Ahad Ha-Am's Influence on Jewish Educational Thinking in America

Samuel Tabak
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JEWISH EDUCATIONAL THINKING IN AMERICA

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Preface

This thesis is humbly dedicated to the sainted memory of my beloved teacher and friend, Dr. Leo L. Honor. From the very beginning of my studies at Dropsie College, I learned to appreciate his devotion to and dedicated interest in the progress of every student, all of whom benefited greatly from his guidance and warmth.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude for the infinite patience and encouragement Professors Neir Ben-Horin and Ben-Zion Netanyahu have given me. I am indebted to Professor Ben-Horin who has guided me throughout the preparation of this study and directed my research in the area of Jewish education, and to Professor Netanyahu, with his profound erudition in Hebrew literature, for his valuable insights into the thought world of Ahad Ha-Am, viewed from the perspective of the Jewish Renaissance.

In conclusion, I should like to gratefully acknowledge the interest and effort of the members of the staff and librarians of Dropsie College, the librarians of the Jewish Department of the Public Library of New York, the Zionist Archives of the Herzl Institute, and the library staff of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.
INTRODUCTION

While examining the writings of a group of American Jewish educators, I discovered that the ideas they expressed, although divergent in many instances, had an organic relationship. For these writers voiced the sentiments of the Jewish national Renaissance. They were especially concerned with developing for American Jewish youth a program of studies which would contain the essence of Jewish Renaissance thought.

These educators were confronted with the problem of reconciling the traditional Jewish faith with the scientific findings of the time. Having come under the influence of scientific postulates, they found the orthodox approach to education no longer valid. The empirical method in the investigation of natural phenomena gave rise to a re-examination and questioning of all authoritarian beliefs—the so-called truths that had been handed down by tradition. The theory of evolution contributed to the growing upsurge of doubt, and undermined the otherworldly orientation of the Jewish faith.

The problem of the erosion of orthodox faith actually began about a century earlier. Exposed to the influence of modern philosophy, scholars began to search for answers to the conflicting ideas of their times. The most notable Jewish scholar of the nineteenth century was Nachman Krochmal.
In his *Guide to the Perplexed of the Time*, he attempted to reconcile religion with modern philosophy. His theories reflect the philosophy of German idealism, as expounded by Herder, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. During Krochmal's lifetime the tendency toward assimilation did not become widespread in Poland or in Russia. In Perez Smolenskin's generation, however, the threat to Jewish peoplehood reached greater proportions. Smolenskin, although sympathetic with the Haskalah position that the Jewish people must absorb universal values and culture patterns in order to take their proper place among the citizens of the enlightened countries in which they lived maintained that this could not be achieved by giving up their national, spiritual possessions. This view later brought him into conflict with the Haskalah writers, for he insisted that their approach could lead to a weakening of the Jewish consciousness, and ultimately, assimilation.

Yet the Haskalah writers did not advocate assimilation. Their aim was rather that the Jewish people should adapt themselves to the environment of the country in which they lived, and at the same time retain their Jewish identity. Smolenskin, however, placed greater emphasis on the supreme significance of Jewish nationalism and its culture -- the Torah in its widest connotation, and the Hebrew language and literature. Thus, Perez Smolenskin formulated the Jewish national Renaissance theories which were later incorporated into Ahad Ha-Am's concept of spiritual Zionism. It was Ahad Ha-Am who reshaped
these early, roughly-hewn ideas into a well-rounded, philosophic system. Imbued with the Jewish national Renaissance spirit, he was intent on the transmission of its ideals to every member of the Jewish community.

My aim, therefore, in this study is to relate the guiding ideas of this selected group of educators to the thought world of Spiritual Zionism. For this purpose, I have chosen Ahad Ha-Am as a representative par excellence of the Jewish National Renaissance, as represented by Ahad Ha-Am, who considered Jewish education the *sine qua non* of Jewish survival.

Our American Jewish educators also considered Jewish education as the only effective means of imparting to Jewish youth a sense of identity with their people. The Renaissance ideas, although widely interpreted, formed the nucleus of their educational philosophy.

The focal point of Jewish Renaissance thought was the doctrine of Jewish peoplehood. In this doctrine national awareness is the great motivating force of life in all its manifestations. The sense of identity with one's people--its history and destiny--endows the individual with the inner capacity for maximum self-realization. This national consciousness is especially vital to the Jewish people since they are dispersed and in danger of becoming disintegrated tribal groups. In dispersion, spiritual unity can be attained through the cohesive power of the national spirit, and thus creative life will not be repressed; For the fruits of creation ripen best when the plant remains attached to its
roots, utilizing their enriching nourishment.

In Jewish Renaissance thought the individual Jew, through his relation to humanity and the universe, is given purpose and realization in his own life. Viewing the ethical content as the core of the Torah, Renaissance writers began to emphasize the significance of the Torah in the character training of Jewish youth. They strove for the development of the integrated human being through whom the Torah ethics would be expressed in service to his people and thereby to mankind.

They maintained that knowledge of the Bible, as well as of the post-biblical Jewish classics, should be acquired by each member of the Jewish community; therefore, stress was placed on education—both for children and adults. Moreover, the national possessions of the Jewish people could most effectively be imparted to the learner through the medium of the original, national language. Hebrew was considered to be the most effective means of awakening the Jewish National spirit, for it evokes in the student a host of subtle associations with the Jewish historical past. Thus, only is he able to truly identify himself with his People and its ethical tradition.

In pre-Renaissance times, Jewish education consisted mainly in the transmission of the Torah, including dogma, without encouraging free inquiry into its origin, development, or validity. Renaissance education, on the other hand, consistently emphasized the idea of freedom. Freedom of inquiry and
its concomitant, individual growth, were the paramount aims. Thus, Renaissance orientation stressed the ethical ideal in Judaism rather than the ritualistic and dogmatic. To be an ethical Jew and to partake in the culture of an enlightened environment meant to be a man and a Jew both abroad and at home. It remained, however, for Ahad Ha-Am to demonstrate that the unique system of Jewish ethics can exist independently of Jewish religion in the traditional sense, and that it is feasible for an irreligious Jew to practice an intensely ethical Jewish life provided that he links himself with the Jewish national spirit. Thus, Ahad Ha-Am furnished a meaningful program of life for the enlightened Jew who no longer identified himself with the traditional faith of his fathers.

Applying the insights of the European Jewish National Renaissance to Jewish life in this country, the American Jewish educators attempted to translate the Renaissance approach into a creative system of Jewish education. They recognized that both American and Jewish ethical principles are grounded in the prophetic legacy which is the essence of American democracy and Judaism alike. However, in order to provide enough time for an effective implementation of these ideals in the curriculum, much of the content studies of classical language and literature had to be sacrificed. Ahad Ha-Am would probably not have approved of this shift of emphasis in the school program. To him, the mastery in the original Hebrew of the Jewish classics, and especially the Bible, was a sine qua non for the awakening of the Jewish
national consciousness. Since in Russia the Jew was set apart from the general stream of Russian society, and the Jewish child received his entire education in the separate Jewish school, not participating fully in the Russian community life, it is clear that Ahad Ha-Am's educational problems were not quite parallel to those of the American Jewish educators. Although Ahad Ha-Am believed that Jewish education should develop an integrated person -- a man and a Jew both "in the tent" and in the outside world, this ideal did not present as urgent a problem for him as it did for the American Jewish educators. For them it was necessary to work out a system of Jewish education that would prepare the child to be at home in two civilizations. Their program of studies should enable Jewish young people to participate in the community life of a free democracy and at the same time preserve his Jewish consciousness.

Thus, in examining the guiding ideas of these educators, we will find many points which are not entirely related to Ahad Ha-Am and his contemporaries, nor to his predecessors. For the American educators had to cope with indigenous conditions of Jewish life and education which were peculiar to the American democratic environment. Yet we view all these guiding ideas as belonging to the thought world of the Jewish national Renaissance because they share essential features. Despite the countercurrents or divergencies, which were apparently prompted by special situations, in general perspec-
tive they comprise one organic school of thought. Many of these writers make specific mention of Ahad Ha-Am as their inspiration. In the words of Kaplan: "That impact (of Ahad Ha-Am) effected in me nothing less than a Copernican revolution." 1 Referring to the leaders in the Bureau of Jewish Education, including Benderly, Magnes, Friedlaender and Kaplan, it was noted by Berkson that "all of them ... were proponents of Ahad Ha-Am's conception of Zionism." 2 It is worthy of note that the Zionism of Herzl and Nordau, as formulated by the Basle program, also had a significant influence on the Jewish educators' views; yet they placed stronger emphasis on the spiritual element of Zionism.

Some of the differences in perspective of the American Jewish educators may be ascribed to the fact that there were various individual interpretations of Ahad Ha-Am's thought. For instance, regarding the relationship of the spiritual center to the Diaspora, Ahad Ha-Am's assertion, "If I believed it to be possible for our national spirit to develop freely in the diaspora, I should not be a Zionist," 3 was not always taken at face value. Many of the American Jewish educational leaders did not consider this statement to indicate a disparagement of the American Diaspora. They realized that he did not negate the very future existence of the Diaspora for the upbuilding of the spiritual center, and later also for its own sake. In contrast to the attitude of
the political Zionists, the future life of the Jews in the Diaspora, after the establishment of the spiritual center, was for Ahad Ha-Am a matter of major concern.

Ahad Ha-Am's basic ideas are presented thematically in Chapter I. In the succeeding chapters, the guiding ideas of the American Jewish educators are discussed in regard to their relationship, whether parallel or divergent, to the philosophy of the Jewish national Renaissance, whose outstanding spokesman was Ahad Ha-Am. Each of these men, while largely sharing the basic ideas of the Jewish Renaissance, contributed his own personal interpretation and emphases.

The entire gamut of Jewish educational practice in America has not been included in my study. For instance, diverse school systems such as the Yiddishist, Labor Zionist, religious Zionist, etc., do not fall within the scope of this thesis, for it is limited to a discussion of American Jewish educational philosophy in its relationship to the Jewish National Renaissance, as represented by the spiritual Zionism of Ahad Ha-Am. From the educators within this orientation I have selected for detailed study those who occupied positions of leadership and offered an original insight into the general current of American Jewish Renaissance thought.

Solomon Schechter, President of the reorganized Jewish Theological Seminary of America, inspired a whole generation of rabbis and educators whose influences are still central to the Conservative Movement. Schechter was regarded as the
initiator of the American Historical approach to Judaism. His interpretation was very much like that of Ahad Ha-Am for they both accepted Krochmal's philosophy of Jewish history.

These educators were motivated by the ideal of a Jewish spiritual revival, both in the school and at home. In order to achieve this revival, they maintained that the inspiration of a Jewish cultural center in Palestine was vital. In a free Palestine, the Jewish spirit could be completely regenerated, thus radiating a powerful influence toward the recreation of Jewish life in America. Yet they were all affirmers of the diaspora, especially the American. Calling attention to the fact that the theory of cultural pluralism has become widely accepted by American civic and educational leadership, the Jewish educators asserted that there is a vast opportunity for minority groups, including the Jewish, to lead their own creative national lives and thus contribute to the general stream of American culture. It is, therefore, possible, in their opinion, to develop a curriculum which will be an expression of the Jewish spirit as contained in the Jewish national possessions--Tanakh, Hebrew language, literature and ethics--in short, the Torah in its broadest connotations. Thus, the Jewish child would grow up to be an integrated person--an American, a Jew and a human being.
Ahad Ha-Am, born Asher Ginzberg in Skivra, South Russia on August 18, 1856, underwent a gradual metamorphosis from hasidic piety to an idealist philosophy. The initial influence in his life was his father Isiah, a hasid of the Rabbi of Sadigura. Asher received the typical heder education of his day and later on was given private tutoring. The boy displayed a highly perceptive intelligence, and when he turned fifteen, his father dismissed the tutor and allowed him to study by himself. By the time he was twenty-one Asher's intellectual hunger had led him to study mathematics, sociology, the natural sciences, and languages. He read with understanding such English writers as Locke, Hume, Darwin, Spencer, Mill, and Ruskin.

