

Simon Rawidowicz

**BETWEEN BABYLON  
AND JERUSALEM**

Selected Writings

Edited by

David N. Myers and Benjamin C. I. Ravid

**LIBRARY** OF JEWISH HISTORY AND CULTURE

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# Between Babylon and Jerusalem

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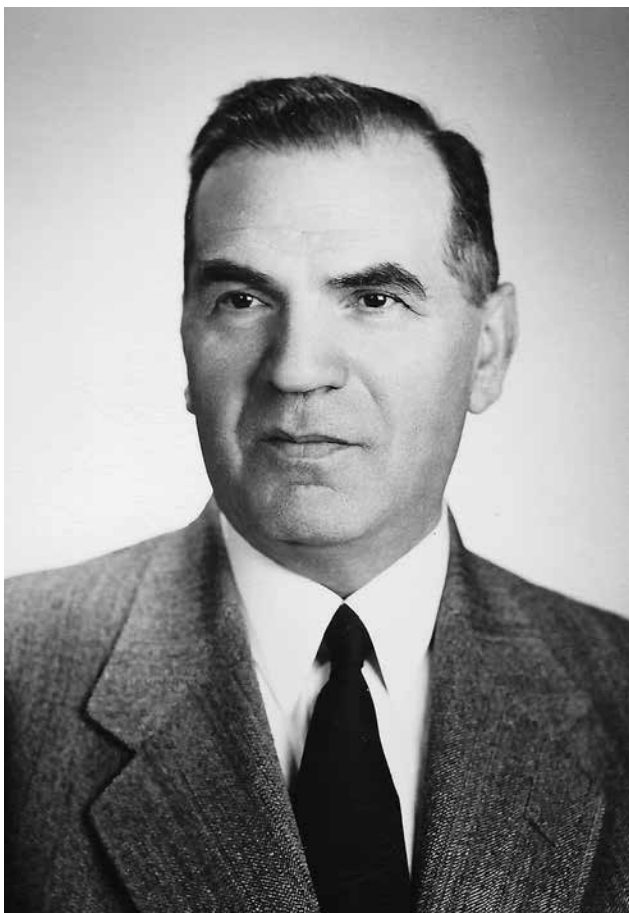
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Simon Rawidowicz (Chicago, 1949)



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## Foreword

*Ish Boded* – A Solitary Man. This self-attribution meets the intellectual particularity of the Jewish philosopher of religion, scholar of the history of ideas, and enthusiastic Hebraist Simon Rawidowicz (1896–1957), one of the most notable and insightful persons of letters in the Jewish 20th century. The phrase “solitary man” bears a double meaning: It signifies uniqueness as well as lonesomeness. Simon Rawidowicz neither joined a specific academic school or an established spiritual current of his time, nor was he part of a recognized political faction in the Jewish world. This made him a singular figure in his generation.

Well versed in both Jewish and general philosophy, especially in German idealism, Simon Rawidowicz took a distinctive view on questions of Jewish existence and Judaism in the intellectual realm of his time, the interwar period, the Second World War, and the postwar years. Committed to a unique ethno-cultural, national Jewish self-awareness, he was a fervent patriot of the Hebrew language and the Land of Israel. He honoured the Jewish Diasporic existence and its environs as much as he revered the geography and religious metaphysics of the Promised Land. Equalling value and meaning of both the Jewish Diaspora and the Land of Israel, Rawidowicz conceptualized their relation as a fraternal bond, which he iconized in an indivisible fusion: “Babylon and Jerusalem.” Thus, he was equally far removed from an absolute Diasporic orientation on the one and a principled Zionist attitude on the other hand. In a time of crisis, when political Zionism seemed to triumph in face of looming Jewish calamities in the 1930s which materialized in an unprecedented catastrophe in the 1940s, this stance was indeed an expression of solitariness.

The bond, the unity of “Babylon and Jerusalem” that Rawidowicz strived for so resolutely, tended to drift apart with the evolution of Jewish statehood – of collectively institutionalized power. Apparently, this development was as structurally unavoidable as it was regrettable. In Rawidowicz’s nationalist thought the unity of “Babylon and Jerusalem” was based on a common Hebrew *textual culture* – i. e., Jewish life rooted in scriptures, literatures and the world of ideas, as well as their exegesis and interpretations. Jewish Palestine, however, basing its self-conception on a substantially political composition as a nation-state, was anchored in the tellurian fusion of land and rule. An estranging distinction emerged:

“Babylon” came to signify the textual dimension of Jewish existence – “Jerusalem” the telluric.

This shifting constellation, producing a subtle separation between “Babylon” and “Jerusalem,” between the Diaspora and Israel, finds its painful apotheosis in Rawidowicz’s piece “Between Jew and Arab” – published here for the first time in its Hebrew original in full, expressing the moral dialectics of a diasporic constellation in reverse, while undermining a formerly firm and imperturbable unity of Babylon and Jerusalem.

David N. Myers and Benjamin C.I. Ravid deserve great credit for exhibiting a representative cross section of especially lesser known writings of Simon Rawidowicz to scholars as well as the interested non-academic public. Both, Myers and Ravid, Rawidowicz’s son, are the leading experts of the philosopher’s work and legacy. With the present selection of his writings, accompanied by introductory texts, they are responding to the invitation of the project “European Traditions – Encyclopedia of Jewish Cultures,” conveyed at the Saxonian Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Leipzig. This volume appears in the series *Library of Jewish History and Culture*, which aims to present a representative neckline out of the oeuvre of remarkable Jewish thinkers especially at the threshold from tradition to modernity.

I would like to thank the editors as well as the scientific staff of the project “European Traditions,” first and foremost Marcel Müller and Momme Schwarz, who oversaw the volume. Further gratitude is owed to Markus Kirchhoff, Stefan Hofmann, Ulrike Kramme, Frauke von Rohden, Georg Wehse, Franziska Jockenhöfer und Cyra Sommer, who were involved in various stages of work.

Dan Diner  
Series Editor

# Editors' Introduction

*David N. Myers and Benjamin C. I. Ravid*

## 1. On the Scope and Motives of this Volume

The man whose thought stands at the center of this volume is one of the most original, though underappreciated, thinkers in twentieth-century Jewish intellectual life. Simon Rawidowicz (1896–1957) was distinctive in several regards: He was a wide-ranging student of Jewish thought, with expertise in the leading medieval and modern philosophers from Saadia Gaon, Yehuda Halevi, and Moses Maimonides to Moses Mendelssohn and Nachman Krochmal. Alongside his interest in these Jewish thinkers, Rawidowicz was familiar with the range of modern European thought. His dissertation on the Young Hegelian philosopher, Ludwig Feuerbach, became a chapter of a book that is still considered to be foundational today. Moreover, throughout his life Rawidowicz retained his youthful interest in Hebrew literature, ending his career as Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Hebrew Literature at Brandeis University.

In addition to these domains of pursuit, Rawidowicz was consistently engaged in the articulation of a very particular vision of Jewish cultural nationalism. In fact, this vision was one of the last concerted expressions in what one might call the golden age of modern Jewish ideology. Nationalists of various stripes, socialists, religious traditionalists, and even assimilationists debated with intense passion and conviction the nature of Jewish collective identity in the early decades of the twentieth century. They were prompted to do so as a result of the rapid change and dramatic upheaval that confronted the Jewish people: the erosion of traditional ways of life and authority, urbanization, the First World War, and the devastating displacement and mass murder that occurred during and after it.

Rawidowicz's own contribution to this impassioned debate was a persistent, and rather intuitive, call to acknowledge that there was a Jewish nation with two equal centers, the Diaspora, which he termed "Babylon," and the homeland, which he termed "Jerusalem." He advocated this proposition of a dual-centered Jewish nation in innumerable written and oral expositions throughout much of his adult life. The *summa summarum* of his entire oeuvre was a nine-hundred-page, two volume Hebrew tome that

bore the name of his ideological vision: *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* (Babylon and Jerusalem). The distinctiveness of this idea may help to explain why Rawidowicz is so forgotten. He navigated between the poles of Zionism and Diasporism, two competing strains of Jewish nationalism for which the choice of Babylon or Jerusalem was a zero-sum proposition. Each of the two had multiple variants, and more importantly, a network of parties, newspapers, and followers that added up to a tangible material presence. By contrast, Rawidowicz's program of "Babylon and Jerusalem" was the creation of a self-declared "solitary man." It attracted relatively few followers and left behind no institutional trace. And, as a result, both the program and its initiator have been relegated to the margins of memory.

This volume aims to shed new light on Simon Rawidowicz and his distinctive blend of scholarship and ideology. The range and originality of his thought call out for renewed attention and investigation. The current book brings together a unique collection of his writings, including some of his seminal contributions to Jewish thought, key ideological interventions, and a number of occasional pieces that reflect the arc of his thinking in the midst of a convulsive quarter century. A distinctive feature of this volume is that it offers several of Rawidowicz's key texts in Hebrew, alongside English translations. Like many Eastern European Jewish intellectuals of his day, Rawidowicz wrote prolifically in at least four languages: Hebrew, Yiddish, German and English. His multi-lingual writing was a function of the peripatetic nature of his own life, as a perpetual émigré who was constantly required to traverse national, cultural, and linguistic boundaries.

In noting this regular boundary crossing, we must acknowledge at the same time the primacy of Rawidowicz's commitment to Hebrew, which he regarded as the most treasured possession – and main connective tissue – of the Jewish cultural nation. His own written Hebrew style was an idiosyncratic mix of old and new, at once drawing upon his vast command of classical Jewish sources and his distinctive neologisms and unconventional syntactical form. It was a Hebrew better read than spoken, a telling indicator of Rawidowicz's status as a Diaspora Hebraist – and indeed, one of the last of that largely lost breed.

### **On Rawidowicz's Publication History**

At various points in his life, Rawidowicz also wrote in German and English, corresponding to the time he spent in countries in which those languages were spoken. From time to time, he wrote as well in his mother tongue,

Yiddish, and in fact, a collection of his essays in Yiddish was published in Buenos Aires in 1962.<sup>1</sup> Two other collections of Rawidowicz's writings, including translations from Hebrew, German, and Yiddish, have appeared in English: *Studies in Jewish Thought*, edited by Nahum Glatzer, and *Israel. The Ever-Dying People*, reissued in paperback with one additional chapter under the title of *State of Israel, Diaspora, and Jewish Continuity. Essays on the "Ever-Dying People,"* edited by Rawidowicz's son and co-editor of this volume, Benjamin Ravid.<sup>2</sup> Ravid also assembled and introduced a longer collection of his father's scholarly writings in Hebrew, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra'el* (Studies in Jewish Thought).<sup>3</sup>

The distinctiveness of the present volume, apart from excavating little known sources and providing texts that are difficult to access, lies in combining scholarly and ideological writings, showing both the multiple voices in which Rawidowicz spoke, as well as conveying the breadth and depth of his register as it developed over time. A selection of these writings has been grouped into chapters, introduced by brief prefaces that highlight major points of biographical and conceptual relevance.

This volume appears at a time when Rawidowicz's oft-forgotten perspective may possess new relevance. His vision of a global Jewish nation has particular resonance in our current age, marked by powerful forces, equally powerful displacements and upheavals caused by globalization,

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- 1 Simon Rawidowicz, *Shriftn* [Works], Buenos Aires 1962. Some of the scholarly essays – as opposed to articles of an ideological orientation – included in that volume were translations from other languages.
  - 2 See Simon Rawidowicz, *Studies in Jewish Thought*, ed. by Nahum Glatzer, Philadelphia, Pa., 1974; idem, *Israel. The Ever-Dying People and Other Essays*, ed. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid, Rutherford, NJ, 1986; idem, *State of Israel, Diaspora, and Jewish Continuity. Essays on the "Ever-Dying People,"* ed. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid, Hanover, NH/London 1998.
  - 3 Benjamin C. I. Ravid, *Le-ḥayyav ve-li-khtavav shel Shim'on Ravidoviz* [On the Life and Writings of Simon Rawidowicz], in: Simon Rawidowicz, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra'el* [Studies in Jewish Thought], ed. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid, vol. 1: *Perakim mi-mavo le-filosofyah shel toldot Yisra'el, Rav Sa'adyah Ga'on, Rabbeinu Mosheh ben Maimon* [Chapters of an Introduction to a Philosophy of Jewish History, Saadia, Maimonides], Jerusalem 1969, 17–82 (Hebrew pagination); idem: *Hakdamah le-kerekh ha-sheni* [Introduction to Volume Two], in: Simon Rawidowicz, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra'el* [Studies in Jewish Thought], ed. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid, vol. 2: *Mendelszon, Krokhmal, ha-sifrut ha-ivrit ha-ḥadashah, shivrei iyyunim* [Mendelssohn, Krochmal, Modern Hebrew Literature, Fragments], Jerusalem 1971, 9–16 (Hebrew pagination).



and a resurgent locally based, ethnocentric reaction. Earlier in this fledgling century it seemed as if Rawidowicz's conception of a transnational cultural group, split between homeland and Diaspora, might point toward a new model of political organization in the globalized world. As of this writing in 2020, that proposition seems far less certain.

What seems clearer is that the populations of Jews in the Diaspora and the State of Israel are rapidly moving toward a position of demographic parity, with the current balance standing at roughly 55 to 45 percent in favor of the Diaspora.<sup>4</sup> As the day of parity approaches, it seems sensible to recall Rawidowicz's inimitable thought. His project of "Babylon and Jerusalem," in which the two parties are to forge a partnership of equals based on a shared historical and cultural legacy, was intended to minimize the possibility of a drift between homeland and Diaspora Jews. Rawidowicz imagined strong bonds of affiliation, even going so far as to suggest that there be a constitution between the two main halves of the Jewish nation.<sup>5</sup> Although the prospect of a formal legal link between the Diaspora and the State of Israel seems highly unlikely, there are certainly major issues of shared interest – for example, the constitutive question of "who is a Jew?" – that could benefit from more cooperation between the two sides. Seen from this perspective, Rawidowicz's vision of "Babylon and Jerusalem" is both germane and less far-fetched than one might otherwise think. It is the task of this volume to introduce Rawidowicz to a wider audience than currently knows him, and to revive interest in the two interrelated domains of Jewish thought – scholarly analysis and ideological prescription – in which he distinguished himself.

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4 See The Times of Israel Staff, Israel's Population Tops 9 Million, Including 45 % of World Jewry, in: Times of Israel, 6 May 2019 <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israels-population-tops-9-million-including-45-of-world-jewry/>> (19 March 2020).

5 Simon Rawidowicz, Two That Are One, in: idem, State of Israel, 147–161, here 153 f.

## 2. The Peripatetic Journeys of a “Solitary Man”

### The Early Years – From Grajewo to Białystok

Simon Rawidowicz was born on 11 October 1896 (officially on 22 February 1897) in Grajewo, a town in present-day Poland about 75 kilometers northwest of Białystok. Then a part of the Russian Empire, Grajewo had a Jewish community of more than 4,000 souls at the time, who represented a majority of the residents in town.<sup>6</sup> The community was rich in Jewish institutions and piety, so much so that Rawidowicz once asserted that “Grajewo’s Jewishness was total, with a set way of life; a Jewishness of ‘when you lie down and when you rise up’” (Deuteronomy 11:19).<sup>7</sup> His father, Chaim Yitzhak (1863–1936), presided over a house in which traditional Jewish religious observance combined with a passionate devotion to the Hebrew language and adherence to the fledgling Zionist movement. The latter two commitments not only set the Rawidowicz family apart from many other Jewish inhabitants in Grajewo but left a deep imprint on young Simon. By the time he was fourteen, he had authored and submitted to the Zionist weekly *Ha-Olam* (The World) for publication a Hebrew short story that was not accepted. Although he would abandon strict religious observance in his later life, Rawidowicz never surrendered his respect for and deep knowledge of classical Jewish sources, from the Bible to medieval rabbinics and philosophy to modern Hebrew literature. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of his literary style, as for so many of the great Hebrew stylists of his age, was a rich intertextuality that permitted him to move skillfully among multiple layers of the Hebrew language.

It was to the causes of Hebrew culture and Zionism that the young Rawidowicz dedicated most of his talents as a young man. In 1914, with the outbreak of the First World War, the family moved from Grajewo to Białystok, a much larger city with a diverse Jewish community that constituted a majority of the population. Simon became actively involved

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6 See George Gorin/Hayman Bloom/Sol Fishbayn (eds.), *Grayeve yizker-bukh* [Grajewo Memorial Book], New York 1950, 17. Available in English translation: idem, *Grajewo Poland Memorial (Yizkor) Book*, transl. by Evelyn Fine and Shelly Levin, New York 2014.

7 Simon Rawidowicz, *Grayeve. Di shtrebendike un di troyemendike. A kapitl zikhroynes* [Grajewo. The Aspiring and the Dreaming. A Chapter of Memoirs], in: Gorin/Bloom/Fishbayn (eds.), *Grayeve yizker-bukh*, 35–46, quoted in: Ravid, *Le-ḥayyav ve-li-khtavav*, 21 f.

in promoting the cause of Zionism there through the Ze'irei Zion (Youth of Zion) movement, especially by organizing cultural activities. This work went hand in hand with his labor as a Hebrew language instructor in adult education institutions in Białystok, at least one of which he played a role in establishing. His "business card" from this period, in Hebrew, identified him as a "Member of the Central Committee of Ze'irei Zion in Lithuania and the Regional Committee of the Zionists of Southern Lithuania" and then in slightly larger bold type, "Director of the Hebrew Pedagogical Courses." After the end of the war, in December 1918 he served as one of the five representatives of Ze'irei Zion on the first democratically elected Jewish community council of Białystok. Clearly, Rawidowicz was greatly influenced by the environment of his childhood and youth, which he never forgot and about which he frequently reminisced in letters to his family to the end of his days.<sup>8</sup>

### The Berlin Years

Similarly to many young Eastern European Jews of his generation, Rawidowicz sought to expand his own educational opportunities by leaving his home country after the world war had ended. He joined a stream of thousands of co-religionists who made their way to universities in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy.<sup>9</sup> Rawidowicz arrived in Berlin in the summer of 1919, and soon thereafter enrolled in classes to qualify for the *Abitur*, which was required for admission to the university.<sup>10</sup> He began his formal studies at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin in late 1921. It was at that moment that he embarked on the professional

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8 See Benjamin C. I. Ravid, *In Search of Lost Times and Places. Simon Rawidowicz Reflects on His Formative Years in Grajewo and Białystok* (notes and letters ed. and transl. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid), in: Polin 29 (2017), 353–401.

9 See on this theme Steven Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers. The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923*, Madison, Wis., 1982; Trude Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland 1918–1933*, Hamburg 1986; Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers. East European Jews in Imperial Germany*, New York/Oxford 1987.

10 On Rawidowicz's time in Berlin, see Benjamin C. I. Ravid, *The Berlin Period of Simon Rawidowicz. The Context of His Feuerbach Scholarship*, in: Ursula Reitemeyer/Takayuki Shibata/Francesco Tomasoni (eds.), *Feuerbach und der Judaismus*, Münster 2009, 135–157.

path of the trained philosopher. His two main guides at the university were the neo-Kantian Max Dessoir (1867–1947) and the logician and classicist Heinrich Maier (1867–1933). Interestingly, these two figures also supervised the philosophical studies of two other slightly younger Eastern European Jews who came to Berlin to attend university in this period and who later would gain considerable renown in the Jewish world: Joseph Ber Soloveitchik (1903–1993) and Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972).

However, Rawidowicz noted that it was a young Privatdozent, David Baumgardt, who first turned his attention to the thought of the neo-Hegelian Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872). He devoted his sixty-four-page dissertation to Feuerbach’s initial attraction to and subsequent critique of his revered mentor Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) up to 1839, the year in which he published a critical assessment of Hegelian philosophy.<sup>11</sup> The dissertation was presented to the faculty of philosophy in April 1926 and approved in May 1927. Subsequently, Rawidowicz expanded it into a five-hundred-page book, published in 1931, that undertook three additional tasks: First, it situated Feuerbach’s approach to Hegel in a wider philosophical context, from David Hume and Jean-Jacques Rousseau to David Friedrich Strauss, Bruno Bauer, and Friedrich Schleiermacher; second, it traced Feuerbach’s relationship to a number of prominent German thinkers other than Hegel, such as Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, and Arthur Schopenhauer; and third, it explored the reception of Feuerbach’s thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, principally in Germany, but also in France, the United States, England, and Russia. The result was a broad and systematic treatment of Feuerbach’s thought that was deemed significant enough to be reprinted twice, in 1964 and in digital form in 2013, respectively.<sup>12</sup>

Alongside his philosophical studies, Rawidowicz was commencing his career as a Hebrew writer, editor, and publisher. This work grew naturally out of his efforts as a youthful educator and activist in Białystok. Now in Berlin, he began to make his mark in what was an exceptionally dynamic, if short-lived, center of Hebrew and Yiddish letters. Indeed, the historian Michael Brenner has noted of this milieu: “Before World War I Berlin was one center of Hebrew culture, but it became *the* center between 1920

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11 Ludwig Feuerbachs philosophische Jugendentwicklung und seine Stellung zu Hegel bis 1839 (Inaugural Dissertation), Berlin 1927.

12 See Simon Rawidowicz, Ludwig Feuerbachs Philosophie. Ursprung und Schicksal, Berlin <sup>3</sup>2013 (ebook).

and 1924.”<sup>13</sup> The arrival of tens of thousands of Eastern European Jews to Berlin after the war transformed Berlin – and particularly, Berlin Jewish life – into a teeming marketplace of émigrés with their languages, ideologies, and cultural expressions. The Hebrew poet Chaim Nahman Bialik (1873–1934),<sup>14</sup> who himself arrived in Germany in 1921, was particularly taken by the encounter between Eastern European and German Jews, and their respective cultures. “Many of [...] the bearers of Hebrew culture (from the east) found their way to Berlin. [...] At this great and decisive hour, relatives who had been separated by force happened onto the same inn.”<sup>15</sup>

Simon Rawidowicz stood at the threshold of that inn, which became the site of very considerable cultural innovation for Eastern Europeans and Germans alike, and quickly entered it. He founded a Hebrew publishing house, Ayanot (Wellsprings), in 1922 that began to issue a series of important volumes.<sup>16</sup> Among the early publications of Ayanot were two products of Rawidowicz’s own hand: his introduction to the opening philosophical chapter of Maimonides’ monumental legal code *Mishneh Torah* (Repetition of the Torah), the *Sefer ha-madda* (Book of Knowledge) from 1922, which is presented here in English for the first time;<sup>17</sup> and his lengthy and detailed introduction to an edition of a major work of modern Jewish thought, Nachman Krochmal’s *Moreh nevukhei*

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- 13 Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, New Haven, Conn./London 1996, 198. On Berlin as a center of Hebrew modernist fiction, see the important book of Shachar M. Pinsker, *Literary Passports. The Making of Modern Hebrew Fiction in Europe*, Stanford, Calif., 2011, 105–146.
- 14 On Bialik, see Dan Miron, Art. “El ha-tsippor,” in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*. On behalf of the Saxonian Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Leipzig ed. by Dan Diner, vol. 2, Leiden/Boston, Mass., 2018, 408–419; David Aberbach, *Bialik*, London 1988; Avner Holtzman, *Hayim Nahman Bialik. Poet of Hebrew*, New Haven, Conn., 2017.
- 15 From Bialik’s remarks in the opening issue of the Hebrew journal *Dvir* (Sanctuary) in Berlin (1926). Quoted in: David N. Myers, *Re-inventing the Jewish Past. European Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History*, New York/Oxford 1995, 35. On this meeting, see idem, “Distant Relatives Happening onto the Same Inn.” *The Meeting of East and West as Literary Theme and Cultural Ideal*, in: *Jewish Social Studies* 1 (1995), no. 2, 75–100.
- 16 For a list of the publications of Ayanot, see Simon Rawidowicz, *Siḥotai im Biyalik [My Conversations with Bialik]*, ed. by Benjamin C. I. Ravid and Yehuda Friedlander, Jerusalem/Tel Aviv 1983, 143, n. 9.
- 17 See the present volume: I.4. Introduction to Maimonides’ *Sefer ha-madda*.

*ha-zeman* (Guide for the Perplexed of the Time) in 1924. The latter text, in particular, remains widely in use as the definitive version of Krochmal’s text.<sup>18</sup> An English translation of Rawidowicz’s introduction to the second edition of the book – published posthumously in 1961 – is made available here for the first time.<sup>19</sup>

What is especially noteworthy about Rawidowicz’s work on these two texts is that he approached them without the benefit of serious formal study of Jewish philosophy. Rather, he came to them through his own autodidactic pursuits, and by the age of 25, possessed an exceptional command of both medieval and modern Jewish thought. Even more impressively, he undertook work on these two volumes while beginning his doctoral dissertation. His simultaneous engagement with Jewish thought, Hebrew publishing, and German philosophy seems at once remarkable and yet of a piece with the frenzied pace of Jewish cultural life in Berlin. This diverse range of pursuits yielded, at times, interesting cross-fertilizations. For example, a key question that Rawidowicz asked in his studies of Krochmal, concurrent with his dissertation on the Young Hegelian Feuerbach, was the extent of the influence of Hegel. In the third part of his introduction to *Kitvei RaNa”K* (The Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal), he concluded that notwithstanding Krochmal’s use of the idea of the “Absolute Spirit” in *Moreh nevukey ha-zeman*, he owed far less to Hegel than to the evolutionary view of history of Giambattista Vico and Johann Gottfried Herder.<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, in his initial Berlin years Rawidowicz continued his previous participation in Zionist affairs. By the end of August 1919, he was contributing to *Unzer Frayhayt* (Our Freedom), the Yiddish-language paper of Ha-Po’el ha-Za’ir (The Young Worker), the Jewish Workers’ Party of British Mandatory Palestine. The first issue of 1920 listed Rawidowicz as a contributor, along with Chaim Arlosoroff, Martin Buber, Shmaryahu

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18 Rawidowicz’s edition of *Kitvei RaNa”K* (Berlin 1924) was republished in an expanded form in 1961. A new edition, photo-reproducing the text of Rawidowicz’s editions but with a different introduction and without the indices, has been published. See Nachman Krochmal, *Moreh nevukey ha-zeman* [Guide for the Perplexed of the Time], ed. by Yehoyada Amir, Jerusalem 2010.

19 See I.5. Introduction to the Second Edition of the Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal.

20 See also Simon Rawidowicz, *War Nachman Krochmal Hegelianer?*, in: *Hebrew Union College Annual* 5 (1928), 535–582, published in an English translation as: *Was Nachman Krochmal a Hegelian?* in: Rawidowicz, *Studies in Jewish Thought*, 350–384.

Gorelik, and Robert Weltsch. David Arye Friedmann was named the managing editor, but in the second issue Friedmann was replaced by Rawidowicz and Hersch Gugig-Berggrün as managing editors.<sup>21</sup> Then in March 1920, a world conference of delegates from Ha-Po'el ha-Za'ir and most of the groups of Ze'irei Zion met in Prague to unite the two socialist Zionist organizations into what became known in 1922 as the Hitaḥadut (Mifleget ha-Avodah ha-Ziyyonit "Hitaḥadut," United Zionist Labor Party). Rawidowicz participated in the Prague conference with Chaim Arlosoroff, Martin Buber, Israel Reichert, and Robert Weltsch from Berlin. The personalities and views of Aaron David Gordon and his pupil-disciple Eliezer Jaffe, two delegates who came from Mandatory Palestine, made a deep impression on Rawidowicz, to the extent that after Gordon died, he considered writing a book on him.<sup>22</sup> After the Prague conference, *Unzer Frayhayt* ceased publication and Rawidowicz no longer directly involved himself in Jewish party politics. In general, his orientation remained moderately left of center.<sup>23</sup>

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- 21 See Marion Neiss, *Presse im Transit. Jiddische Zeitungen und Zeitschriften in Berlin von 1919 bis 1925*, Berlin 2002, 63 f. The top part of the first page of the issue of year 2, number 5, reproduced *ibid.*, on page 63, includes an article by Rawidowicz with the title *Erets-Yisroel un golus (Arum der fareynigungs-frage)* [The Land of Israel and the Diaspora (On the Question of Unification)]. On the identity of Gugig-Berggrün, see *ibid.*, 64, n. 67.
- 22 Rawidowicz never wrote this book, but he did write an article: Simon Rawidowicz, Aharon David Gordon, in: *Ha-Tekufah* (1928), no. 24, 440–458; reprinted in: *idem*, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra'el*, vol. 2, 412–431. Previously he had translated Gordon's *Briefe aus Palästina* from German to Yiddish. See Aharon David Gordon, *Briv fun Erets-Yisroel* [Letters from the Land of Israel], Berlin 1921. For Rawidowicz's impressions of the Prague Conference and especially of Gordon and Jaffe, whose book on worker settlements in the Land of Israel he translated from Hebrew to Yiddish (Eliezer Leib Jaffe, *Arbayter-zidlungn in Erets-Yisroel* [Workers' Settlements in the Land of Israel], Berlin 1921), see Simon Rawidowicz, *Mivne ha-arez. Mi-rishmei ha-ve'idah ha-pragit* [The Building of the Land. Impressions from the Prague Conference], in: *Ha-Avodah* 1 (1920), no. 28, 9–18.
- 23 Moreover, initially, Rawidowicz was still thinking primarily in literary terms and was very attracted to the important short story of Mordecai Ze'ev Feilerberg, "Le-An?" (Whither?), which he saw as the literary expression of the dilemma of the youth of his generation. In Białystok, he had delivered a Yiddish lecture on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the death of Feilerberg, and subsequently published it as a Hebrew article in 1921, and then with some changes as a separate booklet. See Simon Rawidowicz, *Dor ha-ma'avar u-meshorero* (Mordekhai

The Jewish Berlin in which Rawidowicz circulated was full of cultural luminaries with whom he interacted regularly. Chief among them was Bialik, whom he venerated and would become a conversation partner. Rawidowicz recalled the arrival of Bialik in Berlin in 1921 “as an event on the order of a festive holiday, an elevation of the soul.”<sup>24</sup> Over the course of the next few years, both intensely discussed the state of Hebrew literature and the prospects for a revival of a Hebrew national culture. Notwithstanding Rawidowicz’s reverence for Bialik – and their shared Hebraist interests and commitments – the two were, in one case, competitors in the Berlin Jewish marketplace. Bialik perceived Rawidowicz’s Ayanot as a threat to his own Hebrew publishing house, Dvir (Sanctuary), which printed books and an eponymous journal. In order to forestall the threat, Bialik offered Rawidowicz the directorship of Dvir on the condition that he leave Ayanot, an offer that Rawidowicz politely declined. But the strength of their personal and ideological bond overcame this tension, and the two remained in close contact during Bialik’s Berlin years (and Rawidowicz wrote about Bialik on various occasions, with some of these writings appearing in this volume).<sup>25</sup>

In this same period, Rawidowicz also forged a strong relationship with another prominent Eastern European Jew, the historian and activist Simon Dubnow (1860–1941). The two Simons, separated by 36 years, met and corresponded frequently with one another in the decade after Dubnow’s arrival in Berlin in 1923, and continued to do so until Dubnow’s murder in a Nazi massacre in Riga in 1941. The initial encounter came about when Rawidowicz undertook to publish at the Ayanot press Dubnow’s edition of the important record book of the Lithuanian Jewish council, *Pinkas medinat Lita* (Minutes of the Country Lithuania, 1925). This meeting

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Ze’ev Fayerberg) [The Generation of Transition and Its Novelist (Mordecai Ze’ev Feilerberg)], in: Ha-Tekufah (1921), no. 11, 399–419, reprinted separately as: Mordekhai Ze’ev Fayerberg. Perek be-toldot sifrouteinu ha-ḥadashah [Mordecai Ze’ev Feilerberg. A Chapter in the History of Our Modern Literature], Berlin 1923; reprinted in: idem, Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra’el, vol. 2, 383–411.

- 24 Rawidowicz related this impression in his notebooks recording his relationship with Bialik. See Rawidowicz, *Siḥotai im Biyalik*, 28. For Rawidowicz’s innovative assessment of Bialik, his life, and writings, see idem, *Al parashat batim. Yisra’el – bayit u-vayit* [Israel’s Two Beginnings. The First and Second House], in: idem, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra’el*, vol. 1, 3–108; idem, *Rishon ba-sheni. Ḥ. N. Biyalik* [Towards the Second “Commonwealth”], in: idem, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra’el*, vol. 2, 293–336.
- 25 See III.2. The Twentieth-Century Job; III.3. Bialik the Man as Revealed in His Letters.



was important not only in exposing Rawidowicz to a major Eastern European Jewish scholar and cultural figure. It also introduced him more fully to Dubnow's views as a Diaspora nationalist. Dubnow was a leading exponent of "autonomism," a variant of nationalist theory that focused not on sovereignty in the form of a *state*, but rather on state support for the cultural, linguistic, and educational properties of a sub-state *nation*.<sup>26</sup> This call for "national cultural autonomy," which arose in the major multi-ethnic imperial settings of Europe in the late nineteenth century (i. e., Austria-Hungary and Tsarist Russia),<sup>27</sup> was avidly heeded by young Jews, principally in Eastern Europe, although in East-Central and Central Europe as well. Rawidowicz knew of Jewish "autonomism" through the activities of groups such as the socialist General Jewish Labour Bund but had the opportunity to receive a far more detailed grasp of the idea from Dubnow. Indeed, this engagement with the Russian-Jewish historian in the mid-1920s likely stimulated Rawidowicz to develop a more refined sense of the potential of a vibrant "Babylon" – one of the two main pillars of his emerging project of "Babylon and Jerusalem." Rawidowicz wrote about Dubnow on various occasions, and edited the first memorial volume in honor of Dubnow, in which a moving essay of his appears.<sup>28</sup>

A third cultural figure, along with Bialik and Dubnow, exerted a profound influence on Rawidowicz, though not via direct contact in Berlin: Achad Ha-Am (Asher Ginzberg, 1856–1927). The seminal Hebrew essayist and ideologue, who resided in Tel Aviv in the 1920s, was a source on whom Rawidowicz drew amply in promoting a resurgent Hebrew language as the thread linking the different parts of the global Jewish nation.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, Achad Ha-Am served as a polemical foil to Rawidowicz, who challenged the older activist's ideology, which was based on a system of a single national center in Erez Yisra'el emitting rays of creativity that were to

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26 On Dubnow, see Robert M. Seltzer, *Simon Dubnow's "New Judaism." Diaspora Nationalism and the World History of the Jews*, Leiden 2013; Viktor E. Kelner, *Simon Dubnow. Eine Biografie*, Göttingen/Oakville, Conn., 2010.

27 See Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, ed. by Ephraim J. Nimni, Minneapolis, Minn., 2000; Ephraim J. Nimni (ed.), *National Cultural Autonomy and Its Contemporary Critics*, London, 2005.

28 See III.4. A Great Jewish Historian and his Life; III.5. Humanistic Nationalism; V.6. The Involuntary Martyr.

29 On Achad Ha-Am see, e.g., Paul Mendes-Flohr, Art. "Cultural Zionism," in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 2, 185–191. On his keen interest in Rawidowicz's *Kitvei RaNa"K*, see below.

nourish the Diasporic periphery. At the end of the 1920s, Rawidowicz was working on an alternative to Achad Ha-Am’s center-periphery model. It would soon become his own preferred spatial image: an ellipse supported by two co-equal foci, Babylon and Jerusalem.

This combination of admiration and critique was rather characteristic of Rawidowicz’s relationships to leading Jewish figures of his day, from Bialik to David Ben-Gurion (1886–1973).<sup>30</sup> He was receptive to a wide range of currents, and unlike a good number of contemporaries, loath to engage in mean-spirited polemics. But similarly to those contemporaries, Rawidowicz was deeply engaged in the intense ideological battles of the day. The Weimar Berlin to which he came in 1919 was aflame with such battles, providing an ambience in which Rawidowicz could develop, test, and advance ideas of his own. It was in this setting that he interacted extensively with prominent intellectuals and crafted his own unique ideological amalgam that navigated between the Diasporism of Dubnow and the cultural Zionism of Achad Ha-Am. It was also in this setting that he developed the confidence to stand his ground and challenge what he perceived as misguided orthodoxies. Thus, while supporting a fortified Jewish presence in Erez Yisra’el and sharing with Zionists a strong preference for Hebrew as the national language of the Jews, he resisted the growing “Palestinocentrism” which placed Erez Yisra’el in the middle of all national Jewish life – rather than as the equal partner of the Diaspora in a global Jewish nation.

The evolution of Rawidowicz’s thought in this era went hand in hand with his efforts to create an organizational foundation for his vision of Jewish cultural nationalism. In 1929, Rawidowicz was the moving force behind the creation of the Bet Am Ivri (Hebrew House) in Berlin, which he conceived of as the central address for Hebrew-based activities in the city. Its tasks included both reversing the tide of ignorance of Hebrew among the Jewish population and catering to more advanced Hebrew speakers through an array of lectures, including his own. The Hebrew

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30 On Rawidowicz and Ben-Gurion see David N. Myers, *Between Jew and Arab. The Lost Voice of Simon Rawidowicz*, Hanover, NH, 2008, 84 f. and 119; Jacques Picard, *Jerusalem, Babylon und andere Orte der Erinnerung. Über das Woher und Wohin in der jüdischen Geschichtsschreibung*, in: *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte* 100 (2006), 89–104; Simon Rawidowicz/David Ben-Gurion, *Excerpts from a Correspondence Between David Ben-Gurion and Simon Rawidowicz on the State of Israel, the Diaspora, and the Unity of the Jewish People*, in: Rawidowicz, *State of Israel*, 194–204.

House initiative was part of a Weimar moment that saw adult education, in the form of the *Volkshochschule*, as a necessary means of bringing in the culturally disenfranchised. It was this task, for example, that prompted leading Weimar figures such as Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, and Leo Baeck to invest a great deal of their labors in new institutional incarnations of adult education. In fact, Baeck, the renowned liberal rabbi, was a member of the Bet Am Ivri.

For all of his dedication to the local Hebrew scene, Rawidowicz always had his eyes on the wider international sphere. Thus, he hoped not merely to inspire an upsurge in Hebrew language instruction in Berlin; he aimed to create momentum for Hebrew to become the lingua franca of the Jewish people, which he frequently chose to call by its traditional Hebrew name, *Yisra'el*. Rawidowicz felt a mix of trepidation and excitement as his efforts to create an institutional framework for this ambition reached a culmination in Berlin in June of 1931 when he opened the inaugural conference of the organization that he suggested be called *Brit ha-ivrim* (The Association of Hebraists) but in the end was called *Brit Ivrit Olamit* (known in English as the World Association for Hebrew Language and Culture).

Rawidowicz made clear in his opening address that he considered himself a Zionist no less than those who actively sought the “negation of the Diaspora.” And yet, he also emphasized that he was a very different kind from virtually any other Zionist. To wit, Rawidowicz rejected *Ahad Ha-Am*’s model of *Erez Yisra'el* as “the spiritual center” of the Jewish people. “Until now,” he insisted, “we have learned the laws of center and periphery; from now on we must learn the laws of partnership, the laws of partners.” That doctrine, which he articulated clearly here for the first time, rested on the necessary interdependence of Babylon and Jerusalem: “Just as Jewry of the Diaspora cannot exist without the Land of Israel, so can the Judaism and Hebrew culture of the Land of Israel not exist without a creative Hebrew Diaspora.”<sup>31</sup>

Rawidowicz’s challenge to the Palestinocentrism of Zionism was accompanied by a bold set of organizational aspirations. He imagined the *Brit Ivrit Olamit* as the equal of the Zionist Organization, the guiding

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31 Rawidowicz’s address of 21 June 1931, *Li-yesod brit ha-ivrim* (On the Establishment of the Brit Ivrim), initially published as *Le-irgun ha-golah ha-ivrit* (On the Organization of the Hebrew Diaspora), in: *Moznayim* 3 (1931), no. 9, 2–5 and no. 10, 2–8, was reprinted by the Lwów (today Lviv) branch of the *Brit Ivrit Olamit* in the booklet *Im lo kan – hekhan?* (If Not Here, Where?, Lvov 1933). See II.2. If Not Here, Then Where?, 145.

body of Zionists founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897. Accordingly, it should have its own triennial congress, culture fund, and membership of 100,000 within three years.

In 1926, Rawidowicz married Esther Eugenie Klee (1900–1980), daughter of the Berlin lawyer and Zionist leader Alfred Klee (1875–1943). The next year he earned his doctorate in philosophy at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität and began to seek employment on the academic job market. Even before completing his dissertation, he had been in contact with Julian Morgenstern, the president of Hebrew Union College, about a position in Jewish philosophy at the Cincinnati, Ohio, institution.<sup>32</sup> In 1928, he entered into discussions with Rabbi Moses Schorr about teaching Jewish philosophy at the new Institute for Jewish Studies in Warsaw, but no agreement was reached.<sup>33</sup>

Above all, Rawidowicz was most interested in obtaining a position at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, which formally opened on 1 April 1925,<sup>34</sup> which did not yet have a specialist in Jewish philosophy. His motivation was two-fold: his desire to live in a Hebrew cultural environment in Mandatory Palestine, and his close relationship with his father, three brothers, and two sisters who already lived there. It is curious to ask, as a counter-factual proposition, what the effect of such an appointment would have been on his scheme of Babylon and Jerusalem. In other words, had he immigrated to Palestine, would he have abandoned his belief in the co-equal status of the Diaspora? At a minimum, a post at the Hebrew University would have allowed him to pursue research and teaching in a lively Hebrew environment. Rawidowicz even confessed, after a visit to Palestine in 1933, that “during my time there, it became clear to me that my place, after all, is in Erez Yisra’el.”<sup>35</sup> To his great disappointment,

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32 See Myers, *Between Jew and Arab*, 50–52; Benjamin C. I. Ravid, *The Human Dimension of Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Letters from the Rawidowicz Archives, in: Jonathan P. Decter/Michael Rand (eds.), *Studies in Arabic and Hebrew Letters in Honor of Raymond P. Scheindlin*, Piscataway, NJ, 2007, 87–128, here 92–97. The discussion was over succeeding David Neumark, the scholar of Jewish philosophy, who died in 1924, not Jacob Klatzkin, as erroneously stated in Ravid, *The Berlin Period*, 153.

33 For details, see Ravid, *The Human Dimension*, 97–102.

34 See David N. Myers, Art. “Hebrew University,” in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 3, 222–227.

35 National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Joseph Klausner Papers, 4<sup>o</sup> 1096/469. Letter from Simon Rawidowicz to Joseph Klausner, 12 November 1933.

and notwithstanding his persistent lobbying of university officials in Jerusalem – and the backing of some well-known supporters (e.g., Leo Baeck) – Rawidowicz did not receive an offer from Hebrew University. Rather, in 1934, Julius Guttmann (1880–1950), the doyen of Jewish studies scholars in Berlin, who had taught at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, arrived in Jerusalem to take up the position in Jewish philosophy.

Facing a good deal of professional and financial uncertainty, Rawidowicz found employment in a variety of capacities in the Berlin Jewish community. Starting in 1926, he worked part-time at the Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums as a member of the team editing a multi-volume collection of the writings of Moses Mendelssohn on the anniversary of his 200th birthday in 1929. Specifically, Rawidowicz edited the seventh volume of the *Gesammelte Schriften* (co-sponsored by the Akademie and the Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums)<sup>36</sup> that appeared in 1930.<sup>37</sup> He contributed a lengthy introduction that carefully analyzed a number of Mendelssohn's shorter writings, particularly the famous response to the call for his conversion in 1769 by the Swiss theologian, Johann Caspar Lavater. He also prepared the eighth volume for publication, but it did not appear because of the Nazi rise to power. His work on these volumes commenced a life-long interest by Rawidowicz in the famous Berlin Jewish *Aufklärer*.

Concurrently, Rawidowicz served together with Benzion Katz and Shaul Tchernichovsky on the editorial board (*Redaktionskollegium*) of the Stybel Publishing Company, which Abraham J. Stybel had transferred from Warsaw to Berlin, and co-edited the Hebrew literary annual *Ha-Tekufah* (The Season).<sup>38</sup> After Stybel moved his publishing company to Tel Aviv in 1930, Rawidowicz trained as a librarian at the Preußische Staatsbibliothek and was then engaged as the half-time librarian of the Berlin Jewish community. At the same time, he was being considered for a prestigious, though unpaid, assignment at the University of Berlin. Following the

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36 See Henry C. Soussan, *The Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums in Its Historical Context*, Tübingen 2013.

37 See the report on the Mendelssohn project: Julius Guttmann, Bericht des wissenschaftlichen Vorstandes, in: *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins zur Gründung und Erhaltung einer Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* 7 (1926), 41 f., here 42.

38 See the obituary for Stybel: Simon Rawidowicz, Avraham Yosef Shtibel [Abraham Joseph Stybel], in: *Mezudah* 5–6 (1948), 627–630.

publication of his expanded dissertation, one of his two mentors, Heinrich Maier, planned to propose his appointment as a *Privatdozent* in philosophy at the University. Rawidowicz wrote to his father in July 1931 about this prospect, noting the unprecedented nature of such an appointment for a Russian-born, Hebrew-writing Jew. Additionally, he observed with a mix of irony and marvel that his chief advocate, Professor Maier, was no lover of Jews: “How great is the objectivity of some of the Christian scholars, even though they are antisemites! We have to learn and learn from the good qualities of the nations of the world.”<sup>39</sup>

In the same letter to his father, written a few short weeks after the opening of the Brit Ivrit Olamit conference, Rawidowicz wrestled with a key tension in his life: “[F]rom the perspective of my academic, intellectual, and economic future alike, it is forbidden for me to occupy myself with the creation of a new Hebrew movement in the Diaspora, but from the moral standpoint, I cannot free myself from it.”<sup>40</sup> This moral imperative guided Rawidowicz throughout his life, leading him to devote the better part of his labors to the ideal of a flourishing Hebrew culture.

What significantly hampered his organizational efforts on behalf of a World Hebrew Union – and foreclosed the possibility of an appointment as a *Privatdozent* at the University of Berlin – was the growing antisemitic climate of Germany. That environment, leading up to Hitler’s assumption of power in January 1933, forced Rawidowicz to consider leaving his place of residence of the previous 14 years. Besides, his wife Dr. Esther Klee, a trained biologist and formidable researcher in her own right, was dismissed from her position as Director of the Department of Tissue Culture at the Charité, the hospital of the University of Berlin.<sup>41</sup> Esther shared her husband’s life with great interest, enthusiasm and devotion, and after his death, actively participated in keeping his legacy alive.

## The London Years

In the late summer of 1933, Simon and Esther took their trip to Palestine designed in no small measure to explore job prospects, including at the Hebrew University. Not receiving any firm commitments, they made their

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39 Quoted in: Ravid, *The Berlin Period*, 153. On Heinrich Maier, see also *ibid.*, 155 and 157.

40 Quoted in: *ibid.*, 154.

41 For further details, see *ibid.*, 147f.

way to London, where Rawidowicz had received an invitation from Jews' College within the framework of its special program for aiding Jewish scholars from Germany. In London, he immediately took up the cause of Hebrew culture, connecting with a small coterie of devoted Hebraists. He soon merged his work on behalf of the Brit Ivrit Olamit into the local Tarbut Association, the Hebrew cultural organization that operated under the aegis of the English Zionist Federation.

From his new English home, he wrote, in 1934/35, "Kiyyum ha-tefuzah" (The Existence of the Diaspora), a long analysis of the development of Jewish life in Germany and the reaction of various parties in German Jewry to the rise of Nazism. It was published in *Moznayim* (Scales), the journal of the Hebrew Writers' Association in Tel Aviv.<sup>42</sup> During his time in London, Rawidowicz also contributed a number of essays – on Maimonides, Mendelssohn, Herzl, and Bialik among others – as well as book reviews and articles on issues of the day under various pseudonyms to *Ha-Olam*, the Hebrew language organ of the Zionist Organization, for which he served for a short time, in 1936, as acting editor.

At first glance, there is something incongruous about Rawidowicz participating actively in these journals, given the shared commitment of their sponsoring bodies to the supremacy of a Hebrew cultural life in Erez Yisra'el. He was an unrelenting critic of the Palestinocentric orientation of the Zionist movement that, to his mind, necessarily entailed a negative view of the Diaspora – to the point of calling for its negation.

But Rawidowicz was a Jewish nationalist, and a Hebraist to boot. Some of the more independent-thinking Zionists who shared his Hebraist predilections and Eastern European background became his main conversation partners in London and afterwards. Throughout the 1930s, he lectured in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish on the history and varied ideological permutations of Zionism. He wrote for the English Zionist Federation's *The Zionist Review*, as well as for the flagship Anglo-Jewish newspaper, *The Jewish Chronicle*, and also *The New Judea*, using a variety of pseudonyms such as Ben Hana, Avi Ḥayyim, and Shimoni.<sup>43</sup>

42 Simon Rawidowicz, *Kiyyum ha-tefuzah*. 14 perakim bi-she'elat Yisra'el she-be-Germanyah [The Existence of the Diaspora. 14 Chapters on the Jewish Question in Germany], in: *Moznayim* 6 (1934), no. 2, 125–139; no. 3, 265–276; *Moznayim* 7 (1935), no. 6, 581–609.

43 These pseudonyms had a self-referential quality: Ben Hana (Son of Hana, which was the name of Rawidowicz's mother Hana Batya, 1864–1920), Avi Ḥayyim

Especially important and significant was Rawidowicz’s extensive systematic formulation of his ideological position, “Beddek ha-bayit,” (Inspection of the House), that was published in 1939 as a series of articles in *Ha-Olam*.<sup>44</sup> Upon reading it, his old mentor Simon Dubnow wrote him that “you have chastised the foolish only with ‘whips’ when you should have chastised them with scorpions,” and went on to denounce sharply the “impertinent idiots” who denigrated the Diaspora.<sup>45</sup> He proceeded to advise Rawidowicz to publish his views in a special volume, written in a simple style, for while he himself enjoyed the rich style of Rawidowicz, the new generation of Hebrew speakers educated in the Tarbut schools would not understand or find meaning in all the pearls drawn<sup>46</sup> from the sources of thousands of years. Rawidowicz took the first part of Dubnow’s advice to heart, and a table of contents for such a book, with the title *Babylon and Jerusalem* and dated Elul 5700, 4 September to 2 October 1940, is preserved in his Nachlass.<sup>47</sup> It contains a combination of articles that he had already written, including much of “Kiyyum ha-tefuzah” and many sections of “Beddek ha-bayit,” as well as new ones that he intended to write. In a letter of 3 February 1942 to his brother Avraham, he referred, apparently for the first time, to “my book *Babylon and Jerusalem* that is troubling me day and night.” However, the course of the Second World War diverted him from that project.

The aggregate of his various writing assignments did not yield a stable livelihood. Nor for that matter were his ideological activities the entirety

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(Father of Ḥayyim, which was one of his son’s Hebrew names), and Shimoni (a variation on his own Hebrew name, Shimon).

- 44 Simon Rawidowicz, *Beddek ha-bayit*. *Prakim aḥadim bi-she’elat Yisra’el* [Inspection of the House. Some Chapters on the Jewish Question], in: *Ha-Olam*, 23 February 1939, 336; 2 March 1939, 361 f.; 9 March 1939, 379 f.; 16 March 1939, 399 f.; 23 March 1939, 419 f.; 30 March 1939, 440–442; 13 April 1939, 477–479; 20 April 1939, 500 f.; 27 April 1939, 516–518; 4 May 1939, 536 f.; 1 June 1939, 620 f.; 8 June 1939, 641 f.; 15 June 1939, 660 f.; 22 June 1939, 679–681; 29 June 1939, 701 f.; 13 July 1939, 738 f.; 20 July 1939, 758–760; 27 July 1939, 777–779, 13 August 1939, 819 f. See the excerpts in Ravid, *Le-ḥayyav ve-li-khtavav*, 48 f.
- 45 Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 10 May 1939, in: Simon Rawidowicz (ed.), *Simon Dubnov in Memoriam. Essays and Letters*, London/Jerusalem/Waltham, Mass., 1954, 453 f., here 453.
- 46 In parentheses, Rawidowicz corrected Dubnow’s *ha-sheuvim* (that are drawn), modifying the feminine *margaliot* (pearls), to *ha-shevot*.
- 47 The Nachlass is kept in the Simon and Esther Rawidowicz Archive located in the home of Prof. Benjamin Ravid in Newton, Massachusetts.



of his professional existence. From the time of his arrival in London, Rawidowicz had a number of very part-time teaching posts – at Jews' College and the School of Oriental Studies – that allowed him to continue his research in Jewish philosophy. In the mid-1930s, he focused a good deal of attention on two recurrent scholarly interests, Maimonides and Mendelssohn, as well as other thinkers in medieval and modern Jewish thought. He also continued to write short pieces on key issues of his day, especially as they related to his ideological vision.

### During the Holocaust

Juggling scholarly and ideological concerns continued to be a challenge in Rawidowicz's life in England – made all the more difficult by the absence of a solid financial base. His sense of stability was further undone by the rapidly escalating pace of events that followed the German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939. He responded by founding and editing a Hebrew supplement to *The Zionist Review* which he called *Yalkut. Li-she'elot ha-ḥayyim, le-sifrut u-le-maḥshavah. Mussaf-ḥodesh la-hashkafah ha-ziyyonit* (Anthology. On Questions of Life, Literature and Thought. Monthly Supplement to The Zionist Review). In his opening editorial charge, included in this volume, he noted that the “destruction of European Jewry in 1940 up to the British Isles – may the Guardian of Israel protect them – also marks the destruction of the last vestiges of Hebrew literature on the continent.”<sup>48</sup> Rawidowicz called on his fellow Jews in the United Kingdom to ward off the specter of cultural annihilation by embracing the Hebrew language with new vigor.<sup>49</sup>

Rawidowicz was indefatigable in support of a vibrant Hebrew culture. But the psychic costs were substantial. In this period, he revealed in the pages of *Yalkut* a literary alter-ego whose name captured well his mood and Sisyphean mission: “Ish Boded,” or “A Solitary Man.” As one of a handful of Hebraists in the United Kingdom and facing up to the enormity of the tragedy unfolding further east, Rawidowicz felt a sense of isolated

48 V.2. Introducing “Yalkut,” 310.

49 Rawidowicz was intrigued in this regard by the example of the Welsh. He noted several years later that they “even after hundreds of years of coexistence with the English, intermarriage, wandering, and uprooting [...] preserved and continue to preserve their language.” Simon Rawidowicz, *Olam ve-lashon* [World and Language], in: *Yalkut* 1 (1941), no. 3, 9f., here 9.

despair. And yet, he could not desist from his principal task. And so, following the demise of the short-lived *Yalkut*, he founded a publishing house named after the biblical mountain, Ararat. Its main activity was issuing the Hebrew journal *Mezudah* (Fortress), intended to serve, as its name suggests, as a fortress of strength in a time of great upheaval. He was acutely aware of the irony that London, of all places, had become one of the last sites in Europe in which it was possible to publish in the Hebrew language. And out of a sense of responsibility toward its success, he agreed to serve as its sole editor. The new journal provided a platform for a wide array of Hebrew writers from Europe and the Yishuv in Palestine.

It also served as a forum for his own critical views.<sup>50</sup> The ongoing assault on European Jewry fortified his belief that Zionism’s Palestinocentrism was flawed. Exactly at a moment when former Diasporists and Zionist opponents were arriving at the conclusion that a territorial safe haven for the Jews was essential, Rawidowicz stressed that a stronger commitment to the ideal of cultural autonomy outside of the homeland was crucial. Undergirding this claim was his core belief in *libertas differendi*, the right of an individual or a group to be different. That right, he wrote in a long *Mezudah* article in 1945, “should stand along other more well-established rights, such as those declared by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his 1941 State of the Union address: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.” For Rawidowicz, the fact of Jewish difference, indeed, the fact that “Israel is the most different in the world,” was affirmed with shocking force by the Holocaust.<sup>51</sup>

During the dark period of the Nazi genocidal assault, Rawidowicz was able to overcome one long-standing obstacle in his career path: the absence of professional and financial security. In 1941, at the age of 44, he was appointed to a permanent academic position for the first time in his life – as a lecturer in Hebrew in the department of Semitic languages at

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50 For further details and excerpts from the articles, see Ravid, *Le-ḥayyav ve-li-khtavav*, 53–57.

51 Simon Rawidowicz, *Kiyyum le-lo tnei. Mi-muskaloteha ha-rishonim shel medinyut Yisra’el, ḥelek sheni* [Unconditional Survival. First Principles of a Jewish Policy, part 2], in: *Mezudah* 3–4 (1945), 5–87, here 13. An English article on this theme, based on the text of a lecture found in the Nachlass of Rawidowicz, was published as “*Libertas Differendi*,” in: *Conservative Judaism* 29 (1973), no. 3, 24–35, and reprinted as “*Libertas Differendi. The Right to be Different*,” in: Rawidowicz, *State of Israel*, 118–129.

the University of Leeds.<sup>52</sup> He was a well-liked member of the Leeds faculty, and ascended to the post of department chair in 1946. A large cohort of friends and colleagues surrounded him, primarily in Leeds and London – non-Jewish scholars from his university department, Hebraists, Zionists, and other ideological fellow travelers. And in tandem with his writing in *Mezudah*, he continued to publish scholarly articles, largely in Hebrew and often devoted to his two long-standing “guides for the perplexed,” Maimonides and Krochmal.

The years that immediately followed the Second World War were marked by continuity in several key respects and a significant change in another. Rawidowicz continued to evince a strong scholarly interest in medieval and modern Jewish thought, and to advocate for the cause of Babylon and Jerusalem. Owing to that advocacy, and in full recognition of the devastation wreaked on his fellow Jews in the very recent past, he remained a “solitary man.”

### United States and “Israel”

But now, after a 15 years' residency, Rawidowicz decided to leave England. In spring 1948, he accepted an invitation to serve as a visiting professor at the Chicago College of Jewish Studies. By the end of his semester visit, the College offered him a permanent faculty position, which after some hesitation he accepted. As he made the move to Chicago, he acknowledged that he was, by nature, a peripatetic soul. In a letter to his brother, he confessed: “Over the years, my heart has lost the desire to settle in this place or that, in a specific place. I live beyond time and space.”<sup>53</sup>

That said, the United States proved to be a most hospitable environment for Rawidowicz. He liked the energy of America and found a circle of friends and even fellow Hebraists in Chicago. And yet, Chicago was a short-lived stop. Two years after arriving there, he was invited to join the founding faculty of Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Brandeis was the kind of institution of which he had long dreamt and for which he had long advocated. Indeed, while still living in England, he had heard that Chaim Weizmann (1872–1952) opposed a plan to establish a Jewish university in the United States. Rawidowicz sharply criticized the

52 See Ravid, *The Human Dimension*, 106–111.

53 Letter from Simon Rawidowicz to Avraham Ravid, 12 June 1948. Quoted in: Ravid, *Le-ḥayav ve-li-khtavav*, 58.

veteran Zionist leader in an article in *Mezudah* in which he asserted that every Diaspora community was obligated to maintain its own educational institutions from kindergarten to university. He wrote longingly of “a Jewish university that will nonetheless have a Hebrew spirit” and that would take rise in the Diaspora – and thereby recall the glory of the ancient Babylonian academies of Sura and Pumbedita.<sup>54</sup> Brandeis bore the potential, he believed, to become just such an institution – a major center of Jewish and Hebrew scholarship.

With his Brandeis position came a new measure of gratification, on professional, Jewish, and personal levels. He enjoyed a professorial appointment at a prestigious new institution. He was a founding member of the department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, serving as its first chairman until his death, and a moving force behind both its undergraduate and graduate programs. Rawidowicz was also an active and visible presence on the Brandeis campus; he loved the energy of the new university and threw himself into teaching and the intellectual life of the community. And as in England, Rawidowicz and his wife Esther created in Waltham an inviting social circle open to friends and guests from near and far.

Even from the United States, Rawidowicz continued to dream of Babylon and Jerusalem, his vision of a dual-centered Hebrew nation. The pace of his scholarly output slowed in the Brandeis years, as he devoted himself with new vigor to his ideological labors. The key factor in this reorientation was the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Rawidowicz did not share in the euphoria of so many of his fellow Jews that, after millennia of wandering, the Jewish people had regained political sovereignty. He possessed a far more complex view of the situation. On one hand, he wholeheartedly supported the creation of the state and recognized that it could serve both as a safe haven and cultural center for Jews. On the other hand, he feared that the hegemonic and Palestinocentric impulses of Zionism vis-à-vis the Diaspora would be fortified. The new state, he predicted, would arrogate to itself exclusive control over the Jewish world, reducing the Diaspora – where more than 90 percent of the Jewish population lived in 1948 – to second-class status. Rawidowicz found compelling symbolic evidence for this claim in the name chosen for the new polity: Israel. That

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54 Simon Rawidowicz, Only from Zion. A Chapter in the Prehistory of Brandeis University, in: idem, State of Israel, 240–247, here 241. For the original article see Ish Boded (i. e., Simon Rawidowicz), Shivrei devarim, 21–40 [Fragments, 21–40], *Mezudah* 5–6 (1948), 524–567, here 558–563.

name, he believed, belonged to the entire Jewish people, not exclusively to one segment of it. Rawidowicz expressed his displeasure with this usage in an article in *Mezudah* in 1954 and sent an offprint to David Ben-Gurion, that led to a lengthy exchange in that same year (and in 1955), during the latter's brief retirement from government service.<sup>55</sup>

### Bavel vi-Yerushalayim

Throughout the 1950s, Rawidowicz devoted much of his time to a major summation of his ideological vision. He finally completed *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* which had grown to 909 pages and by early summer 1957, had only to undertake a reading of the final set of proofs and the compilation of an index. Because of the length of the book, he divided it into two volumes. The first volume commenced with a fifty-page introduction that has been almost completely neglected yet contains valuable insights into Rawidowicz's over-all approach as he demonstrated the link between the past and the present and the need for scholarship to consider both in an integrated manner. The first part of the book laid out a sweeping vision of Jewish intellectual and political history. Then came the 14 chapters of the second part under the rubric "The Year 1948 and the Question of Israel;" the number of chapters was an unmistakable evocation of Maimonides, whose major legal code, the *Mishneh Torah*, was divided into 14 books. The second volume contained the third part, a more random assembly of related and elaborating material, also comprised of 14 chapters that he referred to as *nispahim* (appendices).

It was in the first volume of *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* that Rawidowicz made his most systematic contribution. The title of the first part of the book, "Al parashat batim," (At the Crossroad of the Houses) consciously echoed Achad Ha-Am's collected writings from 1913, *Al parashat der-akhim*, (At the Crossroads) but the content bore Rawidowicz's unique stamp. The *batim* (lit. houses) to which he alluded were not, as conventionally understood in Hebrew, the First and Second Temple in Jerusalem,

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55 See the exchange in Simon Rawidowicz, *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* [Babylon and Jerusalem], vol. 2, Waltham, Mass., 1957, 872–909. For the original Hebrew article see idem, Yisra'el [Israel], in: *Mezudah* 7 (1954), 11–61. For an abridged English version of this article and a portion of the correspondence see idem, *Israel. The People, the State*, in: idem, *State of Israel*, 182–193; idem/Ben-Gurion, *Excerpts from a Correspondence*.

but rather two distinct mentalities and hermeneutical systems employed by and constitutive of Jews.<sup>56</sup> The first *bayit* was a rather simple mode of interpretation, borne of the ancient Hebrews’ interaction with the surrounding world of the Ancient Near East that manifested itself in the canonical, fixed Written Law. By contrast, the second *bayit* entailed a far more dynamic and sophisticated mode of interpretation that he associated with the Oral Law, especially as it developed after the year 70 CE.<sup>57</sup> In a rather striking move, Rawidowicz turned the term second *bayit* on its head. It represented not the last incarnation of Jewish political sovereignty in ancient Judea in the form of the Second Temple, but rather a distinctive Jewish culture that took rise in the first major period of rabbinic creativity during the last decades of the Second Temple and then, especially after its destruction, also in the Diaspora. Furthermore, Rawidowicz proceeded to analyze the emergence of modernity and its major movements in light of the conflict between the first and second *bayit*. Toward the end of the first part of *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim*, he resorted to a more conventional – and physical-spatial – understanding of the term, as he discussed the rise of a third *bayit*, referring to the newly created State of Israel.

The remaining and longest section of the first volume of *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* contained the second part of his book, chapter-length elaborations of the themes of relationship, partnership, and mutual dependence between the two centers, interspersed with critiques of Israeli and American Jewish leaders. He was particularly concerned that the events of 1948 had induced fierce ideological secularists like David Ben-Gurion to embrace a sense of messianic possibility.<sup>58</sup> Rawidowicz’s own attitude vis-à-vis the new State was far more sober. He remained committed both to a major Jewish cultural center in Erez Yisra’el and to the state that arose in 1948. But he feared that the creation of the state was a tipping point in

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56 The term *bayit* is the unconstructed first word of the compound noun *bet ha-mikdash* (Holy Temple). The Hebrew language abounds with references to the *bayit rishon* (First Temple) and *bayit sheni* (Second Temple).

57 See David N. Myers, A Third Guide for the Perplexed? Simon Rawidowicz “On Interpretation,” in: William Cutter/David C. Jacobson (eds.), *History and Literature. New Readings of Jewish Texts in Honor of Arnold J. Band*, Providence, RI, 2002, 75–87.

58 The first chapter of the second section of *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* was entitled “Without Messiah?” The title gave a clear sense of Rawidowicz’s own preference for a Jewish nationalism shorn of messianic intimations, though the question mark also indicates his uncertainty that his sobriety would carry the day.

the balance of power between Babylon and Jerusalem. He believed that Zionists, newly emboldened by the weight of sovereignty, would decisively alter the nature of the relationship with the Diaspora, setting in place a center-periphery framework – until the periphery disappeared. For his own part, Rawidowicz dreamt of a formal constitutional relationship between the two centers of Jewish life that cemented a true partnership (*shutafut*) of equals.<sup>59</sup>

However, he did not live to see the realization of this vision nor the publication of his magnum opus. He died on 20 July 1957, without the opportunity to pass over the very last set of page proofs. The two-volume *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim* bore the date 1957, but actually appeared the following year. Without its author to promote and expound it, the book entered the world as an unclaimed orphan.

Rawidowicz was a popular teacher and esteemed by his colleagues and students in the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department, but he remained a “solitary man.” He had no real followers of his life’s mission, the Babylon–Jerusalem concept, and few intellectual partners with whom to share his work in progress. He was one of the last living links to the golden age of Jewish nationalism that generated so much creative friction in the early twentieth century. Accordingly, the arrival of *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim*, the product of over 25 years of dedicated labor, did not occasion a major reception or retrospective on Rawidowicz’s work. The hulking volume remained linguistically inaccessible to most potential readers in the Diaspora and ideologically remote from most potential readers in the State of Israel. Over the years, it has attracted a small coterie of admiring cognoscenti, especially among Jewish studies scholars in the Diaspora. Today, the book stands as testament to a relatively forgotten world of ideas in which the premise of a cultural nation whose *raison d’être* did not hinge on political sovereignty was once passionately debated.

### **Between Jew and Arab**

It is important to mention a final text by Rawidowicz that saw the light of day only in the penultimate decade.<sup>60</sup> It was an essay that he worked on in the last years of his life that was intended as one of the appendices to

59 Simon Rawidowicz, *Two That Are One*, 153 f.

60 It took more than fifty years for the chapter to appear, in an English translation with an introduction and extensive annotation. See Simon Rawidowicz, *Between*

*Bavel vi-Yerushalayim*. It seems as if Rawidowicz decided not to include it in the book because of its controversial content; it dealt with the status of Palestinian Arabs in the new State of Israel and those who had become refugees during the 1948 War. His general policy was not to discuss matters dealing with foreign affairs, preferring to focus on the global Jewish cultural nation and its members. However, the relationship between Jews and Arabs – or “Bein ever le-arav,” as the final text was called – had become an urgent Jewish matter.

The main point of Rawidowicz’s 33-page text emphasized the importance to Jews of recalling their own experiences as an oppressed national minority in order to develop the requisite sensitivity toward the Arab population of historic Palestine. He was fearful that the assumption of political power by Jews in 1948, after a half-century of protracted and bitter battle, would have the opposite effect, deadening their deeply ingrained moral sense. The Jews would then become, he noted in a powerful biblical image, “like the servant who now comes to reign.”<sup>61</sup> Such a development would not only pose new moral challenges for Jews in the State of Israel; it might set a precedent for the mistreatment of Jews in other countries.

Not content with this admonition, Rawidowicz took an even bolder step in the latter half of his essay. There he called for the repatriation of those Arabs who fled or were expelled from Palestine in the midst of the armed hostilities of 1948 and were prepared to return in peace. He appealed directly to his fellow Jews: “There should not be a single refugee from the State of Israel in the world. The Arab refugees should return to their homes, and your state should be pure, O Israel.”<sup>62</sup>

Rawidowicz belonged to a very small subset of Jews who advanced such an idea; to most other Jews, it seemed a recipe for suicide. And yet, he advocated the idea of repatriation for two reasons. First, it was politically advisable in order to minimize the level of enmity that the State of Israel, and, for that matter, Diaspora Jewry, would face in the world for refusing to return the refugees. Second, it was a matter of preserving the ethical integrity of “Israel” (that is, the Jewish people at large), lest it descend from the moral universe of the biblical Jacob (later known as Israel) into

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Jew and Arab, in: Myers, *Between Jew and Arab*, 135–180. For the Hebrew original see this volume, VI.2. *Bein ever le-arav* [Between Jew and Arab].

61 Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*, in: David N. Myers, *Between Jew and Arab. The Lost Voice of Simon Rawidowicz*, Hanover, NH, 2008, 135–180, here 137. The biblical reference is from Proverbs 30:22.

62 *Ibid.*, 178.



the moral universe of Esau.<sup>63</sup> The frequent recourse to biblical and also rabbinic images here, as elsewhere, demonstrates Rawidowicz's strong grounding in classical Jewish sources.

The mixture of political and moral considerations in this essay hints at the recurrent tension between two facets of Rawidowicz's personality: an intuitive and realistic side that yielded sharp insights into contemporary affairs, and a naïve and utopian side that fueled his sense of isolation. These two facets are amply present in his essay on the Arab question, as well as in his larger vision of Babylon and Jerusalem. In both cases, he apprehended predicaments that most others did not see and proposed dramatic solutions but was largely ignored. In the case of "Between Jew and Arab," he decided to withhold publication of the essay out of the consideration that it would divert attention from the main theme of the book, the Babylon and Jerusalem concept that he had been advocating for over 25 years. Paradoxically, far more attention might have come to Rawidowicz had he not withdrawn this provocative essay on the refugee question. Regardless, it is a good time now to re-encounter Simon Rawidowicz, to study his ideas, and to determine if and how his diverse body of writings is still relevant.

### **A Coda: On the "Ever-Dying People"**

Rawidowicz is often remembered for one phrase, originally published in an essay in *Mezudah* in 1948.<sup>64</sup> In this brief historical-psychological analysis, he claimed that

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63 Jacob and Esau were the younger and older sons of Isaac and Rebecca, who became hated rivals when Jacob deceived his father, with his mother's help, to win the family birthright. Nevertheless, Jacob came to be regarded in classical Jewish tradition as refined and gentle, whereas Esau was deemed coarse and rough. The rivalry between the two Biblical characters was extended metaphorically to the later relationship between Jews and Gentiles, and especially Christians. For a recent exploration of the modern traces of these prototypes, see Malachi M. Hacoen, *Jacob and Esau. Jewish European History Between Nation and Empire*, Cambridge/New York 2019.

64 Simon Rawidowicz, *Yisra'el. Am ha-holekh va-met [Israel. The Ever-Dying People]*, in: *Mezudah* 5–6 (1948), 134–148; reprinted in: Rawidowicz, *Iyyunim be-maḥashevet Yisra'el*, vol. 1, 139–154.

“Jewry has indulged so much in the fear of its end that its constant vision of the end helped it to overcome every crisis, to emerge from every threatening end as a living unit, though much wounded and reduced. In anticipating the end, it became its master. Thus, no catastrophe could ever take this end-fearing people by surprise, so as to put it off its balance, still less to obliterate it – as if its incessant preparation for the end made this very end absolutely impossible.”<sup>65</sup>

Rawidowicz prepared an English version for delivery as a lecture, and its typescript was published posthumously in 1967 and again in 1974.<sup>66</sup> The phrase was then adopted for the title of the hard-cover edition of the volume of his ideological essays, *Israel. The Ever-Dying People*, but the paperback edition used the more descriptive title, *State of Israel, Diaspora, and Jewish Continuity. Essays on the “Ever-Dying People.”* The original phrase became a mantra, and has been invoked frequently in sermons, magazine columns and articles, and academic publications.<sup>67</sup> As an unusual testimony to its wide appeal, it even appeared in a volume of the spy novelist Daniel Silva’s best-selling books: “A man much wiser than Shamron had called the Jews the ever-dying people, a people forever on the verge of ceasing to be.”<sup>68</sup>

### 3. On the Texts in this Edition

The central aim of the volume is to provide scholars and interested readers with both an introduction and an overview of Simon Rawidowicz’s thinking. To this end, the book offers a selection of texts covering a broad spectrum of topics that have not received attention in previous collections of texts. In addition, two documents from Rawidowicz’s Nachlass will be printed here for the first time.

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65 Idem, *Israel. The Ever-Dying People*, in: idem, *State of Israel*, 53–63, here 61.

66 Idem, *Israel. The Ever-Dying People*, in: *Judaism* 16 (1967), 423–433; reprinted in: Rawidowicz, *Studies in Jewish Thought*, 210–224; idem, *State of Israel*, 53–63.

67 For example, see Marshall Sklare, *American Jewry. The Ever-Dying People*, in: *Midstream* 22 (1976), no. 6, 17–27; reprinted in: Jonathan D. Sarna (ed.), *Observing America’s Jews*, Hanover, NH, 2003, 262–274.

68 Daniel Silva, *The Confessor*, New York 2003, 226.

The volume contains thirty texts arranged into six chapters. Each chapter opens with an introduction that seeks to explain the context of Rawidowicz's writings. Bibliographical details, information on publication, republication, and translations, if relevant, can be found on the first page of each text. Twenty texts of the volume were written in English by Rawidowicz. One article originally composed in Hebrew is reproduced here only in English translation. Another eight texts are presented here in English translation, accompanied by the Hebrew original. One text in Hebrew is reproduced for the first time.<sup>69</sup> The English translation has been omitted due to its publication in an annotated form in 2008.<sup>70</sup>

This edition aims to meet the goals of both authentic text transmission and reader friendliness. For the entire series *Library of Jewish History and Culture*, in which this volume appears, a high degree of fidelity to the original was applied for the reproduction of source texts.

In general, the transcriptions retain the original orthography. The texts are offered exactly as they were written, specific characteristics as well as interventions of the editors are highlighted. For the documents from the Rawidowicz Nachlass, this also applies to deletions, subsequent additions and corrections. Conventions governing the presentation of this information in the transcriptions are indicated in the Transcription Conventions preceding Rawidowicz' texts.

Typographical and grammatical errors have not been corrected but marked with "[sic]" in English and "[!]" in Hebrew texts. In instances where readers might have encountered difficulties comprehending the text when the error is left uncorrected, a correction has been suggested in square brackets. Only obvious spelling and typing errors, inconsistencies in upper- and lower-case spelling, and punctuation were corrected. However, Rawidowicz's sometimes idiosyncratic capitalization in English texts was left as in the original; the same applies to transliterations of Hebrew names and terms as well as for emphasis Rawidowicz made in quotations of other authors. Editorial footnotes are marked with an asterisk "\*."

In the translations and introductions, the transliteration of Yiddish words follows the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research standard version. For Hebrew the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* transliteration rules apply. Furthermore, letter-spacing in Hebrew texts is printed in italics in the translation for better readability.

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69 See VI.2. Bein ever le-arav [Between Jew and Arab].

70 See Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*.

The appendix offers a list of quotations from the Bible, Talmud and rabbinical sources. The index contains persons, places, and subjects mentioned by name with the respective page references.

## 4. Acknowledgments

This book has taken many turns in the road over more than a decade. It has been deeply enriched by the input and effort of Talia Graff, Lindsay King, Jason Lustig, Nadav Molchadsky, and Eugene Sheppard. We also thank Orr Scharf and Jonathan Chipman for their translations of a number of challenging Rawidowicz texts from the Hebrew; Yehudit Yadlin provided excellent editing of those Hebrew sources.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the project “European Traditions – Encyclopedia of Jewish Cultures” at the Saxonian Academy of Sciences and Humanities at Leipzig for initiating this project, particularly to its head, the distinguished historian Professor Dan Diner, who has patiently awaited the outcome of his kind invitation to produce a volume of Rawidowicz’s writings.

Throughout the project, we were aided by the excellent staff of the Academy project including Stefan Hofmann, Markus Kirchoff and Frauke von Rohden, and more recently by the keen editorial eye of Marcel Müller and Momme Schwarz. We would also like to thank the other members of the Academy project: Franziska Jockenhöfer, Ulrike Kramme, Cyra Sommer, and Georg Wehse.

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## Figures



*Fig. 1: Simon Rawidowicz (Berlin, c. 1920)*



Fig. 2: The delegate pass of Simon Rawidowicz to the 1920 Prague conference of Ha-Po'el ha-Za'ir (The Young Worker) and Z'eirei Zion (Youth of Zion) which shortly afterwards merged into the Socialist-Zionist party Hitahadut.



Fig. 3: Hebrew students' reception for Chaim Nahman Bialik (1873–1934) in Berlin, 1924. The poet left Berlin that year for Mandatory Palestine. Bialik is seated in the middle at the table in the back, while Rawidowicz, who is chairing the event, is seated to his right.



Fig. 4: In April 1930 Rawidowicz and his wife Esther Eugenie (née Klee, 1900–1980) acquired German citizenship. In a letter to his brother Avraham from 2 May 1930, Rawidowicz wrote: “Yesterday I received my citizenship certificate. I am a Prussian! As a newborn child.”



Ch.

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Dr. S. Rawidowitsch (hebräisch)  
Dr. Oskar Wolfsberg (deutsch)

Bialik: Das letzte Wort

1. Zeitlin: Eil Zion
2. Achron: Hebräische Melodie
3. Achron: Scher (Ein Tanz)
4. Stutschewsky: Dwejkuth
5. Stutschewsky: M'chol kedem

Stutschewsky: Rikkud  
Ch. N. Bialik, Gedichte

1. S. Almann: Ajech
2. J. Engel: Minhag Chadasch
3. Darius Milhaud: Zionshymne

Bialik: „Techesaknah“

**Hebräischer Chor des Brith Manoar**  
**Alexander Granach rezitiert jiddisch**

**Prof. Joachim Stutschewsky, Wien: Cello**  
**Am Flügel: Michael Taube**

**Professor Bruno Eisner (Klavier)**  
**Meinhart Maur rezitiert deutsch u. hebräisch**

**Hede Türk singt Lieder von Ch. N. Bialik**  
**Am Flügel: Mathilde Torczyner**  
**Violine: Charlotte Rosen**

**Hebräischer Chor des Brith Manoar**

**Karten zu 3,—, 2,—, 1,— Mark. 30 Pfennig für Jugendliche**  
**im Büro der Berliner Zionistischen Vereinigung, Meinekestraße 10.**

**BERLINER ZIONISTISCHE VEREINIGUNG**

BRITH 'IVRIT-OLAMIT  
BETH AM IVRI, BERLIN

Fig. 5: When planning this concert in honor of the 60th birthday of Chaim Nahman Bialik, it was impossible to foresee that the date, 30 January 1930, would mark a historical turning point for Jewish life in Europe – the day on which Adolf Hitler assumed the position of Chancellor of Germany.

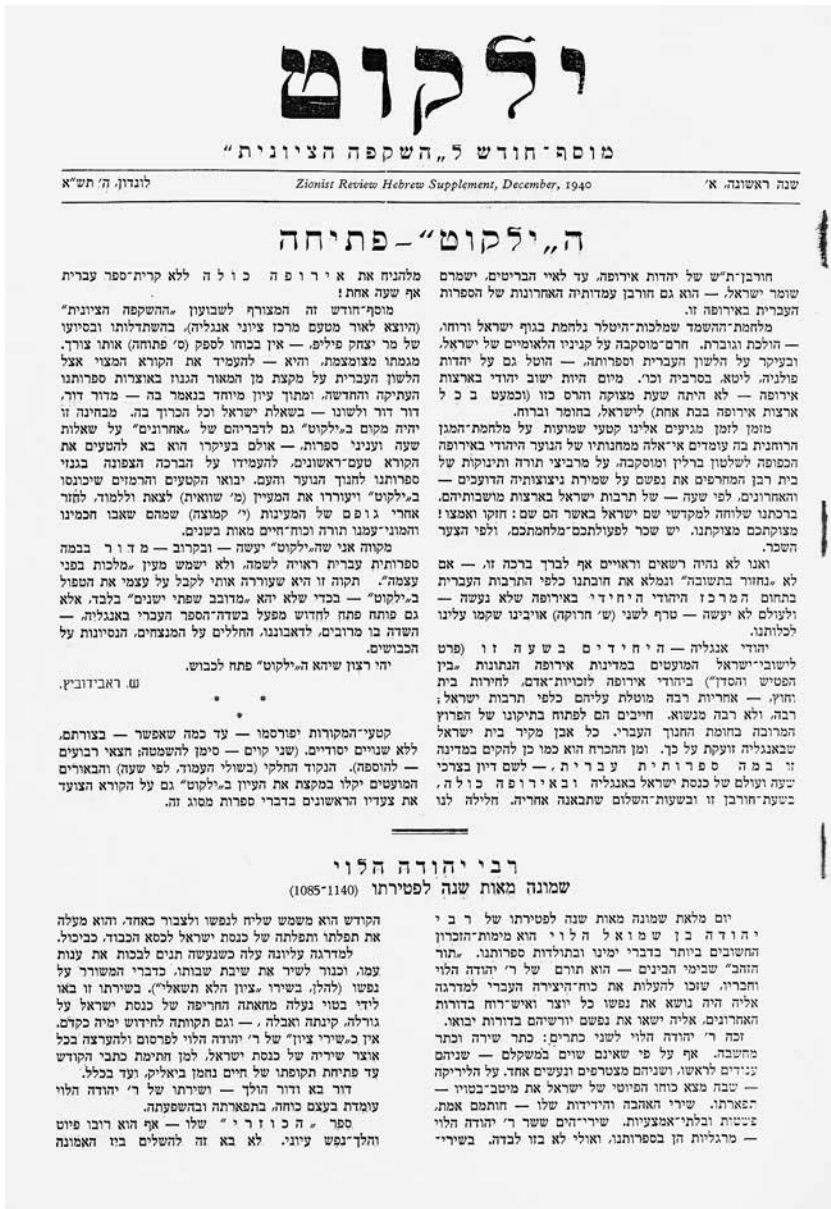


Fig. 6: One year after Nazi Germany invaded Poland, Rawidowicz, who had lived in London since 1933, founded the journal *Yalkut* (Anthology), a supplement to *The Zionist Review*. The project was intended to counteract the “destruction of the last vestiges of Hebrew literature on the continent.” *Yalkut* was short-lived, but soon thereafter Rawidowicz started a new Hebrew journal, *Mezudah* (Fortress), in 1938.

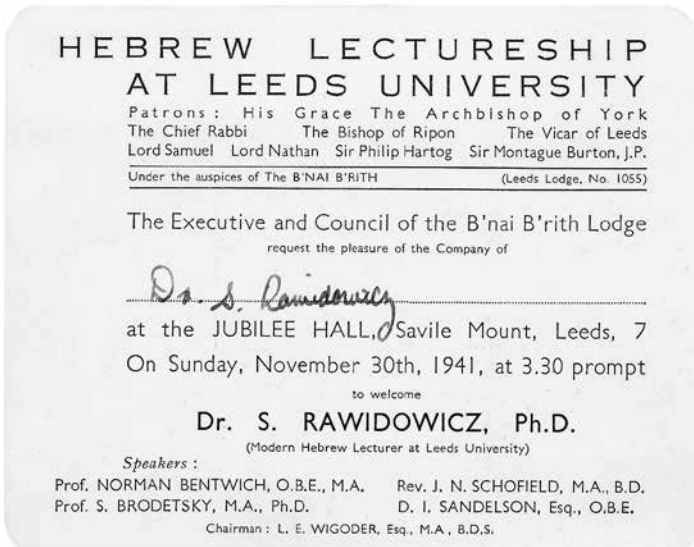


Fig. 7: Announcement of Rawidowicz's Hebrew Lectureship position at Leeds University, 30 November 1941. After years of professional insecurity in London, the appointment to Leeds University offered financial stability to Rawidowicz. The opening ceremony was sponsored by a distinguished array of religious and public figures.



Fig. 8: Reception of the Ararat Publishing Society in London (1944). Rawidowicz founded the publishing houses Ayanot (Wellsprings) in 1922 and Ararat in 1942. He also served on the Editorial Board of the Stybel publishing house (founded in 1902) during its Berlin period. From left to right: Benzion Margulies, Cecil Roth, Simon Rawidowicz, Alexander Margulies, Chief Rabbi Joseph Herman Hertz, Oscar Philipp.

6, Stainburn Mount ,  
Leeds , 7.  
22nd May 1944

Dear Mr. Davies ,

When we met last in the Anglo-Palestine Club and you were so kind to listen patiently to my Hebrew address , I told you how great was the interest the Hebraists who are struggling very hard in many countries to revive the language of the Prophets are taking in the efforts of the Welsh nation to preserve their own tongue . It is out of this interest that I approach you now , asking you to recommend to me a Welsh scholar or author who would be prepared to write for the Hebrew Magazine " Metsudah " , edited by me in London ( issued by the Ararat Publishing Society Ltd. of 51, Hatton Garden , London , E.C.1. ) an article on the present position of the movement for the preservation of the Welsh language and the aspirations and ideas , which inspire this movement . A short introductory note about the Welsh people in general would of course be welcome .

I shall be much obliged to you , if you could kindly consider this matter and make appropriate suggestions which will be very much appreciated .

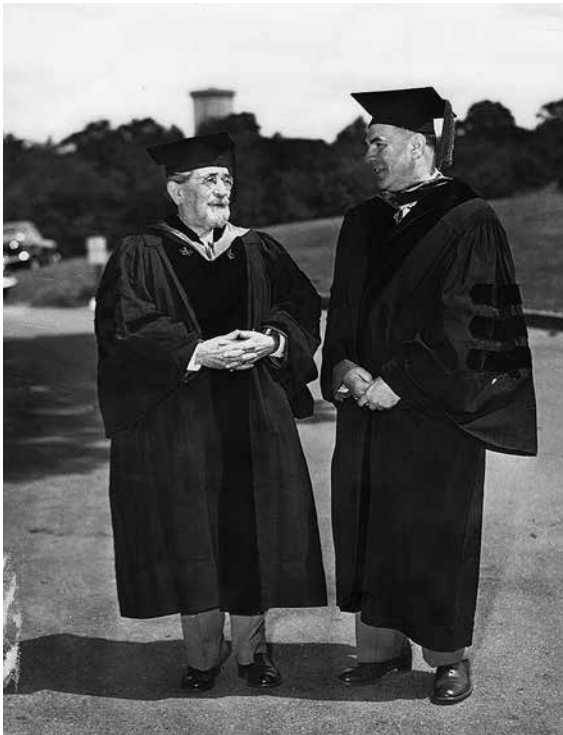
I hope to meet you again one day at the house of our mutual friend Dr. Sokolow.

With kind regards ,  
Yours sincerely ,

Fig. 9: Letter from Rawidowicz to Rhys J. Davies (Leeds, 22 May 1944). During his time in Great Britain (1933–1948) Rawidowicz developed an interest in the Welsh language. He saw Welsh as a model for advocates of Hebrew to emulate members of a small nation held on to their native culture while also absorbing the language of the surrounding environment, English. In seeking a possible expert to write on the efforts of the Welsh to preserve their language, he turned to the Welsh trade unionist and Labour politician Rhys John Davies (1877–1954). The correspondence did not result in an article for *Mezudah* as Rawidowicz had hoped.



*Fig. 10: Simon Rawidowicz (Leeds, 1947).*



*Fig. 11: Rawidowicz with Louis Ginzberg at Brandeis University (1953). Louis Ginzberg (1873–1953) was an eminent scholar of rabbinics and a leading figure of the Conservative movement in the United States. From 1902 until his death he was professor of Talmud at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.*



*Fig. 12:* In 1956, Eliyahu Elat (1903–1990), then Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom, visited Brandeis. After working for the Jewish Agency from 1934 to 1945, Elat served as Israel's first ambassador to the United States from 1948 to 1950. From left to right: Esther Rawidowicz, Eliyahu Elat, Simon Rawidowicz, Zehava Elat (née Zalel), Thelma Sachar (1906–1997, née Horowitz; wife of the historian and Brandeis founding president Abram Leon Sachar), Jacob M. Landau (b. 1924, professor emeritus of Political Science and then lecturer in Middle East history at Brandeis), Shlomo Marinoff (professor at Brandeis), his wife Martha Marinoff, their daughter Arnona Marinoff, unknown.

ARARAT PUBLISHING SOCIETY

*A Memorial Meeting*

*for the late*

*Prof. Dr. Simon Rawidowicz ז"ל*

*will take place on*

*Monday, 19th August, 1957, at 5.30 p.m.*

*at the School of Oriental and African Studies*

*University of London, Malet Street, W. C. 1.*

*The Very Rev. the Chief Rabbi and H. E. the Israeli Ambassador*  
*have kindly consented to participate.*

*The Rev G. Boyars will officiate.*

*Chairman: Alexander Margulies.*

51 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.1.

Fig. 13: Announcement of a memorial ceremony for Rawidowicz organized by the Ararat publishing house, which he had founded in 1942 (London, 1957). Simon Rawidowicz died on 20 July 1957.

*Credits: Images 11 and 12 appear courtesy of Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. Photographs taken by Ralph Norman, University Photographer. All other images appear courtesy of the Simon and Esther Rawidowicz Archive of Professor Benjamin Ravid in Newton, Massachusetts.*

## **Selected Writings**



# Transcription Conventions

#	Single illegible letter
###	Illegible word
ⓧ	Doubtful reading
< >	Rendition of square brackets in the original document
◇◇◇	Decorative element
x	Page break with page number appearing in original document
<del>Erasure</del>	Handwritten strikethrough
{Insertion}	Text inserted by hand
[Insertion]	Insertion of the editors

# I. Studies in Jewish Philosophy

## 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to one of the most important facets of Simon Rawidowicz's intellectual personality, his status as a wide-ranging scholar of Jewish thought. Already as a twenty-five-year-old, Rawidowicz burst onto the scene of Jewish studies with a series of scholarly contributions to the work of two giants of Jewish thought and guides for the perplexed of their time, Maimonides (1135–1204) and Nachman Krochmal (1785–1840). Rawidowicz did so in Hebrew, not his native language, and in Berlin, not his hometown, which makes his entrée all the more impressive. As one of thousands of Eastern European Jews who moved westward after the First World War, often in search of higher education, Rawidowicz found Germany a uniquely suitable place to pursue his intellectual interests – not only through a doctorate in German philosophy at the University of Berlin, but in the intersecting realms of Jewish thought and Hebrew literature.

This pairing accompanied Rawidowicz over the course of his life. In London, Leeds, Chicago, and Waltham, he taught and wrote on medieval and modern Jewish philosophy. And as both a scholar and an activist, he remained deeply interested in the past, present, and future of Hebrew. This entwined set of interests invariably brought Rawidowicz to Yehuda Halevi (c. 1075–c. 1141), the great medieval Hebrew poet and thinker.<sup>1</sup> Although he did not devote any major scholarly articles to Halevi, Rawidowicz did deal with Halevi's thought in his teaching. And he dedicated two brief essays to him in the English-language journal of the World Zionist Organization, *The New Judea*, that began to appear in London in 1924.

In the two pieces, Rawidowicz evinced a clear affinity for Halevi whose national pathos – as reflected both in his poetry and in his philosophical skepticism – touched him. Rawidowicz appreciated Halevi's command of the regnant philosophical idiom of his Spanish milieu, but also his

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1 For a pair of introductions to the life, poetry, and thought of Halevi, see Joseph Yahalom, *Yehuda Halevi. Poetry and Pilgrimage*, Jerusalem 2009; Hillel Halkin, *Yehuda Halevi*, New York 2010.

resistance to being wholly seduced into the palace of Greek wisdom.<sup>2</sup> He deeply connected to a guiding image in Halevi's writing: the heart. In the first essay included here, *Yehudah Halevi (On the Eight Hundredth Anniversary of his Death)*, published in 1940 (I.2.), Rawidowicz shows that Halevi likens the heart to the Jewish people. Similar to the Jews' status in the world, the heart was at once the "most sick" and the "most healthy" of the body's organs.<sup>3</sup> For Rawidowicz, who suffered from cardiac trouble over the last fifteen years of his life, Halevi's focus on the heart had a particular resonance.

The primary task of the article was to introduce Halevi to an English-speaking audience. Rawidowicz noted Halevi's excellence as a Hebrew poet who could "provide a lasting expression of that fire that was burning in the soul of the mediæval Jew and of collective Jewry."<sup>4</sup> He also observed that Halevi was deeply knowledgeable about Greek philosophy which allowed him to adopt an informed skeptical stance that sought "to limit the sphere in which pure Logos can be applied."<sup>5</sup> Both as poet and philosophical skeptic, Halevi appeared to Rawidowicz as a Jewish nationalist *avant la lettre* who was passionately devoted to the Jewish people, the Land of Israel, and the Hebrew language well before the advent of modern Zionism. He identified with Halevi and the vigor of his Hebrew creativity in the Diaspora, as well as with his unrealized dream of settling in Erez Yisra'el (where Halevi did arrive but died shortly thereafter).

The second essay, *Yehuda Halevi. His Philosophy of Nation and Land* (I.3.), focuses on the powerful allure of Erez Yisra'el in Halevi's thinking. Rawidowicz saw in his deep attraction to the Land of Israel the meeting of "geography and religious metaphysics."<sup>6</sup> That is, Halevi combined a mundane spatial affinity with the ancient land and a sweeping, mystical view of its perfection. This attraction was also expressed in a revealing encounter that Halevi described in his most famous book, the imagined dialogue of the *Kuzari*.<sup>7</sup> There the Jewish protagonist, the Haver, encounters the King

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2 Yochanan Silman, *Philosopher and Prophet. Judah Halevi, the Kuzari, and the Evolution of His Thought*, Albany, NY, 1995.

3 II.2. *Yehuda Halevi (On the Eight Hundredth Anniversary of his Death)*, 67.

4 *Ibid.*, 64.

5 *Ibid.*, 65.

6 I.3. *Yehuda Halevi. His Philosophy of Nation and Land*, 68.

7 See Adam Shear, Art. "Kuzari," in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 3, 667–673. The standard English edition is *Yehuda Halevi, The Kuzari. An Argument for the Faith of Israel*, introd. by Henry Slonimsky, New York 1964. See

of the Chazars and explains to him the importance and holiness of Erez Yisra'el. The King then excoriates the Haver for failing to make the Land of Israel “thy abode in life and death.”<sup>8</sup> This scene has a poignant relevance for Rawidowicz; he too, a proud Jewish nationalist, placed great value on the Land of Israel but he did not move there. Instead, he developed the distinctive ideology of “Babylon and Jerusalem” that argued for the integrity of Jewish cultural existence in the Diaspora alongside that in the Land of Israel. Rawidowicz concludes the essay by noting that Halevi was a source of intrigue and inspiration for a number of other modern Jewish thinkers and movements, including the nineteenth-century figures Heinrich Heine and ShaDaL (Samuel David Luzzatto), as well as modern Orthodoxy and modern Jewish nationalism itself.<sup>9</sup>

In the pantheon of medieval Jewish giants, Maimonides the rationalist is often cast as the counterpart to Halevi and his romanticism.<sup>10</sup> Rawidowicz was interested in and attentive to both. He was first introduced to the Great Eagle, as Maimonides was known, in Grajewo, when his father taught him chapters from the massive legal code *Mishneh Torah* (Repetition of the Torah). When he arrived in Berlin, he continued to study Maimonides, working on an edition of the first book of the legal code, *Sefer ha-madda* (Book of Knowledge), which was devoted not to practical laws guiding the daily ritual life of Jews, but rather to Maimonides' overarching philosophical and theological principles. In 1922, Rawidowicz published his edition of *Sefer ha-madda* through the new Hebrew-language publishing house, Ayanot, that he established in Berlin. In his introduction (I.4.), Rawidowicz made clear the ongoing relevance of Maimonides' great work:

“And if our approach to some problems is different from that of ‘the Great Eagle,’ and despite the fact more than seven hundred years separate us, nevertheless, let our generation go forth from this eagle’s nest and wonder at the mighty hand of Maimonides. For wonder is the source of enlightenment and occasions learning, and this is our goal.”<sup>11</sup>

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the more recent bilingual edition translated by Daniel Korobkin: Yehuda Halevi, *The Kuzari*. In *Defense of the Despised Faith*, Jerusalem 2009.

- 8 I.3. Yehuda Halevi. *His Philosophy of Nation and Land*, 68.
- 9 On the reception of Halevi and the Kuzari in medieval and modern Jewish thought, see Adam Shear, *The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity, 1167–1900*, Cambridge, Mass., 2008.
- 10 On Maimonides see Howard Kreisel, Art. “Guide for the Perplexed,” in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 3, 84–92.
- 11 I.4. Introduction to Maimonides' *Sefer ha-madda*, 96.

What Rawidowicz found admirable and worthy of emulation in Maimonides was his genius as a systematizer. Maimonides took the large and unruly body of Halakhah (Jewish law) and transformed it into an orderly system of laws and even philosophical principles. He drew upon his training in Greek philosophy, which emboldened him to impose a logical framework on the halakhic corpus. This was one of the daring acts that drew down upon Maimonides, as Rawidowicz notes, harsh criticism from contemporary critics, shocked by his bold arrogation of authority.

At the same time, Maimonides was also deeply rooted in the form and language of the third-century Mishnah. The great challenge – and ultimate achievement – of the Great Eagle was to balance between tradition and innovation, between his commitments to Jewish and Greek learning, in producing his compendium of Jewish law. The importance of this effort, especially given Maimonides' crystalline Hebrew formulations, impelled Rawidowicz to study him throughout his life. He remained particularly interested in *Sefer ha-madda*, and continued to work on an annotated critical edition of it. In fact, before the outbreak of the Second World War, he sent a text of a critical edition to the publishing company of his old friend, Rubin Mass, in Jerusalem. He was unable to complete the accompanying commentary in Leeds because of the absence of a suitable library. But a number of his studies on Maimonides appeared in the collection of his Hebrew writings.<sup>12</sup>

Rawidowicz's interest in Maimonides was not limited to the *Mishneh Torah*, but extended to his major philosophical work, the *Guide for the Perplexed*. Maimonides imagined this work as a manual ordaining a path of study for a small cohort of philosophically sophisticated Jews. Some six hundred and fifty years later, another Jewish thinker, the Galician autodidactic scholar Nachman Krochmal, wrote a new *Guide for the Perplexed of the Time* that remained unpublished in his lifetime. It was left to one of the eminent founding fathers of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, Leopold Zunz, to publish and title Krochmal's not-yet-completed Hebrew text in 1851.<sup>13</sup>

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12 Simon Rawidowicz, RaMBa"m [Maimonides], in: *Iyyunim be-mahashevet Yisra'el*, vol. 1, 237–471.

13 Nachman Krochmal, *Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman* [Guide for the Perplexed of the Time], ed. by Leopold Zunz, Lemberg 1851. On the title of the book, see Zunz's comments in his editor's introduction: Leopold Zunz, *Hakdamat ha-mozil le-or* [Preface by the Publisher], in: Simon Rawidowicz, *Kitvei rabbi Naḥman Krochmal* [The Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], 2nd rev. ed., London/

A bit more than seventy years later, Rawidowicz turned his attention to Krochmal and his *Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman* (Guide for the Perplexed of the Time). Shortly after completing his edition of *Sefer ha-madda*, he published again for Ayanot in Berlin an edition of Krochmal's magnum opus, preceded by a 225-page introduction under the title of *Kitvei RaNa"K* (The Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal). Rawidowicz's introduction to the second edition (I.5.) is presented in this volume for the first time in English translation. Already in the 1924 edition, Rawidowicz privileged internal continuity over external influence. As suggested in the Editors' Introduction, he believed that the main task in Krochmal scholarship was not to determine which school of German philosophical thought influenced Krochmal, but rather to assess his place in Jewish thought and his role in reformulating it.<sup>14</sup> It had been generally assumed that Krochmal had accepted the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, and adapted it to Jewish history. For his part, Rawidowicz asserted that Krochmal, while adopting a cyclical view of history, could not be considered a Hegelian, since he had not accepted the basic premise of the Hegelian dialectic. Actually, he pointed out, Krochmal's cycles did not constitute a dialectical progression but rather an organic evolution, for in what way could the third period of the cycle, that of decline, be considered a synthesizing resolution of growth and maturity?<sup>15</sup> For Rawidowicz, the challenge in studying Krochmal was to ascertain what he had said within the framework of the long tradition of Jewish thought and how he reformulated it and paved the way for others.

Rawidowicz had prepared more material than he could include in his introduction to *Kitvei RaNa"K*, so he wrote on Krochmal in a number of other settings.<sup>16</sup> At one point, he had also intended to write a book on Krochmal in German. Additionally, he signed a contract with Chaim Nahman Bialik and his Dvir (Sanctuary) publishing company to edit the

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Waltham, Mass., 1961, 2.1–2.3 (Hebrew pagination), here 2.3. On Krochmal, see Lawrence Kaplan, Art. "Guide for the Perplexed of Our Time," in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 3, 92–97.

14 See Editors' Introduction, 21.

15 *Ibid.*

16 In addition to I.6. 100th Anniversary of Nachman Krochmal, see also Simon Rawidowicz, *Was Nachman Krochmal Hegelianer?*, in: *Hebrew Union College Annual* 5 (1928), 535–582; *idem*, *Nachman Krochmal als Historiker*, in: *Ismar Elbogen/Josef Meisl/Mark Wischnitzer (eds.), Festschrift zu Simon Dubnows siebenzigstem Geburtstag*, Berlin, 1930, 57–75.

writings of Abraham Krochmal, the son of Nachman Krochmal, but that plan never materialized.

Shortly before his death, Rawidowicz prepared to publish a second edition of *Kitvei RaNa"K*, to which he intended to add Leopold Zunz's introduction to the first edition of *Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman*, as well as extensive indices to be arranged by his advanced graduate student at Brandeis, Alfred Greenbaum. Eventually, a second edition, based on an outline found in the Nachlass of Rawidowicz, appeared in 1961.<sup>17</sup>

In the meanwhile, Rawidowicz penned a brief tribute, *100th Anniversary of Nachman Krochmal*, in English in *The New Judea* in 1940 (I.6.). Writing against the backdrop of the Nazi assault on Europe, Rawidowicz recognized that the Galician world out of which Krochmal emerged had reached the end of its cycle of growth and was now undergoing a "terrifying ordeal both physically and spiritually."<sup>18</sup> He expressed the hope that a new Krochmalian cycle of rise would quickly follow the dark decline of the present. Krochmal, for him, was indeed a guide who could inspire other guides. Rawidowicz especially appreciated, as he had with Maimonides, Krochmal's efforts to systematize Jewish thought and shape it into what Rawidowicz had long aspired to create himself, a viable philosophy of Jewish history. While Krochmal couldn't fully realize this ambition, Rawidowicz believed that he was able to peer into the soul of his people. In particular, Krochmal grasped that the Jewish people, like other nations, had its own distinctive *Volksgeist* – or "ruah ha-umah"<sup>19</sup> – that impelled it forward. It was this guiding spirit that allowed it to survive in periods of decline, as well as to flourish in periods of growth. For Rawidowicz, this inextinguishable spirit was the fuel driving forward a global Hebrew cultural nation. As a scholar, Krochmal represented for him an ideal opportunity to exercise his shared interests in the intersecting arc of Jewish thought and Hebrew literature.

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17 Rawidowicz, *Kitvei rabbi Naḥman Krokhmal*. A more recent edition has been produced by Yehoyada Amir: *Nachman Krochmal, Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman [Guide for the Perplexed of the Time]*, Jerusalem 2010.

18 I.6. 100th Anniversary of Nachman Krochmal, 132.

19 *Ibid.*, 131.

## 2. Yehuda Halevi (On the Eight Hundredth Anniversary of his Death)

*The text reproduced here first appeared under the name S. Rawidowicz in: The New Judea 17 (1940), no. 3, 35–36.*

THE climax of the medieval “Golden Age” of Hebrew literature and poetry is inseparably connected, and to a great extent even synonymous, with Yehuda ben Samuel Halevi. Though preceded by a number of outstanding literary geniuses, it is Yehuda ben Samuel Halevi of whom one generally thinks first when recalling that glorious age of Hebrew literary achievements [sic]. He represents a unique combination of an original poet and a philosopher – a very rare combination, not only in Hebrew but in world literature. Besides his predecessor, Solomon ibn Gabirol, who, although partly overshadowed by Yehuda Halevi, surpasses him in some respects both in poetic power and in the realm of the speculative, he was the first poet and the only one in Hebrew literature to have distinguished himself in poetry and philosophy. Though his service to the first is regarded as the more lasting, the latter will, nevertheless, always shine among the classical efforts of Jewish thought.

Born in Toledo in 1085, brought up in an atmosphere combined of Jewish traditional and Talmudic culture with the then flourishing Arabic literature and science, Yehuda Halevi was destined soon to become one of the greatest representatives of the spiritual and literary mediæval *Jewish-Arabic synthesis sui generis* – as unique a phenomenon in the history of culture and spiritual life as in that of international relations. When Yehuda Halevi – physician by profession, as was usual among the members of Jewish mediæval *intelligentsia*, especially in the countries under Muslim influence – began to enrich Hebrew literature with his great poetical genius, though partly under the influence of the classical Arabic literature of his age, he was never an imitator nor a servile follower of the dominant literature in his “fatherland,” Spain. He had before him rich and classical Hebrew poetry, of which he was not the pioneer. And, treading a well-paved road, he fortified and enlarged it. With outstanding literary skill, he connected it with heights hardly surpassed at a later period. His great poetical imagination, richness of language, strength of expression, variety of color, depth of pathos, sincerity of feeling, helped him to become *the Jewish lyric [sic] par excellence*, the greatest in this field which has always been so typical of the Hebrew poetry, old and modern. He came



after poets such as Samuel Hanagid, Solomon ibn Gabirol and Moses ibn Ezra, and he completed this extraordinary accumulation of literary spirit and achievement elevating it to a new peak, from which not only he, but also his masters before him, began to radiate a new light which subsequent centuries were unable to obscure.

As a writer of lyrics, he was at his best in his individualistic secular poems, though he was great also in religious poetry. His love songs are vivid, full of natural expression and immediacy, though here and there one cannot help feeling the influence of the age. His "*Shirei Yam*," "Sea Poems," belong to the masterpieces of Hebrew literature. They have their literary claim to-day, as they had on his contemporaries. Yet, great as he was in all these spheres, he almost surpassed himself when he began to sing about the things most holy to him: Israel and Zion.

Though I do not accept the usual distinction, entirely unjustified, in my opinion, between "national" and non-national Hebrew poets, I admit it will hardly be possible to rid Yehuda Halevi of the "label" of "national poet." Indeed, in the most elementary meaning of the poem, the label may be justified. National, his own nation became to him a – or the – guiding idea. He was not the first either to lament on Jewish sufferings or to rejoice over Jewish hopes of resurrection. But none of them was or ever will be so entitled to describe himself as the jackal to weep over Israel's toil and at the same time as the harp to play its song of Redemption.

It was given to Yehuda Halevi to provide a lasting expression of that fire that was burning in the soul of the mediæval Jew and of collective Jewry. That is why he and his message are so "modern," and has as intimate an appeal to the individual Jew as to collective Jewry. There is hardly an occasion, whether in hours of national crisis and disaster or in days of hope, that which Halevi's verses should fail to move; it seems almost as if they were coined for us moderns! Who can forget the mediæval poet's expressions of despair and horror when, looking around, he asks: "Is there any spot on earth, in East or West, where we can feel safe?" Or his deep disgust at eating, drinking, and all the joys life supplies, when he sees the "dogs eating the young lions of Judæa"? His "Zion Poems," which form the strongest and most expressive part of our *Tisha b'av* (9th of Ab) liturgy, echo the centuries-old cry of protest of the Jewish soul against persecution; at the same time its hope for redemption; those colorful expressions will never lose their force and sincere ring, and will appeal in centuries to come as they did in generations gone by.

As a philosopher, Yehuda Halevi occupies a peculiar place in the history of Jewish thought. It was not his concern to erect a system of thought, either to introduce philosophical analysis into Judaism or to harmonise Judaism with any particular current of non-Jewish thought, an effort to which many Jewish philosophers before and after him had devoted their lives. On the contrary, he regarded the effort of defending Judaism against rationalistic and scientific philosophy superfluous. Jewish philosophy in his time in the countries under Moslem influence begins to turn away from the two dominant philosophical schools of either the so-called *Mutakallimun* (Arab speculative theologians) or the Neo-Platonism, in order to be stamped more or less radically by the spirit and fundamentals of Aristotle, whom both Arabic and Jewish translators and commentators had discovered for the spiritual benefit of the mediæval world. Yehuda Halevi was fully aware of this process of the new tendency of development of Jewish thought in the direction of a more rationalistic, realistic, and partly naturalistic outlook. It was because he noted the ever-increasing influence of Greek wisdom (which he regarded as possessing “flowers” without bearing “fruit”) on the minds of his Jewish contemporaries that he shaped his concept of Judaism as being above philosophy.

Halevi exhibits not only a very sound knowledge of “Greek wisdom” which he wants to ban from the “tents of Jacob,” [Jeremiah 30:18] but often shows a keen insight into its very essence [sic], its *differentia specifica*, when confronted with a religious and metaphysical concept such as Judaism. He also raises some criticisms against that new philosophy which was later taken up in various forms and deepened by several critics of Aristotle’s system. Yehuda Halevi questions the authority of Reason to decide all the fundamental problems concerning God, the universe and man. Reason should be applied when Reason has the power to discern, investigate, and decide – like a natural science – but not in domains outside of human, direct experience and scientific analysis.

Yehuda Halevi’s philosophical skepticism, his endeavors to limit the sphere in which pure *Logos* can be applied, his questioning of the omnipotence of Reason as taught by the rationalist philosophers, bring him in line with many a philosopher of ancient and modern times. This type of thinker was to be found among a certain school of *Stoics* of the first centuries. It is clear that Halevi owes much to the leading Arabic theologian and thinker Al Ghazal (1059–1111), who tried originally to accept the supremacy of pure *Logos*, but soon became skeptical about its very fundamentals and became one of the leading Moslem mystics. One could not, for instance, identify David Hume’s concept of “belief” replacing the philosophical and

scientific idea of “causality” etc., but [36] a line could nevertheless be drawn from Yehuda Halevi’s anti-rationalism to the skepticisms of the great Scot. In contemplating some of the currents of European *romantic philosophy* in the nineteenth century, one hears an echo of our mediæval thinker.

One of the decisive distinctions between rationalism and anti-rationalism is in their attitude to history. The latter draws more upon history than the former. The rise of interest in the study of history and the flourishing of historical research owes its origin to the philosophy of romanticism. No wonder, therefore, that Yehuda Halevi, after refuting the authority of Reason, of pure speculation, was a pioneer in acknowledging the supreme authority of history. When the history of the struggle of “History *versus* Reason” is presented, due attention will have to be paid to this fact. Here Yehuda Halevi was actuated not only by his anti-rationalism, but also by his religious outlook. In Halevi’s system history becomes tradition. Tradition meaning not only religion, but also “nationality.” The spiritual factors which made for the establishment of the authority of history in modern thought are also responsible for the creation of the modern idea of “Nation” and for that of the philosophy of nationalism in its various aspects. Here again Yehuda Halevi turns out to be one of the forerunners of a philosophy which has won so prominent a position many centuries after his age.

Thus the representative of Judaism, the “*Haver*,” who is invited by the King of the Chazars to expound to him the principles of Judaism (this dialogue between the King of the Chazars and the “*Haver*” is the literary framework of Halevi’s book “*Kuzari*”, in which his philosophy is developed step by step), proclaims the impossibility of founding a religion on purely rationalistic principles. These are open to argument and doubt; there is no universal agreement about them among the philosophers themselves. The Greek philosophers have to reason on the problem concerning God and the creation of the world. The results of their reasoning never supply a sound indisputable, and lasting basis on which an absolute truth can be established. The Jews, however, are treading on much safer and truthfully established ground: Tradition. Divine wisdom was given only to the family of Shem. Instead of subjective speculation, Judaism is built on the only source of truth: History or Tradition. Halevi stresses the fact that the national tradition of Judaism is a *mass* tradition, i. e., based on acts witnessed by *large* masses, a fact which makes misleading and deception impossible. Whilst rational proof may be turned into their opposites and lead to falsehoods of various kinds, a tradition of such a “national” type is of absolute and everlasting validity.

As Yehuda Halevi prefers the belief in a personal living God to the principle of a rationalistic or scientifically established “First Cause” or “Prime Mover,” so he gives preference to the *prophet* over the philosopher. The prophet is not only the bearer and intermediary of “Tradition,” but he is also in immediate contact with God. A philosopher will never be able to reach the high degree of absolute knowledge, of truth, which is given to prophets only. Unlike other medieval Jewish thinkers, Yehuda Halevi is not attempting to “rationalise” or “naturalise” the phenomenon of prophecy. While anxious to preserve the super-naturalism of prophecy, he makes it dependent on two “natural” factors like the People of Israel and the land of Zion, to whom prophecy is confined.

Here is the core of Halevi’s philosophy. He does not exclude other nations – especially their pious and wise men – from sharing the deserved reward in the “world to come,” but he goes very far in his extreme exclusiveness regarding Israel, the land of Israel, and its language. This concept of “Jewish Nation” is partially *naturalistic* and “*biological*” and partly, definitely so, metaphysical and *religious*. The distinction between the Israelite and the non-Israelite is put on the same level as that between a plant and mineral or between man and the other living beings. It is a difference in kind, not in degree. The decisive factor in this “species” called Israel is the “Divine matter” which is inherent in Israel. Israel’s position among the nations, as explained by Halevi’s Rabbi to the King of the Chazars, is like that of the heart in relation to the body. Israel, like the heart among the organs, is at once and the same time the most sick and the most healthy of them. Here Halevi has produced one of the finest “definitions” of the extraordinary and peculiar position the Jews occupy in the world: the “most sick” and the “most healthy”! The heart’s extreme sensibility – explains Halevi – caused by the purity of its blood and its great “intelligence,” causes it to feel the slightest symptom and expels it as long as it is able to do so, unlike the other organs that lack this fine sensibility and can be affected by some strong matter – which produces illness. The philosopher of the twelfth century is aware of the “disease” of assimilation of his age, which he interestingly compares again to the heart being affected by the disease of the other organs; a “disease” penetrating the heart from outside courses resulting in sufferings etc. He accepts these in the traditional way of piety: “Now we are burdened by them, whilst the whole world enjoys rest and prosperity. The trials which meet us are meant to prove our faith, to cleanse us completely and to remove all taint from us.” [Kuzari 2:44]

(A second article will appear next month.)

### 3. Yehuda Halevi. His Philosophy of Nation and Land

*The text reproduced here first appeared under the name S. Rawidowicz in: The New Judea 17 (1941), no. 4, 52–53. It was marked “II.” since it is the continuation mentioned at the end of I.2.*

As Israel among the nations, so is Zion among the lands.

Halevi develops a theory according to which the geographical position and climate of Palestine make it the best of all countries, the fittest one to serve as a domicile for the “Heart of the Nations” as well as for the manifestation of prophecy. For whosoever prophesied did so either in Palestine or concerning it.

Here again the biological and natural similes are apparent. As a certain spot is more suitable than others for planting certain things, so is one land more suitable than others to produce a special kind of man of a national community. The politico-geographical approach of Yehuda Halevi has in various forms played an important role in historical and economic research in general till the present age. Geography and religious metaphysics meet in Halevi’s thought, investing Palestine with a kind of unrivalled superiority and excellency hardly known before. Halevi is conscious even of what moderns call “personal realisation” of Zionism.

The Haver stresses the importance of the Talmudic saying: “All roads lead up to Palestine, but none from it” [Kuzari 2:22]; he acquaints the King of the Chazars with all the laws manifesting its holiness, and how according to Jewish tradition Palestine is irreplaceable. The King is amazed. “If this be so” – he says to the Haver – “thou fallest short of the duty laid down in thy law, by not endeavoring to reach that place, and making it thy abode in life and death, although thou sayest: ‘Have mercy on Zion, for it is the house of our life’ and believest that the Shekhinah [presence (of God)] will return thither.” [Ibid., 2:23] Whereupon the Haver, in deep shame and self-humiliation, admits his unforgivable failure regarding the return to Palestine as not only his personal failure. He utters words applicable not only to Spanish Jewry during the twelfth century but equally so to subsequent ages, till European Jewry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. “You put me to shame, O King of the Chazars. It is the sin that kept the divine promise with regard to the Second Temple from being fulfilled. Divine Providence was ready to restore everything as it had been at first, if they (the Jews) in Babylon had all willingly consented to return.

But only a part was ready to do so, whilst the majority and the aristocracy remained in Babylon, preferring dependence and slavery and unwilling to leave their houses and their affairs." [Ibid., 2:24] The sentence, "My beloved stretcheth forth his hand through the opening," may be interpreted as the urgent call of Ezra, Nehemiah and the Prophets, until a portion of the people grudgingly responded to their invitation. In accordance with their mean mind they did not receive full measure. *Divine Providence only gives man as much as he is prepared to receive; if his receptive capacity be small, he obtains little, and much if it be great.* "Were we prepared to meet the God of our forefathers with a pure mind, we should find the same solution as our fathers did in Egypt." [Ibid.]

