the abstract, ideological discussion of the concept of faith, and the practical attainments. The return to the land of Israel follows from the ideological construct making up Jewish faith, and is central to the dogma.

Finally, the contents of faith are crucially important in Reines's view. Midrash and Aggadah are thus vital to the shaping of theology in general, as well as to current national decisions. For Reines, "one spirit" pervades Halakha and Aggadah and, consequently, he applies identical methods to the study of both: "I have therefore set myself the task of building all explanations of aggadic and midrashic material on strong foundations, which may also serve as cornerstones in the temples of Halakha, and one spirit permeates all my books, whether of Halakha or Aggadah."[14] Furthermore: together with their extensive halakhic endeavor, the members of the Great Synagogue "inquired into all matters of religion and faith," thereby laying the theological foundation of Judaism.[15]

In his various writings, Reines did establish a broad and intricate theoretical-homiletic basis for the ideology of religious-Zionism, resting on the interpretation of rabbinic legends and midrashim.[16] Under the rubric of "Hebrew literature," Reines included both the "halakhic part," relevant only to elite students of Torah, and the "aggadic part," from which the entire people can profit. On the "knowledge of Hebrew literature," he remarks:

> The hope that the entire people will understand the value of religious literature is realistic only concerning aggadic and midrashic literature (because knowledge of halakhic literature can only be expected from the few). Moreover, this too will only be possible if we can bring them to understand the sublime and uplifting ideas latent in the parables of our great sages and in their wondrous riddles, to grasp the mysteries of the vast and profound wisdom bequeathed by our great rabbis and legislators, who were stirred by the divine heavenly spirit to speak in taunting riddles.[17]

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[14] Reines, *The Light of Seven Days*, Preface, p. xxiii. For a bibliography of Reines' extensive output, see Yosef Shapira, *Philosophy and Halakha in the Approach of Isaac Jacob Reines* [Hebrew], Ph.D. dissertation (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1994), ch. 1.

[15] Reines, *The Light of Seven Days*, Part 2, p. 6a.

[16] Reines wrote an unpublished commentary on *Middrash Rabbah*. On the place of Aggadah and its relationship to Halakha in Reines's doctrine, compare Geulah Bat-Yehudah, *Man of Lights: Rabbi Isaac Jacob Reines* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1985), pp. 67-70.

[17] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Preface, p. viii.

Reines's attitude to Aggadah resembles that of medieval allegorical commentators, for whom Aggadah was an ideological and intellectual construct to be revealed through deep symbolic interpretation. The literal meaning of Aggadah, then, conceals latent ideas, which the commentator knows how to expose. Medieval sages, however, found in rabbinic legends rational and scientific knowledge (in the fields of psychology, physics, metaphysics, etc.) whereas, for Reines, the deeper meaning of aggadic material relates mainly to the justification and corroboration of "peoplehood" [*amamut*], namely, nationalism.[18] The call to establish the Zionist approach on midrashic sources ("Aggadah"), which Reines sees as conveying ideological as well as creedal contents, recurs in the writings of many religious-Zionist thinkers. We will deal below with the appeal of Judah Leib Zlotnick (Avida), calling for a return to Aggadah.[19] Avida was a noted scholar in the area of Jewish folklore as well as a prominent Mizrahi leader. In later years, Judah Leib Maimon (Fishman) (1875-1962), a political figure as well as a compelling writer and intellectual, would unambiguously assert:

> When we seek to apprehend the substance of our nation's link to its historical land, and know the root of its national, Zionist psyche, we have no better, more important, or more appropriate means than to study its aggadot. The soul of the nation and its ties to the land are reflected in them in all their grace and splendor, without frills or embellishments. From the character and style of the aggadot, we will know the character and style of the nation. The entire inner life of our nation is mirrored in its aggadot; its world view, its faith, its hopes, its yearnings, its longings, its joys and delights—all are disclosed and revealed in their full purity, beauty, and innocence.[20]

Thus, the religious-national approach of Reines, Zlotnick, Maimon, and others, relies on the unambiguous acknowledgement of a distinct and compelling creedal layer within Judaism. Hence, Reines's

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[18] Reines ascribes the "calamities" befalling the Jewish people (referring to the persecution and the sufferings afflicting them) to the fact that Gentiles do not "appreciate our talmudic and midrashic literature" (*ibid.*, p. ix). On the concept of "peoplehood," see Dov Shfatiah, "Rav Isaac Jacob Reines In Light of his Book 'A New Light on Zion'" [Hebrew], in Raphael and Shragai, eds., *The Book of Religious-Zionism*, pp. 261-262.

[19] See pp. 142-143 in this volume.

[20] Judah Leib Maimon (Fishman), *Religious Zionism and its Development: Chapters in the History of the People of Israel and the Land of Israel* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1937), ch. 3, p. 19, and compare Jacob Moses Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim* (Jerusalem: Bet Zevul, 1977), Part 2, ch. 18, p. 73.

dogmatic pronouncement concerning Providence may be considered typical: "It is a foundation of faith to believe that everything befalling both a private individual and the nation as a whole is in the care of divine providence."[21]

For Reines, then, inquiring into the links between God and the world, and particularly into the links between God and the people of Israel, was a highly commendable pursuit; sources for this inquiry were to be found in Aggadah and in Midrash. This view contrasts with his assertion concerning the useless and perilous nature of any inquiry into God's attributes and the principles of existence, namely, creation. Reines, then, seems to return to the approach of Judah Halevi, who objects to philosophical, abstract inquiry *per se*, but favors the study of evidence pointing to God's revelation in history. The study of God's link to his world and his people is thus the basis of faith itself, and faith is essentially an emotional phenomenon.

The teachings of the medieval poet and thinker also left their mark on the work of Isaiah Aviad (Wolfsberg) (1893-1957), a leader of German religious-Zionists and a diplomat in Israel's early years of statehood. He suggested a definition similar to that of Reines, in its contrast between faith and rational, demonstrative thought. In his view, "the whole core of faith is that it *does not* require proof, since all is right, and just, and fits."[22] The following passage describes this rule in detail:

> The main issue when defining faith is absolute certitude [*bitahon*], which requires no proof or evidence, neither through apodeictic arguments nor through miracles occurring in the world. The soul of the believer cannot be shaken concerning the basic feeling.[23]

Aviad thus returns to the biblical sense of "faith,"[24] namely, equating it with certitude and reliance on divine providence. The root of this certitude is an inner certainty about the object of faith that, for Aviad, is mainly the intended fate of the Jews as a persecuted people, namely, the theodicy of history.[25] Faith is thus a state of consciousness, beyond rational cognition: "Faith concentrates all the

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[21] Reines, *The Two Lights*, vol. 1, ch. 3, p. 18a.

[22] My emphasis. Isaiah Aviad (Wolfsberg), *Gateways to Philosophical Problems of Our Time* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1948), p. 21.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[24] Compare *ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

powers of emotion."[26] Attempting to demonstrate this meaning of the term "faith" in the sources, Aviad examines its use in *The Kuzari*, as a paradigm of the medieval understanding of the concept. For this purpose, he cites several passages from *The Kuzari*, in which the term "faith" recurs. His discussion, however, is based on a twofold mistake: (1) Aviad used the Ibn Tibbon translation, which renders the original concepts inconsistently (in the original Arabic *imān*, *i'tikād*, and so forth). (2) Research shows that *The Kuzari* is not a "good example of medieval religious philosophy."[27] Rather, the opposite is true. Its unique approach hindered its integration within Jewish philosophy, and the book became a legitimate philosophical source only in the second half of the fourteenth century, over two hundred years after it was written; only then is it cited in philosophical writings, and only then were the initial commentaries on it written in Provence. This mistake, however, points to the meaning of faith adopted by Aviad. *The Kuzari* exposes the need for an additional realm, beside rational thought and prophecy, in order to develop a full religious consciousness, and this need fully accords with Aviad's definition. In his view, faith is a type of certitude and, in its perfect manifestations, entails divine revelation: "The faith of Israel is not merely abstract faith. Clearly, it entails a providential revelation; faith is a divine gift not granted to everyone."[28]

Aviad also uses the parable mentioned in *The Kuzari* 5:16, stating that people with a natural gift for poetry rely on allusions to understand and to teach matters that theoreticians of poetry find hard to formulate.[29] This parable fits the description of faith as an inner emotional certitude. Samuel Alexandrov (1865-1941) also used the same parable (without noting its source), and almost for the very same purpose:

> In a sense, faith is a sublime feeling latent in the person, as the spirit of poetry is in the poet. Hence, just as the true poet is sometimes able to grasp and experience, in regard to the universe, feelings that the scholar will only experience after strenuous learned efforts, and as he may at times also soar with his feelings onto places the philosopher will never reach, so the simple true believer will at times feel subtle

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 32. The discussion of "faith" in the Middle Ages is in pp. 29-32.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 171. On prophecy as a type of contemplation beyond ordinary rational cognitive apprehension, see *The Kuzari* 4:3.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

> and pleasant feelings higher than those of the greatest philosopher. The naïve believer pours out his whole heart to God and feels… the creature comes to resemble its creator. This is faith and this is its power for God.[30]

Alexandrov also locates faith in an emotional domain, contrasting it with the primacy of rational thought. A recurring echo of Judah Halevi's approach can be noted again, favoring the naïve believer over the scholar and philosopher, and the experience of revelation over the intellectual experience.

In the following sections, we trace the eventual fate of this approach, which found fit expression in the writings of Reines, Alexandrov, and Aviad, and in the reflections and musings of religious-Zionist thinkers. Mostly, these thinkers adopted Reines's call to pursue the study of history's religious implications, but did not heed his warning to refrain from the study of abstract faith. Let us consider a typical example. For Isaiah Bernstein, faith means cognitive understanding: "The concern with faith is a science, the crown of wisdom and the pinnacle of all sciences—'the true foundation and cornerstone of knowledge'."[31] This cognitive understanding is also useful for apprehending God, although divine reality can never be fully grasped. Bernstein compares the achievements of knowledge to the significant attainments of mathematics, where the axis of numbers is infinite and every achievement can only apply to a segment of this infinity. Although Bernstein acknowledges the complexity of human knowledge, where "matter and spirit, body and soul, brain and heart, mind and feeling" are all mixed, rational understanding is what leads to a clear grasp of rational and spiritual issues.[32] The

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[30] Samuel Alexandrov, *Letters of Research and Critique* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Lifschitz, 1932), pp. 73-74.

[31] Isaiah Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Moreshet, 1956), p. 22.

[32] This analysis relies mainly on the article "Faith and Understanding," in Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, pp. 11-17. Bernstein retains the experiential dimension in faith, arguing that overstating the authority of rationality may undermine the foundations of religion. Rationality, however, does play a crucial role in the shaping of faith, and drawing a sharp distinction between rationality and faith is a cardinal mistake (see *ibid.*, p. 19). Bernstein clearly states that "the term 'faith' does not apply to whatever is outside human thought, beyond rationality, and most certainly not to that which is anti-rational" (*ibid.*, p. 20); he also refers to faith as "the highest level of our human apprehension (*ibid.*, p. 24). We should further note that Bernstein relies heavily on Maimonides as an inspiration for his philosophy, and Maimonides, as we know, was an ardent supporter of philosophic inquiry as a religious challenge.

discussions in Chapter Two below, dealing with theological questions, illustrate the intellectual effort that was devoted to the abstract study of theological questions, which was approached as a challenging task. When Reines was criticized for focusing on purely political concerns,[33] a further objection was apparently involved, questioning his disregard for the national religious ideal as an all-encompassing concept in the life of religious-Zionists. This critique was not necessarily justified. Reines did call for serious and systematic inquiry into matters concerning divine providence and its links to historical events. He thereby contributed to the ideological stance supporting the perception of the national-religious idea as a new chapter in Jewish thought.

3. *Separating Faith from Religion: Three Approaches*

Reines's extensive and passionate discussions about faith and its problems contributed to a new interest in these topics among religious-Zionist thinkers. Reines's approach to faith, however, was not acceptable to other thinkers on the following points:

1. The presentation of the feeling of faith as different from natural feeling.
2. The need for consequently balancing and compromising between natural feeling on the one hand, and the feeling of faith on the other.
3. The negative attitude to inquiry into abstract philosophical issues, such as the essence of the divine and the "principles" of reality.
4. The presentation of a faith founded on aggadic sources as a discrete, positive area of Judaism.

Approaches opposed either wholly or partly to Reines's view developed in two directions. One is the unique view represented by Hayyim Hirschensohn's doctrine, to which Amiel objected in principle and Nissenbaum opposed on pragmatic grounds. The other is embodied in the views of Abraham Isaac Kook and his disciples, Harlap and the Nazir. I discuss them below in this order.

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[33] On Amiel's critique, see Abraham Rubinstein, *A Movement in a Period of Transition: A Chapter in the History of Mizrahi in Poland* [Hebrew], (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1981), p. 315. For an analysis, see *ibid.*, pp. 132-135.

According to Hirschensohn, a distinction is required between "the revelation of God" and "the apprehension of God." Apprehension is an autonomous human activity that attains results through skill and dedication; revelation, however, is heteronomous, granted to human beings not as a reward for their virtue and toil, but rather according to the needs of the times. Some clarification is needed here: Is God at all apprehensible? Hirschensohn's answer is that "we understand the apprehension of God as a [human] apprehension of the existence of the "necessarily existent" *per se*, even when it is entirely impossible for us to apprehend its essence."[34]

Hirschensohn, then, adopts the medieval perception of God developed in the doctrines of Avicenna and Maimonides, drawing two distinctions: (1) The mode of God's existence differs from that of all other beings. God is "necessarily existent," namely, to assume that God does not exist results in paradox and contradiction. All other beings are "possibly existent," namely, to assume they do not exist does not lead to contradiction, although they are necessary as far as their causes are concerned, since divine existence enables every object to exist by itself.[35] (2) A distinction prevails between essence and existence. In other words, there are abstract essences, and when given the attribute of existence they actually exist. According to the original approach of Avicenna and Maimonides, every being is a composite of essence and existence, except God, whose essence and existence are identical. Hirschensohn argued that it is possible to study God's mode of *existence*. Although we cannot apprehend the divine essence because "this is not in the essence of our senses," we can apprehend the quality of divine existence, and even demonstrate it incontrovertibly. Evidently, then, Hirschensohn expects positive results from the inquiry into a distinctly divine attribute, namely, the quality of divine existence. In fact, the view holding that the apprehension of God is impossible is a "false concept" in Hirschensohn's view.[36] Apprehending God, however, is one consequence of the concern with general philosophy, part of the human understanding of nature and the world. As we will see below, he does not make knowledge of God part of *religious* philosophy.

Let us reiterate the differences between Reines and Hirschensohn

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[34] Hayyim Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Haibri Press, 1932), ch. 15, p. 40.

[35] See below, pp. 105-114

[36] Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, ch. 15, p. 40. See also ch. 17, p. 46.

concerning the value and the status of reason. Hirschensohn devotes a special chapter of *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts* to "The Advantage of Reason over the Senses" (ch. 25). Later, he applies this hierarchy to human perfection:

> Reason and logic represent perfection concerning these sublime matters, and uplift the human soul to attain them. Sensations are also part of man's perfection but also part of his failings, since man is no better than "the beast that goes downwards" [Ecclesiastes 3:21] in the attainment of material trivial matters. Nevertheless, both are a wondrous perfection, resembling the world to come…[37]

Hirschensohn's approach is thus expressly intellectual, viewing the development of reason and inquiry as the utmost human perfection. In this view, the knowledge of the senses represents the bestial side of humanity. In contrast, Reines devotes a passage of *The Book of Values* to the relationship between reason and the senses, arguing in empiricist fashion, "the senses are not liable to err, whereas reason is liable to err and make mistakes."[38] In other words, sensory apprehension is superior to the apprehension of reason. Furthermore, he establishes a rule: "Whatever exists in reality exists in reason because, were it non-existent in reason it would not exist in reality. Not all that exists in reason, however, is necessarily existent in reality, because reason might err and make mistakes."[39]

Furthermore, Hirschensohn agrees with Reines's definition of faith (or "religion" in his formulation) as an emotional feature: "because the concept of religion is not a general but rather a particular concept for each individual, the revelation of the necessarily existent in the person's feelings."[40] This similarity, however, also entails an essential and fundamental difference: for Hirschensohn, faith is a distinctively natural feeling, which cannot possibly be bound within a general, institutionalized framework that compels and coerces the individual. Individuals must personally shape their own creedal structure according to the structure of their own minds. This is true for every religious person, and particularly for Jews. Hence, argues

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[37] *Ibid.*, ch. 36, p. 86.
[38] Reines, *The Book of Values*, p. 197.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[40] Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, ch. 34, p. 81. See also Eliezer Schweid, *Democracy and Halakha: Studies in the Thought of Rabbi Hayyim Hirschensohn* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1978), pp. 155-156.

Hirschensohn, the Torah does not demand belief in articles of faith, nor does it suggest a list of such articles:

> Whoever reads the Torah of Moses, which is founded on justice and righteousness, grace, truth, and national memories, will find no mention of principles and articles of faith. Only the unity of God, and no mention of spiritual hopes to take shelter under God's shadow and sit by the right of the heavenly kingdom, or the like. The reader will thus understand that the Torah did not wish to make these beliefs and hopes part of our legacy, because these are matters for individual feelings and should not be shifted from the private to the public.[41]

Kook's approach, which argues for the existence of a natural faith and a faith unique to the Torah, and for the need to combine them in order to attain perfection, is discussed below. Unlike Kook, the phrase "the faith of the Torah" becomes void in Hirschensohn's terms: the Torah does not command faith in specific dogmas, just as the prophets preach against flawed moral conduct but do not object to flaws in faith, as it were. In Hirschensohn 's treatise, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, theological discussions about God, his attributes, and the immortality of the soul are of a general nature. They challenge philosophical systems, such as Spinoza's, and are not anchored in the sources, which are used, if at all, only for illustration purposes. Nevertheless, discussions related to the Torah, to revelation, and to morality do rely on specific source material.[42]

Hirschensohn thus argues for the separation of Torah and faith, and consistently separates these two realms from philosophy. Hence, he devotes a chapter to contend with the accusation claiming, "they

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[41] Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, ch. 34, p. 81, and ch. 54. As I note below, Hirschensohn's approach is exceptionally extreme. Even Bernard Drachman, ("Exile Within Redemption" [Hebrew], *Hatoren*, 26 March [7 Nissan] 1920), who accepted the principle that Judaism need not acknowledge constraining articles of faith, admits that Judaism has principles about "matters beyond nature." On the link to Moses Mendelssohn, see the end of this section.

[42] For an instance of a deep theological discussion on modal concepts of God, see ch. 2:4 below. Schweid points to inconsistencies in Hirschensohn's discussion, and argues that he accepts a compelling creedal framework (*Democracy and Halakha*, pp. 156-157). As noted, Hirschensohn seems to have remained faithful to a view limiting the Torah solely to a pragmatic framework, with roots in revelation and prophecy. The covenantal God is presented within a context of revelation rather than in a theological discussion about the Deity and its attributes. A somewhat related view is that of Nehemiah Nobel, who argued that individuals cannot be considered heretics because of their religious views. See Pinhas Rosenblueth, "Rav Nehemiah Nobel: His Personality and Thought" [Hebrew], *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 1 (1983), p. 15.

[Jewish philosophers] have no true philosophy inquiring into life, only religious philosophy."[43] How should one define a "religious philosophy" that is not a "true philosophy," and has sometimes been mistakenly ascribed to Jewish philosophers? Relying on Hirschensohn's discussion, two central characteristics of the concept of "religious philosophy" can be proposed:

1. It applies philosophical methods to theological issues, such as creation and revelation.
2. It turns philosophy into a popular, vulgar pursuit.

In contrast, true philosophy inquires into the nature of the world, the existence of God, and the required preparatory sciences. Hirschensohn claims that the crucial sources of Judaism neglected any concern with "religious philosophy." The Bible avoided abstract theological principles and focused on the life sciences, on morality, and on society, as evidenced by the exclusion of all mythological features. The biblical description of creation does not deal with the creation of the angels or the gods as does its mythological parallel, and focuses solely on the creation of the terrestrial world and its components.[44] The medieval philosophers that Hirschensohn considers important were also reluctant to engage in a philosophical concern with theological principles. Hirschensohn interprets Judah Halevi's attack on philosophy as specifically intended against religious philosophy rather than against the study of the natural world as an intrinsic pursuit, or against an ethics devoid of theological elements. Hirschensohn admits that the *Guide of the Perplexed*, a work whose contents and terminology he uses with unabashed admiration, deals with religious philosophy, but careful readers can also find in it many discussions on specifically philosophical topics, including logic, physics, ethics, and so forth. Even on these grounds alone, the *Guide* is a paragon of its kind according to Hirschensohn, who subsequently endeavored to write glosses on it.[45] Furthermore, "true" medieval phi-

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[43] Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, ch. 56, p. 145.

[44] Hirschensohn thereby raises anew the commentary on *Maaseh Bereshith* [the esoteric doctrine of creation] by Abraham Ibn Ezra, who eliminates all metaphysical allusions from the account of the creation. See Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History from Antiquity to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1993), pp. 90-93. Hirschensohn may have been influenced by trends within *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which sought to point out distinctions between biblical faith and mythology.

[45] These remarks appear in Hayyim Hirschensohn, *Five Selections of Religious Philosophy* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Haibri Press, 1932).

losophers disapproved of the popularization of philosophy, as denoted by Maimonides' uncompromising critique of the dialectical arguments adduced by the "speakers" [*Mutakallimun*],"[46] the Muslim theologians who made philosophy a tool in the service of their own theological interests. Hirschensohn holds that Maimonides did not address even his articles of faith to a wider public, and the paraphrase of the thirteen articles of faith in the prayer book, which became highly popular, contradicts the *Guide*'s original intention. Hirschensohn thus concludes that the sages of Israel always knew that true philosophy and religion are separate rather than contiguous areas:

> Religious philosophers wanted to strengthen religion through philosophy, and they were the ones who actually introduced the Jewish people to the study of philosophy… because, after discovering that philosophy is not opposed to the Torah, many became its disciples. The Jewish people learned the wisdom of philosophy from these books, since they contain many philosophical views, even on issues indifferent to religion, as well as many original points, whether clarifying the views of earlier philosophers or stating their own.[47]

Clearly, then, Hirschensohn saw in philosophy an intrinsically valuable intellectual pursuit. The philosophical endeavor, however, has nothing in common with personal religious feeling, and must be divorced from religious practice. The approach demanding the separation of religion from both philosophy and personal religious feeling, however, is not widespread among religious-Zionist thinkers.[48] It seems to have found one loyal follower, with changes of emphasis and formulation, in Yeshayahu Leibowitz, who at some stage drew close to religious-Zionism and was even an activist.[49] Hence also the

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[46] Compare Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 43-58.

[47] Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, p. 152.

[48] Compare, for instance, to the statement by Moshe David Gross, expressing a typical religious-Zionist position: "According to the principles and concepts of Judaism, faith cannot be an abstract intangible concept divorced from action and deeds. Faith is expressed and concretely shaped among us through our Torah and the observance of its commandments." Hence the implication for religious-Zionism: "The same applies to our redemption. Indeed, redemption will be attained as a reward for faith… but, at the same time, we must act and toil according to our faith, for the sake of our redemption and the salvation of our soul." Moshe David Gross, "On the Merits of Faith" [Hebrew], *Ha-Hed* 14, No. 7 (1939), p. 9.

[49] See, for instance, Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, the Jewish People, and the State of Israel* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1976), pp. 14, 18. On Leibowitz and

pragmatic halakhic style so prevalent in Hirschensohn's attitude toward the Zionist project, quite unlike the approaches of Reines, Maimon (Fishman), and others.[50]

Isaac Nissenbaum does not accept the separation between the practical domain of religion and the philosophical, doctrinal domain, but admits that Judaism is drawing closer to such a split. As a basic premise, he acknowledges: "in every doctrine, in every method, in every world view, we find principles and deeds. The deeds follow the principles, and to them they return." Hence, in any religion or ideology, a one-sided emphasis of practice over belief, or of belief over practice, is mistaken. Judaism, however, does not fit the classic model of religion, and is thus tolerant regarding dogma. Deeds have primacy in Judaism, and the philosophical dimension is thus less important:

> Judaism, which is a Torah of life given to people who build "a kingdom on earth," pays more attention to deeds than to beliefs. Judaism sets almost no principles to its believers, although it has fundamental articles, or, more precisely, a main purpose; it does, prescribe, how-

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the religious-Zionist approach, see ch. 6 below. Both Hirschensohn and Leibowitz repeatedly take issue with "religious philosophy" in their writings, to the point or rejecting it outright. It must be noted that critiques of Leibowitz's approach on these points are also valid for Hirschensohn. See, for instance, Yaakov J. Ross, "Anthropocentrism and Theocentrism" [Hebrew], in *The Yeshayahu Leibowitz Volume: An Anthology of His Thought and in His Honor* [Hebrew], edited by Assa Kasher and Yaakov Levinger (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University Students Union, 1982), pp. 63-64. Compare: Avi Sagi (Shweitzer), "The '*Akedah*': A Comparative Study of Kierkegaard and Leibowitz" [Hebrew], *Daat* 23 (1989), p. 130. Bernstein who, as noted, supports the value of rational inquiry and relies on Maimonides, does not agree with Hirschensohn on this point either. For Bernstein "the essential point of all this [namely, the various manifestations of Judaism—'commandments and deeds, beliefs and opinions, virtue and morality, social patterns, etc.'] is faith. And not just faith in general, which is the foundation of all religions… but the faith that made and makes us a unique class in the world and is the foundation of all the values and spiritual and material assets branching off from it, singling us out from all nations and tongues" (Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 95. On the explicit controversy with Leibowitz on this question, see *ibid.*, pp. 215-220). Based on his perception of faith as the foundation of the commandments, Bernstein openly confronts Buber and his circle (*ibid.*, pp. 106-110, 122-123), and clings to Maimonides' articles of faith (*ibid.*, p. 115). Finally, another approach that also points to the absence of a decisive principle in Jewish faith is that of Emmanuel Rackman. See *One Man's Judaism*, (Tel-Aviv: Greenfield, 1970) pp. 273-279. Yet, Rackman reinstated dogma in the shape of norms constituting the foundation of Judaism's legal system (*ibid.*, pp. 4-7).

[50] See Schweid, *Democracy and Halakha*, pp. 19-35; and compare to the discussion in the previous section.

> ever, many deeds to its followers. This characteristic has been preserved throughout its history. Judaism was always lenient concerning freedom of thought, and always strict in its demand for discipline concerning action. Every sage and thinker was allowed to accept or reject, to find ways of declaring ritually fit or unfit, according to his own intellect, but he was not to instruct people to behave contrary to accepted practice (Halakha), since leaders abide by the practical rule "to follow the majority." On this issue, the leaders of Judaism in every generation had one principle higher than all rational principles, a fundamental principle set in the mind and unwritten in any book—the principle of the nation's unity, which depends on a shared set of life practices.[51]

As this passage shows, Nissenbaum does not draw fine distinctions between "dogma" and "ideology," as he does not distinguish too precisely between "dogma" and "purpose" or "mission." He pools together on one side of the scale principles of faith, halakhic arguments, national unity, and, finally, the ideal of "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" (the purpose). Yet, Nissenbaum seems to mix these concepts deliberately, in order to stress that, in Judaism, deeds and commandments enjoy primacy over ideas and faith. In sum, Judaism is not a dogmatic religion, and its ideological layer gives way before the social and ritual ethos. This image of Judaism is valid for "ordinary times, when life follows its usual course, and deeds are then indeed decisive," [52] but when we are at "a crossroads," the philosophical, doctrinal "principle" may sometimes become the dominant consideration. Nissenbaum's examples indicate he uses the notion of "principle" rather freely.

Let us consider one such example. The party opposed to the Uganda scheme at the Zionist congress, "Zionists of Zion," was joined by the supporters of "political Zionism." The latter did not support the "deed," namely, the fostering of Jewish work and settlement in the spirit of practical Zionism, but only the "principle," namely, they supported the land of Israel as the aim. Nissenbaum, one of the fiercest opponents of the Uganda scheme, explained the failure of territorialism on the grounds that various factions had coalesced around the "principle" and had suppressed the "deed."[53] On this

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[51] Isaac Nissenbaum, "Principles and Deeds" [Hebrew], in *Selected Writings* (Tel-Aviv: Levin-Epstein, 1948), pp. 214-215.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 216. See also Israel Shapira, *R. Nissenbaum: His Life and Works* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Religious Department of the Jewish National Fund, 1970), pp. 28-30;

issue, the importance of the land of Israel was the guiding notion for Zionists, rather than the need to contend with a practical problem. It seems that Nissenbaum's interpretation of current events follows from a basic approach, advising compromise to bridge the deep gulf separating secular and observant Jews on the "practical" issue (namely, Halakha), by striving to attain the common Zionist aim ("the principle"). On our issue, he concludes that, in ordinary times, "deeds will bring you closer, and deeds will draw you away."[54]

The general principle laid down by Nissenbaum recurs in another source. Nissenbaum claims that "Judaism," as a concept, encompasses "religion and Torah as well as the nation."[55] He lists three constitutive "principles" of Judaism, which can be inferred from the people's ancestral ethos:

1. "Labor: Manual labor that creates simple physical values."
2. "Morality in an all-encompassing sense, including inner truth, honesty, justice, faith, and all the moral virtues noted by the sages concerning the individual and society."
3. "The honor, unity, and yearnings of the nation."[56]

Clearly, these three elements do not belong to the specifically "religious" element but to the "national" one. In other words, dogma is more relevant to the national than to the religious component of the Jewish legacy. In this sense, Nissenbaum follows Reines, who had already turned the settlement of the Land of Israel into a dogma. Indeed, expanding the meaning of Judaism enables Nissenbaum to reach an ideological conclusion: this is our own understanding of the concept of "Judaism," and we call it "Mizrahism."[57] The cur-

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Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement*, translated by Len J. Schramm (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988), pp. 281-282.

[54] Nissenbaum, "Principles and Deeds," p. 217.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 213-214. In another source, Nissenbaum numbers seven "foundations" or "spiritual pillars": "the unity of God, the love of God, the fear of God, the election of Israel, divine providence, belief in individual and collective reward, and the eternity of the Hebrew nation." See *Ancient Heritage* [*Kinyianei Kedem*] [Hebrew], (Warsaw: Grafia, 1931), vol. 2, p. 140. Rather than an attempt at formulating dogma, however, this seems to be a response to an essentially homiletic need, which is not always the case in the programmatic articles by Nissenbaum considered here.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 215. Nissenbaum's distinctive Zionist-messianic approach was one of the reasons for the radical identification between Judaism and "Mizrahism," given the centrality of the messianic in Judaism. Compare Abraham Rubinstein,

rent religious-national ideal thus requires a renewed perspective on the structure of Jewish religion.

Pragmatic Zionist ideology, then, helps to shape the philosophical model of Jewish religion. The answer to the opening question in Nissenbaum's article, "What is the Mizrahi," is formulated in this spirit. Hence, in principle, Nissenbaum consistently supports the original model of Judaism as a religion of deeds, devoid of the dogmatic layer he considers typical of other religions. In his view, ideological necessities may at times blur the dominance of deeds, but Judaism is mainly a pragmatic religion. And yet, Judaism is remarkable in its flexibility to highlight and emphasize specific elements in light of changes over time. One instance is the stress on nationalism and the Land of Israel as the center, which turns into a dogmatic, metaphysical element. Moses Samuel Glasner (1856-1924) was one of few Hungarian rabbis who supported the founding of the Mizrahi. He adopts a similar approach when stating that the commandment of settling the land is dictated by the very essence of the Torah as "the constitution of the state,"[58] and "whoever does not believe in the future of the Jewish people in their historical land, strips the Torah of meaning."[59]

The model confining the Torah to the practical halakhic domain was vigorously attacked by Moshe Avigdor Amiel. In the preface to his treatise, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, he reviews the controversy about the very existence of faith in Judaism, and divides history into two periods, which he tendentiously names: (1) "From the giving of the Torah until Moses Mendelssohn"; (2) "The Mendelssohn era."[60] During the first of these two periods, no one ever doubted that

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"Messianic Portents and Messianic Pangs in R. Isaac Nissenbaum's Teachings" [Hebrew], *Shragai* 1 (1982), pp. 86-88. Nevertheless, the identification between Judaism and "Mizrahism" points to a new religious consciousness, which developed following the endorsement of nationalism. I expand on this question in ch. 4 below.

[58] Moses Samuel Glasner, "Zionism in the Light of Faith" [Hebrew], in *Torah and Kingdom: The State in Judaism* [Hebrew], edited by Simon Federbusch (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1961), p. 66. Glasner addresses his argument to those claiming that Judaism is only a faith, in the wake of his bitter controversy with the Reform and the Neologists.

[59] *Ibid*., p. 67.

[60] Moshe Avigdor Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1943), p. 2. See also Gershon Greenberg, "Ontic Division and Religious Survival: Wartime Palestinian Orthodoxy and the Holocaust (Hurban)," *Modern Judaism* 14 (1994), p. 30.

Judaism has a rich philosophical content, far beyond a set of behavioral practices. In fact, those casting doubts on the centrality of the articles of faith—and Amiel is obviously referring here to the discussion of Itzhak Abarbanel (1437-1508) in *Rosh Amanah*—had not only never questioned the existence of a content level but, furthermore, had claimed that "there is not a word in the Torah that is not considered an article of faith." They thereby implied that philosophical contents encompass the totality of Judaism and, therefore, distinctions of dogma are out of place. Amiel sees the method of Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) as a bold challenge to the authentic approach that had been so clear in the first period. Mendelssohn had constituted Judaism solely on observance of the commandments, merely a "religion of *nomos*." In sum: Mendelssohn presented Judaism as "a name bare of content; or, more exactly: a name devoid of any content whatsoever, dry bones without any spirit, a cask without wine."[61] Amiel's view is not divorced from topical implications. It links Mendelssohn to secular Zionist ideology:

> Although they would seem to be at odds on the surface, they actually share a negative common denominator. Both have a common foundation: Israel has no Torah. Judaism has no principles, no "credo" of its own, no special world view, no specific method; it is not at the center of our thought and takes up no room even in its periphery…. Judaism has only the four cubits of practical commandments, or the four hundred parasangs by four hundred parasangs of the land of Israel—the cradle of our nationalism.[62]

Amiel thus finds that the "Mendelssohn method" and the "Herzl method" share a common denominator. One saw in religion only a

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[61] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time* p. 2. For an alternative critique of Mendelssohn, see David Neumark, *The Articles of Faith in Israel: A History* [Hebrew], (Odessa: Moriah, 1912), vol. 1, pp. 7-8. Compare Rotenstreich, *Contemporary Jewish Thought*, vol. 1, p. 295; Simon Rawidowicz, *Iyyunim Bemahashevet Yisrael: Hebrew Studies in Jewish Thought* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1971), vol. 2, pp. 95ff. It is worth noting that Aaron Barth also challenged Mendelssohn on this point, claiming that the "articles regarding God's eternity, the creation of the world, the unity of the Creator, Torah from Heaven, and so forth, are reflected in every page of the Bible." See *Our Generation Confronts Eternity and Other Writings* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1975), p. 68. This approach is illustrated in the presentation of Providence as an agreed article of faith based on biblical sources (*ibid*., p. 292). Barth, however, is not as extreme as Amiel. Although claiming that some articles of faith are incontrovertible, he does admit that the faith of Judaism is not a matter for the decision of an authoritarian establishment. Aaron Barth, *The Perennial Quest*, translated by Hayyim Shachter (Jerusalem: WZO, 1984), pp. 21-22.

[62] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 3.

political constitution, and the other strove to establish a polity without any religion; in this context, dismissing "religion" implies, above all, a blunt rejection of the articles of faith.[63] Both the "Mendelssohn method" and the "Herzl method" emptied Judaism of its contents, offering a legal or territorial definition as replacements. Amiel passionately argued against this and claimed, "there is no Judaism without articles of faith."[64] It is probably correct to state that Amiel viewed the philosophical contents as the dominant dimension of Judaism and, on these grounds, he did not find that the term "faith" provided an adequate description of these ideas:

> The Torah is not just faith, it includes more than that: an original world view, which unites the cosmos, an understanding of "He who said, let there be a world," an understanding of God's image—the human being, nature and what is beyond nature, the individual and universal soul, and so forth…. Unfortunately, in our age we have forgotten the foundation and mainstay of Judaism, which had been an axiom at all times and for all segments of the people: Judaism is, above all, a unique outlook on the world.[65]

Amiel, then, dwells extensively on the approach to dogma in Judaism and broadens its scope. In his treatise, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, he takes pains to replace the term "faith" with such terms as "understanding" and "knowledge." Understanding is based on knowledge of the external world through systematic and scientific data processing; in his terms—"analytical understanding." Knowledge is based on a sense of inner certitude in the human soul: "intuitive knowledge."[66] The philosophical realm in Judaism, then, is not lim-

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[63] Amiel, *The Spiritual Problems of Zionism* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Histradrut Hamizrahi, 1937), p. 35.

[64] Amiel, *Ha-Hed* 12, No. 1 (1937), p. 3.

[65] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 4. This approach certainly influenced Amiel's critique of the Mizrahi for its failure to deal with ideology to the required extent. See *Encyclopedia of Religious-Zionism*, edited by Itzhak Raphael, vol. 4, p. 197; Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. 238.

[66] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 7. See also Moshe Avigdor Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami* (Jerusalem: n. p., 1936), vol. 2, pp. 27-28. Amiel then states: "Although God cannot be apprehended through "understanding" [*yediah*], he can be grasped through "knowledge" [*hakarah*] (*For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 9). Incidentally, understanding is defined as "the understanding of nature," and Amiel thereby created a kind of "Jewish view of nature." This is the backdrop to the harmonistic approach between nature and the Torah in his writings, allowing him to write, for instance: "Since both Nature and the Torah are creations of the Holy One, blessed be He, it is inconceivable that they should not be compatible in their design and their content, or that they would not be in spiritual harmony, because one living

ited to an intimate, esoteric, or mystical type of understanding coming to the fore only in the personal relationship between the individual and God. Rather, the opposite is true: this realm involves total understanding, beginning with comprehensive and absolute knowledge of the entire cosmos, through conclusive judgments about all areas of life, morality, and society, and up to an intuitive perception that relies on inner spiritual knowledge. Although Amiel admits that no positive apprehension of God is possible, he states: "the faith attained after all the suffering and pain of knowledge is unlike the naïve faith of the simpleton."[67] The cosmos is indeed a subject for investigation, enabling us to achieve a faith based on true inquiry.

Amiel's view, then, in expanding the concept of faith and granting it such a decisive role, is diametrically opposed to Hirschensohn's. His approach is obviously far more prevalent than those of Hirschensohn and Nissenbaum. The following two examples, from the writings of Shmuel Hayyim Landau (1892-1928), one of the founders of the *Torah va-Avodah* movement and Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel (1880-1953), chief rabbi and distinguished halakhist, illustrate this:

> The basic program of the religious-Zionist idea should not be sought in religion in the sense of the Torah and the commandments that the Jew must perform, but in religion as a perspective on the world, on life, and on the cosmos; in the religious outlook of Judaism, within which and from which religion is constituted, and in the extension of the religious world view to everyday practice, as the living Torah of Judaism. The religious view of Judaism about the world, life, and the cosmos in general is the starting point for the religious and national foundations of the Jewish people.[68]

Uziel's explicit formulations link together, inextricably, the realm of faith and the realm of the commandments in the Torah:

> Although faith is not commanded in the Torah, it is the foundation of all the commandments, because without faith there is no Torah and no commandment, no morality, no love, and no fear of God. The Torah is but a branch of faith and the body to its soul—when the soul departs, the body no longer exists, and when the root dies, the branches are cut off.[69]

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soul beats in both of them" (Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 101). On the correspondence between Torah and nature in Reines's view, see ch. 2:2 below.

[67] Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 191; see also *ibid.*, p. 230.

[68] Shmuel Hayyim Landau, "National-Religious-Zionism" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 3, Nos. 13-15 (1928), p. 183.

[69] Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Ha-Va'ad Le-Hotsa'at Kitve Ha-Rav, 1992-1993), vol. 1, p. 190.

We are back, then, to the unambiguous view stated by Shragai, which opened this chapter. The vast majority of religious-Zionist thinkers developed their ideology on the assumption that philosophical and creedal foundations are the basis of praxis, and that Judaism highlights praxis only in response to ongoing events. Halakha was presented as only one aspect of the construct that is Judaism, a construct that is distinctly theological. Kook and his intellectual circle corroborated this view, and even took it to extremes in their doctrine, which is the subject of the next section.

4. *The Poetry of Life: Faith as Totality*

Let us return to consider the status of faith at the personal level, and to its location in the fluctuation between cognition and feeling. Kook and his disciples, Harlap and the Nazir, suggest an approach very different from that of Reines, and even opposed to it in some of its implications. First, like Hirschensohn, Kook recognizes the existence of a natural faith, stemming from an inborn, inherent natural feeling. He writes as follows on the "idea of the divine":

> Openly or latently, in straight or crooked modes, we will find the disposition of the idea of the divine in all human hearts everywhere, in all parties, families, and nations. It prompts a variety of religions and feelings of faith, orders, and customs that, in turn, lead to many huge and powerful deeds in the lives of nations and of people, in the social order and in the course of politics, secretly and openly weaving and embroidering unfathomable stories in the human spirit and in the essence of life.[70]

In other words: just as there is a natural morality that must be channeled and combined with the morality characteristic of Jewish religion,[71] there is a natural faith, that must be shaped according to

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[70] Abraham Itzhak Kook, *Lights* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1963), p. 102. Compare *ibid.*, p. 104. Kook also points to two dimensions of faith, "a content of nature" and "a content of knowledge," parallel to the kabbalistic *sefirot* of *gevurah* and *hesed*. The natural dimension is inflexible, the source for the distinctiveness and specificity of the various religions. The knowledge dimension is inclusive and "tolerant," as is the ceaselessly flowing *hesed*. Clearly, the natural quality of faith is stressed regarding both particularity, which points to a basic need for a separate religion, and generality, which offers all religions a common ground. See Abraham Itzhak Kook, *The Lights of Faith* [Hebrew], edited by Moshe Gurevitch (Jerusalem: n.p., 1985), p. 49.

[71] Abraham Itzhak Kook, *The Lights of Holiness* [Hebrew], edited by David Cohen (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1963), vol. 3, p. 20.

the faith characteristic of Judaism. Natural faith is presented as a positive notion, all its forms glimmering with an "inner divine spark."[72]

Yet, the most characteristic emphasis in Kook's concept of faith is the expansion of its scope and its application to all realms of life, primarily the psychological one. Kook sees no contradiction between the dominance of the natural feeling of faith and other psychological faculties. He does not discuss the balance between the feeling of faith and natural feeling as a supreme value, as Reines had done. Kook argues that these various feelings will be united at the level of perfection; at the very least, he assumes a perfect union of reason, feeling, will, imagination, and action: "Deeds turn into fantasies, through spiritual elaboration, and fantasies into feelings, feelings into ideas, and ideas into a set spiritual character, affecting the whole essential content."[73] This description of psychological unity in the soul's faculties can be usefully compared to Uziel's definition of the concept of faith:

> Faith is not merely the shining rays of spiritual movements; rather, the idea becomes feeling, the feeling will, and the good will fuses with the divine will, the source of the good. This is how perfect faith evolves.[74]

According to Uziel, intellectual perception ("the idea") becomes feeling, whereas for Kook feeling turns into idea, namely, feeling precedes intellectual perception. Kook acknowledges the existence of distinct, separate psychological faculties, but this distinctiveness

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[72] Kook, *Lights*, p. 131. Compare Kook, *The Lights of Faith*, p. 11. Note that Kook recognizes the potential negative implications of perceiving natural faith in isolation as was the case, in his view, with Christianity. See Benjamin Ish-Shalom, *Rav Avraham Yitzhak Ha-Cohen Kook: Between Rationalism and Mysticism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), pp. 130-131.

[73] Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, vol. 1, p. 249. See also *ibid.*, p. 248. The blend between the psychological and the mental is the subject of the section entitled "The Unity of Feeling, Mind, and Will," in Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, vol. 1.

[74] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 1, p. 192. Uziel, however, is closer to Reines's approach in his definition of faith: "Faith is not something said with one's lips or perceived with one's eyes, but rather felt in one's heart and understood with one's reason" (*ibid.*, p. 191). Uziel even cites, and agrees with, the definition of faith formulated by Karl Joel (1864-1934): "Faith is a sparkling grasp of man's spirit, which uplifts his soul to feel the holiness pervading Heaven, a holiness that cannot be perceived through any sense because thought is wholly incapable of apprehension. God's knowledge is something we consider to be separate from God himself, and we are united with God when we feel His presence in all our limbs" (*ibid.*, p. 192). Joel also exerted considerable influence on the Nazir. Uziel, like Reines, has reservations about philosophical inquiry *per se*. See *ibid.*, pp. 197 ff..

is also a characteristic of philosophies that are far removed from, and even oblivious to religion. According to Kook, religious perfection obliterates distinctions between psychological faculties, leading to psychological unity:

> In terms of secular apprehension, the intellect functions as an autonomous force that develops ideas, the imagination functions autonomously in aesthetic matters, pragmatic action functions autonomously in practical matters, and feeling functions autonomously in matters of feeling. In terms of sacred apprehension, however, from the revealed content of prophecy and the Holy Spirit, every revelation is a function of all forces. Life, feeling and action, imagination and reason, all are joined together in one unity.[75]

Kook, then, detects no psychological distinctions in a state of religious perfection. Rather than balance, regulation, or the setting of defined boundaries for psychological qualities and feelings, one faces now perfect unity, different facets of the same essence. What is true of the soul's various psychological faculties is also true of faith, which for Kook includes both the pinnacle of will and the pinnacle of intellect. The psychological dimension cannot be divorced from faith, nor should this be done regarding the social or national dimensions. In sum, faith is not an isolated, independent realm:

> Divine faith reveals the scale and daring of human will and cognition, when fully realized, and understanding this requires perfect knowledge of one's entire being, as far as this is possible. It is an eternal law that knowledge of God is within reach through knowledge of God's deeds, and faith encompasses all forms of knowledge, making a whole out of all the details, thereby granting everlasting life to all those rewarded by its light. Through its innermost strength, [faith] animates social and individual life, as it animates all the worlds, from beginning to end, since all of them together are the noble man, the superior virtuous man, of whom it has rightly been said, "the just shall live by his faith."[76]

The end of the passage hints to several kabbalistic concepts, such as "the noble man" [*adam de-atsilut*] and the *sefirah* of *yesod*, which represents the virtuous man.[77] These concepts, however, seem to be intended to convey the notion of a microcosm, namely, of the human being as a mirror of the world and a reflection of the entire

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[75] Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, vol. 1, p. 263.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 107; Kook, *The Lights of Faith*, p. 42 (with changes).

[77] Compare Gershom Scholem, *Elements of the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* [Hebrew], translated from the German by Yosef Ben Shelomo (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1976), pp. 213-258.

cosmos. One implication of the ancient Pythagorean idea is the unity of the universe, which is proportional to the unity of the human model. Hence, perfect faith reflects the unified, harmonious dimension of the entire creation, and first and foremost the psychological unity of each single individual.

According to Kook, then, no bounds should be set to faith, which covers all the believer's psychological faculties, as well as the entire world. "Faith in its natural state is deeper than abysses, embracing all creatures and all deeds."[78] It could further be argued that Kook's view of faith stems from a doctrine of all-encompassing unity in which individuality, separation, and contradiction appear so due to partial and imperfect knowledge, a kind of epistemological illusion. When knowledge is complete and perfect, only the general rule appears. The general rule is the solid foundation underlying specificity and contradiction.[79] To limit faith to human epistemological or intellectual capabilities would thus mean to rely on lacking or faulty evidence. In a mature, sober approach, faith is an expression of human fullness and totality. Indeed, only someone expanding the scope of faith to include the entire universe could write such lines as: "Faith as a totality is the poetry of life, the poetry of reality, the poetry of being, and poetry is the feeling that most deeply penetrates the innermost recesses of the concept's essence, its inner content, what could never be grasped through prose."[80] In his wake, Alter Jacob Shahrai (1875-1938) will write: "The fountains of poetry have welled up, Heaven's windows have been opened, gushing and flooding, a new and an old song now join into one song of majesty and splendor. This is the power of the believer's faith."[81]

This view of Kook is exhaustively discussed by Harlap, who

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[78] Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, vol. 3, p. 108.

[79] On the general vision of unity and the unity of opposites in Kook's doctrine see Zvi Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, translated by Avner Tomaschoff (Jerusalem: WZO, 1991), pp. 48, 83-87; Nahum Arieli, "Integration in the Philosophy of Rav Kook" [Hebrew], in *The World of Rav Kook's Thought* edited by Benjamin-Ish-Shalom and Shalom Rosenberg and translated by Shalom Carmy and Bernard Casper (New York: Avi Chai, 1991), pp. 161-164; Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, pp. 208-211, and the index. Compare pp. 6a-7a below.

[80] Kook, *The Lights of Faith*, p. 40; compare *ibid.*, p. 88. See also Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, "Utopia and Messianism in Rav Kook's Doctrine" [Hebrew], *Kivunnim* 1 (1979), p. 24.

[81] Alter Jacob Shahrai, "Israel in the Philosophy of Rav Kook," *Netivah* 7, No. 2 (1932), p. 64.

emphasizes the expansion of the concept of faith to all realms of life, placing nationality at the center. Harlap relates to this issue in his glosses to the second of Maimonides' *Eight Chapters*. In this chapter, Maimonides discusses the nature of the psychological faculties that constitute the basis for the commandments of the Torah, and finally asks whether the human intellect can be commanded. As we know, Maimonides rules it can, claiming that human beings can be commanded to attain true knowledge. Harlap then proceeds to discuss the nature of faith as true knowledge. In his discussion, he opposes the approach that locates faith as a distinct psychological faculty ("sense").[82] Faith encompasses the whole of human existence, beginning with the innermost recesses of the personality and up to the individual's social relationships:

> Because faith is life itself, "the just shall live by his faith" (Habakuk 2:4), and every step in life depends on faith, since the world could not prevail even in the secular sense without faith—no man would trust another and there would be no room for commerce or for social life.[83]

Through this approach, Harlap moves into a new realm, by drawing a distinction between the faith of other nations and the faith of the Jewish people. Concerning the faith of Gentiles, he states rather harshly: "At best they can be rescued from falsehood; hence, their faith is entirely negative."[84] In other words, Gentile faith is fundamentally lacking in any positive content and, at most, can refrain from negative heretic opinions. Worse still, this empty faith seeks to impose itself upon Israel. Harlap appears to be expounding here on

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[82] Harlap follows Kook's approach, generally assuming psychological unity. For instance: "In truth, thought and will are one, and one cannot be without the other," *Mei Merom: On the Prayer book* (Jerusalem: Bet Zevul, 979), p. 105. Note that Harlap quotes from the prevalent Hebrew translation of Maimonides, stating that the mind is commanded to attain "true rational *faith*." Other modern translations and commentators, such as Kafih and Shailat, have also followed this rendering. In contrast, Maimonides used the term *i'tikād* (Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah: Nezikin*, Kafih edition [Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1975] p. 377; Maimonides, *Introduction to the Mishnah*, Shailat edition [Jerusalem: Ma`aliot, 1992], p. 378), and his original intention is "attaining true knowledge," namely, what should a person learn in order to acquire true knowledge. Careless and imprecise readings, both medieval and modern, have placed Maimonides' discussion within the context of faith.

[83] Jacob Moses Harlap, *Mei Merom: On Maimonides' Eight Chapters* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Bet Zevul, 1982), I, ch. 2, 2 , p. 78.

[84] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, ch. 26, p. 101. On Harlap's extreme view of Gentile nations, see also ch. 2:4 and ch. 4:2 below.

the folktale about Esau's emissary struggling with Jacob: "One [sage] said it appeared to him as a heathen and the other said it appeared to him as a scholar" (Hulin 91a). In Harlap's view, both sages intended the same: "Because Esau's emissary says he will teach Jacob a pure faith and will become his teacher, but in truth he is only an idolater whose faith is only heresy and blasphemy."[85] As opposed to Gentile faith, Jewish faith brings the divine into the world:

> Jewish faith is positive. In the contents of this true faith, they expose and bring His light in all the worlds, may His name be blessed, to reveal the constantly evolving name of God, which is the mystery of the link between the Creator and creation.[86]

Jewish faith is thus not only a psychological, mental, or sociological characteristic of the individual and of society. Faith becomes the mission of the people: "Thereby, they [Israel] preserve faith, preventing its distortion in this world so that no one will be led astray."[87] At the same time that he presents Gentile faith as demonic, Harlap characterizes Israel by its unique faith. The sharp contrast with Hirschensohn's approach is prominent here. Hirschensohn had presented faith as a completely personal matter, entirely separate from religious influence, whereas Harlap stretches Kook's approach to its limits, making faith all-encompassing and claiming that faith is what singles out Jews as a nation from the rest of the universe.

The Nazir's approach draws inspiration from Kook's doctrine, but is still strikingly different in content and emphasis. Before analyzing the Nazir's views on these issues, several aspects of his doctrine deserve consideration. Both in his way of life and in his theory, the Nazir had one aim in mind: to understand, and even to experience prophecy. The type of prophecy that the Nazir had envisaged is hard to ascertain; what is unquestionable, however, is that the logical cognitive realm is for him a precondition for attaining prophecy.

The Nazir argued that, despite the essential difference between various creative realms in Judaism (Halakha, philosophy, Kabbalah, ethics, and so forth), all share a common denominator in the formal element, namely, the logic of analogy (comparison, induction, and so forth), which is not part of deductive-syllogistic logic.

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[85] Jacob Moses Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Bet Zevul, 1977), ch. 64, p. 215.

[86] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, ch. 26, p. 101.

[87] *Ibid.*, ch. 8, p. 16.

Analogical logic does not confirm a given proposition; rather, it discovers the new. Both in the printed version and in the unpublished sections of his treatise *The Voice of Prophecy*, the Nazir tirelessly and consistently exposes the analogical foundation of the various realms of Jewish creativity. He formulates this approach in metaphors of sight and hearing. Jewish creativity is not satisfied with the given proposition (what is seen): it strives to disclose inwardness ("to hear" the hidden) by comparing it to the given. The analogical method is thus "auditory," disclosing principles by studying the hermeneutical rules of the Torah, which are based on analogy. The Nazir articulates this approach on many occasions, as in the following passage:

> The Hebrew never sees an object as the final, absolute substance; rather, what is revealed appears to him as a bridge to what is beyond it, what is alluded in it, what it resembles. This includes the quality of parable, which is unique to Hebrew auditory logic.[88]

The Nazir had argued that God cannot be apprehended through demonstrative, rational tools, since God is abstract and has no common ground with anything known to humanity. By analogy from the known and the revealed, however, we can come to know God. The Nazir viewed the rebirth of the State of Israel in our times as a sign of events that, once their inner meaning is understood, will lead to knowledge of God: "In our generation, the generation of the beginning of redemption, God, the Rock and Redeemer of Israel, is revealed in His names and attributes, and we hear [divine revelation] as speech… we can hear it in the spirit of the auditory, prophetic Hebrew logic."[89]

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[88] David Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1970), p. 48.

[89] *Ibid.*, p 132. An unequivocal link between the doctrine of divine attributes and the interpretation of current events emerges from this passage, creating a distinctive theological disposition for the national messianic approach. An approach resembling the "auditory logic" of the Nazir is also evident in the writings of Abraham Itzhak Yekutieli (1874-1944), who holds that the advantage of the Jewish people rests on intuitive rather on deductive reasoning and understanding. Intuition, according to Yekutieli, blends together "reason and feeling." This unity is expressed in all areas: "That is why the people of Israel imparted to the world the knowledge of God's unity that, as noted, is derived from intuition; they imparted prophecy, which is the highest level of intuition, and absolute morality, or morality for its own sake—'Be not like those servants who serve the master in the expectation of receiving a gift…' (Avot 1:3) which also stems mainly from intuition. Judaism, then, is neither philosophy nor mysticism but intuition" (Abraham Itzhak Yekutieli,

The concept of faith endorsed by the Nazir thus rests mainly on cognitive contents, involving the study of the revealed world as the basis for an analogy with the concealed, as well as on the features of analogical logic. Yet, he too embraces the unity of realms as the desirable state and, as usual for him, articulates this approach in systematic terms. The unifying approach is compelled by the com-

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"*Torah va-Avodah* as a World View" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 2, Nos. 9-10 [1927], pp. 165-166; on the psychological unity of spiritual faculties as the basis of faith, see also *idem*, "The Essence of Judaism" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 3, No. 10 [1928], pp. 260-261). Yekutieli exhaustively explores the advantages of intuition. Each nation has its own specific thought, typical of that nation alone. Not so Judaism: "But this is not so regarding the intuitive way, which obviously cannot be typical of one sole world view. Hence, any world view that is not intuitive is thus also not national because, ultimately, intuition is basically human; hence, any world view that is not based on an intuitive knowledge of God is, in this sense, not human either" (*ibid.*, p. 167). Yekutieli relies on Spinoza to point out the advantage of intuitive over deductive cognition. The Nazir too claims that deductive cognition is inferior, and views analogical cognition (which is somewhat close to intuition) as the union of various psychological faculties, including feeling and reason, prophecy and morality, as we will see below.