It is remarkable that this man, who had no formal education after the age of 12, was able to acquire such analytical insight into the writings of the British and French philosophers and social psychologists. In addition, he mastered the Jewish disciplines - Bible, Talmud, Codes and philosophy - and although for the most part a self-taught man, he was considered a brilliant Talmudic scholar by his Jewish contemporaries. His erudition in Jewish law eventually became so profound that his opinion was eagerly sought by leading rabbis with whom he corresponded.
In 1884 he went with his wife and children (he had married at the age of 16) to Odessa, one of the great centers of Jewish intellectual life. There he was attracted to the "Lovers of Zion" movement,¹ and although at first reserved about expressing his opinions publicly, he eventually became an eminent speaker.

Encouraged by his friends, he finally let his essential views on the aims of the Hoveve Zion movement be published in an article in Ha-Meliz (The Interpreter).² This revolutionary article, "Lo-zeh ha-Derekh" (The Wrong Way) was signed with the pen name "Ahad Ha-Am" for, as he said, "I express my opinion in this matter as one of the people whose mind is preoccupied with the problems of the nation."³

Thus began a brilliant literary career. Of Ahad Ha-Am's challenging articles and essays, Leon Simon had this to say:

"his pen name was becoming well known to the Hebrew-reading public as that of a writer with a distinctive style and original views on the questions in which the public was especially interested - questions connected with Palestine and Jewish nationalism, with assimilation and anti-Semitism, with Hebrew education and literature."⁴

In 1896, at the age of 40, Ahad Ha-Am was asked to become editor of Hashiloah, a Hebrew monthly devoted to Jewish scholarship and literature. For seven years he served as editor of Hashiloah, and during this time his philosophically grounded, meticulously executed essays and articles not only enriched literature but also offered deep insight into the problems of the Jewish national-spiritual awakening.
In 1907 Ahad Ha-Am accepted a position with the Wissotzky Tea Company in London. Although he had anticipated that life in London would be fully creative because of the intellectual atmosphere and the accessibility of well-stocked libraries, his failing health limited his literary activity in these new surroundings. However, even under such circumstances he managed to write several of his most perceptive essays— for example, "Jewish and Christian Ethics." Moreover, in 1917 he was largely instrumental in guiding Chaim Weizman in diplomatic activities which finally resulted in the Balfour Declaration. Thus, Ahad Ha-Am, the leader of Spiritual Zionism, also contributed effectively to the achievement of political Zionist goals.

The last six years of Ahad Ha-Am's life were spent in the spiritual center which had been his lifelong dream. He died in Tel-Aviv on January 2, 1927.

A fundamental element in Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy is his concept of the organismic nature of the Jewish People. In this view, a People is not just an aggregate of individuals; it has a soul of its own, a national spirit which expresses itself in the national culture. Thus, the ego of the Jewish People is composed of memories and impressions of the past, and aspirations for the future, intertwined with one another and shared by its members. The national spirit is embodied in the Jewish People and gives it its unique character as expressed in visible forms of Jewish culture, such as language, art, literature, and, particularly, in the national ethic.

Ahad Ha-Am's concept of the organismic nature of the
Jewish People may be traced to Herbert Spencer's idea of society as an organism, indeed as a "super-organism." Discussing the gradual process of change which is constantly taking place in the universe, Spencer remarks that the definition of evolution "should be that the matter passes from a relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a relatively definite, coherent heterogeneity." 5 As for Man himself - the human organism - Spencer has this to say:

Advance from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is clearly displayed in the progress of the latest and most heterogeneous creature--Man. While the peopling of the Earth has been going on, the human organism has grown more heterogeneous among the civilized divisions of the species; and the species, as a whole, has been made more heterogeneous by the multiplication of races and the differentiation of them from one another. 6

Elaborating further on the effect of the evolutionary process on human societies, Spencer observes:

On passing from Humanity under its individual form to Humanity as socially embodied, we find the general law still more variously exemplified. The change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is displayed equally in the progress of civilization as a whole and in the progress of every tribe or nation; and it is still going on with increasing rapidity. 7

According to Spencer, "All organized results of social action--all super-organic structures, pass through parallel phases." 7a In other words, all the cultural expressions of a society--such as language, art, music philosophy and the like--undergo a similar evolutionary process. As Spencer succinctly states:
Not only is the law thus exemplified in the evolution of the social organism, but it is exemplified in the evolution of all products of human thought and action, whether concrete or abstract, real or ideal.

Ahad Ha-Am, likewise, expressed this idea, that nations develop, in organic fashion, distinctive cultural patterns motivated by their respective national spirits. In other words, each People is a unique organism in itself and evolves its own particular cultural trends. Thus, Ahad Ha-Am, like Spencer, regarded the heterogeneity of nations as a mark of progress in the evolution of mankind.

Ahad Ha-Am places ethics and religion in two separate categories, both emanating from the Jewish National Spirit. I would say that "religion" itself is nothing but a known form of "culture" and that "Judaism" is neither the one nor the other, but it is the national creative power which in the past was revealed in the form of culture that was essentially religious. In what form this creative power would reveal itself in the future -- it is impossible to predict.

The term "national creative power," as employed in the above letter, could lend itself to misinterpretation, for it might be assumed that this "power" is the mere product of the People's creative genius. However, taking into consideration Ahad Ha-Am's idealist orientation as evidenced from his frequent references to the "national spirit" we conclude that the term "national creative power" denotes the power emanating from a transcendental source.

Combining these Spencerian ideas with German idealist
theories, Ahad Ha-Am formulated his philosophy of Jewish peoplehood, although he remarked in his reminiscences that he found the original German texts of Hegel and Kant too involved. The concepts of German idealism reached him through Nachman Krochmal, who himself had adapted them into a Jewish world view.

According to Krochmal, the Jewish National Spirit is the absolute, universal spirit, and the Jewish People, by virtue of its persistent striving for a prophetic encounter, is the only nation which has fully attached itself to the Absolute Spirit. Thus the history of the Jewish nation, although displaying like other nations a cyclical pattern of rise, development, and decline, is constantly revived because of its linkage with the Absolute Spirit. The Absolute Spirit is revealed to the Jewish People through a gradual process of unfoldment; this revelation, in Krochmal's Philosophy, is an experience of pure intellect.

Evidence of Ahad Ha-Am's idealist position may be discovered from a careful reading of his essays. Indeed, Nahum Sokolow asserts that one cannot adequately comprehend Ahad Ha-Am's theories without having studied the philosophy of Nachman Krochmal. Ahad Ha-Am's constant repetition of the word "spirit" undoubtedly links him to the Krochmalian tradition. When he employs the phrases "ruah hayahadut" (spirit of Judaism) or "ruah Haam" (spirit of the people), to him the word "ruah" signifies an indefinite power of an unchangeable nature. We note in Ahad Ha-Am's writings a definite distinc-
tion between the words "ruah" and "cultura". In his opinion, "cultura" or culture is produced as a result of the People's own activity and creative effort, and, therefore, undergoes changes according to the needs of the times and the locale. The spirit of Judaism, on the other hand, has a quality of constancy which clearly relates it to the absolute.

Unfortunately, however, errors in translation of the original Hebrew text of Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy occurred. Some of his translators were under the impression that he used the words "ruah" or "cultura" interchangeably, and thus they did not hesitate to translate the phrase "spiritual Zionism" as "cultural Zionism." Such loose translation altered the meaning considerably. When Ahad Ha-Am speaks of the national spirit, it must not, as Leon Simon and others suggest, be equated with the national culture. The latter is only a vehicle through which the national spirit is manifested. Some translators, when converting Ahad Ha-Am's Hebrew into German, frequently used the word 'Volksgeist' (national culture) in the same connotation as 'Geist' (spirit). Ahad Ha-Am would not have condoned this indifference to his careful distinction between 'cultura' and 'ruah' in the original Hebrew text.

His reference to the Absolute Spirit, or God, as "the Ideal" also reveals Ahad Ha-Am to be in idealist. For example, in his essay Moses, he states that Moses dies "with the light of gladness on his face...as though embracing the ideal." The "ideal" evidently refers to the transcendental infinite
power. Another striking allusion to the absolute spirit is contained in an excerpt dealing with the importance of the spiritual center in Palestine. Hoping for the establishment of this center, Ahad Ha-Am expressed the belief that the Jewish People, on their arrival in the center, would be able to "attach themselves to the Ideal." This bears a close resemblance to Nachman Krochmal's concept (as defined by Julius Guttman) that:

the goal of the adoration of God was the unification of the human spirit with the divine spirit. Theoretically, religion was spiritual perception, and in its highest reach it was the grasp of the absolute spirit; practically it was the striving towards unification with this spirit so as to become identical with it.10

Ahad Ha-Am likens Judaism to a tree which undergoes changes yet in its essence remains an unchanging entity. Constancy is the keynote of intrinsic Judaism. The concept of evolution does not, in Ahad Ha-Am's writing, represent a philosophy of naturalism as has been imputed to him by certain critics. He was essentially an idealist, and in his philosophy, as in Krochmal's, the theory of evolution is utilized only to the extent of affirming that change occurs gradually. History is a developmental process and, similarly to biological change, displays no sudden leaps.

The very history of a People, Ahad Ha-Am maintains, is determined by that People's "will to exist":

History does not follow our program completely, but creates whatever it is destined to create, by virtue of this instinct that is within us, whether we recognize the nature of our work or whether it is easier for us to avoid this recognition. In either case, history is made by us, and it moves inexorably toward its goal through our actions. Its course, however, would be much longer and its process more difficult without the assistance of our intuitive insight.11
From this quotation, however, we must not assume that Ahad Ha-Am believes that the "will to exist" is a primary force controlling the destiny of the People. The "will to exist" as termed by Ahad Ha-Am is an instinct functioning within the People for the purpose of its perpetuation. In his formulation a People's history is directed by the national spirit operating through the group instinct for self-preservation. At the same time the leaders of the People, intuitively comprehending the intent of the national spirit, find it possible to straighten the otherwise tortuous course of the historical process.

This idealist interpretation of Ahad Ha-Am's "will to exist" becomes evident from his essay, A Nationalist Rabbi, in which Ahad Ha-Am describes the views of Rabbi Eliashberg. Ahad Ha-Am makes it clear that the rabbi's theories are in accord with the ideas expressed by Ahad Ha-Am himself. Summarizing the rabbi's pamphlet, Sefer Shevil Hazahav (Warsaw, 1897), Ahad Ha-Am highlights the concept that the lifegiving force directing the destiny of the Jewish People is the national will to exist. Ahad Ha-Am notes that the rabbi too regards the national will to exist as the motivating force for Jewish survival. It is interesting to observe, however, that this rabbi does not actually use the term "will to exist." Instead, he speaks of "the inner force for the uplifting of the nation."