Halevi's Haver goes so far in his self-criticism as to admit to the King: "If we say in our prayers 'Worship His holy hill – worship at His footstool, He who restoreth His glory to Zion,' [Psalms 99:5] and similar phrases, this is but as the *'chattering of the starling and the nightingale.'* *We do not realise what we say by this sentence, nor others, as thou rightly observest, O Prince of the Chazars.*" [Kuzari 2:24]

But Yehuda Halevi's "Haver" did realise what he was saying, what he was believing in, he realised what History and Tradition meant, and at the end of his extensive philosophical dialogue he tells the King that he had made up his mind to go to the "centre of the world" [Ibid., 2:20] – Jerusalem. The King asks: "What can be sought in Palestine nowadays, since the divine reflex [53] is absent from it, whilst, with a pure mind and desire, one can approach God in any place? Why wishest thou to run into danger on land and water among various peoples?" [Ibid., 5:22] The Haver insists on fulfilling the dream of his life and the law of his Tradition. No function performed by a Jew can be perfect, except in Palestine. He is looking for the fulfillment of additional religious duties that are obligatory only on those resident in Palestine. "I only seek" – he tells the King – "freedom from the service of those numerous people whose favor I do not care for, and shall never obtain, though I have worked for it all my life. Even if I could obtain it, it would not profit me – I mean serving men and counting their favors." [Ibid., 5:25] The "Haver" prefers serving God in His chosen land. Reminding the King of the necessity of bringing both intention and action to perfection, he concludes with the words, historic in themselves: "Jerusalem can only be rebuilt *when Israel yearns for it to such an extent that they embrace her stones and dust.*" [Ibid., 5:27]

Here the Poet and Philosopher meet again. The road of the one, like that of the other, leads to the "heart" of History and Tradition. Palestine

was the goal from the very beginning. The philosophy of the “Kuzari” ends with the climax of Halevi’s poetry.

Was it given to Yehuda Halevi to fulfill his dreams, prayers and promise? Did he ever land in Palestine?

Historical research is more than doubtful about it. It seems even to be established that he spent a very considerable time in Egypt, where he came from Spain, during which he could have often tried to embark on the fulfilment of his burning desire, but he did not. The reasons for his very long sojourn in Egypt, his verses praising Egypt and its “historic” spots connected with the Jewish past, are so far unknown to historical research. The Halevi *saga*, however, knew that the Haver kept his solemn promise, nay, more than this, that the dreamer and poet of Zion was killed (about 1140) by a rider in Jerusalem, while he was embracing and kissing the stones of the Holy City, and in ecstasy crying: “*Zion, halo tishali lishelom asiraich!*” [Zion – behold, ask after the wellbeing of your imprisoned!]

“Zion, shalt thou not ask if peace’s wing  
Shadows the captives that ensue thy peace  
Left lonely from thine ancient shepherding?

Lo! west and east and north and south – world-wide  
All those from far and near, without surcease  
Salute thee: Peace and peace from every side.”

[Halevi, Ode to Zion]



Never forgotten in the many centuries after his mysterious death, Halevi was almost “re-born” in the nineteenth century.

On the one hand, one of the greatest and most tragic figures of assimilated and emancipated German Jewry of that century, Heinrich Heine, revived Halevi’s memory in the most powerful and impressive manner in world literature. On the other, modern Jewish historical research, led in its beginnings by Samuel David Lazzatto [sic] and followed by a number of scholars, from [Salomo] Sachs to the youngest students in this field of our own days, has brought Halevi in his literary and spiritual totality as near to our times as possible. Halevi’s “modernity” is increasing from decade to decade. The movement of Jewish renaissance, the revival of Hebrew literature and Zionism gave an impetus to the rebirth of the great

mediaeval poet and thinker. Thanks largely to [Chaim Nahman] Bialik's inspiration and literary efforts, Halevi is becoming more and more almost a "living part" or co-creator in present Hebrew and Yiddish literatures.

The poet Yehuda Halevi established a standard for Jewish or for "national" poetry; all who have come after him and who will in centuries to come sing on Israel's sufferings and yearnings will be measured by it, will be weighed on Halevi's "scales." It was only about seven and a half centuries after Halevi, when a new and modern "Golden Age" – under entirely different spiritual and political circumstances – was initiated in Jewish life and Hebrew literature, that a Hebrew poet rose, one who evoked the admiration of the masses, and who moved even a strict and cautious a critic as Ahad Haam to proclaim him as the successor of the great "Spanish" poet, although Bialik himself, with characteristic modesty, disapproved of such comparison.

Yehuda Halevi as a philosopher stands in a different position. Jewish philosophy has been and will be measured more by Maimonides' or Spinoza's standard than by Halevi's. Nevertheless, even to-day there are two schools in Jewry who build their fundamentals on Halevi's philosophy of religion. Enlightened orthodoxy endeavours to revive Halevi's philosophy and religion, while modern and secular Jewish nationalism stresses again and again its indebtedness to Halevi's philosophy of nationhood in general and of Israel in particular. The student of philosophy as such, while perhaps missing in Halevi a stimulating speculative system, cannot however fail to learn from his creative reasoning, his questioning of the very reliability of reason – of which only a philosophic mind worthy of this name is capable.



## 4. Introduction to Maimonides' Sefer ha-madda

*The original Hebrew text was published in: Moses Maimonides, Mishneh Torah. Sefer ha-madda [Repetition of the Torah. Book of Knowledge], ed. by Simon Rawidowicz, Berlin 1922, 7–28. The title of the text is provided by the editors; it originally appeared with the headline “Mavo” (Introduction). Orr Scharf translated the text into English.*

### I. Mishneh Torah

Maimonides found an empty field – and built a fence around it [cf. Bavli, Eruvin 100a]. He saw the walls of Judaism, with more gaps than bricks, and rose up to stand in the breach [Ezekiel 22:30] and pull together all that had accumulated in the nation's thought into a firm framework; a framework whose powers of *fertilization* exceed its powers of preservation. Many before him had tried to build a fence around the same field. Some of them had risked their lives for the sake of devout faith, some were valiant men who ascended mountaintops to behold the incomprehensible, to break through the fences of their ancestral heritage and inquire into the past and the future. Generations past had nurtured the nation's creativity, each with a spirit and style of its own: one adds, another overturns, but all of them give their share. And then a genius comes along and takes over the property that has been gathered for nothing but its own sake and renown. Who is that genius systematizer? He who plucks the fruit of the labor of generations over centuries and calls it his own. And even if he travels on paved roads and takes whatever comes his way – the edifice is his; it is his home and a sanctuary for the wandering soul of yore in which it has finally found refuge. Generations will frequently complain about the systematizer, saying that he seeks to destroy the ancestral heritage, or that he merely owes to others that which his merit purportedly acquired and achieved, and that he has not brought new assets into the nation's treasure house – for his invention is *superficial*, not material, not ex-nihilo; rather, it is a *reinvented seal*, which forms both beginning and end, sealing and opening concurrently.

Maimonides both seals and opens all areas of medieval Jewish thought, serving as a milestone for generations past and blazing a trail for generations future. He who came to clear a path for the mind and to guide the perplexed through the wasteland of reality that had entrapped them – undertook upon himself to systematize *the halakhah* [Jewish law] in a way

that innovates as much as it codifies. In seeking to preserve it, he actually reached greater depths and fecundity.

Since the days of old, the sages of Israel have grappled with the following question: "Disciples become fewer and fewer, and afflictions keep increasing, and the kingship of idolatry grows in territory and strength, and Israel is carried adrift and driven away." [Mishneh Torah, Introd., 15] And what are the means with which the nation sustains itself in exile, [8] what are its provisions for the path of the meek? What will become of halakhah? The language of the Gemara [another name for the Talmud] is "Aramaic intermingled with other tongues," and nowadays "no man knows the language." [Ibid., 36] The ways of Talmudic deliberation, *shakla ve-tarya* [give and take], are no longer scrutable to recent generations, among whom some are preoccupied with the "vanities of the age" [Hilkhot yesodei ha-Torah (Laws of the Foundations of the Torah) 7:1] while others are familiar with philosophical reasoning, its measure and its ways. How may halakhah be brought back into the life of Israel, and Torah spared from oblivion?

Arranging halakhah, structuring this edifice, which is an act of creating anew was Maimonides' only resort; the only surviving anchor after the ships of Judaism had sunk in the desolate and baleful sea of life. And though several of his predecessors who were halakhic luminaries ([Isaac] al-Fasi, most notably) did the same before him (and there is no school of thought from which Maimonides did not learn), our medieval systematizer learned most of all from the redactor of the Mishnah [the first compendium of the Oral Law]. The age of Maimonides was as the age of our holy Rabbi [Judah ha-Nasi]; the purpose of the "Mishneh Torah" [Repetition of the Torah] and the purpose of the Mishnah are identical.

Maimonides sought to learn but instead found himself teaching. Versed in the logical teachings of Greek and Arab philosophy, his soul was not drawn to the Talmud's ways of *pilpul* [dialectical mode of Talmud study]. When studying Talmud, Maimonides would write down for himself the outcome of the various disputes, in order to avoid having to reread the entire Talmudic corpus for the sake of a single ruling. Later he came to realize that this method was very useful to students of Talmud who were tired of following its ways, as few of those who ventured into them safely emerged from them. Those lists ultimately served as the foundation for the composition of the "Mishneh Torah."

In a letter to his close disciple, *Rabbi Joseph, son of Rabbi Judah ben Akinin*, Maimonides comments on the evolution of the work: "Know that I did not compose this work in order to grow in stature among the Jews,

nor to win praise. And the blessed God knows that at first, I worked only for the sake of myself and spirit, to take rest from study and discourse and from the search for my needs. And in old age (Maimonides was 47 when he began working on the “Mishneh Torah”), *I thank the blessed God that I am alive. I am moved by zeal for the Lord, the God of Hosts [I Kings 19:10] and have seen that the nation is without a legislative book offering sound reflection, free from controversy or error, and my work is for the glory of the blessed God alone.*<sup>20</sup> In seeking to repair himself he brought repair to the world, and relief to halakhah.

“In old age,” Maimonides tells us, he began composing this “juridical manual.” But he was dedicated to the repair and arrangement of halakhah from his youth. In his commentary on the Mishnah [9] and in other lost works (his commentary on the Palestinian Talmud and on the three tractates of the Babylonian Talmud – Mo’ed, Nashim and Nezikin), we witness his sincere efforts to order and systematize halakhah, arranging it according to a simple logic. In this respect, he is both reactionary and revolutionary, heralding the heritage created in times of hardship and beginning to carve out a path of his own.<sup>21</sup> When discussing central issues, the “Great Eagle” [i. e., Maimonides] was so cautious that he sometimes hid under the wings of tradition in order to vanish from sight. He wanted to prove the veracity of the “Mishneh Torah,” which is nothing other than the “sum total” of developments in received tradition and religious thought – composing first “*Sefer ha-mizvot*” [Book of the Commandments]. The latter famously served as a precursor of the “Mishneh Torah.” After establishing *principles* according to which halakhah is grouped under 14 types<sup>22</sup> he reorders the 613 commandments,<sup>23</sup> all in order to prove that the “Mishneh Torah” is nothing other than a vessel holding their content, that he did not add or subtract anything from either the Torah or the words of the scribes. “And I saw fit to introduce at the opening of the book the number of all of the

20 Moses Maimonides, *Sefer pe’er ha-dor* [Book of the Glory of the Generations], Amsterdam 1765, 27 (Hebrew pagination).

21 See Michael Gutmann, Maimonides als Dezisor, in: Moses Ben Maimon. Sein Leben, seine Werke und sein Einfluss, ed. by Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums, vol. 2, Leipzig 1914, 306–330; Adolf Schwarz, Das Verhältnis Maimuni’s zu den Gaonen, in: idem, vol. 1, Leipzig 1908, 332–410.

22 See on this matter The Guide of the Perplexed, III:35 [Moses Maimonides, The Guide of the Perplexed, transl. by Shlomo Pines, vol. 2, Chicago, Ill./London 1963, III:35, 535–538], introducing several changes in their order.

23 Their source is the Torah and ancient tradition; see Bavli, Makkot 23b.

commandments, positive and negative, to ensure that the structure of the book encompasses them all and that no commandment is spared from the scrutiny of its prescriptions ...” This is all in order to ensure that the book leaves nothing undiscussed. “*And since I remembered all of the commandments according to their number, I was safe from [making] this [mistake].*”<sup>24</sup> There were forerunners who attempted, before Maimonides, to enumerate the commandments (the author of “Halakhot gedolot” [ascribed to Simon Qayyara, a ninth-century sage from Babylon] and others; also the Jewish poets of Spain broached this subject as well, incorporating it into their verse) – but he was utterly dissatisfied with those attempts.<sup>25</sup>

After laying the groundwork with “Sefer ha-mizvot,” the “Mishneh Torah”<sup>26</sup> appeared, which Maimonides completed on 8 Kislev (7 November) in the year 1180<sup>27</sup> |10| after ten years’ work, as he himself testifies: “And how much have I toiled night and day as much as ten consecutive years on the composition of this work ... For I have drawn together matters [that were] distanced, dispersed and disparate among the hills and mountains, and I have taken them – one from a city and two from a clan.” [Jeremiah 3:14] (From his epistle to Jonathan ha-Cohen) This book, as its title suggests, *codifies the halakhah* throughout its transformations over 1,500 years; a succinct summary of the vast halakhic corpus found in the two Talmuds, which is interspersed with pilpul, rabbinic debates and endless discourse of the sages. Maimonides creatively received and incorporated this immense inheritance within it, enabling him to erect his upright, solid edifice – despite the flaws that experts on halakhah may find in it – giving expression to his unsurpassed ingenuity and style. And

24 Moses Maimonides, Sefer ha-mizvot [Book of the Commandments], Introd., 3.

25 See *ibid.*

26 This is how Maimonides named his book, as we shall see from his introduction. Ha-yad ha-ḥazakah [The Mighty Hand] is only a secondary title given by his followers. It is possible that it was initially named Book of the *Arm/Hand* ([the Hebrew word for “arm/hand” has the numerical value of 14], which equals the 14 books [of Mishneh Torah]), and later on it was named Book of the Hand, or Book of the Mighty Hand (*perhaps based on the last verse in Deuteronomy* [34:12]). Some have also called it: *Book of Maimuni*, or [just]: *Maimuni*. See Moritz *Steinschneider*, *Catalogus librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* [Catalog of Hebrew Books in the Bodleian Library], Hildesheim 1964 [1852–1860], 1861–1941 (entry Moses Maimonides).

27 According to [Salomon] Munk. This is not corroborated in Maimonides’ introduction. See Isaac Hirsch Weiss, *Toldot ha-RaMba*”M [Life of Maimonides], in: *Bet Talmud* 1 (1881), 225–233, here 225.

not only that; this book had to serve both his own and future generations as a *national-human encyclopedia*, a repository for the nation's spirit and a site for questions of a man and a nation into which any man of Israel could enter and find a solution and an answer in any matter that might bother him: theoretical inquiries or practical matters, trivial customs and fundamental questions of metaphysics, astronomy and ethics, disputes between man and his fellow and the laws of the world to come, conjugal relations and temple worship and sacrifices. An edifice replete with stairwells, second and third floors, many halls and vestibules, set and ready for people to enter through, sit in its shade and enjoy that which is available to them, each according to his heart's desire. Each sentence – an edifice unto itself, each chapter – an upright building, each halakhah – a steadfast wall without a breach, each book – a palace of many parlors and halls ready and ordered. And all of those buildings, each whole in and of itself, are joined together by the master architect, who, with measuring rod in hand, aligns them to form the *palace of palaces*, which is testimony to the builder's strong arm, the arm with which men of singular merit are endowed. And if you find that hardly any book in the halakhic literature has an influence and impact so marked and prominent in life and thought – this means that much of it is owed to the *secret of the edifice!* The secret of the great systematizer who knew how to assemble such variegated and disparate material and establish shared tenets for it, gradually molding it to what it is; he who gathered and compiled – but never became a mere “compiler.”

And this gigantic encyclopedia, the effort of a single man, was destined not only to serve as a [11] repository of ancestral inheritance, but also as an opening to questions by the progeny not anticipated by their ancestors. All of the questions that the [current] generation faces – they will necessarily find their answer in the “Mishneh Torah,” which is not limited to the confines of the Talmud and its assorted literature. At the end of *Hilkhot kiddush ha-ḥodesh* [Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon], Maimonides says as follows: “For we have elucidated the calculation of all the methods required for observing (the moon) and for questioning witnesses, to make everything available to the men of understanding, so that they shall not lack any of the paths of the Torah, *and shall not wander in search thereof in other books. Search and read in the scroll of the Lord: Not one of these shall be absent.*” [Isaiah 34:16] ([Sefer ha-zmanim (Book of the Seasons), *Hilkhot kiddush ha-ḥodesh*,] 19:16) For this reason he addresses several topics that the Talmud and later works hardly addressed. Although he always tries to ground those matters in faith, he appears to “apologize” for having incorporated dietary knowledge (Diätetik) into his book when

he says: "Since the wholesome and healthy state of the body is one of God's ways, it is impossible for one to understand or possess any knowledge of the Creator if one is ill; therefore one must distance oneself from things that weaken the body and immerse oneself in the things inducing health and healing." (Hilkhot de'ot [Laws of Human Dispositions] 4:1) And this is all because Maimonides could not leave his edifice lacking in any respect, for even if its only deficiency was in matters of nutrition, the world would have gone back into chaos. In the same way, knowledge of physics and metaphysics is a gate to this knowledge and to the love of God (see Hilkhot yesodei ha-Torah 2:2), etc. Various issues of faith and life, questions of matter and spirit, entwine, gradually becoming one unit. All things progressively ascend to the zenith of the edifice, by which the author's mighty hand was overtaken and from which it gained the strength to support the entire construction.

On the one hand, Maimonides hammered his stakes into the ground in enumerating the Torah's commandments, while on the other hand he always held before his eyes the Mishnah, using it as the model for creating his own world, incorporating and absorbing from the entire halakhic corpus that preceded him (particularly from *al-Fasi*), and in the process of ordering a halakhic system scattered "among the mountains and hills," he traversed the vast sea of the Talmud and its assorted exegetes as an eagle flies, carefully compiling, but not like one faint of heart, approaching the field of the heritage and reaping the gleanings, forgotten sheaf and unharvested border of generations past, placing them in his vault, a tile from here and a brick from there, odd elements of assorted styles and eras, which gradually become one.

And yet, where we see him reaping others' crop and following in their footsteps, this is where we also find him breaking a new path, which [could only belong to] the halakhic decisors [12] who had sought to arrange practical halakhah before him, if they would have had, according to [Zacharias] Frankel's observation,<sup>28</sup> talent beyond their stature. R[abbi] Aḥai, for example, arranged all of the laws according to the commandments of the Torah; R. Simon Qayyara and al-Fasi used the arrangement of the Mishnah as a model, omitting the laws that apply only to the days of

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28 Zacharias Frankel, *Der gerichtliche Beweis nach mosaisch-talmudischem Rechte. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des mosaisch-talmudischen Criminal- und Civilrechts*, Berlin 1846, 100 ff.

Messiah, and Maimonides would not have done that.<sup>29</sup> Since Maimonides incorporated in the “Mishneh Torah” all laws while making a distinction between practical ones and those applying to the days of Messiah, he could have followed neither the Torah nor the Mishnah. And therefore, he divided, for example, Massekhet Pesahim [Tractate Passover], which discusses the laws of unleavened bread and mazah, and the paschal sacrifice, into two parts. The laws of unleavened bread and mazah went into “*Sefer ha-zmanim*” (because law precedes deed), and the laws of the paschal sacrifice went into “*Sefer ha-korbanot*” [Book of the Offerings]. Other examples abound.<sup>30</sup> Maimonides’ method of arranging halakhah is entirely new. Most importantly, he aims to group together laws referring to the same subject matter in a section of their own, separating them from other laws that earlier works associated with them. Sometimes, for the sake of symmetry, he placed certain laws in a book on a different topic, despite the apparent incongruity. (For example: he placed the “Hilkhot issure bi’ah” [Laws of Forbidden Intercourse] in “*Sefer ha-kedushah*” [Book of the Holiness] because “*Sefer nashim*” [Book of Women] – which is where those laws belong – is too long and dense).<sup>31</sup> First, he established the arranging principles of halakhah in all of its subjects, and when he found that it divides into 83 types, he arranged them in 14 books. Once this “framework” was complete, he began filling it with the content of various laws assembled and compiled from the two Talmuds and the extensive literature interpreting them. His approach to systematization draws on *analysis as well as on synthesis*. “Maimonides’ system [...] is founded on the analytic method, the systematic description of halakhah – on synthesis.”<sup>32</sup> [Das System M. beruht, was Niemandem erst gezeigt werden muß, auf der analytischen, die systematische Darstellung des Halachastoffes auf der synthetischen Methode.] And so Maimonides was able not only to classify halakhah, but to establish it mainly as *an organic form*, almost creating it anew and placing it within a logical rational system.

29 In addition, Maimonides differs from *al-Fasi* in that the latter also provided a summary of the rabbinic discussion on most laws, whereas Maimonides provides only the final halakhic rulings.

30 See Bernhard Ziemlich, Plan und Anlage des Mischne Thora, in: Moses Ben Maimon, vol. 1, 248–318, here 267 ff.

31 See *ibid.*

32 Adolf Schwarz, Der Mischneh Thorah, ein System der mosaisch-talmudischen Gesetzeslehre. Zur Erinnerung an den siebenhundertjährigen Todestag Maimuni’s, Vienna 1905, 97, n. 1.

As for the work's formal arrangement, the "laws" of the "Mishneh Torah" are akin to the "tractates" of the Mishnah, and the "book" replaces the Mishnah's "order." [13] Due to the abundance of material and for the sake of its logical classification, Maimonides had to divide halakhah into 14 books, whereas six orders were enough for Rabbi [Judah ha-Nasi].

Frankel observed that the structural division of the "Mishneh Torah" is based on Maimonides' distinction between *practical laws* and *theoretical laws* (for the *hilkhata le-meshiḥa* [Laws for the Messianic Days])<sup>33</sup> and Maimonides comments in part III of "Moreh nevukhim" [Guide for the Perplexed] (chap. 35[, 538]): "It is known that the commandments are divided into two groups: *those between man and God* and *those between man and his fellow man.*" Therefore, now that we are aware of Maimonides' tendency to address practical laws before laws for the Messianic days, we may find the organizing principle of the "Mishneh Torah," according to the following order proposed by [Bernhard] Ziemlich:

	Part I		Part II
	Commandments between man and God:		Commandments between man and his fellow man:
Practical commandments	{ 1. The Book of Knowledge* 2. The Book of Love of God 3. The Book of Seasons 4. The Book of Women 5. The Book of Holiness 6. The Book of Asseverations	Practical commandments	{ 11. The Book of Torts 12. The Book of Acquisition 13. The Book of Civil Laws
Messianic commandments	{ 7. The Book of Agriculture 8. The Book of Temple Service 9. The Book of Offerings 10. The Book of Cleanness	Messianic commandments	{ 14. The Book of Judges

The perceptive reader of those "books" will notice their inherent connection and the logical, consecutive ordering of their structure and sequence.

33 Schwarz disagrees. See *ibid.*, 6 ff.

\* Translation here follows: Moses Maimonides, *The Code of Maimonides*, 14 vols., New Haven, Conn., 1949–1979.



However, it should be noted here that Maimonides expanded the concept of “commandments between man and God,” subsuming it under “Sefer nashim” and other such matters. “For every commandment ... whose purpose it is to bring about the achievement of a certain moral quality or of an opinion or the rightness of actions, which only concerns the individual himself and his becoming more perfect, is called by them [a commandment dealing with the relation] *between man and God*, even though in reality it sometimes may affect relations between man and his fellow man.”<sup>34</sup> And the same applies to commandments dependent on the Land of Israel, which Maimonides considers laws for the Messianic days.



[14] An encyclopedia authored by a quorum of scholars dedicating their entire lives to the task will inevitably have its critics and detractors. The Maimonidean project, the work of a single man, in the area of faith and religion, which introduced a novel approach and methodologies not reckoned by the ancients – how much more so! The story of the quarrels between the Maimonidean school and its critics is one of the most important and illuminating lessons to be learned from the medieval era. Anyone wishing to analyze this dispute must make a distinction between the claims and criticisms leveled against the “Mishneh Torah” in the wake of Maimonides’ “sins” in “Moreh nevukhim,” and those that specifically address the order and the system, the approach and purpose of the work itself. It would be impossible to present this dispute in its entirety here. Instead, a few passages from Maimonides’ response to his critics will suffice; the author wishes to share the secrets of his work and we can do no better than to listen to him.

*Pinhas ben Meshullam*, a rabbinical judge from Alexandria, raised against Maimonides three claims that are in fact one (of which we learn only from Maimonides’ reply): 1) that he frequently omitted the names of Tanaitic and Amoraitic sages from his work, creating the risk that readers may forget the nation’s great masters; 2) that he presented his work as the only arbiter on all questions of faith and religion in theory and practice, as this may lead Jews to forget the *Talmud*; 3) that he separated law from the various disputes, omitting Talmudic discussions [of halakhah] and failing to cite his sources and to offer rational grounding – why should

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34 Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, III:35, 538.

the People of Israel accept his rulings?<sup>35</sup> After Maimonides denies various words of slander and calumny that had reached R. Pinhas ben Meshullam regarding him, he responds to the issues themselves: “Know first that, God forbid, I never said: Do not study the Gemara or the teachings of R. Isaac [al-Fasi] or his colleagues,<sup>36</sup> ... for did I not say explicitly at the outset of my work that I composed it only out of concern for the |15| impatient who cannot plumb the depths of the Talmud and will not learn what is permitted and what is prohibited by reading it ... and regarding your comment on sages’ names, I already mentioned the names of most sages, Tanna’im and Amora’im, at the beginning of the work. Is it indeed, as you say, that anyone who has issued halakhot and separated grain from chaff desecrates the name of Heaven, as you believe? Early Ge’onim and great rabbis already authored works and issued halakhot in the Hebrew language and in the Arabic language on major issues ... And know that I already said in the introduction to my work that its subject matter will be presented in the *way and language of the Mishnah*, but you and your fellows did not heed my words and did not grasp the difference between the way of the Mishnah and the way of the Talmud. ... Know, my companion and friend, that any author of a book, either on matters of Torah or in other fields of knowledge ... writes either by way of *hibbur* [composition] or by way of

35 See our note 18. [This note refers to a remark by Rawidowicz concerning *Sefer ha-madda* in the endnotes. See Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah. Sefer ha-madda* [Repetition of the Torah. Book of Knowledge], ed. by Simon Rawidowicz, Berlin 1922, 71 f. (Hebrew pagination).] Samuel David Luzzato challenged Maimonides, basing himself on R[abbi] Pinhas ben Meshullam’s above claims, also criticizing him for establishing *ikkarim* [principles] for Judaism, “Since after all, the prophets, Tanna’im, Amora’im and Ge’onim never circumscribed matters of faith.” (See Samuel David Luzzato, *Mikhtav heh* [Letter Five (Isaac Samuel Reggio)], in: *Kerem hemed* 3 (1838), 61–76, here 70.

36 In his epistle to his disciple R. Joseph ben R. Judah ben Akinin (Maimonides, *Sefer pe’er ha-dor*, 27 [Hebrew pagination]), he says: “And do not study [anything] other than the teachings of the Rabbi (al-Fasi) and evaluate him in light of the work (*Mishneh Torah*), and when you encounter disagreement – know that the study of the Talmud will instruct you on this issue, and reason and read in the right place and find the truth *and do not permit your time to go to waste on interpretation and Talmudic discourse and those matters which I have already deemed to be a waste of time and of little use.*” In my opinion, the disagreement arose since Maimonides’ critics understood “Talmudic discourse” as referring to Amoraic discussions in the Talmud, whereas Maimonides likely referred to the constellation of Talmudic exegetes.

perush [commentary]. And in the way of *hibbur* only correct matters are to be discussed, without objections, analyses or supporting evidence, as our holy Rabbi [Judah ha-Nasi] did in composing the Mishnah. ... And I did not write commentary but a *hibbur*, in the way of the Mishnah.”<sup>37</sup> And again: the opinions of the sages of the Mishnah are none other than the opinions of the founding fathers of kabbalah [received tradition] transmitted from one generation to the next, coming from the mouth of Moses. So how come they did not mention the names of their forerunners?<sup>38</sup> And as for the arguments made against Maimonides by other critics, who made his life bitter with words of jealousy and hatred, he writes to his disciple: “For I knew and verified when writing it that this work will undoubtedly fall in the hands of evil, jealous people who will condemn its beauty and dismiss its greatness, finding therein confirmation for their damning or short-sighted readings ... and as it shall undoubtedly fall into the hands of the remnants that God calls the true and the just, who, thanks to earnest and superb study, will come to appreciate and know the value of my work, of whom you are one, and *even if in my lifetime I will have none other but you – I shall be content*. ... But I know with certainty that in the future, when envy and thirst for power abound, all of the People of Israel will crave it (this work) and no other. And without a doubt, all other [works] will be set aside, save by those in search of irrelevancies, although they will fail to find that which they seek.”<sup>39</sup>

And his confidence was, on the whole, not misguided.



[16] “And you should know that man should not speak and preach to the people before repeating that which he wishes to speak of one, two, three and four times; he must learn it well, and then speak ... *But that which man legislates by hand and writes down in books ... he should repeat a thousand times, if possible.*”<sup>40</sup>

37 Moses Maimonides, Igrot ha-RaMBa”M [Letters of Maimonides], Grodno 1785, 29 ff.

38 Ibid. See our note 18.

39 Maimonides, Sefer pe’er ha-dor, 27 (Hebrew pagination).

40 Moses Maimonides, Ma’amar kiddush ha-shem [Discourse on Martyrdom], in: idem, Koveḥ teshuvot ha-RaMBa”M ve-iggrotav [Collection of Maimonides’ Responsa and His Letters], part 2/II, ed. by Abraham ben Aryeh Lichtenberg, Leipzig 1859/1860, fol. 12–15, here fol. 12.

And elsewhere he writes to his son, R. Abraham: “And do not speak with derisive language; speak with rich language and clarity of tongue, with a calm voice, to the point, as one who wishes to learn and seek the truth.”<sup>41</sup>

His approach to halakhah was also his approach to style and language; as the former is “of one piece,” [Exodus 37:7] conjoined and comprised of different eras and sources, so the latter is compact and fine, exalted in style, language possessing at once both the *simplicity of the simple people and the nobility of abstract thought*, this is the simplicity that emanates from the innermost simple and direct soul of the people and this is the thought of the soul that aspires to great things, plunges to the depths and soars to the heavens, yet it does not lose any of its sublime simplicity. The estate of generations past and the wealth of the individual soul are clasped together in his language, and, thus captured, they mutually support and supplement one another to impeccable perfection.

Maimonides' literary style is imbued with *classical lucidity, simplicity* of great vividness, *conciseness* that is neither meager nor poor, *intensity* and *density* of unfathomable breadth and extent, *brevity* deriving from a broad and all-inclusive scope that hints at bountiful treasures, the precision of the fastidious for whom ritual purity is never clean enough, *prudence* not owing to tremor or infirmity, *refinement* that does not ooze the sweat of the brow, *finesse* not owing to vainglorious form, close *weaving* without any excess, awkward syntax, or routine turns of phrase. In addition, his style is highly symmetrical, matching together sentences and sentence sequences in each chapter. Those privy to the secret of constructing ideas will not miss the secret of his style; here, too, the builder's measuring rod did not leave his hand for a moment, as he crafted a style that elevated him to the rank of great, freethinking authors, who, mastering many “prayer formulations” paved the way to a new “rite” from which only a select few |17| will pray – the beating of hammers was not heard, mortar, clay and bricks, construction waste and crumbled rocks, gravel and some such will not be seen or found there. People open up their eyes in amazement: This edifice – where did it come from? He did not borrow tools from anyone, and no one has seen him work.

But Maimonides did not know the meaning of style for its own sake, and he did not conjure up verbal charades. Forever thinking of utility, if such mannerisms were to be found in his work, it was only in the hope of

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41 Idem, Musar na'eh me'od [Very Pleasant Moral Teachings], in: *ibid.*, fol. 38–40, here fol. 38.

winning the hearts of his generation, to be of use to posterity: to prevent their house from falling down because of the collapse of style and the spirit of language. “For all of our works are indeed compact and fine; it is not our intention to merely write more books or waste time on futile pursuits. Hence, we shall only interpret that which requires interpretation and in self-explanatory manner at that, and we shall only write on the issues in brief ... You, the readers of our work, already know that I always tend to leave out disputes and arguments, *and if I could substantiate the Talmud with one chapter – I would not have done it with two.* And why am I asked to repeat the sermons and tales? They are to be found in their place and read there. And what is the use of duplicating them and claiming authorship over them?”<sup>42</sup>

Even when it came to grammar, Maimonides did not forget his approach to style. For language is all about style: the latter sets the model for the former, and everything else follows it. In the Arabic language too (which according to Maimonides is nothing but “the Hebrew language slightly gone wrong,” from his letter to [Samuel] ibn-Tibbon), which was not as obliging to him as its Hebraic sibling, he was able to achieve a level of creativity that neither R. Yehuda Halevi nor even R. Saadia Gaon achieved.<sup>43</sup>

And in Hebrew? This work is living proof! For this language is a precious treasure and a blessed tool strengthening Hebrew to this very day, and its fragrance shall not evaporate as long as it exists. Nevertheless, objections arise, and one of Maimonides’ fiercest critics, *R. Abraham ben David* [known as RABaD], was not content with mere fault-finding in matters of halakhah and speculation and went on to condemn Maimonides’ style and language. [18] (“*He has spoiled our language*” – [Hasagot ha-RABaD (Animadversions of the RABaD), *Sefer ahavah* (The Book of Love), *Hilkhot berakhot* [Laws of Benedictions], 6:3; “I have noticed that this man modifies and transforms idioms, and consequently he is

42 Idem, *Ma’amar teḥiyat ha-metim* [Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead], in: idem, *Koveṣ teshuvot ha-RaMBa”M*, part 2/II, fol. 7–11, here fol. 10.

43 Maimonides failed to follow certain rules of Arabic grammar, and yet his language is “lucid, sharp, fierce and powerful, free-flowing, and at times very mellifluous [klar, scharf, gedrungen, voll Kraft und Saft, außerordentlich fließend und oft von großem Wohlklang].” Israel Friedlaender, *Die arabische Sprache des Maimonides*, in: *Moses Ben Maimon*, vol. 1, 421–428, here 428. For more detail, see idem., *Der Sprachgebrauch des Maimonides. Ein lexikalischer und grammatischer Beitrag zur Kenntnis des Mittelarabischen*, vol. 1: *Lexikalischer Teil*, Frankfurt a. M. 1902.

confounding” – [Ibid., Sefer taharah (The Book of Cleanness), Hilkhot] tum’at ha-met [Laws of the Uncleaness of the Dead], 22:7; “This language is darkness, not light” – [Ibid., Hilkhot] issure bi’ah, 8:10, etc.)

Language is all about content; content gives language its shape. Maimonides himself conceded that the “Mishneh Torah” is strictly a *book for the laity*, a book “for the young and the old,” [Mishneh Torah, Introd.] wherein any Jew may find everything necessary for his edification and for his life, at different moments and in various matters. And a book for the laity, which by definition must be accessible, has no prospects of success without suitable *language*: simple and lucid, convenient and practicable;<sup>44</sup> language that speaks to the reader’s heart and draws him into the subject unaware. A folk’s book of this kind does not require sage comments, citations, interpretations and clarifications, for “the reader need not notice at all that the author wishes to clarify a certain matter; the author must present the issue to the reader with such clarity that the latter will understand it of his own accord [der Leser darf gar nicht merken, daß es etwas zu erklären gibt; der Gegenstand muß so durchsichtig vor ihn hingestellt werden, daß er in denselben hineinschauen könne].”<sup>45</sup> Language can conjure those spells, and when Maimonides touched with the magic wand in his hand the Hebrew language, whose soul was still imprisoned in books and on parchments, this “old lady,” not yet worn down, began dancing and walking, living and speaking – though with the poise and dignity befitting an ancient tongue, a “holy language.”<sup>46</sup> She still had the discernment of the old – yet did not lack the bliss of youth, the youth that follows prolonged maturity.

And his resolve to offer his people a book in plain language helped him find his register within the “realms of language” to which he was no stranger. In his preface to “Sefer ha-mizvot” he shares his view on this question: “And I have also realized that I shall not compose it in the

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44 See Schwarz, *Der Mischneh Thorah*, 76 ff.

45 Ibid., 76 f.

46 It is a holy tongue because “no word at all has been laid down in order to designate either the male or the female organ of copulation, nor are there words designating the act itself that brings about generation.” Maimonides, *Moreh nevukhim*, III:8, 435. On Maimonides’ view of the Hebrew language see Wilhelm Bacher, *Die Biblexegese der jüdischen Religionsphilosophen des Mittelalters vor Maimuni*, Budapest 1892, 168 ff. See on the same topic Yehuda Halevi, *Sefer ha-kuzari* [Book of the Kuzari], II:15 ff.

language of the books of the prophets for it *falls short of covering matters of law*. And I shall not compose it in the language of the Talmud either, for only a very few members of our nation would understand it, and some of its words are strange and hard even for those versed in the Talmud. Rather, I shall compose it in the language of the Mishnah, for this would *be easier for the masses to understand*.” And therefore, when |19| one of his admirers, Joseph ben Gabbar from Baghdad, wrote to him and complained that he “does not understand the work (Mishneh Torah) for it is written in the Hebrew language,” Maimonides replied: “And you should study this matter in the book in the holy tongue ... for it is easy to understand and very amenable.<sup>47</sup> ... *And I do not want, on any account, to publish it in Arabic for all of its pleasantness would be lost*. And I now wish to return the Commentary on the Mishnah and on Sefer ha-mizvot [from Arabic] to the holy tongue – all the more reason not to translate this work into the Arabic language! And do not ask this of me at all.”<sup>48</sup>

The Mishnah’s redactor, R. Juda ha-Nasi, was Maimonides’ model not only in matters of arrangement and editing, but also in matters of language. He praised him often and was amazed by his use of language. “And he [Judah ha-Nasi] was of such impeccable skill and unsurpassed knowledge in the holy tongue that the sages, may they rest in peace, would study his

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47 Maimonides was convinced that the language of the Mishnah is the most accessible to the members of his generation. Indeed, even though the letter of Joseph ben Gabbar is not very instructive, he appears not to have known Hebrew at all; and although he had “made a considerable effort in Torah study,” there are other facts that contradict this. *Joseph ben Tanhum ha-Yerushalmi* (who lived in the 13th century) deemed it necessary to compose a *lexicon* for the “Mishneh Torah” to assist the people of that generation who understood neither the language of the Mishnah nor the language of Maimonides, which is slightly different, as proven below: the Arabic name of this lexicon is *Al-murshid al-kāfi* (*The Sufficient Awakener*, and Jewish exegetes named it “Sefer ha-maspik” [The Book of the Sufficient]). See Wilhelm *Bacher*, *Aus dem Wörterbuche Tanchum Jeruschalmi’s. Nebst einem Anhang über den sprachlichen Charakter des Maimūni’schen Mischne-Tora*, Strasbourg 1903, 44 ff. See also [Ignaz] *Goldziher* on the same topic [Das arabische Original von Maimuni’s Sêfer Hammisewôt, in: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 3 (1889), no. 1, 77–85].

48 Moses Maimonides, *Teshuvot* [Responsa], in: idem, *Kovez teshuvot ha-RaMBa*”M, part 2/II, fol. 15–16, here fol. 15. It would be impossible to calculate the relief and deliverance that Hebrew would have enjoyed had Maimonides succeeded in executing his plan to translate his Arabic books.

interpretations of confounding words in the Bible from his slaves and servants, and this is stated in the Talmud.”<sup>49</sup> And this language, the language of the Mishnah that most scholars call “new Hebrew,” is embedded into the language of the “Mishneh Torah.” Maimonides molded his own language in its image and likeness, and yet it is very different from the source, for although no traces of translation are evident in the “Mishneh Torah,” *it is fundamentally a translation*. Maimonides had to *translate* into his own idiom, *in both language and style*, the bulk of the halakhic literature that had been produced in different times, according to different principles, using diverse dialects and conventions, and even different languages altogether. And anyone who knows even a little on this subject will grant this observation and wonder at the great uniformity of this temporal-linguistic “hybrid.” And so [20] we may consider Maimonides not only an original stylist but also a translator of the highest order, a member of the elite,<sup>50</sup> a translator wary of omission and a superior, freethinking author; a *translator* and an author as one.

Hence, we learn that the language of Maimonides the *translator* is of necessity different from the language used by the redactor of the Mishnah, for whom Hebrew was the language of his forefathers and who studied everything in the language in which it was composed and taught. As far as possible, Maimonides leaves the terms coined by the Mishnah intact and teaches laws written in pristine Hebrew verbatim, when there is no halakhic or linguistic reason to do otherwise.<sup>51</sup> But usually we find

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49 Mishneh Torah, Introd.; cf. Bavli, Rosh Hashanah 26b.

50 This great translator’s mind was not assuaged until he also translated into Hebrew the Talmud’s most famous Aramaic sayings. For example: instead of *kol de-alim gavar* [“he who is stronger overcomes,” cf. Bavli, Gittin 60b; Bava Batra 34b] he says, *kol ha-mitgabber zakhah* [“he who overcomes acquires”] (Hilkhot shekhenim [Laws of Neighbors] 3:10). And in this case too, RABaD remained uneasy, refusing to acknowledge Maimonides’ talent for translation: “I am aware of the truth of those who say that he who transfers [lit. copies] from one language to another must be extremely well-versed in the task and well-versed in both languages. For I have seen that this author has turned himself into a translator of the language of the Gemara into the Hebrew language and by changing an idiom became unidiomatic” ([Hassagot ha-RABaD on Mishneh Torah,] Nedarim [Oaths], 6:9:1). And Maimonides’ comments to Ibn-Tibbon on translation are well known.

51 Changes of this sort abound. For example, see Ziemlich, Plan und Anlage des Mischne Thora, 264.



that he pushes the boundaries of the Mishnah's language in order to introduce new elements, some out of necessity and others voluntarily and intentionally;<sup>52</sup> many elements of biblical Hebrew that do not have a trace in the Mishnah were resurrected in Maimonides' language, much of which Maimonides learned from the Mishnah but did so as one who fills old jugs with new wine. Sometimes, biblical language "shielded" him from straits when he was ill at ease with certain images or phrases of the Mishnah. His penchant for vivid imageries, evident in various places, sometimes makes him venture away from the school of the Mishnah's redactor as he uses "flourishes" and biblical verses – [21] either whole or parts of them, and anyone claiming that it is a linguistic "obstacle" is wrong and certainly did not penetrate the mysteries of Maimonides' linguistic workings. All of this owes to his great care to avoid the pitfalls of "dullness," and so in order to stir the reader's heart, at times he would give up on the consistency of tense, number, person, etc. This is the reason for the conspicuous *biblical spirit* of various passages in the "Mishneh Torah," bolstered by synonyms, images and phrases originally from Scripture. And in the same way that he made ample use of the Bible's language, he sometimes changed the content and substance of what he took from the Mishnah, and here we find many words reworked by him and by others. (For example: *amitah* [a specific truth], *haze* (*hezea*) [supply], *ḥalif* (singular, from *ḥalifin* [exchangeable items] which appears in the Talmud) [an exchangeable item], *ne'emanut* [loyal faith] (in the sense of loyal faith), *zaḥut* [fluency], *shegiyah* [a matter or thing in which one errs, occupation, something one delves into], and others). Needless to say, Maimonides introduced many innovations in the fields of philosophy, geometry and astronomy, areas that are usually irrelevant for the Mishnah. As for *Aramaic* and its various dialects, the language in which the majority of halakhic literature is written, there is scant evidence attesting to its influence on the "Mishneh Torah." For the most part, Maimonides translates a saying into impeccable Hebrew, and sometimes he makes an effort to introduce the odd Aramaic phrase with

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52 On the nature of the language in the Mishneh Torah, see in detail *Bacher*, *Aus dem Wörterbuche Tanchum Jeruschalmi's*, 117 ff. Supplementing this book see *idem*, *Zum sprachlichen Charakter des Mischne Thora*, in: *Moses Ben Maimon*, vol. 2, 280–305. In addition, see *Schwarz*, *Der Mischne Tora*, 74 ff.

In the dictionary of the "Mishneh Torah" we will attempt to summarize the different opinions on this matter with new comments. At this time, we will suffice ourselves with this brief discussion.

a twist that adds a flavor of Hebrew. Certain Aramaic terms with a set and well-known meaning are left as is (asmakhta [grounding/surety], adrakhta [order of documents], shekhiv mera [dangerously ill], and others). This is also the case with the mutual influence of Hebrew and Arabic, the language in which Maimonides conducted his life and wrote most of his books. [Israel] *Friedlaender* noted that the influence of Arabic from lived experience on the Hebrew of written books was weaker than the latter's influence on the former.<sup>53</sup> In any event we find in Maimonides' language many traces of Arabic, and as a rule he followed the example of the Spanish sages that preceded him.

Despite the numerous sources that inspired him and the various languages and dialects from which he had to translate, we find in Maimonides' language *a unity of form and character* that have no peer. He fused the language of the Mishnah, which he chose as the foundation for his own idiom, and joined sundry and disparate elements, producing a solid, uniform language that is much more convenient and sometimes has superior flow to the Mishnah. Much in his language draws on the suppleness of Aggadah [non-legalistic exegetical literature], and when discussing matters of reflection and faith that fall outside of the scope of science, he returns to the language of Scripture, reveling in the bliss of biblical verse, not as an "interpreter" but as an author. He was no stranger to sharp scorn, banter and ridicule against [22] the "fools" and "human oafs." And so Maimonides restored the glory of the Hebrew language of old; like a great eagle he spread his wings over extraneous elements in order to bring them into the fold, and with a lion's roar he broke the linguistic boundaries of his generation, rebelled against the accepted "formulation" and became a guide on the paths of language for his own generation and for posterity.



Many halakhic decisors (the Ba'al ha-Turim [Master of the Columns, i.e., Jacob ben Asher], [the author of] *Shulḥan Arukh* [The Prepared Table], [Joseph Karo], and others) used the "Mishneh Torah" as a model and example. Many commentators endeavored to interpret it and to reconcile various contradictions between it and more recent commentators, to show the source of its assertions. More than 200 books have been

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<sup>53</sup> See n. 43.

written about it, not counting the numerous manuscripts lying in libraries like an unturned stone.<sup>54</sup> It was also one of the first books to come out in print. Most scholars believe it was first printed in the year 1480. It was then reprinted in Italy (Soncino) in 1490. Both editions contain only the body of the work, but several commentaries were added to the third edition (1509).

The work made its way into the Christian world as well. Several non-Jewish scholars translated various parts of it into Latin.<sup>55</sup> Famously, they had particular affinity for *Sefer ha-madda* [The Book of Knowledge]. (The introduction by Agostino Giustiniani to the Latin translation of [Hilkhot] *De'ot* is particularly interesting). Recently, many parts of the work have been translated into several living languages.<sup>56</sup>

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## II. *Sefer ha-madda*

Knowledge here is not “science” but knowledge based on discernment. *Sefer ha-madda* is the book of *knowing and discerning*.

Some thinkers founded their system of philosophy and conception of Judaism on *love* (*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God* [Deuteronomy 6:5]), for truth is acquired in one way only, called love. In love’s light, man watches the world and sees it from end to end, and the lover does not let go of his God so long as He has not revealed Himself to him and has shown him the measure of His greatness. Others based everything on *worship* (*And ye shall serve the Lord your God* [Exodus 23:25]), for only in worship does man repair his soul, as this is how he will repair the deficiencies of his being for which there is a need for correction; this is *worship*, and through it man joins himself to Him. And Maimonides accepts nothing other than *knowledge, the absolute imperative: And you shall know the Lord your God*. Man does not comprehend and cleave to

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54 See Adolph *Jellinek*, *Kuntres ha-RaMBa* "M. Sofer u-moneh be'urim hiddushim u-ferushim. [Booklet of Maimonides. Register of Explanations, New Decisions and Interpretations], Vienna 1878.

55 See *Steinschneider*, *Catalogus Bodleiana*, entry Moses Maimonides.

56 See Isak *Münz*, *Moses ben Maimon. Sein Leben und seine Werke*, Frankfurt a. M. 1912. See Bibliography [not reproduced here].

God either through love or worship, but rather through *knowledge*. Love is disruptive, and *worship* is prone to subjugate all of man's senses by distracting him from the world of reflection and speculation, *for the lover may err and the worshipper sees nothing but his own worship, but not the knower*, who knows his God without cease, filling his heart with His knowledge to the brim. For this reason, he cleaves to Him with eternal attachment that does not stop or wane like ordinary knowledge; blessed by reaching the level of the source of knowledge, the active intellect, conceiving things unfathomable to lover and worshipper.

And so *Socrates* in his day taught that knowledge is king and government, unsurpassed in greatness by anything else, for, if blessed with it, one ascends to the level highest of all, *unsurpassed by any other level*. And what is Maimonides' conception of knowledge? As is already known, there are two types of knowledge in Greek philosophy: *Socratic* and *Aristotelian*. According to the former, it is sublime knowledge that contains power, knowledge that is none other than will (and volition wants nothing other than the good, that philosopher taught); this is the knowledge that reigns over man and world, initiates him into the mysteries of everything that is and was, and makes him privy to the work of creation. This knowledge is for *Socrates* nothing but man's self-conquest, a return to his own soul. The conquest of the self yields the conquest of the All, and if man returns to his own soul, he returns *to the soul of the world* [24] and cleaves to the Source that emanates Being out of His goodness, without Whom the world would not have existed, even for one hour.

This is *Socrates*. *Aristotle*, however, failed to grasp the teachings of the master of Plato, his own teacher, for whom knowledge is also a premise and axiom that need not be contemplated. But this knowledge lacks the freedom of will and power that *Socrates* taught us; vague by nature and detached from the source of life, it strays into spheres of contemplation and reflection, and therefore it is highly abstract and cannot open for man a door into the soul of the world or expose him to hidden mysteries.

And Maimonides, a direct disciple of *Aristotle*, learned much from the school of *Socrates* and Plato. His conception of "knowledge" drew on elements from both; this coupling of *Socrates* and *Aristotle* worked well for him. At its core and root, essence and nature, Maimonides' conception of knowledge is strictly *Aristotelian*; in its orientation and telos – the *Socratic* school has the upper hand.

And not in this matter alone did Maimonides graft together these two elements of thought that permeate world culture to this very day. For we find that Maimonides follows *Aristotle* in the sphere of thought, whereas

in his system of faith and religion the experienced student nearly sacrifices the school of his master for the sake of that of *Plato*.<sup>57</sup>

Consistent with his way of thinking, Maimonides both joined and separated these influences here. As he passed the Platonic–Aristotelian conception of “knowledge” through the furnace of love of the Jewish faith, much of that which was abstract and vague was removed from the “knowledge,” and as its layers and elements were dissolved, it began absorbing tender love, affective grace, and religious passion; then an abundance of celestial and concealed life-force began bursting forth from within it; and so love was also endowed with the intellect’s profundity, the mind’s majesty, and the “solidness” of logic, which greatly resembles the chill that never freezes. That which “knowledge” discharges, is that which love absorbs [cf. Bavli, Avodah Zarah 76a–b]; both gradually shed their nature, and this shedding is their salvation.

[25] They support and complete one another, but they shall never be one flesh. They have different roots, even if their paths point in the same direction. *Sefer ha-madda* and *Sefer ahavah* [Book of the Love (of God)] give us access to Maimonides’ edifice. Both were made to support a Jew seeking to purify himself with faith tinged with knowledge and discernment tinged with love. The two books, however, are discrete: science to itself and love to itself. And knowledge is superior.

Knowledge takes precedence, though Maimonides recognized its frailty and meagreness and knew how limited and inconsequential is our knowledge, for which we work so hard and for whose sake we sacrifice ourselves.<sup>58</sup> “Since man’s mind is limited,” [Hilkhot avodat kokhavim (Laws of Foreign Worship) 2:3] it was joined to love, which has much in common with knowledge, at whose core stands a higher moral truth:

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57 *Hermann Cohen* noticed that in certain matters the spirit of Plato speaks from the mouth of Maimonides. And as he failed to observe the vast difference between the Maimonides of scholarship and the Maimonides of faith, he made the novel claim that Maimonides is in fact a disciple of Plato, and, what is more, he found Maimonides to be a sharp critic of Aristotle, mocking and dismissive. It remained hidden from this scholar that the source and development of those ideas are not of the same cloth, and these observations call for an extensive discussion, for which this is not the place. See n. 157 and 581 in: Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, 90–95 and 112 (Hebrew pagination). See *Achad Ha-Am*, *Shilton ha-sekhel* [The Supremacy of Reason], in: *Ha-Shiloah* 15 (1905), no. 85–90, 291–319.

58 See *Hilkhot avodat kokhavim* [Laws of Foreign Worship] 2:3; and he repeats himself in several other places.

the truth in love. And at this point love trespasses into the territory of knowledge, ceasing to be a mere aide and help, and promoted to the rank of a “helpmate.” It initially comes in its own name, and once it sees the degenerate and frail state of “knowledge,” it nurses the wounds of the scholar who is in the throes of struggle, bringing an elixir under its wings.

“As man contemplates these matters ... his love for God increases and his soul thirsts and his body yearns to love the Blessed Holy One.”<sup>59</sup> And at the conclusion of “Sefer ha-madda” it is said: “And how is proper love expressed? By him who loves God with great, excessive, very strong love, so that his soul will be bound up with the love of God, and he will be found contemplating it ceaselessly as though afflicted with *lovesickness* whereby his mind is completely occupied by love for a woman.” [Hilkhot teshuvah (Laws of Repentance) 10:3] For the “medieval rationalist” knew the contemplative and speculative activities that venture beyond the intellect, as well as love and “lovesickness,” and the realm of emotion and imagination was not inaccessible. And so, at times, he was able to join *knowledge*, which is *analytical* in nature, with *love*, which is all-encompassing and synthetic. And though the latter was subordinate to *knowledge*, it is nevertheless whole: the love of a great, soaring soul.

Maimonides joined love and “knowledge” together, and thus Sefer ha-madda also resonates with the sounds of love. “Knowledge” is slowly ramified, becoming a chain with merged beginning and end: Knowledge – God’s unity – love – fear – holiness. But in essence, the first book of the “Mishneh Torah” attempts to establish principles for Judaism, to base [26] the faith on reason and discernment, to clarify its obscure notions (Hilkhhot yesodei ha-Torah), to discern the foundations of morals and ethics in the spirit of the middle path – Aristotle’s “Golden Mean” – and to outline the essentials of human health and nutrition (Hilkhhot de’ot), to affirm the imperative of teaching Torah to the young (adducing what we call a “curriculum”), to the Jewish laity and in houses of learning, to sing the praise of the Torah and those who study it (Hilkhhot talmud Torah [Laws of Torah Study]), to warn us against the various obstacles that lurk for the believer and to keep him away from any form of idolatrous worship (Hilkhhot avodat kokhavim), and if we failed and strayed from the right path – he opened for us the door to *repentance*, for great is the repentance that recovers sinners’ divine image in which they were created. And this form is will, free choice, the will to know and to love the Creator (Hilkhhot teshuvah).

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59 Hilkhhot yesodei ha-Torah 4:12.

“Sefer ha-madda” seeks to bring back the glory of old, to infuse faith with knowledge, for the People of Israel has been the People of Knowledge since the days of yore. “For our nation is a nation full of knowledge, as the Creator, may He be exalted, made clear through the intermediary of the Master (Moses) who made us perfect ... However, when the wicked from among the ignorant nations ruined our good qualities, destroyed our words of wisdom and our works, and caused our men of knowledge to perish, so that we again became *ignorant* ... when, furthermore, we mingled with these nations and their opinions took hold of us, as did their morals and actions ... it says with regard to our adoption of the opinions of the ignorant: ‘And they please themselves with the brood of aliens,’ [Isaiah 2:6] which is translated by Jonathan ben Uzziel: ‘And they walk according to the laws of the gentiles,’ when, in consequence of all this, we grew up accustomed to these opinions, these philosophic views appeared to be, *as it were, foreign to our Torah*, just as they are foreign to the opinions of the ignorant. However, this is not the case.”<sup>60</sup>

The “Mishneh Torah” seeks to bring redemption to Judaic law and thought, and “*Sefer ha-madda*” seeks to redeem knowledge – which is an asset of the People of Israel – from the hands of the nations of the world, to present concisely to the Jew the sum of knowledge and thought of the gentiles and of Israel, to ground them in the Torah and to liberate the People of Israel from the sway of the “ignorant.”

And because Maimonides laid this task upon “Sefer ha-madda,” he placed it at the head of the work and made it the *crown* of his entire edifice. The openings of all the “books” that follow are linked to it and their endings blend back into it, finding their roots and foundations therein. “Sefer ha-madda” is not a mere *entrance* way or corridor that leads to the parlour; it is both beginning and end, the sum of the “Mishneh Torah.” [27] For even if the man of “knowledge” embraced love and worship, the root of his soul remained knowledge; the absolute imperative of “*and you shall know*” superseded that of “*and you shall love*.”



The influence of our Rabbi Moses ben Maimon has not left us, and each generation finds in him new relevance. Our teachers, who were of the

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60 Moreh nevukhim, II:11, 276, [Judah] al-Ḥarizi translation. [Note by translator: Rawidowicz erroneously refers to chap. 12. Translation here with modifications reflecting al-Ḥarizi’s rendition.]

Haskalah [enlightenment] generation, used the “Moreh nevukhim” as a sword and a shield, studying it hidden under a Talmudic book, secretly, stealthily “swallowing” it in. The generation now praying for the “mighty hand” of God [Deuteronomy 34:12] need only return to the “Mishneh Torah,” which has been known among the Jews as “The Mighty Hand” for more than seven centuries.

Concerning the publication of “Sefer ha-madda,” we must note that our intention has been to present it as is, though we have shortened certain passages that, we believe, are not pertinent to the heart of the matter (chapters on health and some such subjects from *Hilkhot de’ot*, and most of the chapters in *Hilkhot avodat kokhavim*), and we have omitted chapters on marital laws and some such topics, because our book should become a reference work for every Jew and also be taught in schools (we denote omissions with three long dashes: – – –, and the reader will identify himself the principles and reasoning that guided the editor in deciding to omit these matters). We have not touched so much as a comma (though at times we have noted inconsistencies in gender and number; we placed omissions of a letter or a word in parentheses ()), and additions and corrections in square brackets (<>). And in this respect, today’s generation will certainly not feel that it is reading a book which was written seven hundred years ago. In order to preserve the original flavour, we have not changed the ordering of chapters and their respective parts, so that the reader may identify omissions, and if he wishes to fill in the blanks from the source – this will be his reward. In our various footnotes – on matters of content, language and source citations – we have tried to present to the reader the central problems that Maimonides discusses in this work, and for the sake of completion we have added to the formulations of the “Mishneh Torah” (on matters of metaphysics, prophecy, ethics and the like), various other statements that Maimonides made on the same topic elsewhere, thus clearly outlining and making evident to the reader the evolution of each idea. And if the reader is thus stimulated to learn more on that subject and to read the source texts of the passages quoted, this will be our reward. As for this Introduction, it contains nothing more than a few general comments on the “Mishneh Torah,” and on “Sefer ha-madda” in particular. The rest of the problems found in other books [of the Mishneh Torah] will be discussed in the relevant place. In order to avoid losing track of the “content” within the myriad commentaries of Maimonides’ “disciples,” we were forced to keep some of our comments and the [28] bibliographical list brief. When we publish the other “books” of the “Mishneh Torah” we will fill in those gaps. In addition, the final volume of the “book” will include



a specialized dictionary dedicated to the elucidation of the terminology of faith, halakhah and scholarship in the “Mishneh Torah.”<sup>61</sup>

And if our approach to some problems is different from that of “the Great Eagle,” and despite the fact more than seven hundred years separate us, nevertheless, let our generation go forth from this eagle’s nest and wonder at the mighty hand of Maimonides. For wonder is the source of enlightenment and occasions learning, and this is our goal.

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61 Needless to say, emphases throughout the text are not in the original; and biblical citations in the “Mishneh Torah” often follow different formulations than ours, since Maimonides apparently relied on other formulations and versions. The same applies to the Talmud.

## מבוא לספר המדע של משה בן מימון

### I. משנה תורה

הרמב"ם בקעה מצא – עמד וגדר לה גדר; ראה את חומת היהדות שהפרוץ מרובה בה על העומד וקם לעמד בפרץ; לתת כל מה שנצטבר במחשבת האומה לתוך דפוס קבוע, דפוס שכח ההפרכה מרובה על כח הגניזה שבו. קדמו לו הרבה גודרים שעמדו לבקעה זו, מהם אשר חרפו נפשם על האמונה המסורה, ומהם עזי נפש שהעפילו לעלות ההרה ולהסתכל במופלא מהם, לפרץ גדרי אבות ולשאל לעברם ולעתידם. דורות ותקופות טפחו את כח היוצר של האומה, דור דור ברוחו וסגנונו, יש מוסיף משלו ויש מהפך הקערה על פיה, הכל טורחים ומכינים – וגאון יבא יכבש את כל הרכוש שלא נצטבר אלא בשבילו ולשמו. איזהו חותם-גאון? הכובש עמל דורות ויובלות וקורא את שמו עליו. ואם גם בדרכים סלולות ילך ולקח מכל הבא בידו – משלו הוא הבנין וביתו הוא, בית מקלט לנשמתם הערטילאית של דור-ידורות שמצאה תקון ומפלט בו. דורות יבאו קובלים תדיר על החותם ואומרים עליו שבא להחריב מורשת אבות, או שלא היה אלא קונה וזוכה בשל אחרים בכליו בלבד ולא הכניס נכסים חדשים לתוך בית גנוזה של האומה – כי אין חדושו של זה אלא חדושי-פנים, לא חדוש חמה, יצירת יש מאין וכיוצא בהם, אלא חדושי-חתימה, בו ראשית ותכלית יחד, חתימה ופתיחה באות כאחד.

חותם ופתיחה הוא הרמב"ם בכל ענפי המחשבה הישראלית שבימי הביניים, מציב ציון לדורות עברו ופורץ דרך לדורות יבאו. מי שבא לפלס נתיב במחשבה ולהנחות את הנבוכים דרך במדבר חייהם שסגר עליהם – הטיל על עצמו את חתימת ההלכה העברית, חתימה זו שפתיחתה אינה פחותה מחתימתה; באה היא לגנו ונמצאת מעמיקה ומפרה.

מדור דור טפלו חכמי ישראל בשאלה זו: "התלמידים מתמעטין והולכין, והצרות מתחדשות ובאות, ומלכות עכ"ם פושטת בעולם ומתגברת, וישראל מתגלגל והולכין לקצות" – ומה הם כלי הגולה של האומה, |8| צידה לדרך עניה? ההלכה – מה תהא עליה? לשון הגמרא היא "לשון ארמי מעורב עם לשונות אחרות", וכעת "אין אדם מכיר הלשון". גם דרכי השקלא וטריא אינם נהירים ביותר לבני הדורות האחרונים, מהם טרודים ב"הבלי הזמן" ומהם אנשים מצויים אצל ההגיון הפילוסופי, מדותיו ודרכיו. כיצד מכניסים את ההלכה לתוך החיים ולא תשתכח תורה מישראל?

סדור ההלכה, סדור-בנין זה שיש בו משום יצירה מחדש היה לו לרמב"ם המפלט היחיד, זה העגן שנשא שריד לאחר שנטרפו ספינותיה של היהדות בים חייה המרודים והזועפים. ואם גם קדמו לו דבר זה כמה מהגאוניס-הפוסקים שלפניו (ביחוד האלפסי) ולא היה בית מדרש בישראל שלא למד ממנו הרמב"ם – הרי יותר מכולם למד חותם זה שבימי הביניים בבית מדרשו של חותם המשנה. תקופת הרמב"ם כתקופת רבנו הקדוש, תכלית "משנה תורה" כתכליתה של המשנה.

בא הרמב"ם ללמד ונמצא מלמד. מצוי היה אצל תורת ההגיון של הפילוסופיה היונית והערבית ונפשו לא הלכה בדרכי הפלפול של התלמוד, וכשהיה לומד תלמוד נוהג היה לרשם לעצמו את המסקנות והפסקים בדברי המחלקת השונים, כדי שלא יהא זקוק לחזר אגב הלכה אחת על כל הש"ס כולו. ולאח"כ נוכח בדבר שענין זה ברכה מרובה בו ללומדי התלמוד שנלאו למצא אורחותיו ורק מעטים נכנסים לתוכו ויוצאים ממנו בשלום. אותן הרשימות השונות הן ששמשו יסוד לחבור "משנה תורה".

במכתבו לתלמידו המובהק ר' יוסף בר' יהודה בן עקנין מעיר הוא על תולדות חברו זה: "דע כי אני לא חברתי זה החבור כדי להתגדל בו בין היהודים, ולא שיבא לי מזה

התפארות. והשם יתברך יודע כי לא טרחתי בו ראשונה אלא לעצמי ולנפשי, שאנוח מן החקירה ומן המשא והמתן ומלבקש מה שאצטרך אליו. ולעת הזקנה (כשהתחיל הרמב"ם מטפל בחבור 'משנה תורה' היה בן שלשים ושבע), ת"ל יתברך שאני חי קנא קנאתי לה' צבאות וראיתי האומה בלא ספר מחוקק שלא יהיה בו לבד עיון אמתי בלי מחלקת ולא שבושים ועשיתי מה שעשיתי לכבוד השם יתברך לבד.<sup>62</sup> יצא לתקן לעצמו והביא תקון לעולם, תקון להלכה.

"לעת זקנה" החל הרמב"ם, לדבריו, לחבר "ספר מחוקק" זה, אולם לתקנתה של ההלכה ולסדורה היה שוקד מימי נעוריו. בפרושו למשנה [9] ובחלקים שונים מחבורים אחרים שהלכו לאבוד (פרושו לתלמוד ירושלמי ולשלשת הסדרים מועד, נשים ונזיקין של תלמוד בבלי) אנו רואים אותו עמל וטורח להכניס סדר ושטה לתוך ההלכה, לסדרה סדור הגיוני שוה לכל נפש. משמר ומהפכני הוא כאחד בנידון זה, כופף קומתו בפני סבלה של ירושת דורות ומתחיל סולל את דרכו, הדרך המיוחדת לו.<sup>63</sup> בעקרי הדברים זהיר היה מאד "הנשר הגדול" שהיה מתקפל לפרקים תחת טליתה של המסרת לחסות בצלה ולהסתר מעין רואים. רוצה היה להוכיח את אמתות "משנה תורה" שאינו אלא "סך הכל" לגלגולי התפתחותה של ההלכה המסורה והמחשבה הדתית – והקדים לו את "ספר המצות". זה האחרון משמש בבחינה ידועה יסוד ופתח ל"משנה תורה". לאחר שקובע הוא שרשים אשר לפיהם נחלקת ההלכה ל"ד סוגים,<sup>64</sup> הולך הוא ומסדר סדור חדש את תרי"ג המצוות,<sup>65</sup> והכל להוכיח שאין בספר "משנה תורה" אלא מה שיש בהן, שלא הוסיף ולא גרע כלום לא משל תורה ולא משל דברי סופרים. "וראיתי שהוא ראוי שאשים תחלה בפתחת הספר מספר המצות כולם עשה ולא תעשה, עד שתבא חלוקת הספר על כללם ולא תמלט מצוה שלא נשלים הדבור בדיניה – – – זה כלו להשמר שלא יעדר ממנו דבר שלא אדבר בו. ובזכרי כל המצות במספר הייתי בטוח מזה."<sup>66</sup> היו מי שקדמו לרמב"ם במנין המצוות (בעל "הלכות גדולות" ועוד, גם משוררי ספרד היו מטפלים בדבר זה ועושים ממנו פְּנִינים לשירתם) – אך דעתו לא היתה נוחה מהם כלל וכלל.<sup>67</sup> לאחר הכשרת הקרקע ע"י "ספר המצות" הופיע ספרו "משנה תורה"<sup>68</sup> שגמרו הרמב"ם בשמיני לכסלו (שביעי לנובמבר) לשנת 1180<sup>69</sup> |10| אחר עבודת עשר שנים, כפי שמעיד הוא גופו בדבר ואומר: "וכמה טרחתי יומם ולילה כמו עשר שנים רצופות בקבוץ חבור זה. – – – שהרי קרבת דברים מרוחקים, מפוזרים ומפורדים בין הגבעות וההרים וקראתי אותם

62 פאר הדור, אמשטרדם, קמ"ב.

63 עי' גוטמן: "הרמב"ם בתור פוסק" בקבץ "משה בן מימון", II; א. שורץ: "יחס הרמב"ם לגאונים", בקבץ הנ"ל, I.

64 עי' בענין זה מורה נבוכים ח"ג, ל"ה. ושם כמה שנויים בסדר מנינם.

65 מקורן בתורה ומסרת קדומה היא. עי' מכות כ"ג, ב'.

66 מתוך הקדמתו ל"ספר המצות".

67 עי' שם.

68 כך קרא הרמב"ם לספרו, כמו שנראה מתוך הקדמתו. "היד החזקה" – אינו אלא שם-לואי שכנהו הבאים אחריו, ושמה נקרא לכתחלה ספר הי"ד (על שם שנחלק הוא ל"ד ספרים) ואח"כ קראו לו: ספר היד, וגם היד החזקה (אולי על יסוד הפסוק האחרון שבספר דברים. עי' שם). יש שהיו קוראים לו גם: ספר מימוני, או: מימוני. עי' שיטנישנידר [!], Cat. Bodlejana, ערך רמב"ם.

69 לדעת מונק, ואין הדבר כך בהקדמתו של הרמב"ם. עי' א. ה. ויס "בית תלמוד" שנה ראשונה, ע' 225.

אחד מעיר ושנים ממשפחה" (מתוך אגרתו ליונתן הכהן). ספר זה – כשמו כן הוא. חתימת ההלכה העברית לכל גלגולי השתלשלותה במשך אלף וחמש מאות שנה, ספוס תמציתי לחמר ההלכותי הרב שבשני התלמודים, זה שמשולב ושזור הוא בפלפולים שונים, במשא ומתן של בתי מדרש ובנצוח תלמידי חכמים שאינו פוסק. כל אותה הירושה הגדולה ספג וקלט לתוכו הרמב"ם קליטה בתיצירה, זו שעל ידה זכה לבנות אותו הבנין המתוקן והמוצק – למרות אי אלה לקויים שבעלי דין שונים יכלים למצא – שיש בו משום אמנות מחשבה וסגנון במדה שאין למעלה ממנה. ולא זה בלבד אלא שספר זה צריך היה לשמש לדורו ולדורות אנציקלופדיה לאומית-אנושית, בית-גנזים לרוח האומה ומכון לשאלות אדם וגוי שיהא כל אדם מישראל נכנס לתוכו ומוצא פתרון ותשובה על כל אשר יציק לו הן בדברי עיון והן בדברי הלכה למעשה, במנהגים של מה בכך ובשאלות מטפיסיות שהן מכבשונו של עולם, בחכמת התכונה ובתורת המדות, בדברי ריבות שבין אדם לחברו ובהלכות שלעתידי לבא, בדברים שבינו לבניה ועבודת בית המקדש ומעשה קרבנות. בנין בנוי מדרגות-מדרגות, תחתים שנים ושלישים, טרקלין טרקלין – ומבואותיו, ערוך ומתוקן לבני אדם שיכנסו לתוכו, יחסו בצלו ויזכו מן המוכן להם, איש באשר תאוה נפשו. כל משפט – בנין בפני עצמו הוא, כל פרק – בית שלם עומד על מכונו, כל הלכה – חומה בצורה היא ואין פרצה בה, כל ספר – היכל מלא טרקלינים ואולמים מתוקנים ומסודרים, וכל הבנינים הללו ששלמים הם בפני עצמם הולכים ומצטרפים בדבר האדריכל הגדול העומד וגוזר עליהם באמת הבנין שבידו לאותו היכל-היכלות העומד ומעיד על ידו החזקה של הבנאי, זו היד שזוכים לה יחידי סגולה שבדורות. ואם רואה אתה שכמעט אין לנו ספר בספרות ההלכה שהשפעתו ורשומיו כה נכרים ובלטים בחיים ובעולם המחשבה – הוה אומר: הרבה בזה מסוד הבנין! סוד החותם הגדול שידע לרכז חמר רב מנומר ומפוזר כזה ולהעמידו על עקרם משותפים, לצמצמו צמצום אחר צמצום עד שהיה למה שהוא; זה שאגר ולקט – ולמדרגת "מלקט" לא ירה.

ואנציקלופדיה ענקית זו, מעשה-יחידה, הוטל עליה לשמש לא רק [11] בית גנזים לירושת אבות בלבד אלא גם פתח לשאלות פְּנים לא שערון דורות אבות כלל. כל השאלות שהדור נזקק להן – מן ההכרח הוא שתמצאנה את פתרון ב"משנה תורה" שאינו מצטמצם בגבולות התלמוד והספרות שלאחריו בלבד. וכך הוא אומר בסוף הלכות קדוש החדש: "הרי בארנו חשבונות כל הדרכים שצריכין להם בידיעת הראיה (ראית הלבנה) ובחקירת העדים כדי שיהיה הכל ידוע למבינים ולא יחסרו דרך מדרכי התורה, ולא ישוטטו לבקש אחריה בספרים אחרים. דרשו מעל ספר ה' וקראו, אחת מהנה לא נעדרה" (שם י"ט, ט"ז). והלכך מטפל הוא בכמה מקצעות שהתלמוד והבאים אחריו לא נגעו בו כמעט. אמנם משתדל הוא תמיד למצא סמוכים לדברים אלה באמונה, נראה הוא כ"מתנצל" על שהכניס את תורת ההֶנְּה (Diätetik) לספרו בשעה שהוא אומר: "הואיל והיות הגוף בריא ושלם מדרכי השם הוא, שהרי אי אפשר שיבין או ידע דבר מידיעת הבורא והוא חולה, לפיכך צריך להרחיק את עצמו מדברים המאבדין את הגוף ולהנהיג עצמו בדברים המברין והמחלימים" (הלכות דעות, פ"ה, א'). והכל משום שאי אפשר היה לו לרמב"ם להשאיר חסר אחד בבנינו זה, שאלו לא חסרה בו אלא שאלת ההזנה בלבד היה העולם חוזר לתהו ובהו. ידיעת הפיסיקה והמטפיסיקה אינה כמו כן אלא שער לידיעת אלה ואהבתו (עי' הלכות יסודי התורה פ"ב, ב') וכיצא בזה. דברי אמונה ועניני חיים שונים, שאלות חמר ורוח הולכים ומשתלבים יחד ונעשים חטיבה אחת, הכל הולך ומתעלה לאותה נקדת הגבה הקבועה בראש הבנין הזה, זו שידו החזקה של היוצר נכבשה בה וממנה לה הכח לכלכל את הבנין כלו.

מצד אחד היה הרמב"ם, כאמור, תומך את יתדותיו במנין מצוות התורה ומאידך גיסא משוה היה לנגד עיניו תמיד את המשנה ומסתכל בה לברא על פיה את עולמו, קולט וסופג מכל ספרות ההלכה שקדמה לו (ביחוד מהאלפסי), עובר אגב סדור הלכה אחת מפוזרת "בין ההרים והגבעות" על פני ים התלמוד ונושאי כליו השונים בטיסת נשר, מלקט לקוטים אחר לקוטים ולא כדרך נמושות, בא לשדה-מורשה וזוכה בלקט שכחה ופאה של דורות ומכנסם לתוך בית גניזו, אריח מכאן ולבנה משם, נדבכים שונים ומשונים, בסגנון ובתקופה, הולכים ונעשים לאחד. ואף על פי כן במקום שאנו רואים אותו זוכה בשל אחרים והולך בדרכיהם, שם מוצאים אנו אותו סולל דרך חדשה, שאֵלו כל הפוסקים [12] שקדמו לו כשבאו לסדר את ההלכה המעשית היו, לפי הערתו של פרנקל,<sup>70</sup> מחזיקים באמת מדה שאינה שלהם. ר' אחאי לדוגמה סדר את כל ההלכות לפי מצוות התורה, ר' שמעון מקהירא והאלפסי שמו להם למופת את סדר המשנה והיו משמיטים אותן ההלכות שלא היו אלא בבחינת הלכתא למשיחא, והרמב"ם לא היה נוהג כך.<sup>71</sup> מתוך שהרמב"ם הכניס ל"משנה תורה" את כל ההלכות אלא שהיה מבחין בין הלכה למעשה והלכתא למשיחא לא יכל ללכת לא בדרך התורה ולא בדרך המשנה; ולפיכך חלק, לדוגמה, את מסכת פסחים הדנה בחמץ ומצה ובקרבת פסח לשני חלקים. דיני חמץ ומצה הכניס לתוך "ספר זמנים" (משום שהלכה למעשה קודמת) ודיני קרבן פסח נכנסו לתוך "ספר קרבנות", וכאלה רבים הם.<sup>72</sup> שטתו של הרמב"ם בסדור חדשה היא לגמרי, בראש ובעקר מתכון הוא לחבר הלכות בנות תכן אחד לחטיבה מיוחדת ולהפריד מעליהן אותן ההלכות הכרוכות בהן בכל הספרות שקדמה לו. ויש אשר מטעמים סימטריים הכניס הלכה אחת לתוך ספר אחר, אם כי לפי מהותה לא יכירנה מקומה כאן. (לדוגמה: הכניס "הלכות איסורי ביאה" לתוך "ספר קדושה" משום ש"ספר נשים" – שבו מקום הלכות אלו – גדול ורביחמר יתר על המדה).<sup>73</sup> תחלה סדר לעצמו את שרשי ההלכה לכל מקצועותיה, כשמצא אותן מחולקות לשמנים ושלשה סוגים עמד וסדרם בארבעה עשר ספרים. לאחר שהיתה "מסגרת" זו קבועה ועומדת התחיל ממלאה תכן, הלכות שונות שקבץ ולקט משני התלמודים וספרותם הרחבה. משנתו בסדר יש בה מן האנליזה והסנטיזה [!] כאחיה "הססטימה של הרמב"ם יסודה בדרך האנליטית, הציור הסיסטמטי של ההלכה – בזו הסינטטית".<sup>74</sup> וכך עלה בידי הרמב"ם [...] לא רק לסדר את ההלכה כ"א לצור לה בעקר צורה אורגנית, ליצר אותה כמעט מחדש, להראות על מקורה, צמיחתה והסתעפותה, להכניסה בגדר שטה הגיונית שכלית. ואשר לצורתו החצונית של הספר הריה"ל ה"לכות" ש"במשנה תורה" הן מעין ה"מסכות" שבמשנה, וה"ספר" הוא במקום ה"סדר". [13] לרגלי רבוי החמר ולשם סדור ההגיוני נאלץ היה הרמב"ם לחלק את ההלכה לארבעה עשר ספרים, ואֵלו לרבי הספיקו ששה סדרים. פרנקל חדש הלכה זו שהיסוד לאותה החלוקה שב"משנה תורה" הוא שהרמב"ם נוהג היה להבדיל בין הלכות למעשה והלכות עיוניות (הלכתא למשיחא),<sup>75</sup> והרמב"ם גופו מעיר

70 עיי Der gerichtliche Beweis (ברלין 1846), ע' 100 ואילך.

71 ומלבד זאת נבדל הוא הרמב"ם מן האלפסי בעקר שזה האחרון היה שונה גם תמצית המשא ומתן ברב ההלכות, והרמב"ם – אין לו אלא פסקי ההלכות בלבד.

72 עיי Plan u. Anlage des M. Thora :B. Ziemlich, בקבץ "משה בן מימון", I, ע' 267 ואילך.

73 עיי שם.

74 א. שורץ. עיי בספרו: D. M. T., ein System d. mos.-talm. Gesetzlehre, ע' 97, ה. 1.

75 שורץ חולק על זה. עיי בספרו ע"ו ואילך.

בחלק השלישי של "מורה נבוכים" (פרק ל"ה): "וכבר נודע כי כל המצוות נחלקות לשני חלקים: עברות שבין אדם למקום ואשר הם בין אדם לחברו". אם כך אחר שידועים לנו כי הרמב"ם הקדים תדיר הלכה למעשה להלכתא למשיחא יכלים לנו למצא את סוד סדור "משנה תורה" בסדר זה שהציע צימליך:

חלק ראשון.		חלק שני.					
מצוות שבין אדם למקום:		מצוות שבין אדם לחברו:					
הלכה למעשה	}	א. ספר המדע.	}	הלכה למעשה	}	ב. ספר אהבה.	יא. ספר נזיקין.
		ג. ספר זמנים.				יב. ספק קנין.	
		ד. ספר נשים.				יג. ספר משפטים.	
		ה. ספר קדושה.					
		ו. ספר הפלאה.					
		ז. ספר זרעים.					
הלכתא למשיחא	}	ח. ספר עבודה.	}	הלכתא למשיחא	}	ט. ספר קרבנות.	יד. ספר שופטים.
		י. ספר טהרה.					

כל המעין יפה ב"ספרים" אלה יעמד מאליו על הצורך הפנימי שביניהם והסדר ההגיוני והדרגתי שעל פיו הם בנויים ובאים זה אחר זה. אלא שצריך כאן להעיר שהרמב"ם הרחיב את מושג ה"מצוות שבין אדם למקום", ולפיכך הכניס לתוכן "ספר נשים" וכיוצא בו. "כל מצוה – – הכונה היא בה לתקן שום מדה או שום סברא או תקון מעשה אשר ראוי לאדם בנפשו והשלמתו, והם יקראו אותו שבין אדם למקום, ואע"פ שעל דרך האמת אפשר שיביאו לדברים שבין אדם לחברו".<sup>76</sup> והוא הדין מצוות התלויות בארץ בבחינת הלכתא למשיחא הן לו.



[14] אנציקלופדיה שנעשתה בידי חבר חכמים המקדישים לה את כל חייהם מן הדין הוא שתמצא חולקים ומערערים עליה, וזו של הרמב"ם שנעשתה בידי יחיד ובמקצע האמונה והדת, ברוח חדשה ובדרכים לא שערום קדמונים – על אחת כמה וכמה! ופרק זה, פרק מלחמות בית מדרשו של הרמב"ם ומתנגדיו הוא מן ההלכות היותר חשובות ולמודיות בתקופת ימי הבינים. כל הבא לדון במחלקת זו עליו להבחין בין אותן הטענות והערעורים שנתגלגלו על "משנה תורה" בגלל חטאים שחטא הרמב"ם ב"מורה נבוכים" ובין אלה שמכוונות הן רק כלפי הסדר והשטה, המגמה והתכלית של ספר זה. אלו היינו באים למסר מחלקת זו כתמה – לא היינו מספיקים. ומכל מקום יבאו נא כאן קטעים אחדים מדברי הרמב"ם שיצא ללמד סגוריה על עצמו בפני מתנגדיו; היוצר בא להעמידנו על סוד יצירתו – אין טוב לנו משמע לו.

פנחס בן משולם, דין אלכסנדריה, טען עליו שלש טענות שהן אחת (ידועות הן לנו רק מתוך תשובתו של הרמב"ם): א) על שסתם תדיר ולא הזכיר שמות התנאים והאמוראים בחבורו, והרי סכנה בדבר שישכח העם את מוריו הגדולים. ב) שקבע את חבורו בתור מכריע יחידי בכל שאלות האמונה והדת להלכה ולמעשה, נמצא דבר זה עלול לגרם לשכחת התלמוד בישראל. ג) שהפשיט מעל ההלכות את דברי המחלקת השונים, השמיט את המשא ומתן התלמודי ולא הראה כל מקור לדבריו, לא הביא כל טעם – ולמה יתחיבו בני ישראל בקבלת דבריו?<sup>77</sup> לאחר שמכחיש הרמב"ם דברי דבה ולעז שונים שהגיעו לר' פנחס בן משולם על אדותיו, משיב הוא לו בגוף הענין: "דע תחלה שאני חס ושלום לא אמרתי: לא תתעסקי [!] לא בגמרא ולא בהלכות הרב ר' יצחק או זולתו.<sup>78</sup> – והלא בפרוש אמרתי בתחלת חבורי שלא חברתי אותו אלא מפני [15] קצר רוח למי שאינו יכל לירד לעמק התלמוד ולא יבין ממנו דרך האסור והמותר – – וזה שאמרת על שמות החכמים, כבר הזכרתי שמות רובי החכמים, תנאין ואמוראין בתחלת החבור. האם כן הוא שכל מי שפסק הלכות ועשה סלת נקיה גרם לשם שמים להתחלל כמו שעלה על לבך? כבר קדמוני גאונים וגדולים שחברו חבורים ופסקו הלכות בלשון עברי ובלשון ערב בענינים ידועים. – – ודע שכבר אמרתי בתחלת חבורי שהענין שתפשתי בו שיהיה דרך המשנה ובלשון המשנה, אבל אתם לא שמתם לבבכם לדברי ולא ידעתם ההפרש שיש בין דרך המשנה ודרך התלמוד. – – דע אלופי ומיודעי שכל מי שכתב ספר בין בדברי תורה בין בדברי שאר החכמות – – הוא אוחו או דרך חבור או דרך פרוש. ודרך החבור להזכיר הדברים הנכונים בלבד, בלא קושיא ובלא פרוק ובלא שום ראייה בעולם כמו שעשה רבנו הקדוש בחבור המשנה. – – ואני לא עשיתי פרוש אלא חבור, דרך המשנה".<sup>79</sup> ושוב: הרי דעות חכמי המשנה אינן באמת אלא דעותיהם של אבות הקבלה דור מפי דור, מפי משה רבנו. ולמה לא הזכירו אלה שמותיהם של הראשונים?<sup>80</sup> ואשר לטענות שאר מתנגדיו שהיו ממררים את חיו בכל מיני דברים שהם מתוך קנאה ושנאה, הוא כותב לתלמידו: "כי אני ידעתי ונתאמת אצלי בעת שחברתי כי יפל זה החבור בלא ספק ביד אנשים רעים קנאים ויגנו יופיו ויפחיתו מעלתו ויראו בו גנותם או קצר עיונם בו – – ויפל בלא ספק לשרידיים אשר ה' קורא על האמת ועל הצדק ובהשתדלות ובטוב העיון ויכירו וידעו ערך מה שעשיתי, שאתה האחד מהם, ואפילו לא יהיה לי בזמני זה זולתך – די לי – – אבל אני יודע בודאי כי בזמנים הבאים כשתפל הקנאה ובקשת

77 ע"י הערתנו 18 בנדון זה. שד"ל קשר מלחמה על הרמב"ם בכח טענותיו אלה של ר' פנחס בן משולם ומלבד זה קבל עליו על שקבע עקרים ליהדות, "כי הנה הנביאים, התנאים והאמוראים והגאונים מעולם לא הגבילו עניני האמונה". (ע"י כרם חמד ח"ג, עמוד 70).

78 באגרתו לתלמידו ר' יוסף ב"ר יהודה בן עקנין (פאר הדור, קמ"ב) הוא אומר: "ולא תתעסק כי אם בהלכות הרב (אלפסי) ותעריכו אותו עם החבור (משנה תורה), וכשתמצאו מחלקת בדבר – תדעו כי עיון התלמוד יורה אתכם זה, ותשתכלו ותעינו במקומו ותמצאו האמת ולא תכלה ותאבד זמנך בפרוש ובמשא ומתן של גמרא ואותם הדברים שכבר הנחתי (חברתי) מהם אבוד הזמן ומעט התועלת". לדעתי מקור המחלקת [15] הוא בזה, שהחולקים על הרמב"ם חשבו ש"משא ומתן של גמרא" הם דברי האמוראים שבתלמוד, והרמב"ם לא התכון כנראה אלא למפרשי התלמוד השונים.

79 אגרות הרמב"ם, הורדנא, 1785, ע' 29 ואילך.

80 שם. ע"י הערתנו 18.

השררה יתאוו כל בני ישראל לו (לחבור זה) לבדו, ויונח זולתו בלא ספק חוץ ממי שיבקש דבר שיעבר בו זמנו, ואע"פ שלא ישיג האיש ההוא תכלית ענין המבוקש".<sup>81</sup>  
ובטחונו זה לא הטעהו ביותר.



[16] "וממה שראוי שתדעהו – שהאדם אין ראוי לו לדבר ולדרש באוני העם עד שיחזור מה שרצונו לדבר פעם ושנים ושלש וארבע, וישנה אותו היטב, ואח"כ ידב – ואולם מה שיחוק האדם בידו ויכתבהו על הספר – ראוי לו שיחזירהו אלף פעמים, אלו יתכן זה".<sup>82</sup> ובמקום אחר כותב הוא לבנו, ר' אברהם: "ואל תדברו בלעגי שפה, דברו במבחר הלשון, בצחות השפה, בקול נחת, בכון הענינים כמבקש ללמד ומחפש האמת".<sup>83</sup>

כמשנתו בהלכה כך משנתו בסגנון ולשון, מה זו "מעור אחד" עם היותה מחוברת ומורכבת מתקופות ומקורות שונים – אף זו קב ונקי, סגנון בני עליה, לשון שיש בה משום פשוטותה של העממיות ואצילותה של המחשבה המופשטת כאחד, זו העממיות הנובעת מתוך תוכה של הנפש הפשוטה והישרה של העם וזו המחשבה אשר בגדולות תהלך נפשה, יורדת תהומות ומרקיעה שחקים ואינה מאבדת עם זה אף כל שהוא מפשטותה העליונה. רכוש דורות ועשר נפשו של היחיד נכבשו בה כאחד, ובכבושם זה הם עומדים ומסיעים זה לזה, משלימים זה את זה השלמה שאין עליה כל תוספת.

סגנונו הספרותי של הרמב"ם טבוע בחותם הבהירות הקלסית, הפשוטות שיש בה הרבה מן הציוריות, הצמצום שאין בו משום צרות עין ועניות, הרכוז והכבוש הבא מתוך מרחבים ומרחקים לא ישערם אנוש, הקצור היוצא מתוך ההקפה הרחב והכולל, זה שיש בו משום רמיזה על אוצרות מלאים כל טוב, הדיוק שאין בו משום קפדנותו של יושב שבעה נקיים ולא ינקה, הזהירות שאין בה משום הרטט והחולשה, הלשוש שאין זעת אפיו של העובד נודפת ממנו, הגהוץ שאין בו משום גנדרנות הצורה, הקשור הנמרץ אשר לא ידע כל קשר-חוץ, קשורי-משפט ושגרות-לשון מקובלות; כמו כן מפותחת בו ביותר ההקבלה הסימטרית, ההתאמה של כל משפט ומשפט וצרוף המשפטים השונים שבכל פרק. מי שידע סוד בנין במחשבה לא נעלם ממנו סוד זה גם בסגנון, אף כאן לא זזה מידו אמת הבנין אף לרגע, עמד ורקע את סגנונו המעלה אותו למדרגת יוצרים גדולים בני חורין הכובשים הרבה "נוסחאות" וסוללים דרך "לנוסח" חדש אשר רק יחידי [17] סגולה יתפללו על פיו – והלמות פטישים לא נשמע, טיט, חמר ולבנים, שוירי בנין ונפצי אבנים, חצץ וכיוצא בו לא יראו ולא ימצאו בגבולותיו. משכימים בני אדם ותמהים: בנין זה – מנין? והן לא שאל כלים מאיש ולא ראה אדם בעבדו.

אולם סגנון לשמו לא ידע הרמב"ם, וכן גם לא עשה כְּנִיִּים בלשון, התועלת היתה תמיד לגנד עיניו, ואם מצוי היה אצל סממנים אלה – אין זאת אלא משום שבזכותם מקוה היה לכבש את לבות בני דורו, להביא תועלת לדורות שלא ימוט בנינו בהמוט סגנון ורוח לשון. "שכל חבורינו אמנם הם קב ונקי; אין כונתנו להגדיל גוף הספרים ולא לכלות הזמן במה שלא יביא

81 פאר הדוד קמ"ב.

82 קבץ תשובות הרמב"ם ואגרותיו, הוצאת ליכטנברג, חלק שני, מאמר קדוש השם, דף י"ב, שורה אחרונה.

83 שם, מוסר נאה מאד מהרמב"ם ז"ל, ל"ח.



אל תועלת. ולזה כשנפרש לא נפרש אלא מה שצריך לפרוש ובשעור שיובן לכו, וכשנחבר לא נחבר רק קצור הענינים. – אתם עדת המעינים בחבורינו כבר ידעתם שאני לעולם נוטה לחסר המחלקות והוכוחים, ולו היה אפשר לי לשית התלמוד כלו בפרק אחד – לא הייתי משימים אותו בשנים. ואיך יבוקש ממני זכרון הדרשות וההגדות – והם נמצאות במקומותם, ויקרא שם. ומה תועלת לכפלים ונאמר שאנחנו חברנו?<sup>84</sup>

ואף בהלכות-לשון לא שכח את משנתו בסגנון. שאין בלשון אלא מה שבסגנון. זה האחרון בונה לה אב, והכל הולך אחריו. גם בלשון הערבית (שאינה לדבריו אלא "לשון עברית שנשתבשה מעט", מתוך מכתבו לאבן-תבון) שלא היתה נשמעת לו כאחותה העברית זכה להגיע למדרגת יצירה, מה שלא עלה בידי ר' יהודה הלוי ואפילו בידי רב סעדיה גאון.<sup>85</sup>

ובעברית? יבא ספרו זה ויוכיח! הן לשון זו חמדה גנוזה היא וכלי מחזיק ברכה לעברית עד היום וריחה לא יפוג כל עוד תחיה לשון זו עלי אדמות; אם כי התנגדות מקלקלת את השורה ואחר ממשיגיו היותר חריפים של הרמב"ם, ר' אברהם בן דוד, לא נתקררה דעתו בהשגותיו השונות בדברי הלכה ועיון והתחיל מגנה גם את סגנונו ולשונו של הרמב"ם. [18] ("קלקל עלינו את הלשון" – ה' ברכות ו', ג'; "ראיתי זה האיש משנה המליצות ומסבב אותן לענינים אחרים ומתוך כך הוא משתבש" – ה' טומאת מת כ"ב, ז'; "זה הלשון חשך ולא אור" – ה' איסורי ביאה ח', י' ועוד).

אין בלשון אלא מה שבתכו, פני הלשון כפני התכן. כי הרמב"ם גופו הכיר בדבר שהספר "משנה-תורה" אינו אלא ספר-עם, ספר "לקטן ולגדול" שיהא כל אדם מיישראל מוצא בו את כל הדרוש לו להשכלתו, לחייו ברגעים ובענינים שונים. וספר-עם שעליו להיות שוה לכל נפש אין לו כל תקוה להתפשט בעם אם אין לשונו אתו, לשון פשוטה ובהירה, נוחה לכל איש ועוברת לחיים,<sup>86</sup> לשון המושכת את לב הקורא ומכניסו לתוך הענין שלא מדעתו. ספר-עם ממין זה אינו זקוק להערות מלאות חכמה, מראי מקומות, פרושים ובאורים, כי "בל יראה כלל הקורא שהמחבר רוצה לבאר דבר מה; על המחבר להעמיד את הענין גופו לפני עיני הקורא בבהירות כזו, שזה האחרון יעמד עליו מאליו".<sup>87</sup> וקסמים אלה בכחה של הלשון הם, ועת נגע הרמב"ם במטה הקסמים שבידו בלשון עבר שנשמטה היתה כלואה גם אז בספרים וגוילים התחילה זו "הזקנה" שטרם בלתה להיות פזיזה ומהלכת, חיה וממללת – אם כי עשתה זאת בנחת ובכבוד כראוי ויאות לכבוד לשון קדומים, "לשון קדש".<sup>88</sup> עמד בה טעם זקנים – אך לא חסרה עדנת הנער, הנער שלאחר זקנה ממושכת.

84 קבץ תשובות הרמב"ם ואגרותיו, הוצאת ליכטנברג, ח"ב מאמר תחית המתים, דף י'.

85 נכשל היה הרמב"ם בכמה מכללי הדקדוק הערבי ומכל מקום לשונו היא "בהירה, חריפה, מלאה עז ועצמה, שוטפת יפה, ולפרקים יפת-קול היא ביותר" (Friedländer: Die arabische Sprache); d. Maimonides; קבץ "משה בן מימון", I, ע' 428) עי' בפרוטרוט בספרו של הנ"ל, Der Sprachgebrauch d. Maimonides, I, פרנקפורט, 1902.

86 עי' בספרו של M. D. T., ein System d. mos.-talm. Gesetzlehre: A. Schwarz, ע' 76 ואילך.

87 שורץ, שם.

88 לשון קדש היא משום ש"לא תמצא בה שם אמתי למשגל ובעילה אך יזכרו אותו בשמות מושאלות סמוכות ובדמיונות" (מורה נבוכים, ח"ג, ח'). בנידון השקפת הרמב"ם על הלשון העברית עי' W. Bacher: Die Bibelexegese M. Maimunis, ע' 163 ואילך. עי' באותו ענין הכחרי מאמר ב', ט"ו ואילך.

ומגמתו זו לתת ספר לעם בלשון עממית היא שעמדה לו בשעת ההתלבטות ב"חבלי לשון" אשר לא היו לו זרים כלל וכלל. בהקדמתו ל"ספר המצוות" מגלה הוא את דעתו בדבר זה: "וכן ראיתי שלא אחברוהו בלשון ספרי הנבואה לפי שהלשון הזה קצר בידינו מה שלים עניני הדינים בו. וכן לא אחברוהו בלשון התלמוד, לפי שלא יבינוהו מאנשי אומתנו כ"א יחידים, ומלות ממנו זרות וקשות אפילו לבקיאים בתלמוד, אבל אחברוהו בלשון המשנה כדי שיקל זה לרוב". ולפיכך כשפנה אליו [19] אחד ממעריציו, מר יוסף בן גאבר מאנשי בגדד, וקבל לפניו "שאינו מבין החבור (משנה תורה) בשביל שהוא בלשון עברי" השיב לו הרמב"ם: "וראוי לך גם כן שתלמוד זה השעור מן החבור מלשון הקדש – כי הוא קל להבין וקורב להתלמד מאה.<sup>89</sup> – ואיני רוצה בשום פנים להוציאו ללשון ערבי לפי שכל נעימותו יפסד. ואני מבקש עתה להחזיר פרוש המשנה וספר המצוות ללשון הקודש – וכל שכן שאחזיר זה החבור ללשון ערבי?! ואל תבקש זה ממני כלל".<sup>90</sup>

אישיותו של עורך המשנה, ר' יהודה הנשיא, היתה משמשת לו לרמב"ם דוגמה ומופת, לא רק בעניני סדור ועריכה אלא גם בהלכות לשון. מספר היה תדיר בשבחו ומפליא היה את לשונו. "והיה (ר' יהודה הנשיא) צח לשון ומופלג מכל האדם בלשון הקדש עד שהחכמים ע"ה היו לומדים פירש מה שנשתבש עליהם מאותות המקרא מדברי עבדיו ומשרתיו, וזה מפורסם בתלמוד".<sup>91</sup> ולשון זו, לשון המשנה המכונה בפי רב החוקרים "עברית חדשה", טבועה ביסוד לשון "משנה תורה", בצלמה ובדמותה יצר הרמב"ם את לשונו, אך בהרבה שונה היא זו ממנה. כי למרות שאין עקבות התרגום נכרים כל עקר בלשון "משנה תורה" – לשון זו לשון-תרגום היא ביסודה. שהרי היה עליו על הרמב"ם לתרגם ללשונו, תרגום סגנון ולשון, את רב ספרות ההלכה שהלכה ונוצרה במשך תקופות שונות, בבתי מדרש רחוקים זה מזה שנבדלו בשטה ובמדות, ואף בלשון ממש. וכל המצוי אף במקצת אצל ענין זה יהא עומד ותמה על האחדותיות הגדולה שבין "כלאים" אלה, כלאי זמן ולשון. וכך רואים [20] אנו את הרמב"ם לא רק כבעל סגנון אלא גם כמתרגם ממדרגה ראשונה, מבני עליה;<sup>92</sup> מתרגם שהיה זהיר בחסר ויתיר כיוצר בן-חורין, מתרגם ויוצר כאחד.

89 הרמב"ם היה בטוח בדבר שלשון המשנה היא המובנת ביותר לבני דורו. אולם אם כי ממכתבו זה של יוסף בן גאבר אין ללמד הרבה, שהרי זה לא היה מצוי כנראה כלל אצל הלשון העברית, אם כי היתה לו "השתדלות חזקה על תלמוד תורה", הנה יש עובדות אחרות מטפחות על פניו. הרי תנחום בן יוסף הירושלמי (שחי במאה השלש עשרה) ראה צרך לחבר לקסיקון ל"משנה תורה" לתועלת בני הדור שלא הבינו לא את לשון המשנה ולא את לשונו של הרמב"ם ששונה היא במקצת מזו, כמובח להלן; שמו הערבי של לקסיקון זה הוא: אלמרשד אלכאפי (המערר המספיק, מפרשי ישראל קראוהו עברית: "ספר המספיק"), עי בכר Aus d. Wörterbuche Tanchum Jeruschalmi's, ע' 44 ואילך; עי גם גולדציהר באותו ענין.

90 קבץ תשובות הרמב"ם ואגרותיו, ח"ב, ט"ו. לא נתן כלל לשער כמה רוח והצלחה היו מגיעים ללשון העברית אלו עלה בידי הרמב"ם להפיק זממו זה בדבר תרגום ספריו הערביים לעברית.

91 ראש השנה כ"ו, ב'. מתוך הקדמתו לפרוש המשנה.

92 לא נתקררה דעת המתרגם הגדול הזה עד שתרגם עברית גם את המאמרים התלמודיים המפורסמים ביותר בצורתם הארמית. לדוגמה: במקום: כל דאלים גבר – אומר הוא: כל המתגבר זכה. (ה' שכניס ג', י.). ואף כאן לא נחה דעת הראב"ד שלא רצה להודות בכשרון תרגומו של הרמב"ם: "מכיר אני האמת עם אותם שאמרו, המעתיק מלשון ללשון צריך שיהא בקי בדבר מאד ושיהיה בקי בשתי הלשונות.

מכאן אנו למדים שמן ההכרח הוא שתהא לשון הרמב"ם המתרגם שונה מלשון עורך המשנה, זה שהיתה לו העברית לשון־אבות ושנה את כל הדברים בלשון שנאמרו ונשנו; עד כמה שידו מגעת אין הרמב"ם משנה ממטבע־לשון שטבעה המשנה ושונה הוא הלכות השנויות עברית צחה כמות שהן, כשאינן טעם הלכותי ולשוני מיוחד בדבה.<sup>93</sup> אך בדרך כלל רואים אנו אותו מרחיב את גבולות לשון המשנה ומכניס לתוכה הרבה יסודות חדשים, יש מתוך אגס ויש מתוך רצון ובמחשבה תחלה;<sup>94</sup> הרבה מיסודות לשון המקרא שאין זכר להם במשנה חזרו לתחיה בלשונו של הרמב"ם, והרבה מהם קבל אמנם הרמב"ם מתוך המשנה אלא שמלא קנקנים ישנים אלה יין חדש. ולפרקים היתה לשון המקרא עומדת לו "בין המצרים" כשתמונות או צרופי־לשון שונים המצויים ועומדים במשנה לא הניחו את דעתו ביותר. משום נטיתו לציריות הנכרת במקומות שונים יוצא הוא את בית מדרשו של עורך המשנה ומתחיל מדבר לפעמים ב"מליצות", בפסוקי [21] מקרא ובחצאייהם; וכל האומר ש"מכשול"־לשון בעלמא הוא אינו אלא טועה, ודאי שלא חדר זה לתוך מסתרי יצירתו הלשונית של הרמב"ם. והכל משום שנוהר היה הרמב"ם ביותר שלא להכשל ב"חדגוניות", וכך גם כדי לעורר את לב המעיין היה מותר לפרקים על העקביות בזמן, שם המספר, שם הגוף וכדומה. מכאן הצביון המקראי המתבלט במקומות שונים ב"משנה תורה" והמוצא לו סיוע בשמות נרדפים, תמונות וצרופי לשון שיסודם במקרא. וכשם שהכניס ללשונו הרבה מן המקרא – כך שנה לפרקים שנוי תכן ומהות במה שהוציא מתוך המשנה; והרבה מלים מחודשות אנו מוצאים כאן, משלו ומשל אחרים. (לדוגמה: אָמְתָהּ, הָצַע (מל' הציע), חָלִיף (יחיד מן "חליפין" המצוי בתלמוד), נאמנות (במובן אמונה), צחות, שְׁגִיָה (עסק, דבר שאדם שוגה בו) ועוד); ודבר שאין צריך לאמר הוא שהרבה חדש הרמב"ם במקצע הפילוסופיה, ההנדסה והתכונה, דברים שהמשנה לא היתה נזקקת אליהם בדרך כלל. ואשר לארמית לסגנונה השונים, זו הלשון שרב החמר ההלכותי שנוי בה, אין לראות ביותר את השפעתה על לשון ה"משנה תורה". עפ"י מתרגם הוא את כל המאמרים השונים עברית צחה, ויש שמשתדל הוא להכניס אי־אלו צרופי־מלים ארמיים בשנוי צורה שיש בו בנותן טעם עברית כל שהוא. מונחים שונים שקבועים הם ומקובלים ביותר נשארים כמות שהם (אסמכתא, אדרכתא, שכיב מרע ועוד). וכך הוא הדבר גם בהשפעת הגומלין שבין העברית ובין הערבית, לשון־חיייו של הרמב"ם שכתב בה את רב ספריו. פרידלנדר הוא שהעיר כי יותר משהשפיעה לשון החיים הערבית על לשון הספר העברית, השפיעה זו האחרונה על הראשונה.<sup>95</sup> ומכל מקום

הנה ראיתי זה המחבר עשה עצמו מעתיק לשון גמרא אל לשון עברית ובמליצה אחרת וטעה במליצתו". (ה' שבועות ו', ט'). וידועים הם דבריו של הרמב"ם לאבן־תבון בשאלת התרגום.

93 שונים ממין זה רבים הם. לדוגמה עי' מאמרו של צימליך: Plan u. Anlage d. M. T., ע' 264 בקבץ "משה בן מימון", I.

94 על מהות לשון ה"משנה־תורה" עי' בפרוטרוט בספרו של בכר: Aus dem Wörterbuche Tanchum Jeruschalmi's nebst einem Anhang über den sprachlichen Charakter des Mischne-Tora, ע' 117 ואילך. מלואים לספר זה – הוא מאמרו: Zum sprachlichen Charakt. d. Mischne Thora, בקבץ "משה בן מימון", II; כמו־כ: ein System d. mosaisch-talmud. Gesetzlehre, ע' 74 ואילך.

במלון המיוחד ל"משנה תורה" נשתדל לסכם את הדעות השונות באותו ענין, לסדר את החמר הרב בצרור הוספות חדשות. הפעם נסתפק בהערה כללית זו.

95 עי' הערתנו 2 לצד [17] n. 85].

מוצאים אנו בלשון הרמב"ם הרבה מעקבות הלשון הערבית, ובהרבה לא נמשך אלא אחר חכמי ישראל הספרדיים שקדמוהו.

למרות המקורות השונים שמהם ינק, הלשונות השונות ובנותיהן שמהן היה עליו לתרגם – אנו מוצאים בלשונו של הרמב"ם אחדות צורה וצביון במדה שאין למעלה ממנה, הוא התיך את לשון המשנה שקבעה יסוד ללשונו וצרף לה יסודות שונים ורחוקים, ותצא לשון מוצקה ואחדותית, שנוחה היא הרבה ושוטפת לפרקים יותר מלשון המשנה. כי הרבה בלשונו מן הרך של האגדה, ומדי יטפל בדברי עיון ואמונה שאין זקת המדע עליהם – חוזר הוא ללשון התנ"ך, מתרפק הוא על עדנת לשון המקרא, לא כ"מליץ" אלא כיוצר. וגם העקץ החריף, ההתול והלעג [22] ל"טפשים" ול"רב גלמי בני אדם" לא היו זרים לו כלל וכלל. וכך החזיר הרמב"ם עטרת הלשון העברית ליושנה, כנשר גדול פרש את כנפיו על כמה יסודות חוץ להכניסם לפניו ובנהמת ארי פרץ את גדרי הלשון בדורו, מרד ב"נוסח" המקובל והיה למורה דרך בלשון לדורו ולדורות. הרבה נהיה אף אנו למדים ממנו, גאון הלשון שלא ירד מימיו למדרגת "עבד לעברית".



להרבה פוסקים מישראל (בעל הטורים, בעל ה"שלחן ערוך" ועוד) שמש הספר "משנה תורה" דוגמה ומופת. הרבה מפרשים עמלו לפרשו ולישב סתירות שונות שבינו ובין הפוסקים האחרונים, להראות על מקורות דבריו וכיוצא בזה, למעלה ממאתים ספרים נכתבו עליו, חוץ מהמון כתבי יד שונים המתגלגלים בביבליתיקאות שונות כאבן שאין לה הופכין.<sup>96</sup> הוא היה גם אחד הספרים הראשונים שזכו לצאת בדפוס. לראשונה נדפס, לדעת רב החוקרים, בשנת 1480. אח"כ חזר ונדפס באיטליה (סונצינו) בשנת 1490. בשתי ההוצאות הללו אין לפנינו אלא גוף הספר בלבד. ההוצאה השלישית (1509) זכתה לכמה פרושים.

גם לעולם הנוצרי חדר ספר זה. כמה מלומדים משלהם תרגמו חלקים שונים ללשון הרומאית.<sup>97</sup> חבה יתרה היתה נודעת מהם לספר המדע. (מענינת היא מאד הקדמת גאורגיוס גנציוס לתרגום הרומאי של הלכות דעות). בעת האחרונה תורגמו הרבה חלקים לכמה מהלשונות החיות.<sup>98</sup>

[23]

## II. ספר המדע

אין "מדע" האמור כאן אלא ידיעה שיש בה משום הכרה. ספר המדע – הוא ספר הידיעה וההכרה.

היו מי שיסדו את שטתם בפילוסופיה ומשנתם ביהדות על האבה (ואהבת את ה' אלהיך), כי בדרך אחת נקנית האמת – ואהבה שמה, לאור האהבה צופה האדם בעולם ורואה מסופו ועד סופו ואין האוהב מרפה מאלהיו כל עוד שלא נגלה אליו והראהו את שעור קומתו.

96 עיי בענין זה: ילינק, קונטרס הרמב"ם.

97 שטיינשניידר: Cat. Bodlejana, ערך רמב"ם.

98 עיי מינץ: משה בן מימון (אשכנזית). עיי ביבליוגרפיה.

ויש שהעמידו הכל על העבודה (ועבדת את ה' אלהיך), שרק בעבודה מוצא האדם תקון לנפשו כי יתקן פגימות ההווה שזקת תקונן עליו; אין אלה אלא עבודה, ועל ידה מצרף אדם עצמו אליו. והרמב"ם אין לו תחלה אלא הידיעה, הצווי המוחלט של וידעת את ה' אלהיך. אין האדם משיג את אלהיו וזוכה להדבק בו לא מתוך אהבה ולא מתוך עבודה, אלא מתוך ידיעה. אהבה מקלקלת את השורה ועבודה מדרכה להטיל שעבודה על כל חושי האדם ומטרידתהו ע"י כך מעולם העיון וההסתכלות, כי האוהב עלול לטעות והעובד אינו רואה אלא את עבודתו הוא, מה שאין כן היודע, שיודע הוא תדיר את אלהיו, מלא כל לבו ידיעתו, משום כך דבק הוא בו התדבקות נצחית שאינה פוסקת ונחלשת כידעה גופה, זוכה להגיע למדרגת מקור הידיעה, השכל הפועל, ומשיג דברים לא ישערום האוהב והעובד. וכך הורה סוקרטס בשעתו שהידיעה היא השלטון והממשלה, ואין לך דבר גדול ממנה, שאם זכה אדם לה – העלה עצמו למדרגת בנייעליה שאין מדרגה על מדרגתם. וידיעה זו של הרמב"ם – מהי? שהרי שנינו: שני מיני ידיעה בפילוסופיה היונית, האחד לסוקרטס והשני – לאריסטו. הידיעה לראשון היא אותה הידיעה הנשגבה שיש בה משום מפעל, אין ידיעה זו אלא רצון (ואין רצון אלא הרצון לטוב, הורה אותו פילוסופוס), זו הידיעה השולטת באדם ובעולם, מכניסתו למסתרי כל הוה וכל הָיָה ועושה אותו שותף במעשי בראשית. אין ידיעה זו לסוקרטס אלא כבוש האדם את עצמו, שיבה לנפשו. מתוך כבוש עצמו כובש הכל הוא, וכי ישוב לנפשו – חוזר הוא לנשמתו של עולם [24] ודבק במקור האוצל בטובו את ההווה, שאלמלא הוא – לא היה קיום לעולם אפילו שעה אחת.

עד כאן – סוקרטס. ואלו אריסטו לא הבין יפה את רבו של אפלטון מורהו, גם לו הידיעה עקר ומושכל ראשון שאין להרהר אחריו, אולם נטולה היא ידיעה זו אותה חרות הרצון והמפעל שהורה לנו סוקרטס, ערטילאית היא ביסודה ואינה יונקת ממקור החיים, תועה היא בעולמות השערות ועיונים, על כן מופשטת היא ביותר ואין בכחה לפתח לאדם פתח לנשמתו של עולם ולחשף לפניו מצפוניסטרם.

והרמב"ם, תלמידו המובהק של אריסטו, למד כאן הרבה בבית מדרשם של סוקרטס ואפלטון. יש ב"מדע" (ידיעה) שלו משניהם כאחד, זוג זה של סוקרטס ואריסטו עלה לו יפה. בעקרה ושרשה, מהותה וצביונה, אין ידיעה לרמב"ם אלא זו של אריסטו, במגמתה ותכליתה – יד בית מדרשו של סוקרטס על העליונה.

ולא רק בדבר זה בלבד הרכיב הרמב"ם שני יסודות מחשבה אלה ההולכים ומתורוצצים בתרבות העולם עד היום הזה, שהרי במשנתו במחשבה מוצאים אנו את הרמב"ם כרוך אחרי אריסטו ואלו בשטתו באמונה ודת קנם [!] עליו כמעט תלמיד ותיק זה את בית מדרשו של רבו וקבע לו מדור בזה של אפלטון.<sup>99</sup>

כדרכו במחשבה ידע הרמב"ם גם כאן לצרף ולהפריד כאחד. עמד והעביר את ה"מדע" של אפלטון-אריסטו דרך כור האהבה של אמונת ישראל, נטל מן ה"מדע" הרבה מן המופשט

99 הרמן כהן ראה שבכמה דברים רוח אפלטון מדברת מתוך גרונו של הרמב"ם, ומשום שלא עמד על ההפרש הגדול שבין הרמב"ם במחקר והרמב"ם באמונה – הלך וחדש הלכה זו שאין הרמב"ם באמת אלא תלמידו של אפלטון, ולא עוד אלא שמצא את הרמב"ם מתנגד גדול לאריסטו, לועג לו ומבטלהו. נעלם מעיניו של אותו חכם שאין כאן שרש הדבר ומגמתו עולים בקנה אחד, והדברים טעונים ברור רב, אלא שלא כאן המקום. עיי הערותינו 157, 581. עיי "שלטון השכל" לאחד העם (השלח, כרך ט"ו, ע' 291 ואילך).

והערטילאי שבו ומשנתפרקו שכבותיו וחוליותיו התחיל הולך וסופג רך-אהבה, חסד שברגש, אשדות, ושפעת חיים סמירים וגנוזים התחילה פורצת מתוכו; וכך זכתה גם האהבה לעמק שבשכל, להוד שבמח, ל"מוצק" שבהגיון, זה שיש בו הרבה מן הצנה שאינה מקפאיה לעולם. כפולטו של ה"מדע" כך בולעה של האהבה, הולכים ומאבדים הם שניהם ואבודם זה – גאולה היא להם.

[25] מסיעים ומשלימים הם זה את זה, אך לבשר אחד לא יהיו. כי שרשים שונים להם אם גם מגמה משותפת לדרכם. ספר המדע וספר האהבה פותחים לנו פתח לבנינו זה של הרמב"ם, שניהם כאחד באים לסיע לאדם מישראל הבא לטהר עצמו באמונה שיש בה משום ידיעה, בהכרה שיש בה משום אהבה. אולם שני ספרים מיוחדים הם: מדע – לחוד, ואהבה – לחוד; ומדע עדיף.

"מדע" קודם, אם כי הכיר הרמב"ם בחולשתו ומעוט השגתו וידע עד כמה מוגבלת ופעוטה היא ידיעתנו שאנו עמלים עליה ומקריבים עצמנו לשמה.<sup>100</sup> "מפני שדעתו של אדם קצרה" עמד וצרף לה את האהבה שיש בה הרבה מן הידיעה, ידיעה זו שבמרכזה עומדת אמת מוסרית עליונה, אמת שבאהבה. וכאן מתחילה האהבה הולכת ומסיגה את גבולו של המדע, פוסקת היא להיות אמצעי ועזר בלבד, זכתה והיתה "כנגדו". בשם עצמה היא באה, ולאחר שראתה את ה"מדע" בקלקולו ובחולשתו – מתחילה היא מחבשת את פצעי החוקר הנאבק ומביאה לו סס"חיים בכנפיה.

"בזמן שאדם מתבונן בדברים האלו – מוסיף אהבה למקום ותצמא נפשו ויכמה בשרו לאהב המקום ברוך הוא".<sup>101</sup> ובסימונו של "ספר המדע" נאמר: "וכיצד היא האהבה הראויה? הוא שיאהב את ה' אהבה גדולה, יתרה, עזה מאד, עד שתהא נפשו קשורה באהבת ה' ונמצא שונה בה תמיד כאלו חולה חלי האהבה שאין דעתו פנויה מאהבת אותה אשה". כי ידע איש "שלטון השכל" של ימי הביניים את ההתבוננות וההסתכלות שלמעלה מן השכל, את האהבה ו"חלי האהבה", ואף עולם הרגש והדמיון לא היה סתום בפניו. ומתוך כך זכה לפרקים לצרף את הידיעה שנתחנת היא בטבעה לאהבה שכוללת ומחברת היא. ואם כי כפופה היתה זו האחרונה לידיעה – מכלל מקום שלמה היא, אהבה של נפש גדולה מרקיעה שחקים.