Furthermore, note that one characteristic way of re-examining traditional structures that was adopted by religious-Zionist thinkers involves an attempt to find traces of a typically talmudic logic, namely, to frame talmudic thought within a set of logical rules. Serious intellectual efforts have been devoted to this goal, as evinced by several comprehensive treatises. On Reines, Amiel and Hirschensohn, see Schweid, "The Beginnings of a Zionist-National Theology," pp. 716-718; Shiloh Raphael, "His Halakhic Method" [Hebrew], in Bat-Yehudah, *The Man of Lights*, pp. 356-363; Schweid, *Democracy and Halakha*, p. 121. We should add to this list Moshe Ostrovsky-Hameiri (1886-1947), who wrote *The Principles By Which the Torah Is Expounded* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Silman, 1924); and the Nazir, who devoted his life to this cause. See Dov Schwartz, "The Unique Logic of Jewish Literature According to the Nazir (Rabbi David Cohen)" [Hebrew], *Daat* 27 (1991), pp. 87-109; *idem*, "'The Hebrew Auditory Logic' According to the Nazir" [Hebrew], in: *Higayion: Studies in Rabbinic Logic*, edited by Moshe Koppel and Ely Merzbach (Alon Shevut: Machon Tsomet, 1995), pp. 28-29; Simon Federbusch devoted chapters of his book *On the Paths of the Talmud* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1957) to talmudic logic. Finally, Eliezer Berkowitz, *Logic in Halakha* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1986), deserves note. The Orthodox world could not ignore the attempt to organize talmudic thought within a systematic framework, as manifest both in the achievements of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and in the rise of religious-Zionist scholars and researchers. Simeon Shkop (1860-1941) is an example of the Orthodox response (see Avi Sagi, "Religious Command v. Legal System: A Chapter in the Thought of R. Shim'on Shkop" [Hebrew], *Daat* 35 [1995], pp. 99-114). Orthodox attention to this issue, however, remained limited. The world of the *yeshivot* had some reservations about it, and this was certainly not a general phenomenon. The links between national awakening and the study of halakhic and talmudic logic and methodology still awaits in-depth research, and could be seen as an integral part of the attempt to develop a renewed conception of the *yeshivot* and their study patterns. See also Luz, *Parallels Meet*, pp. 248-250.

mon ground that, in Judaism, is assumed to underlie law (Halakha), rationality (philosophy), mysticism (Kabbalah), psychology, and ethics. The Nazir presents three basic realms that, in a mature perception, are perceived as united: (1) Halakha and Aggadah; (2) Theory and practice; (3) Ethics and logic. Below are several quotations from these statements:

> Hebrew wisdom is unique in its structure, both as Torah and as parable; it is stated as a commandment, as a directive to perform, as a brief saying, as a parable, in the Torah, in Solomon's Proverbs, and in Ecclesiastes.[90]
>
> The general philosophy of the new Jewish philosopher Hermann Cohen also claims that movement, creation, including the basic principle of truth that is part of the union between the ethical and logical realms, also originates in the Torah of Israel.
>
> The union of Halakha and Aggadah bears the imprint of Hebrew wisdom, as well as the union of logic and ethics, theory and practice.[91]

The union of ethics and logic is presented as a mixture that "originates in the Torah of Israel." Since the Nazir formulates the issue as "the union of logic and ethics" without going into detail, we may assume that, due to his academic training and in line with his writings, the ethics to which he refers includes classical ethics, and the logic likewise includes Aristotelian, formal-classical logic. But classical logic and classical ethics are perceived as having opposite concerns, since formal logic is not interested in the content of descriptive statements. "Virtue is triangular" is formally expressed as "A is B," or simply as "attribute B applies to A (Ba)." In contrast, ethics is mainly concerned with the contents underlying action, or with the intention of the doer. Hence, the same act may be performed by two people, the one for utilitarian motives, and the other for intrinsic motives rather than because of personal inclinations. The former can thus be said to have performed a "'good' act, and the latter—a 'bad' one." Hence, the union of logics and ethics, at least concerning the classics, entails a contradiction. All-inclusive union is thus crucial to the Nazir's philosophical method, because the analogical method strives to discover, through comparison, the inward dimensions of the revealed. How will knowledge of these inward dimensions lead to knowledge of God? At this point, one must resort to

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[90] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 15.
[91] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

the panentheism posited by the Nazir, claiming that God is immanent in being.[92] Consequently, analogical discovery will lead to knowledge of God.

It therefore follows that faith cannot be confined to a special realm either, but is rather one feature of psychological, ontological unity. The Nazir chooses to couch this approach in Kook's words, in a chapter entitled: "Inclusive Unity and Universal Vitality in Holy Wisdom":

> Into knowledge and faith, into reason and feeling, flow the mighty rivers of life, of an emanating reality that streams in both its courses, whether downwards or upwards, toward the sublime experience of the treasure of life [*otsar ha-hayyim*], upper flows surging above and nether flows below, and all is alive and fresh, all glad and joyful.[93]

The Nazir's philosophy, then, seems to continue that of Kook. Kook had also acknowledged the unity of the various elements, and faith, at least perfect faith, is therefore not limited to a specific psychological faculty. In their methods, however, the Nazir and Kook are essentially different. For the Nazir, perfect faith is attained in a distinctively logical and cognitive way: deep knowledge of the visible event or object is a necessary condition for the discovery of its inner features. We learn, however, that this is a necessary though not a sufficient condition, since appropriate experiential preparations are required, as the Nazir stated in his mystical journal.[94] In sum, faith according to the Nazir assumes an intellectual and cognitive content as a separate, distinct precondition; in its perfection, faith is perceived in light of the all-inclusive doctrine of unity, which combines faith with other individual, social, and universal features. The beginning of this outlook can be traced back to the Nazir's personal world; at its culmination, this outlook leads us to the spiritual and ideological world of both Kook and Harlap. The three, therefore, constituted a united mystical circle.

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[92] See pp. 62-72 below.

[93] Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, vol. 2, p. 332; Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 128.

[94] See Dov Schwartz, "The Personality and Characteristics of a Contemporary Jewish Mystic" [Hebrew], *Tarbiz* 61 (1991), pp. 127-158.

5. *Faith as an Existential Feature*

After taking the all-inclusive expansion of the concept of faith in the doctrine of Kook and his circle to an extreme point beyond which is nothingness, a dramatic retreat was inevitable. The doctrine of Joseph Dov Soloveitchik (1903-1992), halakhist and philosopher, head of the Itzhak Elhanan *yeshiva*, rabbi of Boston and the Mizrahi's honorary president, is a bold expression of this retreat. Soloveitchik provided a broad platform for a discussion on the nature of faith in *The Lonely Man of Faith*. Following a rather typical pattern, Soloveitchik begins this work by drastically restricting the notion of faith, demolishing traditional perceptions regarding the scope of the concept. Soloveitchik opens in a personal note, directly presenting himself as a typological model of "the man of faith."[95] From here onward, he suggests the realm of the problems concerning him *qua* man of faith, exposing the negative rather than the positive:

> I have never been seriously troubled by the problem of the Biblical doctrine of creation vis-à-vis the scientific story of evolution at both the cosmic and the organic levels, nor have I been perturbed by the confrontation of the mechanistic interpretation of the human mind with the Biblical spiritual concept of man. I have not been perplexed by the impossibility of fitting the mystery of revelation into the framework of historical empiricism. Moreover, I have not even been troubled by the theories of Biblical criticism which contradict the very foundations upon which the sanctity and integrity of the Scriptures rest.[96]

A cursory glance at the examples in this passage points to the contrast between Soloveitchik and such thinkers as Reines, Shem-Tov Gefen, Alexandrov, Hirschensohn, and Kook regarding the contents of faith, since all had regarded the scientific theory of evolution, for instance, as a matter of the highest concern.[97] Furthermore, all the thinkers so far reviewed had perceived the contents of faith as homogenous. Whatever had troubled Maimonides, for instance, also concerned them, beginning with the most conservative and up to Hirschensohn's innovative ideas. Soloveitchik, however, draws an unprecedented distinction between different meanings of faith at

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[95] See Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith* (Northvale, N. J., Jason Aronson, 1997), p. 7.

[96] *Ibid*..

[97] For a more detailed exposition of the attitudes toward evolution in religious-Zionist thought, see pp. 217-218 below.

various times. He is well aware of the concern that biblical criticism had evoked in the nineteenth century among a considerable number of Jewish thinkers. Nevertheless, he holds that the faith of the modern individual is not at all troubled by this question, just as the implications of Darwinian evolutionary theory are not a serious concern. Soloveitchik, then, removes the modern concept of "faith" from its traditional contexts and problems: "The cultural message of faith changes, indeed, constantly, with the flow of time, the shifting of the spiritual climate."[98] If we wish to understand the meaning of faith in our generation, we must search for its meaning within the philosophical system that Soloveitchik constructs in this work.

In *The Lonely Man of Faith*, Soloveitchik speaks of two types of people: Adam the first, "majestic man," and Adam the second, the "man of faith." It would seem, then, that an analysis of the various characteristics of "the man of faith" would reveal the concern of faith as such, and even its contents. "Majestic man" strives to control reality and its forces in his benefit ("and subdue it" [Genesis 1:28]). For this purpose, he creates an array of ideal structures—mathematical and physical—that imitate reality, through which he indeed subdues it according to his needs. In contrast, "the man of faith" "explores not the scientific abstract universe but the irresistibly fascinating qualitative world where he establishes an intimate relation with God."[99] Soloveitchik's version of faith is thus closely linked to an understanding of the foundations of concrete existence—removed from ideal existence—and characterizes life as an "existential experience."

Soloveitchik does not clarify the meaning of the concept of "faith"; rather, he uses it as a given. In light of the analysis so far, we may assume that faith reflects an element or a factor oriented to a concrete existence of a particular type, characterizes it, and assigns it a challenge and a mission. The elements of such an existence should therefore be well defined, in the sense of "a life of faith." The two broad elements involved in experiencing "a life of faith" are:

(1) *Existential Solitude*

"The man of faith" knows he is unique and lonely. This uniqueness is socially significant, implying existence in a social world indiffer-

[98] Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, p. 105.
[99] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

ent to, and alienated from the values of the "man of faith." Uniqueness and loneliness are also significant at a cosmic level: nature does not disclose itself to the "man of faith"; rather, it hides and conceals itself when facing his sincere and desperate attempt to understand its essence and purpose. Finally, uniqueness and loneliness have a distinctive religious-theological meaning: God himself eludes the human yearning to know him.

(2) *Renunciation and Sacrifice*

"The man of faith" knows that redemption from solitude is attained through self-retreat and sacrifice. He must acknowledge the existence of lonely individuals like himself, and recognize the third grammatical persona (after "I" and "thou"), mediating between him and other lonely individuals: the "He," namely, God. This is how a "community of faith" is built, where the "I" and the "thou" are exposed—the two lonely men of faith—before one another, because of God's presence and participation in the community of faith.[100]

Henceforth, we can define the place of faith within a concrete existence whose characteristics have just been described. In Soloveitchik's formulation:

> In the existential community… one hears not only the rhythmic sound of the production line, but also the rhythmic beat of hearts starved for existential companionship and all-embracing sympathy and experiencing the grandeur of the faith commitment; there, one lonely soul finds another soul tormented by loneliness and solitude yet unqualifiedly committed.[101]

Faith helps the individual existing in solitude, in an inimitable existence, to expose himself before the other, and even to join him to create a distinct community. The "other" is, on the one hand, another "man of faith," and on the other, God himself. Faith thus assumes a quintessentially redemptive role, allowing one individual to establish a dialogue with another to create communal existence. Without faith, extrication from the shackles of existential loneliness, or even understanding it in the right light, would have been impos-

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[100] *Ibid.*, pp. 34-52. See also Lawrence Kaplan, "Models of the Ideal Religious Man in R. Soloveitchik's Thought" [Hebrew], *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 4 (1984-1985), pp. 331-332, and ch. 6:4 below.

[101] Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith,* pp. 41-42..

sible. Furthermore, no purposeful community could have been created without faith. Faith grants human beings the power and the ability to overcome the obstacles in the relationship between God and the world, individual and society, time and eternity. Indirectly, Soloveitchik refers to the topical implications of his approach. For instance, he recurrently emphasizes in his preaching that the State of Israel is a divine creation.[102] A secular state failing to acknowledge a divine creator, however, is compared to the two separate and incompatible shores of a river. For Soloveitchik, then, building a sovereign state based on the laws of the Torah appears to be a kind of faith meant to bridge the tensions of the modern community. He formulates a fourteenth "article of faith": "I believe with perfect faith that the Torah can be observed, practiced, and fully implemented in all places and at all times, in all social, economic, and cultural contexts, in all technological circumstances, and under all political conditions."[103]

This is the version that is publicly preached. When examined systematically, however, the concept of "faith" is much more complex. A faith of this type, allowing a dialogue with the other and with God, cannot be subject to cognitive or pragmatic reduction. "Only peripheral elements of the act of faith can be projected on a cognitive pragmatic background."[104] Faith, then, has a deep existential meaning that is not exhausted by explanations, hence the hard, and perhaps even desperate, task of proclaiming faith to a modern generation, which finds existential experiences of cathartic redemption and true dialogue entirely alien.

One conclusion of *The Lonely Man of Faith* is that two types of people, "the man of faith" and "majestic man," build the full human personality. Hence, we can argue that faith addresses itself directly to the inner human fluctuation between the various types of existence resulting from deliberate divine planning, and in the hope

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[102] See, for instance, Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Machon Tal Orot, 1974), pp. 75-76. On the topical implications of this approach see Schweid, *A History of Jewish Thought in the Twentieth Century*, p. 377; David Hartman, "The Rav's Response to Modernism" [Hebrew], in *Jubilee Volume: In Honor of Morenu Hagaon R. Joseph B. Soloveitchik*, edited by Shaul Israeli, Norman Lamm and Itzhak Raphael (Jerusalem and New York: Mosad Harav Kook and Yeshiva University, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 30-55.

[103] Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions*, p. 112.

[104] Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, p. 101.

of reaching a balance between polarized extremes, either in the present or at the end of days.[105]

The concept of "faith" thus takes on a new meaning in Soloveitchik's doctrine, different from its predecessors in two essential matters: one is that faith addresses, first and foremost, the existential condition of the concrete person. The "man of faith" is thus defined and shaped accordingly. Faith is no longer a psychological characterization of a specific psychological faculty, or a cognitive characterization of one or another abstract theological truth. The second, no less important matter, is that faith becomes a necessary or even exclusive element in the process of individual cathartic redemption. Through faith, the individual succeeds in finding a friend, establishing a community, and even bringing the *Deus absconditus* to reveal himself to him. "Faith" for Soloveitchik is such an elementary characteristic that, at times, one finds he feels it needs no explanation whatsoever.[106]

Soloveitchik remains within the borders of religious-Zionist thought in the sense that he perceives Judaism as a religion based on a clear and well-articulated creedal message. Soloveitchik does not agree with "several modern thinkers" who negate dogma in Judaism. He formulates their view and then refutes it:

> They regard Judaism as a purely rational and this-worldly faith, which is unencumbered by a complex theology and is primarily humanistic in its purpose. This understanding, however, is simplistic and erroneous. We do have principles of Jewish faith, *ikkare hayahadut*, which are implicit in the Torah and have been formulated and codified in the Talmud and by later scholars.[107]

To those intent on blurring the uniqueness of Jewish identity given a universal identity, Soloveitchik sets up the uniqueness of Judaism and states:

> Judaism regards its dogmas and values as verities which are rooted in the Torah tradition, and whose authority is ultimately Divine. Our

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[105] See Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, "Majesty and Humility," *Tradition* 17:2 (1978), pp. 25-37. Compare Ehud Luz, "The Dialectic Element in R. Soloveitchik's Works," *Daat* 9 (1982), pp. 88-89. See also ch. 6:1 below.

[106] See Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *On Repentance: The Thought and Oral Discourses of Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik,* edited by Pinhas H. Peli (Northvale, N. J.: Jason Aronson Inc.,1996) p.130.

[107] Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *Reflections of the Rav*, edited by Abraham R. Besdin (Jerusalem: WZO, 1979), p. 23.

> theological and philosophical premises about God, man and creation are uniquely Jewish and, through the course of centuries, have been preserved despite efforts at dissuasion, ridicule, and torture.[108]

Soloveitchik, then, unquestionably supports the existence of dogma and of a shared theological foundation within Judaism, reflecting distinct contents of faith. In other words, the individuality of Soloveitchik's thought is a deviation within the frame rather than beyond it. As other religious-Zionist thinkers, he too acknowledges a creedal foundation in Judaism, which reaches impressive cognitive, homiletic, and hermeneutical expression when Soloveitchik analyzes the path chosen by the Mizrahi, and takes stock of this choice in *Five Expositions*. Nevertheless, Soloveitchik's perception of faith in his writings is remarkable for its modesty and retraction, particularly when considered in light of the pretension characterizing approaches such as that of Amiel on the one hand, which claims to present faith as reflecting the order of reality in Judaism's *Weltanschauung*, and that of Kook and his disciples on the other hand, which upholds faith as a totality and leaves no realm of life beyond it.

6. *Summary*

The analysis of philosophical doctrines current among ideological groups and individuals in the religious-Zionist camp seems to indicate that no general and complete consensus prevails concerning the concept of "faith." Perceptions and characterizations are strikingly different, and we may find that the entire ideological spectrum regarding the definition of faith and its place within Judaism is represented. Nevertheless, the existence of a creedal element remains as a leit-motif in the attitude toward current events. The religious-Zionist intellectual needs the creedal realm to promote the readjustments demanded by unfolding events. Moreover: the very call for a renewed understanding of a concept as elementary as "faith," and the perception of faith as the source of practical ideology, is a unifying element in religious-Zionist thought. It seems that the creedal element was put forward because the halakhic foundation could not be used to justify cooperation with secular Zionism.

Thus, most religious-Zionist intellectuals made faith and its con-

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[108] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

tents a cornerstone. Ideological groups such as Kook's circle saw faith—in their definition—as a dynamic, thrusting, stirring, and nourishing element. Reines, Uziel, Maimon, and Aviad also saw faith as a dogma for many who base praxis on the creedal layer of Jewish sources. On the margins, we find isolated thinkers—of which Hirschensohn is a radical example—who do not identify the dynamic element of action with faith, which for them represents a personal, sensitive, and intimate realm. Nevertheless, even a thinker such as Nissenbaum, who does agree with the primacy of action in Judaism, believes that Judaism adapts itself to changing circumstances by highlighting ideological elements such as nationalism and the land of Israel.

Many religious-Zionist thinkers detected a special need for a concern with faith and its problems, viewing the almost exclusive focus of the *yeshivot* on Halakha and erudition as a feature typical of the Diaspora. The new reality calls for a renaissance of Jewish thought and not only for the adaptation of halakhic and learned creativity to present times. The re-analysis of the essence of faith, and its very definition, point to an attempt to translate the concern with abstract faith into concrete terms, as shown in the recurring appeals of Zvi Judah Kook (1890-1982) to his students to concentrate on the study of "faith."[109] Zvi Judah Kook eventually became the head of the *Merkaz Harav yeshiva* and the spiritual leader of *Gush Emunim*.

The encounter between religion and Zionism within religious-Zionism is thus chiefly expressed in the attempt to fuse three realms that, *ab initio*, are different: nationalism, the philosophical and aggadic foundations, and the institutionalized authority of Halakha concerning current problems. As for the halakhic element: preserving Halakha vis-à-vis the secularism of the various Zionist parties was a significant factor that guided important decisions in the Mizrahi from the start. Halakhic questions were crucial to the surfacing of issues of principle, leading to the uniqueness of religious-Zionism. The establishment of a Jewish theocratic state, problems of religion, society, and nationality within the Jewish people, all these were issues primarily concerned with Halakha.[110] Yet, as noted, Halakha

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[109] For instance, Zvi Judah Kook, *From Within the Redeeming Torah* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Zemah Zvi, 1983), under *emunah* (*limud emunah*) in the index.

[110] See for instance, Yosef Salmon, *Religion and Zionism: First Encounters* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1990); Aryei Fishman, *Judaism and Modernization on the Religious Kibbutz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 52-53.

provided no answers for the new circumstances of joint action with liberal and secular trends in the Zionist movement.

Therefore, most religious-Zionist thinkers found the ideological-creedal layer definitely more important. Most of them relied on Aggadah and on the perception of faith in Jewish sources to explain the foundations of Zionism, and even their support for it. The theological dimension became a mainstay for renewing religious-Zionism and for shaping its views. Reines can thus formulate a kind of "article of faith" with new implications: "As we know, it is a tenet of faith to believe that the Jewish people are everlasting, meaning they will never harm their own faith because, according to the thirteen principles, we are to believe in the coming of the Messiah and in the eternity of the Torah, which necessarily entail the eternity of the people of Israel."[111] We may consider in similar terms Soloveitchik's public declaration concerning a new article of faith, positing that halakhic principles can be applied in a modern society and a modern state.[112] Another issue worth considering involves the course of the arguments raised at the seventh Zionist congress (1905) on the Uganda controversy, as described by Meir Berlin-Bar Ilan (1880-1949), the pivotal figure in the Mizrahi for many years:

> A distinguished member of the Mizrahi, a learned man and a Torah scholar, who years later left the Diaspora to settle in the Land of Israel, stood up then and said: "How can a believer, from the Mizrahi, who believes in Providence, be opposed to Uganda?" The conclusion from his words and his ideas is that Uganda, and not the land of Israel, is part of the Torah.[113]

Out of a controversy that was clearly ideological, interpreting expressions of divine providence in history became, unwittingly, a factor shaping concrete pragmatic positions. Hirschensohn's unique doctrine, then, which was eventually supported by such thinkers as Yeshayahu Leibowitz, exposes his spiritual isolation in the Zionist religious camp. A decisive majority of religious-Zionist thinkers believes that practical ideology follows directly from the ideological-creedal content they find in Jewish sources, and I deal with this issue in Chapter Five below.

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[111] Reines, *The Book of Values*, p. 138.

[112] Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions*, pp. 111-112. See p. 40 above.

[113] Meir Bar-Ilan, *From Volozhin to Jerusalem* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: R. Meir Bar-Ilan Publication Committee ,1971), vol. 2, p. 350.

Hence the importance of presenting the full spectrum of approaches discussing the meaning of faith, as well as the objection to its very existence within institutionalized Judaism. The critical analysis of faith denotes a striving for theological renewal. In sum: a recasting of the concept of faith exposes different approaches within religious-Zionism pledged to a dogma that, in the perception of the thinkers themselves, builds the movement's pragmatic ideological foundation. Discussing the concept of faith leads us to its contents and its various characteristics, and my concern in the following chapter will be approaches to theology among religious-Zionist intellectuals.

CHAPTER TWO

DIVINE IMMANENCE

1. *The Concept and its Scope*

The reconsideration of theological concepts in religious-Zionism did not sidestep even the toughest and most subtle of issues. Chief among them is the doctrine of divine attributes, which is concerned with the essence of God and with the possibility of describing God through human thought and human language. In the wake of changes that, by the end of the nineteenth century, had affected philosophical thought in general and the Jewish world in particular, discussions focused on the question of divine immanence. These discussions, moreover, arose directly from practice. Against the accusations of "revolt" [*aliyah ba-homah*], religious-Zionists stressed divine immanence, that is, God's involvement in the messianic process.

Theologians and philosophers were deeply concerned with the motif of nearness to God and with its formulation: to what extent is a perfect and mysterious God at all concerned with a turbid, material world? Through these discussions, a multivalent concept of "divine immanence" came into being. For the purpose of this study, divine immanence is defined as the the presence and involvement of a divine element in the world in general, and with every one of its creatures in particular. This divine element exists in every creature, object, or event; the divine element constitutes it, activates it, and is inwardly present within it. Divine intervention is not a single, one-time event, like an act of creation *ex nihilo*, or a cause and effect sequence no longer mutually dependent after the appearance of the cause; rather, it represents continuous involvement and a permanent presence. The most radical perceptions of such divine involvement are:

(1) Pantheism, positing the complete identification of God and Nature. God is no different from the world, and exists within it in all his fullness. God, then, is the entire totality of existing creatures and of reality as a whole.
(2) Panentheism, positing that God includes nature but also tran-

scends it, thus implying the existence of a divine stratum that remains uninvolved in the world. God's presence in the world does not detract from divine transcendence. Thus, God surrounds the world, but also includes it.

(3) Acosmism, denying the universe really exists, given God's absolute existence. According to this approach, the existence of the universe is an epistemic illusion. Human consciousness imagines existence outside God, but no such existence is actually possible.[1]

Obviously, Judaism was vigorously opposed to pantheistic utterances,[2] but panentheistic and acosmic approaches did gain a foothold in several contemporary philosophical doctrines, probably due to the growing influence of Kabbalah and Hasidism. Generally, intermediate approaches have tended to surface, discussing various forms of God's presence in the world in panentheistic style.

It should be stated at the outset that some religious-Zionist thinkers never formulated a systematic theology, since they were mainly concerned with topical questions, both ideological and pragmatic. Most of them, however, did show some interest in the essence of God and its links to the turbulent events of the times, and even saw this question as a pressing contemporary concern, viewing the theological motif as a hidden cause. Some of the prominent ideologues of

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[1] See, for instance, Charles Hartshorne, *The Divine Reality* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1948), pp. 88-90; William Ralph Inge, *Christian Mysticism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), pp. 112-117. More moderate interpretations of immanence are also discussed here, including approaches arguing for a divine presence in the world that "pervades" it with divine content. This interpretation of immanence can be applied, for instance, to rabbinic homilies. See, for instance, Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, translated by Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), pp. 37-65. See also Jacob Neusner, *The Incarnation of God: The Character of Divinity in Formative Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988). Compare Gershom Scholem, *Elements of the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* [Hebrew], vol. 1, pp. 259-274; Joseph Weiss, "Mystical Hasidism and Faith Hasidism"[Hebrew] in *Studies in Braslav Hasidism*, edited by Joseph Weiss (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1974), pp. 87-95; Mendel Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), pp. 55-103.

[2] Such as, for instance, in the stormy controversy evoked by R. David Nieto's homily. See Alexander Barzel, "'Total Nature' and 'Particular Nature'" [Hebrew], *Daat* 17 (1986), pp. 67-80. See also Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 32, and compare with section 2 below. Note that such utterances have also been controversial in modern Christian theology. See, for instance, Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (Since 1700)* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1989), pp. 199-203.

religious Zionism even formulated a closely knit *Weltanschauung*, and can be viewed as suitable representatives of a shared ideology. Openness, as we will see below, was a vital element in the world view of religious-Zionists, whether they wished it or not. Hence, even the concept of God was reformulated in light of general philosophical approaches. Non-Zionist Orthodox had been largely reluctant to discuss the essence of God, continuing to cling to the biblical, personal figure, or to a distinctively traditional and kabbalistic terminology. In contrast, many religious-Zionist thinkers did not hesitate to tackle crucial values in Jewish thought in general, and in the theological realm in particular. Some of them knew that the Kantian revolution, for instance, entailed vast implications for the concept of God. The neo-Kantian reaction to Kant's philosophy, to point to another instance, also played a major role in the development of modern thought about God and the world, which could not be easily dismissed. Obviously, many religious-Zionist thinkers did not engage in an objective philosophical discourse that could prove valuable from a more general philosophical perspective. Nevertheless, their attempts to integrate new concepts into their traditional world and their guiding concerns are extremely interesting. The positive effects of these attempts are evident in the formulation of a *Weltanschauung*, while the negative effects are visible in the critique of "heretical" philosophical approaches such as that of Spinoza, which is discussed in Chapter Three below.

The re-examination of the concept of God is visible in the very recourse of many religious-Zionist thinkers to the concept of divine immanence. These thinkers turned to a discussion of God's all-encompassing nature on the one hand, and God's involvement in the universe on the other. Some of these thinkers concluded that God is not absolutely transcendent, and many accepted the view that God is present in the entire universe, although not necessarily identical with it. Hence, a profound and incisive contemplation of nature's various dimensions, and even more so, of the concrete historical process, will reveal the *Deus absconditus*. Others confined themselves to an open discussion of immanence, even if ultimately failing to internalize this concept in their doctrine. These discussions point to shifts between a kabbalistic view of God inclined toward divine immanence, and idealistic philosophical approaches pivoted on human consciousness. Both supporters and opponents of immanence attest to the need for conducting theological discussions in a context that is culturally, conceptually, and theoretically open.

A caveat is in place here. The view of God suggested by these thinkers demands a philosophical analysis of the relevant texts. Most of these texts, however, cannot be approached as meticulously crafted philosophical doctrines because the bulk of religious-Zionist thinkers, as noted, had no intention of formulating an independent philosophical and theological dogma. Rather, many of them sought to justify their practice and, in so doing, developed a world view. Theology emerged out of routine praxis and due to the historical need to take decisions during a crucial period of Jewish national renaissance, but this should not detract from their characterization as thinkers facing a pressing demand for a renewed theology. A classic instance is the ideological and religious foundation of the *Torah va-Avodah* movement. According to this ideology, tilling the land serves to reveal and expose the divine element hidden in Nature.[3] This, then, is a clear articulation of the idea of divine immanence, as Fishman's analysis indicates, although the idea is not conveyed through systematic philosophical tools, nor does it rely on any formal terminology. The textual analysis, therefore, will also follow general trends and not only specific formulations.

Following, then, are several views of the immanent perception of God, or of approaches developed within religious-Zionist circles that contend with this perception as part of a heightened concern with theology.

2. *Providence and Immanence*

The issue of God's presence in the universe recurs often in Reines's writings. Even if he did not fully accept the idea of divine immanence as defined, his work raised awareness concerning the problem of God's involvement in the world, and presented it as a subject for discussion. Reines's basic assumption is that the entire universe is one harmonious whole, all its parts mutually fitting. He systematically formulates the ancient notion of the unity of reality, as conveyed by the match between spiritual and material dimensions:

> All material existence, in its essence, its scheme, and the order of its processes, follows precisely the order of spiritual existence. God made the one as well as the other, but while spiritual existence is hidden

[3] See Aryei Fishman, "Two Religious Ethos in the Development of the Idea of Torah va-Avodah" [Hebrew], *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 2 (1987), pp. 135-136; *Idem*, *Judaism and Modernization in the Religious Kibbutz*, p. 66. See also below, ch. 2:5.

> from man, material existence is concrete and apprehensible through the senses. Material reality is thus seemingly a metaphor and an introduction to spiritual reality, which is the purpose and the simile of Creation, enabling man to contemplate spiritual existence with his intellect.[4]

In another source, he states: "the entire material world is an allegory for the spiritual and ethical world."[5] The harmonistic view of creation leads to a series of ideas, such as the notion of the microcosm: "As man is the shape of the world, so is the world the shape of man, and as man is the end of the world, so is the world the end of man";[6] "man is the image of the entire world, because all existent forces are contained within him."[7] Among these ideas, we may also include the triangular fit of human being-Halakha-nature. In other words, the Torah is suited to human nature, as well as to the essence of natural and social reality in general.[8]

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[4] Reines *The Light of the Seven Days*, Part 2, ch. 1, 5a. In *The Book of Values*, Reines devotes a special entry to "the similarity between the material and the spiritual world" (pp. 115-116). Reines resorts here to his superb homiletical gift to draw practical conclusions: an event resulting from material causes might be justified in spiritual and moral terms, obviously referring to the Zionist movement. Although he understood Zionism to be a consequence of anti-Semitism and persecution, he considered it was still imbued with supreme moral and spiritual value: "After we have understood these two significant facts, that persecution and distress have led to a return to righteousness [*teshuvah*], and that one of the most important elements in this return is the memory of the land, there is no longer any doubt that the present movement [namely, Zionism] is an ethical movement, both in its very essence and in its motivating causes" (*ibid.*, p. 116).

[5] Reines, *The Two Lights*, 1, ch. 4, 25a. In this context, the approach suggested by Jawitz is worth noting. According to Jawitz, "the nature of life in general, its whole essence and truth is but one unique power, which is revealed in many varied activities; that power is the *Deus absconditus* that creates all, and the activities are merely transient." See Zeev Jawitz, *Collected Works* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1943), p. 91. The use of the term "all" is reminiscent of Ibn Ezra's enigmatic language in his commentary on the Torah. On expressions of the principle of unity as a vital component of religious-Zionist thought, see further below.

[6] Reines, *The Book of Values*, "Man and the World," p. 6. Here as well, Reines translates this approach into social terms, that is, the need to love one's neighbor.

[7] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, Ch. 13, p. 74b.

[8] Reines, *The Book of Values*, "The Convergence of Nature and Halakha," p. 171; compare also *ibid.*, "Nature and Torah," pp. 234-235. The notion of a perfect fit between the Torah and reality, which is also endorsed by Samuel Alexandrov and Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, is incompatible with the approach of R. Hayyim of Volozhin, for instance. See Norman Lamm, *Torah Lishmah [Torah For its Own Sake] in the Works of Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin and his Contemporaries* (New York: Yeshiva University, 1989), pp.106-107; Alexandrov, *Letters of Research and Critique*, 3, p. 39, and others. On the implications of this approach for the status of the land of Is-

Reines then proceeds to a further stage: since reality is one and its source is divine, then, reality as such, "nature," may reflect the divine dimension that is hidden within it and sustains it. "We tend to use the term 'nature' for the natural world, although we know that it is founded on God and God is within it."[9] Reines uses the terminology of divine immanence when dealing with miracles. In the following passage, he draws a distinction between the natural and the miraculous:

> You should know that nature and reason are mutually related, that is, matters that are natural can be apprehended through reason, and matters that are not natural cannot be grasped through reason. Etymologically, nature [*teva*] is derived from sunken [*tavu'a*], because the divine found in nature is deeply sunken within it and is not visible at first glance, unlike the miraculous, where the divine is immediately manifest, and even without deep contemplation we know it to be a divine matter.[10]

Reines then concludes: "nature itself is full of God." His formulations in the relevant passages waver between heteronomous Providence and actual immanence. In a discussion of divine providence,

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rael see Eliezer Schweid, *Homeland and a Land of Promise* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1979), pp. 168-169.

[9] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 1, 34a.

[10] Reines, *The Book of Values*, "Nature and Reason," p. 232; compare *Sheare Orah*, Part 1, 19b; *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 4, 39b; ibid., Part 6, ch. 2. 106b. The natural ethos is described as "hidden in relation to its immanent Deity" (*ibid.*). Furthermore, the Nazir quotes the numericon Elohim-nature [*teva*], but in a distinctively immanent sense. See Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 125, and compare to the discussion above. Finally, on the concepts of "miraculous order" and "natural order" see also Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, ch. 42, p. 109.

Issachar S. Teichthal, in his discussion of the miraculous dimension in nature, also notes the identical numerical value of Elohim-Nature. See Issachar S. Teichthal, *A Joyful Mother of Children* [Hebrew], (Budapest: Katzburg, 1943), p. 129. Teichthal, however, is concerned with theodicy, and ascribes no immanent meaning to this question. Rather, the dominant perception in his writings is that of God as "the Cause of all causes," that is, as a remote reason (*ibid.*, p. 38). In this sense, as in many others, Teichthal is a classic instance of the ultra-Orthodox style that adjusted to the religious version of the Zionist solution, but not to the cultural and religious reversal entailed by this solution. On Teichtal's links to Zionism, see Rivka Schatz, "Confession on the Threshold to the Crematoria" and "Postscript" [Hebrew], *Kivunnim* 23 (1984), pp. 49-62; Ephraim E. Urbach, *On Zionism and Judaism: Essays* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1985), pp. 349-351; Eliezer Schweid, "The Joy of the Mother of Children: The Zionist Theodicy of R. Issachar Shlomo Teichtal" [Hebrew], *Tribute to Sarah: Studies in Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah*, edited by Moshe Idel, Devorah Diamant and Shalom Rosenberg (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1994), pp. 380-398.

he compares nature to a purse carrying a precious stone. If we fail to scrutinize the purse carefully, we will miss its hidden contents. The precious stone symbolizes divine providence. Reines's formulation clarifies that divine providence steers nature from within, namely, immanently:

> Nature is only the external case that contains the divine light; it is the purse where divine providence lies hidden and folded… This knowledge, that divine light is placed within the purse of nature, and that nature is inherently full of spirituality and divinity, is the knowledge underlying religion and faith as a whole, inherent in the meanings and contents of the entire terminology.[11]

Hence, the formulation "nature is full of divinity" recurrently used in this passage is not random. It helps to shed light on the phenomenon of idolatry. A divine force drives every creature, and pagans were wrong to think that these forces constitute "separate divinities," whereas it is from the Holy One, blessed be He, "that all these separate forces emanate, and there is no one but Him."[12] The reason for this mistake is that, without the Torah, pagans were forced to learn about God directly from nature. Once we have the Torah, however, we can rely on it to learn about God without fear of error. We may thus conclude that Reines acknowledges that divine forces flow within creation and activate it, all sharing one source: God. At least the formulation suggests a sort of divine presence.

Furthermore, the immanent formulations of the divine presence are not exhausted by nature. Divine presence also directs human history in general, and Jewish history in particular, as an inner cause. Reines translates the distinction between the actions of divine providence regarding Gentiles and regarding Jews into immanent terms. This distinction is articulated as a commentary on the statement in PT Ta'anit 2:6: "The Holy One, blessed be He, joined his great name to that of Israel." What is the meaning of this association between the name of God and the name of Israel? It appears that every one in Israel has "a divine power, and this is the driving power implanted in the heart of every Jew that, seemingly by itself, directs him to-

[11] Reines, *The Light of the Seven Days*, Part 2, ch. 9, 21a-b.

[12] *Ibid.*, Part 3, ch. 4, pp. 39b-40a. See also *ibid.*, p. 41a. Reines proceeds to clarify that idolaters had "thought of these forces as means and mediators between the world and the Holy One, blessed be He." In other words, he again resorts to Maimonides' perception of idolatry (for instance, in *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:36).

ward spiritual and ethical matters."[13] An essential distinction between Jews and Gentiles emerges in this passage, manifest in the "divine power" pulsating in all Jews, sustaining them and shaping their reactions. This animating power has a direct bearing on the wondrous endurance of the Jewish people throughout their dreadful history. We then understand the association of the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, with Israel:

> What it means is that God planted in them a wondrous power, which is indeed the divine power, the eternal power to face the onslaughts against them, and this is the driving power found in the heart of every single Jew; because each one can feel inside him this hidden force, as it were, which will save him from being torn away from his source. The driving force in the heart of every Jew is indeed sublime and precious, because only this force has stood him in good stead, as a rock in stormy seas, when the waves around were furiously raging, seeking to sweep him away.[14]

It is readily clear, then, that God does not direct the course of history as a heteronomous force; rather, God is involved in the historical process and steers it from within as a close, forceful presence. This divine involvement is what enables the Jewish people to survive. Reines uses two additional names to refer to this inner divine power: (1) "Drawing power," which is the "divine seed planted within him, through which his heart is drawn upwards, and it is to this power, planted in the heart of every Jew, that they [the sages] refer through the metaphor 'joined his great name to that of Israel'."[15] (2) "A divine spark [*nekudah*] deeply hidden in his heart [the heart of every Jew]."[16] Hence, he describes the Jewish people as bound to one end of a chain pulled at the other by God, who prevents them from straying away, from assimilation, and from error. This divine power has a visible practical effect: "The people of Israel must imagine that the Holy One, blessed be He, pledges to them that He

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[13] Reines, *The Light of the Seven Days*, Part 3, ch. 3, 25b.

[14] *Ibid.*, 25b; and compare *ibid.*, 26b and 84b. See also the formulation in Reines, *A New Light on Zion:* "…The wondrous power within the nation of Israel is revealed as a divine power that could only be God's hand, and this is indeed the splendid power found within Israel—the strikes and blows that the nations of the world inflict on them improve their actions and draw them closer to the Holy One, blessed be He" (Part 5, ch. 4, 39b).

[15] Reines, *The Light of the Seven Days*, Part 3, ch. 3, 25b.

[16] *Ibid.*, 26a.

will return them to their land and their city."[17] Even on careful scrutiny, however, this statement bears no visible messianic connotations; immanent divine involvement follows directly from the laws of nature and from the cosmos in general. As this involvement has served to preserve the Jewish people through persecution and massacre, so will it lead them to a political haven that will ensure their safety.[18] Zeev Jawitz (1847-1924), a writer and historian who led the Mizrahi after Reines, also attributed the survival of the Jewish people to God's presence in history and ascribed this view to the prophet Jeremiah:

> God is a source of life to all who trust him and cleave to him, and his spirit, which constantly renews them and sustains them, will not allow the soul of those who seek him to die. As man draws away from this source, so he withers and is scattered away, and then is no more, because he no longer has a living soul that could sustain him and a power that could nurture him.[19]

Finally, note that Reines holds that the divine ethos within nature is now concealed, and remains visible only to those who search deeply; in the messianic future, however, when all eyes are opened, the divinity concealed in the natural world will be revealed to all: "But as the world reaches the stage when the light of reason shines in the right measure, so that man can see the divine in nature as he sees the divine in miracle, it will be possible to call nature a miracle."[20] Apparently, Reines was thereby alluding to the future messianic era, as opposed to present times.

Reines, then, draws away from extreme denotations of immanence. He does not offer a panentheistic approach, for instance, including nature in the divine, or an acosmic approach that dismisses the reality of the universe. Resonating in his formulations, however, is an approach that detects an inner divine program (a "spark" or a "power")

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[17] *Ibid.*, 27a.

[18] See Michael Nehorai, "Rav Reines and Rav Kook: Two Views of Zionism," in *The World of Rav Kook's Thought*, pp. 255-267; Ravitsky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, pp. 32-36. This discussion and many others show that Reines, although describing the desirable political haven in terms entrenched in a well-known religious and theological mold, separated it from the messianic idea. This separation, however, is only found in Reines's apologetical writings. In the writings containing his preaching and his systematic doctrines, Reines did see Zionism as the realization of the messianic idea.

[19] Zeev Jawitz, *A History of the Jewish People* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Ahiezer, 1935), vol. 3, p. 43.

[20] Reines, *The Book of Values*, "Nature and Miracle," p. 230.

driving nature and history from within or, in other words, a concrete divine involvement directing physical nature on the one hand, and the historical process on the other hand. Furthermore, he explains Jewish fortitude and survival as deriving from an inner "divine power." The implication of Reines's formulations is that divine immanence is tied to Providence and to the historical process. He was no longer satisfied with the traditional perception of God, and sought new ways of linking God to historical events, thus legitimizing the historical event of Zionism. Isaiah Aviad (Wolfsberg) would eventually adopt a similar wording: "The course of history is in the soul of Israel, and is viewed by our people as full of divine hints, as the stage for the revelation of divine providence."[21] In this context, it is worth noting that Nehemiah Aminoah (1896-1966), a leading figure in Hapoel Hamizrahi, also presents the ethical accomplishments of the Jewish people in terms of "a divine revelation that appeared in every single generation, which was embodied in the ethical personality abiding by the Torah of the living God."[22]

Although the God posited in Reines's approach is imbued with transcendental attributes, immanent overtones are also present. This style is typical of the first generation of the Mizrahi, which includes both Reines and Jawitz, and comes to the fore in the assumption that natural processes and historical events denote a causality and inner-directedness showing Providence to be closely involved in the unfolding of events. They are not lured, then, into supporting approaches arguing for a total divine presence. Amiel, for instance, will retain these moderate formulations of divine immanence, extending them also to the epistemic and psychological realms. These "partial," moderate approaches, however, failed to resonate for long in religious- Zionist thought. The philosophy of Kook, Harlap, and

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[21] Isaiah Aviad, *Reflections on the Philosophy of History* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook,1958), p. 230. Although Aviad refers to "[God's] revelation in nature and history" (*ibid.*), he does not deal with divine immanence in detail. On Aviad's theoretical stance and on the central role of history in his approach, see *Encyclopedia of Religious Zionism* (Hebrew), vol. 1, pp. 15-16. Note that the question of an immanent divine presence in history has also concerned modern thinkers in other Jewish religious movements, such as Emil Fackenheim and Steven Schwartzschild, obviously from another perspective and as a reaction to events other than those that had concerned Reines. See, for instance, Emil Fackenheim, *Essays* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: WZO, 1989), pp. 15-18; Steven Schwartzschild, *The Pursuit of the Ideal* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), pp. 61-81.

[22] Nehemia Aminoah, *At the Fountain* [*Al ha-Mabu'a*] [Hebrew], edited by Isaiah Bernstein (Tel-Aviv: Aminoah Memorial Fund, 1968), p. 47.

the Nazir stretched the immanent perception of God to extremes, and applied it historically, psychologically, and cosmologically, to all aspects of being. This approach was already making headway within Kook's charistmatic circle as Reines's activity was drawing to a close. This development is discussed in the following sections.

3. *Epistemic and Psychological Immanence*

Amiel, as noted, draws a distinction between "analytical knowledge" and "intuitive knowledge."[23] Psychological knowledge, as an inner mental certainty, is extremely important for Amiel because, above all, it teaches us about God's essence. Whereas analytical knowledge leads to a denial of the divine attributes, namely, to a mysterious and ineffable God, intuitive knowledge leads to a positive perception of the divine attributes. On these grounds, Amiel distinguishes Greek culture from Judaism, claiming that Greek philosophy was concerned with analytical knowledge, while Judaism relies mainly on intuitive knowledge: "From 'know thyself' to 'know what is above thee,' from 'the microcosm' to the macrocosm and, finally, to 'He who said, let there be a world'; know thy soul and, from that, the world soul."[24]

The concept of "intuitive knowledge" is again presented as related to the idea of the microcosm: human beings reflect the whole world in the structure of their souls. Deep introspection, then, reveals to the observer hidden worlds, as well as their inner impulses. The expression "world soul" resonates with echoes of Platonic and neo-Platonic views. Plato presented the soul of the world as emerging from God, and its relationship to the entire world as the relationship of the private soul to the private body. The neo-Platonic school described reality as emanating from the perfect "one." This emanation unfolds in stages, and the "world soul," or the "*psyche*," is the last stage before the material. But neo-Platonism views the emanating "one" as remote and unknown, whereas Amiel's use of the term "world soul" indicates that God is not only the distant and removed Cause of causes, but also the leader directing the world from

[23] See above, ch. 1:3. On intuition inYekutieli's remarks, compare *ibid*., note 89.

[24] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 8. On the idea of harmony in Reines's writings, see the previous section.

within. For Amiel, the intuitive survey of the "world soul" will reveal the "He who said, let there be a world." This expression recurs in the discussion about the similarity between the soul and the Creator, which develops around the talmudic commentary on Psalms 103 ("Bless the Lord, O my soul"): "Concerning the Holy One, blessed be He, and concerning the soul…. As the Holy One, blessed be He, sees and is not seen, so also the soul sees and is not seen" (*Berakhot* 10a). This passage deals with intuitive knowledge, and with "the similarity between our soul and the soul sustaining every living creature—the Holy One, blessed be He."[25] If God is a kind of immanent, hidden mover within every creature, then deep introspection will help us find the traces of the divine presence. Thinking logic is replaced by inner contemplation and introspection, a Jewish pursuit dating back to medieval times. It is thus clear why Amiel ascribes such great importance to the similarity between the human and the divine image (*tselem*), a similarity that eventually becomes actual involvement.[26]

Amiel anchors his view of immanence in a distinctively Kantian approach. Kant had held that space and time are forms of sensibility, necessary conditions for any perception. Perception situates objects and arranges them according to the two forms of sensibility. Amiel, however, disagrees with Kant. Unlike Kant who, according to Amiel, holds that space and time are different and separate forms of sensibility, Amiel is convinced that both can be reduced to one factor—infinity:

> Space and time are but two concepts that are really one: infinity. The concept of space is a kind of quantitative infinity, and the concept of time is a kind of qualitative infinity; space is a kind of matter, and time—a kind of spirit; their common denominator is infinity.[27]

The infinity of matter and spirit, as defined by Amiel, is a divine attribute that is to some extent apprehensible, and an object of

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 9; see also *ibid.*, p. 12. On "the world soul" in neo-Platonic sources see, for instance, John Michael Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 112-129.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 13. Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 88. Compare *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 25. On the development of Kant's views regarding forms of sensibility see Jan T. J. Srzednicki, *The Place of Space and Other Themes* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), pp. 25-64. Amiel may have been influenced by the discovery of relativity theory and its theoretical implications.

positive discussion. This is how he explains the idea of "space as a kind of matter": "The Tetragrammaton points to the infinity of time… and the name Elohim to the infinity of space."[28] Amiel thus offers a unified perception of the cosmos:

> Because although space and time appear to us as two concepts, they are truly but one; the infinity of quantity and quality, of matter and spirit. The infinity of above, below, ahead, and behind; the infinity of what was, what is, and what will be, of eternity, without beginning or end—whose beginning has no beginning and whose end has no end.[29]

The inevitable conclusion is that infinity "is the essence of the Holy One." Concerning the divine name revealed to Moses, "I will be what I will be" [Exodus 2:14], Amiel says it is "infinity in space and in time, without beginning or end."[30] Amiel reviews a series of Kantian assumptions that, in his view, contribute to the description of God: perception is a priori rather than experiential; time and space are absolute forms of sensibility; the unity of apperception (perception as a condition of experience). He then concludes:

> It is puzzling that modern philosophy has failed to notice that knowledge of the Creator follows absolutely from all these a priori forms of knowledge, because all these issues—unity, identity, universality, eternity, infinity, necessity, and above all, the first cause, the Cause of all causes—are all attributes of the Creator, to the extent that human understanding can, if at all, grasp God.[31]

And he sums up: the "One" is the "unity of the world." If we return to Kant, we will find that these forms of sensibility make up pre-experiential human consciousness and that, furthermore, reality is built within the context of these forms of sensibility. This is the meaning of Kant's "Copernican revolution": perception not only apprehends, but also creates its objects; therefore, every conception and every science will be based on the unity of the perception grasping them.[32] Furthermore, reality in general—from an ontic and not

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[28] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 14. Unwittingly, Amiel returns here to an approach reminiscent of Spinoza's, who argues that extension is a divine attribute. He emphasizes, however, that we are not dealing with all extensions, but only with infinite extension.

[29] *Ibid.*. It is worth noting that Amiel, like Reines, also deals extensively with the harmony between Torah and nature, although his formulations are less systematic. See Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, pp. 101-105.

[30] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 28.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[32] Compare Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, pp. 254-255.

only from an epistemic perspective—is based on God, among whose attributes we number time and space as forms of sensibility: if God is the absolute and infinite manifestation of these forms (both in the sense of the Tetragammaton and in the sense of Elohim), then all private perceptions creating reality do so by relying on divine infinity. Our forms of sensibility thus imitate God's absolute forms, and this is the meaning of the statement: "He knows and He is known and He is knowledge itself."[33]

Let us consider these statements from another angle: in this discussion, God is identified with infinite forms of sensibility. Individual forms are not, nor can they be, detached from God's infinite ones: "Our thinking is nothing but modes of expressing the divine idea, a perimeter to the center, the center that is God";[34] "all spiritual [forces] in the world are merely unique modes of discovery by the divine spirit."[35] Rather than merely an imitation of divine knowledge, we could view this as an immanent divine involvement in the perception of every single individual. These assumptions complement the view of God as the "world soul," which Amiel presents in a new light: God is the infinite expression of space and time, as well as of other absolute characteristics of the structure of perception (unity). God thereby allows, within his absolute structure, the limited expressions of human perception. The connotation of immanence is clearly visible in Amiel's formulations. Let us return to the exegesis of the divine name revealed to Moses in his mission to the people: "'I will be what I will be' is the unified perception, a unity that has no paragon except in the 'unity of the world,' the perception of the whole, 'the omnipotent and all-perfect."[36] He also says about the

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[33] *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 15. *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 92, following Maimonides, *Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:10. Compare David H. Baneth, "On the Philosophic Terminology of Maimonides" [Hebrew], *Tarbiz* 6 (1935), pp. 16-17. On the different meanings of the Tetragrammaton and Elohim see *The Kuzari* 4:1.

[34] Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 87.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 94 (quoting Nicholas Malebranche). Amiel enlisted all the immanent approaches he had found in modern philosophy. Malebranche had held that ideas are not grasped as such but only through God merging, to some extent, with the perceiving soul. On divine immanence in Malebranche's theory, see Samuel Hugo Bergman, *History of Philosophy from Nicolaus Cusanus to the Age of Enlightenment* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1974), pp. 218-223.

[36] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 28, from the liturgic poem "ve-Khol Ma`aminim," included in the *musaf* prayer of Rosh Hashanah. Amiel presents the unity of creator and creation as a cause and effect relationship (*ibid.*, pp. 33-36).

verse "You preserve them all" [Nehemiah 9:6]: "All the vitality of the entire universe, the whole of creation, from the inanimate to the angels, not only originates in God, may He be blessed, but is the very essence of God."[37]

Following his systematic articulation of divine immanence in reality in general and in human perception in particular, Amiel proceeds to trace the psychological expression of God's presence in the human soul. He formulates this view as a response to the person who, albeit unsuccessfully, seeks God everywhere:

> Tell this man: True, you have sought as far as you can, but in your own mystery [*mistarim*], in the innermost spirit, in the inner recesses of your soul, in its deepest source and roots—you have made no effort to try and search… Because "the Holy One, blessed be He, has a place and its name is mystery" [Hagigah 5b]. And although you may have uprooted the Holy One, blessed be He, from all these places and you may have pushed away the *Shekhinah*, there, in your own mystery, He is safely ensconced and you will never be able to displace him at all.[38]

The conclusion is that, in the most inner recesses of the soul, "there is place for the Holy One, blessed be He."[39] The preaching style that Amiel adopts in this passage cannot obscure the fact that the divine presence in the soul is a direct conclusion from his discussion about forms of sensibility that had been couched in Kantian terms, namely, a transcendental discussion. In this sense, Amiel does not distinguish between psychology and epistemology. The divine presence in the forms of sensibility (space and time) leads to a divine presence in the inner recesses of the soul, "the mystery." Indeed, for Amiel, the individual personality is derived from the infinite personality of God: "The self in the human being comes from the divine self,"[40] an assumption he formulates in greater detail as follows:

> The sense of "self" in man is the foundation that prompts and engenders all feeling in man, the "self" is the central point to all that happens within him, and the experience of "self' is truly an experience of

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[37] Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 2, p. 117. Another thinker whose philosophy is compatible with several immanent tendencies and was also influenced by Kant (as well as by Schopenhauer), is Nehemiah Nobel. See Rosenbluth, "R. Nehemiah Nobel: The Man and his Thought," pp. 25-26.

[38] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 17. Compare *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 93.

[39] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 20.

[40] Amiel, *Hegyionot el Ami*, vol. 1, p. 88. Ibid., p. 31.

> the divine, because there is only one "self" in the whole of Creation, the "I am the Lord your God," and our own sense of self is merely a crumb from the infinite self of the Holy One, blessed be He.[41]

Amiel is thus continuing the trend claiming inner divine involvement in natural processes, but takes Kant's epistemology as his point of departure. Amiel explains a number of basic foundations in Kant's method, pouring into them the concept of God as infinity and as the source of all forms of personal perception. Rather than being an outside agent, God is the inner foundation of every form of perception and of the human soul. Amiel, then, provides a broad framework—ideological, psychological, and epistemic—for Isaiah Bernstein's simplistic statement about "the human soul being part of God above."[42] Nehemiah Aminoah also stated that, at Sinai, it was revealed to the Jewish people "there is none else beside Him" [Deuteronomy 4:35] "not by looking outside but by looking inward, from within human essence, from the sense of God that is found within the human being."[43] Finally, we should also mention here Jawitz's view claiming that divine emanation inspires the will to freedom in the human soul. By virtue of this will, says Jawitz, we

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[41] *Ibid.*, p. 31. Compare also *ibid.*, pp. 34-35; 205-206. Note that Amiel also relies on the notion of "annihilation of selfhood" [*bittul ha-yesh*] to indicate complete abjection before God, a notion that emerges when human beings recognize they cannot know God: "The wiser the man, the better he understands and feels the depth and the breadth of the vast sea, the eternal abyss, the infinity of the master of the entire universe. From this stage [of understanding and feeling], he comes to the full realization that we will never know, sensing the nothingness of his essence and his being, to the point of total and actual annihilation of selfhood"(*ibid.*, p. 191). The end of the passage leaves no doubt concerning the actual use of the notion of "annihilation of selfhood," striving toward acosmism.

[42] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 27. Elsewhere, Bernstein writes more clearly about those perplexed in their faith, whose actions result from blurred feelings: "Some forces are found in man (according to the religious view, they are light sparks from the supreme divine will that penetrate all isolating barriers), pushing him to good deeds and training him for sacrifice without any knowledge of, or security, or faith in the future, and without being able to explain how and why" (*ibid.*, p. 42). Bernstein, then, considers it puerile to view faith as relying on certainty. His rhetoric reflects his assumption of a divine presence in the soul and, in this sense, he is not far from the view about an "inner point," presented above in the name of Reines and Aviad (Wolfsberg). On Bernstein's approach see below, section 5.

[43] Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 84. In his article on R. Levi Itzhak from Berdichev, he writes: "As long as man, in his experience, feels himself linked to the divine above him, his prayer and his acts will evoke in God, may He be blessed, compassion and plenitude, blessings, and abundance in all worlds" (*ibid.*, p. 96). See also below, ch. 2:5.

may rule that "the motto of Jewish culture is: the Holy One, may He be blessed, Israel, and the Torah, are one."[44] This rhetoric of immanence widely influenced the language of religious-Zionism.

In sum, Amiel argues that God dwells immanently in the human soul. God is disclosed and revealed through introspection or through a transcendental and psychological analysis of perception. Although Amiel's formulations on immanence are not as sharp and definitive as those of Reines, it is clear that immanence troubles him, both as a thinker and as a believer. He therefore chooses to preserve a trend presenting God as internally involved in processes evolving in the world and in human beings.

4. *Panentheism and Acosmism*

God's presence in the universe was a matter of concern for Kook and his circle. Their formulations come close to being the most radical position on divine immanence. The pantheistic approach, holding that God is identical with nature, and the acosmic approach that claims the universe, given divine plenitude, is an epistemic illusion, find profound expression in the views advanced by both Kook and the Nazir. The links of their views to pantheism and acosmism have deep roots in their general philosophical thought on the one hand, and in their kabbalistic approach on the other.[45] Kook points to such links in several celebrated passages from "The All-Encompassing Unity," published in *The Lights of Holiness*: "The idea that the whole of reality is divine and nothing else prevails besides God is extremely pleasing to the heart";[46] "Less troublesome… is the

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[44] Jawitz, *Collected Writings*, p. 72. See also *ibid.*, p. 67. For the source of this quotation see below, note 78.

[45] Kook was familiar with the writings of Moses Hess, and also with the pantheistic perception they entail. See Eliezer Goldman, "Secular Zionism: The Vocation of Israel and the Telos of the Torah" [Hebrew], *Daat* 11 (1983), pp. 115-118; *Idem*, "Rav Kook's Links to European Thought" in *The World of Rav Kook's Thought*, pp. 141-142. As noted, the Nazir had studied philosophy in Basel, and was directly acquainted with general philosophical sources. In his main work, *The Voice of Prophecy*, the Nazir investigates the sources of pantheism, which he discerns already among the pre-Socratics (in fragments from Xenophanes and the Eleatic school). See *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 117, and compare p. 123, note 145.

[46] Kook, *The Lights of Holiness*, 2, p. 396. Compare also Kook, *Epistles*, 3, p. 35.

monotheism leaning toward pantheism that, purified from its dross, features prominently in the new "rationalist" Hasidism, claiming nothing exists but God."[47] These and many other passages emphasize an acosmic approach, stressing that a perception of the world as actually existing independently is merely an illusion: only God exists.[48]

This statement, however, should be qualified. Kook left many fragments, mostly without any order. His writings were edited by others, who assumed this task according to their personal views and theories, and the border between editing and writing is sometimes blurred or disappears altogether.[49] A different editing perspective could have changed certain meanings and emphasized other aspects in these excerpts.[50] The Eight *Kevatsim* [Compilations] that were the

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[47] Ibid., p. 399. For an analysis of sources related to pantheism in Kook's thought see Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, pp. 48-50; Tamar Ross, "Rav Kook's Concept of God" [Hebrew], *Daat* 8 (1982), pp. 115-123; Shalom Rosenberg "Introduction to the Thought of Rav Kook," in *The World of Rav Kook's Thought*, pp. 42-47; Benjamin Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, pp. 38-40. The term "new Hasidism," as used by Kook, refers to the acosmic philosophy of R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, founder of Habad Hasidism (see, for instance, Ross, "Rav Kook's Concept of God," p. 115).