In comparing his own "hefez hakiyum" (will to exist)
with the rabbi's "hakoah hapenimi lehaamadat haleom" (inner force for the uplifting of the nation), it is significant that Ahad Ha-Am introduces the rabbi's terminology with the words, "Or, in his language," thus drawing a distinct parallel between his own ideas and those of the rabbi. In short, Ahad Ha-Am equates his "hefez hakiyum" with the term used by the rabbi. The rabbi, steeped in traditional religious belief, obviously intended his phrase "hakoah hapenimi lehaamadat haleom" to mean the spiritual power of the Jewish People. It seems logical to assume that Ahad Ha-Am's "national will to exist" likewise signified a force flowing from the transcendental source.

In his analysis of Jewish history, Ahad Ha-Am observes, in the prolonged struggle for Jewish existence, one force that keeps the Jewish people from disintegrating: the "national will to live." In the process of this struggle, the people develop laws, ethics, and national treasures, which receive their particular forms in accordance with the dictates of the national spirit.

Ahad Ha-Am regards Jewish national culture as a protective organ, extending the analogy of nation and organism. In the efforts of the people to maintain it in spite of opposition, the People maintains itself:

The struggle for existence contains in itself a special benefit, in that it gives to every living creature in the course of its development its necessary weapons of self-defense: horns to the ox, wings to the bird, special instinct to the bee, good sense and intelligence to man - characteristics, manners,
and specific ways of life to each and every nation in accordance with its conditions and relations to other nations. In the same way our people also acquired, in its prolonged struggle for existence, characteristic manners, ways of life...which were and are able to protect it from the arrows of hatred and envy that aim to annihilate it.12

The national spirit thus provides the people with its own inderent cultural pattern to assure its survival among the nations.

In tracing the course of Jewish history, Ahad Ha-Am notes that, during the period of the First Jewish Commonwealth, the sense of national unity was so strong that individual happiness was commensurate with the happiness of the nation:

In all the commandments and laws, the blessings and the curses, which the Torah of Moses put before us, one aim is held constantly in view; the salvation of the entire nation in the land of its inheritance (be-eretz nahlatah). This aim takes little note of the happiness of the individual man. In its eyes every Israelite is but one limb of the nation of Israel, and the benefit which will accrue to the group is the reward of the deeds of the individual.13

The national consciousness began to falter with the destruction of the First Temple. The diminution of the sense of national unity brought the importance of the individual's fate to the fore. His happiness rather than that of the nation became important. The nationhood of Israel would have disintegrated were it not for the visions of the prophets and sages of that period. They applied the power of the Jewish religion to the aid of the weakening bonds of nationalism. During the Second Commonwealth religion and nationalism went hand in hand. Further destruction of the Second Jewish Commonwealth intensified the importance of the religious motif in national life. The Jewish religion, by adding prohibitions and
injunctions - the "fence about the law" - effectively kept the Jewish people apart from the gentile world surrounding it. The emphasis, nevertheless, shifted gradually from the ideal of the salvation of the nation to that of the salvation of the individual. A radical change took place in the heart of the people:

The love of the nation was no more the pure selfless love - and the national welfare was no more the ideal cause for which a member of the people would readily sacrifice his individual ambition. On the contrary, the main goal of the individual became from now on the attainment of his own individual success - temporal or eternal - and the success of the group was cherished by him only to the extent that he himself had a part in it. 14

The many catastrophes and constant wanderings to which the Jewish people were subjected in the subsequent centuries of Diaspora existence (causing endless anxiety in the heart of every individual Jew for the welfare of his own household) contributed to the further weakening of already faint national feeling.

Ahad Ha-Am in his essay The Negation of the Diaspora maintains that this national feeling is also weakened because of the foreign cultures surrounding us, in which our national possessions are being submerged. Granting that it is unlikely that the Jewish people will be completely assimilated, Ahad Ha-Am, nonetheless, felt that national unity will suffer in the Diaspora and we will become like scattered tribes, taking on the colorings and characteristics of language, institutions and culture of the various nations within which we dwell, and
consequently the intrinsic national consciousness will suffer.

**Spiritual Regeneration and Spiritual Center**

With the advent of the modern scientific age and the concomitant exodus of the Jewish people from the ghetto, there took place also the "exit of Judaism from the ghetto." The strong attachment to faith which had held the people together gave way to agonizing doubts. Now there was palpable danger that the people would lose its national consciousness and unity. Even if it did not entirely merge with the larger non-Jewish groups in the lands of the dispersion, it would at the very least disintegrate into separate tribes having little in common with each other.

Ahad Ha-Am felt that the only resolution of the "plight of Judaism" would be a concerted effort by dedicated men to bring about a national revival of the Jewish national spirit by its concentration in Palestine, the historic land of Jewry. He believed that it is impossible for the Jewish people to attain in the Diaspora its maximum creative life. It is therefore necessary for it to develop, he maintained, a spiritual center in Palestine to serve as the model Jewish community and to enrich and stimulate Jewish life everywhere.

Ahad Ha-Am took issue with Simon Dubnow's theory that the Jewish people could maintain their national identity without a spiritual center in Palestine. Ahad Ha-Am also realized that there would not be a major migration of the Jews in his
lifetime, for he believed that a majority of the Jews would remain in the Diaspora indefinitely. He insisted, however, that only by means of the radiating influence of the spiritual center in Palestine could the dispersed Jewish communities in the Diaspora maintain their national identity.

The Yiddish language and its literature, he argued, are not in themselves sufficient to assure the survival of the Jewish people. This language and its literature are based on too limited and short-lived an experience of the Jewish people. The nations of the world would not respect our people if it were based mainly on the Yiddish language and literature which were developed only recently out of the ghetto life in eastern Europe. They would more readily acknowledge the Jewish people if it reconstructed itself on the foundations of its ancient sacred tongue, culture and institutions. Besides, cultural autonomy is an impossible dream. Even the most liberal democratic countries do not tolerate cultural autonomy of any minority group. In a letter to Dubnow, dated May 29, 1907, Ahad Ha-Am stated:

...In my opinion the possibilities of national life for Jews in the diaspora are very limited. They can never satisfy our demands so far as to enable us to say that we are living as a nation in the fullest sense, and that there is ample scope for the Jewish spirit to develop and express itself in original creative work up to the limit of its capacity. 16

Simon Dubnow strongly resented Ahad Ha-Am's attitude toward Yiddish. Dubnow claimed that Yiddish as spoken by seven million Jews throughout Poland, Russia and throughout most of eastern Europe, and being the language of a vast
treasure of creative Jewish literature, cannot be waived aside. Granted that this language and literature is only about 400 years old, it still reflects the soul of European Jewry in all its manifestations of life. As to Ahad Ha-Am's question of what values will take the place of the crumbling ghetto walls, Dubnow answers:

Every period has its own architecture and the powerful vital instinct will unmistakably tell the people what style to use for building the wall of national autonomy which will replace the former religious "fence to fence", ...In any event, those who do not negate the Diaspora have no alternative but to direct their efforts toward building up the Diaspora on the basis of autonomy. The spiritual center in the land of Israel, while exerting a force of its own for a minority, will serve the majority only as one of the factors in strengthening our people. 17

To Ahad Ha-Am's argument that is is impossible to achieve complete autonomy even in the most enlightened countries for the Jewish people and that Diaspora Jewry is destined to gradually decline and to disintegrate if not for the spiritual center in Palestine, Dubnow had this to say:

...if the Diaspora cannot endure and it is destined to disintegrate, what point is there to furthering the growth of a center in Palestine? The very revival of the spiritual center in the land of Israel depends on the healthy national material which will stream into Palestine from the Diaspora; and where is this material to come from if external security for national development in the Diaspora will be lacking? If the Diaspora cannot live a full national life without the center in Palestine, then the latter cannot possibly exist without a national Diaspora. 18

It has been pointed out that the major unbridgeable difference of opinion between Ahad Ha-Am and Dubnow was on the question of Yiddish. It seems that the American Jewish
educators discussed in this study maintained that Ahad Ha-Am shared Dubnow's concept of "affirmation of the diaspora", since they themselves did. Be this as it may, Ahad Ha-Am did consider the existence of the Jewish center in Palestine as fundamental for Jewish survival.

Influence of Perez Smolenskin on Ahad Ha-Am

Perez Smolenskin (1842-1885), many of whose ideas formed the roots of Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy had also expressed a longing for a center in Palestine as a fulfillment of the messianic hope - the main source of the Jewish people's vitality. Yet Smolenskin, in contrast to Ahad Ha-Am, did not insist that the survival of the Jewish people depends entirely on the realization of this messianic hope in the foreseeable future. For even without land or language we are still a people, and can go on existing as such in the diaspora due to the power of the Torah which is the most authentic expression of our national spirit. In Smolenskin's view this unique feature of peoplehood holds true only for the Jewish people, for the Torah is much more than "religion" in the accepted sense of the word; Torah is a way of life. As Smolenskin defined it:

The Torah that the Lawgiver gave us is a Torah of truth, a Torah of life...for its foundation is in thought, and every person will study and understand it in accordance with the power of his intellect and the level of his spirit. 19

It seems that Smolenskin, in viewing the Jewish people from the spiritual perspective, echoed Nachman Krochmal's
philosophy of Judaism. Smolenskin, however, expressed these ideas in late 19th century rational terms, in contradistinction to Krochmal's metaphysical terminology.

Smolenskin pointed out that the Torah was not to be found in the sacred texts alone; it existed in the very consciousness of the people and was passed on from generation to generation. Although he believed that changes occur naturally due to the evolutionary process, he emphasized that the basic truth of the Torah is eternal, and that Jewish life is essentially spiritual. Thus, the Jewish religion is closely bound up with Jewish life and must change according to the needs of the times.

...Dogmas and laws that would be good for the members of the generation to which they are given, would become as chains that would deaden all freedom for the coming generation. ...It (Torah) will not change even though the generations change...since its foundation is in the spirit. Therefore it will be for all time the spirit of life and truth. 20

He points out that spirit is infinite whereas the creations of man are finite:

The work of man has beginning and end. One cannot envision God, who is the loftiest of all, as a picture or image that is limited. ...The pictures and images which are the work of man will not portray thought because thought has no limit or end. 21

Smolenskin maintained that the unique nature of Jewish peoplehood consists in its spirituality. In other words, the Jewish People is so constituted by virtue of this special phenomenon - its inherent spiritual quality - that its continued existence is assured provided that, by intensive education, the guiding principles of the Torah become the sus-
taining element of its daily life.

He advocated a synthesis of Torah and secular knowledge in the Jewish program of studies. His inspiration was Rabbi Eliyahu of Wilna, who approved the inclusion of both religious and modern scientific elements in the educational program. Smolenskin initiated most of the intrinsic ideas of national Jewish education that were later refined by Ahad Ha-Am and ultimately fashioned by the American Jewish educators into a meaningful program of Jewish education designed to foster the awakening and the cherishing of the national consciousness in the American environment.

Ahad Ha-Am's Attitude toward Political Zionism

Ahad Ha-Am was often criticized as an antagonist of the Jewish State. His answer, as stated in an essay entitled "The Jewish State and the Flight of Jews" clarifies his approach to this question.