צרף הרמב"ם אהבה ל"מדע", ולפיכך גם ב"ספר המדע" נשמעים צלילי אהבה. הלך ה"מדע" והסתעף, היה לשלשלת שראשה וסופה עולים בקנה אחד: ידיעה – יחוד – אהבה – יראה – קדוש. אך ביסודו בא ספר ראשון זה ל"משנה תורה" לקבע עקרים ליהדות לבססה על [26] השכל וההכרה, ללבן את ההופעות הסתומות הכרוכות בה (הלכות יסודי התורה), לברר את יסודות המוסר והמדות ברוח הדרך האמצעית, "שביל הזהב" לאריסטו ולעמד על עניני בריאותו ומזונו של אדם (הלכות דעות), להשמיע על חובת למוד התורה לתנוקות (בצרוף "תכנית למודים" בלשוננו), לסתם אנשים מישראל ולבתי מדרש, להעיר על כבוד התורה ולומדיה (הלכות תלמוד תורה), להזהירנו על המכשולים השונים הטמונים לרגל המאמין ולהרחיקנו מכל צורת עבודה זרה שהיא (הלכות עכו"ם וחוקותיהם), ואם נכשלנו וסרנו מהדרך הישר – הרי פתח תשובה לפנינו, כי גדולה היא התשובה שמחזירה לחוטא את צלם האלהים שבו נברא; וצלם זה – רצון הוא, בחירה חפשית, רצון לדעת ולאהב את בורא העולם (הלכות תשובה).

100 ע"י ה' עכו"ם וחוקות הגויים ב', ג'; ובכמה מקומות חוזר הוא על דבריו אלה.

101 ה' יסודי התורה ד', י"ב.

אין "ספר המדע" בא אלא להחזיר עטרה ליושנה, להכניס מדע לתוך האמונה, כי עם ישראל הוא עם המדע מאז ומעולם. "כי אומתנו אומה חכמה כמו שבאר הבורא ית' ע"י האדון (משה) אשר השלימנו, – אבל כשהאביו הדרתנו רשעי האומות הסכלות והאביו חכמתנו ותושייתנו והשמידו חכמינו עד אשר חזרנו סכלים – והתערבו עמו ודבקו בנו דעותיהם כמו שדבקו בנו מדותיהם ופעולותיהם, – – כן אמר בהדבק דעת האומות הסכלות אלינו: ובילדי נכרים ישפיקו (ישעיה ב', ר'), תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל: ובנמוסי עממיא יהבון; וכאשר גדלנו על הרגל הדעות ההם באו אל הענינים, ר"ל: עניני הפילוסופיה, כאלו הם זרים מתורתנו כשם שהם זרים מדעות האומות הסכלות, ולא כן הדבר".<sup>102</sup>

"משנה תורה" בא להביא גאולה להלכה ולמחשבה העברית, ו"ספר המדע" בא לגאל את המדע שאינו אלא קנין ישראל מידי אומות העולם שהחזיקו בו, לתת לאדם מישראל את תמצית המדע והמחשבה בגויים ובישראל, למצא להם סמוכים בתורה ולשחרר את עם ישראל מהשפעת ה"אומות הסכלות".

ומשום שהטיל הרמב"ם תעודה כזו על "ספר המדע" קבעו בראש חבורו ועשאו גולת הכותרת לכל בנינו זה. כל שאר ה"ספרים" הבאים אחריו – ראשם נעוץ ב"ספר המדע" וסופם חוזר והולך אליו להתמזג עמו ולגלות בקרבו את שרשם ויסודם. "ספר המדע" – אינו רק מבוא בלבד, פרוזדור לטרקלין; לכשתרצה פותח הוא וחותרם כאחד, תמצית ל"משנה תורה" כלו. [27] כי אם גם השלים איש ה"מדע" עם האהבה והעבודה – שרש נשמתו היה ב"מדע"; הצווי המוחלט של "ידיעת" גדול היה מזה של "ואהבת".



זקת רבנו משה בן מימון טרם פקעה מעלינו, וכל דור מוצא בו מְשִׁלֵּי; לאבותנו בני דור ההשכלה שמש ה"מורה נבוכים" סיף ומגמר־לחמה, למדו אותו כשהוא מוטל חבוי מתחת לספר התלמוד; "בלעוהו" במסתרים ובגנבה – הדור המתפלל ל"ידי החזקה" אין לו אלא לשוב ל"משנה תורה" שזכה להיות "ידי החזקה" ליהדות במשך חמשה עשר יובלות ומעלה.

ואשר להוצאת "ספר המדע" עלינו להעיר שכונתנו היתה למסר אותו כלו כמות שהוא, אם כי קצרנו בענינים שונים שאינם צריכים לדעתנו לגוף הענין (פרקי בריאות וכדומה מ"הלכות דעות", רב הפרקים שב"הלכות עכו"ם וחקות הגויים") והשמטנו פרקי אישות וכיצא בהם, משום שספרנו זה שעליו לשמש ספר עיון לכל אדם מישראל נועד גם ללמוד בביה"ס. (לסמן השמטה משמשים שנים, שלשה קוים ברחב: – – , והמעין יעמד מאליו על העקרים והיסודות שעל פיהם קצר והשמיט מסדר הדברים האלה). בלשון לא שנינו אף כקוצו של י"ד (לפעמים עמדנו על חסר עקביות במין ומספר בהערותינו השונות, להשמטת איזו אות או מלה השתמשנו בחצאי עגולים ()), להוספה ולתקון – במרובעים (<>), ומצד זה ודאי שלא ירגישו בני הדור כי ספר זה נכתב לפני שבע מאות שנה. כדי שיהא טעם מקור עומד בו, לא שנינו גם את סדר הפרקים וחלקיהם, ע"י כך יעמד המעין על ההשמטות השונות, וכל הרוצה לחזר ולמלא את החסר מגוף המקור – שכרו בצדו. בהערותינו השונות – בתכן, לשון ומקור (מראי מקומות) – השתדלנו להעמיד את המעין על הפרובלמות המרכזיות שדן בהם הרמב"ם בספרו זה, ולשם שלמות הענין

צרפנו להלכות הפסוקות שב"משנה תורה" (במטפיסיקה, נבואה, מדות וכיוצא בהם) דברים שונים שאמר הרמב"ם באותו ענין במקומות אחרים, וכך תהא השתלשלות כל רעיון הולכת ומתבהרת ביותר, הולכת ומתבלטת לפני המעיין בספר זה; ואם יתעורר זה האחרון ע"י כך להעמיק באותו ענין ולקרא בעקבות הקטעים השונים את גופי המקורות – והיה זה שכרנו. ואשר למבוא זה, הנה אין בו אלא הערות כלליות אחדות ל"משנה תורה" בכלל ול"ספר המדע" בפרט. על יתר הפרובלמות שב"ספרים" האחרים – ידובר במקומן. כדי שלא יהא ה"פנים" אובד ב"נושאי כליו" הוכרחנו לקצר בכמה מהערותינו וברשימה [28] הביבליוגרפית; כשנזכה להוציא את שאר ה"ספרים" של "משנה תורה" נמלא אחרי זה, כמו כן עומד להספח ל"ספר" האחרון מלון מיוחד מוקדש לברור המונחים של "משנה תורה" במקצע האמונה, ההלכה והמחקר.<sup>103</sup>

ואם גם יחסנו לכמה שאלות שונות הוא מזה של ה"נשר הגדול", ושבע מאות שנה ויותר מפרידות בינינו – יהיו בני הדור יוצאים מקן-נשרים זה ותמהים על ידו החזקה של הרמב"ם. הפליאה היא סבת ההשכלה, ותמיה מביאה ללמוד. והן זוהי כל מגמתנו.

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103 דבר שאין צריך לאמרו הוא כי ההדגשה במקומות שונים אינה במקור; ופסוקי המקרא השונים שב"משנה תורה" יש מהם הרבה שהם שונים משלנו, משום שהיו לרמב"ם, כנראה, נוסחאות וגרסאות אחרות. והוא הדין בדבר התלמוד.



## 5. Introduction to the Second Edition of the Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal

*The original Hebrew text found in draft form in Rawidowicz's Nachlass, signed with the abbreviation S. R. and written in 1956, was published posthumously as an introduction to: "Kitvei rabbi Naḥman Krokhmal" [Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], 2nd rev. ed., London/Waltham, Mass., 1961, 6e–6j (Hebrew pagination). The book's first edition appeared in 1924 in Rawidowicz' publishing house Ayanot (Wellsprings) in Berlin. The title of the text is provided by the editors; it originally appeared with the headline "Mavo la-mahadurah ha-shniyah" (Introduction to the Second Edition). Benjamin C. I. Ravid translated the text into English. Angle brackets <...> indicate material supplied by those who prepared the 1961 edition of Kitvei RaNa"K for publication.*

### 1.

When thirty-two years ago in 1924 I published "Kitvei RaNa"K" [The Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], I intended to follow it with my book on Krochmal (of which my "introduction" to Kitvei RaNa"K is a part) as stated in my note <on page 16>. Some of its chapters I did publish afterwards.<sup>104</sup> In the last thirty-two years I have been occupied with some

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104 Simon Rawidowicz, Naḥman Krokhmal be-tokh ḥoker u-mevakker [Nachman Krochmal as a Scholar and a Critic], in: Ha-Shiloaḥ 42 (1924), no. 2, 167–182; no. 3, 252–262.

Idem, Rabbi Naḥman Krokhmal. Yaḥaso le-“ḥasidut”, le-“haskalah” u-le-“le’ummiyyut” [Rabbi Nachman Krochmal. His Relation Towards Hasidism, Haskalah, and Nationality], in: Ha-Toren 11 (1925), no. 1–3, 155–174.

Idem, Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra be-he’arato shel rabbi Naḥman Krokhmal [Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra from the Perspective of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal’s Interpretation], in: Ha-Shiloaḥ 45 (1926), no. 1–2, 32–44.

Idem, Ge’ulat demut (perek be-meḥkar RaNa"K) [Redemption of an Image (A Chapter in the Study of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal)], in: Ha-Olam, 23 July 1926, 588 f.; 30 July 1926, 609–611; 6 August 1926, 628 f.

Idem, Klitav RaNa"K ve-hashpa’ato [The Reception of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal and His Influence], in: Ha-Olam, 11 February 1927, 119 f.; 18 February 1927, 138 f.; 4 March 1927, 179 f.; 11 March 1927, 199 f.; 1 April 1927, 258 f.; 29 April 1927, 338–340; 6 May 1927, 358 f.

research issues, hence from year to year I was compelled to postpone the completion of the book on RaNa"K, and I hope that soon I will be able to fulfill this desire of mine.

I postponed the publication of my book on RaNa"K because I wanted first to write my book on medieval and modern Jewish thought, from which the reader can perceive the development of some main themes in Jewish thought, some of which are basic for the thought of RaNa"K. During the last thirty-two years, in the course of investigating Jewish thought in general, I also extensively investigated the roots of the author of "Moreh nevuḳhei ha-zeman" [Guide for the Perplexed of the Time] in that thought.

Meanwhile, the complaints of readers and scholars regarding the difficulty in obtaining the Kitvei RaNa"K, which went out of print almost ten years after its publication, bothered me. I said to myself: I cannot further delay the publication of its second edition because of the book on RaNa"K and the book on Jewish thought that have not yet been published – lest one delay cause another. So I gave up my desire because of those who complained about the absence of the book on "the market" and despite my hesitations, I am proceeding to the publication of this edition.

And my heart is heavy because the people [who would be interested in Krochmal] in Eastern Europe passed from the world between the two editions. I am sorry that I have to publish this edition in a country with this high standard of living and cost of printing ... and hundreds of potential

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Idem, War Nachman Krochmal Hegelianer?, Hebrew Union College Annual 5 (1928), 535–582.

Idem, Nachman Krochmal als Historiker, in: Ismar Elbogen/Josef Meisl/Mark Wischnitzer (eds.), Festschrift zu Simon Dubnows siebzigstem Geburtstag, Berlin, 1930, 57–75.

Idem, Reshimot Zūnḳ le-hoḳa'at "Moreh nevuḳhei ha-zeman" [The Notes of Zunz on "The Guide for the Perplexed of the Time"], in: Kneset 7 (1942), 367–378.

Idem, Al ha-ruḳani ha-muḳlat le-rabbi Naḳman Krochmal [On the Absolute Spirit of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], Ha-Do'ar, 23 May 1947, 798–800.

Idem, Rabbi Isaak Abravanel ve-RaNa"K. Al ha-ruḳani ha-muḳlat le-rabbi Naḳman Krochmal [Rabbi Isaak Abravanel and RaNa"K. On the Absolute Spirit of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], in: Meḳudah 5–6 (1948), 290–298.

Idem, Art. "Krochmal, Nachman," in: Jüdisches Lexikon, vol. 3, Berlin 1929, 910–912.

Idem, Art. "Krochmal, Nachman," in: Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 8, New York 1932, 602.

readers of RaNa"K in the State of Israel may not be able to bring it into their house.

[6f] This 1956 edition supplies the main things missing in the 1924 edition: *Indices to ...*, and also the introduction of [Leopold] Zunz to the first edition of *Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman*<sup>105</sup> and his letter to the printers.<sup>106</sup>

In order not to further increase the length of this book, I have omitted the explanation of some issues in RaNa"K's system, which I undertook for the needs of my research between 1924 and 1956 – and they will find their place in my above-mentioned book on RaNa"K.

## 2.

When *in 1922* I established the publishing company “Ayanot” [Well-springs] (in Berlin) in order to publish *sources* of our classical and modern literature, I intended to go the way of *abridgement* on the one hand (preparing abridged sources for schools, the youth, and the people) and on the other hand, of *completeness* (complete sources, with commentaries for scholars and thinkers). The publication of *Sefer ha-madda* [Book of Knowledge] of Maimonides (1922) will serve as an example of the way of abridgment, and *Kitvei RaNa"K* (1924) of the way of completeness.

I was not satisfied with the abridged *Sefer ha-madda*, so I republished it (in 1947) in *its completeness*, and its second part (commentary, sources ...) will appear soon ...

In my introduction to that 1947 edition of *Sefer ha-madda*, I alluded to the difficult work-conditions in which the author, editor and publisher found themselves <in the terrible days of the inflation in Weimar Germany, when the printer was greatly pressuring me because of the unceasing rise in prices, and it was not possible for me to go back and to look properly at either my notes to *Sefer ha-madda*, some of which I had been compelled to write in the printing house itself, or at the proofs>.

This was also the case with my *introduction* to *The Writings of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal*. The unceasing rise in the cost of printing compelled

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105 <Rawidowicz wanted to photo-reproduce the introduction of Leopold Zunz to “*Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman*,” but it was decided, for the sake of clarity, to reset it in type.>

106 I published it <Simon Rawidowicz, *Reshimot Zunz le-hoza'at “Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman”* [The Notes of Zunz on “Guide for the Perplexed of the Time”], in: *Kneset 7* (1942), 367–378>; in my book on RaNa"K I will further comment on it ...

me to commence printing my introduction *before I finished it*, and to submit it for printing section by section, a decree that greatly troubled me. And worse than that: I was compelled to write several of its pages in the printing house – against the backdrop of the noise of the printing machines in the publishing house of Schulzinger in Berlin. The necessity of the times and the confidence of youth enabled me to write my introduction under these awful conditions, which later I would not have accepted ...

And so, under pressure, I wrote that introduction, in the spring of 1924, in ten weeks. How great is the working strength of someone young, without fear of the readers, enthusiastic in his work ... Indeed, during those ten weeks I did not even look at the daily newspaper; the “Vossische Zeitung” was piled in heaps in the corner of my student room (in which some of the Hebrew writers of Berlin kept me company), and even so, I am very surprised at myself that I was able to emerge successfully from that difficult experience. When I began ... the *writing* of two hundred and twenty-five pages [of the introduction] and their inspection alone confined me to my desk for at least two years and now at the end of my years of understanding – even those would not suffice for me.

As the director of “Ayanot” and its only editor in those days, I dealt with all the practical details involved in the publishing of Kitvei RaNa"K, including obtaining the paper for printing (which was very difficult in the days of the inflation) and the other related tasks ... I also had to deal with ... distribution!!

The 1924 edition was printed in around a thousand copies. If I am not mistaken, they were all sold in around five or six years. As stated, this means that for twenty-five years Kitvei RaNa"K has been “hard to find.”

[6g] When this year I examined my introduction in order to clarify the correction of errors and additions, it became clear to me that if I were writing it now, in 1956, I would not at all change much in the *way of essence and approach* – only some changes in style and presentation. I do not say that one should not add to the introduction nor take away from it – in my book on RaNa"K I will certainly add and take away (but not in the *essence* of my approach). And I am permitted to say: In it, I achieved my aim; it fulfilled my goal regarding RaNa"K and Jewish thought. The merit of RaNa"K stood me in good stead – and it also so to speak “overshadowed” me a little. I have published several introductions (and they too are not especially short) and books after Kitvei RaNa"K – yet Kitvei RaNa"K is the work that has made an impression on my readers, who always remind me of “the good deeds” of my youth. A scholar is envious of all other scholars, except for the one who makes his own teachings comprehensible.

## 3.

I was very glad that I was able to dedicate *Kitvei RaNa"K* to [Chaim Nahman] Bialik ...<sup>107</sup> How much did Bialik esteem *RaNa"K*. <I showed him the pages that had been printed. He was very happy about them, read here and there, was excited, and said: "This is what they call a 'digest.' Bible, Talmud, mysticism, Jewish thought and general philosophy are all absorbed into it, and one does not recognize that it actually comes from the outside. Everything is as if it comes from inside, as if it comes only from his soul. So it has to be ... I so much appreciate *RaNa"K*, his style and his presentation. Very good, now there will be an examined and proof-read edition."

I gave Bialik "*Kitvei RaNa"K*" that I had dedicated to him. He took the book from me, thanked me, opened it, and leafed through it. He was moved a little. He said: "This is a big book. It could have been two volumes ... You have done a great work. Not even one book in our modern literature has appeared in this format of '*Kitvei RaNa"K*' and really this is our only book. [in Yiddish:] This book is worthy of our drinking *l'haim* on its appearance ... you have to celebrate its conclusion ... and since you have been a *Hatan Torah* [the groom of the Torah], you must be a *Hatan Bereshit* [the groom of Genesis] ..."<sup>108</sup> Afterwards Bialik continued: "Your present is very nice, both in its contents and also in its dedication, everything is very nice.">

A while after the publication of *Kitvei RaNa"K* (in the spring of 1925), I visited Achad Ha-Am in Tel Aviv. He greatly praised it. He told me that he purchased one of the first two copies that arrived in Tel Aviv some days after its publication in Berlin ... and Achad Ha-Am was very weak in those days, he was compelled to stop talking before we could finish our discussion about *RaNa"K* ...

After his death, I learned from the article by *Alter Druyanov* about the extent of the "interest" of Achad Ha-Am in my introduction to *Kitvei RaNa"K*: <In the building that is named after Achad Ha-Am ("Achad

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107 <When Bialik resided in Berlin, he frequently met with Rawidowicz. A close friendship existed between them. Bialik urged Rawidowicz to cease his activities as editor and director of "Ayanot" and to accept the directorship of "Dvir" [Sanctuary]. S. R. would write down his conversations with Bialik. The passages quoted here are taken from those handwritten accounts found in S. R.'s Nachlass.>

108 <The footnote originally contained the Hebrew translation of the Yiddish words of Bialik.>

Ha-Am House” in Tel Aviv) one finds many books from his library marked with “pencil notes:” a regular line was a sign of something to which he gave his attention with lines of his pencils, either because he agreed or because on the contrary, he did not agree; several lines next to each other – a sign of something that made a special impression on him, either positively or negatively; a line in a colored pencil – a sign that he wanted to react to that material when he [6h] would be free to do so etc., and I would not be wrong were I to say that from the order of his “lines,” one can learn much about the thought of Achad Ha-Am.

One of the books that bore his lines was the introduction of Dr. Simon Rawidowicz (Berlin, “Ayanot” Publishing Company). At that time, Achad Ha-Am was already very sick. Sometimes pains encompassed him and sometimes weakness attacked him to such an extent that even reading a book became difficult for him, but nevertheless he read the long introduction from its beginning to its end. He did not put down his pencil from his hand and marked that which he marked.><sup>109</sup>

#### 4.

And I already said:

<I may add and note regarding Krochmal research in general: Everyone who looks at what has been written on Krochmal during the last twenty years, and especially whoever compares the words of those who dealt with Krochmal written before the publication of “Kitvei RaNa”K” with those that have been written after it, will see that my work in the field [of Krochmal] has not been in vain.><sup>110</sup>

Some of the articles, and maybe most of them, that have been published on RaNa”K since 1924 repeat the main points of my views in my introduction, many of them without any attribution. Some of them argue with me, for example, over the question of the “nationalism” of RaNa”K, as they cite, without mentioning a source, the same passages of RaNa”K that I mentioned; and some of them deal with the question of the “Hegelianism”

109 Alter Druyanov, Achad Ha-Am, in: Ha’aretz, 7 May 1937, 2.

110 Simon Rawidowicz, Rabbi Yizhak Abravanel ve-RaNa”K. Al ha-ruhani ha-muḥlat le-rabbi Naḥman Krochmal [Rabbi Isaac Abravanel and Rabbi Nachman Krochmal. On the Absolute Spirit of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], in: Meẓudah 5–6 (1948), 290–298, here 291, n. 2.

of RaNa"K without “discovering” any new material or adding the least thought of their own.

Some of our scholars who engage in matters of thought accepted my assumptions regarding the “non-Hegelianism” of RaNa"K, while some writers still retain it. Some of them also ignore the fact that I never rejected at all the presence of traces of Hegel in RaNa"K (see below in the introduction, page 160).<sup>111</sup>

My main intentions in chapter [3] of my introduction were: 1) to present RaNa"K *on his own*, to free him from his indebtedness to a particular *school* in order to understand the essence of his thought ... 2) to encourage researchers to investigate the *essence* of his image. This is not linked to his following in the footsteps of any given philosopher externally, but derives from his own internal *stance*, his labor to renew the *House* of Israel and to fortify it.

Unfortunately some authors repeat the known and the conventional regarding RaNa"K – and do not ...

And I am permitted to add: “Kitvei RaNa"K” brought people closer to RaNa"K – and my introduction provided him with some exposure. I found scholars in the West who initially had not paid much attention to him, but during the course of time they found their way ...

And here I see a duty to myself to relate a story involving myself and a certain Western scholar, a man with many accomplishments in the research of medieval thought ... After I published Kitvei RaNa"K, I turned to Julius Guttman (Professor at the Hochschule [für die Wissenschaft des Judentums; Higher Institute for Jewish Studies] and head of the Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums) and suggested to him that the Akademie publish my German book on RaNa"K. (I will admit: With the end of the inflation, “Ayanot” Publishing Company ceased, my source of earnings also diminished |6i|, and I was ready to commit that idolatry –

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111 <See his words there: While some authors of the history of Hebrew literature still hold on to the “Hegelianism” of RaNa"K, in recent years some of the scholars of Jewish philosophy have stressed their agreement with the essence of my assumption that the system of RaNa"K as it is before us is not that of [Georg Wilhelm Friedrich] Hegel or of dialectical materialism (see Julius Guttman, *Yesodot ha-maḥshavah shel rabbi Naḥman Krokhmal* [The Foundations of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal’s Thought], in: *Kneset* 6 (1941), 259–286; Nathan Rotenstreich, *Muḥlat ve-hitraḥshut be-mishnato shel RaNa"K* [The Absolute and the Event in the Theory of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal], in: *Kneset* 6 (1941), 333–344).>

[by writing in] German). Guttman, during our conversation about that matter, was surprised at my suggestion: a book on RaNa"K? RaNa"K was an "original scholar"? What did he innovate?

In those days – in 1925 – I was completely absorbed with RaNa"K, I was astonished at his astonishment. I "defended" Krochmal – to that scholar in Berlin; and my heart was bitter: were my eyes smitten with blindness to such an extent, had the love of RaNa"K caused me to lose perspective, or were the eyes of that scholar afflicted with blindness?

Guttman compared RaNa"K to Eduard Zeller and to some other scholars of philosophy ... I countered that: 1) in my humble opinion, Eduard Zeller deserved investigation because of the change that he brought about in [Immanuel] Kant research, 2) and the main thing: how could one compare the place of Zeller in the development of German thought to the position of RaNa"K in Jewish thought in the nineteenth century, etc.?

After I advanced some additional "arguments," Guttman said to me very briefly: "When one wants to write about the linen industry <in Silesia, one must go to Breslau. "When one writes about the liturgical poets of the Rhine, one must go to Cologne. If you want to deal with RaNa"K, go to Warsaw, that is the appropriate place to do so.">

And for the sake of historical accuracy, I will reproduce here *his exact words*:

"Wenn man über schlesische Leinwandindustrie arbeitet, muss man nach Breslau gehen. Wenn man über rheinische Dichtung schreibt, muss man nach Köln gehen. Wenn Sie über RaNa"K arbeiten wollen, müssen Sie nach Warschau gehen. Das wäre der richtige Platz dafür. [If you do research on Silesian canvas industry, you have to go to Breslau. If you write about the Rhenish poetry, you have to go to Cologne. If you want to work on RaNa"K, you have to go to Warsaw. That would be the most suitable place.]"

These words, of the kind that one who hears them is unable to forget all of his days, disturbed me very much. I went to the house of *Ismar Elbogen* and poured out my heart to him ... Elbogen was also much amazed at the words of his colleague at the "Hochschule." He began taking down some encyclopedia volumes from his bookshelf and examining: researcher A lived in city B and wrote about scholar C who lived in community D ...

When the book of Guttman appeared I found in it ... lines on Krochmal. And in 1940, when I was in England, I received a letter from Elbogen (who lived in New York) in which he asked me: have you seen that Guttman published a long article on RaNa"K in which he expresses his agreement with your assumption regarding the non-Hegelianism of



RaNa"K? Certainly he remembered that decree that Guttman had issued upon me in 1925: if you want to deal with RaNa"K – go to Warsaw ...<sup>112</sup>

A while later, the volume of “Kneset” [Assembly] that contained the article of Guttman reached me. He who decreed that I had to go to Warsaw was able to go up to Jerusalem and there he discovered RaNa"K ... I thanked my Maker profusely that I did not need the rod of Hitler to uproot me from Germany to the land of the Hebrews – in order to discover the importance of RaNa"K, and also the existence of the modern Hebrew language ...

Blessed be ha-Makom [God], blessed be He.

I did not say that all Jewish scholars in Western Europe saw in RaNa"K a sort of “Ostjude,” whose value was mainly for “Ostjuden” in Warsaw and so on. And Guttman’s approach to RaNa"K – until he was fortunate to acquire residence in Jerusalem – contains much that is relevant also to the consideration of the matter of East and West in the field of Jewish scholarship in the last generations.

As for the actual research of Guttman, it does not add *much to the essence* of scholarship on RaNa"K. He sums up that which is known, repeats some of my assumptions, directly or indirectly ... In my book I will deal with him in the context of the examination of some articles on RaNa"K, and here I will limit myself to these details.

[6j] I will conclude with the final words of my introduction <to the first edition:

“As we finish our investigation of the thought of RaNa"K, we must pray for the revival of that thought, for the revival of the absolute spirit that is in it, for the renewal of that aspiration of the intellect and the great truth that the critical approach runs as a thread through his life and thought, for the revival of this higher spiritual integrity that RaNa"K inaugurated regarding the establishment of the principles that can renew Jewish thought that ceased to a certain extent with the death of that fighter. If it will return someday, and be imbued with the spirit of RaNa"K, it will bring much good. And future generations will learn much from the guide of the perplexed of the nineteenth century.”>

If the 1956 edition will further attract people to RaNa"K – as did the 1924 edition – it will be my reward.

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112 Students of Elbogen told me that in the 1930s he used to deal much with RaNa"K in his lectures and would read to them from my introduction when he would stress the adaptation of the Hebrew language to matters of thought.

After the publication of my books on RaNa"K and on Jewish thought (see above), I will publish a third edition of Kitvei RaNa"K and in it will be an *extensive commentary and sources and ...* notes to Moreh nevukhei ha-zeman – page by page, line by line, as I did with volume seven of the writings of Moses Mendelssohn. All my days I regret that while I was able to publish those writings of Mendelssohn on the basis of the manuscript and to correct everything that required correction on the basis of manuscripts and in the “technical” spirit of text editing that was accepted in Germany in the 1920s – and it was a fine tradition – I was not able to fulfill that desirable practice with RaNa"K.



My heartfelt thanks to Mr. Alexander Shapiro, the head of “Po’alei Zion” in Boston, wholeheartedly devoted to Yiddish literature, who contributed much to the building of the Land, who responded to me in his goodness and participated generously in the expenses connected with the 1956 edition – that is appearing at my expense, without a publisher and a publishing company ready to publish Hebrew books in America, “a land in which nothing is lacking” [cf. Deuteronomy 8:9] not for the sake of business or for the sake of enhancing Torah and its glorification ...

Fortunate is he that his name is connected with the dissemination of Kitvei RaNa"K among the People of Israel.

Elul 1956.

<The abovementioned 1956 edition is the present [i. e., 1961] edition.>

## מבוא למהדורה השנייה של כתבי רבי נחמן קרוכמאל

### א.

כשפרסמתי – לפני ל"ב שנה – את "כתבי רנ"ק" עמדתי לתכוף להם את ספרי על רבי נחמן קרוכמל (ש"מבואי" לכתבי רנ"ק הוא חלק ממנו) כאמור בהערתי <עמוד 16>. אחדים מפרקי פרסמתי אחר כך.<sup>113</sup> ובל"ב השנה האחרונות נטרדתי בכמה פרשיות עיון, וכך הלכתי על כרחי ודחיתי משנה לשנה את סיום ספר-רנ"ק; והנני מקווה שאזכה למלא מבוקשי זה בקרוב. דחיתי את פרסום ספרי על רנ"ק משום שרציתי להקדים לו את ספרי על מחשבת ישראל בימי הביניים ובדורות האחרונים, מתוכו יעמוד המעיין על התפתחותם של כמה ראשי פרקים במחשבת ישראל – מהם יתד ופנה למחשבת רנ"ק. בל"ב השנה האחרונות התחקיתי הרבה – תוך עיון במחשבת ישראל בכללותה – גם על שרשים של בעל "מורה נבוכי הזמן" בה במחשבה. ובינתיים חזקו עלי דברי קוראים וסופרים שקבלו על הקושי בהשגת כתבי רנ"ק – שאזלו מן השוק כמעט כעשר שנים לאחר יציאתם לאור. אמרתי לנפשי: אין אני רשאי להוסיף ולדחות פרסום מהדורתם השנייה של כתבי רנ"ק בשל ספר-רנ"ק וספר-המחשבה שלא פורסמו עדיין – ולא יהא נדחה גורר נדחה. וכך בטלתי רצוני מפני רצון הקובלים על חוסר הספר "בשוק" ונגשתי להוצאת מהדורה זו – על אף הסוסי.

ולבי דוי עלי שעס-רנ"ק אשר במזרח-אירופה עבר מן העולם בין מהדורה למהדורה. ומצטער אני שנגזר עלי להוציאה לאור בארץ בעלת רמת-חיים גבוהה זו ודמי הדפסה ... ומאות קוראיר-רנ"ק בכווח שבמדינת ישראל אולי לא יהא בכוחם להכניס לביתם מהדורה זו.

113 נחמן קרוכמאל בתוך חוקר ומבקר, השלח, ירושלים, תרפ"ז, מב:ב, ע' 167–182; מב:ג, עמ' 252–266. רבי נחמן קרוכמאל (יחוסו לה"חסידות", ל"השכלה" ול"לאומיות"), התורן, ניו-יורק, תרפ"ה, יא:א-ג, עמ' 155–174.

רבי אברהם אבן עזרא בהאררתו של רבי נחמן קרוכמאל, השלח, ירושלים, תרפ"ו, מה:א-ב, ע' 32–44. גאולת דמות (פרק במחקר רנ"ק), העולם, לונדון, 1926, יד:לא, ע' 588–589; יד:לב, ע' 609–611; יד:לג, ע' 628–629.

קליטת רנ"ק והשפעתו (רבנו משה בן מימון, עזריה מן האדומים, הקבלה, השפעה ומגע), העולם, לונדון, 1927, טו:ו, ע' 119–120; טו:ז, ע' 138–139; טו:ט, ע' 179–180; טו:י, ע' 199–200; טו:יג, ע' 258–259, טו:יח, ע' 338–340; טו:יח, ע' 358–359.

War Nachman Krochmal Hegelianer?, Hebrew Union College Annual, Cincinnati, 1928, vol. V, pp. 535–582.

Nachman Krochmal als Historiker, Festschrift zu Simon Dubnow's siebzigstem Geburtstag, Berlin, 1930, pp. 57–75.

רשימות צונג' להוצאת "מורה נבוכי הזמן", כנסת, תל-אביב, תש"ב, ספר שביעי, ע' 367–378. על הרוחני המוחלט לר' נחמן קרוכמאל, הדואר, ניו-יורק, גליון היובל תש"ז, כו:כט, ע' 798–800. ר' יצחק אברבנאל ורנ"ק: על הרוחני המוחלט לר' נחמן קרוכמאל, מצודה, לונדון, תש"ח, ספר ה"ד, ע' 290–298.

Krochmal, Nachman, Jüdisches Lexikon, Berlin, 1929, vol. III, pp. 910–912.

Krochmal, Nachman, Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, New York, 1932, vol. VIII, p. 602.

16 | מהדורת־תשט"ז זו ממלאה את עיקרו של החסר במהדורת־תרפ"ד: מפתחות ל... גם הקדמת צונץ למהדורה א' של מונה"ז<sup>114</sup> ואגרתו למדפיסים.<sup>115</sup> כדי שלא להוסיף ולהכביד על משקלו של הספר הנני מוותר כאן על בירורן של כמה הלכות במשנת רנ"ק, להן נזקקתי בעייני בין תרפ"ד ותשט"ז – וזה ימצא את מקומו בספרי האמור על רנ"ק.

## ב.

כשייסדתי בתרפ"ב את הוצאת־הספרים "עיינות" (בברלין) – לשם פרסום מקורות ספרותנו העתיקה והחדשה, עמדתי לילך בדרך הקיצור מכאן (הכשרת קיצורי מקורות לבית־הספר, לנוער ולעם) ובדרך השלמות (מקורות שלמים, מפורשים לאנשי עיון וספר) מכאן. כדוגמה לדרך הקיצור תשמש הוצאת ספר־המדע לרמב"ם (תרפ"ב) ולדרך השלמות – הוצאת כתבי רנ"ק (תרפ"ד).

דעתי לא היתה נוחה מקיצור ספר־המדע – חזרתי והוצאתיו (בתש"ז) בשלמותו וחלקו השני (פירוש, מקורות...) עומד לצאת לאור בקרוב...

בהקדמתי להוצאת־תש"ז זו לסה"מ רמזתי על תנאי העבודה הקשים בהם היה נתון סופר ועורך ומו"ל >בימייה הנוראים של האינפלציה בגרמניה־שלוויימאר כשהמדפיס היה מאיץ בי ביותר מחמת עליית־השערים שלא היתה פוסקת, ולא ניתן לי לחזור ולעיין לא בהערותי לסה"מ שנאלצתי לכתוב כמה מהן בבית הדפוס גופו ולא בעמודי ההגהה כהלכה.<

והוא הדין במבואי לכתבי רנ"ק. עליית שער־הדפסה שלא פסקה גזרה עלי לפתוח בהדפסת מבואי לפני סיומו, למסרו לדפוס גליונות־גליונות, גזירה שצערתי הרבה. וחמורה מזו: נגזר עלי לכתוב כמה וכמה מעמודיו בבית הדפוס – לקול רעש מכוננת הדפוס בבית הדפוס של שולצע >בברלין<. הכרת־השעה ובטחון־עלומים עמדו לי לכתוב את מבואי בתנאים איומים אלה – שלא הייתי מקבלם לאחר כך...

וכך – בלחץ – כתבתי את מבואי זה – באביב תרפ"ד – במשך עשרה שבועות. עד היכן מגיע כוח עבודתו של רך־בשנים, מחוסר אימת־צבור, נלהב בעבודתו... אמנם, באותם עשרה שבועות לא עיינתי אפילו בעתון־יום; "פאסישע־צייטונג" היתה נערמת ערימות־ערימות בפנת חדר־סטודנטים שלי (בו ארחו לי לחברה כמה מסופרי־ישראל שבברלין), ואף על פייכן, הנני תמה הרבה על עצמי שעלה לי לצאת בשלום מאותו נסיון קשה. משנכנסתי ל... היתה כתיבת רכ"ה עמודים ובדיקתם כשלעצמן אוסרתני לשולחן עבודתי לכל הפחות כשנתיים ועכשיו בסוף שנות בינה – אף הללו לא היו מספיקות לי.

כמנהל ענייני "עיינות" ועורכה היחידי באותם הימים טפלתי בכל פרטי־המעשה הכרוכים בהוצאת כתבי רנ"ק – לרבות השגת הניר להדפסה (קשה היתה זו ביותר בימי האינפלציה) ושאר המלאכות הכרוכות... נגזר עלי לעסוק גם ב... הפצה!!

114 >רצה ראבידוביץ לצלם את הקדמתו של צונץ ל"מורה נבוכי הזמן" אבל הוחלט, כדי להקל על הקורא, להדפיסה מחדש.<

115 פרסמתי >בכנסת, תל־אביב, תש"ב, ספר שביעי, ע' 367–378< ובספרי על רנ"ק אוסיף ואעיר עליה...

מהדורת תרפ"ד נדפסה באלף טופס בקרוב. אם אינני טועה כולם נמכרו במשך חמש או שש שנים בקירוב. כאמור, זה כט"ו שנה כתבי רנ"ק הם "יקרי המציאות".

[16] כשבדקתי השנה במבואי – לשם ברור תקוני טעויות ומלואים – הוברר לי שאילו כתבתי עכשיו, בתשט"ז, לא הייתי משנה הרבה בעיקרו ברובו ככולו, שינוי עיקר וגישה, – פרט לכמה שנוייסגנון והרצאת־הענינים. חלילה לי מלומר: אין להוסיף על מבואי זה ולא לגרוע ממנו – בספר רנ"ק אהיה ודאי מוסיף וגורע (ולא בעיקר גישתי). ורשאי אני לומר: באתי בו על שכרי; מילא זה את מבוקשי בפרשת רנ"ק ומחשבת ישראל. זכות רנ"ק עמדה לי – וגם כאילו "האפילה" עלי במקצת. כמה מבואות (ואינם קצרים ביותר גם הם) וספרים פרסמתי אחרי כתבי רנ"ק – וכתבי רנ"ק הם שנטבעו בלב קוראי, הזוכרים לי תמיד את "חסד־נעורים". בכל איש־עיון מתקנא – חוץ מבאיש־עיון שיצא לעשות אזנים לתורתו.

## ג.

הרבה נהניתי שניתן לי להקדיש את כתבי רנ"ק לביאליק ... – כמה העריץ ביאליק את רנ"ק.<sup>116</sup> >הראיתי לו את גליונות־קרוכמל הנדפסים. הוא שמח עליהם ביותר, קרא פה ושם, התפעל ואמר: זהו מה שקוראים "עכול". את התנ"ך, התלמוד, הקבלה, המחשבה הישראלית, והפילוסופיה הכללית כולה בלע לתוכו, ואין מכירים כי זה בא מן החוץ. הכל כאילו בא מבפנים, כאילו בא רק מתוך נפשו. כך צריך להיות ... אני מחבב כ"כ את רנ"ק, את לשונו והרצאתו. טוב מאד, עכשיו תהא הוצאה בדוקה ומוגהה.

מסרתי לח. נ. ביאליק את "כתבי רנ"ק" שהקדשתי לשמו. קבל את הספר ממני, הודה לי, פתח, דפדף ודפדף. התרגש במקצת. אמר: "הרי זה ספר גדול. יכול היה להיות בעל שני כרכים ... עבדת עבודה גדולה. אף ספר אחד מספרותנו החדשה לא יצא בצורה זו של 'כתבי רנ"ק', ובאמת הרי זה הספר היחידי שלנו. נו, איר דארפט דם ספר באנעצען ... איר דארפט מאַכן אַ סיום ... איר זייט אַ חתן תורה, איצט דארפט איר ווערן אַ חתן בראשית"<sup>117</sup> ... אחר כך המשיך ביאליק: "מתנתך נאה מאד, גם בתכנה, גם בצורת ההקדשה, הכל נאה מאד".

וזמן מה לאחר פרסום כתבי רנ"ק (באביב תרפ"ה), ביקרתי את אחד־העם בתל־אביב. הרבה לספר בשבח הוצאת כתבי רנ"ק. סיפר לי: משני הטפסים הראשונים של כתבי רנ"ק שהגיעו לתל־אביב כמה ימים לאחר פרסומם בברלין, קניתי אני את האחד ... ואחד־העם היה תשוש במאד באותם הימים, היה נאלץ להפסיק את שיחתו, עד שסימנו את בירור דברינו בפרשת רנ"ק ...

לאחר פטירתו למדתי ממאמרו של אלתר דרויאנוב על מדת "התענינותו" של אחד־העם במבואי לכתבי רנ"ק: >בבית שנקרא שמו של אחד־העם עליו ("בית אחד־העם" בתל־אביב) אתה מוצא ספרים לא מעטים מעזבונו מעוטרים "גאמה שלמה" של שרטוטי

116 >בימי שבתו של ח. נ. ביאליק בברלין היה נפגש תכופות עם ראבידוביץ. ידידות רבה שרתה ביניהם. חנ"ב הפציר בש. ה. שיפסיק פעולותיו כעורך ומנהל "עינות" ויקבל עליו הנהלת "דביר". ש. ה. נהג לרשום שיחותיו עם ביאליק. הקטעים המובאים כאן העתקנו מרשימות אלו הנמצאות בכתב־יד בעזבונו של ש. ה. >

117 >ראוי הספר הזה שנשתה "לחיים" לרגל הופעתו, עליך לסדר חגיגת "סיום", ומכיון שעלית ל"חתן תורה" תעלה גם ל"חתן בראשית". <

עפרונות משלו: שרטוט רגיל – סימן למה שהסב אליו את תשומת־לבו, אם מחמת שהדברים נראו לו, או להיפך, מחמת שלא נראו לו; כמה שרטוטים זה בצד זה – סימן למה שעשה עליו רושם מיוחד הן לחיוב והן לשלילה; שרטוט בעפרון צבעוני – סימן שהוא אמר להגיב על הדברים כשתהא דעתו [ח6] פנויה לכך וכך ולא אטעה אם אומר, שמתוך ה"גאמה" של שרטוטיו יש ללמוד הרבה על הגות־רוחו בינו לבין עצמו.

אחד הספרים הנושאים עליהם שרטוטי רשמיו, הוא מבואו של הד"ר שמעון ראבידוביץ' (ברלין, הוצ' "עיינות"). בעת ההיא כבר היה אחד־העם חולה מאד. עתים אפפוהו חבלי מכאובים, ועתים תקפה אותו חולשה עד כדי כך, שגם קריאת ספר נעשתה לו עמל קשה, אף על פי־כן קרא את המבוא הגדול מראשו עד סופו. לא הניח בשעת מעשה עפרונו מידו ושרטט מה ששרטט.<sup>118</sup>

## ד.

וכבר אמרת:

>רשאי אני להוסיף ולהעיר מבחינת מחקר־הרנ"ק בכללו: כל המעיין במה שנכתב על רנ"ק בספרותנו בעשרים השנה האחרונות, וביחוד כל המשווה את דברי העוסקים בפרשת־רנ"ק שנכתבו לפני פרסום "כתבי רנ"ק" לדבריהם שכתבו בה בפרשה לאחריו – יעמוד על כך שעמלי בשדה־רנ"ק לא עלה בתוהו.<sup>119</sup>

כמה מן המאמרים – ואולי רובם – שפורסמו על רנ"ק מתרפ"ד ואילך חוזרים על עיקרי הנחותי במבואי, ורבים מהם אינם חוששים לעיכוב־גאולה. מהם מתווכחים אתי – לדוגמה – בשאלת "לאומיותו" של רנ"ק, כשהם נאחזים – ללא הזכרת מקור – באותם דברי רנ"ק שהזכרתי במאמרי; ומהם יוצאים והופכים בשאלת "הגליניותו" של רנ"ק – ללא "גילוי" חומר חדש או הוספת שמץ־נופך מחשבה משלהם.

אחדים מחוקרינו המצויים אצל דברי מחשבה קיבלו את הנחתי בפרשה זו על "אי־הגליניותו", וכמה סופרים עודם מחזיקים בהגליניותו זו של רנ"ק. מהם גם מתעלמים מן העובדה שלא שללתי כלל וכלל מציאותו של רישומי־הגל ברנ"ק (להלן במבוא, 160).<sup>120</sup>

עיקר מבוקשי בפרק [3] במבואי היה (1) להעמיד את רנ"ק על עצמיותו לשחררו משעבוד אסכולה כדי לתפוס את מהותו לנפשו ... (2) לעורר את מעיינינו שיצאו ויעינינו בעיקרה של דמות רנ"ק. זה אינו כרוך ביציאה בעקבות פילוסופוס פלוני ואלמוני בחוץ – אלא במעמדו בבית, בעמלו שעמל לחדוש בית ישראל וביצורו ...

לצער, כמה סופרים חוזרים על הידועות והמפורסמות בפרשת רנ"ק – ואינם ...

118 א. דרויאנוב, אחד העם, הארץ, תל אביב, כ"ו אייר, תרצ"ז, גל' 5401.

119 ר' יצחק אברבנאל ורנ"ק; על הרוחני המוחלט לר' נחמן קרוכמאל, מצודה, לונדון, תש"ח, ספר ה"ר, ע' 291, הערה 2.

120 >עיין דבריו שם: בשעה שכמה מכותבי תולדות ספרותנו העברית עודם מחזיקים ב"הגליניותו" של רנ"ק, יצאו בשנים האחרונות אחדים מחוקרי הפילוסופיה בישראל והדגישו את הסכמתם לעיקר הנחתי שמשנת רנ"ק כמות שהיא לפנינו אינה תורה הגלינית או דיאלקטית־פנלוגיסטית (עיין: יוליוס גוטמן, "כנסת", ספר ששי, 263 וכך; נתן רוטנשטריך, שם, 338).<

רשאי אני להוסיף: "כתבי רנ"ק" קרבו לבבות לרנ"ק – ומבואי עשה לו אוזן מה. מצאתי אנשי־עיון – במערב – שלא השגוּחו בו הרבה תחילה, וברבות הימים מצאו את דרכם ... וכאן רואה אני חובה לעצמי לספר מעשה שהיה בי ובחכם אחד מחכמי המערב, בעל זכויות רבות בחקר מחשבת יה"ב ... לאחר שהוצאתי לאור את כתבי רנ"ק פנית אל יוליוס גוטמן (פרופסור ב"האָכשולע", ראש המכון המדעי לאקדמיה ...) והצעת לי שהאקדמיה תפרסם ספרי הגרמני על רנ"ק (אודה: עם סיום האינפלציה נפסקה "עיינות", נתדלדל גם מקור פרנסתי |6ט| והייתי מוכן לעבוד אותה עבודה זרה – גרמנית). גוטמן – בשיחתנו בה בפרשה – תמה על הצעתי זו: ספר על רנ"ק? רנ"ק היה "חוקר מקורי"? מה חידש? באותם הימים – בתרפ"ה – הייתי כולי ספוג רנ"ק, תמהתי על תמיהתו. לימדתי "סנגוריה" על רנ"ק – כלפי אותו חכם בברלין; ולבי מר עלי: האמנם עד כדי כך הוכו עיני בעוורון, אהבת רנ"ק העבירתני על דעתי, או חכם זה עיני הוכו בעוורון? גוטמן השווה את רנ"ק לאדוארד צלר ולכמה חוקרי־פילוסופיה זולתו ... טענתי כנגדו: א) לפי עניות דעתי, אדוארד צלר ראוי למחקר מבחינת אותו מפנה־קנט שפנה. ב) והעיקר: כיצד ניתן להשוות את מקומו של צלר בהתפתחות המחשבה בגרמניה למעמד רנ"ק במחשבת ישראל מן המאה הי"ט וכי?

לאחר כמה טענות "סניגוריה" נוספות שטענתי, אמר לי יוליוס גוטמן בקצור רב: כשאדם כותב על תעשיית־בד >אשר בשלזיה, עליו ללכת לברסלוי. כשאדם כותב על פיוט הרינוס, עליו ללכת לקלן. רצונך לעסוק ברנ"ק, לך לוורשה. זהו המקום המתאים לכך.  
למען האמת ההיסטורית, אמסור כאן בלשונו בדיוק:

Wenn man über schlesische Leinwandindustrie arbeitet, muss man nach Breslau gehen. Wenn man über rheinische Dichtung schreibt, muss man nach Köln gehen. Wenn Sie über Krochmal arbeiten wollen, müssen Sie nach Warschau gehen. Das wäre der richtige Platz dafür.

דבריו אלה – מסוג דברים הם שאין בכוח שומעם לשכחם כל ימי – הממוגי הרבה. נכנסתי לביתו של פרופ' איתמר אלבוגן ושפכתי לפניו את לבבי ... אף אלבוגן היה תמה הרבה על דברי חברו להוראה ב"האָכשולע". התחיל מוריד ממדף ספריו כמה כרכי אנציקלופדיות והיה בודק: חוקר פלוני ישב בעיר פלונית וכתב על חכם אלמוני שישב בארץ אלמונית ... כשיצא לאור ספרו של גוטמן מצאתי בו ... שורות לרנ"ק. ובשנת ת"ש – ואני באנגליה – קבלתי מכתב מאלבוגן (שחי בנייר־יורק) ובו הוא שואלני: אם עמדתי על כך שגוטמן פרסם מאמר רחב על רנ"ק ובו הוא מביע את הסכמתו להנחתי בדבר א־הגליניותו של רנ"ק? ודאי נזכר באותו גזר דין שגזר עלי גוטמן בתרפ"ה: רצונך לעסוק ברנ"ק – לך לוורשה ...<sup>121</sup> לאחר זמך־מה הגיעני כרך "כנסת" ובו מאמרו של גוטמן. זה שגזר עלי לילך לוורשה זכה ועלה ירושלימה וגילה את רנ"ק ... ברכתי אותה שעה בשם ובמלכות את קוני שלא הייתי זקוק לשוטו של היטלר, לעקירה מגרמניה לארץ העברים – כדי לגלות את מעלתו של רנ"ק, וגם את מציאותה של לשון עבר החדשה ...  
ברוך המקום ברוך הוא.

121 תלמידי אלבוגן ספרו לי שבשנות השלושים היה מרבה לעסוק ברנ"ק – בהרצאותיו – והיה קורא ממבואי לפנייהם, כשהיה מדיגש את הסתגלותה של לשון עבר לדברי מחשבה.

לא אמרתי: כל חכמי ישראל במערב-אירופה ראו ברנ"ק מעין "אוסט-יודע", שערכו בעיקר ל"אוסט-יודען" בוורשה וכו'. וגישתו זו של גוטמן לרנ"ק – עד שזכה וקנה שביתה בירושלים – הרבה בה מן הענין גם להערכת פרשת מזרח ומערב בשדה חכמת ישראל בדורות האחרונים. אשר לעצם מחקר זה של גוטמן אין הוא מוסיף הרבה בעיקר מחקר רנ"ק. הוא מסכם את הידוע, חוזר על כמה מהנחותי, במישרין ובעקיפין ... בספרי אטפל בו – תוך בקורת כמה מאמרים על רנ"ק – וכאן אסתפק בפרטים אלה.

[6] | אסיים בדברייסיומי למבואי >למהדורה א':

"וכשאנו הולכים ומסיימים את דברייעיוננו במשנתו של רנ"ק, רשאים אנו להתפלל על תחיתה של משנת רנ"ק, על תחית 'הרוחני המוחלט' שבתוכה, על התחדשותה של אותה שאיפת השכל והאמת הגדולה העוברת כחוט השני דרך חייו ומשנתו, על החיאתו של זה היושר הנפשי העליון. מלחמת הבקרת שבה פתח רנ"ק על קביעתם של היסודות שיש בהם כדי לחדש את המחשבה הישראלית, פסקה בבחינת מה עם מותו של אותו לוחם. ואם תשוב ותבא בזמן מן הזמנים ותהא טבועה בחותם של רנ"ק, עתידה היא זו להביא ברכה רבה. והרבה יהיו למדים בנייהדורות הבאים מפיו של מורה נבוכי המאה הי"ט".

אם מהדורת תשט"ז תוסיף לעשות נפש בישראל לרנ"ק – כאשר עשתה מהדורת תרפ"ד – והיה זה שכרי.

לאחר פרסום ספרי על רנ"ק וספר המחשבה (עיין למעלה) אוציא מהדורה שלישית לכתבי רנ"ק ובה יהא פירוש רחב ומראה מקומות ו... הערות למונה"ז – עמוד בעמוד, שורה בשורה, כדרך שעשיתי בכרך ז' של כתבי משה מנדלסון. כל ימי הנני מצטער על שניתן לי להוציא אותם כתבי רמ"ד ע"פ כתב-היד ולתקן בהם את כל הטעון תיקון, על יסוד אותם כתבייד וברוח "טכניקה" של הוצאת טכסט שהיתה מקובלת בגרמניה בשנות העשרים – וקבלה נאה היתה זו – ולא ניתן לי לנהוג מנהג רצוי זה ברנ"ק.



הנני מודה מקרב לבי למר אלכנסדר שפירא – ראש לעסקני "פועלי ציון" בבוסטון, מסור בכל לבו לספרות יידיש, שתרם הרבה לבנין הארץ, שנענה לי בטובו והשתתף בעין יפה בהוצאות הכרוכות במהדורת תשט"ז – היוצאת לאור על חשבונני, באין מו"ל ולא חברה, המוכנה להוציא ספרים עבריים באמריקה, "ארץ לא יחסר כל בה", לא לשם עסק או לשם הגדלת תורה והאדרתה ... אשריו ששמו נכרך בהרווחת כתבי רנ"ק בישראל.

אלול תשט"ז

[הוצאת תשט"ז הנ"ל – זוהי המהדורה שלפנינו.]



## 6. 100th Anniversary of Nachman Krochmal

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NACHMAN KROCHMAL, who was born in Brody (Galicia) in 1785 and died in Tarnopol in 1840, was one of the greatest thinkers Eastern European Jewry has produced in the last two centuries. He represented a new, hitherto unknown combination *sui generis* of all that was creative and reviving in traditional Judaism with all those revolutionary elements of new thought that were to form a basis for modern Jewry in generations to come. An outstanding spiritual leader of his own age, he was chosen by Jewish history, or by the subsequent historical development of Jewry – to rank among those national guides who have lived and worked not for their own time alone.

His tremendous spiritual and literary influence had preceded for many decades the publication of his main, indeed only work, “Moreh Nebuchei Ha-zeman” (Guide to the Perplexed of the Age), a work with which the world was not acquainted until eleven years after his death. Surrounded by a group of young students – many of whom had distinguished themselves as leading scholars and poets during his time and later – Krochmal radiated from his profound learning and wisdom not only upon the immediate circle of his young intimate contemporary friends in his own country, but on the *Haskalah* (enlightenment) movement as a whole in Russia as in other countries. While his pupils and contemporaries, some younger than himself, others older, published their works, the great master himself showed an unusual degree of self-control, self-discipline, and self-criticism in refuting all the vehement claims made upon him by his students and his contemporary scientific world. In the introduction to his great *opus* he quotes the word of one of our sages, who warned scholars not to deal with ideas in the way that some fathers deal with their daughters when reaching the age of marriage, showing anxiety to get rid of them. Krochmal, who engaged partly and unhappily in business life and partially in some communal activities, devoted all his life on crystallising his ideas, polishing their formulae and putting them into a concise style, that was to serve both as a warning to the hasty writer and as an example to the author anxious to preserve the purity of expression and the adequacy of contents. The master took his preparatory work so seriously that he never was able to

finish it. Nor did he acquaint the world of the most important fruits of his lifelong constant research. So his “Moreh Nebuchei Ha-zeman” remained a torso. But it has become the greatest “unfinished symphony” of Jewish scholarship and philosophy of recent generations. After a hundred years of Jewish history, the most revolutionary and in many respects extremely rich and fruitful epoch for many centuries, and after another hundred years of a tremendous development of modern Hebrew literature, Krochmal’s *opus* is still the centre of study and admiration, still unsurpassed in the great literary, educational, and national values. A new Krochmal, a second “Moreh Nebuchei Ha-zeman” is to us a *desideratum* in the same way as is a new *Maimonides*, a second “More Nebuchim” [Guide for the Perplexed] (on which Krochmal’s work was partially modelled).

Krochmal’s aim was not merely to add a few stones to the new building of “Chochmat Yisrael” (Jewish scholarship), which was jointly erected by his contemporaries and their younger followers. He did not confine himself to the investigation of a particular field in Jewish history and literature. His vision went much further than that. His outlook was Jewish universalistic in the deepest meaning of this term. His was a passionate desire to arrive at a new understanding of all that Judaism, Jewish history, really means. Like Francis Bacon and Descartes, who considered the problem of “method” to be the outstanding one for the development of the new science and the renaissance of philosophy, Krochmal, who will always rank as one of the “openers” of the gates to the Jewish *renaissance*, was stressing the necessity of finding a new way, a new *method*, with the help of which one can pave a path in the wood of the Jewish past and present. He was one of the first to have walked this new tread.

So he was, after the Italian pioneer Aariah [sic] de Rossi, among the very first to bring the Jewish past – its so varied spiritual, literary, and political developments and tendencies – into the new “categories” or “boundaries” of *space* and *time*. This very complicated and colorful *quasi* spaceless and timeless “mass” called “Judaism” or Jewish History, etc., got in Krochmal’s hand its *historical* background, it began by him to be ordered, systematised, and analysed, viewed and studied from the angle of space and time. And this has to be stressed that in examining all aspects of Judaism from the aspect of time and space, Krochmal did more for a new understanding of the spiritual and national world system called “Judaism” from the angle of eternity (*sub specie aeternitatis*) than any Jewish philosopher before him. His new critical and historic method made him the pioneer of modern research in all fields of Jewish learning. He not merely opened new gates to the critical understanding of the Bible; he has also laid the foundation

stones of a new method concerning the historic understanding of the Talmudic world, both of *Halachah* [Jewish law] and *Aggadah* [non-legalistic exegetical literature]. Philo, Jewish mysticism, Abraham Ibn Ezra's wisdom, did not escape Krochmal's far and broad view. But he was never a mere critic of texts, a philologist, or even a historian in the narrow meaning of the term. He was a *philosopher*, the first modern Hebrew philosopher *par excellence*. His aim was not the mere explanation of a number of details concerning the development of Judaism or of a certain group of phenomena and periods in Jewish history. It was the clarification of the *totality* of the Jewish past and present in all its religious, literary, and political, and national implications.

The creation of a new philosophy of Judaism was the driving motive of his effort, which, unfortunately, had not had time, owing to his premature death, to be fully and adequately fulfilled in a way that would have satisfied the over-critical and constantly scrutinising philosopher himself. Though not completed, the fundamentals of this new philosophy are before us. He has not accomplished his great task of developing fully his system of logic, philosophy, and religion, etc. But what he did in both the outlining of the skeleton of the total development of Jewish history and putting down the principles of a Philosophy of History, is of lasting import. Here Krochmal enriched Jewish scholarship and Hebrew literature in a most fruitful way, partly by his own original ideas and partly out of the world of ideas then prevalent in European – especially German – philosophy and history. He was the first in Jewry to introduce also the principle of *development* as the guiding one in the making and being of history and of its national groups, and to [198] apply this fundamental law to Jewish history as well. The concept of the development underlying his analysis of Jewish history and of the philosophy of history in general is not of a dialectical but of a purely evolutionist and biological character. In conformity with some of his predecessors among non-Jewish historians, old and modern, he divides the life of a nation into three stages: growth or rise, standing still, decline – a scheme which is modelled on the natural division of human life (youth, adolescence, old age) or of the day (morning, mid-day, and evening). This scheme helps Krochmal to put the development of Jewish history from the days of Abraham until around the end of the 17th century into a *cyclic* shape, and so to pave the way for the discovery of “sense,” “system” and “order” in all the ups and downs of our long past which have so puzzled many a Jewish and non-Jewish historian and observer.

Among the factors decisive in the historic development, Krochmal lays very much stress on the “*Spirit of the Nation*” (“*ruach ha-umah*”) which on

the one hand is a necessary result of the very existence of the nation, or national community, while it is on the other the driving and shaping force of the special character of the given nation, in accordance with the various external circumstances. This theory, the origin of which can be traced back to *Montesquieu*, the author of "*Espirit de lois*," later developed by [Johann Gottfried] Herder and other German "romantics," turned out to become one of the most influential teachings of Krochmal. At a time when Jewish "religious liberalism," the Jewish "Reform-Movement" in Western European countries, emphatically refuted the very "national" character of Jewry, to them devoid of any nationhood of its own – the great philosopher in Galicia was elaborating his theory of the "spirit of the Nation" which has to be applied to the Jewish community as to any other national group which played any role in history, or that was given by history any "chance" of existence. Krochmal's "*ruah ha-umah*" became very decisive for the development of the philosophy of later Jewish nationalism (from Moses Hess to Ahad Ha'am). But a closer analysis of Krochmal's concept of the "spirit of the Nation" will show that the forerunner of modern Jewish nationalism is not to be fully identified with it.

Besides this "*ruah ha-umah*" Krochmal builds his philosophy on the existence of a "*ruchani muchlat*"; an "Absolute Spirit," (a concept which he took from the classical German philosophers of his days: [Johann Gottlieb] Fichte, [Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph] Schelling, and [Georg Wilhelm Friedrich] Hegel). This "*ruchani muchlat*" is to our philosopher the source of all spiritual being, of all making and existence. While "Spirit" as such is a result of man's efforts, while the spirit of the nation is the fruit of the nation's life – this "Absolute Spirit" is the very primary force in individual and collective life. It is a totality *sui generis*, not composed of partial beings. It is the omnipotent force in history, the most creative and driving factor in it. As far as Judaism and Jewry are considered, Krochmal finds in this "*ruchani muchlat*" (absolute spirit) the guarantee for Israel's unity, identity, and eternity. To a certain degree here, the "spirit of the nation" becomes identical with this everlasting and omnipotent "*ruchani muchlat*." So Israel becomes here the *great historical exception*, thanks to the "Absolute Spirit" that was and is alive in Jewish history from its early beginnings till the present.

This helps Krochmal to a new belief in *Israel's eternity*. The philosopher who introduced space and time into Judaism saw more than others how fundamentally this Jewish reality is beyond time and space. Here – and not only here – he deviates from one of his German masters, Hegel, who said: "No nation can survive after its decline, after it has survived its

‘purpose’ and fulfilled its task. No nation can play twice a role in history.” [cf. Hegel, Werke, vol. 8, 163] The survival of Jewry in the past serves Krochmal as an illustration and guarantee for Israel’s survival in the future. Since Jewish history being *cyclic*, a *very modern* concept – and Krochmal counts three cycles, each consisting of three phases of development from “rise” to “decline” – it is impossible, according to Krochmal’s theory, to exclude the coming of new “cycles” from the incessant current of Jewish existence.

Krochmal has put the end of the third cycle at about the year 1700. It is given to Krochmal’s followers to divide the years 1700–1940 into one cycle or two. However, this might be decided upon, there will be general agreement that Krochmal’s personality and achievement belongs to a phase of “rise” in one of the “cycles” of Jewish history. Unfortunately, there will also be general agreement that our own present days, when we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Nachman Krochmal, are the beginning of a very tragic phase of “decline” in the recent “cycle” of our history.

None the less, we are obliged to turn our thoughts to the great philosopher of Tarnopol and Zolkiew, and this for two good reasons:

To proclaim in Krochmal’s spirit our solemn belief in a new “cycle” of Jewish existence, which will begin with a new phase of “rise” and “growth,” when the present phase of decline of the passing cycle will be gone.

We pay homage not only to Nachman Krochmal and his great work, but also to his own Jewry, to the Jewry of Tarnopol and Brody – to the great Jewry of Eastern Europe, which has produced men like Krochmal and his followers, which, unhappily, is now undergoing so terrifying ordeal both physically and spiritually. In commemorating Krochmal’s memory we are conveying a message of faith and confidence in a new “cycle” in Jewish history, beginning with a new phase of “rise” of Krochmal’s great Eastern European Jewry, now doomed to tragic perplexity, unbearable misery, and silence.

## II. Rawidowicz as Ideologue of a Hebrew Cultural Nation

### 1. Introduction

The collection of five lectures and essays in this chapter highlights a number of core features of Rawidowicz's ideological *Weltanschauung*, and thus differs in form and content from those in the previous chapter. It draws from one of the most fertile periods in his life, as well as one of the most uncertain, as Rawidowicz took leave of his transplanted home in Berlin in 1933 to head to Mandatory Palestine with the unrealized hope of finding a position there before settling in London. As he moved venues, Rawidowicz demonstrated a great deal of versatility in adapting to the local cultures, meeting prominent Jewish cultural figures and academic colleagues, all the while remaining true to his vision of a Hebrew cultural nation anchored in Babylon and Jerusalem.

Living in Berlin in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Rawidowicz was immersed in a wide range of scholarly and cultural activities: publishing his dissertation on Ludwig Feuerbach, finding employment in a variety of research and library positions, and remaining actively involved in Jewish and Hebrew-related activities. This was, of course, a highly volatile time in Germany as discontent with the Weimar political experiment grew, propelled by conservative and reactionary agitators including Adolf Hitler.

It was also a period of uncommon creativity for Rawidowicz, who crafted a number of the key pillars of the "Babylon and Jerusalem" edifice. First among equals was his belief in the *Hebrew language* as the connective tissue of the Jewish people throughout the world. He was adamant in insisting that Hebrew was not the exclusive preserve of Jews in the Land of Israel, but rather the national property of Jews wherever they lived. At the same time, he was keenly aware that intimate knowledge of Hebrew among Jews had fallen dramatically in the post-Enlightenment era. To recapture the generative power of Hebrew required sustained action. Rawidowicz imagined the creation of a global body parallel to the World Zionist Organization, with its focus on settlement of and political support for the Jews in Mandatory Palestine.

Rawidowicz began to lay out his vision in a lecture on “The Future and Fate of Hebrew Creativity in the Golah,” on 18 October 1930 at the Bet Am Ivri (Hebrew House) in Berlin. According to an account that appeared in the German Zionist weekly, *Jüdische Rundschau*,<sup>1</sup> he lamented that Hebrew creativity in Eastern Europe and the Germanic lands had greatly declined after the First World War. In response to this decline, he proposed the formation of a broad-based cultural organization to deal with the situation.

Rawidowicz was bolstered by the favorable response of European Hebraists and Hebrew organizations, especially the Tarbut (culture) organizations. With their encouragement, he and his comrades convened a gathering in Berlin on 21 June 1931, where he delivered the keynote address. *On the Establishment of the Brit ha-ivrim* (II.2.) was later published in a booklet headed *If Not Here, Then Where?* – a title that played on the third line of the famous quote of Hillel the Sage that begins with “If I am not for myself.”<sup>2</sup> Rawidowicz’s proposal to establish an international Hebrew movement, which included an expansive conceptual framework and a detailed organizational plan, was endorsed by the attendees. It was decided to establish an organization called the Brit Ivrit Olamit (World Hebrew Union) which rested on a program of eleven principles, the first of which called for “the dissemination of knowledge of Hebrew language and culture, and the acquisition of fluency in spoken Hebrew among the nation.”<sup>3</sup> It was also decided to establish a temporary central committee to

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- 1 Anonymous, Gesellschaft zur Erneuerung des jüdischen Schaffens, in: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 4 November 1930, 575. See also Benjamin C.I. Ravid, Shim'on Ravidoviç u-vrit ivrit olamit. Perek be-yaḥasim bein tarbut ivrit ba-tefuḏah le-ideologyah ha-ziyyonit [Simon Rawidowicz and the World Hebrew Organization. A Chapter on the Relationship Between Hebrew Culture in the Diaspora and Zionist Ideology], in: Avraham Ben-Amitai (ed.), *Meḥkarim u-massot ba-lashon ha-ivrit u-ve-sifrutah. Divrei ha-kinnus ha-madda'i ha-ivri ha-shishah-assar be-Eropah. Ha-Universitah ha-Ḥofshit*, Berlin, ha-makhon le-madda'ei ha-yahadut, Tamuz 761, Yuli 2001 [Studies and Essays in Hebrew Language and Literature. Berlin Congress. Proceedings of the 16th Hebrew Scientific European Congress. Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Judaistik, July 2001], Jerusalem 2004, 119–154, here 126. For an overarching assessment of the state of Hebrew cultural activism in Berlin, see now Tamara Or, *Heimat im Exil. Eine hebräische Diasporakultur in Berlin 1897–1933*, Göttingen 2020.
  - 2 See Mishnah, Avot 1:14: “If I am not for me, who will be for me? And when I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, then when?”
  - 3 Ravid, Shim'on Ravidoviç u-vrit ivrit olamit, 133.

administer the Brit and to organize a Hebrew congress. That committee then entrusted Rawidowicz with the task of heading the Brit.

From this point forward, the organization followed a number of pathways. One led to London, where Rawidowicz settled after the rise of Hitler in 1933. There he promoted the organization's work and oversaw the Brit's executive committee, while the main office was in Warsaw. As if this arrangement were not complicated enough, another group maintained that the center of the Brit was and could only be in Mandatory Palestine, for it was the center of a living Hebrew culture. The differences between Diaspora- and Palestine-based supporters also led to disputes in recounting the history of the Brit's origins. Whereas Rawidowicz was widely held by the former to be the founder, the Palestine supporters advanced alternative accounts according to which the Brit was founded by others, including Rawidowicz's acquaintance from Berlin, Chaim Nahman Bialik (to be discussed in chap. III).

In fact, hints of these divisions were evident already at the Brit's opening meeting in 1931. The opponents of Rawidowicz's vision deemed it insufficiently Zionist. Rawidowicz, for his own part, did declare that the new organization should be distinct from the World Zionist Organization, and its home should be in the Diaspora.<sup>4</sup> The two organizations should be parallel and complementary. This notion was intimately linked to the ideal of two co-equal cultural centers in the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel. He articulated the need for a relationship of mutual *partnership* – of *shutafut* – between the two centers. In Berlin, this principle signaled Rawidowicz's departure from his fellow Eastern European Hebraist and source of inspiration, the great essayist Achad Ha-Am, for whom the relationship between Diaspora and the Land of Israel was not one of mutuality but rather of hierarchy in which there was a dominant center and a subordinate periphery.<sup>5</sup> The opponents to Rawidowicz in Berlin

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4 Among the critics were Hebrew activists Zvi Vislavski (1889–1957) and Baruch Krupnik (1889–1972), the latter of whom declared that Rawidowicz's opening address was a "most radical innovation that it is forbidden to place as the central lecture." Meanwhile, in a revealing letter to his father in Palestine a month and a half after the conference (14 August 1931), Rawidowicz wrote that "you see me as one of the lovers of the Diaspora and haters of Zion." See Ravid, Shim'on Ravidoviz u-vrit ivrit olamit, 131 and 136.

5 See Achad Ha-Am, *Ten Essays on Zionism and Judaism*, transl. by Leon Simon, London 1922, especially: idem, *A Spiritual Centre* (1907), in: *ibid.*, 120–129.



and later Tel Aviv – those who saw Erez Yisra'el as the center of the Jewish nation and Hebrew culture – were Achad Ha-Am's followers.

Rawidowicz never relented in his advocacy of a genuine partnership. Nor did he ever surrender his belief in the Diaspora as a legitimate and necessary site of Jewish cultural existence. Even in the immediate wake of Hitler's ascent to power, he expressed the hope that Jewish life would not be altogether eradicated in Germany. He invested almost a magical power in the ability of beleaguered Jewish communities to survive, giving rise to a "law of the existence of the Diaspora" (II.3.), as he described it in the multi-part essay "Kiyum ha-tefuzah" (The Existence of the Diaspora) from 1934/35. For example, his assertion that "[n]o Jewish Diaspora is uprooted from its place completely [...] unless it is completely expelled"<sup>6</sup> rested on a belief in the organic rootedness of Jews in their varied homelands. But it also betrayed a mystical and naïve sensibility that sometimes swept up Rawidowicz in a romantic reverie, leading him to maintain that Germany would be the site not only of great challenge to its Jews, but also of their rejuvenation.

Even when he left the once-intense world of Hebrew culture in Berlin for the more challenging terrain of London, he persisted in promoting the new-old language, both within the framework of the Brit and beyond. In a pair of selections spanning from 1936 to 1943, he revealed a certain measure of realism when he made clear that he did not expect Hebrew to become the first language of Diaspora Jews. In the later essay – of which we are reissuing an extract (II.5.) – published in the journal *Mezudah* (Fortress) that he founded and edited, he pointed to a possible model worthy of emulation: the ongoing commitment of residents of Wales to speak and be educated in Welsh alongside their total fluency in English. Fascinated as he was by the phenomenon of a small nation successfully preserving its cultural legacy, Rawidowicz took up the study of Welsh himself. And in parallel, he enjoined British Jews, especially the young, to take up the study of Hebrew. In his 1936 speech to an Anglo-Jewish Hebrew club (II.4.), he floated the idea that Hebrew might become the second language of Jews in the United Kingdom.

The phrase he used to describe this proposal – *lashon sheniyah shel galuyot* (second language of the Diaspora) – intentionally evokes the Diaspora custom of marking a second day of celebration (*yom tov sheni*) for the three major pilgrimage festivals on the Jewish ritual calendar, Shavuot, Pessach, and Sukkot. It also echoes Rawidowicz's frequent ten-

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6 II.3. The Existence of the Diaspora, 192.

dency to borrow terms from classical Jewish sources or rituals and insert new content in them. Although he gave up most of his family's traditional religious practice as a young man, he always retained great reverence for Jewish ritual and an excellent command of rabbinic literature.

The title of the last text in this chapter (II.6.), *I and Not My Messenger*, reflects his practice to take a traditional phrase and adapt it, often with a slight paraphrase, to his thought. *I and Not My Messenger* adapts a formulation found in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishma'el* and repeated in the Passover Haggadah (and later by Rashi). There one finds the expression “ani ve-lo ha-shaliah” (I myself and not the Messenger), quoted by Rawidowicz. The felicitous rendering of the title of this essay in English as “I and Not My Messenger” gives the essay more immediacy.

This article, originally published in 1937 in Hebrew, was one of his most widely disseminated essays. The title embodies, for Rawidowicz, a golden rule of Judaism, akin to Hillel's injunction “do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you.”<sup>7</sup> Judaism has little tolerance for the idea of deputizing someone to discharge the obligations of another. Rawidowicz here has in mind the age-old tradition of “sheliḥut” – of sending messengers out from the Land of Israel to the Diaspora to share information, instruct, and collect money from Jews in the Diaspora. Such a system presumes that Diaspora Jews are secondary and subordinate actors in the main drama of Jewish life, which unfolds in the Land of Israel. “I and Not My Messenger” brings the focus back to a central principle of Rawidowicz: Diaspora Jews must not rely on messengers to act on their behalf. They share an equal responsibility for and indeed are equal partners in the creation of Jewish culture and life.

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7 Bavli, Shabbat 31a.

## 2. On the Establishment of the Brit ha-ivrim

*The following is an expanded version of a speech given at the inaugural conference of the Brit Ivrit Olamit (World Hebrew Union) in Berlin, on 21 June 1931. The original Hebrew text was initially published as “Le-irgun ha-golah ha-ivrit” [On the Organization of the Hebrew Diaspora] in: Moznayim 3 (1931), no. 9, 2–5; no. 10, 2–8, and then reprinted with extensive footnotes containing excerpts from his intervening articles on the subject in: Simon Rawidowicz, “Im lo kan – hekhan?” [If Not Here, Where?], Lvov 1933, 10–40. Yehonathan Chipman translated this text into English. Italic passages in Hebrew are shown bold in the translation.*

*Honorable Assembly,*

In times past, when people would gather for a cultural conference of this sort, they would discuss the value of the Hebrew language, the Hebrew spirit, the People of Israel and its nature, and so forth. They would argue whether it was *possible* for Hebrew to become a widespread spoken language in the Diaspora and similar questions. Happily, today we are free from this type of discussion. In all the lands of the Diaspora, there exist – even under the most difficult conditions – various kinds of Hebrew kindergartens and schools. In practice, life itself has made its decision: it is possible, it is permitted, it is fitting, and it is desirable that it be so. One may argue today about the nature of the Jewish people and their spirit, just as people did decades ago, but nobody disagrees as to the value of the Hebrew language for the life of Jewry in the Diaspora. Even among the circles of assimilationists in Western Europe this idea has become accepted in practice, so that we no longer need to discuss these questions that have meanwhile found their solution, if not in their desired completeness. All that is left is to emphasize that we have not gathered here in order to *save the language*. Moreover, we have not gathered only in order to save Hebrew culture. If our only goal were the language and its values, we could have consigned this task to one of the museums, to a society for antiquities, or to some literary-aesthetic association. We almost certainly could have found a society of *Christian* scholars among the Germans or the English, who would have taken upon themselves the task of preserving the Hebrew language so that it not disappears from the earth. But the issue that confronts us today is not that of language, but the *question of the spiritual survival of the People of Israel in the Diaspora*. We are not simply

a “Sprachverein,” we have not come together to “save” this “beautiful, surviving, unique” language, but rather to save |11| the People of Israel, which has been swept away after the Great World War, and struggles for its very cultural existence.

### The Spiritual Existence of Israel in the Diaspora!

– This is the question that we are proclaiming before the world, and whose solution we are discussing here.

We have come together in order to take action. But if there is no theory, from whence can action derive? The theory must precede the action, and if there is no philosophy there can be no action. Or perhaps one ought to say that the failure of the Hebraist movement in the Diaspora only came about because it failed to create its own philosophy. A movement that does not remove the obstacles from the path of *its philosophy*, that does not adhere to the basis of its thought – will in the end not survive. And I would like to speak to you briefly today about the *philosophy and theory* which, in my opinion, must precede the action that demands its realization from us. This theory is an *introduction* that contains a condition, even though it does not serve here as a basis per se. The action is the main thing, and not the theory, but an action that is preceded by a theory endures, whereas an action that does not have a theory of its own does not strike roots. Those who stand watch over the philosophy will also perform the action.

I would add that the hints of the theory and the plans of action that I am going to suggest to you, I do on my own. The “Preparatory Committee” of this conference is not responsible for either my theory or for my action. They are the views of an individual, and I do not speak in the name of any group.



My answer is that the ideology that has thus far been implanted as the basis of our Hebrew cultural approach in the Diaspora is not able to sustain and nourish a creative Hebrew movement in this Diaspora. The society of “The Seekers of Good and Wisdom” during the generation of the Meassefim [contributors to the Haskalah journal Hame’assef (The Collector)] and the society of “The Lovers of the Hebrew Language” in Russia before the Great War were motivated by aesthetic and linguistic ideals, by love of

the language, and by the recognition that the new Judaism had nothing left but the language alone. Such is not the case for our Hebrew cultural enterprise in the Diaspora following the war years. On the one hand, it is conditioned by the political circumstances that were created in post-war Europe; on the other hand, this enterprise is integrally connected, like a candle to its wick, with |12| the Zionist idea. Insofar as it derives from Zionism, it is based upon the doctrine of the *spiritual center* of Achad Ha-Am, from whose waters all of us drink. *But this is also the weak point of our cultural activity in the Diaspora* and serves as the basis for some other details with which I do not have the time to deal. However, we must spend some time on this one point, as we set out to renew our enterprise and to give it stature.

I cannot argue here against a number of the assumptions of Achad Ha-Am's doctrine of the spiritual center. Some of my thoughts on this subject have been published in other articles, but most of them I have been unable to publish due to the lack of Hebrew literary organs in which it is possible to discuss – at length, in depth and in a serious manner – the fundamental questions of our life and destiny in the Diaspora.<sup>8</sup> I shall offer here one idea, from which you may infer my views regarding the rest. For the purposes of our enterprise, it will suffice to allude to one of the *basic*

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8 I suggested some of my ideas regarding the negation of the Diaspora in my lecture in the Bet Am Ivrit in Berlin in early 1929 in a discussion with Dr. J[akob] Klatzkin. Hints of my criticism of the accepted Zionist outlook can be found in my article "Le-shem ḥiddush sifrutainu" [On the Renewal of Our Literature], in: Ha-Olam, 2 December 1930, 971 f.; 9 December 1930, 994 f.; 16 December 1930, 1014 f. The article found an echo in the Hebrew and Yiddish press (see for example: Anonymous, A shevvet oder a folk? [A Tribe or a Nation?], in: Der Yidisher Zhurnal, Toronto, 6 March 1931, 4). Asher Barash was aroused by it to raise at a meeting of writers in Tel Aviv the question of "Sifrut shel shevet ve-sifrut shel am" [The Literature of a Tribe and the Literature of a People], in: Moznayim 2 (1931), no. 38, 8–11). In my article "Shtei she'elot she-hen aḥat" [Two Questions That Are One], in: Moznayim 2 (1931), no. 44, 7–9; no. 45, 8 f., I attempted to raise by allusion the basic question of the Diaspora and to remove it from the limited area of literature. See also my articles "Halakhah u-ma'aseh. He'arot aḥadot la-knesiyah ha-ivrit be-Berlin" [Theory and Practice. Some Remarks on the Hebrew Congress in Berlin], in: Ha-Olam, 1 December 1931, 936 f.; 8 December 1931, 958 f.; 15 December 1931, 978 f.; 22 December 1931, 998 f., and "Shutafut shel kiyyum" [Partnership of Existence], in: *ibid.*, 19 May 1932, 291–293; 26 May 1932, 306–308; 2 June 1932, 322–325.

*errors* in the doctrine of the “spiritual center.” This is the doctrine that, as I said, undermines the life of our enterprise in the Diaspora. I find the decisive fault in the *lack of the idea of creativity* and of the creative element. At the center of Achad Ha-Am’s doctrine is the concept of imitation. He sees life as an *imitation* of that which has already passed. The past serves as a source of imitation for the present, while the present serves as a source of imitation for the future. Today imitates yesterday, and tomorrow will imitate today. From this doctrine we may infer, although it is not explicitly stated: Homo homini simia – man is a monkey to man. Not a voracious wolf, not a forgiving God |13| – but rather an “aping” monkey. Nationalism is based upon imitation (“imitation of competition”), and assimilation is likewise based upon imitation (“imitation of self-effacement”). Achad Ha-Am sees imitation as a spiritual law, both social and metaphysical, in the sense of a first principle or fundamental law (we shall not discuss here the positivistic schools in whose footsteps he follows). All of Achad Ha-Am’s teaching is as remote from the idea of creativity as the leading speaker of the previous generation was remote from *Immanuel Kant*, the father of the idea of “synthesis” and spontaneity. (I do not mean to say here that Achad Ha-Am does not know of the concept of creativity, but rather that one must properly understand the place of “creativity” in his thought.) It seems to me that even creativity in the Land of Israel is seen by him as only an imitation of the work of creativity that was undertaken in this land thousands of years ago. Achad Ha-Am asks: What is the People of Israel lacking? And he answers: A center for imitation. How shall this center of imitation be built? For this, he has no place other than the Land of Israel. The act of imitation to be undertaken in the Land of Israel of the life that existed when the People of Israel was on its soil will in turn serve as a basis for imitation by the Diaspora. In this way Achad Ha-Am, and many other spokesmen of Zionism and of the Hebrew movement, have fallen captive to the thicket of mechanistic ideas upon which I cannot elaborate here in detail. I cannot deal with the issue of consciousness, with the relationship between our own consciousness and those things that exist in the external world, whether we only recognize those things that we ourselves create, whether these exist prior to our synthetic creation of them and outside of it – this question has no place here. However, the following idea must serve us as a basic axiom: *we only live* – I mean life in the highest sense – *that life which we ourselves create*, and insofar as we create it. That which we do not create, we do not live. And if matters are thus regarding an individual, how much more so regarding a community, a collective, a nation. The collectivity enjoys that which comes from

other collectivities, on the one hand deriving benefit and on the other giving benefit. However, its true life, its supreme life, its original life, is none other than the creation of its own soul. If the former were angels, human beings, or even less – we are *creators*. If we do not create, we do not exist.

The People of Israel lacks political freedom, independence, economic and cultural freedom. A center of imitation will not save us. Wherever a community of Jews lives – there exists a *center of Jewish creativity*. The Land of Israel has nothing to fear from these centers of creativity. On the contrary, it needs them. Diaspora Jewry will achieve [14] complete unity and accept upon itself the yoke of the Land of Israel, will bear the suffering of its building – not out of imitation, not out of a desire or hope to imitate, but rather out of its own *creativity*, because its *creativity* will necessarily carry an unbreakable connection with its fellow Jews in the Diaspora and with the Land of Israel created by them. And when I come to advocate the idea of creativity in place of the idea of imitation, I do not mean to say that the idea of imitation is improper, that there are not decisive elements of imitation in spiritual and social life! We only wish to refute its *position of primacy*. It cannot serve as the model for our approach to life. The primary *principle must be creativity!* If there were no creativity in the world, if the world as a whole did not demand creativity, the turmoil of creation – there would be no place for the power of imitation and similar forces in other spheres of life.

Hence, of necessity we must free ourselves, first of all, from the hypnosis of the idea of imitation, as if the “periphery” could live and exist solely on the strength of imitation. And after we have recognized that Diaspora Jewry can only exist by virtue of its own creativity, and despite all the numerous obstacles that stand in the way of our creativity in the Diaspora that we do not ignore, it has no other mode of existence than this. Even if its creativity will never attain the heights of perfection, it must nevertheless follow this path. After this, we must also free ourselves from the second assumption of spiritual Zionism that we do not ignore – namely, *that the Land of Israel alone can solve the question of the Jews*. Just as Diaspora Jewry cannot by itself resolve the question of Judaism, so too the Land of Israel alone – the Land of Israel as it is in the present and in the near future – cannot resolve the question of the culture of the Jews that is desired and sought, of which scores of generations have dreamed and for which they have sacrificed their lives. From this we may infer the following: the *total* culture of the People of Israel, that which is suitable for an ancient people, for a nation that has the Torah, Prophets, and Writings,

and is capable of being transmitted, cannot come into the world except through *shared creativity* between the Land of Israel and the Diaspora. The future culture of the People of Israel – culture in its fundamental and comprehensive sense –

has Two Partners:

These two partners are the inhabitants of the *Land of Israel* and *Diaspora Jewry*. How many “shares” in this partnership belong to the Land of Israel [15] and how many to the Diaspora?<sup>9</sup> There is no point to debating the division of shares or arguing over the question of the equality of rank between the two partners – not for purposes of litigation and not for bargaining. Let the history of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth centuries come and decide. We shall leave our destiny in their hands. So long as the majority of the People of Israel is found in the Diaspora – and not as a numerical majority alone – there cannot and will not be a complete Jewish culture without the creative participation of Diaspora Jewry. Our culture in the Land of Israel cannot achieve its longed-for *Hebrew and*

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9 In my article “Shutafut shel kiyyum” I clarify the concept of partnership: “We should not understand this partnership as it is in real life ... This partnership means a *basic* partnership, not a partnership for a certain *purpose*, but a partnership for *life and death*, ... an ever-lasting partnership ... As in other basic ideas, it contains both *affirmation and negation* simultaneously. Its affirmation affirms the world and its negation negates the world ... The partnership means that neither of the two partners is independent and neither can fully exist without the other ... This is not a partnership of two self-standing *parts* ... but of two halves, halves of the whole, which brings them together, two each of which of necessity needs the existence of the other. This is a partnership that will and necessity compel ... It lives and exists in the hand of *fate* ... If one partner leaves this partnership he is removing himself from the world because he has no other means of existing ... in order to visualize this partnership-approach ...” I further say: “This is a partnership of the *face* ... could the existence of one side be imagined without the other? Is it possible that one side will not adhere to the rules of life, the rules of being and its absence to which its friend, the other side, is also subjected? Could it be that one side will absorb the light of the sun and the other side will be radiating with an ‘artificial sun’?! Could it be that one side would bleed and the other side has some undefinable liquid? As we said: there is not one face but two sides of the face, and even the face of Israel consists of two sides ... but not of two authorities. In essence the accepted Zionist monism is nothing but an *imagined* monism ... In the accepted view lies the concept of *one-sidedness* ... and in our conception of partnership we advance into a new level of *unity* in the question of Israel, the unity of the face of the People of Israel and its fate.”



*human* completeness unless all those portions of Jewry that desire Jewish life participate in its creation. (And here too one may see how great is the danger of “Negation of the Diaspora” – that negates Jewish existence and creativity in the Diaspora, thereby seeing fault in our Jewish renaissance, cutting it in half – but here is not the place to [16] elaborate on this question.)<sup>10</sup> If the revival of Jewry is a joint enterprise, then one must place the methods of our cultural enterprise under the scepter of criticism in order to establish it in its new place. In any case, we must forego the monopoly of the solution of the Land of Israel. We say: *The question of spiritual Judaism in the Diaspora must be resolved within the life of the Diaspora itself, and through creative partnership of the Diaspora in the creativity of the Land of Israel.* In the Land of Israel itself, there are some people who have begun to recognize this. However, in the Diaspora there is still a great deal of sancta simplicitas, and not every “holy simplicity” is truly holy, fructifying life and thought.

Diaspora Jewry does not merely receive, is not only influenced; it must also give, must also be a partner – not a lessee, not a sharecropper, not a day laborer, not an expeditor, not a group living on charity – but a partner.<sup>11</sup> And as we have already said elsewhere: *Until now we have*

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10 See my article “Leshem hiddush sifrutenu”: “Now it became clear even to the radical negators of the Diaspora that just as the Diaspora needs the Land of Israel, so does the Land of Israel need the Diaspora (and I do not mean ‘fundraising’ and the like). Without a living and creative Diaspora Jewry, the Land of Israel will not be developed and will not be able to achieve the task placed upon it by history. Therefore, I say: All who negate the Diaspora – negate Diaspora Jewry, and eventually will negate even the Land of Israel! The *negation of the Diaspora* or its affirmation? No, the *negation of Jewry* or its affirmation! That is the question.” I am going to devote another article to the ideas of the negators of the Diaspora elsewhere.

11 See my article “Leshem hiddush sifrutenu”: “The Diasporas do not live unless they create, and we have a double and multiple duty to nurture the *creative power* of this Jewry, if we want it to be connected also to the Land of Israel. To the extent that the creative power of the Diaspora will decline, so will the creativity in the Land. Do you want to turn Diaspora Jewry into a kind of *import-export company*? In other words – to make it on the one hand a company for sending money and people to the Land of Israel and on the other hand a company for receiving assets and spiritual values from the Land of Israel? All who view Diaspora Jewry only as such a company and ignore the necessity for creativity that is implanted in any living being – undermine the existence of Jewry in the Diaspora, as well as the

*learned the laws of center and periphery; from now on we must learn the laws of partnership, the laws of partners.* [17] We have learned that the renewed Hebrew culture cannot be created in the Land of Israel alone, nor can Jewry of the Diaspora exist in itself except through creativity. Just as Jewry of the Diaspora cannot exist without the Land of Israel, so can the Judaism and Hebrew culture of the Land of Israel not exist without a creative Hebrew Diaspora. When we move the solution to the question of Hebrew culture from the private realm of the Land of Israel to the common realm of the Land and the Diaspora, we confront a host of theoretical and practical problems in the realm of the relation between the Land of Israel and the Diaspora that did not exist as long as we said that Diaspora Jewry was for receiving and the Land of Israel was for creating. I could allude here to other basic problems as well – but our limited time prevents us from doing so.

In essence: by uncovering these two elements: (1) Hebrew creativity as a necessary form of Jewish existence in the Diaspora and (2) negation

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building of the whole of the Land of Israel. ‘Periphery’ and its center! But if the ‘periphery’ will not be creative in itself – there will not be a center; that is, the center will not influence the periphery but rather be an isolated point without a periphery, a ‘center’ that can only shine upon itself and not on others.”

And against the wrong understanding of the theory of center and periphery, as if the function of national *life* was given to the center, and the function of *receiving*, the suckling of the abundance of life, was given to the majority of the People of Israel among the nations. Moreover, I say (ibid.): “And again: Could center and periphery mean a division of functions? Could the center live, and the periphery ‘take part’ in its life? Could the center work and create, while the periphery sits and watches its creation, and at the most finds the *means* for its creation? Should the relation of the periphery to the center be as the relationship of matter and form in *Plato’s* philosophy, then would the center be a ‘platonic’ center and the periphery – a ‘platonic’ periphery? Neither a center nor a periphery. We say: center and periphery are equals, mixed together in one body, both living the *same life* with a few differences, both would generate the *same creativity* with a few differences: the center in a ‘central’ way, and the periphery in a ‘peripheral’ way. All of our life we objected to an economic and political ‘separation’ in the Land of Israel, we fought it and prevailed. The working Yishuv eliminated this ‘separation.’ Should we accept this spiritual and cultural ‘separation’ of the Diaspora Jewry? If Diaspora Jewry will give-up on its Jewish spiritual *creativity*, if it will satisfy itself with the creativity of the Jewry in the Land of Israel, if it will knowingly and willingly betray the tradition of Jewish creativity – is there a more horrible spiritual ‘division’ than this?”

of the monopoly of [18] the Land of Israel for the benefit and for the sake of the Land of Israel,<sup>12</sup> and the placing of our culture within the realm of partnership – we necessarily arrive at a new *understanding* of the question of our existence in the Diaspora. These two basic ideas must be at the basis of the new organization that we are about to establish. I am not declaring dogmas; I am not saying: Accept my opinion, for if not, we will stifle our desire for renewal. In practice, even the most extreme negators of the Diaspora may participate in our project, even those who think that the obligation of Diaspora Jewry is to commit suicide for the sake of Heaven, for the sake of the Land of Israel, who think that the Jewry of the Diaspora will hobble along until it becomes totally moribund and that in the meanwhile it can, of course, engage a little bit in education, in culture, and so forth. But for myself, I feel an obligation to emphasize that I do not believe in the success of our work as long as it is based upon the doctrine of “spiritual” Zionism and the like; as long as there is not a complete *transformation of values* within our camp. I have only mentioned here the main points of this transformation of values, and that only by way of sug-

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12 As I already wrote in my article “Shtei she’elot she-hen aḥat”: “A voice from the Land of Israel should inform the circle of Jewry who wish to sustain the existence of the People of Israel in the Diaspora: The Land of Israel that is being built imposes upon you the duty of *independent* national life, standing watch over the cultural creation inside and outside, *do not fulfill your duty* with the life of the People of Israel in the Land of Israel. A work which is made by others – the owner, the one who should nurture it, does not really enjoy it, it does not sustain him. Our brothers in the Diaspora, plant the vineyards of Hebrew culture in the Diaspora, do not be dependent only on the Land of Israel, build your own Hebrew culture in the Diaspora, make your Hebrew culture a regular one and place it at the top of your Jewish life. You do not have your own independent national economy in the Diaspora and no Jewish policy. Jewish culture is in your hands, teach it to your children ... To the extent that you will care for – willingly and out of the joy of creativity – Hebrew culture in the Diaspora, to the extent that you will work diligently to provide Hebrew creativity for everybody, to the extent that you will aid in reviving Jewish culture in the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel into a Jewish culture in its inner spirit and linguistic form – you will be able to help to revive the People of Israel in the Diaspora and in its Land and to deepen and enrich Hebrew creativity in the Land of Israel. There is no hope at all for the Land of Israel from a Diaspora Jewry which loses – consciously and intentionally – its creative will and castrates itself ‘for holy causes’ ... And if you in the Diaspora will not reach the desired level of wholeness – it is not up to you to finish, but you are not free to give up the duty of creating the spirit of Israel, in all its manifestations and forms ...”

gestion but essentially this transformation of values will serve as a source of ideological ferment and thought in the Diaspora that will fructify the labor and thought in the Diaspora and perhaps also in the Land of Israel.

[19] It is not for the *work of the present*, in the accepted sense of the word, that I preach!<sup>13</sup> I call for a new approach, a different understanding of the very question of our existence in the Diaspora and its solution:

an approach of *creativity* for Jewry in the Diaspora not one of imitation. This change will necessarily lead to a new awareness: *that the face of the People of Israel in the Diaspora is turned towards the Land of Israel* (or, more precisely: one face of the face of Israel; see below), *but the center of gravity of the question of the spiritual existence of the People of Israel in the Diaspora – is not in the Land of Israel, but within Jewry of the Diaspora itself.*

These matters require explanation. I feel that, despite all my additional explanation, people will understand my words wrongly and will see in them what they imagine, holding me accountable for things that were said by them, not said by me. The culture-creating community needs to know what it is, who it is, and before whom it stands. The cultural work of sojourners is not like that of permanent residents, and even among sojourners, one finds different types. The People of Israel is – or ought to be – a permanent *resident* in the Land of Israel, but instead it is a permanent *sojourner* – not merely a sojourner but a permanent sojourner in the lands of its dispersion! A permanent resident on the one hand and a permanent sojourner on the other! Not half-slave and half-free, but entirely a permanent resident and a permanent sojourner at one and the same time! The People of Israel in the Diaspora must establish *the center of its creativity* as a permanent sojourner in *the lands of its dwelling* (we have already spoken above of the connection between this center of creativity

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13 We must “go down” – but this is a “going down” for the purpose of “going up” – we should go together with the situation in the Diaspora and carry the burden of the Diasporic life not as “the work of the present” and in a superficial “Helsingfors” style. Helsingforsism means acknowledging all the accepted Zionist principles together with the concept of “work of the present” ... That is not the way! The changing of values must leave its mark not only in practice but also, and especially, in *theory*. The work of the present and the Helsingforsism, with all its liberating intention, was nothing but a *historical patch*, and we demand a *new fabric*, a life-fabric of creation. Even the everyday work of Jewry in the Diaspora ... needs a new theoretical examination, a foundation of “partnership” and “creation.” (Rawidowicz, *Shutafut shel kiyyum*, 324).

and that in the Land of Israel). It cannot see its life as a *means* alone, the life of a *creative* community cannot serve as a means alone. Of necessity, its rationale and its inner contents must be implanted in it.

[20] And from this, even though I cannot discuss this point except by way of allusion, we arrive at a new solution to the problematic relation between the Land of Israel and the Diaspora.

Assimilation, Reform, Western liberalism, and so forth came along and said: The Diaspora is a vessel of *blessing* for the People of Israel. From our old treasure house, they revived the old and profound rabbinic saying: “The Holy One blessed be He performed a kindness to the People of Israel in that he dispersed them among the nations” [Bavli, Pesaḥim 87b]. Zionism came along and said: The Diaspora is a curse, an imprecation from God! And we say: Even in the future, we will rebel against the Diaspora, as *builders of the Land* we will struggle and struggle against the Diaspora, and as builders of the Land we will never make peace with it; we are at war with it our entire life, all the days of our life we are building the Land. However, we are not only building the Land of Israel. The life of the Diaspora demands its own improvement, and we must of necessity listen to its demands – and in *creative* manner, as stated above. The Jewish community that must live in the Diaspora, a community of millions of people, will necessarily live and create its life in the Diaspora for many years to come. It will of necessity say: When I stand within the framework of my creativity, I acknowledge that the Diaspora is neither a blessing nor curse, but a *fact*, a historical given. And please understand the words of the future creative public in the Diaspora properly. We have two methods of building: the method of building in the Land of Israel and the method of building in the life of our Diaspora, and each one has its own fundamental laws. One who does not take heed of its unique approach and laws destroys himself and its established approach. Our attitude toward the Diaspora is not like that of building the Land of Israel, for our attitude towards the Diaspora is like that of our living in the Diaspora. In this latter approach, we say: The Diaspora is a *fact*; we shall wage war against this fact insofar as it endangers our existence. We shall wage war against all the negativity therein. We shall direct our faces towards the second approach of building, to the approach of building the Land of Israel, until *these two approaches join together in a dynamic inner combination*. But we must of necessity live our lives in the system of Diaspora-building of our creative lives, and we must of necessity live with this fact. How much longer shall this “fact” lie in wait for us? I do not know. I have not made any agreements with the angel appointed over eternity. If this “fact” whose name is the Diaspora of

Israel will only exist until the year 2100, for example, we must nevertheless and of necessity (we are sworn to do so!) make laws for it, listen to its inner laws, rebel against it yet also live in it, and not fulfill our obligation by saying: “What a curse this is ...” We are forbidden [21] to engage in such superficiality. The Land of Israel demands of us that we know how to understand the secret of the Diaspora, the secret of the “fact.”

In the approach of building the Land, we say: The Diaspora is a curse; but in the approach of *life* in the Diaspora, we say: It is neither a curse nor a blessing, but simply a fact! Is there a contradiction here, a duality? Absolutely not! True logic, particularly the logic of life, does not see any contradiction here. On the contrary, this solution creates a bridge between the two approaches to life, and their building will be given over to the People of Israel in the coming centuries. What is the task of the People of Israel during the coming centuries? Of necessity, it will on the one hand build its Land and, on the other, live a life of creativity and construction in the lands of its Diaspora. In place of the absolute abstract doctrine of accepted Zionism – and at times, this absolute is only *absolute* in appearances, a “pseudo-absolute,” I allude here to

*the Doctrine of Relativity*

as a solution to the question of the People of Israel. That question has one solution, which is two, one in relation to building its Land and one in relation to life in the Diaspora, and they both derive from one source. They are cut from the same cloth; the subject of both is the same, the material of both is the same, and the soul of both is one. One side of the face of the People of Israel is turned towards the Land of Israel, and the other is turned towards the Diaspora, but both of them are the face of the People of Israel. Both of them together – and not either face on its own – is the face of all of Israel. One who delves deeply into my view will see that these two solutions are one, that the two approaches connect to one another and become one. When I speak of relativity, I do not refer to relativism in the accepted sense of the word, but rather to its proper meaning as an *organic, scientific* solution, a solution offered within the context of a system, a unique system, for every solution is premised upon its own unique system in which it is given and fixed. One does not move solutions and laws around from one system to another, as mentioned earlier, without destroying the system or reducing the solutions and laws to the level of dogma, of things that are arbitrary. Concerning the theory of relativity in the natural sciences (and in other areas) there are many critics, because people saw therein, erroneously, a point of departure for a worldview without any order or law: Everything is relative, everything is permissible, there are no boundaries

and no discipline! But those who are knowledgeable understand well that the theory of relativity has nothing in common with the commonplace relativism that is to be found in the marketplace of conventional slogans. It seems to me that, in the future, the theory [22] of relativity of the People of Israel, the doctrine of relativity as a solution to the question of the People of Israel that I propose here by way of allusion (and whose essence, and the questions implicit therein, I will address elsewhere) opens to us a new perspective, a new way of seeing ourselves and our future.

If there is no contradiction here whatsoever – what is here is *destiny*; this is the essence of our fate. And whoever does not hear in this the language of the destiny of the People of Israel in the twentieth century – and in the twenty-first and the twenty-second centuries and so on – will not find the way towards the solution of the question of our existence.



For the purposes of our enterprise, let us go out and declare: We wish to renew the face of Diaspora Judaism. We wish to arouse the *creative* powers innate within this Jewry, we wish to make this Jewry into a *national collective that creates values*, a collective that has *creative* connections with world culture. We wish to make Diaspora Jewry a *creative partner* in the act of Hebrew creativity in the Land of Israel; we struggle against those approaches that wish to make the People of Israel in the Diaspora into a group of beggars, dependent upon someone else's table, even if to us it is a holy table. We struggle against those who see in Diaspora Jewry a kind of import-export company. Let us state it clearly: "Brit ha-ivrim" [The Association of Hebraists] being established here is meant to establish a new covenant or renew the old covenant of the People of Israel with its Spirit – and I am confident that the Jewish people in the Diaspora will hearken to our words. We are not only establishing schools and kindergartens. We are not only asking for support for our institutions that are struggling under an indescribable burden; we are attempting to resolve the *spiritual* existence of the People of Israel in the Diaspora, the question of its *spiritual productivization*. We wish to transform a people that supports itself from the remnants of long-gone worlds and that awaits compassion from above and from outside, to a people that creates and lives. Can there be any doubt that our words will produce a great echo?! I must again unfortunately repeat and emphasize that for the sake of *creativity*, it is both possible and worthwhile to activate the Hebrew Diaspora, but for the sake of *imitation by the periphery* it is not possible. It will not succeed, because it

is opposed to the laws of the *motion of life!* A person can reconcile himself to the idea that his ancestors were monkeys – but a *person does not turn himself into a monkey!* When the Diaspora is creative, when it sees itself as a *creative partner* – it will be ready to make sacrifices for the approach of our enterprise. But if we do nothing but observe, [23] receive, and enjoy; if everything is done, will be done, and can be done only in the Land of Israel, even with the greatest ideological protection, all for the sake of Diaspora Jewry – why then should Diaspora Jewry engage in creating Hebrew culture?

At this point I shall conclude my theoretical presentation with two comments, one of which is necessary for the essence of the subject, and the other directed towards the disputants.

- 1) I should take note here of the objective and subjective obstacles that await creativity in the Diaspora and the hope for our creativity in the Diaspora – only the time is not yet ripe. I must necessarily fulfill my obligation by identifying the *principles* that ought to serve as a guide in determining the program of our project. All those details that follow from it shall be clarified and refined thereafter. It would have been fitting to devote a special session to the question of *assimilation* in the Diaspora. And I must note here that recently there has begun to be heard a widespread view that even in the Land of Israel the danger of assimilation exists, for assimilation has many faces. There are those who say that the existence of a Jewish Diaspora can serve as a barrier against assimilation and also against Levantinization in the Land of Israel. We are not pessimists regarding this question, and I do not believe that the danger of assimilation (at least in the linguistic sense, if not in the cultural and human sense) in the Land of Israel is particularly great. In any event, this should suffice to make it clear that the saying, “Assimilation is upon you, O Hebrew Diaspora!” is not sufficiently great to contradict my previous words. Again, among the other basic concepts of spiritual Zionism, the concept of *wholeness* requires careful examination. We need to examine how much truth there is in it, and how much exaggeration.
- 2) My critics should not accuse me of “insulting” the Land of Israel, Zionism, and so forth. My own Zionism is no less than that of those who fulfill their obligation by negating the Diaspora and by reciting Kaddish over Diaspora Jewry. In principle, what is on the agenda in this conference is not the issue of Zionism or that of the Land of Israel – but rather the issue of the *Diaspora*, and the Hebrew existence of the People



of Israel in the Diaspora. This question demands a solution from us – and on this there is no difference between those of us here in the Diaspora, who are ready and willing at any moment to go up to the Land, and those living in the Land of Israel. Even if I lived at present in the Land of Israel, it would not at all change my outlook on this question.

Thinkers and writers in the Land of Israel recognize that there is a problem here that it is impossible for us to ignore – whether they agree to all of my words on this subject or only some of them.

[24] In all that I have said here and presented to you here I do not intend anything other than to anticipate the danger facing the building of the Land of Israel and the catastrophe facing our Hebrew enterprise in the lands of our Diaspora. The building of our Land requires a new light, and all the more so is it needed for the building of our life in the Diaspora. The paths that we have followed thus far have not brought us to our goal. Let us go out and look – in light of Jewish thought and reality – for new ways of creating a basis for Hebrew enterprise in the Diaspora (and in the name of its deeply-rooted and fundamental unity with the renewal of our culture in the Land of Israel). This thing is of the greatest importance for our very life-soul. What we are lacking is a *new* approach, new ways of working, *new* organization!



The organization of the entire Hebrew Diaspora, the gathering of all the Diaspora communities into an overall Hebrew association, the providing of stature and a new theoretical basis for our movement – all these cannot be consigned to the existing “cultural” organizations, nor to the *Zionist Organization*. And we need not add that we acknowledge the great value of the work done by “Tarbut” [culture] in Poland, in Lithuania and elsewhere. Nevertheless, we must place the theoretical and practical organization of Diaspora Jewry upon the shoulders of the

*General Hebrew Association  
for all the lands of the Diaspora*

that will encompass all the personalities, institutions and associations that are included within Hebrew-speaking Jewry in the Diaspora. You will certainly agree that there is no need for any special argument on behalf of these things. It is sufficient to make a few general comments.

It is clear that this new association, which we suggest calling by the name  
*“Brit ha-ivrim”*

and notwithstanding my reservations about the use of the word “brit,” [union] which we consider one of the *fundamental words* of our religion and of our Jewish existence – will of necessity be an *autonomous* popular association, working in cooperation with other groups close to it, without being dependent upon them but rather independent. Certainly, the “Brit” will find ways of engaging in common work with educational and literary institutions in the Land of Israel, with the General Hebrew Association in the Land of Israel once it is established, if there should be need in the Land of Israel for an association of this type. Such is not the case regarding the Zionist Organization. The “Brit” will be completely separate from the latter (and of course one needs to distinguish between the *Zionist Organization* [25] and Zionism in general). This is so, because as long as the Hebrew movement is dependent upon the Zionist Organization, it will only receive crumbs, and in the present situation not even crumbs. But once the “Brit” stands on its own two feet, it will be its own master. The methods of work of the “Brit” will not be like those of the Zionist Organization. The latter, being a political-settlement movement, needs to excite the hearts of people, it must have a great deal of external spark and fire, it has kings and princes, ministers and viceroys, whose slightest words are likely to influence public opinion. This is not the case regarding our cultural movement, which is turned *inwards* and not outwards. Hence, its methods of work will of necessity carry the sign of “modesty” and inwardness. Here there is room for a number of thoughts and questions that have no place in a political movement that is intended to create a Jewish state with a Jewish majority and so forth. Until now the “impractical” Hebraists were dragged along in wake of the Zionist Organization – the time has come for these “impractical” ones to demonstrate that within their own home, in their own four cubits, their impracticality is not so great. Let us not come to the Zionist Organization, which has its own troubles and limitations, with demands for culture and education. At this point in time, such demands are none other than demands that cannot be granted.

It is self-evident that our new organization will have a natural connection to the Zionist movement – and with other social movements close to it – but this connection will not be allowed to affect its autonomy. As I said, our organization will be

*nonpartisan*

in respect to its overall Jewish policy. We need at present to refrain from sharpening swords within our own camp. We shall refrain from partisan opposition among ourselves for the sake of creating our organizational framework, until we reach the point at which our organization becomes

strong and well-established and can contain within itself “twins” who struggle with one another, like Jacob and Esau [cf. Genesis 25:26–34]. I would insist upon giving primacy to the creation of the organization, and to forgo for the moment any emphasis on the differences in approach towards the political and economic questions in Jewry and in the outside world, and in our attitude towards Zionism and the like. Notwithstanding my awareness that nothing exists in this world that is completely “nonpartisan,” I nevertheless demand here nonpartisanship, after I have defined this concept and described its essence.

[26] When I say that the “Brit” must not subjugate itself to any political party, I am not looking for that which is convenient and easy; I am not being opportunistic, but insist on this because *the center of activity of the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora must be the Diaspora, just as the center of activity of the Zionist Organization must be the Land of Israel*. For this reason, we must make a clear separation between the two. I have not come to propose a kind of Hebrew Agency or Agency for Hebrew Culture. I am not interested in seeking out those who have been baptized nor do I wish to convey the sad state of our cultural life to strangers. My intention in creating the “Brit ha-ivrim” is none other than an attempt to create or recreate the *Hebrew nation in the Diaspora* (and do not attach to this expression intentions which are not contained within it), the creation of a “representation” of Hebrew Jewry in the Diaspora. Just as Jewry is organized in synagogues for purposes of religion, in communities for purposes of civil and religious life, and so on, so must Diaspora Jewry be organized in the “Brit ha-ivrim” for purposes of its Hebrew life!

Let there be an end to all the *isolated organizations!* Let us have one all-encompassing organization to which all of the different streams and organizations will be subject. We do not delude ourselves that we can bring all of Diaspora Jewry within the framework of the “Brit.” Nor do we wish to fulfill our obligation in the verse recited by everybody: “And I shall make of you a great nation.” [Genesis 12:2] But we must attempt to bring under the framework of the “Brit” all of *national Jewry* in the Diaspora.



We have defined the parameters of the “Brit ha-ivrim” in general terms, both internally and externally. These parameters are not meant to be a dividing line but are necessary because we have to limit our activities. We now need to discuss what constitutes the most important, and seemingly the simplest, question, that of the *program and functions* of the “Brit ha-ivrim.”

I must admit the truth: at first, I understood it in excessively narrow terms. In recent years I have discussed a great deal the creation of an association for Hebrew literature.<sup>14</sup> Initially I had in mind nothing but literature, scholarship and the arts alone (a question far more profound and complex than is imagined by the devoted distributors and advocates of the Hebrew book, [27] for by disseminating books alone one does not sustain a creative Hebrew Diaspora). As I plunged to the depth of the question, my awareness grew that the “Brit ha-ivrim”

*must be the highest institution and center for all aspects and manifestations of Hebrew culture, for all experiments and projects of the Jewish will to life.*

The “Brit” must necessarily seek scholarly methods of work and new practical methods for studying Jewish life in the Diaspora. The “Brit” will stand on its watch as one who is *constantly learning*. A person who does not learn does not endure – all the more so an entire community. The “Brit” needs to *learn* about the economic conditions of Jewry in the Diaspora, the conditions of our social and political life, and must adapt its work accordingly. The time has come to free ourselves from dilettantism and from the transient atmosphere that has become attached to us. We need to conduct our cultural work (Kulturpolitik) in a learned and practical manner, based upon our general and Jewish life in the Diaspora, their nature and destiny and so forth. We previously took note of the new *understanding* of our enterprise, and we now emphasize the need for a new scholarly-practical *approach* to our work.

In practice, the “Brit” will be concerned with two main areas of activity:

*Education and spiritual creativity in general.*

Of course, education must occupy a primary position. Education both within the school and outside of it, education of youth with all that it involves. A great deal has been done in the Diaspora in the areas of primary and secondary education, notwithstanding numerous obstacles. We happily take note of the fact that the Hebrew teachers and educational activists in the Diaspora have created in the various countries of the Diaspora a network of Hebrew educational institutions, beginning with kindergarten up to the gymnasium and supplementary classes of various kinds. My hat goes off to them! But there are still numerous problems in Hebrew education that demand a solution. We have not yet seen that center which will unite all the teachers and educational institutions of the Diaspora communities in order to create an integrated system of Jewish

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14 See my above-mentioned articles.

education in the Diaspora, nor is there a common educational platform for Jewry of the Diaspora. (Even though the arrangements of educational matters, both in theory and in practice, follow the unique conditions of each particular Diaspora, the need for cooperation among all the Diasporas regarding this area is still felt, for we have found a number of fundamental educational questions common to all the Diasporas.) Moreover, in Poland, [28] for example, several educational associations exist alongside one another without combining into one common group. The “Brit” will correct this and will create an *association of Hebrew teachers and educational activists for all of Diaspora Jewry*. The “Brit” will also create *parent and student associations and the like* – all in accordance with the possibilities available in each Diaspora.

But in the course of our discussing education, we need to make two comments: (1) The needs of Hebrew education in the Diaspora are so immeasurably great that at times it seems as though it is impossible to satisfy them. We must take care that education will not swallow up the other aspects of the work of the “Brit.” This happened in a number of Hebrew associations created to serve the needs of the Hebrew *movement*, but as there was a need for the facilities for Hebrew education (which they provided) they were unable to care for the other branches of cultural life. For not on the basis of education alone will the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora exist. One needs to establish boundaries. Every convention of the “Brit ha-ivrim” must determine the inner criteria regarding the income and expenditures of the “Brit” in the area of education and the other areas to which it relates. But we will not deal with this budgetary question here. (2) In many countries there already exists a “culture” association that deals primarily with education. As it would be too burdensome at present to attempt to create a joint solution to all the questions of Hebrew education in the Diaspora, since each country has its own educational issues and Hebrew education in the Diaspora is largely dependent upon the nature of the general education accepted in each country, the attitude of the state towards its Jewish minority, etc. – whereas concerning all other subjects the “Brit” is able to act in a joint direction, albeit in different ways, in all the Diasporas, in the area of education this would be too difficult, especially in the beginning. Therefore, to find a common practical policy, on the basis of all these considerations, I would present the following transitional proposal until such time as our organization can develop properly: (1) that the Educational Bureau of the “Brit” (see below) functions as the “culture” association; (2) that the Educational Bureau will be autonomous in a number of respects. I cannot discuss here the parameters of this autonomy.

However, it is clear that autonomy in the area of education is intended to add and not to detract, to bolster the unity of the activity of the “Brit” and not to diminish it. The “cultural” associations, the educational institutions, and the teachers’ groups will certainly acknowledge that the creation of a worldwide Hebrew organization, the “Brit ha-ivrim,” will raise the status and respect shown towards Hebrew education and the dignity of the Hebrew school and the Hebrew teacher, and will fortify their position both within and without.

[29] Gentlemen! Must we add that the *question of languages* does not exist for us in the Hebrew school? One of our devoted members suggested to me that we add to the agenda of our convention the issue of the languages used in the schools; that is to say, should they be completely Hebrew and unilingual or bilingual? I think that this question will make the convention fiery and tempestuous, one that will be militant and cause a tempest in our world! I did not intend to create a sensation, nor have I in my entire life ever been one to pursue sensations. I accept the following: that whoever pursues sensations, sensations run away from him. We do not intend that the question of languages, not even in this form, occupy the center of our discussions. Nevertheless, as we have already touched upon this question, allow me to add a few words concerning this question and to say that, in my opinion, we need not overdo in this matter – particularly *externally* – regarding the struggle against Yiddish in the area of education and other related subjects. I was still a young man when I waged the “holy war” against the “contemptible mistress,” as it was called in those days. But our national experience in recent years teaches us that we should not see this enemy as an *antithesis*, rather as a *synthesis*. At least on the external level, we need to find a *modus vivendi* with Yiddish.

The “Brit ha-ivrim” will not collapse under the weight of *inherited prejudices*. It will not feel the need to hate zealously nor to love in exaggerated fashion that which our ancestors hated or loved. Of necessity, it will need to view critically several of the concepts that have been accepted among us for some twenty years. It will be free to determine its attitude towards other forces and movements, both within and without. The “Brit” will forge the path of its creation and its work in a *new way of creative and constructive Hebrew work in the Diaspora*.

The “Brit ha-ivrim,” which is not subjugated to any particular *political direction* within Jewry, will find itself new allies, new circles of friends, in both East and West, that it has not previously attempted to bring into our movement. In the lands of Western Europe, we will be joined by various circles that are, for example, not included within the Zionist Organization.

The same holds true for the East. Go out and see: The Yiddishists have succeeded in arousing public opinion in Western Europe on behalf of their movement, even among the circles of assimilationists [30] and liberals, whose love for East European Jewry is not particularly great. If they are able to do so – how much more so we ourselves!