[48] Note that Alexandrov suggests a similar idea. As usual for him, he formulates his view in kabbalistic terms. For him, the four worlds of *Atsiluth* [emanation], *Beriah* [creation], *Yetsirah* [formation], and *Asiyah* [making] are not located in different places. Rather, they are different epistemic expressions of the same world and are perceived according to the observer's level of knowledge: "These are not different worlds, beyond ours; rather, all is either the lower world or the world of *Asyiah*, which we can see with our own eyes, and no other… except that we perceive people according to our ability to grasp them, each of us according to his measure… The wise, learned man will see the world in all its manifestations—inanimate, vegetable, animal, and human—as the world of *Atsiluth*, and will see everything with his spirit, because he rises up to boundless spiritual heights, unlimited by time and place, hovering in infinite space… But the man who cannot, through the strength of his knowledge and learning, rise up to infinity, is slightly limited, and will therefore see the world as a world of *Beriah* or a world of angels…" (Alexandrov, *Letters of Research and Critique*, 3, p. 40). Alexandrov's explanation of monotheism has overtones of immanence, in the connotation of "pervades all worlds" (see below, ch. 3:5). These immanent echoes in Alexandrov's writings rely in kabbalistic sources, and they have also been ascribed to Schelling. See, for instance, Moshe Schwarcz, *From Myth to Revelation* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1978), pp. 181-182.

[49] Concerning *The Lights of Holiness* in particular, where the Nazir's strong influence is highly prominent, see Dov Schwartz, *Religious Zionism between Logic and Messianism* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1999), pp. 198-233.

[50] For an editing attempt that differs from that of the Nazir in *The Lights of*

sources of *Lights of Holiness* have recently appeared in print, but their publication did not lead to dramatic changes. Attempts to translate Kook's "true" ideas into abstract philosophy become sometimes desperate, in the absence of a solid criterion that might turn poetry, musings, and occasional aphorisms into actual philosophical thought. It may thus prove more fruitful to trace the contours of Kook's approach by studying the views prevalent in the writings of his personal disciples, where divine immanence is indeed the dominant trend.

The Nazir, following Kook, endorses the notion of an all-encompassing unity, but anchors within it his own personal method. The Nazir held that Kook's theology could be summed up through the concept of "panentheism." In *The Voice of Prophecy*, the Nazir paraphrases the last passage from *The Lights of Holiness* cited above: "The negative pantheistic method, once purified of its impurities and refined of its dross, must be reformulated as panentheism, which fundamentally stresses the divine cosmic vitality that preserves all, while remaining transcendent and beyond all."[51]

A question is in order before attempting to clarify the term "divine cosmic vitality": how did the Nazir perceive the link between Kook's view and the pantheistic perception of God? We learn from an autobiographical passage by the Nazir that he was keenly aware of Kook's theoretical leaning toward pantheism. The Nazir also knew, through his personal acquaintance with Kook, that Kook felt a close affinity with the Spinozian doctrine positing absolute identification between God and the cosmos. In response, the Nazir argues that his own approach can "rescue" Kook's thought from the "dangers" of the Spinozian pantheism latent within it. This important passage is quoted below in its entirety:

> The supreme unity, all for the sake of unification [*le-shem yihud*], the supreme thought unites in the light of the expansion of all deeds within God. Actual unity within God, in the light of song and joy, in the heart of the worshipper, the unifier. Thus, all is good, none is evil, and there is no duality, only the one. There is a fact of unity here, a subject for

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Holiness, see Yonina Dison, "'*Orot ha-Koddesh*' Re-Edited and Organized According to Four Motifs" [Hebrew], *Da`at* 24 (1990), pp. 41-86.

[51] *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 123. The Nazir dealt with the perception of unity in pp. 123-129. See also Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, p. 49, note 8.

> thought, a value of joy and delight, of good, of one ethic.
>
> Seemingly, this resembles the method of Spinoza, who views thought and expansion as one and begins with ethics, as in the name of his book, dealing with the unity of thought and space, which are good and evil and, in truth, are only (null) modes, and their vitality is the good. This, as the Rav [Kook] said several times when expressing agreement with Spinoza, is the method of the *sefirot* rather than the method of substance, as in the charge that Christians hurl at the Kabbalah. In light of these peculiar and strange remarks, one should consider further.
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> In my view, this is the main flaw, *proton poseidos*, of his philosophical method. Because Spinoza's approach, even after it is refined from all its dross and even after we admit its greatness and its many elements of truth (of which I am well aware!), is ultimately not the way. And we will be saved from it by my auditory logic: as it shields us and protects us from the glitters of materialistic psychologies, so does it purify and refine the glitters of mystery in the affliction of its majesty.[52]

This passage shows how far the pantheistic approach pervades the writings of both Kook and the Nazir. As we will see in Chapter Three below, Kook and the Nazir differ in their epistemological approaches, and hence in their critique of Spinoza. Rather than implying a total rejection of Spinoza's approach, however, their critique derives from the imperative need to draw a distinction between their view of truth and that of Spinoza, which are so closely similar. According to the Nazir, a perception of divine totality that includes concrete reality will assume the right proportions when defined through his auditory logic, which, by definition, is precise and "rigorous." The Nazir thereby purports to distinguish panentheism from the absolute identification of God with nature posited by Spinoza. For the Nazir, then, divine immanence as an active and dynamic element is missing from Spinoza's approach, which posits a static world: "Particularly absent from his [Spinoza's] method is the crucial element of cosmic

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[52] The phrase "affliction of its majesty" hints to a play on words. The *Sefer Yetsirah* points to the closeness between *oneg* [pleasure] and *nega* [affliction], and the Nazir relies on it to suggest that Spinoza's approach is a *nega* [affliction] but there is also *oneg* [pleasure] in its majesty, hence the phrase "the affliction of its majesty."

This entire passage appears in the Nazir's intimate diary, to which he himself had referred as "the secret scroll." The diary was preserved in manuscript, and is in the possession of the family. On the critique of Spinoza's philosophy, see ch. 3 below.

vitality in the supreme unity, creating and renewing through movement, which is superior to visual corporeality."[53]

The Nazir repeatedly emphasizes the notion of divine immanence, and particularly the term "cosmic vitality."[54] This concept is seemingly derived from the neo-Platonic notion of the "world soul." As mentioned, this approach argues that the whole of reality emanates from God; God goes on steering reality from within, in an ongoing, continuous creation. Why the Nazir's recurrent emphasis on this term? He answers this question explicitly: "In addition to the light of ideal vision, there is in the supreme unity a divine cosmic vitality that springs from the source of life, which is internal, invisible, audible, and heard, superior to the visible sight."[55] The symbols of sight and hearing and their meaning in the Nazir's doctrine were discussed in the previous chapter. Sight represents the datum that can be described through syllogistic logic. Hearing and listening symbolize the spiritual inner layer below the visible, which we come to know through analogy. The inner stratum underlying all objects is divine vitality. According to this approach, we may access God through his revelation in the inner stratum of every being, as constituting it and vitalizing it: "divine cosmic vitality, supremely audible."[56] It is thus clear how the Nazir's approach restrains the danger of pantheism. God is not absolutely identified with the world; rather, God steers every creature as a soul in a body, as a dynamic inner force. The disclosure of this activation through the application of rigorous rules of analogy prevents the collapse into an identification of creator and creature, mover and moved.

Harlap endorses the acosmic approach adopted by Kook in these passages. He stresses that, because of our limited perception, we think of reality as existing independently. A perfect perception, however, would acknowledge that the whole of reality is part of the divine, and that nothing exists apart from God. In the following passage, Harlap conveys this approach in a complex formulation suffused with kabbalistic terminology:

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[53] *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 118.

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 120-132. See also p. 64 above. Compare: Moshe Zeev Sola, "The Monotheistic Outlook in his Doctrine" [Hebrew], in *Abraham Itzhak Kook: A Collection of Essays*, edited by Itzhak Raphael (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1966), p. 89.

[55] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 129.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

> The return to the Will of wills is the aim of all words. Just as the formless matter that had existed before cosmic expansion had appeared as purposeless will, lacking the concreteness of reality in its length and breadth, and particularly its borders and boundaries, so the cosmic revelation, in its full expansion, must not dim the source and root of its being. This is the aim of all words—the bounded should not conceal the unbounded, as in God, may He be blessed, the bounded will does not conceal the unbounded one. And when the universe reaches this sublime peak, we will see the entire cosmos, with its root and source, included and absorbed within the root of all roots, the soul of all worlds, and "the Lord shall be one, and his name One" [Zechariah 14:9]. Indeed, the mouth cannot say this now, nor can the mind accept it, but all this happens because we are confined within these limits and, based on our present understanding, we can make no judgment concerning the wisdom to be revealed in the Holy Heavens in the future, when confusion is removed and our blind eyes are opened and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" [Isaiah 11:9].[57]

The term "Will of wills" is commonly used in the *Zohar* to refer to the *sefirah* of *keter*.[58] At the beginning of the passage, Harlap draws a parallel between the primordial divine will, which is the source of creation as a whole, and the Aristotelian concept of "formless matter" (*hyle*). Formless matter is the substratum of every being; formless matter lacks all quality, exists only potentially, and thus has no real existence. Nevertheless, formless matter is a necessary condition for the existence of every material substance. At the same time, the primordial divine will ("Will of wills") has no intention of its own, although it is the source of personal wills and of reality in general.

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[57] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, I, ch. 4, p. 8. Compare *ibid*., II, ch. 25, pp. 68ff; *Mei Merom: Nimmukei ha-Mikra'ot* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Bet Zevul, 1981), *Bereshit*, p. 15. On the implications of this approach at the personal level, see *Mei Merom: On the Prayer Book*, pp. 154, 254.

[58] See, for instance, *Zohar*, Exodus 68b; *Zohar*, Leviticus 26b, and elsewhere. Compare Isaiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, translated by David Goldstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) vol. 1, p. 243. In the cited passage, as well as in chapters 1-3 of *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, Harlap emphasizes the element of the supreme will that created reality. This approach was obviously influenced by Solomon Ibn Gabirol's view on divine will that, to some extent, also inspired early kabbalistic writings. See Gershom Scholem, "Traces of Gabirol in the Kabbalah" [Hebrew]," in *A Collection of Palestine Writers in Literate and Jewish Thought*, edited by Aaron Abraham Kabak and Eliezer Shteinman (Tel-Aviv: Independent Hebrew Writers Union, 1940), pp. 39-66; compare Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, pp. 90ff.. Finally, it is worth noting that Harlap is continuing trends already evident in Hasidic thought, for instance, dealing with human beings cleaving to the highest *sefirot*, and even to *en-sof* as such. He writes: "We aspire to the lights of *en-sof*, we strive to enter the unbounded spaces, the open fields, and the ceaselessly streaming fountains" (*Ibid*., 2, ch. 25, p. 94).

Furthermore: just as the original formless matter exists in every substance, as shown by the reduction to the object's prime matter (the hylic matter found in every being), so the primordial divine will constitutes every being. This will is the "world's soul," namely, it is immanent in the cosmos as a whole. Mature understanding grasps that everything is "included and absorbed," "united and contained" in the primordial source, which is the supreme will. This understanding, however, is only attained in the messianic era and, at present, we must be satisfied with a more limited and restricted understanding.

There are obvious ethical implications to a view in which awakening from a limited perception and acknowledging divine totality is the supreme value. The notion of absorption within the source is translated into an ethos of *imitatio Dei*: "the basis of *imitatio Dei* is the conjunction with God and the containment within Him, may He be blessed."[59] Harlap considers it self-evident that the yearning "to be absorbed and swallowed within his light, may He be blessed" is a characteristic feature of God's servant. Hence, "this tendency must strengthen within us the enhancement of virtue, and particularly faith and trust, worship and gratitude."[60] Conversely, wickedness leads to fractional perceptions of creation and to opposites.[61] As is usual for him, Harlap links the Jewish people to a cosmic-ontological conceptual system. The Jewish people are, in a sense, "the Will of wills" for all other creatures (including the angels), and reach the highest and most genuine grasp of divine totality in the course of revealing the united essence of existence to the nations of the world; finally, it is the Jews who discover that evil has no independent existence, and can therefore "prevail over evil."[62]

Harlap returns to the idea of immanence in a different garb. He

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[59] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Nimmukei ha-Mikra'ot*, p. 15.

[60] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, I, ch. 5, p. 10.

[61] *Ibid.*, II, ch. 15, p. 68; compare *ibid.*, p. 72.

[62] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 8, 11, 32. 41; II, pp. 49-50, 52. Note that the Jewish people are presented as an expression of divine totality, of immanence, and of God's name, whereas the nations of the world are presented as a demonic force intent on destroying them. The assimilation of Jews is an achievement of the nations of the world, who represent the forces of impurity (Harlap, *Lehem Abirim*, I, pp. 14, 36, 38; II, p. 98; *Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, p. 206; *Nimmukei ha-Mikra'ot*, p. 252; *On the Prayer Book*, pp. 256-257, 261, and others). Harlap also draws radical conclusions from formulations in Kook's writings about the uniqueness of the Jewish people and their land. See, for instance, Uzzi Kalkheim, *The Mantle of Faith* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Harry Fischel, 1976), pp. 338-361.

argues that, without the "revelation of divine light," reality becomes delusory. Revelation takes place through two elements: the Torah and Israel. Based on these two assumptions, Harlap concludes:

> This mystery is vast: when viewed from the perspective of the Torah and of Israel, the universe does exist; without this perspective, it does not. How can two opposite perceptions of the same thing coexist? None of the world's philosophers and scientists will ever understand this; only Israel knows, senses and feels that "the Lord is God and there is none beside him."[63]

The theological conception outlined in this passage has a direct link to practical Zionist ideology through the statement that "fundamentally, national feeling will lead to the discovery of Israel's eminence."[64] The Jewish people, then, reflect and reveal the general, divine dimension of the world. Accordingly, nationalism is also derived from spiritual principles rather than merely reflecting practice. In a passage dealing with "Jewish nationalism," Harlap argues that "love of the nation and closeness to the land, when they acknowledge the divine link tying every Jew to the land of Israel, enable us to bestow on these principles the everlasting holiness flowing from eternal divine heights."[65] Nationalism, then, should not be separated from the special characteristics of the Jewish people; rather, it serves to disclose and reveal the people's uniqueness.

Harlap creates an explicit tie between the national ideal and divine immanence: the redemption of the nation in its land enables us to discover the appropriate image of reality as a whole, namely, "every object plays a part in the discovery of God's existence, may He be blessed."[66] Evidence of a link between immanence and nationalist views is also intimated in the writings of other thinkers in this

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[63] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, II, ch. 9, p. 61. Harlap does not view these two elements, the Torah and Israel, as mutually balanced, and claims that "Israel precedes the Torah" (*ibid.*, ch. 20, p. 76); furthermore, the people of Israel are those who raise the entire world to its unified source (*ibid.*, p. 90).

[64] *Ibid.*, I. ch. 7, p. 14. Together with his emphasis on the essential role of the Jewish people, Harlap also stresses the essential uniqueness of the Land of Israel. Raphael, *Encyclopedia of Religious Zionism*, vol. 2, pp. 378, 382, 386; Dov Schwartz, *The Land of Israel in Religious Zionist Thought* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1997), ch. 5.

[65] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, II, ch. 25, pp. 97-98. Following this statement, Harlap attacks the national [Zionist] perception that is oblivious to the spiritual dimension and strives only for a "normal" existence. Compare *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, p. 323.

[66] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Lehem Abirim*, II, ch. 6, p. 58.

circle, but Harlap presented this link more explicitly and even adopted a radically paternalistic approach in the wake of this theology. He defines a "dimension of silence" as a situation wherein the individual's personality is neutralized, and divine wisdom comes to rest upon him. The events of redemption are also steered by this inner divine power, neutralizing the personality of those involved in them:

> We are also called upon to be silent before the coming of the Messiah, to feel in every one of our actions and struggles that only the power of God is acting within us and awakening us…. Great leaders are then required… to silence all senses and desires within themselves, so that wisdom might be bestowed on them. They will thereby sustain this power for all those striving for redemption, so they might also feel the power of God acting within them, while they themselves are still and silent.[67]

Harlap thoroughly explores the approach claiming that human beings are only an instrumental factor in the process of redemption, and that divine providence steers historical events from within. He supports divine immanence as set forth by Kook, but he radicalizes the more moderate formulations of his predecessors, claiming that no barrier should separate theology from the standing of the Jewish people. Divine immanence is clearly manifest in the unique existence of the Jewish people, and future redemption will reveal this to all. The intense messianic overtones pervading Harlap's writings are explicitly evident in his discussions of divine immanence.

We conclude with a discussion of Zvi Judah Kook's approach. The idea of a divine presence in the world, which some thinkers perceive as the antithesis of the total identification between God and the world, is also conveyed in the definition of God in the language of the *Zohar*—"surrounding all worlds, pervading all worlds."

In his posthumously published book *The Light of My Pathway*, Zvi Judah Kook claims that this definition is hinted in the first verse of the reading of the *Shema*.[68]

The description of God as "the world's soul"[69] again suggests, in

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[67] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, II, ch. 27, pp. 173-174.

[68] Zvi Judah Kook, *The Light of My Pathway* [Hebrew], edited by Hayyim I. Steiner and Y. Isser Klonsky (Jerusalem: Zvi Judah Hacohen Institute, 1989), p. 120.

[69] See section 3 above. Compare also *The Light of My Pathway*, pp. 131-132. On "universal vitality" in the writings of the Nazir, see above, p. 64.

a sense, an immanent perception of God, which is compatible with Zvi Judah Kook's approach in his other writings:

> The main and unique essence distinguishing Jewish culture, including its idea of unity, is its persistent memory of the inner, divine, and unifying content of the entire cosmos, pervading it and containing it, including all the minute details of its obstacles, contradictions, permutations, and transformations, all implicit in God's all-encompassing essence and revealing the depth of his majesty, tracing all paths and ways of life by him.[70]

God is the "general inner foundation" of both physical and cultural reality.[71] This immanence is also the foundation of the national idea.[72] It is worth noting, however, that neither panentheism nor acosmism are the dominant trend in Zvi Judah Kook's thought. As the previous passage shows, Zvi Judah Kook views God as detached from the world, influencing it as a "supreme source above all worlds." This source "comes into the world" from its latency and transcendence, thereby implying that the world is not comprised within the supreme source but exists independently. Zvi Judah Kook sums up the implications of this approach for religious practice, for instance in prayer:

> The appeal to God and the spiritual connection with God, creator and ruler of all worlds, may He be blessed, does not address God as such, since he is beyond any name or attribute, designation or definition, blessing or praise, beyond any tie or connection. Rather, it appeals to his continued revelation in ethos and Providence, in virtue and action, in the perception of an element of will directed to the discovery of the supreme will, in his splendid appearance through the supreme light of knowledge, and in the sublime glory that builds eternal grace through his word.[73]

Zvi Judah Kook discusses in several passages the value of the collective [*kelal*] as opposed to that of the individual. He ascribes enormous importance to the collective to the point of formulating an approach that is almost organistic,[74] but he does not resort too fre-

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[70] Zvi Judah Kook, "Jewish Culture," in *On the Paths of Israel* (Jerusalem: Hoshen Lev Trust, 1997), p. 4.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 5. Compare *ibid.*, "The Answer of Deep Faith," p. 24.

[72] *Ibid.*, "On the Agenda," p. 13.

[73] Zvi Judah Kook, *The Light of My Pathway*, p. 127.

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 217, and often in other articles in Zvi Judah Kook, *On the Paths of Israel*.

quently to panentheistic expressions, as opposed to their explicit appearance in Kook's *The Lights of Holiness*. His formulations in these passages represent a return to the moderate approaches articulated by Reines, Amiel, Uziel, and others. The approach of Zvi Judah Kook, then, is not unequivocal; while showing traces of Kook's influence, he also moderates radical immanence. Fundamentally, he was not a philosopher nor did he presume to be one; rather, he remained an ideologue all along, reacting to current events and revealing their inner meaning.

In sum: Kook's school is not satisfied with a partial or moderate perception of divine immanence, and views the world as founded mainly on a divine reality that constitutes it and animates it. The principle of ongoing creation, not in the sense of God as an outside agent but as an inner immanent constituent, is a prominent element in the writings of Kook's disciples, and has therefore influenced many other thinkers, including Shakhrai,[75] Bernstein, and Aminoah.[76] Finally, all three thinkers—Abraham Itzhak Kook, Zvi Judah Kook, and Harlap— concur in the view that the correct perception of the God-world relationship, namely, the literal understanding of "there is none beside him," is only reached at the stage of (epistemic or ontological) perfection. This correct perception will become known to all only in the messianic era, which they do not doubt is unfolding here and now.

5. *Immanence, Redeeming the World, and Tilling the Land*

As noted, Kook's unofficial role as the theological arbiter of religious-Zionism left an indelible stamp on thinkers from various trends within this movement. Hardly anyone would question the view that "Rav Kook has infused the movement of renaissance [Zionism] with the glory of religious thought."[77] His impact on abstract questions, such as the theological issues discussed here, may be considered an instance of this effect. The immanent approach unequivocally endorsed by Kook and his disciples left its imprint on this as well as on other issues that concerned crucial figures in Hapoel Hamizrahi, such as Bernstein, Aminoah, and Shragai. In a programmatic article, Bern-

[75] See Alter Jacob Shahrai, *Ha-Hed* 12 (1937), p. 11.
[76] See next section.
[77] Aviad (Wolfsberg), *Judaism and Present*, (Jerusalem: WZO, 1962), p. 57.

stein suggests a dogmatic formulation of the principles of religious Zionism. The supreme principle, in his view, is the principle of unity, which is the "foundation of foundations" of faith. When describing this principle, he writes:

> The thought of unity and the perception of unity: "Israel, the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He—are one." A unity that progressively encompasses the whole of reality, including the whole of nature, Torah, heaven and earth, Abraham, Israel, and the Temple. On a sensorial, superficial perception, these matters appear to be separate, but they are one in their foundation, in their root, and in their truth. Labeling, conceptual divisions, the discernment of separation and multiplicity, the separation of powers and realms—all these matters appear so only in the simplistic reading of our limited human senses and tools. But we have been privileged with a supreme revelation, with the light of prophecy in Israel, and with the soul spark granted to all breathing creatures since he "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" [Genesis 2:7]—and we grasp with our reason the notion of supreme unity. And may the divine spirit preserve us.[78]

This passage clearly formulates the view of Kook and his disciples, claiming that the existence of details is merely an epistemic illusion, a partial and lacking analytical approach. An ontologically stable existence is only made possible by the principle of unity. "In fact, there is neither division nor multiplicity—all is one unity."[79] He then bemoans materialism, which erred by "perceiving only the husks, the external dimensions of things rather than their contents and internal dimensions, without contemplating the source of their being and vitality."[80] Immanence is thus framed into a clearly dog-

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[78] Following Job 33:4; Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 86. Compare also *ibid.*, pp. 271, 369. For the source of the quotation at the opening of this passage see Isaiah Tishby, "'The Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah, and Israel are one'": the source of this saying is in a commentary on *Idra Rabba* by Moses Hayyim Luzzato, *Studies in Kabbalah and its Branches*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993), pp. 941-953. See also Zvi Judah Kook, *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 65. On the principle of unity see also Jawitz, *Collected Writings*, pp. 94-99; Raphael Ben-Nathan, *In One Movement* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Moreshet, 1991), pp. 303 ff.

[79] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 124. The exact understanding of the source of unity, its "one and only being and existence" is presented as beyond human grasp. In this context, note that Bernstein mentions the neo-Platonic perception of evil elsewhere in his writings. According to this approach, evil means privation: "Since the Holy One, blessed be He, is the source of all forces, evil in the world is not absolute, but merely a result of our distance from the source due to the matter that screens and shades, as it were, the light of the world" (*ibid.*, p. 253).

[80] Isiah Bernstein, *Within Circles of Enslavement and Redemption* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1965), p. 164. Bernstein explicitly notes here that his

matic mold in Bernstein's formulation, and becomes the foundation of the national-religious idea. Aminoah also presented the principle of cosmic unity, while explicitly pointing to Kook as his direct source:

> There is nothing in the world—according to the Rav—that is not directly related to existence as a whole in its original foundations…. This is the grand plan that this universal genius has devised for our spiritual life, the laws representing the unity of the world and the unity of the Creator.[81]

The principle of a universal unity encompassing reality and God, as conveyed by Bernstein and Aminoah, became an important feature in the thought of the *Torah va-Avodah* movement, and helped to substantiate the religious value of tilling the land as a form of bonding with the Deity present in nature, as we will see below. Abraham Itzhak Yekutieli conveyed this notion when stating that we grasp God "intuitively, by grasping the unity prevalent in the universe as a whole."[82]

How is this abstract theoretical approach actually implemented? Bernstein argues that a partial and deficient focus on the details led to the present split between the land of Israel and the Jewish people. In exile, the promised land and the renewal of the people had been details concerned only with the future. The unified approach propounded by the Mizrahi, however, implies that the land cannot be separated from its people, its renewal, and its God: "The Mizrahi came and reversed things to their origin and their source, to the deeply entrenched notion of unity."[83] Bernstein finds here the justification for cooperating with secular Jews, in terms of an all-encompassing unity comprising all the details. Aminoah formulates his ideas about redemption in a poetic style:

> In the days of darkness [of slavery in Egypt], the Holy One himself, blessed be He, revealed himself to them. The Shekhinah descended, as it were, from the divine throne, to dwell with them in their defilement and their enslavement. In their affliction, he was afflicted [Isaiah 63:9]. Until he revealed himself to them and redeemed her, and the

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sources are the Kabbalah and Habad doctrines, leaving no doubt concerning the immanent tone.

[81] *At the Fountain*, pp. 86-87.

[82] Abraham Itzhak Yekutieli, "The Essence of Judaism" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 3, 1928, p. 260. On intuition in Yekutieli's thought, see above, ch. 1, note 89.

[83] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 87. Bernstein reiterates here his closeness to Hasidism.

> Shekhinah redeemed herself with them. The revelation of the Shekhinah in the sorrow of enslavement. The redemption of the Shekhinah, in the birth pangs of the redemption of Israel. The redemption of the nation. The redemption of man. The redemption of the world. He redeemed not only our ancestors, but us as well. Us, forever and ever. True redemption![84]

Aminoah chose to contend with the national implications of the idea of immanence under the veiled cover of "the Shekhinah descended, as it were."[85] Yet, when we examine Aminoah's words in light of the Hasidic sources that influenced him, we find that he cannot accept a literal interpretation of transcendence. God is voluntarily involved with the Jewish people. It seems that "collective" means cooperation of the creator with creation, the maker with the made, and the redeemer with redemption. The redemption of the people, therefore, entails the redemption of the Shekhinah. Aminoah does not conceal his strong preference for Kook's immanent view: "What, after all, is the secret of thought, if not the reality of a spiritual existence integrated within a general cosmic reality…".[86]

Bernstein and Aminoah do not offer a systematic analysis of divine immanence; they were ideologues rather than philosophers, so they link this idea to the general ideology of the Mizrahi, according to their own interpretation. In contrast, Shragai posited a direct tie between the idea of immanence and the doctrine of *Torah va-Avodah*. He first applied the idea of cosmic unity to the relationship between human beings and the world, claiming that human beings do not face nature as heteronomous. In fact, Shragai takes the notion of a mutual affinity between them to extremes and posits a radical fusion between human beings and the world, which leads to the idea of divine immanence:

> Man is not outside the world and outside nature, using them to fulfill his practical, scientific, and aesthetic needs; rather, man is here, within the world, within the "one place" that was not preceded by a separation of time or of place. The world is revealed within man, and man is revealed within the world. Man is part of the world soul. His soul feels, thinks, acts, and creates a unity of the world as a whole. In this

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[84] Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 76.

[85] On the *Shekhinah* as a divine presence, see Scholem, "Elements of the Kabbalah and its Symbolism," pp. 259-307. Compare Fishman, *Judaism and Modernization,* p. 58.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 81. Incidentally, Aminoah refers there to Kook as "the geologist, the physicist, and the astronomer of Judaism."

> relationship, man raises to the rung where he is not separate from creation but becomes one with it. Hence the attitude and the feeling of religiosity, as is written, from my flesh I shall see God.[87]

Note that Shragai is not satisfied with the classic notion of the microcosm, whereby man reflects the world in the layers of his soul, and vice-versa, parts of the world parallel the layers of man's soul. Rather, the human soul is an actual expression of the world soul and, in turn, God dwells in the world. This is a typical immanent elaboration of the idea claiming, "He who tills the land becomes a partner in the creation,"[88] and the doctrine of *Torah va-Avodah* leads to the "*tikkun* of creation."[89] The contact with nature, then, leads to the discovery of God both in one's soul and in the world. Shragai, then, writes about the religious and metaphysical meaning of natural life:

> Human existence within the four cubits of the land and of nature, the human struggle with nature to discover its secrets, create in us the divine feeling and the spiritual yearning for the living God, and develop in us the knowledge that "no place is without him"… because He and the whole—and the whole and He—are one, and all becomes, as it were, one place.[90]

Working the land discloses divinity everywhere. Shragai emphasizes that our acknowledgement of the totality and unity of reality will grant us supreme happiness, whereas separation and isolation result in sorrow and depression.[91] This is where the doctrine of *Torah va-Avodah* heals the ailments of duality and separation: "*Torah va-Avodah* strives to remove duality and universal sorrow, to attain wholeness and harmony everywhere through creativity and work."[92] The value of work, then, is not exhausted in its social and productive implications; work expresses the divine immanence of reality as a whole.

Bernstein, Aminoah and Shragai link the divine presence in the world to actual events, to the promised redemption, and to the value

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[87] Following Job 19:26; Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "Thinking" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 3 (1928), p. 254. Excerpts from this article appear in Aryei Fishman, *Hapoel Hamizrahi (1921-1935)*: *Documents* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: University of Tel Aviv, 1979), pp. 186-187.

[88] M. Zagorodski, "Our Settlement" [Hebrew], *Ha-Hed* 8 (1933), p. 14.

[89] M. Rosenblum (Shoshan), cited in Fishman, *Hapoel Hamizrahi*, p. 167.

[90] Shragai, "Thinking," p. 259.

[91] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 259. Compare with Fishman "Two Religious Ethos in the Development of the Idea of *Torah va-Avodah*," pp. 135-136.

of work. Their open admiration for Kook and his theory stretched to include the innermost depths of the theology that Kook had conceived and imparted to his disciples, which they applied to the ideology that guided them in their practical and public course. The study of these authors' topical writings exposes the link between abstract theology and practical ideology.

Eventually, this link between theory and practice will be emphasized in the ideology of the religious kibbutz. Although ideologues of the religious kibbutz tended to refrain from abstract theological analyses to focus on practice, theoretical elements were not altogether absent from their formulations. Meir Or [Orlean] (1911-1976) had already argued that "the belief that man's mission is to raise above routine duty so as to draw closer to abstract ideas of God is what created the religious kibbutz."[93] Moses Unna (1903-1988), one of the founders of the religious kibbutz movement, anchored the ideal of *Torah-va-Avodah* on a strong notion of unity. In his view, the human individual is an organic, homogenous entity, whose entire being conveys "God's image." Hence, as the psychological realm is an expression of the divine, so is the physical: "Like the 'spirit' and the 'soul', the human body is also part of 'God's image'."[94] Thus, physical work has value because it is a realization of the divine image in the human creature.

Finally, the current attempt to revive the *Torah va-Avodah* movement is also largely based on a renewed version of the idea about the "divine contents of the world."[95] Hence, the idea and the rhetoric of immanence bring to its culmination the encounter between the divine, theoretical, abstract idea, and the natural world, symbolized in the earth and its toil, as well as in the value of work in general.

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[93] Meir Or, *Or ha-Meir* [The Illuminating Light] [Hebrew] (Tirat Zvi: Tirat Zvi Press, 1987), p. 186. Or ties this idea to the challenge posed by an investigation of the dogmas of Judaism (*ibid.*, p. 187). Compare Fishman, *Judaism and Modernization*, p. 83-84

[94] Moshe Unna, *The New Community*: *Thoughts on the Doctrine of the Religious Kevutsah* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1985), p. 27.

[95] As quoted from Kook in Yonah Ben-Sasson, *Jewish Thought Through the Test of Time* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 1994), pp. 729, 734.

6. *Between Monotheism and Pantheism*

Uziel offers the monotheistic model of God as opposed to the pantheistic one. Ostensibly, he is not directly concerned with Spinoza, who is never mentioned in his discussion;[96] on the other hand, he argues that pantheism is idolatry, namely, a perception of nature's various forces as divine. Uziel thus pretends to offer an alternative that he presents as the opposite of pantheism; on careful scrutiny, however, although his approach is sharply different from pantheism, it never reaches absolute transcendence. His formulations are hesitant, wavering between absolute transcendence and moderate immanence; ultimately, he favors an immanent perception regarding a concrete and inner divine presence in the world. Uziel's discussion is a successful instance of a reexamination of the divine essence.

Let us begin by considering the formulations that support absolute divine transcendence. Uziel chooses to articulate the distinction between pantheism and Judaism in the following terms:

> Supporters of this approach [pantheism] lower God to nature and limit his presence to whatever exists in the universe; but heaven and earth and all that is in them, however broad and large, have limits and borders. Judaism does the opposite—it raises nature to God, because heaven and earth and all that is in them are a divine emanation, or a withdrawal [*tsimtsum*] of the divine light and a revelation of God's capability and mighty will in his creatures.[97]

Raising nature to God, according to this passage, means that all reality flows from God in a process of emanation. The source of this emanation, however, should not be confused with its effect, because the source is utterly different from the emanated being. Uziel emphasizes the supremacy of God, just as classic neo-Platonists had painstakingly negated all attributes from God, who remained undefined although reality emanated from him. Uziel formulates this principle clearly: "The emanation of light that is creation in all its forms is not the emanating source itself, nor even a part of it, because a part resembles the whole and Judaism believes that God has no paragon in heaven or earth."[98]

The parable cited later in the passage is a good illustration of this

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[96] See below, ch. 3.
[97] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 2, p. 43.
[98] *Ibid.*, following Deuteronomy 4:39.

separation between God and creation: the rabbi imparts the emanations of his spirit to his disciple when teaching Torah, but his existence is absolutely separate from him.

Uziel, however, is not steadfastly committed to the idea of God's absolute transcendence and questions its exclusivity in a series of formulations, all highly revealing concerning his own doubts about God's essence. Let us consider them one by one:

First, he resorts to kabbalistic terms that definitely assume divine immanence. On the Tetragrammaton and Elohim as divine names, he writes: "These are not separate, distinct names; rather, they merge and unite, and in their fusion give us a clear understanding of divine reality, of the greatness and might of God, pervading all worlds and surrounding all worlds."[99] If God pervades all worlds with his presence, then, to some extent, he is immanent to reality. Furthermore, in the passage cited above, Uziel mentions the "withdrawal [*tsimtsum*] of the divine light." The concept of "withdrawal" in Lurianic Kabbalah does not convey total emptiness. A space opened up when the *Ein-Sof* withdrew, but this space was not altogether empty. The divine traces in that space are the *reshimu*, a concept that recurs in the writings of Luria's disciples and refers, at least, to the lower stages of the withdrawal.[100]

Second, Uziel refers to the relationship forged between the emanating source and the emanated being in terms of a "mission." The emanated being functions as a type of emissary for the emanating source, but not the type of emissary that is detached from the sender: "The emanated being is not the source's emissary in the sense of bearing his name without the sender accompanying him; rather, the emissary remains forever bound to the sender."[101] What is the nature of this mission, given that the sender is forever "accompanying him"? Is the sender involved in the actual mission, or with the emissary? Uziel answers this question clearly:

> God carries out his mission everywhere, and all become righteous emissaries of the Holy One, blessed be He, who is all justice, love,

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[99] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[100] See, for instance, Isaiah Tishby, *The Doctrine of Evil and the 'Kelippah' in Lurianic Kabbalism* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984), pp. 24-28. Amiel often resorts to the scheme of the *sefirot* in this discussion. Compare Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 144-146.

[101] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 2, pp. 43-44.

> and compassion… These emissaries are not distinct from their senders, but are near him, so that even when dangerously threatened, and even when the whole world seems steeped in darkness, we feel the closeness of God, whose light pervades all worlds.[102]

This passage again ends with the formulation "pervades all worlds." The mission is thus a product of the divine light that, to some extent, involves an immanent presence. Hence also the topical implication: God steers events from within, and this inner thrust brings the contemplating human being to theodicy and to hope.

Third, even the parable relating to the rabbi and the disciple, which seems to draw an unequivocal distinction between mover and moved, is not so clear-cut. Commenting on this parable, Uziel writes:

> This emanation links the disciple to the rabbi, the creature to the creator, the rabbi to the disciple, the creator to the creature, because the creature is a part emanating from him, and the creator is all, and no more can be said on this delicate matter. Let us just mention the saying of our rabbis, of blessed memory… He is the place in which his world exists, and the world is not the place in which he exists.[103]

The reference to God as "all" ("the creator is all"), and the use of veiled and esoteric expressions ("no more can be said") remind us of the enigmatic and mysterious language of thinkers such as Abraham Ibn-Ezra, which is not lacking in pantheistic hints.[104] We may therefore assume that the link between the rabbi and the disciple means that the rabbi's spirit does not steer the disciple's consciousness only from outside, but also as an inner mover. Furthermore: the student's consciousness is present and exists, as it were, in the rabbi's spirit, as the world is present and exists in God.

These three statements show that Uziel does not support classically pantheistic views. Nevertheless, although his perception of God is mainly transcendent, his discussions show a real interest in the immanent perception of God and in the attempts to contend with it. The analysis of Uziel's writings shows him upholding a combi-

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[102] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[103] *Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the book of Genesis –A New American Translation*, translated by Jacob Neusner (Atlanta, Ga.:Scholars Press, 1985), vol. 3, p. 7; Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 2, p. 44.

[104] For instance: "And God is one, and he creates everything, and he is everything, and I cannot elaborate further" (Commentary on Genesis 1:26); see Leo Prijs, *Abraham Ibn Ezra's Commentary on Genesis Chs 1-3: Creation and Paradise* [Hebrew] (London: n. p., 1990), p. 84.

nation of two views found in a tension. One view assumes a divine presence in the world, at least in defined situations (divine assistance to the Jewish people in history, and the rabbi-disciple relationship). The other view assumes a God that is beyond the world and absolutely separate from it. In this sense, the conclusions emerging from Uziel's view partly resemble those of Reines, who resorted to immanent terms to establish God's presence in history. It is thus important to reiterate that Uziel's immanent approach helps him to understand historical events as an inner divine act, and as an expression of the divine light illuminating material reality.

7. *Immanence and Halakha*

The nature of the spiritual emanation from rabbi to disciple is also a concern for Soloveitchik, but first we must consider his concept of God. An approach suggesting a divine presence in reality appears in a celebrated chapter of his essay "From There You Shall Seek" [*U-Vikashtem mi-Sham*]. Apparently, these formulations do not reflect Soloveitchik's authentic view, which is influenced by Hermann Cohen's concept of correlation (see below); they do attest, however, to the legacy that forced Soloveitchik to enter into a renewed discussion of the concept of God. In the relevant chapter of "From There You Shall Seek," Soloveitchik deals with a classic concern of Aristotelian epistemology and, like Maimonides, he also presents God as He who knows, is known and is knowledge itself. Soloveitchik changes the concept coined by Aristotle as well as that coined by Maimonides. In two stages, the foundations of his epistemology develop into an immanent perception of the Deity:

A. *Knowledge as Abstraction*

According to Aristotelian epistemology, which Maimonides also endorses, knowledge is abstraction, namely, the abstraction of the object's essence (the "form") from its material substratum, and the communion of this essence with the knowing intellect. This approach claims that knowing a chair or a table implies abstracting the essence of "chairness" or "tableness," so that these essences will merge with the intellect seeking to know them. In the same way, God knows

all essences in the universe; in other words, the supreme divine intellect fuses with the essences of all objects.[105]

B. *The Divine Knowledge Comprising the Essences of All Objects*

Following Avicenna, Maimonides drew a further conclusion from Aristotelian epistemology,[106] which was based on the following question: How can God know individuals? Individuals, after all, are constantly splintering and changing, whereas God is homogeneous and unchanging. Maimonides had assumed that God is perfect, and hence incapable of knowing creatures inferior to him, since divine knowledge is not heteronomous. In sum, God can only know his own essence. How, then, does God know the objects existing in the universe? Maimonides' answer to this question is that, within the divine essence, are the essences of all the objects in the universe ("forms"), obviously in their ideal and perfect form. God, therefore, knows all individuals by knowing himself. He does not know individuals in their individuality, but as they are integrated in the general, ideal order. Furthermore, the existence of individuals in the real world is a consequence of their existence within God's ideal knowledge. In other words, the creation is God's thought about all objects in the universe.

These two stages lead, according to Soloveitchik, to an unmistakably immanent view of God. The subject-object duality, namely, the process whereby the knowing subject abstracts the form of the object before him, does not exist concerning God. By knowing himself, God knows the entire gamut of forms, thus making the latter identical with God. Following is Soloveitchik's formulation, laced with allusions to the Aristotelian and Maimonidean perceptions described above:

> God… is the one and only, eradicating the reality of the other, "all" exists within him and through him. All participates in his existence and clings to him. The reality of objects emerges through their integration in the Deity. Hence, in God's knowledge of the universe it is impossible for subject and object to oppose each other. It is impos-

[105] See, for instance, William K. C. Guthrie, *Aristotle: An Encounter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 182-183.

[106] See Dov Schwartz, "Divine Immanence in Medieval Jewish Philosophy," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 3 (1994), pp. 249-268.

> sible to detach the universe from God because separation from the source is ontological extinction. In God, the will to know is not an inalienable, objective element of the Deity that is separate from the knowing subject. Hence, God's knowledge of the universe is indistinguishable from his knowledge of himself.[107]

Hence the conclusion about creation as a product of God's thought:

> The act of creation is essentially the thinking activity of the Holy One, blessed be He, as God of the universe. On the one hand, God knows the entire universe as viable and unique, as if his thought were directed toward some ontic "outside." The divine knowledge thus revealed constitutes the reality of the universe. The disclosure of the supreme will out of the inscrutable *Ein-Sof* becomes manifest in the laws of nature. As noted, however, the "other" universe also exists within God. It is the source of reality, its essence and end.[108] "All" is within him. God's knowledge of the world is the knowledge of his (own) essence as the place of the world, as the first and last object that comprises all, encompasses all, and pervades all creation.[109] The reality of the "other" persists because it is part of God's self-knowledge.[110]

Reality, then, is not detached from God. There is an "outside" aspect to reality that, as it were, exists independently. From God's perspective, however, reality exists only within him rather than being self-sustaining, since thought is not merely perception but also entails a creative dimension. Because God thinks the objects, all objects in the universe exist within God's essence, namely, within divine thought. Hence, Soloveitchik is not satisfied with the existence of mere essences in God's thought; for him, real existence occurs also within the all-encompassing divine essence. It is readily clear that Soloveitchik radicalized Maimonides' approach. According to Maimonides, the existence of the universe is derived from God's special existence.[111] Maimonides upheld the world's dependence on God

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[107] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek" [Hebrew], *Halakhic Man: Revealed and Concealed* (Jerusalem: WZO, 1979), p. 197.

[108] Soloveitchik hints here to the *Guide* of *the Perplexed* 1:69, where Maimonides presents God as the three causes of the world: the efficient cause, the formal cause and the final cause. The immanent overtones suggested by Soloveitchik are nowhere to be found in this chapter of the *Guide*. Nevertheless, by the Middle Ages, we find that this text by Maimonides had already been interpreted in immanent terms. This point is discussed at length in Schwartz, "Divine Immanence in Medieval Jewish Philosophy."

[109] The hint here is to "surrounding all worlds and pervading all worlds."

[110] *Ibid.*, p. 201. This passage is suffused with kabbalistic terminology.

[111] The reference is to the modal doctrine of reality (necessarily existent vs. possibly existent). See above, pp. 15-16.

as necessarily existent, as a guarantee, in a sense, of the existence of any present. According to Soloveitchik, God pervades the entire cosmos, "'all' is within him," and the universe exists within his essence. The correlative perception, therefore, appears in distinctively immanent terms.

Several conclusions follow from this approach. First, when human thought coalesces with the essences it grasps, it imitates all-encompassing divine thought.[112] Furthermore: Soloveitchik concludes that knowing the universe is actually knowing God, whose presence is concealed there: "Man and God unite in the knowledge of the universe."[113] Indeed, the universe is "a distinct, separate object" on the one hand, but "the existence of the universe is involved in the thought of the Holy One, blessed be He, as absolutely true thought and infinite moral will, which is all action and creation."[114] Soloveitchik's terms thus transcend the notion of the world's mere dependence on God; they clearly convey God's involvement in the entire universe through his creative thought.

As noted, these passages seem to convey immanence only because of their style and terminology. The authentic interpretation leans more toward Herman Cohen's correlative view, stating that God and the world do exist independently, but an essential tie still prevails between them. This tie is established though God's creation of the universe, when the universe is a direct expression of the Deity.[115] The divine presence thus reflects this essential tie. The medieval style that Soloveitchik uses, however, denotes recourse to an approach that locates all forms in the divine essence, out of a sincere wish to examine its nature and its link to everyday reality. This style of thought also denotes an attempt to adapt the notion of a concrete divine presence to modern philosophy, namely, to Herman Cohen's teachings.

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[112] *Ibid.*, p. 198.

[113] *Ibid.*, p. 202.

[114] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[115] See Eliezer Schweid, "Foundations of Hermann Cohen's Religious Philosophy" [Hebrew], *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 2 (1983), pp. 272-273. David Hartman also endorses a correlative scheme of this type. He emphasizes that God and human beings are independent concerning their freedom as well as their ontological status, yet the covenant creates an essential link between them. Hartman takes pains to avoid distinctively immanent formulations and takes exception, for instance to the kabbalistic model of *tsimtsum* [withdrawal]. The divine presence in his approach, however, is a classic expression of this essential link between God and man. See David Hartman, *The Living Covenant* (New York: Free Press, 1985), pp. 24-25, 222-223.

From ontology and epistemology to the Oral Law and the foundations of Halakha: Soloveitchik draws a parallel between the model of the God-universe relationship and the model of the rabbi-disciple relationship when studying the Oral Law. At the ontological level of the universe—"it is impossible for the 'being' to emanate from God without the divine *Shekhinah* clinging to it." At the level of studying the Oral Law,

> The study of the Oral Law by rabbi and disciple is a miraculous metaphysical activity, involving the revelation of the impinging personality to the one affected. The revelation is also the communion between rabbi and disciple…. Herein lies the secret of the Oral Law, which in its nature and scope never reached objectification, even after it was recorded in writing. The Oral Law denotes a law that combines with the uniqueness of the individual and becomes inseparable from him. When the Law is transmitted, the personal essence is transmitted with it.[116]

The uniqueness of the Oral Law, then, is not only that it remained unwritten and was delivered orally. To draw a parallel from Aristotle's conceptual realm, the Oral Law is a kind of formless matter that assumes form according to each individual object. [117] Soloveitchik, like Uziel before him, makes the dependence between rabbi and disciple broader than just an "emanation of the spirit." Studying the tradition of the Oral Law implies substantial cooperation between rabbi and disciple, "communion," and "union." In Soloveitchik's formulation, something of "the personal essence" of the giving rabbi is also found in the "recipient." We can therefore draw a simple conclusion about the continuity between the ontological and the halakhic models: the first "rabbi" teaching the Halakha to Moses was no other than God himself. Hence, the living study of the Oral Law can be considered a further expression of divine immanence amongst its teachers and students, a form of substantial collaboration on God's part in the transmission and innovation of the Oral Law. Soloveitchik places prophets next to Torah scholars, [118] both

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[116] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," p. 229.

[117] Compare, Joseph Tabori, "The *Halakhah* and its Development" [Hebrew], *Jewish Studies* 33 (1993), pp. 78-79.

[118] *Ibid.* Compare Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man,* translated by Lawrence Kaplan (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1983), pp. 128-130. Note that, in the second part of this essay, creative halakhic activity is presented as an encounter between God the creator and man the active agent, who complements the process of creation by engaging in halakhic activity. In the present discussion,

under the "man of God" category. Finally, as the divine presence makes the world dynamic, so the divine that is embodied in the Halakha infuses dynamism into the halakhic realm, including its continuity as well as its innovation. [119] The rabbi-disciple relationship is actually correlative, but the conceptual system is immanent, pointing to a re-examination of the concept of spiritual emanation.

Although Soloveitchik did not offer a solid, consistent view of divine immanence, immanent echoes do resonate in his formulations and become apparent in the two parallel areas of his writings: the understanding of cosmic reality, and the nature of Halakha. Aviezer Ravitzky locates the sources of this discussion in Maimonides' thought on the one hand, and in the methods of the neo-Kantians—and particularly Solomon Maimon—on the other. [120] An additional and more general type of influence should perhaps be added to these two direct sources, a *zeitgeist* that is manifest in the writings of the religious-Zionist thinkers described above, who were concerned with the immanent conceptualization of the Deity. We may assume that Soloveitchik was familiar with discussions such as those of Reines, Amiel, and Uziel on the one hand, as well as with the writings of Kook and his disciples on the other. His contribution, beyond the translation of the modern correlative idea into classic immanent terminology, comes to the fore in the use of the theological question to clarify the dynamic process of transmission and innovation within Halakha.

8. *Summary*

The shared interest of religious-Zionist thinkers in the divine attributes—manifest in their confrontation with the immanent approach to God—emerges not only in approaches supporting this view, but also in those that contest it, and in the very attempt to reformulate immanence in modern terms. Uziel, for instance, was sharply opposed to radical immanence, but his insightful discussion shows his deep concern with it. Hirschensohn adopted an explicitly tran-

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however, the encounter becomes a genuine form of cooperation between God and man.

[119] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," p. 230.

[120] Aviezer Ravitzky, "Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik on Human Knowledge: Between Maimonides and neo-Kantian Philosophy." *Modern Judaism* 6 (1986) 157-188.

scendent view of God but, as we will see in Chapter Three below, he was so profoundly troubled by the notion of immanence that he thought it best to contest it openly. Finally, some attributed the afflictions of their times to an exaggerated concern with these questions: "Positive religiosity is replaced by religious feeling, when each one builds his own God and declares him immanent or transcendent." [121] Ideologues of religious Zionism, however, were also involved in this contest. In other words, the apparently abstract discussion about the nature of God's presence in the universe includes many Zionist religious thinkers, either as supporters or as interested parties. Even those who reject the idea of immanence outright, feel obliged to propose a theology that relies on alternative foundations. [122] Divine immanence was one of the factors shaping the reactions of religious-Zionists to ongoing events.

Immanence is thus a revealing indication of genuine concern with the divine attributes. Two directions surface in the various approaches to immanence emerging from a study of the views adopted by religious-Zionist thinkers:

(1) One direction supports a kind of divine involvement directing human beings in a psychological and personal sense, in their capacity as participants in historical and political processes, and in a religious sense, as halakhic innovators. This involvement, which broadens the meaning of divine presence and turns it into the inner thrust of the process, is shared by Reines, Amiel, Uziel, and Soloveitchik.

(2) The second direction expands divine involvement to the utmost, and describes the universe as existing within God. Unlike the previous direction, the immanent approach does not emerge from an analysis of latent perceptions; rather, it is discussed systematically, directly, and explicitly. This direction

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[121] Giorgio Pipeerno, *Ebraismo, Sionismo, Haluzismo* [Hebrew], edited and prepared in Hebrew by Johanan Di Catro (Sdeh Elyiahu: Sde Elyahu Publishing House, 1974), p. 36. Pipeerno (1923-1972) also criticizes modern philosophy "for dismissing the concepts of revealed religion and of the transcendent God, including all the qualities ascribed to him" (ibid., p. 52).

[122] One such instance is David Hartman's covenantal approach. For Hartman, the covenant between God and Israel is evidence of the autonomy, the freedom and the absolute choice afforded to both parties. A covenant requires the authentic, separate existence of the involved parties, namely, God and the Jewish people. See above, note 115.

> is supported by the school of Kook and his disciples—the Nazir, Harlap, and, to some extent, Zvi Judah Kook—and influenced leaders of Hapoel Hamizrahi such as Bernstein, Aminoah, and Shragai. Some of these thinkers did not hesitate to posit a direct link between immanence and the land of Israel. For instance: "By returning to the land of Israel the Jew regains part of the divine soul that is his…. And the Jew cannot be himself altogether until he recovers that share of the divine spark within him that is the correlative of the Divine Presence in Israel." [123]

Recurring in the various discussions are several shared patterns, contents and formulations, substantial as well as formal, some of which were not extensively considered here. For instance, the use of the expression "pervades all worlds and surrounds all worlds"; God as "the place of the world" and "no place is free of him"; God as "the world soul" and as the inner source of its vitality; the God revealed in the mysteries of nature; the distinction between the Tetragrammaton and Elohim as divine names; the analysis of the relationship between God and the world through the rabbi-disciple relationship, and so forth. These patterns attest to a shared pool of sources that sustains the theological discussions on the question of divine immanence: on the one hand, religious-Zionist thinkers draw from the Midrash and from kabbalistic and Hasidic sources; on the other, they are indirectly influenced by neo-Platonic and neo-Pythagorean schools, as well as by Kant, Spinoza, and Hermann Cohen, whom they question. More than anything, however, they attest to a concern with theology as a vital task. As noted, religious-Zionist thinkers did feel that they were charged with the task of reviving Jewish thought. Moreover, divine immance provided the justification for participation in the Zionist revival against the charge of *alyiah ba-homah*, or bringing the Messiah without awaiting divine intervention, since God himself is steering the revival.

Discussions of divine immanence, which cut across trends and factions in the religious-Zionist movement, indeed attest to a re-examination of theology. Let us reiterate that the openness to continental philosophical approaches on the one hand, and the involvement with the legacy of Jewish philosophy and Kabbalah on the other,

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[123] Rackman, *One Man's Judaism*, p. 301

resulted in a deeper and sharper concept of God. The openness and the involvement stem from the need for cultural renewal, and were also aided by historical events. For instance, the intense controversy within the Zionist movement concerning cultural activities probably played a decisive role in the development of religious-Zionist thought. [124] Outwardly, they projected a radical or moderate opposition to cultural activities within the framework of the Zionist movement. Inwardly, the movement of national renaissance seems to have precluded the adoption of these religious concepts without any re-examination, or without further reconsideration of the values of Jewish thought in light of secular culture. We might even say: the religious-Zionist movement was required to offer a unique, alternative culture.

This re-examination came to the fore in the concern with the immanent perception of God. Given these circumstances, it is clear why several thinkers might be interested in Spinoza's pantheism and in the interesting figure of Spinoza the man. This is the subject of the next chapter.

[124] See, for instance, Geulah Bat-Yehudah, "The Issue of 'Culture' and the Mizrahi" [Hebrew], *Sefer Shragai*, edited by Mordechai Eliav and Yizhak Raphael (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1982), pp. 66-86.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DIALECTIC VIEW OF SPINOZA

1. *Introduction: Fascination and Rejection*

Many thinkers in the Zionist movement found Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677) and his philosophy highly appealing. Their interest was not purely intellectual; these thinkers viewed Spinoza as a significant influence on the shaping of their own Zionist approach, which was exerted mainly through his philosophical doctrine and his theological-political theory.

In the theological-political realm, Spinoza set the parameters for defining the Jewish people as a nation, stressing the religious aspect of nationalism. Spinoza's discussion of the separation between religious and national institutions also contributed to the Zionist idea about the "normalcy" of the Jewish people and the future Jewish state. His famous remarks at the end of the third chapter of his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus,* concerning the potential renaissance of the Jews, was an unending source of inspiration for Zionist thought. Influenced by Spinoza, some thinkers construed his political thought as a foundation, as it were, of their own Zionist world view.[1] Joseph Klausner's approach is one illustration of this extreme stance. Klausner's quotation from Leon Pinsker (1821-1891) reflects Spinozian sources of inspiration in Zionist thought:

> If Spinoza, the moderate and considerate thinker, Spinoza who relates to everything so cautiously and to Judaism without undue love, if he could believe in the possibility that one day the Jews would establish their state and be chosen again by God, this is a sign that this

[1] See Eliezer Schweid, *Judaism and the Solitary Jew* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1974), p. 121. Schweid's historiographical approach (p. 116) argues that the history of modern Jewish thought cannot be understood without decisive weight being granted to the opposition to this aspect of Spinoza's thought and the attempts to abandon it. Schweid implemented this approach in his *A History of Jewish Thought in Modern Times* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1977), pp. 28-62. Accordingly, he would consider Spinoza's influence on Zionist thought decisive, at least by negation. This influence was manifest both as a psychological factor affecting the thinkers and as a concrete impact on the shaping of Jewish "nationalism" (compare *Idem*, *Judaism and the Solitary Jew*, p. 126).

> is not merely an hallucination…. So did Spinoza thereby also lead—indeed unintentionally—to the Hebrew movement of renaissance.[2]

In other words, those who view Spinoza as a kind of harbinger of Zionism argue that Spinoza, in his sharp criticism in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, posed before Jews the challenge of national "normalcy." Others, even if more moderate in their assessment of Spinoza's contribution to the Zionist idea, still viewed his teachings as a fruitful and influential source.[3] Jacob Klatzkin's (1882-1948) [4] serious critique of the *Tractatus* was ignored by other contemporary Zionist thinkers. Through the *Tractatus*, then, notwithstanding its contempt for Judaism, Spinoza actually influenced the development of the Zionist idea among many thinkers, leaders, and philosophers.

In the philosophical realm, Spinoza's pantheism influenced several Zionist thinkers, mostly belonging to the school advocating a kind of "national theology."[5] Spinoza's influence came to the fore in different variations of the notion of divine immanence, such as

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[2] Joseph Klausner, *From Plato to Spinoza* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mada, 1955), p. 296. This passage was written in 1932. Concerning these remarks by Spinoza, see Shlomo Pines, "The Opinions of Joseph Ibn Caspi and Spinoza on the Probability of the Restoration of the Jewish State" [Hebrew], *Studies in the History of Jewish Philosophy: The Transmission of Texts and Ideas* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1977), pp. 298-305; Joseph Hayyim Yerushalmi, "Spinoza's Outlook on the Existence of the Jewish People" [Hebrew], *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, 6 (1983), pp. 171-91.

[3] I am referring to Nahum Sokolow, Ber Borochov, and Nahman Syrkin. See Schweid, *Judaism and the Solitary Jew*, pp. 120-121; Zeev Levy, *Spinoza's Interpretation of Judaism* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Hapoalim, 1983), pp. 151-153. On Moses Hess, see Shlomo Avineri, *Moses Hess: Prophet of Communism and Zionism* (New York: New York University Press, 1985), pp. 21-45; Yirmyiahu Yovel, *Spinoza and Other Heretics,* vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) pp. 66-73. On Spinoza's influence on Zionism, Franz Rosenzweig, and Hermann Cohen see the introduction to Leo Strauss, *Spinoza's Critique of Religion,* translated by E. M. Sinclair (New York: Schocken, 1965), pp. 4-82.