In a word: Chibbath Zion, no less than "Zionism" wants a Jewish State and believes in the possibility of the establishment of a Jewish State in the future. But while "Zionism" looks to the Jewish State to provide a remedy for poverty, complete tranquility and national glory, Chibbath Zion knows that our State will not give us all these things until "universal Righteousness is enthroned and holds sway over nations and States"; and it looks to a Jewish State to provide only a "secure refuge" for Judaism and a cultural bond of unity for our nation. "Zionism", therefore, begins its work with political propaganda; Chibbath Zion begins with national culture, because only through the national culture and for its sake can a Jewish State be established in such a way as to correspond with the will and the needs of the Jewish people."
Many Zionists labelled Ahad Ha-Am's critique of Herzl's formulations for the Jewish State as one-sided, pointing out that these formulations included also a program for Jewish cultural activity. Ahad Ha-Am who was a delegate to the first Zionist Congress, viewed Herzl's attention to the cultural aspect as less than adequate for the revival of the Jewish national spirit.

Dr Theodor Herzl, in the above-mentioned address, indeed also said that "Zionism desires the return to Judaism before we return to the Jewish State"; but these pleasant words are so far removed from the deeds that we are compelled to arrive at the strange conclusion that we have here no more than a beautiful rhetorical expression.

...If it were truly the aim of Zionism to return the heart of the people to Judaism— to make them not only a political people but also a people that lives in harmony with its inner spirit— then the First Zionist Congress would not have postponed the problems of national culture, the problems of language and literature, the problem of education and the dissemination of national traditions until 'the eve of the Sabbath at dusk' (until the last hour), after the end of all the discussions pertaining to Rechtlich, or Voelker-Rechtlich, to the time that all the assembled were already overexhausted and were eager to see the sun was setting. Then they set aside a brief hour for the address of one of the members on all these great questions that are truly at the core of everything and without which all the rest is, indeed, vain altogether. Naturally, this address had to be delivered hurriedly and abridged; for a detailed discussion, there was no time. 'From above' it was suggested to turn over these 'worries' to a committee of some writers, and all the assembled exclaimed 'Amen!' just in order to finish and get done. 23

In order to establish the spiritual Jewish center in Palestine, culminating in the sovereign Jewish State, Ahad Ha-Am felt it is necessary to develop within the people a
state of mind concentrated on the central ideal and dedicated to it. To further this program, he organized the Society Agudath Bene Moshe. The Bene Moshe, according to Ahad Ha-Am, should have as a primary goal the implementation of Jewish ethics in the life of the Jewish people as exemplified by the life of Moses.

Ahad Ha-Am also criticized Yehuda Leib Gordon (1831-1892), whom he incorrectly accused of advocating a delay in the settlement of Palestine until the proper time in the future. Alluding to Gordon, Ahad Ha-Am noted that:

One of the great men of the generation went out and preached publicly that Pedut nafshenu kedemet l'geulatenu --our spiritual redemption precedes our physical one; that it is not fitting to work for the 'Love of Zion' until the spirit of the people will free itself from the inner chains that hold up its growth and development, and that, therefore, the enlightened of the people should resign themselves, for the time being, from this matter (settlement in Palestine) the time of which has not yet arrived; and to return to their negative work with which they occupied themselves until now...

It is true that our people, in its present moral condition, is not ready for any great national work; the concentration of the people will not result in any realization without a long preparation preceding it; but this preparation is incapable of being realized, because the negative (approach) will not result in the positive ethical and social qualities which we are lacking; and it is not necessary because it is possible for it to arrive in a more natural way by the 'Love of Zion' itself...for the goal of concentration of the spirit, this little settlement is not to be minimized. It is great enough, for one ideal colony is better than ten defective ones.24

Ahad Ha-Am obviously overlooked Gordon's explicit recommendation for a concentrated effort to settle in Palestine, at the same time that the Jewish people are being educated for their
national rebirth. In his essay Ezra V'Ezra, (Hameliz: 13, 1882, 238-9), Gordon himself stated the following:

At the time that you are seeking aid of silver and gold for the poor of our people in order to take them out from their physical poverty and to redeem them a physical redemption—*at that same time*, you must seek out amidst us, sacred men like Ezra described...who would improve what is necessary to improve and found and perfect the House of the Nation...on permanent and fitting foundations for the needs of life in our days...in order that our (physical and spiritual) redemption...spring forth and blossom in one stalk. 25

Gordon, furthermore, maintained that the Jewish people must first throw off the shackles of outdated laws before it could effect a National Renaissance, both in the diaspora and in Palestine. That is, the Jews must first desalt themselves from the outdated preservatives which, although they had served a useful function during Ghetto life, became a hindrance to the free expression of the Jewish spirit during the modern age of emancipation. "Many of the customs---many of the stringent restrictive laws---the educational programs that were established and made the norm for us for generations," must be either modified or replaced. He considers that "all of us feel and know that the road of our people on which our leaders guided them in days of clouds and fog is no longer a path fit to be trod in the light of life in an intelligent ascent." (Ibid., 12, 237).

Speaking of Jewish education in his times, Gordon claimed that:

The programs of education, the general outlook of the masses of people on life and their thoughts and concepts in regard to other peoples, is not civilized
and is not the way to lead to the perfection of the
humankind. What our leaders and guides did for us
by increasing all the fences was all for the good in
its time in order to establish for us a name and a
remnant among barbaric peoples amidst whom we dwelt.
(Ibid., 137).

Thus, Gordon anticipated Ahad Ha-Am's identical position
in respect to the need for the simultaneous education in the
diaspora, through the means of de-salting, or as Ahad Ha-Am
termed it, de-ossification; and the well-organized settlement
of a spiritual center in Palestine.

The Primacy of Ethics in Judaism

The Jewish national spirit in its most ideal form, accord­
ing to Ahad Ha-Am, is represented by its unique national ethic.
In Moses, Ahad Ha-Am visualized the personification of the es­
sential elements of this ethic: absolute truth and absolute
justice. In his essay "Moses", Ahad Ha-Am writes:

The Prophet has two fundamental qualities, which
distinguish him from the rest of mankind. First,
he is a man of truth. ...Secondly, the Prophet is
an extremist. He concentrates his whole heart and
mind on his ideal, in which he finds the goal of
life and to which he is determined to make the whole
world do service, without exception. ...From these
two fundamental characteristics there results a
third, which is a combination of the other two:
namely, the supremacy of absolute righteousness in
the Prophet's soul, in his every work and action. As
a man of truth he cannot help being also a man of
justice or righteousness. ...Thus I picture the
Prophet in his purest form. Such, in essentials, were
all the true Prophets of Israel...but the type is most
perfectly realized in the ideal picture of the "lord
of the Prophets" (moses).26

Ahad Ha-Am asserts that ethics is the essence of the
particular spirit of a people. Thus each nation develops a
particular ethics in accord with its national spirit. The Jewish people especially created their own unique ethics by virtue of having lived a solitary existence.

...ethics in itself...is...perhaps more than all cultural subjects a national possession in which there is contained the impressions of the life of the people and its position at all times, and in it (the ethics) is noticeable the nature of the national spirit and the manner of its relationship to the outside world and the conditions of life that are continually changing. And if this is true with all other enlightened nations who are not so far removed from one another in their characteristics, their conditions and their history, how much more it is true of the Jewish people, who from the beginning of its being, has been a "people that dwells alone".

Some leaders of the Jewish people, in Ahad Ha-Am's opinion, misunderstand the true nature of this unique national ethic. He criticizes in particular Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau who, in their dramas, place their heroes in duels in order to redeem their Jewish honor. Ahad Ha-Am asserts that the barbaric custom of dueling is foreign to the ethical conceptions of Judaism and that the imputation of cowardice deserves but a disdainful glance. He writes that these plays are:

...opposed to the foundations of our national ethics - in other words not only to the religious law but also to the essence of the ethical impulse that lives within our heart. ...the true Jew whose national ethics is motivating the very cords of his heart knows and feels within himself that a culture of thousands of years lifts him very high above this barbaric act which is a remnant of the savagery and cruelty of ancient days and his impulse of honor is still intact and is not damaged even a bit by the derogation of some boar. He will answer then with a look of disdain and go on his way.

Until the nineteenth century, the scattered Jewish
community was held together with self-realization and identity through a common belief in the sanctity of the Torah as a document offered by God to it, his chosen people. Ahad Ha-Am maintains that even now, when many in Jewish community have faltered in their belief in divine revelation, the Jewish national ethics may serve as a unifying factor, a mainstay of national self-fulfillment and survival. He asserts thus that it is possible for the Jewish people to fashion its daily life in accord with its common belief in the ethical system, even if at first practiced in a mechanical manner until the people become habituated in this mode of life.

...ethics is a direct relationship between the inner spirit and outer life. And if a man becomes used thus, to relate himself to all life matters in agreement with the foundations of national ethics, even if he does it first in an artificial manner, mechanically, he will end up to feel in his heart a living fountain from which national ethics flows and then this relationship will become for him a natural matter that comes out by itself from his inner self. 29

In his essay "National Ethics", Ahad Ha-Am indicates that, though ethics and religion are usually associated in the tradition of the people, their sources are independent. Religion lends a sense of authority to ethical prescription, and thus acts as a steadying and strengthening influence on the moral conduct of the people. On the other hand, religion, especially in its primitive form, acts as a retarding factor on the free development of the ethical impulse. Ethical concepts tend to develop more rapidly than their religious
...ethics, as all cultural possessions, was not given to man perfected but it continuously is developing gradually from generation to generation. In the beginning of its development, in those early days that it first encounters the law it still exists in a very low condition. The ethical impulse does not yet revolt then against most activities that are considered at a later time as serious ethical transgressions and, needless to say, that it is not exacting yet about the purity of character and matters of the heart. And this ethical context whose essence is still lacking is thus "the ideal". It becomes realized in the form of the most primitive godhood...therefore when the ethical urge in later days reaches a higher level... it is impossible that the law should not stand as an opponent since this (law) is guarding that deity as sacred and pure with all its ethical qualities that the first generations ascribed to it.

The traditional view holds that ethics developed from Torah law. In Ahad Ha-Am's opinion, however, the ethical impulse came first; it was God-given, an intuition planted by God in the heart of man. Thus, Kant's 'categorical imperative' is basic to Ahad Ha-Am's theory of ethics.

Yet many students of Ahad Ha-Am, due in some cases to superficial reading on their part, and in other instances to Ahad Ha-Am's neglect to make his views explicit, misinterpreted his position and identified him with schools of thought such as naturalism, pragmatism, or instrumentalism. In addition, as a result of the redaction of his letters (although executed under his own supervision) vital information which could shed light on his essential philosophy is often missing.

For example, in a letter addressed by Ahad Ha-Am to David
Neumark (Odessa, March 22nd, 1899) Ahad Ha-Am's own position is not clearly revealed:

...As regards your theory of ethics, you seem to me to overlook that the belief in a categorical imperative is itself a fact which, whether we ourselves believe in it or not, demands explanation as a historical phenomenon. Even if (in your own words) "we imagine that the modern mind does not recognize moral actions," there still remains the question how, as a matter of history, men came to believe in the existence of the moral imperative.

What is Ahad Ha-Am's position? Is he an idealist or a positivist? Does he himself believe in the categorical imperative, or does he agree with David Neumark that the categorical imperative is not in keeping with modern times?