Nor need we hide our eyes from what is occurring in the Orthodox camp in the Diaspora. And at this point I must say that the conference of the Women of “*Agudat Israel*” [Union of Israel] that took place some time ago in Poland can serve as a clarion call. It can teach us that we have neglected in an unforgivable way certain circles within Jewry which live a traditional way of life. The above-mentioned conference of the Women of *Agudat Israel*, in which the best and most knowledgeable Jewish women in Poland participated, was one at which there were more words of “Torah” than at most Zionist Congresses that have been convened in recent years. This conference of Jewish women – the same conference that declared war against women’s sufferance because a Jewish woman ought to be nothing other than a mother, and asserted that Adam and Eve only sinned because they did not have a mother, and had the Women of “*Agudat Israel*” been around at the time of Adam and Eve, sin would not have come into the world – this conference made a first breach in the wall of traditional Jewry in the Diaspora, and also in the wall of *Hebrew* Jewry. This conference declared that Yiddishkeit [Jewishness] and Yiddish are one and the same, that the struggle on behalf of the “Jewish” language means protection of the rights of religious Jewry, that every kosher daughter of Israel must speak Yiddish. The leadership did not disagree; the only dispute was between one group that said that a kosher daughter of Israel must speak Yiddish only on *Shabbat* (they stole “*lashon ha-kodesh*,” [the holy language] from the holy *Shabbat*!), while the others demanded that she speak Yiddish all the days of the week, as if in the Torah scrolls of the great-great-grandfathers of these Jewish women it is written: And you shall reflect upon Yiddish day and night ... The month of Sivan, the month in which the Torah was received, has been established by these Jewish women as a month of agitation on behalf of Yiddish and Yiddishkeit. All our days we have complained that “strangers have gone for the beauty of the poem and the poet,” because Jewish women do not know enough Torah – and behold, this association, which includes many women knowledgeable in Torah and in Hebrew, comes and separates itself from the language of the religion of the People of Israel, the language of the Torah, the language of the prophets! If Hebrew is unfit to come into the congregation because it is the language of Zionism – which these Jewish women hate – since when

has the language of the Bund [General Jewish Labour Bund in Lithuania, Poland and Russia], the guardians of heresy in Israel, been given religious sanction? This approach is not befitting the dignity of these Jewish women; rather, it teaches us that our movement has not much power within the context of the struggles of Diaspora Jewry, and that we must be vigilant and seek new ways. And I have not elaborated upon this point merely for illustrative purposes, but because it shows the extent to which we need to delve into everything that is being done around us in the life of Jewry in the Diaspora! *The Diaspora* [31] *is living and developing, it sheds one form and assumes another* – and what of us, who are fearful for the destiny of our culture? Is it indeed decreed that we shall suffer isolation in the life of the Diaspora? Will Jewish life in the Diaspora indeed pass us by?

The “Bund” and those close to it on the one hand, and the “Women of Agudat Israel” on the other hand, will declare war upon us. Shall we then throw our lot in with the Zionist Organization, lifting our eyes to Mount Zion, and not undertake the struggle within the Diaspora as *creators of Hebrew culture and of a Hebrew Jewish life?* Is it not clear that thus we are losing on both sides, without masses and a movement of Hebrew workers in the Diaspora, and without a Hebrew future in the Diaspora?!



A second and fundamental branch of the activity of the “Brit ha-ivrim” is serving *spiritual creativity of all kinds*.

In the context of this lecture, I must touch briefly upon this matter. When the “Brit ha-ivrim” will begin its work in the field of education, it will find available to it a tradition of many years of work. Such is not the case regarding Hebrew literature, learning and art in the Diaspora. But the “Brit” needs not begin from scratch. Of necessity, it will need to speak with both supporters and opponents. But here I must emphasize: Jewish Babylonia cannot remain without a *Talmud of its own*; as long as the People of Israel remains in Babylonia, so long as there is a Babylonia within the People of Israel, it must of necessity learn not only the Jerusalem Talmud but also the Babylonian Talmud. *Two Jerusalem Talmud and one Babylonian Talmud or rather one Jerusalem Talmud and one Babylonian?* I leave this question for others.<sup>15</sup>

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15 These words of mine on the Babylonian Talmud are intended to allude to a *new historical perspective*, from which one can see the question of Diaspora and Land of Israel not in the accepted manner. And of course, one should not consider the



[32] Do not leave Babylonia without a Talmud of its own! As I have said elsewhere: “People still go up from Babylonia to the Land of Israel and go down from the Land of Israel to Babylonia. Babylonia does not yet have a new Babylonian Talmud, nor does the Land of Israel yet have its own Talmud. The gates of Babylonia are open to the Land of Israel and those of the Land of Israel are open to Babylonia. We still have hope for a *Babylonian–Jerusalemite* Talmud. It is still possible to avert the evil decree so that a wall will not be created between the new Babylonia – for today’s Jewry has not merely one Babylonia – and the new Land of Israel; that those who create and cultivate the Jewish spirit in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora will each create in their own state and in their own corner, out of recognition of the people as a whole, not out of the arrogance or weakness of a *tribe* but through a sharing of source and destiny of Jewish Babylonia with the Land of Israel.”

Let the “Brit” come and make the People of Israel in the Exile aware of the idea that Hebrew literature, scholarship, and art are not dependent upon the Land of Israel, but are the *obligation of the Hebrew community wherever it may be, that members of the Hebrew community* are obligated to sustain spiritual creativity, that they alone bear the burden of our literature. Its support and cultivation cannot be imposed upon booksellers and publishers alone, who will not support it unless there is some sort of profit to be made – for such is the nature of things. The same holds true

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Babylonian Talmud as only a “commentary” and prove from that the lack of creative power of Jewish Babylonia in the past, and also in the present and the future. One should look more deeply into the concept of “commentary” in the spiritual life of our people. And that the Babylonian Talmud is not as full of “submission and self-effacement” toward the center in the Land of Israel as claimed by one of my critics. The Jewish *creative* desire of Babylonian Jewry stands out in the Babylonian Talmud much more than has been so far noted among us. Also, there were not lacking Jewish creators in Babylon who saw Babylon as a creative Jewish center in itself, as a center equal in the level of its holiness to the Land of Israel. And R[abbi] Nathan [32] said that: *For out of Babylonia shall go forth Torah and the word of the Lord from Nehar Pekod* (Yerushalmi, Nedarim 6a; see in greater detail Rawidowicz, Halakhah u-ma’aseh). These words of mine on the Babylonian Talmud apparently aroused one of the writers in the Land of Israel to pour out his anger on the Babylonian Talmud, and so arose – to my great distress, for I had unintentionally caused this “attack” on the Talmud – an extended argument on the “value” and “importance” of the Babylonian Talmud in the press of the Land of Israel.

of Hebrew literature and of all the other institutions of the community and its property, for which the community is responsible. A hole in the earth cannot fill itself up. A public hospital, for example, cannot support itself at the expense of its patients. The same holds true for most public institutions. Some overarching cultural institution must come along and take upon itself the cultivation of all kinds of Hebrew spiritual creativity. The issue of the *publication* of Hebrew books should not stand at the center of our question but rather the issue of the *creation* of the book – *the issue of the creation of the conditions and the cultural environment needed to prepare the ground for the creation of the Hebrew book and its acceptance.*<sup>16</sup>

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16 I discuss at length the need and necessity to renew Hebrew literature and scholarship in the Diaspora in my article “Le-shem ḥiddush sifrutenu.” Among other things, it was written there: “They [33] complain greatly that the Hebrew book from the Land of Israel is not distributed as widely as it should be in the Diaspora. They began to seek solutions to this problem. And I say that all these solutions are useless. The Hebrew book from the Land of Israel will spread out in the Diaspora when there will be also a living Hebrew book in the Diaspora, when Diaspora Jewry will create its own culture and literature, when the Hebrew book will not be a gift from the Land of Israel to the Jews of the Diaspora but rather a necessary need, when the Jew in the Diaspora will fulfill, creating its own work. If there will be Hebrew literature and art in the Diaspora – then people will also jump on the Hebrew book from the Land of Israel. Publishers and booksellers who will come to fill this need now will not succeed. The salvation of the Hebrew book in the Land of Israel will come only from the renewal of the literary creativity of the Jews in the Diaspora. This is not only a literary-cultural question, *but rather a central political question.*” In my article “Shtei she’elot she-hen aḥat” I further elaborated: “It is clear that we need to purify the hearts in the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel. The many ‘influencers’ and all kinds of ‘agents,’ who are supposedly fighting for the honour of the Land of Israel, who think that it will be built only out of the destruction of the national cultural Diaspora – should not stand in our way. I heard from Hebrew authors that it is a *sin to print a Hebrew book in the Diaspora* ... They say that there are publishers in the Land of Israel who accuse anyone who says that it is time to build a foundation for the Hebrew book in the Diaspora, also for the strengthening of the literature in the Land of Israel of committing national ‘treachery.’ Certainly we must free ourselves from such a ‘custodian-like’ position in order to strengthen the connections between the cultural Diaspora and the renewing Land of Israel.”

[34] And again: “It is time to establish an association of Hebrew readers and writers in the Diaspora, the Association of Hebrew Literature. This association will build an Hebrew literature and Jewish Studies! Every author, scholar, teacher, functionary, and ordinary reader, every Hebrew institution, school and library

[33] The time has come to put an end to the shame of the Hebrew author in the Diaspora. (And, in point of fact, the situation of the Hebrew author in the Land of Israel is also, unfortunately, not an encouraging one, for regarding matters of literature there is no real difference between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel.) The shame of the Hebrew author is the shame of the nation as a whole. Were I blessed with a fiery tongue, I would pour out fire and brimstone upon the heads of the People of Israel, a people that starves its authors and sages. Poets and authors of the first order, the sons of the Orient in our literature, go hungry for bread. Some of them turn their back upon our literature out of a sense of helplessness and poverty, in disappointment and bitterness. At the Congress of Hebrew Authors in Berlin, one of the authors said: "I am not 100 percent a Hebrew author, because I am not 100 percent a beggar" ... Being a Hebrew author has become a synonym for one who must beg for alms! Artists, scholars,

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will contribute to this association. And so the foundation for the renewal of Hebrew culture in the Diaspora will be laid. With joint forces, this association will be able to establish a fine Hebrew journal in a short time, and to start organized literary and scholarly Hebrew activity. This pact will return the crown of 'the people of the book' to its former place, will turn the People of Israel in the Diaspora into a people creating Hebrew literature and scholarship and will function as a center for the creative forces of the entire Jewish Diaspora ... And after we will succeed in creating the 'tools of expression,' we will have to deal with the need of improving and fixing the expression itself ... The renewing literature will of necessity have to take on new forms. It will have to adapt to the demands of the hour, to the literary, cultural, scholarly and artistic demands of a new Hebrew generation that has meanwhile arisen in our literature in the Diaspora ... The great economic and social turmoil that most of the Jews in the Diaspora are experiencing, of necessity must influence the literary and scientific creativity that has to renew itself." And one should also discuss the need to join the sparks of the scholarly work in the Diaspora into the framework of our Hebrew movement. Our writers and functionaries often wrongly mock *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the West. Certainly one should praise the many attempts made in the field of Jewish Studies in the Diaspora, in Western Europe and in the United States of America. A proper Hebrew movement must pay attention [35] to the values hidden in "*Wissenschaft des Judentums*" in the Diaspora and its various institutions. And in the future, Diaspora Jewry will also create much in their various fields. And here is embedded one of the most important spiritual and cultural tasks of the new movement. It must integrate the creators of "Judaism" and "Humanity" in the Diaspora into Hebrew Jewish life. But it is impossible for me to do more than allude to this here.

elders and young people are idle and unable to serve our literature as they would wish and in accordance with their ability! We do not create forums for our literature, and then we come and complain that there are no publicists, no critics, and no professional researchers among the Jewish people ... We do not give straw to our creators, and we expect them to produce bricks!

[34] I have not come here to cut short praise for the creators who are found in our camp. But it is quite clear that every other nation and language would take far more care to meet their needs than is done among Jews. Religion takes care of its priests, the state takes care of those who set up its doors and guard its gates, so ought not Hebrew culture take care for the welfare of its creators? A public is only judged on the basis of its end, on the basis of the power hidden therein, and not on the basis of its activity. Do not count on your fingers those few authors living in the Diaspora today – rather consider the potential living creative powers in the dispersion of the People of Israel, those *powers* that find their expression and will be revealed in practice tomorrow or the day after – if we take care for them in time, when it is still possible. Has there been a decree declared against us that cannot be revoked that Meir Halevi *Letteris* will write poetry in Hebrew, but that Heinrich *Heine* will write in German? That only the midgets will belong to us and to our children after us, while the eagles will soar to the distant quarters of the world and to the wide-open spaces? We long for a fundamental change in the situation. Let the *Letteris* of the future write in German, and should another *Heine* emerge in the Diaspora may his way to Hebrew not be blocked by *Letteris* and his colleagues ... It would be better if the future *Letterises* were to write poetry in German, and the future *Heines* in Hebrew ...

[35] *By establishing literary forums, by offering prizes for all kinds of creative work, by arranging an information office to serve as a go-between between our literature and that of the world, by bringing Hebrew creativity within our lives and within the life of the larger world – the “Brit ha-ivrim” will remove the shame of those that shame us, and will correct the pain and shame of our authors, from the earliest authors of the Haskalah [enlightenment] down to the last of the young authors in our own generation.*

But just as I have not placed education at the center of our conference, so do I not wish to make the question of *spiritual creativity* a central question. The organization of the “Brit ha-ivrim” must come first. First *the creation of a new movement*, and then the repairing of the house. If this movement will come into being, we will enjoy the benefit of both

education and literature, our camp will be filled with the joy of creation. And if not ... but it would be better that I not open my mouth to the Devil [cf. Bavli, Berakhot 19a].



In my previous words, I alluded to the *structure* of the “Brit ha-ivrim”: A Hebrew organization of the Diaspora, an ingathering of all classes and streams of the Hebrew Diaspora, an autonomous, nonpartisan organization that will gather together all those who wish a Hebrew existence for Jewry in the Diaspora. In this way, it will function as a mass organization. Its members will be prominent figures, institutions, associations, youth movements, and so on; each member will make an annual contribution of two dollars (I would recommend no less than this sum). *Over the course of three years, we shall need to gather beneath the flag of the “Brit ha-ivrim” One hundred thousand members.*

I do not want to serve as the Rabbah bar bar Ḥana [an amora known for his fantastic “tall tales”] of this conference. I hate exaggeration. I did not pull the number 100,000 out of my sleeve, simply because it is less than 200,000 and more than 10,000. We arrived at this estimate on the basis of statistics of the number of school children in the lands of the Diaspora, their parents, their teachers, their relatives, and [36] so forth. On the other hand, the number of people who contribute a shekel [to the Zionist Organization] served us as a certain point of reference. We are confident that with properly organized effort and using new, concrete slogans, it will be possible to recruit 100,000 Jews for the “Brit ha-ivrim.” All depends upon us. (I first suggested this idea long before the proposal, now being batted around in the Jewish world, to find one million contributors to the “Keren Hayesod” [United Palestine Appeal]. I made this proposal, and there were no supporters for it. There were those who saw it as a case of impracticality “batlanut” [idleness]. The well-known proposal of finding a “million” contributors demonstrates that just as that is not impractical, so too it is not impractical when we seek 100,000 annual contributing members for “Brit ha-ivrim.”) The conference must also declare here the establishment of a

*Hebrew Culture Fund.*

Much has been said among us about such a fund. Allow me to comment that during the [First] World War, I laid the foundations for a Hebrew Culture Fund in Polish Lithuania that existed for a certain period of time, and through it were founded the first Hebrew elementary schools in a

number of cities (Białystok and others). If those among our activists in whose hands this matter was later entrusted had continued to take care of it, the Hebrew Culture Fund would still exist today, and we would not be in the sad and depressing situation in which we find ourselves. The Hebrew Culture Fund to be established now must serve *primarily* to organize and support matters of education and creativity in the Diaspora. If we are successful, we will receive legacies and establish special funds whose income will serve for specific cultural purposes in both the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel – and there is no fear of competition with the Keren Kayemet (Jewish National Fund) or the Keren Hayesod. On the contrary: if it is permitted to maintain two different funds for the same purpose, the building of the Land of Israel, all the more is it proper to create a third fund for another, unique purpose. In order to emphasize our natural participation in the culture of the Land of Israel, I would propose that we decide unanimously that a certain portion of the income of the Culture Fund of the Diaspora *serve the purposes of Hebrew education in the Land of Israel*. The decision regarding this matter will be in the hands of the convention of the “Brit ha-ivrim.” The income of the “Brit” can be increased in several ways: placing boxes for Hebrew culture in Jewish homes, issuing *special stamps*, and so forth. All of these details will be handled by the Central Committee of the “Brit,” and experts on such matters will express their opinion.

[37] For the present, the “Brit” will have four departments:

A department for Jewish education (“to be known as Tarbut”);

A department for literature, scholarship and art;

A department for matters of the Cultural Fund;

A department for questions of organization and publicity.

Allow me, if you will, to emphasize the great importance of the last *department*, as the first three do not require any special explanation. The question of organization is a fundamental one for us. Insofar as it will be efficiently run, to that extent will the “Brit ha-ivrim” become established. Special attention must be paid to matters of *publicity* and the dissemination of our ideas. Here too we must clarify to ourselves that *we are fighting for our spiritual existence*, and that we are asking the Jew not only for his *financial support*, but also for *his soul*. The publicity effort is not a matter of economic value, only of collecting money. It should declare to the Jew: “Look to the ‘Brit,’ and do not turn to your evil impulse,” to the impulse of assimilation and apathy, to the evil impulse of national suicide. We need a bevy of speakers who can preach our ideas, dozens of authors and activists spread throughout the Jewish Diaspora who can spread these

ideas among Jewry and revive the Diaspora, disseminate these ideas in those cities where the candle of Torah is still aflame and light it in those places in which it has flickered out. It will not be enough for these people to give one lecture; they will need to spend a certain period of time with the teachers and parents in each and every town and city, to experience their suffering and to live their lives, to learn some Torah with them, and in this way to win over people to our cause. We must not place all our hope on the great cities of the East and West (and of course we must not neglect those individuals who have financial resources). We must go to the *people*, to the Hebrew towns of our Diaspora, that is the way to organize branches of the “Brit ha-ivrim.”

“Brit ha-ivrim” personnel, popular educators, will resolve by means of their work the most difficult question, namely:

*The Purpose of the Organization.*

The *ideological platform* of the “Brit ha-ivrim” is based upon the idea of the existence of Jewry in the Diaspora as a community that creates values and as a *partner* in the creation of the new Judaism in the Land of Israel. But we have not fully clarified to ourselves the *nature* of this new organization: What shall be its makeup? To what social class, to what layer of society, are we addressing ourselves? During this period of confusion and chaos, it is very difficult to answer this question. As we said, in the course of our work and through its means, the “Brit [38] ha-ivrim” will discover its supporters in society. At the present moment, which is a transitional period, the purpose of the organization – apart from the issue of Hebrew youth – will relate primarily to the middle class. There is no Hebrew “proletariat” in the Diaspora, but the economic development of the middle class may bring about a situation through which we will find, in the near future, *Hebrew masses* in the Diaspora. I do not wish to relate to the question of whether it will be good or bad from either the general or the Jewish socio-economic viewpoint.

In any event, the “Brit” must create a new type of *Hebrew professional* in the Diaspora, one who will fulfill this task not “by the way,” but twenty-four hours a day. In this is implied an important and valuable goal in several different respects. I do not intend to say that the creation of a cadre of Hebrew professionals in the Diaspora will serve as an end in its own right, nor do I pray for the emergence of a Hebrew “bureaucracy.” One might even say that officials are superfluous, and at times even dangerous, in those places where they exist and useful and necessary in those places where they do not. How many political and cultural movements would have disappeared from the earth were it not for those who served the

movement, those who labored with sincere devotion, and those who knew how to keep its candle burning. And, we need not add, that professionals alone do not make a cultural movement – but without professionals, no work gets done. And in this point, we also find the solution to the question of the *lack of work* in our camp. The entire world is groaning and suffering under the burden of the question of unemployment; great nations are laboring day and night to find a way of remedying the situation – and we are placing our heads in the sand, at a time when within our own world this question is also troubling. The question of the lack of cultural and spiritual employment for the handful of workers who exist in practice (both in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora), and for the masses of workers who exist in potential. Upon whom shall Hebrew culture thrust its burden? If we do not take care to create while it is still possible a cadre of cultural professionals in the Diaspora outside of the four cubits of the schools who will make this work their primary occupation and will undertake it out of love, faith and dedication, this lack will be keenly felt, and especially one such as myself, who has served the public all his life without any reward – even if, admittedly, he is not particularly old – is allowed to emphasize this matter.

New publicity that sets out to win the Jewish soul will create an organized Hebrew public in the Diaspora. In every Jewish community there will be a branch of the “Brit ha-ivrim;” [39] in every region – a regional committee; in every country – a national committee; and at their head will be the Central Committee, and as the supreme forum of “Brit ha-ivrim” there will be

*The Hebrew Congress.*

It will meet every three years, or as needed. The Hebrew Congress will not serve merely for purposes of demonstration, but will rather, of necessity, serve as a kind of Council of Four Lands that existed in early-modern [Eastern] Europe, a council of *all the lands of the Diaspora* for matters of culture and for questions relating to our existence in the Diaspora generally. This Congress will deal, in depth and in breadth, with our economic, cultural, literary and educational situation in the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel. It will include, for example, a day devoted to scholarship, an education day, a literature day, an arts day, a day devoted to economics and Jewish policy, and so on. The Hebrew Congress will serve as a permanent *parliament* for a Hebrew-Jewish culture. And one need not add a single word regarding its value and influence for the future. The present gathering, which shall declare the convening of the First Hebrew Congress (on the basis of elections by those who will pay the culture shekel



and the like) will perform great things. This declaration will assist in the creation and establishment of the “Brit ha-ivrim.”

I have been unable to discuss all those questions whose solution is incumbent upon us. Rather, I have confined myself to touching in outline form upon the *main topics* to which we must devote ourselves. For the labor is very great – let not the workers be lazy, for time is pressing and we depend upon time and place. We do not delude ourselves, and we are not attempting to do things that are beyond our ability. Flesh and blood cannot create something that will be eternal. We exist in time and place, and our actions belong to time and place. It must suffice if we set out to fulfill that which has been imposed upon us by our particular time and place.

And do not say: Behold, this dreamer comes [Genesis 37:19]. The difficulties involved in this matter are *well-known* to all of us; the obstacles that lie in wait for us are also well-known. Let the wise man go and he will go, even when he sees the obstacles in his path. That which is a *necessity for the very existence* of an ancient community with a long history will be done by this community, be it easy or difficult!

We are meeting in the very city in which the first buds of our new literature first emerged, and from which also emerged the doctrine of assimilation and Reform, both in practice and in theory. We stand here and attempt to tie a crown for the Shekhinah [divine presence], the Spirit of Israel, for that language which was betrayed by David Friedländer and his colleagues. Who could imagine and who could have told Moses Mendelssohn and Naphtali Hartwig Wessely, Dorothea [40] Schlegel [néé Brendel Mendelssohn] of the house of Veit, Salomon Maimon and Heinrich Heine, Abraham Geiger and all those who came after him, that in 1931 a group of Jews – and not all of them from Eastern Europe! – would gather in a Hebrew assembly hall on the Kurfürstendamm and debate as to how to renew Hebrew culture! Is not this historical allusion sufficient to overcome even the sworn doubters in our camp! Is there no room for the “Brit ha-ivrim?” Does not Diaspora Jewry in our days find a great deal to preserve in *its memories*, and through its memories to preserve its existence? Is it impossible for Hebrew-speaking Jewry to establish a supreme institution to preserve Hebrew culture and *Hebrew creativity* in the Diaspora? If not out of an abundance of faith, then let us enter our project out of a sense of *desperation*, out of the recognition that but a little bit more and we shall be lost, and from this basic feeling of fear and terror find also the power to *create*.

A Greek philosopher, who left a decisive influence upon Jewish thought in the Middle Ages and who again influenced Jewish thought when it

came to renew itself, namely *Aristotle*, said: Whoever does not understand movement does not understand *nature* [On the Heavens, I.2, 268b14–17]. To which we would add that whoever does not understand movement does not understand *life*, does not understand *reality*, does not understand those events which are rooted in time and place. We lack a strong movement of the spirit; therefore, we are disconnected from reality and from the supreme occurrences!

The “Brit ha-ivrim” must serve us as a union of movement, as a union of thought and action. And we hope and wish that the “Brit ha-ivrim” being established here will write a new scroll in the history of Jewish existence in the Diaspora.



## ליסוד ברית העברים

כנסיה נכבדה!

לפנים, כשהיו מתכנסים לועידת-תרבות מעין זו, היו עומדים ודנים על ערך הלשון העברית, על הרוח העברי, נשמת ישראל ושכינתו, מהות האומה וכו', היו מדיינים ומתווכחים אם אפשר לו לדבור העברי להיות רווח בגולה, וכיצא בשאלות הללו. – אשרינו שאנו פטורים ממשא ומתן זה. בכל ארצות הגולה קיימים – אם גם בתנאים קשים ביותר – גניילדים, בתיספר עבריים לטפוסיהם השונים. החיים פסקו הלכה למעשה: אפשר, מותר, ראוי ורצוי. על מהות האומה ועל רוח-ישראל ניתן להתווכח היום כשם שהתווכחו בשאלה זו לפני עשרות שנים. אולם על ערך הלשון העברית לחיי ישראל בגולה אין איש חולק. אף בכמה מחוגי המתבוללים במערב-אירופה נתקבלה הלכה זו למעשה. ואין אנו חייבים לדון בשאלות הללו, שמצאו בינתיים את פתרון (ואם גם לא בשלמות הרצויה) בעובדות. ואין לנו אלא להדגיש, שלא נתכנסנו כאן כדי להציל את הלשון, יתר על כן: לא נתכנסנו לשם הצלתה של התרבות העברית בלבד – אילו לא היתה לפנינו אלא הלשון וערכיה בלבד היינו יכולים להפקיד תעודה זו בידי אחד מבתי-המוזיאון, איזו חברה לעתיקות, או איזו אגודה ספרותית-אסתטית, וקרוב הדבר, שהיינו מוצאים חבר מלומדים נוצריים, בין הגרמנים או בין האנגלים, שהיו מקבלים עליהם תפקיד זה של שמירת הלשון העברית, שלא תעבור זו מן העולם. לא שאלת הלשון, אלא שאלת-ישראל עומדת לפנינו, שאלת קיומו הרוחני של ישראל בגולה. אין אנו בחינת "שפראך-פּעראַיין", לא את השפה ה"יפה, השרידה, היחידה" אנו באים ל"הציל" – [11] אלא את ישראל הסחוף שאחרי מלחמת-העולם, ישראל הנאבק על קיומו התרבותי.

### קיומו הרוחני של ישראל שבגולה!

– זוהי השאלה. עליה אנו מכריזים כלפי העולם, ובפתרונה אנו מדיינים. אנו באים לעשות מעשה. אולם אם אין הלכה – מעשה מנין? ההלכה קודמת למעשה, ואם אין תורה אין מעשה. ושמא יש לומר, שלא בא כשלונה של התנועה העברית בגולה אלא משום שלא יצרה זו תורה משלה, תנועה שאינה מסקלת אבנים מדרכי תורתה, שאינה מדבקת בעיקרי מחשבה – אין סופה להתקיים. והריני לעמוד ברשותכם – וקצרות – על התורה ועל ההלכה, שיש לדעתי להקדימן למעשה התובע ממנו את הגשמתו. הלכה זו היא הקדמה שיש בה משום תנאי, אע"פ שאינה משמשת כאן עיקר לעצמה. המעשה עיקר ולא ההלכה, אולם מעשה שהלכה קודמת לו – מתקיים, ומעשה שאין עמו הלכה משלו אינו מכה שרשים. שומרי-תורה יהיו גם עושי-מעשה.

והריני מוסיף ומעיר: רמזי-ההלכה וגופי-המעשה שאני בא להציע לפניכם – על דעת עצמי בלבד הם. אין ה"ועד המכין" של הכנסיה אחראי לא להלכה ולא למעשה שלי. דברי יחיד הם, ולא על דעת הצבור אני אומרם.



האמנם חסרים אנו הלכה, תורה? האמנם אין יסוד אידיאולוגי טבוע בתנועתנו, או יותר נכון, בשיאופותינו העבריות בגולה? הכיצד?

תשובתי: האידיאולוגיה שהיתה טבועה עד כאן ביסוד תפיסתנו התרבותית העברית בגולה אין בה כדי לכלכל ולקיים תנועה עברית יוצרת בגולה זו. חברת "שוחרי הטוב והתושיה" שבדור המאספים, חברת "חובבי שפת עבר" שברוסיה שלפני המלחמה היו נגרות אחרי אידיאלים אסתטיים ולשוניים, מתוך אהבת הלשון ומתוך הכרה שאין לה ליהדות החדשה שיור אלא לשון זו בלבד. מה שאין כן מפעלנו התרבותי-העברי בגולה שאחרי ימי המלחמה. מצד אחד מותנה הוא מהתנאים המדיניים שנוצרו באירופה שלאחר המלחמה, ומצד שני מפעל זה כרוך כנר בפתילה [12] ברעיון הציוני. עד כמה שהוא נובע מתוך הציוניות, תומך זה את ידותיו בתורת המרכז הרוחני אשר לאחד העם, שממיו כולנו שתינו. וכאן מקום-התורפה של מפעלנו התרבותי בגולה. פרט זה בונה אב לכמה פרטים אחרים, שאין שתי מרשה לי לעמוד עליהם. אולם על פרט יחיד זה עלינו להתעכב, כשאנו באים לחדש את מפעלנו ולתת לו שעור-קומה.

מה שיש לי לטעון נגד כמה הנחות הקבועות בתורת המרכז הרוחני לאחד-העם – אין אני יכול לטעון כאן. קצת מדברי פרסמתי במאמרים אחדים. רוב דברי לא יכולתי לפרסם מחוסר אורגנים ספרותיים עבריים, בהם אפשר היה לדון – בהרחבה, בעיון ובכובד-ראש – בשאלות חיינו וגורלנו היסודיות בגולה.<sup>17</sup> דייני כאן ברמז אחד, וממנו תקישו על השאר. לנו, לצורך מפעלנו, יספיק הרמז על אחד הלקויים היסודיים בתורת ה"מרכז הרוחני", זו התורה שהיתה כאמור חותכת חיים למפעלנו בגולה. לקוי מכריע זה אני מוצא בחוסר רעיון היצירה, בחוסר יסוד היצירה. במרכז תורת של אחד-העם טבוע רעיון החקוי. בחיים הוא רואה חקוי לחיים שכבר עברו. העבר משמש מרכז-חקוי להוה, ההוה משמש מרכז-חקוי לעתיד. היום מחקה את האתמול, והמחר יחקה את היום. מכלל תורתנו אנו שומעים, אם גם לא בפרוש נאמר: *homo homini simia* – האדם לאדם קוף. לא זאב טורף, לא אלהים [13] סלח – אלא קוף מחקה. הלאומיות עומדת על החקוי ("חקוי של התחרות") וההתבוללות אף היא מיוסדת על החקוי ("חקוי של התבוללות"). החקוי משמש לו לאחד-העם חוק נפשי, חברתי ומטפיסי כאחד, בחינת פרינציפ, חוק ראשון (על אסכולות-הפוזיטיביסטים שבעקבותיהן הוא יוצא לא ידובר כאן). רחוקה כל תורת של אחד-העם מרעיון היצירה כשם שרחוק היה ראש-המדברים בדור הקודם מעמנואל קנט, אבי רעיון ה"סינטיזם" והספונטניות. (ואין כוונתי לומר, שאין אחד-העם יודע את מושג "היצירה", אלא שיש להבין את מקום ה"יצירה" בתורה זו כהלכתה). נראה הדבר כאילו אף מעשה-היצירה בארץ ישראל אינה בתורה זו אלא חקוי למעשה-היצירה שנוצר וחי בארץ זו לפני אלפים שנה. אחד-העם שואל: מה ישראל חסר? והוא משיב: מרכז חקוי. היכן יבנה מרכז החקוי? אין לו לכך ארץ אחרת אלא ארץ ישראל, מעשה החקוי שיעשה בארץ

17 בשאלת שלילת-הגולה הצעתי כמה מדברי בהרצאתי שהרצאתי ב"בית העם העברי" בברלין בראשית שנת 1929, בווכוח בין בעל הטורים האלה ובין הדי"ר קלצקין. רמזים לבקרת ההשקפה הציונית המקובלת תמצא במאמרי "לשם חדוש ספרותנו" שנדפס ב"העולם" 1930 (גליונות מט, נ, נא). המאמר מוצא הד בעתונות העברית והיהודית (עיי' לדוגמא "דער אידישער זשורנאל", טורניטו [!], 6 מרץ 1931). אשר ברש נתעורר על ידו להעמיד במסבת סופרים בתל-אביב את השאלה על "ספרות של שבט או ספרות של עם" (מאזנים, שנה ב, גליון לח). במאמרי "שתי שאלות שהן אחת" שנתפרסם אה"כ ב"מאזנים" (שנה ב, גליונות מד"מה) השתדלתי להעמיד בדרך רמז את שאלת ארץ-תפוצות על עקרה ולהוציא את השאלות הכרוכות בה מתחום הפרובלימטיקה הספרותית המצומצמת. עיי' כמו"כ במאמרי "הלכה ומעשה", העולם, 1931 גליונות מח-נא, וגם במאמרי "שותפות של קיום", העולם, 1932, גליונות יט-כא.

ישראל לחיים שהיו קיימים בימי היות ישראל בארצו ישמש שוב מרכז-החקוי לגולה. וכך נפל אחד-העם, וכמותו כמה מדברי הציוניות והתנועה העברית, בשבי של סבך רעיונות מיניסטיים, שלא אוכל לעמוד עליהם כאן בפרוטרוט. לא אטפל בשאלת ההכרה, בשאלת היחס שבין הכרתנו ובין הדברים שבעולם-חוץ, אם אין אנו מכירים אלא את הדברים שאנו עצמנו יוצרים, אם הדברים קיימים קודם ליצירתנו הסינטיטית ומחוצה לה – שאלה זו אין לה כאן מקום. אולם דבר זה צריך לשמש לנו מושכל ראשון: אין אנו חיים – חיים במשמעות עליונה – אלא את החיים שאנו עצמנו יוצרים, ועד כמה שאנו יוצרים אותם. את אשר אין אנו יוצרים אין אנו חיים. ואם באיש כך – בצבור, בקבוץ, באומה על אחת כמה וכמה. זוכה הקבוץ משל קבוצים אחרים, נהנה מכאן ומהנה מכאן, – אולם חייו האמתיים, העליונים, הראשוניים אינם אלא יצירת-נפשו. אם הראשוניים מלאכים, בני-אדם או פחות מכן – אנו יוצרים. אם אין אנו יוצרים – אין אנו קיימים.

ישראל חסר חרות מדינית, עצמאות, חרות כלכלית ותרבותית. מרכז-חקוי לא יצילנו. בכל מקום שקבוץ ישראל חי – מרכז יצירה ישראלית חי בו. ואין לארץ ישראל לחשוש מפני מרכז-יצירה אלה. ונהפוך הוא, זקוקה היא להם. יהדות הגולה, תפוצות-ישראל יבואו לידי |14| אחדות שלמה ויקבלו עליהם את עול ארץ ישראל, ישאו בסבל בנינה – לא מתוך חקוי, מתוך רצון-חקוי ותקות-חקוי, אלא מתוך יצירתם הם, משום שיצירתם תעמידם על כרחם בקשר בל ינותק עם חבריהם לתפוצות ועם ארץ ישראל הנוצרת על-ידיהם. וכשאני בא להעמיד את רעיון-היצירה במקום רעיון-החקוי, אין כוונתי לומר שרעיון-חקוי זה מן הפסולים הוא, שאין אנו מוצאים יסודות-חקוי מכריעים בחיי הנפש והחברה! אין אנו באים אלא להפקיע את כח-הפרימט שלו. אין זה יכול לשמש בני-אדם לתפיסת-חינו. הפרימט ליסוד-היצירה! אילו לא היתה יצירה בעולם, אילו לא היה העולם כולו תובע-יצירה, תוסס-יצירה – לא היה מקום לכח-החקוי ולכמה כחות דומים לו בספירות-חיים שונות.

על כרחנו עלינו להשתחרר תחלה מזו ההיפנוזה של רעיון החקוי, כאילו יכול ה"היקף" לחיות ולהתקיים בכח החקוי. ואחרי שהכרנו, שאין יהדות-התפוצות יכולה להתקיים אלא בכח היצירה בלבד, ולמרות כל המכשולים הרבים האורבים לה ליצירתנו בגולה שאין אנו מעלימים עינינו מהם, אין לה דרך-קיום אחרת אלא זו, ואף אם יצירתה לא תזכה לעולם להגיע לפסגת-השלמות, מוכרח היא לילך בדרך זו – אחרי כל אלא עלינו להשתחרר מהנחה שניה של הציוניות הרוחנית – והיא שארץ ישראל לבדה תפתור את שאלת היהדות. כשם שאין יהדות הגולה לבדה יכולה לפתור את שאלת היהדות – כך אין ארץ ישראל לבדה, ארץ ישראל שבימינו ושבעתיד הקרוב, יכולה לפתור את שאלת תרבות ישראל השלימה, הרצויה והנכספת, שעשרות דורות חלמו עליה והקריבו חייהם עליה. מכאן אנו למדים: תרבות ישראל השלימה שתהא נאה לאומה עתיקת-יומין ובת מסרת, לאומה בת תורה נביאים וכתובים וכו', לא תבא לעולם אלא מתוך שותף-יצירה בין ארץ ישראל והגולה. תרבות ישראל שלעתיד לבא – תרבות במשמעותה היסודית והמקיפה –

שני שותפים בה:

ארץ ישראל ויהדות התפוצות. כמה "מניות" בשותפות זו לארץ |15| וכמה לגולה?<sup>18</sup> לא לדינא ולא למקח וממכר יש ערך לחלוקת מניות זו ולכוחים על שאלת שוויה-מעלה שבין

18 במאמרי "שותפות של קיום" הריני מבאר את מושג השותפות: "שותפות זו אין להבינה כדרך שהיא נהוגה בעולם המעשה... שותפות זו שאנו מדברים בה פירושה: שותפות לשורש וליסוד, לא שותפות

שני השותפים. תבוא ההיסטוריה במאה הכ"ד והכ"ה ותכריע. בידה נפקיד גורלנו. כל שעה שרוב מנינה של כנסת ישראל מצוי בתפוצות – ולא ברוב שבכמות בלבד הכתוב מדבר – לא תקום ולא תהיה תרבות ישראל שלמה בלי השתתפותה היצירתית של יהדות התפוצות. תרבותנו בא"י לא תגיע לשלמות העברית-אנושית הרצויה אלא אם ישתתפו ביצירתה כל חלקיה של היהדות הרוצה בחיי ישראל. (ואף כאן אתה רואה כמה גדולה סכנתה של "שלילת הגולה". השולל את הגולה, כלומר השולל את קיום היהדות בגולה ויצירתה, מטיל פגם בתעודת תחיתנו הישראלית, גוזר אותה לשנים, ולא כאן המקום [16] להרחיב את הדבור בשאלה זו.)<sup>19</sup> אם תחית היהדות מפעל שותפות הוא יש להעביר תחת שבט הבקרת את דרכי מפעל הגירה-תרבותי על מנת להעמידו ברשותו החדשה. על כרחנו אנו מוותרים על מונופולין הפתרון לארץ ישראל, ואנו אומרים: **שאלת היהדות הרוחנית בתפוצות נפתרת מתוך חיי-התפוצות גופן ומתוך השתתפות-יצירה של התפוצות ביצירת ארץ ישראל.** בארץ ישראל גופה התחילו אחדים מכירים בדבר זה – אולם בגולה מרובה עדיין *sancta simplicitas*. ולא כל "תמימות קדושה" קדושה באמת, מפרה את החיים והמחשבה. יהדות התפוצות אינה מקבלת, מושפעת בלבד – על כרחה תהא נותנת, על כרחה תהא שותף, לא אריס, לא חוכר, לא שכיר-יום, לא אקספדיטור ולא קבוץ של "חלוקה" – אלא

לשם מטרה פלונית או אלמונית, אלא שותפות לחיים ולמות ... שותפות-עולם ... אף רעיון זה דוגמת שאר רעיונות היסוד, אתה מוצא בו חיוב ושלילה כאחד. חיובו חיוב עולם ושלילתו שלילת עולם ... השותפות אומרת: אין עצמאות לאחד משני השותפים בשותפות זו, ואין השותף האחד יכול להתקיים קיום שלם אם שותפו יעדר ... אין זו שותפות של שני חלקים שלמים לעצמם ... אלא של שני חצאים, חצאי הכל הכוללם יחד, שנים שכל אחד מהם תובע על כרחו את קיום חברו. זוהי שותפות שרצון והכרח מכריעים בה כאחד ... חיה וקיימה בכח הגורל ... אם יצא השותף האחד מתחומה של שותפות זו הרי הוא מוציא את עצמו מן העולם, משום שאין לו דרך קיום אחרת אלא זו ... וכדי להעביר תפיסת-שותפות זו לתחום ראייתה של העין ... אני מוסיף ואומר: זוהי שותפות של פנים, שותפות של פן ופן בפנים ... כלום תצוייר מציאותם של פנים בהעדרו של הפן האחד בהם? כלום אפשרי הוא שהפן האחר בפנים לא יהא נשמע לאותם חוקי החיים, חוקי ההוייה והחדלון שלהם כפוף חברו, הפן השני? פן אחד יהא סופג אור השמש, ופן שני יהא מוקרן בקרניה של 'שמש מלאכותית'?! בפן האחד יהא קולח דם ממש, ובפן השני – נחל מה שלא ניתן להגדרה? אמרנו: אין פנים אלא פן ופן, ואף פני ישראל פן ופן הם ... ואין כאן משום שתי רשויות. באמתו של דבר אין המוניסמוס הציוני המקובל אלא מוניסמוס מדומה ... בהשקפה המקובלת טבוע מושג של 'דפניות' ... ובדרך השותפות המבוררת כאן אנו עולים למדרגת אחדות חדשה בשאלת ישראל, אחדות פני ישראל וגורלו ... (העולם גליון י"ט, תרצ"ב). עיין במאמרי "לשם חדוש ספרותנו": "הרי עכשיו נתברר הדבר אף לשוללי הגולה הקיצוניים, שכשם שהגולה זקוקה לארץ ישראל, אף ארץ ישראל זקוקה לגולה (ולא 'מגביות' וכיצא בהן אני מתכוון). באין יהדות גולה חיה ויוצרת לא תפתח ארץ ישראל ולא יהא בכחה למלא את אשר הטילה עליה ההיסטוריה הישראלית. ולפיכך אני אומר: כל השולל את הגולה – שולל את היהדות בגולה דרך כלל, וסופו שהוא שולל גם את ארץ-ישראל! שלילת הגולה או חיובה? רעיון שלילת הגולה היה רעיון נאה בימי שבת-צבי, בימי משיח במציאות הישראלית שבימינו – אין זה אלא רעיון עקר ומסוכן. שלילת הגולה או חיובה? לא. שלילת היהדות או חיובה! זוהי השאלה. יתר על כן: אין זו אלא השאלה של חיוב ארץ ישראל ושלילתה!" לתורתם של שוללי הגולה הנני עומד להקדיש מאמר נוסף במקום אחר.

שותף.<sup>20</sup> וכבר אמרנו במקום אחר: עד עכשיו למדנו הלכות מרכז והיקף, מעכשו עלינו לצאת וללמוד הלכות שותפות, הלכות שותפין. |17| למדנו, אין התרבות העברית המיוחדת נוצרת בארץ ישראל לבדה, ואין יהדות הגולה לבדה יכולה להתקיים אלא דרך יצירה. כשם שאין יהדותה של הגולה יכולה להתקיים בלי ארץ ישראל כך אין יהדותה ותרבותה העברית של ארץ ישראל יכולה להתקיים בלי גולה עברית יוצרת. כשאנו עוקרים את פתרון שאלת התרבות העברית מרשות היחיד של ארץ ישראל ומניחים אותו ברשות של ארץ ותפוצות – קמות לפנינו המון פרובלימות עיוניות ומעשיות, פרובלימות בספירת-היחס שבין ארץ ותפוצות, שלא היו כמוכן במציאות כל שעה שאמרנו: יהדות-הגולה לקבלה, וארץ ישראל ליצירה. על פרובלימות יסודיות אחדות הייתי יכול לרמוז כאן – אולם שעתנו המצומצמת מעכבת.

בעיקר הדברים, מתוך גלוי שני היסודות הללו: א) יצירה ישראלית-עברית כצורה הכרחית לקיום ישראל בגולה. ב) שלילת מונופולין של |18| ארץ ישראל לטובתה ולזכותה של ארץ ישראל,<sup>21</sup> והכנסת תרבותנו לרשות שותפים – אנו באים על כרחנו לידי תפיסה חדשה של

20 עיין במאמרי "לשם חדוש ספרותנו": "אין התפוצות חיות, אלא אם כן הן יוצרות, וחובה כפולה ומכופלת עלינו לשקוד על טפוח כח יצירתה של יהדות זו, אם רוצים אנו בכך שתהא כרוכה גם בארץ ישראל. במדה שיחלש כח היצירה של הגולה, בה במדה תלך ותדר אף היצירה שבארץ. האם אתם באים לעשות את יהדות הגולה מעין חברה לא-כספורט ואימפורט? כלומר, שתהא מצד אחד חברה למשלוח אנשים וכסף לארץ ישראל, ומצד שני חברה לקבלת נכסים וערכים רוחניים מארץ ישראל? כל הרואה ביהדות התפוצות אך ורק חברה זו ומעלים עיניו מהכרח היצירה הטבוע בכל מצוי חיוקיים – אינו אלא חותר תחת קיומה של היהדות בגולה ותחת בנין |17| ארץ ישראל שלמה כאחד. 'היקף' ומרכז! אך אם לא יהא 'ההיקף' יוצר ונותן משלו – לא יהיה מרכז, כלומר: לא יהיה מרכז המשפיע על ההיקף, אלא נקודה בודדה בלי היקף מסביבה, 'מרכז' שיוכל להאיר רק לעצמו ולא לזולתו."

וכנגד הפירוש המטעה שניתן לתורת המרכז וההיקף, כאילו פונקציה החיים הלאומיים נמסרה למרכז, ופונקציה הקבלה, יניקת שפע החיים, נמסרה לרוב מנינם ורוב בנינם של ישראל באומות. אני מוסיף ואומר (שם): "שוב: כלום מרכז והיקף – פירושו חלוקת פונקציות? זה המרכז חיה, וההיקף 'טול חלק' בחייו? המרכז יעבוד וייצור, וההיקף יהא יושב ומסתכל ביצירתו, ולכל היותר ימציא לו אמצעים ליצירתו? אם יהא דין יחס ההיקף אל המרכז כדין יחס של העצמאים אל האידאות בתורתו של אפלטון, יהא המרכז מרכז 'אפלטוני' – וההיקף היקף 'אפלטוני', לא מרכז ולא היקף. אנו אומרים: מרכז והיקף אותזים בטלית אחת, מעורים בגוף אחד, שניהם חיים אותם החיים באי אלה שניים, שניהם יוצרים אותה יצירה באי אלו שניים: המרכז בצורה 'מרכזית', וההיקף בצורה 'היקפית'. הרי, כל ימינו התנגדנו ל'חלוקה' כלכלית ומדינית בא", נלחמנו בה וגם יכולנו לה. הישוב העובד העביר מן העולם אותה 'חלוקה'. כלום נבוא ונשלים עם 'חלוקה' רוחנית, 'חלוקה' תרבותית של יהדות הגולה? שהרי אם תוותר יהדות הגולה על יצירתה הרוחנית הישראלית, אם תצא ידי חובתה ביצירתה של היהדות הא"י בלבד, אם תבגוד בידועים ולרצון במסורת היצירה הישראלית, כלום יש לך 'חלוקה' רוחנית נוראה מזו?"

21 כבר אמרתי במאמרי "שתי שאלות שהן אחת": "קול מארץ ישראל צריך לעבור במחנה היהדות הרוצה בקיום ישראל בגולה: ישראל שבגולה, ארץ ישראל ההולכת ונבנית מטילה עליכם חובת חיים לאומיים עצמיים, עמדו על משמר היצירה התרבותית כלפי פנים וכלפי חוץ, אל תצאו ידי חובתכם בחיים הישראליים שבארץ ישראל. מלאכה שנעשית ע"י אחרים – אין בעל המלאכה, זה שחב בטפוחה וגידולה, נהנה הימנה הנאה שיש בה ממש, אין היא נעשית לו סם חיים. אחינו שבתפוצות, נטעו כרמים

שאלת קיומנו בגולה. ושני רעיונות יסוד אלה יש להטביעם בבסוס ההסתדרות החדשה שאנו באים ליסדה. אין אני קובע דוגמות, אין אני אומר: קבלו דעתי, ואם לאו נכבוש רצון-חדושנו. למעשה יוכלו להשתתף במפעלנו אף שוללי הגולה הקיצוניים ביותר, אף הללו הסבורים שחובתה של יהדות הגולה לאבד עצמה לדעת לשם שמים, לשם ארץ ישראל, הסבורים שיהדות הגולה תרעה עד שתסתאב ולפי שעה יכולה זו כמובן לעסוק דרך אגב גם קצת בחנוך, בתרבות וכו'. אלא שאני רואה חובה לעצמי להדגיש, שאין אני מאמין בהצלחת עבודתנו כל שעה שתהא זו מבוססת על תורת הצינויות "הרוחנית" והדומה לה, כל שעה שלא יבוא במחננו שני ערכין גמור. לא סמנתי לפניכם אלא את ראשי פרקיו של שני-ערכין זה, ובדרך רמז, ובעצם הדבר עתיד שני-ערכין זה לשמש מקור לתסיסת עיון ומחשבה בגולה, תסיסת עיון שתפרה את העבודה והמחשבה בגולה ואולי גם בארץ.

[19] לא לעבודת-ההווה במובנה המקובל אצלנו אני מטיף!<sup>22</sup> אני דורש תפיסה חדשה, תפיסה אחרת של עצם שאלת קיומנו בגולה ופתרונה:

#### תפיסת-יצירה ליהדות הגולה

ולא תפיסת-חקוי. שנויזה יביא על כרחו גם לידי הכרה חדשה זו: פני ישראל שבגולה לארץ ישראל (וליתר דיוק: הפן האחד מפני ישראל, עיין להלן), אולם מרכז-הכובד לשאלת-קיומו הרוחני של ישראל בגולה – אינו בארץ ישראל, אלא בתוך יהדות הגולה גופה.

דברים אלה טעונים ברוח, והריני מרגיש שלמרות כל ברוי הנוספים יגלו בדברי פנים שלא כהלכה ואיש איש יראה בהם מהרהורי לבו, יכניס מהרהורי לבו לתוך דברי ויחייביני על דברים שנאמרו פיו, ולא מפי. הרי צבור יוצר תרבות חייב לידע מה הוא, מי הוא ולפני מי הוא עומד. לא הרי מפעל-תרבות של גרים כהרי זה של תושבים, ואף בגרים אתה מוצא כמה סוגים: גרי אריות וגרי אמת. עם ישראל הוא – או צריך להעשות – תושב בארץ ישראל, והריהו גרי-

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לתרבות העברית בגולה, אל תהיו סמוכים על שולחן ארץ ישראל בלבד, ערכו שולחן לתרבות העברית בגולה, עשו תרבותכם העברית קבע והעמידוה בראש חייכם הישראליים. אין לכם בגולה לא כלכלה לאומית בת חורין משלכם ולא מדיניות ישראלית קבועה ועומדת. לוחות תרבות בידכם שנונם לבניכם ודברו בהם ... במדה שתקיימו – מתוך רצון ומתוך שמחה של יצירה – את חיי התרבות הישראלית בתפוצות, במדה שתהיו שוקדים על תקנת היצירה העברית לכל, סוגיה, במדה שתעשו את תרבות ישראל שבגולה ישראלית ברוחה הפנימי ובלבושה הלשוני – בה במדה תסיעו להחייאת ישראל בגולה ובארצו, להעמקתה והעשרתה של היצירה העברית בארץ ישראל. אין כל תקוה לארץ ישראל מיהדות תפוצות ההולכת ומאבדת – וגם בידועים ובכוונה – את רצון יצירתה, מזו המסרסת עצמה 'לשם שמים' ... ואם לא תגיעו בגולה למדרגת השלמות הרצויה – לא עליכם המלאכה לגמור, ואין אתם בני חורין להפטר מחובת יצירתו של רוח ישראל, לכל גלוי ולבושיו ..."

22 אנו צריכים ל"רדת" – ויש בירידה זו משום עליה – לילך עם המציאות שבתפוצות, עם חיי ישראל, לישא בעול חיי התפוצות לא בסגנון של "עבודת הוה" והלסינגפורסיות שטחית. ההלסינגפורסיות (!) פירושה: הודאה בכל עקרי הצינויות המקובלת להלכה בצרוף "עבודת הוה" ... לא זה הדרך! שיני הערכין מוכרח להטביע את חותמו לא רק על המעשה, אלא גם ובעקר על ההלכה. עבודת ההוה וההלסינגפורסיות, עם כל רצון החרור הטבוע בה, לא היתה אלא מעין טלאי היסטורי, ואנו תובעים מרקם חדש, רקמת חיים של יצירה. אף עבודת יוס'יום בחיי ישראל בתפוצות ... זקוקה לבאור עיוני חדש, לבסוס של "שותפות" ו"יצירה" (שותפות של קיום, העולם 1932, כ"א (!)).



תושב – לא גר בלבד אלא גר-תושב – בארצות פזוריו! תושב מכאן וגר-תושב מכאן! לא חציו עבד וחציו בן חורין אלא כולו תושב וגר-תושב כאחד! ישראל שבגולה חייב לבסס כגר-תושב את מרכז-יצירתו בארצות מושבותיו (על הקשר שבין מרכז-יצירתו זה וארץ ישראל כבר דובר לעיל). אין הוא יכול לראות את חייו כאמצעי בלבד: אין חיי צבור יוצר יכולים לשמש אמצעי בלבד. מן ההכרח שיהא טעמם ותכנם הפנימי טבוע בהם.

[20] ומכאן – ואף על פרט זה איני יכול לעמוד אלא דרך רמז בלבד – נשקף פתרון חדש לפרובלימות-היחס שבין ארץ ישראל ובין התפוצות.

ההתבוללות, הריפורמה, הליברליזם המערבי וכו' באו ואמרו: הגולה היא כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל. העלו מבית-גזינו את המאמר הישן העמוק: צדקה עשה הקב"ה עם ישראל שפורסם בין האומות. באה הציוניות ואמרה: אין הגולה אלא קללה, מארת אלהים! ואנו אומרים: אף להבא נמרוד בגולה, כבוני הארץ נלחם ונלחם בגולה, כבוני הארץ לא נשלים עמה לעולם. מלחמה לנו בה כל ימי היותנו, כל ימי היותנו בונים את ארצנו. אולם הרי אין אנו בונים את ארץ ישראל בלבד. הרי חיי-תפוצות דורשים ממנו את תקונם ואנו על כרחם מוכרחים להשמע לדרישתם – ובדרך של יצירה, של יצירה שביצירה, כאמור לעיל. הצבור הישראלי המוכרח לחיות בגולה, זה הצבור בן המיליונים, שעל כרחו יהא חי ויוצר את חייו בגולה ימים רבים, על כרחו הוא אומר: כשאני עומד במסגרת יצירתי אני מכיר שאין הגלות לא ברכה ולא קללה, אלא עובדה, נתון היסטורי. ובמטותא מכס להבין את דברי הצבור היוצר בגולה שלעתידי לבוא כהלכתם. שתי שיטות-בנין לנו: שיטת-בנינו את הארץ ושיטת-יצירתנו בחיי התפוצות, שיטה שיטה וחוקיה היסודיים. מי שאינו משגיח בשיטה וחוקיה המיוחדים – מחריב את עצמו ואת השיטה הקבועה. אין יחסנו אל הגולה בשיטת-בנינו את הארץ כהרי יחסנו אל הגולה בשיטת-חינו שבתפוצות. בשיטה אחרונה זו אנו אומרים: הגולה היא עובדה, נלחם בעובדה זו עד כמה שהיא מסוכנת לקיומנו, נלחם בכל השלילה שבה, נכוון את פניה לשיטת-הבנין השניה, לשיטת בנינו את ארץ ישראל, עד שתצטרפנה שתי השיטות הללו צירוף דינמי-פנימי. אולם על כרחנו אנו חיים בשיטת-בנינו התפוצתית חיי יצירה, ועל כרחנו אנו מוכרחים לחיות ב"עובדה" זו. כמה ימים עוד נכוננו לה "עובדה" זו? לא אדע. ברית לא כרתי עם המלאך הממונה על הנצחיות. אם "עובדה" זו ששמה תפוצות-ישראל לא תתקיים אלא עד שנת 2100, לדוגמא, על כרחנו אנו מושבעים ועומדים לחוק לה חוקים, להשמע לחוקיה הפנימיים, למרוד בה ולחיות בה, ולא לצאת ידי חובתנו באותה אמרה: קללה היא זו... ישראל אוסר עלינו [21] קלות-דעת זו, ארץ ישראל תובעת ממנו שנשכיל לעמוד על סוד התפוצה סוד ה"עובדה". בשיטת בנין-הארץ אנו אומרים: הגולה קללה היא, ובשיטת חיינו בתפוצות אנו אומרים: אין זו לא קללה ולא ברכה, אלא עובדה! כלום אין כאן סתירה, שניות? לא ולא. ההגיון האמת, ביחוד זה ההגיון של החיים, לא יראה כאן סתירה כל שהיא. ונהפוך הוא, פתרון זה גושר גשר בין שתי שיטות-החיים והבנין בהן יהיה נתון ישראל במאות הבאות. מהו תפקידו של ישראל במאות הבאות? על כרחו יהא בונה את ארצו מכאן וחי חיי יצירה ובנין בארצות פזוריו מכאן! במקום תורת-המוחלט, זאת התורה המופשטת לציוניות המקובלת, ועתים אין מוחלט זה שבידה אלא מוחלט למראית-עין, פסידו מוחלט, אני מנסה לרמוז על

#### תורת היחסיות

בפתרון שאלת-ישראל. שאלת-ישראל יש לה פתרון אחד שהוא שנים: אחד ביחסו אל בנין ארצו ואחד ביחסו אל חייו בגולה, ושניהם נובעים ממקור אחד. שניהם אווזים בטלית אחת. נושא שניהם הוא אחז, חומר שניהם הוא אחד ונשמת שניהם היא אחת. הפן האחד בפני

ישראל פונה כלפי ארץ ישראל והפן השני כלפי התפוצות. שניהם כאחד הם הפנים, פני ישראל. שניהם כאחד – ואין פן אחד, אחד מהם, פני ישראל כולו. המעמיק לירד לסוף דעתי זו, יראה, ששני הפתרונות הם אחד, ששתי שיטות-היחסים חוזרות ומדבקות אחת בחברתה והיו לאחת. וכשאני אומר: יחסיות, אין במשמעה רילטיביזמוס, במובן המקובל, אלא פירושה: פתרון מדעי אורגני, פתרון נתון בתוך סיסטם, שיטה מיוחדת, שהרי כל פתרון מותנה משיטתו המיוחדת, שבה הוא נתון וקבוע. אין מעבירים פתרונות וחוקים משיטה לשיטה, כאמור לעיל, מבלי שיהרסו את השיטה או שיורידו את הפתרונות והחוקים למדרגת דוגמות, דברים שבשרירות לב וכיצא בהם. על תורת-היחסיות במדעיהטבע רבו הקופצים, (בתחומים אחרים) משום שראו בה – ובטעות – נקודת-מוצא להשקפת-עולם ללא חוק וסדר: הכל יחסי, הכל מותן, אין גבול ואין משטר! ויודעי דבר יודעים יפה, שאין לאותה תורת-היחסיות דבר עם הרילטיביזמוס העובר לסוחר ומצוי בשוק הסיסמאות המקובלות. נדמה לי, שעתידה תורת-22| היחסיות הישראלית, תורת-היחסיות בפתרון שאלת ישראל, שאני מציע כאן דרך רמז (ועל עקריה והשאלות הגננות בה אעמוד במקום אחר) לפתוח לנו פתח-ראיה חדש, ראיית עצמנו ועתידנו. אם אין כאן אף סתירה כלישהיא – הרי יש כאן גורליות, הרי זוהי מהות גורלנו. וכל מי שלא ישמע כאן את שפת גורל-ישראל במאה הכ', הכ"א והכ"ב, וכ' – לא ימצא את הדרך לפתרון שאלת-קיומנו!



לצורך מפעלנו נצא ונכריז: אנו באים לחדש את פני יהדות הגולה רצוננו לעורר את כחות-היצירה ביהדות זו, רצוננו לעשות יהדות זו קבוץ לאומי יוצר ערכים, קבוץ לאומי הנתון בקשר של יצירה עם תרבות העולם. יש את נפשנו לעשות את יהדות הגולה שותף-יוצר במעשה היצירה העברית בארץ ישראל, מלחמה לנו בשיטות הבאות לעשות את ישראל שבגולה קבוץ-מקבלים, סמוכים על שולחן-חוץ, ואם גם שולחן-קודש הוא לנו, מלחמה לנו בשיטות הרואות ביהדות הגולה מעין חברה לאימפורט ולאקספורט בע"מ – נאמר: ברית העברים הנוסדת באה לכרות ברית חדשה או לחדש את הברית הישנה של ישראל עם שכנתנו, ואני בטוח בדבר שישאל שבגולה יטה לנו אוזן. נבוא ונאמר: לא בתיספר וגניילדים בלבד אנו מיסדים, אין אנו דורשים אך ורק תמיכה במוסדותינו הכורעים תחת סבל לא ישוער – אלא את שאלת קיומו הרוחני של ישראל בגולה אנו מנסים לפתור את שאלת הפרודוקטיביזציה הרוחנית של ישראל בגולה, רצוננו להפוך עם מתפרנס משיירי עולמות שעברו ומצפה לחסד-מעלה וחוף לעם יוצר וחי – וכלום יש ספק בדבר שגדול יהא הד דברינו?! ואני חוזר ומדגיש, ולצערי אני מוכרח לחזור על דברי: לשם יצירה אפשר וכדאי להפעיל את הגולה העברית – ולשם חקוי של היקף לא יתכן. לא נצליח, משום שהדבר מתנגד לחוקי תנועת-החיים! אדם ישלים עם הרעיון שאבות אבותיו היו בחינת קופים – אולם אין אדם משים עצמו קוף! כשהגולה יוצרת, כשהיא רואה עצמה בחינת שותף-יוצר – עתידה היא להקריב קרבנות לשיטת מפעלנו. אם אין זו אלא מסתכלת, 23| מקבלת ונהנית, אם הכל נעשה, יעשה ויכול להעשות בארץ ישראל, ובשלמות האידיאלית ביותר, הכל גם בשביל יהדות התפוצות – למה תטפלנה תפוצות ישראל ביצירת תרבות עברית? והריני מסיים את הצעותי העיוניות בשתי הערות, אחת מהן נחוצה לגוף הענין, והשנייה כלפי המתווכחים.

- (א) חייב הייתי לעמוד כאן על המכשולים האוביקטיביים והסוביקטיביים האורבים ליצירה בגולה ועל תקות-יצירתנו בתפוצות, אלא שאין שעתנו מספיקה. על כרחי אני יוצא ידי חובתי בסימון הפרינציפ שעליו לשמש מורה-דרך בקביעת תכניתו של המפעל. כל הפרטים הנובעים ממנו עתידיים להתברר ולהתלבן אחר-כך. מן הראוי היה להקדיש שעת-עיון מיוחדת לשאלת ההתבוללות בגולה. ואני מוכרח להעיר שבימים האחרונים התחילה רווחת הדעה, שאף בארץ ישראל קיימת סכנת ההתבוללות. שהרי כמה פנים להתבוללות. ויש אומרים, שקיומה של גולה ישראלית ישמש תריס בפני ההתבוללות וגם בפני הלבנטיזציה בא"י. אין אני פסימיסטן בשאלה זו ואין אני מאמין שסכנת-ההתבוללות (לפחות, זו הלשונית, מה שאין כן התרבותית האנושית) בארץ היא גדולה ביותר – מכל מקום דיו לרמז זה להוכיח, שהאמרה "התבוללות עליך, גולה עברית!" אין בה כדי לטפח על פני דברי הקודמים. ושוב: בין שאר מושגיה-היסוד של הציוניות הרוחנית טעון מושג השלימות עיון רב. יש לבדוק בדבר, כמה יש בו מן האמת וכמה מן ההגזמה היתרה.
- (ב) אל יתבעו ממני מבקרי את עלבונה של ארץ ישראל, הציוניות וכו'. ציוניות אינה פחותה מזו של היוצאים ידי חובתם בשלילת הגולה ובאמירת "קדיש דרבנן" על יהדות התפוצות. בעיקר הדבר, בכנסיתנו זו אינה עומדת על הפרק לא שאלת הציוניות ולא שאלת ארץ ישראל – אלא שאלת הגולה, שאלת קיומו העברי של ישראל בגולה. שאלה זו תובעת ממנו את פתרונה, ואין כאן בין בני-גולה המוכנים בכל עת ובכל שעה לעלות לארץ, ובין בני ארץ ישראל ולא כלום. ואילו ישבתי כיום בארץ ישראל לא הייתי משנה ממטבעי-השקפתי זו.

החושבים והסופרים בארץ ישראל יכירו שיש כאן פרובלימות שאי-אפשר לנו להסיח דעתנו מהן – בין אם יסכימו לכל דברי או למקצתם.

[24] אין אני מתכוון בדברי שהצעת לפניכם אלא לקדם את פני הסכנה הנשקפת לבנין ארץ ישראל ופני הקטסטרופה האורבת למפעלנו העברי בארצות פזורנו. בנין ארצנו זקוק להארה חדשה, ושבעתים ממנו זקוק לכך בני-חיינו בתפוצות. הדרכים בהן הלכנו עד כאן לא הביאונו למחוז חפצנו. נצא ונחפש – לאור המחשבה והמציאות הישראלית – דרכים חדשות לבסוס מפעלנו העברי בגולה (ובשם אחדותו השרשית והיסודית עם חדושת-תרבותנו בארץ). בנפשנו הוא הדבר, כי חסרים אנו: תפיסה חדשה, שיטות-עבודה חדשות, ארגון חדש!



ארגון כל הגולה העברית, כנוס כל התפוצות למכון עברי עליון, מתן שיעור קומה ובסוס עיוני חדש לתנועתנו – אינם יכולים להמסר לא לידי חברות "תרבות" הקיימות ולא לידי ההסתדרות הציונית.

אין מן הצורך לומר שאנו מכירים בגודל ערך עבודתה של "תרבות" בפולניה, בליטא ובארצות אחרות – אולם חייבים אנו להטיל את הארגון העיוני והמעשי החדש ליהדות התפוצות על שכמ

הסתדרות עברית כללית לכל אצרות הגולה,

שתהא מקיפה את כל האישים, המוסדות וההסתדרות הנמנים על היהדות העברית בגולה. ודאי תסכימו לי, שאין צורך בנימוקים מיוחדים לדברי אלה. דיינו בהערות כלליות אחדות.

ברור הדבר: הסתדרות חדשה זו שאנו מציעים לקרא לה בשם  
 "ברית העברים",

ולמרות הסוסינו כלפי מלת "ברית" הרי יש לראות בה אחת ממלות-היסוד של דתנו ושל קיומנו הישראלי – תהא על כרחא הסתדרות עממית אוטונומית, עובדת שכס אחד עם חברות קרובות לה ובלתי תלויה בהן ונושאת את עצמה. ודאי תמצא ה"ברית" דרכי עבודה משותפות עם מוסדות החנוך והספרות בארץ ישראל, או עם הסתדרות עברית כללית בארץ ישראל – לכשתוצר, אם יהא צורך לארץ ישראל בהסתדרות מעין זו. מה שאין כן ההסתדרות הציונית. ה"ברית" תהא פרושה לגמרי מזו האחרונה (ויש כמובן להבדיל בין ההסתדרות [25] הציונית דרך כלל). כל שעה שתהא התנועה העברית סמוכה על שלחנה של ההסתדרות הציונית – תזכה בפירוים, ובמצב הנוכחי גם בפירוים לא תזכה. כשתעמוד ה"ברית" ברשות עצמה הרי היא מלכה לעצמה. לא הרי שיטות עבודתה של ה"ברית" כהרי אלו של ההסתדרות הציונית. תנועה מדינית-מישבת יש בה כדי להרחיב לבות אדם, יש בה הרבה מברק-חוקן, יש לה מלכים ושרים, מיניסטרים ושמשיהם, שמלה קלה כחמורה שלהם עשויה להשפיע על דעת הקהל. ואין הדבר כך בתנועתנו התרבותית. פניה כלפי פנים, ולא כלפי חוץ, שיטות-עבודתה על כרחן תהיינה טבעות בחותם "צניעות" ופנימיות. כאן יש מקום לכמה הרהורי-לב ושאלות שאין להן מקום בתנועה מדינית, בתנועה המתכוונת לברוא מדינת-יהודים, עם רוב יהודי וכו'. עד כאן היו ה"הבראיסטים" ה"בטלנים" הנגררים אחרי ההסתדרות הציונית – הגיעה השעה שה"בטלנים" יוכיחו שבביתם, בארבע אמותיהם, אין מדת בטלנותם גדולה כל-כך. אל נבוא אל ההסתדרות הציונית הנתונה במיצר בדרישות תרבות וחנוך. דרישות אלו אינן עכשו אלא בחינת דרישות שאין להן נדרש.

מובן הדבר, ארגונו החדש יעמוד בקשר טבעי עם התנועה הציונית – ותנועות חברתיות קרובות לה – אולם אין קשר זה רשאי לפגוע באוטונומיה שלו, כאמור ארגונו יהא  
 בלתי מפלגתי

בבחינה מדינית כללית וישראלית. לפי שעה עלינו להמנע מצחצוחי-חברות בתוך מחננו, נבליג על נגודי-מפלגה שבינינו – לשם יצירתה של מסגרת-הארגון, עד שנזכה ויהא ארגונו עז ומבוסס ויוכל לכלכל בקרבו "תאומים" מתרוצצים, את יעקב ואת עשו כאחד. אני דורש מתן-פרימט ליצירת הארגון, וותור-שעה על הבלטתם של חלוקי-תפיסתנו את השאלות המדיניות והכלליות בישראל ובעמים, יחסנו אל הציוניות וכו'. עם הכרתי שאין בעולם, וביחוד בספירה זו, "בלתי-מפלגתיות" שלמה, אני דורש כאן מכל מקום בלתי מפלגתיות, אחרי שהגדרתי מושג זה והעמדתי על עיקרו.

[26] וכשאני אומר, שאסור לה ל"ברית" לכוף עצמה למפלגה מדינית, אין כאן משום רדיפה אחרי הנוח והקל, אחרי אופורטוניות, אלא משום שמרכז הפעולה של התנועה העברית בגולה מוכרח לעמוד בגולה, ומרכז-הפעולה של ההסתדרות הציונית על כרחו בארץ. ומטעם זה אני דורש להפריד בין הדבקים. אין אני בא להציע מעין Hebrew Agency או Agency for Hebrew Culture. אין אני רודף אחרי נוטבלים ואין אני רוצה למסור את דבר-עצוב חיינו התרבותיים לידי נכב. אין אני מתכוון ביצירת "ברית העברים" אלא לנסיון-יצירתה של האומה העברית בגולה (ואין לתלות בבטוי זה כוונות שאינן בו), ליצירת "רפרזנטנץ" לישראל העברי שבגולה. כשם שהיהדות מאורגנת בבית-הכנסת לצרכי דת, בקהלה לצרכי חיה האזרחים, הדתיים וכו' – כך צריכה יהדות התפוצות להיות מאורגנת ב"ברית העברים" לשם חיה העבריים!

הקץ לכל הארגונים הבודדים! יהיה לנו ארגון אחד מקיף, ולו יהיו כפופים כל הזרמים והארגונים השונים! אין אנו משלים את נפשנו שנוכל להכניס את כל יהדות הגולה למסגרת ה"ברית". אין אנו רוצים לצאת ידי חובתנו בפסוק הנישא בפי כל: "ואעשה אותך לגוי גדול". עלינו להשתדל להכניס תחת כנפי ה"ברית" את כל היהדות הלאומית בגולה.



בקיום כלליים תחמנו את תחומיה של "ברית העברים" כלפי חוץ וכלפי פנים. ואין בתחום זה משום חיץ ממבדיל, אלא משום רצון לצמצום של יצירה. עלינו לדון כעת בשאלה החשובה ביותר, והפשוטה לכאורה ביותר: שאלת תכניתה ותפקידיה של "ברית העברים".

אני מודה על האמת: תחלה הייתי תופס מועט. בשנים האחרונות דנתי הרבה בדבר יצירת ברית הספרות העברית.<sup>23</sup> תחלה לא היו לפני עיני אלא הספרות, המדע והאמנות בלבד. (ושאלה זו עמוקה ומסובכת הרבה יותר מכפי שמשערים המפיצים המושבעים של הספר העברי. [27] ובהפצת ספרות אין מקיימים גולה עברית יוצרת, עיין להלן). במדה שירדתי לעומקה של השאלה, בה במדה בשלה הכרתי ש"ברית העברים" מוכרחה להיות

מכון ומרכז עליון לכל לבושיה וגלוייה של התרבות העברית, לכל נסיונותיו ומפעליו של חפץ-הקיום הישראלי.

ה"ברית" תחפש על כרחה שיטות-עבודה מדעיות ומעשיות חדשות לחקר חיי ישראל בגולה, ה"ברית" תעמוד על משמר חיינו כלומדת. איש שאינו למד אינו קיים, וצבור על אחת כמה וכמה. ה"ברית" צריכה ללמוד את תנאי הכלכלה הישראלית בגולה, תנאי חיינו החברתיים, המדיניים, וצריכה לסגל על פיהם את עבודתה. הגיעה השעה להשתחרר מהדילטנטזמוס והארעיות שדבקו בנו. יש לנהל עבודת-תרבות (בלע"ז: Kulturpolitik) בשיטה מדעית ומעשית מתוך עמדת חיינו הכלליים והישראליים בגולה, מהותם, תעודתם וכו'. קודם לכן עמדנו על התפיסה החדשה למפעלנו, ועכשו אנו מדגישים את הצורך בשיטה מדעית-מעשית חדשה לעבודתנו.

למעשה יהיו לה ל"ברית" שני מקצועות חשובים ועקריים:

החנוך והיצירה הרוחנית דרך כלל.

כמובן שהחנוך תופס מקום בראש: חנוך בבית-הספר ומחוצה לו, חנוך-הנוער וכל הכרוך בו. במקצוע החנוך העממי והבינוני נעשה בגולה הרבה מאד – על אף כל המכשולים הרבים! אנו מציינים בשמחה דבר זה שהמורה העברי ועסקני החנוך בגולה הקימו במדינות שונות שבגולה רשת מוסדות-חנוך עבריים, החל מגני-ילדים וכלה בגימנסיות ובשעורי השתלמות מסוגים שונים, יישר כחם! אלא שהרבה פרובלימות חנוכיות עבריות עדיין תובעות את פתרוןן. לא זכינו עדיין למרכז שיאחד את כל המורים ומוסדות החנוך של כל תפוצות הגולה לשם יצירת שיטת-חנוך ישראלית שלימה בגולה, לא זכינו לבימת-חנוך משותפת ליהדות התפוצות (ראף על-פי סדור עניני החנוך להלכה ולמעשה הולך אחרי התנאים המיוחדים לכל תפוצה ותפוצה, מורגש הצורך ההכרחי בשתף-פעולה בין כל התפוצות במקצוע זה, שהרי מוצאים אנו שאלות-חנוך יסודיות אחדות והן משותפות לכל התפוצות). ולא עוד אלא שבפולניה,

23 עיין במאמרי הנזכרים למעלה.

[28] לדוגמא, קיימות זו בצד זו הסתדרויות חנוך אחדות שאינן מצטרפות לכלל אחת. ה"ברית" תתקן את המעוות. תבא ותיצור הסדרות המורים ועסקני החנוך העברי לכל יהדות התפוצות, ה"ברית" תיצור הסתדרויות הורים ותלמידים וכו', הכל לפי האפשרויות הנתונות בתפוצה ותפוצה.

ותוך כדי דברינו על החנוך, עלינו להעיר שתי הערות: א) צרכי החנוך העברי בגולה מרובים לאין שעור. עתים נדמה כאילו לא נתנו הללו לספוק. חייבים אנו לדאוג לכך, שהחנוך לא יבלע את שאר ענפי עבודתה של ה"ברית". כך אירע להן לכמה הסתדרויות עבריות שנוצרו לשמש את התנועה העברית, ומכיון שנוקקו לצרכי החנוך העברי לא היה ספק בידם לטפל בשאר מקצועותיה של התרבות. לא על החנוך בלבד תחיה תנועה עברית בגולה. יש לגדור גדה. כל קונגרס של "ברית העברים" יהא חייב לקבוע את אמת-המדה הפנימית בהכנסותיה והוצאותיה של ה"ברית" כלפי מקצוע החנוך ושאר המקצועות שה"ברית" נזקקת להם. בשאלת-תקציב זו לא נטפל כאן. ב) מכיון שבהרבה ארצות קיימת הסתדרות "תרבות" המטפלת בעקר בחנוך, ומכיון שיכבד כרגע להביא לידי פתרון משותף את כל שאלות החנוך העברי בגולה, שהרי מדינה ומדינה ושאלות חנוכה, והחנוך העברי בתפוצות תלוי הרבה בחנוך המקובל במדינה, ביחסה של המדינה אל המעוט הישראלי וכו' ובשעה שבכל שאר המקצועות תוכל ה"ברית" לפעול בכוון משותף – ואם גם בדרכים שונות – בכל התפוצות, הרי במקצוע החנוך יכבד עליה, וביחוד בראשית המפעל, למצוא את הקו המעשי המשותף בהחלט, – על יסוד כל אלה אני מציע הצעת שעה, הצעת מעבר, עד שארגונו יקום ויתפתח כהלכתו: 1) שהמשרד לחנוך שעל יד ה"ברית" (עיין להלן) תהא ההסתדרות "תרבות". 2) שמשדד חנוך זה יהא אוטונומי בכמה בחינות. על גבולותיה של זו האוטונומיה לא אוכל לעמוד כאן. ברור הדבר, שאוטונומיה זו במקצוע החנוך באה להוסיף ולא לגרוע, לבצר את אחדות פעולתה של ה"ברית" ולא למעט את דמותה. הסתדרות "תרבות", מוסדות החנוך וקבוצי המורים ודאי יכירו בדבר, שיצירת ברית עברים עולמית תרים את קרן החנוך העברי, את כבוד בית-הספר העברי, כבוד המורה והחנוך העברי, תבצר את עמדתו כלפי פנים וכלפי חוץ.

[29] רבותי! כלום חייבים אנו להוסיף ולומר, שאין שאלת הלשונות קיימת בשבילנו בבית-הספר העברי? אחד מחברינו המסורים הציע לי להכניס לסדר-היום של כנסיתנו את שאלת הלשונות בבית-הספר, כלומר שאלה זו: בית-ספר עברי שלם, חד-לשוני, או בית-ספר דו-לשוני? חבר זה סבור, ששאלה זו תעשה את הכנסייה בוערת ורותחת, כנסייה לוחמת ומטילה סער בעולמנו! החבר לא נתכוון לשם סנסציה ואף אני לא הייתי מימי רודף אחרי סנסציה. מקובלני: כל הרודף אחרי סנסציה, הסנסציה בורחת ממנו. אין אנו רוצים להעמיד את שאלת-הלשונות, ואף בצורתה זו, במרכז משאנו ומתנגנו. אולם, עם כל אלה, מכיון שכבר נגענו בשאלה זו, הרשוני להוסיף עוד מלים מספר בה בשאלה ולומר, שלפי עניות דעתי אין לנו להדגיש את הסאה, – ביחוד כלפי חוץ – במלחמתנו באידיש במקצוע החנוך ובמקצועות הקרובים לו. עוד נער הייתי וכבר נלחמתי "מלחמת הקדש" בזו ה"שפחה החרופה", כמות שקראו לה באותם הימים, אולם נסיונו הלאומי בשנים האחרונות מלמדנו, שאויבנו זה אינו הכתוב השני המתנגד לנו, אלא הכתוב השלישי המכריע בינינו. לפחות כלפי חוץ אנו מוכרחים למצא *modus vivendi* עם האידיש.

ה"ברית" לא תהא כורעת תחת סבל ירושה, לא תהא מוכרחה לשנוא שנאה קנאית ולאהוב אהבה נפרזת את אשר שנאו ואהבו אבותיה. מן ההכרח שתעביר תחת שבט הבקרת כמה מהמושגים המקובלים במחננו זה כעשרים שנה. בת-חורין תהא זו בקביעת יחוסיה כלפי

שאר הכחות והתנועות בפנים ובחוץ. ה"ברית" תחבר דרך יצירתה ועבודתה פרוש חדש לעבודה עברית יוצרת-קונסטרוקטיבית בגולה.

"ברית עברים" שאינה משועבדת לשום כוון מדיני מסוים בישראל, מן ההכרח שתמצא לה כחות-עוז חדשים, חוגי-חברים חדשים במזרח ובמערב שלא עלתה עד כה להכניסם בעול תנועתנו. בארצות מערב-אירופה יספחו אלינו אי-אלה חוגים שאינם נמנים, לדוגמא, על ההסתדרות הציונית. והוא הדין במזרח. צאו וראו, האידישאיים עלתה בידם לעורר דעת-קהל במערב אירופה לטובת תנועתם, ואף בחוגי המתבוללים [30] והליברלים שאין אהבתם ליהודי המזרח ולשונם גדולה ביותר. אם הם כך – אנו על אחת כמה וכמה.

ואין לנו להעלים עין מהנעשה במחנה האורתודוקסיה בגולה. וכאן אני מוכרח לומר: ועידת בנות "אגודת ישראל" שנתכנסה לפני זמקמה בפולניה יש בה כדי לשמש לנו אות-תרועה, יש בה כדי להורותנו שהזנחנו הזנחה שלא תכופר אי-אלה חוגים ביהדות החיה חיי מסורת. אותה ועידה בה השתתפו הטובות ויודעות התורה שבבנות ישראל בפולניה, הועידה בה נשמעו הרבה יותר "דברי תורה" מברוב הועידות הציוניות שנתכנסו בשנים האחרונות, זו הועידה של בנות ישראל שהכריזה מלחמה בזכות הבחירה לנשים, משום שאין אשה ישראלית אלא אם, ואדם וחיה לא חטאו אלא משום שלא היתה להן אם, ואילו היו בנות "אגודת ישראל" בימי אדם וחיה לא היה החטא בא לעולם, זו הועידה פרצה פרץ ראשון בחומת היהדות המסורתית בגולה, וגם בחומת היהדות העברית. ועידה זו הכריזה שאידישקייט ואידיש היינו הך, שהמלחמה לטובתה של השפה היהודית פרושה הגנת זכויותיה של היהדות הדתית, שכל בתי-ישראל כשרה חייבה לדבר אידיש, ולא נחלקו המנהיגות בדבר אלא שהללו אמרו שבת-ישראל כשרה חייבה לדבר אידיש בשבת (את "לשון הקדש" גזלו משבת-קודש!) והללו דרשו שידובר אידיש כל ימות השבוע, כאילו בספר תורתם של אבות אבותיהן של בנות ישראל אלו נאמר: והגית באידיש יומם ולילה... חודש סיון – חודש קבלת התורה – קבעו בנות ישראל אלו כחודש תעמולה לאידישקייט ולאידיש. כל ימינו קבלנו על ש"זרים לנאווה [!] השיר והשר", על שאין האשה הישראלית יודעת תורה דיה, והרי הסתדרות זו המונה המון בנות-תורה ועברית, באה ומדירה עצמה מלשון דת ישראל, מלשון התורה והנביאים! אם עברית פסולה לבוא בקהל, משום שהיא שפת הציוניות השנואה על בנות ישראל אלו, מאימתי נתקדשה קדושת-דת ה"בונד", שפת שומרי הכפירה בישראל? אין דבר זה מוסיף כבוד לבנות-ישראל אלו – אלא הוא בא ללמדנו, שאין כח תנועתנו גדול במערכות ישראל שבתפוצות, שעלינו לעמוד על המשמר ולחפש דרכים חדשות. ולא עמדת על פרט זה אלא לשם דוגמא, עד כמה יש להתעמק בכל הנעשה מסביבנו בחיי ישראל בגולה! הגולה [31] חיה ומתפתחת, פושטת צורה ולובשת צורה – ואנו, מחנה החרדים לגורל תרבותנו? האומנם נגזרה עלינו גזרת איזולציה גמורה בחיי הגולה? האומנם יעברו חיי היהדות בגולה ממנו והלאה?

ה"בונד" והקרובים לו מצד זה, "בנות אגודת ישראל" מצד שני יכריזו עלינו מלחמה, ואנו נשליך יהבנו על ההסתדרות הציונית ונשא עינינו אל הרציון ולא נעמוד במערכות הגולה כיוצרים עבריים, פיוצרי חיי-יהדות עבריים?! – כלום אינכם רואים שאנו נעשים קרחים מכאן ומכאן, ללא המון ותנועת פועלים עברית בגולה, ללא עתיד עברי בגולה!?



ענף שני ויסודי בפעולתה של "ברית העברים" משמשת היצירה הרוחנית לכל סוגיה.

לרגל הרצאתי עלי לנגוע קצרות אף בענין זה. כש"ברית העברים" מתחילה עובדת במקצוע החנוך, הרי היא מוצאת לפניה רכוש רב, מסורת בת מספר שנים. מה שאין כן בספרות, במדע ובאמנות עברית בגולה. אין על ה"ברית" לעשות מעשי בראשית. מן ההכרח היא לה לדבר בשער עם אוהבים ואוהבים. אף כאן תהא מוכרחה להדגיש רעיון זה, שאין בבל הישראלית יכולה להשאר בלי תלמוד משלה, שכל זמן שישראל שרוי בבבל, כל זמן שיש בבל בישראל – על כרחו היא ישראל לומד לא רק תלמוד ירושלמי אלא גם תלמוד בבלי. שנים ירושלמי ואחד בבלי או אחד ירושלמי ושנים בבלי? שאלה זו אני מניח לאחרים לדון בה.<sup>24</sup>

[32] אל תניחו את בבל בלי תלמוד משלה! וכמות שאמרתי במקום אחר: "עדיין עולים מבבל לארץ ישראל ויורדים מארץ ישראל לבבל. אין עדיין לבבל תלמוד בבלי חדש ואין עדיין לארץ ישראל תלמוד משלה. שערי בבל פתוחים לא"י ושערי א"י לבבל. עוד תקוה נשקפת לנו לתלמוד בבלי ירושלמי. עדיין אפשר לקדם את פני הרעה שלא יגבה הר בין בבל החדשה – ואין בבל אחת לישראל בימינו – ובין א"י החדשה, שיוצרי הרוח הישראלי ומטפחיו בארץ ובגולה יהיו יוצרים איש במדינתו ובפנתו, מתוך הכרה של עם ולא מתוך גבהות-לב או שפליברכים של שבט, מתוך שתוף המקור והגורל לבבל הישראלית ולא"י."

תבוא ה"ברית" ותרגיל את ישראל שבגולה אצל רעיון זה, שספרות, מדע ואמנות עברית אינם מצוה התלויה בארץ, הם חובת הצבור העברי באשר הוא שם; הצבור העברי חייב בקיום היצירה הרוחנית, הוא לבדו ישא בעול ספרותנו, ואי אפשר להטיל את כלכלתה וטפוחה על מוס"ם ומול"ם, שלא יקיימוה – וכך מחייב טבע הדברים – אלא כשיש מתן שכר בצדה. דין אחד יהיה לספרות העברית וכו' ולכל שאר מוסדות הצבור וקנייניו, שהצבור חייב בכלכלתם. אין בור מתמלא מחולייתו. בית-חולים צבורי, לדוגמא, אינו חי על חשבון חוליו. והוא הדין ברוב מוסדותיו של הצבור. יבוא מכוון-תרבות עממי עליון ויקבל על עצמו את גדולה של היצירה העברית הרוחנית לכל סוגיה. אין שאלת הפצת הספר העברי צריכה לעמוד במרכז שאלותינו, אלא שאלת יצירתו של הספר, שאלה זו של יצירת התנאים והסביבה התרבותית המכשירים את הקרקע ליצירת הספר העברי, ליצירתו ולקבלתו.<sup>25</sup>

24 דברי אלה על התלמוד הבבלי כוונתם לרמוז על הפרספקטיבה ההיסטורית החדשה, שמתוכה ניתן לראות את שאלת גולה וארץ שלא כמקובל. וכמובן שאין לראות את התלמוד בבלי ב"פירוש" בלבד ולהוכיח מתוך כך את חוסר כח יצירתה של בבל הישראלית בעבר, וגם בהווה ובעתיד. יש להתעמק יותר במושג ה"פירוש" שבחיי רוח אומתנו. ואותו תלמוד בבלי אינו מלא כ"כ "הכנעה והתבטלות" כלפי המרכז הא"י, כדברי אחד ממבקרי רצון היצירה הישראלית של היהדות הבבלית בולט בתלמוד בבלי הרבה יותר מכפי שעמדו על כך עד כאן אצלנו. לא חסרו כמו"כ יוצרים ישראליים בבבל שראו את בבל כמרכז ישראלי לעצמו, כמרכז שוה במעלת קדושתו לארץ ישראל. ורבי נתן הוא [32] שאמר: כי מבבל תצא תורה ודבר ד' מנהר פקוד (ירושלמי, עיין על כך בפרוטרוט במאמרי "הלכה ומעשה", העולם תרצ"ב, גליונות מ"ז-נ). דברי אלה על התלמוד הבבלי עוררו כנראה את אחד הסופרים בא"י לצאת ולכלות את חמתו בתלמוד הבבלי, וכך נתעורר – לצערי הגדול, שהרי אני גרמתי שלא ברצוני ל"התקפה" זו על התלמוד – בעתונות הא"י וכוח ממושך על "ערכו" ו"חשיבותו" של התלמוד הבבלי... על הצורך וההכרח שישנו בחדוש הספרות העברית והיצירה המדעית בגולה עמדתי ארוכות במאמרי "לשם חדוש ספרותנו". ובין שאר הדברים נאמר שם: "קובלים" [33] הרבה על שאין הספר העברי הא"י נפוץ בארצות הגולה כראוי. התחילו מבקשים כמה מיני תרופות למכה זו. ואני אומר שכולן רפואות שוא. הן הספר העברי הא"י יתפשט בארצות הגולה, כשיהא בצדו ספר עברי חי משל יהדות הגולה, כשיהדות



[33] הגיעה השעה לשים קץ לעלבון הסופר העברי בגולה (ואף מצבו של הסופר תעברי בארץ ישראל אין בו, לצערנו, כדי להרחיב את הלב כלל וכלל, ובעניני ספרות אין באמתו של דבר כל יסוד להבדיל בין גולה וארץ). עלבון הסופר העברי הוא עלבון האומה כולה. אילו נתנה לי לשון חוצבת להבות – הייתי ממטיר אש וגפרית על ראשי עם ישראל, עם המרעיב סופריו וחכמיו. משוררים וסופרים העומדים ראשונה במלכות, בני "מזרח" בספרותנו, רעבים ללחם, מהם פונים עורף לספרותנו מתוך רעב אינאונים, מתוך יאוש ומרירות. באספת סופרים עבריים בברלין אמר אחד הסופרים: "אינני סופר עברי במאה אחוזים משום שאינני מחזר על הפתחים במאה אחוזים" ... הולך ונעשה סופר עברי שם נרדף למחזר על הפתחים! אמנים, חוקרים ומלומדים, זקנים וצעירים הולכים בטל ואינם יכולים לשמש את ספרותנו, כרצונם וכמדתם! אין יוצרים

זו תהא בגדר יוצרת ספרות ותרבות, כשהספר העברי לא היא מתנה משולחן גבוה, מתנת א"י ליהודי הגולה, אלא צורך הכרחי, שיהודי זה שבגולה עומד ומגשימו, שוקד על יצירתו ועל תקנתו. אם תהא ספרות ואמנות עברית בגולה – יהיו מרובים הקופצים על הספר העברי הא"י. מוליים ומוסיים שיבואו לעמוד בפרץ – לא יראו ברכה בעמלם. תשועת הספר העברי הא"י תבוא אך ורק ע"י חידוש היצירה הספרותית של יהודי הגולה. וזו אינה שאלה ספרותית-תרבותית בלבד, אלא גם שאלה מדינית ממדרגה ראשונה. "במאמרי 'שתי שאלות שהן אחת' הוספתי ואמרתי: 'ברור הדבר, שזקוקים אנו לטהור הלכות בגולה ובא"י. אל יעמדו בינינו המ'שפיעים' המרובים וכל 'הסוכנים' למיניהם, הנלחמים כביכול על כבודה של ארץ ישראל, הסבורים שארץ ישראל לא תבנה אלא מתוך חורבנה של הגולה התרבותית הלאומית. שמעתי מפי סופרים עבריים שחטא הוא להדפיס ספר עברי בגולה ... אומרים: יש מוליים בארץ ישראל המאשימים בעון 'בנידה' לאומית כל הבא ואומר: עת לתקוע יתד נאמנה לספרות העברית בגולה – גם לשם בצורה של ספרותנו בארץ. וודאי יש להשתחרר מאי-אלה 'אפיטרופטיות' לשם הדוק הקשרים בין הגולה התרבותית ובין ארץ ישראל המתחדשת."

[34] ושוב: "הגיעה השעה ליסד ברית הסופרים והקוראים העבריים בארצות הגולה, ברית הספרות העברית. ברית זו תבנה לנו ספרות עברית ומדע ישראל! כל סופר, איש-מדע, מורה, עסקן, סתם קורא, כל מוסד עברי, בית ספר וספרייה, יתנו את ידם לברית זו. וכך יונח היסוד להתחדשותה של התרבות העברית בגולה. בכחות משותפים יעלה בידי ברית זו במשך זמן קצר לבסס קיומו של ירחון עברי נאה לשמו וכו', ולפתוח בפעולה ספרותית ומדעית עברית מסודרת. ברית זו תחזיר את עטרת 'עם הספר' ליושנה, תעשה את ישראל שבגולה עם יוצר ספרות ומדע עבריים, תשמש מרכז לכתות היצירה של כל יהדות הגולה ... ולאחר שיעלה בידנו ליצור את 'כלי המבטא' על כרחנו נטפל בצורך שמורה ותקנתה של מלאכת המבטא גופה ... הספרות המתחדשת על כרחה תהא לובשת צורות חדשות. עליה יהיה להסתגל לדרישות השעה, לתביעותיו הספרותיות, התרבותיות, המדעיות והאמנותיות של הדור העברי החדש שקם בינתיים לספרותנו בגולה ... הזעזועים הכלכליים והחברתיים הכבירים, בהם מצויה היהדות ברוב ארצות הגולה, מן ההכרח שיטביעו את חותמם על היצירה הספרותית והמדעית הצריכה להתחדש." ומן הראוי היה ליחד את הדבור על הצורך הקיים בהכנסת ניצוצותיה של היצירה המדעית בתפוצות לתוך מסגרת תנועתנו העברית. סופרינו ועסקנינו מרבים ללגלג על "חכמת ישראל" של יהודי המערב, ואין הדין עמהם. ודאי שיש לברך על הנסיגות המרובים הנעשים במקצוע חקר מדעי היהדות בתפוצות, במערב-אירופה ובאמריקה. תנועה עברית כהלכתה תהא חייבה על כרחה להקדיש תשומת-[35] לב מרובה לערכים הגנוזים "בחכמת ישראל" זו שבתפוצות ולמוסדותיה השונים. אולם עתידה יהדות התפוצות ליצור הרבה גם במדעים הכלליים למקצועותיהם [!] השונים. וכאן גנוז אחד מתפקידיה הרוחניים והתרבותיים החשובים ביותר של התנועה המתחדשת שומה עליה להכניס את יוצרי ה"יהדות" וה"אנושיות" שבתפוצות לתוך ארבע אמותיהם של חיי ישראל העבריים, ואף על כך אי אפשר לי לעמוד כאן אלא דרך רמז בלבד.

במות לספרותנו ובאים וקובלים: אין פובליציסטים בישראל, אין מבקרים בישראל, אין חוקרים בעלי מקצוע בישראל ... תבן אין נותנים ליוצרינו – ולבנים דורשים מהם.

[34] אין אני בא לגמור את ההלל על יוצרינו המצויים במחננו. אולם ברור הדבר, שבכל אומה ולשון היו דואגים לתקנתם הרבה יותר מבישראל. הדת דואגת לכהניה, המדינה דואגת למציבי דלתיה ושומרי פתחה, והתרבות העברית לא תשאל לשלום יוצריה? ואין צבור נדון אלא על שם סופו, על שם הכח הגנוז בו ולא על שם הפעל שבו. אל תספרו באצבעותיכם את מתי מספר הסופרים היושבים בגולה, הסופרים החיים כיום – העלו על לבבכם את כחות היצירה החיים ב תפוצות ישראל בכח, באתכסיא, הכחות שימצאו את בטויים ויתגלו בפועל מחר ומחרתים – כשנדאג לכך בעוד מועד. האמנם גזירה נגזרה עלינו ואין להשיבה שמאיר הלוי לטריס ישיר עברית והיינריך היינה ישיר גרמנית? הנמושות לנו ולבנינו אחרינו, והנשרים נשלח למרחקי העולם ולמרחביו? והרי אנו נכספים לשנויה מצב מעיקרו. ישרינא לטריס שלעתיד לבוא גרמנית, ואם יקום בגולה היינה אלינא ימצא את הדרך לשירה העברית חתומה בפניו עלידי לטריס וחבריו ... מוטב וישיר לטריס שלעתיד לבוא גרמנית, והיינה שלעתיד לבוא עברית ...

[35] ביסוד בימות ספרותית, בהכרות פרסים לכל סוגי היצירה, בסדור לשכת-מודיעין מתוכת בין ספרותנו ובין ספרות העולם והספרות היהודית, בהכנסת יצירתנו העברית לתוך חיינו ולתוך חיי העולם הגדול – תגול "ברית העברים" את חרפת מחרפיה, תמצא תקון לצער יוצרינו ועלבונם מראשוני סופרי המשכילים עד אחרון הסופרים הצעירים שבדורנו!

וכשם שלא העמדתי את החנוך במרכז כנסיתנו – כך אין ברצוני לעשות כאן את שאלת היצירה הרוחנית שאלת-מרכז. ארגון "ברית העברים" קודם. תחלה יצירת תנועה חדשה, ואחר-כך בדיק הבית. אם תנועה זו תקום, נזכה לחנוך ולספרות, תבוא שמחה של יצירה למחננו. ואם לאו – מוטב ולא אפתח פה לשטן.



מבנה "ברית העברים" מרומו בדברי הקודמים: ארגון עברי של הגולה, כנוס הגולה העברית לכל שכבותיה וסוגיה, ארגון אוטונומי, בלתי-מפלגתי, מכנס את כל הרוצים בקיום עברי של ישראל בגולה. וכך תהא ה"ברית" עממית, חבריה הם אישים, מוסדות, הסתדרויות, ארגוני-נוער וכד'. החבר תורם תרומה שנתית בת 2 דולרים (הייתי מציע שלא להפחית מסכום זה). ואנו צריכים לכנס תחת דגלה של ה"ברית" במשך שלש שנים מאת אלף חברים.

אין אני רוצה לשמש רבה בר בחנה של הכנסיה. גוזמאות שנאה נפשי. אין אני נוקט סכום זה של מאת אלף, משום שהוא פחות ממאתים אלף ויותר על עשרת אלפים. למספר משוער זה אנו מגיעים על יסוד הסטטיסטיקה של תלמידי בתי-הספר בארצות הגולה, הוריהם, מוריהם, קרוביהם וכד', ומצד [36] שני משמש לנו כאן נקודת-אחיזה מספר השוקלים. אנו בטוחים, שבעבודה מסודרת ובסיסמאות חדשות שיש בהן ממש נתן לכנס לתוך "ברית העברים" מאת אלף איש מישראל. דבר זה תלוי בנו. (ימים רבים לפני ההצעה המנסרת עכשו בעולמנו על כנוס מיליון תורמים ל"קרן היסוד" הצעתי את הצעתי זו ולא מצאתי לה תומכים. ראו בה "בטלנות". הצעת ה"מיליון" המפורסמת מוכיחה שאין כאן "בטלנות" כשאנו באים ודורשים מאת אלף תורמים שנתיים ל"ברית העברים"). הכנסיה צריכה להכריז [ע] כאן כמו כן על יסוד

### קרן-תרבות עברית.

שהרבה דובר אצלנו עליה. הרשוני להעיר, שבימי המלחמה העולמית הנחתי יסוד לקרן תרבות עברית בליטא הפולנית, נתקיימה זו זמןמה ובכחה נוסדו בתי-הספר העממיים העבריים הראשונים בערים אחדות (ביאליסטוק וכו'). אלו היו ממשיכים לטפל בה אלה מעסקנינו שענין זה נמסר אחר-כך לידם – היתה קרן התרבות העברית חייה וקיימת, ולא היינו מצויים במצב מעליב ומדכא זה. קרן התרבות שעליה נכריז, צריכה לשמש בעיקרה לסדור עניני החנוך והיציאה בגולה. אם נזכה נקבל עזבונות, ניסד על ידה קרנות מיוחדות, שפירותיהן ישמשו לצרכי תרבות מסוימים, בגולה ובארץ כאחד. ואין כאן חשש התחרות בקרן-הקימת ובקרן-היסוד. והרי הדברים קל וחומר: אם מותר לקיים שתי קרנות לצורך אחד, לבנין ארץ ישראל, על אחת כמה וכמה שמותר לקיים קרן שלישית לצורך אחד ומיוחד במינו. ולשם הדגשת צרופנו הטבעי עם התרבות בארץ ישראל, הייתי מציע שנחליט פה אחד, שחלק מסוים מהכנסותיה של קרן התרבות בגולה ישמש לצרכי החנוך העברי בארץ ישראל. ההכרעה בענין זה תהא מסורה לקונגרס של "ברית העברים". נתן להגדיל את הכנסות ה"ברית" בכמה דרכים: קביעת קופסה לתרבות העברית בביתו של אדם מישראל, הוצאת בולים מיוחדים וכו'. בכל הפרטים הללו עתיד לטפל הועד המרכזי ל"ברית", יחוו את דעתם על כך המומחים לשאלות אלו.

[37] לפי שעה יהיו לה ל"ברית" ארבעה משרדים:

משרד לחנוך ("תרבות");

משרד לספרות, מדע ואמנות;

משרד לעניני קרן-התרבות;

משרד לשאלות הארגון והתעמולה.

הרשוני בטובכם להדגיש את גורל ערכו של המשרד האחרון, שהרי שלשת הראשונים אינם זקוקים להסברה מיוחדת. שאלת הארגון משמשת לנו שאלת-היסוד. במדה שיהא זה משוכלל, בה במדה תתבסס ה"ברית". ותשומת-לב מיוחדת יש להדגיש לשאלת התעמולה. אף כאן עלינו לברר לעצמנו: אנו נלחמים על קיומנו הרוחני, אנו דורשים מהישראלי לא רק את רכושו בלבד, אלא גם את נפשו. מלאכת-התעמולה אין לה ערך כלכלי, קבוץ ממון בלבד. תכריזו לישראל: הבט לברית ואל תפן ליצר, ליצר ההתבוללות והאדישות, ליצר הרע של הכליון הלאומי. זקוקים אנו למחנה נואמים מטיפים לרעיוננו, לעשרות סופרים ועסקנים שיפוצו בתפוצות ישראל, יפוצו בישראל ויחיו את הגולה, יפוצו בעיירות בהן נר-תורה עודו דולק. ידליקו נר-תורה במקום שכבר דעך. לא יצאו הללו ידי חובתם בהרצאה אחת, אלא ישבו זמן-מה עם המורים ועם ההורים בכל עיר ועיירה, יסבלו בסבלם ויחיו את חייהם, ילמדו אתם יחד קצת תורה, ובזו הדרך יעשו לנו נפשות. אל נתלה את כל תקוותינו בכרכים שבמזרח ובמערב (כמובן שאין להזניח אף את היחידים ובעלי היכולת), נלך אל העם, אל העיירה העברית בתפוצותינו. זה הדרך לארגון סניפי ה"ברית".

עובדי ה"ברית" הללו, מחכניהם, יפתרו מתוך עבודתם זו את השאלה הקשה ביותר, שאלת נושא החברה.

את מצעה העיוני של "ברית העברים" העמדנו על רעיון קיום ישראל בגולה כצבור יוצר ערכים ושותף ביצירת היהדות החדשה בארץ ישראל. ועדיין לא בררנו לעצמנו, נושא החברה החדשה מי הוא? לאיזו מעמד, לאיזו שכבה אנו מכוונים פנינו? בשעת ערבוביה ואנדרלמוסיה זו יכבד ביותר לפתור שאלה זו. כאמור, מתוך עבודתה ודרך עבודתה תמצא "ברית העברים" את נושאה החברתי. לפי שעה, בשעת מעבר, ישמש נושא החברה – מלבד הנוער

[38]

העברי – ברובו ובעקרו המעמד הבינוני. "פרולטריון" עברי בגולה אינו, אולם התפתחות הכלכלית של המעמד הבינוני יכולה להביא לידי כך שיהיה לנו בעתיד הקרוב אף המון עברי בגולה. ואין אני רוצה לנגוע בשאלה זו, אם טוב או רע הוא הדבר בבחינה מדינית-כלכלית כללית וישראלית. בכל פנים, ה"ברית" חייבה ליצור טפוס חדש של עובד עברי בגולה, עובד שימלא תפקידו זה לא דרך אגב, אלא כ"ד שעות ביממה. כאן גנוזה תעודה חשובה ורבת-ערך בכמה בחינות! אין אני מתכוון לומר, שיצירת מחנה עובדים עבריים בגולה משמשת תכלית בפני עצמה אין אני מתפלל לתקומת "ביוורוקרטיה" עברית. אפשר היה לומר: פקידים מיותרים, ועתים גם מסוכנים, במקום שישנם, פקידים נחוצים והכרחיים במקום שאינם. כמה תנועות מדיניות ותרבותיות היו עוברות מן העולם – אילו לא היו עומדים לה משמשי-תנועה, עובדי-אמת שידעו לשמור על נרה שלא ידעך. ואין מן הצורך להוסיף, שאין עובדים בלבד יוצרים תנועה תרבותית. אולם באין עובדים אין עבודה. וכאן אנו מוצאים גם פתרון לשאלת חוסר העבודה במחנה. כל העולם כולו כורע תחת סבלה של שאלת חוסר העבודה, ממלכות אדירות עושות ימים כלילות למצוא תקנה לכך. ואנו טומנים את ראשינו בחול, בשעה שגם בחלל עולמנו מנסרת שאלה זו, שאלת חוסר עבודה תרבותית ורוחנית לקומץ העובדים הקיים בפועל (בארץ ישראל ובגולה) ולהמון העובדים הקיים בכח. על מי תשליך התרבות העברית את יהבה? אם לא תדאג בעוד מועד לגידול מחנה עובדי תרבות בגולה, מחוץ לארבע אמותיו של בית-הספר – עובדי-תרבות שיעשו עבודתם זו קרדומם, ויחפרו בקרדומם מתוך חבה, אמונה והתמכרות, – יהא לקוי זה מורגש ביותר. ודוקא מי ששימש כל ימיו את הצבור שלא על מנת לקבל פרס – ואם גם ימיו אינם מרובים – מותר לו להדגיש ענין זה תוספת הדגשה.

תעמולה חדשה הבאה לכבוש את נפשו של הישראלי תיצור את הצבור העברי המאורגן בגולה. בכל קהלה ישראלית יהא סניף של "ברית העברים" [39] בכל גליל – ועד-גלילי, בכל ארץ – ועד-ארצי, ובראשם יעמוד ועד-מרכזי, והבמה העליונה ל"ברית העברים" ישמש הקונגרס העברי,

שיתכנס אחת לשלש שנים או כפי הצורך. הקונגרס העברי לא ישמש הפגנה בלבד, – אלא על כרחו יעשה מעין ועד ארבע ארצות, ועד כל ארצות הגולה לעיני תרבות, לשאלות קיומנו בגולה בכלל. בקונגרס נדון – בעמקות ובהרחבה – במצבנו הכלכלי, התרבותי, הספרותי והחנוכי בגולה ובארץ. יהיו בו לדוגמא: יום-מדע, יום-חנוך, יום-ספרות, יום-אמנות, יום-כלכלה ומדיניות ישראלית וכו'. הקונגרס העברי ישמש פרלמנט קבוע לישראליות העברית. ואין מן הצורך להוסיף אף מלה אחת על ערכו והשפעתו שלעתידי לבוא. כנסיתנו שתכריז על כנוס הקונגרס העברי הראשון (על יסוד בחירות-שקל התרבות וכיוצא בכך) תעשה מעשה רב. כרוז זה יסייע ליצירת "ברית העברים" ולבסוטה.

לא יכולתי לעמוד על כל השאלות שפתרוןן מוטל עלינו. הצמצמתי בראשי-פרקים לצורך המלאכה אשר לפנינו. והמלאכה מרובה מאד – אלי-נא יהיו הפועלים עצלים, כי הזמן דוחק, ואנו תלויים בזמן ובמקום. אין אנו משלים את נפשינו ואין אנו מהלכים בנצורות ונבצרות ממנו. אין בשר ודם יכול לברוא בנין עדי עד. אנו בזמן ובמקום ומעשינו בזמן ובמקום. דיינו אם נצא למלא את אשר הטיל עלינו זמננו ומקומנו.

ואל תאמרו: הנה בעלי-החלומות הלזה בא! הקושי שבדבר ידוע לכולנו. המכשולים האורבים לנו ידועים. לפני עור לא תתן מכשול – והפכת תן לו וילך, אף כשרואה אתה שמכשולים אורבים לדרכו. מה שהוא מחויב-ה-מציות לצורך קיומו של צבור עתיק ורבי-ימיו, יעשה על-ידי צבור זה, אם קל ואם קשה הוא לעשותו!

עומדים אנו בעיר בה נבטו נצני ספרותנו החדשה, שממנה יצאה גם תורת ההתבוללות, הריפורמה וכ' להלכה ולמעשה, עומדים ומנסים שוב לענוד עטרה לשכינת ישראל, ללשון בה בגדו דוד פרידלנדר וחבריו. מי מלל ומי פלל למשה מנדלסון ולנפתלי הירץ וויזל, לדורותיאה |40| שלגל ולבית פיט, לשלמה מימון ולהיינריך היינה, לאברהם גיגר ולכל הבאים אחריהם, שבשנת 1931 יעמדו אנשים מִישראל ולא כולם מבני מזרח־אירופה! – בבית עם עברי ברחוב קורפירסטנדס ויטכסו עצה לחדוש תרבות ישראל! כלום אין בכחו של רמז היסטורי זה לנצח את הספקנים המושבעים במחננו? האם אין מקום ל"ברית העברים"? כלום אין יהדות הגולה שבימינו מוציאה הרבה והרבה לשם שימר [!], תקרא: שימור] זכרונותיה, ודרך זכרונותיה מתכוונת היא לשמור על קיומה? היבצר מהיהדות העברית להעמיד מכוון עליון לשם קיום התרבות העברית, היצירה העברית בגולה. אם לא מתוך שפע של אמונה נצא לקראת מפעלנו מתוך יאוש, מתוך ההכרה שעוד מעט ואבדנו, מתוך הרגשה יסודית זו של פחד־אבדון וכליון. אף אימת־פחדים זו יש בה כדי ליצור.

פילוסופוס יוני אחז, שהשפיע השפעה מכריעה על המחשבה הישראלית בימי הבינים, זה שעמיד לשוב ולהשפיע על המחשבה העברית לכשתקום ותתחדש, אריסטו, אמר: כל מי שאינו מבין את התנועה, אינו מבין את הטבע. ואנו מוסיפים ואומרים: כל מי שאינו מבין את התנועה, אינו מבין את החיים, את המציאות, את ההתרחשות הנתונה בזמן ובמקום. תנועת רוח כבירה אנו חסרים, ולפיכך אנו נטולים מעל המציאות ומעל ההתרחשות העליונה! "ברית העברים" צריכה לשמש לנו ברית התנועה, ברית המחשבה והמפעל. ולואי ותפתח "ברית העברים" הנוסדת מגילה חדשה בתולדות קיומנו הישראלי בגולה.



### 3. The Existence of the Diaspora

*The Hebrew text is an excerpt from the essay “Kiyum ha-tefuzah. 14 perakim bi-she’elat Yisra’el she-be-Germanyah [The Existence of the Diaspora. 14 Chapters on the Jewish Question in Germany],” which appeared in: Moznayim 6 (1934), no. 2, 125–139; no. 3, 265–276; Moznayim 7 (1935), no. 6, 581–609, here 596–601. The title is provided by the editors. Orr Scharf translated the text into English.*

[...]

#### XII

If there is something new in the events of 1933 in Germany, it is certainly not to be found in the *need* to leave the Galut [exile]. Did German Jewry and world Jewry really need Hitler’s persecutions in order to know this? Were the numerous afflictions endured until 1933 not enough?

Leave the Galut, acquire a homeland – is this the *new* voice that rises from the ruins of our Diaspora in Germany?

To us, the followers of national Judaism, there certainly was no need for a *new confirmation* of the obligation [597] to build the Land of Israel, and to the multitudes of the German Diaspora those events did not prove anything.

Certainly, the slightest friction between the People of Israel and other nations in the Diaspora proves the grave state of Diaspora Jews, and there is no need for higher wisdom in order to offer them the “good advice” that they should leave the Galut ... Diaspora Jewry has no shortage of such “advisors” and “good advice.” Redemptive pathos, even when really worthy of the name, will not save it.

It is easy to live outside of Germany and to preach to its Jews: Leave the Galut! You must find a homeland! Do not enter into the ghetto! The Galut is your doom! A “national homeland” is what you lack, and so forth. They say that there is a single cause for the catastrophe of German Jewry and its name is “Galut.” If so, the solution is simple: Redemption from Galut. To what is this similar? To an artless doctor visiting a patient with terminal tuberculosis and exclaiming: “My friend, tuberculosis is the cause of your suffering; hence you must recover from it ...” “Galut,” “Diaspora” is the very *question* from which we cannot find an escape. And if it is made to be both the diagnosis and the remedy – this “solution” does not advance

us even one step ahead. Such talk of redemption may be employed by some people, that is, the “redeemers,” to calm their own turbulent minds and soothe their own aching hearts, but the “redeemed,” the yearners for redemption – what good, what blessing can they derive from this redemptive solace?

How does one redeem a large Jewish Diaspora, *how does one resolve* the question of its very existence, where does one move this 600,000-strong community of the [People of] Israel? That is the question. The gates of all countries are locked before them. (And in order to learn this bitter truth, we had no need to wait for the report of the High Commissioner for Refugees appointed by the League of Nations ... And perhaps it was neither justified nor just to spend so much Jewish money on this Christian American’s “discovery of America!”) And even the gates of the Land of Israel are open only to a scant few of them. Many delays hold back not only the *complete* exodus of German Jewry, but even the departure of its majority, *en masse*. And the delays – some derive from essence and necessity, and cannot be fixed. Some are matters of will and of habit, others depend on Germany, the country that is hurling out its Jews, while still others depend on the countries responsible for taking in the hurled. In short: a complex of subjective and objective factors – personal, social, economic, political, and the like – exist that cannot be disentangled or even be listed in a single breath.

Take a look at the issue of refugees and immigrants and you will see:

In the eighteen months that have elapsed since the [National Socialist] revolution broke out, only *10 percent* of the Jews in Germany (approximately 60,000 persons), around a third of whom are Jews from *Eastern* [Europe], left. A third of the members of this Diaspora who left Germany left not as *Jews*, but as sundry *leftists*; that is, their exodus was not a *Jewish* exodus, but a *general-political* one.

[598] Out of these sixty or sixty-five thousand emigrants, some 11,000 to 12,000 went to the Land of Israel, *half of them* Jews from Eastern [Europe], most of whom should not be counted among the “rooted” German Diaspora that was uprooted. The majority of the immigrants to the Land of Israel was wealthy. Thus, so far the Land of Israel has absorbed some *five to six thousand members* of the “real” German Diaspora (and only if they will stay forever!), constituting a twelfth of the entire German exodus of 1933–1934 (or approximately an eighth of the *Western* [European] Jewish emigration). That is, Hitler’s whip, unprecedented for many centuries of our nation’s history, has sent to the Land of Israel – a thriving country offering many opportunities in comparison to most European

countries – approximately a 104th part of the *entire* Diaspora (or slightly over 1 percent of the purely *Western* Diaspora). The Land of Israel has absorbed approximately 1 percent of the refugees who fled Hitler's regime in the years 1933–1934!

What is the meaning of this?

*The Jewish Diaspora in Germany remains in its place.*

And therefore I say: If the life of our German Diaspora in the year 1933 has something new to teach us, it concerns the question of the *Diaspora and of the Diasporic communities*.

The destruction of German Jewry not only engraved on our skies with letters of fire the eternal truth that the People of Israel has neither security nor stability in the Diaspora; it also underscored the actual truth that there is (at least, at this time) a natural limit to the Land of Israel's absorption capacity, and thus also to the possibility of solving the Jewish existential dilemma. Indirectly, and at times even openly, some Zionist leaders admit to this truth, or to a part thereof<sup>26</sup> – but they fail to draw from it the logical

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26 Many of the Jewish leaders in the Land of Israel have emphasized that it has neither the capacity to absorb the German Jewish masses nor an economical or social interest in the immigration of unskilled newcomers. Dr. A[rthur] Ruppin has emphasized (in his speech at the most recent Zionist Congress) the need to settle fifty thousand German Jews in America and in a few other member-states of the League of Nations. As is well known, those countries refuse to accept such a mass migration. B[erl] Katznelson announced on the eve of the most recent Zionist Congress: "It is beyond our powers, the powers of the Zionist movement as a whole, to absorb and take in flighty masses. Though we share the pain of the multitudes of Jews that are atrophying and dying in the world, and though we want to save each and every Jewish soul, *we are not yet able to do so ...*" (Berl Katznelson, Tazkir le-kongres 18 be-inyenei ha-sifrut ve-ha-tarbut ha-ivrit [Memorandum to the 18th Congress on the Matter of Hebrew Literature and Culture], in: Davar, 30 July 1930, 4 f., here 4). And the Zionist leaders know full well that the Jewish question is none other than the question of the "flighty masses," the question of 16 million members of those "flighty masses ...!" Dr. N[ahum] Goldmann has declared to the most recent [3rd (Preparatory) World] Jewish Conference in Geneva [1934]: "The Land of Israel would have value and dignity only when it shall be the representative of a *strong Jewry in the Galut, if it will be backed up by a nation of 16 million Jews (!)*. The Land of Israel, backed up by a destroyed and miserable Jewry in the Galut, would be a small Jewish island in an Arab ocean." Even the father of the partnership theory, the writer of these lines, did not "dare" to envision such an "ideal" of a "powerful," sixteen-million-strong Galut standing behind the Land of Israel.



and practical conclusions regarding the *future of the Jewish Diaspora*, and regarding the place of the Diasporas in the life of Jewry in the future.