[4] "This work brings no honor to its author, neither in its content not its form... in any event, its shadow is greater that its light. This book is a stumbling block tripping up a great man. It is an act that does not befit him, and would that we had not seen him in his corruption. But we shall not judge him for his distortion, nor shall we infer from this about his character in general…" Jacob Klatzkin, *Barukh Spinoza: His Life, Works and Doctrine* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Massada, 1954), p. 51.

[5] Eliezer Schweid, "'Theologic Nationalism' in Zionism" [Hebrew], in *Moshe Schwarcz Memorial Volume: Annual of Bar-Ilan University,* 22-23, edited by Moshe Hallamish (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1988), pp. 391-408; *idem, A History of Jewish Thought in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 338-40. Schweid lists Micha Joseph Berdyczewski, Aharon David Gordon, and Hayyim Nahman Bialik as prominent representatives of this trend.

the spirit of the nation (Berdyczewski) or nature (Aaron David Gordon). The influence of Spinoza's philosophy on the formulation of the Zionist idea may thus be regarded as a further chapter in the complex relationship between modern Jewish thought and Spinoza's teachings.[6]

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Circumstances differed in religious-Zionist circles although, like many of their secular contemporaries, some religious-Zionist thinkers did develop their outlook through close scholarly contact with Spinoza's ideas and writings. This is true, for instance, concerning Hirschensohn, Kook, the Nazir, and, perhaps indirectly, Jawitz, Alexandrov, and Soloveitchik. To some extent, these men represent religious-Zionist thought in the last three generations and, in this chapter, I focus on their critical or favorable views of Spinoza. I will also describe the views of Spinoza held by Shem Tov Gefen[7] and Reuven Egushewitz,[8] who were not spiritual leaders and are seldom mentioned in the annals of religious-Zionism but, in their modest way, were close to the religious-Zionist endeavor. They are representative models of religious-Zionism and their attitude toward Spinoza will be indicative, to some extent, of the attitude of religious-Zionism in general.

What was the general attitude of religious-Zionist thinkers to Spinoza's teachings? My attempt to answer this question in this chapter will rely on and substantiate the following assumptions:

a) *The Scope of the Discussion*

Religious-Zionist intellectuals were hardly concerned with Spinoza's political theories and their implications for the fate of the Jewish people. Their main involvement with Spinoza focused on his spec-

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[6] Numerous studies are available concerning the attitude to Spinoza among Jewish scholars in general and Enlightement authors in particular. See Menahem Dorman, *Jewish Arguments Against Spinoza* [Hebrew] (Te-Aviv, Ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad, 1990).

[7] Shem-Tov Gefen (1856-1926) was an original thinker, who wrote *Doctrine of Pure Prophecy: The Mathematical Philosophy of the Ein-Sof* [Hebrew] (Cairo: Hayyim Vidal, 1923). He corresponded with Kook.

[8] Reuven Egushewitz, (1897-1951), wrote a series of books in Yiddish dealing with materialistic and atheistic philosophies.

ulative philosophy, namely, on the immanent perception of God, which several of them interpreted as pantheistic. In some cases, this involvement was characterized by a critical tone; in others, by a dialectic of fascination and rejection. Spinoza's political doctrine, then, does not impinge directly on the religious-Zionist idea in its practical, narrow sense of providing a political solution to the Jewish problem while preserving the religious framework. The failure of Spinoza's political doctrine to affect religious-Zionists may be part of the extremism and zealousness kindled among them by the clash with those secular circles that had been influenced by Spinoza's doctrine. Spinoza's impact on the religious-Zionist idea, then, may also emerge through their confrontation with it rather than through their acceptance and internalization of his inspiration.

b) *The Topics of the Discussion*

As noted, religious-Zionist thinkers preferred to focus on the basics of Spinoza's philosophy, namely, to confine themselves strictly to the theoretical realm while leaving aside the theological political question altogether. Discussions in religious-Zionist writings focus on Spinoza's immanent approach and its implications for God's anthropomorphization. These thinkers devote particular attention to such concepts as *substantia* and *attributum* as they feature in Spinoza's mature philosophical treatise, the *Ethica.*

c) *The Theoretical Foundation of the Discussion*

These thinkers did not approach Spinoza's doctrine from a philosophical *tabula rasa.* Their critique began from a preliminary vantage point, primarily Kantian and neo-Kantian. The general critique, then, was accompanied by a philosophical overtone characterized by critical and idealistic nuances.

d) *The Complex Underlying Attitude*

As noted, religious-Zionist thinkers were not entirely one-sided and their attitude toward Spinoza is not limited to criticism and attack. The religious and emotional burden attached to Spinoza's notorious excommunication led to concern with the question of his heresy, and several of these thinkers developed a complex attitude to-

ward Spinoza's teachings. While critical, they still tended to defend Spinoza's doctrine in general. This ambivalence is sharply reflected in the approach that criticizes Spinoza, and yet views him as "a righteous man" and "a prophet" (see section 4 below).

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A prior qualification is necessary—there is no distinctive body of writings, in the shape of a collective "religious-Zionist critique" of Spinoza. It might thus seem unjustified to present this discussion as concerned with the outlook of "religious-Zionist circles." Rather, we seem to have a group of Orthodox religious thinkers dealing with Spinoza's doctrine, or individually expressing their objections. As noted in Chapter Two above, however, divine immanence was a matter of concern for religious-Zionist thinkers, and the analysis of their attitude toward Spinoza is a must within this theological context. The justification for presenting their critique as representing a collective religious-Zionist reaction rests on two further reasons:

a) *The Attitude to Secular Zionism*

Paradoxically, Spinoza significantly affected the formulation of the secular Zionist idea, despite his hostile attitude toward Judaism in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. In contrast, although significant numbers of religious-Zionist thinkers were well acquainted with Spinoza's doctrines, not only were they not directly influenced by it but they were actually sharply critical. As we will see below (section 6), some of their objections focused on the practical consequences of Spinoza's teachings, and perhaps only indirectly on the Zionist endeavor. This is a valid consideration according to the view that approaches religious-Zionism as a solid *Weltanschauung*, as it is indeed generally perceived by scholars and by religious-Zionists themselves. Furthermore, the findings of the present study clearly challenge the view that Orthodox Judaism endorses Zionism as an independent, autonomous approach, to be supported in addition to religion.[9] Even

[9] See Mordechai Breuer, "On the Concept of 'Religious-Zionist' in Historiography and in Jewish Thought" [Hebrew], *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 3 (1989), p. 18. On Spinoza's influence on the general conception of religion and nationalism in the Enlightenment era, see Connor Cruise O'Brian,O'Brien, "Some Reflections on Religion and Nationalism," *Studies in Zionism*, 11, (1985), pp. 167-8. Most re-

if we were to adopt the approach claiming that religious-Zionism functions as a wholly independent national element, to which religious praxis is then added, we would face an apparently unintelligible phenomenon: contrary to Spinoza's decisive influence on the national approach of secular Zionism, religious-Zionism has totally disavowed any political affinity with Spinoza. Even those religious-Zionist thinkers who refrained from criticizing the Spinozian model never considered his political ideas worthy of implementation. From this perspective too, then, a typical attitude of religious-Zionist thought toward Spinoza can also be defined by negation.

b) *The Contrast with the ultra-Orthodox*

Due to their self-imposed seclusion, non-Zionist Orthodox circles pretended to ignore or were mostly unfamiliar with his thought. In contrast, religious-Zionists conveyed an open approach that welcomed integration with universal culture,[10] and were therefore exposed to Spinozian teachings; some of them, as part of their general training in philosophy, were closely acquainted with his writings. Knowledge of Spinoza and his teachings, then, followed from the cultural and social characteristics of religious-Zionists as an ideological group. The awareness that secular Zionists had a favorable approach toward Spinoza may have brought the question of their own attitude toward him into sharper focus. Religious-Zionists, therefore, are almost alone among Orthodox Jews of the time in their potential affinity with a philosophical and speculative theory such as Spinoza's doctrine.

On these grounds, the following discussion will be defined as dealing with the attitude of intellectuals and ideologues within religious-Zionist circles toward Spinoza's teachings.

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As noted, the first assumption of this discussion is that the relationship toward Spinoza was formulated around his speculative philosophy. Indeed, two of Spinoza's main views bore the brunt of the religious-Zionist critique. One is Spinoza's ontological and episte-

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ligious-Zionist thinkers were familiar with this literature, but still failed to confront Spinozian sources.

[10] See below, ch. 4, section 3.

mological approach, especially the ascription of pantheism to his theory, namely, the identification of God with the whole of the cosmos. The notion of an immanent God did not bother these thinkers, but they could not accept the anthropomorphism that ensues from identifying God with nature and with material forces.

The second approach is an outgrowth of the first: identifying God with nature leads to a static view of the world. Reality is presented as fully self-contained, lacking any meaningful change processes. The two endpoints in the timeline that are so crucial to religious thinkers, creation and redemption, are entirely missing from Spinoza's writings. Teleological conceptions, presuming an end for every object or event, have no place in this theory either. According to Spinoza, history is not a purposeful process, and messianic concepts are altogether irrelevant. Religious-Zionist thinkers, who interpreted events as reflecting God's direct and dynamic intervention in history (accompanied by eschatological overtones), could not agree with Spinoza's stasis. Rather than focusing on Spinoza's rejection of the concept of a personal God, their concern centered on his exclusion of any divine dimensions from the historic processes. Although religious-Zionists seem to focus their critique on abstract philosophical issues, it obviously stems from the most profound and systematic foundation of their philosophical and ideological *Weltanschauung*.

In the following analysis, I examine several aspects of the attitudes of religious-Zionist thought toward Spinoza's teachings. In the first stage, I present a critique of Spinoza's world view, particularly the ascription of pantheism to Spinoza (sections 2-5); in the second stage, I present a critique of his static view of reality (section 6).

2. *Kantianism vs. Neo-Kantianism: The Boldness of Knowledge*

Despite essential philosophical differences between Kook and the Nazir, two common lines are evident in their spiritual development: (1) The indecisiveness surrounding questions about the status of Kabbalah, its antiquity and authenticity, from a philosophical as well as from a critical-scientific perspective.[11] Due to their interest in these

[11] On Kook, see Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, pp. 65-66. In many of his unpublished manuscripts, the Nazir voices concern regarding the scientific approach to Kabbalah. For instance, in the introduction to his commentary on *Tikunne ha-Zohar*, "*Manginot HaTikunim*," written in 1925-1926, the Nazir touches briefly on the question of the antiquity of this text, and offers a compromise solution. In the

questions, both Kook and the Nazir became aware of the resemblances between Kabbalah and universal philosophical concepts. It is thus plausible to assume that both these thinkers noted the closeness between certain kabbalistic teachings and pantheism, as well as the tensions evoked by this similarity.[12] (2) Their acquaintance with Spinoza's pantheism through his own writings as well as through other articulations of his doctrine.[13] Their study of Spinoza's doctrine probably began out of a thirst for knowledge, and gradually evolved into a critical approach. The parallels in the development of Kook and the Nazir created a fitting ground for their criticism of Spinozian pantheism.

A distinction must be drawn, therefore, between the critical view suggested by Hirschensohn, for instance, and that of Kook and the Nazir. Hirschensohn was critical of Kabbalah as well as of Spinoza's doctrine. As shown in section 4 below, Hirschensohn favors Spinoza's view over that of the Kabbalah on the question of anthropomorphism. In contrast, for Kook and the Nazir the contents of the Kabbalah were sacred, and they viewed the spread of its contents among their contemporaries as a "holy mission": "The mysteries of the Torah bring redemption, and return the people of Israel to their land."[14] Some Kabbalistic and Hasidic currents tend toward pantheism, and Kook and the Nazir liberally drew on these mystical methods. Kook advanced the theory of all-encompassing unity [*ha-ahdut ha-hakolelet*], bordering on acosmism, and the Nazir

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world of emanation (*atsiluth*), the Zohar was written by R. Shimon Bar-Yochai, while in the world of action (*asiyah*) it was written by Moses de Leon: "The *Tikunnim* and the *Ra'ayah Mehimanah* are supernal revelations from the spirit and soul of R. Shimon Bar-Yochai and Moses, their exact words, as it were, and in the world of emanation these are considered their own words. But literally, in the world of action, they were written by righteous and holy men at a later period, as is conveyed by the language and by many later idioms…". I wish to thank Rav She'ar Yeshuv Cohen for granting me access to his father's manuscripts. See also Dov Schwartz, "The Application of Legal Reasoning to Mystical Symbolism in the Teaching of R. David Cohen Ha-Nazir" [Hebrew], in *Studies in Halakha and Jewish Thought Presented to Prof. Emanuel Rackman on his Eightieth Anniversary*, edited by Moshe Beer (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1994), pp. 303-324.

[12] See Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), pp. 144-152; Yosef Ben Shlomo, "Gershom Scholem Pantheism in the Kabbalah" in *Gershom Scholem: The Man and His Work* edited by Paul Mendes Flohr (Jerusalem and Albany: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities and SUNY Press, 1994), pp. 56-72.

[13] For a discussion of pantheism in general, see above, ch. 2.

[14] Abraham Isaac Kook, *The Vision of Redemption* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: R. Abraham Hacohen Kook Publication Society, 1941) p. 89.

strongly emphasized panentheism in his own writings as well as in his editing of Kook's *The Lights of Holiness*. Their attitude to Spinoza's approach is thus characterized by a strong inner tension between rejection and acceptance, opposition and agreement, and, finally, by a desire to draw an essential distinction between their own outlooks and pantheism. We will discuss the critiques of Kook and the Nazir as reflecting Kantian and neo-Kantian points of departure.

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The explicit critique of Spinoza formulated by Kook and the Nazir appears in Kook's article "Knowledge of God," and in the Nazir's treatise *The Voice of Prophecy*. Scholars[15] have rightfully pointed to a Kantian starting point in Kook, arguing that the "thing in itself," the realm beyond the categories of understanding, is inapprehensible. Knowledge is possible only within the transcendental forms of sensibility and, in Kook's terms, "from the attributes [of the phenomenon] relating to the subject being studied."[16] From this Kantian perspective, Kook criticizes Spinoza's outlook for its attempt to understand the thing in itself; the claim that God is identical with nature implies that it is possible to know a realm beyond that of understanding, namely, God. He views Spinoza's approach as "childlike," in its claim that thought can recognize the "thing" fully and absolutely.[17] Kook, then, founds his critique of pantheism on the

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[15] See, for instance, Yosef Ben Shlomo, "The Divine Ideals in Rabbi Kook's Teaching" [Hebrew], *Schwarcz Memorial Volume*, pp. 73-86, (particularly note 45); Eliezer Goldman, "The Structuring of Rabbi Kook's Thought (1906-1909)," [Hebrew], *ibid.*, p. 97; Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism* , pp. 187-188. Ish-Shalom mentions (p. 7) a letter written by Zvi Yehudah Kook, attesting that Abraham Isaac Kook's essay "*Da'at Elohim*" was influenced by a lecture by Hermann Cohen published in *Ha-Shiloah* 13 (1904). This influence focused on the central role of ethics in Judaism (as Ish-Shalom notes on p. 136, note 46). In contrast, in the epistemological realm, it was Kant's influence that proved decisive.

[16] Abraham Isaac Kook, "*Da'at Elohim*" [Hebrew], in *Eder HaYakar v'Ikvei Ha'Tson* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1967), p. 130. We know that Kook authored a book as yet unpublished entitled *A New Guide for the Perplexed*. In this work, he discusses the proper attitude to such issues as the status of Assyriology and other sciences vis-à-vis Judaism. He considered this subject extremely important to the concerns of his generation. Moshe Zvi Neriah (in a personal conversation) reported that "*Da'at Elohim*" was originally included in *A New Guide for the Perplexed*. It is thus clear that this issue, including the controversy with Spinoza, seemed very pertinent to Kook.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 133. Kook offers an interpretation of Kant shared by many religious-Zionist thinkers, as will be shown below. As noted, Kant's essential contri-

limitations of human understanding. Eliezer Goldman has already noted that Kook's philosophical views were probably influenced by the trailblazing Hebrew treatise written by Fabius Mieses (1824-1898), *The History of Modern Philosophy*. Mieses was highly critical of Spinoza.[18]

The Nazir's approach is different. He agrees with the neo-Kantian critique of Kant's position, which holds that knowledge can be acquired without forms of sensibility. On this issue, the Nazir adopts the stance of Hermann Cohen and Solomon Maimon: "Pure thought requires no origin outside itself. Indeed, according to transcendental philosophy there is pure thought, understanding purified of all visibility."[19]

The Nazir thus disagrees with Kook and argues, in idealistic terms, that knowledge of the "thing-in-itself" is to some extent possible. At this point, however, he parts course with idealists. He holds that, while this knowledge is unattainable trough "conventional" (meaning deductive) methods, analogical reasoning can bridge the gap between human understanding and the divine substance.[20] Hence, the Nazir cannot criticize Spinozian pantheism as Kook had, and must return to Cohen's critique. Cohen had criticized Spinoza not

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bution is that knowledge does not merely apprehend its objects but, to some extent, actually creates them. The object that is apprehended is shaped by the forms of sensibility, and we can therefore infer there is no true existence beyond apprehension. Religious-Zionist thinkers refuted this contention, and argued that God is an actual reality beyond knowledge. We noted in ch. 2 above that Amiel had tried to make his views compatible with Kant by arguing that God is the complex of forms of sensibility, but Kook does not accept this approach.

[18] Mieses' book appeared in Leipzig in 1887. See Fabius Mieses, "Spinoza: One of Us?" [Hebrew], *Ha-Hed*, 8, No. 4 (1933), pp. 18-19. On Mieses's influence on Kook see Goldman, "Rav Kook's Links to European Thought," pp. 144-148.

[19] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, pp. 114-15. Compare Charlotte Katzoff, "Salomon Maimon's Critique of Kant's Theory of Consciousness," *Zeitshrift fur Philosophische Forschung* 35 (1981), pp. 185-195. The Nazir wavered between going to Marburg to study with Hermann Cohen or staying close to Kook, and opted for the latter. Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, however, shows that the Nazir did not withdraw from his Marburgian stance as a result of this decision.

[20] The Nazir considers the philosophy of Hasdai Crescas as an instance of the analogical approach. See *ibid.*, pp. 120-123. In his unpublished memoirs, the Nazir writes, "The origin of Spinoza's philosophy is in intellectual vision, in space, in geometric dimensions rather than in non-speculative Hebrew logic, and this leads to his negative aspect…. His philosophical doctrine must certainly be contested, for it is not of Jewish origin, although he did rely on several Jewish philosophers, such as Rabbi Hasdai Crescas, as is well known" (vol. 1, which the Nazir entitled "Childhood and Teens").

only in his *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism* but also in his earlier Marburgian writings. In his view, God is a transcendent being engaged in a correlative relationship with humanity, a relationship denoting an association between two separate elements linked through an essential attachment. To Cohen, Spinoza's pantheism is a modern form of idolatry, for it rejects God's unity and undermines this correlative relationship. The Nazir returns to this contention, stating that pantheism blurs God's separateness and leads to anthropomorphism: "The Amsterdam philosopher strayed from the path through an exaggerated emphasis on his primary principle—everything is divinity, pantheism, absolute, while God, blessed be He, is not separate, transcending all. That is anthropomorphism."[21]

Kook began his critique of Spinoza from a Kantian starting point. The Nazir relies on his own method. Spinoza held that his was the ultimately perfect method for understanding reality. According to the Nazir, Spinoza erred by ignoring another method leading to the recognition of the divine substance: "The negative doctrine of the 'philosopher from Amsterdam' originates in an absolute intellectual vision, or an absolute mental image, *idea adequata*, the intended idea, expected to emerge through a supreme, absolute mental vision."[22]

In the Nazir's view, Spinoza had focused on a "mental vision" and had not been aware of "auditory understanding." In other words, Spinoza had held that syllogistic, geometric thought, based on coherent deductive arguments and inferences, is the only vehicle for reaching truth, and built his *Ethica* on this thought. In contrast, the Nazir proposed analogical, symbolic thinking. He thought that Judaism's uniqueness lies in the comparative, analogical content of its various disciplines (prophecy, Halakhah, medieval philosophy, and Kabbalah) rather than on Spinoza's syllogistic, apodeictic reasoning. Through its analogical mode of thinking, Judaism can lead to knowledge of the divine substance. According to the Nazir, Spino-

[21] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 117. On Cohen's critique of Spinoza, see his *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, translated by Simon Kaplan (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1972), pp. 140, 331-333, 349-350; Jacob Klatzkin, *Hermann Cohen* [Hebrew] (Berlin-London: Rimon, 1923), pp. 56-57, 65; Samuel Hugo Bergman, *Contemporary Thinkers* [Hebrew], (Tel Aviv: Mitspeh, 1935), pp. 232-233; Schweid, "Foundation of Hermann Cohen's Religious Philosophy" pp. 291-292. See also above, ch. 2:7.

[22] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 119.

za's erroneous method of thinking led him to the "root of unbelief." [23]

Both Kook and the Nazir, then, attack Spinoza for his pretension to have attained understanding of the absolute, and for presenting human understanding as omnipotent in its reasoning.[24] They differ, however, in their epistemological orientation. Kook, following Kant, holds that knowledge has no access to the essence itself, only to its appearances in the refining fire of human understanding, whereas the Nazir, following the neo-Kantians, holds that a way might be found to know the essence. In strict philosophical terms, Kook considers the "thing-in-itself" a borderline concept, viewing whatever is beyond it as inapprehensible through human knowledge, while the Nazir sees in it a concept of substantial-knowable content that can be reached through the appropriate method.

3. *Kantianism vs. Neo-Kantianism: The Price of Unveiling the Deity*

The differences in the critique of Spinoza when approached through a Kantian or neo-Kantian perspective recur in the works of Shem-Tov Gefen[25] and Soloveitchik. Unlike Kook and the Nazir, whose relationship was that of teacher and disciple, Gefen and Soloveitchik reached their contrasting approaches independently. Their opinions are presented here together not because of any proven mutual in-

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[23] See studies mentioned above, chapter 1, note 89. In one of the many scattered notes left by the Nazir, he wrote: "When Spinoza relies on Descartes and develops logical vision to the utmost, the speculative idea of extension in space become everything, everything is divine. He thereby deviates from the basis of Hebrew logic, which never sees the absolute in space. In fact, even on these grounds alone, the excommunication of this great philosopher is justified."

[24] Compare this to Reines' remarks: "The knowledge that even the greatest and most luminous human intellect is restricted is crucially relevant to the preservation of religious faith. Should a man think that his intellect is unlimited and can grasp everything, he might conclude that something he cannot understand does not exist and slide into unqualified heresy... Man must know that the limits of reality are wider than the limits of the intellect" (Reines, *The Book of Values,* p. 77). Reines does not explicitly mention Spinoza. The argument that overestimating the power of reason leads to heresy is quite common. See below on Shem Tov Gefen and Soloveitchik (section 3).

[25] On the doctrine of this original, forgotten thinker, see the essays by Samuel Hugo Bergman in Shem-Tov Gefen, *Dimensions, Prophecy and Geology* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1974), pp. 10-14, 265-271. It is worth emphasizing again that Gefen embodied religious-Zionism in his private life and his ethos rather than in his declarations or publicistic writings.

fluence, but due to the systematic differences between their points of departure.

Gefen assumed an essential similarity between the teachings of Maimonides and Kant. Like Kook, he also identified the concept of the "thing-in-itself" with the image of the Deity as it emerges from Maimonides' negative theology. According to Gefen, the "thing-in-itself" is God, and Maimonides had anticipated Kant in his contention that it is impossible for human thought and language to describe God.[26] Relying on this assumption, Gefen criticizes the concept of God in Spinoza (to whom he consistently refers as "son of a thorn," the Spanish translation of "Spinoza"). Gefen argues that Spinoza had assumed that every divine attribute is self-sufficient and conveys an independent entity that can be known and grasped. God, then, is a composite of infinite positive attributes and has no concealed dimension. God is unveiled before human knowledge, devoid of any negative attributes. Gefen points to this statement as an oxymoron: the attributes are independent and self-sufficient, but they also constitute the divine essence and depend on it. He then says:

> How is it possible for entities that are not independent (because the concepts or the essential attributes are necessarily dependent on a percipient, and without a percipient, there is no concept) to become independent; or, in Kant's terms, how can the phenomenon become the *noumenon*, given that the phenomenon is a result of the *noumenon* and its manifestation, and depends on it.[27]

In Kant's doctrine, the *noumenon* is that which is apprehended, as it were, without categories and forms of sensibility—knowledge totally divorced from sensuous experience, the fruit of pure reason. The *noumenon* is a borderline concept required by the method. The *noumenon*, then, is devoid of content; it indicates that human understanding can only be based on a sensuous transcendental perception, and is incapable of pure understanding without these dimensions. Indeed, Gefen interpreted the *noumenon* as referring to the divine and, as such, bearing a positive content, an interpretation slightly different from

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 103. Gefen may have been influenced by Solomon Maimon's commentary on the *Guide*, *Givat ha-Moreh,* in which Maimon interprets Maimonides from a Kantian perspective.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 111. According to Gefen, it is self-evident that the essential attributes are real, namely, he ignores the approach that views the attributes as wholly subjective. Compare Thomas C. Mark, "The Spinozistic Attributes," *Philosophia*, 7 (1977), pp. 55-82. Hirschensohn also interprets Spinoza's concept of attribute as real, an approach he rejects. See below, ch. 3:4.

its original Kantian meaning. God exists beyond knowledge, and is therefore altogether indescribable. Gefen explained Spinoza's error in Kantian terms: as we know, the *phenomenon* refers to the real world, which is attained through knowledge. Spinoza erred, as it were, by identifying the *noumenon* (the divine substance, according to Gefen), with the *phenomenon* (the positive attributes). The conclusion, then, is that God is devoid of any attributes.

Gefen refuted the doctrine of the positive attributes with several arguments, among them one claiming it is impossible to predicate the simultaneous existence of two self-sufficient positive attributes. This argument, negating multiplicity, is identical to that included in conventional proofs of the existence of the "necessarily existent" one, which are common in medieval thought.[28] He concludes that predicating infinite positive attributes inevitably leads to the annihilation of the divine substance; all that is left in reality is a list of exclusive parallel attributes that never meet, leaving no room for the existence of the substance itself. In other words, Spinoza's theoretical understanding of the Deity leads in practice to atheism. This outlook is "materialistic, [God is equal to] a body of infinite dimensions, which acts according to the laws of nature and of mechanics." [29]

Like Kook's, Gefen's critique of Spinoza also adopts a Kantian perspective, as he understood it. In Gefen's view, Kant deliberately left open a path to the hidden and the mysterious that is beyond human understanding. Furthermore, like Kook and the Nazir, Gefen attacks Spinoza for his pretension to expose God to human knowledge.

Soloveitchik, like Gefen before him, fluctuates between the Maimonidean and Kantian legacies, but Soloveitchik's analysis of hu-

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[28] Gefen, *Dimensions, Prophecy, and Geology*, pp. 111-112. Gefen chose this proof because of Spinoza's understanding of God as "*causa sui*." See Herbert A. Davidson, *Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 293-298. Gefen also refutes the positive attributes by analyzing the number "one" (*ibid*., p. 113).

[29] Gefen, *Dimensions, Prophecy and Geology*, p. 115. See also pp. 169-70. Spinoza, then, could be considered a materialist. In this context, Gefen's refusal to distinguish between attributes and modes is worth noting. Gefen relies on evolution theory, both from a Darwinian and Lamarkian perspective, the latter claiming that a species can become a genus and vice versa. Thus, there is no essential difference between an attribute and a mode. See *ibid*., p. 116. On Spinoza as a materialist see below, ch.3:5.

man knowledge (in an early essay written in the 1940s, "From There You Shall Seek") is essentially neo-Kantian. He points to the common features of human and divine knowledge, leading to conjunction and communion but without nullifying the subject. Human and divine knowledge are parallel in both content and form.[30] Soloveitchik, then, clearly cannot criticize Spinoza from the same perspective as Kook and Gefen since, in his view, the divine substance can be discussed in positive terms. Soloveitchik has an additional reason for refraining from a critique of Spinoza for exposing the divine substance to human thought: he includes Spinoza in his typology of *homo religiosus* claiming that, on the one hand, Spinoza defines the substance as possessing infinite attributes but, on the other hand, only two of the attributes, *extensio* [extension] and *cogitatio* [thought], are recognized by human knowledge. Spinoza, then, also assumes that most of the attributes are not apprehensible, and the divine substance remains concealed from human knowledge.[31]

Soloveitchik, therefore, chooses another simplistic critique: he describes the wish of thought to found plurality and diversity on one abstract principle. The attempt to explain all the multifarious particulars of reality through one simple idea detracts from the dynamic nature of plurality. He calls this "rational cosmic religiousness," and argues that it leads to pantheism. In this context, he cites Spinoza's "substance consisting of infinite attributes," a doctrine which is a "step away from atheism."[32] In his discussion of the correlation of thought between man and God, where Soloveitchik's neo-Kantian orientation comes to fore, he emphasizes, "God created the world as a

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[30] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," pp. 198-204 in particular, and see above, ch. 2:7. The neo-Kantian overtone in this description was first pointed out by Ravitzky in "Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik on Human Knowledge," pp. 162-163, and I follow him in the present discussion. Ravitzky reviews the tension between the Maimonidean negation of the attributes and the idealistic conception.(*Ibid.* 166-168).

[31] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 14. Spinoza is included under the rubric of *homo religiosus*, longing for a "supernal existence whose echo is heard from time to time in the world of knowledge and science" (*ibid.*). In general, Soloveitchik is not interested in Spinoza's thought, which is almost irrelevant to his outlook, as Soloveitchik concentrates on the status of the individual and on the characterization of individual existential situations in relation to the normative halakhic system and the community. This stress on the individual contrasts, in a way, with Spinoza's doctrine. Compare Eliezer Schweid, "The Status and Value of the Individual in Spinoza's Teaching" [Hebrew], *Daat*, vol. 11, (1983), p. 92.

[32] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," p. 139.

separate entity, but did not give it independent existence.[33] Although the universe is dependent upon God, God is still transcendent, a conception that is alien to pantheism.

Essentially, then, Gefen and Soloveitchik disagree. Gefen claims that Spinoza had fully exposed God to human knowledge or, in a Kantian variation, that Spinoza had blurred the distinction between the "thing-in-itself" and its *phenomena*. Soloveitchik contests the view that Spinoza had bared God from his latency and sublimity; rather, he saw Spinoza's claim that the substance has infinite attributes as revealing little and concealing much. Soloveitchik cannot endorse Spinoza's metaphysics and is therefore critical of the identification of the universe with God, which he believes borders on the heretical. While Kook and the Nazir had discussed the epistemological aspect of the problem, that is, Spinoza's exaggerated assessment of human knowledge, Gefen and Soloveitchik grapple with the theological problems inherent in the purported exposure of the ultimate transcendence.

The critiques discussed so far were set forth by various thinkers in the course of formulating a more general outlook. Kook, the Nazir, Gefen, and Soloveitchik discussed Spinoza while considering one or another idea. In contrast, Hirschensohn and Egushewitz offer a systematic critique of Spinoza's philosophy, which reviews all his concepts, one by one. This consistency reflects their mixed, ambivalent attitude toward Spinoza's teachings. In the next two sections, I discuss their thorough critique of Spinoza's doctrine.

4. *Tug of War: Maimonides and Spinoza*

Hirschensohn's point of departure differs from the Kantian and neo-Kantian perspectives used by the thinkers discussed above. His critique of Spinoza relies on the modalic understanding of divinity, and on the Maimonedean distinction between essence and existence.[34]

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[33] *Ibid.*, p. 202.

[34] The modalic approach on the one hand, and the division between essence and existence on the other hand, are among the major innovations of Avicenna, who influenced Maimonides. According to Wolfson, Spinoza also adopted the modalic outlook as well as the division between essence and existence under the influence of medieval philosophy. See Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), vol. 1, pp. 61-78; *idem*, "Spinoza and the Religion of the Past," in *Religious Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.:

As noted, several religious-Zionist thinkers had already indicated that Maimonides reflects general modern philosophical conceptions. Hirschensohn uses Maimonides' modalic distinctions, namely, his division of modes of existence into possible and necessary, to point out Spinoza's mistake. Hirschensohn's discussion is comprehensive and wide-ranging, and the analysis of his view will thus be more extensive than that of others. Hirschensohn's affinity with Spinoza is manifest in his translation of passages from *Ethica*, including explanatory and critical glosses, which he entitled *Sources and Spiderwebs*.[35] He also discussed Spinoza in his book *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, and it is patently clear that he approached his critique of Spinoza as a top priority. His attitude toward Spinoza was uneven, fluctuating between uncompromising criticism and almost blind reverence. He defines his critique as scientific rather than theological, claiming that he disagrees with Spinoza on some of his scientific premises rather than on issues of faith and heresy, but his positive assessment does not detract from his zeal.

His critique can be both petty and profound, dealing with form as well as content. Hirschensohn sometimes finds that "he [Spinoza] stammers";[36] that he inwardly recoiled from openly expressing the idea of anthropomorphism and therefore resorted to a thick and convoluted philosophizing style.[37] Beside his formal critique, he disparages the most essential elements of Spinoza's metaphysics. Hirschensohn focused his critique mainly on the concepts of substance and attributes, and both are discussed below, in this order.

Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 247-249. Yet see Alan Donagan, "Essence and the Distinction of Attributes in Spinoza's Metaphysics," in *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Marjorie Green (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), p. 171. For Maimonides' decisive influence on Hirschensohn's approach to philosophical issues see Schweid, *Democracy and Halakha*, particularly pp. 146, 152, 159.

[35] Printed in Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, pp. 63-120. Three of the selections are concerned with the interpretation of Maimonides' *Guide*.

[36] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 67.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 76. Hirschensohn resorts to irony: "All this discloses the soul of this sage, for despite his boldness when facing the swords of the rabbis and of the mass, he feared for his soul, which told him, 'Don't speak to me overtly to distress me and rebel against that which I have long taught you—to reject anthropomorphism. Place limits upon the expanses of your heart, confine it with ideas and learning for I hear, and do not speak of me so, lest my feelings resonate upon the walls of your heart and hurt us."

[I] *Substance and Modes*

Hirschensohn is sharply critical of Spinoza's concept of a substance with infinite attributes—namely, God—and of the relation presumed by Spinoza between the substance and its modes. Spinoza defines substance as a "cause in itself" (*Ethica* 1:1) and all its modes as "necessarily existent," given that God is their immanent cause (*ibid.*, props. 11, 22); the modes *per se* are not necessarily existent (*ibid.*, 24). Hirschensohn correctly correlates the concept of the divine "substance" with the "necessarily existent" concept and, apparently, the "mode" (he does not explicitly mention this term) with the concept of "possibly existent."[38] From a Maimonidean point of view, says Hirschensohn, Spinoza made two mistakes. First, the term *causa sui* does not properly characterize "necessarily existent" because the necessarily existent has no cause.[39] Hirschensohn also disagreed with Spinoza's Aristotelian view that knowledge is the understanding of something through its causes. It is possible to know and act without becoming involved in the causal chain that preceded the object of the cognition or the action. A picturesque example of this principle is the knowledge and love of a man for his wife, which endures even without him knowing her family tree.[40] Ultimately, the human mind cannot comprehend the divine substance, the "absolute existence."[41] A more serious mistake is Spinoza's identification of God with nature, namely, "the necessarily existent" with all the "possibly existent." On this issue, he writes:

> All the myriad possibly existents together cannot make one necessarily existent, from thousands of zeros no number will come, and if a one is not placed before them, all the zeros together will still stand for nothing. If all the particulars in the universe are possibly existent, the one including all of them is also possibly existent, and it would thus

[38] Identification of the "mode" with the "possibly existent" is imprecise, as Spinoza's definitions also indicate. The concept of "mode" parallels what Maimonides and Avicenna had called "possible by itself and necessary by its causes." See Oliver Leaman, *An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 31.

[39] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, pp. 72, 76, 94, 101. Again, Hirschensohn rejects this term by relying on Maimonides' "Everything that is necessarily existent in respect to its own essence has no cause for its existence in any way whatever or under any condition" (*Guide of the Perplexed*, translated by Shlomo Pines (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), Part 2, premise 20.

[40] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 79.

[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 86.

> be possible for us to comprehend nothingness. Our failure to comprehend nothingness, however, shows that there is an infinite being that is necessarily existent, and that it exists because it is existence, while all the possibly existent are only images of its possible manifestation in infinite possible existences.[42]

According to Hirschensohn, Spinoza presented a formula:

substance/necessarily existent = all the modes/possibly existent.

Hirschensohn claims that the modalic concepts of "possible" and "necessary" are fundamentally different categories and, therefore, cannot possibly be linked together. This argument is reminiscent of the proof against plurality attributed to Zeno of Elea, whereby every object is composed of a collection of infinitely divisible parts, which are nonetheless not identical with it. Similarly, an infinite collection of "possibly existent" is not equivalent to "necessarily existent." The consequence of this argument is Hirschensohn's total rejection of the use of the term "substance" for the genuine "necessarily existent," that is, God:

> ...for we cannot call something a "substance" if it lacks accidents, and although the necessarily existent is manifest in infinite possible existences, these are not its accidents and all the possibly existent are not its attributes, in the sense that the accident is an attribute of the substance. Any substance whose accidents are not its attributes is not a substance for those accidents, for you cannot say that the sword is a substance of wisdom or folly, for wisdom and folly do not describe a sword. Nor does sharpness, an adjective of the sword, describe a house, a tent, or other similar nouns. Therefore, the necessarily existent is not the substance of those that are possibly existent, for it is not at all their substantiality and they are not its accidents; it only creates them and sustains them, but is not their substantiality because their substantiality is the possibly existent rather than the necessarily existent. It appears to me that Spinoza erred, and substituted the necessarily existent with existence itself, forgetting that existence itself is possible and that the necessarily [existent] is necessary. All the attributes he ascribed to the necessarily existent belong to the general substance, rather than to what he called "*causa sui*," whose essence is his existence. The general substance is not God, only the first substance of existence in which God is manifest.[43]

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[42] Hirschensohn, *Falsity and Truth*, 14, p. 38. This chapter suggests that, above all, Hirschensohn was bothered by the moral implication of Spinoza's approach. See also *ibid.*, 44, pp. 106-107 (the question of will and necessity). Compare below, ch. 3:6.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 118. Hirschensohn posits that Spinoza made a grammatical error, confusing *etzem* (substance) with *shem etzem* (noun).

It follows, then, that the term "substance" should be used only figuratively concerning God.[44] According to Hirschensohn, a distinction is required between "substance" and God. "Substance" for Spinoza is the hylic matter used in the creation of the world. Spinoza wanted to identify God with the entire spectrum of reality, but the concept of "substance" is only appropriate to this primordial matter.[45] The identification of the Spinozian substance with the "necessarily existent" is mistaken. Hirschensohn's argument against identifying the substance with all that exists ("possibly existent") resembles Gefen's argument against identifying the substance with the attributes. Their reasoning is also similar: identifying the divine substantiality with other characteristics (attributes, modes) turns God into an empty concept.

Finally, Hirschensohn concludes that "necessarily existent" is, on the one hand, the cause of the "possibly existent" and, on the other hand, completely transcends them:

> You must admit that there is a necessarily existent that is manifest in infinite possible existences, but is infinite in itself. It is "God" rather than the world in general [that is composed of] only possible existences that will all, like a garment, fray and wear out, while he and his necessity will never disappear.[46]

(II) *Attributes*

Hirschensohn argues against Spinoza that the attribute is not autonomous. The attribute is accidental, that is, it is a quality of a thing that is not essential to its true nature and, therefore, is not independent.[47] Moreover, the attributes are only subjective ways of thinking and are not essential qualities of the substance, that is, the attributes are not to be considered ontologically existent. Hirschensohn presents this subjective conception of the attributes as his personal opinion, which is incompatible with Spinoza's definition:

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[44] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections,* p. 87.

[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 89-91, 106-107. Schweid presents Hirschensohn's reasoning so that the Spinozian substance is the world in general (Schweid, *Democracy and Halakhah*, p. 149). It seems that this presentation is correct in the general philosophical context. Compare also Hirschensohn, *Falsity and Truth* 6, pp. 21-23.

[46] Hirschensohn, *Falsity and Truth*, 14, pp. 39-40.

[47] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, pp. 68, 71.

> According to Spinoza's method, the attributes are the essence of the substance, and accidental attributes therefore change the substance; in our opinion, the essential attributes are not the essence of the substance but only accidents that appear to human perception as part of the essence. Therefore, the accidental attributes are never a change in the substance, only a change in our perception, which sees the essential attributes changing to several types of accidental attributes.[48]

Here too, Hirschensohn follows the approach of Gefen, who had interpreted Spinozian attributes in distinctively ontological terms.[49]

Hirschensohn inquires as to what led Spinoza to posit the existence of the two attributes of thought and extension. His answer is that, for Spinoza, it was a way of contending with the classic question of the source of plurality in the corporeal world, and he then concluded that the abstract spiritual God is also the source of plurality and of matter. Hirschensohn held that the Maimonidean notion, whereby from one spiritual source only one hypostasis can emanate, had been accepted by all philosophers.[50] How, then, did the physical world stem from God? Spinoza solved this problem by attributing plurality and physicality to the Deity itself: "Spinoza found a more crooked path to say that He is not simple, for extension is His essential attribute, and all the accidents inhere in Him."[51] Indeed, Hirschensohn rejects the principle that had forced Spinoza to make matter contingent on God ("From the one stems only one") by using the idea of evolution as Gefen had.[52] The biological evolution of the species shows that the source of a particular species could well be a very different species (and he hints to the instance of man's

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[48] *Ibid.*, p. 69. Compare p. 84.

[49] See above, ch 3:3.

[50] This idea originated with Avicenna, and relates to the order of emanation of the various stages from God and from one another. In his view, only one object can emanate from one source of emanation. For instance: only one separate intellect emanates from God. This principle clarifies the appearance of matter, by positing a long chain of hypostases emanating from one another, with matter appearing only at the end. In this chain, God is not the direct source of matter. Obviously, many disagreed with the principle that "from the one, only one follows," in the wake of Averroes' critique of Avicenna's teachings. See, for instance, Dov Schwartz, *The Religious Philosophy of Rabbi Samuel Ibn Zarza* [Hebrew], Ph.D. Dissertation (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1989) 1, pp. 57-58.

[51] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, pp. 78-79.

[52] See p. 103 above, note 29. Nevertheless, he qualifies his statement by claiming that this is only "an argument and not a demonstration" (*Five Selections*, p. 78). Apparently he was influenced by Maimonides' phrasing in the *Guide*, II:19 (the proof of creation from the multiplicity of celestial movements).

origin in the ape). Given this incontrovertible evidence, it is not hard to assume that the absolutely spiritual would issue the material.

As was noted in section 3 above, Soloveitchik views Spinoza's doctrine as the thought of the *homo religiosus* because, out of the infinite attributes, only two are known to humans (thought and extension). In contrast, Hirschensohn remains unimpressed by a divine essence made mysterious by its attributes; in fact, he relates to the infinity of attributes through an approach anchored in Kantian roots. For him, only the two attributes of thought and extension are "total entities," while any attribute that is neither thought of nor extends is an "absolute non-entity." That is, an attribute that is not humanly apprehensible does not exist. In sum, all the infinite attributes unknown to human beings are but a "sophisticated invention."[53]

The attributes, then, should not be considered essential entities, but merely "accidents" that do not describe the essence: "Indeed, truth will show that all the attributes are merely accidents of the substance that no man or creature will ever see or grasp, and these accidents are not differentiated in the substance for they are not of its essence at all."[54] Most probably, Hirschensohn would argue that the attributes of action describing the effects of divine actions in the material world are merely the appropriate attributes of "the necessarily existent."

Hirschensohn does not spare criticism of Spinoza's doctrine and views it as anthropomorphic. Among some of his stinging remarks on it: Spinoza "humiliated the divine essence"[55]; the difference between Spinoza and the idolaters is that "they say to the tree, 'You are my god,' and he says to his god, 'You are a tree'"[56]; and in another formulation, "because the idolaters ascribed material concepts to their idols while Spinoza ascribed divine concepts to the primordial matter, elevated it and said, 'You are my god.'"[57]

The question is whether Hirschensohn considered Spinoza a heretic, and viewed his teachings as blasphemy and sacrilege.

An analysis of Hirschensohn's attitude to Spinoza reveals that his sharp critique or his blatant style do not fully sum up his approach.

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[53] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 70. Compare pp. 71, 75.

[54] *Ibid*, p. 96. Here too, Hirschensohn relies on the *Guide* I:52, although Maimonides would not agree to call an "attribute" an "accident."

[55] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 69; idem. *Falsity and Truth*, 48, p. 119.

[56] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 68.

[57] *Ibid*, p. 80.

Hirschensohn does not hesitate to defend Spinoza and argues that, although mistaken, he is neither a heretic nor an idol-worshipper. The primary source for removing the heretic stigma from Spinoza is the language of the *Ethica*: "No attribute of substance can be truly conceived from which it follows that substance can be divided" (I, prop. 12), on which Hirschensohn writes: "This pronouncement redeems Spinoza—it rescues him from the idolaters' valley of the dead and places him in the company of the righteous, who believe in the absolute philosophical unity [of God], for his concept of extension is in no way physical."[58] In other words, the attribute of extension does not anthropomorphize God. Furthermore, Hirschensohn considered kabbalistic thought, particularly the Lurianic concept of *tsimtsum*, inferior to Spinoza's method. Spinoza is thus close to the original, authentic meaning of the "necessarily existent," whereas the kabbalists distanced themselves from its abstract meaning.

Spinoza also drew closer to the notion of monotheism: "Spinoza's monotheism is clearer and purer than that of all his predecessors in the study of this matter."[59] He then proceeds with his critique of Spinoza's substitution of primordial matter for the spiritual God;[60] the mistake, as noted, is the ascription of attributes of the divine "substance" to matter, namely, the claim that the primordial matter is infinite. At the same time, however, he claims that Spinoza's errors do not render him a heretic. Spinoza erred in "vision" rather than in "faith," and he was therefore correct, as were Amsterdam's communal leaders who excommunicated him.

Hirschensohn devoted a long "note" to establish these assertions, from which I quote below:

> [Spinoza] views the extending substance as indivisible… In so doing, Spinoza raised himself from the ditch of heretical anthropomorphism

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[58] *Ibid*, p. 103. Egushewitz also based his discussion on the argument that the attribute of extension is not a physical dimension. See below, ch. 3:5. Compare Stuart Hampshire, *Spinoza* (London and Tonbridge: Pelican Books, 1951), pp. 66-68. On Hirschensohn's tolerant attitude toward Spinoza, see Schweid, *Democracy and Halakhah*, p. 148.

[59] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, p. 106. Apparently, Hirschensohn alludes here to the kabbalists who, as we know, described the Deity as a complex of lively and variegated powers. In ch 3:2 above, we pointed out Hirschensohn's critical attitude toward the Kabbalah. See also Schweid, *Democracy and Halakhah*, pp. 145-47.

[60] See above, pp. 109.

> and idolatry, and made the mistake of a dreamer before logically considering his visions. I would like to remark here that Spinoza is a righteous man according to his doctrine, and blessed in his reasoning and argumentation. With righteousness and honesty, he suffered the humiliations of those who opposed him and ostracized him, sacrificing his soul and honor to sanctify God's name. Had he agreed with his enemies, he would have worshiped many gods, whereas we would have been seen as heretics or idolaters had we admitted Spinoza's ignorant [conception of] God. Both adversaries were right in their ways, according to their scientific approaches. Oppressor and oppressed were both seeking God, and both were righteous, worshipping God truly and genuinely, for our controversy with Spinoza is only a scientific dispute, involving neither heresy not a debasement of religion and faith. It is as if two people were to disagree, one claiming the earth is larger than the sun and the other claiming the sun is larger than the earth. The disagreement between us hinges on whether we are unable to gasp nothingness [*ha-ayin*] because in truth there is no nothingness, or we fail to grasp it because it is not our genus, for we are [*yesh*]; in our [Hirschensohn's] opinion, we do not grasp it, whereas Spinoza thinks it does not exist. The disagreement between us is not one of faith, but rather a natural scientific philosophic argument as to whether the extending matter is finite or infinite…
>
> I also wish to defend Spinoza on the grounds that he is only mistaken and is not an idolater, for we call an idolater one who says to a creature, you are my God, but one who says that God is a creature is a heretic rather than an idolater. Spinoza did not say to primordial matter, you are my God, he merely said to God, you are matter and extend, and this is not included in the prohibition of idolatry.[61]

Spinoza's fatal error, then, involving the substitution of matter for the "necessarily existent," does not make him a heretic. On the contrary, Spinoza is presented as "righteous," as a "worshiper of God" and including, as it were, a prophetic dimension. In the passion of his vision, Spinoza saw the indivisible material substance extending *ad infinitum*, no more no less. Spinoza, however, erred in his interpretation of this vision: he did not understand that these two features of substance, extension and homogenous simplicity, are incompatible. Hirschensohn boldly attributes prophetic capabilities to Spinoza, "and this in truth is the secret of the vision and the prophecy." The prophet sees the abstract concepts in material garb, in the shape of a king, a chariot, a man, and so forth. Spinoza also

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[61] Hirschensohn, *Five Selections*, pp. 115-117. Compare to the discussion of Yovel, *Spinoza and Other Heretics*, vol. 1, pp. 202-203.

saw the supernal substance, the "necessarily existent," in its material garb (extending *ad infinitum*) but, unlike the biblical prophets, he failed to interpret this vision in the appropriate abstract manner. Spinoza, them, is included among the seers of prophetic visions.

Hirschensohn's attitude toward Spinoza is not clear-cut. He appreciates the consistency, the boldness, and the elegance of Spinoza's doctrine, and he also attempts to confine his error to a scientific rather than theological mistake. He also sees Spinoza as a kind of holy man, because he was consistent in his approach and paid the heavy price that this required, but his uncompromising critique of Spinoza's philosophy is unquestionable. A careful analysis of his critique shows that Hirschensohn attacks Spinoza on the same grounds as his predecessors in the religious-Zionist camp: the fearless daring involved in lowering the Deity from its heights and bringing it close to human apprehension or material existence. According to Hirschensohn, Spinoza did this by intentionally distorting the concept of "substance" and by misinterpreting the Maimonidean notion of "necessarily existent." This conceptual distortion led Spinoza to even greater mistakes in the doctrine of the attributes, which Hirschensohn illustrates by resorting to the image of the ever-widening distance between a perpendicular and an intersecting diagonal. Hirschensohn's critique relies largely on Maimonides, concerning both contents and conceptual semantics; in his view, Spinoza's logic and his casuistry drew on Jewish sources, including Maimonides, but he distorted them.

Some of Hirschensohn's claims are also found in Gefen's writings, and the study of the conceptual affinity between them, which is yet to be undertaken, could prove fruitful. Hirschensohn is known as a critical and unconventional thinker from a religious-Zionist Orthodox perspective. His attitude toward Spinoza, including his argumentation, may have contributed to this perception.

5. *Tug of War: Was Spinoza a Materialist?*

Samuel Alexandrov dealt extensively with the value of materialism and its historical standing in the context of modern heresy. Research shows that Alexandrov pointed to a sharp contrast between materialism and the foundations of Judaism. Nevertheless, he assigned modern materialism a built-in dialectic role in the hands of divine

providence, in the shape of the absolute heresy that precedes the return to true faith.[62]

How does Spinoza's doctrine fit in the map of heresies? Alexandrov lists Spinoza among materialist philosophers. In a letter to Joseph Gutman, he suggests three approaches concerning the relationship between God and the world, anchoring them in the saying "pervades all worlds, surrounds all worlds." According to Alexandrov, the correct doctrine understands this phrase literally: God is everywhere, yet at the same time is transcendent (namely, panentheism). The two other perceptions are mistaken. One sees God as transcendent and never intervening in the world; God only "surrounds all worlds." The other is "the view of Spinoza and the pantheists," who "only admit that He 'pervades all worlds' and deny that He 'surrounds all worlds,' and this is the notion claiming that God and the universe are one."[63]

In developing this idea, ascribed to Spinoza, Alexandrov categorically stated that pantheism and materialism sprout from the same root, that is, from the "pervades all worlds" approach: "And furthermore, the source of materialism is also in the 'pervades all worlds' view, as we know." He then turns to Gutman in blunt and forceful terms: "No wonder, then, that you do not cling at all to this 'necessary' God."[64]

Like Gefen and Kook,[65] Alexandrov saw a clear linkage between Spinoza and materialism. Note that, despite the dialectic role that he assigned to materialism, Alexandrov still saw its Marxist manifestations as a serious threat to Judaism in the present. Spinoza's

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[62] On the relationship between materialism and heresy in Alexandrov's writings see Ehud Luz, "Spiritual and Religious Anarchism in the Writings of Samuel Alexandrov" [Hebrew], *Daat* 7 (1981), pp. 123-124. The attitude to materialism has been a subject of concern to other religious-Zionist thinkers, up to the present. See, for instance, Rackman, *One Man's Judaism*, pp. 151-153.

[63] Alexandrov, *Letters of Research and Critique*, p. 70. Alexandrov therefore held that Spinoza's doctrine reflects pure pantheism.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 71. Alexandrov was generally influenced by Schelling, and directs the reader to the latter's views at the end of the discussion: "To feel these reflections, we require the assistance of kabbalistic sages in general, and the studies of the philosopher Schelling in particular." See Luz, "Spiritual and Religious Anarchism," pp. 122, 125, 133; Geulah Bat-Yehuda, "Rabbi Samuel Alexandrov" [Hebrew], *Sinai*, 100 (1987), p. 198. Schelling's approach, as we know, was close to that of kabbalistic theosophy.

[65] See above, p. 103, note 29. See also Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, p. 316, note 3.

doctrine is thus presented in materialistic and as such, negative terms. Nevertheless, some thinkers disagreed with Alexandrov's view and even questioned it; the most thorough and systematic was Reuven Egushewitz.

Egushewitz was well aware that Spinoza's name was associated with materialism, and strove to refute this association. He devoted his treatise *Faith and Heresy* to a critique of materialism.[66] In the introduction to his work,[67] Egushewithz lists his motives for writing the book. He sees current events, particularly the establishment of the State of Israel, as the fulfillment of a "vision of final redemption" and as miraculous divine providence. Some, however, deny the reality of miracles and base their outlook on materialism, and Egushewitz attacks them in this book. Egushewitz, then, is not afraid to draw a connection between his attitude to philosophy and his religious-Zionist outlook.

Egushewitz rejects the claim that Spinoza's doctrine could be viewed as part of modern materialism. When analyzing the fundamentals of materialism, Egushewitz distinguished between ancient and modern materialistic views. In his view, ancient materialism contended that matter is the sole reality. Nature is merely the total of material processes unfolding within it. Hence, there is no spiritual realm, nor any systematic need for one. Modern materialism, on the other hand, could not accept such a thesis because it faced the Newtonian discovery of force. These forces act upon matter even without any direct "material" contact. Material existence, therefore, is not epitomized in the stream of matter, but rather in the addition of a "supra-material" entity, which is force. In response to the discovery of force, modern materialism was compelled to argue that material substance is homogeneous. The distinction between force and matter is only nominal; in fact, there is no difference between matter and force. Modern materialists, said Egushewitz, rely on Spinoza for the claim that "force and matter are perceived as two manifestations of the same 'thing,' so that force is in essence matter, and matter is essentially force."[68] He therefore devoted the

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[66] On this thinker, see Zeev Gold's comments at the beginning of the Hebrew translation of Reuven Egushewitz, *Faith and Heresy*, translated by Hayyim Lifshitz, (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1961).

[67] *Ibid.*, pp. 9-16.

[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38. Compare Ernan McMullin, ed. *The Concept of Matter in Modern Philosophy* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), p.

chapter of his book entitled "Spinoza's Metaphysics" to a discussion of whether Spinoza's doctrine is indeed materialistic, and whether modern materialists were correct in adhering to it so closely.

Egushewitz argued that we must reconsider the concept of attribute.[69] An attribute is an expression of the substance on a certain plane. The infinite attributes of the substance have infinite planes, and every one of these planes has infinite modes. Yet the attributes are expressions of one unified, simple substance, for if the substance were complex, its parts would be either infinite or finite. The former option is void because infinity does not allow for differentiation and distinction,[70] and if the part were infinite, there would not be room for any others; the latter option is also void, since there could be no infinite substance composed of finite parts. The substance, then, is homogeneous; and if the substance is unified, its attributes, which are manifestations of the substance, are also unified. The attribute of extension, then, lacks any materialistic connotation, for it is infinite and devoid of any differentiation.

Egushewitz concludes that Spinoza is not a realist. On the other hand, it is inconceivable that Spinoza was a radical idealist, a philosopher who views space as merely an idea. Egushewitz's explanation is rather vague:

> The issue is that both of them [extension and thought] express different "languages," through which the substance "makes known" to our mind that it exists. It expresses this through thought, and also through representation, for we grasp reality through both these "languages."[71]

Apparently, Egushewitz found no fitting answer to his query. If space is only a mental conception, Spinoza still remains a radical idealist. Furthermore, these remarks should not be interpreted in Kantian terms, whereby space is a form of sensibility, for the subject here is a divine attribute rather than transcendental space. In any event, Egushewitz argued that the attribute of extension is not material, since it applies to a pure conceptual space and is indivisible. In his

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31; James E. McGuire, "Space, Infinity, and Indivisibility: Newton on Creation of Matter," in *Contemporary Newtonian Studies*, edited by Zeev Bechler (Dordrecht-Boston-London: D. Reidel, 1982), pp. 165-169.

[69] Egushewitz, *Faith and Heresy*, pp. 47-48.

[70] Egushewitz analyzes the concept of "infinity" in light of Aristotelian arguments against the existence of infinite substance. See Aristotle, *Physics* III, 4. That is, Egushewitz interprets Spinoza from a distinctively Aristotelian perspective.

[71] Egushewitz, *Faith and Heresy*, p. 51.

view, this analysis of the attribute of extension is sufficient to exclude Spinoza from the materialist category:

> Spinoza's premise that space and thought are manifestations of the same essence is due to his non-realistic outlook that space is not the same divisible space we construe but rather something we cannot imagine, because in all our images we grasp divisible space. Are materialists prepared to accept this non-realistic outlook concerning force and matter? Are they willing to admit that matter is something we cannot imagine?[72]

Egushewitz, like Hirschensohn, acquits Spinoza by developing and substantiating the notion that the attribute of extension does not apply to the material world and its particulars and, therefore, does not lead to anthropomorphism. As noted, Hirschensohn's attitude toward Spinoza was ambivalent: he did not blur the problematic areas of Spinoza's philosophy and emphasized its errors as he saw them. Whereas Hirschensohn attempted to leave out Spinoza from the list of heretics and anthropomorphists, Egushewitz discarded even the claim that he was mistaken. Egushewitz argued at the beginning of his book that materialism is a stumbling block to the Zionist and national endeavor, but Spinoza is not an obstacle at all. Although Egushewitz's attitude toward Spinoza differs from that of his predecessors, and Alexandrov in particular, he did not relate to Spinoza's theological-political doctrine and confined himself to the metaphysical realm.