Actually it is possible to give opposite interpretations to this passage. From a cursory reading one might assume that Ahad Ha-Am agrees with David Neumark that the categorical imperative is out of date for modern man. However, upon closer examination, and also taking into consideration his idealist position, as has been noted in his other writings, one is inclined to infer that Ahad Ha-Am believes in the categorical imperative. It is apparent, of course, that Ahad Ha-Am, looking at the matter from the historical point of view, was primarily concerned about how the moral imperative became a part of our culture. Yet, had Ahad Ha-Am considered the moral imperative as untenable with modern canons of thought, he would surely have stated this explicitly.

We further recall that Leon Simon mistakenly interpreted Ahad Ha-Am as a biological evolutionist. However, since it was
Herbert Spencer's idealist views which mainly accounted for Ahad Ha-Am's approach to evolution, it would seem that Simon misunderstood Spencer as well. Spencer explicitly states:

Thus the First Cause must be in every sense perfect, complete, total: Including within itself all power and transcending all law. Or to use the established word, it must be Absolute. 32

In a similar vein, Ahad Ha-Am states that "God is the only ideal of absolute perfection." 33

Carefully exposing the inconsistency of the relativist viewpoint, Spencer logically proves the necessity of the non-relative concept:

In the very assertion that all knowledge, properly so-called, is Relative, there is involved the assertion that there exists a Non-Relative. In each step of the argument by which this doctrine is established, the same assumption is made. From the necessity of thinking in relations, it follows that the Relative is itself inconceivable except as related to a real Non-Relative. Unless a real Non-Relative or Absolute be postulated, the Relative itself becomes absolute, and so brings the argument to a contradiction. And on watching our thoughts we have seen how impossible it is to get rid of the consciousness of an Actuality lying behind Appearances; and how, from this impossibility results our indestructible belief in that Actuality. 34

Spencer's idealism emerges clearly from the above statement. Ahad Ha-Am's Spencerian evolutionism, therefore, must not be regarded as a denial of idealism. His philosophy, like Spencer's was primarily based on the assumption of the Absolute.

Jewish National Ethics as Related To Spencer's Ethical Theory

Indicating his sympathy with Spencer's view on ethics,
Ahad Ha-Am noted that Spencer envisioned a time in which the ethical sense,

...will become an instinct in the heart of the foremost representatives of humanity to such a degree that they will not have to deliberate in order to distinguish which of their deeds are in accord with absolute justice, but with one glance, with the certainty of an instinct, they will perceive the slightest deflection from justice; and the influence of personal relationships and social attitudes will not make any impression on them. 35

In his book, The Study of Sociology, Spencer presents a detailed analysis of the ethical impulse. He points out that the human species is, for the time being, limited in its grasp of the ultimate goal of complete social altruism. In the imperfect organization of present-day societies, certain negative elements are detrimental to the development of the intrinsic ethical impulse. Spencer classifies each of these elements as a bias—for example, the class bias, the bias of patriotism and also the theological, the educational, and political bias. In discussing the theological bias, he makes this observation:

The theological bias under its general form, tending to maintain a dominance of the subordination-element of religion over its ethical element—tending, therefore, to measure actions by their formal congruity with a creed rather than by their intrinsic congruity with human welfare, is unfavourable to that estimation of worth in social arrangements which is made by tracing out results. 36

Comparing the injurious effect of the anti-theological bias, Spencer draws attention to the fact that it may also be a contributing factor in hampering sound ethical judgement:

On the other hand, the reactive bias distorts conceptions of social phenomena by under-valuing religious systems. It generates an unwillingness to see that a religious system is a normal and essential factor in
every evolving society; that the specialties of it have certain fitmesses to the social conditions; and that while its form is temporary its subsistence is permanent. 37

Ahad Ha-Am considered Jewish religious dogma to be an unnatural outgrowth of Jewish Diaspora life. In his opinion, dogma could result only in stultifying the free development of the ethical impulse. Ethics being, as Ahad Ha-Am claimed, a completely separate branch in the expression and progress of the human spirit, it follows that the ethical impulse should be emancipated from theological dogma. This at once brings to mind a similar statement by Spencer:

Institutions, old and new, home and foreign, are considered as congruous or incongruous with particular sets of dogmas, and are liked or disliked accordingly; the obvious result being that, since the sets of dogmas differ in all times and places, the sociological judgements affected by them must inevitably be wrong in all cases but one, and probably in all cases. 38

Ahad Ha-Am implies that it is ethics, rather than law, which best expresses the Jewish national spirit. Ethics, although given religious authority by the law which ascribes to ethics a divine source, is in a continuous state of development independent of law.

...law and ethics, are two trees of life that are completely separate from one another and...to each one there is a separate root in the spirit of man and...only after these trees grow, and develop, each one separately, they become confused together and enter into one another's domain. 39

To Ahad Ha-Am the law is only an outer garb of the true national spirit which is contained in the national ethics.
In the outer form of the law is hidden a more honorable branch of national life - the national ethics, that flows from the people's spirit and its historical life, - (since we recognize this) don't we have the right to demand from all those that bear aloft the national banner, that they would put their heart to know the true national ethics and attempt to harmonize their life with it. 40

Ahad Ha-Am concludes that "...national ethics is a great and perfect Torah in itself that needs study and use."41

The Historical School

Krochmal's philosophy of history may be regarded as the basis for Ahad Ha-Am's historical approach to Judaism. In Krochmal's philosophy, history reveals the evolving design of the Absolute Spirit. The historical development of Jewish law consists principally in discovering therein the manifestation of the Jewish spirit which, according to Krochmal, is part and parcel of the Absolute Spirit.

Ahad Ha-Am, like Krochmal, maintained that a fundamental attitude toward man's life and his purpose is handed down from generation to generation. This tradition is the Torah in its essence. In the view of both these thinkers, the historical development of Judaism consists of a slow process of refinement during the course of which the mind of man gradually divines absolute truth, which for Krochmal, stems from the Absolute Spirit. It is not merely by chance, therefore, that Ahad Ha-Am uses the adjective "absolute" to describe the qualities of truth and justice; through this deliberate choice
of terminology he seeks to relate his theories to the idealist philosophy which posits absolute categories.

Krochmal considered the historical setting of a law extremely significant, for each particular law performed a vital function in its own era and environment. "The study and interpretation of historical documents differs in each age in accordance with the conditions of each age." 42 It is the scholar's duty "to interpret and to investigate each matter in relation to its proper time of composition." 43 This statement clearly defines the historical approach in Krochmal's philosophy. He insisted that every law, especially those that exhibit accretions to the essence of divine truth, must be examined from the perspective of its origin.

In the same vein Ahad Ha-Am emphasized that it is a mistake for people of modern times to judge antiquated laws by present standards. One document may be given any number of varied interpretations, each depending on the particular historical period and locale in which the interpreter lives.

Krochmal had begun to apply scientific methods to the investigation of the Scriptures. He even made the bold suggestion that it should not be considered an act of blasphemy if an examiner of the sacred writings were to discover that in some cases their divine origin had been erroneously assumed. For example, he pointed out that it had been proven that certain psalms which had been predated and ascribed to King David,
had actually been composed in the post-exilic period. In Drochmal's opinion, such discoveries implied no irreverence for the past; at the same time we must not feel irreparably bound to traditions which do not meet the requirements of our own generation.

Ahad Ha-Am agreed that all human thoughts are conditioned by the character of the thinker's environment, and that, as a result, "many of the sacred truths of one generation will become the absurd follies of the next." Although absolute truth, the essence of the Torah, does not change, dogmatic religious laws cannot be considered valid for all time.

A third dimension to Krochmal's historical approach to Judaism was added by Ahad Ha-Am. He pointed out that only the interpreter with a genuine gift of empathy can fathom the true meaning of a text. Constructive criticism implies understanding, not condemnation. Although one need not feel bound to outdated laws and institutions, yet an empathetic analysis of these laws and of the circumstances which prompted them leads to profound understanding and respect for the past. As Ahad Ha-Am said: "Bible, Talmud and Shulhan Aruch are simply three different expressions of the genius of our people, each reflecting the circumstances and the requirements of a different epoch in its history." 45

In his discussion of the historical method, Ahad Ha-Am does not specifically mention Nachman Krochmal; yet a striking similarity of approach is apparent. This approach is aptly summed up by Ahad Ha-Am:
Thus the historical method has done more than all the most cogent arguments of the iconoclasts to emancipate the human mind from its bondage to the past. When we re-live, as it were, the lives of bygone ages, enter into their thoughts, and understand their psychology, we no longer regard it as a reflection on them that their beliefs and their ways do not entirely square with our ideas and our requirements. Hence we can respect the ancients without being compelled invariably to follow in their footsteps. Every generation has its own needs, its own truths. It was right for the ancients to think and act as they did in their time; it is equally right for us to think and act as we do in the different conditions of our own time. 46

As we have noted, Ahad Ha-Am adds profound psychological insight to the historical method of analyzing ancient beliefs and customs. In accordance with this position he maintains that one should not criticize obsolete Torah law which seems to be out of harmony with the times, for:

...it is a mistake to suppose that this wall of Jericho can be brought down by a blast of the trumpet. The wall has a powerful defense in the sentiment of reverence for the past, and the sound of the trumpet only stirs the defenders to greater feats of valour. 47

Likewise he asserts that the Shulhan Arukh, though apparently not needed today, was necessary at the time of its composition by Joseph Karo in order to serve as a unifying bond for the people who lived under oppression in the ghettos:

The Jews needed a rule of life, and they could not find one in learned discussions of purely historical interest, or in debatable expressions of opinion. What they needed was precisely the strong hand of a rigid religious code, with its fixed and unalterable laws and precepts, to regulate every detail of their lives. ...it is perfectly obvious that there is no longer any widespread demand for an iron code. Even those among us who meticulously observe every precept of the Shulhan Arukh do so only out of subservience to the past. If the code had not existed, the present generation would certainly not have invented it. 49
Ahad Ha-Am considers the genuine expression of the Jewish spirit to be not in the codification of the law but in the "Torah of the Heart". He distinguishes between "People of the Book" who, during exile in the Diaspora, are frozen in heart and enslaved to the codified book which they fear to change in accordance with the needs of the times, and "Literary People" who, in the authentic period of the Prophets and sages of the first and second Jewish commonwealth, freely created the book in accord with the needs of the times. This was the "Torah of the Heart" - the heart which would revolt against static law or customs that conflict with the spirit of the times.

For example: the Biblical law of "an eye for an eye" was felt by the more developed moral sense of a later age to be savage and unworthy of a civilized nation; and at that time the moral judgment of the people was still the highest tribunal. Consequently it was regarded as obvious that the written word, which was also authoritative, must have meant "the value of an eye for an eye", that is to say, a penalty in money and not in kind.