The 1933 revolution has disclosed the secret of the *Diaspora's perseverance* (for the near future, at least), *the force of the existence of the Jewish Diaspora*, that which derives partially from the *inertia* of perseverance and partially from the ever-renewing desire of any Diasporic community for *perseverance* and *continuity* when forced to confront its fate.

[599] This we have learned: *No Jewish Diaspora is uprooted from its place completely, absolutely, deliberately, and within a time span commensurate with the concept of complete uprooting and dissolution – unless it is completely expelled. Each Jewish Diaspora, by and large, continues to persevere in its place – as long as the ruling state does not seal the last of its life-giving wells and does not completely uproot it with force.*

We have hinted here at a *basic law*, perhaps the first of the basic laws of life in the Diaspora, which is the law of *existence and perseverance* (and here, of course, is not the place to study its specifics and implications).<sup>27</sup>

Come and see: in recent generations not a single one of our Diasporic communities fell “from the highest attic to the lowest pit” [Bavli, Ḥagigah 5a] (without any exaggeration), lost its liberty (even if it was merely a formal civil liberty) to utter civil slavery as did the German Diaspora. Never have the numerous rights of a Diaspora been revoked overnight. Never has a Diaspora so massively immersed in the dominant cultural and

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27 The exodus from Egypt and the 1492 expulsion from Spain are not mere “episodes” in the annals of the Diaspora for they possess some of the outstanding manifestations of the basic principle in the life of the People of Israel. What was said regarding the Exodus? “And the Lord said unto Moses ... afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, *he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.*” [Exodus 11:1] (And Rashi adds: lets you go [means] finally; lets you go [means] completely: he shall drive all of you out [Berliner, Raschi, 119]). ... And the Egyptians *were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste ...* [Exodus, 12:33] And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not *leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry*, and they had not prepared for themselves any victual ...” [Ibid., 12:39] The Diasporas of Egypt and Spain vanished in the wake of a *complete expulsion*. The other Diasporas were not uprooted all at once; they changed character, while their demise, decline and degeneration took decades or even centuries. One Diaspora passed down its assets and inheritance to another. This phenomenon belongs to the *transformation of the Diasporas*, and is not of our concern here.

social life of a nation been “thrown out.” In recent generations, no community enjoying such material and spiritual stature became completely vulnerable overnight from a legal-civil and social-political perspective. Israel’s dignity and stability have not been disgraced as openly and legally (“öffentlich-rechtlich” ...) before the entire world as they were in 1933 by the government of one of the great powers that was still a member of the League of Nations!

This German Diaspora of 600,000 persons should have left its country of dwelling, in its entirety. And if it lacked the strength – or its will was insufficient – world Jewry should have staged an *exodus from Germany* in front of the entire world, for the sake of saving this community and for the sake of sanctifying the name of Israel!

All those trumpeting the coming of the messiah and telling German Jews to leave the Galut could not even dream of a *complete exodus from Germany* or of an exodus of most members of that Diaspora.



Moreover, the global economic and political reality, the state of world Jewry within it, the economic and political conditions that the Land of Israel faces at this time, indicate unanimously: |600| *The question of German Jewry will not – at least for now, in the coming years – be resolved anywhere else but in Germany itself.* In the same place in which this Diaspora suffered destruction, there it will dress its wounds, shed its former appearance and assume a new one – in Germany itself.

Hence, the solution to the problem of the German Diaspora will be mainly through *remaining in place*, and not through uprooting.

And this solution of remaining in place cannot be implemented based on a worldview nor on an approach of an aid society for refugees or for the weak nor on a philanthropic or some similar approach; rather, it should be based on a *Jewish, or national worldview*, which recognizes the two key phenomena in modern Jewish history – *uprooting and remaining in place* – and accepts the validity of both.

This solution of remaining in place of necessity must emerge out of deep engagement with the fate of the Diaspora and its basic principles, out of the aspiration to re-establish the Jewish nation, that is, building itself in the Land of Israel while maintaining its existence in the Diaspora, a nation whose face has two facets: that of the Land of Israel and that of the Diaspora. Our question will be solved by renewing the *face* of the People of Israel in its wholeness.

Neither the camp of [Max] Naumann nor (in contrast) that of Samson Raphael Hirsch, nor the “liberal” camp nor the camp of the “export” Zionists, who consider themselves to be “liquidators” of the Galut through the transferral of various financial and spiritual assets, are worthy of handling the solution to the question of the Diaspora in Germany nor should they be handling it. The *Jewish Zionists*, those Zionists who acknowledge the necessity of Jewish existence in the Diaspora based on a conception of unceasing creation, who would turn their faces both toward the building of a great and complete Land of Israel and also toward the Jewish millions in the Diaspora; those who would not see in Diaspora Jewry a mere resource for propaganda, export, liquidation, donations and the like; those who would not consider the Jewry of the Galut dead or useless and would forget some of their accepted principles and recognize the foundation of Jewish wholeness; those who would understand the Jewish reality in the Diaspora as it is and would include it as a *positive fixed factor* in the future course of the development of the Jewish people (despite the many different obstacles) – they are the ones worthy of handling the question of our Diaspora in Germany.

There is no room for two leaderships in the “resolution” of the question of our Diaspora in Germany! There should be a single leadership for the Land of Israel and for the Diaspora. Uprooting and remaining in place shall take place out of a genuine *spirit of partnership*, with a single hand – the same hand that uproots shall build.

Every Jewish Diaspora has a unique manifestation of Jewish existence, a unique Jewish experience. The rich experience that the [German] Diaspora has acquired throughout the centuries of its existence teaches – not only by way of uprooting, but also by way of remaining in place.

Our moral and Jewish sentiment should forbid us to fulfill our duty toward German Jewry with the oratory of “redemptive pathos.”

As regards redemption – let them go and be redeemed.

As regards the Land of Israel – let them immigrate there. Every person who comes to immigrate there should be admitted. They will immigrate in their thousands. All those whom the Land of Israel can absorb should go there. The building of the Land of Israel should benefit as much as possible from the 1933 revolution!

[601] Moreover, I dare say: Immigrants should be spared from scrutiny in a time of emergency. Both major and minor requirements related to “hakhsharah” [training (for Aliyah)] should not be enforced strictly. This is an unprecedented hour of danger – let the Land of Israel train those returning to its border. And what about the preparation of the heart? The

Land of Israel has always been a land of miracles. Not all of those who prepare for it are prepared. There are many who are completely assimilated, who belong to the throngs of the indifferent members of the German Diaspora, who will discover in the Land their Jewish soul, more successfully than will many of our finest Zionists. Who are we to decide if the soul of this Jew or that one had not stood at Mount Sinai?

Although many of the German immigrants, as is known, did not migrate to the Land of Israel but to a land of “prosperity,” and indeed, it is as if rather than ascend, they *descended* to the Land of Israel, their walking sticks in hand, the Wayfarer’s Prayer on their lips, waiting for the hour when the glory of their “Vaterland” might be restored – and to fly back home “on the wings of eagles” ... [cf. Exodus 19:4] It is obligatory to make every effort to try to root them in the Land of Israel. A great responsibility is placed upon the Jews of the Land of Israel to draw these forced proselytes back into the fold and to turn them into people of the Land. Let not the German Diaspora have many “former inhabitants of the Land of Israel,” “Germans of the Mosaic faith,” who will be to the ordinary German Jew the Urim ve-tummim [oracle stones, used to reveal the will of God] on all matters that concern the Land of Israel and modern Judaism. The magnitude of this danger is unfathomable!



Those who wish to go to the Land of Israel – should go to the Land of Israel.

Those who wish to go to the Diaspora – should go to the Diaspora.

To this Diaspora in Germany and to the other Jewish Diasporas it will be said: Regardless of whether you leave the Galut or stay there: lead a Jewish life, carry the yoke of Jewishness with the sadness and joy of creation, be partners in the building of the Land and in furthering life in the Diaspora.

We are neither saying “stay in exile all your days,” nor “build ye houses, and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them,” [Jeremiah 29:5] and not even “leave exile,” when they have no way out ... But rather: Be whomever you may be, and be Jewish!

“And I will multiply them, and they shall not be few” [Ibid., 30:19] – Jeremiah, the man of Anathoth, had instructed in a letter he sent from Jerusalem to the elders of the exiles and to the priests and prophets and all the people that Nebuchadnezzar [II] exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon.

And multiply in the Diaspora – as Jewish, as the bearers of the existence of the People of Israel and its destiny.

[...]

XII

אם יש חדוש בפרשת-גרמניה משנת תרצ"ג-דאי שאין למצאו בצורך היציאה מן הגלות. כלום לכך זקוקה היתה יהדות גרמניה ויהדות העולם לגרות-היטלר? כלום לא הספיקו לכך המון התלאות עד שנת תרצ"ג?

צאו מן הגלות, קנו מולדת – זהו הקול החדש העולה מתרבות תפוצתנו בגרמניה? לנו, לבני היהדות הלאומית, ודאי שלא היה צורך במופת חדש לחובת. [597] בנין א"י, ולבני המון התפוצה הגרמנית לא הוכיחו מאורעות אלו ולא כלום, כאמור לעיל. כמובן, כל התנגשות קלה שבקלות בין ישראל לעמים בתפוצות מוכיחה שיהודי התפוצות נתונים ברעה, ואין צורך בחכמה עליונה כדי להשיאם "עצה טובה" זו שיצאו מן הגלות ... "יועצים" ו"עצות טובות" לא יחסרו ליהדות התפוצות. פתוס של גאולה, אפילו כשהוא באמת ראוי לשם זה, לא יצילה.

נקל הוא לישב בחוץ-לגרמניה ולהטיף ליהודי גרמניה: צאו מן הגלות! עליכם למצוא מולדת! אל תכנסו אל הגיטו! הגלות היא אבדון לכם! "מולדת לאומית" אתם חסרים וכר. הללו אומרים: סבה אחת גרמה לאסונה של יהדות גרמניה ו"גלות" שמה. אם כך, הפתרון הוא פשוט: גאולה מן הגלות. משל למה הדבר דומה? לרופא הדיוט הבא לחולה שחפת שאין לו תקנה ואומר לו: ידידי, אין אתה סובל אלא בעטיה של שחפת זו, ולפיכך עליך להשתחרר ממנה ... גלות, תפוצה, – היא היא השאלה שאין אנו מוצאים מנוס ממנה, ואם עושים אותה בחינת דיאגנוזה ומוצא רפוי כאחד – אין "פתרון" זה מציעדנו קדימה אף צעד כל שהוא. בדברי גאולה מעין אלה יכולים בני-אדם, כלומר ה"גואלים", להרגיע את רוחם הסוער ולהשקיט את לבם הכואב. אולם ה"נגאלים", חוכי הגאולה – מה טובה, מה ברכה להם מנחמה זו של גאולה? ...

כיצד גואלים תפוצה יהודית להמוניה, אי זה הדרך פותרים את שאלת קיומם הממשית, לאן מעבירים ששים רבוא מישראל אלה? היא היא השאלה. שערי כל הארצות נעולים בפניהם. (וכדי להכיר באמת מרה זו לא היה לנו מן הצורך לצפות ל"דין וחשבון" של הנציב העליון לפליטי גרמניה מטעם חבר הלאומים ... ואולי לא היה מן הדין ומן היושר להוציא כל-כך הרבה מממונם של ישראל לצורך "גילוי-אמריקה" זה בידי אותו נוצרי אמריקני!) ואף שערי א"י אינם פתוחים אלא בפני מועט מן המועט מהם. רבים הם העכובים לא רק ליציאת-ישראל שלמה מגרמניה, אלא אף ליציאת רוב-רובה, ליציאה המונית. והעכובים – מהם בגדר טבע והכרח, שאין שום תקנה בפניהם, מהם בתחום הרצון וההרגל, מהם מותנים מצד גרמניה, הארץ המקיאה את יהודיה, ומהם תלויים בארצות שהוטל עליהן לקלוט מוקאים אלה. בקצרה: סבך גורמים סובייקטיביים ואובייקטיביים, אישיים, חברתיים, כלכליים, מדיניים וכ' – שאין להיתור ואין אף למנותו בנשימה אחת.

פתחו ספר-פליטים ועולים וראו:

במשך השנה וחצי שעברו מיום פרוץ המהפכה לא יצאו מהתפוצה שבגרמניה אלא כעשרה למאה (ששים אלף נפש בערך), וכשליש מהם – יהודי ארצות המזרח. כשליש

היוצאים מבני התפוצה לא יצאו את גרמניה כיהודים, אלא כבני המחנה השמאלי לכל סוגי, כלומר זו לא היתה יציאה יהודית, אלא יציאה מדינית-כללית. [598] מששים או ששים וחמשה אלף יוצאים אלה עלו לארץ כ"א – י"ב אלף, וחצים מיהודייהמזרח, שאת רובם אין למנות על התפוצה ה"מושרשת" בגרמניה ששורשה. רוב העולים לארץ היו בעלייהון. כלומר, א"י קלטה לפי שעה כחמשת-ששת אלפים נפש מהתפוצה ה"אמיתית" שבגרמניה (ולואי ותהא זו קליטת-עולם!), שהם החלק הי"ב מכל יציאת-גרמניה בשנת תרצ"ג ותרצ"ד (או החלק השמיני מיציאת יהודייהמערב, בערך). כלומר, שוטו של היטלר, שלא היה משלו בדברי ימי עמנו זה מאות בשנים, העלה לארץ-ישראל – ארץ פורחת ובעלת אפשרויות רבות ביחס לרוב הארצות באירופה – את החלק הק"ד בערך מהתפוצה בכללותה (או משהו יותר מחלקהמאה מהתפוצה המערבית הטהורה). א"י קלטה כאחד ממאה מחללי שלטון-היטלר בשנות תרצ"ג ותרצ"ד!

מה פרושו של החזיון?

תפוצת-ישראל בגרמניה במקומה עומדת.

ולפיכך אני אומר: אם יש בחיי תפוצתנו בגרמניה בשנת תרצ"ג מן החדוש, הרי לא בא אלא להורותנו הלכות בשאלת התפוצה והתפוצות.

חורבן יהדות גרמניה לא זה בלבד שקרת באותיות-אש על שמינו אמת-עולם זו, שאין בטחון ואין יציבות לישראל בתפוצות – אלא הבהיר גם אמת-שבמציאות זו, שקיים (לפחות, בימי דורנו) גבול שבטבע לכח קליטתה של א"י, ועלידי כך גם לאפשרות פתרונה של שאלת-היהודים הקיומית. בעקיפין ופרקים אף בדרך ישרה מודים כמה ממנהיגי הציונות באמת זו או בחלק ממנה<sup>28</sup> – אלא שאינם יוצאים להסיק ממנה את המסקנות ההגיוניות והמציאותיות על עתידה של התפוצה בישראל, על מקומן של התפוצות בחיי ישראל שלעתיד לבוא.

פרשת-היטלר, מהפכת-תרצ"ג – הורו את סוד התמדת התפוצה (לפחות, לעתיד הקרוב), את כח הקיום של התפוצה הישראלית, זה שחלקו נובע מתוך אינרציה של התמדה וחלקו מתוך רצון התמדה ורציפות ההולך ומתחדש בכל תפוצה כשמעמידים אותה בפני גורלה.

[599] לְמַדְנו: אין תפוצה ישראלית נעקרת ממקומה עקירה שלמה, עקירת-לחלוטין, עקירה מכוונת, ובשעור זמן ההולם את מושג

28 גם רבים מראשי היהדות בארץ הדגישו, שאין לא"י לא אפשרות-קליטה להמוני התפוצה שבגרמניה ולא ענין כלכלי או חברתי בעליה של עולים בלתי-מוכשרים. ד"ר א. רופין הבליט (בנאומו בקונגרס הציוני האחרון) את הצורך לישב חמשים אלף מיהודי גרמניה באמריקה ובכמה משאר הארצות הנמנות על חברה-הלאומים. כידוע, ארצות אלו מסרבות לקליטת-המונים זו. ב. כצנלסון הודיע ערב הקונגרס הציוני האחרון: "אין בכחנו, בכח הציונות כולה, לקלוט ולעכל בארץ המונים אוריים. עם כל רגש ההשתתפות בצערם של המוני היהודים הנמקים והגועים בעולם, עם כל הרצון להציל כל נפש מישראל, אין עדיין בידינו לעשות זאת..." (דבר ל' ביולי תרצ"ג). והרי המנהיגים הציונים יודעים יפה, ששאלת ישראל היא באמת שאלת ה"מונים האוריים", שאלת ט"ז מיליון בני "המונים אוריים"!... ד"ר נ. גולדמן צהיר לפני הועידה היהודית האחרונה בג'ניבה: "לארץ-ישראל יהיה ערך וכבוד רק אז, אם היא תהיה נציגת יהדות חזקה בגולה, אם מאחוריה יעמוד עם בן ששה-עשר מיליונים של יהודים (!) ארץ-ישראל, שמאחוריה תעמוד יהדות הרוסה ועלובה בגולה, תהיה אי יהודי קטן באוקינוס ערבי." "אידיאל" זה של גולה "חזקה" בת ט"ז מיליונים מאחוריה של א"י – לא "העז" לראות בדמינו אף בעל תורת-השופות, כותב הטורים האלה...

העקירה והבטול המוחלט – אלא אם כן היא "זוכה" לגרוש שלם, כל תפוצה מתפוצות ישראל מתמדת ברובה ובעיקרה במקומה – כל שעה שאין המדינה השלטת סותמת את אחרונות בארות־חיה ואינה עוקרת אותם עקירה ראויה לשמה בזרוע.

רמזנו כאן על חוק יסוד, ואולי הראשון לחוקי־היסוד בחיי התפוצות, והוא חוק־הקיום וההתמדה (וכמובן שלא כאן המקום לברור פרטי והחזיונות הכרוכים בו).<sup>29</sup> צאו וראו: לא היתה בדורות האחרונים תפוצה מתפוצותינו שנפלה מאיגרא רמא לבירא עמיקתא (בלי קורטוב של "מליצה"), שירדה מקרות (ואם גם לא היתה אלא חרות אזרחית כלפי חוץ) לעבדות אזרחית גמורה כזו התפוצה הגרמנית. אף פעם לא ניטלו מתפוצה זכויותיה המרובות בין לילה. אף פעם לא "הושלכה החוצה" תפוצה כל־כך מעורה בהמוניה בחיי התרבות והחברה השלטת. לא נעשתה – בדורות האחרונים – בן־לילה תפוצה בעלת־קומה בחומר וברוח מעין זו הפקר גמור בבחינה משפטית־אזרחית, חברתית־מדינית. זה מאות בשנים לא נתחללו כבוד ישראל ושיבת־דורותיו גלוי לעיני כל העולם ("öffentlich-rechtlich"...) כמות שנתחללו בשנת תרצ"ג מטעם שלטון אחת המדינות הגדולות, וכשעדיין נמנתה על חב־הלאומים!

הרי צריכים היו ששים רבוא אלה, בני התפוצה הגרמנית, לצאת את ארץ־מושבם בנעריהם ובזקניהם. ואם הם לא היה בכחם – או רצונם לא היה מספיק לכך – חייבה היתה יהדות העולם לערוך יציאת־גרמניה לעיני כל העולם, לשם הצלת התפוצה ולשם קדוש שם ישראל! כל התוקעים בשופרו של משיח והאומרים ליהודי גרמניה: צאו מן הגלות – לא היה בכחם אף להעלות על דעתם יציאת־גרמניה שלמה, או יציאת רוב־רובם של בני התפוצה.



ועוד: המציאות הכלכלית והמדינית בעולם, מצב היהדות בעולם זה, התנאים והמדיניים בהם נתונה ארץ־ישראל שבזמן הזה, כולם אומרים פה אחד:  
 [600] שאלת יהדות־גרמניה אין לה – לכל הפחות, לפי שעה, לשנים הבאות – פתרון אלא בגרמניה גופה. במקום שחרבה התפוצה, שם תחבש את פצעיה. תפשוט צורתה הקודמת ותלבש צורה חדשה – ובגרמניה גופה.  
 מכאן: פתרון תפוצת־גרמניה יהא בעקרו פתרון־הנחה, לא פתרון עקירה.

29 יציאת מצרים וגרוש ספרד אינן "אפיזודות" בדברי ימי התפוצות, אלא יש בהם מגלוייו המובהקים של אותו חוקי־היסוד בחיי ישראל. ביציאת מצרים מה נאמר? "ויאמר יהוה אל משה ... אחרי כן ישלח אתכם מזה כש לחו כלה גרש יגרש אתכם מזה (ורשי מוסיף: כלה – גמירא, כלה – כליל: כולכם ישלח) ... ותחוק מצרים על העם למהר לשלחם מן הארץ ... ויאפו את הבצק אשר הוציאו ממצרים עגת מצות כי לא חמץ כי גורשו ממצרים ולא יכלו להתמהמה וגם צדה לא עשו להם ... תפוצות מצרים ותפוצות ספרד נתבטלו בטול שלם דרך גרוש שלם. שאר התפוצות לא נעקרו עקירה בבת אחת, פשוט צורה ולבשו צורה. כליון, ירידתן ודלדולן נמשכו יובלות או מאות שנים. תפוצה אחת מסרה את רכוש וירושתה לתפוצה שניה. חזיון זה מקומו בתחום הסך־קספורמציה של התפוצות, ואין ענינו כאן.

ופתרון־הנחה זה אינו יכול להעשות מתוך "השקפת־עולם" או חוג־ראיה של חברת־עזרה לפליטים או למנושלים, לא מתוך השקפת־עולם פילנטרופית וכיוצא בה – אלא מתוך השקפת־עולם ישראלית או לאומית, זו שעמדה על שני החזיונות הראשיים בהיסטוריה הישראלית החדשה: העקירה וההנחה, וזו המודה בשניהם כאחד.

פתרון־הנחה זה מן ההכרח שיבוא מתוך חדירה עמוקה בגורל התפוצה וחוקיה היסודיים, מתוך השאיפה לקומם עם ישראלי, ההולך ונבנה בא"י ושומר את קיומו בתפוצות, עם כָּן פְּנִים של מים: פן – א"י ופן – התפוצות. פתרון שאלה זו מתוך חדוש פני ישראל בשלמותם.

לא מחנה־נוימן ולא מחנה שמשון רפאל הירש (להבדיל), לא מחנה ה"ליברלים" ולא ציונייה־אכספורט, הרואים עצמם כ"ליקבידטורים" של הגולה דרך כל מיני "טרנספֶּר" כספי ורוחני, ראויים וצריכים לטפל בפתרון שאלת התפוצה בגרמניה הציונים הישראליים, הציונים שידוד בחיוב קיום היהדות בתפוצות מתוך תפיסה של יצירה שאינה פוסקת, שפניהם יהיו מכוונים כלפי בנין א"י הגדולה והשלמה וכלפי חיי המיליונים מישראל בתפוצות כאחד, אלה שלא יראו ביהודייה־תפוצות רק חומר לתעמולה, חומר לאכספורט, חומר לליקבידציה, חומר לקבלת תרומות וכו', אלה שלא יראו את יהדות־הגולה כבר מינן או כאפס גמור, אלא שישכחו אִי־אלה פרקים ממשנתם המקובלת ויעמדו על יסוד הישראליות השלמה, שיבינו את המציאות הישראלית בתפוצות כמות שהיא ויכניסו אותה כגורם חיובי קבוע למהלך התפתחות ישראל לעתיד לבוא (על אף כל המכשולים בכמה וכמה בחינות) – הם הם שיהיו ראויים לטפל בשאלת תפוצתנו בגרמניה.

אין מקום לשתי רשויות ב"פתרון" שאלת תפוצתנו הגרמנית! רשות אחת תהא לא"י ולתפוצה גופה. מתוך רוח־שותפות אמתית תעשה עקירה והנחה זו ביד אחת. היד העוקרת תניח.

בכל תפוצה ישראלית חי גילוי מיוחד של קיום ישראל, נסיון ישראלי מיוחד. הנסיון הרב שרכשה תפוצה זו במשך מאות שנות קיומה יש ללמוד ממנה [!] – לא רק דרך עקירה, כִּי־אם גם דרך הנחה.

הרגשתנו המוסרית והישראלית בדין הוא שתאסור עלינו לצאת ידי חובתנו בדברי "פתוס של גאולה" כלפי ישראל שבגרמניה.

אשר לגאולה – ילך ויגאל.

אשר לא"י – יעלה. כל הבא לעלות – מעלים אותו. יעלו באלפיהם. כל אלה שא"י יכולה

לקולטם – יעלו. מכסימום התועלת לבנין א"י ממהפכת־תרצ"ג!

[601] יתר על כן, מעיז אני ואומר: אין בודקין לעליה בשעת חירום. אל יחמירו בסעיפים גדולים וקטנים של "הכשרה". שעת סכנה היא מאין כמוה – הניחו לה לא"י ותכשיר את השבים לגבולה. ואשר להכשרה שבלב? א"י ארץ נסים היא מאז ומעולם. לא כל המתכוון מוכן לה. יש רבים מהמתבוללים הגמורים, מהמון האדישים בבני התפוצה הגרמנית והם יגלו בארץ את נשמתם הישראלית, כאשר לא יגלוה הרבה מטובי ציונינו. מי אנו כי נכריע, נשמתו של פלוני או אלמוני מישראל לא עמדה על הר סיני?

אף־על־פי שרבים מעולי גרמניה עלו כידוע לא לא"י אלא לארץ "פרוספריטי", ובאמת כאילו לא עלו אלא ירדו לא"י, מקלם בידם, תפילת־הדרך על שפתותיהם ומצפים לשעת החזרת העטרה לישנה ב"פאטערלאנד" שלהם – ויעופו "על כנפי נשרים" הביתה... מן ההכרח הוא להשתדל בהשרשתם בא"י. חובה רבה מוטלת על יהדות א"י לקרב גִּרֵי־אריות אלה ולעשותם בני־הארץ. אל־נא ירבו בתפוצה שבגרמניה "מי שהיו ארץ־ישראליים" אלה, "גרמנים



בני דת משה" שימשו לסתם בני-התפוצה שבגרמניה בחינת אורים ותומים על א"י ועל היהדות החדשה. אין לשער עוצם הסכנה הזו!



אשר לארץ – לארץ.

ואשר לתפוצה – לתפוצה.

לתפוצה זו שבגרמניה ולשאר תפוצות ישראל יאמר: אם תצאו מן הגולה ואם תשבו בה – חיו חיי ישראל, שאו את עול-ישראל מתוך צער ושמחה של יצירה, היו בני-שותפות, שותפים בבנין הארץ ונושאי חיי התפוצות.

אין אנו אומרים לא "שבו בגולה כל ימיכם", לא "בנו בתים ושבנו ונטעו גנות ואכלו את פרין", ואף לא "צאו מן הגולה" ואין מוצא להם ... – אלא: היו את אשר תהיו, היו ישראליים! "ורבו שם ואל תמעטו" – הורה איש-ענתות בספר אשר שלח מירושלים אל יתר זקני הגולה ואל הכהנים ואל הנביאים ואל כל העם אשר הגלה נבוכדנאצר מירושלים בבלה. ורבו בתפוצה – כישראלים, כנושאי קיום-ישראל וגורל.

[...]

#### 4. Address to the Hebrew Youth League. Delivered at the Anglo-Jewish Youth Conference for Hebrew

*The following text, found in Rawidowicz's Nachlass, presents a speech, typewritten on the bilingual letterhead of the Hebrew Youth League (only reproduced once here), with a few Hebrew words inserted in a handwriting that was not Rawidowicz's. It contains corrections, deletions and additions by typewriter as well as by hand. Attached to it were a few half-sheets of paper containing a highly condensed version of the typescript in Rawidowicz's handwriting, which presumably represented the actual oral presentation. It is one of the few preserved English lectures of his from that period. According to the superscription on the typed version, the talk was delivered at the Anglo-Jewish Youth Conference for Hebrew, held at the First Avenue Hotel in London, on Sunday, 8 November 1936. The speech is published here for the first time. The title is provided by the editors.*

ברית הנער העברי

HEBREW YOUTH LEAGUE

Office Address:  
75 GREAT RUSSELL STREET,  
LONDON, W.C.1.

המזכירה: גב' ר. סרנה

[Secretary: Ms. R. Sarna]

All communication to the  
Hon. Secretary: Miss R. Sarna  
158 Amhurst Road, London, E.8.

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ANGLO-JEWISH YOUTH CONFERENCE FOR HEBREW (held at First Avenue Hotel on Sun. Nov. 8th. [1936])

I am sorry that I cannot continue my opening statement in Hebrew, but unfortunately [sic], to many of you my Hebrew would be "double-Dutch."

The first Anglo-Jewish Youth Conference for Hebrew, which I have the honor to open, is in our opinion an urgent necessity and long-overdue. If an apology is necessary, it is not because we have called this conference now at a time of political excitement, but rather because we have called it so late.

This conference must make the {youth of the} Jewish community of this country aware of our cultural problems. All the governments of

different types are paying the utmost attention to the problems of illiteracy, ignorance and lack of education among the masses; while we Jews, the {עם הספר}, the “Nation of the Book,” are patiently, too patiently, submissive to the fact that the overwhelming majority of our nation, if not around 90 %, are absolutely neglecting our national language and do not take any part at all in the modern revival of our ancient and ever-young language.

We are not active enough in the sphere of Jewish elementary education. You know how large is the percentage of the children of the London Jewish community who do not get any Jewish education. We do almost nothing in the sphere of acquainting the youth or the adult section of our community with the treasures of our culture.

Can we be satisfied with a young generation which at best which makes its only sacrifice to Jewish culture by reading a portion of the Law at their Bar Mitzvah and forgetting it a day after? How long can it go on this way? And even in the Youth organisations themselves, how little is done on the field of Hebrew.

It is not Hebrew that wants our help; it is we who want the help of Hebrew. Do not learn Hebrew and take part in Hebrew work for the sake of Hebrew, but for the sake of yourself. When a Jew learns Hebrew, he does no favor to Hebrew; he is only fulfilling an elementary duty to himself, to his Jewish personality. It is not Hebrew which needs a revival, it is the Jewish masses who need a cultural revival, a strong cultural basis to serve it in good and bad times. We are not concerned with the mere revival of our ancient [2] language; what presses on our minds is the present and the future of those 124 millions of Jews outside Palestine on the one hand, and {להבדיל} [vastly different], outside Russia on the other hand. Shall indifference, lethargy and apathy be allowed to go on paralysing the cultural life of these millions of Jews? Shall the assimilation to the left or to the right go on deceiving old and young in Israel? Shall these millions become a herd of persecuted individuals on the one hand and satisfied on the other without any national cultural character, sunk in colourless and meaningless spiritual decay. Or shall those millions of the Diaspora be helped to become a strong creative community which produces cultural values out of a sense of responsibility for the future of this dispersed Jewry and for the future of Jewry at large. Not the question of our language is at stake, the future of these 14 millions is at stake; this it is [sic] which should occupy the mind of all responsible forces in Jewry.

Far be it from me to under-rate difficulties facing the task of the Hebrew of the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora. But to give up this task is still more difficult, nay impossible. It is the reality of Jewish life, the

situation and status of Diaspora-Jewry that force upon them – and just now, now more than ever – to concentrate all their energy and power on shaḥping a new Jewish dynamic cultural policy, which is imperative for Jewry of our days, both young and old.

It is a great mistake on the part of our leading national organisations and parties to neglect to such a degree the cultural needs of our masses.

Many think: bread first; many say: safety first. But mistaken are those who think culture is a luxury. Neither is Hebrew literature a luxury. Culture is the real lasting safety. We agree with the primary necessity of {th}e political and economic reconstruction of Jewry, but we think that this work can never acheive [sic] what it stands for unless the spiritual and cultural forces in Jewry have been reconstructed too. Cultural tasks can never be postponed, as life itself cannot be postponed. At a time when efforts are being made – in this countries and in other Diaspora-countries – to create new metho[d]s and means for political defense against violent anti-Semitism and aggressive fascism, we say that defense ḥbegins at home! It is not enough to demonstrate in the streets, we must demionstrate to ourselves ### – and in facts – our will to |3| improving [sic] Jewish life and to build a strong cultural basis for our masses.

A race in armaments all over the world. The expected war, {לא אפתה} [I will not open my mouth to the Devil (cf. Bavli, Berakhot 19a)], will be in any case be disastrous for the Jewish masses in many countries. Our work cannot prevent anything in this field but what we can and must do, is to make these masses aware of their national culture, to make them culture-consc{ious}, so that even in periods of catastrophes they shall feel some soil under their feet. We must give the masses and youth of modern Jewry protective cultural weapons against the challenging forces, inside and outside of Jewry.

Our enemies are numerous: the economic conditions, the political unrest, the power of surrounding cultures. But among them a most dangerous and stub{b}orn enemy is within our own ranks: the apathy to cultural efforts, the acquiescence in the difficulties of our work in this field and as a result, a lack of initiative, of dynamic organisations, of preparedness for even small sacrifices, being happy and satisfied with setting up a committee and sub-committee which are in neo way fit for the big task. Jewish Youth should eventually see that assimilation has failed completely, not only in Germany. It is failing everywhere. Everywhere you find now {a} kind of lost paradise of assimilation. The 18th and 19th centuries wanted the Jews to assimilate as radically as possible. The post-war twentieth century forces Jews to segregate themselves as much as possible

from the surrounding nations. Some difference of nuance in this respect does not matter. There is not a time in Jewish history when the illusions of assimilation were more dangerous for us than now. We are not obliged to fight assimilation as such. This is too adequately done by the world outside but we are bound to open the eyes of our Youth and masses to the falsehoods of assimilationist ideology. I regret very much that our national bodies do so little, almost nothing, in this respect. Money collecting for the highest purpose is not enough. It is a great mistake that we do not fight the illusion of assimilation that is still powerful in our midst. We do not even make use of the chances offered to us by recent events. Instead of a well-planned offensive on the enemy within, we do nothing but apologise for our existence. The Hebrew movement is, in our opinion, a very active counterbalance to that belief in assimilation. It creates a possibility for the unassimilated or the rejected to live and to know the meaning of their existence.

[4] And we must stress again and again that without a strong Hebrew movement in the Diaspora, the position of the Hebrew language and culture, even in Palestine, is in great danger. In the Conference for Tarbut [culture] recently held in Tel-Aviv under the auspices of the Vaad Leumi [(Jewish) National Council], it was announced that about 20,000 Jewish men and women in Palestine from the עולים [immigrants] of recent years did not know Hebrew; either none at all or not sufficiently to be able to read the press and literature and to take part in the daily spiritual life of the ישוב [Yishuv]. It was possible until now to bring into Hebrew classes and circles only about 7,000 of these 120,000. Imagine the danger for the cultural and even the political and social life in Palestine if the mass emigration – and we all hope that this mass emigration will neither stop nor diminish – will bring in the next few years another 100 or 150 thousand emigrants without adequate culture training. I say CULTURAL TRAINING because a few Hebrew phrases or a bit of Hebrew speaking are in no way sufficient for a Jew, either as a citizen of the new Palestine or as a member of the Jewish Diaspora. Those who speak fluently שלום [shalom] are not able to build a new creative Jewish community either in Palestine or in the Diaspora. I believe in the power of Palestine which will in time force upon all the newcomers the supreme authority of Jewish or Hebrew culture. Palestine can for many reasons fight with a greater speed and more efficiency the עם הארץ [ignorant] than we in the Diaspora, surrounded as we are by strong and highly developed dominant languages and cultures. But the difficulties in the cultural field of the ישוב [Yishuv] should not be overlooked. The depressing crisis that

has befallen Hebrew literature in Palestine, the desperate outcries of our best Hebrew authors about the deplorable situation of Hebrew literature in Palestine, deserve[s] our greatest attention. We must not only help Hebrew literature and culture in Palestine in the present crisis but we must also relearn many of our axioms as regards our cultural policy in the Diaspora. First of all, we must have Jewish or Hebrew cultural policy in the Diaspora as an active one on a big scale, comprehending all spheres of Jewish [sic] individual and communal life.

In brief, the stronger Hebrew culture is in the Diaspora, the better are the prospects for a really sound and deeply rooted Jewish culture in Palestine, the more possible a real cultural cooperation between Jewry in Palestine and Jewry in the Diaspora. The more Hebrew and values of Jewish culture [5] Jews import to Palestine; the more Jewish culture will Palestine be able to export to the Diaspora. So the Hebrew movement has a twofold task: for the Diaspora itself and for Palestine. But you must never consider all the duties connected with Hebrew and cultural work as merely a kind of mental {הכשרה} [preparation] for Palestine. It is one principle and practically much much more. In the system of Jewish Law we have two kinds of {שאינן תלויות בארץ, התלויות בארץ, מצוות} [laws which apply only in the land of Israel and those that do not], those dependent on Palestine only, like {שמיטה} [sabbatical year], seventh year, and those which are not confined to Palestine. I have never found any authority for making Jewish culture a kind of duty confined to Palestine only. As human beings we are forced by our own nature to have so{m}e kind of culture – many do not realise it, very happy people indeed – and as members of the Jewish community we are forced by our own natures, although reluctantly by a complex of internal and external, political, economic and social conditions# and circumstances, to have a Jewish culture peculiar to ourselves. Nobody can escape this supreme necessity. We, for our part, do not even want to escape it. Hebrew culture is a duty imposed by all those forces on the Jewish nation as such and on every individual member of it, everywhere, anywhere, independent of this or other place[s]. It is easier to fulfill all the duties connected with Hebrew culture in Palestine, it is difficult here, in this country or in other countries of the Diaspora [sic]. But the more difficult it is the stronger and greater must be the sacrifices and efforts for this aim. Your own will for Hebrew culture, the active and creative part that you yourselves are willing to # play in the effort for that culture, to develop cultural activities, coloured by your own life, and which answer your needs without ignoring the facts of the world around you – that is what matters.

It is for this reason that we thought it necessary to invite the organised Jewish Youth and to ask them to take upon its shoulders the burden of the Hebrew movemnet [sic], as far as they themselves are concerned and to organise an active dynamic force for the furtherance of the aims of the Hebrew movemnet. I know [that the] Jewish Youth in this country like in others is not united. In spite of that, I believe in the possibility, and in fact, in the urgency, of the Hebrew Youth League whose creation is to be proclaimed at {t}his conference. I know culture is not a kind of abstraction, independent of political forces or economic conditions. Even the cultural [6] achievements of the individual are more dependent on the political-economic conditions than he himself is aware of. Jewish Youth is politically and economically not a unity. But all different sections of this youth have two great proud attribute{s} in common; they are young and they are Jews, driven by those forces which face youth and Judaism as such. If we all have much the same awareness about the urgency of reshaping the cultural face of our people, let us create a concrete basis of mutual understanding and cooperation in this field, regardless of the religious and political philosophy of the respective organisation or individual.

Therefore I consider it as the most important proposals of this conference those dealing with the establishment of a central council of the Hebrew Youth movement and of the introduction of the {מס תרבות} [cultural tax], a levy for all the activities of the Hebrew movement. For years a few friends of our movement and myself have been trying to explain the necessity of having a permanent and regular system for obtaining the necessary means without which all our work is condemned to fail, as it has failed hitherto, without which there is no use to all our meetings and conferences, in all our propaganda which is sometimes a good exercise for the {כח הדבור} [the power of speaking]. His {מזל-מלאכה} [oral art] which does not result in any concrete cultural actions, Hebrew speaking which is not backed or supplemented by Hebrew action or concrete Hebrew action which for Hebrew education and literature is even worse than empty {מליצה} [phrase]. Th{is} Hebrew movement which is blamed in some lofty circles as bourgeoisie or {בעלי בתיש} [well to do] is financially the poorest in modern Jewry. In many countries small local societies like {בקיור חולים} [visiting the sick], {לינת הצדק} [hostel for the poor], not to mention {חברה קדישה} [burial society], are far better off than this central movement for Jewish culture. No central body supports it financially. The joint [American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee], for instance, is helping very little Tarbut schools in some countries. Official Jewish communities and bo{d}ies do not side with our Hebre{w} movement, they have not yet

realised what this movement stands for. The Zionist organisation# as such has not been able till now to take over the full responsibility for the Hebrew work in the Diaspora, and it seems sure that the near future will not bring any radical# change in this official policy.

I think that some sympathy and support by individual Zionists for the Hebrew movement is not sufficient. The leading bodies of the Zionist movement which is {i}nsepara{b}#ly connected with the Hebrew Renaissance, must eventually declare officially to |7| the Zionist and Jewish world their programme for making possible the continued existence of those Hebrew schools where about 70,000 Jewish children get their Hebrew education, th#e schools w{h}ich are struggling so terribly to-day, and for strengthening and enlarging this work. Thes{e} r#representative bodies must make it clear, whether th{e}y themselves intend to take the full responsibility for the the [sic] future of the spiritual and cultural life of the millions of Jews, or they think that a ## special and central organisation should be burden{e}d with this responsibility. And last but not least: we must get from these bodies a clea{r} answer from where the means for all cultural work in the Diaspora shall come.

The Hebrew movement does not lack either a vision or a programme. The scheme of work that has been put before # this conference is a modest mi{n}imum programme. What {t}his movement lacks in the different countries is a strong organisation, a powerful hand, {יד החזקה}, an organisation of enthusiastic workers and idealistic supporters. The recent political development makes it even more imperative for the Hebrew movement to r{e}ly on itself in mobilising all forces aware of the necessity for systematic, creative cultural work, for the creation of an adequate central organising body and a permanent source of revenues to enable the movement to achieve its aims in the field of education, art, literature and press.

I am therefore glad that my proposal to impose a levy for culture which I first submitted to# the last annual Zionist Conference of Great Britain and Ireland, found a supporting echo in Palestine. The elementary necessity of this {מס תרבות} [cultural tax] ## for the conducting, reviving, and encouraging of all the cultural efforts in the diaspora Jwry Jewry is so obvious that it does not need any further justification. An end must be put to the usual hesitancy in this respect which is so terribly paralysing for all our work.

Before the last war, the Poles, Czechs and other national minorities, which afterwards got their political independence, organised popular levies, like "Kapeika" [Kopek] and others, for the defence [sic] of their



language and culture. The Jewish minorities all over the world, the sons of a people that had a high culture when Lithuanians or Czechs did not yet exist or were without {כתב ולשון} [alphabet and language], had not even the beginnings |8| beginnings of their national culture. This Jewish community should at least do wh{a}t all other national minorities did before the war and are doing now. Even Gt. [Great] Britain, the national language of which is spoken and learned by two thirds of the world-population, is organising English weeks abroad in Belgium and other countries. All# the other {b}ig and small states are conducting very active propaganda for their d{c}ulture. We Jews do not want to influence anybody culturally outside our own community, but our Jewish community must become aware of its Jewish= duties towards Jewish culture in general, and in particular o{t}owards Hebrew, which should bec{o}me the second language in the general life of the Diaspora Jewry, {לשון שניה של גלויות}, but the first in all spheres of our Jewish life.

We shall be very happy to see this conference passing this proposal and later to see the central council translating thi{e}s decision into facts. It does not ask much: 1/- [shilling] annually for young members till 18, 2/6 [2 shilling and 6 pence] from 18 and onwards; of course not till the age of 75. The older generation will have to sacrifice a few shillings more for the Hebrew movement. Apart from the material prospects which this offers, it will have a tremendous educational influence on the members of the Youth movement and subsequently a still stronger moral influence on the national movement at large. We intend that every J{ew}ish house in the Diaspora, every member of a Youth organisation shall shoulder himself the responsibility for the spiritual and cultural future f{o} of the millions of Jews in the Diaspora.

Palestine has at present about {1}20,000 Jewish men and women who are still outside the sphere of Jewish or Hebrew culture. But we in the Diaspora, apart from Russia, where the Jewis{e}{k}sia [sic; Jewish section of the Soviet Communist Party] has been violating the will of the Jew for Hebrew culture, we have about 14,000,000 Jews, of whom at least 90 % are indifferent or hostile to Je{w}ish or Hebrew culture. To find the right and effective way of winning these millions of Jews for our Jewish culture, of making them, {or} at least a part of them, active partners and supporters, this is the main task of the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora.

|9| It is a task worth{y} of the power of a state; surely then it is worth while for Jewish Youth.

It is a task for Jewish Youth, especially for those parts of it that have got rid of illusions offered from outside and are ready to do their duty to their

own people. Every young man and woman in this country should join the Hebrew Youth League, which celebrates now the day of its commencement.

We hope that this first Anglo-Jewish Youth Conference for Hebrew will lay the foundations for a solid and lasting work that will survive all the dark forces menacing Jewry almost all over the world. We all hope that the Hebrew Youth League will become the strongest and most powerful league of Jewish Youth for the revival of our people and its culture.

## 5. A People and Its Language

*The Hebrew text is a section from the regular series of brief reflections, “Shivrei devarim, 7–14” (Fragments, 7–14) which first appeared under the name Ish Boded (A Solitary Man) in: Mezudah 2 (1943), 160–176, here 168–170. The title is provided by the editors and corresponds to a subheading in the original. Orr Scharf translated the text into English.*

[...]

*The Welsh* are no less “British” than the Jews of England; that is, their citizenship in Great Britain is in no way inferior to that of the “Priests” of Israel and their attendants (the “Levites”), namely, the heads of Anglo-Jewry and the “Israelite” masses that they lead.

The Welsh are surrounded by the English on all sides. They dwell in Great Britain not surrounded by walls [cf. Ezekiel 38:11, Zechariah 2:8]. They have been marrying with the English, “assimilating” into them for centuries, and they also share the same “religion” with the English, yet *they have not relinquished their own language*. This nation preserves its language without the fear that it be suspected of “dual loyalty.” The English language is easier and more “convenient” than their national tongue. English literature is immeasurably richer than their own literature. And yet this nation wants its “difficult” – for the non-Welsh – language and its sparse literature. So it is for a nation in whose heart dwells a feelings of dignity – not a nation that chases after foreign rewards which amount to a denial of its own origins.

The Welsh have earned their reward. Loyalty to one’s origin is like a source of sustenance.\* It sustains and enlivens – and also bears fruit. A few days ago the English Parliament revoked a parliamentary act approved by [King] Henry VIII [Tudor] in 1536 that prohibited the use of the Welsh language in courtrooms – a very important *historical-political event*, and not for the Welsh alone.

Home Secretary Herbert Morrison, who proposed the revocation of this act before the House of Commons on 14 October 1942, said: If the edict of Henry VIII of 1536 preventing Welsh speakers from having any

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\* Note by translator: Rawidowicz here uses a double entendre, employing the Hebrew term “keren kayemet,” which is the name of the Jewish National Fund, but here connotes “source of sustenance.”

manner of office in England had been observed, England would never have permitted [David] Lloyd George to rise to power and rescue Great Britain. "I for one," he added, "am all in favor of that national spirit which is characteristic of Wales, and, let me add for greater security, is characteristic of Scotland as well; a national spirit which takes pride in the traditions, the history and the customs of the country; takes pride, if one may say it, in the differences in the way of life and outlook and temperament of the people of one part of this Kingdom from another; but which, despite its pride in its national characteristics and its national tradition, has no spirit of spite or enmity towards the others of this Kingdom."\*

He proposes the bill "at a time when nationalism of a spiteful, destructive and disastrous order is spreading misery and destruction over the Continent of Europe and, so far as it can, elsewhere." And he hopes that "the House of Commons will not scorn us but will welcome our action. Perhaps it distinguishes the mind and temper of this great country from the mind and temper of Nazi Germany and its associates at present." The English Parliament approved this bill that was signed by four hundred thousand Welsh. Several of the Welsh MPs [members of parliament] opened their speeches in Parliament in the Welsh language. (A Jew who were to speak Hebrew at a Jewish gathering would be seen by his people as a complete foreigner.) One detail does bear some resemblance to the Jewish institutions: *one* Welsh Member of Parliament rose and spoke against this "autonomy" for the Welsh language! ... But he was outnumbered by the 36 Welshmen in Parliament (whereas in our camp, with respect to acknowledging the Hebrew language, unfortunately the ratio is *reversed*: one member is faithful to our national language as opposed to 36 times 36 members who [169] betray it and undermine its existence and revival). Those 36 Welshmen and all the other non-Welsh representatives upheld and affirmed that the language of the Welsh People should be revived, including in the courtroom.

*David Lloyd George*, who strongly supported Herbert Morrison, could not attend the event at which his mother tongue regained its freedom, because he was ill that day. This was one of the greatest days in the eventful and glorious life of this elderly man. This Welshman, who rescued the

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\* Actually Rawidowicz is quoting from the speech of Sir Henry Morris-Jones. See House of Commons, Welsh Courts Bill, 14 October 1942, column 1665 <<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1942-10-14/debates/2c3fecfe-354a-489c-afa2-bb6f2c8009c4/WelshCourtsBill>> (20 May 2020). Only the second quote is from Herbert Morrison. See *ibid.*, column 1664.

British Empire and its allies in the First World War of this century, was a native Welsh speaker. His sons did not know English in their childhood (and I have heard from several enlightened Welshmen, including British Members of Parliament, that they began learning English when they were ten); indeed, the spoken language at his home was Welsh. When his wife passed away two years ago, not a *single* English word was heard at her funeral service at the cemetery. The Prime Minister of Great Britain at its great hour of emergency – a man who remained loyal to the Balfour Declaration and to the People of Israel – remained loyal all his life to the language of his forefathers and to the language of his sons, which is his own language. It never entered his mind – nor the minds of any others – that his loyalty to his national language undermines his loyalty to Great Britain and everything associated with it.

And the English Parliament, so it seems, did not lament having to deal with this “trifle”: the use of a national language other than English in its courtrooms. The hour is difficult. The fate of Great Britain and its allies is hanging in the balance (happily, though, the scale of victory has begun to rise in recent days). The needs of Great Britain are truly many, urgent and “burning;” the existence of the nation, the state and the empire depends on realizing them. And yet, the legislative representatives of Great Britain have found a moment of “leisure” to address this question. They saw the need and duty at this hour to give back to the Welsh the right to use their own language.

And the Jewish people? What about in our own institutions, which are distant from the idea of a “religious community,” and which declare that [the People of] Israel is a *nation*, a living and vibrant *nation*? Any functionary or son of a functionary who is appointed to a “political” committee in order to speak on behalf of some “political faction,” would he ever, in the course of the seventy years of his life, find a single “spare” moment to address the question of language and culture, which is a matter of life or death for us, indeed, far more so than for the Welsh who dwell in their own land?! We have “succeeded” in passing on all matters of language and culture to a handful of idlers, men of leisure, who should be left to their own devices. These unfortunate ones who were not given straw – and thus they do not have the ability to make bricks. They become weaker with time because of impotence and inaction. Their dreams are ephemeral and fleeting. At the same time, the “religious community” holds its head higher and higher among the Jews.

The Welsh do not have even one Welsh author of their own who reaches the ankles of the least of the authors of the Bible, the Mishnah [the

first compendium of the Oral Law], the Midrash [Biblical exegesis] and the like. They do not have a Yehuda Halevi nor an [Solomon ben Jehuda] Ibn Gabirol, no [Chaim Nahman] Bialik or a Mendele Moykher-Sforim of their own. And we ...

We are more blameworthy than any other nation. We are more full of shame than any other people. How blameworthy, how shameful!

We have changed our skin for the sake of reward – and just look at the “reward” that the Jewry of the “religious community” in Germany, France and other countries received. We are satisfied with the minimum of what the nations call “religion.” And the Hebrew language is not holy, but *ostracized* ...

Our nation is constantly being “educated,” here in this Diaspora and elsewhere – to the point that its language [170] and national culture have deteriorated to the level of the least cultured nations. *Is there a people as illiterate* as the People of Israel, the people of the book?

A nation without literature and language? How wretched! It shall “not be reckoned among the nations of the world.” [Numbers 23:9]

And a nation with literature and language that has neither the desire or will for its own language or literature is seventy-seven times more wretched.

[...]

## עם ולשון לו

[...]

הוולשים אינם "בריטיים" פחות מיהודי אנגליה; כלומר, אין אזרחותם בבריטניה הגדולה פחותה מזו של "כהני" ישראל ו"לוויי", ראשי אנגלודז'ורי וההמון ה"ישראלי" המונהג על ידם. הוולשים מוקפים אנגלים מכל עבר. פרזות הם יושבים בבריטניה הגדולה. מתחתנים באנגלים, "מתבוללים" בהם זה מאות בשנים, ולהם גם "רילידיון" משותפת עם האנגלים, – ואף על פי כן לא וותרו על לשונם. אין אותו עם חושש לשמור על לשונו – שמא יחשדוהו ב"דרלואליות". הלשון האנגלית קלה ו"נוחה" מלשונם הלאומית. ספרות האנגלים עשירה לאין ערך מספרותם. ועם זה רוצה בלשונו ה"קשה" – לשאינו וולשי – ובספרותו הדלה. ככה יעשה עם שרגש-כבוד לאומי חי בלבו – ולא עם של רודפי פרס בחוץ, מתכחשים למקור מחצבתם. הוולשים באו על שכרם. נאמנות למקור – בחינת קרן קיימת היא. מקיימת זו ומחיה – וגם נושאה פרי. לפני ימים מועטים בטל בית-הנבחרים האנגלי את גזירתו של הנרי השמיני שגזר בשנת 1536 על השמוש בלשון-וולש בבתי-הדין – מאורע היסטורי-מדיני רב חשיבות, ולא לוולשים לבדם.

הרבט מוריסון, המיניסטר לענייני פנים, שהציע אותו חוק-ביטול לפני בית הנבחרים האנגלי בארבעה עשר באוקטובר לשנת 1942 אמר: אילו נתקיימה גזירתו של הנרי השמיני משנת 1536 שדובר-וולש לא יהא רשאי לקבל שום משימות באנגליה – לא היתה אנגליה מרשה לעולם לללוד ג'ורג' לעלות לשלטון ולהציל את בריטניה הגדולה. "אני כולי – הוסיף ואמר – מצדד ברוח הלאומיות השוררת בוויילס ובסקוטלנדיה, המתגאה ביחודים בדרכי-חיהם ובאפיים של בני המדינה, ואין עמה שום הרגשה של כעס או איבה." הוא מציע אותו חוק "בשעה שהלאומיות של משטר טרוף, קנטרן ומהרס, מביא שואה וכליון ליבשת אירופה וגם עד כמה שאפשר בחוץ לה"; והוא מקווה "שבית הנבחרים לא יבוז – או ילעג – לנו על הצעה זו – אלא יקבלנה בברכה. ואולי זו מבדילה בין רוחה ואפיה של ארץ-גדולה זו ובין רוחה ואפיה של גרמניה הנאצית." בית הנבחרים האנגלי קבל הצעת-חוק זו שנחתמה בידי ארבע מאות אלף וולשים. כמה מהצירים הוולשים פתחו את נאומיהם בבית הנבחרים בלשון-וולש (עברי כי ידבר עברית באספה יהודית – והיה בעיני בני עמו כאדם שאינו מן הישוב). פרט אחד יש בו משום דמיון למערכות ישראל: ציר וולשי אחד קם והתנגד ל"אוטונומיה" זו ללשון הוולשים! ... אולם בטל זה בל"ו הוולשים שבבית הנבחרים (במערכותינו אנו, בבחינת ההודאה בלשונו העברית, היחס לצערנו, הוא הפוך: אחד נאמן ללשונו הלאומית כנגד ל"ו פי ל"ו |169| כופרים בה וחותרים תחת קיומה והחייאתה). הללו וכל שאר הצירים שאינם-וולשים קיימו ואשרו שלשון בני ויילס תקום לתחיה גם בבתי-הדין.

דוד ללוד ג'ורג' שעמד לימינו של הרבט מוריסון – לא יכול להשתתף במעמד החזרת החירות ללשונו, משום שחלה אותו יום, והוא אחד הימים הגדולים בחייו של ישיש זה, רבי המעש והתפארה. בן-וויילס זה שהציל את הקיסרות הבריטית ובעלי-בריתה במלחמת-העולם הראשונה במאה זו – שפת-אמו היתה וולש. בניו לא ידעו אנגלית בשנות ילדותם, (ושמעתי מפי כמה וולשים משכילים, וביניהם גם צירי בית הנבחרים האנגלי, שהתחילו לומדים אנגלית בשנה העשירית לחיהם), לשון הדבור בביתו – וולש. כשנפטרה אשתו לפני שנתיים – לא נשמעה אף מלה אנגלית אחת בטכס-השכבתה בבית הקברות. ראש ממשלת בריטניה הגדולה בשעת-החירום הגדולה – השומר אמונים להצרת בלפור ולישראל – שמר כל ימיו אמונים ללשון

אבותיו ולשון בניו, והיא לשונו. לא עלתה מימיו על דעתו – ולא על דעת זולתו – שנאמנותו ללשון עמו מטפחת על נאמנותו לבריטניה הגדולה וכל הכרוך בה. ובית הנבחרים האנגלי, כמרומז, לא רגן על שהטריחוהו בדבר "קל-ערך" זה: שמוש לשון לאומית בבתי-הדין. השעה קשה. גורל בריטניה הגדולה והנלוים עליה – במשקולת (ולשמחתנו, כף הנצחון התחילה עולה בימים האחרונים). צרכי בריטניה הגדולה מרובים, דחופים ו"בוערים" באמת – בסיפוקם תלוי קיומן של האומה, המדינה והקיסרות כאחד – ושלוחי בריטניה הגדולה מצאו להם "פנאי" להזקק לאותה שאלה, ראו צורך וחובה לעצמם להחזיר בשעה זו לווילשים את זכות השמוש בלשונם.

ובישראל? ובמערכותינו הרחוקות מתפיסת ה"עדה הדתית", המכריזות כי ישראל ע עם הוא, ע עם חי וקיים? כל עסקן או בר-עסקן כי יזכה להמנות על איזו ועדה "מדינית" – או "פוליטית" בלשונם – לדבר בשמה של איזו "מפלגה מדינית" שהיא – כלום ימצא לו במשך שבעים שנות חייו אף רגע "פנוי" אחד להזקק לשאלת הלשון והתרבות, שהיא לנו שאלת-חיים ממש, הרבה יותר מאשר לווילשים היושבים על אדמתם?! אנו "הצלחנו" למסור את כל עניני הלשון והתרבות לקומץ "בטלנים": יגלגלו בהם כרצונם. העלובים הללו שתבן אין ניתן להם – ולבנים אין בכחם לעשות. והם מתנוונים והולכים, מחוסר-אונים ומבטלה, חלומותיהם נדפים – וה"עדה הדתית" הולכת ונושאת ראש בישראל.

אין לווילשים הללו אף סופר-זולש אחד משלהם המגיע לקרסוליהם של הקטנים בסופרי התנ"ך, המשנה, המדרש וכו'. אין להם לא יהודה הלוי ולא אבן גבירול, לא ביאליק ולא מנדלי מוכר ספרים משלהם. ואנו ...

אשמנו מכל עם. בושנו מכל גוי. כמה אשמנו, כמה בושנו. הופכים אנו עורנו על מנת לקבל פרס – וראה "פרס" זה שקבלה יהדותה של ה"עדה הדתית" בגרמניה ובצרפת וכו' וכו'. אנו מסתפקים במינימום של "רילידיזן" בלע"ז. והלשון העברית – לא קודש, חרם היא ...

"מחנכים" ו"מחנכים" את עצמנו בתפוצה זו ובזולתה – עד שמבחינת לשון [170] ותרבות לאומית ירדנו למדרגת העמים דליה-תרבות ביותר. מי כעם ישראל – עם-הספר – גוי אנ-אלפא ביתי בארץ?

עם שאין לו כתב ולשון – מה עלוב הוא. בעמים לא יתחשב. ועם שיש לו כתב ולשון, ואין בו כח ורצון לכתב ולשון משלו – עלוב הוא שבעים ושבעה.

[...]



## 6. I and Not My Messenger

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name Simon Rawidowicz and with the note "Lecturer in Hebrew at Leeds University" in: Beth ha-midrash (Synagogue Journal of the Beth Hamidrash Hagadol, Leeds) 1 (1945), no. 3, 12–14, and 23–26. It was first published with the same title in: The Jewish Academy. Organ of the Inter-University Jewish Federation of Great Britain and Ireland (London) 13 (1945), no. 2, 22–27, with the following note added: "The author's views on the Jewish problem, which have aroused lively discussion in both Zionist and non-Zionist circles, have recently been further developed in his contributions to the volumes of the "Metsudah" [Fortress], issued by the Ararat Publishing Society, London. The present essay, written originally in Hebrew in 1936 has been translated into Yiddish, German and Italian. The present translation [from German] into English is by William Margulies." But no translation into Yiddish could be found. A shortened version entitled "I and Not My Messenger" appeared in: The Jewish Spectator 10 (1945), no. 12, 23–25. A German translation of the Hebrew text called "'Ich und nicht der Schaliach!' Zur Theorie der Schutafut" was published under the name Dr. Simon Rawidowicz in: Jüdische Rundschau, 26 March 1937, 9f. A translation into Italian entitled "Ani ve-lò ha-shaliach" appeared under the name S. Rawidowicz in: La Rassegna Mensile di Israel 11 (1937), no. 8/9, 359–367. The Hebrew text "Al ha-sheliḥut" (Emissaries) was published under the name Dr. Simon Rawidowicz in: Ha-Olam, 23 April 1937, 244–245, and *ibid.*, 28 May 1937, 383.*

"I shall pass through the land of Egypt, I and no angel ..., and on all the gods of Egypt I shall execute judgment, I and no messenger ..."

ועברתי בארץ מצרים בלילה היה אני ולא מלאך ... ובכל אלהי מצרים אעשה שפטים אני ולא השליח  
(Haggadah)

I

It is related in the Talmud, in connection with the contrasts drawn between the two great Tannaïtes Hillel and Shammai, how a non-Jew once approached Shammai and expressed his willingness to become a

convert to the Jewish faith on the condition that he was taught the whole of the *Torah* while standing on one leg. When Shammai became angry and pushed him away, the non-Jew went to Hillel and made the same request. Hillel thereupon said to him: “Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you. That is the whole *Torah*; the rest is merely amplification of this. Now, go and learn it.” [Bavli, Shabbat 31a]

If a non-Jew in his search for the most fundamental principle of the *Torah*, had gone astray and chanced upon me – for who am I that I should dare to reduce the *Torah* to one principle? – and if he had asked me to teach him the whole *Torah* “on one leg,” I would have said to him – though much averse to any missionary activities and with all deference to Hillel:

“*Ani ve-lo ha-shaliah*, I myself and no messenger – that is one of the most basic principles of the *Torah*. The rest is all amplification; come we shall learn it.”

Ever since Jewry began to be conscious of its existence, it has at all times most strongly rejected the idea of the messenger, the deputy, the conception of *Shelichut* [messengers], which has assumed so many forms in the history of mankind.

Whether or not the Jew has seen God “face to face,” he yet always adopted a “face-to-face” attitude in his relationship to his God. The high degree of close and direct contact with his God that the Jew has attained or striven after is one of the most exceptional phenomena in the sphere of relations between God and man. Not the Prince of Prophets alone received the *Torah* from God, but all Israel was present; though only at the foot of Mount Sinai, yet they *all* – as the *Torah* reports – heard the thunder, saw the flames, etc. (Indeed, on this fact that it was not only a mere “message” but a *collective reception*, the best of the Jewish medieval thinkers base the doctrine of the absolute and eternal validity of the *Torah*.) And according to tradition, there were present at the ceremony at Mount Sinai not only that generation which had gone forth from Egypt, but all the souls of Israel that would at any time assume bodily shape in this world. The souls of all the innumerable Jewish centuries that were to follow – ours and those thousands that may still [13] come – would not and could not be represented by any messenger; no *Shaliach* [messenger], no deputy, was to receive the *Torah* for them. They themselves had to be present, themselves directly to close the covenant with God and his Law, themselves directly to be obligated by the highest divine authority.

Where one does come upon *Shelichut* in Israel, it is wholly concrete, distinctly outlined, and refers to something definite. The angels, the messengers, are created for a certain hour and to meet a definite requirement;

no angel can perform more than one “mission.” And every “mission” imposed by God upon human beings is to be similarly understood: concrete, definite, decided as regards time and purpose. Even the greatest of all the prophets of Israel had quite a definite mission in Egypt, defined as to time and content: he was the man with the mission to deliver the slaves of Pithom and Ramses, to negotiate with Pharaoh. But when the night of decision arrived, the night of the exodus from Egypt – there was no *Shaliach*. God himself went into action. “I shall pass through the land of Egypt ..., I shall execute judgment ... [Exodus 12:12], I and no angel ..., I and no Seraph ..., I and no messenger ...” The word “I” is to be taken most literally here.

Accordingly, when at the time of the Second Temple a sect or group of Jews began to acquiesce in the conception of *Shelichut*, when they attempted to transform the “Servant of God” of the prophetic writings into God’s eternal messenger, God’s son – Jewry had to separate itself from them and from their ideas.

“I and not my messenger” – that was Israel’s reply to Christianity.

“I and not my messenger” has become for Israel the basic principle and the symbol in all spheres of life and existence. “*Ani, Elohim*,” “I, God,” became the model for “You, Man.”

You, Man, the decision lies with you alone. With you it rests whether to go heavenward or to plunge into the abyss. Your path to God lies open before you; you alone can pursue it. You stumble and lapse into sin, and you must yourself expiate it. Alone must you wander through the inmost depths of Hell up to its outermost ends. Whether Paradise or Hell – you decide. Whether love or hatred – it is your affair. Alone and directly, you must assert yourself against malignant forces and evil impulses; alone, you must go through all the battles of life – you alone, and no angel, no Seraph, no messenger, will do it for you. Life and Death lie in your hands. “Life and Death I have placed before you, blessing and curse. Choose ye life ...” [Deuteronomy 30:19]

Nobody can “deputise” for anybody else. Therein lies the secret of the uninterrupted and permanent responsibility of the individual for his actions. Man, in contrast to animals – teaches our *Halachah* [Jewish] law code – requires no warning against possible damage or harm resulting from his actions. He should always be on the alert, “whether awake or asleep.” There can be no kind of *Shelichut* in either the spiritual or the intellectual fields, in either the sphere of the individual or in that of the community. Our *Halachah* further teaches that one cannot appoint a *Shaliach* for any action that is forbidden or sinful – the *Shaliach* himself

will be responsible for any action he takes; and similarly there can be no *Shelichut* in the spheres of the permissible, the desirable, and the ideal.

*Shelichut* is a misfortune for – both the sender and for the messenger. Among those who are, on the occasion of the offering of their [14] first fruits, not allowed to read the appropriate passage from the *Torah*, the *Mishnah* [the first compendium of the Oral Law] includes – besides others who are not fully qualified by the law – also the *Shaliach*, for he cannot say: “... which Thou, O Lord, hast bestowed upon me.” [cf. Deuteronomy 26:10]

## II

There have been times in the history of Jewry when those whose duty it should have been to safeguard Israel from *Shelichut* thoughts, succumbed and were no longer in a position to offer the desired resistance to the invading *Shelichut* elements. During the last hundred years, we have regrettably begun to resign ourselves to the idea of *Shelichut* in one form or another. This has resulted in various developments in the most widely differing spheres.

Here two examples may suffice, the first from that sphere with which Western-European Jews should, relatively speaking, be the most familiar: the Synagogue Service.

Compare the position of the *Sheliach Zibbur* (Reader) in the East-European and in the West-European synagogues. Jewry in Eastern Europe, living in more or less close communities, far from emancipation and assimilation – and here nothing is further from my mind than to identify emancipation with assimilation and to reject the former because of the assimilation that often accompanies it – and also far from thoughts of *Shelichut*, this Jewry has understood Judaism as concerning everybody. “Senders” and “messengers” did not and do not exist there. This fact found, and still finds, expression in the praying in the *Beth Hamidrash* [house of learning]. The *Sheliach Zibbur* of the Eastern *Beth Hamidrash* has neither the intention nor the task, let alone the power, to pray “for” the congregation, that is, to pray *instead of* the congregation, to stifle the prayer of the congregation, to “discharge” those assembled from their duty. The congregation that “sends” him never shifts onto him either its duty or its need to pray. The *Sheliach Zibbur* prays and the members of the congregation pray. He repeats their prayer, while they take part in his. He is not there in order to simplify, to speed up, or to co-ordinate the praying. On the contrary, one might speak of a constant struggle between

him and the congregation, whose members do not wish to interrupt their prayers. The *Shammash* [sexton] often finds it very difficult to obtain the necessary silence so that the *Sheliach Zibbur* can make himself heard. All pray, nobody “instead of” the other, each one for himself and for all the Israel. *Sheliach Zibbur* and congregation become one, just as individuals increasingly and more intensively band themselves together to form a living society. Here it becomes apparent how in a particular sphere a living Jewry transforms the concept of *Shelichut* in a Jewish and creative manner.

Contrast with this the *Sheliach Zibbur* and the congregation in the modernised Western synagogue, which did not remain closed to outside influences. Here there is often no real “praying congregation.” The *Sheliach Zibbur* prays “for” those assembled, while they more or less keep silent and “listen.” There are no imploring voices, there is no merger of congregation and “messenger.” There is a good deal of “silent devotions,” and the “devout congregation” does not “disturb” the minister; indeed, often he does not disturb them either. The coldness, the lack of real communion that shocked me some two decades ago [23] on my first visit to such an “organised” service – these I shall never forget. There the *Shaliach* prays for the congregation; indeed, he prays *instead* of them. There the Rabbi feels, thinks, or preaches “Judaism” – again as *Shaliach* – for the “devout congregation” which for the most part neither feels nor lives this “Judaism,” neither thinks it nor desires it. But everything goes on in this way in their “name” and on their “mandate.”

“I cannot – or I do not want to – live in a Jewish or religious way; our Rabbi, Minister, and officials should care for the maintenance of Judaism; I as a ‘private person’ am under no obligation to do this, but our *Shelichei Zibbur*, our messengers ...” These devastating words rise to the lips of thousands of Jews who do not themselves wish to bear the “yoke of Judaism,” whether they *proclaim* it clearly and openly or make it understood in various indirect methods. For those heads of the community who are very strict where the piety of their “officials” is concerned, who feel themselves called upon to control their “officials” thoughts and deeds while they themselves have in their own life sent back the last remnants of their Jewishness to Mount Sinai – are they invented or legendary figures?

From yet another sphere. How often do we hear of Palestine tourists in Palestine, of Jews who have renounced the last remnants of Jewish duties in their own lives, who with their Business-Materialism and their indifference towards everything Jewish or with their assimilationist cynicism make impossible every attempt aiming at some improvement or

amelioration of the national and spiritual *niveau* of Diaspora-Jewry, but who none-the-less dare to exclaim: “We do not want to have anything to do with Palestine, for Palestine is a stronghold of godlessness and faithlessness, of disregard for the Commandments, etc. Of course, we and our children do not ‘keep anything’ – London, Paris, New York – yes, but in Palestine ...!” One might think that the *Kashrut* [dietary laws], *Shabbat*, and the whole system of religious commandments had been proclaimed only for the Labour settlements of Ein Charod and Tel Yosef but not for those indignant de-Judaised Jews themselves.

Here again is revealed that dangerous basic phenomenon: the transference to the *Shaliach*. He, the *Shaliach*, is obliged to lead that life which the “sender” denies entirely as far as he himself is concerned; the *Shaliach* must do that which neither the “sender” nor his children wish to do; he must cultivate values that are in practice almost meaningless to the “sender” in his own life, values for which the “sender” is prepared to sacrifice neither his existence nor even his smallest comfort.

And if this mental attitude has such devastating effects in these spheres, how much more apprehension is provoked when it is also met with in the whole system of relations between Palestine and the Jewish Diaspora.

### III

The upbuilding of the National Home in Palestine, the dream of centuries and the reality of our time, the greatest concrete and positive surviving achievement of the last two generations is also threatened by the dangerous concept of *Shelichut*. During the last few decades, the voices of those who say: “Here the Diaspora-Jewry as a Jewry of the ‘senders,’ there Palestine as the land of the ‘*Shelichim*,’ the messengers.”

[24] I regard these *Shelichut* thoughts as most dangerous as far as the existence of Israel both here and there is concerned. They are no blessing for the “land of messengers” and they are a great danger for the future of the “senders.”

For this concept supports and favors that process which has increasingly gained ground among Diaspora-Jewry and by which all things Jewish come to be regarded as “discharged” or are shaken off as a “yoke.” The concept has had such a paralyzing effect on the Jewry of the Diaspora that one must not ignore it under any circumstances. We are not concerned here with those large groups of the Jewish people that refuse to take any active or positive attitude towards Jewish life. No, we refer indeed to that

section of Jews which participates in the building up of Palestine, that is, the “sending” Jews. It often seems as if these Jews also, in the sphere of their own life and existence, reject all duties implied by real Jewish life and activity, referring in their defense to the fact that in Palestine everything Jewish is already done and being created, and that therefore there is nothing more for Diaspora-Jewry to “do,” even if it possessed the requisite ability and talent. And in this connection, has not for several decades the view been expounded that Jewry in the Diaspora *could* not create anything more to add to our Jewish inheritance? Hence the “messengers” in Palestine should now create a new Jewish life, a new Hebrew culture, for us, i. e., *instead of us*.

It is not enough that the external and internal conditions in Diaspora-Jewry are uncommonly difficult for the development of those innate creative powers that are possessed by Jewry in common with all communities, even the poorest and most persecuted; now we have in addition that ideology of *Shelichut*, accompanied by the barren and destructive theory of the “Negation of the Diaspora,” with the result that all the paralysing tendencies in the social and spiritual life of Jewry in the Diaspora are immensely enhanced. This ideology is very *opportune*, very convenient for a Jewry that would like to get rid of its burdens and to make life easier. It is so agreeable to all Jewish opportunism that regards no substitute as too bad and for which no renunciation is too difficult.

For almost two thousand years, Jewry has fought under the flag of “I and not the *Shaliach*.” But in the twentieth century, large sections of Jewry in the Diaspora, and just the best and most conscious ones, are proclaiming: “The *Shaliach* and not I.”

This *Shelichut* ideology that has done so much harm and continues to do harm, which has so favored the passing of duties onto other shoulders, this ideology is also of the greatest danger for the Land of the “messengers,” for Palestine itself.

We Jews know unfortunately only too well how tragic it is always to be a scapegoat, an object on which all curses are heaped. But it is no less tragic to be, so to speak, a blessing-goat, a dumping ground for all blessings and good things.

To endure Hell is impossible; but it is no less impossible for a human being to be conscious of his living in Paradise. Many of the complaints which are often made regarding the upbringing of large sections of Palestinian youth really originate from that belief of living in Paradise, that belief of perfection and of complete redemption, from that [25] incorrect comparison with Diaspora-Jewry, which, explicitly or implicitly, makes up

the basis of education in Palestine. From this point of view, many aspects of the Palestinian scene can be seen in a different light.

On the other hand, many of the “senders” delude themselves if they think or believe that they are entitled to expect that the land of the “messengers” should always follow the path desired by the “senders.” In the spheres of culture and economics, religion and politics, Palestine will and must go its own way, unconcerned with the expectations and the desires of the “senders,” obedient only to the reality of its own position, to the economic, political and spiritual conditions in and around Palestine. Many of the complaints that are heard here and there outside Palestine betray just that disappointment of “senders” at the fact that the “messengers” have not properly executed their “mission.”

#### IV

In short, this concept of *Shelichut* is fundamentally an impossible and harmful basis for the establishment of a “living, real, and creative relationship” between Palestine and the Diaspora in our age and in the future. It provides no basis for the revival of our people, whose preponderant majority still has to and will have to live and create outside Palestine.

The Jewry of the Diaspora must remain conscious of its own responsibility for its future. No Jew can be a Jew for another. No Jewish community can discharge its Jewish obligations by virtue of the acts of another community. In brief, there is no Jewishness by proxy. Happy is that Jewish entity that evolves its Jewish existence in complete political, economic and cultural sovereignty. Unfortunate is that Jewry that, oppressed and menaced, must always ask the watchman: “What of the Night?” [Isaiah 21:11] The former like the latter, however, has no choice but this: to be Jewish, to live Jewish, and to create things Jewish. Whether perfectly or imperfectly, whether in absolute freedom or permeated by foreign influences – to be Jewish, to live Jewish, and to create things Jewish. Happy is that Jewry which will arrive at its destination; unhappy that which may perhaps never reach it. Both, however, must go the same way, and both must for themselves cover the *whole* way.

Neither the Jewish religion as such nor the traditional Jewish conception of Messianism have ever known the distinction between a “centre” and a “circumference.” On the day of Judgment, at the end of all time *all* Israel (tradition has it), including *all* the resurrected dead, will be congregated in one place in happiness and freedom, and not one lamb will any



longer be exposed to the lions [cf. *ibid.*, 65:25]. How far is the realisation of this great vision from present-day Israel! As long as millions of Jews have to fight for their existence – and even if their numbers are reduced by a half – so long can we not and must we not fall under the spell of a conception implying the Negation of the *Galuth* [exile] or of any theory of *Shelichut*. The doctrine of the Negation of the *Galuth* cannot abolish the *Galuth*, but it can serve to justify the abolition of creative Jewishness in the Diaspora.

There must not be any “senders,” shirking their own Jewish duties, [26] escaping into *Shelichut* for reasons of convenience, in order to get rid of all of their Jewish responsibilities. Nor indeed should there be any “messengers” expecting the decline of the “senders” and believing that God’s promise “I shall make of thee a great nation” [Genesis 12:2] was meant for them, while His angry remark “Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them and that I may consume them” [Exodus 32:10] referred to the millions of “senders.” We want no self-satisfied, self-righteous “messengers” who might appear to themselves as the inhabitants of a haven of absolute safety and a paradise of complete protection. We want no “messengers” who might lose all sense of proportion between Israel and the world, between the vision and the dream of thousands of years on the one hand and its realisation on the other, between the necessities of the millions of “senders” and their own achievements.

The Jews who are building up Palestine and those who are fighting in the Diaspora are neither “*Shelichim*” nor “senders,” neither “centre” nor “circumference,” but are the inseparable parts of *one whole*, one national unit that is struggling for its preservation and its reconstruction and that will have to struggle for these for a long time to come. It is one and the same people which is building and will build Palestine (according to the given conditions) and which fights and will fight for the *creative* maintenance of its existence everywhere (according to the possibilities of the different *Galuyot*, even if never to the degree of ideal perfection). Here only a relationship between two equally responsible, inseparable partners is possible, an absolute *co-operation*, so fashioned that each of the two partners is saddled, permanently and absolutely equally, with *all* responsibilities and *all* duties, without exceptions and modifications. There can be no division of functions, no division of tasks; *both* together make up the whole and each stands and falls with the whole, but each must act on its own as if it were the whole. From this point of view, Jewish policy in the Diaspora should be re-examined, and new principles should be evolved.

Will the Jewry of the Diaspora comprehend all the immense reality, the assumption of responsibility without limits, the acceptance of the liberating yoke – which are manifest in the thousand-year-old credo of Israel: “I and not the *Shaliach*”? For only then will it be able to do justice to its duties toward both parties of the credo.

The Jewish reality of our time points imperatively to the path of “*I and the Shaliach*,” in so far as one is inclined to think in terms of *Shelichut*. To this, however, Diaspora-Jewry can only rise by means of a renewed realisation of the necessity for the rejection of *Shelichut*, only if again it comprehends what is meant by “*Ani welo ha-shaliach*.” [I and not the messenger]

<This article was written in Hebrew in 1935 [sic]. The English translation above, by William Margulies, appeared in the I.U.J.F. [Inter-University Jewish Federation of Great Britain and Ireland] “[The Jewish] Academy” last month>



### III. Appreciations of Jewish Cultural Figures

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter features short English-language pieces published in 1937 and 1938 in which Rawidowicz profiles three leading figures in twentieth-century Jewish thought. Each of them had his own persona in Hebrew, though two were known far more for their contributions in other languages: Russian, Yiddish, and German. Of the three, Rawidowicz felt a particular connection to the Eastern Europeans, Chaim Nahman Bialik (1873–1934) and Simon Dubnow (1860–1941), with whom he was first in close touch during the Berlin phase. Along with Achad Ha-Am, they were among the most important inspirations in shaping his ideological vision.

Rawidowicz met the third figure, Martin Buber (1878–1965), even before Bialik and Dubnow. Buber was a major presence in the Jewish and Zionist worlds that Rawidowicz came to know intimately in Germany. He first encountered him in Prague at an international conference of Socialist Zionists in March 1920.<sup>1</sup> And yet, in contrast to Bialik and Dubnow, Rawidowicz did not speak the same “language” as Buber. Buber’s “I–Thou” dialogic theology was far afield of Rawidowicz’s intellectual historical approach to Jewish thought. Even their shared interest in Jewish culture was sounded in distinct registers: Buber articulated his “Hebrew humanism” in a more ethereal, spiritual, and German key; Rawidowicz expressed his deep ideological commitment to Jewish cultural nationalism in a richly timbred Hebrew.<sup>2</sup>

From his youth, Rawidowicz developed a reverence for Bialik not just as a great poet but as a prophetic figure beckoning toward a full Hebrew renaissance.<sup>3</sup> He recalls that he was initiated to the work of Bialik as a boy in Grajewo by the son of the *shohet* (ritual slaughterer), a young man of around 21 years, who would spend his days in the town’s *bet ha-midrash* or study hall. Rather than pore over pages of the Talmud, the young man would immerse himself in the Hebrew literary masters of the day. It was

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1 See Ravid, *The Berlin Period of Simon Rawidowicz*, 140.

2 Grete Schaeder, *The Hebrew Humanism of Martin Buber*, Detroit, Mich., 1973.

3 On this theme, see Dan Miron, *H. N. Bialik and the Prophetic Mode in Modern Hebrew Poetry*, Syracuse, NY, 2000.

he who introduced Rawidowicz to Bialik, confident that such an act would not be perceived as a transgression by Rawidowicz's avidly Hebraist and Zionist father.<sup>4</sup>

Rawidowicz recalls his own initial face-to-face encounter with Bialik in 1920.<sup>5</sup> In the aftermath of the First World War, many of the leading figures of Hebrew literature made their way to Berlin, which was becoming an important meeting point for German and Eastern European Jews. Word of Bialik's arrival in Berlin was especially thrilling to Rawidowicz and his fellow émigrés: "My excitement was that of every Eastern European young person born at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, who was educated in Torah in the bet ha-midrash or yeshivah, who was nourished from the wellsprings of our new literature."<sup>6</sup> From that point, the two men began to meet regularly, especially in 1923 and still 1924, in the months before Bialik decamped from Germany to Tel Aviv. Rawidowicz filled up a notebook with recollections from their meetings – and then a second from a later phase in 1929 and beyond.

These recollections were published posthumously in *Siḥotai im Bialik* (My Conversations with Bialik) in 1983. They reveal that Rawidowicz's relationship with Bialik was complicated. In one remembrance from March 1923, he admitted that his "unbridled admiration (for Bialik) was waning." In the next month, he wrote critically of Bialik's "know-it-all" attitude.<sup>7</sup> Bialik for his part, seemed to reciprocate in ambivalence. Yehuda Friedlander has noted his mix of respect and disdain toward Rawidowicz.<sup>8</sup>

But in 1924, Rawidowicz dedicated his edition of Krochmal's Writings to Bialik. And the two short retrospective essays on Bialik below adopt a reverential tone. They were written after Bialik's death in 1934 and in the early years of Rawidowicz's relocation to London. In the first (III.2.),

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4 Rawidowicz, *Siḥotai im Bialik*, 29.

5 For a comprehensive assessment of Bialik, see Avner Holtzman, *Hayim Nahman Bialik. Poet of Hebrew*, New Haven, Conn., 2017.

6 Rawidowicz, *Siḥotai im Bialik*, 28.

7 For Rawidowicz's impressions from 14 March and 29 April 1923 see *ibid.*, 45 and 54.

8 See his observation in: Yehuda Friedlander, *Ha-reka ha-sifrutit* [The Literary Background], in: Rawidowicz, *Siḥotai im Bialik*, 18–25, here 19. As noted in the previous chapter introduction, the complication increased in the next decade over the competing accounts of who was responsible for starting the Brit (Rawidowicz or Bialik) and where it should be centered.

which appeared in the flagship Anglo-Jewish journal *The Jewish Chronicle*, Rawidowicz compares the modern poet to the biblical Job. He recognizes that a poet, especially a famous and revered one, can all too easily imagine himself as a prophet and “fall into imitation of an antique imitative style.” But Bialik avoided that fate, and Rawidowicz recognizes “the great revolution he wrought in Hebrew poetry.”<sup>9</sup> In the second essay (III.3.), published under his pen name Ben Arai (Temporary One) in the English Zionist Federation’s *The Zionist Review*, Rawidowicz retraces Bialik’s life, as reflected in his published letters, the first volume of which appeared in Tel Aviv in 1937.<sup>10</sup> In reviewing this volume, Rawidowicz observed the challenges and travails, including intense depression, that accompanied Bialik throughout his life. Here he holds himself and other Jews responsible for not understanding Bialik and his goals well enough. The essay offered Rawidowicz an opportunity to express a measure of contrition on behalf of his generation for not doing more to embrace the great national poet and his project of national cultural renewal.

In this same period of time in London, Rawidowicz wrote two retrospective articles in the supplement to *The Jewish Chronicle* in praise of Simon Dubnow. As with Bialik, Rawidowicz had met Dubnow in Berlin in the early 1920s. He quickly contracted with the renowned Russian-Jewish historian to publish an edition of the *Pinkas*, or communal record book, of the early modern Lithuanian Jewish community for Ayanot (Well-springs).<sup>11</sup> Prior to the publication of the volume in 1925, Rawidowicz visited Dubnow at his home and corresponded frequently with him, as the two discussed technical matters related to the *Pinkas*. Significantly, Dubnow wrote to Rawidowicz in a rich, idiomatic, and allusive Hebrew

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9 III.2. The Twentieth-Century Job, 236.

10 Chaim Nahman Bialik, *Iggrot Ḥayyim Naḥman Biyalik* [Letters of Chaim Nahman Bialik], vol 1., ed. by Fishel Lahover, Tel Aviv 1937.

11 *Pinkas ha-medinah o pinkas ha-va’ad ha-kehillot ha-rashiyyot be-medinat Lita. Koveḥ takkanot u-fesakim mi-shnot 373 ad shnat 521. Nikhtav mi-khtav-yad ha-nimḥa be-Horodna, im millu’im ve-shinuyei nusha’ot al pi ha’atakot be-pinkas be-Brisk u-ve-Vilna, arukh be-zeruf mavo ve-he’arot al yedei Shim’on Dubnov* [Minutes of the Country, or Council Minutes of the Main Jewish Communities in the Country of Lithuania. Collection of Statutes and Ordinances from 1613–1761. Transcription of a Manuscript from Horodno, with Additions and Handwritten Variants Based on Copies in the Pinkasim of Brisk and Vilna, ed. and accompanied by an introd. and annot. by Simon Dubnow], Berlin 1925.

(with small notes addressed to Rawidowicz's wife Esther in German).<sup>12</sup> He addressed Rawidowicz in his letters as "dear friend," and shared in them thoughts about scholarship, family, and life in Berlin and later Riga, where Dubnow moved in 1933.

Rawidowicz called attention to Dubnow's Hebraism in the first piece published here (III.4.). While Dubnow was an enthusiastic promoter of Yiddish, he also loved Hebrew, which "he considered as the national language."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Dubnow undertook some of his most important work, including the *Pinkas* edition and his *Toldot ha-ḥasidut* (History of Hasidism), in Hebrew – alongside his many studies in Russian, German, and Yiddish.<sup>14</sup>

The second *Jewish Chronicle* essay below (III.5.) casts Dubnow as a political philosopher. Rawidowicz understood this term not in the sense of an academically trained scholar, but rather that one devotes his work to the formulation of a political ideology. In his own career, Rawidowicz filled both roles, but criticized his academic colleagues in this essay for not taking seriously what amounted to applied political thought. He sought to restore some balance to the picture by offering an appreciation of Dubnow as a political thinker. On this reading, Dubnow labored throughout his life to give voice to the national character of the Jewish people, though he was also capacious, flexible, and dialectical enough to embrace the universal values of "humanity, progress, and social advancement."<sup>15</sup> In terms of his own contribution to nationalist theory, Dubnow promoted and refined the idea of national cultural autonomy for the large Jewish minorities in Eastern Europe. Even in his unstinting support for this idea, he never surrendered the goal of a Jewish settlement in Ottoman and Mandatory Palestine.<sup>16</sup> He believed in both the autonomist project

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12 Rawidowicz published 86 letters from Dubnow to him from 1923 to 1939 in the memorial volume. See Simon Dubnow, Mikhtavei Shim'on Dubnov el Shim'on Ravidoviz [Letters from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz], in: Rawidowicz (ed.), *Simon Dubnow*, 401–457.

13 III.4. A Great Jewish Historian and His Life, 244.

14 Simon Dubnow, *Toldot ha-ḥasidut* [History of Hasidism], 3 vols., Tel Aviv, 1930–1932.

15 III.5. Humanistic Nationalism, 249.

16 See Simon Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights, National Rites. Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial and Revolutionary Russia*, Stanford, Calif., 2014. In describing his own stance to Rawidowicz, Dubnow wrote in a letter from 1935: "Erez

and Jewish settlement of Palestine, though he invested far more energy and enthusiasm in the former. Rawidowicz noted an affinity between Dubnow's balance and his own idea of *shutafut*, or partnership. To be sure, there were different emphases and perspectives that separated the two. But Rawidowicz maintained that Dubnow got it right with his exposition of "Jewish humanistic, progressive Nationalism."<sup>17</sup> Dubnow, for his part, read the two pieces that Rawidowicz wrote and sent to him, for which he expressed double appreciation.<sup>18</sup>

In the same period (December 1938), Rawidowicz wrote a tribute to Martin Buber in *The Zionist Review* (III.6.). The piece recognized the philosopher's salutary ability to move among different cultures: Western philosophical rationalism, Jewish nationalism, and religious irrationalism. Buber was an effective translator between East and West, communicating essential features of Hasidism, mysticism, and the organic intensity of shtetl life to Western audiences.<sup>19</sup> Rawidowicz also appreciated Buber's role as an heir of the legacy of Achad Ha-Am in recognizing the centrality of culture to the Zionist project. His stature as a major culture figure was of particular significance in Germany after the rise of Hitler to power, when cultural activity was a form of sustenance and even resistance to the totalitarian forces amassing.

At the time of this article, Buber had just accepted a position as professor of social philosophy at the Hebrew University.<sup>20</sup> Rawidowicz was hardly a detached observer of developments at this university; he had very much hoped to receive an appointment at it in 1933. Five years later, the university was caught in the throes of grave economic challenge owing to the global depression, as well as the recurrent question of what kind of university it should be: a world-class research center, a teaching

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Yisra'el is the only territory that has the potential to absorb some fifty thousand people a year. I never opposed Zionism *per se*, but rather the negation of Exile in Zionism. That negation has been a battle for me from my early days to the present." Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 8 October 1935, in: Rawidowicz (ed.), *Simon Dubnow*, 446 f., here 447.

17 III.5. Humanistic Nationalism, 250.

18 See Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 19 May 1938 and 20 October 1939, in Rawidowicz (ed.), *Simon Dubnow*, 452 f., here 453, and 457.

19 See Paul Mendes-Flohr, Art. "Dialogue," in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 2, 298–305, and the comprehensive biography: idem, *Martin Buber. A Life of Faith and Dissent*, New Haven, Conn./London 2019.

20 Mendes-Flohr, *Martin Buber*, 201–205.



institution to serve the nation or some combination of both. Rawidowicz used the opportunity of Buber's recent appointment to reflect on the mission of the university. He recognized, as had Buber, that the purpose of the Hebrew University in 1938 had been redefined by the exigency of the hour. It was now necessary to absorb "the masses of Jewish students" who had been expelled from European institutions in the ominous age of Nazism. Whatever ambivalence Rawidowicz may have had toward the university disappeared. The Jerusalem institution required "our utmost active support"<sup>21</sup> as Europe becoming increasingly hostile to Jews and their culture after a millennium of surviving and flourishing on its soil.

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21 III.6. Martin Buber and the Hebrew University, 254.

## 2. The Twentieth-Century Job

*The text reproduced here appeared unsigned in: The Jewish Chronicle Supplement 16 (1937), no. 172, 2–3. Slightly changed to “Chaim Nachman Bialik, The Beloved Poet” it was reissued in: The Zionist Review, 22 July 1938, 15–17.*

IT was one of Russia’s most representative writers, Maxim Gorki, who, when he first read the Russian translation of Chaim Nachman Bialik’s poems, is reported to have exclaimed: “He is Job of the twentieth century!” Not that Bialik, the third anniversary of whose death is approaching, is to be compared with that “man in the land of Uz,” [Job 1:1] “the greatest of all the men of the East,” [Ibid., 1:3] whose happiness and fear of God aroused the envy of Satan, and who, in his subsequent misery, “rent his mantle, fell down upon the ground, and said: ‘Naked came I out of my mothers’ womb, and naked shall I return thither ...’” [Ibid., 1:20]

Bialik’s life was, on the whole, a fully blessed one. Son of a traditional Jewish environment, traditional even in its poverty and suffering, a pupil of the Volozyn Yeshivah, the Talmudic Oxford of Russian Jewry, “unknown soldier” fighting, as were so many thousands of poor and persecuted Jews at that time, for life and for a place in the sun – even though an unkind sun – and for the chance to feel their own soil beneath their feet, Bialik became more and more a spiritual leader in Jewry, the national poet *par excellence*, the central figure in Jewish life both in Palestine and the Diaspora. No modern Hebrew writer was more popular and more loved. No other of our authors reached his position of moral authority. None was held in such high esteem by the strictest literary connoisseurs and at the same time so beloved by the masses of his people. His personality was magnetic. He no sooner entered an assembly than he became its centre, enlivening it with a kind of electric energy. No one who ever had the experience of a talk with Bialik would ever forget it.

If the great Biblical sufferer led a life such as that of our modern national poet, Israel and the world might have been robbed of one of the greatest poetic-philosophical works of all time. For Bialik never experienced the vivid sorrows of the man of Uz. Yet, on the other hand, the modern Hebrew poet was almost throughout his life tortured by sufferings which, in their different plane, may well have exceeded those of the Biblical Job. For Bialik was the poet who sang the sufferings of a Job

whose passion has endured for twenty centuries; he was the poet of Israel to-day.

Many before and since Bialik have sung the themes of Israel, Torah, Zion, Sufferings, Redemption, etc. Our Literature of Piyyutim [Jewish liturgical poems] is full of such work. But none of them, since the days of Juda Ha-levi, as Ahad Ha'am, who never exaggerated, declared, none succeeded in becoming the undisputed spiritual representative of Israel, the mouthpiece of its boundless despair, its pangs, and its yearnings. Truly, Bialik was Israel's laureate.

Before the Kishinev pogrom and afterwards, many poems were written on the destruction and massacre of Jewish Communities. Yet Bialik's poem on that occasion, "In the City of Slaughter" ("Be'ir Ha-haregah") towered above them all and became *the* monumental poetic expression not only of the Kishinev massacre, but also of all such Jewish tragedies. The unforgettable cry of desperation in his poem "On the butchery" ("Al ha-Shechitah") was, and will remain for centuries the flaming protest of persecuted Jewry against a so-called civilised world which has tacitly acquiesced in the inhuman torturing of a great nation scattered to the four corners of the earth and has even gone out of its way to augment those tortures and to vary them from bloody pogroms to the refinement of cold, legalised destruction:

"Headsman! Here's my neck – come, strike it through!  
 Behead me like a dog, the axe is in your hand,  
 And all the world's my block –  
 And we – why, we are few!  
 My blood is cheap – smite, let my blood flow,  
 The blood of babes and greybeards stains your coat –  
 'Twill never be wiped o'er."

(This is based on a translation from "Bialik's Poems," edited by [Leonard Victor] Snowman.)

Like the ancient prophets of Israel, Bialik is merciless in his scorn for the cruelty of the world and in his contempt for the weakness of his own people. It was the indignation and revolt of a modern resurrected Jewry to which he gave vivid poetic expression. And the hearts of all young Israel, yearning for justice and peace in a brutish world, beat quicker when the voice of the Job of twenty centuries' misery issued his terrible challenge:

“If there is Right, then let it now be shown!  
 For if when I have perished ’neath the skies,  
 The Right shine forth, I pray,  
 Crushed be its throne for ever!  
 Through eternal wrong the Heavens shall wilt,  
 Walk on, ye recreants, walk in your violence still,  
 Live, stained with guiltless blood!”

Since Bialik’s voice thundered these lines, many a headsman in many a country has proved his “heroism” on the neck of our defenceless people. And whenever, since then, the brutal axe has been raised to destroy “the Tents of Jacob,” [cf. Numbers 24:5] the first thought of the sufferers has been: Bialik! For Bialik beheld the misery of Israel, it lived in his great vision; he speaks our hearts even as we sit beside the mutilated bodies of fathers, mothers, and children. When recently, in “free” Poland, we had the [3] Przytyk massacres, when a few weeks ago Polish headsmen displayed their bravery in Brest-Litovsk, formerly one of the centres of Talmudic scholarship – once again Bialik and his vision rose fresh in our minds, in the hearts and minds of young and old in Polish Jewry. His words of protest and despair were their words.

Is it surprising that some have clamoured for Bialik’s national poems to be added to the Piyyutim in the Prayer Book, that some have even done it?

Bialik’s great poetic genius, his spotless sincerity, his colossal powers of expression, and his superb command of Hebrew were bound to secure for him an unrivalled place in modern Hebrew literature. Yet the writing of “national poetry” can easily involve great dangers for a poet. It may force him to rhetoric, to a mawkish pathos, to speak with the voice of a preacher or pleader rather than with that of pure poetry. National “phraseology” frequently excludes true and pure poetic expression. That Bialik, our national poet, never hesitated to place his inspiration beneath the service of the national revival, that he willingly ran the risks involved, and yet suffered no loss in his poetic greatness, until his mighty national motives came to help him mould a classic form for his poetic genius – herein is Bialik’s greatness to be found. Many a poet has been shorn of his poetry when he became the mouthpiece of national or social needs and ideas. In Bialik, the national ideals of Israel and his poetic genius form one indissoluble unity.

In the same way as the “national poet” did not kill the great artist in Bialik, so he could dare to follow in the footsteps of the prophets without being crushed under the burden of comparison. Both in vision and in powers of expression, as well as in style, many of Bialik’s poems

remind one very vividly of some of the best and most immortal chapters of our great prophets. Yet “prophecy” also involves a great danger to the personality of an original poet. He can so easily fall into imitation of an antique imitative style.

Can a man of the twentieth century be a prophet? Should he attempt to be one? The phenomenon of prophecy is too vast and ancient ever to become topical or “fashionable.” The prophets were great, unprecedented, and unsurpassable, as well as inimitable. Here again the original genius of Bialik came to his rescue; his great original creative power saved him from becoming a mere imitator. Some of the younger and very able Hebrew poets tried to follow Bialik’s “prophetic” poems, but in the main they have totally failed. Their work has been too artificial, too elaborated, there is too much of the literary “façon” in it.

What Bialik has meant to the last two generations of modern national Jewry, what he achieved not only as a “national poet” but also as a moderniser of the Aggadah [non-legalistic exegetical literature] and some of the classics of our medieval poetry, his significance in the fields of education, in the Hebrew movement, and in Hebrew publishing – all these topics require special and more detailed treatment. What he has done for the revival and modernisation of Hebrew, while preserving the main traditional classic forms and laws of our language, must always be recorded as the great revolution he wrought in Hebrew poetry.

Bialik and Hebrew are inseparable. The same man who called Bialik “Job of the twentieth century,” Maxim Gorki, once said: “It is worth while to learn Hebrew in order to be able to read Bialik in the original.” Unfortunately, Bialik’s work loses much of its original vigour and beauty in translation. No real appreciation of Bialik is possible without a thorough knowledge of Hebrew, and not the poor sort of the “Hachshara” [training (for Aliyah)] Hebrew, which is, of course, only better than nothing.

To know Bialik is to know what national modern Jewry stands for and to grasp the significance of Hebrew literature and poetry. While introducing the reader to Israel of to-day, Bialik is also one of the best modern guides to ancient Jewish culture. The study of Bialik, therefore, should be one of the principal spiritual concerns of Jewish youth.

### 3. Bialik the Man as Revealed in His Letters

*The text reproduced here appeared in the column "A Literary Diary" under the pen name "Ben Arai" in: The Zionist Review, 22 December 1938, 20–22.*

Of all modern Hebrew authors Chaim Nachman Bialik has received the most attention, in Hebrew and other languages, from our critics, essayists and translators. His untimely death a few years ago was deeply mourned even by those of modern Israel who never actually enjoyed his poetry and prose in the original Hebrew, and his loss is still felt in almost every branch of Jewish life, in Palestine as well as elsewhere. In the Report published by the Royal Commission on Palestine headed by the late Lord [William] Peel, Bialik – together with the late Nahum Sokolow – is singled out as the man to whom the modern revival of Hebrew is mainly due. The Report might have added a few other names of Hebrew authors of the 19th and 20th centuries, worthy exponents of modern Hebrew and its literature, to whose great efforts and sacrifices the miracle of turning Hebrew from the "dead" language of the Book into a living one owes so much. But none of the Hebrew authors of the last two generations can be regarded as more representative of our spiritual national revival and the great achievement of modern Hebrew literature than Bialik.

The relatively vast literature on Bialik has been greatly enriched in recent years. The Hebrew periodicals have given generous space to material concerning Bialik's life and activity, and the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine has created a special foundation in Bialik's name – "*Mosad Bialik*" [Bialik Institute] for the encouragement of Hebrew literary activity. Although the budget at the disposal of the "*Mosad Bialik*," modest as it was at the beginning, has, unfortunately, recently been reduced, full recognition should be given to the fact that for the first time the Executive of the World Zionist Organisation and the Jewish Agency for Palestine have undertaken to encourage modern Hebrew Literature and to help Hebrew authors in their struggle to fulfil their difficult task under very complicated and disturbing conditions. The fact that this small but promising move towards an official Zionist policy in cultural matters is connected with the name of Bialik, whose memory it helps to perpetuate, is an indication of the great appreciation of Bialik's lifework felt by all interested in our national rebirth. The "*Mosad Bialik*" publishes, among other literary works, a Commemorative Annual, *Kenesseth* [Assembly],

which contains critical essays on Bialik as well as selections from the work he has left, thus contributing greatly to our knowledge and appreciation of his work.

### The Importance of his Correspondence

There is no doubt that the key to many problems in Bialik's literary work is to be found in his correspondence (*"Iggeroth Chaim Nachman Bialik"* [Letters of Chaim Nahman Bialik]), of which the first four volumes have already appeared, edited by [Yeruham] F[ishel] Lachower and published by "Dvir" [Sanctuary] the publishing-house which was founded and directed by Bialik himself and his life-long friend T. Ch. [Yehoshua Hana] Rawnitzki.

It is an essential characteristic of the letter written to private persons or notabilities, in a more or less intimate style and not for publication, that it should disclose many facets of a poet's or a philosopher's life and personality to which he was either unwilling or unable to give expression in his more deliberately formulated literary work. Letter-writing is, no doubt, an art in itself. Many authors have been more successful in their correspondence than in their formal literary work. Bialik does not, however, belong to this category, although he wrote admirable letters marked by an intimate personal touch, enriched with wit and humor, and shaped in a matchless Hebrew, sometimes even more vivid than that of his literary work, because in his letters he was free from his "audience" and could express himself in as "uncensored" a form as he chose. But in spite of this, Bialik's correspondence could never overshadow either his poetry or prose. Unfortunately many of his letters, especially from his earlier days, are either totally lost or inaccessible to the Editor of the correspondence, owing to the conditions under which many of Bialik's correspondents live or formerly lived in the U.S.S.R., where no contact is maintained with modern Hebrew Literature.

In spite of these difficulties, students of Bialik's work as well as the general circle of Hebrew readers will always treasure Bialik's correspondence, as a most revealing source not only for the better understanding of Bialik's own life and work but also for the explanation of many phenomena in the life and history of modern Jewry with its modern literature, Jewish national movement and Zionism. The hundreds of letters contained in the first four volumes are, of course, not of equal interest, nor all on the same high level; some of them indeed might well have been omitted in the

interest of the high standard of these “*Iggeroth*” as a whole. But each letter adds some illuminating detail about Bialik and his reactions to men and affairs, and information about his fellow-workers’ efforts in various fields of Jewish life and Hebrew literature.

### Early Struggles and Misgivings

Of particular interest is Bialik’s correspondence from the time of his literary beginnings and of his struggle for recognition until he became the acknowledged leading national poet. His modesty and frankness in describing his weakness, in stressing his doubts about his literary powers, his self-criticism, his misgivings as to his future and literary career, are almost unparalleled in any author’s letters.

Even later, when his fame had already begun to spread, he replied to Joseph Klausner, who asked him for information about his life for a biography: “I have no life at all. Can’t you imagine the biography of a man devoid of achievement like myself? The making and development of people like myself are generally without particular interest, so that you might simply infer from the life of one of us the lives of the others.” But with this modest disclaimer, Bialik then gave his interviewer information which is now most valuable and informative.

We learn from this very important autobiographical document much about Bialik’s childhood, which he spent in the small village of Radi, in Volynia, in charming surroundings of forests and fields, which left an abiding impression on him and to which he owed his sense of beauty and love of nature. His father, whom he lost when he was seven years old, was an inn-keeper, patronised by Russian and Ukrainian peasants. His father suffered greatly from the unprofitable and uncongenial nature of his occupation. While he filled the glasses of the beer-swilling peasants he would keep his eyes on the text of the *Mishnayoth* [passages of the Oral Law contained in the Mishnah], which was always open before him. [21] When one reads Bialik’s references to his father and mother, one can appreciate those unforgettable poems in which he has created so noble a memorial to his parents, whose lives of toil and suffering were akin to those of so many parents in Israel. His grandfather was also among the first persons to leave their impress on young Bialik’s character and personality. The urge to write was so keen in the young boy, that when he was unable to express himself in Hebrew, he called Aramaic and Yiddish to his aid, and it is greatly to be regretted that none of these early writings has been preserved.



## Early Education

Bialik drew his Jewish knowledge first from the medieval philosophical literature, and later on he became acquainted with the non-traditional literature of the *Haskalah* [enlightenment]. Then he made up his mind to go to Berlin, in order to study at the orthodox theological seminary conducted by Dr. [Azriel] Hildesheimer. This was the ideal of the young “heretic!” But through his fear that his grandfather might protest against this decision, he preferred going to study at the Yeshiva in Voloszyn, Russian Jewry’s Talmudic “Oxford,” from which he hoped to go to the seminary in Berlin. But, if he had gone to the Western centre, Hebrew literature would have been deprived of one of its greatest modern poems: “*Ha-matmid.*” [The Eternal Student]

It was at Voloszyn that Bialik became acquainted with the *Hibbath Zion* [Love of Zion] Movement, and there he became an admirer and follower of Ahad Ha’am, to whom he preserved his allegiance and admiration until he died. How happy was he to see afterwards all the “lions” of Hebrew literature and *Hibbath Zion* in Odessa, where – with some short intervals – he himself endured a period of severe privation, but where he won his first literary spurs with a degree of success unequalled by any of his predecessors or followers. It happened that [Moshe Leib] Lilienblum, a veteran of both *Haskalah* and *Hibbath Zion*, selected Bialik’s first poem, “*El hazippor*” [To the Bird] for publication; this was sent to Ahad Ha’am, who forwarded it to Rawnitzki, with whom Bialik formed such a friendship, notwithstanding the disparity in their ages, that they became the David and Jonathan of modern Hebrew Literature.

## Periods of Acute Depression

Bialik often complained about the wasted energy and effort in his life.

The man who was so full of life, a dazzling conversationalist and a brilliant wit, experienced more than one period of the deepest depression. Sometimes it originated in merely personal motives, sometimes it came through external circumstances such as pogroms, but mainly these phases were conditioned by both individual and general factors. He was often afraid that he would not be equal to the task he set himself.

So we read, for instance, in one of Bialik’s letters to Ben Ami [Mordechai Rabinovich] (in 1907, when he was thirty-five): “I do not know why I am here. Is it tragic or comic? I envy even the street-player who seeks

to be fed like a dog or a crow and whose work is fixed every day, while I do not know what to do; I do not know to-day what I shall do to-morrow. Every morning, when I open my eyes, I see before me the question, to which there is no answer: What shall I do? My life is not worthy of the name. There is no free choice, no system or rules; everything is accidental, hazardous, disjointed. My grandfather prepared me for the ministry; then I became a merchant and afterwards a *melamed* [religious teacher], then a teacher, then an office worker, again a teacher (and between times I wrote poetry), then I dealt in coal, then I became an editor (and wrote poetry whenever I had time); and now I am, thank heavens, a printer and one of the owners of *Morijah* – well, try to find some sense in all that.”

“You want to know” – he goes on – “whether I write. I do not write. There is no holy spirit. I do not know anything, I do not understand anything, I do not pray for anything. Our eternal fire, our literature, is this, is extinguished. Idiots, laymen and now priests try to rekindle it with resin and pitch.”

Bialik was at that time dissatisfied even with the beginnings of Hebrew culture in Palestine. He calls those responsible for it simply “*melammedim*” [sic]. Later on he complains again – in another letter to Ben Ami – about the disappearance of the “*Shechina*” [the female part of the Godhead] from his life. Sometimes – he wrote – he thought of committing suicide, but he was too lazy to do that “good thing.” He had no strength even for that! ...

## **We are to Blame**

Everybody who had the privilege of knowing Bialik – and those who had it consider it one of the greatest spiritual privileges of their lives, could hardly believe that Bialik underwent such sufferings of this nature. So far as these originated in the merely individual problems of the poet, we – the community of his readers and admirers – are, of course, not responsible. But very often it was the lack of real understanding and proper actions on the part of the Jewish people [22] that drove Bialik into the deepest despair. His genius laid upon us a great privilege and responsibility and our part has been a shameful failure. This was the origin of his poetic outbursts like *Prophet, Escape!* (“*Chose, lech berach!*”). His torture when he was faced with a lack of the will to act, with a spate of words not followed by any real satisfaction – was unspeakable.

Unfortunately, Bialik had to experience one of the greatest disappointments of his latter years in London, where he came to organise a campaign

for the encouragement of Hebrew literature, which was then, some time before the period of prosperity in Palestine, in as neglected a condition as it is now, some time after the interruption of that period. His poem, *Gam behitaroto leeineichem* [Even as He Strips Naked Before Your Eyes], full of indignation and wrath, that was written by Bialik in London almost with his heart's blood, will serve to coming generations as a documentary proof of how deeply insulted and unhappy our great poet was when he was faced with the failure of his mission in England. Every endeavor should be made to ensure that this "London-poem" of Bialik becomes more widely known to Anglo Jewry than it is at present. This might perhaps help those who devote their thoughts and life to preserving Bialik's inheritance to succeed where he himself failed. It is a great and sacred debt that we owe to the memory of Bialik.

## 4. A Great Jewish Historian and His Life

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THERE are not many Jewish historians like Simon Dubnow, whose life and public activities themselves make history.

A scholar may blamelessly confine himself within the narrow limits of the subject to which he has been devoting his life; he may do so out of conviction that he cannot serve more than one master or out of his keen consciousness of the duties imposed upon him by his scholarship, or even through his lack of understanding of the problems and needs of his own Community and of his relationship thereto. Indeed, many a critic will deprecate those scholars who can never forget that they are members of a community and nation and who try to fulfil the duties that this membership imposes upon them. Those who try to serve two masters have often drawn upon themselves attacks by both.

Simon Dubnow, however, whose seventy-fifth birthday was recently celebrated, has never been afraid of that fate. Our sages once stressed the diametrically opposed character of the book and the sword. (“If one is a scholar, he is no sword-bearer; if one is a sword-bearer, he is no scholar.”) [Bavli, Avodah Zarah 17b] But to Simon Dubnow, from his beginning, book and sword were inseparable; they served the same purpose. An understanding of Jewish history of the past has in him been combined with the political fight for the economic and cultural reconstruction of Jewish life to-day. From the beginning of his scholarly activities, he took care not to lose contact with the universal and Jewish realities of his time. So this Jewish historian has really lived. This is the principal reason why his autobiography has been expected with so great an interest.

The other main reason lies beyond his personality and scholarly and political activity. It lies in his time, in that period of some three generations of which he has been in part an observer and in part a protagonist, even a leader. He is one of the last great survivors of the tragedy of Russian and Eastern European Jewry. He went through the old traditional Judaism in the atmosphere of which he was born, through the Hebrew *Haskalah* [enlightenment] Movement in his early boyhood, through the Russian assimilationist crisis which befell the Russo-Jewish intelligentsia at the time of his maturity, and into the Jewish secular Nationalism of which

he himself, the author of the “Letters on Ancient and Modern Judaism,” became an ardent prophet.

His new political philosophy helped him in paving new ways in Jewish historical research. His great predecessor, Heinrich Graetz, for instance, who will remain for generations the classic of Jewish historiography, used to ignore the past, as well as the present, of Eastern European Jewry. Nor, for that matter, was his attitude to the Chassidic movement and similar phenomena of a more positive character. Here, and in many other fields of study of Jewish history, are the overwhelming merits of Simon Dubnow to be found, those merits that have ensured him an outstanding place among Jewish historians. He has opened up new approaches to the study of Jewish Eastern European and general history. He has done so by introducing his sociological method in opposition to the previously predominant theological or philological methods, and by rewriting the whole of Jewish history from a national point of view, based on his conception of the tendency to autonomy of the various Jewish centres. Not only has he (after [Eliezer Zvi Hacohen] Zweifel) laid the foundation for the scientific study of Chassidism, but his personality has become also a symbol in the great fight of the politico-economic reconstruction of Eastern European Jewry.

He opposed his lifelong friend, Ahad Ha'am, and his theory of the building up of the spiritual centre in Palestine, advocating a policy of autonomous Jewish national minorities everywhere. But he never opposed the building up of a Jewish National Home in Palestine as such. The heart of our leading Jewish historian has always been with the rebuilders of the land where Jewish history originated. In the same way, although ardently supporting the movement for cultivating the Yiddish language and literature, he always welcomed and took great interest in the revival of Hebrew, which he considered as the national language, while Yiddish was conceived by him as the language of the masses (*Volkssprache*). A couple of years ago, he even wrote in wonderful Hebrew his classic “History of chassidism” (“Toledot ha-chasiduth”), which he had originally written in Russian.

At the beginning of the post-War period, it seems as if his philosophy of Jewish Nationalism, based on the principle of autonomy for the national minorities, was going to become an actuality. Some Eastern European states had then started to fulfil their international obligations as regards their Jewish minorities by granting them a more or less formal cultural autonomy by establishing Ministries of State for Jewish Affairs, etc. But, alas, later on, one after another they annihilated these very interesting and promising experiments. Notwithstanding the remains of a few working

examples here and there, on the whole the ideal of the autonomous and equalitarian Jewish National minority is at present as far from fulfilment as it was when it was originally proclaimed in pre-War days in Tsarist Russia.

It fell to the lot of the champion of this ideology to witness not only the national decay of Russian Jewry, but also the politico-economic catastrophe of emancipated German Jewry. Years after he had been forced to leave Russia, with whose general and Jewish life all of his scholarly and political activity had been connected, he was not spared the horrors of the Hitler revolution and had, [2] at the age of seventy-three, to go into exile for the second time.

After Dubnow had completed his lifework, i. e., his "World History of the Jewish People" (in ten volumes, originally written in Russian, first published in its German and Hebrew translations), he proceeded to write his "Life." The big changes that have occurred in recent years, both in general political and Jewish life, have made it still more imperative for the leading Jewish historian to sum up his own life, which has been inseparable from the general stream of Jewish life as a whole.

It is only the first part of the Hebrew translation of his "Life" ("Sefer Chaim," translated by M[oshe] Ben-Eliezer, published by "Dvir" [Sanctuary]) which lies before us, covering his first thirty years (1860–90). Dubnow tells his story with the same objectivity and self-restraint which he uses in presenting historical accounts in general. So he traces his ancestors from the Dubno of the seventeenth century and throws a new light on Joseph [Joske from] Dubno, the author of "Jesod Joseph."

He gives a vivid and detailed picture of his parents and the milieu of his childhood, his education, etc., which is of great interest not only for the understanding of his personality, but also of general conditions of Jewish life in Russia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The descriptions given of the "Cheder," "Yeshivah" and the "Beth Hamidrash," surroundings in which the boy received his traditional education, will be most instructive to students of Jewish education of that time. Of equal interest is Dubnow's account of the penetration of the *Haskalah* and some of the modern Hebrew works (by [Abraham] Mapu, [Kalman] Shulman, [Perets] Smolenskin and others) into this traditional milieu and the revolution they caused in the minds of the Talmudic students. Here is an important account of the manifestations of the great spiritual crisis of Eastern European Jewry of the last century. The very detailed curriculum of his general non-Jewish education which he gives shows us the then prevailing tendencies of Jewish youth in Russia fighting for an entry into a surrounding world that was hostile.

Although the young Dubnow was still considering joining the Jewish Theological Seminary at Breslau, he was more and more drifting away from traditional Judaism. The frankness with which he speaks about his attitude at that time to religion and about his fights against his environment, etc., should attract the attention even of those who will not be able to agree with him. An outstanding place is occupied in this sphere by his grandfather, a typical representative of traditional Judaism.

Young Dubnow soon became an adherent of the then prevailing rationalist cosmopolitanism that was admired by progressive and liberal Russia. [Henry Thomas] Buckle and [Charles] Darwin were his masters. But he was still more influenced by the English philosophers John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, the spell of whom bound him and was reflected in his historical outlook. Mill's logic and ethics formed the basis on which the future Jewish historian started to build up his concept of history and of Judaism, and since then he has never given up his belief in the nineteenth-century ideal of liberalism, freedom of the individual, and the progress of a free mankind.