6. *A World Without Drama: A Critique of Stasis*

The world of religious people teems with activity. Goals, aims, a set calendar of festivals, and past and future events: all are important characteristics of religious life as one imbued with objective and purpose. "A purposeful outlook on every single endeavor is extremely valuable."[73] "Religious philosophers have indeed tried to show that there is intention and purpose even in nature."[74] In Spinoza's outlook, these features lose their meaning. Quite obviously, a religious

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 53. Egushewitz could have found support in the reputable opinion of Lange, who tends to exclude Spinoza from the category of materialists. See Friedrich Albert Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart* (Leipzig: A. Kroner, 1898), pp. 406-407.

[73] The opening sentence of Reines' book *Gates of Light*, Part 1, 1a. See also 28a.

[74] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 7.

critique dealing with Spinozian metaphysics could not ignore the stasis characterizing the Spinozian outlook. The following critiques, spreading over a lengthy period, illustrate this trend:

1. Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795-1874) challenges Spinoza's doctrine by referring to it as a "fertile root with bitter flowering." In his view, the negative aspects of Spinozian doctrine focus on the denial of "reward and punishment" and the presentation of God as lacking will.[75]

2. Kook argued that Spinoza's doctrine negatively affected "divine ideals" by pretending to deal directly with the divine essence. On these grounds, he justifies Spinoza's excommunication:[76]

> The hand of God directed the leaders of the Amsterdam community to ban one who sought to lead into oblivion the ideal of appealing to God, substituting it with a shocking call to selfishness that has neither strength nor humility, neither sanctity nor joy, neither purity nor a life of yearning for true action—a heretical idealism that, in truth, is a call to an alien god, another god, and a strong sanction of vain thought.[77]

Kook scholars disagree on the meaning of "the divine ideals." The disagreement hinges on the identification of the attributes with the kabbalistic *sefirot*;[78] indeed, all agree that "ideals" are manifest in everyday life, at the practical and normative levels. In other words, the will to understand the divine essence itself should be steered toward imitating God's actions in the terrestrial world, including the Zionist endeavor. In Spinoza's closed and static world, however, there is no room for divine involvement in reality, for the practical, reli-

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[75] Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, "The Situation of Philosophy in Our Times" [Hebrew], *Ha-Maggid* (1861). See Avraham Itzhak Bromberg, "The Founders of Religious-Zionism" [Hebrew] in *A Vision of Torah and Zion*, edited by Simon Federbusch (Jerusalem and New York: Mosad Harav Kook and Moriah, 1960), pp. 50-51.

[76] See pp. 000 above.

[77] Kook, *Eder HaYakar*, p. 134.

[78] See Ben Shlomo, "The Divine Ideals in Rabbi Kook's Teaching," p. 76, and Ross "Rav Kook's Concept of God," p. 120, as opposed to Goldman's view in "The Structuring of Rabbi Kook's Thought (1906-1909)," pp. 101-102. Ish-Shalom takes a different position. In *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, pp. 6-7,193 ff., he argues that kabbalistic concepts were an important source of inspiration for Kook, but they should not be consistently understood in a strictly kabbalistic sense. In his view, the "divine ideals" are not identical with the *sefirot* in their kabbalistic meaning; rather, they are a philosophical-idealist expression with essential implications for national and Zionist activity. I agree with this view, and Kook's critique of Spinoza will thus be understood as clearly related to religious-Zionism.

gious, and ethical expression of the concept of God. Kook described such affects as strength, humility, will, and so forth, which have no essential place in the Spinozian world. Kook, therefore, considered Spinoza's doctrine as "heretical idealism."

3. Jawitz saw the flaws in Spinoza's philosophy as stemming directly from his metaphysics. The unified world outlook that identifies God with nature, spirit with matter, soul with body, necessitates absolute determinism:

> Freedom is absent in heaven and earth, in the soul and in the inanimate; there is no freedom of choice, and everything is forced and predetermined. No creature is responsible for its actions. The righteous will not be rewarded because he is forced to do evil, since the natural temperament compels both the righteous and the wicked.[79]

Negating freedom of choice involves crucial political implications. According to this approach, "might is right." Indeed, a most significant flaw in Spinoza's outlook is that it leaves no room for any eschatological overtones, excludes a teleological interpretation of history, and it certainly does not consider historical events as part of a process of perfectibility:

> In this somber, gloomy doctrine there is no room for freedom of the heart, for love and will, for the righteous judgment of the world and for genuine peace, for successful cultural growth over time, for amending the world at the end of days and for everlasting justice, which are the ideals of Israel's Torah, its prophets and sages. Nor is this doctrine capable of appreciating the wonders of history, for it sees everything constantly revolving in one recurring cycle, without any nation or person ever able to slip away at all.[80]

This passage shows that Jawitz criticized Spinoza's philosophy because it does not allow any active interpretation of history. Jawitz, then, is critical of Spinoza's determinism as a historian, and as upholding an independent historiosophical approach.

4. Jawitz' critique is included in the terse formulations of the Nazir. In *The Voice of Prophecy*, the Nazir claims that Spinoza's pantheistic outlook leads to four types of flaws, as follows:

a. Absence of creation—innovation. There is no generation. Everything exists forever.[81]

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[79] Jawitz, *A History of the Jewish People,* vol. 13, p. 103.
[80] *Ibid*, pp. 103-104.
[81] Aharon Barth also criticizes Spinoza on this point. Barth relies on the find-

b. Denial of miracles.[82]
c. Limitation of choice, determinism, negating freedom of will.
d. Negation the virtues of kindness and mercy.[83]

In the Nazir's unpublished manuscripts, Spinoza's doctrine is often described as "static," and contrasted with modern philosophic conceptions such as the dynamic Leibnizian concept of "force."[84] According to the Nazir, then, the flaws of Spinoza's doctrine are rooted in their ethical and practical implications.

5. Spinoza's concept of time is highly problematic. Like Aristotle, he does not see time as an independent entity but as a characteristic of *duration*. Moreover, in the Spinozian world there is no room for "beginning" or "end" points, yet Spinoza still argues that there is consciousness of time.[85] Soloveitchik criticized Spinoza for presenting time as unreal:

> In order to introduce the idea of eternity (*sub quadam aeternitatis specie*) into the supreme world view afforded by knowledge, Spinoza removed from being the attribute of time and ascribed to it only the attribute of space [extension].[86]

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ings of modern cosmological theories that speak of a starting point to the universe, as well as to what he considers the inability to find the source of primordial matter. See Barth, *The Perennial Quest,* p. 27.

[82] As noted (see section 5 above), this is the notion that Egushewitz had attributed to the materialists, attempting to exclude Spinoza from this category. As this source shows, the Nazir disagrees.

[83] Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, pp. 117-118. Incidentally, in a passage from his youth memoirs, the Nazir writes: "But in his [Spinoza's] personal ethics and in the *Ethica*, he is pure and sublime." This appears to reflect a development—or even a new clear-headedness—in the Nazir's outlook.

Note that Amiel uses Spinoza's doctrine to prove that philosophers in general were opposed to compassion: "The philosopher Spinoza decided that 'it is improper for a superior man to behave with compassion, for it lacks benefit and is essentially evil, since compassion will evoke in us a feeling of sadness, which is not befitting a man of perfect intellect,' whereas for us, compassion and pity take up most of our Scriptures" (*For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 42). In general, Amiel was not influenced by Spinoza but primarily by Kant. See Katriel Fishel Tekhursh, *Rav Amiel's Doctrine in Philosophy and in Judaism* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Shraga Weinfeld, 1945), pp. 12-14. Compare to ch. 2, section 3 above.

[84] See, for instance, David Cohen, *Commentary on The Kuzari 5:10*, edited by Dov Schwartz (Jerusalem: Nezer David Press, 1995), p. 95.

[85] See Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, pp. 347-358; Menahem Brinker, "Spinoza on Determinate Being and its Relation to Eternity and Time" [Hebrew], *Iyyun*, 17 (1966), pp. 208-211.

[86] Soloveitchik, *Halakhik Man*, p. 118.

This critique will be better understood if we examine Soloveitchik's concept of time. For Soloveitchik, time is not shaped through absolute, inflexible points. He rejects Aristotle's teleological view of time that shapes time according to the end point (which is actually determined at the beginning point); nor does he accept Newton's mechanistic conception, which shapes time according to the beginning point of the process. Soloveitchik posits the possibility of "a change in directions:" for instance, the repentant individual qualifies the past through the present, whereas halakhic man lives even the present in light of the eschatological future. Eternity and temporality mingle, just as the past and the future can be shaped and qualified.[87] Time is perceived as dynamic and flexible, thus allowing for dramatic changes. Clearly, Spinoza's and Soloveitchik's understanding of time are diametrically opposed. For Spinoza, time has no ontic foundation; it is only a partial viewpoint that does not reflect the totality. Spinoza presented eternity as a characteristic of substance, thereby neutralizing the meaning of time. In contrast, according to Soloveitchik, it is precisely the moment, the fleeting dimension, that establishes and shapes eternity. The critique of Spinoza again focuses on his eternal, stable, and static universe, contrasted with a religious alternative laced with existential overtones.

6. Finally, consider the critique of José Faur, a prominent figure among American religious-Zionist intellectuals, who came to live in Israel. According to Faur, Spinoza made Jewish suffering meaningless. Faur stresses that, for Spinoza, justice is with the pursuer and the pursued is mistaken; at this point, Spinozian metaphysics, theology, and politics converge.[88]

In this context, it is important to note the attitude of a prominent thinker of this period, Martin Buber (1878-1965), toward Spinoza's philosophy in general. As is well known, Buber saw in Hasidism the expression of a dynamic, innovative Judaism, far removed from the atrophy of the monologue, to use his expression. His interpretation of Hasidism resulted in a controversy with other scholars.[89] Buber interpreted the legacy of the Ba'al Shem Tov as a kind

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[87] *Ibid.*, p. 117-120. For a more extensive consideration of this issue see below, ch. 5, part 1, section 3.

[88] See José Faur, *In the Shadow of History* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), pp. 216-217.

[89] For Scholem's debate with Buber see Gershom Scholem, "Martin Buber's Interpretation of Hasidism," *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays in Jewish*

of reaction toward Sabbetai Zvi on the one hand, and to Spinoza on the other.[90] In Spinoza's world, God is inaccessible, totally impersonal, completely self-sufficient, and self-contained in his absolute perfection. According to Buber, Spinoza removed the basis for a genuine dialogue between man and God. Buber continues in Hirschensohn's path in his defense of Spinoza's motives. He views Spinoza as attacking the transcendental conception of God, which exalts God and erects a barrier between God and reality, but considers that Spinoza's reaction, in its identification of God with reality, went too far in the opposite direction. Divesting the Deity of any transcendence ultimately eliminated any option of a dialogue with God. Buber thus rejects the static world view emerging from Spinoza's philosophy, and joins the previous critiques on this issue. Religious-Zionist thinkers did warn against the flaws of the static perception regarding such distinctive theological and halakhic concepts as creation, miracle, and freedom of choice, repentance, and redemption. Buber, however, cautions against the crumbling of dialogue and the fossilization of the relationship between man and God.

Religious-Zionist thinkers who criticized Spinoza's static outlook were moved to do so by their perception of the importance of Zionism; alternatively, their dynamic philosophic conception shaped their outlook concerning the importance of Zionism. For instance, Kook and the Nazir saw the events of their generation as sure signs of "redemption,"[91] and they criticize Spinoza's motionless universe when dealing with the realization of their eschatological aims. Possibly, then, as Egushewitz had rejected materialism due to his mes-

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Spirituality (New York: Schocken Books, 1972); David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 89-93; Gershom Scholem, *Explications and Implications: Writings on Jewish Heritage and Renaissance* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1989), Vol. 2, pp. 408-413. See also Rivka Schatz, "Man Facing God and the World in Buber's Writings on Hasidism" [Hebrew], *Molad*, 149-150 (1960), pp. 596-609.

[90] The following discussion is based on Martin Buber, "Spinoza, Shabbetai Zvi and the Baal Shem Tov" [Hebrew] in *In the Orchard of Hasidism* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1979) pp. 10-12. On Buber's attitude toward Spinoza see also Moses Schwarcz, *Jewish Thought and General Culture* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1976), pp. 122-123; Abraham Shapira, *Between Spirit and Reality: Dual Structures in the Thought of M. M. Buber* (Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv: The Bialik Institute and Tel-Aviv University Press, 1994), p. 217.

[91] In this they differ from Soloveitchik, whose outlook is pragmatic rather than messianic. See below, ch. 6, part 1, section 6. Nevertheless, Spinoza's outlook is also clearly incompatible with religious-Zionist pragmatism.

sianic interpretation of contemporary events, these thinkers criticized Spinoza's doctrine on the same grounds.

7. *Summary*

The complexity typical of the relationships between various trends of Zionism and Spinoza's philosophy requires further clarification. Nevertheless, it appears that the religious-Zionist thinkers presented in this chapter share a minimalist attitude concerning Spinoza's doctrine: speculative philosophy and metaphysics are topics worthy of study and consideration. From here onward they differ in their views: some firmly reject Spinoza's outlook, while others defend it and even find merit in it, openly endorsing it. As noted, the common denominator of the religious-Zionist thinkers surveyed here is the assumption that Spinoza's theological-political ideas are not worth studying and do not deserve any consideration. On this matter, a few remarks are in order:

1. The kabbalistic-messianic origin of Zionism in general and of religious-Zionism in particular, has not been fully explored. Kalischer,[92] Alkalai, Alexandrov, Kook, the Nazir, and their current followers, all are examples of a large cross-section of the harbingers of religious-Zionism and its thinkers, who were and are driven by kabbalistic-messianic outlooks. Hence, the sharp critique of Spinoza's pantheism might be clarified by uncovering the kabbalistic motives underlying the motivation for religious-Zionist activity; kabbalistic and Hasidic doctrines, after all, border on pantheism, and on Spinoza's outlook in particular.[93] A definite historiographical analysis of the influence of Kabbalah on religious-Zionism would contribute, so it seems, toward an understanding of these thinkers' attitude toward Spinoza, which will emerge from the dialectic of critique and apology, rejection and acceptance, and from the disregard of the theological-political aspect.

2. We did not discuss the attitude of Labor Zionists of the time toward Spinoza's doctrine. We find that many Labor Zionists viewed

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[92] See Jacob Katz, "A Historical Profile of R Zvi Hirsch Kalischer" [Hebrew], in *Jewish Nationalism* (Jerusalem: WZO, 1983), pp. 293, 308-309.

[93] See above, p. 97, note 12. In general, the question of Kabbalah and pantheism has been approached without linking it directly to Spinoza. Note Amiel's admiration for the supporters of the "Hakham Zvi" regarding the expression "God or nature": "It is clear that the spirit of pure, original, and genuine Judaism was conveyed by these Jewish leaders" (Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 144).

Spinoza's work as one of the most important contributions of the Jewish people to universal culture.[94] The attitude of religious-Zionist intellectuals may have been indirectly influenced by these appraisals. A proper evaluation of this point requires separate research into historical issues such as the philosophical and actual contacts between these movements, which might help us to understand the ambivalence of religious-Zionists toward Spinoza.

3. The discussions in these chapters surveyed several models of criticism, and we do not pretend to claim that they cover the entire spectrum of critical options. Indeed, there are other private points worth considering in this context, and we will illustrate one of them. Kook justified Spinoza's excommunication in the following words:

> Were it not for those who banned him, this man would have been deemed a sage in Israel, his books would have been considered reliable works of divine [*elohit*] philosophy worthy of diffusion in the community. It is impossible to estimate the threat they involve to the spiritual and national status of Israel, and the potentially frightful consequences had the might of the Hebrew word been added to it. It is also impossible to estimate how many forces would have been lost, bringing along awesome confusion and prolonged illness, before reaching the spiritual summit needed to recognize their utter nothingness.... How damaging would they have been had they been written in the holy tongue, possibly even laced with words of Torah, with unacceptable insolence... much more than the influence exerted by all these as he sat away, isolated and separate.[95]

Kook, then, did not require the studies of a scholar such as Leo Strauss (1899-1973) to recognize Spinoza's esoteric language.[96] Kook condones Spinoza's excommunication on its original grounds, namely, the preservation of political stability in the community. Spinoza's esoteric literary style makes his philosophy dangerous, and the excommunication thwarted this dangerous threat. Zvi Judah Kook

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[94] See for example, Julius Carlebach, *Karl Marx and the Radical Critique of Judaism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 313, 320-321.

[95] Kook, *Eder ha-Yakar*, p. 134.

[96] Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), pp. 142-201. For instance, concerning the esoteric use of the term "son of God" in a letter from that era, see Ephraim Shmueli, "A Newly Found Letter of Baruch Spinoza" [Hebrew], *Iyyun*, 26 (1976), p. 288. In this context, note that one of the characteristics of halakhic man in Soloveitchik's system is his exoteric approach. Evidently, in contrast to the esoteric approach sometimes found in the *homo religiosus*, halakhic man does not conceal his thought behind ambiguous language (*Halakhic Man*, p. 42). As noted, Spinoza is considered a *homo religiosus*.

also condemns Spinoza for writing "as if he were one of the sages of Israel."[97] In our discussion, we focused mainly on the critiques of Spinoza's metaphysics, on the basic concepts of the *Ethica*. We attempted to prove that religious-Zionist circles were mainly interested in the speculative aspects of Spinoza's philosophy rather than in his theological-political doctrine. Additional critiques could focus on other topics.

In sum: even if no direct link joins the critique of Spinoza and religious-Zionist activity, an indirect link is certainly present. Some of the critiques related to the speculative doctrine, and then proceeded directly to negate any purpose or end within Spinoza's static world. As pantheism was a topic of discussion, so was the elimination of the *telos*, one of its direct consequences. The outlooks conveying this attitude, which were discussed in the present chapter, negatively reflect the "roaring silence" of other religious-Zionist thinkers, who refrained from direct criticism of the theological-political realm. The critiques of Spinoza are a further illustration of the varied reaction of Zionist Orthodoxy toward the challenge of secular Judaism. The complexity of this reaction was clearly expressed in the halakhic discussion of Isaac Halevi Herzog (1888-1959)[98] on the excommunication imposed by the Amsterdam community.

The critique of religious-Zionists helps to shed light on the thinkers who expressed it, whether directly or indirectly, even more than it serves to clarify Spinoza's doctrine. Their discussions convey the need for forging a *Weltanschauung* by clarifying its theological foundations. As noted, this clarification included the immanent conception of God, and the confrontation between many religious-Zionist thinkers and Spinoza's doctrine was therefore inevitable.

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[97] Zvi Judah Kook, *From Within the Redeeming Torah*, p. 20.

[98] This ruling was first published by Yirmyahu Yovel in his article "Justice Against Justice Without Tragedy: Spinoza's Excommunication" [Hebrew], *Baruch de Spinoza: A Collection of Papers on his Thought*, edited by Menahem Brinker, Marcelo Dascal, and Dan Nesher (Tel-Aviv: University Publishing Projects, 1977), pp. 184-185. It was reprinted in Yovel's book, *Spinoza and Other Heretics*, vol. 1, pp. 202-203. In contrast, Zvi Judah Kook (*From Within the Redeeming Torah)* held that Spinoza's theory of attributes was "the worst of idolatries."

8. *Appendix*

The essential thesis raised in this chapter is that religious-Zionists generally refrained from a systematic and considered critique of Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*. Religious-Zionists were mainly concerned with his metaphysics as an integral aspect from their renewed concern with theology. Sporadic mentions of the *Tractatus* were generally brief and superficial, failing to contend with it seriously. I wish to point out two isolated attempts to deal directly with Spinoza's theological political doctrine.

1. Jawitz briefly criticized the content of the *Tractatus*, although failed to mention it explicitly:

> Not only is Spinoza's entire doctrine the complete antithesis of the Torah of Israel, but he also chastised the entire people and the Torah for the sin of the leaders of the Amsterdam community, who did not agree with him. His evil wickedness is shown in his contained hatred for the people of his birth, who had cared for him, and for the Torah, whose defenders—Maimonides, Crescas, and the kabbalists—inspired his finest thoughts. Full of ceaseless adulation for the ruling religion [Christianity], praising even trifling matters as major attainments, he misread the Scriptures and found fault with them, as he did in the Ten Commandments that brought light to the universe. After a few brief comments on the law found in the Torah, which he thought worthy of emulation by all nations and kingdoms, he hastened to falsify history and continued to affront Israel.[99]

Obviously, this passage contains no genuine discussion of the claims raised in the *Tractatus*, but the critique relates directly to its contents.

2. The Nazir left many manuscripts of lectures on Kook's *Lights of Holiness*; in one of these lectures, he formulates a critique of Spinoza's *Tractatus*. It is worth noting that the critique of this work emerges mainly after the establishment of Israel (1962). Nevertheless, this critique was neither published nor edited for publication, but merely stated in oral expositions addressed to special disciples. Furthermore, in the notes of one of the Nazir's students, which have been published since 1990 in successive issues of *Nitsane Aretz (Anthology of Manuscripts and Glosses by Students and Graduates of the Merkaz Harav Yeshivah*), the critique does not appear in full and all quotations are

[99] Jawitz, A *History of the Jewish People*, vol. 13, p. 104.

omitted. Three passages from this critique as found in a manuscript are published here for the first time, followed by a fourth passage containing his unedited remarks in a relevant lecture, as published in *Nitsane Aretz*:

(a) The *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*[100]

Chapter Three, p. 79: A harsh critique of the people of Israel, and of the Bible, for ascribing prophecy, wisdom, and justice only to themselves and not to the nations of the world, claiming "we shall be differentiated,"[101] and so forth. Felicity is not only the knowledge that I alone have something, to the exclusion of others—this is childish thinking. (It is hard to read this chapter, seeing how he attacks and slanders his people, the people of Israel, opposing their election!).

p. 81: Divine *rule* follows the order of nature, which involves both truth and *necessity*. Divine aid is natural aid (as he claims in the *Ethica*, God or nature).

Ibid.: Everyone is forced to behave according to the fixed natural order (no free choice!).

p. 86: The prophet Malachi, "and in every place incense is burnt" to the Lord not only by Israel, not only by the Jews.

p. 87: The prophet Jonah knew that God is merciful to all nations.

p. 88: Unquestionably, all nations had prophets; it is untrue that "we shall be differentiated."

(b) A Harsh Critique of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*

On the cover, there is a quotation from the Gospels. Generally, he slanders the people of Israel, slights them, and praises the nations of the world. He is a stranger to his people, and pours hatred and scorn on them. He despises the faithful as those who vow to bring sacrifices to pay off God, hoping for good tidings and fearing the future.

Faith is based on an evil claim,[102] faith brings hope and fear of

[100] I skipped several quotations from the *Tractatus*.
[101] Exodus 33:16.
[102] Unclear in the manuscript.

evildoing; faith in superstitions rules men. P. 26: *Faith is a means for monarchies to rule their servants*, and they refer to this through the euphemism "religion," which is the greatest calamity for a free state. It is also the basis of biblical criticism until this day.

(c)

The doctrine of the Amsterdam philosopher, and of the father of the Enlightenment [Mendelsohn], is that the Torah of Israel is the law of the Hebrew state, and that the commandments, the whole of the Mosaic Torah, is meant for the Hebrew state; religion and the state are one unit, two that are one. Notwithstanding this doctrine's damaging aspects and faults, it does thwart those in the new Hebrew state seeking to separate religion and the state, by claiming that religion and the state are one and cannot be separated. Advocates of alien laws that are *not* founded on the law of the Torah of Israel [see that] the Torah is the law of the Hebrew state: "Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them."[103]

(d)

This is something I am afraid to mention, so I shall be brief. We claim that sacred wisdom [*khokhmat ha-koddesh*] is unified with action, but there have been other opinions. Some have argued that the Torah of Moses is solely the constitution of a Hebrew state rather than a set of beliefs, and does not mention [a command of] faith in God, and so forth, only action: do this, do not do that, etc.. This is "the man from Amsterdam" (Spinoza) in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. And he concludes that, if there is no state, there is, God forbid, no Torah, and other things the mouth cannot utter. It is hard to read this book, which is also the beginning of biblical criticism. His book was also banned by the Dutch government.[104]

The Nazir, then, was troubled by Spinoza's *Tractatus*. Although he saw a need to read from it at length to his students, he did not collect his critical remarks in a separate publication and left them

[103] Exodus 21:1.

[104] Aaron Mundshein, "The Lectures of R. David Hacohen "Ha-Nazir" on '*Orot* Ha-Koddesh'," *Nitsane Aretz* 7 (1990), p. 69. See also the version that appears in my article, "'*Orot Ha-Koddesh*'—A Joint Venture?" [Hebrew], *Sinai* 107 (1991), pp. 80-81.

on the margins of his notes to Kook's *Lights of Holiness*. Despite his awareness of the *Tractatus*, then, he chooses to contend openly and systematically only with Spinozian metaphysics. Finally, even David Hartman's isolated allusions to the *Tractatus* do not mark the beginning of a change, and religious-Zionism has preserved its traditional attitude to Spinoza's theological political foundations.

CHAPTER FOUR

WHAT IS "RELIGIOUS-ZIONIST THEOLOGY"

The three previous chapters outlined a range of views on various theological questions concerning the divine essence, the faith in this essence, and the shaping of a praxis based on these theological foundations. What lessons can be learned from these views about religious-Zionist thought?

The discussion so far indicates that religious-Zionist thinkers seem to share a platform not only on practical issues concerning the political and territorial solution of the Jewish problem, but also in their theological underpinnings. This common denominator pertains to method rather than to content; it involves a reorientation, a re-examination of basic theological foundations in light of the religious-Zionist conception and its interpretation of current events. These thinkers do not always arrive at the same conclusions, but all share a principle involving a reconsideration of traditional faith in terms of modern language and culture, together with the need for promoting a new type of believer and a new structure of faith. According to this assumption, then, "religious-Zionist theology" can be discussed as a separate domain, striving to develop a new conceptual construct of Judaism. The meaning of this assumption, as well as the need for its justification, is the subject of the present discussion.

1. *Practical Ideology and Weltanschauung*

Some ideologies can easily be adopted by different outlooks; for instance, the ideology of the ecological movement can be equally endorsed by "right-wing" or "left-wing" views in the political spectrum. Other ideologies, however, represent a "comprehensive world view."[1] On several grounds, historical as well as intrinsic, religious-

[1] See Shalom Rosenberg, "A Renewed Controversy: Judaism and Zionism" [Hebrew], *Kivunnim* 1 (1979), p. 11. This formulation is directly or indirectly influenced by the style of religious-Zionist thinkers (see below). It is also worth noting that the definition of an ideology as a system of ideas creating an ethos or a world view is already found in the writings of Karl Mannheim (1893-1947).

Zionism can be described as belonging to the latter type—it is a "world view." In the following chapters, I will set forth the claim that it is possible to deal with the methodological foundations of a "religious-Zionist theology." How so?

A simple answer to this question, no less profound because of its simplicity, is that a group of individuals who share an idea and work for its implementation, who are partners to a life endeavor and an all-encompassing mission, can be expected to develop common theological traits. Despite inevitable differences between them, they will have a common framework for discussion. A group contending with common problems will tend to rely on a series of common sources. Religious-Zionist thinkers are no different concerning this set of expectations. They acknowledge the existence of a theology in Judaism, which is why they are defined as engaged in creating religious thought; this thought, we may safely assume, will be influenced by a practical ideology, and will also influence it in turn. In the words of Meir Bar-Ilan (Berlin), Zionism is "the whole of the religious Torah world" for the religious-Zionist;[2] given this definition, the theological conceptual system of Judaism will certainly require re-examination. Furthermore: for many religious-Zionist thinkers, their national approach was the linchpin of their religious world. They raised the practical national element, which had been peripheral for centuries, to the center of their spiritual religious being. It is thus easy to understand that a new religious consciousness developed within this group of thinkers.

Uziel's definition of the concept of "nationalism" is a fitting expression of this reversal. According to this definition, "nationalism" is part of a simple, normal life. Orderly life within a national framework, however, is only the first stage, merely an introduction to the additional stages that constitute nationalism's most sublime achievements:

> In its precise meaning, nationalism is a world view meant to enhance our human life on earth, raising us to the summit of the human mission and its success, imparting the true views, the proper virtues, and the doctrines of law and morality to our children after us, and imposing these views and pious virtues on everyone, not through force and coercion, but through explanation and understanding, reflecting an

[2] Meir Bar-Ilan (Berlin), "The Achievements of the Mizrahi"[Hebrew], in *Mizrahi Jubilee Publication of the Mizrahi Organization of America*, edited by Pinhas Horgin and Leon Gelman (New York: Posy Shoulson, 1936), p. 7.

> appreciation of the truth and excellence of these views and of the good that ensues from them to all their followers.[3]

From this general definition of "nationalism," Uziel arrives at a definition of "Jewish nationalism":

> The mission of Jewish nationalism is, in sum—to live and to work, to build and be built, to improve our world and our lives, to raise ourselves and raise others to the summit of human perfection and accomplishment, through peace and love, to be sanctified in God's holiness in both thought and deed, to be a blessing to ourselves, and a blessing and glory, a light and a splendor to all nations, and to be a holy people to our Lord, Maker of the universe and Creator of humanity.[4]

Clearly, then, a definition of this type, which is certainly acceptable to substantial numbers of religious-Zionist thinkers, defines nationalism as a "comprehensive world view." This definition applies to the most basic theological beliefs of the religious person, who strives not only to create "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," but also to "mend the world in God's kingdom." It rests on the view that nationalism should not be divorced from religion, and that these two domains are actually one. It is thus plausible to assume that a comprehensive and inclusive Zionist theology of this type will develop among religious-Zionists, for whom religious existence is the most important consideration.[5] If the definition of "Jewish nationalism" does indeed contain such concepts as "true views" and "pious virtues," together with a recognition of "our Lord, Maker of the universe and Creator of humanity," it is clear that this nationalism includes distinctively theological elements. We present below several examples that express this prevalent view. Nissenbaum wrote: "Our Judaism in all its elements, from the Scriptures and the Oral Law and up to the hidden wisdom [Kabbalah], is a religious-national

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[3] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 2, pp. 121-122.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 134. On Amiel's discussion of nationalism see Israel Kolatt, "Religion, Society, and the State during the National Home Period," in *Zionism and Religion*, edited by Shmuel Almog, Yehuda Reinhartz and Anita Shapira (Jerusalem and Boston: Zalman Shazar Center and Brandeis University, 1998), p. 288.

[5] Indeed, when Aaron David Gordon formulated a Zionist approach that is, in a sense, an all-encompassing worldview, it was called "a religion of labor." See Eliezer Schweid, *The World of A. D. Gordon* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1970); *Idem*, introduction to the *Selected Writings of A. D. Gordon* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1983), pp. 7-24; *Idem*, *A History of Jewish Thought in the Twentieth Century*, index, *s.v.* Gordon.

Judaism, with the redemption of the nation and the building of the land at its center."[6]

Religious-Zionism, as the expression of religious nationalism, is thus perceived as the "center" of Judaism, and well entrenched in all its domains. This combination of religion and nationalism as the basic formula is also suggested by Shlomo Zalman Shragai: "Every religious manifestation in Jewish life is also a national manifestation… every national manifestation is also a religious manifestation."[7] More recently, Unna determinedly stated: "Jewish nationalism means that the Jewish people perceive themselves in relation to themselves, to other nations, and to God";[8] "according to the doctrine of religious-Zionism, religion and nationalism in Judaism are two sides of one coin."[9] The historiographic perspective of Maimon (Fishman) adds further depth to this statement. In his book on the history of religious-Zionism, he devotes less than one tenth to the period extending from the "harbingers of Zionism" until about the time of the writing (1936).[10] The other parts of the book review the history of "Zionism" from the promises given to Abraham, through the Bible and rabbinical literature, medieval and modern philosophy and mysticism, and up to the Hasidic movement. Hence, the history of the religious-national movement stretches from "the day the land of Israel was promised to the people of Israel" and until the present.[11] Maimon does not even agree with approaches that date the beginning of religious-Zionism to the views of Nahmanides and his arrival to the land of Israel.[12] Accordingly, he formulates the program of the Mizrahi movement as follows:

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[6] Isaac Nissenbaum, *Tradition and Freedom* [Hebrew], (Warsaw: 1939) p. iv; compare also Nissenbaum, *Ancient Heritage*, vol. 2, pp. 157-158. For a discussion of this approach see Abraham Rubinstein "A Profile of R. Isaac Nissenbaum," *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah*, 1 (1983), pp. 44-45.

[7] Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "Foundations" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 7:11-13 (1931), p. 179.

[8] Moses Unna, "The Essence of Jewish Nationalism" [Hebrew], *Redemption and The State* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 1979), p. 319.

[9] Moses Unna, *The New Community* (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1984), p. 143.

[10] Maimon (Fishman), *Religious-Zionism and its Development*, pp. 260 ff. This book was republished as *Israel, Torah, Zion* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1989). See *ibid.*, pp. 333 ff.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 292.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

> The program is clear and precise, an absorbent plan incorporating all that is proper in Hebrew life, materially and spiritually, in body and soul—a program that includes all the overt and hidden religious-national aspirations and yearnings embraced by the best in the nation, its prophets and saints, its sages and poets, its *geonim* and rabbis, its pious leaders and followers in all generations and at all times. The program of the Mizrahi is the essence of our great past, together with the healthy, productive, and living seed of our future. Preserving the historical continuity of our spiritual, rooted, traditional life in our holy, historical land—this is the goal of the Mizrahi and this is its plan.[13]

A plan such as the one outlined by Maimon reveals a broad, comprehensive *Weltanschauung*, in the sense of a "deeply rooted spiritual life." It is not confined to the solution of the Jewish problem solely in practical terms, through observant Jews joining the ranks of those seeking to realize the territorial option. Finally, let us consider Bernstein's explicit remarks on this question:

> The Mizrahi is not merely a union of religious-Zionists, in which these two elements happened to be joined together. The Mizrahi is a comprehensive world view. A homogeneous and united philosophy, a unique approach to Judaism. It is Torah, and we must learn it.[14]

As noted, Bernstein, Uziel, Nissenbaum, and Maimon reflect an approach widely prevalent among Mizrahi thinkers and rabbis, which the Mizrahi founder couched in more general terms: "Because no nation will fail to involve some spiritual matters from the pinnacles of faith and religion when referring to its land."[15] "The Zionist movement," Reines goes on to say "is spiritual and moral."[16] The school of Kook and his disciples also saw in the return to the land of Israel a coherent religious ideal, encompassing all realms of religious creativity and rooted in them. For them, the appearance of religious-Zionism was a new chapter in Jewish thought: the age of messianism.

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[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 291-292.

[14] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 85. See also Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 194. Compare with the remarks of Reuven Weinschenker-Gafni (1903-1971) concerning the status of the *Torah va-Avodah* movement in the Mizrahi: "The 'Mizrahi' is a spiritual world view about the religious-national quality of the nation" ("Independence in Practice" [Hebrew] *Netivah* 7 [1931], p. 91). See also the words of Giorgio Pipeerno, who would eventually join religious-Zionism, claiming that the only possible way of preserving Judaism is through "the Zionist solution" (*Ebraismo, Sionismo, Haluzismo*, p. 161).

[15] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 9, p. 49a.

[16] *Ibid.*, 49b.

Eventually, writing in retrospect, religious-Zionist thinkers will be harshly critical. Let us consider two instances. Aviad rebukes his immediate predecessors: "No prominent inclination toward speculative concerns is evident at this time.... In the area of ideology and ideological analysis, not one book is to be found from the time of the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel fitting the magnitude of this historic turning point."[17] Unna speaks about the movement in general: "One of the weaknesses of religious-Zionism, in my view, is that it has failed to use its method to develop an all-embracing, inclusive theory as the basis for its praxis."[18] The wording here might be more precise if "develop" were replaced by "formulate." This theory was not systematically formulated, or set out in an ordered treatise, but many religious-Zionist thinkers did want to establish a theological infrastructure on the basis of the ideology they had adopted or, at least, clearly enunciated the need for one.

The theological foundations of religious-Zionism, then, can be discussed by formulating at least general principles for this new religious consciousness. Shragai, who was quoted at the opening of Chapter One above,[19] suggested a fitting expression—"the faith constituent of the Torah"—as the basis of religious-Zionist ideology. In this light, the need to justify this theological discussion would appear, in a sense, ineptly apologetic.

The theological response of religious-Zionism might emerge more clearly when contrasted with a contrary approach. In a sobering note, the editor of a newly launched interdisciplinary periodical wrote as follows: "Whoever had believed that Zionism was a total solution to all the problems of the Jewish people, whoever had thought that, by its very nature, it ensures us absolute security and fosters in us all the qualities appropriate to a free and decent society—was wrong."[20]

This approach is unacceptable to religious-Zionists, as well as incompatible with their views and with the new consciousness they

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[17] Aviad, *Judaism and Present*, p. 57. Aviad also criticizes Zionist leaders in general, for disregarding the "value of thought" and avoiding the need for keen ideological confrontation.

[18] Moses Unna, "Unity or Isolationism?" [Hebrew], *Alon Shvut Assembly: Deliberations on the Ideology of Religious Zionism, its Essence and Course* (Jerusalem: Mizrahi-Poalei Mizrahi, 1978), p. 74.

[19] See above, ch. 1, note 1.

[20] Ahuviah Malkin, editorial in *Alpayim* [Hebrew] 1 (1989), p. 7.

had been striving for. For them, the religious-Zionist platform was indeed a renewed world view that provided comprehensive answers to the Jewish problem in the social, religious, and spiritual realms. This is true for the period both before and after the establishment of Israel, and is even more valid for the messianic trend represented, for instance, by the religious stream of Gush Emunim. In the present discussion, however, we will not confine ourselves exclusively to this view, and we will closely probe religious-Zionist thought and its supporters in search of noticeable elements, both cognitive and ideological, that might justify the search for a shared and distinct theological platform.

What led religious-Zionist intellectuals to engage in abstract discussions about the nature of faith, theology, and related speculative realms? Mainly, what is the source of this impulse aspiring to a new theological construct of Judaism? The reasons for the emergence of this comprehensive world view within the religious-Zionist camp may be grouped in two categories: negative factors (isolation and alienation) and positive factors (cultural openness), discussed in this order below.

2. *Isolation and Alienation*

The claim that religious-Zionist thought was built as a *Weltanschauung* can be established by negation: joining the religious-Zionist camp, at least during the first decades of its existence, involved exclusion from the Orthodox rabbinic world. Most rabbis, heads of *yeshivot*, and Torah authorities in Eastern Europe denied recognition, to say the least, to rabbis who had joined the Zionist movement. Reines, for instance, was almost entirely isolated within the rabbinical world and no longer invited to rabbinical congresses in Russia because of his extensive Zionist activity.[21] Reines reported that Max Nordau, at the third Zionist Congress (1899), had repeatedly admonished the rabbis for their indifference to the Zionist movement. Hearing a passionate rebuke of the rabbis by an anonymous speaker, Reines asked Nordau, who was a businessman by profession, if he would join the Zionist movement knowing he stood to lose one fifth of his earnings. On reporting the speaker's reac-

[21] Bat-Yehudah, *The Man of Lights*, pp. 128-129.

tion, Reines tells us: "He said nothing to me, but the expression on his face attested that my words had hit home." Reines then went on:

> And why should they protest so much against the rabbis if they themselves would fail the hard test of enduring the destruction, the damage, the uprooting, and the loss of all their material circumstances once their support for Zionism became public knowledge? Clearly, then, as long as you do not turn this into a moral ideal, the heritage of the entire nation, so that all the children of Israel know it is based on the holiest of foundations, they should not ask all the rabbis to express their opinions openly, nor should you blame them for this….[22]

Reines did try to offer solutions to the isolation and alienation affecting rabbis who supported Zionism. Nevertheless, and even several generations later, there seems to be no essential change in the profound sense of isolation and ostracism imposed upon them. Soloveitchik, a prodigious Torah scholar who also bore his share of seclusion and alienation from the rabbinic world, excelled in conveying the sense of spiritual isolation and compared it to Joseph's isolation from his brothers, the tribes of Israel:

> When the Mizrahi was founded in 1902, the founders of our movement fulfilled the commandment "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," because whoever joined the Mizrahi was almost evicted from his homeland and from the home of his spiritual father. We were alone, as was Joseph the dreamer, alone among his brothers who mocked him. We were also suspected by our brothers of many sins, and they looked at us from afar…. We must say that to be removed from the tribes of God, from Levi—the masters of the time, the teachers of Israel…; from Judah—the leaders of the time, who were the true supporters of the community, and whose words were as the oracle on all political and social issues…; from Benjamin, the pious of the time, modestly observing the Halakha in holiness and purity, to whom Jews streamed to obtain a blessing…—was not a pleasant experience.[23]

This passage hints to the emergence of a new religious consciousness among religious-Zionist thinkers, who were being shunned by representatives of the conservative anti-Zionist model. It is readily evident that the Zionist dimension was not simply added to the personality and ideas of the thinker; rather, the explicit recognition

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[22] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 9, ch. 1, p. 128b.

[23] Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions* [Hebrew], pp. 19-20. Soloveitchik speaks about his own personal sense of rejection on pp. 24-26.

of the Zionist movement actually resulted in a broad transformation of the thinker's entire way of life, including his religious consciousness. For their part, however, secular Zionists viewed any mixture of theological elements as burdensome, superfluous, and "odd," an approach that became fully and sharply evident on the question of "culture."[24] In the wake of this "spiritual" isolation from both sides, one might expect religious-Zionist thinkers to reassess their ideological reactions, including their theological responses, in the light of newly emerging problems. Elemental theological concepts could be reconsidered.

For instance: following the adoption of religious-Zionist, one could expect the basic theological concept of "faith" to be re-examined. Chapter One above showed that several thinkers founded the Zionist religious idea on faith, informing it with a distinctive dogmatic guise (for instance, Reines, Amiel, Maimon, and Shragai). Presenting the idea of the return to the land of Israel as a dogmatic principle of Judaism—and for some as *the* central principle—implies a re-examination of the structure of faith in Judaism, its roots, its principles, and its ramifications. Indeed, one cannot ignore that a central link connecting the various groups of religious-Zionist thinkers concerns the application of halakhic categories to the Zionist endeavor (joining ranks with transgressors; the creation of a Halakha-ruled state; working the land, and so forth). But a radical change in the dogmatic structure of Jewish faith by, for instance, raising the return to the land of Israel to the category of a "crucial article of faith" is unique to religious-Zionist thought, although it was perhaps to be expected.[25] Reines's view on the question of faith is an instance of this new order of priorities.

The decision to make the return to the land of Israel the central principle of faith is problematic. Messianism was indeed one of Maimonides' articles of faith, but within the context of a broader

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[24] On this question, secular Zionism is no different from any secular Western ideology. Compare Eliezer Schweid, "Theology as a Pedagogical Discipline" [Hebrew], in *Gevuroth Haromah: Jewish Studies Offered at the Eightieth Birthday of Rabbi Moses Cyrus Weiler*, edited by Ze`ev W. Falk (Jerusalem: Meisharim, 1987), p. 321.

[25] In contrast, for non-Zionist Orthodoxy, settling the land is at most a command, and halakhic and intellectual efforts were aimed toward proving that this command is no more dominant than any others. See, for instance, Yaakov Tsur, "Zionism and Orthodoxy in Germany" [Hebrew], in *Zionism and its Jewish Opponents*, edited by Hayyim Avni and Gideon Shimoni (Jerusalem: WZO, 1990), p. 79.

idea of redemption. Reines acknowledges the idea of redemption as an article of faith *per se*, without including in it the return to the land. Instead, the return to the land is turned into an independent and autonomous principle. Can the return to the land of Israel be presented in the guise of a dogmatic principle? Certainly, if the concept of "faith" is defined in terms of this principle, which is precisely what Reines did…. He defined faith as an emotional feature, which includes an ideological, beside the emotional, moral, and practical dimensions. Accordingly, the return of the Jewish people to their land is construed as a distinctive aspect of faith. Kook and his disciples substantiated this idea by expanding the concept of faith into an *élan vital.* Nissenbaum went even further, as noted in Chapter One above, when he made "Judaism"—as he defined it—coextensive with the Mizrahi movement. Nissenbaum reached this formulation relying on his perception that values such as nationalism and physical labor are an essential feature of Judaism. Many religious-Zionist thinkers, such as Leon Gelman—a leader of the movement in the United States—called for renewed concern with the principles of Judaism in light of contemporary events (in his book *In the Paths of Judaism* and in other writings). Hirschensohn, then, who vigorously opposed dogmatic Judaism, may have been reacting to the approach then dominant, which had founded religious-Zionism on faith.

This discussion of approaches to faith thus points to the need discerned by religious-Zionist thinkers for re-examining traditional conceptions. In this sense, theological discussion is consistent with a historical reality of isolation and alienation from the Orthodox, anti-Zionist world. The very notion of founding the Zionist idea on faith is a theological reaction to the isolation that was the fate of religious-Zionist thinkers, at least at the outset, and conveys the emergence of a new type of religious consciousness.

3. *Openness to Culture and to the Concern with Theology*

Unlike many non-Zionist Orthodox thinkers, religious-Zionist thinkers are united in their openness to general culture, and particularly to its concern with abstract theological issues. This feature appears to be essential, since the aim of establishing a "normal" modern state combines a technological and scientific orientation with modern culture. In this spirit, Unna claims: "seclusion is the antithesis of the religious-Zionist approach"; in his plan to bring together all the

various factions within the religious-Zionist camp, he formulates a unifying platform. In his view, religious-Zionism must

> direct its efforts to establish the spiritual and material life of the Jewish people on the Torah and the commandments, remaining open to positive humanistic values and to the science and technology of Western culture. Its approach will be critical, and thus selective, without renouncing the broad foundation. This spiritual and religious perception determines its attitude to current problems.[26]

This mission becomes an educational value in Bernstein's formulation:

> Ours is certainly not an appropriate time for withdrawal and isolation. We do not withdraw and isolate ourselves from the culture of other nations. The religious camp, and certainly religious youth, is open to outside influences. A religious way of life and observance of the commandments do not preclude these influences—foreign influences and foreign thinking fill our world. The claim of "innocence" is untenable in contemporary reality, it is untrue. Except for a few individuals (and even if there are many), this is not an innocent generation, and it cannot hide behind this claim. Unwillingness to deal with faith in our time is tantamount to criminal negligence, a dangerous neglect or evasion, evidence of the spiritual-religious weakness of the times![27]

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[26] Moses Unna, "Restoring Religious-Zionism: How?" [Hebrew], *Shragai* 2 (1985), p. 246. Elsewhere, Unna defined religious-Zionism as a "wondrous combination of Jewish rootedness, a sense of heritage and of continuity, together with openness to today's world and its problems, and the bursting joy of creativity." See *Israel Among the Nations* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: The Religious Kibbutz, 1971), pp. 5-6. Compare Aryei Fishman, "Tradition and Change in the Reality of Religious-Zionism" [Hebrew], *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 1 (1983), pp. 129-131; *Idem*, *Judaism and Modernization*, pp. 50-52. In this context, it is important to note the persuasive statement by Moses Samuel Glasner (1856-1924), who claimed that the creation of the state requires "a reduction in the number of Talmud students" (Glasner, "Zionism in the Light of Faith", pp. 70-71). This would in fact be the normal situation, just as only the tribe of Levi was responsible for Torah study in biblical times.

[27] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 19. The appeal for a specific concern with the issue of faith is discussed below, at the end of this section. Note that Bernstein comes from a Hasidic conservative background, and this appeal is couched in the terms of the national approach he had adopted. He also calls for the creation of a corpus of literature similar to the one of medieval Jewish philosophy, "resembling the one available at the time of Maimonides and Judah Halevi" (*ibid.*, p. 97, and see also p. 95). Compare Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 87. On Kook's educational approach on the issue of openness see Menahem Friedman, *Society and Religion: The Non-Zionist Orthodox in Eretz-Israel—1918-1936* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi, 1977), pp. 99-100. The controversies and disputes over the new educational ideal proposed by religious-Zionists, from a series of experiments

Indeed, one implication of the openness characterizing religious-Zionist thought is its recourse to universal cultural sources. Religious-Zionists relied on a broad pool of cultural and philosophical sources, contrary to the trend prevalent in non-Zionist Orthodoxy. In addition to Jewish sources in philosophy, Kabbalah, Hasidism, and so forth, religious-Zionists also relied on Spinoza, Kant, Schopenauer, and others, resulting, as might be expected, in a type of thought unique in its content and style. It is worth noting that non-Zionist Orthodoxy had also opened up to universal sources, as attested by such figures as Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888), Nathan Birnbaum (1864-1937), and Isaac Breuer (1883-1946).[28] These, however, were isolated instances, acting in specific locations and cultural contexts (Germany), and definitely not a sign of broader developments. Quite the contrary, Orthodoxy rejected any suggestion of external cultural influences, and frantically banned even the reading of periodicals that mediated this culture and presented it in Hebrew. Furthermore: non-Zionist Orthodoxy generally refrained from dealing with theological and philosophical problems in light of modernity. Serious theological discussions, relying on literary or philosophical tools, are hard to find in this brand of Orthodoxy. Halakha and halakhic authority replaced theological and philosophical concerns. We may assume that Bernstein's sharp comments about the "unwillingness to deal with faith [Jewish philosophy]," written in 1942, are directed against non-Zionist Orthodoxy and its followers within religious-Zionism, or perhaps we should say against those who failed to sever their ties with it after joining the religious-Zionist camp. These comments reflect a prevalent trend, critical of the Orthodox because of their obliviousness to philosophical considerations. Let us cite a few lines from Avida's accusations against them:

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launched by Reines and up to the character of Jewish education today, are part of the openness issue. For an instance of an educational ideal of openness see Mordechai Bar-Lev, "R. Zeev Jawitz as the Harbinger of Religious-National Education in the Land of Israel" [Hebrew], *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 2 (1987), pp. 91-110.

[28] This approach was supported by several members of the *Torah im Derekh Eretz* movement, which upheld Torah with secular education. This movement was influential at specific times and places, and held an ambivalent attitude toward Zionism. See Mordechai Breuer, "Orthodoxy and Change" [Hebrew] in *The Torah im Derekh Eretz Movement*, edited by Mordechai Breuer (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1987), p. 86.

> They have neither heeded nor studied the words of our prophets; they have chosen a few passages from rabbinical sources, saying: "This halakha is fitting and this one is not"; they have drawn away from Aggadah, which revitalizes the spirit and the emotions. They have not turned to study the spirit of the Torah; as for the study of our history, the history of our leaders, and the history of Judaism, all the rabbis speaking at the last rabbinical conference despised it and mocked it.[29]

Non-Zionist Orthodox circles harbored reservations concerning the discussion of religious-philosophical ideas with modern tools, and focused exclusively on the study of Halakha, Ethics (*Musar*), and Preaching (*Derush*). In contrast, there was hardly any religious-Zionist thinker of stature who had not read cultural or philosophical writings in the original or in translated versions and had not been influenced by them to some extent, even to the point of dealing with abstract theological issues.[30] This is true of those of German as well as of Eastern European extraction who came from a Hasidic background. Some even tried to justify this recourse to non-Jewish sources. In his letter to Pinhas Lintop, Kook appears to grant legitimacy to the study of extremely heretic doctrines:

> As for the alien beliefs, I tell Your Honor that, in my view, obliterating and eradicating these beliefs is not the purpose of Israel, just as we do not strive to destroy the entire world and its nations but rather to mend them and raise them, to purify their dross. They will thereby wish themselves to join the source of Israel, to be bathed in its light … this is the case even concerning idolatry, and *a fortiori* concerning religions that rely for some of their foundations on the light of Israel's Torah.[31]

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[29] Rubinstein, *A Movement in a Period of Transition*, p. 157. See Rubinstein's analysis, *ibid.*, p. 137.

[30] The recourse to universal cultural sources is evident beginning with the period known as "the harbingers of Zionism." Although it is questionable whether Zvi Hirsch Kalischer was influenced by general philosophy, it is clear that he studied it and was aware of its foundations. See Katz, *Jewish Nationalism*, p. 288. For a further instance of contacts between Nehemiah Nobel and Hermann Cohen, and concerning Schopenhauer's influence on Nobel, see Rosenbluth, "Rav Nehemiah Nobel: His Personality and Thought," pp. 11-12, 16-18, 22. For a study of how periodicals affected the influence of general philosophy on these thinkers see, for instance, Eliezer Schweid, *Judaism and Secular Culture* [Hebrew] (Tel-Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad, 1981), p. 114.

[31] Kook, *Epistles*, vol. 1, p. 132. Compare Ish-Shalom, *Between Rationalism and Mysticism*, pp. 136-137; Eliezer Schweid, "Prophetic Mysticism in Twentieth Century Jewish Thought" [Hebrew], *Daat* 29 (1992), p. 104.

This is an elaboration of the Lurianic doctrine on the raising of the sparks from the depth of the impure *kelippot* [husks], but with a distinctive cultural nuance. Truth is also found in views seemingly far removed from Judaism, and the era of redemption leads to the revelation and clarification of this truth. The messianic aspect of Kook's doctrine, therefore, demands a principle of openness. The work of the Nazir, Kook's colleague and disciple, represents the full implementation of this principle. The first part of his treatise, *The Voice of Prophecy*, is entirely devoted to a discussion of Jewish and general philosophical approaches, starting with the pre-Socratics and up to post-Kantian idealistic philosophy. It is thus typical that the Nazir sought the cooperation of philosopher Samuel Hugo Bergman (1883-1975) in the editing of Kook's *The Lights of Holiness*.[32]

The principle of openness is evident, for instance, in the considerable influence of Spinoza and Kant on the theology of religious-Zionist writings. In Chapter Two above, we re-examined the theology of these texts through the analysis of immanent formulations or through the critique of immanent perceptions of God. We found that Amiel's approach, for instance, suggests a new type of divine immanence, whereby God includes in his essence infinite forms of sensibility concerning space and time. Hence, all private perceptions creating reality are a limited expression of the divine perception. An approach of this type could only be formulated in Kantian terms. Furthermore, the approach of Kook and his disciples is not exhausted through the prevalent kabbalistic panentheism, and is actually reshaped in the wake of Spinoza's approach; Schopenauer and Bergson also seem to find place in Kook's philosophical writings on perfection as perfectibility.[33] We may also assume that Chapter Three above, dealing with several critiques of Spinoza by religious-Zionist thinkers, could never have been written in most non-Zionist Ortho-

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[32] See Dov Schwartz, *Religious-Zionism Between Logic and Messianism* , p. 225. See also *Idem*, *The Land of Israel in Religious-Zionist Thought* , pp. 232-245. It is also worth noting that Isaiah Bernstein sought support in Samuel Hugo Bergman's writings to warn against the dangers of scientific authoritarianism. See Bernstein, *Within Circles of Enslavement and Redemption*, p. 153.

[33] Compare Yosef Ben Shlomo, "Perfection and Perfectibility in Rabbi Kook's Theology" [Hebrew], in *Between Theory and Practice*, edited by Yirmiyahu Yovel and Paul Mendes-Flohr (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984), p. 301. See also Shalom Rosenberg "R. Abraham Kook and the Blind Alligator" [Hebrew], in *In His Light: Studies on the Doctrine of Rav Abraham Hacohen Kook*, edited by Hayyim Hamiel (Jerusalem: WZO, 1986), pp. 326-331.

dox circles. The enormous interest of many Zionist thinkers in the metaphysical discussion of Spinoza—ranging from a keen and incisive study of his writings and up to a vigorous defense of the Amsterdam philosopher—would be inconceivable in most non-Zionist rabbinical writings.

Let us consider the immanent perception of God yet again. In the writings of non-Zionist rabbis, God is usually transcendent and divine providence clearly heteronomous, without any proper discussion of the perception of God as such. For instance, when Israel Meir Ha-Kohen of Radun, known as Hafez Hayyim (1838-1933), deals with Providence, he describes God as sending prophets and angels, as driving Israel into exile and granting them rewards, without in any way hinting to a divine presence activating the cosmos from within.[34] When Elhanan Bunem Wasserman (1875-1941) analyzes current events from his perspective, he also describes divine providence as steering historical events from outside.[35] This is also true of Moshe ben Zvi Teitelbaum of Ujhely, Hungary (1759-1841), who was influenced by the writings of medieval philosophers no less than by kabbalistic writings on theological questions;[36] of Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz, known as Hazon Ish (1878-1953),[37] and of many others. In a generalization that will necessarily be superficial, we might state that Orthodox opponents of Zionism internalized the supreme value of the Torah as determined by Hayyim of Volozhin (1749-1821)[38] without, in most cases, resorting to the metaphysical kabbalistic background underlying this supreme value.[39] A system-

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[34] See, for instance Israel Meir Ha-Kohen of Radun, *Niddehei Yisrael*, (Warsaw: 1894), p. 63d.

[35] Elhanan Bunem Wasserman, *Selected Papers* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: 1986), pp. 81ff.

[36] See, for instance Moses ben Zvi Teitelbaum, *Yismah Moshe* [Hebrew], (Berlin: 1928), pp. 3b, 5a, 54d, and more. In all these sources and in many others, Teitelbaum emphasizes that God is beyond any description, and that only the attributes of action are revealed to human beings.

[37] I am referring to Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz's brief essay, *Hazon Ish: Faith and Trust* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: 1984). Even when the Hazon Ish speaks of divine reality, in the sense of God "pervading the entire world," he actually means that "everything stems from His knowledge, may He be blessed, from His will and consent" (p. 67).

[38] See, for instance, Wasserman, *Selected Papers*, p. 122.

[39] See, for instance, Norman Lamm, *Torah Lishmah,* pp.82-83; Tamar Ross, "Rav Hayim of Volozhin and Rav Schneur Zalman of Lyadi: Two Interpretations of the Doctrine of *Tsimtsum*" [Hebrew], *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 1 (1982), pp. 153-169.

atic, in-depth discussion of the immanent perception of God in typically philosophical terms is thus very far from this type of thought, even if this perception was implicitly accepted in its formulations. Moreover, the impetus given to Zionist thought in general by the dominant Spinozian approach had no effect whatsoever on non-Zionist rabbis.