But this state of things did not endure. The Oral Law (which is really the inner law), the law of the moral sense was itself reduced to writing and fossilized; and the moral sense was left with only one clear and firm conviction - that of its own utter impotence and its eternal subservience to the written word. 49 * (See below)

While the Rabbis of the earlier part of the Talmud were bold enough to reinterpret the literal meaning of the

* The above is strikingly similar to the theory of M.L Lillienblum ("Orhot Hatalmud"- Hamelek, 1867/8) who maintained that the Talmud consists of an adaptation of the law to the needs of life. He appealed to the rabbis of his time to be aware of this flexible quality of the law and to permit modification accordingly.
text, later Rabbis in Diaspora exile chained themselves to the book. Ahad Ha-Am offers two examples of the latter. The first is a poem by Y. L. Gordon which portrays the plight of a woman who was granted a writ of divorce from a man named Hillel (Hey yod lamed lamed). The letter yod was erroneously omitted in this writ which was therefore invalidated by the Rabbi who examined it for certification. In the meantime Hillel was lost at sea. Thus a new writ could not be issued. Gordon concludes his poem, "On the Edge of the Yod", with a note of synicism, describing the cruelty of the Rabbi who decreed that this poor woman remain a grass widow throughout her remaining years. The second example is a story by Israel Zangwill in which a young woman is about to marry the man she loves who is a Cohen (a descendant of the priestly family of Aaron). Just before the wedding day it is discovered that the girl was once the victim of a hoax when a prankster put a ring on her finger in front of two witnesses and pronounced the wedding formula. Thus the Rabbi refused to officiate at the wedding with the Cohen because he considered her already legally married to the prankster. A divorce would not help because a Cohen may not marry a divorcee. Zangwill concludes the story with the father of the girl saying, with a sigh of relief, "Thank God we were spared this terrible mistake." In these two examples Ahad Ha-Am sees "People of the Book" responding to the codified law as they would to a natural disaster or a law of fate. He attempts to show that it was the norm
of exiled Diaspora Judaism to be enslaved to the codified law and its minutiae; that the Rabbis were only reflecting the frozen spirit of the people and of the times.

Where the natural play of heart and mind is thus stifled, we cannot expect to find self-assertion or strength of purpose in any business outside the field of the written work. Logic, experience, common sense and moral feeling are alike powerless to lead men into new paths towards a goal of their own choice. Inevitable, as our experience has shown, this general condition puts obstacles in the way of the solution of any and every one of our problems. It has long been obvious to thinking men that there is no hope for any particular measure of improvement unless the general condition is put right first of all. 50

Ahad Ha-Am advocates that the Jewish people throw off the yoke of the book and create a new heart through educational, literary and spiritual effort. He maintains that true Zionism cannot be realized without preparation of the heart. In this formulation Zionism is Judaism at its best.

This is the conception of Judaism on which our education and our literature must be based. We must revitalize the idea of the national renaissance and use every possible means to strengthen its hold and deepen its roots, until it becomes an organic element in the Jewish consciousness and an independent dynamic force. Only in this way, as it seems to me, can the Jewish soul be freed from its shackles and regain contact with the broad stream of life without having to pay for its freedom by the sacrifice of its individuality. 51

Upon a superficial reading of Ahad Ha-Am's discussions of the methods of the regeneration of the heart, one may assume that he advocated deliberate changes in the Jewish tradition rather than the view which he generally posits — that of an evolving change arising from inner necessity in accordance
with the spirit of the times. In the essay "Words of Peace," he goes to great length to repair such misinterpretation of his position. He reassures Rabbi Johathan Eliasberg that he never intends to manipulate deliberately the accepted codified Jewish laws:

...I myself do not believe at all in the possibility of amending the law in an artificial way. Whoever says to amend the law is in my eyes the one who seeks to cool a fire. ...The law is the law as long as its adherents believe in its divine source, whereas the idea of amendment could arrive in the heart only after this faith has been lost... 52

He further states that the Jewish reform movement is unlike other reform movements, including our own Karaites. Whereas other reformers attempt to distinguish between sacred scripture and profane additions, the Jewish reformers attempt to amend that which they admit to be sacred tradition. As to the Jewish reformers, Ahad Ha-Am observes that

they contradict themselves in an astonishing and strange manner, and it is not to be wondered at that their reforms bring the nullification of religion generally, since in truth the concept of amendment really includes in it the concept of denial, and whoever comes to reform really has nothing left to reform. 53

Ahad Ha-Am insists that any deliberate manipulation of the law is artificial and therefore invalid. In his opinion, the only manner in which the law changes validly is though the intuitive, unconscious process in which the liberated "Torah of the Heart" follows its natural course:

It is enough for the intuitive general feeling of the heart to develop in an unconscious manner by a change for the good in our human and national life until it will return and become uplifted to a level of a free ethical authority. 54
In his essay "Jewish and Christian Ethics" Ahad Ha-Am's position in regard to the God-concept may be clearly delineated:

If the heathen of the old story, who wished to learn the whole of the Torah while he stood on one foot, had come to me, my reply would have been: "'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness!'--that is the whole Torah, and the rest is commentary". 55

In order to understand this negative formulation, one must realize that Ahad Ha-Am patterned his metaphysical viewpoint chiefly on that of Maimonides. The latter, following in the medieval tradition, was especially concerned with a definition of God that would preserve the absolute infinity of God. Among the medieval Philosophers, particularly the mutakalimim, there were even some who were wary of ascribing to God any positive attributes at all, for they felt that a positive attribute, stemming from the finite, human mind, must of necessity be finite itself. Maimonides, although not so extreme in his view, shared with them the fear of defining God in such a way as to delimit his absolute nature.

In our study we are not concerned with Ahad Ha-Am's differentiation between Judaism and Christianity. Our problem is to glean from Ahad Ha-Am's writings a clear understanding of his conception of God. In the essay which we have quoted above, Ahad Ha-Am was attempting to establish the position that the Jewish conception of God is abstract and is thus in contradistinction to the Christian and Mohammedan religions which ascribe a human or anthropomorphic form to God. The
very fact, however, of his quoting the Second Commandment suggests that he accepted the ontological God of the First Commandment which directly precedes his quotation. In this Commandment the reference to the God of Israel "who took thee out from the land of Egypt" contains the idea of God's concern with man's history and destiny. This is the traditional conception of an ontological whose divine providence guides the course of mankind.

The purpose and program of the Bene Moshe Society, which Ahad Ha-Am organized, was the awakening of the national Jewish consciousness and the building of an ideal community in Palestine which in turn would extend its influence upon Jewish life in the Diaspora. Each new member of the Society was obliged to take an initiation oath. This oath was beyond a doubt approved by Ahad Ha-Am and may possibly even have been composed by him. Thus the words "I swear by the God of Israel", which were contained in the oath, are convincing evidence that Ahad Ha-Am accepted the traditional God-idea of the Jewish people.

In the essay "Anticipations and Survival", Ahad Ha-Am discussed the nature of the dissemination of ideas among people in time and place:

Hence, when the abstract idea of the Unity of God arose and spread among the Israelites in early days, it could not possibly be anything but an anticipation. Only a select few had a true and living comprehension of the idea, compelling the heart to feel and the will to follow. The masses, although they heard the idea preached times without number by their Prophets, and thought that they believed in it, had only an external knowledge of it; and their belief was an isolated belief, not linked with actual life, and without influence in practice. 56
This passage has been selected by some of the investigators of Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy as tangible evidence of his belief in God as an ontological Being. For instance, David Neumark considers that the word "nolad" (was born), used by Ahad Ha-Am in his discussion of the abstract idea of the Unity of God, is proof that Ahad Ha-Am posited an ontological existence of God beyond time and space. Just as an embryo exists in the womb before birth, so the God of Israel existed before he emerged in the consciousness of the people. Neumark further points out that the idea, were it not absolute reality, could not have taken hold in the minds of the select few unless sociological conditions so indicated. Since these conditions were not yet prevalent in the Prophetic period, he maintains that the God-idea could become manifest in man only if the idea were an ever-existent, Absolute Reality.

In a letter to Ahad Ha-Am a man stated that he did not follow the traditional Jewish faith but that he loved his people, his literature and all the Jewish spiritual possessions. He wished to know whether he could still be considered a genuine member of the Jewish people. Although Ahad Ha-Am identified his man as a national-pantheist, he declared him to be a good national Jew. Noting Ahad Ha-Am's praise of the man, a number of interpreters labeled Ahad Ha-Am himself a national-pantheist. As we have already shown, however, in our analysis of his God-concept, Ahad Ha-Am was not a pantheist; but rather a believer in the God of Israel who was in all likelihood identified by
him with (in Krochmal's terminology) the Absolute Spirit.

In the essay "Torah from Zion" Ahad Ha-Am expressed his views regarding an ethical Jew who neither believed in an ontological God nor cherished his national possessions. As to whether this man, who lived in Israel and spoke the Hebrew language, could be considered a national Jew, Ahad Ha-Am answered as follows:

Therefore a national Jew even if he denies God as an ontological entity may not say: I have no part in the God of Israel, in that historical force that kept our people alive and influenced the nature of the spirit and the process of its life in the course of thousands of years. Whoever in truth does not have a part in the God of Israel, who does not feel within himself any closeness to this "upper world" in which our fathers invested their brains and their hearts in the course of generations and from which they drew their their ethical strength - he could be a good man, but a national Jew he is not. 57

From this statement some critics have ascribed to Ahad Ha-Am a functionalist approach in his God-concept. In this formulation God becomes manifest as he functions in history. Actually, however, this may have been a misunderstanding of Ahad Ha-Am's remarks, for he himself may have believed in an ontological God; and in any case, never rejected the idea. His advice to the freethinker was merely an effort to demonstrate that even the agnostic can be accepted in the Jewish national fold, providing the agnostic recognized the God-concept as the motivating power in Jewish history.

The ontological God, according to Ahad Ha-Am, becomes known to man by the process of evolving revelation. This is in agreement with Maimonides' theory that the communication
of God with man takes place as an expression of intellectual conceptualization. Later, Nachman Krochmal, in keeping with the idealist philosophies, had conceived of revelation as a mental God-man encounter. To Ahad Ha-Am as well, God is pure intellect and reaches man only through the mind. In order to meet the limited comprehension of the ancient Israelites, the Biblical writers resorted to an anthropomorphic presentation of the God-man encounter, but the true medium of communication of God with man is the intellect.

Ahad Ha-Am notes that in Judaism there is a preference for the abstract. This tendency is supported by the theory that man, with his finite mind, cannot truly conceive the infinity of God except in terms of abstraction. Ahad Ha-Am comments:

What essentially distinguishes Judaism from other religions is its absolute determination to make the religious and moral consciousness independent of any definite human form, and to attach it without any mediating term to an abstract incorporeal ideal. 58

In Ahad Ha-Am's concept, God is the abstract ideal of absolute perfection, and it is through the knowledge of God that the human and the divine are united.

Intrinsic National Possessions

The Jewish national spirit, according to Ahad Ha-Am, finds its most authentic expression through Tanakh, Hebrew language and Hebrew literature. In the essay "Torah from Zion", Ahad Ha-Am emphasizes the importance of these expressions, recapitulating
his definition of a good national Jew as one who "...loves his people, its literature and all his spiritual possessions."

Ahad Ha-Am asserts that just as the national Jew may not completely divorce himself from the God-idea, neither may he divorce himself from relation to the holy scriptures as a sacred national possession. A national Jew must relate himself to the Tanakh with:

...a feeling of special closeness that enfolds national sanctity, a feeling from which thousands of delicate threads come out and are continuously drawn from epoch to epoch to the depth of the distant past. This spiritual closeness is not equal to what a person feels for just any book whose contents or form he loves. And all this is not only because the Tanakh is the book in which he finds the incarnation of our national spirit in the early stage... it is this hypnosis that lifted the Tanakh from the level of an historic monument of a certain period to the level of an historic force of all the periods; it (the Tanakh) is an essential part of the national "I" which could not be imagined without it: the holy scriptures in the religious and national sense at the same time. ...Only a complete atroph of the national sentiment could bring about a "liberation" of the Jew (from the Tanakh).