In describing his literary beginnings, Dubnow throws new and interesting light on the literary and political activities of Russian Jewry in the 'eighties of the nineteenth century. We not only learn here fundamental facts about the Jewish centres in St. Petersburg, Vilna, etc., but we are also instructively informed about the personalities and activities of the older and younger Jewish authors with whom the rising historian got into touch, such as [Jehuda Leib] Kantor, Mordechai ben Hillel Hakohen, [Simon] Frug, [Jakow L.] Rosenfeld, [Mark] Varshavski, [David] Gordon, [Adolf] Landau, [Lew] Levanda, [Ossip] Mandelstam, [Nahum] Sokolow, [Isaac Elchanan] Spektor, [Jacob] Dineson, Shalom Aleichem, and many others. Both men and events are portrayed here with sparkling vivacity and colorfulness.

All this represents only the beginning. To greater and more consistent scholarly activity, as well as to more leading political endeavors, has Dubnow risen since the 'nineties of the nineteenth century onwards, a period that will be dealt with in the forthcoming volumes of his "Life."

## 5. Humanistic Nationalism

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JEWISH Political Philosophy is, on the whole, unfortunately not given the attention that it deserves. Often the Jewish scholar or theologian refuses *a priori* to take any notice of this Political Philosophy, either because he is afraid of being mixed up with “politics” or because he dislikes it. He is, however, not aware of the fact that this very refusal or dislike is in itself a result – perhaps sometimes unconscious – of a certain “political” or politico-philosophical attitude. It is in any case not a question of “neutrality” or “impartiality.” No claim or false assumption of “objectivity” can justify the unreasoning attitude of Jewish scholarship toward the problems of modern Jewish Political Philosophy.

In this field lie burning problems of our Jewish present and future, questions that concern the very essence of Israel, of Jewry as a national or “political” Community, and of Judaism as a national or metaphysico-theological unity, and their correlation with other political communities and present systems of thought. The establishing of an adequate concept of Judaism, the idea of the “Jewish Nation,” the phenomenon of Nationalism and Assimilation must form, no doubt, the central topics of our Jewish Political Philosophy. It is essential that problems in this branch of thought be approached from a concrete and realistic standpoint depending on the dynamic process of the actual life of the Community, which is at the same time “subject” and “object” of this Philosophy.

Great service was done in this field of Jewish thought by the Nestor of Jewish historians, Simon Dubnow, who is generally considered, even by those who are unable to subscribe to all of his theories, the modern successor of Heinrich Graetz, the classical builder of modern Jewish historiography. Dubnow’s system of Jewish Nationalism was first developed in his famous “Letters on Old and Modern Judaism” (published in Russian, in the periodical *VOSCHOD* [Sunrise] from 1897–1907, as “Pisma o starom i novom evreistvie”), which exercised an overwhelming influence on the Jewish intelligentsia of the early twentieth century. The “Pisma” served as a kind of textbook for the study of Jewish problems both for Dubnow’s followers and for his opponents. Affairs in Israel and in the outer world have changed profoundly since the days when the “Pisma” were originally



conceived. But they have not yet lost their hold on the modern and younger students of Jewish problems. It was, therefore, a happy idea on Dubnow's part to give the present-day reader a new issue of his "Letters" – although neither rewritten nor fundamentally altered – the authorised Hebrew translation of which, by A[vraham] Levinson, has now been published by "Dvir" [Sanctuary], Tel Aviv (this is the only new publication of this work, since the Russian original and German translation cannot yet be republished).

One cannot be concerned here to enter into a thorough discussion of Dubnow's Jewish Political Philosophy and of the concept of Nation as well as of the Jewish Nation on which it is mainly based. The seven principal points underlying his system should, however, be mentioned: (1) Nation is here considered as a cultural and historical group of individuals, originally united through common race, language, soil, and state, then becoming a spiritual unity on the basis of cultural inheritance, traditions, and spiritual and social ideals in common; (2) After having gone through all these evolutionary steps, a nation possessing a certain amount of common ideas and feelings, driven by needs in common and by a tendency towards its continuous self-development, deserves, and must be given, some kind of autonomy, whether it be political, social, or cultural, according to its position among the other nations; (3) Dubnow reshapes Descartes' "Cogito ergo sum," adapting it to his system. The united cultural group of individuals called "Nation" also derives its existence from its self-consciousness. "We consider or perceive ourselves as a nation, therefore we do exist." The self-consciousness of the Nation is the main criterion of its existence. The strengthening of the national will and self-defence is the manifestation of this self-consciousness. A nation that is devoid of means of defence such as soil and State is naturally anxious to develop with the same intensity a system of "internal" means of defence; (4) The Jewish Nation represents the highest possible type of cultural and historical or spiritual nation. The long and peculiar historical development kept alive and strengthened this nation even without the "external defence" or unity of common soil or political centre. This "development" will go on strengthening the national will of the Jewish Community, which may take on other forms or manifestations, according to changes in the surrounding conditions; (5) *De facto*, the overwhelming majority of present-day Jewry do [sic] possess a consciousness of the Jewish Nation as a kind of "spiritual nation," owing to the fact that the national culture of Jewry has hitherto been concentrated in religion only. The secularisation of the national idea – so the author believes – will in the future turn the religious-metaphys-

ical [5] and traditional consciousness into a historical and evolutionary one. The ideology that says that Jews are nothing more than religious groups among the nations and rejects accordingly the concept of a "Jewish People," originates in assimilationist ideas advocated by some sections of Diaspora Jewry, out of the desire to adapt themselves radically to the dominating nations; (6) The contents of Judaism, a product of the national culture, form not a traditional but an evolutionistic element in the universal human culture. When a Jew betrays the Faith and becomes converted, he is no longer a member of our national Community; (7) Jewish nationalism has nothing to do with nationalistic egotism; it represents merely the collective individuality of Israel.

Dubnow goes to great lengths to show how Jewish nationalism is in line with the ideas of humanity, progress, and social advancement, against Reaction of whatever kind. Philosophically, Dubnow is a pupil of French and English Positivism. In his system – both in method and in argumentation – are found active traces of Auguste Compe's famous distinction between the theological, metaphysical, and positivist state of mankind's development, as well as of John Stuart Mill's "Logic" and Herbert Spencer's Evolutionism. Dubnow and Achad Ha'am are the greatest Jewish Positivists and Evolutionists of our time. The philosophy of the English-French Positivism Dubnow connects with a political Liberalism, which serves as the main basis of his system of Jewish Nationalism. He does not only deny the existence of any antagonism between this nationalism and a sound humanistic Internationalism, or between this Nationalism and the patriotism of the Jewish people to their respective "Fatherlands;" the so-called problem of "double loyalty" is not to him a problem at all. He sharply attacks assimilation, which he considers not only a violation of the national needs of Jewry, but also a very dangerous threat to the freedom of the "collective Ego" of Israel and to its status of equality among the nations.

In his own evolutionistic and dialectical way, he reconciles the "thesis" of nationalist isolation and the "antithesis" of assimilation in the "synthesis" of Autonomy; postulating that the Jews should be given everywhere a status of national minority, i. e., of national autonomy. And, again, this autonomy should – according to the author of the "Letters" – neither make the Jewish minorities a kind of "State within a State" nor lead them to isolation or exaggerated segregation, Jewish nationalism of this type being absolutely in harmony with humanistic, progressive Universalism. From this point, Dubnow develops a practical programme for the national and communal life of the "autonomous" Jewries in the Diaspora.

When Dubnow worked out his system of "Autonomy," under the terrible conditions of Tsarist Russia, it was regarded as a kind of Utopia. After the War, when some of the newly-created states agreed to give the Jews the status of national minority, it seemed as if the Utopia was going to become a reality. Recent political developments, however, have unfortunately caused nothing but the deepest disappointment to the originator of this theory. But these same developments have been a great shock also to other Jewish ideologies, too, from the right to the left. When Dubnow, however, speaks about Autonomy as a basis for the Jewish minorities in the Diaspora, he never thinks of opposing in any way the building up of Palestine. He has always been, and is, wholeheartedly connected with that building up and the revival of Hebrew.

There is, however, still an urgent need to bridge the gulf between Zionist ideology and that which attaches to the necessarily continued existence of Israel in the Diaspora; and in a way I myself tried to do it through the idea of *Shutafuth* [partnership] based on the full equality of rights, duties, values, and responsibilities between Palestine and Diaspora Jewry. Other questions remain that need further elucidation. But, from whatever angle we approach the urgent problems of our Political Philosophy, we shall always find ourselves compelled to turn to this textbook of Jewish humanistic, progressive Nationalism. Many present problems have been vividly foreshadowed in it. Youth will also find in the "Letters" a good ideological guide to many of its own perplexities.

## 6. Martin Buber and the Hebrew University

*The text reproduced here appeared in the column "A Literary Diary" under the pen name "Ben Arai" in: The Zionist Review, 22 December 1938, 20–22.*

MARTIN BUBER, who was recently appointed professor of sociology at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, is one of the most outstanding personalities among the spiritual leaders of German Jewry. As is to be expected of a grandson of Shelomo Buber, the celebrated Jewish-Galician scholar, he has never been entirely an "western Jew," although he has always had more of the West in him than many of the well-known types of "western Jews." To him the East has always been as essential and as vital as the West. And by East I mean not only the "eastern Jews" but the East in its widest significance, with its general "eastern" culture, its mysticism, and its deep religious feeling. If, in his earlier work, he was mainly inspired by western aestheticism, it is, on the other hand, eastern wisdom and has appealed to him more and more during the later stages of his intellectual development.

Buber began his work for Zionism and Jewry as one of the leaders of the famous "*demokratische Fraktion*," fighting side by side with Chaim Weizmann, Berthold Feiwel, Leo Motzkin and others for democracy in Zionism, for the encouragement of those activities inspired by the cultural aspect of the movement, and for the principle of "*Gegenwartsarbeit*" [sic], the doctrine that Zionism should not confine its scope to Palestine only, but should also work for the political, economic, and cultural improvement of the Jewish masses in the Diaspora.

### A Leader of Youth

Buber gave to the young generation of Zionists in Austria and Germany a more adequate conception of Jewish life and thought than had previously existed. Much of his work for the spiritual guidance of German-Austrian Jewry may be compared with the work of Achad Ha'am for the enlightenment of East-European Jewry in national culture and Zionism. At first Buber's Zionist philosophy followed in its main points the lines laid down by Achad Ha'am, but he later tended more and more to pave a way of his own. His work is marked by a fusion of a Jewish-nationalist trend of thought with religio-philosophical irrationalistic elements. Allied as it is to

the spirit of the so-called “religious socialism,” Buber’s philosophy presents the Jewish religion as a whole, from a much broader angle than it is covered by both Jewish orthodoxy and liberal theology.

From the time of his first addresses on Judaism to the “Bar Kochba” in Prague, he has been one of the most active and influential speakers and writers in German Jewry. *Der Jude*, which he edited, ranks among the finest products of Zionist literary work. His highly individual mode of thought and expression impressed Jewish youth even though many were unable to follow in detail his mysticism, neo-Chassidism, or general philosophy of God and man.

No wonder that when, at the beginning of 1933, German Jewry was faced by an unparalleled crisis, the younger generation turned to Buber for guidance and spiritual help. The response to his addresses on education and on the duties of German Jewry in that time of emergency demonstrated clearly how much of value he had to say and to give to his brethren in Germany. A “*Redeverbot*,” prohibiting public speeches even before small audiences, which the Hitler regime soon imposed on him, made him inarticulate at a time when the encouragement and guidance he could have given were most badly needed. But he could not be prevented from thinking and writing. He was still able to continue his very productive literary and philosophical activity, and he continued also his work of translating the Bible into German, an enterprise which had been begun with the co-operation of his friend Franz Rosenzweig, who had since died. And then, a short time ago, Buber left Germany for Jerusalem, to take up his academic work at the Hebrew University, an institution of which himself he had urged the necessity more than three decades before.

### **A Unique Cultural Centre**

Seldom has a centre of learning aroused so much controversy as our Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The keen interest which Jewry takes in this institution on the one hand, and the discrepancy between the urgent needs of the persecuted Jewish students of Europe and the original aims of our Hebrew University on the other, form the main topics of discussion.

Many critics of the Hebrew University have been in the habit of saying “Let us have in Jerusalem a university on the usual lines of European universities, to train those professional men who are needed in Palestine, and to give an opportunity to those exiled Jewish students from all over the world who can no longer continue their studies in their own countries.”

Such critics used to point to the Lithuanian University at Kaunas, for instance, which is planned on the usual lines, and which, they maintained, achieves more than the Hebrew University, and with a smaller budget, – a criticism which is not our concern here to examine.

The opposition to the establishment of one of these usual types of university in Jerusalem was not homogenous. Both the arguments and the positive aims of its opponents followed divergent lines.

Martin Buber had two reasons for issuing a warning against the establishment of a Hebrew University on Western European lines, as may be learned from his recent speech in Tel Aviv. In the first place he said that we should not accept the usual forms of Western European educational institutions as a basis for our Hebrew culture in Palestine. Although we were pupils of the western civilisation we could no longer believe in its creative force. One of the reasons for our return to Palestine was that we were sceptical of the power and sincerity of life in western Europe. In Palestine we had to try and create forms of life and institutions more suited to our own character, for we could not accept the forms established in the Orient as we had not yet become Orientals. In the second place the institutions we were building in Palestine had first of all to satisfy the needs of Palestine and the Yishuv. Palestine had no need of a “*universitas literarum*,” covering all branches of human knowledge and producing each year groups of graduate intellectuals, for whom there would be no prospect of living in Palestine. Buber said that we needed therefore to create in our University all the [16] research institutions necessary for the economic and social life of the Yishuv, chairs in subjects of Hebrew culture, and a central institution to educate our people for the task, equally vital from the general human and the Jewish point of view, of working for the fulfilment of the ideal of social justice.

I do not propose to discuss here the suggested antagonism between Occident and Orient, nor to broach the question whether we shall become Orientals in Palestine, remain Occidentals in the Orient, or endeavour to find some kind of synthesis of these two opposing trends. I am prepared rather to wait patiently for the future development of Palestine on lines which will force upon us either one course or the other.

But it is interesting to note that even Martin Buber had to admit that, faced as we are with the terrible plight of Jewish youth throughout the world, we cannot model the University on these ideal lines. Our University has been compelled to open its doors to the masses of Jewish students driven out from a great number of European universities, though what will become of them when they graduate, whether Palestine will be able

to absorb them, or whether they will be forced to leave the country and seek some place of work in *Chuz Laaretz* [outside of Palestine], no one can foretell. Hard realities are constantly forcing the opponents of a Hebrew University run on the usual western lines to accept compromise dictated by the facts of the present situation.

Franz Rosenzweig called it "the holy necessity." I do not know whether any necessity can be holy, but this necessity which forces upon us the abandoning of some of our ideas relating to the Hebrew University, also forces us to examine other recent problems of Palestine and of Jewish life from viewpoints which we opposed before. Even in this respect the lesson of our Hebrew University is instructive, and at this juncture it is important that we should not only receive a lesson from the University but also give it our utmost active support, since it has inevitably suffered greatly from the prevailing economic depression.

## IV. Occasional Writings in a Time of Crisis, 1938–1939

### 1. Introduction

Chapter four assembles a selection of nine texts that Rawidowicz published in a time span of two years at the end of the 1930s. They appeared in *The Jewish Chronicle Supplement* (IV.2.) and *The Zionist Review* (IV.3.–IV.10.), two London based journals to which Rawidowicz contributed on a regular basis during the 1930s. This body of work attests to how tirelessly Rawidowicz worked in advocating the revival of Jewish culture and Hebrew language in the Diaspora. In terms of style, these brief pieces foreshadow his later Hebrew contributions to *Yalkut* (Anthology) and *Mezudah* (Fortress), written under the pen name Ish Boded (A Solitary Man), hinting at the state of ideological isolation that Rawidowicz felt in this period – and throughout much of his adult life.

In contrast to his longer philosophical writings, these essays illustrate his nuanced perception of contemporary trends and conflicts between Jewish communities in the Diaspora and in the Yishuv. They underscore the fact that even in the wake of the devastating news about the persecution of Jews all across Europe, Rawidowicz could not give in to despair. Sacrificing his own scholarly research, he devoted himself intensively to Jewish life in the Diaspora and the role of the Zionist and Hebrew cultural movements.

Out of the eight articles that appeared in *The Zionist Review*, four were under the headline “A Literary Diary.” Though somewhat disparate in topic, Rawidowicz used this journalistic form to share regular impressions and observations related to the state of Diaspora Jewry. The pieces were published under the pseudonym *Ben Arai*, literally, “son of the moment,” hinting at the essays’ topicality, the turbulent nature of the time, and, above all, his sense of transience.

All the articles in this chapter are connected by Rawidowicz’s familiar themes: strengthening the Jewish Diaspora in relation to the Yishuv as well as fortifying Jewish knowledge and culture through the Hebrew language. According to him, both aspects are linked to two different yet entwined problems within contemporary Jewry: the ongoing degradation of the Diaspora



by Jewish leaders in the Yishuv and the indifference of Jews in the Diaspora towards Jewish tradition and culture outside of Mandatory Palestine. Taken together, he argued, these self-inflicted wounds prevent the realization of the Jewish people's full potential.

In characteristic style, Rawidowicz balances his abiding concern for the well-being of fellow Jews and criticism for what he sees as their liabilities and mistakes. An example of this mixed approach can be found in *Creative Fanaticism* in which Rawidowicz explores the prominent Hebraist and editor Eli'ezer Ben-Yehuda (1858–1922),<sup>1</sup> one of the harbingers of the revival of Hebrew culture in Palestine (IV.2.). Rawidowicz observes that Ben-Yehuda operated in relative isolation – that is, in environments largely indifferent or antagonistic to the advancement of the Hebrew language. The firm opposition Ben-Yehuda faced outside and inside of the Yishuv hardened his resolve not only to promote the usage of Hebrew in daily life, but also to advance scholarly research into the language. In 1890 Ben-Yehuda founded the Va'ad ha-lashon ha-ivrit (Hebrew Language Committee) which would become the leading institution for the development of the Hebrew language in Mandatory Palestine and later the State of Israel. Additionally, he worked tirelessly on his *Milon ha-lashon ha-ivrit ha-yeshanah ve-hadashah* (The Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew). This enterprise culminated in a sixteen-volume standard work completed in 1958, 37 years after Ben-Yehuda's passing.<sup>2</sup> Rawidowicz's admiration for the Lithuanian born scholar came as no surprise. One senses his identification with Ben-Yehuda, who, like Rawidowicz, struggled mightily to promote Hebrew language and culture with a largely unsympathetic Jewish public.

Rawidowicz trained his critical perspective in a novel direction in his 1938 article *Planning for a True Jewish Life. An American Experiment* (IV.4.). There American Jewry is described as a group that is detached from its cultural and religious roots, and that he compared to a group of Hebrew-speaking African Americans – or “Hebraic Negroes”<sup>3</sup> – as he referred to them in language typical of his day. As an antidote to this state

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1 See Andrea Schatz, Art. “Hebrew,” in: *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 3, 207–218; Robert St. John, *Tongue of the Prophets. The Life Story of Eliezer Ben Yehuda*, Berlin 1973.

2 Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, *Thesaurus totius Hebraicitatis et veteris et recentioris* [A Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew], 16 vols., Berlin-Schöneberg/Jerusalem/New York 1908–1959.

3 IV.4. *Planning for a True Jewish Life*, 265.

of alienation, he promotes the vision of Hebrew poet, translator and editor Abraham Regelson (1896–1981) to establish Hebrew speaking settlements throughout the United States. Regelson, who emigrated with his parents from Russia to America at the age of nine, became a passionate Hebrew scholar who frequently contributed poems and essays to journals in the United States and Palestine. He made *aliyah* in 1933 but had to return to New York three years later when his children became sick with malaria.

For Rawidowicz, Regelson's vision of creating Hebrew-speaking colonies in the United States was an uplifting example of how new ideas could emerge within the Diaspora to recapture the spirit of a Jewish community. It furthermore encouraged him not to give in to pessimism or disdain toward his fellow Jews. In this particular case, it placed Rawidowicz in the familiar situation of defending his ideas against the claim of being a quixotic utopian. Interestingly, he sought to make the case by invoking the Zionist project of *hakhsharah*, training especially young people in agricultural and physical labor in rural enclaves. Rawidowicz's embrace of Regelson's idea points to the root problem, in his view: the specter of assimilation into the broader non-Jewish urban surrounding and the concomitant alienation from a vibrant Jewish life.

Rawidowicz's willingness to countenance unpopular ideas or take on formidable opponents were on display in "A *National Language is Irrelevant ...*" (IV.5.). His issue revolved around a crucial, even existential question for him: language. In that essay, he addressed large parts of Jewish orthodoxy, predominantly in Eastern Europe but also those within the Yishuv, who fiercely repulsed attempts to introduce Hebrew as the chief Jewish language. To them, Hebrew was *lashon ha-kodesh*, the holy tongue, that should not be desecrated by pulling it into the lower spheres of the daily and profane. Hence, they regarded Yiddish as their mother tongue, confining Hebrew to prayer and Torah study. He recalled the famous *Sprachenkampf* which had raged in Palestine in 1913/1914. At that time, different factions argued about whether Hebrew or German should be employed as the primary language in schools, including the new *Technikum* in Haifa. Rawidowicz knew that the advocates of Hebrew had won the day, and he was not inclined to revive that struggle again.

Even though he was capable of being critical, Rawidowicz had no interest in dividing Jewry into irreconcilable camps. This is evident in the short piece *Jerusalem and Yavneh* that he published in *The Zionist Review* in the summer of 1939 (IV.9.). There he reached back into Jewish history to recall the story of the renowned Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai (1st century CE). In the famous story recorded in the Babylonian Tal-

mud (Gittin 56b), Rabban Yochanan surrenders Jerusalem to the Roman general Vespasian, whom he predicts will become the new Emperor. In return for this prediction, he asks that Vespasian “give me Yavneh and her sages” in order to rebuild a living Judaism after the destruction of the Holy Temple. Rawidowicz converts this familiar tale into a general reflection on the condition of Jewry. He rejects the idea of a divided Jewry according to which different factions pursue their own predilections: The Land of Israel over the Diaspora, the political over spiritual or orthodoxy over secularism. Instead, he pleads for a recognition of Jewry as a holistic body consisting of many different features, all of which are considered an integral part of the whole.

## 2. Creative Fanaticism

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name S. Rawidowicz in: The Jewish Chronicle Supplement 17 (1938), no. 182, 2–4.*

SWITZERLAND has served, and still serves, as an illuminating example to many nations and countries in more than one respect. The peaceful co-existence and co-operation of different communities speaking various languages in this neutral State have often been quoted by several sections in both Judaism and Zionism as an illustration of the possibility of a lasting and peaceful solution of the Jewish and Arab problem in Palestine. Those who have advocated the establishment of a bi-national state have pointed to the politico-national status of Switzerland as a convincing example showing the way to the fulfilment of their own political programme. Nor could those Jews who demanded the recognition of the status of cultural-national minority for the Jewries of the Diaspora find a better example on which to base the hope of the realisation of their theory than this same Switzerland. Furthermore, that country has shown the way to the solution of the problem of preserving the mother-tongue and at the same time acknowledging the authority of the dominant language in the State – a lesson which shows that it is possible for the Jews in the Diaspora to keep and to develop their own national language at home, in school, and in the internal spheres of their communal life, and at the same time to be – naturally and necessarily – loyal to the official language of the majority of the State, like all other citizens of the country. These tendencies of thought are here merely stated, without discussing or examining them from any logical or politico-practical point of view.

While hitherto Switzerland has served as a model for various shades of thought in Jewry, now, for the first time in the history of both Switzerland and Jewry, the former is going to profit by the example of the Jewish people; an important fact that deserves special attention. Besides the four languages officially equally recognised in Switzerland (German, French, Italian, and recently “Romanisch,” too) there still exists, especially in the country villages, a fifth language which is more a kind of dialect used in many different forms. Within recent years, a movement has started in Switzerland for unifying and reviving this fifth language, which is not officially recognised by the Government but is spoken by great sections of the people, until it is enabled to become the *Swiss language* – that is, a

national language possessed by the Swiss people as a whole. The representatives of this movement, numbering among them influential historians, philosophers, and writers, also stress the idea that the national Swiss language would free the country and its people from the internal competition and rivalry between the different recognised languages and would minimise or perhaps abolish the unfortunate waste of spiritual energy now caused among the Swiss people by the plurality of languages. But how could this wonderful proposition be turned into reality? In answer, those Swiss cultural leaders point to the way in which Norwegians succeeded in Norway in replacing the official Danish; the way the Slovakian language has developed – and *the way in which Hebrew has recently become a living language*, used for both modern literature and daily life.

More attention to the revival of Hebrew seems to be paid in Switzerland than in many sections of present-day Jewry. Those who are eager to stress any Jewish distinction or any Jewish contribution to the world should be careful not to overlook this singular and outstanding recognition of the renaissance of Hebrew by the Swiss national movement. If the Jews have been able to set an example, and a very positive and constructive one, for a cultural national movement in democratic Switzerland, is it not a contribution worth being made widely known and fully stressed?

[3] In drawing attention to this fact, the memory must be recalled of an ardent and devoted fighter for the revival of Hebrew, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, whose fifteenth Yahrzeit [anniversary of death] has recently been publicly celebrated in Palestine and in the Diaspora. Ben Yehuda, born in 1857 in a small Lithuanian town, lived from 1881 onward in Jerusalem, and combined in his person the scholar and the fighter. His political and religious credo brought him into fierce conflict with the “Chaluka” [Distribution] Jewry and the leaders of the “old Yishuv” to such an extent that he was not even spared the “traditional” *Cherem* [ban], and was also put into prison. But this article is not concerned with Ben Yehuda’s personality and the relations between him and the old and modern Yishuv. It is rather the devoted Hebraist, the pioneer of the revival of Hebrew, the Jewish scholar who is brought mainly to mind. He was very active in creating and consolidating the Hebrew periodical literature in Palestine. While Austrian and Russian Jewry in the nineteenth century had established a series of live and influential Hebrew periodicals, which included Hebrew dailies (in which the Diaspora has done the pioneering work), it was not before the year 1912 that Palestine witnessed the appearance of its first Hebrew daily, *DOAR HAYOM* [Daily Mail]. This was the work of Eliezer Ben Yehuda, supported by his son Itamar Ben Avi. Before this date, he was

editing, with [Alexander N.] Frumkin, the periodicals CHAVVAZELETH [Lily], and also MEVASSERET ZION [Herald of Zion], HA-ZEVI [The Gazelle], and HASHKAFAH [The Outlook].

Ben Yehuda, however, has done much greater service to the Jewish cultural renaissance by his life-long fight to turn Hebrew from a literary into a living and modern language. He was certainly not the first to use Hebrew as a living language, nor the first who spoke Hebrew. There were many before him who made themselves understood in that language. No doubt, a man like Abraham Ibn Ezra (1092–1167), the greatest “wandering Jew” among the first-rate Jewish scholars of the Middle Ages (who, by the way, visited England, but was unable to find a permanent refuge among Anglo-Jewry), could not make himself understood by Jewish scholars and students of the different countries that he visited except with the help of Hebrew. Many outstanding Cabbalists and leading Jewish scholars were said to have spoken nothing but Hebrew on the Sabbath. But on the whole, those early Hebrew speakers were only the exceptions, and there was no kind of national movement whatsoever, this activity being confined in the chief instances merely to the Sabbath, and probably to *divrei kodesh* [holy matters] only. Although one of our sages, when classifying the four languages, Greek, Roman, Aramaic, Hebrew, said that Hebrew was specially fitted for speaking (“Ivri le-dibbur”); while Latin, for instance, was fitted for warfare (Megillah, “Talmud Yerushalmi,” 10, a), this classical saying was not very popular among Jews, nor did it impress them very much during the many centuries of the Diaspora.

It was the idea of the modern national revival of Jewry which made essential the revival of Jewry’s national language. Many authors – since the days of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, and [Moses] Mendelssohn – began to write in Hebrew also on secular matters, too, matters of daily occurrence; and in this they were continuing the line introduced by the Haskalah [enlightenment] movement. It was, however, Eliezer Ben Yehuda who grasped the idea that a language is not national unless it actually lives in the mouth of its nationals and is not confined only to their literature. He not only grasped this idea but made it the dominating idea of his life. Once having arrived at this conviction, then Ben Yehuda did not recognise any limits in his fanatical struggle to turn Hebrew into a real and modern spoken language. It is known how he suddenly stopped speaking Russian to his wife, who did not understand Hebrew; and this “cruel” method worked: Mrs. [Hemda] Ben Yehuda then learned Hebrew very quickly. His house in Jerusalem soon became the first Jewish house in Palestine in which Hebrew really ruled. It was the first “Hebrew Centre”

of the so-called “Spiritual Centre.” Ben Yehuda’s efforts met with bitter opposition from men of the “old Yishuv,” who looked upon this open speaking of Hebrew as a real *Chillul Hashem* [desecration of the Name (of God)]. Nor was he taken very seriously by many leading men of the modern Yishuv. Even those who agreed that Hebrew should be spoken in Palestine were reluctant or sceptical, as far as Diaspora Jewry was concerned. [Menachem] Ussishkin once told the story of how “Ahad Ha’am,” for instance, was – in 1899 – greeted in Hebrew by a group of enthusiastic Hebraists of Ekaterinoslav, but he looked at them half-ironically and replied to them – in Russian!

Ben Yehudah’s belief turned out to be more creative than the realistic and cautious attitude taken by many of the best Jewish authors. His postulate of the “Dibbur Ivri” [Hebrew speech] afterwards became more and more the belief and practice of hundreds of thousands in Israel. The Hebrew teacher and Chalutz [pioneer] in Palestine, the Tarbut [culture] workers in the Diaspora, all contributed their share to this movement, favoured by the new conditions of the post-War period.

Yet how could an old, classical language of literature suddenly become a spoken one, fitted for daily use, adapted to all the needs of modern life? Here the scholar and philologist Ben Yehuda comes in. His great “Thesaurus totius Hebraicitatis” [Complete Dictionary of Hebrew] (not completed when he died) was not intended to serve Hebrew lexicography only, but also – and perhaps even more – to make the “Dibbur Ivri” fully possible. Ben Yehudah’s achievements in the field of Hebrew scholarship deserve a special study. Many of his [4] innovations met with criticism from Jewish philologists, nor were they accepted then by the masses of Hebrew-speaking Jews. But the greater part of them still live, and will go on living, in modern Hebrew, while many of his critics make use of many of Ben Yehuda’s *Chiddushim* [innovations] without having the slightest notion that they were introduced by this revolutionary originator, and, of course, without due acknowledgment to him.

Ben Yehuda was not the “inventor” of Hebrew, as he was once introduced by a chairman to an American Jewish audience; but whenever Jews or non-Jews admire the phenomenon of the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language, they will always have first to remember the life-long political and scholarly fight that Eliezer Ben Yehuda devoted to this cause.

### 3. A Bulwark of the Hebrew Diaspora

*The text reproduced here appeared in the column "A Literary Diary" under the pen name "Ben Arai" in: The Zionist Review, 5 May 1938, 18–20.*

THE terrible plight of Polish Jewry is too widely known to require any further stress here. Amidst the unrelieved economic wretchedness, however, and despite every attempt to degrade it through persecution, there are not wanting in the Jewish community of Poland signs of a determined will to live and to maintain its national existence through creative effort.

It is from this point of view, and not from the desire to find something of consolation in a hopeless situation, that I draw attention to a fact of tremendous importance which has passed almost without notice. It is that in the official census results taken in Poland, no fewer than 243,539 Jewish men and women declared Hebrew to be the language of their daily life.

The future itself is small in comparison to the total Jewish population, declared at 3,114,000 in the same census, not more, that is to say, than 8 per cent. As against it, moreover, has to be set the fact that 12 per cent of Polish Jewry declared themselves to be, both culturally and linguistically, "real Poles." But account should be taken, if a correct picture is to be drawn, of the great number of Jews, running certainly into hundreds of thousands, who have a more or less close understanding of Hebrew, but who for political or other reasons, either that they are members of the Agudah [Israel], or of some party of the left, have not declared themselves Hebraists. Even on the most conservative estimate, it is surely a matter of some significance, that in one country alone in the Diaspora, a quarter of a million Jews should have declared that Hebrew is their mother tongue, the language of their everyday life and their cultural expression. Why, then, even in our own ranks, has this fact passed without comment?

#### **Language: The Basis of Culture**

THERE are critics of the Hebrew movement who will question the importance of this phenomenon and who will say that there are other aspects of Jewish life and culture which are deserving of much greater attention.

No less than these critics, and others who have made of skepticism in Jewish affairs, and particularly with regard to Hebrew, a kind of religion,



do I know that Hebrew alone is not the only thing that counts for the people which uses it. I agree that the national culture does not consist of language alone, but that there are other factors which go to create it. That is self-evident. But it is no less clear that Jewry as a whole must agree on the fundamental fact that a national language is a *sine qua non* for the expression of a national culture.

The various sections or movements within a people may express the content of their own ideals in their own various and peculiar ways, and according to their own respective philosophies. But if they wish to form some kind of unified group, whether national, social, or even ideological, they can do so only by using the same means of communication, the same channel for the manifestation of their will to exist and to create on the basis of the heritage of their fathers.

It would not be necessary to mention so axiomatic a matter, were it not so often overlooked and even rejected by many responsible organisations and individuals in present day Jewry. The quarter of a million Hebrew speaking Jews in Poland have understood it and acted on it. They are pioneers in a work whose importance should not be underestimated.

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### **Tarbut in Poland**

CREDIT to whom credit is due, and here it is really overdue. It was the Hebrew teacher and the Tarbut [culture] worker who, at the cost of infinite struggle and self-sacrifice, made the Hebrew revival in Poland possible. In a community living in desperate conditions, the Hebrew educationalist has to face added difficulties. It is not only that material want stands in his way, and that the hostility of the assimilationists and the interference of the government complicate his task. He has to fight a tendency towards lethargy and indifference in his ranks. For there are those who agree in principle with the need for Hebrew, Tarbut, Jewish culture, and so on, but only in Palestine, not in Poland. In Poland, they say, as in other Diaspora countries, a Hebrew revival is impossible. At most we can provide a minimum of Jewish education in some form of religion class or Talmud Torah!

Fortunately the Jewries of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Roumania, Czechoslovakia and other countries have produced a younger generation of devoted Hebraists who have decided not to wait for the Messiah, but have undertaken the daring experiment of a Hebrew Revival in hundreds of Jewish communities in spite of the pessimistic prophecies of many ide-

ologists and even of Hebrew authors of great reputation. Without support from the official communal organisations, the Hebrew teacher carried on his work. If despite this, he has been able to establish a vast network of educational institutions from the Kindergarten to the Teachers' Training College, he deserves all the more our greatest admiration.

I say "admiration" because I am afraid to speak of more concrete forms of appreciation. The various relief organisations have been niggardly in their support of these institutions, while a drive which we held in London recently to assist them financially received but little response even from those who can afford to give and who understand the need for giving. One result of this lack of the necessary backing is to be found in the fact that the only Hebrew weekly in Poland, "Baderech" [On the Way], which was in fact the only Hebrew weekly in the whole of Europe, has recently ceased publication. It gives us food for anxiety, and for a critical examination of our own shortcomings.

### Hebraic Negroes

SOME of my readers will be surprised to learn that there is a large community in Chicago which is far more interested in Hebrew and spends much more money on the teaching of Hebrew than many of the Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Among the Negro\* slum dwellers of Chicago there functions a Society for the promotion of Hebrew knowledge, with a membership of over 150 members, which, by the way, is larger than the membership of the Tarbut Association in London! This society maintains a Hebrew school, where Negro teachers apply the Ivrit be-Ivrit [Hebrew in Hebrew] method in the sephardic pronunciation, although they are all Christians in a traditional sense. Many of the Negro pupils acquire in this way a sound Hebrew knowledge, before they receive a knowledge of literary English.

One of the graduates of the school, who is now a Christian priest, persists in preaching that a truly religious life is impossible without a knowledge of Hebrew and of the Bible in the original. I feel a little embarrassed sometimes, when I think [sic] of this Negro priest. How many of our own communal leaders, how many even of our theologians,

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\* The tenor and language in this section reflect usage that would not be acceptable today. The editors decided to retain this section as an act of fidelity to Rawidowicz's words and thoughts as he formulated them.

really believe that a thorough knowledge of the Bible in the original [20] is essential for every Jew and Jewess? Why do some people blame our youth organisations for estranging children from the synagogue by introducing the sephardic pronunciation? As if this alone were responsible for the drift of our youth from the synagogue or any other institution of traditional Judaism!

I can begin now to understand the outburst of the prophet Amos “Are ye not as the sons of the Negroes to me, O children of Israel?” [cf. Amos 9:7] Would that more of us were like the sons of the Negroes of Chicago!



### The Melamed and His Goat

AS Palestine is the Promised Land, so is Hebrew the Beloved Language. Seldom is an occasion lost for expressing with great enthusiasm, that Hebrew is our national language, and that the Hebrew movement demands, as our resolutions put it, “every support and encouragement.” What does this amount to in practice?

It reminds me of the satirical poem which David Frischmann wrote, some thirty years ago, about the Melamed [teacher], Reb Leiser [sic] Itshi Beile and his goat. Reb Leisir’s goat was an ordinary goat and like all other goats it was punctual in giving of its milk. But the Melamed “loved” her. Wherever he went, on Sabbath and on weekdays, he never tired of saying what a fine animal she was, and how much he was fond of her. You would have thought that all this time the centre of so much affection was wasting away from lack of proper food and attention. Till one day Reb Leisir walked into the stable and found his goat dead, the fount of his milk dried up. His distress was touching in the extreme. The Maggid [preacher] was called in to deliver the funeral oration, but needless to say he was not paid for his pains. Who can expect mere material considerations to enter the sphere of “pure love”!

The moral holds good even now. And how discouraging it is to meet with this merely passive and theoretical approach to a question of such great importance at a time when we are confronted in Jewish life with urgent political and cultural problems, when the whole question of the revival of the creative forces of our people is at stake. Sometimes I think that a little “hatred” of Hebrew could have been of greater help to us, than

this kind of “love” which is not followed by any preparedness for sacrifice, however small, in the sphere of action and responsibility.

### **In Plain Language**

IT is because I cannot see the advantage in passive agreement that I welcome the letter received from the secretary of one of our Zionist societies which was invited by the Tarbut Association to send a representative to its annual Conference, recently held in London. To this invitation, which was naturally in Hebrew, the following reply was received:

“Dear Sir, We are unable to understand contents of enclosed letter. Our Zionist Committee meets on Tuesday night, so that if you want us to discuss any matter, please send me a plainer letter. Yours faithfully ...”

Here, at any rate, is an expression of frankness. I would welcome the appearance of the writer at the next Annual Conference of the Zionist Federation. I hope that he will say there with equal frankness: “With regard to all this talk about Hebrew, I must tell the Conference that we in our Society are neither able nor willing, have neither the time nor the means, to undertake anything in this respect.”

Frankness of this kind would be more useful than any of the “Kulturreferatt” [sic] presented to the Zionist Congresses. It would bring out the results of our traditional attitude towards Hebrew. And it might make us ask ourselves whether the great and noble appellation of Zionist can properly be applied to those for whom our national language is not sufficiently “plain.”

## 4. Planning for a True Jewish Life. An American Experiment

*The text reproduced here appeared in the column "A Literary Diary" under the pen name "Ben Arai" in: The Zionist Review, 30 June 1938, 17-18.*

It is essential that the cultural development of a nation or group should not be isolated from its actual political and economic life, but should have an intimate relationship with every phase of that life. The deeper the cultural movement is rooted in the actual life of the group whose higher aspirations it expresses, the stronger will be its influence, and the greater its benefits to the community.

The principal defect of our Hebrew cultural movement throughout the Diaspora is that it has always been considered to be a purely "spiritual," even "abstract" movement, isolated from the representative moments in the political and economic spheres of Jewish life.

The idea that our national cultural movement should be built on non-party lines, as a non-political movement, is right insofar as such an attitude enables all political parties and movements in modern Jewry to participate in cultural progress. It would even be beneficial if it provided for a wide and united front of institutions and public bodies all contributing to the general cultural trend. But this line can be definitely harmful if it is understood to imply that our cultural movement should neither influence nor be influenced by our general political and economic life. This principle of "keeping out of politics" leads to keeping aloof from reality, to the danger of being removed from every factor which exists in actual life and exercises a real influence on community life. This "abstract" approach to the problems of our cultural movement does great disservice to the movement and to the community in general.

Do we really feel that Hebrew is our national language, do we sincerely attach at least a degree of importance to the movement which has shouldered the responsibility for the revival of Hebrew in the Diaspora, for making the Hebrew language and culture a real force in the life of Jews both as individuals and as a community? If so, then we must ask ourselves how we are going to translate this into terms of real life? What is to be our programme of action? Are the means at our disposal adequate for this extraordinary task of restoring to actual life a language which was, until

recently, “dead” and “literary,” and of creating a unified national basis for our actual and spiritual life?

### **A Revolutionary Suggestion from America**

It is gratifying therefore, to be able to report that American Hebraists take very seriously the problems affecting the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora. The achievements of the Hebrew movement in America, should, of course, have been much greater in view of the duties and responsibilities incumbent on a Jewish community of more than six millions. But it is not the movement which is to blame for the discrepancy between the great responsibilities and the small results achieved. There are many objective external and internal factors in general and Jewish life in America which impede the progress of the movement towards a revival of Hebrew culture.

Nevertheless, there are signs of a very promising beginning in the new Hebrew movement in America. A number of periodicals, political, literary, academic and educational, are published there. The American Organisation of Hebrew Youth, which deserves special attention, has recently made a very good start.

More than this, and symptomatic of the spirit of sincerity and consistency which animates Hebraists in America, is the plan now before the Tarbut [culture] circle of New York for creating there a *Shechuna Ivrit*, a Hebrew colony or settlement. The very plan indicates a creative cultural will, that is, a definite impulse towards a creative Hebrew life and cultural work, an impulse which is missed so much in other countries of the Diaspora.

### **Neglected Opportunities**

The highly gifted Hebrew-American poet, Abraham Ragelson [sic], who is poet and thinker in one, and who is too good a Hebrew stylist, whose work has enriched Hebrew literature by including the work of leading modern American authors, is one of the active protagonists of the plan for a *Shechuna Ivrit*. In the weekly *Hadoar* [The Mail], he rightly criticizes the pioneers of Jewish migration to America for having failed where other national groups have succeeded.

When the Christian immigrants from England, Scotland and Germany came to America they founded national colonies and settlements of their

own and named them after the places they came from in their own fatherlands; New Haven, Germanstown [sic], Milford, etc. In this way, they have carried on their national life in their new domicile in the New World, a life in which the general atmosphere reminds them of their country of origin. They even continued their traditional professions and occupations. The Dutch immigrants, who were bulb-growers in Holland, have established many centres for similar agricultural activity in their new home.

But what have the Jewish immigrants done? They have founded synagogues and relief-societies, bearing the names of their Russian or Galician towns, and they have bought ground for cemeteries. But what a great service could have been rendered by Jewish *landsmanschaften* [sic] to their fellow-countrymen and to all Jewry, if instead of placing the cemetery in the centre of their interest, they had built Jewish towns and settlements, New Minsk, New Eishishok, and so on! This alone would have enabled them to preserve their living tradition, to continue their Jewish cultural and spiritual life. This alone would have saved them from many evils that have befallen American Jewry.

Those parts of New York populated by Jews do not, unfortunately, form an organic and interconnected Jewish community. Not belonging effectively together, they are continually on the move, with the result that the Jewish immigrants have lost their old Jewish tradition, while they have not succeeded in creating a new and desirable style of Jewish life of their own.

What is needed is the creation of organically interconnected and systematically centralised Jewish settlements, where American Jews, or those of them who wish to live a full Jewish life in a Jewish environment and in natural intercourse with the general life of America in all its aspects, can do so, both as members of their living Jewish community and as free and equal citizens of the country in which they reside.

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### **Aims of the Shechuna**

The main objective is to create a Jewish settlement, where Americanism and Judaism can dwell together peacefully and harmoniously, while influencing each other and co-operating in the creation of the real “American Jew.” The Hebrew *Shechuna* would include within its walls all the Hebrew authors and workers in New York and in America in general. It would function as a means of liaison between America, Palestine and world Jewry. On the one hand it would acquaint Palestinian and world Jewry

with the best work being done in America in the cultural field, and on the other hand it would serve to introduce to America the cultural values created by the Jews in Palestine.

The *Shechuna* would also serve as a laboratory for sociological experiments, and as an inspiration and model for all Jewish America, as far as education, communal life, colonisation and public work are concerned. Such a *Shechuna* could well produce chaluzim [pioneers] for Palestine as well as pioneers for the spiritual and economic life of American Jewry itself. It would not segregate itself from the general life of the country even in its educational system, but its participation in the general life of America would bear the stamp of Jewish life and culture.

In the centre of Jewish life would be a "House of Learning," in which the Jews of the *Shechuna* would learn the best of their traditional culture from childhood until the end of their days. The synagogue would also retain its place in the *Shechuna Ivriith* but Ragelson has expressed the hope that it would be not only a place of worship but also a kind of *Bet-Am* [house of people/community center], and a platform for scholarly discourses, although I myself feel that this function should be left entirely to the "House of Learning." It must open its doors to new and modern values in Jewish thought, to the ideas, for instance, of such thinkers and writers as Nachman Krochmal, Hayyim Nachman Bialik, the philosopher of the Palestine Labour Movement, Ahron David Gordon, and others. The *Shechuna Ivriith* should also include social and co-operative institutions, in which Palestine Labour and its various branches could also serve as a model.

What then of America's attitude to such an establishment? The White House is interested at present not only in housing, in creating suburbs for the proletarian population of the big cities and in settling the workers on the land, but it is also endeavoring to bring together in close settlement nationals belonging to the same community, religion, or race. This is being done not in order to discriminate between the various nations and races represented in the United States, but with the clear purpose of creating national communities, living at peace with each other, sharing kindred national or religious interests and ideas.

Why should not the Hebrew section of American Jewry make use of the opportunity thus offered them by the government's policy, to lay the foundation stone of the *Shechuna Ivriith*, which might become the Hebrew spiritual centre for American Jewry?



### Political Concern

Many of those who are skeptical or pessimistic will say that this idea of a *Shechuna Ivriyth* in America is purely Utopian. Only *batlanim* [impractical men] like Hebrew poets and authors could make such a suggestion or take it seriously.

In spite of the risk which I am running of being identified with those sceptics who cast doubts on even the most practical schemes when they are concerned with Hebrew cultural activities in the Diaspora – with those *batlanim*, in short – I must confess that I feel the general idea of this *Shechuna Ivriyth* to be quite sound and practicable.

The scheme should not be considered only from the cultural aspect, as it involves political and economic considerations of the greatest importance. I consider the first task of such a Hebrew settlement to be the withdrawal of numbers of our youth in America and elsewhere from the overcrowded free and other professions, and the training of them in agricultural work and similar productive activities. This would solve some of the problems facing the coming generation in most of the greater European and American cities. In this way the long desired and still unfulfilled *Berufsumschichtung* of both our young and our middle-aged would approach its solution.

But in order that such settlements in the Diaspora should be able to succeed and fulfil the hopes dependent on them, they must be centres of living Jewish cultural *chalutzioth* [pioneer spirit]. Hebrew should not be merely an adjective equivalent to “general Jewish,” but it should really indicate that these settlements of Jewish youths in the Diaspora are going to become Jewish strongholds, centres for Jewish life in all its various aspects and manifestations. These settlements would in time become a force capable of revolutionising old-fashioned and lethargic Jewish communal life. A new type of Diaspora-Jew would finally emerge from them.

## 5. “A National Language is Irrelevant ...”

*The text reproduced here appeared in the column “A Literary Diary” under the pen name “Ben Arai” in: The Zionist Review, 25 August 1938, 16–18.*

NOT more than a very small section of orthodox Jewry has acknowledged the political and cultural necessity for Jewry as a whole to have a national language of its own, in other words, to cultivate and develop the language of the Bible and Jewish tradition not merely for the purpose of prayer and the study of classical texts, but also as a living medium of self-expression that may serve as a basis for common understanding throughout the whole of Jewry.

It is not our purpose here to give a full account of Jewish orthodoxy’s attitude towards Hebrew during the past century or so, although such a survey would throw light on many a problem and phenomenon of modern Jewish life. It will suffice here merely to mention that the attitude taken up by orthodox Jewry towards the revival of Hebrew, an attitude which is partly negative, in part militantly hostile, partly disinterested and neutral, and in part characterised by a kind of passive resistance, arises from many and various causes. Some of these are deeply rooted in a traditional conception of the essentials of culture and of the role that language plays in the spiritual life of the community, while others can be understood and explained only by a detailed analysis of the development of the political life of modern Jewry and of the influences of this life on orthodoxy.

### Language Merely a Form

The average orthodox Jew in Eastern or Western Europe has not been interested in Hebrew as a living or modern language because he has not attached any special importance to language as such. Language, in his eyes, was merely a form, a factor of little importance in the scale of spiritual and religious values upon which his whole life and philosophy were built. Whether intentionally or otherwise, he was in the habit of overlooking the cardinal importance attributed to Hebrew as a language by the great classics of our religious thought. Even the unforgettable sayings of our sages concerning the language “in which God himself spoke,” and in which the Torah was written have failed to impress the average orthodox Jew

with the idea that if this value can be revived, it cannot fail to be of value in spreading a knowledge of the Torah and of ancient Hebrew literature.

Even Yehuda Halevi's enthusiastic eulogies, (in his *Kuzari*), of Hebrew as a language superior to all the other tongues of the human race, have apparently had no effect on the type of orthodox Jew in question. It is not the language that matters, this type of Jew has always argued, but what is said in it, and he found some encouragement for this standpoint in the famous saying of our sages, *Shema bekol lashon sheata shomea*, ([Hear or say] the *Shema* in whatever language you understand) [cf. Bavli, Berakhot 15a]. From this, he has always inferred that the *Shema* alone matters, while the *lashon* (Language) is of little or no importance at all. This has always been one of the "official" arguments used against the revival of modern Hebrew, not only by the orthodox among us but also by many of the assimilationists. Many assimilated Jews, whose sons, and even they themselves, can barely read the *Shema* in the original, Jews for whom it has become necessary to transcribe even the *Birkat hatorah* [Blessings over the Torah] into Latin characters, for the benefit of those called to read a "portion of the Law," have tried to combat the movement towards building up a positive modern Jewish culture with the moral support of traditional and religious quotations such as the above, as though our sages, whose life and work were bound up with Hebrew, had spoken thus in order to provide a leaf with which their bankrupt heirs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries might cover up their nakedness!

### The Haskalah Movement

The politically militant section of orthodox Jewry could not accept the fact of the modern revival of Hebrew because it was inaugurated by the *Haskalah-Movement* (enlightenment) of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and was carried on and translated into the terms of the practical daily life of Jews into the *Chibbath Zion* [Love of Zion] and modern Zionism, three modern movements that the orthodox considered to be the ruin of Israel and the Torah ...

During the period of the *Haskalah*, many orthodox Jews in some countries considered the mere study of *dikduk* (Hebrew grammar) by a Jew as a kind of heresy, simply because the *maskilim*, the adherents of the *Haskalah*, believed in the precise grammatical understanding of the Hebrew of the Bible and other classic works of Hebrew literature. If the *maskilim* learn *dikduk* then it must be *treifa* [non-kosher] and *pasul* [disqualified]!

As though it were a religious duty not to understand the exact meaning of the language of the Bible! As though the method used in teaching the Bible in the nineteenth century Cheder, the method of *Vajomer – gesagt, Vayelech – gegangen, Vayeshev – gesessen*, and so on, really constituted a kind of religious precept, a Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai! As though, in short, the very fundamentals of Hebrew grammar had not been laid down by our greatest mediaeval scholars, pious men, no less devoted to God and the Torah than the leaders of modern orthodox Jewry from Wilna to Frankfort-am-Main [sic] or Pressburg.

Of a similar nature was the attitude of this type of orthodoxy towards the further stage in the revival of Hebrew, which was carried on by the Chibbath Zion movement and Zionism. Since militant orthodoxy opposed this revolutionary movement of modern Jewry for the building up of the modern Palestine, it felt obliged also to oppose the Hebrew Revival sponsored by those movements. If Zionists want Hebrew to become a modern and living language, so the leaders of this sector in Jewry thought, it must be dangerous. If [Eliezer] Ben Jehudah speaks nothing but Hebrew, if he has made it the purpose of his life and work to transform Hebrew from a language confined to books, into one used in all spheres of individual and social life, we must fight this terrible “heresy.” So thought and argued the “old Yishuv” of Jerusalem about half a century ago. To speak Hebrew was in their eyes, and not in theirs only, a great *Chilul Hashem* [desecration of the Name (of God)]. Hebrew is a holy language (*leshon kodesh*) and the heretics should be prohibited from using it for their secular purposes.

The holiness in Hebrew – in the recognition of which our modern Hebraists are second to none – is used as an argument against the Revival of Hebrew even in our own days. As if a language can be holy only if it is not spoken, only if nobody uses it, only if the youth deserts it, only if nobody can probably understand its treasures! As if the language is holy [17] when it is buried in books and old manuscripts, only when its use is not fully understood by those who believe in its holiness!

The opponents of the revival of Hebrew in this camp of present-day Jewry seem to confuse holiness with lack of life. They are afraid that by becoming a living language Hebrew might become unholy. But, in the fundamental self-expression of a nation such as its language represents, is holiness to be achieved only in a state of death, of not belonging to the realm of living spiritual beings?

The general argument: “The language does not matter, only the content is relevant,” could be of use to Jewish militant Orthodoxy, however only in the West of Europe, but not in the Eastern countries.

In Germany and other countries in Western Europe the linguistic problem of the Jews was not a burning one. Jewish Orthodoxy could and did follow the line taken up by the average Jew who adapted himself to the culture and language of his respective surroundings, out of economic and political necessity and without being aware of his own national language. The average Jew did it without any ideology. This was, however, furnished partly simultaneously and partly *post factum*, by the ideologists of assimilation of various shades, from the end of the eighteenth century until our own time.

### The Exponents of Yiddish

But matters were totally different in the Eastern-European countries with large Jewish masses, especially where assimilation was not favored either by the Government's policy or by the economic and political conditions of their surroundings. The radical assimilationists, however small their number in these countries might have been, did not care very much about the obstacles in their way and imitated the policy of assimilation advocated and to a great extent realised in the Western countries. But for some sections of the militant Jewish Orthodoxy, it was difficult – for various reasons – to join the camp of radical linguistic assimilation.

So we have witnessed the amazing fact that great parts of the *Agudas Israel* in Poland have been driven by their great hostility to Zionism, to modern Palestine, and to Hebraism into the arms of aggressive Yiddishism. Thus they joined the ranks of the *Bund* (the great Union of Jewish socialists) and of other Jewish political groups that have only one platform in common: the platform for opposing Zionism and the revival of Hebrew.

The women's section of the above mentioned party, the *B'noth Agudas Isroel* [sic], was not afraid some years ago to proclaim the learning and spreading of Yiddish and its literature as one of the first spiritual duties of the youth of the *Agudas Israel*. It also suggested that the month of *Sivan* (the month in which the Hebrew Torah was given to Israel!) should become a month of official propaganda for Yiddish and its literature.

It was interesting to observe how far political antagonism can drive even extremely religious-minded people. Because Zionism identifies itself officially with Hebrew, these *B'noth Agudas Israel* felt compelled – as far as the problem of language is concerned – to join the ranks of the *Bund* and similar groups.

If modern living Hebrew is *trefa* because it is supported or spoken by

the religiously “unsatisfactory” Zionists and Chaluzim [pioneers], – how can modern Yiddish, cultivated in many countries by outspoken non-religious Jewish groups, be *Kosher*? If modern Hebrew is too secular for the *B’noth Agudas Israel*, since when can Yiddish be regarded as the “holy” language of religious Jewry?

Far be it from me here to renew the lamentable and unproductive *Schprachenkampf* [sic], but I must draw attention to the amazing fact of some parts of Orthodox Jewry supporting the Yiddishism of the *Bund* in Poland.

### The Yiddish-Yeshivah in Tel-Aviv

In Palestine, there was no organised Yiddishist front which anti-Hebraist and anti-Zionist orthodoxy could join. Nevertheless, since the days of Eliezer ben Jehudah, as already mentioned, some militant circles of extreme orthodoxy persisted in cultivating Yiddish and boycotting Hebrew in school, synagogue, and home.

As the years went on and the revival of Hebrew in Palestine met with such great success, even the above-mentioned circles were, of course, forced to yield here and there. But only blind optimists can believe that their resistance or opposition to Hebrew – even in Palestine! – has been renounced by them forever.

But even those who were not so optimistic in this respect could not help being surprised by the fact that a couple of months ago there was founded in Tel-Aviv (not in Jerusalem, the residence of the “old Yishuv,”) a Yeshivah in Yiddish! Owing to recent terrible events in Palestine, little notice has been paid to this fact in Palestine itself. But this phenomenon deserves the utmost attention. It shows that even in the centre of modern Palestine such a thing is possible.

This Yiddish-Yeshivah imperils the unity and unification of Jewish or Hebrew education in Palestine. It is going to widen the linguistic gulf between secular and religious education – although there are in Palestine many religious educational institutions in Hebrew. And this linguistic gulf is really much more than a purely linguistic one. The unity of the Yishuv as such depends largely upon the acknowledgment of the supreme authority of Hebrew.

### Strengthening Hebrew in the Synagogues

That a spiritual danger in this sphere of Jewish life really does exist can also be inferred from a public statement issued by the Chief-Rabbinate of Tel-Aviv to all the various types of synagogues in Tel-Aviv. I shall not dwell here on the manifesto as such, but shall confine myself to the mere translation of it, which might serve as a very important document in connection with the struggle of Hebrew in Palestine:

“One of the signs of the renaissance of our People, returning to its land and intending to build its home and State, is the Hebrew language, which is dear and beloved to us chiefly because it is God’s language, the language of the Supreme One, the Holy Language, the language of the Bible, Mishnah [the first compendium of the Oral Law] and Midrashim [Biblical exegesis], and also of the vast literature created by the great and wise men in Israel through so many generations and periods. It is through Hebrew that we become deeply bound with the great past of our Nation and draw from its sources the forces of renaissance and resurrection.”

“To our rejoicing, we see that the Hebrew language is *spoken* by many not only here in our Holy Land, but also in the countries of the Diaspora. There is a hope that still many more will appreciate the importance of the Hebrew language for the resurrection of our Nation and that it will become the language of all Israel.”

“But we are sorry to witness the strange phenomenon that just here, in our Holy Land, in many synagogues, holy places where the Holy Language must dominate – as it is used for holy purposes – many of the Talmud-lectures are not given in Hebrew, and there are delivered in them addresses and sermons in various kinds of ‘jargon.’”

“Therefore, we have to draw the attention of the heads of the various synagogues to warn them to be on the watch and to make our Holy Language prevail in the life of the Synagogue; that the Talmud-lectures should be given in Hebrew; that they shall especially see to it that all the sermons, addresses, and declarations should be given in the Holy Language only. Only through adhering to Hebrew as the language in which the knowledge of the Torah and the Ethics of Judaism should be spread, shall we succeed in bringing these ideas to all the masses of our People, especially to the hearts of the young generation and so bring them nearer to our eternal sources, to the life of Torah and Holiness, in this way we shall become one Nation speaking one language, and the words of our Prophets will be fulfilled ...”

## 6. The Virtue of Self-Criticism

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SINCE the days of Plato every system of ethics has sought to establish a fixed scale of values, based on certain "Primary Virtues." A similar task has been attempted by various religious and philosophical doctrines which are distinguished by the "Primary Virtues" which they take as the foundation of their ideology.

Self-criticism seems to be a very modern virtue. One hardly ever finds it in ancient ethical or religious systems. But a closer investigation shows that even the "Ancients" did not fail to overlook this great virtue, although they did not give it the name, we know it by to-day. Self-knowledge, and similar ethical postulates preached by many of the ancient philosophers, carried to a great extent the same implications as the virtue we now call "Self-Criticism."

The ancient injunction, "Know thyself," might even perhaps be considered as one of the most influential sources of inspiration for the modern postulate of self-criticism.

Of course, it is not a very "easy" virtue. But, are any virtues "easy"? And is there any justification for claiming that they should be?

People often criticise their fellow-men for the lack of self-criticism, while they themselves do not practice this virtue which is particularly difficult to practise, since it is by its very nature unflattering.

### **Self-Criticism as a National Peculiarity**

What has been said about individual human beings applies, with even greater force, to the "collective ego" of a national community.

[Herbrand Sackville, 9th] Earl De La Warr, President of the Board of Education, said in his recent address given in Paris: "Self-criticism is a national sport in Great Britain."

If so, are we entitled to suppose that some nations have, and others have not, a gift for national and individual self-criticism, that some are capable of it, and others not? I would not go so far as to assert that. But we might perhaps be justified in distinguishing between nations or groups



of people who have developed a stronger and more acute sense of self-criticism than others.

It would be unwise to expect universal agreement on the question as to whether self-criticism can be considered a national attribute or whether one particular nation is stronger than any other in this sphere. I hope, therefore, that I shall not find a hornet's nest when I say that if the English people can be said to have cultivated self-criticism so far that it can be spoken of almost as a "sport" – the Germans, on the other hand, belong to the category of nations that have a far, far weaker sense of self-criticism. This statement, based on relatively long and close observation, has nothing to do with Hitler and the evils that his régime has achieved (although most of his and his followers' declarations show a complete lack of serious self-criticism, and his *Mein Kampf* could serve as a classical example of how remote an individual can be from this virtue). In general, self-criticism has never been popular with the Germans; they have preferred other kinds of "sport."

### Our Ancestors' Example

How splendid was the self-criticism of the leaders of ancient traditional Judaism! What a profound and magnificent expression our religious poets, the authors of our liturgy, have given to this conception.

When the Jew stands before God, all praise and complacency, self-indulgence, pride in achievement, accumulated wealth, honor and prestige – all are forgotten, as though they had never been. On the Days of Judgment – *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* – man stands before God in all his smallness, even smaller than he really is. No boasting, no pointing to the great things done by him and his fellow-men. . . . It is not only habitual religious self-humiliation combined with the urge for internal purification, accompanied by confession, that strikes us to the depth of our soul, even during the mere reading of our traditional liturgy. It is the exalted and purifying self-criticism expressed therein that dissolves our last attempts at self-deceit.

The Jewish people, both in its totality and through its individual men and women, is subjected to this creative and renewing self-criticism. I have in mind not only the impressive and lengthy *Al Chet* [For the sin] and the *Oshamenu* [We have sinned], or the wonderful *Viduj* [Confession] before *Kol Nidrei* [All vows], but many other masterpieces of our liturgical literature, some of them, unfortunately, omitted from the modernised

*Machzor* [prayer book for festivals]. (I am concerned here primarily with the literary and political aspect of them.) In them, you find not only the burning protests against the blood-thirsty persecutors, the desperate cry of the poor “sheep” facing constantly the “seventy lions” of the surrounding nations, expressed in a way unexcelled by any modern Jewish poet of recent times – but you see there also the persecuted community analysing its position, investigating the causes of its misery, examining its own faults and transgressions, until it no longer has the power to protest or to defend itself.

### A Refreshing Call from Palestine

Modern Jewry is not so readily inclined to indulge in this kind of radical and almost devastating self-criticism. One has only to examine the attitude of certain Jewish political parties and groups towards each other, when confronted with the great catastrophes that have befallen Jewry in recent years in order to see how far removed many of them are from this virtue. Each of them believes and proclaims that the opposite party is bankrupt of hope or ideas, while none of them can be considered to have emerged victorious from the disasters that have befallen our people. Meanwhile, the House of Israel – everywhere, from Dan to Beersheba, from Eretz Israel to Vienna, Berlin, Lemberg, and Vilna – is in flames. A concentration of all Jewish forces, overlooking previous differences of opinion or outlook in order to stand up to the almost unparalleled urgency of the present situation is one of the greatest of all our needs.

It is therefore very refreshing and encouraging to notice that one of the leaders of the Mizrahi movement, Rabbi J[ehuda] L[eib] Fishman (member of the Executive of the Zionist World Organisation and the Jewish Agency for Palestine) has considered this moment, though so fraught with troubles and persecutions forced upon us by the outside world, as opportune enough to draw the attention of his friends, the followers of religious and traditional Zionism, to the weakness within their own ranks.

The critic, of course, does not forget his opponents in the other camps of Jewry and Zionism, but the main stress in his call to his followers (“Prepare [17] the Way” in *Sinai, A Monthly for Torah, Science and Literature*, published by the “Rav Kook Institute” of the World Mizrahi Organisation, December issue) is placed on the self-criticism that he practises within his own ranks.

The self-critic, if this term is permitted, is greatly dissatisfied with our achievements in various fields of thought and practice. The greatest hope – he states – of the Jewish renaissance and the rebuilding of Palestine was that in the future we should see the fulfilment of our eternal aim: “From out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” [Isaiah 2:3]

But – he complains – we have, unfortunately, to admit that all our work has not brought us even one step nearer to the fulfilment of this great vision. During the forty to fifty years of national renaissance, we have been far removed from this eternal ideal of our people. The national conscience has awakened in Jewry, the destructive tendencies of the assimilationists have been seen in all their ugliness and accordingly refuted by the nation. We are longing for our own sources of inspiration, for our own national self, for perfection and purity – but all this awakening has not yet purified us, or increased and deepened our knowledge of Torah and the literature of Israel.

Rabbi Fishman complains that Zionism – even that of the Mizrachi camp – stresses too much the practical, political, and colonising aspect, while the spiritual side is overshadowed. The ignorance of the sources of Judaism – he goes on – in the ranks of Zionist youth is increasing. How is a national Judaism conceivable without being deeply rooted in the sources of our culture, in the Torah?

Even more vigorous criticism is leveled by Fishman against the practise of religious and traditionally national Jewry. He complains about the fact that even in the ranks of religious Judaism ignorance of the Torah is on the increase. We, he says, who have come to Palestine to build it on the basis of the Torah, what have we done to strengthen the position of that Torah? Where are our worthy achievements in this respect? We are too much inclined to be satisfied with the minimum accomplishment. We live on the merits of the past, *Sechut Avoth* [Merits of the Fathers], but where is our own great contribution? We are satisfied with a number of schools and institutions, but what are we doing to make the Prophet’s vision true: “And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord ... For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah.” [Isaiah 2:3]

Fishman has bitter comment to make concerning the educational work led by his own political and religious group. We have not succeeded – he says – in planting in the hearts of our pupils a real “eternal love” for our concept of traditional Judaism. And this because our teachers, though being religious, are far from a deep and lasting creative love for our Judaism. They cannot serve as ideal examples to their pupils. Many of them are

only “mechanically” connected with religious Judaism. He is not afraid of going so far as to add that many of those teachers “love” the Torah not for the sake of the Torah, but for material reasons. They are not prepared to make any sacrifice on the altar of this love. Many of them have not in their homes even a Talmud text, *Haggadah* [book containing the Passover story and rituals] or kindred books.

As far as the very study of Talmud is concerned, Rabbi Fishman draws our attention to the fact that only about twelve out of the 700 students of the Hebrew University attended lectures on Talmud. (The proportion between students and lecturers in the various branches connected with the study of Talmud at the Hebrew University is worthy of close attention). The Palestinian *Yeshivoth* do not satisfy him either from the general spiritual aspect or from the point of view of educational standards. Jewish renaissance means above all the renaissance of Hebrew, the language that has accumulated all that was best in ancient Jewry, all that was alive in our Prophets and Sages – and how can we be reconciled to the fact that our national and holy language is not heard in many of the *Yeshivoth* in Palestine? Or to the fact that the voices of the students of these institutions in Jerusalem are not heard using our ancient and rehabilitated tongue? For Yiddish is still predominant, as though it were impossible to explain the *Mishnah* [the first compendium of the Oral Law] or a portion of the *Gemara* [discussion/elaboration of the Mishnah] in Hebrew!

### The Social and Ethical Aspect

Rabbi Fishman misses in these *Yeshivoth* the combination of Talmudical training with an ethical and social code for daily life. It is this aspect that the critic stresses most vigorously.

He opposes the usual distinction of traditional Judaism between “Commandments between man and man” and those “between man and God.” How can you – he asks again – expect the young generation to respect and adore our religion if they see religious Jews living on money-lending, preferring cheap non-Jewish labour to Jewish labour, handing over to the courts their poor brethren who are unable to pay their |18| debts instead of helping them in their misfortune?

The author stresses the very well-known fact that the Jewish religion consists not only of ritualistic laws concerning food and so on but also of social and ethical commandments, especially those prohibiting usury and the deception of one’s fellow-men and urging help for the needy. One

cannot accept the one part of it without truly observing the other, which is equally essential and indispensable.

Rabbi Fishman is against the separatist tendencies of extreme Orthodoxy. He reminds his readers of the great figure of Rabbi Israel Salanter, the inaugurator of the “*Musar-movement*” in Russia (a movement for strengthening the ethical postulates among Jewish masses and Talmudic scholars, for self-knowledge and practising the maxims of Jewish Ethics), the fighter for peace and mutual understanding in Israel.

“If I had lived in the generation of Rabbi Moshe Sofer” (known as the “Chatam Sofer,” the leader of Orthodoxy, great opponent of modern Jewish liberalism and religious reformism) – Rabbi Israel Salanter is related to have said – “I would not have done what he did, ban the reformers and excommunicate them from Israel, but I would have first approached Abraham Geiger (the head of the Jewish reformers in Germany) and would have tried to argue with him in order to convince him of his error. Had I succeeded, well and good. If not – I would have allowed him to assume that I had accepted his point. Well, my brother, I would have said, you want a ‘reformed Synagogue,’ – then let us build it together. I would have then put in the ‘reformed Synagogue’ ten *Talmidei Chachamim* (Talmudical scholars) who would sit there and study the Torah, and I am absolutely sure that in the end this ‘Synagogue’ would have been turned into a *Bet Midrash* [house of learning] ...!”

I wish that many of the groups in modern Jewry had shared the great wisdom of Rabbi Israel Salanter. If this method had always been adopted for dealing with ideological and political opponents, how much better and healthier would our communal and political life have been.

One of the most decisive steps towards this creative wisdom is again the cultivating of that virtue on which we have dwelt here. May the frank call of the leader of the Mizrachi to his followers serve as an instructive and encouraging example to other political parties and groups in modern Jewry!

## 7. Jewish Renaissance. One and Indivisible

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name Dr. Simon Rawidowicz in: The Zionist Review, 4 May 1939, 16–18.*

At least two generations of Jewish spiritual leaders and Hebrew authors have had occasion to complain about the lack of understanding that has been shown toward the renaissance of our Jewish culture and the various tasks that it imposes on our people. I do not propose to add even one verse to this Book of Lamentations.

[Menachem] Ussishkin once told the story of how Dr. Theodor Herzl was embarrassed at the Third Zionist Congress (1899) by the Right Wing that opposed the discussion of the cultural problem on the platform of the Congress. The late Dr. Moses Gaster, who had to deliver the *Kulturreferat* at that Congress, is said to have comforted the excited leader in the following words: “Do not worry Dr. Herzl, I shall raise the cultural problem to so high a level that nobody will understand.”

Although Dr. Gaster, with whom I spoke some time ago on this topic, was not prepared to admit to the precise phrasing of his remark, the story serves nonetheless to demonstrate most vividly the way the cultural problem has most often been dealt with. Whether or not one raises it to a high level, people are not inclined to “understand” it – and the discussion of it, in fact, usually “does no harm.”

It would involve me in far too deep a controversy if I were to enumerate here all the arguments and explanations that have been offered for this curious fact. In our own Zionist ranks may be heard even now more than one “justification” for the lack of adequate support given by official Zionism to the endeavors that are being made for our cultural revival. On the one hand, there are such arguments as the necessity to give priority to the political and financial aspects of the building of Palestine, or the usual plea of lack of time, money, workers and so on. On the other hand, there are those who are so convinced that the Hebrew revival in the Diaspora has no relevance to Palestine that they not only withhold their practical support for this movement but also decline even to discuss it. This I rank among the most important clues to the lamentable situation. The arguments based on an alleged lack of means, time, and workers for the Hebrew movement are more deeply rooted in current Zionist ideology than is usually assumed.

My purpose here is to state the very reverse of the belief that the cultural revival in the Diaspora has no relevance to the upbuilding of Palestine. As I have tried to make clear elsewhere, I do not view the problems of Diaspora Jewry, linguistic and spiritual problems included, from a merely Palestinian viewpoint. Yet, for the sake of argument, I am prepared to follow the lines of the generally accepted axioms. Instead of a lengthy speculative analysis, I shall begin by hinting at a concrete fact, which could be augmented by many others from various spheres of life.

### The “*Juedische Welt Rundschau*”

If there were any need for special stress to be laid on the problem, the controversy that has recently broken out in Palestine over the publication of the *Juedische Welt Rundschau* in Jerusalem may well serve.

It can be said without exaggeration – even if one did not fully agree with the policy pursued by it – that the *Juedische Rundschau*, the official organ of German Zionists, developed during its existence a high standard of political integrity and sobriety, combined with exceptional insight and dignity of style that might serve as an ideal example for the Zionist and Jewish press in other countries. Under the editorship of Dr. Robert Weltsch it has, especially lately, become more and more the leading organ of German-speaking Jewry, even outside Germany. The extremely heartening and educational role played by this journal during the first five and a half years of the Hitler regime deserves special mention.

The second stage in the development of the Nazi “solution” of the Jewish problem, the disastrous results of which made themselves so unmistakably felt in November of last year, put an end to the appearance of this outstanding Zionist journal. The editor and his friends thought it advisable to renew publication in Jerusalem. They believed that in doing so they would be rendering a great service both to Zionism and to German-speaking Jewry now scattered in so many different countries. Its first Jerusalem issue, however, and its distribution to thousands of houses in Palestine, raised a storm of indignation from all sectors of the Yishuv. All the leading political and cultural groups in the Yishuv joined in a protest against this undertaking, and in spite of an attempt to defend the venture by a few of the more tolerant and sympathetic personalities, it had to be given up and limited to the continuation of the journal in Paris, according to recent information in the Palestine Press.

I am not prepared at this moment to examine the advisability of

publishing the German *Juedische Welt Rundschau* in Jerusalem or any alternative project that might answer the needs that gave birth to the idea, nor have I space for such an examination. But I feel obliged to draw the attention of our responsible political and cultural organisations to the greater issue that underlies the controversy over the Jerusalem *Juedische Welt Rundschau*. It may be pointed out here, incidentally, that this controversy is reminiscent of the fight of the first Yishuv against German about 30 years ago, in connection with the *Technikum* in Haifa. The difference is that it was an issue of Zionism against the German patriotic and assimilationist *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*, while now the protests and the defensive measures are directed against men who have served for decades the cause of Zionism and Jewish spiritual renaissance.

### The Roots of the Problem

The external characteristics of this fight against the publication of the German *Juedische Welt Rundschau* in Jerusalem should not be allowed to divert attention from the main causes and the very roots of such phenomena.

If the possibility of a Zionist journal being published in Palestine in German constitutes so grave a menace to the development of spoken and written Hebrew and to our cultural life and educational work, is it likely that the elimination of any such threats will in itself guarantee a satisfactory future for cultural activities in the Yishuv? Does not the very fact that one Zionist journal in German is considered a grave threat to the cultural life of the Yishuv, in spite of eighty-odd existing Hebrew periodicals and a whole network of Hebrew educational institutions [17] from the kindergarten to the Hebrew University, deserve the closest examination?

And the more one may be convinced of this menace, the more support one might give to the Yishuv's resistance against the publication in Jerusalem of a journal for German-speaking Zionists – the more urgent it becomes not merely to acquiesce in protests but to go to the very root of the matter.

Furthermore, is the fact that the Yishuv counts tens of thousands of citizens who cannot really enjoy any journal except one like the German *Juedische Welt Rundschau*, who cannot identify themselves with any of the eighty odd Hebrew periodicals, less disturbing than the mere publication of that organ in Jerusalem? Will not the masses of readers, many of them highly cultured men and women, excluded from sharing not only in the



literary but partially also in the political life of the Yishuv, build a kind of German “Ghetto” in Palestine to attract other groups of the Yishuv, and import German literature and journals into Palestine from abroad?

And why only the German newcomers? It is not confined to them alone. Does not the circulation in Tel Aviv of a certain liberal Russian daily issued in Paris alone surpass the number of the copies of all Hebrew Palestinian periodicals subscribed to by Jews all over the world? Not to mention the popularity of the Yiddish press among the *Olim* [immigrants] from the Eastern-European countries, or that of the English and American periodicals among the corresponding circles in Palestine. Does not the number of English books imported to Palestine surpass by far that of Hebrew books bought by the Jewry of the whole British Empire? The blame is often laid on the German *Olim*. Of course, most of them would not have taken refuge in the Land of our Fathers had they not been so mercilessly forced to leave their German “Fatherland.” But, does that not apply to a good proportion of the *Olim* from other countries too? And this is not confined to the masses and non-Zionists alone. How many Zionist leaders and Hebrew authors, [Chaim Nahman] Bialik for instance, and many, many others, failed to fulfil personally and in a concrete manner the idea of Zionism until they were directly or indirectly forced to do so by radical changes in the conditions of their domiciles!

There are frequent, and justified complaints about the dominance of spoken German in Palestine. But I recently learned from the statement made by the “*Hitachdut Olei Germania*,” [Association of Immigrants from Germany] – re-stated by Professor Hugo Bergmann – according to which many German *Olim* have been complaining that while they have tried to address non-German *Olim* in Hebrew, they have been asked to speak German.

### The Basic Factor

This is not the main problem. Far be it for me to prescribe any kind of chauvinistic cultural and spiritual isolation. When we speak about “Hebrew education,” we never mean one that excludes the universal values and fundamentals on which education as such is necessarily based. While advocating *Dibbur Ivri* (Hebrew speech) we never think that a Jew or Jewess is obliged to speak Hebrew and Hebrew only for twenty-four hours a day. There is not such a *Mizwah* [commandment] in the *Shulchan Aruch* [The Prepared Table] of our cultural renaissance. In the same way,

we do not think that Palestine can or should isolate itself politically or economically, as well as spiritually and culturally, from the outer world. We do not even think that the Yishuv will be – at least for the next generations – uni-lingual. Many sections will be forced – both for economic as well as for obvious spiritual reasons – to be bi-lingual, some even polyglot.

I do not intend to prophesy here the future cultural and linguistic structure of the Yishuv; all I am seeking to point out is that the Yishuv's linguistic self-defence against a Zionist organ to be issued in German in Jerusalem should not make us blind to the basic factors that necessitate such measures of self-protection.

The main cause of it is, no doubt, that Zionism has neglected the spiritual and linguistic education of our masses and youth in the Diaspora-countries, that it has failed to raise the cultural standard, that it has not seen that it was necessary first of all to develop in the Diaspora a Zionist internal policy that would turn Diaspora-Jewry into a Jewish living community, constantly creating spiritual and other values indispensable for their life, in brief, that it has not gone so far as to acknowledge that a living and creative Diaspora-Jewry is a *sine qua non* for Palestine, Zionism, and the Jewish future in general. And how is such a Jewry imaginable without a solid, all-encompassing, dynamic cultural policy, built on the ideas implicit in the Revival of Hebrew?

If we want to have a *National* home in Palestine – and there can be no doubt about it – we must train our Diaspora-Jewry for it, i. e., we must have a national policy for the Diaspora. Had we given an adequate preparation to our *Olim*, the “national” side of our Home would have been much more secure, at least there would have been no controversies necessary in this sphere.

Therefore I blame the German Zionists (and, of course, the Zionists of other countries,) less for their temporary loyalty to German in Palestine, and for issuing German periodicals there, than for their failure – while in Germany, in the pre-Hitler period – to give their own followers and the wider circles of German Jewry a more Jewish spiritual background, and mainly for not having adequately acknowledged the supreme command of our Renaissance: *the return to Hebrew*, ancient and modern, in speech and in literature. They should have paid much more attention to the problems of the Hebrew revival – *and not postponed or “shelved” them until they could actually go to Palestine*. They should have come to Palestine not with a “transferred” German language or culture, but with a language inherited from their fathers and forefathers.

I know the difficulties facing every Diaspora-community in the cultural and the linguistic field, still more those conditioned by the natural and inevitable strong influence emanating from the highly developed culture of a surrounding and dominant western country. Nevertheless, German Zionism (as well as Zionism in other countries) could and should have done much, much more in the field of our cultural life – for its own national safety and for the benefit of a homogeneous Palestine.

Do not blame devoted and sincere Zionists for trying to continue the publication of their German Zionist organ in Jerusalem – blame Zionist cultural policy, or the lack of such an adequate policy, during the past thirty years. This is not a question merely of the *Juedische Welt Rundschau*, but it is a concern of the highest Zionist and Jewish importance.

It is easier to arrange protests and to pass resolutions against a German Zionist organ in Jerusalem |18| than to devote the vast amount of patience, energy and devotion necessary to make the Hebrew language and Jewish culture living and dominant forces in the life of our masses and youth in the Diaspora, so that in the future the Yishuv might be spared any further cultural schisms. But there is no other way for the future of the Jewish Palestine, as well as of Jewry in general, than this: less satisfaction with resolutions of protest in Palestine, and more faith and initiative in the Diaspora.

For, one should in no way minimise the dangers threatening the homogeneity and linguistic and spiritual unity in the Yishuv. About a year ago it was estimated that 150,000–200,000 Jewish men and women in Palestine did not sufficiently know the official and living language of the Yishuv. This means that about 40 per cent of the Yishuv are unable to take a full and active part in political and cultural life of Palestine. They cannot read the Hebrew Press and literature, they cannot profitably attend meetings or visit the theatre, nor can they come to a real and close brotherly understanding of the other 60 per cent of the Yishuv. How great a social and political menace for the future of the Yishuv this implies!

If the riots which began in 1936 and their political and economic consequences had not stopped or weakened mass immigration into Palestine; if another 150,000 Jewish men and women from various countries had been added since then to the 150,000 already mentioned, a still heavier brake would necessarily have been put on the progress of the cultural and linguistic unity of the Yishuv. This lamentable decline in the mass immigration (compared with 1933) of the last three years – which I greatly deplore, since in spite of all my insistence on Hebrew and Jewish culture I would prefer millions of Jews in Palestine with very, very little Hebrew to

a Yishuv of around 200,000 more or less good Hebraists! – has eased the linguistic position in Palestine a little. Hebrew has been given a chance to recover, to strengthen its old position, and to assure its future. It is tragic enough that the Hebrew cultural life of the country should owe anything to such a deplorable factor as the decline of the Aliyah to Palestine.

I certainly believe that the language of our national past will, in the end, succeed in imposing its supreme authority on all those newcomers. But it is very dangerous for our cultural policy here and there not to pay the greatest attention to the risks involved in this position.

The moral of all this can be summed up in a few fundamentals:

The inadequate regard for Hebrew culture and Jewish education in the Diaspora is dangerous not only for the Jews in the Diaspora itself but also and in, perhaps, a higher degree for Palestine.

The linguistic and spiritual problem of the Yishuv must be grappled with and solved at its roots, i. e., in the *Diaspora*. No Jewish or Hebrew Palestine is imaginable (and if imaginable, hardly very useful and influential for all Jewry in general) without a living Jewish or Hebrew Diaspora-Jewry. The “Hebrew Revival” in the Diaspora is a *sine qua non* both for the maintenance and development of Jewry as such as well as for the complete fulfilling of our aims in Palestine. Strengthen the Hebrew movement in the Diaspora-countries and you strengthen the very fundamentals of Palestine. *For the Jewish or Hebrew Renaissance is one and indivisible.*

## 8. Jerusalem and Yavneh

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THOSE who stress the urgency of our spiritual needs and cultural problems are generally regarded as exponents of a one-sided spiritual approach, who remain blind to the burning economic, political, and civic problems facing Jewry today. The present writer hastens to repudiate this charge as far as he himself is concerned.

Nothing is further from me than the reduction of all our Jewish problems to spiritual factors or the overriding of all other “non-cultural” aspects of our life. When I write in these columns about our cultural problems, I do not claim that they are in the remotest degree more “important” than the economic or political ones. Nor do I suggest that we should shut our eyes to the urgent everyday problems that face us throughout the world. I never conceived of “Jewish culture” as isolated from all these spheres. Such a far from splendid isolation, from which our cultural problems have been unfortunately too often viewed, can be of no help either for our cultural welfare itself or for the other activities from which it is cut off in so unnatural a way. Neither do I see it as a kind of a “substitute.” Some in our ranks often argue that since we are either unable or unwilling to direct and reshape the economic and political spheres of our life, we should therefore give up all our interest in those aspects and concentrate only on the spiritual factor. This kind of “escapism” from the practical problems of the Jewish reality has not only been of no help towards a real solution of our spiritual problems, but it has even done much to harm it.

### **A Soul Without a Body**

A “Jewish Culture” that is not an inseparable part of an all-encompassing “Jewish Policy” is even less real than a soul without a body. It might be “easier” to isolate the spiritual aspect from all the others, but this robs the spiritual factor of all its substance and life.

There is no doubt as to the merits of Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai, the leading *Tanna* [lit. teacher] of the first century, who succeeded in escaping from the besieged Jerusalem, presenting himself to the hostile Roman *Gen-*

*eralissimo*, whom he is said to have asked: “Give me Yavneh and its sages!” [Bavli, Gittin 56b] I am second to none in praising the greatest national value of the Talmudic centre that existed in Yavneh before the Roman “mandate” on it was given to the great *Tanna* and exercised a decisive influence on Jewish lore and life afterwards. Nevertheless, I cannot conceal my doubts as to whether some modern followers of Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai interpreted rightly his action and the circumstances under which it was undertaken, from a merely historical point of view. That their very concept of Judaism based on this request for Yavneh, that their “Jewish Policy” and approach to our spiritual problems which I would like to describe generally as modern *Javneh-ism* [sic], was mistaken and full of harm for our life, for the education of our youth, to the encouragement of our Jewish masses in modern times – of this I am almost sure.

### “Yavneh-ism”

Though my reverence and admiration for Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai is very great, I do not know whether I would have ever escaped the besieged Jerusalem to get from the Romans “Yavneh and its Sages” – the Talmudic and spiritual centre which does not need any “approval” on the part of any outside power, and of which none of our old and modern persecutors or friendly tolerant powers will ever rob Israel –, and so set an example for Jewish thinkers and politicians 1,900 years later to say: We follow this “slogan” of “Yavneh and its Sages,” Yavneh and *not* Jerusalem, Yavneh *instead* of Jerusalem! ...

When I stress the urgency of “Yavneh” in our own days, I refute most emphatically this current “Yavneh-ism.” Nothing is more alien to me than the concept of “Yavneh instead of Jerusalem.” “Yavneh” is to me merely a part of a Jewish totality that is unthinkable without “Jerusalem,” i. e., without the political and national revival of Jewry in Palestine and outside it, as far as the circumstances allow, today and in the days to come. Our cultural policy, as I have said before, is to be interwoven with all the other aspects of a constructive *Jewish* – and as far as Zionists are concerned: *Zionist* – Internal Policy.

### The Lack of a Positive Policy

Hence also some kind of justification – though no apology is really needed – for my discussion of our cultural problems even in the first dark days after the issuance of the “White Paper.” Even now I cannot identify myself with the philosophy of “Yavneh *instead* of Jerusalem.” We shall have to defend the philosophy of “Jerusalem,” i. e., the idea of our political and national rebirth, without acquiescing in the possibility of the spiritual “minimum” or consoling ourselves with some kind of “Yavneh.”

But, on the other hand, if in days of great Jewish prosperity in Palestine and outside it I raised my voice again and again stressing the urgency of a radical change in Zionism’s attitude to and philosophy of Diaspora-Jewry, how much more do I feel pressed to warn friends in our ranks of the dangers threatening Jewry as well as Zionism in this field of our life, dangers which become very acute not only because of external circumstances but also as a result of misconceptions and the lack of a positive and dynamic policy on our part.

*(“Jerusalem and Yavneh” is an introduction to a comprehensive study of the relationship between practical and purely spiritual Zionism which Dr. Rawidowicz is to write for subsequent issues of the Zionist Review).*

## 9. Jerusalem and Yavneh. The Fundamental Problem

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name Dr. Simon Rawidowicz in: The Zionist Review, 29 June 1939, 16–17, and 19.*

<Under the title “Jerusalem and Yavneh,” Dr. Rawidowicz contributed to the “Zionist Review” of June 15th a special article in which he examined the relationship between practical and purely spiritual Zionism. In the following article the author deals with the practical importance of a national language in the rehabilitation of the Jewish people.>

BEFORE beginning to work out any cultural or spiritual programme, one should thoroughly re-examine the fundamentals and scope of the message which our cultural renaissance has to convey to Jewry. One should admit failures, where they have been made. One should admit disbelief, instead of paying lip-service to conventionally acknowledged ideals. For open disbelief is to be preferred to the passing of pious resolutions on our cultural duties, resolutions which nobody takes seriously, for which nobody is prepared to make a real sacrifice.

I consider it therefore imperative both for the future of Zionism and for the re-shaping of our Jewish life in the Diaspora to inaugurate a frank discussion of some of the fundamentals on which the cultural renaissance of Jewry depends. Among them close attention should be paid above all to our real attitude to the problem of our so-called *national language*, a language which is at present inaccessible to the greater majority of our people, and does not even play an adequate part in the lives of most Zionists in the Diaspora.

### **Is a National Language Worth While?**

Let us be frank about this, too. We have to ask ourselves: Do we consider it necessary for the millions of Diaspora-Jewry to continue to develop and to keep alive – apart from the languages of their respective domiciles – a universally acknowledged Jewish national language, in which their spiritual and general Jewish efforts should find adequate expression, which should identify them with their historic past and unite them as a living community now and in the future? Is such an instrument as a national



language a superfluous luxury, of no relevance to the preservation of Jewry and Judaism, or is it indispensable for a community with such a past and scattered all over the world if it is anxious not to lose its political and spiritual *identity*? What importance or value do we attach to language in its broadest aspect in the life of a nation, and especially in that of a nation such as ours? If these questions are to be answered in the affirmative, what language could and would best serve this purpose?

I am not putting these questions to those sectors of modern Jewry where it is believed that the Jewish people as such will speedily vanish through assimilation or conversion. I have in mind rather that sector of Jewry that believes in and preaches a national future for the Jewish people. Do adherents of this school of thought fully realise the tremendous spiritual implications involved in this “national” and political revival? Or do they really mean that this revival is confined merely to Palestine, while the millions of Jews in the Diaspora will sooner or later disappear from the “stage of history,” and be so utterly annihilated that all these problems will be “solved”?

If those who believe in a national and political revival of Jewry extend this to the masses of the Jews in the Diaspora, they have to face the *linguistic* problem of this Jewry as one of the most important factors of their spiritual and cultural life.

### The Forms of National Life

For the past two thousand years traditional Judaism, with all its love for the Holy Land and the Holy Language has been on the whole neither willing nor able to acknowledge the decisive value of the *forms* of national life, such as *Land* and *Language*. It was the Jewish *Haskalah*-movement (Enlightenment) of the middle of the 18th century which endeavored to build up a new philosophy of “Jewish Formalism,” which taught Jewry to acknowledge the outstanding importance of a *form* like language (used for secular purposes in literature) for the preservation of our national community.

Zionism, which accepted and enlarged many of the endeavors undertaken by the *Haskalah*-movement, followed here also in the footsteps of its predecessor. Zionism has not only acknowledged the “Formalism” of a national language, but it has also strengthened it by adding to it that of land, soil, political nationhood, economic integrity, etc. I cannot dwell here even briefly on the development of the philosophy of this modern

Jewish Formalism, which has taken on various shapes, from a radical exclusiveness to a more tolerant and moderate formula which has enabled this Formalism to undergo various combinations with other, sometimes even opposing, philosophies in modern Jewry.

I have to confine myself to the statement that though this modern language-Formalism has been connected with the authority of the old classical religious values involved in Hebrew, it has not so far succeeded imposing itself fully not only on modern Jewry in general, but even on the ranks of this movement of Zionism, with which this formalistic philosophy seems to be so closely interwoven. Even here it has hardly been fully recognised in such a way as to give this approach a real dynamic interpretation which would help to translate it in all its vigor and authenticity into reality. An examination of the manifold reasons responsible for this fact would yield a very interesting chapter in the study both of modern Jewish development and of Zionism. But here we are concerned only with the fact.

### **Main Lines of Approach**

Outside Zionism there are three divergent approaches to the problem under consideration:

- 1) That of total or partial assimilation, which fights directly and indirectly any effort to revive Hebrew in the Diaspora, since any kind of Jewishness is considered as a dangerous and harmful segregation, as a stumbling block in the way of triumphant national suicide.
- 2) Yiddishism, the radical advocates of which deny the language of our past, which is alive also in the present and not only in Palestine, any prospect of becoming *the* national language of Jewry of the future, since Yiddish (which though spoken and understood by eight odd millions of Jews two generations [17] ago, has suffered in recent years a tremendous decline in the countries of the Jewish masses, as in Russia, America, and even Poland, not to mention the British Empire and elsewhere), is and will remain the national language of the Jewish masses in the Diaspora.

I am not going to identify assimilation with the advocacy of Yiddish. In spite of refuting the philosophy of Yiddishism, we have to appreciate the accumulation of our Jewish experience, sufferings and hopes as expressed in Yiddish, both old and modern. Though we believe that to Hebrew alone the national future belongs, that it alone can hope to become the unifying language of the Jewries all over the world, we can

appreciate the great political and national role played in the past by the language of the Jewish masses. From this point of view, the great decline of Yiddish – not for the benefit of Hebrew, but for that of the language of the respective domiciles – gives no satisfaction to any Hebraist whose mind is concentrated on the national preservation and the spiritual re-shaping of Jewry. Both assimilation and Yiddishism, however, have this in common: they are bitterly opposed to the Revival of Hebrew in the Diaspora.

- 3) The third approach to the Revival of Hebrew is not as militantly hostile as the two previous ones. This is of a disinterested or neutral character that often leads to an attitude of passive resistance. Typical of this attitude is the outlook of some theologically or metaphysically minded sections of our intelligentsia as well as that of some militant groups of anti-Zionist Jewish orthodoxy.

### The Orthodox Attitude

The average orthodox Jew in Eastern or Western Europe has not been interested in Hebrew as a living or modern language because he has not attached any special importance to the *language as such*. Language in his eyes, was merely a form, a factor of little importance in the scale of spiritual and religious values upon which his whole life and philosophy were built. Whether intentionally or otherwise, he was in a habit of overlooking the cardinal importance attributed to Hebrew as a language by the great classics of our religious thought. Even the unforgettable sayings of our sages concerning the language “in which God himself spoke,” and in which the Torah was written, have failed to impress the average Orthodox Jew – apart from relatively few exceptions – with the idea that if this value can be revived it cannot fail to be of value in spreading a knowledge of the Torah and of ancient Hebrew literature.

Even Yehudah Halevi’s enthusiastic eulogies (in his *Kuzari*), of Hebrew as a language superior to all the other tongues of the human race, have apparently had no effect on the type of orthodox Jew in question and his kindred in other camps. It is not the language that matters, they have always argued, but what is said in it, and they have found some encouragement for this standpoint in the famous saying of our sages: *Shema bekol lashon sheatah shomea* ([Hear or say] the *Shema* in whatever language you understand) [cf. Bavli, Berakhot 15a]. From this they have always inferred that the *Shema* alone matters, while the *lashon* (language) is of little or no

importance at all. This has always been one of the “official” arguments used against the modern revival of Hebrew, not only by the orthodox among us, but also by many of the assimilationists. Many assimilated Jews, whose sons, and even they themselves, can barely follow the *Shema* in its original, Jews for whom it has become necessary in some Synagogues in certain countries to transcribe even the *Birkat hatorah* [Blessings over the Torah] into Latin characters for the benefit of those called to read a “portion of the Law,” have tried to combat the movement towards developing positive modern Jewish culture activities with the moral support of traditional and religious quotations like the above. As though our sages, whose life and work were bound up with Hebrew, had spoken thus in order to provide a leaf with which their bankrupt heirs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries might cover their nakedness!

### A Barren “Holiness”

The politically militant section of the orthodox Jewry, apart from a few exceptions, could not accept the fact of the modern revival of Hebrew because it was inaugurated by the *Haskalah* movement of the eighteenth centuries [sic], and was carried on and translated into the terms of the practical daily life of the Jews by Chibbath Zion [Love of Zion] – and modern Zionism – three modern movements repudiated by this orthodox camp in Jewry. If Zionists proclaim Hebrew to be a modern and living language, it must be very dangerous. If [Eliezer] Ben Yehuda speaks nothing but Hebrew, if he has made it the purpose of his life and work to transform Hebrew from a language confined to books, into one used in all spheres of individual and social life, we must fight this terrible “heresy” – so argued the “old Yishuv” of Jerusalem about half a century ago. To speak Hebrew was in their eyes a great *Chilul Hashem* [desecration of the Name (of God)].

The holiness of Hebrew – in the recognition of which our modern Hebraists are second to none – is used as an argument against the Revival of Hebrew in some quarters even in our own days. As if a language can be holy only if it is not spoken, only if nobody uses it, only if the youth desert it, only if nobody can fully and naturally enjoy its treasures! As if a language is holy when it is buried in books and old manuscripts, only when its use is not fully understood by those who believe in its holiness. The opponents of the revival of Hebrew in this camp of present-day Jewry seem to confuse holiness with lack of life. They seem to be afraid that by

becoming a living language Hebrew might become unholy. But, in the fundamental self-expression of a nation such as its language represents, is holiness to be achieved only in a state of total muteness or death, of not belonging to the realm of living spiritual beings?

### Zionism's Vital Role

Zionism cannot by its very nature, and officially, identify itself with either of the three mentioned anti-Hebrew, or anti-formalistic philosophies. It must fight assimilationist tendencies. It cannot accept the Yiddishist philosophy. It cannot acquiesce in the attitude of the irrelevance of a national language or the unimportance for the Jewish future. In the realm of the practical life of Diaspora Jewry, however, I feel bound to say that here and there unfortunately more or less strong tendencies are felt in Zionist practice that are reminiscent of those three attitudes, tendencies that hamper the very work for which Zionism stands and will always stand. While some Zionist groups in certain Western European countries share so strong a skepticism and a policy of “in-|19|difference,” as far as the cultural revival of Diaspora Jewry is concerned, that they are brought very near, even if unintentionally, to the camp of anti-Zionist assimilationism, other groups in Eastern European countries are hampered by their sympathies for Yiddishism from taking their due part in the Hebrew revival, since they have not succeeded in balancing these sympathies, which can be to a certain degree fully understood, with their Zionist duties towards our cultural revival.

Though I in no way subscribe to the exclusive and radical modern Jewish “Formalism,” though I know that neither man nor nation lives by language alone, and I do not reduce our spiritual rebirth to the revival of Hebrew, I must draw the attention of those responsible for the Zionist movement in its totality to this source of great danger in our own ranks.

For before Zionism can shape any real and adequate policy for Diaspora-Jewry, it must give its unequivocal and absolutely binding answer to the cardinal question: Must Diaspora-Jewry have a national and unifying language of its own? If so, can this role be attributed to Hebrew? If so, how far can and should it be carried and what is to be done for the fulfilling of this aim?

This is not a question merely of Hebrew, but of the future of Zionism and of the place to be allotted in the future to Zionism in Jewish life.

## 10. The Dangers of “Substantialism”

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name Dr. Simon Rawidowicz in: The Zionist Review, 3 August 1939, 14.*

(In the following article the author carries a stage further the study of the “Fundamental Problem” of Jewish life and culture which he is writing specially for the “Zionist Review.”)

CULTURAL “Formalism,” which considers spiritual and cultural activity purely from the viewpoint of its form, whilst remaining indifferent to its ideas and content, is by its very nature fated to overlook the most vital aspects of that very complex phenomenon called “culture.” But it is equally certain that what may be called cultural “substantialism” is also doomed to failure. This approach, which stresses the overwhelming importance of the substance or content of culture whilst underestimating the significance of the *forms* in which this very substance manifests itself, is merely a barrier to the complete understanding of the implications of a national culture.

In the everyday life of a nation or group of people bound together over an unbroken period by the ties of common needs and interests, the contents of its culture, whether inherited or acquired, is unthinkable except within the framework of its national forms, which have been created by the community as a whole. In the same way, the forms of cultural self-expression have neither validity nor usefulness nor even a real existence unless they are rooted in the very “matter” or substance of that creative power which they are intended to serve. They cannot be regarded as anything but “empty” forms.

In the cultural or spiritual sphere, perhaps even more than in any other field of human activity, form and substance are one and indivisible. This applies to all manifestations of spiritual life, from the most elementary and primitive phenomena to the most subtle and complex.

### **The Form of All Forms**

As far as the language of the group or nation is concerned, it is the form of all forms, it is the framework for all that is created by a national community. Just as no man’s thoughts can ever reach his fellow men except

through the medium of language, so in the same way language also serves the needs of the nation or a close-knit community, giving expression to its dreams and aspirations, from the innermost core of its subjective experience to the complex inter-reactions of the individual and the group with the external world.

As far as Israel is concerned, it is hardly necessary to reaffirm the widely-acknowledged fact confirmed throughout our history for thousands of years and through more than two hundred generations of suffering and achievement, that Hebrew was, is, and as far as an eternal national existence can be envisaged, ever will be the national “form of all forms” in which the soul of Israel will always find at once its simplest, noblest self-expression and self-realisation.

In spite of the fact that some Jews, in various parts of the world and at various periods have been, and may be again totally oblivious to this great truth affecting our national life, and that some are apathetic or even hostile towards it, seeking even to destroy or weaken the links that bind the people of Israel to their language, this unassailable truth, already tested and tried throughout the ages, will survive unscathed as it has always done.

Even if millions of *individual Jews* were to identify themselves with the languages of the countries in which they live, the *Jewish people* as such will never be able to identify itself with any other language in the world but Hebrew, for it is in Hebrew alone that the “national soul” or collective-ego of Israel will always find its self-realisation. From the viewpoint of a national or communal life it is this alone that matters, and not the attitude taken up by Jewish individuals, or small groups.

If space permitted, I could demonstrate this incontrovertible truth with examples from our history and from the history of other nations in modern times, and I would be able, moreover, to show the great support given to my thesis by both group- and individual-*psychology*. It will suffice to point out that the greatest error committed by our modern “substantialists” lies in their dismissal of Hebrew as the mere “form” of our culture and as such of no real importance. It is a grave error, based on a complex of manifold misconceptions and prejudices, and much too dangerous for our individual and group-life to be overlooked.

Many Jewish “spiritual” ideologists and theologians, both orthodox and radically liberal, would have been spared many of their efforts, which even the deepest sincerity has often failed to save from being fruitless, to “save” Judaism and Jewry, if they had condescended to step down from the lofty peaks of their high “spirituality” to the more realistic levels of the life of the Jewish communities of today. How fruitful and successful might

their endeavors have been, if they had discovered – among other verities still to be “discovered” – the incomparable value of a national language for the life of modern Jewry in the Diaspora-countries; if they had grasped the overwhelming “substantial” force that is alive in this oft-despised “mere form.” Among all sections of Jewry complaint is heard about the youth’s “*drift from Judaism.*” If this complaint is honestly meant – and I do not doubt its honesty – should not the responsible men and women complaining about it ask themselves whether that watered-down “Judaism” is really able to stand the test of the menacing “drift!” A “Judaism” confined to a certain minimum of “practice” is hardly able to survive, or to attract our young generation, thirsty – as far as it has any interest in matters spiritual – for a great vision and a hard, nay, a *hardening and strengthening yoke.*

A “Judaism” that reminds us of the Cabbalistic “soul that goes naked” (*neshama deazla artilait*) [Sefer ha-Zohar III, 99b] will hardly achieve the miracle expected. How can you separate “Judaism” from its *language*, from its “form of all forms”? How can one acquiesce in this sort of minimum of “Hebrew” required for a more or less correct repeating of a few, sometimes very few prayers?

Put back the “soul that goes naked” into its living body, return to Jewry its national language, give the youth its Jewish instrument for its own self-expression and self-realisation – and a new life, new creativeness will awake in Jewry. Not all of a sudden, not like things that “spring up in a night” but thanks to the hard work done through the inspiration of the great vision and a courageous sense of responsibility towards our future as Jews.





# V. Shoah

## 1. Introduction

Rawidowicz's resettlement in England in 1933 marked a productive new phase in his career. Over the course of his fifteen years there, he remained energetically involved in Hebrew cultural activity, started two journals in that language, acquired fluency in English, developed familiarity with Anglo-Jewish life, and, finally in 1941, achieved a new measure of professional stability when he was appointed to a permanent teaching position in medieval and modern Hebrew in the Department of Semitic Languages at the University of Leeds.

And yet, it was also in the midst of this intense activity that Rawidowicz's literary alter ego, Ish Boded (A Solitary Man), was born.<sup>1</sup> Being a Hebraist in England was, indeed, a solitary vocation. But being a Hebraist on the European continent meant belonging to an increasingly endangered species. Keenly attuned to the growing threats to Jewish life and culture in Europe after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, Rawidowicz was, at once, despondent and re-energized. England, he insisted, must now step up to become the living bastion of Hebrew language and culture.

To act on this principle, he established in 1940, with the support of a German-born British Jew, Oscar Philipp (1882–1965), a Hebrew supplement to *The Zionist Review* of the English Zionist Federation known as *Yalkut. Li-she'elot ha-ḥayyim, le-sifrut u-le-maḥshavah. Mussaf-ḥodesh la-hashkafah ha-ziyyonit* [Anthology. On Questions of Life, Literature and Thought. Monthly Supplement to The Zionist Review].<sup>2</sup> The first

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1 See Ish Boded [i. e., Simon Rawidowicz], *Shivrei devarim*, 1–6 [Fragments, 1–6], in: *Yalkut* 2, (1942), no. 2–3, 87–95, here 95.

2 *Yalkut* first appeared in December 1940. In its second year, only two issues were published, both with a partially vocalized *Yalkut La-noar* (Yalkut for Youth). Significantly, the last issue contained a new column entitled “Ish Boded,” that was subsequently continued in *Mezudah* (Fortress). For further details on *Mezudah* and its publishing house, Ararat, see Benjamin C. I. Ravid, *The World of Ararat and Its Fortress. From the Letters of Simon Rawidowicz to Alexander Margulies*, in: Rawidowicz, *State of Israel*, 248–274.

sentence of his introduction (V.2.) announced the urgency of the moment: the terrifying prospect of the “destruction of European Jewry,” which would also lead to “the destruction of the last vestiges of Hebrew literature on the continent.”<sup>3</sup> *Yalkut*, he hoped, could serve as a counterweight by stimulating interest in Hebrew among the free Jewish community of the United Kingdom.

While expressing that hope – and throwing himself into activities to promote it – Rawidowicz was clear-eyed in grasping the enormity of the crisis facing European Jewry. In a talk during a panel on “Anti-Semitism and the War” held at the P.E.N. (Poets, Essayists, Novelists) Club in London in September 1941 (V.4), he called on the organization to preserve the honor of Hebrew and Yiddish literature, minor literatures in comparison to others, but necessary for the defense of freedom in the world. He summoned up the memory of the courageous French author, Émile Zola (1840–1902), who came to the defense of Capt. Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935) and French Jewry, best symbolized by his famous open letter from 1898, “J’accuse,” accusing the French government of antisemitism in prosecuting Dreyfus. The current moment, Rawidowicz enjoined, required P.E.N. to take a courageous stand in defense of European Jews, and particularly Jewish authors in Yiddish and Hebrew facing mortal threats.

In many of his pieces from this period, Rawidowicz’s tone turns doleful and his language even more reliant on biblical and rabbinic sources. In this time of emotional duress, Jewish tradition afforded him a language, a calendar, and a prism through which to observe the unfolding tragedy. Writing *To Our Brethren the Children of Israel in Europe*, published in *Yalkut*, in 1941 (V.3.), Rawidowicz wraps his message in the imagery of the imminent Passover holiday season. “All Europe is Egypt,” he stated, and “there is no exodus and no escape, no Red Sea is torn apart for you, nor does the sea of your tears force an opening, for every heart is mute.”<sup>4</sup> Elijah’s cup, the cup of wine that is poured at the Seder table in hopes of redemption, had become the “cup of affliction.”<sup>5</sup> Rawidowicz here appeals to God to answer the cries of the Jewish people – and the call of hundreds of millions under threat – to be free next year.

The passage of time led to an even more ominous sense. Writing from his new home in Leeds (V.5.), Rawidowicz declared that the year 5703 – equivalent to late 1942 and 1943 – was “the most catastrophic year

3 V.2. Introducing “Yalkut”, 310.

4 V.3. *To Our Brethren the Children of Israel in Europe*, 313.

5 *Ibid.*, 314.

in Jewish history.”<sup>6</sup> Indeed, it was in January 1942 that Nazi and German state officials gathered at Wannsee to plan the “final solution.” A half year later, in August 1942, Gerhart Riegner (1911–2001) of the World Jewish Congress sent a telegram to the British and U.S. governments reporting on the German intention to murder “all Jews in countries occupied or controlled [by] Germany.”<sup>7</sup> Fuller public disclosure of this information took longer, until the end of 1942.

By then, Rawidowicz had come to know the extent of the danger. In a contribution to the journal of the United Hebrew Congregation of Leeds in 1943, he declared that the present threat was far graver than the bitter travails to which Jews had been subjected at any point since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, including the Crusades and the Spanish Expulsion of 1492. What made the moment especially difficult to bear was that while sympathy for Jewish suffering existed in the world, “[w]ords are many, but actions few.” Rawidowicz concluded his short piece by declaring that Jewish martyrs of the ghettos of occupied Poland attested to “the indomitable spirit of the Jewish people.”<sup>8</sup>

The traditional category of “martyrdom” or “kiddush ha-Shem” (sanctification of the Name [of God]) underpinned Rawidowicz’s eulogistic tribute to his friend, Simon Dubnow, who was murdered by SS forces on 8 December 1941. The two had remained in regular epistolary contact up to 1939. Their letters, which are contained in the Dubnow memorial volume, reveal the ever-narrowing world that the older historian inhabited in Riga, Latvia. In a letter from 30 January 1938, Dubnow told Rawidowicz that he should “thank God for not settling you in the Sodom and Gomorrah of Poland and Romania.”<sup>9</sup> The next letter, from 19 May 1938, came after the so-called *Anschluss* which unleashed “the destruction of Austria and the hooligans’ riots that spread terror over the whole world.”<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, a month after the German invasion of Poland, on 5 October 1939, Dubnow conveyed to Rawidowicz that while many of his friends asked him about plans to leave Riga, he had determined that “no change of place at present

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6 V.5. On the Precipice, 321.

7 Quoted in: Gerhart Riegner, Riegner Telegram, in: Walter Laqueur/Judith Tydor Baumel (eds.), *The Holocaust Encyclopedia*, New Haven, Conn./London 2001, 562–567, here 564.

8 V.5. On the Precipice, 324.

9 Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 30 January 1938, in Rawidowicz (ed.), *Simon Dubnow*, 451 f., here 452.

10 Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 19 May 1939, in: *ibid.*, 453.

would change one's luck (except fleeing the hell of Germany), for we are also facing bad luck."<sup>11</sup> Tragically, Dubnow did remain in Riga, where his luck ran out. German forces arrived in 1941 and undertook a series of "liquidations," including the infamous Rumbula Forest massacre where Dubnow was shot to death.

In his tribute to Dubnow (V.6.), which was the lead essay in the memorial volume that appeared in 1954, Rawidowicz commemorated his friend as "an involuntary martyr."<sup>12</sup> The entire tribute was, in fact, a meditation on martyrdom, as Rawidowicz again made recourse to a rich, though decidedly lachrymose, set of traditional Jewish images. Never, he declared, was there a case of "holy martyrdom" that paralleled the murder of six million Jews in the Holocaust. These victims included a minority of Jews intent on assimilating into non-Jewish society, whom Rawidowicz called in language borne of the sense of profound crisis "voluntary martyrs." The large mass of victims from Eastern Europe were "involuntary martyrs" – those, like Dubnow, who never surrendered their deep commitment to Jewish culture and tradition. It was they who grasped that martyrdom was a collective, not individual, act, for "[o]ne who will sacrifice himself on the altar of Israel is a son of the *community*."<sup>13</sup> In the end, the Nazis did not discriminate in the slightest between the voluntary and involuntary martyrs when proceeding with their plan for extermination.

While describing Dubnow as a "holy martyr," Rawidowicz nonetheless portrayed his friend as one of the leading promoters of a decidedly secular vision of the Jewish nation, as well as of a secular reading of the Jewish past. Dubnow, on his view, believed that the Jewish nation followed its own life path and did not answer to a higher divine authority. Jewish history was one of creative vitality in many domains; Rawidowicz stood this view of Dubnow's in contrast to that of the Russian historian's most important precursor in the annals of modern Jewish historiography, Heinrich Graetz (1817–1891). According to Rawidowicz (and Dubnow before him), Graetz

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11 Letter from Simon Dubnow to Simon Rawidowicz, 5 October 1939, in *ibid.*, 453 f., here 453.

12 Rawidowicz explains at the end of the memorial volume that most of the volume's essays were given to the printer of *Mezudah* in London in 1946. However, because the printer's heirs were unable to continue the completion of the book, its printing was moved from London to Paris, and then again, in 1948, to Jerusalem, causing further delay. See Simon Rawidowicz, *Divrei ḥatimah* [Concluding Words], in: *idem* (ed.), *Simon Dubnow*, 459 f., here 459.

13 See V.6. The Involuntary Martyr, 328.

advanced a view of Jewish history as a kind of *Leidensgeschichte* (history of suffering).<sup>14</sup>

Rawidowicz's essay is its own *Leidensgeschichte*. One senses his rage and sorrow as he moves between depicting Dubnow's death as an instance of noble martyrdom, on one hand, and as a grotesque desecration, on the other. Shattered by the experience of the Holocaust and especially by the murder of his friend, Rawidowicz sides with Graetz in declaring that "Jewish history is a martyrology, a story of blood and tears."<sup>15</sup> Earlier, in the wake of the devastating pogroms against Jews in Ukraine, Dubnow himself departed from his usual optimism to write of "the millennial Jewish martyrology."<sup>16</sup> More than two decades later, after the greatest of catastrophes to befall the Jewish people, Rawidowicz took upon himself the solemn responsibility to place his friend Simon Dubnow in that story of blood and tears.

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14 Ibid., 332.

15 Ibid., 334.

16 See Dubnow's introduction to the volume edited by Elias Tcherikower: *Tret'ja gajdamačina. Vstuplenie k knige Čerikovera* [The Third Haidamachina. Introduction to Tcherikower's Book], in: Elias Tcherikower, *Antisemitizm un pogromen in Ukrayne, 1917–1918. Tsu der geshikhte fun ukraynish-yidishe batsihungn* [Anti-Semitism and Pogroms in the Ukraine, 1917–1918. On the History of Ukrainian-Jewish Relations], Berlin, 1923, 9–15, here 9. Tcherikower (1881–1943), who worked closely with Dubnow in the years following the First World War in pioneering *khurbn-forschung* (research into mass murder), wrote his own relevant reflection on memory, martyrdom and mass murder. It was published posthumously, five years after Dubnow's death. See idem, *Jewish Martyrology and Jewish Historiography*, in: *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* 1 (1946), 9–23.

## 2. Introducing “Yalkut”

*The original Hebrew text appeared under the name S. Rawidowicz in: Yalkut. Li-she'elot ha-hayyim, le-sifrut u-le-mahshavah. Mussaf-ḥodesh la-hashkafah ha-ziyyonit 1 (1940), no. 1, 1. The omissions within in the text contain notes on the vocalization of the preceding words; the omission at the end of the text concerns technical details of the journal. Orr Scharf translated the text into English.*

The destruction of European Jewry in 1940 up to the British Isles – may the Guardian of Israel protect them – also marks the destruction of the last vestiges of Hebrew literature on the continent.

The war of annihilation that Hitler's Reich is waging on the body and soul of Israel is escalating. Moscow's ban on the national heritage of the Jewish people, and especially on the Hebrew language and its literature has also been imposed on the Jews of Poland, Lithuania, Bessarabia and elsewhere. Since the day that Jews first settled in Europe, there has not been such a time of oppression and devastation for Israel (and in almost all countries of the continent simultaneously) in both matter and spirit.

From time to time, fragmented rumors reach us about the spiritual defense organized by some groups of Jewish youth in the parts of Europe under the sway of Berlin and Moscow, and about teachers of Torah and their pupils risking their lives to protect the waning – and, for the time being, last – sparks of Jewish culture in their countries. We extend our blessing to those sanctifying the name of Israel wherever they are: be strong and brave! Your trouble is our trouble. There is a reward for your combative effort and according to the suffering so is the reward.

And we will not be allowed nor deserving of even giving this blessing if we do not “repent” and fulfill our duty toward Hebrew culture in the only Jewish center in Europe that has not fallen – and never will fall – prey to the two [...] enemies that have risen to annihilate us.

The Jews of England – *the only ones at this hour* (save for the few Jewish communities in the states of Europe that are caught “between the rock and the hammer”) among the Jews of Europe to enjoy human rights and internal and external freedom – bear a great responsibility toward Jewish culture; great, but not greater than can be borne. They must commence the task of mending the great breach in the wall of Hebrew education, as every brick in the wall of the House of Israel in England cries out. And it is also

necessary to establish in this country a *platform for Hebrew literature* – for discussing the timely and timeless needs of the Jewish community in England and *Europe at large* at this hour of destruction and in the time of peace that will follow it. We must not let *all of Europe* remain without a single center of Hebrew for even one hour!

This monthly supplement attached to the weekly “Zionist Review” (published by the English Zionist Federation), thanks to the assistance and support of Mr. Oscar Philipp is not able to provide [...] this need. Its limited purpose is to acquaint the Hebrew reader with a glint from the splendor hidden in the riches of our literature, old and new, giving particular emphasis to what is said – from generation to generation, each generation in its own words – on the Jewish question and on everything associated with it. Accordingly, “Yalkut” will include also the words of “later” figures on cultural affairs and literary matters. But mainly, it seeks to offer readers a taste from the sages of old to make them aware of the values hidden in the storehouses of our literature for the edification of our youth and our people. Let the passages and references that will be assembled in “Yalkut” arouse the reader [...] to go out and learn, to seek the core fountains [...] from which our sages and masses have been drawing wisdom and strength for centuries.