One exception was found, resorting to immanence while rooted in a rich Orthodox, non-Zionist legacy. I am referring to Hasidic theology and to Habad thinkers in particular. These thinkers, however, endorsed immanence in terms very different from those adopted by religious-Zionism, relying on kabbalistic foundations rather than contending with continental philosophy. One of the psychological expressions of divine immanence is the Hasidic perception of the "inner point," claiming that an inner divine spark, ceaselessly burning, is found in every single Jew.[40] Will the removal of the interjecting husks expose this inner point in every one of them? Shalom Dov Schneersohn (1866-1920) does not seem to think so. He accuses Zionism of striving to become an alternative to traditional observance. In the wake of this accusation, he claims:

> Relying on this assumption, he who joins the Zionists no longer sees himself obliged to observe the Torah and the commandments, nor can we expect that he will eventually repent even if you crush him in a grinder since, by his account, he is a proper Jew because he is a loyal nationalist.[41]

Schneersohn draws a clear conclusion from his approach: "Herzl and Nordau were not drawn to Zion because of some divine feeling that awoke in their hearts." The practical implication is also anchored in theology. Schneersohn indicates that, in the acts of the *sitra ahra*, the divine light is not internal but surrounds all. Although the divine light revitalizes every being, in the *sitra ahra* it is, "in a sense, in exile,"[42] showing that divine immanence changes its essence in

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[40] See Mendel Piekarz, "'The Inner Point' of the Admorim Gur and Alexander as a Reflection of Their Ability to Adjust To Changing Times" [Hebrew], *Studies in Jewish Mysticism, Philosophy and Ethical Literature Presented to Isaiah Tishby*, edited by Joseph Dan and Joseph Hacker (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1986), particularly p. 620; idem, *Ideological Trends of Hasidism in Poland during the Interwar Period and the Holocaust* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1990), pp. 122-153.

[41] Shalom Dov Schneersohn, *Kuntres u-Maa'yan mi-Beit Ha-Shem* (Brooklyn:1944), p. 48. On the opposition of Habad rabbis to Zionism see Itzhak Alfasi, "Hasidism and the Mizrahi Movement" [Hebrew], *Shragai* 1 (1982), p. 58.

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69. The extent of immanence in the acosmism of Habad is also

relation to holiness and defilement. The similarity with Reines, for instance, who finds in every Jew an inner "divine force" directing the decisions of the entire nation, is illuminating, since Reines also formulates the notion of an "inner point":

> Absolute heresy, or complete denial of religious principles, do not actually exist, even if worthless ideas may appear to have become deeply entrenched in the person's heart. If we could enter the treasures of his heart, however, we would find that, on its edges, the point of faith lies asleep and alienated, because passions and carnal desires have laid traps and bans on it and, to its great sadness, have pushed it to the fringes of the heart.[43]

This approach is discussed further in Chapter Five below, but let us note here that this perception became common and widespread, and was eventually formulated by Zvi Judah Kook in the context of discussing the Tetragrammaton: "Israel always sets the Tetragrammaton before it; that is why it will not waver and that is why it possesses a divine force, which is its divine source."[44] This paves the way for an outlook that sees divine guidance manifest in concrete events, among them religious-Zionist activity, which is also a solution to the heresy of exile. Aviad posits a direct link between the immanent divine power of the Jewish people, which he assumes to be identical to the special providence over the chosen people, and current events according to his interpretation, namely, omens of redemption and their realization within the Zionist process. Aviad tries to offer a logical explanation of Judah Halevi's formulation of divine presence/immanence:

> Judah Halevi's view [on the issue of the divine], on the divine power within Israel, on the divine providence that guards Israel and always goes with them, is now easily clarified. The question about the end and purpose of humanity is also better understood now. Prophecy, divine providence [literally—divine thing, a key term in *The Kuzari*], which

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a topic that still awaits discussion. Compare Menahem Mendel Shneersohn, *Gates of Faith* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Kehat, 1991), pp. 74-75; Ross, "Rav Hayim of Volozhin and Rav Schneur Zalman of Lyadi."

[43] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 4, p. 39a. Compare to his statement: "even when they [the Jewish people] lost their political independence, pure faith was not eradicated from their hearts, nor was their bond with the Holy One, blessed be He, severed, thus proving they have an inner, intrinsic bond with their Creator" (*ibid.*, ch. 6, p. 42a). This principle recurs in many of Reines's writings. See for instance, *A New Light on Zion*, pp. 44a, 46a; see pp. 49-56, 175-187 in this volume.

[44] Zvi Judah Kook, *The Light of My Pathway*, p. 115.

> was Adam's lot and hence the lot of all humanity, did not cling to all his descendants but passed from generation to generation and was fulfilled in one [person only], until it reached Jacob and from him became the lot of all his children-tribes. One nation inherits the most important possession, the divine share from Heaven, and in this role it lives, creates, suffers, and rises again to receive redemption, to the ingathering of exiles and to recreate humanity as a new reality at the end of days.[45]

Clearly, then, the same immanent idea of the "divine point," which in Habad was meant to denote difference, acts in religious-Zionism as a unifying element that supports its approach. We thus learn that divine immanence, in its Zionist version, assumes a distinct uniqueness in the wake of practical ideology, just as it may assume other forms in non-Zionist approaches. Hasidic sources did not examine in depth the philosophical-methodological dimensions of the idea of immanence, confining themselves to a re-elaboration of traditional kabbalistic concepts. Might not a discussion of divine immanence anchored in a general philosophical tradition act as a theological common denominator? After all, such a discussion has engaged almost every religious-Zionist thinker mentioned in these pages, including Reines, Alexandrov, Gefen, Amiel, Uziel, Hirschensohn, Kook and his son, the Nazir, Harlap, Shragai, and Egushewitz.

Finally, Harlap's radical approach, stating that divine immanence in the cosmos as a whole is reflected only in the Jewish people, and that this reflection has a direct bearing on Jewish nationalism, indicates without a doubt that abstract theology is not divorced from practical ideology. In fact, it is the element that prompts and en-

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[45] Aviad, *Gateways to Philosophical Problems of Our Time*, p. 11, according to *The Kuzari* 1:95. See also Aviad, *Reflections on the Philosophy of History*, p. 171. This passage was written in 1945, by which time the messianic conception of Zionism had already taken shape in Aviad's mind. The shift from a "neutral" religious perception of the events to a distinctively messianic approach is well described in an article from 1943 (see *Gateways to Philosophical Problems*, p. 261), where he writes: "I always took care not to identify Zionism with messianism… but now I dare say that, for the first time, I feel in a way that rather terrifies me that Zionism, to some extent, borders on the prophecy of redemption and that, from afar, I envisage the transition." This passage, then, describes the divine force of the Jewish people as bringing "redemption" and the "end of days," and the Zionist endeavor as a part of this process. It is worth noting that in his treatise, *Reflections on the Philosophy of History*, written after the establishment of the state of Israel, Aviad devoted a special chapter to the justification of the messianic interpretation. See *ibid.*, pp. 192-217, and particularly pp. 212-213.

courages action. Relying on this approach, Harlap can resort to the style he uses in the following passage:

> It is not possible to acknowledge the existence of God without acknowledging the existence of Israel, God's people, and whoever claims to know God without relating to the people of Israel, who bear the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, is guilty of idolatry, so that even praising and exaltations addressed to Heaven are only blasphemy and profanity.[46]

Harlap's appeal is addressed to Gentiles, clearly stating the impossibility of formulating any theology without linking it to the special standing of the Jewish people and, as Harlap adds in other sources, to the special status of their nationality.[47] When we examine the immanent concept of God in the writings of both Kook and the Nazir, we see that Harlap's outlook did not develop in a vacuum; quite the contrary, his approach reflects the common views. Hence, despite the differences between the school of Kook and that of Reines and his followers regarding the status and goal of the national movement, both factions bind abstract theology to pragmatic concerns.

Religious-Zionist thinkers, as noted, detected a deliberate and tendentious isolation in non-Zionist Orthodoxy. They noted that its thinkers refrained from actual theological confrontation, preferring an absorbing engagement in talmudic concerns, casuistic or halakhic. In Chapter One above, we noted that Reines had reservations about the attainments of abstract theological pursuit. Nevertheless, he makes the following strong appeal:

> "Hence I tell you, 'Seek the Lord and his strength'" (Psalms 105:4; Chronicles I 16:11), do not refrain from the study and inquiry of divine matters, because engaging in the study of divine matters without any hope of reaching the goal of these inquiries is still considered a worthy and ideal purpose.[48]

In the context of Reines' approach, this passage refers to the divine attributes of action, namely, inquiry into the involvement of divine providence in history. This view did indeed become deeply entrenched in religious-Zionist thought and led, either directly or indirectly, to demands for creative initiatives.[49] Let us mention fur-

[46] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Nimmukei ha-Mikra'ot (Bishlah)*, p. 136.
[47] Compare, *Encyclopedia of Religious-Zionism*, vol. 2, p. 390.
[48] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 10, p. 57a.
[49] Compare with the statements of S. Barkai, specifically concerned with the

ther that, for Jawitz, the solution to the problem posed by the negative remnants of the exile in the Jewish soul is to create a Jewish culture based on education, language, and history in the spirit of the Torah.[50] Although Jawitz took exception to an excessive openness that might lead to self-effacement vis-à-vis other cultures, he views the encounter between Judaism and these cultures as a challenge. For instance, the period of the Men of the Great Synagogue represents, in his view, an encounter between "two model nations," meaning the two classic cultures of Israel and Greece.[51] Although Jawitz ruled that Greek culture is dangerous, he still valued its aesthetic and scientific merits. Greek culture reached technical perfection ("instruments and practical tools") but failed to attain its purpose and goal ("its cherished destination"). This task devolves on Judaism, which formulates the notion of the immortality of the soul as the mission of humanity.[52] For Jawitz, then, contending with the cultural encounter is an important element in the history of the Jewish people.

Another example can be added. In a brief article, arguably programmatic or theoretical, Eliezer Meir Lipschuetz (1879-1946) related to the study of theological and ideological issues in a spirit of cultural openness as the essential challenge facing religious-Zionism. Lipschuetz, a renowned educator and the first director of the Mizrahi teachers' seminar in Jerusalem, holds that this challenge becomes even greater given that the non-Zionist Orthodox were brazenly oblivious to it. The article opens with the following key passage:

> This is an attempt to trace unique and compelling guidelines for a "Mizrahi" ideology. I hold it is deplorable that both within the "Mizrahi" and within Orthodox Judaism in general, inquiry into concepts and ideology have failed to take up their worthy place. For a very long time, Orthodox Judaism has forsaken any concern with lofty questions. A great crisis arose when, at the end of the Middle Ages, the chain of

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Torah va-Avodah movement: "A publishing house, and pamphlets on the essence of Judaism and the problems of *Torah va-Avodah* able to foster and develop our ideology, refine ideas, and resolve disputes—this is an urgent and pressing need that cannot be postponed for a moment, because the movement's soul depends upon it" ("The Birth Pangs of *Torah va-Avodah*" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 5 [1929], p. 47).

[50] Jawitz, *Selected Writings*, p. 90. As we know, Jawitz devoted most of his energy to the study of history [*A History of the Jewish People*] according to his own world view. Compare Reuven Michael, *Jewish Historiography from the Renaissance to Modern Times* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1993), pp. 424-465.

[51] Jawitz, *A History of the Jewish People*, vol. 4, p. 10.

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12. Compare also *ibid.*, p. 218.

> creativity and research into philosophy and conceptions was broken. It was perhaps one of the greatest calamities of our history that the last philosophers in Spain and Provence left the scene, bringing to a close the research into metaphysics [lit., concerns beyond nature] and the study of the Torah's essence. Indeed, in other circles as well as in other lands, mystery achieved heights and depths, reached a pinnacle, and expanded its scope.[53] But the mutual exchange with outside philosophy ceased, as did our attempt to place ourselves vis-à-vis the thoughts and views of others. Very rarely, an outsider wandered in to hear echoes from the world of mystery, and failed to understand the splintered voices,[54] and few of us ever heard, from afar, echoes from another world. The philosophical chain ceased… and no guide arose for the perplexed.[55]

Lipschuetz thus appeals for a return to the study of metaphysics through intensive and persistent interaction with universal philosophy, and then calls for the anchoring of religious-Zionist ideology in abstract theological and ideological principles. Indeed, the calls of Reines and Lipschuetz, together with the appeals by Kook, Unna, and Bernstein to deal with Jewish philosophy in a spirit of openness to general culture, were answered in the theological discussions of religious-Zionist thinkers, whether by design or by accident. The systematic discussions of divine immanence, found in the writings of several thinkers, attest to radical changes and to a re-examination of theology on the one hand, and to a certain confrontation with universal philosophy, including its adaptation to Jewish philosophy, on the other. The principle of theological inquiry in a spirit of cultural openness is thus manifest in the various theological discussions featuring in religious-Zionist writings.[56]

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[53] The reference is apparently to the spread of Kabbalah in various centers during the sixteenth century, after the expulsion from Spain. Lipschuetz's appeal to emulate the openness of Spanish philosophical culture (the "Golden Age," as it were), is also found in the writings of other religious-Zionist thinkers. On Jawitz's comments on this issue see Maimon (Fishman) "The History of the Mizrahi and its Development" [Hebrew], in *Sefer Hamizrahi: R. Isaac Jacob Reines Memorial Volume* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1946), p. 115; on the speech delivered by Samuel Abraham Poznanski during the second Mizhrahi convention in Poland (1919) see Rubinstein, *A Movement in Changing Times*, p. 297. Finally, on Isaiah Bernstein's speech at the seventh convention of *Hapoel Hamizrahi* see: *The Seventh Convention of Hapoel Hamizrachi Movement in Eretz Israel* (1935), edited by Yossi Avneri (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan, 1985), p. 41.

[54] The reference is apparently to the increasing concern with Kabbalah in Christian circles during the Renaissance, as in the case of Picco della Mirandolla.

[55] Eliezer Meir Lipschuetz, "Experience" in *Sefer Hamizrahi*, p. 147. On Kook's book, *New Guide of the Perplexed*, see above, ch. 3, note 16.

[56] It seems that the principle of openness, together with other theological fea-

4. *Multiplicity, Unity, and Re-Examination*

Religious-Zionist thought, then, assumed the existence of a distinctive theological foundation in Judaism. In the categorical formulation chosen by a religious-Zionist thinker, "faith in God and faith in the human being created in God's image is the very essence of the garb, the body, and the soul of Judaism."[57] And Judaism, as we have already noted, is "Mizrahi" and "national" in its character.

The basic assumption concerning the existence of a "religious-Zionist theology" does not disclaim multiplicity and gradations. Various chapters in this book clearly specify the difference between various approaches and conceptions in religious-Zionism, and this difference could even be formulated in general terms: a religious-Zionist approach that is not distinctively messianic, such as that of Reines (in his apologetic writings) or Soloveitchik, anchors its ideology in moderate theological assumptions—divine immanence is evident in the history and in the psychological background underlying practical decisions. The definition of faith is oriented toward clear principles, resulting from an emotional and intuitive factor or situation. In contrast, a radical messianic religious-Zionist approach, such as that of Kook's circle, expands divine immanence to include the entire cosmos, while also stretching the concept of "faith" to the utmost. Other approaches adopt a midway attitude between these two poles.

One could probably claim that both fashioned their ideological approaches toward the Zionist endeavor relying on abstract theological foundations or, alternatively, that both fashioned their theological foundations so as to match their practical concerns. This is true of ideologies characterized by a strong messianic fervor, as well as of views tending to historicity. Soloveitchik's Zionism is suffused with his theological doctrine and with the unique role of Halakha within it.[58] The unique conception proposed by Yeshayahu Leibowitz

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tures, can also provide a criterion for describing the typical characteristics of religious-Zionist thought. See Yosef Salmon, "Harbingers of Zionism and Harbingers of Ultra-Orthodoxy" [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 73 (1995), pp. 106-111; Israel Bartal, "Who is the *Ha-Ivry*," *ibid.*, pp. 112-114.

[57] Bernstein, *Within Circles of Enslavement and Redemption*, pp. 137. See also p. 142.

[58] Compare Aaron Lichtenstein, "R. Joseph Soloveitchik," *Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century*, edited by Simon Noveck (Washington: B'nai B'rith, 1963), pp. 292-293. This statement also applies to the thought of Emanuel Rackman, as conveyed in *One Man's Judaism*.

(1903-1994), which extorts Zionism from its theological dimension and establishes it on an exclusively practical ideology, was never accepted by religious-Zionist philosophy.[59] In the words of a religious-Zionist intellectual, "the 'Mizrahi' movement is not to be measured solely by such criteria as the volume of its organization and activity, but by its great philosophical truth, which is its only concern."[60]

The conclusion, then, is that one need not recoil from discussing "religious-Zionist theology." Nor is it necessary to seek redundant justifications for assuming the existence of this theological substratum; instead, it is best to describe its foundations and doctrines. The examination of the various approaches shows that practical activities proceed beside an incisive examination of the traditional theological foundation, and even follow directly or indirectly from it. This examination of ideological and theological theories takes place, as noted, in light of the exposure to universal philosophy and culture.

The multiplicity of views within the religious-Zionist camp does not blur the existence of a theological foundation or, more precisely, the ongoing process of theological self-scrutiny. In fact, the many variations and gradations may be evidence of the religious-ideological openness accompanying religious-Zionist thought, and contribute to the shared theological characteristics. Just as religious-Zionist thinkers again ask "What is religious literature?"[61] and bemoan

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[59] On this stance see below, ch. 6:2. A similar approach is that of Hayyim Hirschensohn (see above, ch. 1:3). According to this analysis, the present renewed interest in Hirschensohn's doctrine, as well as the concentration of some religious-Zionist circles around Leibowitz, are not a product of the religious-Zionist vision; rather, they emerge despite this vision, reflecting a critique and a sense of disappointment with it. The sociological and political reasons for this development lie outside the confines of this book. These reasons denote a rejection of the comprehensiveness entailed by the religious-Zionist vision, as it was absorbed by the broader Orthodox nationalist public.

[60] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 153.

[61] Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 114. See also pp. 120-122. Note that writers associated with the *Torah im Derekh Eretz* movement did engage in literary pursuits, (see, for instance, Marcus Lehman). But Aminoah does not discuss literature as only a temporary measure to be used as a panacea against secularism, a case of "it is time to act for the Lord; they have made void that Torah" (Psalms 119:126). Rather, literature was meant as a source of motivation for the youth, who would draw "inspiration for idealism, for self-sacrifice, in order to create the life described [in the literature] in the society and in the state, assuming for this purpose the yoke of the Torah and the commandments" (*ibid.*, p. 116). Incidentally, Y. L. Groibart (1862-1937) devised a comprehensive educational program at the second Mizrahi

the fact that "scholarly Orthodoxy in Israel has not expressed its inner world in literature or the arts,"[62] they also strive to rebuild a comprehensive *Weltanschauung* or, perhaps, to revive a religious philosophy relying on distinctively national foundations. For instance, the following passage was written in the context of an attempt to launch a journal for Kook's movement *Degel Yerushalayim* [Flag of Jerusalem] in 1918: "The spirit of [Jewish national] renaissance needs a Hebrew literary center, which will influence and be influenced by intellectuals. The ideas and the hopes of this generation seek expression and elucidation, to be attained by delving into the Hebrew knowledge hidden in the Torah of Israel and in the words of its sages."[63]

The plurality within the religious-Zionist camp does not mask the shared characteristic—the endeavor to re-establish a philosophical and ideological foundation in Judaism, to be formulated through systematic literary means. Moreover, the ideological foundation they are seeking is all-inclusive and relates to all areas of life, from abstract theoretical theology and up to praxis. This characteristic indicates that the theological idea is either fashioned according to Zionist ideology or, vice-versa, that praxis is modified according to

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convention in Poland, calling for the writing of popular works along the lines of Lehman's narratives. See Rubinstein, *A Movement in Changing Times*, p. 291.

[62] Pinhas Schieffman (1874-1945), in a review of vol. 10 of Jawitz's book, *A History of the Jewish People*, which appeared in *Ha-Hed* 8, No. 5 (1932). Jawitz himself, as Luz describes him in *Parallels Meet*, "had an unquenchable thirst for renewing the ancient Hebrew culture in an aesthetic spirit" (p.231). In his view, Jawitz's approach became a shared feature of religious-Zionist thought. Compare also with the words of Meir Or (Orion), a member of kibbutz Tirat Zvi: "Our communes have been charged with the task of this generation, the generation of the renaissance, of giving a new shape to cultural life. We are part of this generation. We go to the theatre, to the cinema, enjoy a concert and a ballet. Why should we want others to do everything for us? Why do we not create ourselves in this domain?" (*Or ha-Meir*, p. 73). Compare also Giorgio Pipeerno, *Ebraismo, Sionismo, Haluzismo*, p. 54. Finally, the discussion about the meaning of the *Torah va-Avodah* values is worth noting, when Jonah Ben-Sasson relies on Kook's approach: "Kook vigorously asserts that science, valor, beauty, and wisdom are part of the divine content of the world, and accuses those who disparage this of lacking faith. These contents must be integrated into the world of Judaism as a value, and not merely as a need. They will enhance our world and enrich our Judaism" (*Jewish Thought Through the Test of Time*, p. 734). All these are expressions of the hope to create a normative and aesthetic *Weltanschauung* within Judaism.

[63] David Cohen "Ancient Hebrew Wisdom" [Hebrew], *Barkai* 4 (1987), p. 361 (edited by Dov Schwartz). Compare Yossi Avneri, "*Degel Yerushalyim*," *Bi-Shvilei ha-Tehyiah* 3 (1989), p. 51.

abstract theological principles. How did religious-Zionist thinkers fashion the national idea, the religious-Zionist ethos and praxis, according to the theological foundation? This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM THEOLOGY TO IDEOLOGY: ADOPTING THE NATIONALIST IDEA

1. *Religious Nationalism*

An evident paradox marks the existence of religious Zionism: the message of Zionism was the "normalization" of the Jewish people.[1] Zionist thought provided several modern interpretations of the classic ideal of "a light onto the nations," such as the socialist or intellectual versions ("the Jewish genius"). None of these interpretations, however, placed the Jewish people at a different existential plane, beyond the borders of the normal. In fact, the opposite is true; all were based on the approach that sovereign Jewish existence would provide a full model of normal existence that is both proper and ethical. In contrast, religious-Zionism assumed, a priori, that a religious purpose was part of the Zionist idea. Religious Zionism considered that realizing the ideal of sovereign political existence will also lead to the realization of the religious ideal, since they viewed nationalism and religion as inextricably bound. The notion of Israel as a chosen people, "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," necessarily confers a special uniqueness on the people of God, which precludes their leading a "normal" life. Some endorsed a moderate approach, ascribing to the Jewish people an acquired uniqueness, while others went to extremes and ascribed to them an inherent uniqueness, due to their very existence, in the style of Judah Halevi in *The Kuzari*. Neither of these positions, however, could accept a conventional, "normal" national ideal for the people of God.[2] By its own definition, then, religious Zionism had to cast a religious ideal

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[1] See Shmuel Almog, "Normalization and 'A Light to the Gentiles' in Zionism" [Hebrew], in *Chosen People, Elect Nation and Universal Mission: Collected Essays*, edited by Shmuel Almog and Michael Heyd (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1991), pp. 287-297; Belfer, "*Malkhut Shamayim" and the State of Israel*, pp. 43-54.

[2] The very rise of Zionism has been viewed by some as a genuine "miracle," and non-Zionist Orthodoxy has been attacked for its "refusal to acknowledge the great miracle latent in the renaissance movement," (Zeev Jawitz, "The Paths of a Movement" [Hebrew], in *Sefer Hamizrahi*, p. 183).

within the national ideal and so it did, whether in moderate or radical terms.

Utopia, then, was always part of the hopes for restoration. For the religious-Zionist thinker, the renewal of settlement was never exhausted by the ideal of establishing a Jewish society. Renewing Jewish settlement means reviving the religious dimension of the Holy Land. Renewing nationalism means, sooner or later, returning theocracy, to "renew our days as of old" (Lamentations 5:21). An apologetic undertone, therefore, accompanied the call for a renewal of Jewish settlement: all great religions yearn for this land, while the people of Israel need to be urged to marshal their forces for the task of its settlement:

> May this bring glory and renown to us too in the eyes of other nations, when they say, "the children of Israel also wish to stake a claim and renew the land of their ancestors." ... If people in Italy and other nations are willing to die for the land of their ancestors, then even more so for this land, which everyone in the world says is holy—will we stand afar as heartless weaklings?[3]

The hope, then, was to return to a place in which anyone walking four cubits is ensured a place in the world to come.[4] According to religious-Zionist thought, the dream of a moral and ideal society in the land of Israel is a cover for the building of the land, whose settlement equals the fulfillment of all the commandments, whose air brings wisdom and makes divine worship flourish. Religious-Zionism was not always genuine and sincere in its endorsement of the Zionist ideal and terminology. The allegorical technique adopted by Jewish philosophy throughout its history seemed to reawaken. This technique argues for at least two dimensions in the interpreted text: the external, literal level, and the internal level ("the inner core"), containing a deep meaning revealed only to scholars. Allegory now shifted from the sacred text to the Zionist endeavor. Outwardly, concerning practical decisions, they accepted the purpose of Zionism in its general formulation. Under this surface formulation, how-

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[3] Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, *Derishat Zion* [Hebrew], edited by Yosef Klausner (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1964), p. 79. On this admonition see Mordechai Eliav, *Love of Zion and Men of Hod: German Jewry and the Settlement of Eretz Israel in the Nineteenth Century* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1971), p. 190; Shlomo Avineri, "Zionism and Jewish Religious Tradition: The Dialectics of Redemption and Secularization," in *Zionism and Religion*, pp. 3-4.

[4] According to TB Ketuboth 111a; Kalischer, *Derishat Zion*, p. 83.

ever, we find the deep religious ideal: renewing divine worship within the mold of a theocratic society at the general level, and exploiting the spiritual-religious advantages of the land of Israel at the personal level. Obviously, adopting the Zionist ideal compelled religious-Zionists to accept, in the first place, a normal life based on such values as work, scientific development, and the like. The hidden purpose of many religious-Zionist thinkers, however, focused on distinctively religious ideals, such as renewing prophecy and expanding the observance of the commandments as in times of old (land-bound commandments, sacrifices, and so forth). Many of these thinkers fully endorsed Judah Halevi's approach, whereby prophecy and divine inspiration are not confined to an elite group; Kook and the Nazir, for instance, attributed vast contemporary significance to the rabbinic saying about the masses of the Jewish people—"if they are not prophets, yet they are the children of prophets."[5]

The "allegorical" technique of deep meaning and surface meaning was applied to the religious formulation of the Zionist idea. Literally, the Zionist idea applies mainly to the practical world: its concern is the creation of politically productive institutions and bodies set up in order to solve the Jewish problem and settle the land. This practical activity, however, was driven by a deeper, spiritual element, which is no other than the religious, Torah foundation. The activities of the Zionist movement are, in a sense, the body, but the soul, namely, the true meaning, can only be understood through the religious ideal adopted by religious-Zionism: "But we call upon you to immediately breathe a soul into this inert body, so that it might be truly worthy of its name… the concept that the source of Zionism, the supreme holy source, the Bible, furnishes in all its traditional splendor and depth."[6] "Zionism, as a movement that proclaims the ['true'] national basis of Israel is right and proper, and has meaning and hope."[7] In truth, however, "it will emerge that the value of [the people of] Israel in the land of Israel transcends all the usual

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[5] TB Pesahim 66a. See Kook, *The Vision of Redemption*, p. 81; Cohen, *The Voice of Prophecy*, p. 7. On the renewal of the "holy spirit," see Kalischer, *Derishat Zion*, p. 91. On prophecy as the dominant factor driving Jewish history see Jawitz, *Collected Writings*, p. 107. Compare, Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, pp. 119-120; Eliezer Schweid, "Prophetic Mysticism in Twentieth Century Jewish Thought" [Hebrew], *Daat* 29 (1992), pp. 103-105.

[6] Kook, "Epistles of Rav Kook on Hamizrahi" [Hebrew], in *Mizrachi Jubilee Publication*, p. 86.

[7] Kook, *Epistles*, vol. 3, p. 157.

contents of politics and religion."[8] The sources of Judaism are thus the true inner motive underlying Zionism. The Zionist idea is actually a cover for "genuine" Jewish nationalism.

An additional characteristic in the theological design of the religious-Zionist idea must also be considered: religious Zionism, as such, does not acknowledge the separate existence of secular Zionism. For religious Zionism, the attempt of secular Zionism to present itself as a stable, legitimate factor is a historical and ideological illusion: time will show that it never existed as an autonomous body, or that it had been unaware of the genuine element informing it with life and motivation. Hence, religious-Zionists are not ready to acknowledge a purely secular drive. Secular activity within Zionism is also driven by religious elements, which are so far latent and hidden. Secular Zionist consciousness is thus a cover and a shell for a deeper, genuine consciousness, which is the will to return to the people of Israel their ancestral religious standing. Secular Zionists are thus unaware of the meaning of their actions, or of their "real" motivations.

This is the meeting point between theory and practice. Abstract theology assumes ideological shape by reformulating the underlying purpose of settling the land of Israel and establishing a sovereign society. Ultimately, the re-examination of traditional concepts within religious-Zionism led to a reshaping of the national ideal. The transformation is twofold: new trends and aims, beside the renewal of nationalism, were added to the Zionist ideal; moreover, at the religious level, nationality is redefined in light of the actual national renaissance. For religious-Zionists, theological reorientation left its mark on the national idea in three principles: (1) Zionist realization, in its religious formulation, will bring spiritual advantages to the entire world, namely, it will raise all the inhabitants of the planet to their level of spiritual-religious perfection. (2) The purpose of the Zionist endeavor is to return divine worship to its full scope, as in days of old. (3) The Zionist idea is based on religion; the secular interpretation, therefore, has no legitimate standing.

In the previous chapters, I discussed several abstract theological principles that religious-Zionist thought undertakes to re-examine. I pointed out possible mutual influences between the immanent concept of God and the political-religious interpretation of current events. In this chapter, I deal with the shaping of the national ap-

[8] *Ibid*., p. 158. Compare *Lights*, p. 158a.

proach itself out of general theological principles, such as the status of ritual and the relationship between Israel and the nations of the world. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to trace the link between theological approaches and the re-examination of the national idea in light of religion, according to the three principles noted above.

2. *The Nation and the World*

Most religious-Zionist thinkers saw the religious-Zionist ideal as the harbinger of a new universal era, believing that the establishment of a just and sovereign religious society in the land of Israel would bring light to the entire world. The Zionist idea would no longer be confined to the solution of the Jewish problem: "Jewish nationalism is related to the whole of humanity."[9] Religious-Zionist thinkers claimed that the gains accruing from the re-establishment of the Jewish state are not limited to the independence of the Jewish people; rather, the whole world will be uplifted, spiritually and religiously, in the wake of the Jewish renaissance. True, many national movements, and among them many Zionist thinkers, had approached their own renaissance as a matter of general interest with worldwide implications. The main concern of Zionist thinkers, however, was to create a model for a just society that would lead the rest of the world to imitate them, leading to their own advancement. In contrast, many religious-Zionist thinkers held that the Jewish renaissance would necessarily result, directly and immediately, in the religious and spiritual elevation of the entire world. Some confined this to the social and moral realm while others, tending to anchor their approach in kabbalistic terminology, held it had cosmic significance.

The notion of a world uplifted through the redemption of the Jewish people is already evident among the "harbingers of Zionism,"[10] and became entrenched in religious-Zionist thought. Judah Alkalai (1798-1878) draws on the apocalyptic messianic legacy—the people of Israel would in the future wrest vengeance and inflict punishment on non-Jews. In his view, the national home would be attained through a struggle against demonic forces, characterized by

[9] Zeev Gold, *The Gold of the Land* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1982), p. 142.

[10] Using quotations from "the harbingers of Zionism" is intended to indicate their ongoing influence on religious-Zionist thinkers, viewed retrospectively. In that context, Alkalai and Kalischer are discussed as a philosophical sequence within religious-Zionism.

a rich store of images: the Devil, Esau, Amalek, Armilus, and so forth. Alkalai's approach is sprinkled with various homiletic and aggadic motifs and does not take a kind view, to put it mildly, of the role that the nations of the world would play in the events of redemption. Unequivocally, they represent evil and malice. In his view, however, political renewal would result in a cosmic uplift and in the mending of original sin. Alkalai compares the commandments of the Tabernacle to the command "to prescribe the rules and duties of kingship."[11] There is a common denominator between the command to erect the Tabernacle and to establish the monarchy:

> As the Tabernacle was built to mend Adam's original flaw and enable the existence of the world, so this commandment [the renewal of kingship] mends the ten sayings [creating the world] that were flawed by Adam. May we live to mend the world through this command, which is even preferable, since the mending through the Tabernacle was a temporary measure, while the mending of our dwelling will grow further and further, until we implement the intention [*kavannah*] of the cosmos, which will be realized with the coming of the Messiah.[12]

The political renaissance will thus be the "mending of the world" [*tikkun olam*] and will atone for Adam's sin. Kalischer's style differs from that of his predecessor. Whereas Alkalai wraps his ideas in homiletic and kabbalistic allusions, Kalischer conveys his views clearly and systematically, and even supports them by "relying on reason." When discussing redemption, he upholds a clear universal principle:

> It is not incumbent only on the people of Israel to urge the redemption of the world. All people of faith who believe all that is written in

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[11] Judah Alkalai, *The Writings of Rav Judah Alkalai* [Hebrew], edited by Itzhak Raphael (Jerusalem, Mosad Harav Kook, 1975), p. 115.

[12] *Ibid.*. As noted, Alkalai does not renounce the apocalyptic legacy, and attempts to reconcile it with natural redemption are an important concern for him. In this passage, a distinction is evident between the "home" in the land of Israel (for which he uses a Hebrew word that also denotes the biblical Tabernacle), referring to the building of the land, and the situation that will prevail "with the coming of the Messiah." Alkalai endorses the classic solution of splitting the messianic figure. Present natural events are the mission of the Messiah son of Joseph, and wondrous and miraculous events are the task of the Messiah son of David. This enabled the preservation of the apocalyptic legacy without restricting the present initiative toward national renaissance. See, for instance, *ibid.*, 2, p. 386. Compare Zvi Zehavi, *A History of Zionism in Hungary: From the Hatam Sofer to Herzl* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: WZO, 1966), p. 166; Jacob Katz, "Messianism and Nationalism in the Doctrine of Rav Judah Alkalai" [Hebrew], in *Jewish Nationalism*, p. 338.

> the books of the holy prophets, of blessed memory—God's light will shine upon them too, if they help us and assist us to fulfill the Holy Covenant and to build the Holy Land for the glory and splendor of the world, as is written: "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord…" (Isaiah 56:6).[13]

Any stranger from the nations of the world who assumes the yoke of Israel's renaissance will thus merit "God's light." For Kalischer, there is no redemption in the universe without Israel's redemption. This assumption, in and by itself, suffices to awaken "all the faithful among Christians and Muslims" to help in the renewal of Israel, since these religions also aspire to "the end of days."[14] The idea of a general redemption that is linked to the redemption of Israel recurs among the thinkers of this time, such as Joseph Natonek (1813-1892), who called for the purposeful and active settlement of the land of Israel.[15] We turn now to several examples in religious-Zionist thought.

An appeal to Gentiles in the spirit of Kalischer's call, linking the redemption of the world to the redemption of the Jewish people, is also found in Nissenbaum's writings: "We, after all, hope that everyone, everyone, all the nations in all corners of the world, will see in our land and our kingdom their own salvation as well, the salvation of our God, the God of the universe."[16] This quotation appears in a book of homilies on the Zohar, *Ancient Legacy* [*Kiniyanei Kedem*], claiming that mending the Jewish people will lead to the mending of the world. The concluding statement in the book, formulated in this spirit, includes an eschatological note:

> We will redeem our earth, we will build our land, we will set up our lives there according to the commandments of our Torah and its spirit—and a new-renewed earth will emerge in the world, and a new-renewed heaven will extend above it, and the light of the seven days will spread throughout the universe, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" [Isaiah 11:9].[17]

Alkalai, Kalischer, Nissenbaum—all claim that building and settling the land will lead to the elevation of the entire world. Theological

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[13] Kalischer, *Derishat Zion*, p. 109. See also Zehavi, *A History of Zionism in Hungary*, p. 151.

[14] Kalischer, *Derishat Zion*, p. 113.

[15] See Zehavi, *A History of Zionism in Hungary*, p. 199. On Joseph Natonek, see Dov Fraenkel, *The Beginnings of Modern Political Zionism* [Hebrew] (Haifa: Omanut, 1956), p. 70; Mordechai Eliav, *Love of Zion and Men of Hod*, pp. 53, 67, 134.

[16] Nissenbaum, *Ancient Heritage*, vol. 2. p. 180.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

and eschatological systems are thus bound to the Zionist ideal, and the redemption of the Jewish people is made synonymous with the redemption of the entire world.

Kook and his disciples deepened the principle of uplifting the world in the wake of the redemption of Israel, establishing it on systematic foundations—ideological, philosophical, and kabbalistic. They confirmed the unique status of the Jewish people and their religion vis-à-vis other nations, as well as their influence over them.[18] Kook and his circle reached a sharp and pointed formulation of the uniqueness of the chosen people and their religion, as the following examples will indicate: "Judaism is the inner core of humanity and of reality in its broad sense"[19]; "The people of Israel are the yardstick of the entire world—if they rise, the world rises with them, and when they fall, the whole world falls with them"[20]; "Israel is to the world as the soul is to the body"[21]; "Israel—the heart of all nations."[22] These are extreme expressions of the approach that makes the perfection of nations, and even the elevation of the entire universe, contingent upon the situation of the Jewish people. Hence the explicit proclamation: "The entire world awaits the light of Israel."[23]

Several scholars have already addressed the principle in Kook's doctrine claiming that the world is uplifted as a corollary to the elevation of the chosen people.[24] Kook did present a comprehensive prospect of cosmic transcendence that would follow the redemption of Israel, which he imparted to his students and followers. For

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[18] See, for instance, Rosenberg, "Introduction to the Thought of Rav Kook," pp. 76-82 ; Yoel Bin-Nun, "Nationalism, Humanity, and *Knesset Israel*" in *The World of Rav Kook's Thought,* pp. 210-215.

[19] Kook, *Epistles*, 1, p. 175.

[20] *Ibid.*, ch. 49, p. 200.

[21] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, Part 1, ch. 26, p. 51. Harlap relies there on the Lurianic principle concerning the mission of Jews in exile, defined as lighting the sparks.

[22] Zvi Judah Kook, "Torah Jewry and the Jewish State," in *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 65, according to *The Kuzari* 2:36. For additional writings that follow *The Kuzari,* see *ibid.*, pp. 71, 73, 173, 211. Compare with Abraham Itzhak Kook, "Lectures on *The Kuzari*" in *Collected Essays* [*Ma'marei ha-Re'ayah*], (Jerusalem: 1984), pp. 485-486. *The Kuzari*, both in content and in style, exerted a crucial influence on Kook and his circle, and the Nazir wrote his comprehensive exegetical commentary on it.

[23] Kook, *Lights*, p. 22.

[24] See, for instance, Binyamin Efrati, "Israeli Politics in His Outlook" [Hebrew], in *Abraham Itzhak Kook: A Collection of Essays* [*ha-Re'ayah: Kovets Ma'amarim*], edited by Itzhak Raphael (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1966), pp. 214-236; Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, pp.245-246, and more on the same chapter; Ben Shlomo, "Perfection and Perfectibility in Rabbi Kook's Theology," pp. 289-309.

Harlap, it is common knowledge that, "as the Jewish people are released from the shackles of exile, the entire cosmos is released with them from any adversary or enemy raising against God and his Messiah."[25] In line with the general attitude in this doctrine, which demonizes the nations of the world, Harlap makes the elevation of humanity contingent upon its recognition of "the value of Israel, and its admission that the land of Israel belongs only to Israel." Should the nations of the world decline to accept this and refuse to "bow and surrender before Israel,"[26] the redemption of Israel will become a stumbling block for them and cause their downfall. Harlap again emphasizes that the redemption of Israel means absolute redemption for the entire cosmos.

Zvi Judah Kook, following his father, went even further and defined Jewish nationalism according to general and cosmic criteria: "Our nationalism is surely always cosmopolitan, always encompassing humanity and the entire universe." Jewish nationalism always entails the realization of "universal, eternal, infinite, and divine ideals."[27] Generally: "Israeli politics has neither right nor purpose without the ideal element rooted in the strengthening of the nation's cultural power, which is internally related to the ideal cultural elevation of the entire universe."[28] Like Harlap, Zvi Judah Kook also preserves the element of hostility toward Gentiles as an independent factor.[29] Generally, however, the renaissance of Israel results in the redemption of all nations. This approach rests on a theurgic view stating that the inner divine world is also dependent upon the Jewish people, and their redemption is the actual redemption of God.[30]

These explicit, sweeping statements by Kook and his circle also

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[25] *Mei Merom: Mi-Ma'ynei ha-Yeshuah*, Part 1, ch. 10, p. 28.

[26] *Ibid.*; compare *ibid.*, p. 32, 123; Harlap, *Mei Merom: On Avot*, p. 233; *Mei Merom: Ori ve-Iysh'i*, ch. 41, pp. 233-235; *Mei Merom: On the Prayer Book*, p. 275, and many other sources. These passages by Harlap are notable for their preservation of the style and contents of midrashic and apocalyptic literature. Generally, Harlap's messianic doctrine is a classic instance of a modern apocalyptic approach, as conveyed by his demonic perception of Gentiles. Zvi Judah Kook could also be considered part of this approach, at least in his conversations as recorded in such books as *From the Redeeming Torah*.

[27] Zvi Judah Kook, "On the Agenda," *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 11.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[29] The claim that settling the land of Israel leads to purification from Gentile defilement recurs in the writings of Zvi Judah Kook. See, for instance, "Light on Our Pathways," *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 166.

[30] See, for instance, Harlap, *Mei Merom: On the Prayer Book*, p. 251.

left their mark on thinkers from Hapoel Hamizrahi circles, such as Shragai, Bernstein, and Aminoah. They adopted the principle making the nations of the world dependent on Israel, although they generally tended to interpret the apocalyptic ideal of cosmic redemption as a vision of universal peace. Once again: beside the kabbalistic contents underlying the view that the elevation of the world depends on the redemption of Israel, the elementary faith in the special theological status of Israel as a chosen people definitely confirms the world's dependence on them. Shragai had clear views on this matter:

> Even the world was created for the sake of Israel, for that central point within the world: the land of Israel that, from the beginning, was intended for the people of Israel. And even more: the Torah was also for Israel… and this Israel, for whom it all is, exists only in order to return everything to its roots, to the end of days, to the day when nation shall not lift up sword against nation [Isaiah 2:4], and everyone will acknowledge the divine laws [given] to the eternal man and the eternal people.[31]

Shragai is explicitly articulating an assumption latent in the thought of many religious-Zionist thinkers: the people of Israel, their land, and their Torah are what confers meaning on the entire cosmos, and their redemption is therefore the redemption of the entire world. Shragai believes that this longed-for redemption is attained through universal peace. Bernstein repeats the same principle, moderating the apocalyptic destiny even further. In 1946, he wrote the following:

> The battle we are now waging for the freedom and redemption of Israel and for the establishment of a Jewish state is not confined to us. The return of Israel to Zion is a universal need, not only because the world will thereby be released of the misfortune of Israel, of the pressing problems of the Jews, but for its own growth… In the renewal of our life here, while drawing from the well of Israel, from their depths, we bring Abraham's blessing to all the nations on earth. The return of Israel to their land and the renewal of their spirit are a significant contribution to peace in the world.[32]

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[31] Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "The Doctrine of the Mizrahi," in *Sefer Hamizrahi*, p. 139. On the Mizrahi movement as returning the people of Israel to the Torah and its commandments, see *ibid.*, pp. 143-144. Similar views about Israel as "the redemption of all humanity" and as "the repair of the cosmos" appear in other articles of Shragai. See, for instance, sources cited in Fishman, *Hapoel Hamizrahi*, pp. 183, 187.

[32] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 66. On the uniqueness of Israel in Bernstein's

Bernstein links the ideal of the spread of monotheism in the messianic era to the attainment of a long-awaited peace. Accepting monotheism implies "a call to the nations of the world to replace the idols of their silver, the idols of their gold, the idols of their souls, and the idols of their interests, by acknowledging the One, oneness, and peace."[33] In this context, he quotes extensively from Kook's *The Vision of Redemption* [*Hazon Ha-Geulah*]. Rather than interpreting these passages literally, however, Bernstein claims that the cosmic ideal is epitomized in the attainment of the long-awaited peace. Everlasting peace is thus dependent on the renewal of Israel, because the struggle between spirit and matter shapes history through its changes and upheavals. Bernstein tends to interpret universal history as a confrontation between matter and spirit in several of his sayings. In his view, the people of Israel hold "vast spiritual power" in "the Torah of truth,"[34] and they can tilt the balance toward the superiority of the spirit. Aminoah also views the people of Israel as a spiritual power active in history, and he ascribes this to their personal and social morality.[35] Finally, an additional passage from Bernstein on this question is worth quoting:

> When the kingdom of Israel is created in Zion, establishing the kingdom of the God of Israel and the God of the universe on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, the world will be mended in God's kingdom. Justice and law, purity and holiness, will then rule in the world. Difficulties will be overcome, the crooked will be made straight, contradictions will be settled, opposites will be reconciled, flaws will be corrected and needs will be fulfilled, the dispersed will gather, the divided will be joined, everything will return to its origin and its source, uniting in the supreme unity, in "the unity of the One."[36]

National redemption and universal redemption are thus mutually bound, as "a flame to an ember." Indeed, a cosmic ideal of this kind is not a substitute for Bernstein's quest for peace. These cosmic,

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view, see *ibid.*, p. 143. He too, like Maimon (Fishman), Kook, and many others, enlists Judah Halevi's views in the service of his national-religious views.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[34] *Ibid.*.

[35] "The supreme idea of Judaism, then, does not prevail merely on the strength of the ideal, but also serves as a well-known weapon in the defense of the individual and of society. This recognition enables the weak, unarmed Jew to be a real force at the center of human heroism, because with him is the revelation of supreme powers that surpass all human might" (Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 48). On the influence of Bernstein's approach on Aminoah, see *ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

[36] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 442.

eschatological remarks were written toward the end of 1949, influenced by the creation of the state of Israel. Yet this statement clarifies that, as the renaissance of the people of Israel will ultimately bring peace so, in the long range, the redemption of Israel will lead to the redemption of the entire world. This link between the renewal of Israel and the redemption of the entire world is also found in the writings of Aminoah. Discussing the ideal of *Torah va-Avodah*, Aminoah writes that "Judaism is not only a nationality but also a source of light to humanity. The redemption of Israel brings along the redemption of the individual and of the collective in humanity."[37] As it appears from the context, redemption is linked to the perfect integration of morality and productivity within a religious framework. The building of a new society for the Jewish people will therefore result in universal perfection.

This analysis shows that the philosophy of religious-Zionism, throughout its various trends and factions, from the forerunners and up to contemporary thinkers, is pervaded by the motif of dependence between the Jewish people and the world. Religious-Zionism views the realization of the Zionist idea as the elevation of all inhabitants of the universe, and was thus unwilling to accept the approach proposed by Reines, the founder of the Mizrahi. In the exoteric approach characterizing the second part of *A New Light on Zion,* as well as in other sources, Reines bluntly describes his despair with cultural progress and general tolerance. His call to join the Zionist movement was accompanied by sharp warnings concerning the upsurge of anti-Semitism and the impossibility of its eradication. He clearly separated the period of future redemption, which will bring moral and cultural progress, from a present that offers no such hope.[38] All that Reines was willing to accept was that the Jews "would show everyone that [true] life is spiritual life,"[39] namely, that the people of Israel should set an example for the rejection of materialism. But most religious-Zionist thinkers never adapted to this pragmatism. Reines himself, in his sermons, also proclaimed a close affinity between the Zionist movement and final redemption. Nevertheless, out of concern for the movement's public image, and in an attempt to win over anti-Zionist Orthodoxy, he differentiated between Zionism and redemption and rejected the progressive approach. Religious-

[37] Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 204.
[38] See, for instance Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 2, ch. 3, p. 11a.
[39] *Ibid.*, Part 6, p. 78b.

Zionist thinkers held that the realization of the religious-Zionist idea would lead to an uplift at the cosmic, political, moral, and spiritual levels, thereby informing this idea with a distinctively universal character.

3. *The Renewal of Worship*

Religious life in exile had always been partial. Worship wore down to limited areas of ongoing interest, as these came to the fore in the talmudic treatises chosen for study. Lacking a Temple, or a Sanhedrin, or ranks for the Temple service, the Mishnah orders of *Zera'im* [Seeds], *Kodashim* [Holy Things] and *Tohorot* [Purities] were swept aside, almost useless. To many thinkers, observing the commandments in exile appeared as "training," or as a "memorization" exercise in preparation for the return to the land.[40] For the religious-Zionist thinker, the idea of nationality was diluted within the yearning to re-establish full religious worship, which carried visible or hidden messianic overtones: "Worship for the sake of building of the land or, more precisely, to bring redemption closer."[41] The wish to renew a full religious ritual nurtured the national idea and informed it, openly or latently, with meaning. Following Maimonides, Hirschensohn expressed reservations about renewing ritual sacrifices at present, but his views failed to strike roots and remained marginal.[42] The detailed halakhic discussion about the possibility of renewing worship is not synonymous with the hope that nurtured the ideol-

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[40] See Aviezer Ravitzky, "Waymarks to Zion: The History of an Idea" [Hebrew], in *The Land of Israel in Medieval Jewish Thought*, edited by Moshe Hallamish and Aviezer Ravitzky (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 1991), pp. 1-39. See further in this chapter in the analysis of Harlap's approach.

[41] Bar-Ilan, *From Volozhin to Jerusalem*, vol. 3, p. 554, and compare to the sober tone in pp. 569-570.

[42] See Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, pp. 84-88; Schweid, *Democracy and Halakha*, pp. 81-82. Hirschensohn held that the reason for the sacrifices is "to ingather the nation, to gather the heart of the entire people into one center in the holy tabernacle… their whole intention [of sacrifices today] is the ingathering, in order to bring them together at the center" (Hirschensohn, *On the Falsity and Truth of Some Concepts*, pp. 71-72). Incidentally, in a letter of apology printed in Part 4 of *Malki ba-Koddesh* (p. 176), Hirschensohn claims there is no impediment to the building of the Temple when the endeavor is inspired by national or political factors, and that his opposition is specifically focused on the renewal of the rituals of sacrifice. On the approach of Maimonides to sacrifices, see *Guide of the Perplexed*, 3:32.

ogy. Thinkers from all trends of religious-Zionism aspired to a full religious life and, above all, to renew the Temple worship. In short: "The destruction of the Temple marks the end of spiritual life for the entire nation"; "the destruction of the Temple is drawn as a painting of death."[43] Jerusalem is not only a source of vitality and encouragement;[44] renewing worship on Mount Zion becomes a distinctive religious-Zionist goal. Thus, the return to the land will ultimately reinstate divine worship.

The opening paragraph of the first Mizrahi manifesto (1902), composed by Jawitz, enumerates the factors leading to the Zionist awakening. One is the anguish of the times—the persecution of Jews and the renewed upsurge of anti-Semitism—which is described as an external factor. The description of the internal factor immediately follows:

> But with the afflictions of external sorrows, an internal feeling, perhaps even more powerful, awoke in the hearts of many sensitive people, clearly communicating to them that the soul of the nation, which is our holy Torah, could no longer be fully sustained in their lands of exile. Its commandments, which on their own are the nation's entire spiritual life, could not be preserved in their full purity, because the threatening times surrounding us impose harsh demands upon us.[45]

This manifesto does not yet spell out the longing for full religious activity, namely, the renewal of worship as practiced in ancestral times in the Temple and the Sanhedrin, observing sabbatical and jubilee years. The guiding concern is the distress of the times and the pauperization of the Jewish people. Nevertheless, this passage seems to be intimating a latent yearning for the full expression of "the power of the Torah and the commandments." Eventually, Harlap would formulate this principle unequivocally: "Just as it is impossible for the people of Israel [to live] without faith in his [God's] unity, so is it impossible for Israel [to live] while even a detail from

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[43] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 8, ch. 3, p. 125b. Compare *ibid.*, 126a. Reines did not emphasize the renewal of sacrifices as a goal, apparently hoping to enlarge the circle of Mizrahi supporters as far as possible. A discussion of this issue would complicate the problematic issue of human initiative in the messianic process much further.

[44] Compare to Yehiel Michl Pines's statement in Alter Druyanov, *Documents in the History of Hibbat Zion and the Settlement of Eretz Israel* [Hebrew], edited by Shulamit Laskov, vol. 2 (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University and Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1985), p. 357.

[45] In *Mizrahi Jubilee Publication*, p. 33.

any commandment is missing."[46] Furthermore, the first commandment that the Messiah son of Joseph will call upon us to obey will be "the commandment to settle the land of Israel, and from it they will eventually come to obey the rest of the Torah's commandments."[47] A clear-cut mission thus crystallized within religious-Zionist thought: redeeming the land is meant to enable, as far as possible, full observance of all the commandments.

The principle of full observance appears in many religious-Zionist writings, as it stems from Nissenbaum's notion of national unity. Nissenbaum discusses the influence of Judaism on the concept of the "nation" ("the Judaism of nation," as he refers to it), and makes national unity, evident in both the Torah and the nation, its most important aspect. Although they remain different on both counts, individuals are united in their religion and their national membership. This unity was attained through the recognition that there is one Torah for all, although different communities have developed separate practices. Nissenbaum addresses the question of the path that led the Jewish people to this wondrous unity:

> Had the children of Israel studied only the books of legal decisions, only the brief rulings required for their everyday lives, they would have indeed disappeared. Awareness of controversies and of separate practices posed a threat to our understanding of the Torah as well as to the unity of the nation. But the children of Israel, throughout their lives, studied the whole Torah, the Bible, the Talmud and, for centuries, never had books of legal rulings. They were already used to this comprehensive study, so that when they came later to the study of these rulings, they did not confine themselves only to knowledge of the actual rulings, but chose to delve into the sea of the Talmud and the writings of the *rishonim* [early authorities]… and through this study they were always involved in the totality of the Torah, in its unity.[48]

This passage, as well as others below, clarify that the broad scope of Torah study led to the unity of the nation, which in turn led to the national idea. Study was not limited to topical issues or, should we say, to the concerns of exile. Sages did not recoil from dealing with issues that could only be implemented in some utopian future. Presenting the study of Torah as an independent speculative value for scholars made it eternal and, as such, potentially appropriate to

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[46] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Ma'ynei ha-Yeshuah*, part 1, ch. 34, p. 61.
[47] *Ibid.*, ch. 49, p. 79.
[48] Nissenbaum, "Judaism, the Nation and the State," in *Selected Writings*, p. 89.

modern reality. Note that Nissenbaum, Soloveitchik, Federbusch, and others, point to Maimonides' monumental *Code* to illustrate the quality of halakhic study as all-encompassing, unifying, and pertinent to all times, including the modern period: "Whereas all other halakhists omitted from their books the rulings concerning the sabbatical and the jubilee years, he [Maimonides] included in his book not only the rulings concerning the Temple and the Sanhedrin, but also the rulings concerning kings… which should now be carefully studied."[49] In this sense, "the present time is only a historical anomaly in the ongoing process of implementing the ideal Halakha in the real world… and we await and yearn for the day of Israel's redemption, when the ideal world will vanquish profane reality."[50] Hence, when adapted only to life in exile, the study of Halakha is lacking and withered. Nissenbaum views the hope for a full renewal of divine worship as a hidden element playing an essential role in the shaping of the religious-Zionist idea. Let us examine two sharp and unequivocal formulations, linking the true meaning of Zionism to the renewal of full worship:

> But we say that abiding by the Torah and fully observing its commandments is only possible in the land of Israel, and that is why we aspire to the land. In this way, the Zionist end became a means for attaining the end of observing and preserving the Torah.[51]
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> The Zionism of Torah teaches that not only is the national renaissance of the people possible solely in the land of Israel, but that the

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[49] *Ibid.*, p. 93. Isadore Twersky established and confirmed the scope of Maimonides' code in his unique study, Isadore Twersky, *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides [Mishneh Torah]* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 188-237. This study conclusively indicates the unique historical scope of this work. In contrast, Nissenbaum and Soloveitchik see the *Code* as a further instance of what they consider conventional halakhic study.

[50] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 29. Federbusch, *On the Paths of the Talmud*, p. 36. In light of the approach assuming the comprehensiveness of the commandments, Federbusch called for "the renewal of the science of Torah and the revival of those halakhot bearing on public, community life that have been set aside" (*ibid.*, p. 39). Federbusch himself joined in this endeavor and wrote several books on the subject, among them *The King's Law in Israel* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1973). Finally, note that Zvi Judah Kook often uses the scope of Maimonides' *Code* to emphasize the importance of the study of faith, since the *Code* opens with the Laws on the Foundations of the Torah. See Zvi Judah Kook, *From Within the Redeeming Torah*, p. 119.

[51] Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "The Vision and Aim of the Mizrahi," *Mizrahi Jubilee Publication* p. 69.

> renaissance of the Torah, in all its fullness, is also linked to the return of Israel to their land.[52]

A radical formulation of the idea of full worship appears in an article justifying the ideological participation of the Mizrahi in the Zionist movement. Following is the statement on religion and nationality:

> Both share a commitment to the revival of the land, together with the essence of the nationality that grew within it, and to the Torah, to the observance of the practical commandments bound to the land—"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" [Psalms 137:4]. And this is the whole of Judaism, according to the Mizrahi.[53]

The yearning to expand the borders of religious worship becomes the foundation of nationalism and, in fact, the total expression of "the whole of Judaism." Zionism as a whole thus becomes a movement instrumental in attaining this aim.

Let us consider an additional aspect concerning full worship. The school of Kook and his disciples, as usual, founded the longing for full ritual in the uniqueness of the religious act when performed in the Holy Land. Previous approaches had wished to settle the land in order to make the scope of observance all-inclusive. In contrast, Kook and his disciples saw the very act of observing the commandments in the land of Israel, including those commandments that could be observed in exile, as a qualitative transformation of the religious act *per se*. An abysmal gap separates the meaning and quality of a religious act performed outside sovereign religious existence in the Holy Land, from its meaning and quality after establishing a sovereign religious settlement. Observance in the present, then, rather than being an isolated act, draws support from an ancestral past or a messianic future:

> Faith in general only sheds light on the community of Israel when it is healthy, solid in its strength, its kingdom, its Temple, its land, in full possession of all its spiritual and material assets. All the commandments are always linked in their course, as well as in their inner content, to the supreme plight, when they become visible in their full splendor. Due to the massive decline in the community of Israel, we cannot demand from faith and from the commandments their full light, but only that fragment of the spark of light that remains within it even

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[52] Federbusch, *The Vision of Torah and Zion*, p. 16.

[53] Kalman Eliezer Fraenkel, "Hamizrahi: Its Essence and Charter," *Netivah*, Special Volume (Elul 1926), pp. 7-8.