Ahad Ha-Am believes that the most authentic expression of the Jewish national spirit is to be found in the Jewish life and times of the first commonwealth as depicted in the Tanakh. Thus he regards the Tanakh as the primary source of the ideal Jewish self-awakening. By making the Tanakh a central theme in his life the modern Jew may identify himself with the essence of his national spirit. Aside from methodological criticisms that Ahad Ha-Am offers the teacher of Tanakh of the Gymnasiuim in Jaffa, Dr. Ben Zion Mosenson, he endorses the teacher's theory of the importance of Tanakh in the life of
the Jewish people. He quotes Dr. Mosenson:

This book (the Tanach) is the sole mirror in which is reflected our illustrious life of the past, and for a people poor and destitute, a wandering people without land and language, oppressed and crushed by the environment - this is the only source of aspiration for a different life, a life of freedom and honor.... All the life of the free people in its land with all its light and shadow is projected before the eyes...by the study of the Tanach...there will be born in the mind...the comparison between the picture of then and the Diaspora life now; and the response of feelingful heart would imperceptibly be drawn toward the rays of light that are shining from the distant past into the darkness of the strange soil. 61

The Tanakh then, in Ahad Ha-Am's consideration, holds the highest position of the expressions of the Jewish national spirit. Through study of the Tanakh the Jew may find his deepest identification with his people, its heritage, and thereby, himself.

To Ahad Ha-Am, the national language best portrays the inner world of a people. Hebrew is not only a vehicle of expression and communication; without it the whole thought and emotional world of a people and its national spirit would be non-existent. He writes:

A national language does not mean at all the language in which the people speak...for in order that a language be lifted to the level of a national language it is not enough for it to be a "Mother tongue", but it need contain with this also the spiritual treasure of the people from generation to generation. 62

Ahad Ha-Am claims that even those Jews who do not speak or read the Hebrew language intuitively feel it is the national language. Speaking of the Jews in eastern Europe who used Yiddish as their vernacular, Ahad Ha-Am writes:
...their hearts and souls, their sacred feelings, their joys and sorrows, their tears and sighs, all that was considered by them important to establish as a memorial, and to bequeath it as a legacy for coming generations - all these they would bring into the treasure of the only national language. And even the women and the uneducated that were not privileged to know the national language, and for whom we would compose "Thinot" and other readers in this spoken language, even they knew that this is not the national and they would fulfill their duty toward their national language, which they did not know, by trying with all their strength (to see to it) that their children would know it. 63

Ahad Ha-Am maintains that the growth of the language develops naturally as a result of the search for adequate words to express thoughts. Thus language expands concurrently with the expansion of thought. Ahad Ha-Am criticizes the Haskalah writers who were trying to artificially embellish the Hebrew language. He insists that the expansion and improvement of Hebrew must come from within through the expansion of knowledge.

Our new literature of the last hundred years views thought as nonessential to the aesthetic sentiment and they look upon language as if it was created only for the sake of its use for this sentiment. It (the language) did not at all come to fill certain spiritual needs whose lack was felt by the better educated of the people, as it used to be in medieval times.... They wished to enlarge and dedicate it anew on a foundation of aesthetic sentiment and made it "the embellished language", as a means for this... Therefore this literature could not create an extensive and precise language in accordance with the needs of thought in our times. 64

Thus Ahad Ha-Am emphasizes the dependence of language upon scholarly literature. He asserts that serious literature dealing with the expanding thought world of Judaism creates
the need for relevant expression of these thoughts which in turn results in the constant growth and improvement of the language. As he summarizes:

If you wish therefore to revive the language try to revive the literature. And if you wish to revive the literature bring into it living thoughts; bring them in however you are able...either in a speculative or in a narrative form, but do not change them even an iota for the sake of embellishment of the language alone. Embellish the thought and it will uplift the language. 65

According to Ahad Ha-Am, literature becomes a part of the national literature only if it is written in Hebrew. Jewish literature written in another language, if it is of excellence, may enter into the stream of world literature; if it is not of excellence, it will disappear. In either case it will never be considered Jewish national literature.

In his essay, "The Spiritual Revival", Ahad Ha-Am writes:

Our national literature, then, is that alone which is written in our national language; it does not include what Jews write in other languages. If they write on subjects which concern other nations as well, or other nations only, their books belong to the literature of the nation in whose language they are written; and the best of them find a place in the history of that literature, though not always a place commensurate with their value, side by side with the native writers. If they write exclusively on matters concerning Jewish people and its national life, they are building themselves a ghetto in a foreign literature; and this ghetto, like any other, is regarded by the native population as of no account, and by the Hebrew community as merely temporary product, which is not destined to endure as part of its national life, which it may and does enjoy at that time and in that place, but which cannot call forth, as a national literature does, a living and imperishable sentiment...
Ahad Ha-Am continues that a literary work written in Hebrew, even if it is of inferior literary quality, endures as national literature.

The ultimate value of national Hebrew literature, according to Ahad Ha-Am lies in its potential and its purpose which is the fulfillment of the need of national self-knowledge.

...it (self-knowledge) includes not only the knowledge of our people and its deeds...but also the true relationship between it (our people) and the world around it, the open and hidden ties between the phenomena of its life, its needs and between the laws that govern the life of man and society in general. 67

Thus, in summary, Ahad Ha-Am considers that the primary purpose of Hebrew literature is to answer these questions:

What is our essential national historic self for whose sake or because of which we are embattled with the entire world these thousands of years? What is the nature of our life at present in the lands of our dispersion? In what way is our life meaningful, and in what way does it need correction? And above all, what is our future? How and when - if it is to be at all - will we arrive at the longed-for shore in spite of the strong current that tears us apart limb by limb and carries us one by one to the great sea? 68

Ahad Ha-Am explains that "belles-lettres" have a meaningful place in world literature because they portray ideas more simply than do abstract formulations, however:
...In our present situation we think that our impoverished literature should not squander its meager strength for such matters (belles-lettres); as long as matters of greater urgency and benefit demand its task and there is no strength. For this reason it is possible that in this periodical (Hashiloah) there will be a lesser number of poems...and poetry alone and outpourings of the soul about the beauty of nature and the pleasantness of love, etc., may seek its object in the languages of other nations and find it in a sufficient measure. 69

This is not to infer that Ahad Ha-Am could not perceive the value of art in all of its forms but that he chose, under the pressure of circumstance, to view art through the prism of nationalist priorities.

He was magnanimous enough, however, to accept poetic contributions by Hayim Nahman Bialik whose early genius he clearly recognized. Although Bialik's poems were not of a national character, Ahad Ha-Am did not hesitate to publish them in the Hashiloah. Yet he rejected the essays of provocative young writers such as M. J. Berdichewsky.

The latter, in an open letter to Ahad Ha-Am, voiced a strong protest against Ahad Ha-Am's refusal to include in Hebrew literature purely aesthetic expressions having no national content. Berdichewsky argued thus:

We wish to be bne-adam ivrim (Hebrew human beings), nurtured from the same place. We feel the need to heal the rift in our heart. We must expand our boundaries and establish human enlightenment on the same level of importance as our ancient legacy. 70

To Berdichewsky, the supreme significance of a person's life is not that he is a member of a nation, with its specific tradition, but that he is part of the stream of
humanity, sharing the complex influences and experiences of a changing world.

When Joseph Klausner succeeded Ahad Ha-Am as editor of Hashiloah in January of 1903, he immediately reversed Ahad Ha-Am's editorial policy toward belles-lettres. Granting Ahad Ha-Am's contention that, in our time of national crisis, aesthetic literature, if intended for enjoyment only, is a luxury that must be postponed, Klausner argued that contents of universal human interest are a necessity in the Hebrew periodical in order that the reader may gain a broad outlook on life and develop an integrated personality. As he explained it:

...This we wish to do with the new Hashiloah. If a young Hebrew were to read during his adolescence, in the same language and in the same book, themes on Judaism and on humanity, they would blend within his mind into a unified perspective and would no longer be regarded by him as two separate worlds. Then he would introduce into his general mental makeup the Hebraic spirit which has been inherent in him since birth, and is a legacy of thousands of generations, and is inseparable part of his Hebraic mentality. Then all those perceptions and ideas that he would read in his national language would become "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." 71

Klausner urged that the universal cultural treasures created by each nation be shared with other nations. He believed that this could be accomplished by including in the Jewish national literature universal aesthetic values. He pointed out that:
We are not chauvinists, but nationalists, and our nationalism is based on the lofty idea that all peoples should receive the whole of truth, goodness, and beauty from one another, and in turn should hand over to each other the truth, beauty and goodness that they themselves create. 72

Thus, according to Klausner, universal values, absorbed and blended into a national culture, are transformed into original national treasures, and when shared in their new form with other nations, lend moral and aesthetic enrichment to the world.

National Education

Ahad Ha-Am emphasized that the Jewish national possessions must not belong exclusively to the elite, but must rather be integrated in the life of the entire Jewish community for the effective regeneration of the Jewish national spirit and thus the reconstitution of the Jewish people. He advocated the creation of a system of Jewish national education to serve as the primary vehicle for transmission of the national possessions of Judaism to all members of the people, adults as well as children. On the adult level, in addition to the program of the Enei Moshe, Ahad Ha-Am planned the publication of a Hebrew Encyclopedia in popular style, geared to the widest education of the Adult Jew toward an awareness of himself, of his position in the world, of his sacred heritage as a Jew with all of its concomitant cultural offerings, and thereby, ultimately to the inculcation within him of the Jewish national spirit. Due to opposition from a number of Jewish scholars who took
issue with the popular approach of the encyclopedia, and a
subsequent cessation of financial backing, the project failed
to materialize, but for one small collection of essays.

Ahad Ha-Am devotes far more attention, particularly in
the essay, "National Education", to the structure and methods
of a program of national Jewish education for children. He
maintains that, in order to avoid a conflict within the heart
of the Jewish child, the teacher should not create a dichotomy
within the soul by separating the curriculum into secular and
Jewish departments. He suggests that the curriculum in the
Jewish school be an integrated one. He attacks the curriculum
where Hebrew studies are like a ghetto within a general program
of studies, separated and enclosed.

Why do we not find such a strange separation (between
national and general studies) among the schools of
other nations; because to them all the studies are at
the same time national and general; because, with them,
their nationhood is not regarded so low that they would
exclude it from the human family that would consider
all the languages and literature in the world as matters
of general humanities except their own language and
literature. The proper arrangement therefore, of our
school curriculum will only then be achieved when also
with us the Hebrew studies would be regarded as general
ones; e.g. that through them the human spirit would
develop in its national form as it is with other peoples. 73

He disapproves of attempting to implant the national
spirit in children by the constant praise of the quality of
the Jewish people.