I am hopeful that “Yalkut” will soon become *part* of a stage of Hebrew literature worthy of its name, and not become a kind of “kingdom unto itself.” This hope led me to take upon myself the direction of “Yalkut” – so that it not only “move gently the lips of those who are asleep,” but also pave the way to renewed activity in the sphere of the Hebrew book in England, a field in which, unfortunately, casualties outnumber the victors, failed attempts overshadow triumph.

And may “Yalkut” lead to triumph.  
[...]



## ה"ילקוט" – פתיחה

חורבן־ש"ש של יהדות אירופה, עד לאיי הבריטים, ישמרם שומר ישראל – הוא גם חורבן עמדותיה האחרונות של הספרות העברית באירופה זו.

מלחמת־ההשמד שמלכות־היטלר נלחמת בגוף ישראל ורוחו, – הולכת וגוברת. חרס־מוסקבה על קניניו הלאומיים של ישראל, ובעיקר על הלשון העברית וספרותה, – הוטל גם על יהדות פולניה, ליטא, בסרביה וכו'. מיום היות ישוב יהודי בארצות אירופה – לא היתה שעת מצוקה והרס כזו (וכמעט בכל ארצות אירופה בבת אחת) לישראל, בחומר וברוח.

מזמן לזמן מגיעים אלינו קטעי שמועות על מלחמת־המגן הרוחנית בה עומדים אי־אלה ממחנותיו של הנוער היהודי באירופה הכפופה לשלטון ברלין ומוסקבה, על מרביצי תורה ותינוקות של בית רבן המחרפים את נפשם על שמירת ניצוצותיה הדועכים – והאחרונים, לפי שעה – של תרבות ישראל בארצות מושבותיהם. ברכתנו שלוחה למקדשי שם ישראל באשר הם שם: חזקו ואמצו! מצוקתכם מצוקתנו. יש שכר לפעולתכם־מלחמתכם, ולפי הצער השכה. ואנו לא נהיה רשאים וראויים אף לברך ברכה זו – אם לא "נחזור בתשובה" ונמלא את חובתנו כלפי התרבות העברית בתחום המרכז היהודי היחיד באירופה שלא נעשה – ולעולם לא יעשה – טרף לשני [...]. אויבינו שקמו עלינו לכלותנו.

יהודי אנגליה – היחידים בשעה זו (פרט לישוב־ישראל המועטים במדינות אירופה הנתונות "בין הפטיש והסדן") ביהודי אירופה לזכויות־אדם, לחירות בית וחוזן, – אחריות רבה מוטלת עליהם כלפי תרבות ישראל; רבה, ולא רבה משוא. חייבים הם לפתוח בתיקונו של הפרוץ המרובה בחומת החנוך העברי. כל אבן מקיר בית ישראל שבאנגליה זועקת על כך. ומן ההכרח הוא כמו כן להקים במדינה זו במה ספרותית עברית, – לשם דיון בצרכי שעה ועולם של כנסת ישראל באנגליה ובאירופה כולה, בשעת־חורבן זו ובשעות־השלום שתבאנה אחריה.

חלילה לנו מלהניח את אירופה כולה ללא קרית־ספר עברית אף שעה אחת! מוסף־חדש זה המצורף לשבועון "ההשקפה הציונית" (היוצא לאור מטעם מרכז ציוני אנגליה), בהשתדלותו ובסיועו של מר יצק פיליפ, – אין בכוחו לספק [...] אותו צורך. מגמתו מצומצמת, והיא – להעמיד את הקורא המצוי אצל הלשון העברית על מקצת מן המאור הגנוז באוצרות ספרותנו העתיקה והחדשה, ומתוך עיון מיוחד בנאמר בה – מדור דור, דור דור ולשונו – בשאלת ישראל וכל הכרוך בה. מבחינה זו יהיה מקום ב"ילקוט" גם לדבריהם של "אחרונים" על שאלות שעה ועניני ספרות, – אולם בעיקרו הוא בא להטעים את הקורא טעם־ראשונים, להעמידו על הברכה הצפונה בגני ספרותנו לחנוך הנוער והעם. יבואו הקטעים והרמזים שיכונסו ב"ילקוט" ויעוררו את המעיין [...] לצאת וללמוד, לחזר אחרי גופם של המעינות [...] שמהם שאבו חכמינו והמוניעמנו תורה וכוח־חיים מאות בשנים.

מקווה אני שה"ילקוט" יעשה – ובקרוב – מדור – בבמה ספרותית עברית ראויה לשמה, ולא ישמש מעין "מלכות בפני עצמה". תקוה זו היא שעוררה אותי לקבל על עצמי את הטפול ב"ילקוט" – בכדי שלא יהא "מדובב שפתי ישנים" בלבד, אלא גם פותח פתח לחדוש מפעל בשדה־הספר העברי באנגליה, – השדה בו מרובים, לדאבוננו, החללים על המנצחים, הניסונות על הכבושים.

יהי רצון שיהא ה"ילקוט" פתח לכבוש.

[...]

### 3. To Our Brethren the Children of Israel in Europe

*The original Hebrew text appeared under the acronym S. R. in: Yalkut. Li-she'elot ha-hayyim, le-sifrut u-le-maḥshavah. Mussaf-ḥodesh la-hash-kafah ha-ziyyonit 1 (1941), no. 4–5, 1. A copy of the essay, with the Hebrew notation of Rawidowicz that it should be translated into English in its entirety, was found in his Nachlass, together with a typewritten English translation by an unknown translator that is being published here for the first time.*

To our brethren, the children of Israel who dwell in captive Europe – Passover greetings from the tents of Jacob [cf. Jeremiah 30:18] in the fortress of Great Britain.

We know that hundreds of thousands among you are hungry throughout the vast expanses of all Europe for “the unleavened bread of poverty” every day and every night, as well as the days and nights of Passover 5701 [1941]. For you, this night is no different from any other night. There is no leaven for your millions – not for you to eat until you are sated and not to destroy before the festival, as is the ancient custom – nor is there unleavened bread. A little while back, two years ago and last year, most of you sat as princes around your tables and recited the Exodus from Egypt [cf. Exodus 12:31–41]. And tonight, the lowest of the sons of the bondswoman rules you with rage and mischief and wrath, and strikes you blow after blow, while no one makes a reckoning. Your staff is not in your hand, for theirs is on your back. All Europe is Egypt, and there is no exodus and no escape, no Red Sea is torn apart for you, nor does the sea of your tears force an opening, for every heart is mute. The wilderness of Europe has shut you in. The night of watching has become a night of terror and fear for you, as are all the other nights of the year, nights of fear and watchfulness. With a torn and aching heart, you lift up your eyes and say: “Watchman, what of the night,” [Isaiah 21:11] and no one answers.

Our brethren the children of Israel in Europe, writhing in its agony, when we think of you and of your sufferings – our Passover is no Passover, our Seder is no Seder.

How can we sit at our festival table as free men, when you are in Hitler’s chains? How can we have joy in our festival, when all festival joy has ceased in all Europe?

Not for you alone is this night of the year 5701 different from the Passover nights of the centuries that have gone before. This “New Order”

in Europe – which we know is neither new nor an order – has come to destroy the order (the seder) of the whole world. Only a narrow strip of sea divides you from us, who are nearest to you – and the enemy who wreaks his devilish cruelty upon you casts down upon us too, almost nightly, the ten parts of evil and horror that are his portion, and reminds us, day and night, as if we needed any such reminder, of the torments of hell to which you are abandoned.

Your enemy and ours has cast us down into the depths, but not into darkness. Thousands among the People of Israel this year, in London, the capital, and in many provincial towns, read the Scroll of Esther in the depth of the earth. So too tonight will thousands among us go down to the shelters where we shall hold our Seder. There will the children ask: “Wherefore is this night different?” and there will the fathers answer: “We were slaves in Egypt.” These Sedarim will take place amid great multitudes, Sedarim of whole congregations and communities gathered in a single group – not single-family Sedarim. Such Passover nights in the vastness of the earth, in cellars and underground stations, are certainly the *first of their kind* since the day when Israel went forth from Egypt. Nor do we go down into the depths to tell of the Exodus from Egypt secretly or furtively to hide or to flee. We do not sit as once did the Marranos in Spain – but as free Jews, able and happy to relate, publicly before all the world, about the Exodus from Egypt and of the end that befell Pharaoh and all those who followed him and rose up against us to destroy us in every age; we sit as Jews who know that we have many brethren in affliction, that if our agony is without peer in the world, many nations on the five continents of the earth have at last begun to understand the truth, that is so clear to us and so hidden from them, that the enemy of the People of Israel is also their enemy, the enemy of every nation that will not bow down or bend the knee to him, the enemy of mankind.

Our brethren in Europe who are left, for the time being, in the hands of the tyrant – your likeness is before us and within us, night and day, and especially on this night of Passover 5701. To the cup of Elijah the Tishbite, the cup of redemption, is added this year the cup of affliction, the cup of suffering and not of wine, the cup of the Jews of Europe, of the “unknown Jew” throughout the world. When we open the doors of our houses and of our night shelters in the vastness of the earth and cry out: “Pour forth Thy wrath” [Jeremiah 10:25] – again we think of your dwellings of your doors that perhaps will not be opened this year. We shall remember you and your sufferings, and we shall cry out: “Pour forth Thy wrath” with a voice that will silence the airplanes of the destroying fiend that fly above our heads

with a noise that pierces our ears day and night – perhaps a miracle will take place, and he will “pass over” our dwellings on this night of nights.

Will you hear the cries of “Be strong and of good courage,” [Joshua 10:25] the voices of your brethren from the depths of the earth in the British Isles? Will your ear catch our cry for your redemption and the redemption of all who are tormented in the hell that Hitler prepared for the world?

Know: many nations, hundreds of millions of souls on the face of the earth, are praying for a *new Festival of Freedom*. Those peoples of Europe who are in captivity open with us in this year 5701 Passover Haggadah [book containing the Passover story and rituals] and say to themselves and to their children: This year slaves, next year free men!

We do not deceive ourselves: their day of redemption will not be, because of our many sins, a *day of complete redemption for us*. Their sun will rise when Hitler’s sun sets. But we shall need a *new, a further* dawn, a day when a *new heart* and a *new spirit* will be given to most of the nations of Europe in whose shadow we dwell. The servitude of the People of Israel in the world is vastly different from that of Europe that is now subjected to the slaves of slaves; their liberation and the solution of their problems in the days of peace to come are different from our liberation and our problems. But still, on this Passover night 5701 we shall find – for you and for us, for you and we are one – a little consolation in this sorrow that is shared by many, and more in the prayer of many, this *prayer of all Europe*, which echoes ever stronger in the four parts of the world that remain outside it.

“This year slaves, without even the ‘poor bread of affliction’ – next year free men”!

Your prayer, our prayer, the prayer of all the world.

But this was not the prayer of *all the world*, because of *its many sins*, on the night of Passover 5699 or even 5700. Is there perhaps not in this a little hope and encouragement for Passover 5702?

London, March/April 1941

## לאחינו בני ישראל באירופה

לאחינו בני ישראל היושבים באירופה השבויה – ברכת־פסח שלוחה מאהלי־יעקב שבמצודת בריטניה הגדולה.

ידענו: מאות רבות מכם רעבים ברחבי אירופה כולה ל"הא לחמא עניא" כל הימים והלילות, לרבות ימי פסח־תש"א [1941] ולילותיו. לא נשתנה לכם הלילה הזה מכל הלילות. אין חמץ לרבבתיכם – לא לאכילה, די שבעכם, ולא ביעור – ואין מצה. לפני זמן־מה – לפני שנתיים, ואשתקד – הייתם ברובכם מסובים כבני־מלכים ומספרים ביציאת מצרים, – והלילה הזה השפלים ש"בבני השפחה" רודים בכם, בזעם ובעברה ובחרון־אף, ומכים אתכם מכה על מכה, ואין מונה. מקלכם לא בידכם, כי מקלם על גבכם. כל אירופה מצרים, ואין יציאה ולא מוצא, אין יס־סוף נקרע ולא יס־דמעותיכם קורע, ערל כל לב. סגר עליכם מדבר־אירופה. ליל־שמורים נהפך והיה לכם ליל־חרדות וזוועות, כמוהו כאשר שס"ד לילות־השנה, לילות־אימים ומשמה בלב דוי וקרוע תשאו עיניכם ותשאלו: מה מלילה, מה מלילה? ואין עונה.

אחינו בני־ישראל שבאירופה המפרפרת ביסוריה, כי נהגה בכם ובסבלכם – פסחנו לא פסח, סדרנו לא סדר.

איכה נסב דרך בני־חורין, – ואתם נתונים בשלשלאות של היטלר? איכה נשמח בחגנו, – ושמחת כל חג שבתה באירופה כולה.

לא עליכם לבדכם נשתנה לילה זה שבשנת ה'תש"א מלילות מאות־השנים שקדמו לו. אותו "סדר חדש" באירופה – שאינו, כידוע, לא סדר ולא חדש – בא להחריב את סדר העולם כולו. רק רצועתיים צרה מפרידה ביניכם ובינינו, הקרובים אליכם ביותר, – והאויב המתעלל בכם באכזריות־שטן מוריד גם עלינו כמעט לילה־לילה את עשרת קב־הרשע והזוועה ש"זכה" להם, בא ומאלצנו לשוות נגדנו יומם ולילה (כאילו היינו זקוקים ל"הזכרה" זו!) את עינוי השאול בהם אתם נתונים.

אויבכם־אויבנו הורידנו למעמקים, ולא עלתה בידו להושיבנו במחשכים. אלפים מישראל קראו השנה בלונדון המטרופולין – ובכמה מערי המדינה – את מגלת־אסתר בתחיתות־האדמה. וכך יהיו יורדים גם הלילה הזה אל־פיס־אלפים ממנו למקלטים ממקלטים שונים לערוך בהם את סדרם. שם תינוקות ישאלו: "מה נשתנה" וכו', ואבות ישיבו: "עבדים היינו" וכו'. יהיו הללו סדרים "בעם רב", סדרי עדות וקהלות המצטרפות לחטיבה אחת – ולא סדר־משפחה בלבד. סדר־פסח שכמותם בעביה־האדמה, – מתחת לבתים, בתחיתות של תחנות־רכבת וכו' וכו' – הם ודאי הראשונים במינם מיום צאת ישראל ממצרים. ואין אנו יורדים למעמקים לספר ביציאת מצרים כדרך באים ב"מחותרת", "מתגנבים", מעלימים או בורחים. לא שבת אנו־סיספרד נשב, – אלא שבת יהודים בני־חורין, המתורים ומאושרים לספר – בפרהסיא, לעיני כל העולם – ביציאת מצרים, בקץ שהקיץ על פרעה ועל כל הבאים אחריו שקמו עלינו לכלותנו בכל דור ודור; שבת אנשים מישראל היודעים כי אחים־לצרה רבים לנו, כי אם גם סבלנו אין דומה לו בעולם, הרי עמים רבים בחמת חלקי התבל התחילו סוף־סוף לעמוד על אמת זו – שהיתה כה גלויה לנו וכה חתומה בפניהם – שאותו אויב־ישראל הוא גם אויבם הם, אויב כל עם ועם "אשר לא יכרע ולא ישתחוה לו", אויב כל אדם עלי אדמות.

אחינו בני ישראל באירופה שנמסרה, לפי שעה, ביד עריץ – דמותכם לפנינו, בנו, כל הימים והלילות, וביחוד הלילה הזה, ליל־פסח תש"א. לכוס אליהו התשב, כוס־הגאולה, נצרף השנה כוס־הסבל, כוס־יגונים ולא יין, היא כוס יהודי־אירופה, כוס "היהודי האלמוני" ברחבי העולם. ועת

נפתח פתחי בתינו ומקלטי־לילותינו בעבי־האדמה לקריאת "שפוך חמתך" – שוב נהגה בבתים שאולי לא יפתחו השנה. אתכם וסבלכם נעלה על לבנו ונקרא "שפוך חמתך" בקול אשר ישתיק את שאון אירוני־השטן המשחית הטסים על גבי ראשינו, שאונו המנסר באזנינו יומם ולילה, גם כי יארע "נס" ופסח על בתינו ללילה מן הלילות.

היגיעו אליכם קולות "חזקו ואמצו", קולות אחיכם ממעמקי אדמת איי הבריטים? התצודו אונכם שאגתנו לפדותכם ופדות כל נענה בתפתה שערך היטלר לעולם?

דעו: עמים רבים, מאות מיליוני נפש על פני כל כדור הארץ מתפללים לחג־חירות חדש. עמי־אירופה הללו הנתונים בשביה פותחים אתנו בשנת תש"א ב"הגדה של פסח", מגידים לנפשם ולבניהם: השתא עבדי, לשנה הבאה בני חורין!

אין אנו משלים את נפשנו: יוס־גאולתם הם לא יהא – בעוונותינו הרבים, – יום גאולה שלימה לנו. שמשם יעלה – עם שקיעת שמשו של היטלה ואנו נהא זקוקים לעליית־שחר חדשה, נוספת, ליום בו ינתנו לב חדש ורוח חדשה לרוב עמי אירופה, שבצלם אנו חוסים. לא הרי עבודתו של ישראל בעולם כהרי עבודתה של אירופה המשועבדת בשעה זו לעבדי־עבדים, ולא שחרורה ופתרון שאלותיה בימיה־שלום העתיד לבוא כשחרורנו ופתרון שאלותינו אנו. ואף על פי כן: בליל פסח תש"א נמצא – לנו ולכם, ואנו ואתם אחד – קצת נחמה בצרת־רבים זו, ויתר ממנה באותה תפלת־רבים, תפלת אירופה כולה, שהדה הולך וגובר בארבעת חלקי התבל שמחוץ לה:

השתא עבדי – עבדים ללא "לחמא עניא", – לשנה הבאה בני חורין.

תפלתכם, תפלתנו, תפלת העולם כולה.

זו לא היתה תפלת העולם כולו – בעוונותיו הרבים – לא בליל־פסח תרצ"ט

ואפילו לא בליל־פסח ת"ש, – האין בכך משום קצת עידוד תקווה לפסח־תש"ב?

לונדון,

ניסן, תש"א.

#### 4. Anti-Semitism and the War

*The text printed here is a reproduction of a lecture from the panel “Anti-Semitism and the War” and appeared under the name “S. Rawidowicz (Palestine)” in: Hermon Ould (ed.), Writers in Freedom. A Symposium. Based on the XVII International Congress of the P.E.N. (Poets, Essayists, Novelists) Club Held in London in September 1941, London/New York/Melbourne 1942, 141–143.*

I HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO REPRESENT ONE OF THE OLDEST LITERATURES in the world, Hebrew, as well as one of the P.E.N. Centres still alive and very active in Palestine, America, and other countries. If I had more time, I would have liked to tell you about the development of Hebrew, and I think it would be very interesting to many of the thirty or forty nationalities here to hear something of the great revolution, spiritual and artistic, which took place in reviving Hebrew and turning it into a modern language. The Palestine Centre, which has a branch in America – its Polish branch shares, unfortunately, the fate of the Polish P.E.N. in Poland – is very active also in translations, and I can tell you that the first president of this club, John Galsworthy, became almost a Hebrew author; also Mr. [Herbert George] Wells, who writes wonderful Hebrew, is read in Hebrew in Palestine, Poland and other countries. A new-comer [142] to Hebrew literature is Mr. Winston Churchill, who has recently been translated into Hebrew. I am sure that his message rendered in Biblical Hebrew will make very impressive and inspiring reading.

We have had here many discussions on literature, fighting or not, or both. I have the honour to represent Hebrew literature, which was always a fighting literature. The Bible is the most outstanding example of how writing and fighting should be combined. The great Frenchman, [Ernest] Renan, once said that Hebrew was the language of world protest against evil everywhere. Hebrew should be used for this purpose, because it was the language of the Prophets – authors who, though not members of the P.E.N. Club, were the founders of the greatest “international” in the world for justice, liberty and freedom.

I would mention another thing – the Open Window. Our literature is not yet advanced enough to suffer from this problem; it represents a people without any windows, for we do not have a house, a roof over our heads, or a floor under our feet; we are still homeless. I can tell you there

are seventeen million Jews all over the world with open windows, but open only for the purpose of stones being thrown in. We were the first victims of Europe, we were the first occupants of concentration camps, which were built for us, and everybody knew what was meant when Hitler proclaimed the destruction of our people to be his chief aim. Now, when Hitler's victims are counted, we are overlooked. Is it because we are too numerous and have been victimized too much?

I must tell you that we Hebrew authors consider this P.E.N. International the only and last centre of freedom in the world; we feel that we can appeal to you, not only on our own behalf but on behalf of the world, for the sake of internationalism and freedom in the world in general. It was said that anti-Semitism was the greatest camouflage of Fascism; it is the best introduction to dictatorship and in fighting this I call upon you to expel from literature any kind of anti-Semitic propaganda. I call upon you to help us in building the Jewish National Home in Palestine, which has been since the earliest days of the Bible inseparably connected with the literature and life of our people, as well as in the efforts to restore Jewish rights all over the world, because Right is indivisible and the P.E.N. Club must stand for that. Hebrew and Yiddish authors have a very hard task, writing in two languages, to make the Jewish masses – which are greatest in depression and despair – believe that the P.E.N. Club is a reality. We want the Jewish masses to believe in you, but sometimes we, too, are in despair and do not know how to do it. Ignored everywhere, the Jews all over the world are the first ally of Great Britain, perhaps the best – and by [143] its very nature – because there will never be a Jewish [Vidkun] Quisling. So with Hebrew and Yiddish literature representing these ideals, we would like to see in the P.E.N. Club a spiritual forum for centralizing a clear, honest, frank and mutual understanding between all nations. We are a very big nation but very weak. I am not asking for any “favours” or “mercy,” but for the restoration of the honour of the world in general. Hebrew and Yiddish authors and centres all over the world would like the P.E.N. Club in the future to concentrate more on developing the smaller or less-known literatures so that they may become known to the world. The greatest danger is that world-literature may help the still strong “appeasement” philosophy; some writers may forget, while engaged in their literary work, what is actually going on. But, once and forever, our books must always be fighting books – such was the Bible.



As we are on French soil<sup>17</sup> – spiritually French soil – I would like to remind my French friends of a great Frenchman who did for the world more than anybody else – [Émile] Zola. Zola, with [Georges] Clemenceau and others, took up the case of Captain [Alfred] Dreyfus, of whom he had no idea at all, and in taking up that case he did not want to defend weak minorities, he wanted to defend France; he went out to save the honour of his own country. In saving France, he prepared the way for the victory of 1918; he prepared a new Europe. Without Zola there could have been no Clemenceau. When a country cannot produce fighting writers, it is no more able to produce fighting statesmen and generals, either, or any fighting men and women at all. And I think the spirit of this French soil, the spirit of Zola, should be more discernible in the P.E.N. Club. We are not asking for any favours, but that you defend the honour of literature, the honour of Europe; and in defending this spirit, you are also defending yourselves. The world and its literature need more of the spirit of Zola.

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17 The meetings were held in the French Institute in London.

## 5. On the Precipice

*The text reproduced here appeared under the name Simon Rawidowicz in: United Hebrew Congregation Leeds. A Bulletin of Leeds Jewry 1 (1943), no. 1, 1–2. It is an abridged translation of the first part from “Al pi tehom” (On the Precipice), published in: Bizaron (1943), no. 41, 317–322; (1944), no. 44, 95–98; no. 45, 195–102.*

The year 5703 (1942/43) – the fourth year of the Second World War in the first half of the twentieth century – was no doubt the turning-point of this great world-catastrophe. In its second half, still more as it was nearing its end, the more obvious became the doom of the Axis-powers, the brighter the prospects of the United Nations for a satisfactory outcome of the War, on which the future of European and American civilisation depends.

The one nation that opposed Hitler long before 1939, his first victim, the main target of his blood-thirsty destruction almost unparalleled in History, though not officially reckoned among the twenty-six odd United Nations, is second to none in its deep satisfaction with the turning of fortune in the battle-field of the Nations. No nation was – owing to its very nature and to the force of political circumstances – further than Israel from bowing to Baal, from appeasing the forces of beastliness in Europe, from compromising with the powers that rose to turn Europe and America, nay the whole globe into one concentration camp. No nation in the world can and will be happier than Israel when the day comes and “that wicked thing” [Deuteronomy 17:5] is no more. Yet at the threshold of the year 5704 there is no room in the heart of Israel for jubilation.

At the beginning of the year Hitler’s merciless sword was still hanging over Palestine as well as over the neighboring countries. The danger was so great, so near when [Erwin] Rommel was standing at the gates of Alexandria. The fate of Polish and the other European Jewries threatened to become *Yishuv’s* fate. We are so happy and grateful that the *Yishuv* of Palestine was spared this terrible horror that Europe and its Jewries have been facing since 5700 (1939/40). There is not the slightest exaggeration in describing the year 5703 as the *most catastrophic year in Jewish history*. It pales the darkest years – and there are many – in the history of our people since the destruction of the Second Temple and the beginning of the era of Dispersion. The crusades of the 12th and the 13th centuries were confined

to a few of the countries in which the Jews of the so called Middle-Ages took refuge (The Rhineland and England).

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 (when Columbus discovered America, which accommodates at present over 5,000,000 Jews enjoying freedom and prosperity, in spite of the threatening antisemitism and some internal disintegration) was one of the most terrible blows ever struck against our people. Yet, the overwhelming majority of the exiles were able to find a temporary or prolonged refuge in Portugal, North Africa, Italy, and Turkey. Then the world – “un-enlightened as it was” – was still open – open also to the Jew. The many massacres and pogroms in Eastern Europe in the subsequent centuries were again confined to certain places, limited in time, never wholesale.

Never before the year 5700 has the whole of Europe from the sea of Azov till the British Channel been so unified – “gleichgeschaltet” – as far as the persecution of the [2] Jews is concerned. Never before were the Jewries of Europe so numerous and prosperous before the onslaught, never was the onslaught so organized, so continuous, so determined, so ruthless.

I shall not try to take stock of the losses of European Jewry since 5700, which reached their climax in 5703. This is an impossible task, and were it possible, who could or would dare undertake it? We have no detailed or adequate knowledge of the present position of the remainder of European Jewry, nor do we know how large this remainder is. What we do know about the indescribable sufferings of the great and proud European Jewry of about 5,000,000 souls since 5700 is sufficient to rob us of the last ounce of our peace of mind, to bring us to the depths of greatest sorrow and despair.

No wonder the heart of Israel is also full of bitter disappointment. There is in the world no lack of sympathy with our suffering; neither are protests wanting. The conscience of Europe and America makes itself manifest from time to time. Words are many, but actions few. Yet this is the time to act, not to speak. Again, Israel’s fate at this crucial moment mirrors the deep tragedy of man in general. There exists so great a discrepancy between man’s suffering in recent years and his power of reaction. Sufferings, we know, often fulfill the function of purifying and elevating those who experience them, making them nobler and greater ...

When one looks, however, at the world at large, one is sorry to note how great was the disaster that came down on man since 5700 and how little and weak was his inner response to it. A tragedy, one of the greatest that has ever befallen man, is being performed in the world and it does not terrify man, does not awaken him from his lethargy, leads him not towards a new beginning. Everywhere man gets his promised or threatened dose

of “blood, sweat, toil and tears,” [Sir George Schuster, House of Commons Debate, 1 July 1942] and man “can take it,” [Major Frank Heilgers, *ibid.*] does take it, yet does not rise to the great occasion. Old, half-extinguished lights that did not lighten very much even “yesterday” – are alight almost everywhere, and no new light is to be seen. So much *Tohu-wa-bohu* [chaos] – yet man does not try to stand up and inaugurate a real new order. Never before did the time cry more for true renewal, for the re-birth of man and his values. No moment in man’s career on God’s earth was more in need of it. Yet “business as usual” is the order of the day. So catastrophic a tragedy – and no inner purification, no “*tohorah*” [purity], or “*katarsis*” as the Greek philosopher Aristotle used to call it. The signs of goodwill for the better morrow to come are so few, and so dim when compared with the gigantic forces of destruction at work.

Were there more “purification” in the world, such a phenomenon as the increasing of anti-Semitism [sic] – to mention this instance only – among the nations that fight Hitler would have been absolutely impossible. Imagine, in the midst of the life and death struggle against the greatest anti-semitic [sic] power in History, European and American communities fighting Hitlerism should be able to afford some basis for the strengthening of that very movement which threatens their own existence. What satanic irony. And, is the increase of anti-Semitism in the anti-Hitlerite world a bad omen for the Jews *only*? No, it is as bad, and if not a *worse omen for the non-Jewish world* which fights Hitler.

Man and world have not yet risen. Maybe the measure of afflictions is not yet filled. The process of “healing” needs more devastation; more blood, sweat, toil and tears are perhaps necessary. At present man and world are standing on a precipice. Their next step will either save them from disaster or hurl them into the depths of the abyss. The fate of the world – and of Jewry within it – hangs as if by a thread. Everything is in the balance.

One day, man will return to his own self – for awaken he must – and he will regain his power of resistance to all the forces that spell disaster for him and for his future on earth.

Let us therefore be prepared for the day of man’s awakening when he will set out to create a new or at least a better world. Let the Jewish community in these Isles, on which the eyes of tortured European Jewry are turned, fortify itself, in body and spirit; let it be self-conscious, free from the usual apathy and unwillingness, ready for thought and action, aware of its responsibilities towards its own destiny as well as towards the great past of our people and its future.

Anglo-Jewry owes this to itself. It owes it also to the hundreds of thousands of Jewish martyrs in Hitler's Europe of 5700–5703, to the heroic fighters of the Ghettoes in Poland, whose glorious death of *Kiddush Ha-shem* [sanctification of the (divine) name], will testify forever to the eternity of the indomitable spirit of the Jewish people. – Israel will never give up, never surrender to the forces of evil. Our people will forever preserve its proud place in the history of mankind – “recognised” by the Nations or not: – “AM YISRAEL CHAI.” [The People of Israel lives.]

## 6. The Involuntary Martyr

*The original Hebrew text appeared under the title “Kadosh al korho” in: Simon Rawidowicz (ed.), Simon Dubnov in Memoriam. Essays and Letters, London/Jerusalem/Waltham, Mass., 1954, 13–23. It was prepublished under the same title in: Bizaron 28 (1953), no. 161, 3–14, and later reprinted under the title “Shimon Dubnov. Kadosh al korho” [Simon Dubnow. The Involuntary Martyr], in: Simon Rawidowicz, Iyyunim be-mahashevet Yisra’el [Studies in Jewish Thought], ed. by Benjamin C.I. Ravid, vol. 2, Jerusalem 1971, 449–460. The Hebrew text contains two fonts. Passages that have been set with the second font are reproduced in bold letters in the transcription and the translation, respectively. Orr Scharf translated the text into English.*

### 1.

From the day that Israel became a holy nation unto the world, since the first martyrs died on Judean soil, as fatalities of the “Gleichschaltung” imposed by the despots of Greece and Rome, it has not been beset by such a profusion of holy martyrdom enfolded in unprecedented mourning over our six million dead on European soil in the years 1939–1945. This martyrdom is of a unique nature, causing an anxiety that will terrify our hearts all the days that we will walk on this blood-soaked and ephemeral earth; it is of horrendous scope, which shocks us to the very core of our existence; and sometimes it seems that we will never again regain our strength in the wake of this catastrophe.

Unlike the martyrs of Israel in past generations, who were given the choice to follow their hearts – whether it be to accept the yoke of Greece and Rome, of Christianity and Islam or to choose martyrdom – the martyrs of 1939–1945 did not have any alternative. They did not choose their death; it forced itself upon them with all its horror, with irresistible might, as a dictate of nature armed with technological contrivances not imagined by the oppressors, the “sanctifiers” of Jewish martyrs up to Hitler’s generation, without escape and the faintest hope of salvation. Hence the great unease that this Third Destruction has instilled in our hearts, in which a third of the People of Israel (in quantity, but more than that in quality, in loss of its hidden powers) in the 20th century, which shook the life-foundations of its surviving two thirds: For they are *involuntary martyrs* – and should they be called martyrs? May we elevate them to the rank of those pure

ones who gave their lives – willingly, by choice – for the sanctification of Israel and its God?

The Angel of the Nation has vented his full fury on us, paralyzing the greater part of the nation that was not consumed by Hitler, and exposing its heart to persistent gnawing doubt. The People of Israel, well-versed in the “kindness” of the all-loving, merciful and forgiving world, the anvil for the hammer of its evil in every language in every generation, in no generation suffered cruelty such as that entailed by this involuntary martyrdom. He who sanctifies the Name of Heaven and Israel willingly is rewarded upon going up to the gallows, as he leaps into the pyre. That fleeting moment of sanctification of the Name of God is the greatest hour of his earthly life. The loathing that he holds for gentile life in all its garbs, his faith in the blessed God and the 613 worlds awaiting [according to the rabbinic legend] martyrs since the six days of creation – fill the heart of the sanctifier of the Name in his final hour with an abundance of other-worldly happiness and joy with which no man of Israel is privileged in ordinary times that merely separate between one era of martyrdom and the next. The reward of the sanctification of the Name is the sanctification of the Name. In contrast, he who involuntarily sanctifies the Name is the most wretched of the world’s wretches. For he has also been robbed of the “grace” of choosing, [14] of making the last decision of his life; is his sacrifice not a sacrifice, his martyrdom not martyrdom? What is his reward for a sacrifice that is not sacrificial?

One heavy burden joins another: For the martyrdom of 1939–1945 had stamped with the same seal of *compulsion* also the timely death of the innocent and true martyrs, our finest sons and daughters in Poland and Lithuania and in other European countries, many of whom prayed like Rabbi Akiva in his day to be blessed with fulfilling the commandment of “[loving the Lord] with all your soul,” [cf. Bavli, Berakhot 60b, Deuteronomy 6:5] even if He takes your soul, as if they were created for the purpose of dying a martyr’s death. Woe to Israel’s finest, to those born martyrs of unsurpassable virtue, who were destined not to arrive at the hour of supreme bravery for which they yearned all of their days with very great suffering and with yet greater love, enduring countless tribulations with even greater dedication. In contrast with this denial of voluntary martyrdom, the extent of involuntary martyrdom in Israel in our days has increased almost beyond measure. The destruction of 1939–1945 adorned with martyr wreathes very many of our brothers and sisters who would have rejected it with all their strength and torn it to tiny shreds had they been given the slightest access to a life without wreath, reward and majesty.

Among those millions of our martyrs were, to our great regret, some tens of thousands of men and women consumed by assimilation, immersed in foreign culture, skeptics and faint of heart who found the heritage of generations past too heavy to bear; they lacked the power and the will to go through fire and water for sanctification as the nation's martyrs; those meant nothing to them, and not only through fault of their own; we are also to blame, all of us.

This great slaughter came and mixed the blood of voluntary martyrs with the blood of involuntary martyrs, and to some extent mixed blood of two different kinds: the blood of those versed in Scripture, Mishnah [the first compendium of the Oral Law] and Aggadah [non-legalistic exegetical literature], the strongest among us in the Jewish Diaspora, with the blood of simple people who did not read and did not study, who did not draw water for the keepers of the charge of Torah nor chopped wood for them, as did their exalted forefathers; the blood of righteous men like the martyrs of Mainz and Speyer and thousands of martyred communities, who with their lives wrote the great ancestral scroll of the nation and sealed it with their death; with the blood of tens of thousands of Jewish men and women in whose hearts this time-honored righteousness did not live and who did not consider the ancestral scroll their own; the blood of world-sustaining Pharisees, who conquer all urges, who draw sustenance from one measure of carobs [Mishnah Taanit 24b], world-leaders in the fallen tent of poverty [Amos 9:11], with the blood of Jews who crave conquest, devour life with all their might in the outside world, who came out to gorge their souls on this worldly delicacies as if struggling to find a rewarding compensation for their forefathers' life of self-denial and mortification; the blood of women who are the nation's pride, who preserve the purity of the House of Israel, with the blood of Jewish women whose way of life was far removed from that of their virtuous mothers; the blood of those who fight for the existence of Israel, men of the holy and the profane, with the blood of those who throw rocks into the wellspring of their existence, with whom the sword of the deranged and mad enemy caught up on the course of their flight from their life-source, the road on which multitudes of Israel perished unredeemed in the East and in the West several generations before Hitler's rise to power in Germany and Europe.

How dreadful is this mixture of blood. There is no greater horror.

Sometimes I think to myself: Perhaps this might teach us a new precept in the laws of sanctification of the Name, make us aware of a hidden secret of great value not only in relation to the death of martyrs but also



in relation to the *life* of Israel, a holy nation in its entirety, and in each and every generation? This secret is:

[15] The sanctification of the Name is the deed of the *individual* of Israel, and yet its human element is not decisive. It lies at the *very core* of Israel, at its very *existence*, in its worldly presence. It is what makes that world rise up against us, and it is what has, does, and will prevail over them without ever being prevailed over. Everything follows the tree's trunk and roots; the deciding is not given to its limbs. One who will sacrifice himself on the altar of Israel is a son of the *community*; he exempts the community from giving its burnt offerings, the nation its sons, in any way. This sanctification of the Name is not at all subject to individual inclinations – one may sanctify and one may desecrate; it is not one's volition that grants the act its meaning, but the manifestation of *Israel* in itself, the manifestation of the nation *as a whole*. This individual duty is a communal duty imparted upon a person, a duty borne by the trunk that has been distributed to its limbs. It is the sanctity of Israel, its right to preserve its life and its otherness in the world – and not an act of spiritual valor of a select few. This national sanctity will, of necessity, find its expression among the masses, very many of whom are distant from it, in life and in death. For the individual, the martyr, the gates are open either to volition or coercion. For the nation, like the tidings of life's triumph over death, survival over annihilation, the unconditional existence that is repeatedly sealed and revealed with the death of each and every martyr – what difference is there between volition and coercion?

The voluntary martyrs of the Middle Ages, in the days of the Christian-Jewish “polemic” that also served as pretext for looting and preying, were mostly victims of the destructive lust of Christendom for the *spirit or religion* of the wandering “servant” of God. The involuntary martyrs of the 20th century are “sanctified” by the wish of the nations to destroy the *body* of Israel, to eradicate it from the world forever. The generation of involuntary martyrs took upon itself to serve as the target for a *greater attack by the nations* than the one that had been aimed at the voluntary martyrs of past generations. In this generation, *the Jew himself*, the People of Israel, and each of its members, has been taken to the gallows by one of the most belligerent kingdoms of Europe, in broad daylight, in the sight of all the nations of the world. And as stated: Without an opportunity to become forced converts, without an anchor of relief. A demon of blood and gas came in this century and wrapped a unique *talit* [prayer shawl] around each and every son and daughter of Israel – on those who throw off the yoke and those who deny any tenet as well as the bearers of the yoke of all 613 commandments, the loyal Zionist and the believer in Socialism; the

pure and holy grandmother who put her trust in “Ze’enah u-Re’enah,” [late sixteenth-century Yiddish commentary on the Torah portion of the week favored by women] and her granddaughter who went forth and saw and did not guard her vineyard. And this is the greatness of their demise, this is their sanctity; not the sanctity of volition and coercion, but rather the sanctity of root and trunk, the sanctity of *a nation’s very essence*; sanctity wherein coercion is volition that demands its due from those who are oblivious to it as it does from those who resist it. This martyrdom has nothing to do with the heart’s desire and everything to do with wholeness, with *perseverance* in the face of fate. It does not distinguish between one man and his fellow, one woman and another; it cries out to the high heavens: *Israel without condition, Israel as a whole*.

This martyrdom did not distinguish between volition and coercion, choice and imperative. And if we were to follow that distinction to its end, perhaps we would have discovered that the involuntary in fact surpasses the voluntary; it is a necessity that is an instinct, imprinted with the seal of fate, an involuntary act in appearance that is a voluntary act in essence, a concealed volition alive in the heart of the nation *as a whole* even when it is not discernible and visible to each one of its sons; the involuntary wholeness of the nation is no less valuable in any way than the splendid voluntary courage of each and every of its members. What is more: Volition, in addition to its reward [16] in the world-to-come and the unique spiritual satisfaction granted to the martyr as he stretches his neck for the hangman, also compensates and placates, and so may slightly attenuate the greatness of the sacrifice. In contrast, coercion is upsetting and unsettling, and makes the executioner’s sin graver. It is as if it would be possible to say from the perspective of the victim and not from the perspective of his intent, for every sacrifice requires intent and not martyrdom; does the involuntary martyr surpass the voluntary martyr by virtue of the great *protest* that he makes against the world’s wickedness and malice? Certainly not. Who are we, the two thirds of Israel that were not sanctified either by voluntary martyrdom or by involuntary martyrdom, to differentiate one blood from another, one martyr from his fellow-martyr? Is volition superior to coercion, coercion to volition? There is no lesser and greater among the martyrs – voluntary and involuntary are alike. Voluntary martyrs and involuntary martyrs have equal merit in preserving the life of Israel, whether they are worthy or not. Each man and woman of Israel who has been – and is – taken by the despots of the nations to their gallows, and how numerous are they, sanctify God and Israel by their very *existence*, as said. *The sanctity of their existence* precedes the sanctity of

the gallows. Blessed are they who have succeeded in making themselves into an offering; woe to those who have not succeeded. And the reward of the involuntary martyr is as that of the voluntary martyr. The Giver of all Rewards shall deprive neither.

From now on say: This bloody mixture of 1939–1945 came to teach us a lesson, much profounder than what we may learn here. Not only was the blood of voluntary martyrs mixed with the blood of the involuntary martyrs – *they were joined together. Blood came to blood, one blood.* Martyrdom joined martyrdom, one adding splendor to the other. Voluntary martyrs endow involuntary martyrs with the majesty of choice. Involuntary martyrs confer the magnitude of fate, the force of reality and the destiny of the nation upon voluntary martyrs. One martyr from Poland's and Lithuania's Jewish communities who assembled in their town markets holding Torah scrolls in their hands and singing the prayer "How goodly is our lot" to meet the Germans, who came to destroy them, can atone for multitudes of slaughtered Jews who were not graced with the ascension of their soul to which nothing on earth is comparable [cf. Job 41:26]. Who would dare to accuse their lost souls that wander around the world seeking restoration? The singing of "I believe in the coming of the Messiah" of our youth who went naked into the gas inferno; this chant of faith in Israel and in man even if God's image had left him, shall silence forever the echoes of the cries of despair and writhing of defeat of the multitudes of our brethren at their dying hour that fill the air of all Europe, and from us there is not a refuge from those of our brothers and sisters whose lips did not open at that horrific hour, neither for prayer nor for song. Who has the heart to invoke the severity of the law against this most miserable lot of the miserable? Each of the 93 Jewish girls from Poland sentenced to prostitution who purified themselves and left this world in sanctity; that righteous grandmother in one of Poland's ghettos who would immerse herself each and every day and wrap herself with her white shrouds, preparing herself hour by hour to leave this bleak valley in purity and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God, the Creator of the world, the true judge whose every act is truth, and who will tell Him what He should do – spreads the talit of her sanctity over multitudes of our slain brethren who did not possess such tremendous strength of spirit that is the result of a tradition of two millennia, abounding with highest bravery unknown to "normal" nations.

The blood of volition sanctifies, purifies and raises before the throne of glory every drop of involuntary Jewish bloodshed [17] in Europe in the years 1939–1945, and it shall be forever kept alive and boiling in the

nation's cup of remembrance over which Esau's emissary [cf. Genesis Rabbah 77:5] and those who did his will have no control at all. Volition and coercion merge and become one: One is the blood, one is the soul, the soul of one Israel.

## 2.

And with the martyrdom of Reb Shimon son of Reb Meir Ya'akov Dubnow in the ghetto of the holy community of Riga on 18 Kislev 5702 [8 December 1941], the decree of fate reached the peak of its horror. There is no greater coercion than the one suffered by this involuntary martyr, and no holiness more sacred than his.

No holiness is more sacred than his, as he his life's work were imbued with courageous revolt; one revolt against two things: *Holiness and sanctity*.

*Holiness* – Dubnow was one of the best of Eastern Europe's New Israel of the 19th and 20th centuries, who set out to herald to his generation the advent of reviving and liberating *secularity*. The same secularity that repeatedly tried and failed in the East and in the West became, thanks to certain social and intellectual circumstances in the late 19th century (through the Haskalah [enlightenment] movement that continued here as well to fight an ancient battle, and with the support of general spiritual and social-economic movements) European Jewry's main road. Dubnow became the spokesman, or to be more exact, one of the spokesmen, of this secular movement in the seven-million strong Russian Diaspora that possessed great strength in matters both holy and secular: In traditional Talmud study of great vigor that sometimes appeared to be worthy of the mantle of the Diasporas of Spain and France and Germany in the Middle Ages on the one hand; and in secular literature that was about to overshadow in certain respects the scope and richness of the "golden secular" age of Spanish Jewry on the other hand; in Hebrew and Yiddish, and in both *Hibbat Zion* [Love of Zion] and revolutionary international Socialism. Against the backdrop of 19th century secularity, Dubnow had also set out to find the secular in ancient Israel, the human-natural secular stratum upon which the nation's sphere of holiness had been built; to fight for the revelation of the secular aspect in the face of this holy nation, for the secular manifestations in the kingdom of priests, the flesh and blood in the spirit of Israel, the "nation" in its God. And so he became one of the great Jewish "secularizers of holiness" of recent generations, demanding complete secularity – as both a historian sitting in the dust of the past and

a man of war fighting for the improvement of life in his generation. He and the members of his generation – the generation of the visionaries of our revival in all its manifestations in Odessa on the shore of the Black Sea, a sort of Alexandria of a second Egypt; in the Jerusalem of Lithuania of the Vilna Gaon and of the “Haskalah”; in the metropolis of a zealously devout and burgeoning Poland, and in dozens of other cities and towns; and from Dubnow’s mouth much of the Jewry of our day lives, the Jewry of the holy and the secular in the Land of Israel and in the Diasporas – envisioned the new secularity and he set the tone. They believed and were reassured that from their days onwards this secular spirit would serve as a prototype for all of the nation’s values and assets, and that the triumph of the mundane over the holy would last for generations: A nation, but not necessarily a holy one, moral but not necessarily divinely so, a kingdom in its home but not a kingdom of priests. There was much holiness, a new type of holiness, in that secular enthusiasm, in the risky foray into that secularity and everything that it entailed, a passion that perhaps the “secularizers of holiness” themselves did not experience.

[18] *Sanctity* – the assimilators of the West, from whose waters Dubnow drank much (and in his early period, too much), considered Judaism to be a catastrophe descended from heaven, or from history. Some of them said that this catastrophe can be slightly rectified while others said that it cannot be rectified at all, and it would only leave this world with them. Jewish liberalism in Germany viewed Jewish existence as tragic existence, and its contribution was that sublime and eternal tragedy that would not cease also in the coming generations. This voice is still heard even today, though now it sings a different tune. Shimon Dubnow, the son of the great masses of Jewry, came and said: Judaism is the story of a lofty victory, of the victory of light over darkness, of existence over annihilation, a living reminder of the liberty of man and nation; it is neither an admirable tragedy nor a catastrophe pleading for mercy from without and stifling the bearers of its yoke from within.

The nationalist among scholars of the West, the greatest historian of them all, Heinrich Zvi Graetz, who paved the way for those who came after him, including Dubnow, in the opening of his magnum opus, defined the history of Israel in the last eighteen centuries as a (“*Leidensgeschichte*”) [history of suffering] externally (in emphasizing those “*Leiden*,” [suffering] “*Dulden*,” [bearing] and “*Wandern*,” [wandering] he did not ignore manifestations of “*Forschen*,” [researching] “*Denken*,” [thinking] and “*Lernen*” [learning] in Israel), and as a “*Literaturgeschichte*” [history of literature] internally. The young Shimon Dubnow came out and said:

Jewish history is neither the story of martyrs and their death, nor is it only a tearful epic; it is the story of a *worldly nation*, the history of a living people that has been molded in its own shape and image, the history of a society that aspires to *self-rule*, to an independent autonomy, the history of the nation's war for its survival. The holy martyrology with which Jewish history had been crowned is a crown of the *past*. The new secular era eliminated the sanctity of past generations or gave it a new form, and the advent of liberty, progress, and the like put an end to this sacred martyrology. From then on, it was not to be any longer a holy nation or a nation of martyrs, it was no longer to espouse only the sanctity of life and the sanctity of death in their traditional, time-honored form. In 1942 [sic], his end came and proved him wrong, and how horrible was that proof.

The life and activities of our historian are a kind of living testimony to the last eighty years of our history, full of construction and destruction. In his beginning he witnessed the reign of the Haskalah (even if its demise was already lurking), the rise of assimilation and the spread of emancipation, and later on, the dawning of Zionism and the emergence of Jewish Socialism. Dubnow did not earn his fame only through observation; he set out to pave the way for Diasporic nationalism and autonomy. In the wake of the First World War, he witnessed the materialization of his political dreams in several of our Diasporas. This was the most glorious period of his life, when he began reaping his fruits a little with a hopeful song in his heart, even though the Bolshevik revolution, to which a "liberal" Russian Jew such as he was loath, greatly darkened it. And in the last decade of his life, aged 72 to 82, he was destined to witness the dimming of the lights of his life, within and without: The repudiation of the French revolution that he so admired by the German-Fascist revolution, the revocation of emancipation in Germany and the states that it overran, the decline of Diasporic nationalism, the dismantlement of attempted autonomism in the East, the decline of the [19] profane movement (**secular movement**) in which he wholeheartedly believed, as well as the diminution of Zionism (by the Partition Plan [1937] and the White Paper [1939]), for which he was an advocate and an adversary, and in his heart, he answered "amen" after all who prayed for its success.

And so he was there with his fellow members of the generation as the bad situation became worse and still worse. This remnant of the Russian Diaspora and its Odessan branch, a man of the East from head to toe, fled from the East to the West after his sun set in the East, and then came the devil of the West and forced him to return to his homeland, Soviet Russia, from which he had fled, and caught up with him in Riga (in the wake

of the 1939 division of Poland and the Baltic states between Russia and Germany). And after his city of refuge was conquered by Hitler's troops, he was forced to witness day-in day-out the hardships and sufferings of the ghetto until its complete devastation, and to expire on one of the streets of Riga, ill and too weak to stand on his feet, with his brothers and sisters in that holy congregation, in holiness and purity. It would seem that Graetz, his master, was more right than he was: Jewish history is a martyrology, a story of blood and tears, as is the history of its chroniclers. Between age eighty of "strength" and ninety of "bowed back" [cf. Mishnah Avot 5:21] his soul bowed down to the ground, his body became prey to human beasts; as if his revolt against the sanctity of past generations was no more than a youthful folly, the boldness of rebels seeking to change the order of the world, only for the world to absorb them and no one was aware that they had come to their end. The "*secularizer of holiness*" of the late 19th century took upon himself to be the *sanctifier of the secular* in his life and a holy martyr in his death in the mid-20th century – an involuntary martyr, more involuntarily, in the profoundest sense, than millions of his brothers and sisters who suffered the same fate, as already implied. Few of them read our history as he did, knew it as intimately as he did, tread its secret paths like a native and also "made history" and revolted as he did against the sanctity of past generations, with a new sanctification of secular life whose crest had been desecrated and thrown to the ground.

Certainly, if this bold-hearted and strong-spirited champion of secularity were forced to decide between converting or renouncing a speck of holiness and martyrdom in the manner of his ancestors all over the world, he would have made himself an offering to the God of his forefathers, jumping with the cry of [the prayer] "Shema Israel" into that pyre prepared for us since the six days of our creation, whose flames seared and stirred the hearts of all chroniclers in Israel up to Shimon Dubnow, inclusively. At such hour, a "secularizer of holiness" like him would have gone out to be killed even for less than a trivial matter of holiness rather than transgress [cf. Bavli, Sanhedrin 74a–b]. This choice was not given to him either. "Holy shall be every man of Israel in Europe, holy shall you too be, Shimon son of Reb Meir Ya'akov, for holy were your forefathers, hence involuntarily you are holy;" this divine voice that called out from the heavens and sundered the air of Europe as it was suffering the abuse of Hitler's defiling troops, may the name of the wicked rot [Proverbs 10:7], the elderly Dubnow heard day and night in the last months of his life. He knew that his fate had been sealed. He sanctified himself to do the will of

his Maker. And I am sure that he remained faithful to the secular spirit of his youth and the revolt of his adolescence against holiness, as he was dying the death of a holy martyr.

And the Angel of the Nation was yet crueler to its faithful historian. Jewish sages and writers do not enjoy longevity, certainly not past the “eighth decade of strength.” Each of their achievements is acquired by expending their life force, every step forward on their thorny path costs them heart and blood. When Shimon Dubnow – who had seen many evils in his day, and for most of his life made his living [20] with his quill, that is, he was always on the brink, as he wandered, struggled, and knew little financial stability as he began approaching middle age, his heart foretold his nearing end (see his [auto]biography [*Book of My Life*]). Luckily, his fears were proven wrong. He was not consumed by the revolutionary fire in his homeland, he came out “from slavery into freedom” (as he put it), reaping the fruits of his life’s work in his seventh decade, and summing it up in “World History of the Jewish People” and his other works. He enjoyed an impressive longevity. How fresh was he in body and spirit in his eighth decade. But ultimately this great blessing reversed and became a terrible curse. It was as if our “historian” was given this gift of life for no other reason but to drink to the dregs the goblet-cup of suffering [Isaiah 51:17] of Jewish history, discovering on the eve of his death a few historical secrets that become apparent only “when nightfall is neigh.” How regretful are we for having failed to retrieve his last words, with which some of the martyrs of yore earned their fame. The things that the last of the chroniclers discerned in the 20th century in the Riga ghetto were not discerned by many a chronicler before him. His life and suffering close to his death also remain unknown to us, like that of the millions of his brothers and sisters who disappeared without a trace, monument or headstone. He dwelt among his people, and with them he perished. The blood of this involuntary martyr blended with the blood of six million involuntary martyrs across Europe.



### 3.

Shimon Dubnow had three personas which are one; historian, political thinker, and leader standing at the gate and responding to the times and their demands. The root of all three is one; an ancient verse that Dubnow



kept citing to Israel and to himself: “The secret of the nation’s existence depends on the absolute imperative of the ancient prophecy: *‘The scepter shall not depart from Judah.’*” [Genesis 49:10] In every era our enemies below: “There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed whose laws are different from those of any other people.” [cf. Esther 3:8] And in recent generations this is called “a kingdom within a kingdom,” and the Jewish people walks on its historical path and says: Indeed, a kingdom within a kingdom, an internally autonomous collective within an external political collective, etc. (from his Introduction to “Pinkas medinat Lita” [Minutes of the Country Lithuania], 1925).

Dubnow sought the scepter in the three above-mentioned capacities. What is a scepter? It is home rule, freedom at heart, independence in spite of every yoke and subjugation. And Dubnow himself was a man of the scepter. He was a man of rigorous discipline, privy to the secret of self-control to the point of self-affliction, one of those great stiff-necked men with whom his provenance, the Russian Jewish Diaspora, has been blessed. Dubnow had found much support for the scepter of the heart in the scepter that prevailed among our Russian Diaspora that had been blessed with a unique pride from which Dubnow drew abundantly. Chroniclers and ordinary people, Jewish and non-Jewish, would study the scepter of foreign nations that tyrannized the Jews of Eastern Europe. Yet sometimes they did not properly observe also that internal scepter with which those communities were blessed. Great was their power to withstand the scepter from without, because they had a scepter from within, and the latter prevailed. “And there was a king in Jeshurun,” [Deuteronomy 33:5] also in Jeshurun of the Diaspora. The biblical phrase “and there was” does not always denote strife and destruction, particularly if used in reference to our Diasporas in Eastern and Central Europe. If it were not for that scepter of kingship of Israel in the Diaspora – in its deepest sense, kingship does not depend on an army and armament on the ground, sea and air, on ruling over others and everything associated with it; its essence is in man’s soul, in him and his communities, much of it [21] is found in the very existence of everything that may exist, in the nature of everything that is imbued with the imprint of Being, in the freedom of every object insofar as it is an object – it is possible that the scepter of Zion would not have come into existence, and the lawgiver would not have returned in the 20th century to the Judah in Zion. For the scepter of the renewing Zion is a continuation of the scepter of the Diasporas – a continuation that also contains much of a protest, while also retaining much of its creative translation and interpretation.

Dubnow looked at that Diaspora whose scepter reached its zenith in the 19th century and the early part of the century that followed, and in its light he set out to discover every speck of sovereignty that the Jewish people had struggled for since its beginning – “The scepter shall not depart from Judah” illuminated his way through our history, from land to land and from era to era. Hence, this autonomism should not be attributed to outside influence alone. It is hewn mainly from the reality of the Jewish Diaspora in Russia. In its form and image, it was created.

And the scepter is twofold, double-edged. If man and collective are fortunate, the scepter of kingship revives them. If they are unfortunate, it is the scourge of slave masters. Dubnow began with a scepter and ended – actually, was ended – with a scourge. And the scepter of the beginning was nothing like the scourge of the ending. The annals of Israel were to the Man of the Scepter the annals of the triumphant scepter of a people without land and without lawgiver. The man who studied from youth the scepter of sovereigns in Israel was destined to witness in old age the wrathful scourge that Israelite Diasporas met, the one that expunged them from this world. The curse of European culture in the 20th century overpowered the blessing of the nation’s third Patriarch: The scourge of destruction and annihilation shall not depart from Judah. All his life he prayed for a scepter from within; then came along a tribe wielding the scourge of oppression, striking him together with his six million brethren. Stricken and “sanctified” by the external scourge with which Israel has always been “sanctified” since yore, that tribe’s golden age came to an end. His life is testimony to his tribe’s grandeur; his demise is a lasting monument to the tribe’s failure and insult.

This Man of the Scepter did not approach our history from the traditional perspective of the “**scepter of Judah**,” a scourge entirely of divine and human rage. He envisioned a **scepter for Judah**, a scepter of sovereignty that would join together tribes without land and kingship. And ultimately, the scepter of Judah had the upper hand. It prevailed over the scepter of Shimon who was not given to strike root in Israel and to become the source of a new internal scepter. With his blood he sealed the first half of the 20th century with the scepter of Judah of past generations. He and his generation became themselves a “page,” an additional page, and may it be the last, in that “Scepter of Judah.”

- Will the scepter not depart from *Judah*??
- The “*scepter of Judah*” did not depart from Israel ...

## 4.

Is it not a many-faceted symbol that the greatest historian of our time passed away while enveloped in the prayer shawl of “all martyrs,” at the close of the first secular era of modern Jewish history, as he sanctified himself and his people for both the holy and the mundane with this expression of exceptional sanctity, whose terrifying implementation is also a result of the world’s new secular age, abounding with conquests by a technology of murder, of mass slaughter, mass martyrdom not imagined by our predecessors? If this is a symbol, it is only so for the past. I am certain: Shimon Dubnow the martyr would have constantly warned, [22] if given the opportunity to utter his final words, not to consider his demise a portent. It is not a mission of the Jewish people to preserve this holy martyrdom to the end of days. Any holiness but this. The sanctity of life with all the mundane in it, and not the sanctity of the slain. But if the world were to become enraged and defiled and deranged, and were to go back to its evil nature and live by the sword and harm Jacob, each man of Israel is prepared by his very nature to be sanctified by this martyrdom, and how much more so was Shimon Dubnow.

We are prepared, and the world should not think that we are ready for that martyrdom and born to it. We will never accept, not from a Jewish perspective and not from a universal perspective, such martyrdom, neither voluntary martyrdom nor involuntary martyrdom such as that of 1939–1945. Woe to the world that witnessed in those few years of great ruin, almost beyond repair, the extermination of millions of those martyrs. How great is the insult and how immense is the malice of a world that imposes this martyrdom on a people whose finest sons aspired to improve and to refine it and to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, and not a nation of martyrs, the victims of every tyrant and monster. The grandeur of our martyrdom is a mark of shame for the world. The demise of six million of our martyrs, Shimon Dubnow the martyr among them, creates an abyss between us and the world. It is not in our power to build a bridge over it – it is up to the world, and it is its duty. This world, in which the involuntary martyr so greatly yearned to believe, in it and in man that dwells in it, in the spirit of each nation and its holy mundaneness, in society’s hidden light and in its progress, light sown for man [cf. Psalms 97:11]. This is faith and this is its reward: Gas and blood without end.

And yet, even if great is the filth and abomination of a world that turned millions of Jews into dust and ashes, fertilizer, and also soap – and there is no mark of Cain more burning on the forehead of the world than

the “*Judenseife*” with which a few of the vile of the gentiles still clean themselves, never to be cleansed of their defilement – we will not wrench from our hearts that faith in the world as a whole and in the man that lives therein, without which there is no hope of revival, neither for us nor for the world. Those criminals have ruined the world, and Israel shall live by his faith [cf. Habakkuk 2:4]. Therefore, in this dire hour for Israel and for the world, some eighteen months after the end of this terrible chapter in the history of the Second World War, we bring into our heart not only Shimon Dubnow and the sanctity of his death, but also the living chronicler who *believes in man*, on the mundane and the holy in him, as a man of good tidings on Israel’s acceptance in the world, on his striking root in the reality of the world, as a symbol of planting and sowing in Israel, for the faith in our power to overcome Esau’s emissary out of a wish for revival in spite of annihilation; and also as a living reminder of the vigor of the creativity of our large Diaspora in Eastern Europe, that city and mother in Israel [II Samuel 20:19] that even the House of Romanov with all its malicious tyranny could not subdue.

To be truthful, Shimon Dubnow as a **symbol** is perhaps greater than his rich and fruitful scientific and social legacy, which has revealed more than it has concealed, and we have no intention whatsoever to ignore here its shaded parts (and the writer of these lines was never a “Dubnowist”). When this symbol of life is joined with the symbol of martyrdom that became intertwined with it at the end, is there any need to add and emphasize that Shimon Dubnow merits *dedicating* mourning to him, although mourning over an individual cannot replace the mourning over a nation, and martyrdom blurs any difference between great [23] and small, between fruitless and fruit-bearing trees of many roots and branches, and in all other respects. And in this dedicated mourning, we do not ignore others among the great and noble of the circle of the remnant of Jewish sages and writers in Europe – especially Dubnow’s spiritual descendants, his disciple-friends in the study of Jewish history in Eastern Europe who were slain along with him, even if not in the same ghetto in Riga: Moses Schorr, Meir Balaban, Ignacy Schiper, and one of his finest younger followers, Emanuel Ringelblum, may God avenge their blood. And so a great and numerous Jewry was lost, with its chroniclers, young and old alike, its artists and poets, scholars and educators, men of the holy and of the mundane, thousands and thousands of our people, including those “humble of the earth, mute of being” [Chaim Nahman Bialik, “May I Be One of You”], that one of our greatest poets prayed that it would be his lot to be with them; those thanks to whom we have come this far and been saved

from Hitler's fire by a few miracles, and our insult is so great that we do not know what to say and what to do for the souls of the martyrs of 1939–1945, which also demand of us their repair, of him too, and we fall short, so short, of offering that repair. The prayer-shawl of Shimon Dubnow, a communal talit, is spread over the six million of our martyrs – voluntary and involuntary – and his name shall be forever linked with the study of their history and that of their forefathers and with the envisioning of the revival of those who will follow them. Their memory and his are one. May the memory of involuntary martyrs be blessed.

London/Leeds, 1946.

## קדוש על כרחו

### א.

מיום היות ישראל לעם־קדושים בעולם, מהרוג־יהמלכות הראשונים על אדמת יהודה, החללים למשובת־"גלייכשאלטונג" של עריצי יון ורומי ואילך – לא ירד עליו שפע קדושה כזו העטופה עטיפת אבל שאין אבל למעלה ממנו על ששת מיליוני חללינו בארצות אירופה בשנות ת"ש־תש"ה. מיוחדת היא בסגנונה הנותן בה טעם לחרדה שתחריד את לבותינו כל ימי התהלכנו על אדמה מגואלה ותלויה־באוויר זו, בהיקפה האיום שזעזענו עד יסוד קיומנו – ועתים נראה לנו כאילו אחרי שואה זו שוב לא נשוב לאיתנו עולמית.

שלא כקדושי ישראל בדורות שקדמונו שההכרעה נמסרה ללבותיהם: אם לקבלת עול יון ורומי, אם לנצרות ולאישלום ואם למות־קדושים – קדושי ת"ש־תש"ה לא נפתח בפניהם פתח־בירה כל שהוא. לא בחרו הללו במותם – קפץ זה עליהם בכל נוראותו בכח־איתנים שאין להשיבו, כגזירת־טבע מזוינת בנכלי טכניקה לא שערור צוררים "מקדישי" קדושים בישראל עד לדור־היטלר, ללא מוצא וצל־צלה של הצלה. מכאן אותה מועקה רבה שהטביע בלבותינו חורבן שלישי זה, בו נספה שלישי של עם ישראל (במנין, ולמעלה ממנו ברוח, בכוח הגנוז בו בחינת־אתכסיא) שבמאה העשרים ונתערערו אשיות חיהם של שני שלישי שנשארו לפליטה: הרי הללו קדושים על כרחם הם – וקדושים שמים? הניתן לנו להעלותם במעלת טהורים שמסרו נפשותיהם – לרצונם, בבחירתם – על קידוש ישראל ואלוהיו?

שר־האומה כילה בנו חמתו, מה כילה. שיתק רוב גופה של האומה שלא היה למאכולת־היטלר. ואת לבה פרץ־הפקיר לאותו ספק המנקר בו כיתושו של טיטוס. ישראל למוד "חסדו" של עולם־החוץ רב האהבה והרחמים והסלחנות, הסדן לפטיש־רשתו בכל לשון ובכל דור – לא טעם טעם אכזריות מעין זו הטבועה באותה קדושה־על־כרחו. המקדש שם שמים וישראל לרצונו – בא על שכרו עם עלייתו לגרדום, תוך כדי קפיצתו למדורת־האש. אותו הרף־עין של קידוש־השם הוא שעתו הנאה והגדולה בשעות חייו עלי אדמות. תיעובו זה שהוא מתעב את חיי־הגויות על כל לבושיהם, אמונתו שהוא מאמין בש"י העולמות המזומנים להם לקדושים מששת ימי בראשית – ממלאים לבו של מקדש השם בשעתו האחרונה שפע אושר ושמחה אשר־לא־ימאן שאין אדם מישראל זוכה לו בתקופות כתיקונו, והן מועדי־הפסקה בין תקופת־קדושה אחת לחברתה. שכר קידוש השם – קידוש־השם. כנגדו, המקדש את השם על כרחו עלוב בעל־וביעולם הוא. הרי שודד גם אותו "חסד" של בחירה, [14] עשה־הכרעתו האחרון בחייו: קרבנו לא קרבן, קדושתו קדושה? מה שכר לו, לקרבנו־לא־קרבן?

מועקת־לב למועקת־לב מצטרפת: הרי קדושת ת"ש־תש"ה הטביעה באותו חותם־כרח גם את קצם־לא־יבקצם של הקדושים באמת ובתמים, טובי בני עמנו ובנותיו בפולין ובליטא ובשאר ארצות אירופה, שרבים מהם התפללו כרבי עקיבא בשעתו שיזכו לקיים מצוות "בכל נפשך", אפילו הוא נוטל את נפשו – וכאילו לכך נוצרו: למות מות קדושים. וי על האי שופרא־דשופרא בישראל, על אותם קדושים מבטן ומלידה שאין מעלה על מעלתם, שנגזר עליהם שלא יזכו לשעת גבורתם העליונה אליה נשאו נפשותיהם כל ימיהם, מתוך יסורים עצומים ובאהבה עצומה מהם, בתלאות־קיום רבות מספור ובמסירות־נפש רבה מהן. כנגד קיפוח זה של קדושה־ברצון – הוגדשה בישראל שבימינו סאתה של קדושה־על־כרחו הגדשה שאין כמעט למעלה ממנה. חורבן ת"ש־תש"ה יצא ועיטר בעטרת קדושים רביס־רבים מאחינו ומאחיותינו שהיו בוועטים בה

בכל כוחם ומנפצים אותה לרסיסי רסיסים – אילו נפתח להם פתחמה לחיים כל שהם, שאין בהם לא עטרה זו ולא שכרה והודה. עם מיליוני קדושינו אלה נמנו, לדאבוננו הרב, כמה רבבות איש ואשה אכולי־טמיעה, ספוגי־נכר, ספקנים וחששנים שירושת הדורות היתה להם משא כבד מנשוא; לא היה בכוחם ולא ברצונם לבוא באש ובמים על קודש מקדשי האומה – חתומים היו הללו בפניהם, ולא באשמתם הם לבדם; אשמנו גם אנו, כולנו.

בא אותו טבח רב ועירב דם קדושים־לרצונם בדם קדושים־על־כרחם, ובבחינת־מה כמעט דם מין בשאינו מינו; דמי גדולים במקרא ובמשנה ובאגדה, מארזי כל לבנון שלנו בתפוצות ישראל, בדמי המון הדיוטות שלא קראו ולא שנו, מים לא שאבו לשומרי משמרת התורה ועצים לא חטבו להם, כאבותיהם הנעלים; דמי צדיקים שכמוהם כקדושי מגנצא ופיירא ואלפי קהילות־הקודש, בחיים כתבו את מגילת־היוחסין הגדולה לאומה ובמותם חתמוה, בדמי רבבות אנשים ונשים מישראל שאותה צדקת־דורות לא חיתה בלבותיהם ומגילת־אבות לא היתה מגילתם; דמי פרושים מקיימיי־עולם, כובשי כל יצר ניוונים בקב חרובין, שליטי־עולם בסוכת־ענים הנופלת, בדמי אנשים מישראל, רעבי־כיבוש, זוללי־חיים בכל כוחם ובחוץ, שיצאו להרוות נפשותיהם ממעדני העולם הזה כנאבקים על פיצוי־גמול לחיי ויתורים וסיגופים של אבותיהם ואבות־אבותיהם; דמי נשי־תפארה לאומה, שומרות טהרת בית־ישראל מכל משמר, בדמי מטרונות מישראל שאורח־חיהן היה רחוק הרבה ממסרתן של אמהות צדקניות; דמי לוחמים לקיום ישראל, אנשי קודש וחול, בדמיהם של זורקיאבנים בבור מחצבתם, שחרב האויב הטורף־המטורף השיגתם בדרך בריחתם ממקור חייהם, בה ספרתמו ולא נגאלו רבבות־רבבות מישראל במזרח ובמערב כמה דורות לפני עלות היטלר לשלטון בגרמניה ובאירופה.

מה מחרידה היא אותה תערובת־דמים. אין זוועה כזוועתה.

יש שאני אומר בלבי: אולי יש בה בזו כדי ללמדנו הלכה חדשה במשנת קידושיהשם, להעמידנו על סוג גנוז ורב ערך לא למיתתם של קדושים בלבד אלא גם לחיי ישראל, גוי קדוש בכללו, ובכל דור ודור? והוא:

[15] קידושיהשם מפעל האיש־מישראל הוא, ואין יסוד־איש שבו מכריע. בעצם ישראל הוא, בעצם קיומו, במציאותו בעולם. היא המקימה עלינו אותו עולם, והיא שיכלה ויכולה ותוכל להם – והם לא יוכלו לה. הכל הולך אחרי גזע האילן ושרשיו, ולא לענפיו ההכרעה. איש כי יעלה עצמו עולה על מזבח ישראל – בן הצבור הוא; ויתר לצבור על אישיו, לאומה על בניה בכל בחינה שהיא. קידושישם זה לא נמסר כלל ללבו של יחיד, ברצותו יקדש וברצותו יחלל; אין רצייתו הנונתת בו טעם – אלא גילוי ישראל שבו, גילוי העם בכללותו. חובת גברא זו אינה אלא חובת ציבור שניתקה לאיש, חובת גזע שנתפצלה לענפיו. קדושת ישראל היא, זכותו לשמור על חייו ועל אותה הווייה־שלו־שונה בעולם – ולא מעשי גבורתם הרוחנית של יחידי־סגולה. קדושת־עם זו מן ההכרח שתבוא בהמון, ובו רבים־רבים הרחוקים ממנה, בחייהם ובמותם. מבחינת האיש, הקדוש, פתוחים כאן השערים אם לרצון אם לכורח. מבחינת האומה, כבשותו של נצחון החיים על המות, התקומה על הכלייה, אותו קיום־ללא־תנאי החוזר ונחתם ומתגלה במות כל קדוש וקדוש – מה לנו רצון מה לנו כורח?

הקדושים־לרצונם בימי־הביניים, ימי ה"ווכחים" שבין הנצרות והיהדות ששימשו גם כסות־עניים לבצע ולטרף – היו בעיקרם קרבנות לתאוות השמדתו של העולם הנוצרי את רוחו או דתו של "עבד ה'" הנעוה. הקדושים־על־כרחם במאה העשרים – רצון האומות להשמדת גופו של ישראל, לעקירתו מן העולם ולעולמים, הוא הוא ש"הקדישם". דור הקדושים־על־כרחם נטל עליו לשמש מטרה להתקפת־אומות גדולה מזו שהיתה מכוונת כלפי הקדושים־

לרצונם בדורות עברו. בדור זה, היהודי כמות שהוא, עם ישראל ואישי-איש שבו הועלו לגדרום על ידי אחת הממלכות התקיפות ביותר באירופה, לעין השמש, לעיני כל אומות העולם – וכאמור: ללא פתח לאנוסים, ללא עוגן הצלה. אשמדאי-שלידס-וגאז בא במאה זו ועטף טלית-עם מיוחדת במינה כל בן ובת בישראל – כפורק עול וכופר בכל עיקר כנושא עול על כל תרי"גיו, כנאמן-לציון כמאמין-בסוציאליזם, כסבתא הטהורה והקדושה האמונה על "צאינה וראינה" כנכדתה אשר יצאה וראתה וכרמה לא נטרה. והיא היא גדולת קצם, היא קדושתם. לא קדושת רצייה והכרעה – קדושת שורש וגזע, קדושת מציאות-של-עם כמות שהיא; קדושה בה כורח – רצון; תובעת היא את שלה מאשר לא ידעה וגם מאשר יתקוממו לה. אין בקדושה זו מבחירת הלב – ויש בה מן השלימות, מן אי-הוותר אשר לגורל. אין היא מבחינה בין איש לאיש ובין אשה לאשה, כולה צועקת עד לב השמים: ישראל ללא תנאי, ישראל כולו.

לא הבחינה זו בין רצון וכורח, בחירה וגזירה. ואילו יצאנו אנחנו להבחין אותה הבחנה ולמצות את עומק הדין, אולי היינו מגלים סודו של כורח והוא גדול מרצון – כורח שהוא טבע, טבוע בחותמו של גורל, כורח בנגלה והוא רצון בנסתר, רצון חבויה בלבה של האומה בכללה גם כשאינו גלוי-נראה ללב כל בן בבניה; שלימות-העם שבכורח אין מעלתה פחותה באיזו בחינה שהיא מתפארת-הגבורה שברצון איש ואיש שבו. וגם זו: הרצון – נוסף למתן-הפרס [16] בעולם הבא וסיפוק-הנפש המיוחד במינו הניתן לקדוש עם פשיטת-צוארו לתליין, הכרוכים בו – מפצה הוא ומפייס, וכך עשוי זה להחליש במקצת את גודל-קרבתו. כנגדו, הכורח מקומם ומגריז – ומגדיל את חומר חטאו של המעלה לגדרום. כאילו ניתן לומר: מבחינת הקרבן – ולא מבחינת הכוונה הכרוכה בו, שהרי כל קרבן צריך כוונה ולא קרבן-קדושים – כאילו עולה הקדוש-על-כרחו על הקדוש-לרצונו, עולה כמחאה רבה שהוא מוחה על רשע עולם וחמסו? – לא ולא. מי אנו, שני שלישי של ישראל שלא נתקדשו לא קדושת-רצון ולא קדושת-כורח, כי נבדיל בין דם לדם, בין קודש לקודש? יתר לרצון על הכורח, לכורח על הרצון? אין פחות ואין יתר בקדושים. כרצון ככורח. כקדושים-לרצונם כקדושים-על-כרחם – בזכותם חי ישראל, אם ראוי הוא ואם אינו ראוי להם. כל איש ואשה מישראל בהם בחרו – ובחרים – עריצי האומות לגרדומיהם, ומה רבו – מקדש את השם וישראל בעצם מציאותו, כאמור. קדושת מציאותו קדמה לקדושת גרדומו. אשרי מי שזכה והעלה עצמו עולה – וי לו למי שלא זכה לכך. ושכרו של עולה-על-כרחו כשכרו של עולה-לרצונו. גומל כל גומל לא יקפחהו.

אמור מעתה: תערובת-דמים זו שבשנות ת"ש-ת"ש"ה ללמד יצאה, והרבה יותר משניתן לנו ללמוד כאן. לא נתערבו דמי קדושים-לרצונם בדמי קדושים-על-כרחם – אלא נצטרפו. דם בדם בא, דם אחד. קדושה לקדושה מצטרפת, קדושה לקדושה מוסיפה תפארת. קדושים-לרצונם אוצלים הוד-בחירה על קדושים-על-כרחם. קדושים-על-כרחם תורמים גודל-גורל ותוקף-מציאות וגזירת-עם לקדושים-לרצונם. קדוש אחד מעדות ישראל שבפולין ובלטיא שנתכנסו וספרי-תורה בידיהם בשוקי עירוניהן לקבל בשירת "מה טוב חלקנו" את פני הגרמנים שבאו לכלותם – יש בו לכפר על רבבות הרוגים וטבוחים מישראל שלא זכו לאותה עליית-נשמה שאין על עפר משלה, ומי יעזי לבוא בדין עם נשמותיהם התועות ערטילאיות בעולם ומבקשות את תיקונן? שירת "אני מאמין בביאת המשיח" של צעירינו שנכנסו ערומים לתופת-הגאז, רננת-אמונה זו בישראל ובאדם אם גם סר צלם-אלוהים ממנו – תשתיק לעולמים את הדיהם של נאקות-היאוש ופרפורי-התבוסה של רבבות אחינו ואחיותינו בשעת גסיסתם, הממלאים את חללה של אירופה כולה ואין – לנו – מפלט מהם, הללו מאחינו ואחיותינו ששפתותיהם



לא נפתחו אותה שעת־אימים לא לתפלה ולא לזמרה. ומי לבי־אדם לו ויהין למצות עומד דינם של אותם אומללים מכל אומלל? כל אחת מאותן צ"ג בנות ישראל מפולין שנגזר דינן לבושת וטהרו עצמן ויצאו מן העולם בקדושה, אותה סבתא צדקנית באחד מגניטאות פולין שהייתה טובלת יום־יום ומתעטפת בתכריכה הלבנים, מכינה עצמה שעה־שעה לצאת מעמק עכור זה בטהרה ובתפלת שבח והודייה לאל בורא עולם, דיין אמת שכל מעשיו אמת, ומי יאמר לו מה תעשה – פורשת טלית קדושתה על אלפיס־אלפים מאחיותינו החללות שלא ניתנה להן אותה עצמת־נפש גדולה, והיא פרי מסורת בת אלפים, רבת גבורה עילאית שעמים "נורמאליים" לא ידעוה.

דס־הרצון מקדש, מטהר ומעלה לפני כסא־הכבוד כל טיפת דס־כורח מישראל [17] שנספכה באירופה בשנות ת"ש־תש"ה – ותהא שמורה לעולמים חיה ורוחתת בכוס־גניזה של האומה, שאין עליה לשר־של־עשו ולעושי־דברו שליטה כל שהיא. רצון וכורח מתמזגים ונעשים אחד: אחד הוא הדם, אחת היא הנפש, נפש ישראל אחד.

## ב.

ובמיתת־קדושים של ר' שמעון בר' מאיר יעקב דובנוב בגיטו שבק"ק ריגא ב"ח כסלו ה'תש"ב – הגיעה גזירת־הגורל לשיאי־איימה. אין כורח ככרחו של קדוש־על־כרחו זה – ולא קדושה כקדושתו. אין קדושה כקדושתו – ואישיותו ומפעל־חיייו היו טבועים בחותמו של מרי דרוך־עז, מרי אחד שהוא שנים: בקודש ובקדושה.

בקודש – דובנוב אחד היה מטובי בניו של ישראל החדש באירופה המזרחית שבמאות הי"ט והכ" שנחלץ ובישר לדורו בשורת־חול מקוממת ומשחררת. אותו חול שניסה ונכשל, וחזר וניסה וחזר ונכשל במזרח ובמערב – כמה מסיבות חיים ומחשבה גרמו ונעשה בסוף המאה הי"ט (בכוחה של תנועת ה"השכלה" שהמשיכה גם כאן מלחמת־קדומים ובסיוען של תנועות רוחניות וחברתיות־כלכליות בחוץ) מעין דרך־מלך בישראל שבאירופה. דובנוב היה לפיו – ליתר דיוק: לאחד מפיותיו – של חול זה בתפוצת רוסיה בת שבעת מיליוני הנפש שכוחה היה רב לקודש ולחול כאחד, לתלמודיות מסרתית רבת־און שעתים נראה היה כאילו זכתה להתעטף באדרתן של תפוצות ספרד וצרפת ואשכנז שבימי־הביניים מכאן ולספרות־חול שעמדה להאפיל בבחינת־מה בהיקפה ובשפע גווניה על "חול־הזהב" של יהדות ספרד מכאן, לעברית וליידיש, לחיבת ציון ולסוציאליזם בין־לאומי מהפכני כאחד. לאורו של החול בן המאה הי"ט יצא גם הוא לחזר אחרי חול־הקדומים בישראל, אחרי שכבת־החול האנושית־הטבעית שעליה נבנה אותו עולם־קודש באומה; להלחם על חישובו של פך־החול בפני גוי קדוש זה, על גילוי החולין בממלכת הכהנים, הבשר־ודם ברוח ישראל, ה"עם" שבאלהיו. וכך היה לאחד מ"מחללי הקודש" הגדולים בישראל שבדורות האחרונים, ממחיבי החול על כל עצמתו – כהיסטוריון המתאבק בעפרו של העבר וכאישי־מלחמה הנאבק על שיפורם של חי דורו. הוא ובני דורו – דור חוזי חזון תקומתנו על כל לבושיה באודיסה שעל שפת הים השחור, מעין אלכסנדריה של מצרים שניה, בירושלים דליטא של הגר"א וה"השכלה", במטרופולין של פולין האדוקה־הקנאית והמתפרצת כאחת, ובעשרות ערים ועיירות זולתן, ומפיו חיה הרבה היהדות שבימינו, יהדות קודש וחול בארץ ישראל ובתפוצותיו – ראו את החול החדש והוא קבע. מאמינים־מובטחים היו כי מימיהם ואילך יהא חול זה בונה אב לכל ערך ונכס באומה, ונצחון החול

על הקדוש יהא נצחון לדורות: גוי ולא דווקא קדוש, מוסר ולא דווקא מוסר-שמים, ממלכת-בית ולא ממלכת-כהנים. הרבה מן הקדושה – קדושה חדשה – היתה באותה התלהבות-חול, בחרוף נפשם של המעפילים הללו על אותו חול וכל אשר בו – ואולי "מחללי הקדוש" עצמם לא ידעוה.

[18] בקדושה – המתבוללים במערב, שדובנוב שמה הרבה (ובתקופתו הראשונה: יתר על המדה) ממימיהם, ראו את היהדות והיא אסון מן השמים, או מן ההיסטוריה. מהם אמרו: אסון זה יש לו קצת תקנה. ומהם אמרו: לא בידינו הוא לתקנו, לא יעבור מן העולם אלא עמנו יחד. הליבראליזם היהודי בגרמניה ראה את הווייתו של ישראל כהווייה של טרגדיה – ותרומתה תרומת טרגדיה נשגבה ונצחית – שלא תפסוק גם בדורות יבואו; קול זה עודו נשמע אף בימינו, ואם גם בשינוי נעימה. בא שמעון דובנוב, בן יהדות-ההמונים הגדולה, ואמר: היהדות היא פרשת נצחון נעלה, נצחון האור על החושך, הקיום על החידלון, מזכרת חיה לחירות אדם ועם – לא טרגדיה מעוררת הערצה ולא אסון משווע לרחמים בחוץ ומחניק את נושאי עולו בבית.

הלאומיים בחכמי המערב, גדול ההיסטוריונים שבהם, הינריך צבי גרץ, סולל הדרך לבאים אחריו ולדובנוב בתוכם, הגדיר – בפתחתו למפעל האברים שפעל בישראל – את תולדות ישראל בייח המאות האחרונות כדברי ימי מרטירולוגיה ("ליידענסגעשיכטע") מבחינת-החוץ (עם הדגשתו של אותם "ליידען" ו"דולדען" ו"ואנדערן" לא העלים עיניו גם מגילויי "פארשען", "דענקען", "לערגען" בישראל) וכתולדות-ספרות ("ליטעראטור-געשיכטע") מבחינת-פנים. יצא שמעון דובנוב הצעיר ואמר: אין דברי ימי ישראל ימי קדושים ומיתתם ולא ספר דמעות בלבד, דברי ימי עם עולם הם, ימי עם חי טובע בצלמו ובדמותו, ימי חברה שואפת לשלטון-בית, לעצמאות-אוטונומיה, ימי מלחמת עם על נפשו. עד כמה שאותה קדושה-של-מארטירולוגיה [1] עיטרה את דברי ימי ישראל – עטרת העבר היא. תקופת החול החדשה העבירה מן העולם את קודש-הדורות או הלבישתו צורה חדשה, ובשורת החירות והפרוגרס וכו' שמה קץ לקדושת-מארטירולוגיה [!]. שלהם. מכאן ואילך: לא גוי-קדוש ולא עס-קדושים, לא קודש-חיים בלבד ולא קדושת-מיתה בצורתם המסרתית מדור-דור. בא קצו בשנת ה'תש"ב וטיפח על כל פניו, ומה איום היה אותו טיפוח.

ספר חייו ומפעליו של אותו קורא-דורות יש בו משום עדות חיה לשמונים השנה האחרונות בדברי ימינו, רבות הבנין וההרס. בראשיתו ראה בשלטונה של ה"השכלה" (ואם גם חיסולה התחיל אורב לה), בהתגברותה של ההתבוללות ובהתפשטותה של האמנסיפיציה, אחר כך – בעליית שמשו של חיבת-ציון ובעצימת הסוציאליזם היהודי. לא קנה עולמו בראייה בלבד: יצא וסלל דרך ללאומיות-של-גולה ולאוטונומיזם. זכה וראה אחרי מלחמת-העולם א' בהתגשמות חלומותיו המדיניים באחדות מתפוצותינו, וזו היתה תקופת הזוהר בחייו, בה התחיל קוצר את קצירו ובלבו תקווה לרינה, – אף על פי שהמהפכה הבולשביסטית, שהיתה שנואה על יהודי רוסי "ליבראלי" שכמותו, האפילה הרבה עליה. ובעשר שנות חייו האחרונות, בין ע"ב לפ"ב, נגזר עליו שיראה בשיקיעתם של מאורות חייו בבית ובחוץ; חיסולה של המהפכה הצרפתית הנערצה עליו ע"י המהפכה הגרמנית-הפאשיסטית, ביטול האמנסיפיציה בגרמניה ובארצות הכפופות לה, ירידת קרנה של לאומיות-של-גולה, פירוק נסיונותיו של האוטונומיזם במזרח, שקיעת שמשו של [19] תנועת-החול (סיקולאריזאציה) בה האמין בכל לבו – וגם צמצום דמותה של הציונות (ע"י תכנית-ה"חלוקה" וה"ספר הלבן"), ששימש לה "תנא ופליג" ובלבו ענה אמן אחרי כל מתפלל להתגשמותה.

כה הלך עם בני דורו מדחי אל דחי, והאחרון הכביד. שריד זה לתפוצת-רוסיה ולכרס-אודיסה שבה, איש-מזרח מכף רגלו עד ראשו, נמלט ממזרח למערב לאחר שהעריב שמשו במזרח, בא שטן שבמערב והחזירו על-כרחו למקורו, רוסיה הסובייטית ממנה ברח, וזו הדביקתו בריגא (עם חלוקת פולין והארצות הבלטיות בין רוסיה וגרמניה בשנת ת"ש); ולאחר שנכבשה עיר-מקלטו בידי חיל-היטלר נגזר עליו לראות יום-יום במצוקות הגיטו ותלאותיו עד לחיסולה הגמור, ולהוציא נשמתו ברחוב מרחובות ריגא, חולה וכוח אין בו לעמוד על רגליו, עם אחיו ואחיותיו באותה קהילה קדושה, בקדושה ובטהרה. כאילו צדק ממנו רבו גרץ: דברי ימי ישראל הם מארטירולוגיה [!], ספר דם ודמע – כמוהם כדברי ימי קוראידורותיהם. בין "גבורות" ו"לשוח" שחה נפשו לעפר, גוו הופקר לחית-אדם – כאילו מרדו בקדושת-הדורות לא היה אלא מעין משובת-עלומים, עזות-לבם של מתקוממים הבאים לשנות סדרו של עולם – וזה בולעם ולא נודע כי באו אל קרבן. "מחלל הקודש" בסוף המאה הי"ט – נטל עליו שיהא מקדש החול בחייו וקדוש במותו באמצע המאה הכ' – קדוש-על-כרחו, בתוספת כורח – ובמשמעותו העמוקה ביותר – מזה שהוטל על מיליוני אחיו ואחיותיו לגורל, כמרומז. מעטים ביניהם קראו את דורותינו כמותו, ידעו מוצאיהם ומבואיהם, התהלכו כבני-בית בסתר-ישיביליהם וגם השתתפו ב"עשייתה של היסטוריה" – והתקוממו כמותו נגד קדושת הדורות, מתוך קדושת חול וחיים חדשה שנזרה חולל והושלך ארצה.

ודאי, אילו גזרו על איש-חול אמיץ-לבב ותקיף-רוח זה להכריע בין שמד או ויתור על אבק-קודש כל שהוא ובין מות-קדושים כאבות אבותיו על פני כל כדור הארץ – היה מעלה עצמו עולה כליל לאלהי אבותיו, קופץ בשוועת "שמע ישראל" לאותה מדורה הערוכה לנו מששת ימי בראשיתנו, זו ששלהבותיה צרבה-הסעירו לבותיהם של כל קוראי הדורות בישראל עד לשמעון דובנוב והוא בכללם. בשעת גזירה היה "מחלל-קודש" שכמותו יוצא ליהרג אפילו על פחות מערקתא דמסאנא של קודש – ואינו עובר. לא ניתנה גם לו זכות-בחירה זו. קדוש תהיה כל אדם מישראל באירופה, קדוש תהיה גם אתה שמעון ב"ר מאיר יעקב, כי קדושים היו אבותיך, על כרחך אתה קדוש, – בתיקול זו שיצאה ממרומים ופילחה את אוירה של אירופה בה התעמר חיל-טמאים של היטלר – שם רשעים ירקב – היה דובנוב הישיש שומע יומם ולילה בחדשי חייו האחרונים. ידע שיצאה עליו הגזירה. קידש עצמו לעשות רצון קונו. ומובטחני בו שנשאר נאמן לחול-נעוריו ולמרד-עלומיו בקדושה – תוך כדי מותו מיתת-קדושים.

ותוספת-אכזריות התאכזר שר-האומה לקורא דורותיה הנאמן: לא לחכמים ולסופרים בישראל אורך-ימים, ולמעלה מגבורות לא כל שכן. כל כיבוש מכיבושיהם נקנה בלשד-אונם, כל צעד-קדימה בדרך-קוציהם עולה להם בלבם ובדמם. כשהתחיל שמעון דובנוב – שרבות רעות ראה בחייו, רוב ימיו חי על קולמוסו, כלומר חייו [20] היו תלואים מנגדו, עקר והניח, נאבק, ידע מעט מן הקבע בכלכלתו ובהנחתו, – מתקרר לשנות העמידה, גברה בלבו הרגשת קצו ההולך וקרב (עיין בספר חייו). זכה וחששותיו עלו בתוהו. לא נשרף בכור-אש המהפכה בארץ מולדתו, יצא מ"עבדות לחירות" (בלשוננו), קצר בין זקנה לשיבה את קציר חייו וברך על המוגמר ב"דברי ימי עם עולם" ובשאר פרויקט-משנתו. ולאריכות ימים נאה זכה. כמה רענן היה בגופו וברוחו גם בין שיבה לגבורות. לבסוף נהפכה עליו ברכה רבה זו והיתה למארה איומה. כאילו לא ניתנה לו לקורא-דורותינו אותה מתת-חיים אלא כדי שימצה את קובעת כוס התרעלה שבדברי ימי עם עולם וגילה ערב קצו כמה סודות-דורות שאין עומדים עליהם אלא "סמוך לחשיכה". ומה צר לנו שלא זכינו להציל מפיו את פסוקו האחרון, בו קנו עולמם כמה מהרוגיה-המלכות הקדמונים. מה שראה קורא הדורות האחרון במאה העשרים בגיטו דק"ק ריגא – לא ראו הרבה קורא-דורות

לפניו. חייו וסבלו ערב קצו נעלמים לנו גם הם – כשם שנעלמו ממילוינו אחיו ואחיותיו, ללא זכר גל-אבנים ומצבה. בין עמו ישב, עם עמו חלל נפל. נתערב דמו של קדוש-על-כרחו זה בדמי שש מאות רבוא קדושים-על-כרחם ברחבי אירופה כולה.

## ג.

שלשה היו בו בשמעון דובנוב: קורא-דורות, הוגה-דעות מדיני, עומד בשער ונענה לשעה ותביעתיה – ואחד הם. שורש אחד לשלשתם, והוא פסוק קדמון שדובנוב חזר ופסקו על ימיו לישראל ולנפשו: "סוד קיום האומה תלוי בצווי המוחלט של הנבואה הקדמונה: 'לא יסור שבת מיהודה'". הצוררים שבכל הדורות צועקים: "ישנו עם אחד מפורד ומפורד ודתיים שונות מכל עם". ובדורות החדשים קוראים לזה "מלוכה בתוך מלוכה" – וכנסת ישראל הולכת בדרכה ההיסטורית ואומרת: אמנם, מלוכה בתוך מלוכה, קבוץ אבטונומי [1] פנימי בתוך קבוץ ממלכתי חיצוני וכו' (בפתיחת מבואו ל"פנקס המדינה", תרפ"ה).

בשלש הרשויות האמורות היה מחזור אחרי השבט. שבט מהו? הווה אומר: שלטון-בית, חירות שבלב, עצמאות על אף כל עול וכל שעבוד. ודובנוב גופו – איש שבט היה. איש משמעת מרסנת, יודע סוד כבוש עצמו עד לידי אכזריות-לנפשו, מאותם קשיה-עורף הגדולים בהם נתברכה מחצבתו, תפוצת ישראל ברוסיה. אותו שבט שבלב דובנוב מצא לו סיוע רב בשבט שהיה חי בתפוצתו שברוסיה – זו שזכתה לזקיפות-קומה מיוחדת במינה, ודובנוב נטל ממנה מלוא חפניו. קורא-דורות וסתם בני-אדם, משלנו ומשלהם, הופכים והופכים בשבט-החויץ שהיה רודה בישראל שבאירופה המזרחית, – והדין עמהם. אלא שפרקים אין הללו מסתכלים כהלכה גם באותו שבט-בית לו זכו אותן תפוצות. רב היה כוחן לעמוד בפני שבט-מלבר – כי היה להן שבט-מלגו. וזה גבר. "ויהי בישרון מלך" – גם בישרון שבתפוצות. לא כל ויהי לשון צרה וחורבן הוא – וביחוד בתפוצותינו שבאירופה המזרחית והמרכזית. אלמלא אותו שבט-מלכות לישראל שבתפוצות – מלכות בעומק-משמעותה אינה עומדת על צבא זיון ביבשה ובים ובאוויר, על השתלטות בזולתנו וכל הכרוך בה, עיקרה של מלכות בנפש האדם הוא, בו ובקבוציו, הרבה ממנה [21] בעצם הקיום לכל בריקים, בטבע לכל טבוע בחותמה של ההווייה, בעצמאות הנתונה לכל עצם באשר הוא עצם – אפשר ושבט-ציון לא היה בא לעולם, ולא חזר במאה העשרים מחוקק ליהודה אשר בציון. והרי שבט ציון ההולכת ומתחדשת המשך הוא לשבטן של תפוצות, – המשך שיש בו הרבה גם מן המחאה על העבר, מתרגומו ומפירושו היוצר כאחת.

הסתכל דובנוב באותה תפוצה שכוחה-לשבט הגיע לשיאו במאה הי"ט ובראשית המאה שאחריה, ולאורה נחלץ לגלות כל אבק-שבטיות בו נתאבק ישראל מראשיתו – ו"לא יסור שבת מיהודה" נר לדרכו מארץ לארץ ומתקופה לתקופה בדברי ימינו. מכאן: אין להעמיד אותו אוטונומים על השפעת-חויץ בלבד. חצוב הוא זה בעיקרו ממציותה של תפוצת ישראל ברוסיה. בצלמה ובדמותה נברא.

והשבט שנים הוא, שבט פיפיות. זכו אדם וקבוץ – ושבט מלכות מקומם הוא להם. לא זכו – והוא שבט נוגשים רועץ וממגה. פתח דובנוב בשבט, וסיים – קרי: וסיים – בשבט. ולא הרי שבט-פתיחה כהרי שבט-סיום. היו לו לאיש השבט דברי ימי ישראל דברי ימי נצחון-שבט לעם אשר לא שבט-ארץ לו ולא מחוקק. הוא הגבר הסתכל מראשיתו בשבט מושלים שבישראל – נגזר עליו לראות בסופו את מלוא שבט עברתן של תפוצות ישראל, זה שיצא והעירן מן העולם. קללת תרבות אירופה במאה העשרים גברה על ברכתו של השלישי באבות האומה: לא יסור מעל

יהודה שבט שמד וכלייה. כל ימיו התפלל לשבט משביט־בית – בא שבט משבית ושבטו, אותו על שש מאות רבוא אחיו לשביטה. נשבט ו"קודש" בשבט־החוץ ה"מקדש" ישראל מאז ומעולם, וסוף תקופתו פסגתו של אותו שבט היא. חייו – עדות לתפארת שבט; קצו – תעודה־לדורות לכשלוך שבט ועלבונו.

לא הסתכל איש־שבט זה בדברי ימינו מתוך אותה אספקלריה מסרתית של "שבט יהודה", שבט כולו זעם אלוה ואדם. חזה חזונו של שבט ליהודה, שבט־שלטון לחבר שבטים נטולים שבט ארץ ומלכותה. ובקצו – ידו של אותו "שבט יהודה" היתה על העליונה. גבר זה על שבט שמעון שלא ניתן לו להכות שרשיו בישראל ולהעשות מקור לשביט־בית חדשה. בדמו חתם את פרשת מחציתה הראשונה של המאה העשרים ב"שבט יהודה" מדור דוה. הוא ודורו נעשו גופם "דף" – דף נוסף, ולואי ויהא זה אחרון – באותו "שבט יהודה".

– לא יסור שבט מיהודה?

– לא סר מישראל "שבט יהודה" ...

#### ד.

האין בכך משום סמל רב־פנים שגד[ו]ל קוראי־דורותינו בימינו הוציא נשמתו כשהוא עטוף בטליתם של "כל הקדושים", בסוף תקופת־החול הראשונה בדברי ימי ישראל החדש, והוא מקדש עצמו ועמו על קדשיו וחוליו כאחד בגילוי זה של אותה קדושה מיוחדת במינה, שביצועה המבהיל הנהו גם פרי זמ־החול החדש בעולם, רב הכיבושים בטכניקה־שלי־הרג, קדושה־בהמונים לא שעורה קודמינו? אם סמל כאן, אינו כאלא לעבר בלבד. מובטחני: הקדוש שמעון דובנוב היה מזהיר [22] ומזהיר – אילו ניתן לו לפסוק אותו פסוק אחרון־חותם – שאל יראו בקצו משום סמל לעתיד. אין זו תעודה לישראל לשמור על קדושה זו עד קץ כל הדורות. כל קודש – ולא קדושה זו. קידוש החיים על כל החול שבהם – ולא קדושת חללים. אולם, עולם כי ישתולל ויסואב ונטרפה דעתו עליו, כי יחזור לסור־רטבעו וחי על חרבו ופגע ביעקב – איש־איש מישראל מוכן מטבע ברייתו להתקדש קדושה זו, ושמעון דובנוב על אחת כמה וכמה.

מוכנים אנו – ואל יעלה על לב העולם כי מזומנים אנו לאותה קדושה ולה נוצרנו. לעולם לא נשלים, לא מבחינת ישראל ולא מבחינת העולם, עם אותה קדושה כמות שהיא, לא קדושה־ברצון ולא קדושה־על־כרח מעין זו שבשנות ת"ש־ת"ה. אוי לו לעולם שראה באותן שנים מועטות – ורבות הרס שאין לו כמעט תקנה – בהשמדתם של מאות רבוא קדושים אלה. מה רב עלבוננו ומה עצום זדונו של עולם המטיל אותה קדושה על עם שטובי בניו נשאו נפשותיהם לשפרו ולעדנו ולהיות בו ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש – ולא עם קדושים, חללים לכל עריץ וחית־אדם. תפארת קדושתנו – אות קלון הוא לעולם. קצם של שש מאות רבוא קדושינו – והקדוש שמעון דובנוב בכללם – תהום הוא מתהים בינינו ובין העולם. אין בכוחנו אנו לגשור גשר על פניה – בידי העולם הוא, וחובתו היא. העולם הזה – כמה הרבה להאמין בו אותה קדושה־על־כרחו, בו ובאדם אשר בו, ברוח עם ועם וקדושת־חוליו, באור הגנוז לחברה ובהתקדמותה, אור זרוע לאדם. זו אמונה זה גמולה – גאז ודם איך־קץ.

ועם כל אלה, אם גם רבה חלאת־תעבתו של עולם שעשה מיליוני יהודים עפר ואפר, דומן, וגם בורית – ואין לך אות־קין צורב במצח־העולם מאותה "יודעני־זיפס", שעדיין מנקים עצמם

בה כמה מטמאיהגויים אשר לעולם לא יטהרו מטומאתם, – לא נקור מלבותינו אותה אמונה בעולם – בכל לו ובאדם אשר בו, שבלעדיה אין תקומה לא לנו ולא לו. פושעים אלא קלקלו את העולם – וישראל באמונתו יחיה. ולפיכך, בשעת-אימים זו לישראל ולעולם – כשנה ומחצה לאחר סיומה של פרשת הזוועה האיומה שבמלחמת-העולם ב' – אנו מעלים על לבותינו לא רק את שמעון דובנוב בקדושת-זמותו, אלא גם את קורא-דורותינו החי המאמין באדם, על חוליו וקדשיו כאחד – כאיש בשורה להתנערותו של ישראל בעולם, להכאת שרשיו במציאותו של עולם, כסמל לנטיעה זריעה בישראל, לאמונה בכוח התגברותנו על שר-של-עשו מתוך רצון לתקומה על אף כל כלייה; וגם כמזכרת-חיים לאון יצירתה של תפוצתנו הגדולה באירופה המזרחית, אותה ארץ ואם בישראל שגם בית-רומאנוב על כל זדון-עריצותו לא יכול לה.

אם נמצה את עומק הדיון, סמל זה בשמעון דובנוב אולי גדול הוא ממפעלו המדעי והחברתי רב הפרח והפרי, שחמתו מרובה מצלתו – ואין אנו מתכוונים כלל וכלל להעלים כאן על צלתו זו (וכותב הטורים האלה לא היה "דובנוביסט" מימיו). כשאתה מצרף לסמל-חיים זה אותו סמל-קדושה שנכרך בו בקצו – כלום יש צורך להוסיף ולהדגיש שיש בו בשמעון דובנוב כדי לייחד אבל לעצמו, אף על פי שאין אבל-יחיד במקום אבל-אומה, וקץ-קדושים מטשטש כל פדות בין גדול [23] וקטן, אילני-סרק ועצי-פרי רבי שרשים וענפים, ובכל בחינה שהיא. ותוך כדי ייחוד-אבל זה אין אנו מעלימים עין משאר הגדולים והטובים בפליטת חכמי ישראל וסופריו שבאירופה – וביחוד בני-דובנוב ברוח, תלמידי-יחבריו בחקר תולדות ישראל באירופה המזרחית, שנפלו חללים עמו ואם גם לא באותו גיטו ריגא: משה שור, מאיר בלמן, יצחק שיפר, ואחד מטובי נכדיו עמנואל רינגלבלום הי"ד. ככה אבדה יהדות גדולה ורבה על קורא-דורותיה הזקנים והצעירים גם יחד – אמניה ומשורריה, למדניה ועסקניה ומחנכיה, אנשי קודש וחול, על רבבות-רבבות בני המוננו, בהם גם אותם "ענוי עולם אלמי נפש" שגדל פייטניהם התפלל שיזכה ויהא חלקו עמהם – הללו שבזכותם הגענו עד הלום וניצלנו בכמה נסים מאש-היטלר, ועלבוננו כה רב כי לא נדע מה נאמר ומה נעשה לנשמות קדושי ת"ש-תש"ה התובעות ממנו את תיקונו, גם ממנו, וידנו קצרה, מה קצרה לאותו תיקון. טליתו של שמעון דובנוב, והיא טלית-צבור, פרושה על שש מאות רבוא קדושינו-על-כרחם-ולרצונם – ושמו יהא כרוך לעולמים בחקר דברי ימיהם וימי אבותיהם ובחזיית חזון תקומתם של הבאים אחריהם. זכרם וזכרו אחד. זכר קדושים-על-כרחם לברכה.

לונדון-לידס, תש"ו



## VI. Jews and Arabs. A Distinctive Perspective

### 1. Introduction

The following text is one of the most provocative and explicitly political essays that Rawidowicz ever wrote. It is presented here for the first time in its Hebrew version, thus making available the original text in addition to the already published English translation.<sup>1</sup> *Bein ever le-arav* (Between Jew and Arab) marked a departure for Rawidowicz, as he made clear in the very opening: “From the day that I first broached the subject of Israel and Diaspora, I made a vow not to discuss publicly two issues: the foreign policy of the Zionist movement and [of the State of Israel], and the ‘Arab Question’ [...]”<sup>2</sup> As we know, he spent much of his adult life reflecting and writing on the balance of cultural relations between the Jewish centers in the Land of Israel and the Diaspora. This persistent effort to forge a meaningful partnership between the two centers of Jewish cultural creativity earned him the ire of those Zionists who favored concentrating all of the human and cultural capital of the Jewish people in Erez Yisra’el.<sup>3</sup> Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Rawidowicz’s exclusive focus on what he called the “Jewish Question” shifted. Now the “Arab Question,” he declared, “has become a question about the Jewish people and its national home [...]”<sup>4</sup> It was this urgent political and moral question that preoccupied him in the early 1950s when he wrote the essay from his home in Waltham, Massachusetts.<sup>5</sup>

What was the “Arab Question” for Rawidowicz? It consisted of two elements: the status and treatment of the 150,000 Palestinian Arabs who remained in the State of Israel, and the plight of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who fled or were forced from their homes in the armed hostilities of 1948. Rawidowicz’s engagement with these two interlocking questions was unusual, to say the least, for a Jewish thinker in the

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1 For the English translation see: Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*.

2 *Ibid.*, 135 f.

3 See Ravid, *Shim'on Ravidovitz u-vrit ivrit olamit*, 132 f.

4 Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*, 136.

5 For a detailed analysis of this text and the context surrounding it, see Myers, *Between Jew and Arab*.



early 1950s.<sup>6</sup> He himself had little contact with the small number of other Jews who expressed concerns over the issue in this period – members of the Israeli Communist Party and alumni of the Jewish peace groups Brit Shalom and Iḥud.<sup>7</sup> Once again, Rawidowicz found himself in a solitary space. He admitted to his brother Avraham in 1956, after sending him his 33-page Hebrew text on the “Arab Question,” that “I assume that you will not accept my words. So far, I have not found a man or a woman of ours to whom my words were acceptable.”<sup>8</sup>

In the first instance, Rawidowicz believed it politically imprudent for the State of Israel to enact discriminatory legislation against Arab citizens and to ignore the existence of refugees whose homes were once in present-day State of Israel. Such insensitivity risked incurring the wrath of the international community, and particularly the United States. Of equal and perhaps greater concern to Rawidowicz was the ethical consideration at stake. In his view, turning a blind eye to Palestinian refugees and second-class Arab citizens was a moral stain on the Jewish people. It defied the historical experience of the Jews, who had spent millennia in dispersion but who had now assumed the reins of sovereignty in the ancestral homeland. He expected that Jews would have internalized an appreciation for the need to regard the minority in their midst with dignity and grace. Accordingly, in this essay, he called for the repeal of discriminatory legislation against Israeli Arabs.

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6 For a recent study that explores American Jewish interest in Palestinians in Israel in the 1950s, see Geoffrey Levin, *Liberal Whispers and Propaganda Fears. The American Jewish Committee and Israel's Palestinian Minority, 1948–1966*, in: *Israel Studies Review* 33 (2018), no. 1, 81–101.

7 One like-minded person on this matter, with whom he had other similarities and a number of differences (including over the viability of the Diaspora), was the iconoclastic Zionist and religious thinker, Yehoshua Radler-Feldman, known as Rabbi Binyomin (1880–1957). See the thorough dissertation devoted to him, including a discussion of his call for the return of Arab refugees: Avi-Ram Tzoreff, *Shutafut yehudit-aravit ke-neged siaḥ ha-ḥilloni. Maḥshavah datit, politikah ve-sifrut bi-khtivato shel Yehoshua Radler-Feldman (R. Binyomin, 1880–1957)* [Jewish-Arab Partnership Against the Secular Discourse. Theology, Politics, and Literature in the Writings of Yehoshua Radler-Feldman (R. Binyomin, 1880–1957)], PhD dissertation, Ben-Gurion University, Be'er Sheva 2018, esp. 191–200.

8 Simon Rawidowicz to Avraham Ravid, 10 May 1956. The letter is included in the Rawidowicz Archive.

But even more dramatically, he called for the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians refugees to their homes.<sup>9</sup> He declared in the essay: “Never in their history did Jews force refugees into the world. Let not the State of Israel begin its path by forcing refugees into the world.”<sup>10</sup>

Rawidowicz’s call for the repatriation of Arab refugees, which was sounded by very few Jews in this period, was a *cri de cœur* from the depths of his heart.<sup>11</sup> But the cry was never heard in public. Originally intended to serve as an appendix to his magnum opus *Bavel vi-Yerushalayim*, the text of “Between Jew and Arab” did not appear in the book. In fact, it only saw the light of day in 2008.<sup>12</sup> In all likelihood, Rawidowicz came to believe that the essay would be too incendiary to be received sympathetically in the Jewish world and would lead to the disregard of other ideas (such as the Babylon–Jerusalem framework) that he had been advocating for three decades and withheld the chapter from publication. As a result, this provocative essay, marking its author’s entry into the world of contemporary Middle East politics, remained silent for a half-century.

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9 Rawidowicz did recognize that the “State of Israel had the right – and obligation – to investigate each and every one of them upon his return home, and with the most thorough scrutiny; it could have shut its gates to spies and inciters.” Instead, he noted, it has “shut its gates to every refugee, to men, women, and children who did not commit any wrong.” Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*, 145.

10 *Ibid.*, 176.

11 One of the few venues for such a view to be heard was in *Ner* (Light), the journal of the binational Jewish group *Ihūd*, which was edited by R. Binyomin. For the discussion of R. Binyomin and others who took up the question of a return of refugees in the new State of Israel, as well as references to relevant articles in *Ner*, see David Myers, Introduction, in: *idem*, *Between Jew and Arab*, 1–134, here 103 and 266 f. (n. 45 f.).

12 See the full translation: Rawidowicz, *Between Jew and Arab*. For the publication history of the text see also Myers, *Between Jew and Arab*.

## 2. בין עבר לערב [Between Jew and Arab]

*The original text was found in Rawidowicz's Nachlass. It was a galley proof produced in 1957. Initially planned as an appendix of Bavel vi-Yerushalayim (Babylon and Jerusalem), the text was ultimately not included in the book. The document contains handwritten corrections and additions by Rawidowicz. In the upper left corner there is the following handwritten note in Hebrew: "Written in 5712-5713 [1951/52-1952/53]; not adequately proofread; not published in 'Mezudah' and will not be published in 'Bavel vi-Yerushalayim;' but rather as a pamphlet of its own one day in the future." There is also a handwritten note on page 8a, not by Rawidowicz, but by one of his brothers, which we do not reproduce. A translation into English together with detailed annotation appeared under the title "Between Jew and Arab" in: David N. Myers, Between Jew and Arab. The Lost Voice of Simon Rawidowicz, Hanover, NH, 2008, 135-180, and 277-285.*

מדיניות-החוץ לציונות ולמדינת ישראל – שאלת-ערב שאלת-} בית מתש"ח ואילך. – מעבר ישראל מאינאונים לאונים. – שיפור עמדת ערב במדינת עבר. – חוקה לעבר וחוקה לערב. – חוק השבות. – חוק האזרחות. – חוק גזירת מדינת ישראל גזירה. – גזירת-הפליטים בתש"ח. – פניהמוסה, פניהמעשה שבה. – מעמד מדינת ישראל בעולם וגזירת-הפליטים. – טענת "לא טוב היות מדינת ישראל בעלת מיעוט לאומי זר רב". – גזירת הפליטים וראשית קבוץ-הגלויות, תרומת ישראל לבנין המדינה. – בין עבר לערב וחינוך הדור הבא מישראל במדינה. – איפה ואיפה במוסר ישראל. – מוסר-היהדות מוסר "גלות"? – המושכל הראשון לציונות בפרשת עבר ערב עד לתש"ח. – דת-עבודה, עס-אדם. – ה"פתרונות" לשאלת ערב בעבר: טרנפס, טמיעה. – שאלת ערב לעולם ושאלת ערב לעבר. – הסכנה בשיבת הפליטים ובאי-שיבתם, חתירה מבחוץ וחתירה מבית. – השתתפות אר"ם בביעור שאלת פליטי-ערב מן העולם. – "אוטופיה" וממש. – צילתה של תש"ח. – האחריות לקיום מדינת ישראל, לשלום בניה ובנותיה מישראל בימים יבואו.

.א

מיום שנכנסתי לשער ארץ ותפוצה, קנמתי על עצמי את הדיון-בצבור בשתי פרשיות אלו: מדיניות-החוץ לציונות (ולמדינת ישראל) ושאלת הערבים בארץ ישראל. עיקר עיוני מכוון לבית ישראל, למעמד-ביתנו, לארבע אמותינו, לשם בעור אבניהנגף מדרך ישראל בביתו, לנפשו, – להלכה ולמעשה. עודני עומד בקינומי כלפי אותה מדיניות החוץ. המדברים בה, לפני תש"ח ואחריה, מפריזים הרבה ב"ריבונותה". בעיקרו של דבר, אין לה למדינת ישראל כאן פתח-ברירה – כאילו ברצותה היא מזריחה וברצותה מעריבה, וכיוצא בשאלת-} ת בינה ובין עולם-החוץ, הכל צפוי לה בתחום זה – לפחות לפי שעה, ואינה שעה קצרה. ולא לה לבדה.

כמה מדינות גדולות ועצומות ממנה – ניטלה מהן בדור האחרון הרשות להכרעה בחוצן, במדיניות-חוצן.

ואינה כן שאלת ערב, בה הנני יוצא כאן מנדרי שנדרתי לי, – ואין זו אלא משום שעם הקמת המדינה נהפכה המערכה בין עבר לערב בארץ ישראל. שוב אין הללו "שנים אוחזין בטלית" [משנה בבא מציעא 1:1], שנים הטוענים טענה כולה שלי לשלישי העומד על גבם – אלא אחד [2a] אוחז ביד, רוכב ומנהיג, והשני מונהג; זה שליט שליטת-רוב מכריעה, שליטת עס-מדינה וזה נשלט כמיעוט – והשלטון לישראל. כך נעשתה "השאלה הערבית" בנוסחה החדש, נוסחית-ש"ח, שאלת בית לישראל, ובעומק משמעותה: שאלה לישראל כולו – אם גם נופח נוטה החוצה, מכאן, ונראית היא כמויחדת לישראל שבמדינת ישראל, מכאן.

הציונות (או מחנות מכריעים בה) ראתה את שאלת ישראל והיא נובעת מחוסר-כוח; ולפיכך טענה זו: הבו אונים לאותו אום איך-אוניס, עשוהו בר-כוח ככל בני-כוח שבעולם, רב-שלטון ככל עם ולשון – ונפתרה שאלתו. אותו רעיון הכוח על שרשיו בחוץ שבמאה הי"ט – ברוח ובמדיניות – שפרנס הרבה את מלחמת ישראל החדש על אילו (מתן אייל לעם מחוסר-אייל), איול גופו בבחינת חברה ומדינה, יש בו לייחד מחקר לעצמו. מעניינינו {נו} הוא בפרשה שלפנינו: כיצד עבר עם אחרי אלפים שנות איך-אוניס לאוניס, מהעדר-שלטון לשלטון? מה היו צעדי הראשונים והם מה מאלפים ומכריעים בדרכו להטאיללותו בתחום החברה והמדינה, לקניית כוח בעולם? ההבלית בגרות רבה, נסיון רבי-ימים, או חלה אותן "מחלות ילדות" של מדינה קטנה וצעירה שמנו חכמים יודעי-מחלות בקבוצים היוצאים מן-לוח לעצמאות? הידע כבוש-יצר – או אותה זכייה בכוח ובשלטון {ן} העבירתו על דעתו והדריכתו בנתיבות משועבד-לשעבר כי ימלוך [ראה משלי 30:22], חלש כי יתקוף המבליט על כרחו את כוח מלכותו הבלטה יתירה, ותקפו מתקיף "מאליו"? ובעיקר: העמדה מדן-נתן-ת ישראל בנסיון באותו תחום מכריע; בין עבר לערב?

אין בין עבר לערב בכלל, ומראשיתו (מימי הביניים ואילך) מענייני – אלא זה הפותח בתש"ח: בין מדינת ישראל לבין הערבים בגבולותיה (כלומר, לא בין מדינת ישראל למדינות ערב, אותו בין-רובין מקומו בתחום שבין ישראל לעמים). קשה ומסולבכה ומרגיזה פרשת בין-רובין זו – ואין אנו בני חורין מלהיפטר מנמחה {ממנה}.