> at its lowest ebb. This is the point receiving the brilliance of crowns of light from the glorious past, and from a future glowing from afar.
>
> Concerning the Temple-bound commandments and the land-bound commandments, the change in the character of the light is eminently visible—they only reach fullness, even according to Halakha, when the nation stands at its fullest. But even concerning all the practical commandments, and even concerning commandments involving human relationships and all the virtues attached to religious actions—the full light rests on them only when the nation is at its fullest, and wanes as it decays.[54]

The yearning for full worship, then, is not exhausted merely by expanding the scope of observance, namely, by establishing the Temple and observing the land-bound commandments, but also requires a renewal of the metaphysical meaning (symbolized by light) inherent in the ethical and social commandments. "The expectation of salvation," as Kook writes further in this passage, includes a yearning for fullness in religious practice. In fact, whoever is satisfied with partial observance of the commandments has failed to probe the depths of the religious and ritual meaning of redemption. In this spirit, Harlap offers to clarify the statement that only someone observing the commandments in the land of Israel is in the category of *metsuveh ve-oseh* [someone who is commanded and observes, ranking higher than someone who volunteers to observe the commandments]:

> The reason is that all the commandments are woven and bound together, and one cannot exist without the other. Hence, the land of Israel, where all the commandments apply, is the main location for their observance, unlike the case abroad, where no land-bound commandments apply. Observance abroad, then, is only in the category of one who is not commanded and still observes the commandments, since the command is intended for all of them together.[55]

The very yearning to live in the land of Israel, therefore, confers "glory and splendor upon all the commandments, which will then be able to reap the benefit of all the sublime and the mysterious."[56] Zvi Judah Kook views the building of the Temple as a central, cru-

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[54] Kook, *Lights*, p. 163. Compare Kook, *The Vision of Redemption*, pp. 153-158; "The Lights of the Commandments," in *Be-Shemen Ra'anan: Memorial Volume in Honor of Nathan Ra'anan Kook*, edited by Ben-Zion Shapira (Jerusalem, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 319-343.

[55] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Ma'ynei ha-Yeshuah*, Part 3, ch. 12, p. 252.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 253. See also *ibid.*, Part 2, p. 229.

cial element—the incontrovertible motivation for the national awakening of recent times is to renew worship in the Temple. This motivation stands beside the hope of solving the Jewish problem. When commenting on the "Israelite nation," he argues:

> It misses its home, its domain, its land, not only to hide there from the persecutor, to escape the material or spiritual blows, but in its positive desire to return to its living land, to its God, to its core, to live its pure, healthy, free life, its own life, its divine life. Our own movement for settling the land of Israel and Hibbat Zion were revealed in the desire to *build the Temple*.[57]

These comments were written in 1913. Several months after the creation of the State if Israel, Zvi Judah Kook added the following:

> Had God brought us to the land of Israel and not built the Temple there, it would have sufficed [from the Passover Haggadah]. Our coming and our gathering in the land of Israel is wholly focused and directed toward the building and the concern with the Temple, whose holy magnificence and splendorous glory pervades and fills the entire land of Israel, everywhere.[58]

Indeed, longings for the renewal of worship gained momentum with the creation of the State of Israel in general and after the Six-Day War in particular, and Zvi Judah Kook would eventually play a central role in this development. It is enough to mention the many discussions of rabbis and public figures concerning the renewal of the Sanhedrin to understand how an element that had been part of religious-Zionist doctrine in general, became a powerful messianic drive in recent times. "And after God has blessed us with political deliverance, and a sovereign, independent Israeli government has emerged, it is now a [privilege] incumbent on us to establish beside it a national court that will judge according to the Torah."[59] This statement accurately conveys the state of mind widely prevalent among religious-Zionist thinkers. Overall, then, it could be claimed that religious-Zionism did not consider that Zionism had fully accomplished its aim by establishing the State of Israel; only the return of divine worship to its fullness in times of old will constitute a full realization of the Zionist idea.[60]

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[57] Zvi Judah Kook, "On the Agenda," *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 9 (emphasis in original). See *ibid.*, "Torah and Redemption," p. 32.

[58] Zvi Judah Kook, "Israel who Stood at Sinai," *ibid.*, p. 136.

[59] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 1, p. 177. Compare Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, pp. 85-92.

[60] See Ephraim E. Urbach, "Has the State of Israel Realized Zionism" [He-

The ideological and practical developments of religious-Zionist thought in recent times, therefore, cannot be understood without recognizing that the yearning to renew worship follows directly from the basic theological characteristics of religious-Zionism, and their implications for the national idea. Maimon wrote in 1936: "The value of religion in the life of the Hebrew nation has no measure or limit, and this practical religion has not only assumed the most important role in Hebrew nationalism, but has actually become nationalism itself." He concludes: "Because our Judaism is, in fact, the full and authentic Hebrew nationalism."[61] In this context, it is clear that "Judaism" means religious action. Portraying the inclusiveness of the commandments as a Zionist ideal is thus an important characteristic of religious-Zionist theology.

4. *The Failure to Recognize Secularism as an Independent Factor*

The claim that the religious-Zionist ideal requires openness at various levels (educational, scientific, cultural, and so forth), just as it requires full cooperation with distinctively secular elements, recurred in previous chapters. This openness, however, never entailed the recognition of secular Zionists as legitimate. The new religious formulation of the national ideal appropriated for itself the full meaning of this notion. As a result, religious-Zionist circles developed an approach that was unwilling to acknowledge an independent Zionist-secular consciousness, and this type of consciousness was almost ignored as a viable or meaningful element in the general perspective of the religious-Zionist renaissance. One of the most eloquent preachers ever to arise in religious-Zionism proclaims: "Zionism is the return to the ancestral view of Judaism concerning the importance of the fatherland."[62] Furthermore: "This faith in the power of Judaism always impels Zionist activity."[63] This statement is formulated after providing an almost esoteric interpretation of texts by

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brew], *On Zionism and Judaism: Essays*, (Jerusalem: WZO, 1985), pp. 126-127.

[61] "Hebrew Nationalism," *Mizrachi Jubilee Publication*

[62] Nissenbaum, "The Value of the Land of Israel in Our World View," *Selected Writings*, p. 23. In a sober note, Nissenbaum adds that integrating "material" work and an ("ancient") religious-Jewish culture is not more than a hope at present, but this is the aspiration of every religious-Zionist (*ibid.*, pp. 24-25).

[63] *Ibid.*, "On the End of an Era," p. 46.

Herzl and Nordau from speeches at Zionist congresses.[64] In other words, the "true" meaning of secular Zionism can only be explained in light of the religious ideal. The secular Jew is unwilling to admit "the actual religious-original content of Israel, which is hidden in the treasure of the Jewish soul,"[65] but it is this content that actually drives these secularists and determines their moves. The immanent factor impelling Zionism in general, then, is the religious factor, regardless of whether Zionism admits this or not. For the religious-Zionist thinker, only religion has the power to grant secularists "the inner knowledge about the spirit of the nation."[66]

Reines had already shown at length that no absolute heresy is possible within the Jewish people. Passions and a search for material achievements hide the seeds of faith that is actually concealed in the heart of every Jew. Worthless, false views are indeed found among Jews "due to the bitter exile."[67] Hence, when the yoke of exile is released and the Zionist ideal is attained, heresy will inevitably disappear and faith will be exposed. Reines is faithful to the principle he had formulated, whereby "the return to the Jews also brings about the return to Judaism."[68] Striving to realize the Zionist idea thus follows from the deepest desire to disclose faith, and vice-versa, Zionist activity will eventually draw closer those who have turned away from Jewish faith. Reines, as noted, acknowledged the existence of the "point of Judaism latent and concealed inside the whole heart" and, therefore, even if a Jew "wishes to leave Judaism he cannot do so."[69] We must thus conclude that "the link [of Jews] to their faith can never be broken."[70] On the feeling of Jewish nationalism, he writes as follows:

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[64] *Ibid.*. Nissenbaum explicitly argues that faith is ensconced in the Zionist idea "below the level of consciousness" (*ibid.*, p. 47). The interpretation of Herzl's views appears also concerning the issue of culture and the use of Hebrew (*ibid.*, p. 47). A similar interpretation appears in Zvi Judah Kook, "On the Agenda," *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 10. Abraham Itzhak Kook's well-known eulogy linking Herzl to the Messiah son of Joseph deserves mention in this context (*Sinai*, vol. 47, pp. 327-332). It was reprinted in his *Collected Essays*, vol. 1, pp. 94-99). On Amiel's critique see above, ch. 1, section 3, and see below, note 74.

[65] Aminoah, *At the Fountain*, p. 43.

[66] Barth, *Our Generation Confronts Eternity and Other Writings*, p. 333.

[67] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 5, ch. 4, p. 39a.

[68] *Ibid.*, Part 6, 84b. For a similar formulation, see *ibid.*, ch. 7, p. 89a.

[69] Reines, "A Limit on Forsaking Judaism," *The Book of Values*, p. 75. See also above, ch. 4:3, text accompanying note 41.

[70] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 6, ch. 2, p. 105b.

> There are some Jews, who, as they begin to stray from the path of faith, they depart further and further day-by-day, falling lower and lower until they reach the point of national feeling, at which they stop. Not only will they not wish to go beyond this point but, quite the contrary, they will devote themselves to it, and earnestly dedicate themselves to the welfare of their people and to their achievements.[71]

Zionist activity thus springs from unconscious inner layers involved in the link between the people and their nationality and, in fact, between the people and their God. The deepest motivations bearing on national renaissance as well as on the return to the holy land, which Reines included in the notion of "peoplehood" [*amamut*] or nationalism, are classic religious drives. Reines develops at length an incisive halakhic argument to prove that the commandment of settling the land is valid today, and that all those sharing in this task participate in this commandment, even against their will. He also passionately argues that there is no free choice concerning the individual's deep attachment to nationality and to God. Although this claim supports Reines's approach, which justifies cooperation with secular Jews, it also seems to fit the theological ideas conveyed in his writings. A secular Jew necessarily becomes someone who observes a commandment and realizes a deep link ingrained in his soul: "The awakening of the secularists," wrote Reines, "is a kind of general repentance."[72] Furthermore: the rise of Zionism "does not

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[71] *Ibid.*, Part 5, ch. 8, p. 44a. Compare with the following: "…because Zionism is a spiritual and moral movement, after a new wind had suddenly begun to blow, awakening in many people love for their people and their land. The bond of every single one of them to the collective and to their land grows daily. Even among those who many felt had cut their ties to their people and their land, this tie was suddenly strengthened, clearly proving this is a spiritual bond that had been latent in them from the start, and has now come forth. This is exceedingly strong proof of the spiritual and moral nature of this movement" (*ibid.*, ch. 9, p. 49b). See also Schweid "The Beginnings of a Zionist-National Theology," pp. 711-713. An approach claiming that every Jew is tied in an essential bond to the land of Israel appears also in the writings of Mordechai Eliasberg (1817-1889): "The heart and passion of everyone we call a Jew are directed to his cradle in the land of Israel in order to settle it, perfect it, and glorify it" (Mordechai Eliasberg *The Golden Path* [Hebrew] [Warsaw: Shuldberg, 1897], p. 32). Compare Salmon, *Religion and Zionism: First Encounters*, pp. 39-40. Salmon rightfully points to Eliasberg's tolerant approach. Yet, his claim that Eliasberg "recognizes the Jewish legitimacy of Zionist Jews who are not observant" is correct only at the pragmatic level; Eliasberg viewed the union of all factions of the Jewish people as a pressing and supreme need. At a theological, speculative level, however, he viewed secular Jews as driven by deep religious motivations.

[72] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, Part 9, ch. 1, p. 126a.

stem at all from secularism, but rather from its negation."[73] The pretension to a true understanding of the "genuine" motivations of secular Jews became an essential characteristic of religious-Zionist thought.

Many have pondered Kook's doctrine, which categorically denies secular Zionism any legitimation, and may even be said to deny its very authenticity. Indeed, Kook was prepared to grant legitimacy to secularism as an active factor as long as it is an instrument of divine providence and of the redemptive process, manifest in the building of the holy land. In other words, in itself it is nothing and, in fact, one could argue that the secular ideal is an illusion deliberately devised by God. The private desires of secular Zionists and the personal standing of the movement as a whole are meaningless, except in their ability to advance the divine interest and bring redemption to a close. Kook bequeathed to his disciples full assurance in their ability to explain the "genuine" motivations of secular Zionists. These claims reach radical expression in Kook's eulogy of Herzl, when he presented Herzl as the Messiah son of Joseph.[74] Zvi Judah Kook draws a distinction between Zionism and antinomian messianic movements (Karaism, Sabbateanism), which he views as distorting "Torah and religiosity." In contrast, he formulates the motivation and the objective of the Zionist movement as follows:

> The course of events regarding Herzl and the whole question of practical and political Zionism is completely different. Here the move is

[73] *Ibid.*, ch. 2, p. 129a.

[74] Kook explained the differentiation in the messianic personification by claiming that the Messiah son of Joseph is responsible for the material political aspect ("to be a singular nation on the earth, a light onto the nations") and the Messiah son of David brings spiritual realization. See "The Eulogy in Jerusalem," *Collected Essays*, p. 94. Compare Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, pp. 243-244; Luz, *Parallels Meet*, pp. 140-141; Rosenberg, "Introduction to the Thought of Rav Kook," pp. 82-84; Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, pp. 98-101. In an insightful analysis, Ravitzky objects to what he terms the "accepted generalization" (p. 100), claiming that religious-Zionists had perceived Herzl as a "great penitent." He relies on Kook's sober perception, as reflected in his sayings and in the very use of the falling Messiah motif. However, even if Kook was indeed skeptical, religious-Zionists fully accepted the perception of Herzl as a "great penitent," as is evident from many of the sources cited in the present analysis. The reasons for this phenomenon extend beyond the impression left by Kook's words; rather, they are rooted in the very essence of religious-Zionism, whose theology leaves no secular "voids" in its all-inclusive perception of reality. Indeed, many religious-Zionist thinkers refused to heed the criticism of Herzl voiced by such intellectuals as Ahad-Ha'am or Amiel, and preferred to present Herzl's statements in an interpretation that matched their approach.

> from the ground upwards, from the decline and entanglement of assimilation in exile to a progressive ascent, through the pangs of many forms of suffering, general and personal, spiritual and material, mental and physical, toward the wholeness of Judaism and the truth of its life, in the air of its land and the holiness of its earth, awakening to its true renaissance.[75]

Zvi Judah Kook finds in the mission of redeeming the land "the divine endorsement of Zionism," contrary to other messianic movements. He thus ascribes great value to the exposure of the immanent religious core that fosters secular Zionism. Discovering the essential, "genuine" religious foundation of Zionism is, in a sense, participating in the Creation.[76]

This approach reveals the characteristic pretense to explain divine intentions and moves as they really are. The enigma of divine providence, which the religious thinker had always faced in wonder and amazement, is fully resolved concerning the Zionist process. Glasner had already ruled that, when fateful historical events are involved, "the parties concerned are merely puppets controlled from above." You cannot leave responsibility and choice in such events to "the will of an individual or to the will of the majority."[77] God's plan is thus absolute and decisive. A suitable term for this view, appropriated by current ideologues of religious-Zionism, is "the cunning of history."[78] Accordingly, Uziel also sees the return to the ancestral land as a purification of the dross and the impurities that had clung to the Jewish people in their exile. He categorically concludes:

> Hence the solution to this wondrous and unfathomable riddle, whereby the national awakening of Hibbat Zion and the return to Zion, and finally Zionism, began only in the ranks of the people who had forsaken Judaism! The reason is no other than providing divine enlightenment for those who are in need of repentance [*teshuvah*], and they return [*shavim*] to Zion, and through this repentance, they return to their people and escape assimilation and intermingling, in which they had almost drowned.[79]

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[75] Zvi Judah Kook, "Torah and Redemption," *On the Paths of Israel*, p. 35.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[77] Glasner, "Zionism in the Light of Faith," p. 76.
[78] See, for instance, Yoel Bin-Nun, "The Hour of Reckoning Has Arrived," *Nekudah* 123 (September 1988), p. 28.
[79] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 2, pp. 302-303.

In the same spirit, Uziel claims that the exile is "a refining furnace and a litmus test for the nation and the emissaries of God, the protector of Israel, to preserve His uniqueness and His Torah." Moreover: "The exile of Israel and the redemption of Israel are linked and bound together, since the exile only took place so as to be followed by full and eternal redemption."[80] In his view, the Zionist movement is guided by a meticulous divine plan meant to return secularists to the fold. The secularist unwittingly serves as the goal and the aim of divine providence. Without their knowledge, secular Jews steer calculated historical moves. Uziel hence infers an additional goal for religious-Zionism, a goal that all had considered but few had formulated explicitly: to bring back into the fold those who had left ("draw them closer out of a love for Judaism and its Torah"). Uziel thereby stresses again a goal that Reines had repeatedly emphasized: Zionism is the path for returning to religion and preventing assimilation.[81] This goal appears in addition to the widespread use that divine providence makes of the secular element, as religious-Zionist thinkers understand it, in order to build the holy land and enhance the pride of Judaism: "Contemporary secular Zionism is a movement of stimulation, a movement that awakens the spirit of Judaism toward renewal in light of its new physical life in the homeland."[82]

Non-recognition of the secular Zionist position, however, is not only characteristic of zealous messianic trends, such as that of Kook and his ideological circle. Supporters of the trend that appears, at least on the surface, as non-messianic, who do not assume that the Zionist process is part of a deliberate redemptive move, are not prepared to recognize the independent legitimate status of secular Zionists either. A prominent instance of this view is the approach of Soloveitchik, who had hesitations about informing the national

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[80] *Ibid.*, p. 307.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 303. Reines writes in favor of cooperating with secularists: "All the more so since the ethical endeavor in which secularists have participated can exert enormous influence on them, drawing them closer to their faith and their religion" (*A New Light on Zion*, Part 7, ch. 1, p. 112a; compare *ibid.*, Part 8, p. 117a). See more on Reines at the opening of this section. Moreover, for some of them, the general purpose of the State of Israel is to bring the people of Israel back to religion. See, for instance, Aaron Patashnik, "Chapters of Redemption" [Hebrew], in Federbusch, *Torah and Kingdom*, p. 166; Judah Herzl Henkin, "The Meaning of the State of Israel," *Barkai* 5 (1989), pp. 234-237.

[82] Shraga Kadari, "Zionism and Tradition" [Hebrew] *Ha-Hed* 13, No. 10 (1939), p. 20.

awakening with a messianic interpretation.[83] Soloveitchik claims in one of his oral addresses that acquiring the land of Israel means seeking the God of Israel and, in particular, searching for him through a conscious acceptance of suffering and through voluntary sacrifice. In his view, the land can only be acquired through knowledge of the God of Israel or, as he phrased it:

> Yet, it appears that the secular Jew too, who belongs to a non-religious movement, must acquire possession not only of the land of Israel but also of the God of Israel. Even this Jew, skeptic, agnostic, and secular, officially a heretic and at pains to explain the Jewish historical drama in superficial-rational categories, must acquire possession of the God of Israel, build an altar on the mountains of Israel, and bring an offering on the altar.[84]

Soloveitchik thus assumes, a priori, that "the Jew always seeks the Creator of the universe," even when unaware of it. Hence, Soloveitchik does not acknowledge an independent Jewish consciousness detached from religion, and he is particularly unwilling to accept any secular interpretation of the renaissance of the land of Israel. According to Soloveitchik, the only possible interpretation is that the renaissance is a distinctive act of divine providence. The ideal of the "Mizrahi" is thus defined accordingly. When Soloveitchik discusses "modern secular man," he sums up in the following categorical terms: "We wish to see the cherubs spread their wings over the settlement of the land of Israel… we wish to restore the crown to its ancient glory."[85] Indeed, the words of one of his disciples attest to the extent of Soloveitchik's influence. David Hartman also writes about the forced confrontation of the secular Zionist with the values of tradition:

> The Zionists did not leave their historical family when they undertook to revolt against the tradition. I would compare the Zionist revolt to a young person who loses patience with his parents, announces he is leaving home, goes to the door, slams it in great anger, but fails

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[83] On this issue see below, ch. 6, part 1, section 6. See also Dov Schwartz, *The Land of Israel in Religious-Zionist Thought*, pp. 246-273.

[84] Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions*, p. 16. See also p. 17.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 45. Soloveitchik adds that "the role of the Mizrahi" is "to consecrate the secular and bring about the redemption of the soul." Compare also to Soloveitchik's views on the attitude of religious-Zionism to secular Zionism in his essay "*Kol Dodi Dofek*," in Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, *Fate and Destiny: From the Holocaust to the State of Israel*, translated by Lawrence Kaplan (Hoboken, N. J.: Ktav, 2000), pp.67-74.

> to leave the house. The Zionist's radical revolution, after all, was realized in a land that forces a confrontation with different aspirations that have been part of the Jewish historical tradition.[86]

Hartman's book is indeed a sincere attempt to contend with religious pluralism within a modern religious-Zionist framework. He takes exception to "messianic religious activists," who harness secular Jews to divine interests; but even he is not free from the typical religious-Zionist characteristic, claiming to place the acts of secularists in the right light. Secular Jews do not abandon the historic legacy, they do not really leave, and they are "forced" to confront the sources and the Jewish heritage.

Another thinker who made a serious attempt to contend with the problem of secularization is Moses Unna. He warned on various occasions against the blindness of religious-Zionism and its leadership to modern reality. Unna cautioned against a formulation of the present religious-Zionist aim as "returning the people of Israel to their Torah."[87] In light of such an aim, no basis for a shared life between religious and secular Jews is possible. Unna, however, also holds that the ultimate goal of religious- Zionism is "to reunite the entire Jewish people with their Torah and their God."[88] He accepts the need "for publicizing, for speculative clarification, for spreading the ideas of Torah, Halakha, and religious education in all its forms" in order "to return the people to God's Torah."[89] Finally, he adopts Kook's justification of the secular, land-tilling pioneers as realizing "the concerns of *kelal Israel*, the land of Israel, and the nation's renaissance."[90] In other words, Unna returns to the ambivalent attitude that raises the banner of polite cooperation with secularists, concealing the intention to return them to the bosom of Judaism. Indeed, he seeks to emphasize the shared basis of involvement in society and in action, but he too proclaims the ultimate goal

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[86] Hartman, *The Living Covenant*, p. 294. Compare with Benjamin Gross' evaluation of Soloveitchik and of Kook: "For Judaism, the problem posed by secularization is to accept the detachment from the domain of the sacred as legitimate. In my view, Rav Kook did not accept such an approach nor, for sure, did Rav Soloveitchik" ("Secularization and Secularism," *Gilayion*, November 1993, p. 25). Gross rests this view on the theological character of religious-Zionism.

[87] Unna, *Israel Among the Nations*, p. 61.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[89] *Ibid.*, p. 287.

[90] Unna, *The New Community*, p. 59.

of turning the entire Jewish people into a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" as the task of religious Zionism.

It is worth quoting Hirschensohn in this context, when he compares the status of secular Jews to that of the children of Israel leaving Egypt, with the impurity of that land still clinging to them:

> As for our young people, who have assimilated in the land of death, a light shone on them for the first time [inspiring them] to return to our people and to our Holy Land, to join the covenant with God. But they could not remove the scum of exile immediately, because even when we left Egypt, when slavery led us to slide into forty-nine gates of idolatry, we could not at once remove all the abomination of Egypt, and we danced and pranced before the golden calf.... Nevertheless, these people agree with us regarding the national ideal, this one will say, I am my God's, and this one will write, his hand is with God, and they all agree that the land of Israel will be the homeland of the people of Israel only according to the Torah of Israel.[91]

Again, we see an instance of a religious-Zionist thinker who tried to contend directly and sincerely with the issue of secularization and secularism, resorting to categories that were purely halakhic as well as ideological. At the same time, he too pretends to determine precisely the status of secularists. According to Hirschensohn, although the secularist is not free from the dross of exile, "his hand is with God"; when he accepts the national idea, he acquires a share, as it were, among God's servants. Hirschensohn thus exposes the theological hallmark from which the ideology of religious-Zionism never shook free.

Note that this approach, which refuses to recognize a genuine secular Zionist ideal, appears also in the discussions of Amiel, a sharp critic of secular Zionism. In the conclusion of *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, he draws a distinction between "national renaissance" and "national creation." Renaissance means realizing an ideal within a given historical-cultural continuum. Creation in a national context means realizing an ideal through the destruction and obliteration of the past. Amiel reserves this harsh evaluation of "national creation" specifically for secular Zionism that, in his view, aspired to erase the historical legacy. This is how he explains the claim of Nahum Sokolow (1859-1936), whereby Zionism did not generate any

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[91] Hirschensohn, *Malki ba-Koddesh*, vol. 2, p. 100 (from the anthology: Hayyim Hirschensohn, *The Torah and Life* [Hebrew], edited by Yehezkel Cohen [Jerusalem: Hakibbutz Hadati and Ne'emanei Torah va-Avodah, 1988], p. 101).

worthy historical writing, as opposed to the one that had emerged, for instance, within the Enlightenment movement.[92] Despite this critique, Amiel finds solace in the fact that "the land of Israel is also being built through nationalism; the deeds themselves—the settlement and the building of the land—are colossal."[93] But this small comfort could not satisfy a stormy personality like Amiel, and he was not appeased until writing the following, further in this passage:

> But let me tell you that, in truth, I have never been persuaded that these are not believers. Rather, I tend to think that they are hypocrites in this regard, and they do not mean what they say. In any event, this involves self-deceit—they wish to see themselves as non-believers, whereas deep in their hearts and souls they are believers and children of believers. Does not their devotion to the land of Israel, at times reaching radical fanaticism, attest to the sparks of holiness burning in their hearts, even if these are not visible to the people concerned and only appear to them in this form of dedication to the building of the land?… It is no other that in the hearts of all of them is a hidden inner faith, clinging to the recesses of their soul, which is exposed in this form.[94]

Secular Zionists are thus unaware of the depth of their motivations. These hidden motivations are ingrained in them, and the passion that characterizes their deeds is an expression of these motivations. The Hasidic idea of the "inner point" or the "inner spark" is harnessed here to the need to expose the divine element underlying the secular national renaissance. Amiel thereby identifies with Reines's claim concerning the "inner point" that brings secular Jews to join in the realization of the national ideal, as do Bernstein and others.[95] Harlap enlists this principle in the service of his radically messianic doctrine:

> The light of the Messiah is found in every single Jew, since every single one of them has a share in God's Messiah… And as the general light was never flawed, neither was the private spark found in every single Jew. It is always preserved in its holiness and purity, and the hand of the *sitra ahra* [the devil] cannot reach it.[96]

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[92] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 302.
[93] *Ibid.*, p. 304.
[94] *Ibid.*.
[95] See Bernstein, *Within Circles of Enslavement and Redemption*, p. 18.
[96] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Ma'ynei ha-Yeshuah*, Part 1, ch. 46, p. 74. Harlap then argues that "Israel's constitutive moment, namely, discovering the light of the Messiah, will only come about when the people of Israel come to the land of Israel.

Let us return to Amiel's approach, necessarily originating in the blatant rejection of Zionism's demand for "normalization." According to Amiel, the people of Israel are holy in the sense that they "can never become a secular people." The holiness of the Jewish people should not be considered an acquired holiness, which is added to their essence: "Holiness is their substance, and we will never succeed in making the people of Israel a people like all others."[97] The secular element in Israel, therefore, is not independent and autonomous. It draws its sap and its vitality from the divine foundation. On this issue, Amiel is not far removed from the unyielding approach of Kook and his disciples.

In sum: religious-Zionist thought argues that the national renaissance cannot be interpreted in normal, secular terms;[98] therefore, the secular participants do not really have existential, autonomous standing. Hands-on cooperation with the secular camp never led to the recognition of their status as legitimate. This is a feature almost all religious-Zionist thinkers share. Eventually, when the State of Israel was established and its secular character became evident, other arguments denying the independent secular entity took up center stage in politics and in the media. Let us consider two of them. One is presented by Unna. In his view, a non-religious nationalism that draws on the legacy of the Jewish people but is not controlled by it, namely a secular nationalism is dangerous. Motifs such as chosenness, covenant, and messianism, when unaccompanied by the restraining religious interpretation, could result in an arrogant and aggressive nationalism. Hence, only religious nationalism is valid for the Jewish people. "They [the motifs mentioned] have a legitimate place only within a nationalism that has not forgotten the bond linking the Jewish people to their God. There is no place for secular nationalism."[99] The second argument appears in the writings of Moses Krone, who claims that no truly secular core is to be found

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Even when external flaws are apparent, they do not affect this constitutive moment" (*ibid.*). Compare above, ch. 2: 4, note 65 and accompanying text. For further discussion of a "very strong holy spark" found even among the most extreme secularists, see Kook, *Epistles*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80.

[97] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 312. On the uniqueness of the people of Israel in Amiel's doctrine see Greenberg, "Ontic Division and Religious Survival: Wartime Palestinian Orthodoxy and the Holocaust (Hurban)," p. 26.

[98] See Belfer, "*Malkhut Shamayim" and the State of Israel*, p. 59.

[99] On the view of Judaism about the essence of Jewish nationalism, see Unna, *Redemption and State*, p. 325.

in the State of Israel. The dominant type is in fact the traditionalist, concerned with the preservation of the unique national legacy, so that actual secularization is not really to be found in the State of Israel or, at least, not as a widespread phenomenon.[100] These two typical arguments are additional evidence of the totality of the religious-Zionist idea, which cannot tolerate the concrete existence of secularization in the people's renaissance.

Let us conclude by presenting an encounter between the three features that opened this discussion that, in a sense, act as the connecting link between theology and ideology. This encounter is found in the comments of Isser Judah Unterman (1866-1976), the former Chief Rabbi of Israel, concerning the special importance of the Temple:

> The hope to see the Temple standing in all its splendor and glory, serving as a spiritual center to the nation and as a fortress to the entire world, is shared by every *Jew*. Indeed, a Jew who is strong in his faith in the Holy One, blessed be He, and whose soul clings to his Torah, is completely wrapped within this hope, and his soul longs to see the *Shekhinah* as the inspiration of Israel. He is full of an inner yearning for a life of dignity and holiness, which are only possible with the Temple's inspiration. The sanctuary we hope to see built will be a beacon to Israel and will also draw the nations of the world, as with magic ropes, to raise the banner of monotheism, and of moral values and justice for the entire world.[101]

First, Unterman categorically states in this passage that every Jew, no matter where he is, and whether or not he acknowledges this, aspires to build the Temple. Secularization, then, does not really exist. Second, the restoration of religious life within Jewish nationality will bring direct and immediate spiritual gains to the entire world, its faith, and its conventional ethos. Third, Unterman's motto is obviously a yearning for the fullness of religious worship. These remarks explicitly convey the religious-Zionist interpretation of the national idea, as well as the distinctive theological hallmark of this interpretation. Religious-Zionism, then, never attempted an ideological compromise with the changing reality. Quite the contrary, it imposed

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[100] See, for instance, Moses Krona, "The Struggle of Religious Jewry" [Hebrew], in *Religious-Zionism and the State*, edited by Yosef and Abraham Tirosh (Jerusalem: WZO, 1978), p. 95. See also the articles by Shlomo Zalman Shragai and Eliezer Goldman in the same anthology.

[101] Isser Judah Unterman, *A Tribe from Judah* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1984), p. 496 (my emphasis).

its personal perspective on the entire national idea, and refused to grant ideological recognition to the phenomenon of secularization. One could also say that religious-Zionism, while acknowledging the implications and consequences of modernity, did not acknowledge its true ideological roots.

5. *Summary: A Turning Point in Jewish Thought*

This analysis shows that theological self-examination led religious-Zionism to a kind of displacement, and even to a turning point concerning the abstract ideological realms that Judaism should take into account. Beside issues traditionally included within Jewish philosophy throughout its history, such as the divine attributes or the problem of evil, new issues arise, such as the scope of religious ritual as a national motivation, and the status of secularism as a tool in a divine process. Indeed, the concern of religious-Zionist thinkers with secularism does reveal an attempt to cover up the true problem of its status when adapting secularization to the holy realm; at the same time, it also points to a new situation requiring ideological reorientation and philosophical realignment. Harlap excelled in expressing the ideological displacement, in his acute messianic style:

> This, then, is the activity of the righteous in the footsteps of the Messiah, to reveal the depths of the national desire and to realize the wonders of its yearning, to place on it the crown of its holiness and full glory throughout its breadth and scope, its splendorous beauty, and its everlasting greatness.[102]

According to this passage, the existence, the *Weltanschauung*, the entire life of God's servant in this generation—all converge on nationalism. This radical formulation indeed points to the turning point noted above in the theological orientation of religious-Zionist thinkers. These remarks by Harlap bear the stamp of Kook, who had held that a world undergoing processes of redemption reshapes its ideological foundation through the merge of the divine and the national ideas.[103]

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[102] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Mi-Maynei ha-Yeshuah*, 4, ch. 8, p. 333.

[103] Kook, *Epistles*, 1, p. 174. Kook adds the religious and moral idea, although the more significant innovation appears to be the absorption of the national idea within the general ideology. Compare Kook, *Lights*, pp. 102-104; Alter Jacob Shahrai, "Israel in Rav Kook's Approach" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 7, No. 4 (1932), pp. 88-89.

The analysis of religious-Zionist thought in the period that followed the foundation of the Mizrahi thus shows that the movement did believe a new chapter had opened up in Jewish thought, a chapter wholly pervaded by the spirit of nationalism. From now on, no division is postulated between practical ideology and abstract theology, between the national and the religious ideas. The concern with theological issues lacking any essential association with nationalism and messianism becomes a thing of the past, or rather, a concern fit for the exile. Although Kook had indicated that Jewish creativity is driven by a latent national element in exile as well,[104] the national element derived from a "supreme divine light" in our generation—which Kook views as the generation of redemption—paves a new way for Jewish philosophy.

This is quite understandable. Modern Jewish Orthodoxy faced changing concrete situations, unfamiliar to traditional Jewish philosophy. The Zionist trend in Orthodoxy, rather than limit itself to strictly halakhic and moral-homiletic concerns, decided to contend with these situations through a perspective that was distinctively philosophical. A movement consciously open to cultural influences faces new challenges, such as universalism and secularization. I will confine myself here to one additional instance of an ideological issue that had not constituted a challenge until recently, namely, nationalism. In the contest with twentieth century nationalism, several religious doctrines developed typically nationalist features, and one example is that of Shemuel Hayyim Landau. Let us consider a representative sample of Landau's views:

> The national-Zionist movement is based on the view that "the intention to create Israel preceded everything else";[105] it therefore placed the nation at the center of the whole movement. Because only the nation is intrinsically valuable, and all national aspirations and goals are valuable only insofar as they serve as instruments and are needed for the nation as such, and only within it and through it do they assume their stature and value…
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> Obviously, then, anything we attempt to set up as a definition and a condition for the building of the land, beside the requirement that it should be essentially linked to the building of the land, must also conform to the ultimate aim of national renaissance. Only spiritual forms and principles that necessarily follow and are logically required by the national renaissance and its essence, can actually serve as nec-

[104] Kook, *Epistles*, p. 177.
[105] *Genesis Rabbah*, vol. 1, p. 1.

> essary foundations for the building of the land…
>
> In this sense, and only in this sense, the national element in the Torah is not only a commandment and a duty to the sons building the land, but also a main condition of the building, and its essence is actually a factor and a motivation of national renaissance as well as a consequence of it.[106]

Landau thus offers an approach marked by a strong nationalist tension, claiming that the individual is meaningful only within the general framework, and is actually absorbed within the collective. The collective acquires distinctive ontological status, swallowing the individual. Landau bases his view on a comprehensive metaphysical approach that confers upon the collective the status of a cosmic entity:

> The collective has what the individual does not. The people are a separate living organism, a collective "self" rather than a mere gathering of individuals. Through the people, through the collective "self," the individual joins the world and clings to it, to creation and to the entire cosmos, and thereby becomes a partner in the deeds of humanity and of the cosmos as a whole.[107]

Landau draws a distinction between "nationality," a term he views as pointing to the nation's characteristics, and "people," which points to the entire spectrum of unique characteristics and practical features. Whereas "nationality" reflects the soul dimension of the nation, "people" reflects both body and soul. From here, Landau arrives at the value of labor, which extricates the Jewish people from their inferior, parasitical status, and brings them to national and cosmic wholeness.[108] This conclusion follows directly from the new theological platform suggested by Landau. The uniqueness of the chosen people assumes a distinctive nationalistic attire, which is one of the consequences of adding abstract theological elements to a national ideology.

Incidentally, other thinkers tried (whether consciously or unconsciously) to tone down the extreme nationalist resonance of Landau's words, as attested by Shragai's comment that "as long as there

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[106] Shmuel Hayyim Landau, "Clarifying our Method (1)" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 1, No. 1 (1926), p. 5. Compare Fishman, *Judaism and Modernization*, p. 51.

[107] Shmuel Hayyim Landau, "Clarifying our Method (3)" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 1, No. 4 (1926), p. 67.

[108] *Ibid.*, p. 69. Compare Shahrai, "Israel in Rav Kook's Approach," *Netivah* 7, No.3 (1932), p. 76.

is no personal redemption there is no room for general redemption."[109] Indeed, Hapoel Hamizrahi stood at a dialectical crossroads, between individual humanism and national collectivism. Clearly, however, these reactions are a corollary of the confrontation with current events and ideological changes in the world in general; all require new approaches, up to and including the extremism conveyed in Landau's article, since Landau actually considers his views to be an interpretation or expression of the "national foundation of the Torah." Furthermore, Landau's approach fits more than one of Kook's formulations, and his perception of the collective as an exclusive ontological entity does indeed match the doctrine of Kook's circle. Let me cite an instance of a personal intimate formulation, wherein Kook expresses the fullness and the exclusivity of national existence:

> Listen to me, my people. I speak to you from my soul, from the soul of my soul, from the living bond that ties me to you all and that ties all of you to me, from a feeling that I sense more than any other feeling in my life, a feeling that only you, only all of you, the whole of you, all your souls, all your generations, only you are my living content, in you I live, in you, only in the united wholeness of you does my life have that content called life, because without you I have nothing.[110]

This passage expresses, as noted, the totality of the unique national feeling. Kook feels that, without the national dimension, his life cannot be called life. Again in this realm of intimate writing, when Jawitz was writing his *History of the Jewish People*, he sensed that "it is not my spirit, the spirit of the individual, but rather the spirit of my people, the eternal people, that speaks through me and holds my pen."[111] The national entity assumes existential status. Indeed, these feelings of nationalism assumed systematic and political expression in the writings of Kook's disciples, posing before Jewish philosophy challenges it had not faced before.

We have thus learned that a new reality required anchoring and development through the sources, and set up a new order of prior-

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[109] Shlomo Zalman Shragai, "The Renaissance of the Community and the Individual" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 2, Nos. 10-12 (1926), p. 204.

[110] Kook, *Lights of Holiness*, from an earlier edition, 52. The Nazir placed this paragraph within a series of personal introductory passages by Kook to *Lights of Holiness*, and finally decided not to print them. Compare Abraham Itzhak Kook, *Mists of Purity* (Jerusalem: The Zvi Judah Kook Institute, 1983), p. 47.

[111] Jawitz, *Selected Writings*, p. 107.

ities regarding the problems concerning Jewish philosophy. If the religious-Zionist movement did indeed aspire to the creation of "a renewed man, a liberated Jew," and to the "renewal of spiritual creativity,"[112] it also necessarily led to the beginnings of a new approach in Jewish philosophy, paving the ground for "a new Jewish reality, different from all that had existed for generations."[113] Bernstein's statement on the task of religious-Zionism in general and Hapoel Hamizrahi in particular is rather typical: "We need a large spiritual movement that will renew values, that will disclose renewed spiritual sources… and our movement can and should be this: a movement of renewal in Judaism, that introduces new values into Judaism; new because they have almost been forgotten."[114] Bernstein compared the renewal of religious-Zionism to the endeavor of Hasidism and of the *Musar* movement. He thereby evoked the anger of Katriel Fishel Tchursh,[115] although his comments unquestionably convey the general state of mind then prevalent among members of the movement.

For religious-Zionist thinkers, then, a new chapter opened up in Jewish philosophy. It was a response to the call for an intensive concern with the national aspect of theological questions and to the search for "a new guide of the perplexed," which is also the title of a Kook treatise still in manuscript and awaiting publication.[116] The uniqueness of this chapter could be due merely to the fact that it was raising new issues. It is questionable whether the attempts to contend with them reveal new dimensions of depth, thereby truly justifying its definition as a "new era." Religious-Zionist thought, however, viewed the concern with the abstract philosophical dimension of Judaism as its main and essential concern and, moreover, was inclined to view its own position as a new stage in Jewish thought. The movement viewed its doctrine as a new development in Jewish philosophy. Openly or covertly, most religious-Zionist thinkers agreed that "Zionism seeks not only the renaissance of the Jews… but also the renaissance of Judaism,"[117] and Judaism in its renaissance

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[112] Aviad (Wolfsberg), *Judaism and Present*, p. 30.

[113] Unna, *Israel Among the Nations*, p. 277. Unna refers to the *Torah va-Avodah* movement.

[114] Bernstein, *The Seventh Convention of Hapoel Hamizrahi*, p. 41.

[115] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[116] See above, ch. 3, note 16.

[117] See Reuven Weinschenker (Gafni), "Zionism as a Whole" [Hebrew], *Netivah*

includes a new and renewed philosophical and ideological foundation.

3, Nos. 13-15 (1927), p. 195. This statement, in the style of Reines, attracted many. See, for instance, Simon Federbusch, "Foundations of a Torah Zionism," in Federbusch, *The Vision of Torah and Zion*, p. 14.

CHAPTER SIX

DIVERGENCE AND CRITICISM IN RELIGIOUS-ZIONISM

In previous chapters we pointed to a common theological foundation in religious-Zionist thought, concerned with a re-examination of the most basic theological conceptions and with the formulation of the national idea according to this theology. This shared theological foundation, however, has not precluded diversity. In this concluding chapter, I wish to deal with two unique approaches in religious-Zionist thought, attesting to its versatile contents. The first discusses personal redemption while isolating it from public redemption (Joseph Dov Soloveitchik). The second offers a sharp critique of religious-Zionist theology, growing from within the movement and, thus, based largely on a paradox (Yeshayahu Leibowitz).

1. *Personal Redemption and Public Redemption*

a) *Introduction*

Soloveitchik's doctrine was presented above as one of the sources of religious-Zionist thought and the theological transformation it had sought. We stressed, on the one hand, the theoretical theological background that Soloveitchik shared with this thought (the discussion of the divine attributes, presenting the correlative conception in immanent formulations; the link between theology and Halakha; the critique of Spinoza; expanding the borders of halakhic study, and the non-recognition of secularization). On the other hand, several aspects of Soloveitchik's doctrine were presented as a kind of reaction to the all-encompassing perception of faith that had developed in religious-Zionist thought, particularly in the doctrine of Kook and his circle of disciples. This chapter will present an additional approach suggested by Soloveitchik, which separates him from many other religious-Zionist thinkers and is also, in a way, a reaction to their views. I am referring to his individual theory of redemption, namely, to the possibility of reaching individual redemption even in an unredeemed world afflicted by social problems, national adversity, persecution, and war. In this eminently personal vision, redemption

is shifted from the collective to the inner, intimate world of the individual.

Let us open with a preliminary assumption: human existence is characterized, according to Soloveitchik, by a basic duality. Soloveitchik tended to present his philosophical views as embodied in ideal figures. He built various personality types reflecting his theoretical notions. The typological descriptions prevalent in his writings denote a fundamental dialectic that is not always amenable to splicing and bridging. Even halakhic man, who represents a reasonably harmonious figure when contrasted with other typological structures ("man of faith" and "majestic man"), shares certain characteristics with other figures pained by existential and contradictory concerns, revelation and concealment.[1] This duality is already manifest at the very initial stages of Soloveitchik's thought, but its purported anchoring in normative Judaism is proposed only in his later thought. Soloveitchik then claims that Halakha has adapted to this duality and that, furthermore, Halakha encourages the existential characterization of duality as a desirable condition.[2] Out of this basic characterization, the dialectic element progressively expands to other characteristics, from the individual to society and to the community, and from an existence of fate to an existence of destiny.[3]

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[1] According to Lawrence Kaplan, when halakhic man reaches his height he is a figure of "harmony rather than oppositions and contradictions." See his insightful study, Kaplan, "Models of the Ideal Religious Man in R. Soloveitchik's Thought," p. 330. See also pp. 334-337. Even Kaplan acknowledges, however, that the starting point is contradiction. Furthermore, it is also hard to accept that the basic characterization of the *homo religiosus*, as described at the opening of the essay, enables halakhic man to reach perfect harmony, as Kaplan claims.

[2] See Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, "Catharsis," *Tradition* 17:2 (1978), p. 44. Kaplan, *ibid.*, p. 329.

[3] See Ehud Luz, "The Dialectic Element in R. Soloveitchik's Works," pp. 75-89; Avi Schweitzer (Sagi), "The Loneliness of the Man of Faith in the Philosophy of Soloveitchik: A Dialectic of Fate and Mission" [Hebrew]," *Daat* 2-3 (1978-1979), pp. 247-257. The various tensions presented in these articles are described in a Hegelian tone, viewing synthesis and satisfaction as the culminating, final stage. Sagi, who excels at detailing the underlying existential categories (see pp. 249-251 in particular), views Halakha and the appeal to a personal God as elements helping to release these tensions. In contrast, one must consider whether these dialectic existential fault lines do indeed disappear altogether at the final (messianic) stage, namely, whether a perfect synthesis of these distinctive existential categories can be envisioned. The following analysis will point out the complexity of this problem, portraying the meaning of Soloveitchik's doctrine for the development of the messianic idea in modern Judaism.

The discussion that follows relies on two assumptions:

1) The concept of "redemption" in Soloveitchik's doctrine is a result of human existential categories and, in this context, it either interfaces with other categories such as freedom, self-realization, and creativity, or identifies with them.
2) The trends underlying Soloveitchik's view of redemption are affected by the same dialectic element that is at the basis of the entire method, as manifest in the flux between the utopian and the real, the human and the individual. At one pole is the traditional eschatological approach drawing on the vision of a "new age," either in its political-historical or in its apocalyptic guise. Universal changes will unfold in this age, implying the rise of a new, decent society, parallel to the redeemed world. At the other end is individual redemption, applying to the "self," namely, to various levels in the redeemed individual. This redemption is eminently intimate and thus not related, at least directly, to society or to the surrounding world.[4]

b) *Sources*

Individual redemption is a view typical of Christian theology, where it often supersedes the cosmic eschatological dimension.[5] Nineteenth

[4] The idea of individual redemption was clearly formulated in medieval thought, particularly in the development of various psychological approaches. Emphasis was placed on the liberation of the soul from the shackles of matter and its return to its source, an approach with distinctive neo-Platonic roots on the one hand, and rationalist sources on the other (the doctrine of communion with the active intellect). These theories are obviously far removed from the basic existential characteristics typical of redeemed man, although they may have been known to Soloveitchik. See Shalom Rosenberg, "The Return to Paradise: The Idea of Restorative Redemption" [Hebrew], in *The Messianic Idea in Jewish Thought*, (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1982), pp. 43, 78-86; see also the articles by Mendel Piekarz and Gershom Scholem in that volume. See Moshe Idel, "Patterns of Redemptive Activity in the Middle Ages" [Hebrew], in *Messianism and Eschatology*, edited by Zvi Baras (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1984), pp. 254-263; Dov Schwartz, *Messianism in Medieval Jewish Thought* [Hebrew], (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1997), ch. 5.

[5] Gershom Scholem, "Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism," in *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays in Jewish Spirituality*, p. 1. Several theologists (among them Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer at the end of the nineteenth century) had emphasized the cosmic implications of redemption. On individual redemption in Christian theology see, for instance, Rudolf Bultmann, *History and Eschatology: The Presence of Eternity* (New York and Evanston:

and twentieth-century existentialist-religious thought placed particular emphasis on the personal dimension of redemption.[6] Traces of this thought can be found openly and explicitly in Soloveitchik's writings, and are also discernible when we search for the sources of ideas whose origins Soloveitchik does not mention. At the same time, a clear trend focusing on the personal dimension of eschatology is also evident in modern Jewish philosophy, despite the obvious association of some of its thinkers with social ideals that also feature, *inter alia*, in various Zionist ideologies.[7] The leading representative of this trend appears to be the philosopher Hermann Cohen, and several of his doctrine's guidelines concerning personal redemption are described below.

Soloveitchik's affinity with Cohen is well-known, and has also been a subject of scholarly analysis.[8] Cohen finds a parallel between redemption and atonement, and the main discussion on the issue of redemption is thus found in parts ten and eleven in *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, entitled "Atonement," and on part twelve, "The Day of Atonement." Since the expurgation and purification of sin constitute the actual redemption process, suffering is consistently shown to be its prelude.[9] Cohen, as we know, ascribes

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Scribners, 1957), pp. 49-55. Under the influence of Heidegger, Bultmann identifies redemption with the Heideggerian concept of "authentic existence." He thereby applies his de-mythologization principle to such eschatological terms as resurrection, etc.. Compare, Justo L. Gonzalez, *A History of Christian Thought from the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*, 9th edition (Nashville, Tenn.: Abigdon Press, 1988), p. 444.

[6] I will confine myself to Kierkegaard and Karl Barth. Kirkegaard writes in *On Authority and Revelation*, translated by Walter Lowrie (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960): "Salvation from all dizziness spiritually understood, is essentially to seek the ethical, which by qualitative dialectic disciplines and limits the individual and establishes his task" (p. 129). See Avi Sagi, *Kirkegaard, Religion, and Existence: The Voyage of the Self*, translated by Batya Stein (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), pp. 120-122. On Barth see John McConnachie, *The Barthian Theology* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933), pp. 88-92. On Bultmann, see previous note.

[7] See, for instance, Hess, Marx, Sirkin, Buber, and others. See the articles by Shlomo Ne'eman, Michael Graetz and Israel Kolatt in *Messianism and Eschatology*. Systematic attacks against the Reform movement, characterized by patent messianic overtones, deserve mention in this context. Compare David Rudavsky, *Modern Religious Movements: A History of Emancipation and Adjustment* (New York: Behrman, 1967), pp. 203 ff..

[8] See Ravitzky in "Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik on Human Knowledge," pp. 171-180. The analysis of Cohen's influence on Soloveitchik in this article does not apply to the question of individual redemption, which concerns us here.

[9] Cohen, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, p. 235. Cohen also sug-

Ezekiel a special status among the prophets, enjoying a unique advantage that is also manifest in the perception of redemption. According to Cohen's description, the messianic ideal is two-dimensional.[10] The first dimension—represented by the prophets in general—is socio-political redemption, to be accomplished in the political arena. The second dimension—which is the innovation introduced by the prophet Ezekiel—is individual redemption and, as such, challenges the totality of the first dimension. At this level, the reference is to the "sinful soul." Furthermore, redemption symbolizes the future's penetration into the present.[11] It is worth noting in this context that Cohen does not include within redeemed existence the notion of Jewish political independence, which many traditional Jewish philosophies had adopted.[12] In other words: redemption is also possible in an unredeemed world, and becomes manifest at the individual level. In Cohen's terms: "we have considered redemption as the road to the human self."[13]

Cohen thus emphasizes the idea of redemption as the experiential purification of the individual facing God. The centrality of the

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gests an idea that is typical of Christian theology, stating that redemption is attained through suffering. See below, note 22.

[10] *Ibid*., pp. 188-190. On Cohen's view of redemption see Shmuel Hugo Bergman, *Contemporary Thinkers* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1970), pp. 228-230; Schweid, "Foundations of Hermann Cohen's Religious Philosophy," pp. 299-300.

[11] Cohen, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, p. 234. Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) also tends to view redemption as attained in the present, at least partially, even if the cosmos is in the end absorbed within God, in a distinctively pantheistic approach. Rosenzweig describes redemption as a force active in the present—the future is realized within the present. The people of Israel, who are not an integral part of human history, experience the future already in the present through their expectation of it. Past, present and future thus interface. See Rachel Freund, *Die Existenzphilosophie Franz Rosenzweigs* [Hebrew], translated from the German by Yehoshuah Amir (Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1973), pp. 106-107; Rotenstreich, *Contemporary Jewish Thought*, vol. 2, pp. 230 ff., and particularly pp. 237-338; Moshe Schwarcz, *From Myth to Revelation* [Hebrew], (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad and Bar-Ilan University Press, 1978), pp. 299ff..

[12] See Schweid, "Foundations of Hermann Cohen's Religious Philosophy", p. 304.

[13] Cohen, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, p. 234. The emphasis on individual redemption in Cohen does not disavow the universal realm. Cohen is known to have supported socialist ideals, which are not free from notions of alienation and redemption either. Compare Nicholas Lash, *A Matter of Hope: A Theologian's Reflections on the Thought of Karl Marx* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 169-194. Cohen's systematic formulation of the idea of personal redemption, however, left its mark on Soloveitchik's doctrine.

idea is thus clear, since it is for the individual absorbed by and blurred within the ethical, which is universal by definition, that Cohen intends religion. On the issue of redemption, he takes a significant step toward the characterization of religion as an experience of the concrete individual, who is thus exposed as one. Cohen's doctrine, then, proposes redemption as a process realized in the present, and within the intimate realm of the individual. Eschatological, absolute alternatives are rejected, to be replaced by a stress on the ephemeral individual confronting eternity and defeating it. This view of individual redemption is not easily reconciled with that outlined by religious-Zionist thinkers, and this tension will clearly emerge in Soloveitchik's writings.

c) *The Future Realized in the Present*

On the one hand, Soloveitchik accepts the view of redemption as a universal event to be fully realized at "the end of days," as will be clarified below.[14] On the other hand, the content he pours into this mould does not preclude the possibility of an additional dimension leading to a redeemed individual already in the present; he thereby eliminates the qualitative difference between future redemption and a redeemed existence "here and now," as evident from his analysis of repentance.

Repentance is explained in light of a special perception of time, whereby the vectors leading toward the past and toward the future converge in the present. This approach is named the "threefold time structure."[15] Since time—including the vector of the past—can be qualified and shaped, a repentant individual forges the true meaning of his past out of its future implications, and the decision to do so is implemented in the present. Through the concept of repentance, then, Halakha offers an alternative perception of time to the mechanistic and teleological ones that, a priori, locate the causes of the process at specific points: the mechanistic approach at its beginning, and the teleological one at its end. The process of redemp-

[14] See below, section 4, and see, for instance, Soloveitchik, "Mah Dodech mi-Dod [What is thy beloved more than another beloved]" [Hebrew], in *Divrei Hagut Ve-Haa'rakha* (Jerusalem: WZO, 1981) pp. 57-59.

[15] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 114, and see above, ch. 3, text accompanying note 87, for the discussion on Soloveitchik's critique of Spinoza's perception of time.

tion means "a change in the direction of influence."[16] In this perception of time, the past can be created, that is, its meaning determined by a decision in the present and according to the interpretation given to the present. In contrast, the future is also described as meaningful to the present, as denoted by the description of the *Rosh Hashanah* prayer:

> The infinite future, that future in which there gleams the reflection of the image of eternity, also the splendor of the eschatological vision, arise out of the present moment, fleeting as a dream. Temporal life is adorned with the crown of everlasting life.[17]

In the same spirit, Soloveitchik concludes his discussion of repentance as reflecting the creative potential of halakhic man:

> But there is a kind of man who abides under the shadow of a complete and resplendent time. His soul, grounded "in days past" (Deut. 4:32), is devoted to the eschatological ideal. He looks behind him and sees a hylic matter that awaits the reception of its form from the creative future. He looks ahead of him and confronts a creative, shaping force that can delineate the content of the past and mold the image of the "before"…. Such a time consciousness, whose beginning and end is everlasting life, is the aim of Halakhah and is termed creation—the realization of the eternal Halakha in the very midst of the temporal, fleeting world.[18]

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[16] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 116, and text from p. 112 onwards. See also Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, "Repentance and Wisdom in the Head and in the Heart" [Hebrew], in *Days of Remembrance*, pp. 107-109. Among the sources on which he relied for this formulation of a time perception in the context of repentance, Soloveitchik mentions Max Scheler (*Halakhic Man*, p. 123, note 127). Scheler taught that feelings are objectively valid, and thus clearly akin to values. Moreover, he argued that values have a distinctive ontological status. Hence, repentance too, as a state of feeling and consciousness, has the possibility of changing the past. Compare, Joseph Wohlgemuth, *Grundgedanken der Religionsphilosophie des Max Schelers in jüdischer Beleuchtung* (Berlin: 1931). The perception of the past according to the meaning of the present is also evident in Kierkegaard's analysis of consciousness. For Kierkegaard, the meaning of a conscious self is the consciousness of the "self" as active in the past and accepting responsibility for past choices. The "self" is thus exposed as freedom to relate to the past datum and ascribe it to itself. On the notion of "endorsing the biography" in Kierkegaard see Sagi, *Kierkegaard, Religion, and Existence*, pp. 106-108. On the connection between repentance and existential approaches see Pinhas Pel'i, "Jewish Religiosity: Buber's Version" [Hebrew], in *Martin Buber: A Centenary Volume*, edited by Johanan Bloch et. al. (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1982), p. 376, and notes 40-41 on p. 383.

[17] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 119. Compare, *On Repentance*, pp. 254 ff..

[18] Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, p. 122.

These passages faithfully represent the unique time consciousness that follows from repentance. One question, however, remains open—does the creative dimension apply to the future as it applies to the past? In other words: Does the future burst into the present as a guiding, regulative idea, which only directs and controls? Or does perhaps this future also assume its shape according to the present, and is thus realized in the here and now? It appears that Soloveitchik decides to affirm the realization of the future in the present. The relevant discussion, found in "From There You Shall Seek" focuses directly on the concept of "communion":

> For Halakha, communion is not a vague hope sunk in some remote eschatology, but a clear idea grasped halakhically, to be realized through a process rooted in the concrete present. The eschatological "tomorrow" is bound, according to Halakha, to the simple and drab "today"…. When a man is studying Torah, even if alone, the *Shekhinah* is still with him, because when a Jew is engaged in Torah, he gradually realizes the vision of the end of days. Communion, essentially an eschatological vision woven into the end of days, begins to take shape even in this estranged, divided world, and in the concrete life of the individual living a flawed, lonely existence. Judaism was always aware of the continuity between temporal and eternal existence, between a world struggling for its existence and a redeemed one, between a defiled world and one of purity and righteousness.[19]

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[19] Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," pp. 188-189. Medieval philosophies also identified communion with the personal and absolute redemption of the individual, from a different perspective (see above, note 4). Mostly, however, medieval interpretations identified communion as a perfect conjunction with a Supreme Entity (the active intellect), in the wake of Moslem scholars such as Averroes. See, for instance, concerning Moses of Narbonne, Alfred L. Ivry, "Moses of Narbonne's 'Treatise on the Perfection of the Soul': A Methodological and Conceptual Analysis," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 57 (1966-1967), pp. 288-289. Similar approaches are also prevalent in kabbalistic literature, all entailing a price both in the renunciation of the collective idea of redemption and in a suitable allegorical interpretation. This statement, however, needs to be fleshed out and demonstrated more specifically regarding each thinker. The approach that speaks of total communion is explicitly rejected by Soloveitchik. Compare "From There You Shall Seek," pp. 190.