## ב.

אין אני מעלים עיני מאותה חמירות המציאות המדינית בה נתונה מדינת ישראל: אין הסכם-שלום בינה לבין מדינות ערב, והללו נושאות את נפשן ל"סיבוב שני". רבה גם סכנת פולשים מתקיפים מפקידה לפקידה. אשר לערבים במדינת ישראל – מצבם הכלכלי שופר מתש"ח ואילך בכמה בחינות. נהנים הם – כשאר האזרחים – משירותי המדינה: חינוך, סיוע לנחשלים, רפואה וכו'; לנשי הערבים – זכות בחירה במדינה; עם הקמת המדינה ניתן לאזרחים ערביים רבים לפרוק עול אפנדי שעל גבם; חקלאים שבערבים סבלו סבל-מזונות מתש"ח ואילך פחות מרובו [3a] של הישוב היהודי בערי המדינה. כנגד אותם שיפורים רבים בחייהם, נתונים הם (או: היו נתונים) לכמה חוקי-הגבלה שמצב החירום מחייבם; ודרך כלל, עומדים הם ברשות עצמם בארבע אמותיהם – בדתם, בלשונם, בחברתיותם. וכשאנו מונים מעשים שעשתה מדינת ישראל לטובת הערבים שבגבולותיה – אל נשים חלקנו עם מוני "חסדים טובים". הערבים יושבים במדינת

ישראל בזכות ולא בחסד – כשם שכל מיעוט בעולם, לרבות מיעוט מיישראל, יושב באשר הוא יושב בזכות ולא בחסד. מדינת ישראל חייבה לדאוג לשלום אזרחיה. והללו מצווים על דאגה לשלום המדינה – דאגה תחת דאגה.

ודאי, אין להתעלם מן העובדה שמדינות ערב התקיפו בתש"ח את מדינת ישראל, ורובם המכריע של הערבים בה במדינה – ניתן לומר: כולם – התפללו לנצחון המתקיפים. אין בכך מן המפתיע כשם "שטבעי" הוא אותו חשד-גומלין בין עבר ועבר במדינת ישראל. נוסף לכך: לא יהודיה המדינה לבדם, גם עולי – או: פליטי – ארצות ערב רבה מרירותם נגד הערבים; קשה להם – לבני הרוב – לכבוש את מרירותם נגד בני המיעוט. מובנה היא זו, – ודווקא משום כך חייבה הממשלה, האחראית לשלום כל אזרחיה, להתרחק מכל הפלייה שהיא כלפי המיעוט, והיא שארית רוב-הארץ שנעשה מיעוט בתש"ח. שומה עליה גם לחנך את הרוב שיתגבר על נטיותיו הטבעיות, נטיות-רוב שדרכן לילך ולפגוע במיעוט הכפוף לו.

המכריעים בהנהלת המדינה מתש"ח ואילך ציונים וסוציאליסטים הם שהודו כל ימיהם בזכויות הערבים בארץ לשויון גמור, מהם שהרבו דבר גם באחרונה בין עבר לערב. אין הללו זקוקים למוכחים שיבואו ויעמידום על חובתם כלפי שארית ערב במדינה שהוקמה בראשית-האונים לשארית-שאריתו של ערב.

ולמעשה, האם היה בכוחם של אותם נאה-דורשים לשעבר להיות נאה מקיימים בפרשת בין עבר לערב, מתש"ח ואילך?

## ג.

בכמה מהחוקים שחקקה מדינת ישראל בין תש"ח לתשי"ג אינם חוק אחד לערב ולעבה. לא אדון בכל פרטיהם. אסתפק כאן בכמה רמזים.

הערבים – עד כמה שאני יודע – לא מחו על חוק השבות (כ'תמוז תשי"י)<sup>13</sup>, הנועל את שערי המדינה בפני בני עמם, עסיה מיעוט שבמדינה, כשהוא פותחם לרווחה אך ורק לפני עסיה רוב שבה. גזירת המציאות היא זו. מכאן: עם "מפוזר ומפורד" [אסתר 3:8] ללא מדינה, רוצה לנס נפוצותיו בני-בלי-ארץ במדינת ישראל זו. ומכאן: הערבים כמה מדינות להם ואינן מאוכלסות דיין, אין הללו יודעים חבלי [4a] הגירה ופורעניות רדיפות. מאושרים היינו אילו לא היה שטח המדינה כה מצומצם, וניתן לישראל לייסד בארץ מדינה פתוחה לכל נפש. כמחאה על אותה סגירת כלי-בשר שנשתלטה בו בעולם, עולם ירחיז-וסדום המשבח [!]\* תורת-רגל (למעלה). ועכשו שלא זכינו לאותו פתח-ורגל – עבר וערב חייבים לקבל כאחת גזירת-המציאות. תבוא המדינה בכברת ארץ קטנה זו ותשמש מקלט לבני אברהם יצחק ויעקב. כנגד זה, לא הערבים לבדם אלא גם כמה מבני ישראל שבמדינת ישראל, ולא אנשי "איחוד" בלבד, מחו על סעיפי ההפלייה לערבים בחוק האזרחות (תמוז תשי"ב)<sup>14</sup> שלפיהם בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב לבדם זוכים באזרחות מדינת-ישראל בכוח חוקה-השבות –

13 דברי הכנסת ...

\* המשכח.

14 עיין בדיוני הכנסת בהצעת חוק האזרחות: דברי כנסת, ירושלים, כרך י"א, נספחות ע' 1723 וכו', גם בד"ח שאר ישיבות הכנסת בהן נזקקה זו לאותה פרשה שפורסם ב"דברי כנסת".

"בשעה ש"לא יהודים חייבים למלא אחרי התנאים הבאים, כדי להיות אזרחי <מדינת ישראל מכוח ישיבה: 1) התנאי הראשון הוא נתינות ארצי־ישראלית ערב הקמת המדינה; 2) המועמדים לאזרחות חייבים להיות רשומים ביום ד' באדר תשי"ב ... כתושבים; 3) הם חייבים להיות תושבים ביום תחילת תקפו של החוק ... 4) דבר היותם בישראל > במדינת ישראל < מיום הקמת המדינה עד יום תחילת תקפו של חוק האזרחות או כניסתם לישראל > כנ"ל < בתקופה זו כדין, מוכרח להיות ברוה אפילו מקום מגוריהם הוא בשטח, שסופח לישראל > כנ"ל < אחרי הקמת המדינה (לא מיום הסיפוח) או אם נכנסו אליו בתקופה זו כדין. יחד עם אלה שזכו לאזרחות <מדינת ישראל מכוח ישיבה, נעשים לאזרחים ילדיהם, שנולדו אחרי הקמת המדינה וביום תחילת תקפו של החוק היו תושבי <מדינת ישראל. על יסוד הוראה זו יכולים, איפוא, רק ילדים עד גיל 4 שנים ו-2 חדשים לכל היותר לרכוש אזרחות <מדינת ישראלית בזכות הוריהם. ביחס לילדים שעברו גיל זה יש לברר בכל מקרה ומקרה לחוד את קיומו של כל אחד מהתנאים הנקובים לעיל".<sup>15</sup>

ה מו ס ר כשלעצמו קורא תגר על אותם סעיפי־הפלייה. ול מ ע ש ה, גלוי וידוע הוא שכנגד כל כזית־הפלייה שמדינת ישראל מפלה כלפי מיעוט־ערב שבגבולותיה, התיינה אומות העולם מודדות לישראל על פני כל כדור האדמה קביים־קביים של הפלייה. ניתן לראות בסעיפי־{ה} הפלייה סתירה למגילת אר"ם ומגילת זכויות האדם הטבועות בחותמה, שגם מדינת ישראל "באה עליה על התח{ח}ת"ום". מבחינה מדינית פני מית: לא קבוץ־הגלויות ולא צורך־הבטחון למדינת ישראל מחייבים אותם סעיפי־הפלייה. ואילו חייבום, – אין בכוחם להתיר סטייה זו מחובת המדינה כלפי מיעוט־ערב שבגבולותיה. הפלייה היא הפלייה – גם כשהיא משמשת לצרכי בטחון למדינה.

סנגורים שיצאו ללמד זכות על סעיפי־הפלייה יגעו ומצאו שאין הללו פוגעים לרעה אלא "אך ורק" בט"ו אלפי ערבים, מתוך ק"פ אלף נפש בקירוב. כנגדם יש לטעון: א) אין מספר הנפגעים מכריע, [5a] אלא עצם הפלייה. ב) אם אין מדינת ישראל זקוקה להתקין תקנות־מגן מיוחדות כלפי רובם המכריע של אזרחיה הערביים – כלום כדאי לה, ואפילו מבחינה מדינית־מעשית בלבד, להפלות לרעה בתחום זה מיעוט קטן במיעוט־ערב שבגבולותיה?

שליחיה של מדינת ישראל – שגרירה, ציריה, מלאכי־הסברתה – היו מכריזים בתש"י שאותו חוק האזרחות הוא ה"ליבראלי" בחוקי־האזרחות שבעולם, אין דומה לו לחופש וכו'. כנגדם, אתה מוצא מומחים־למשפט משלנו, הדנים בחוקי מדינת ישראל מתוך נישא "משפטית מקצועית", גם הם רוצים ללמד פ{ס}נגוריה על הממשלה, ואי אפשר להם להעלים את ספקותיהם בה בפרשה: לדוגמה ישמשו דברי יהושע פרוידנהיים בספרו הנ"ל:

"מלכתחילה היה ברוה, שבשטח זה מן הנמנע להתעלם מצרכי הבטחון של המדינה. אולם, הפתרון, שאליו הגיע המחוקק בשאלה זו, עורר בקורת חריפה בארץ וב{ח}ר"ל ורבים הוקיעוהו כהפלייה גזענית מובהקת. אם כי תוכחה זו ודאי שאין לה על מה להישען ואם כי אין ספק, שההוראות, שנגדן כווננו חיצונית הבקורת, נובעות אך ורק משיקולים בטחוניים, קשה להגיד, שההסדר החוקי הוא מוצלח ביותר ושפתרונות ההולמים יותר את עצם הבעיה ודרישות לצדק גם יחד והעשויים פחות להבאיש את ריחנו בעולם הגדול, היו מחוץ לגדר האפשרות. כנראה שטרם <צ"ל טרם > נסתם הגולל על פרשה זו ושבעתיד לא רחוק יתוקן המעוות".<sup>16</sup> – כן יהי רצון.

15 יהושע פרוידנהיים: השלטון במדינת ישראל. תשי"ג, 190.

16 שם, 188.

בחוק האזרחות ולהלן: "הואיל ועומס ההוכחה רובץ על המועמדים הלא־יהודים לאזרחות ישראל ברוח, שקשה כאן לדבר – כפי שנוהגים – על הקניית אזרחות באופן אוטומטי ללא־יהודים, ומוטב לציין דרך זו ברכישת אזרחות ע"י התאזרחות בתנאים חמורים עד מאד, היות וכמעט מן הנמנע הוא להביא הוכחות, שהן למעלה מכל ספק, על מילוי כל אחד מתנאי האזרחות, שהחוק קובע, ומשום כך בכוחם של השלטונות לסרב בכל מקרה מלהכיר באזרחות עקב העדר הוכחות מספיקות.

צודקים, איפוא, אולם {אלה} הטוענים, שהחוק מוסר את המיעוט לחסדי השלטונות ואינו מעניק לו כלזכות, מי יתן והשימוש המעשי בחוק יהיה טוב מהחוק עצמו".<sup>17</sup> העתונות היהודית שבתפוצות העלימה עיניה מאותם סעיפיה הפלייה. לדברי אחד המוחים במדינת ישראל על הסעיפים הללו, העתונים היהודים שבאמריקה נתבקשו לא להבליט אותה פרשה.<sup>18</sup> אילו לא נענו סופרינו לאותה בקשה, והיו מוחים על הטעון מחאה – היו ראויים לשכר על מחאתם, גם מבחינתה של מדינת ישראל גופה.

ואף כאן מצאו בעלי־חוב מקום לגבות את חובם – מן הגלות. אחדים ממתנגדי אותה הפלייה – יצאו וכרכו בגלות; לדוגמה, המוחה הנ"ל האומר: "נשאר הרושם העגום גם באוכלוסייה הלא־יהודית בארץ ובחו"ל, וביחוד בין אחינו היהודים בארץ ובחו"ל", שלא יכולנו להשתחרר מן התסביכים הגלותיים שלנו".<sup>19</sup>

האמנם על כל פשעים תכסה גלות – לרבות פשעים שגלות לא ידעתם כלל? אין לך מיעוט־מישראל בתפוצה |6a| שיעלה בדעתו להפלות הפלייה שכמותה; ואילו גם עלתה בדעתו – לא היה ניתן לו כלל לבצעה. בגלות היה ישראל – והנהו – מיעוט מקופח, אם בפועל ואם בכוח, אם מעט אם הרבה – ובמדינת ישראל נעשה ישראל רוב מקפח־בכוח, גם כשלא יהא מקפח־בפועל, ומה ענין "גלות" ו"תסביכה" לכאן? בגלות – הישנה והחדשה – היה ישראל מאז ומעולם קרבן הפלייה; מאימתי למדים מן קרבן על מקריב? ומנהיג ציוני ותיק אחד, בארץ, שנלחם בפולין בגזירת־ההפלייה שממשלת פולין היתה גזרת על המיעוט היהודי שבגבולותיה, גילה בצבור את אכזבתו הרבה במדינה זו – עליה חלם ולחם כל ימיו – הולכת כאן כדרך פולין וכיוצא בה. המוחים מוחים – אם גם אינם מרובים, וקולם אינו תמיד ענות תרועה, ואינם מתיידיים במחאתם – והממשלה מחוקקת את חוקיה, הכנסת מקבלתם – ברוב־הדעות הדרוש – ומדינה כמנהגה נוהגת; מנהג נעשה דין, לכל דין סגורים משלו, ואותה הפליית־מיעוט בעינה עומדת.

#### ד.

חמור מהסעיפים האמורים בחוק האזרחות הוא חוק שנתקבל בא' במרש [מרץ] 1953 בכנסת. ברוב כ"ב נגד חמשה קולות, מתוך ק"כ קולות חברים בכנסת. משה סמילנסקי כתב במאמר־מחאתו על חוק זה: "איכה ישבת בדד בתוך ירושלים, המצפון היהודי?" למעשה, קיבוצים דתיים מכאן וקיבוצים סוציאליסטים מכאן "רכשו" להם בתוקף אותו חוק מקרקעות שכניהם הערבים, שנושלו מעל אדמתם ונעשו בני בלי קרקע. ההצבעה בכנסת מוכיחה שרוב

17 שם, 191.

18 ש. שרשבסקי, סעיפי הפלייה בחוק האזרחות, בטרם, כ"ד באב תשי"ב, ע' 26.

19 שם.

חבריה מתנגדים לאותו חוק, או אין דעתם נוחה ממנו – ולמעשה חוק הוא, דין מלכות דין. כאילו חוקים שכמותם מתחוקקים מאליהם – בית מחוקקים הוא המחוקק, על אפם של המחוקקים?

עד לתשי"ח היתה הציונות מתאפף{פא}רת בכך – ובדין – שיצאה לפדות את ציון במשפט [ראה ישעיה 1:27], לא נישלה ולא תנשל ערבים מעל אדמתם. מה משמחת ומרחיבת-לבב – לישראל ולציונות – היתה עובדה זו שוועדת-פיל ושאר ועודת-החקירה שבדקו בכל חור וסדק בארץ ישראל החדשה, עד למלחמת-העולם ב', לא היה בכוחן להצדיק את הדין על אותה עלילת-נישול שהיו שונאי ציון מעלילים על ישראל. – האם מעמדנו המוסרי והמדיני המעשי, בה בפרשה, ברשות שבין עם לעם, נאה אחרי תשי"ח כמות שהיה לפניו? יש משערים: כחמישים-למאה מהעריביים שנסארו במדינה (למעשה, כתשעים אלף) נושרו לזו מעל אדמתם, כדין ושלא-כדין, והוגלו מנחלתם בגזרת הצבא ובתוקף חוקי בטחון; ואילו גם לא היו אלא עשרים או עשרה למאה בלבד, כלום ניתן להתעלם מהם?

[7a] תאמרו: ישראל נכנס למזל חדש, לא הרי ישוב כהרי מדינה, מלכות פורצת גדר ואין מוחין בידה. אשיב: א) מלכות ישראל חייבה להזהר ולא לפרוץ גדר, אסור לו לישראל לילך בחוקות הגויים ולהפקיע רכוש אויב או מתנגד שנוצח בשדה-הקרב. ב) למעשה, עם חלש ודל, חלש ודל גם כשכתר-מדינה בראשון. "לא כדאי לו" לשלול שלל ולבוז בו. בזו לא יאריך ימים בידיו; סופו – לא אפתח פה לשטן – שישללו ממנו שלל ויבוזו ממנו בז "מנה אחת אפיים". כמרומז, נשמעו בארץ קולות התמרמרות על קיפוחי-ערב האמורים. ברוכה היא עתונות הארץ שאינה נועלת שעריה בפני בעלי הקולות הללו. ולואי יוצאה בעקבותיה העתונות הציונית שבתפוצות בכל לעזיה – וזו העברית, עד כמה שהיא קיימת – והיא מחרימה כל שאינו עונה אמן אחרי שפע התעמולה מעלת-הגרה שבה. מובטחני: מדינת ישראל, ממשלתה וישראל שבגבולותיה יתקנו ברבות הימים כל טעון תיקון בו בתחום – לרצונם ועל כרחם. יקומו מוכיחים מישראל וילחמו על ביעור הרע מקרבו, מכאן; ומכאן: הערבים עצמם ודאי יעמדו על נפשם ויגנו על זכויותיהם במדינת ישראל; דעת הקהל במדינות ערב ובשאר המדינות – אף היא תעשה את שלה. ועם כל אלה – מוטב לה למדינת ישראל שמלאכתה זו לא תיעשה על ידי אחרים; ולא יהא אותו בין עבר לערב "נושא" לעיון ולדין לא באו"ם ולא בעתונות העולם. "האומות המאוחדות" אינן מתערבות בעניניהן הפנימיים של המדינות – ובימתן פתוחה לכל מקטרג, כמה מהן לקיוות בפרשת-המיעוט שבגבולותיהן. אומה פלונית כי תבוא ותאמר לאלמונית: טלי קורה מבין עיניך – והשיבה לה זו: טלי קיסם מבין שיניך [ראה תלמוד ערכין 16b]. רבה הקורה, רב הקיסם בעולם זה – וחטא רבים, רבי קורה וקיסם, אין בו נחמה.

ואין אותן הפליות מתחום האזרחות והקנין – שהזמן גרמן – עיקרה של תורפה בין עבר לערב. כקליפת השום הן כולן כלפי הפלייה רבה אחת, והיא איסור שיבת-בית שנגזר על הערבים שעזבו את ארץ ישראל – או ברחו ממנה – עם פרוץ המלחמה בין מדינת ישראל ומדינות ערב, ביתר דיוק: עם התנפלותן של מדינות ערב על מדינת ישראל.



ה.

פרשת הפליטים חמורה במאד, כמות שהיא ועל שום סופה, וכל המתעלם ממנה איננו עושה {צדקה לישראל.

איני יודע מניינם של הפליטים. הערבים מדברים פרקים במיליון נפש ומעלה. כנגדם, יש מעמידים אותם על חמש, שש או שבע מאות אלף – כלומר, כמנין העולים שעלו למדינת ישראל בין תש"ח ותשי"א. אין מניינם מכריע כאן, ולא נימוקם ליציאה או לבריחה: אם יצאו משום שאחיהם הע-8a|רבים וידידיהם הבריטים הסיתום לכך והבטיחום שיזכו לשוב בקרוב לפלשתינה שאין בה מדינה מישראל.\* אם ברחו משום שנפל עליהם פחד היהודים (וטבח דירי-יאסין, לדוגמה, היה בו להפחיד את ערב שבארץ), מתוך מבוכת מלחמה העוקרת בני-אדם ממקום מושבם ומטלטלתם לחוץ-לגבולם, או מתוך תמימות מדינית ובערות "טכנית" (מספרים: ליל סופת-מטר אחד {ד} הבריה את הערבים בצפת ממקום מושבם; סבורים היו: "נשק סודי" של היהודים חולל אותה סופה). אין לפני – ולפני ישראל והעולם כולו – אלא עובדה זו כמות שהיא: מאות אלפי ערבים, איש ואשה וטף, יצאו את הארץ, ואין מדינת ישראל מתירה להם לשוב לאחיהם, לישב על אדמתם אדמת אבותיהם ואבות אבותיהם. מתשי"ח ואילך הרביתי חשוב באותה עובדה, ומכל צדדיה, עד כמה שניתן לי – ואי אפשר היה לי להשלים עמה, בשום פנים.

אילו היו אותם מאות אלפי ערבים כולם חיילים שנלחמו בצבא מיד {ינת ישראל – כולם קיפחו על ידי כך את זכותם לשוב לנחלתם? ולא יהיו הללו אלא כשבויי-מלחמה, הרשאים לחזור לאחוזתם, עם תום המלחמה, או לאחר חתימת הסכם-השלום?

גם מן {ג}הג זה עבר ובטל מן העולם? והערבים הללו אין דינם דין שבויי-מלחמה, פליטים הם. מדינת ישראל רשאית – וחייבה – היתה לבדוק כל אחד מהם בשובו לאהלו, בכל חומר הבדיקה, לנעול שעריה בפני מרגלים ומסיתים – ונעילת שער זו בפני כל פליט ופליטה, אנשים נשים וטף שלא חטאו, מאימתי היתה זו מצוות-עשה בישראל?

כשהייתי שומע בתש"ח ובתש"ט וכו' מנהיגים בישראל ושרי מדינת ישראל, סופרים ציוניים ואפילו שאינם-ציוניים, מהללים הלל שלם גם על נס זה, הגדול בנסים שארעו לישראל, לדבריהם, ושש או שבע, שמונה מאות אלף – ולו יהיו ארבע מאות אלף או פחות מהם – מתושבי ארץ ישראל נעשו פליטים, – הייתי שואל את עצמי: נס הוא לישראל? פח הוא לישראל. פחת טמנה לנו השעה ונפלנו תוכה. אין זה מן הנסים שישראל חייב – רשאי – לברך עליהם. אין מקומו בעל-הנסים לעם מלומד-הנס מדור דור. אל ישמח ישראל על נס שכמותו.

אם יש מן הנס בניסתם של הערבים מארץ ישראל – הרי אין זו אלא משום שאין מדינת ישראל מתירה לנסים (נ' קמוצה) לשוב; והללו לא עלתה כלל על דעתם שינושלו לעולמים מאחוזתם ב"עון" ניסתם ממנה עם פרוץ המלחמה. כלומר גם זה מעשה ידינו הו.א. וידינו, ידי יעקב, לא לכך נוצרו.

\* In the original, the word order was mixed up, presumably due to a typing error. The correct word order was indicated by handwritten numbers in the margin.

## 1.

כמה פנים לשאלת הפליטים שלפנינו – ראשון בהם הוא פְּהָה מוֹסֵר, ובו אני מתקשה ביותר, קשה לדרוש בפרשת-מוסר בעולם זה שבמאה העשרים; [9a] וכמה קשה להטיף מוסר לישראל, קרבן אי-מוסריותו של העולם למעלה מאלפיים שנה. כלום יש עם על פני כדור האדמה שרשאי הוא להוכיח את ישראל? – וישראל לנפשו – שומה עליו להוכיח את עצמו. ראשית חכמה מוסר, יסודי-היסודות הוא לקיום אדם וגוי. גם למעשה, אם יד המוסר תהא על העליונה בעולם – עתיד ותקווה לו לישראל בו בעולם; ואם ידו על התחתונה – יהא זה בשפל המדרגה, הולך מדחי אל דחי. אותה גזירה שגורה מדינת ישראל על הפליטים הערביים – מעשה אשר לא יעשה הוא מבחינת המוסר. בטוחים היינו שלא יעשה לעולם בישראל. גם כי נשקע "בגיא-צלמות" [תהילים 23:4] של מוסר האומות, נהגה בהגותו ונעשה כמעשהו: מוסר ליחיד לחוד ומוסר למדינה לחוד, חטא בין אדם לחברו הוא מצוות-עשה מוסרית בין עם לעם, כאילו לא תרצח ולא תגנוב ושאר הדברות נאמרו בלשון יחיד כדי ללמדנו שאין בהן ממש כל שהוא לרבים, לחברה ומדינותיה – לא יהא בכוח סגור בישראל לטהר אותו מעשה בק"ן פי ק"ן טעמים.

אין מן הצורך להוסיף ולהפוך באותה בחינת מוסר – אצטמצם בבחינותיה המדיניות והמעשיות של גזירת-מדינה זו, בתוצאותיה לבית ישראל ולמדינת ישראל שבו, ובראשי-פרקים בבל(לב)ד:

א. משק המדינה. לדעת המומחים בפרשה זו איסור שיבת-הפליטים לא הביא ברכה(ת)-כלכלה כל שהיא למדינה; שער המזון והחקלאות היה משופר יותר במדינה אילו ניתן לערבים לשוב ולהמשיך בעבודתם, יציאתם פגעה הרבה בב(ה) זנתה של האוכ(לו)סליה ועשתה את המדינה תלויה במטבע-חוץ לסיפוק מזונותיה; היה בה בזו לשמש לצרכים אחרים, אילו הותרו הפליטים לשוב לנחלתם. איני יודע אם קיפוח-כלכלה זה קיפוח-ארעי היה, מיוחד לשנות המדינה הראשונות – או ריש(ו)מו היא ניכר גם בשנים הבאות. בכל פנים, אותה זכייה שזכתה המדינה (כמדינה, ואזרחיה מישראל כיחידים) מן "ההפקר", כלומר מרכוש הפליטים, לא היתה לה לברכה אפילו מבחינה "משקית" בלשון הארץ.<sup>21</sup>

ב. [10a] מבחינה כלכלית נוספה, והיא גם מדינית ביסודה – יש לעיין ב"בויקוט" שמדינות ערב נוהגות במדינת ישראל, והוא הולך ומחמיר משנה לשנה. אילו הותרו הפליטים בשיבת-בית – היה זה ודאי נחלש הרבה, וסוף-סוף נעלם לגמרי. אותם מאות אלפי ערבים היו ודאי גושרים גשר בין מדינת ישראל ומדינ(ו)ת ערב, והיו

20 עיין: דברי הכנסת [This note appears at the bottom of page 9a, although it does not correspond to any superscripted citation in the text].

21 עמדו על אותה "איהמשקיות" גם בעתונות הארץ. לדוגמה, בעל המאמר "הערות לנאמו של חוסיין", בסרט, כ"ד באב תשי"ב: "... כך נפלו לידינו בתים ופרדסים שדות וכרמים, בארות וצינורות, ואפילו בתי ת(ח)רושת שלמים על ציודיהם ומחסניהם. אינני רוצה להעריך את הרכוש שנפל לידינו – אבל היה זה לא מעט. שאלה היא אמנם, אם השתמשו בכל הרכוש הזה בצורה יעילה (שלא לדבר על גנבות וסחיבות וכו') למציאות" וכו'. מסופק הוא סופרנו אם "השתמשו בו לצרכיה" או לצרכי רוב-המדינה, על חשבוננו של המיעוט שנושל מרכושו, אם גם בא על פיצויו? שאלה זו אין סופרנו שואל כלל. ואין זו, כנראה בגדר [10a] שאלה אפילו לאחד במא(ה) מישראל שבמדינת ישראל.

מסייעים לא רק לשיפור היחסים המדיניים בין עבר לערב בעולם כולו, אלא גם לביצור עמדתה הכלכלית של מדינת ישראל – כלומר, היו משחררים אותה מתלותה בסיוע־החוץ, או מפתח־יח־ים אותה במדה מכריעה.

ג. מבחינה מדינית בין עבר לערב: מציאותם של אותם הפליטים בחוץ למדינת ישראל משמשת אבן נגף מכריעה ל"הסדר היחסים" בינה (1) ובין מדינות ערב הקרובות לגבולה, (2) ובין עולם ערב בכללותו. אלמלא אותם הפליטים, לא היה בכוח של מדינות ערב הקרובות למדינת ישראל לעמוד בסרבנותן ולא להשלים עם קיומה של מדינת ישראל; ולא היו הללו מוצאות אותו סיוע רב לסרבנותן זו בעולם ערב בכללותו. עובדה זו ששמה פליטים היא אִם כל תקלה במדיניות־החוץ של מדינת ישראל, ולא שלטת־שלטת בעולם ערב לבדו. הנחה זו במערכותינו: תחלה הסכס־שולם עם ערב ואחר כך פתרון שאלת הפליטים, או פתרון זה כחלק ההסכס – לא היה בה לכתחילה הרבה מן המדיניות המעשית; ובדיעבד – הכל יודעים שלא הביאה הקלה כל שהיא למדיניות ישראל בתחום שבינה לבין העולם.

## ז.

ומחוץ למדינות ערב – האם לטובה של מדינת ישראל הוא, מבחינת מעמדה בעולם, שאותם פליטים לא יותרו בשיבת־בית?

אומרים בישראל: העולם מבין שאין מדינת ישראל יכולה לבטל גזירה זו. ראשון: העולם כולו מבין? האמנם רשאית מדינת ישראל להעמיד את כל העולם על "מערב" שבו, או על חלקימה באותו "מערב"? האמנם ישלים עולם המזרח (אסיה ואפריקה) עם אותו קיפוח שעם־מזרח, בשר מבשרו, קופח בידי עם חוזר למקורו, מקור־המזרח מתחיל קונה בו שביתה, ועוד עם מערב בעיני מזרח.<sup>22</sup> כלום רשאים |11a| האחראים למדיניותה של מדינת ישראל לזלזל בעליית כוכבו של אותו מזרח? אולי עתיד זה להכריע במלחמת האיתנים שבימינו, בחינת כתוב שלישי בין שני כתובים המכחישים זה את זה. מה יהא בסוף כתובה של מדינת ישראל, והוא עמום אותה גזירת־פליטים, פליט־מזרח?

שני: מנין לה למדינת ישראל שעולמ־מערב "מבין" באמת אותה גזירה, ומשלים אותה בכלל לבבו? עולמ־המערב הזוכר את שעשה היטלר לישראל, והוא עצמו עשה בין עם לחברו כמה

22 פרק זה סימתי כשנתיים לפני ועידת באנדונג (אינדונסיה, באפריל 1955, בה השתתפו כ־2 מדינות אסיה ואפריקה) – הראשונה במינה, הפותחת תקופה חדשה בדברי ימיהן המדיניים של הארצות הללו ובתחום שבין מזרח למערב במלוא היקפם. נעלה זו שעריה בפני מדינת ישראל, ברוח ארצות ערב המתנגדות לה – כאילו אינה כלל במזרח. לא זו בלבד: חלוקות היו אותן כ־2 מדינות ברוב השאלות להן נזקקו באותה ועידה – ושפה אחת היתה להן (אם גם לא לב שלם אחד) כשהגיעו לפרשת עבר וערב: הביעו את "מלוא תמיכתן בזכויותיהם של הערבים בארץ ישראל" ודרשו "ביצועה של החלטת א"ם על ארץ ישראל". טענת־הפליטים שלפנינו היתה החריפה בטענות הערבים ויד־|11a|יהם מתנגדיה של מדינת ישראל, והיא שהכריעה את הכף לרעתה של מדינת ישראל.

רבים בעתונותנו – בארץ ובתפוצות, מחו בתוקף על החלטתה של אותה ועידת אסיה־ואפריקה. מהם גם הלעיזו עליה והבליטו את חוסר־הממש שבה – וזו במקומה עומדת. יש לעיין ולעיין בה מתוך הרגשת־אחריות למדינת ישראל ומעמדה בעולמ־המזרח, למעשה.

מעשים שאינם־מוסריים – או חלקו של עולם זה – נוקט עמדה "פאסיבית־נייטראלית" בשאלת הפליטים; מוכן הוא להשלים עם פתירתה בחוץ למדינת ישראל – גם למען "השלום" באסיה וכו'. ויש עולם תוך אותו עולם – ודווקא זה שסייע הרבה להקמת מדינת ישראל, ביחוד בארצות הברית של אמריקה – המשמיע קולו מפקידה לפקידה על "חובתה של מדינת ישראל לתרום תרומתימה" לפתירת אותה שאלה, והיא החזרת קצתם – או רובם – של הפליטים לארץ מוצאם.

אל תבנצו מדינת ישראל בשתיקתו של העולם הנאור – נאור באמת או למראית עין – הליבראלי־הדמוקרטי, דין הודאה. ואל תרעיש עולמות על כל מדינאי באמריקה ובאנגליה וכו' המפר פרקים את "נדר" שתיקתו ודורש ממדינת־ישראל "סיוע־מה" בה בפרשה (עיין להלן).

העולם "שתק" בפרשה זו אחרי תש"ח – האם אין לחש[ו]ש שקולו, שהוא מתחיל משמיעו כמה שנים לאחריה, יהא הולך וגובר, ונעשה קול ענות תרועה? "שתוק" – כמרומו, גם משום שחורבן ישראל באירופה הביאו במקצת ב"מבוכה" או עורר בלבבו "איניעימות" במדתימה. מסופקני אם רוב העולם מתבייש באמת במעשי היטלר בישראל. אולי אין זה יודע כלל אשר עשה אותו שדי־משחת – וכמה מבני ישראל ובנותיו לא ידעוהו גם הם. והללו ממדינאי העולם שעמדו על שואה זו, אם מעט ואם הרבה, היססו לבוא אחריה ולהטיף לנו מוסה. אכן, גם זו קללת היטלר היא. לא רק בחורבן שהחריבנו, אלא גם באותו פתחה־הנצלות ושתיקה שפתח בבית ובחוץ. בבית – תשובה אחת ללוחשי־לחש על מכותינו לכל תקלה וחולשה שאתה מוצא בישראל אחרי ה[ח]ורבן השלישי: "והיטלר טוב ממנה"? רצונך בהיטלר? ... כאילו אין ברירה אלא זו: שגגה[ה] פלוגית ואוולת אלמונית – ואם לאו – היטלר ... ובחוץ – יש בבני[ו] הסב[ו]רים: לאחר שהיטלר עשה ביהודים מה שעשה, [12a] מי יבוא אתם בדין על שהם עושים? שלישי: אילו גם הבין העולם כולו אותה גזירת־פליטים והסכים לה באמת ובתמים – לנו אסור להבינה ולקבלה באהבה. מן המושכלות הראשונות היא: חלילה לו לעבר להיבנות במדינת ישראל מחורבן ערב.

## ח.

"העולם מבין" – הוא הוא המחריד. עולם זה הבין – אם הרבה אם מעט, להלכה ולמעשה – את ע[א]שר עשה היטלר בגרמניה, בצ'כוסלובקיה ואח"כ גם בפולין ובאירופה; ורבים בו בעולם "הבינו" גם את מעשיו בנו, כמרומו. הבין ומבין הוא – כל עוול תחת השמש. אם אותו עולם שהשלים עם היטלר והדומה לו, פייסו, כרת אתו בריתות ידידות ואי־התקפה, מבין גם את מדינת ישראל כשהיא נועלת שעריה בפני הפליטים הללו – סמן רע הוא לה, לנו. יעקב היה כל ימיו "בלתי מובן" לעשו. באותה "אי־הבנה" גנז אחד ממקורות איבתו ליעקב. כשאין עשו שומע את שפת יעקב – "אל תירא עבדי יעקב" [ירמיה 46:27]. כשזה מתחיל שומע שפת יעקב – אוי ליעקב. כל ביעקב שהוא נשמע לעשו – טעון ביעור מאהלי יעקב, מבשרו ומרוחו.

חוששני: מתש"ח ואילך הולך עשו ומטמא את יעקב באותה "הבנה" – והיה כעשו כיעקב. התאומים שוב אינם מתרצצים. התחילו מבינים איש את אחיו. איש את אחיו? אח יעקב לעשו, הדין מראשיתו בברכת ועל חרבך תחיה דין מצוות־עשה?

לפי שעה נראה – או מתראה – עשו {כ} מבין אותו מעשה יעקב. ו"כשלא יהיה לו כדאי" להבינו} – לא יבינהו. יאמר בפירושו: איני מבין. ידרוש דין וחשבון. יהיה בכוח מדינת ישראל ועם ישראל ליתן אותו דין וחשבון, ולצאת זכאים בדינם? ואולי יבוא יום ועשו וישמעאל יעשו אגודה אחת – לגמול ליעקב כגמולו, על המעשה שעשה בתש"ח? וכשתיתן רשות לגומלים הללו – כלום ידעו גבול בגמילתם?

עד לתש"ח לא היתה טענת־ממש אחת בטענותיהם של שונאי ישראל. ידענו, ידעו גם רבים בעולם־החוץ: עלילת דם שקה, הרעלת בארות כזב; אין דם בהא לחמא עניא; לא החרבנו את כלכלת אירופה ואמריקה וכו'; לא חתרנו תחת קיומן של מדינות, כלי מחזיק שלום היה ישראל לעולם. כמה נאה היתה עמידתנו המוסרית בעולם: ידינו נקיות היו בתכלית הנקיות; לא שפכנו דם, שום דם, בשום מקום ובשום שעה – אם גם ידענו להגן על חיינו – במקומות מזסו} יימים, בשעות מסויימות. לא הדמענו עין איש ואשה וילד בעולם. חלק לא היה לנו בחמס שחמסו גויים תחת השמש, שונאי ישראל והיסטוריונים, לדוגמה, כשבקשו להוכיח שגם ידי ישראל דמים מלאות, – היו נאלצים להאחז בחשמונאים ... (אין ברור תפיסתם של אותם היסטוריונים [13a] מענייני). מימי מלכות בית חשמונאי עד לאמצע המאה העשרים – לא יכלו ראות און ביעקב: שפרכת דמים, כיבוש אדמה לא לו, וכיוצא באלו.

ועכשו, שנת תש"ח, ובעיקר גזירת־הפליטים שבה, מתחילה הולכת ומקימה עלינו לא רק שונאי ישראל שבעולם – והללו אינם זקוקים לה – ולא מדינאים בלבד. אלא סתם אנשי־רוח וחוקרי־היסטוריה שהרחיקו ומרחיקים עצמם משנאת ישראל. גם כשהם מגזימים הרבה בסמוכים שהם דורשים בין מעשה ישראל בתש"ח וכו' במדינת ישראל ###} {ובין} מעשה כמה עריצים בימי קדם ובדורות האחרונים – כלום יש בכוחנו להכחיש אותה עובדה מדאיבה בה הם נאחזים, שכמה מאות אלפי איש ואשה וטף נושלו מאדמתם, בעטייה של תקומתנו המדינית? כלום נעזו פנינו ונאמר: צדיקים אנחנו ולא חטאנו, אין קוץ בעטרת מלכותנו, מלכות תש"ח, אין רבב בגד תפארתנו, טלינתנו כולה תכלת?

כי יבואו צוררינו שאינם בני־ערב ויאמרו: ראו מה עשיתם אך נפתח לכם פתח־מדינה, עם "כזית" ראשון של עצמה ושלטון שניתן לכם – מה נאמו, מה נדבר? מה מכאיבים – הכאבה עמוקה שלא ניתן לגלותה מן הלב לפה – אותם קולות גרמנים, יורשי נאציס ומנואצים גם הם, הנשמעים פרקים: צאו והסתכלו באשר עשו היהודים לערבים שחיו בארץ ישראל למעלה מאלף שנים, למה ילינו בני אמריקה ואנגליה ושאר ארצות המערב עלינו, ועל אבותינו? הזמן מטשטש הבדלי־חיסור בין עוול לעוול, סבל לסבל. אותו חמס שחמסה מלכות היטלר – אין אח לו בדברי ימי אדם בדורות האחרונים. ולבסוף באים יורשיו מכאן וסתם אנשי־רוח מכאן וטוענים: אם גם לא הרי חמס זה כהרי חמס זה – חמס הוא חמס, אם רב אם מועט, גם חמס מועט זוּעק לשמים.<sup>23</sup>

23 קובלים הרבה במערכותינו – ובצדק – על ההיסטוריון האנגלי ארנולד טוינביי שיצא והשווה את גזירת־הפליטים למעשה היטלה. אין להתעלם מן העובדה שאותו היסטוריון לא חזר אלא על טענה החיה בלבנות כמה מבני אומות העולם, גם מחסידיהן.

אין ברור פרשת טוינביי מענייני. אילו ניתן להעביר מן העולם אותה טענה במאמר־מחאה על דברי טוינביי ובהצהרות נלהבות מעין אלו שפורסמו בעתונות בשנים האחרונות – היה הכל "נאה ויאה". ולמעשה, "ספרות" רבה זו ההולכת ומתרבה בישראל, אין בה לא לסתור את פרשת מקסרטינו ולא להרגיע את רוחם של שאינם בני־ברית שאין פרנסתם ותפארתם על שנאת ישראל.

חוששני: ילכו וירבו באומות העולם הללו שלא "יבינו" אותה גזירת-פליטים – ולא ישתקו. ואנו נכתיר כל שאינו-מבין משלהם בכתר שונא ישראל – והיה הצורך כשאנו צורה, ב{ה}מבקש להעבירנו מן העולם כרוצה ביד ובשם ובנחלה לישראל והוא מתקשה באותה פרשה, כולם אויבינו הם, "וחסל"? הכנסת כמה {ו} כמה שאינם שונאי ישראל לכלל שונאינו – יש בה לסייע למדינת ישראל, לעם ישראל בעולם? לשמור על אותו משהו-של{ה} פתח לשיתוף הגות [14a] והרגש שנפתח בין ישראל לעמים במאתים [השנים] האחרונות? ואם גם אינו רחב ביותר – כלום רשאים אנו לזלזל בו? רוצים אנו בגילוי-לב בין ישראל לעמים: יהגו בנו שאינם בני-ברית ללא משוא-פנים, גם ללא "סנגוריה" ו"סבלנות", ידברו בנו ואתנו בגילוי-לב – כשם שאנו נגשים אליהם גישת בני-חורין, גישת זכות-ו{ו}לא-בחסד. ובפרשה זו אנו מכריחים כמה מן המעולים שבהם לכבוש את התמרמרותם – חוששים הם שמא יחשדום בשנאת ישראל, הרחוקה מלבבם –, לספר בשבח מדינת ישראל כשהם מסתירים את אשר בלבבם, בלב ולב ידברו אתנו ובנו. ואף על כך יש להצטער.

ואם גם יארע נס ואותה גזירת-פליטים לא תהא משמשת "נהר-דינור" [דניאל 7:10] לליבוי אש שנאת ישראל – בעולם –, ודאי לא תהא מרבה אהבת ישראל ומדינת ישראל. וכאן יש אומרים: אין בכך כלום, אם עולם זה לא יאהבנו – יכבדנו, יעריצנו בשל כוחנו כי עלה, יירא מפנינו, אין זה מכבד אלא את התקיף וכו'.

מימי לא נמנית עם הרודפים אחריו העולם ואהבתו את ישראל – ואותה אשלייה רבה הגנוזה בדברי האומרים והללו מפחידתני הרבה.

### ט.

לא ניתן לי לבדוק כאן בכל הטענות שטוענים סנגורי גזירת-הפליטים ולפיכך אחת-אחת, ואסור לי להתעלם מאות הטענה שחזרו עליה מתש"ח ואילך במדינת ישראל ובחוץ-למדינה, מן נשיא המדינה הראשון עד לאחרון העתונאים ואנשי התעמולה: לא טוב היות מדינת ישראל בעלת מיעוט לאומי זר רב שאינן מישראל.

[לאון] פינסקר תמך יתד מיתדותיו – כשיצא לטעון טענת ארץ לאומית לישראל – ברעיון הכנסת אורחים,<sup>24</sup> וכשהוקמה מדינת ישראל בתש"ח אמרה, ואומרת: אי אפשר-ו{ו} באורחים, באורחים שאינם בני-ברית, במיעוט לאומי, ואפילו לא באותו מיעוט-ערב שהיה עד לתש"ח הרוב בארץ ישראל. אילו טיפחה מדינת ישראל על חוץ-פנסקר לבדו – והיקף המדינה כשלעצמו מטפח עליו, למעשה – החרשתי. ועובדה זו שהעולם "מסכים" (לדברי מדינאינו) ש"לא כדאי" לקיים מיעוט-ערב רב-נפש במדינת ישראל – הרבה בה מן העלבון לישראל: אין העולם בטוח בו כלל שיהא בכוחו להלך כהלכה עם "מיעוט לאומי זר"; וגם מן הספקנות בכוחה של מדינת ישראל לכלכל מיעוט שכמותו, לעמוד בפניו (עיין להלן).

אם לא טוב היות מדינת ישראל בעלת "מיעוט לאומי זר" – לא טוב היות שום מדינה בעולם בעלת מיעוט לאומי שאינו-משלה; כלומר, כל מיעוט לאומי טעון ביעור; ואם לא ניתן [15a] לבערו בבת אחת – יש להחלישו ולדלדלו עד שיסתאב ויעבור מן העולם "בדרך הטבע",

לאחר שהרוב במדינה יסייע לו ל"טבע" משמידה מיעוטים. האין טועני אותה טענה עומדים על כך שזו חותרת תחת עצם קיומן של תפוצות ישראל באשר הן? אין שאלתי מכוונת לחסלני התפוצות – הללו יאמרו: אמנם כן, רוצים אנו להעביר את התפוצות מן העולם, להביאן לידי משבר שיכריחן לסלק עצמן אם דרך עליה ארצה אם דרך טמיעה, וכל תורה ומעשה שיש בהם להחיש אותו תהליך-חיסול ברכה הם לנו. אולם, הרי מדינת ישראל מרבה דבר ב"שופות" בינה ובין התפוצות. כלומר, אין היא נזקקת "רשמית" ללשון אותם החסלנים! אם מותר לה למדינת ישראל לגזור גזירי {ת} גלוי {ת} על בני "מיעוט לאומי זר", תושביה, אזרחיה בכוח, בזכות ישיבתם בגבולותיה, להפקיע זכות-בעלותם ולשלם מעל אדמתם, (ופיצוי-דמים למנושלים אין בו כדי להעביר מן העולם אותה שפיכת-דם הכרוכה בעצם הנישול) – מה נקל יהא לצוררי ישראל ללמד זכות על כל קיפוח שיקפחו את מיעוטי ישראל בתפוצותיהם – בשם מדינת ישראל: כך נהגתם אתם בתושבי הארץ שקדמו לכם, שאבותיהם ישבו בה למעלה מאלף שנים; במדה שאיכם בארץ מדדו לערבים, בה במדה אנו מודדים לכם, אין דין ואין דיין – גם לכם.

דוד בן-גוריון הדגיש הרבה את אחריותה של מדינת ישראל ואזרחיה (מישראל) לעם ישראל בעולם. לדוגמה, במאמרו "ככל הגויים?"<sup>25</sup>

"ואזרח יהודי בישראל נושא לא רק באחריות מדינתו – אלא באחריות עמו באשר הוא. במידה שמעשיו הטובים והרעים של כל אזרח בישראל קובעים גורל המדינה – ומעשים אלה קובעים גורל {ל} להמדינה לא פחות מ'המשטר' – הם קובעים במישרין ובעקיפין גם גורלו של כל יהודי בעולם". "מה שקורה במדינה כלאוס או כצייילון או כלבנון – אינו מעסיק אלא ת{ו} שובי המדינה. מה שקורה בישראל – מעסיק כל עתונות הארצות שנפוצו בהן יהודים, כלומר, כל עתונות אירופה, אמריקא, אבסטרלייה [!], אפריקא וחלק גדול של אסיה. מדינת ישראל נתפשטה בכל הארצות – עוד בטרם הוקמה. זו עובדה מחייבת: גם את מדינת ישראל וגם את כל תושביה היהודים. אזרח ישראל שאינו מכיר בעובדה זו ובמסקנותיה – אינו יודע מהי האחריות המוטלת על מדינת ישראל ועל תושביה".

אם מדינת ישראל אחראית "לגורלו ומעמדו" של עם ישראל בחוץ-למדינה, וכל מעשה שהמדינה ואזרחיה עושים יש בו בנותן-ענין לשלום ישראל בעולם – האמנם "גורלו ומעמדו" ועתידי של עם ישראל ברחבי העולם? האם אין אותה אחריות המוטלת על המדינה לדבריו – מחוץ-יביתה להסתכל בגזירת-פליטים זו גם מבחינת מעמדי ישראל בתפוצות, מלחמתו על זכויותו בארצות הגויים, אם זכויות אזרח או זכויות מיעוט לאומי, זכויותיו לנחלה ולא חוזה לקרקע אינה נגזלת ולמיטלטלין אינם נשדדים?

[16a]

י.

עד כאן בין ישראל לעמים – מכאן ואילך ראשי רמזים לחמירות הגנחה בפרשה שלפנינו לישראל גופו, מבחינת חזון הציונות (בעיקר: בשער העלייה) וחיבימ {ת} נו של ישראל כמות שהוא.

נדמה לי: כשיצאו מחשבי חשבונה של מדינת ישראל למצות את עומק הדין – יהיו כורכים אם מעט אם הרבה את ההפסקה שחלה בעליית תש"ח וכו' בנעילת השער לפליטי-ערב. אותה פתיחת-ישועה שנפתח(ה) לה למדינת ישראל, ישועה קצרה ומהירה – והישועה הראוייה לשמה ארוכה-ארוכה היא – פתיחת-פתאום, פתיחת "נס" כולה "מציאה" חכייה "מן ההפקר", אולי היא שהכשילה במידה רבה (אם גם לא-מכריעה) את ראשית תהליכו של קבוץ-הגלויות (תש"ח-תש"י) בשתיים: א) אין להתעלם מן העובדה שאותו נס-ערב פתח פתח-מזרח, ומדה שאותו פתח-מזרח הלך ורחב בה וקבוץ-הגלויות העמיס(ס) עול כבד מנשוא על המדינה מקבוץ מקבצת-הגלויות, והכווין את מדיניותה בכמה רשויות כלכל(ל)ה ומדינה שלא היו לה לברכה; ב) ומבחינת העלייה – חסם בעקיפים, אולי גם במישרים – העלייה מארצות המערב. אין אני מבדיל בין ישראל לישראל, בין מזרח למערב בישראל (למעלה). במדה הלך פתח-מערב ונצטמצם, וכמעט ננעל נעילה גמורה. יאמר: לא היתה זו אלא נעילת-שעה.\* והרי אותה נעילת-שעה בשנים הראשונות לקיום מדינת ישראל הכריעה הרבה-הרבה בעיצוב דמותה בביתה ובקביעת מעמדה בעולם-החוץ. וכך יצא שברה של העלייה-מזרח בהפסדה – כלומר, בהעדרה של העלייה-ממערב, שמדינת ישראל כה זקוקה לה. לא ניתן לנו עדיין לחשב חשבון-פתחים זה לסעיפי-סעיפים, ויסודי הוא בספר חשבונותינו. יש בו גם להזייר את בעלי הדרך הקצרה על חובת ההליכה בדרך הארוכה, שהיא לבדה קצרה היא וברכה בה.

מעלייה וקבוץ גלויות – לסיוע ישראל שאינר-עולה לביצועו של אותו חוון בציונות. חוסר הסדר-השלום בין מדינת ישראל ומדינות ערב – הכרוך גם בגזירת הפליטים – ודאי מעכב הרבה בעלייתם של כמה מבני התפוצות ובהשקעותיהם במדינה – ועיניה כלות להן.

לא זו בלבד חוששני: אותה גזירת-פליטים יש בה לפגוע הרבה אפילו במסכת תרומה של תפוצות ישראל למדינת ישראל. אינני "רואה שחורות" בטבעי – וחוששני: אפשר ויבוא יום ודעת הקהל באמריקה ובשאר ארצות תהא מפחידה כמה חוגים מישראל שבהן ודווקא ב"אילי הכסף והזהב" – ותרחיקם ממגביות למדינת ישראל; על שום שנעילת שעי-17a|רי המדינה לפליטי-ערב מעשה "שאינוד מוקרטי" הוא, מטפח על עיקרי החופש וזכות האזרח והקבוץ. מעורר התמרמרות בעולם – ויהודי התפוצות, כמה מהם, יהיו חוששים ל"הזדהות" עם מדינת ישראל. אך יתחילו<sup>26</sup> כמה מחנות בעולם – אם מאהבת ערב אם משנאת ערב – לעורר את

\* The order of the lines in this paragraph was incorrect on the proof pages and the correct order was indicated by handwritten numbers in the margin. The editors arranged them in what they presume to be the correct order.

26 וכבר התחילו – עיין בעתונות אמריקה בשנות 55–1954 לדוגמה. השיפורים שמדינת ישראל שיפרה בחיי ערב שבגבולותיה אינם זוכים בה להדגשה מרובה. כנגדם, קיפוח-ערב, ובעיקר שאלת-הפליטים – פרסומם בעולם-חוץ זה הולך ורב משנה לשנה.

בחודש מאי 1955 פרסמו כמה מעתוני אמריקה הראשיים תמונתה של משפחת פליטי-ערב הראשונה. (שברחה מירושלים בתש"ח) שהגיעה לניו-יורק (על יסוד חוק הסיוע לפליטים משנת 1953), וניתן לה להשתקע באמריקה בעזרת כמה חברות צדקה משלהם. האמנם סבורים הממונים על התעמולה הציונית באמריקה שתמונת-פליטים זו בעתונותם סייעת הרבה לעשיית נפשות למדינת ישראל ולמפעלים הכרוכים בה?} אם ילכו עתוני אמריקה ויוסיפו לעשות פומבי לתמונת-פליטים מעין זו – האמנם לא תפגענה הללו "בשלומם" וב"מעמדם" של יהודי אמריקה? וגם בסיועם למדינת ישראל? ואם גם אותו סיוע לא יקופח} על ידי גזירת-הפליטים, אין הוא המכריע בפרשה שלפנינו. אינני טוען טענה זו ויחזיא בה אלא על לב האחראים למגביות ולתעמולה שאין לפניהם אלא הללו בלבד.



הלבבות על אחת{תה} גזירת־פליטים – ובאו תפוצות ישראל במבוכה. ודאי, הסוגרים ילמדו זכות על אותה גזירה בכל כוחם – ואת מבוקשם לא ישיגו. גדול יהיה פחד העולם הדורש דין וחשבון, דין עבר {ו} ערב על ישראל בתפוצות – ובמדינת ישראל – וריש {ו} מ#יו למעשה יהיו מרובים בכל מפעל־סיוע למדינת ישראל.

### י.א.

אין להתעלם בפרשה זו גם מהגנובה לחנוך הדור הבא מישראל במדינת ישראל. נולד{ה}ג מדינת ישראל בין ערב לערב יש בו להרחיק את בניה ובנותיה – בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב שבה – מעיקר "שבת־אחים" [תהילים 133:1] בין עם לעם (לא סתם סבלנות, שכולה עלבון לסובל ולנסתבל כאחד), עליו עומדים חיי קבוצי־עמים זה בצד זה; מפרנס או מגביר ה{ו} א בלבבות הנוער מישראל "שוביניזם" לאומי הנפסד כשלעצמו ועתיד הוא לפגוע ביסודה של מדינת ישראל בימים יבואו; חותר הוא תחת ביסוסה המוסרי של הציונות מראשיתה עד תש"ח, מחזק את חוסר־אמונתו של הנוער בעקיבותה של הציונות ובמוסריותה של מדינת ישראל, מביאתו לידי אכזבה רבה בראשי המפלגות הציוניות, במחנכיו {ו} בסופריו שהבטיחוהו כמה הבטחות נאות בפרשת עבר וערב. ועל כך מעמידנו ס. יזהר – הוא הסופר מסופרי הארץ שהציל כבוד ספרותנו העברית במדינת ישראל כשיצא ומחה בספוריו ("סיפור חירבת חיזעה", "השבוי") על העוול שנעשה לערבים – ומרחוק הרני מברך על גידול נאה זה בספרות ובמוסר שגידלה ארץ ישראל החדשה, ההולך וכובש מקום [18a] נכבד לעצמו בספרותנו – בדבריו בכינוס לשאלות הנוער האמור (למעלה).<sup>27</sup>

"הן דובר בבית הספר ובישוב כולו, ובפי מנהיגינו על ענין הערבים לפני קיום המדינה. היטב נטעו את הדבר בלב כל אחו, שיש כאן בארץ מקום לשני עמים, שאין האחד דוחק את רגלי משנהו."

"סיפרנו בגאווה על כך שהוודעה [!] האנגלית שנתמנתה לחקור דבר נישול הערבים מאדמתם לא מצאה אלא מספר זעום של מקרים. דברנו על אינטספיקציה ש[ל] להמשק החקלאי בארץ, הפותחת אפשרויות להתקיים בלי לנשל איש. דיברנו על 'אנחנו ושכנינו', בצבעים שונים אמנם, ובקולות שונים, אבל בתוכן דומה, פחות או יותר, היום, מבלי לדבר לגופו של דבר ומבלי להעריכו, אין מקום לערבים בארץ הזאת, הם אינם נאמנים, הם יכולים להיות גייס חמישי בימי מלחמה; הארץ הזאת יעודה אך ורק ליהודים, בו בזמן שליהודי אין מקום אחר בעולם זולת הארץ הזאת, הרי לערבים יש ארצות אחרות שיוכלו לחיות בהן בלי שתיפגע עצמאותם הלאומית; קיומם הלאומי איננו קשור דווקא בישראל; ועל כן, אין להם מקום בארץ. כל זה מתקבל עכשיו על הדעת באופן פשוט וברור ומובן בלי שום ויכוחים רציניים."

"מה פשר הדבר? היכן הקשר בין שתי ההטפות? מתי צדקנו יותר – לפני קיום המדינה או לאחריה? בהיותנו חל{ו}שים [!] או חזקים? אני רואה בזה פצע נפשי וחבלה באמון, חבלה באמון אל אותם המנהיגים שדיברו כך, ועל אונת{ו} המפלגות שהמירו דגל בדגל. נקודת המוקד היא כאן: אופן ההשלחה, השיכחה, ההסתגלות לדרך החדשה, אין אני מביא את

השאלה הערבית משום שהיא כואבת לי באופן מיוחד. כוונתי רק להראות לכם מהו הדבר שאני קורא לו בשם: חינוך מליצי. איני מדבר על התעמרות באדם, על קשיחות-לב לגבי ערבים, או על גילוי עריצות בשאלת הערבים, כי אם מדבר אני על החלפת הדגל ההולך לפני המחנה, ואין פוצה פה. ומכאן – דליחות ידועה השוקעת על תחתית הנפש ומעבירה אותה עד בוא יום."

איכה יוכלו מחנכינו ומדינאינו במדינת ישראל להסיח את לבם מאזרה זו שיצאה מלב נאמן?

### יב.

מדאיבה היא גם התגברותה של הנטייה לאיפה ואיפה במערכותינו המתבטל{א}ת ביותר בפרשה שלפנינו: מדה אחת לישראל ומדה אחת לשאינו-ישראל; כשהם עושים מעשה-עוול – משווע הוא לשמים; וכשהוא נעשה בידינו – הכרח הוא שאין להמלט ממנו; ואם יש בו מן הסיוע לתקומתנו הלאומית נאה ויאה הוא, ויש לברך עליו מאה ברכות בכל יום.

חזוי חזון תקומתנו הלאומית – פינסקה, אחד העם והיוצאים בעקבותיהם – קבלו הרבה על חולשתנו מבחינה לאומית-חברתית, או לאומית-מדינית, פרקים גם הטילו ספק בכוחו של "עדר" זה להיות "עם" בהוראתו הלאומית-המדינית שניתנה לו במאה הי"ט (דבריהם בה בפרשה צריכים בדיקה). אך תמול זכינו להקים תנועה לאומית בת-יכווח כיבוש בחוץ – והיום אנו מדברים בחלשים ממנו בשער זה בלשון עמים תקי{י}פים המסמנים כל תנועה לאומית של מיעוט שאינה נוחה להם כתנועה חשוכה "הרסנית", "צורת חופש והתקדמות" וכו'. כמה מסופרינו ומדינאינו מדברים בערבים – בלשונם של בריטים, צרפתים ואמריקאים (ולא מן הפקחים והמתוקנים שבהם) על לאומיותם של [19a] עמי-המזרח; כאילו לא היתה זו אלא פרי מסיתים ומדיחים, "דימאגוגים" שאפיישלוטון, זמורת-זה "מחלה עוברת", וכיוצא באלה התיאורים הרווחים בספרות הנוקעת לשאלת הלאומיות בעולם "הנחשל", המתעורר מ{ת}רדמתו הלאומית.

פרקים נדמה לי: מה הערבים בארץ ישראל ובארצות ערב מסלפים את רעיון הלאומיות הישראלית, כך אין אנו עומדים כהלכה על מאבק הערבים לעי{צ}ו{ב} לאומיותם הם. אנו בעיניהם – "סוכני" אירופה. ומוסקבה, פורשי מצודת מערב על מזרח. וק{ה}ם בעינינו – "אסיאתים" כושלים, כליזין בידי אפנדים מנצלים ומדינה פלונית ואלמונית המשתמשת לצרכיה בהם ובלאומיותם. כשאנו נאבקים על תקומתנו – אנשי חזון אנו, מבשרי תחייה לאומית שערכה רב למין האדם בכללו. והערבים הנלחמים על קיומם בארץ מושבם – מה שם, או שמות, אנו קוראים להם ולמלחמתם? וכבר {העיר} משה סמילנסקי: אחינו בני ישראל השבים ארצה לאחר אלפיים שנות גלות מפילים הם, גבורים לאומיים הראויים לסיוע העולם כולו – וערבים החוזרים לנחלתם אחרי שנתים או שלוש שנות גלות, מסתנגנים הם, ודמם אינם אסור ...

יש לחשוש שגזירת-הפליטים על כל הכרוך בה תהא מוסיפה שאת לאותה הפיסה של מוסר לאומי חדש ההולכת ומתבצרת במדינת ישראל – ואינו כ{ח}דש כלל, ימיו כימי האדם הכובש והמכניע, לא מוסר היהדותבו התפאר ישראל מעודו ולא מוסר "היהודי החדש" תחזוהו בח{ז}ונם כמה מהוגינו בדורות האחרונים.

לדוגמה ישמש גילוי־דעתו של אחד ממיסדי נהלל, שמואל שמואל דיין, שיצא להגן על זכות העבודה העברית במדינת ישראל – כלומר גם בה, לאחר שלא התירו לפליטים הערביים לשוב לנחלותיהם ולא נשארו במדינה אלא כעשרים למאה מהערבים שישבו בארץ עד לתש"ח, יש להקפיד על כך שמוסדות הקרן הקיימת לישראל והסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל וישוביהם יעסיקו "רק יהודים ולא ערבים" – במאמרו "על יחסנו לערבים",<sup>28</sup> נגד ר' בנימין וחיים גרינברג שערערו על אותה זכות.

סופרנו – ככל סופרי הציונות ומנהיגי המדינה – נאחז בייחוד שבמצב עם ישראל במדינת ישראל ובתפקידיה:

... "התפקיד לאחד קרעי שבטים לעם ולהחיות שפה עתיקה בלתי מובנת לרוב רובם <צ"ל לרובם> של בני העם, תפקיד כזה אין לשום עם בעולם. מכאן מובן, שההנחות המוסכמות על מיעוטים בין העמים בכל שטחי החיים, לא יעמדו לנו בדיון זה כי מה שמובן ומוצדק בארצות ובעמים נורמליים לא תמיד מוצדק ונכון במצבנו כיום בישראל".

אם גם נניח שאין א[ף] שמץ־הפלגה באותה הדגשת אי־דומה – כלום יש באי־דומה שכמותו לחפות עלעוול [20a] מוסרי, חברתי ומדיני לעם אחד, או למיעוט לאומי שלא נוסה בכל הנסינות בהם נוסה ישראל? סופרנו כופר בכל הוא: אין און ביעקב –

... "העשינו עול לערבים שלקחנו את אדמתם בתייהם וכל אשר להם? הערבים כפרטים, ודאי סבלו, אולם העם העברי לא עשה שום עוול לעם הערבי. הם פתחו במלחמה בנו, בקשו להשליכנו לים, עמדנו על נפשנו, לחמנו ונצחנו אנו פעלנו כאדם הטובע, העושה הכל כדי להציל את עצמו; דחפנו את הערבים מביתם לשכניהם ואחיהם לגזע ואת עצמנו הצלנו. כי אנו נשחטנו ונכחדנו בארצות הגויים, פעלנו להצלת עצמנו, את הערבים ודומיהם דחקנו לבתי אחיהם בני עמם, להם ארצות ריקות מאדם ויכולים הם להשתרש ביניהם בנקל. ואלו את עוול לפרט נוכל לתקן באופן יחסי. אנו לחמנו ולחמנים על קיומנו היחידים וכעם. הללו בתוכנו, שאינם מסכימים לדרכי מלחמתנו לשם קיומנו, מוותרים ממילא על קיומנו כיחידים וכעם, ציונותם שוב אינה מובנת, כי אינה מסקנית. חיים גרינברג ור' בנימין, הטוענים שיש הפליה גזעית, חייבים להודות כי עד קום המדינה הם היו שותפים [ל] הפליה זו. ומעכשיו הם טוענים נגדה".

אם כיחידים וכעם דחפנו את הערבים מביתם – "העם העברי" עשה עוול "לעם הערבי", לערבים "כיחידים וכעם". מלחמה בשדה־הקרב לחוד – ונישול אנשים ונשים שלא נלחמו לחוד (עיין למעלה).

אין בכוח סופרנו – ואי־כוחו זה טפוזי לסופרי הציונות – להבדיל בין מוסר ובין תקומה מדינית לעם. כל המסייע לתקומתו המדינית של ישראל בארץ ישראל – מוסר הוא. וכל המעכב לה – אי־מוסרי הוא:

... "אכן המוסר מהו? לעזור לזולת, לסובל, לחסר בית ויכולת קיום, לחסר תקווה, לחסר שורש לנרדף, לחסר שפה הבא מארצות רחוקות, החייב לשבור את הרגליו, להסתגל לשמש לזהסת לעבודה גופנית וכו', הסובלים האלה הם העולים החדשים. ואילו על הערבים היושבים בארץ לא חל דבר מכל אלו. והאם תרומות היהודים בארצותיהם למדינת ישראל אינן מיועדות לבנות את שבטי ישראל כעם במולדתו. ההסתדרות הציונית אספה תרומות בעם ובנתה את

מהלל [!], כדי שתשמש יסוד ומשכן לעולים, הבאים לבנותם ולהשרישם בארץ. ונהלל כשמעסיקה עולים אינה אלא מקיימת חובתה המוסרית והלאומית. הגידו, בבקשה, אשר עם לבבכם ונדע ציונותכם מהי ומוסרכם מהו? אם על היהודים להשמד ולהשחט בגלויות, או לבנות את העם ואת המולדת. אין מוסר לחצאין... המערכת הכלכלית לקיומנו עדיין לפנינו ואינה קלה ודורשת קרבנות לזמן ממושך. ומוסריות המדיניות הכלכלית תיבחן במדה שתשמש את היהודים מחוסרי הלחם, שוכני האהלים הקרועים, שברחו מארצות שונות ומארצות ערב תוך עיניים גופניים ונפשיים, תוך גזילת נכסיהם אם מפעלנו זה של קבוץ הגלויות ובנין כלכלה לאומית אינו מוסר, שוב אין לדעת מוסר מהו?"

עין תחת עין, גזילה מן-ערב תחת גזלת-ערב מן-ערב – מוסר הוא? "להשמד ולהשחט בגלויות" – ואם לאו אין ברירה אלא לנשל ערבים מאדמתם, לדחפם ולדחקם מבתיהם, בלשון סופרנו? כלום לא ניתן "לבנות את העם ואת המולדת" בלי אותו עוול רב לערב? ואם "אין מוסר לחצאין" – עוול לזולתו שמו מוסר?

אם רעיון העבודה העברית היה בו הכרח בראשית הבאת שרשיו של ישראל בארץ ישראל – אי אפשר לוותר עליו לאחר תש"ח כשהערבים היו פמיעוט דל, ולאחר שישאל זכה בבתיאם [21a] ובנחלותיהם?<sup>29</sup> והמוסר דורש – גם אחרי תש"ח – להפלות בין אזרח לאזרח במדינה בתחום העבודה? היכן הם עשרת הדברות ל"מוסר לאומי" זה שבשמו דוגלים סופרנו וחבריו במדינת ישראל?

מדאיבה היא "מוסריות" זו במאד-מאד – ומחרידה היא אמונתו של סופרנו כי – "האמריקאים יבאינו את מצבנו הברור והבולט וידונונו לכף זכות, כי אילו התיחסו בחיוב לבעלי ההשקפות של 'ברית שלום', אשר [יהודה לייב] מ{א}גנ{ס} הביא לפניהם בשעתו לא היו מסכימים להקמת מדינה עברית ולתמוך בה תמיכה מתמדת עד היום".

עד כדי כך מגיע בטחונו של בעל אותו "מוסר לאומי" באמריקה: זו תהא תמיד מבינה הפלית הערבים בישובי היהודים של הקרן הקיימת לישראל וכו', משלימה עם מציאותם של מאות אלפי פליטים ערביים בחוץ לגבולות מדינת ישראל – עונה אמן אחרי אותו "מוסר" ותומכת בו {ו} "תמיכה מתמדת"<sup>30</sup>!

29 מיכאל אסף – שאינו מאמין בתכנית א[ברהם] שרון ל"יציאת ערב", להלכה הוא מקבל אותו רעיון טרנספר ולמעשה הוא מסופק בבצועו, – מעיר במאמרו "האגדה הרעה של הממשל הצבאי" (בטרם, 15.5.53) על "בעיית העבודה הזרה": "לביילבי לידי הנערץ אברהם שרון! אפסה בזה תקותו לזכות ולהיכבד עוד ולשבת גם בכלא של מדינה יהודית' בגלל שמירתו הקנאית, הרומנטית, על 'עבודה עברית'. כי על כל העבודה בישראל חולשת לשכת העבודה הכללית והיא עושה באמונה את מלאכת השמירה על עבודה מאורגנת ומשתלמת לפי תעריפי הסתדרות, בכל מקום שיש 'הזדמנות' לדחוק פועל ערבי ואפילו ותיק במקום ובעל משפחה גדולה – דוחקים. יש זרזים כל כך במלאכה זו, שבטוחני לו נקרא ר' א. שרון לסייע לאותם הזרזים היה מתקומם נגדם בכל נפשו האצילה, אולם הרחוקה מהמציאות". אם אינני טועה פתיחת שיערי הסתדרות העובדים בארץ ישראל לפועליה הערביים לפני זמן-מה שיפרה הרבה את עמדתם של הללו בשוק-העבודה בארץ.

30 ודאי, סופרנו לא היה כותב את דבריו על אותה "תמיכה מתמדת בתשי"ד ובתשט"ו – לאחר התמורה שא[ח]לה במדיניות של ארצות הברית כלפי מדינת ישראל והמזרח התיכון. גם קוד{ם} סלכן תמימים היו יכולים להעלות על דעתם שתמיכת אמריקה במדינת ישראל בשנת תשי"ח תהא 'מתמדת'."

רמז אחרון בשאלת המוסר בין עבר לערב. אותו "בין" מתש"ח ואילך<sup>31</sup> [22a] מסמן בשאלה את מוסר היהדות כמות שהיא: האמנם מוסר יהדות זה בו התפאר ישראל – של קודש ושל חול כאחת – אותה שמחה יתירה ששמח ישראל בחוסר תאוותו לעוול, לעשיית רעה לזולתו – אין בהם ממש כל שהוא? הרשאים שונאינו מנדינו לומר: אין מוסר זה אלא מוסר "גלות", מוסר של מיעוט חלש נרדף על צווארו, מוסר עבדים, מוסר צבור שאין בכוחו לעשות את שכל קבוץ נורמאלי עושה; אך ניתנה לישראל עצמאות-מה בכברת ארץ קטנה – והוא עושה מעשה כל גוי תחת השמש: פגע בך מתנגד – הרגהו; הרג נפש או נפשתיים ממחנך – לך וה[ו]רגו אותה ואת קרוביו ואת קרובי קרוביו; כי זוהי "הלשון היחידה" הנשמעת לאויבך. ידענו: לא יכלנו לעשות [!] עוול ובלבנו האמנו: אין אננו רוצים בעיוול זולתנו, אין לנו יצר רע לעיוול, והיו שהעמידו את מהות היהדות על אי היכולת (וחוסר-היצר) לעשיית

31 כתבתי רובו של נספח זה כשנתים לפני מעשה הקיביה (בליל י"ד-ט"ו אוקטובר, 1953, ערכה "חבורה מזויינת" ממדינת ישראל התקפה על הכפר הערבי קיביה בעבר-הירדן, בה נהרגו למעלה מששים נפש ובהם נשים וטף – כתגמול להתנפלות ערבים מעבר הירדן ב"ג באוקטובר, על בית אחד בכפר יהודי, בו נהרגו אשה ושני ילדיה בשנתם ואחדים נפצעו) שהחריד הרבה את יהודי התפוצות, ברובם המכריע, – ולא הרבו למחות על כך בצבור, כדי שלא לגרום רעה למדינת ישראל. בדברי בעל "הטור השביעי", נתן אלטרמן, היה כדי לשמש ביטוי להלך-רוחם של בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב במדינת ישראל שלא נמנו עם המאפילים על אותו מעשה: ... "אבל אולי יודע / רק יושב מרום / מדוע באמת הזאת ובסימניה / אנחנו מתאמצים כה לגנון כיום / על מעשה חשך / שלא פניו פניה. / על מעשה אשר פסלתו אינה שנויה / בינינו במחלקת, וכולנו חרש / אומרים: צריך היה הוא וחיב היה / וגם יכול היה להעשות אחרת! / על מעשה אשר אנחנו היודעים / כי רק בעצימת עינים מאומצת / {ש}אפשר לדחקו בין הדברים הנכבדים / שבם טורחים אנו לקבוע לו משבצת. / רק שמי מרום יודעים כיצד ועל שום מה / כל כך דבקו לצדקנו ולקבלו כעול ... / ומה היה נגרע מן המדינה והאומה / לו קמנו ושללנו זאת / בקול גדול ולעיני כל! / האל יודע ממתי התחלנו נזהרים / מקראו לכך [22a] בשם אשר גלוי הוא ומרעיד / וממתי התחלנו תת למטיפים זרים / לומר את שעלינו לאמרנו בעברית. / וממתי התחלנו מתאמצים כל כך / שלא לפתוח פה, חלילה, לשטן, / אף כי דוקא בזאת (כפי שכבר הוכח) / נותנים לו פתח-רפה מוגדל ולא מוקטן. / שכן גם מבחינת הכוח-במשפט / ולו רק מבחינת תכלית והגיון / חובה היא שנפסול את הפסול. על מנת / שיודגשו פי שנים הצודק והנבון!" וכו' ("על דביקות שאינה במקומה", דבר, 23.10.53).

בו בגליון "דבר" פותח מ. א. את מאמרו "תקרית כפר קיביה" בפיסקה זו: "מעשה התגמול בכפר קיביה עורר מחדש מכלול של מוסריות, מדיניות ותועלתיות וכו'. ביחוד הזדקרר-התחדשו בעית ההבלגה, ובעית מדינה מוסרית במסגרת עולמית של מדינת-זאבים, בעית הכיסופים לשלום ערבי-יהודי והשפעת התקרית על כיסופים אלה". ולהלן: "אין טעם בעולם – מוסרי, מדיני, תועלתי וכו' – שלא יצוה על ישראל >מדינת ישראל< לחיות בשלום עם השכנים הערבים. כל טעם לחוד וכל טעמים יחד – מצויים עלינו את השלום, את 'לא תרצח'! אבל כיצד תחיה וכיצד תתקיים מדינת ישראל, אם מקאהי, מקלט המופתי [מוחמד אמין אל-חוסייני] הפושעים הנאצים, ועד ... לונדון וואשינגטון מזדעזעים, מזדעזעים ומזדעזעים בחד צדדיות כזאת? ... וכו'. הבלגה והריסת רקמות חיינו קמעה-קמעה, תא אחרי תא, במשך שנים, וכמה שנים נוכל להחזיק מעמד כך?" וכו'.

ועם כל הקושי העצום בדבר – מצוות לא תרצח על כל הכרוך בה במקומה עומדת. בלשון סופרנו: אין זו מצווה מוסרית בלבד, אלא גם "מדינית", "תועלתית" וכו'.

עול.<sup>32</sup> ועכשו כאילו נתברר |23a| הדבר למפרע שאין זו אלא בדות. לא אפריז ואומר: בושנ{ו} מכל עם. ועלי לומר, לדאבוני: בושנו ככל עם. דמינו לכל גוי. במדה שמדדו לנו אנו מודדים להם. שוב, כאמור: העולם – עולמו של עשו וישמעאל – אינו רשאי להסיף מוסר לישראל. אין העולם טוב ממנו – וחבל: האם ישראל טוב ונאה מן העולם, בכל בחינה, ובכל שעה משעותיו על בימת ההיסטוריה? תאמרו: העולם סוף-סוף גרוע מישראל. ושאלתי היא: ישראל טוב הוא, כאן. בשא{ע}ר שלפנינו?

יש אומרים: שדווקא אחרי תש"ח נפתח פתח עם-סגולה לישראל. וכך מלמדנו דוד בן-גוריון "שכל עוד היינו אך ורק עם גולה מפוזר ומפורד, נטול מסגרת ארצית, כפוף לשלטון זר ותלוי בחסדי זרים וכר' לא היתה כל אפשרות אובייקטיבית להיותנו ל"עם-סגולה" וכו'. רק ישראל יושב על אדמתו ועומד ברשות עצמו יוכל לעלות למדרגת עם סגולה."<sup>33</sup>

שאלתי היא: האם אין אותה גזירת-הפליטים בה פתח ישראל המתחדש חידוש-מדינה מעכבת הרבה בעליית ישראל לאותה מדרגה נעלה ורצויה? האם אין זו מצוות לא-תעשה ראשונה לכל עם-סגולה: אל תעקור אדם מנחלתו – אדם: אחד בן בריתך אחד שאינו בן-בריתך, הכל קרויים אדם – אל תיבנ{ה} מחורבן החלש ממך, כבוש יצרך יצר-שלטון על כל בני-יצריו והיית עם-סגולה?

מועקה רבה מעיקה עלינו פרשה זו. יכולה היצ{ת}ה שמש ישראל לעלות בתש"ח עליית-אורה שלמה, ללא פגם. לא היה הכרח – אפילו למעשה – באותו ליקוי-מאור ולהלכה, מבחינת המוסר – אין פגם מיטהר גם כשהוא משמש צורך-מה בעולם המעשה.

32 לדוגמה ישמשו דברי דוד פרישמן – אין אנו חיים מפיו בשערי מחשבה ובשאלות היהדות, ודווקא משום שדינו כאן דין מסיח לפי תומו יש בדבריו משום עדות נאמנה להלך-רוחו של סתם אדם מישראל בימיו – שיצא להעמיד את היהדות על "הרגשת היושר, או יותר טוב, העדר היכולת לעשות עול לזולתו. זהו הכל. אלו היה יושר מין מוסיקה, הייתי אומר: היהודים הם שיש להם חוש השמיעה היותר טוב בשביל זו, בשעה שהעמים האחרים אינם מוסיקאליים כל כך. באה אותה היהדות לתוך העולם וחנכה לה משפחה אחת ממשפחות בני האדם, באופן שאותה המשפחה תהיה מלאה את הרגשת היושר בכל פינה שהיא פונה, ערב בוקר וצהריים, ולא תוכל, גם אלמלי חפצה, לעשות שום עולה" וכו'. האומה הישראלית "מצטיינת בזה, שאין כלל בכוחה לעשות רעות [ו]ע[ו]לות לאחרים, ונמצא שעל ידי כך נתפתחה בקרבה איוו רגילות של יושר מוחלט" וכו'. "אפשר שבכל העולם כולו הוא <היהודי> עתה רק באיזה היחיד של אותו הרעיון. אפשר שבה נעשה לאבן נגף על דרכן של יתר האומות" וכו'. "אפשר שזהו סוד כל השנאה שהעמים מרגישים בדרך אינסטינקטיבי לאומה זו, משום שרק היא עו [23a] להם האחת המזכירה להם תמיד באין אומר ובאין דברים איוו השקפה בלה ונושנה של איוו מוסריות אלמת ואיוו צדק ויושר ואיוו זהירות מפני העול והזדון והרשע" וכו' (על היהדות, העתיד, ספר רביעי, תרע"ז, 155).

אשר לאותה שנאה – האמנם תעבור זו מן העולם כשישראל "יזכה" ויקנה כוח לעשיית עול, יהיה ככל עושיהעול שבעולם? ...

33 "עם סגולה", דבר, 29.10.54.

## י.ג.

אם עמדו תנועות חבת-ציון והציונות בראשיתן על מציאותו של רוב ערבי בארץ ישראל כהלכה ואם לא עמדו, אם העמיקו בגנוח "בשאלה הערבית" להתגשמות הציונות או לא העמיקו – אי אפשר היה להן להתעלם מאותה מציאות לא בתרמו"ו ותרע"ז, ובתש"ח לא כל שכן. ידע העולם אותה מציאות – ידעוה גם אנו: מסברנו וקיבלנו. אמרנו, לעולם ולעצמנו: נמצא מוצא, דרך "חיים משותפים" לעבר וערב בארץ ישראל. מי בראשי הציונות ובסופריה לא הבטיח אותו מוצא של שום וכבוד. שישודו בשיוון גמור ובחוקה אחת לעבר וערב במדינת ארץ ישראל העתידה לבוא? לא רק ציונים "דמוקרטיים", "פרוגרסיביים", "ראדיקליים", סוציאליסטיים ודתיים למיניהם [24a] – גם ראש הציונות המתקיפה, ציונות של ארץ ישראל על שני גדות הירדן – שמתנגדה גינוה כ"אימפריאליסטית", "פאשיסטית", – זאב ז'בוטינסקי, היה כל ימיו במבטיחי אותו מוצא-שלום לשאלת הערבים שבארץ. אפילו אברהם שרון – אבי מחסליה-גולה בציונות, העומד ומעורר את הלבבות ליציאת ערב ממדינת ישראל, לטובת עבר וערב כאחת – כתב כמה שנים לפני הקמת מדינת ישראל: "עלינו הציונים לקבל איפוא על עצמנו את האחריות לפתור את שאלת היהודים כליל. כלומר, שבשמך [!] זמן מתאים ניישב את כל בני עמנו, או כמעט את כולם, בשטח של ארץ ישראל המנדטורית, המערבית והמזרחית. ובתנאי ובערבות בין לאומית מספיקה שתושביה האחרים לא יפגעו: אם ברבות הימים יתפרנסו בארץ 17/12 מליונים משלנו, יתפרנסו שני מיליונים נוספים משלהם וכו'".<sup>34</sup> על אותה הבטחה לערבים חזרו בדורותיים האחרונים כמעט כל סופרי ישראל שנוקקו לשאלה זו, ואם גם דרך רמז, כדבר המובן מאליו.<sup>35</sup> אילו אמרו לפני תש"ח לדוד בן-גוריון, לחיים וייצמן וליצחק בן-צבי וחבריהם שתמידים הם לעמוד בראש דמ[מ]ינת ישראל שלא תרשה לפליטים ערבים, אנשים נשים וטף [ש]וב לאחוזותיהם ועל יד כך תעקרו משרשם ותעשם בני-בליבית – כלום לא היו רואים בדברים אלה עלילה נבזה של שונאי ישראל וציון המתכוונים לחלל שם ישראל ול"השמיץ" את הציונות בעולם?" ולא היו דוחים אותה נבואה בשאט-נפש? הרי כתבי אבות הציונות על כל [ל] למחנותיה לפנינו, עתונות הציונות בלשון עבר ובכל לעז שלו נזקק ישראל בדורותיים האחרונים פתוחה לכל הרוצה לעיין בה. כלום מן הצורך הוא להזכיר את שפע היעודים שבהם על פתירת שאלת הערבים ללא פגיעה כל שהיא בזכויותיהם ובנחלת אבותיהם?

אילו היה אהרון דוד גורדון חי בתש"ח – ההיה גם הוא מתיר לבני אברהם יצחק ויעקב לישוב בבתי ערבים מוחרמים וכבושים. ואם גם בעליהם המנושלים באו על פי צוים?<sup>36</sup> מה

34 תורת הציונות האכזרית תש"ז, 49.

35 לדוגמה, חיים נחמן ביאליק בהרצאתו ו"ארץ ישראל" (תר"ץ): "לעת עתה יש בארץ ישראל די מקום לשני העמים וגם לעתיד יספיק לשניהם. אין אנו רוצים להדוף את הערבים מן הארץ. אין אנו אומרים 'לגרש אותם אל המדבר, כמו שעשה אברהם אבינו בשעתו לישמעאל בנו. אדרבא, ישבו בארץ ויתערו בה' וכו'. דברים שבעל-פה, ספר א', עקניו).

36 "ויחסינו אל הערבים" – כתב א. ד. ג. ב"מכתבים לגולה" – "עד כמה שהם תלויים בנו כמובן – צריכים להתבסס על יסודות חדשים, על אותם היסודות, אשר כונו במכתבים אלה בשם אינטרסים לאומיים נעלים אנושיים-כלליים קוסמיים" ... (כתבי א.ד.ג. ירושלים תשי"ב, ספר א', 553). "ולא רק על היחסים שבין אדם לחברו גדול כוחה של אמת, כי אם גם על היחסים שבין עם לעם. 'לא ישא גוי אל

היה עושה אותו נביא לדת [25a] העבודה, לדוגמה, בעתון מחנהו, "הפועל הצעיר" שהכריז (במאמר עורכו): מדינת ישראל "לא תחזיר פליטים."<sup>37</sup> ההיה שואל כמותי: כיצד ניתן לומר בלשון הקודש: "לא תחזיר פליטים"? מדינה החייבה להעלות את עצמה למעלת עם-אדם<sup>38</sup> תנעל שער-נחלה בפני אנשים נשים וטף בני "המיעוט הלאומי הזר"? או היה גם הוא שותק או מוחה פיו ואומר – כחבריו וכתלמידיו בדגניה ובנהלל, וכו': אין עוול בכפי, צדיקים אנחנו ולא חטאנו? האמנם אין שערי דת-העבודה פתוחים לכל עובד ולכל עומד-לעבו, נחלת ישראל לבדו היא? וחזון עם-אדם אינו [26a] בא במשנת גורדון והיוצאים בעקבותיו אלא לישראל לבדו: לטהר את ישראל "מחלאת" גלותו, מאותה "פרזיות" (בה נאחזו הלל, ובהפלגה

גוי [25a] חרב' [ישעיה 2:4] – גזרה האמת, והאהבה לא קיימה, תבוא האמת ותקיים. בכוח האמת נמצא דרך לחיים משותפים עם הערבים ולעבודה משותפת לברכה לשני הצדדים וכו'. אנחנו הם – בעל-ברית טבעיים: יותר ממה שמאחדת אותנו האחווה הגועית מבפנים מאחדת אותנו השנאה מבחוץ לשני הצדדים יחד" ("הקונגרס", תרע"ז, שם, 203).

א. ד. ג. בטוח גם הוא "כי מלמד זכות הישיבה והעבודה אין לערבים גם הם אלא זכות היסטורית על הארץ, ממש כמונו, אלא שזכותו ההיסטורית היא בלי ספק יותר גדולה", ועם בטחונו זה הוא דורש שנהיה "הזרים מאד ביחסנו אל הערבים, ברכישת קרקעות וכדומה, לבלי לנגוע בזכותם האנושית אף במשהו, לבלי לנשל את העובדים בפועל מאדמתם וכדומה" וכו'. "בכלל החובה עלינו לקבוע יחסים אנושיים אל הערבים, ולא להתייחס אליהם על פי צדדיהם השל[יל]יים בלבד. כמו שהאנטישמיים מתיחסים אלינו על פי צדדינו השליליים אנו." ("עבודתנו מעתה" תרע"ט, שם, 244 וכו').

ועם דרישתו להגיע לידי יחסים אנושיים "קוסמיים" וכו' עם הערבים למעשה (לדוגמה, ב"יסודות לתקנות למושב עובדים" תרפ"ב, שם, 460: "הנהגה בבחירת הקרקע, המוקצה לערבים צריכה להיות לנגד עיני המושב >נהלל<, לא רק טובת עצמו, כי אם גם טובת הערבים", "בכלל בכל מה שיש בכוח המושב לעזור לערבים העובדים וכו' עלינו לעזור להם מבלי להתחשב עם יחסייהם הם אל המושב אם טובים הם או לא" וכו') – פרקים הוא נראה כפותח פתח לפתרון שאלת ערב הרחוק מאותן אנושיות ו"קוסמיות" – ואין להתעלם מאותו פתח במשנת גורדון. לדוגמה, ב"פתרון לא-רציונלי" (תרס"ט, שם, 96): "העבודה היא עובדה קיימת, כי הארץ היא שלנו, כל זמן שעם ישראל הוא חי ולא שכח את ארצו. ומצד אחר, אין להחליט כי אין לערבים חלק בה. השאלה היא: באיזה מובן ובאיזו מידה היא שלנו ובאיזה שלהם. ואיך להתאים את התביעות משני הצדדים. השאלה אינה פשוטה כל כך ודורשת עיון גדול מאד. דבר אחד אפשר להגיד בבטחה כי הארץ תהיה שייכת יותר לאותו צד המסוגל יותר לסבול עליה ולעבוד עליה, אף יסבול עליה יותר ויעבוד יותר. כך מחייב ההגיון כך מחייב הצדק וכך מחייב גם טבע הדברים."

האמנם בטוח היה {ה}מטיף לדת-העבודה ש"טבע הדברים" בין עבר לערב יהא תמיד עולה בקנה אחד עם "הצדק" – לא עם צדק לקבוצה – אדם מסוים בשעה מן השעות אלא מן הצדק כמות שהוא, צדק "אנושי"-כללי, צדק בין עם לעם, צדק אחד לרוב ולמיעוט, למנצח ולמנוצח?

37 "המפורש והסתום" הפועל הצעיר כ"ז בסיון, תשי"ג.

נאים היו דברי א. ד. ג. בפרשה זו, שמעתים מפיו בוועידת היסוד של אחדו צעירי ציון והפועל הצעיר בפראג תר"ף. רב היה עידודם גם לעבר וערב בימים יבואו... "באין עם-אדם אין אדם-אדם, אין יחיד אדם: ומי כמונו, בני ישראל, צריך לאמוד על זה? אנחנו העודענו [!] ראשונה כי האדם נברא בצלם אלהים, אנחנו צריכים ללכת הלאה ולאמור: העם צריך להיברא בצלם אלהים. ולא מפני שאנחנו טובים מאחרים, כי אם מפני שאנחנו נשאנו וסבלנו את כל מה שתובע את זה על כתפינו. במחיר ייסורינו, שאין דוגמתם בעולם, קנינו את הזכות להיות הראשונים ביצירה הזאת, ובכוח ייסורינו נמצא את הכוח ליצירה הזאת" וכו' (כתבי א. ד. ג., שם, 260).



יתירה) – כאילו ארץ ישראל קרויים אדם, אך ישראל יגיע למדרגת ע־אדם, וכשיהא מתעלם, {יוכל} להתעלם מאותו "צלם אלהים" [בראשית 1:26] בקבוץ־אדם שכנגדו? איכה שכחנו – ובמהירות רבה זו – כל ההצהרות הנאות שהצהרנו שני דורות של שבת־יחד – והיו גם שאמרו: שבת־אחים – לעבר וערב בארץ ישראל? חששנו: שהצד שכנגדנו לא יאבה שבת יחד – ואנו לא נרשה לערבים לישב אתנו על אדמתם בארץ ישראל? מי בישראל לא ענה אמן אחרי כל תפלה לחוקה אחת לעבר וערב? ואם אנו שכחנו כל אלה – כלום שכחום וישכחום העולם, וערב שבקרבו?

אל תאמרו: הרי מדינות ערב התקיפו בתש"ח את מדינת ישראל. – שבע המדינות המתקיפות לחוד, ואותם מאות אלפי ערבים תושבי ארץ ישראל לחוד (עיין למעלה). אל תאמרו: אין קבע במדיניות, תלויה זו בשעה והתרחשויותיה, לכתחילה אמרנו והבטחנו ובדיעבד אין מורין כן, לכתחילה לא היינו מגרשים את הערבים, ובדיעבד מכיוון שיצאו לרצונם – למה לנו להחזירם? {אם} לא נשאה הציונות את נפשה לגירוש הערבים מארץ ישראל – אסור לה, גם לא כדאי לה, "להכשיר" בחותם־מלכותה שניתן לה בתש"ח אותו גירוש־בדיעבד. יש עיקרים בין עם לעם, בין עבר לערב, שאין לתלותם בשעה, טעונים הם שמירה בכל שעה ובכל מקום. השעה ונסיבותיה מסוה היא לעומדים בנסיגה; פח ופחת – לנכשלים בה.

#### יד.

ולואי והיה בפְּרִיָה מוֹסֵר כשלעצמו כדי לעורר את ממשלתה של מדינת ישראל שתודרו ותבדוק את מדיניותה בינה לבין ערב – ותוך כדי דיבורי זה עלי להוסיף: חלילה לי מלהעלות על דעתי שמוסריותי נאה מזו של מעצבי מדיניותה של מדינת ישראל ששעת תש"ח וצרכיה גזרו עליהם שיגזרו אותה גזירה על ערב שבגבולותיהם. ועכשיו# שזה לבדו אין בכוחו לחולל אותה מהפכה רצויה במדיניות המדינה – מן ההכרח לחזור ולהעמיד את מדינת ישראל על הסכנה המעשית העצומה הכרוכה בפניגור פתירתה של שאלת אותם הפליטים.

אסור לה למדינה לשגות "בחלומות" ממין זה ששמו "טרנספר": חילופי יהודים מארצות ערב בפליטים הערביים ואחיהם ששרדו במדינת ישראל.<sup>39</sup> חי[27a] לופי אוכלוסיה ניתנו לביצוע אם בזרוע בידי משטר־דיקטטורה העו[ן] קר אוכלוסיה מארץ לארץ ואין אומר לומה

39 אברהם שרון, "ההגיגני" והעקבי ביותר בין שוללי הגולה נאמן לעצמו ולהגיגותיו "האכזרית" כשהוא כורך את דרישתו ליציאת ערב – שארית ערב – ממדינת ישראל בתכנית "טרנספר" של פליטי ערב ... ולפיקך טוען אני בכל הזמן, שלדרישת החזרת־הפליטים בפי אויבנו אין זו תשובה נכונה מצדנו: "אין ביכלתנו להכניס את הערבים שיצאו", אלא מן ההכרח הוא שתשובתנו תהא נתונה בתביעה שכנגד: אנו נאלצים לדרוש [27a] את יציאתם של הערבים שנשארו. ובמדה מסוימת הא בהא תליא: התריס{ם} ההגיגני היחיד בפני החזרתם של אלה הוא יציאתם של אלה. כלומר, לוא בכל ארבע השנים היינו תובעים לפחות – ולוא אף בצורה תאורטית בלבד, קלה ורכה ביותר – את יציאתם של אשר אתנו, לא היינו נתבעים כלל להכניס נוספים והרי את תביעת היציאה היה לבסס על טעמי בטחון: הן מכריזים אנו כי גם מטעמים אלה אין באפשרותנו להחזיר פליטים בהיותם יסוד אויב ושוטן ומכשיל – ועולה השאלה מאליה: ואלה אשר עתה במדינתנו במה "נשתנו מאחיהם הללו? שלנו בני גזע אחר הם?" וכי ("הערות דיפלומטיות של לא־דיפלומט", "בטרם", ד, קסט, תשי"ג).

תעשה – אם ברצונם של המתחלפים. ושני הדרכים הללו אינם דרך בפרשה שלפנינו. ואילו גם ניתן אותו "סרנס" לביצוע – לא היה מביא ברכה רבה למדינת ישראל בשעה זו מכאן (לא תיבנה מעולי ארצות ערב שלא נענו עד כה להכרות קבוץ־הגלויות, והללו יבואו לגבולה {ברובם} כמגורשים מחוסרי הון ומשלחיד רצוי ברובם); ויש בו כדי לסכן את מעמדן של כמה מתפוצותינו, במזרח ובמערב, מכאן – בשעה זו ובשעות תבאנה. להלכה ולמעשה, תפוצות ישראל בארצות ערב עומדות ברשות עצמן. אין מדינת ישראל רשאית לעשות בהן כאדם העושה בתוך שלו לכפות עליהן יציאה מארץ מושבם, דרך חליפין, אילו פתחו באותו "מבצע" – היה מקום לחשוש, שכמה ארצות – ולא באסיה ובאפריקה לבדן – תהיינה מסתייעות לעתיד לבוא "בתכניות־סרנס" מעין זופ או בחציין; תגרשנה את יהודיהן, אם מדינת ישראל תוכל לקבלם ואם לאו; הללו תאמרנה: "מעשה־סרנס אננו עושות, וכי משום שאין מדינת ישראל שולחת לנו את תמורת אזרחיינו, או אין זו רוצה בחליפין, הפסדנו? בקצרה, 'פתרון' ה־ש־ט} מיעה (הטמעת שרידי הערבים שבמדינה בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב) נפסד בתכלית ההפסד. מאי דסני עלך לחברך לא תעביד – מראשיתנו נלחמנו בכל מטמיע שבא להטמיענו בקרב, ראינו את ההטמעה כמעשה־אונס ורצח־נפש ואת הטמיעה כחילה־המוסר; נלחמנו על זכותנו להיות את אשר היינו, על שמירת פרצופנו פרצוף־עם, אורח חיינו והגותנו וכו' – חלילה לנו מלעשות אותה רעה רבה לשרידי־ערב שבמדינת ישראל."<sup>40</sup>

[28a]

ט"ו.

לכתחילה, עם הסדר שבינת הנשק {בין} מדינות ערב ומדינת ישראל, היתה זו חייבה להכריז: כל איש ואשה מהערים {מהערבים} שיצאו מן הארץ עם פרוץ המלחמה רשאים לשוב לאחוזתם – או לכל הפחות: יהיו רשאים לשוב לאחר חתימת הסכם־השלום בינה ובין מדינות ערב – להוציא ערבים שאין בכוחם {ו} את נפשם להיות אזרחים נאמנים במדינת ישראל, המסוכנים לבטחון המדינה. הכרזה שכמותה היתה ודאי מסייעת להשגתו של אותו הסכם־שלום. ובדעיבד – שערי שיבה ותשובה עדין לא ננעלו.

מדינת ישראל חייבה לתקן אותה מעוות. בנפש המדינה הוא – ובנפש ישראל באשר הוא. מציאותם של פליטים ערבים ממדינת ישראל – ברכה היא לערב, לארצות ערב הרוצות בחורבנה של מדינת ישראל, וכולה קללה לעבר. נוה להן לארצות ערב שהעולם – או אר"ם – יושיב אותם פליטים באזור מיוחד, מעין "פליטייה", ארץ־מקל}ט

40 מצטער אני שכמה מהנזקקים לשאלת עבר וערב בשעה זו – ביחוד בארץ – מוצאים לה פתורן]ן בטמיעת ערב בעבה ויש להוסיף: אין חידוש "בפתרון" זה, אפילו יהודי לאומי כאחד העם שדחה בכל לבבו כל גלוי־שלי־התבוללות לישראל ולא התיר לו אלא חיקוי־של התחרות נכשל כאן ולא חשש להתיר לערבים (כלומר לקוות שהם יעשו אותו מעשה "מגונה") את שאסר לבני אברהם יצחק ויעקב: "שאלת הערבים. אחרי שנהיה כוח קולטורי בארץ ברוח היהדות אפשר שיטמעו הערבים בתוכנו. הלא הם יושבי הארץ מקדם, ואפשר שכמה מהם מבני עמנו" ("מסקנות", משנת תרעב, כל כתבי אח"ע, תש"ז, ע'תע"ט). מפני מה תגרוור התהוותו של "כוח קולטורי בארץ ברוח היהדות" את טמיעתם של הערבים? ומה טיבו של אותו "רוח היהדות" שיסייע [28a] לאבדן עצמיותו של עם ומירץ טמיעת מיעוט־ערב ברוב־שלי־עבר?

לפליטיי־ערב, שתשמש מזכרת־עיון למדינת ישראל ולעם ישראל באשר הוא; או יפיצם בארצות ערב, בהן ילכו הפליטים וילבו, לרצונם ועל כרחם, את אש־השנאה למדינה שנישלתם מעל אדמתם. העולם כולו די־ן} בפתיחה־שלי־פשה, ואפשר לו להזדיין} בסבלנות ולדחותה שנה־אחרי־שנה. מה שאין כן ישראל: אי אפשר לו בשום פנים להוסיף ולדחות אותה פתירה. ב}ע}קרו של דבר לא ניתן לו כלל להשלים עם פתירה שאין בה משום ביעורה הגמור של שאלת־פליטים זו. כל שעה נוספת למציאותה של אותה שאלה בעולם – אינה אך מוסיפה פגם לפגם בדמותו המוסרית של ישראל, אלא גם מגבירה את הסכנה לקיומו בימים יבואו. שאלת אותם הפליטים אינה שאלת ערב – שאלת עבר היא, שאלה ששנת תש״ח הטילה על ישראל. ישראל חייב להעבירה מן העולם בתכלית הזריות והשלמות. אלה היא פליט ערבי ממדינת ישראל בעולם – צו חיים הוא לה למדינת ישראל, אין להמלט ממנו.

לפיכך אני מע־ז} ומציע לממשלתה של מדינת ישראל שתלך בדרך הישר ביותר – ואם גם חמור הוא במאד־מאד; מבחינה נפשית, מדינית, חברתית, כלכלית, צבאית, לא נעלמה ממני חמירות זו כלל וכלל – והיא: פתיחת שערי המדינה לפליטי־ערב לאחר שמדינות ערב תבאנה אתה לידי הסכם שלום – פרט לערבים המסוכנים לבטחון המדינה; רצוי שמדינת ישראל תמנה ועדת־בדיקה לפליטים בה גם שאינם בני מדינת ישראל, באי כח [29a] א״ם, למען ראות כל העולם כי מדינת ישראל – מדינת ישראל היא. וראה העולם ולמד כיצד ישראל מתקן מעוות – ופותר שאלת פליטים.

יודעני, כאמור וכשנוי: מדינת ישראל עודה נתונה במצוקה כלכלית רבה, זקוקה הרבה לסיוע־חוץ, וזה אינו ניתן לה בשלמותה הרצויה, למעלה מארבעים מיליון אויבים סביבה, שא־#יבתם החריפה הרבה על ידי אותה גזירת פליטים, הקשיים בכלכלה ובבטחון יתרבו כשיתורו פליטי־ערב בשיבה לנחלתם. ועם כל אלה, אי אפשר לי להעלות על דעתי ששיבתם של כמה מאות אלפי פליטים תסכן סכנת ממש את קיומה של המדינה – המוכנה, כנראה, לפתוח שעריה למאת אלף פליטים, ואולי למעלה מהם, כשארצות ערב תבאנה אתה לידי הסכם־שלום. שיבת פליטים תכביד על המדינה – ולא תחריבה. מן ההכרח שמדינת ישראל תקבל על עצמה אותה הכבדה רבה – ובלבד שתבער את שאלת הפליטים. {שיבתם} קשה במאד־מאד למדינת ישראל, ואי־שיבתם קשה ממנה.

סנ}ג}יה של גזירת־הפליטים, גם בחסידי אומות העולם, טוענים: אילו לא יצאו אותם מאות אלפי ערבים מארץ ישראל בתש״ח, לא היתה מדינת ישראל קמה כלל, ואילו הותרו הללו עכשו בישיבת־בית היתה מדינת ישראל חרבה. דברי סנגוריה הם למדינת ישראל? העמק בהם וראית: עושים הם פלסטר את חזון הציונות ב־סודו. סנגורים אלה מעידים על עצמם שממיהם לא האמינו בחזון הציונות. תמיד ידעו שלא ניתן לבצעו אלא על חורבות ערב שבארץ ישראל – כלומר; בעיניהם לא היה כל ממש בציונות בין תרמיה ותש״ח, כל יעודיה לא היו להם אלא אחיזת עינים בלבד.

מדינת ישראל, הזהרי בסנגורים אלה ובסנגוריותם.

כלום אין ראשי המדינה ושליחיה בכל מקום מדברים מ}ב}אוכלוסיה בת ארבעת, חמשת או ששת מליוני נפש במדינה, ועתים הם גם מוסיפים "לכל הפחות" לאותו מספר? אם כן, מדינת ישראל יכולה להתקיים אלא בתנאי – ותנאי בני גד ובני ראובן הוא – שאותם מאות אלפי פליטים לא יש }ו}בו לנחלתם? כלום יש בחזון היקפה וביעודיה לימים יבואו לעורר אמונה רבה, בלבנות ישראל ועולם כאחת?

והבטחון מה תהא עליו?

בער אני בהלכות צבא ובטחון – ואחת זו ידעתי: למעשה, חמש או שש מאות אלף פליטים ערביים ממדינת ישראל בחוץ לגבולותיה – מטוכנים לה למדינה הרבה הרבה יותר מחמש או שש אלף אזרחים ערביים נוספים בגבולותיה, ואפילו היו כולם או רובם בני "גייס חמישי" – ואינם. סכנה הם במדינה? אמנם כן, סכנה הם במדינה – וסכנה [30a] הם גם בחוץ למדינה; וזו חמורה הרבה הרבה יותר מסכנתם במדינה בכל בחינה. כל חתירה "שניים חמישי" ערבי {ש}י{ן} כול חתור תחת מדינת ישראל זו – כאין וכאפס היא כלפי אותה חתירה שאותם מאות אלפי פליטים חותרים יומם ולילה, בעצם מציאותם; תחת עצם קיומה של המדינה בשעה זו, ותחת ביצוע יעודה בשעות תבאנה.

מדינת ישראל לא תיוושע מטענות כגון אלו: "לערבים כמה וכמה מדינות שאינן מאוכלסות, ולנו אך מדינה קטנה אחת" – מדינות ערב שאינן מאוכלסות לחוץ, וזכות פליטי ערב ממדינת ישראל לחוד; או "בתייהם של הפליטים תפוסים". היא היא המשועת: איכה נתפסו? היד שתפסה – היד שתחזיר. קרקע אינה נגולת – כל קרקע, מכל בעל-קרקע. קבוץ-הגלויות אינו עומד בין כה וכה מאחורי כתלינו. ואל יבוא זה – אילו גם ניתן להביאהו בשלמותו ובמהרה בימינו – על חשבון כמה מאות אלפי ערבים מנושלים ומקופחים. טוב תקן מעוות באחור-רזמן, ובקרבנות רבים – מלהשאירו בעוותו הזועק עד לב השמים.

יש מיצר לשעתו ורווחה יוצאת ממנו לשעות שאחריה. ויש רווחה לשעתה וכולה מיצר לשעות תבאנה.

מדינת ישראל רשאית לפנות לאו"ם, גם לאמריקה ולישראל שבה, שישתתפו בפתיחת הבעייה הכלכלית הכרוכה בהחזרת הפליטים לגבולם – ומובטחני: {ישתתפו} ביד רחבה. הכוון כיוון חדש זה למדיניותה של מדינת ישראל בין עבר לערב – והסדר פרטיו מסור למומחים לשאלות המעשיות המרובות הכרוכות בה בשאלה, ואינן מענייני – יביא נצחון רב למדינת ישראל. כל טענותיהן של מדינות ערב וידידיהן בעולם כולו תיעלמנה העלם גמור. מדינות ערב תיאלצנה להודות בקיומה של מדינת ישראל ולהגיע אתה לידי הסכסס-שלום. בויקוט של מדינת ישראל בארצות ערב – יאבד את רקעו המדיני והכלכלי. מעמדה המוסרי של מדינת ישראל יעלה הרבה: ידעו כל עמי הארץ כי "חזון ישעיהו בן אמוץ אשר חזה [...] בימי עזיהו יותם אחז יחזקיהו מלכי יהודה" [ישעיה 1:1] אינו מליצה לישראל, חי וקיים הוא במדינת ישראל שקמה בתש"ח: "ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה" [ישעיה 1:27] – שביה אחד בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב אחד בני ישמעאל, צדקה לכולם, ללא הפלייה כל שהיא. עם ציון {ן}ירושלים לא יטמא ידיו בזוהמת שלל מיעוט שאינם בני בריה; לא יעשה מעשה או חזו ביד; האוחז ביד – או חזו ביד הוא, ולא לו מדת-המשפט.

אנשי מעשה יאמרו: החזרת הפליטים לנחלתם במדינת ישראל חלוס הוא, אוטופיה. ובאמתו של דבר: "אוטופיה" היא התעלמות זו משאלת הפליטים, דחיית פתירתה משנה לשנה; [31a] סכנה היא מסירת פתירתה זו לאו"ם ולערבים. אין ממש אלא בביעורה, ובדי ישראל.

עיפה נפשנו מאותו ריאליזם מדומה בין עם לעם המביאנו בכ{ל} לדור לטבח-אדם, ההולך ומקרבנו לתהום האבדון לאדם ואדמתו גם יחד. יש ריאלי-פוליטיקה לשעתה וכולה רועץ ליום מחר כי יבוא. אם יש תקווה לתורה מציון [ראה ישעיה 2:3] – תצא ממנה תורה ללא אותו "ריאליזם" עקר וע[ו]קקתה זה תורת אמונה באדם, תורת חוקה אחת למדינה

ולגר הגר בתוכה [ראה ויקרא 19:34] (ואין ערב גר במדינת עבר זו) ולפליטיה המתגוררים בחוץ לגבולותיה. תורה ישנה היא לנו והשעה שעתה.  
 ישראל לא הפליט מימיו פליטים לעולם – אל תפתח מדינת ישראל את דרכה בהפלטת פליטים.

### ט"ז.

אין דבריי-תחונני אלה למדינת ישראל, ממשלתה, כנסתה ומפלגותיה – על ביטול גזירת-הפליטים נובעים מ"רומנטיקה" ערבית-מזרחית.

מימי לא נמנית עם עונד-עטרות לערב, בעבר ובהווה. ומסופקני הרבה בתיאורי הַטְּוּיָה בה שהערבים הטיבו בימי הביניים עם ישראל, הרוחים בספרייהקורות משלהם ומשלנו. הערבים לא עשו בנו מעשי הכנסיה הנוצרית – ורוב ארצותיהם לא היה גן עדן לישראל גם הם. בזו בזו רב ל"נווד הנצח" והתנגדו בכל כוחם לתקומתו הלאומית. אין אני מעלים עיני מהרדיפות שרדפו את ישראל בארצותיהם – לפני תקומת המדינה, וביתר שאת אחריה – ומהפרעות שערכו בשוב היהודי בארץ ישראל בימי מנדט בריטניה. אין אני בוטח בהם – כשם שאינני בוטח בנוצרים ובמוסר "אהבתם". ואנו – לא לכבודם אני חרד, אלא לכבודנו; דואג אני לנפשונו, לטהרת טליתו של ישראל.

צילתה של גאולה – של "אתחלתא דגאולה" – אינה לי במשבר הרוחני והחברתי שבמדינה ולא בתחום המוסר בין אדם לחברו בבית ישראל שבה. לא לעולם משבר זה. ענני-שעה אלא יחלפו, שמי מדינת ישראל יהיו תכלת בהירה. בבית ישראל שבמדינת-החמתה של תש"ח מרובה מצילתה. אורה רבה שבה מבריחה כל צל המתגנב לארבע אמותיה – על אף הקינות הרבות שמקוננים במדינת ישראל בתפוצות על הירידה בה במדינה. עיקר צילתה של תש"ח – בין עבר לערב הוא. צילתה ללא חמה – כל עוד מדינת ישראל פליטים לה בעולם. אין פליטי מדינת ישראל יחידים {ב}עולם בשעה זו. מיליוני פליטים – פליטי חרב ורעב, קומוניזם וכו' – נודדים ממקום למקום בארצות המזרח הרחוק. וה"נאה" לעולם – אינו נאה לישראל, אי אפשר לו לישראל בכך. כמה מבצעים ביצעה מדינת ישראל מתש"ח ואילך – עכשו הגיעה שעתו של מבצע שגיא, הקשה במבצעה: מבצע ביעור [32a] פרשת הפליטים. אלהי {אברהם} יצחק ויעקב הבטיח לכובשי כנען ויהושע בן נון בראשם "ערים גדולות וטובות אשר לא בנית; ובתים מלאים כל טוב אשר לא מלאת ובורות חצובים אשר לא חצבת כרמים וחיתים אשר לא נטעת"<sup>41</sup> – להם ולא לשבי ציון מתרמ"ב {ב} וכו' ולמקומי מדינת ישראל בתש"ח. ולוא יקבע לדורות במגלת מדינת ישראל הפותחת בתש"ח אותו מקרא שנאמר במגלת אסתר ביהודי שושן: ו"שאר היהודים אשר במדינות המלך" ש"נקהלו" ו"עמוד על נפשם" [אסתר 9:16] וכו'; ובזוה לא שלחו את ידם.

חזור וסכם: אל יהי פליט ממדינת ישראל בעולם. ישוּבו פליטי ערב לנחלותיהם – והיתה מדינתך טהורה, ישראל.

ואתם סופרי ישראל במדינת ישראל, מחכניו ואנשי־רוחו – קומו, עורו סיעו לה לממשלתה של מדינת ישראל בביצועו של אותו מבצע, הצילו את כבוד ישראל ומדינת ישראל גם את שלומה ושלום בניה ובנותיה בדורות יבואו – ופתחו שער.

אמנם כן, שלום בניה ובנותיה. דור המנצחים במדינת ישראל, דור תש"ח, בטוח בצדקתו בפרשה זו – ולואי ולא יפרעו ימים־יבואו מבניהם ובני בניהם ולא יגזר עליהם לשלם ארבעה וחמשה ושבעים ושבעה על רווחה זו, רווחת־"נס", שבאה לאבותיהם בתש"ח – והם מחזיקים בה בכל כוחם למענם, למען הבאים אחריהם.

ולואי ולא יהא דור בישראל בדורות יבואו שיקרא לדין את דור מייצבי דלתות המדינה על שנעל דלת בפני תושבי הארץ לשעבר – ופתח תוך נעילה זו פתח למשטיניהם ורודיפיהם בארצות שמסביבם. בידיכם, מדריכי הדור במדינת ישראל, הוא לשמור את הבאים אחריהם מעברתו של אותו יום־שילומים לעתיד לבוא. אל יבוא – ואם יבוא, בני בנינו ובנותינו מה תהא עליהם?

## י"ז.

בפקנסי משנת תש"ח מצאתי כתוב: אם יבואו השנה מלאכים לומר שירה לפני הקב"ה, לא ישתיקים? מעשי ידי טובעים בים פליטיות – שבא לעולם, אם במישרין אם בעקיפין, על ידי בחירי עם סגולתו שחי חיי פליט אלפי שנה, – והם אימרו {יאמרו} שירה? פליטי־ערב אלה לא הרעו לעבר אף מקצת מן הרעה הרבה שעשו המצרים לאבותיהם למעלה מארבע מאות שנה – וכשטבעו הללו לא נשמע קול שירה למעלה.

ואם אלהי ישראל לא ישתיקם, ומלאכים יאמרו שירה, ופיטני־ישראל יענדו כתרם לאותה כבשה שזכתה לעלות למדרגת אריה ויוסיפו וימנו נס־פליטי{ם} סעל כל הנסים שארעו לאבותינו מדור־דור, – מה יהנה אדם מישראל באותה שעת שירה? מה יעשה בשעות לאחריה?

שוחחתי הרבה עם כמה בניס ובנות [33a] בישראל מתש"ח ואילך בפרשת עבר וערב – ולא זכיתי לשמוע מהם אומרים: לא שעת שירה היא, לא למלאכי מעלה ולא לדרי מטה בישראל – כל עוד מאות אלפי פליטים עקורים {ו}תלושים מנחלתם. למדתי גם זו: מי שהיו שאינס־ציונים ואפילו מתנגדים לציון וליהדות הלאומית, גרי־אנטישמיות ובעלי־תשובה, פרקים "מבינים" אותה גזירת־פליטים ומצדיקים עליה את הדין ביתר שאת מבני ישראל שלבבם היה כל ימיהם נאמן לציון ולתקומתה. וגם הללו – משתמטים מפרשת־תש"ח זו. יראים לעיין בה כהלכתה. חוששני: לא ניתן למצוא גם אחד־למאה בישראל שבמדינת ישראל, ולא בה לבד, שיהא מסופק בצדקתה של אותה גזירת־פליטים.

ידעני גם זו: רביס־רבים במערכותינו דברי בפרשת עבר־וערב זו לבדם דיים לפסול בעיניהם "בבל וירושלים" כולו. והללו ודאי ימצאו בו כמה מדברי בשאר פרשיות שיהיו מסייעות לפסילתם זו. ולא הייתי ראוי לכתוב בלשון אותו בוקר וכולם שקמים [עמוס 7:14], איש תקוע, והבאים אחריו – אילו כבשתי את אשר בלבבי בה בפרשה. אם דבר נשמע הוא אם איננו נשמע – עברי הכותב לעברים, בלשון־הבית לבני־הבית ואין פניו פונים החוצה, חייב להגות ולכתוב בגילוי־לב. אסור זה בהעלמה כל שהיא: אין גת שומעת שפתו, אין אשקלון נזקקת לו; אין עליו מוראן של בנות פלשתים – "פן תעלוזנה בנות הערלים" [שמואל ב 1:20] ...

מוטב ואוסיף ואהיה מטרה לחץ כל רובה־קשת בישראל – ולא אהיה מוחה פי ואומר: אין און בישראל. אם און בישראל – און הוא גם בי. אם שפכו דם בישראל (וכמה מיני שפיקת־דם הם) אם ישראל שפך דם בחוץ־לישראל – אין איש מישראל רשאי לומר: ידי לא שפכה. אל תאמרו: כל שאין בכוחו לגמור את ההלל על אותו "נס"־פליטים – אינו שמח בשמחת תקומתו המדינית של ישראל, אין לו חלק ונחלה בישראל; אם אינו עונה אמן אחרי ברכתנו, ברכת מפליט פליטים ועוקר אנשים ונשים וטף מנחלתם – לצרינו הוא. חלילה לו לאחרון שבאחרונים מלהתעטף באדרת קדמונים, ורשאי הוא לשאול: הללו {ש}התקוממו בימי קדם נגד מלכים פורצי גדר, כובשי כרם פלוני ומסיגי גבול אלמוני, "עוכרי ישראל" בלשון אותם תקיפים, הללו ובני עדתם – האמנם הם שעכרו את ישראל?

בישראל בטחתי מעודי. ואני תפלתי: שארית ישראל אל יעשו עוולה. ישמור שומר ישראל את שאריתו שעלתה והיתה לראשית במדינת ישראל – מעוולה ומהכלייה הכרוכה בה כאחת.

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