It is also worth noting that Buber, who anchors the messianic dimension in his utopian view (see above, note 7), also saw the biblical "end of days" as capable of realization in the present and in present reality. See Shemaryahu Talmon, "Utopia and Reality in Buber's Thought" [Hebrew], in *Here and Now: The Social and Religious Thought of Martin Buber*, edited by Shemaryahu Talmon, Kalman Yaron and Yosef Immanuel (Jerusalem: Martin Buber Center at the Hebrew University, 1983), p. 23; Abraham Shapira, "Emerging Communities and the *Tikkun* of the World" [Hebrew], in *Paths in Utopia* (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1984), pp. 276-314.

This passage clarifies that the future to be realized in the present is not trivial and undefined; rather, "the end of days" is actually realized in the present through the intensive engagement with *talmud Torah* [Torah study]. Eternal existence thus enters temporal existence, resulting in an eschatological condition. Hence, what we face are different formulations of an approach claiming that the messianic future materializes already in the present, at least relatively. The value of *talmud Torah*, which is crucially important in Soloveitchik's thought, leads directly to the incursion of a distant, messianic future, into the present.

d) *Existential Eschatological Redemption*

In *The Lonely Man of Faith*, redemption emerges as a harmonistic condition that resolves the fundamental duality and rift characteristic of the human existential plight. Soloveitchik, however, remains ambiguous as to whether this condition can be materialized in concrete reality. According to one direction, since harmony cannot be attained in the present reality, the eschatological vision signifies a different type of existence. Another direction, however, emphasizes the prospect of attaining existential harmony in the present, and this is the topic of the next section.

The Lonely Man of Faith represents the first direction, and presents two typological models: majestic man and the man of faith. The man of faith is portrayed as striving toward "cathartic redemptiveness,"[20] which is typically internal:

> Cathartic redemptiveness is experienced in the privacy of one's in-depth personality and it cuts below the relationship between the "I" and the "thou" (to use an existentialist term) and reaches into the very hidden strata of the isolated "I" who knows him as a singular being.[21]

This situation points far beyond the God-man correlative. The man of faith is subdued by God, implying withdrawal and admittance of failure. Furthermore, this redemption emerges through the crisis and the retreat[22] and, at its height, causes a new crisis: loneliness.[23] Hence,

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[20] Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, p. 35.

[21] *Ibid.*.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 36. The biblical verse that illustrates this situation is "Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord." A recurrent motif in Soloveitchik's writings arises here, namely, the motif of redemption attained through suffering. For the Kierkegaardian source of the motif of suffering see Pinhas Pel'i, "On Man in the

this is not full and absolute redemption. In the advanced description of the dialectic prevailing between the majestic community and the community of faith, he unambiguously determines that harmony is indeed unreachable in any concrete reality and is a deviation from the basic existential foundation of the human being as a divine creation. In a comment highly relevant to our discussion we read:

> Jewish eschatology beholds the great vision of a united majestic-covenantal community in which all oppositions will be reconciled and absolute harmony will prevail.... On that distant day the dialectical process will come to a close and man of faith as well as majestic man will achieve full redemption in a united world.[24]

Absolute redemption, then—contrary to relative redemption[25]—is not within present reach, and requires a different kind of existence, namely, eschatological existence. In this account, Soloveitchik seems to clarify that new contents are also incorporated into the concept of absolute redemption. Beside the cosmic and social perceptions of redemption there is now an existential dimension, which denotes a sense of decisive change in the human self, the absolute transformation of the inner structure of the "self." A change thus necessarily unfolds in the community to which the individual belongs, and a new type of society emerges. In this discussion of Soloveitchik, the concept of "redemption" assumes a classic existential meaning without renouncing the traditional emphasis on the utopian dimension.

e) *Existential Redemption in the Present*

The second direction is found in a series of brief articles, stating that redemption can also be realized in a concrete, unredeemed world. In this discussion, I will not resort to typological options that might be construed as ideal models without any dialectic or hesitations, such

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Philosophy of Joseph B. Soloveitchik" [Hebrew], *Daat* 12 (1984), pp. 99-110.

[23] Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, p. 37-38.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 55, note. See Hartman, *The Living Covenant*, pp. 42-43.

[25] Apparently, this term should be used to define the redeemed condition according to one of the dialectic poles, whereas the meaning of absolute redemption is the harmonization of the dialectic situation. Thus, we find the terminology "complete salvation [*yeshuah*] and the redemption [*geulah*] of reality" used concerning the natural religious experience, which is one pole in the flux between the natural and the revelatory experience. See Soloveitchik, "From There You Shall Seek," p. 152.

as, for instance, halakhic man.[26] The focus will be on a direct analysis of the approach assuming individual redemption.

In the article "Redemption, Prayer, Talmud Torah," slavery is characterized by the inability to engage in dialogue: "A mute life is identical with bondage… the slave lives in silence," or, alternatively, redemption is "communing."[27] Further on, Soloveitchik draws a distinction between two types of slavery, as represented by "the political slave" and "the existential slave." The political slave is enslaved from outside, his freedom denied to him by an external element. In contrast, the internal slavery of the existential slave is evident in two features:

1. "Anonymity"—sinking into human history without leaving any unique personal traces. This characteristic is tantamount to loneliness.
2. "Ignorance"—a mistaken, erroneous self-perception, leading to ignorance about the basic needs of the authentic personality.[28]

Whereas liberation from political slavery could be facilitated by an external factor, as was the redemption of Israel from Egypt through divine intervention, release from existential slavery must be in the hands of the individual and attained through her own powers.

The meaning of redemption, above all, is finding and exposing a self-identity: "The very instant he finds himself, he becomes a redeemed being."[29] This self-identity is exposed with the help of two instruments: prayer, which focuses the individual's true needs, concentrating them in the course of formulating them; and *talmud Torah*, which reveals the person's intellectual ability. In Soloveitchik's formulation:

> … he knows himself, and finds freedom in his knowledge. He is aware of his needs because he prays; he is aware of his intellectual creative capacities because he studies. He is sure that the needs are his own,

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[26] See note 1 above. See also Soloveitchik, *On Repentance*, pp. 12-13.

[27] Soloveitchik, "Redemption, Prayer, Talmud Torah," *Tradition,* 17:2 (1978) p. 56. On careful scrutiny, this feature denotes eloquence rather than necessarily interpersonal communication. For an analysis of the problem of the "other" in Soloveitchik see Sagi, "The Loneliness of the Man of Faith," pp. 253-255.

[28] "Redemption, Prayer, Talmud Torah," pp. 60-64.

[29] *Ibid*., p. 66 . This distinction resembles Heidegger's levels of existence. See Sagi, "The Loneliness of the Man of Faith," p. 249.

> and that the intellectual capacities are a part of himself. This twofold knowledge is cathartic and redemptive.[30]

In this context, redemption is parallel to self-realization and to creativity; as such, it becomes dynamic. Furthermore, redemption is described in distinctively existential terms, justifying its image as bringing liberation from existential slavery. When we add to this conception the extensive descriptions of halakhic man as a figure that seemingly entails complete self-realization, and as a creative figure in the most sublime sense of this concept,[31] one could categorically argue for the realization of redemption on an individual dimension and in the present. According to Soloveitchik, one could clearly trace a defined archetypal profile for redeemed figures of this type, living and functioning in an unredeemed world. In this perception of the concept of "redemption," the gap between the eschatological "end of days"—portrayed above as unattainable in present existential categories—and the present, is reduced even further and becomes merely statistical. In order to define redemption according to *The Lonely Man of Faith*, we needed a new type of existence. In the present definition, redemption is described through existential categories taken from the present, real world.

A redeemed condition of the kind described in "Redemption, Prayer, Talmud Torah" is possible due to the unique character of *Rosh Hashanah*, as described in the article "Tidings of Redemption for the Lost and the Outcast." The style of this article tends toward popular preaching, largely addressed to a mass audience rather than to the individual. Two situations of exile are described there, stemming from Jewish history. One is represented by the figure of the "outcast," which appears in the Egyptian bondage, undergoing physical torments that affect his spiritual plight. The other is represented by the "lost" type found in the Assyrian exile, characterized

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[30] "Redemption, Prayer, Talmud Torah," p. 70. Prayer is mentioned as a redeeming act in this passage, as is also hinted in "The Synagogue—Institution and Idea" [Hebrew], *Divrei Hagut Ve-Haa'rakha*, p. 108.

[31] Halakhic man as a creative individual is the topic of the second part in the book bearing this name. This approach, exalting the creativity of this figure, relies in no small measure on Soloveitchik's biography. See Lichtenstein, "R. Joseph Soloveitchik," pp. 281-297. Incidentally, Soloveitchik makes creativity contingent on solitude: "The originality and creativity in man are rooted in his loneliness-experience, not in his social awareness," (Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, "The Community," *Tradition* 17:2 [1978], p. 13), thereby strengthening the personal-intimate character of redemption in this formulation.

by superb living conditions and the blurring of self-identity and national dignity.[32] The outcast and the lost type are models of exiles in which redemption is not utopian. Soloveitchik applies these models to the personal level. The outcast is "victimized by his fate and his struggle for everyday existence."[33] The threat is to his material welfare. In contrast, the "exile" of the lost type takes place at the specific level of the "self":

> He [the individual] is not an outcast, nor does he perceive himself as an outcast. Materially everything is fine, and he thrives and succeeds in all his endeavors. Nevertheless, he is "lost." He has attained everything but his personality is lost and gone. This man lives a vacuous, superficial life without merit. A lost man needs redemption, just like the outcast.[34]

Redemption is latent in the *Rosh Hashanah* motifs—awe, love, and dignity, in the sense ascribed to these terms in the article.[35] Here too, redemption is represented as a classic existential condition of revelation and affirmation of the personality through the religious experience. This personal-existential redemption is also described as attainable in the present, in the realistic categories of an unredeemed world.

The article "From There You Shall Seek," which is punctuated with quotations from The Song of Songs, describes at length the relationship of revelation and concealment between God and man. In one description of the motif of redemption through suffering, Soloveitchik writes:

> God is revealed to man when he is the victim of a fate as cruel as ostriches in the wilderness, without hope or promise. The encounter with God in order to preclude man's exclusion from God's heritage, the revelation of the Creator to the creature hanging by a thread—this is the secret of the *Shekhinah*'s revelation. A sublime existence emerges from the ontological negation, planting comes after the plucking, destruction—the gate to redemption. Straw and bricks, the torments and suffering of the people, the folly and loathing of life—culminate in the revelation of the *Shekhinah*.[36]

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[32] Soloveitchik, "Tidings of Redemption for the Lost and the Outcast" [Hebrew], *Days of Remembrance*, p. 165.
[33] *Ibid*., p. 166.
[34] *Ibid*..
[35] *Ibid*., pp. 171-180.
[36] Soloveitchik,"From There You Shall Seek", p. 143. See above, note 22.

This passage indicates that the "revelation of the Shekhinah" heralds redemption from existential denial, from the hesitation of self-affirmation and self-denial. Beginning a "sublime existence" is the foundation of personal redemption. This existence is described as emerging from the synthesis of classic existentialist categories: freedom and creativity (such as self-affirmation) as opposed to constraint and passivity (such as retreat and self-denial);[37] natural consciousness as opposed to revelational consciousness.[38] Here too, redemption is described as a separate existential mode, thereby becoming attainable in reality, and the eschatology thus indicates the expansion of this mode to the collective. The difference between a redeemed existence and a lacking, incomplete one again becomes a mere statistic.

f) *Zionism, the State of Israel, and Messianism*

Parallels and reciprocal relationships between the individual and the community or the nation pervade Soloveitchik's writings. A prominent example is the set of categories "covenant of fate" and "covenant of destiny" in the article "*Kol Dodi Dofek*," which are applied at both the individual and the national levels.[39] In contrast, this article offers no systematic messianic conception regarding the collective, not even in the description of the covenant of destiny, and thus fails to clarify the idea of redemption in any significant way. Soloveitchik as an individual, as well as his Zionist doctrine, can be viewed as essentially bound to the history of the messianic idea. Nevertheless, a careful scrutiny of his attitudes to the Mizrahi movement or to the renaissance of the State of Israel and its problems,[40] shows

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[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 150-154.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

[39] See Soloveitchik, in *Fate and Destiny,* pp. 81, 89.

[40] Such references appear, for instance, in Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions*. Terminologically, there is no deliberate use of the term "redemption" or of the verb "to be redeemed" in regard to the state of Israel. Theoretically, even appeals to join the Mizrahi movement or to immigrate to the land of Israel are not placed within a messianic perspective. See Michael Rosenak, "The Jew and the State" [Hebrew], in *Jubilee Volume: In Honor of Morenu Hagaon J. B. Soloveitchik*, vol. 1, pp. 152-169. Rosenak hints in several places that Soloveitchik does see the State of Israel, to some extent, as a messianic symbol. See, for instance, pp. 162-163. Incontrovertible evidence that this is not so is found, as noted, in the direct references to the national endeavor in his oral expositions and his popular writings, which lack any messianic overtones and, in fact, emphasize the gap between the

they are completely lacking in any messianic allusions. The view that the historical events that culminated in the creation of the State of Israel, and even the state's very existence, are the work of divine providence, does indeed recur repeatedly in his writings. It is not, however, in the sense of "redemption" or "salvation," and apocalyptic hints are nowhere to be found. In this sense, Soloveitchik's religious-Zionist view resembles the apologetic writings of Reines, and this is an issue that merits separate consideration. No messianic doctrine should therefore be developed from Soloveitchik's reactions to the historical changes affecting the Jewish people in the twentieth century. It is on these grounds that we have not resorted to these sources in this chapter.

The dominant emphasis in Soloveitchik's doctrine of redemption, therefore, is on the individual, although he explicitly argues that redemption spreads over wide domains, as he does in this passage:

> Redemption is one of the most fundamental ideas of Judaism. It is not bound to the national-historical domain, but extends over the various realms of existence.
>
> All need redemption and deliverance: the historical community and the individual, nature and the entire world, all cry out for redemption and repair. Man's thought, his ideas and reflections, his thoughts and feelings, need redemption. All are in distress and call upon the Lord to deliver them.
>
> The *Shekhinah* too is imprisoned, as it were, in a historical and metaphysical exile, and awaits redemption.[41]

Elsewhere in his writings, however, redemption is often manifest in categories of personal identity, of existential consciousness, of the realization, creativity, and freedom incumbent on concrete existence and on the depths of the individual personality, the "self." Hence, we still find a tension between an approach to redemption as utopian on the one hand, and as real and attainable in the present on the other hand; between its presentation as universal as opposed to individual, with a synthesis between them seemingly impossible. Soloveitchik indeed tried to present several possibilities, particular-

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secular leadership and halakhic requirements, a point that Rosenak considers at length. Incidentally, again in *Five Expositions*, Soloveitchik points to the option available to *gedolei Israel* [great leaders or scholars] to experience the "holiness of the land of Israel" even without physically being there. See Soloveitchik, *Five Expositions*, p. 93. See also Schwartz, *The Land of Israel in Religious-Zionist Thought*, pp. 246-273.

[41] Soloveitchik, "Ideas on Prayer" [Hebrew], *Halakhic Man: Revelation and Concealment*, p. 239.

ly in the realm of the halakhic personality and halakhic creativity, bringing all these options together. David Hartman, however, has already criticized the stability of this synthesis, stating that contradictions and inner tension follow from Soloveitchik's absolute reliance on exclusive divine authority, or perhaps more specifically divine will, which is occasionally arbitrary:

> Soloveitchik was a brilliant innovator in his attempts to portray orthodox Judaism as a plausible way of life in the modern world and to allow the characterology of the modern existentialist temperament to find its roots in the *halakha*. Yet even he, in his attempt to reconcile the conflicting tendencies found in Judaic spirituality, could maintain plausibility only up to a certain point, beyond which one is required to accept unquestioningly the inexplicable demands of God and the authority of the tradition.[42]

A true and full synthesis, then, is not to be found. In any event, it is between the poles of individual and community, utopia and present, that the general outlines of Soloveitchik's idea of redemption come to be crystallized. The idea of a personal redemption taking shape in the present does blunt, to some extent, the utopian vision that had become dogma since Maimonides' times. Soloveitchik, who is also a Maimonidean philosopher, offers an interpretation of "redemption" lacking in Maimonides' intellectual messianism, and is entirely transposed to the intimate existential realm. Soloveitchik acknowledges a redeemed existence in a non-redeemed world, thereby undermining the universal foundation of redemption.

g) *The Status of the Messianic Idea*

Finally, we must deal with a question that emerges in the course of analyzing individual redemption and its place in the development of the messianic idea, which appears to have remained open. Gershom Scholem has rigthfully pointed out[43] that the messianic idea is distinctively "anti-existentialist," since existence for someone who lives awaiting the end is imperfect and suffused by a permanent sense of lack. Life for someone awaiting the end focuses either on the past

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[42] Hartman, *The Living Covenant*, p. 88.

[43] Scholem, "Toward an Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism," pp. 34-36. Many years after he had first raised this idea, Scholem again argued, at the closing of a study conference in his honor, that this was a crucially important problem. See "Postscript," in *The Messianic Idea in Jewish Thought*, pp. 261-262.

(moved by a restorative yearning), or on the future (moved by an expectation of utopian salvation), but never on the present. This is the weakness of the messianic idea as well as its strength, manifest in its teeming, bursting power throughout its various appearances in the arena of history. Soloveitchik's messianic doctrine offers an alternative to the expectation of the end. The fullness of redemption may be realized in the present world, at the individual level. The redeemed condition is described in existential categories, and does not require the mending of the world or of society. This is the place to ask the question reversing the one posed by Scholem: Are not the vital, seminal powers of the messianic idea weakened when transposed to an existential key? Is this approach not oblivious to historical processes that have exerted such crucial influence on the destiny of the Jewish people? It seems that far too great a sacrifice is demanded from eschatological expectations for the improvement of social-political life.

In sum: it seems that the central motif in Soloveitchik's doctrine of redemption is the possibility of (individual) redemption in an unredeemed world. On this issue, an abysmal difference emerges between him and the messianic trend in religious-Zionism, which the following passage by Harlap faithfully conveys:

> Individual redemption depends upon collective redemption, and individual repentance depends upon collective repentance. He who wishes for individual repentance and individual redemption before collective redemption has been completed is as someone wishing to build on air, because the place on which the houses are built is the redemption of the collective, and the houses built on it are the repentance and redemption of the individual.[44]

This appears to be a necessary conclusion, given the central place and value of the collective in the doctrine of Kook and his circle, for whom concrete reality is collective reality. Personal redemption, then, is bound with collective redemption. In contrast, according to a trend clearly discernible in Soloveitchik's writings, there is indeed an individual redemption not at all contingent on collective redemption.

Given the various options in Soloveitchik's doctrine and its dialectical tensions, it is indeed easier to point to general leanings than to a defined messianic approach. Questions remain open concern-

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[44] Harlap, *Mei Merom: Maynei ha-Yeshu'ah*, 4, ch. 6, p. 329.

ing both the coherence and consistency of his doctrine, and concerning Soloveitchik's "true views" and preferences. But even the mere exposure of these leanings, emerging from Soloveitchik's concern with redemption, contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics and challenges faced by messianism in contemporary Jewish thought.

2. *Religious-Zionism in the Shackles of Paradox*

a) *Introduction*

"Paradox" is a recurring concept in discussions of Yeshayahu Leibowitz, both as a critique of his thought and in a search for understanding and coherence.[45] This paradox also seems apparent regarding Leibowitz's very affinity with the religious-Zionist camp. In the early nineteen-thirties, when he was one of the leaders of the Young Mizrahi movement, Leibowitz published several programmatic articles on the relationship between Torah, Halakha, general culture, the land of Israel, and Zionism, in a periodical called *Zion*.[46] From then on, he expressed his views orally and in writing concerning Zionism in general and religious-Zionism in particular, in theory and in practice, and also argued that he had never changed his views. In truth, however, Leibowitz did present different and idiosyncratic views in the course of time, and some have taken the trouble to record these changes.[47] The development of his views, however, is not at the core of the present discussion. Rather, I wish to examine here solid foundations of Leibowitz's doctrine in their context and in their relationship to the theological platform of religious-Zionist thought. My argument is that Leibowitz's doctrine completely omits the theological foundation from the practical ideology of religious nationalism, a foundation that had been a crucial justification of religious-Zionism from the outset. Leibowitz's doctrine, therefore, is almost

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[45] See Itzhak Oren, "Negating the Negations" [Hebrew], *Negation for Negation's Sake*, edited by H. Ben-Yeruham and Chaim E. Kolits (Jerusalem: Shorashim, 1983), pp. 157-162; Asa Kasher, "Paradox, Question Mark" [Hebrew], *Iyyun* 26 (1976), pp. 236-241.

[46] See Eliezer Goldman, "Zionism as a Religious Challenge in the Thought of Yeshayahu Leibowitz" [Hebrew], in *Yeshayahu Leibowitz: His World and Philosophy*, edited by Avi Sagi (Jerusalem: Keter, 1995), pp. 179-186.

[47] See Moshe Gilboa, *Yeshayahu Leibowitz: Ideas and Contradictions* [Hebrew] (Beer-Sheva: Beer-Sheva University Press, 1994), pp. 78-113.

without paragon in the religious-Zionist movement throughout all its ideological trends, and even his inclusion within the movement is arguable.

Leibowitz, then, is the main opponent of the theological superstructure developed by religious-Zionism. His philosophical conceptions of Judaism on the one hand, and of Zionism on the other, reveal shared characteristics. In his religious perception, Leibowitz stands for the removal of theology from Judaism. When he uses the concept of "faith," he intends the actual personal decision to submit to the divine command by observing the commandments. Faith is manifest in such expressions as the service of God, worship, and assuming the yoke of God's kingdom, but "whoever is interested in the Jewish manifestations of religiosity, must, willy-nilly, come to grips with the religious praxis of Judaism, with the world of Halakha."[48] Leibowitz frequently argued that only ideas founded on observance of the commandments were accepted within Judaism, whereas approaches that questioned observance, even if philosophically "moderate" (as were many Karaite views),[49] were rejected. At the same time, Leibowitz categorically denied any theological meaning to the Zionist idea. He declares:

> I am a Zionist; which is to say that I do not wish to live a Jewish life within the framework of the Gentile world, subjected to its rule. I have had my fill of this rule.[50]

As shown by our discussion so far, religious-Zionist thought tries to present a theological axiological structure above all, and only then does it present a practical ideology as deriving from this structure (obviously, the question of what came first, theology or pragmatic

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[48] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, edited by Eliezer Goldman, translated by Eliezer Goldman, Yoram Navon et. al. (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 7. As we know, Leibowitz thereby formulated an extreme view out of approaches such as that of Mendelssohn and Samuel David Luzzato. See, for instance, Yohanan Silman, "The Thought of Samuel David Luzzato in a Systematic Perspective" [Hebrew], in *Studies in Philosophical Questions: In Honor of Shlomo Pines* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1992) pp. 44-52.

[49] For instance, Karaite approaches usually accepted creation *ex nihilo*, while "rabbinic" scholars, such as R. Levi ben Gershom, known as RaLBaG (1288-1344), portrayed creation as occurring within a mass of hylic, undifferentiated matter, which had always existed beside God. A similar view is also valid concerning the divine knowledge of particulars.

[50] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p. 211. Compare Gilboa, *Ideas and Contradictions*, pp. 103-105. See also below, ch. 6:2.

ideology, is irrelevant to this statement). For religious-Zionist thinkers, the idea of religious nationalism is a *Weltanschauung* with distinctive dogmatic principles; the national religious idea emerges as the true interpretation of Judaism, at least for the present time, and is shared by such pragmatic thinkers as Reines and second-generation Mizrahi members as Shlomo Zalman Shragai. In contrast, in Leibowitz's interpretation, the Zionist idea is a defined expression of a basic national yearning for freedom, negating the very existence of any theological structure.

b) *Questioning the Concept of "National Religiousness"*

Leibowitz's view concerning the world of religious-Zionism does not begin with his opposition to the linkage of Zionism to theological elements. Quite the contrary, this opposition stems from a *Weltanschauung* that undermines the theological foundations on which religious-Zionist thinkers built their theology. For instance, Leibowitz utterly rejected the option of founding a value on actual facts and faith on history or, alternatively, giving a religious interpretation of history; he therefore necessarily views the theological endeavor of religious-Zionist thinkers as a manifestation of blatant anthropocentrism:

> To consider history as the foundation of faith is to deplete religion of all religious significance. It is to place man at the center—as against what is customarily inscribed on the lectern before the ark in the synagogue: "I have set God always before me" (Ps. 16:8).[51]

Leibowitz acknowledges that the relationship with history plays a crucial role in Judaism; yet, he insists that the ahistorical elements in the thought and practice of Judaism "constitute its most profound and most significant stratum." In truth, history is, in his view, "irrelevant for the cognizance of God and his service."[52]

Relying on this approach, Leibowitz seeks to disavow any possible link between Zionist ideology and all theological conceptions. His categorical assertions on this count are clarified by elimination; both orally and in writing, he disallows two widespread definitions of the "meaning of Zionism": "The meaning of Zionism was to

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[51] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p. 97; Ross, "Anthropocentrism and Theocentrism," pp. 63-64.

[52] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p. 104.

establish here a model society" (citing Yigal Alon); Zionism is the answer to the problem of "alienation" in exile (in the name of "others"). On *a fortiori* grounds, he rejects various meanings that the religious-Zionist camp had ascribed to Zionism, such as "the most vital foundation and the most basic source of our nationalism is the image of God in man and the utter spirituality pervading all."[53] Instead, he offers a narrow approach, which he voices repeatedly in various platforms: "I define Zionism like this: we are fed up with Gentile rule over the Jewish people…. Gentile rule today may be very good… but there are Jews who have had it with Gentiles ruling over us, and this is the whole essence of Zionism."[54]

Leibowitz not only extracts the Zionist idea from any theological context, but he also denies it any ideological label: "Zionist is not an ideology but a complex of activities undertaken to restore independence to the Jewish nation in its own land… it is nothing more than a set of those activities on behalf of national sovereignty."[55]

These statements, relating to the past as well as to the future, rely on two basic assumptions, one latent and one overt:

a) The structures of Zionism and of Jewish religion are similar. Their meaning is in actual concrete activity based on a particular spiritual posture or a certain mental situation. In Zionism, the spiritual posture is identified with a sense of freedom (a loathing of Gentile rule), and in religion with a decision to assume the yoke of the heavenly kingdom. According to Leibowitz, the assumption that Zionism—or the Jewish religion—depends on a theological idea or justification implies a categorical mistake.
b) The state, as the concretization of the Zionist aspiration, is only an instrument, and has no independent value whatsoever. Leibowitz never tires of stressing that any meaning ascribed to the State, beyond the instrumental one, borders on fascism. Furthermore, again on an *a fortiori* argument, he rejects any ascription of "holiness" to the political entity. This claim runs counter to the spectrum of arguments advanced by religious-

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[53] Moshe Avigdor Amiel, "The Ideological Foundations of the Mizrahi" [Hebrew], in *The Book of Religious Zionism*, vol. 1, p. 5. Amiel said this in 1933.

[54] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Yeshayau Leibowitz—On Just About Everything: Talks with Michael Shashar* [Hebrew], (Jerusalem: Keter, 1988), p. 28. See also *idem. Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, pp. 115-117.

[55] *Ibid*..

> Zionism, whereby only in the Jewish state and in the land of Israel is a full Jewish life at all possible. One need not resort to comparisons with blatantly nationalist approaches, such as that of Landau, or on interpretations relying on Kook, to discern the striking contrast between Leibowitz and the course endorsed by religious-Zionist thinkers in general. In striking contrast, Leibowitz holds that "it is possible to have a very highly refined Judaism outside of Israel," and the state of Israel has no "religious function" whatsoever.[56]

Clearly, then, Leibowitz collapses the theological structure cherished by religious-Zionist thinkers and replaces it with a series of empirical claims without any direct or essential affinity with theological or religious existence. In other words: he denies Zionism any religious significance. His critique of the concept "religious-national" clearly conveys this view:

> If "national" is taken out of the distinctive secular context that has prevailed at least since the days of the French Revolution and assigned a meaning intended for the "Israelite nation" in its traditional sense, it is identical with "religious" and thus superfluous; and if "religious" is taken out of its context as the signifier of the world of Torah and serves to denote an accessory of national-political life, it is worthless.[57]

Leibowitz, then, rendered the term "religious-national" null and void, attacking with particular virulence the activities of religious institutions within the state of Israel.

Here as well, Leibowitz's approach cannot avoid a critique hurled against other areas of his philosophy. Until the end of the nineteen-forties, Leibowitz had declared himself a member of a particular camp (the "Mizrahi," "Ha-Oved ha-Dati"); the religious-Zionist camp has an ideological character and theological leanings, whose very existence is taken as given by its founders and participants. Leibowitz used to claim, up until his death, that he had never defined himself as a "religious-Zionist." And yet, he knowingly aligned himself with the staff and the organization of the movement, and during the nineteen-thirties even set up as the ideal of religious-Zionism the creation of a new religious life, unlike that adopted in exile. Indeed,

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[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211, and elsewhere.

[57] Leibowitz "State and Religion" [Hebrew], in *Judaism, the Jewish People, and the State of Israel* (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1976), p. 183. See Gilboa, *Ideas and Contradictions*, p. 111.

the claim concerning the general agreement prevalent within the religious-Zionist camp from the outset does not hinge on specific ideological contents; I have claimed in previous chapters that all members of this camp share the notion that ideology prevails over any philosophical or theological dimension. Furthermore, the differences between the various factions as to the messianic character of the Zionist endeavor do not contradict the distinctive theological foundation that characterizes the religious-Zionist camp from its beginnings (in its very willingness to address such questions as the essence of divine providence, the value of observing the commandments in a sovereign state, and so forth). Hence, Leibowitz aligned himself with a body relying on an a priori set of beliefs while staking a critical claim that this set of beliefs does not actually exist or has no meaning at all, and that the only common element shared by people within this body is their loathing of Gentile rule.[58] This is obviously paradoxical.

c) *The Implications of the Theological Foundation*

A firm approach that emerges from Leibowitz's doctrine, then, is his opposition to any theological underpinnings in religious-Zionism. This approach seems to retain its vitality as his thought develops over time. Several implications follow from the position denying the existence of a religious-Zionist theology, and the two I will focus on at this point are the status of miracle, and the denial of any links between religion and science.

• *The Status of Miracle*

Many religious-Zionist thinkers related to events stemming from the Zionist challenge, and particularly to the creation of the state of Israel, as miraculous. Although these thinkers knew that Zionism in general is based on human initiative, they refused to renounce the miraculous dimension affecting the course of history. For these thinkers, the renaissance of the Jewish state symbolized miraculous divine intervention, ensuing after a process of human initiative and actually simultaneous with it. This approach stems from the dynamic perception of divine providence, which directs historical events.

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[58] For a similar claim in another realm, see Ross, "Anthropocentrism and Theocentrism."

There are numerous manifestations of this trend. When Uziel discusses the various waves of immigration to the Land of Israel that had defied constraints and risks, he states: "The ingathering of the exiles is a miracle of miracles… because it requires many wondrous acts, every one of which is wondrous in itself."[59] Displays of sympathy on the part of the British government were placed by Moses David Gross (1894-1962) in the category of "miracle."[60] When discussing the place of the people of the Jewish people in history, Isidore Epstein (1894-1962) stated that "the establishment of the state of Israel, after a two-thousand year cessation, is one of the miracles of nature," or "an episode that cannot be explained in human history."[61] Ze'ev Gold (1889-1956), a Mizrahi leader in the United States and a gifted preacher and educator, saw the establishment of the State as the work of "his [God's] mighty hand and his stretched out arm,"[62] and Meir Or defined it as "signs and wonders."[63] Even a thinker slightly restrained and even skeptical in his attitude to the State of Israel, as was Soloveitchik, wrote that "the establishment of the State of Israel, in a political sense, was an almost supernatural occurrence." The Beloved lover knocking upon the door of his love is, in this case, "wondrous."[64] It seems that Soloveitchik intended to point out the involvement of divine providence without sliding into declaring it a miracle. Even this mention, however, is enough to put a definite theological hallmark on the events surrounding the creation of Israel, turning them into an open act of divine providence.

• *Religion and Science*

Given the tendency of religious-Zionist philosophy to create a comprehensive *Weltanschauung* relying on theological foundations, many thinkers were forced into a confrontation, as it were, between religion and science. These thinkers felt a need to integrate the realm of science—as the understanding of natural laws—within the gen-

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[59] Uziel, *Hegyionei Uziel*, vol. 1, p. 173.

[60] Moses David Gross, "On the Miracles" [Hebrew], *Ha-Hed* 13, No. 1 (1938), p. 9.

[61] Isidore Epstein, *Faith of Judaism: An Interpretation for Our Times* (London: Soncino Press, 1954), pp. 304-305.

[62] Gold, *The Gold of the Land*, p. 62.

[63] Or, *Or ha-Meir*, p. 67. Or made this statement about Israel's War of Liberation, which he considered a hidden miracle. See pp. 173-175.

[64] Soloveitchik, *Fate and Destiny*, pp. 69-70.

eral framework of their thought; the reason is that the achievements of science and technology are a must when attempting to establish an independent political entity, and openness to them is characteristic of religious-Zionism by its very definition. Relating to science was not essential during life in exile, but is inescapable when aspiring to build a state. Even religious-Zionist thinkers who had certain reservations about cultural openness recognized the practical need for science. Amiel's words excel in conveying the theological need that is filled through an acknowledgement of natural laws: "Since both Nature and the Torah are the creations of the Holy One, blessed be He, they cannot possibly be incompatible in their plan and in the spiritual harmony of their contents."[65]

Certain scientific realms are considered problematic vis-à-vis religion, however, and religious-Zionist thinkers were concerned with them for the reasons indicated above. Let us illustrate this concern in regard to the theory of evolution in general, and to Darwinism in particular. As it happens, these thinkers often used the theory of evolution to support their metaphysical and theological views, and others entered into discussions about its legitimacy. Generally, the conclusions of these discussions refrained from rejecting evolution (at least not totally), although they were critical of Darwinism. In other words, they took on the challenge, seriously confronting the achievements of modernity embodied in science.

There are many representatives of this trend (some of whom were discussed in Chapter Three above), from Reines onward,[66] and I will mention a few of them here. Both Kook and Alexandrov tried to incorporate evolutionary theory into their metaphysical conceptions, as a description of the development of creation and its perfectibility, on the assumption that biblical exegesis would adapt to evolution.[67] According to these thinkers, perfection is not exhausted through existing values. Perfectibility, meaning the movement toward perfection, is itself perfection. Hence, these thinkers did not

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[65] Amiel, *For the Perplexed of Our Time*, p. 206.

[66] Reines, *A New Light on Zion*, p. 82b.

[67] On Kook see Yaron, *The Philosophy of Rabbi Kook*, pp.191-192; Shmuel Hugo Bergman, "The Theory of Development in Rav Kook's Thought" [Hebrew], in *Men and Ways: Philosophical Essays* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1967), pp. 350-358; Ben Shlomo, "Perfection and Perfectibility in Rabbi Kook's Theology," pp. 289-309, particularly p. 309 (on the flow of the metaphysical principle from the perception of history). On Alexandrov see Luz, "Spiritual and Religious Anarchism in the Writings of Samuel Alexandrov," p. 128; see above, ch. 3:5.

recoil from characterizing God as taking part in the process of perfectibility. Evolution serves this approach well, by pointing to a process of perfectibility in the natural world. Even when some suspicion arose concerning the integration of this biological theory within Jewish thought, it was decided that "it does not weaken the foundations," and that the proper attitude to evolution is to place it in the category of "for further consideration."[68]

In time, the attitude to evolution became more suspicious and critical, but this theory continued to concern religious-Zionist thinkers, as shown by Epstein on the one hand, and Barth and Unna on the other hand. Epstein devoted a whole chapter to the theory of evolution in a book presenting the conceptual construction of Judaism,[69] and Barth and Unna criticize the theological implications, as it were, of the theory of evolution vis-à-vis the cosmological proof of God's existence.[70]

As noted, the attitude to evolution is one detail pointing to a general attitude endorsed by religious-Zionist thinkers concerned with the adaptation of scientific achievements to their theological world view. This attitude once again emphasizes the pretension of religious-Zionists to formulate a comprehensive world view that would include every realm of life, whether theoretical or practical. The place of science within this world view is a challenge with which religious-Zionist thought chose to contend.

d) *A Critique of the Implications*

Just as Leibowitz, relying on the systematic foundations of his thought, refuses to accept any links between Zionism and theology, he also systematically dismantles any implications that might follow from such

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[68] Bernstein, *Mission and Pathway*, p. 96. On the discussion of evolution theory in religious-Zionist publications I will cite examples from three different periods: Abraham Yizhak Yekutieli, "The Essence of Judaism" [Hebrew], *Netivah* 3 (1928), p. 144; Raphael H. Holzberg, "Is There a Contradiction between Religion and the Natural Sciences" [Hebrew], *Ha-Hed* 13:5 (1938), pp. 17-19; Pinhas Alpert, "Rejoinder" [Hebrew], *Gilayion* (1994), p. 48.

[69] Epstein, *Faith of Judaism*, pp. 194-208. At the end of the book, Epstein provides an "Additional Note on Evolution and Genesis," where he quotes Kook and Menahem Kasher.

[70] Barth, *The Modern Jew Faces Eternal Problems and Other Writings*, pp. 271-272; Moses Unna, "Heresy as an Opening to Faith" [Hebrew], *Judaism: Paths to Faith*, edited by E. Amado Levy-Valensy et. al (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 1981), pp. 216-219.

a theology. Leibowitz's attitude to miracle and his negation of any link between religion and science are patently clear, and all that remains is to quote his conclusions in brief. Let us consider the examples cited in the previous section, in the same order.

• *The Status of Miracle*

Leibowitz argues that miracles have no positive meaning from a religious point of view; in fact, incorporating miracles as an element of the biblical story was meant to expose their lack of meaning. In his words:

> The essence of biblical historiosophy is not God's revelation in history as a basis for believing in him; rather, it is to show the inconsequentiality of signs and wonders and of miraculous revelation as means for shaping faith, and as ways leading to knowledge of God.[71]

The examples cited in this discussion, such as the sin of the golden calf in the wake of the Sinai revelation, attest that the concept of miracle has been voided of any positive connotation. Similarly, Leibowitz removes any religious nuance from the events leading to the creation of the state of Israel. He emphasizes that the state came about "not out of a religious impulse or a religious inclination, neither in the name of the Torah nor for the sake of the Torah, but out of a national impulse and for the sake of a political idea." These are "natural elements, as valid in the Jewish people as in any other."[72] Finally, he rules: "I reject attempts to confer a religious aura upon the state of Zionism."[73] The utterly secular explanation that Leibowitz adduces for the creation of the State of Israel dismisses any possibility of divine intervention, leaving no room for the miraculous. In his view, religion is utterly indifferent to Zionism, because he is opposed to the concept of a God active in history. God is entirely beyond any such involvement.

• *Religion and Science*

The total separation between religion or ideology and science in Leibowitz's doctrine is even more entrenched. The example of Darwinism is a good instance of such a separation:

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[71] Leibowitz, *Faith, History and Values* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Academon Press, 1982), p. 167.

[72] Leibowitz, "Independence Day and Jerusalem Day as Religious Holidays" [Hebrew], *Judaism, the Jewish People, and the State of Israel*, p. 92.

[73] Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p. 116.

> All attempts to construct a world view, ideological, historical, and social, and particularly a theory of values, on the basis of empirical data about nature and on the objective understandings of the natural sciences, have failed; [Darwinism] has not served, nor can it serve, as a basis for opinions and beliefs.[74]

Hence the rule: the link between science and religion stems from the classic conception of science, originally shaped by Aristotelian concepts, which had ruled undisputed in medieval times. Aristotle had claimed that "knowledge" means understanding of the causal structure affecting the object of knowledge. Causes are of four types: material, formal, efficient, and final, and answer a series of questions: what is the matter of which the thing is made; what is the essence distinguishing this object from others; what animated the object, and what is its end. Classical science thus included knowledge of the end of every object in response to the question: what is the end for which this object exists, or what function does it fulfill in the complete structure within which it operates? Scientific development in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came about by forsaking the end of the object as a consideration in determining the scientific law, and through the exclusive focusing on the object's efficient cause, namely, on the mechanism causing the physical phenomenon. For Leibowitz, the question of the final cause is almost identical with the question of meaning. Since religion deals with the question of meaning, its separation from science is absolute and conclusive:

> No conclusion reached through scientific research can have philosophical or religious meaning, because philosophy and religion deal with the meaning of the world, and meaning is almost synonymous with final causality.[75]
>
> These [metaphysics and religion] deal with the meaning of the world and its events, while science confines itself to effective causes and to determining functional links between world events.[76]

This argument undermines the pretension of religious-Zionist thought to include science within an overall and comprehensive theological framework. Possibly, the implication of this argument has a bearing on the foundations and deepest yearnings of the religious-Zion-

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[74] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Between Science and Philosophy* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Academon Press, 1987), p. 99.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 293.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 294.

ist camp since, as was argued above, merging science into a religious world view seems to convey the principle of openness that unites all the various factions within the movement. Creating a sovereign political framework requires exposure to science, and the religious-Zionist ideal means that the category of "religion" is also applied to scientific achievements. This analysis confirms the general assumption that opened up this section: Leibowitz's opposition to the foundations of religious-Zionist thought is not confined to a direct and radical limitation of the idea, that is, the feeling of freedom. The foundations of the philosophical structure erected by Leibowitz demolish, systematically and consistently, the theological (and, according to Leibowitz, the ideological as well) basis that religious-Zionist had cultivated from its outset. The challenge, the hope, the pretension fostered by the religious-Zionist camp—all lose their backing and even their meaning when confronted with Leibowitz's critical thought.

Leibowitz's unique critical approach stands in splendid isolation within the religious-Zionist camp, an isolation following directly from his opposition to the justification of praxis on theological grounds. Leibowitz's intellectual isolation within religious-Zionism is apparently an upshot of his blatant dissent with the theological foundation of religious-Zionist praxis. For the religious-Zionist, Leibowitz represents the absurd, namely, the possibility of establishing the independence of the people while severing all links with any theological legacy. His critique is thus not considered constructive in any way, making Leibowitz different from Soloveitchik. Soloveitchik represents an approach seeking to contend with the disillusionment with the heavy theological burden by returning to the status of the individual vis-à-vis an active divine providence. This return, however, took place without breaking the framework of religious-Zionism. In contrast, Leibowitz represents this disillusionment by totally destroying the theological foundation. As the foundation collapses, the whole building caves in, so that Leibowitz's membership in this movement is profoundly paradoxical.

POSTSCRIPT

In this postscript, I wish to reflect briefly on both the direct and indirect implications of the analysis suggested in this book, which seem to have a bearing on the essence of religious-Zionist philosophy today.

It was my intent in this book to substantiate the assumption that the religious-Zionist idea, as formulated by its bearers and spokespersons, is not merely a practical ideology. Religious-Zionist thought aspired to present a new interpretation of Judaism, including a new approach to Jewish thought. Religious-Zionist thinkers wanted to build a new-renewed model of Judaism in a modern national spirit, wherein the basic terms of Jewish thought would assume a guise suited to current events: "the old will be renewed, and the new will be hallowed."[1] They called for a creative awakening in the spiritual world of modern Jewish believers, and encouraged involvement in the most abstract issues of Jewish theology, using modern tools. They thereby brought their entire practical ideology to rest on creedal foundations of their taste and choice.

Appeals to return to a theoretical, abstract theology stood in striking contrast with key trends in non-Zionist Orthodox thought. Unquestionably, non-Zionist thinkers were also influenced by modernity. For instance, more than a few Orthodox thinkers were influenced by Kantian and post-Kantian conceptions, as was the case concerning some supporters of the *Musar* movement.[2] This development, however, is the result of sociological and cultural processes affecting closed groups adapting to a changing reality, as opposed to the deliberate ideology of openness and to the search for renewal that characterized religious-Zionism. The challenge that religious-Zionist thinkers set themselves is thus radically different. They viewed the creation of a new approach influenced by general culture and engaged in reciprocal relationships with it as a good omen for the

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[1] Kook, *Epistles*, 1: 214.

[2] See, for instance, Immanuel Etkes, *Rabbi Israel Salanter and the Musar Movement: Seeking the Torah of Truth*, translated by Jonathan Chipman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), p. 305; Tamar Ross, "Power of Choice in the Thought of Rabbi E. E. Dessler" [Hebrew], *Daat* 12 (1984), pp. 114-118 ff..

future. Not only did religious-Zionist thinkers not conceal the outside philosophical sources that had inspired them, but they actually flaunted them openly and proudly. This is true not only of "left-wing" factions, such as the Hapoel-Hamizrahi movement, but also of such thinkers as Amiel, as well as of Kook and his disciples, namely, the entire religious-Zionist movement.

Furthermore, just as extreme anti-Zionist trends as the Hasidic schools of Munkács and Szatmár offered theological interpretations of current events, religious-Zionist thinkers offered their own interpretation of these events, aspiring to turn it into a constructive world view within Jewish thought. The profusion of ideological options points to the absence of monolithic thought, as well as to a variety of modes for coping with the new reality. Their attempt at coping, however, was impelled by a shared ideological and messianic impulse and by a passion to create new meanings, to examine and define, time after time, abstract concepts such as "faith," "God," "divine providence," "miracle," "prophecy," "messianism," and so forth.

Religious-Zionism thereby aspired to write a new chapter in the history of Jewish thought. Why, then, does it appear to have foundered? Why did religious-Zionist philosophy fail to build a new, systematic chapter in Jewish thought, marking a genuine integration of Judaism and modernity? After all, one cannot ignore a series of impressive achievements that religious-Zionism attained at a practical level—in settlements, in the structuring of religious services in Israel, in the establishment of military *yeshivot* (*hesder*), and perhaps even in legislation. At a theoretical level, however, we have not found in contemporary religious-Zionism a philosophical doctrine reflecting a true confrontation with nationalism and modernity. Ehud Luz wrote as follows about the period preceding the one discussed in this book:

> The basic weakness of religious-Zionism seems to have stemmed from its inability to present a comprehensive synthesis of Zionism and religion and nurture a spiritual leadership that would point out a practical road for implementing such a synthesis. Religious-Zionism never succeeded in understanding the theological significance of modern nationalism. There is no doubt that the very elevation of nationalist values, such as the people of Israel and the Land of Israel to the level hitherto occupied by the Torah and mitzvot, represented a revolutionary change in the perception of Jewish tradition.[3]

[3] Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. 293.

These pointed remarks raise the question of why is it that "religious-Zionism never succeeded in understanding the theological significance of modern nationalism," given that this significance was one of the most important, if not the most important goal that religious-Zionist thinkers had set themselves. Furthermore, Luz holds that Kook's thought did indeed set up an actual synthesis between Zionism and religion. As for myself, I am not at all convinced of this. But even Kook's synthesis failed in that it shattered any possibility of genuine discourse between Judaism in its national interpretation and the modern secular world. The reason is that the comprehensive theology of Kook and of other religious-Zionist thinkers left no uncovered ground, which could have been used as the basis for a shared discourse with secularists. In this sense, Kook's thought is a symptom of the religious-Zionist movement as a whole.

To illustrate this analysis, let us consider two important characteristics of religious-Zionist thought. These characteristics clarify well why a barrier sprung up between the religious-Zionist idea and the modern secular approach here and now.

a) *The Land of Israel*

A direct expression of the theological burden lying at the foundation of the religious-Zionist perception is the attitude to the land of Israel. Since time immemorial, the Holy Land has played an important role in Jewish thought and in Halakha. Mostly, however, this role was defined and limited, particularly in halakhic literature. Yet, as soon as Reines turned the return to the land into a dogmatic principle on which the whole of Judaism is founded, Jewish faith embarked on a new course.[4] As we know, Reines drew away from radical messianic approaches, at least in his apologetic writings. But the return to the land of Israel, because of its value and uniqueness (as the nationalist approach shows), lost its habitual proportions and filtered down to the infrastructure. Obviously, Kook's school stretched this principle to extremes; the principle, however, had been there before, as an integral part of the yearning for a new interpretation of Jewish thought and its ethos. Turning the land of Israel into a dogmatic principle precludes a national renaissance on the land that would not include the profound and burdensome theological layer

[4] See above, pp. 8-9

attached to it. Faith becomes the only justification of an authentic national perception. The attempt to build the land driven by secular motivations such as a common legacy and cultural continuity lose their right to exist. The theological framework leaves no room for motivations of this type.

b) *Secularization*

As noted in Chapter Five above, religious-Zionist existence was based on a disregard of actual secularism. Whether in abstract discussions, such as theology and its current meaning, or in concrete concerns, such as the immediate theological meanings of praxis, the existence and legitimacy of secularism is blatantly ignored. In fact, secularism became an element within the general system. We noted that more than one religious-Zionist thinker interpreted Herzl and Nordau in a way that presented the "true" meaning of their statements as reflecting the religious facet of nationalism. These thinkers certainly knew that these were not Herzl's or Nordau's intentions. They pretended, however, that theirs was the authentic interpretation, in line with their pretension to dictate the moves of divine providence. Religious-Zionist thinkers held that secularists could not understand the "true meaning" of their actions. The heavy theological burden lying at the foundation of religious-Zionism does not allow for areas of compromise or retreat. As a new interpretation of an institutional religion like Judaism, religious-Zionism presented itself as having a platform in all domains of life. Thereby, religious-Zionism seems to have precluded any option of genuine dialogue between religion and the modern person; barring any recognition of an authentic secular existence, no sincere discourse with secularists is possible.

The failure of religious-Zionism to create such a discourse, then, follows directly from its all-inclusive theological foundation. Religious-Zionism was striving toward a world view impervious to the real modern world. A comprehensive world view can leave nothing out. In this sense, it is not at all strange that the only contemporary example of a full, inclusive, and agreed religious-Zionist doctrine is that of Soloveitchik. I am not disqualifying other writings from membership in the category of religious-Zionist thought; quite the contrary, Kook's disciples, for instance, have continued to create and develop the thought of this school in their own ways. I am merely

pointing out that consensus within the religious-Zionist public around a profound, comprehensive, and updated religious-Zionist approach has only crystallized around the doctrine of the Boston rabbi who passed away several years ago. The most important reason for this appears to be that Soloveitchik lived in the United States, in a foreign land and in a Gentile society. Within this environment and with this background, he could not ignore the phenomenon of secularism, nor the alienation and isolation it brings to the modern religious person. This awareness of secularization is also typical of other religious-Zionist thinkers who came to Israel from the United States.[5] Soloveitchik too, as we saw, ultimately failed in this aim. He was also swept by the trend pretending to determine for secular Jews the true meaning of their existence, and his writings do not offer a pure secular typology either; secularists are not "self-sustaining beings." Without disregarding other factors, one could say that religious-Zionist theology left its mark on Soloveitchik's thought. Nevertheless, when we turn to concrete existence in Soloveitchik's doctrine, we find it resonates with the problematic of the religious individual facing modernity.

Indeed, religious-Zionism is apparently fettered by a paradox: while aspiring to merge with modernity, its own theology is unwilling to acknowledge genuine modernity, namely, to recognize an existence without essential room for God and theology. It raises the banner of a dialogue with the secular world, but undermines any option of such a dialogue within its own theological world. No other alternative is apparently available as long as theological fullness

[5] David Hartman formulated the experience of confronting secularism at the opening of his book: "… [I learned that] people can live a significant human life without making a commitment to a personal God. Secular humanism had to be recognized as a vital possible orientation of human beings to the world, even if it was not a live option for me. I learned not to claim that one must be religious in order to be ethical. What I learned in America, in these various ways, can be summed up in my resolution to speak only of the value of Jewish particularity, never to make claims to know a Jewish uniqueness that demonstrates an absolute superiority of Judaism to all other ways of life" (*The Living Covenant*, p. 12). Hartman developed ideas that he claimed were latent in Soloveitchik's writings and attempted to apply them; he thereby breached the consensus described here and formulated an alternative approach in a particular stream of religious-Zionism. This attitude to ideological pluralism is also characteristic of Rackman, who opens his book with this topic (*One Man's Judaism*, pp. 3-5). The question of whether Rackman portrayed a genuine religious humanism should be discussed elsewhere.

is the foremost essential characteristic of religious-Zionism, as indicated by the analyses in this book.

More and more voices are being raised among secular Israeli intellectuals berating the pretension of religious-Zionism to determine the meaning of secularism. What had been during the first four decades of Israel's existence a symbol of cooperation and a joint commitment became an unduly onerous burden. The ideological and social phenomenon whereby Kook's doctrine, as interpreted by his ideological circle,[6] has captured most of the religious-Zionist public, deepened the gap between religious-Zionism and the secular world. The attitude to secularism, however, is not an exceptional item in religious-Zionist theology but rather part of the abstract conceptual baggage that is inseparable from religious-Zionist existence. Religious nationalism views its roots and its surroundings as a series of comprehensive theological assumptions, leaving no room for flexibility.

As a result, the possibility of genuine discourse or, one might say, the possibility of genuine integration in concrete national life while preserving the ideology, requires a reorientation of religious-Zionist theology. One could say it compels a re-examination of the religious-Zionist idea, in the same spirit that marked its first expansion. This re-examination is apparently meant to portray the religious-Zionist idea between two radical extremes. One is the conservative pole, represented by the idea of a comprehensive theological burden and an all-inclusive world view leaving no room for compromises. The other is the critical pole, upheld by Leibowitz, which shatters the theological foundation of religious-Zionism to pieces.

Several currents in modern religious-Zionism, close to the ideological "center" and "left," or to academic circles, tried to find an exit from the labyrinth of the definition. David Harman and his intel-

[6] As emerges from previous discussions, it is estimated that Kook's most "authentic" interpreters were his disciples and the members of his circle—Harlap, Zvi Judah Kook, and the Nazir. Kook did not think in a vacuum; he engaged in an ongoing dialogue with his philosophical-messianic circle. Kook's doctrine cannot be extricated from its context within a school; his close circle, then, provided an interpretation that approached "authenticity," for better or for best. The attempt to harness Kook's statements to interpretations formulated in light of current events thus appears oblivious to objective criteria, which a scholar neither can nor is permitted to ignore. This consideration should be added to the broad array of evidence indicating that many of Kook's writings owe their meaning to the editors who dealt with them (Zvi Judah Kook and the Nazir). See above, pp. 63-64.

lectual circle, the *Torah va-Avodah* movement, several circles within the religious kibbutz movement—all are instances of attempts to criticize the, as it were, "oppressive" theological foundation created by religious-Zionism, seeking a balance between a comprehensive theology and a practical ideology. Were they successful? Well, a considerable number of the original ideologues of the religious kibbutz movement joined the messianic faction founded by Kook and his circle, but a newly emerging trend is attempting to shake free from the influence of this group. The fact that these movements have so far not risen to positions of dominance within religious-Zionism may point to the paradox entailed by a theological movement trying to reduce or dismiss the theological foundations that make up its very existence. Among the factors leading to the growth of the ideology endorsed by the religious kibbutz movement, as Fishman shows well in his book, *Judaism and Modernization on the Religious Kibbutz*, was the reaction to the *Torah im Derekh Eretz* movement, which had established Judaism on its religious law, namely, the Halakha. The religious kibbutz, within the Mizrahi movement as a whole, added the dimension of a general world view transcending what is purported to be a limited law. We are now witnessing, within some of these circles, an attempt to shake free from an all-inclusive theology and return to a concern with religious law, its status, and its application in the modern world. The question again arises: is it indeed possible to reconstruct religious-Zionist from the collapse of its most elementary foundations, namely, forsake the entrenched theological underpinnings on which it is built? Alternatively, if we preserve the theological foundation, we preclude a genuine dialogue with the secular world.

Furthermore: it appears that, ultimately, the theological foundation led to a takeover by the extremist messianic trends of religious-Zionism, because there are no yardsticks or limits to theology. Under the guise of hollow slogans à la "love of Israel" and "the nation's unity," words that turned out to be empty and meaningless, an extreme version of messianism has flourished, at times with ominous consequences. Again, we face a puzzling dilemma: given that the creedal foundation is so essential to religious-Zionism, as this book has shown, can this foundation be declared an utter failure? The implication is that the reconstruction of religious-Zionism necessarily involves a fundamental change in its very existence and its basic structures.

It appears, then, that religious-Zionism should have returned to Reines, its founder. Let us reconsider the above comment concerning his decision to turn nationalism and the land of Israel into a principle of faith. When judged in isolation, this is indeed an extremely dangerous statement. Defining the land of Israel as a principle of faith means that its dismissal could lead to the overall collapse of the religious structure. The existence of God and his revelation, for instance, is a principle of faith because, without it, Judaism could not be sustained. To preserve this principle, Jews were willing to die at the stake throughout their history. What about the land of Israel? Reines actually chose differently. He favored the supporters of the Uganda proposal. In other words, Reines knew well how to draw a line between a creedal system and practical decisions. You could hardly find a religious Jew who does not yearn deeply to return to the days of worship, to establish a theocracy within the boundaries of the biblical Land of Israel and to hold sway over the "Temple Mount." The more sober ones, however, know how to distinguish the yearnings of their hearts, their intimate and hidden utopian longings, from the practical realm where halakhic rulings and considerate decisions are valid. It appears, then, that religious-Zionism should have prevented the movement's theological foundation from taking over, delegating it instead to the realm of the personal. It should have restrained preachers, sermonizers, and firebrands lacking deep halakhic judgment, leaving practical decisions to prudent halakhists. The reason is that genuine halakhists, who know how to interpret according to halakhic rules, soil their hands with the gritty concerns of practical reality. They are not concerned with elementary halakhic formulations in the shape of popular responsa but delve deeply into Halakha, understand well the value of practicality, and the limits of abstract faith. Distinguished heads of *yeshivot* have always known how to separate ideological preaching from practical decisions and from the study of halakhic reasoning. Hence, they have tended to limit and control the entry of ideological views into the *yeshivot*, as did, for instance, the founder of the military *yeshivot*, Hayyim Yaakov Goldwicht at the Kerem de-Yavneh *yeshivah*, before educational policy changed after his retirement. Moreover, a halakhist knows the limits of Halakha and its spheres of influence. An important figure in the leadership of the military *yeshivot* once stated there is no connection between the problem of the occupied territories and the Halakha. These issues, he said, will

be decided by security experts only. Several years later, overwhelmed by creedal messianism, he ruled that soldiers must refuse orders of evacuation from the territories…. It seems that the task of religious-Zionism is to renew our days as of old, placing the abstract, theoretical layer in adequate proportions, while emphasizing halakhic discretion. And the prudent shall not keep silence.

This book could shed light on the ideological and theological circumstances prevailing in the religious-Zionist movement, by exposing the causes of this situation and the process of its development. From here onward, research and scholarship leave the scene and make way for the unfolding of concrete reality. Obviously, envisioning the future compels profound consideration of the changes currently affecting religious-Zionism when faced with a dynamic reality. One may assume, however, that only future religious-Zionist philosophy will determine whether there is hope for a true integration of Orthodox and national religious Jewish thought in the modern world. This thought will be an adequate expression of adapting a "comprehensive world view" to modernity.

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ISSN 1566-1237