Better European pedagogues have come to the recogni-
tion that this kind of national education has a
greater ethical loss than gain since it is liable
to receive a defective form of chauvinism as we have
seen in France. 74
A true national education, according to Ahad Ha-Am is:

...that which would bring the children to absorb the spirit of their people unconsciously by bringing to their hearts general, human possessions in a national form. People that are in a healthy national condition - this (kind of) education is with them a spontaneous thing without any artificial effort from any side. The spiritual atmosphere that surrounds the children of such a people is full with national foundations so that every child, nearly from the day of his birth, has his soul constantly developing within it the national spirit. 75

The national form, according to Ahad Ha-Am, may be imparted most completely in the study of Hebrew language and literature. Therein, he writes:

...he (the child) finds a whole world of lofty thoughts, ethical and aesthetic, that gradually become an intrinsic part of his spiritual "I"...language sufficiently mastered to enable the child to read the Holy Scriptures and the best of later literature and this kind of reading material should serve in our schools as the main means for the development of the spirit of general humanity in the heart of the children. From this source the child should draw their first knowledge about the "Truths" that uplift the human spirit in general and about humanity's great cultural possessions. Only in this manner could we create that organic tie between the individual and his nation which alone is capable of giving us in the future people more naturally integrated who would harmonize within themselves the "Man" and the "Jew" and they would become one essence in which the inner conflict between the two would cease. 76

In the context of education of Jewish children in the Diaspora, Ahad Ha-Am takes issue with the education committee of the Odessa School which prescribed emphasis on practical and Russian knowledge and skills in the curriculum, in order that the child might survive in his struggle to live. He asserts that it is comprehension of one's Jewish heritage the instilling of the Jewish national ethics and thereby the
spirit of Judaism that will fortify the child against the
onslaughts of the hostile elements in his Diaspora society.

Imagine for yourselves a Jewish man who finished
his studies in the school of the committee and as
he stands on the road of life to fight the battle
of his existence, he meets immediately, in his first
steps, obstacles which he is unable to remove. He
knows the Russian language, portions from the books
of Pushkin, and other Russian authors, he knows also
arithmetic and fundamentals of Geography, etc., how­
ever as he wishes to enter with his knowledge into
some branch of human endeavor he is being pushed
backward with a strong arm, because he is a Jew.
And at that very time his Jewishness is very weak.
The language of his people he does not know, the lit­
terature of his people is strange to him; his best
sentiments, all meditations that tend to lift up the
spirit - all these he drew until now and still draws
from sources that have nothing to do with Judaism.
Could you visualize in your imagination what takes
place in the soul of such a Jew, who suffers agonies
for Judaism, the nature of which he does not know...?
Which ethical support have you provided that he could
bear his plight of Judaism with patience and knowledge?
and you continue speaking in the name of the battle
for existence! Verily it is for this very battle it­
self that we request that our Jewish children shall
be educated in our national spirit.

Ahad Ha-Am concludes his essay "National Education"
on a familiar theme which runs throughout the many areas of
his thought: artificial means - committee meetings in this
situation - will not solve the problems of Judaism; an ar­
duous but natural response of inner necessity to the situ­
tion at hand on the part of all the people is the only solu­
tion consistent with the spirit and tradition of Judaism.

After his visit to the Jaffa Gymnasium, Ahad Ha-Am
wrote a comprehensive report on the school's curriculum and
its implementation. In the course of this report he relates
that, upon examination of the children in the subject of Tanakh, he found that, although they knew much of the lives and times of the Prophets, they were deficient in the text itself. Ahad Ha-Am asserts that this deficiency was the result of an overburdening of textual details and amendments; the teachers, taxing the memory of the children with old and new versions of the scriptural text, caused them to forget the actual contents.

To the Jewish child...Eretz Yisrael is the fruit of life of all the generations. In order to recognize his self and his people he must recognize his national possessions and the scriptures included...not only in their original forms but in the forms they assumed in the course of generations - forms which became forces operating in the life of the people.

Ahad Ha-Am concludes that the result of negating the Diaspora, by eliminating its contributions to the Bible scholarship, be it authentic or inauthentic, would create confusion in the mind of the child not only in an understanding of prophetic contents, but what is more damaging, in depriving him of the sense of continuity and identity with the two thousand years of organic Diaspora life of his people whose legacy he must sustain through renewal.

Ahad Ha-Am envisioned education as the prime mover in the regeneration of the Jewish national spirit. He realized that the agent whose mission is to guarantee the very life of Judaism requires free reign if it is to achieve its ultimate potential. Thus Ahad Ha-Am advocated a shift of emphasis from synagogue to school, the new center of Judaism:
...the heart of the Jewish people has always been in the Bet Ha-Midrash (House of Study); there was the source from which they (Diaspora Jewry) drew the strength and the inspiration that enabled them to overcome all difficulties and withstand all persecutions. If we want to go on living, we must restore the center to the Bet Ha-Midrash, and make that once more the living source of Judaism.
Solomon Schechter was born about the year 1847 in Focsani, Roumania. Like Ahad Ha-Am, he was descended from a family of Hassidic scholars and educated in the typical Orthodox Jewish manner, albeit by his own father, as there was no Jewish school. One of the effects of this education was his possession of the three great fundamental gifts of Hassidism: humility, cheerfulness and enthusiasm. These may have effected in him that combination of scholar and joyous mystic which made him both respected and beloved in his lifetime.

Even in the early stages of his education he impressed Jewish scholars. At thirteen he went to Lemberg to study under R. Nathanson, and as a young man he went to Vienna, then the seat of Jewish learning, and entered the Rabbinical Seminary. There, influenced by the Hebrew rationalistic movement, he rejected Hassidism for a while and even wrote satires about it.

He was ordained in Vienna in 1879 by I. R. Weiss. Later, he went on to Berlin for advanced study at the Academy of Jewish Science and Berlin University. There, Claude G. Montefiore, despite his name both an Englishman and a Jew, recognized Schechter's extraordinary ability and brought him to England as his tutor.
He stayed in England for twenty years. There he achieved eminence in the Jewish scholarly group, "The Wanders," and thence in the academic world at large. His wife, Matilda Roth, herself a teacher, encouraged him in his scholarly pursuits. And ultimately, because of his erudition, particularly evident in his edition of Aboth de Rabbi Nathan, he was elected a lecturer at Cambridge. In that academic atmosphere he was able to inspire Gentiles as well as Jews, and to make friends with some of the great men and minds in England, such as Sir James Frazer, author of The Golden Bough.

In 1894, the University sent him to Italy to study Jewish manuscripts. Thence he traveled to America, Egypt and Palestine. The Egyptian journey, begun in 1896 and continued into 1897, afforded him the opportunity for his most famous achievement, the recovery and identification of the fragments of the manuscript back to England with him, "conscious," as Norman Bentwich says, of the duty to interpret his discovery. And that sense of duty diverted him from writing Jewish theology and history, for which he was fitted more than any living Jew, to the minute examination of manuscripts, and led him even into the wilderness of theological controversy. 1

Yet, in the midst of these mental and, in a sense, sacramental, tasks, his name in scholarship became increasingly well known and his academic career flourished. He was appointed Goldsmid Professor of Hebrew at London University in 1897, and was persuaded to become President of the Jewish Theological
Seminary (in New York) in 1901. His fame as a Jewish scholar and spiritual leader was as great in America as it had been and, indeed, remained in England.

He concerned himself, in his last lectures after the outbreak of World War I, with calling those Jews who could help to the aid of their persecuted European fellows. He died in 1915, becoming ill during one of these lectures. What he once said of himself makes a good and true eulogy: "I have not accomplished much, but I think that I have been loyal to a few principles and a few friends."

His main writings include editions of, with introductions and notes to, several ancient Hebrew manuscripts, such as the Aboth de Rabbi-Nathan, the Agadath Shir Hashirim, and the Ben Sira manuscript itself; a large part of his work also comprised three series of Studies in Judaism, several Seminary Addresses, and a minute study of Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology. Also, his Zionism, A Statement, caused a great stir among Jews everywhere, as the trustees and patrons of the Seminary were mainly anti-zionist.

Solomon Schechter and Ahad Ha-Am

Ahad Ha-Am respected the work of Solomon Schechter as a fine example of contemporary exposition of rabbinic Judaism; Norman Bentwich records it in his book about the latter and Leon Simon in his book about the former. Ahad Ha-Am approved of the presentation of the "ideas of the sages in a plain and
straightforward manner, without the glosses and interpretations by which other scholars were wont to distort them."

Yet a man's approval of another man's scholarship - and even of the man himself - does not mean his endorsement of that man's ideas. And the other man's - Schechter's - oft-recorded friendly feeling toward and admiration for the man - Ahad Ha-Am - who also seems to like and admire him do not mean that he, by endorsing the man, endorses his ideas. There cannot be said, in fact, to be a direct line of influence linking these men; rather their thoughts ran on lines which at times were quite far apart, though often parallel.

This difference in the midst of similarity can be seen even in their early development. They both came from Hassidic stock, and both eventually rejected Hassidic ways and sentiments. Schechter, however, "returned", reapprehended the essence of Hassidism and made that essence a unique part of himself, while Ahad Ha-Am, always more skeptical, did not. Simon calls them "the man of religion" and "the agnostic", differentiating them in religious performance, but goes on to say that they "were at one in recognizing the supreme authority of what is called in Hebrew K'\lal Israel, the collective experience of Jewish life..."10

**Doctrine of the Peoplehood of Israel**

Schechter considered the Jewish national spirit to be implicit as the ultimate source of Torah and Israel, and
religion to be coextensive with Jewish nationality. This is in contrast to Ahad H-Am's concept that the Jewish religion will quite possibly assume another form in future times.

Schechter asserted that Jewish nationalism and religion were coeval:

Now as to Jewish nationalism, it is not a creation of the nineteenth century. Its compact with religion was eternal. If in the Maccabean times the nation arose in arms to defend its religion, the reverse happened after the destruction of the holy Temple and the successive spread of Christianity, when religion took the Jewish nation under its protection and consecrated it forever. 11

Yet this endorsement of nationalism, this recognition of Jewish peoplehood, was itself qualified. He warned against "the nationalism of the purely secular kind. ...Jewish nationalism can only be interpreted in the light of Jewish History and pure Jewish thought." 12

The brutal Torah-less nationalism promulgated in certain quarters would have been to the Rabbis just as hateful as the suicidal Torah-less universalism preached in other quarters. And if we could imagine Israel giving up its allegiance to God, its Torah, and its divine institutions, the Rabbis would be the first to sign its death-warrant as a nation. 13

For him, the nation exists to preserve and to proselytize the religion, while the religion consecrates the nation. If the religion is lost and the people preserved, the people will perish spiritually - and possibly, historically. Thus he was willing to accept, without explanation, dogma, for only, as Kripke summarizes,

a religion with dogmas can elicit sacrifice and loyalty from its members. These dogmas are the formulation of the will of God and His purpose, and through them religion becomes worth dying for. 14

The Centrality of Eretz Yisrael

His response to Zionism is quite predictable, considering his concept of the Jewish nation as a means rather than an end in itself. He believed that there should be a national home and that that national home be the traditional one, rather than the
the African territory offered to the early Zionists. His sponsorship of Zionism originated in the belief that it would give the Jew motive power to retain his Judaism and to refuse to be in the worst sense of the word, assimilated. For him, "assimilation" meant not the maintenance of a language and social customs other than the traditional ones, for that, indeed is education itself, but loss of identity; or that process of disintegration which, passing through various degrees of defiance of all Jewish thought and of disloyalty to Israel's history and its mission, terminated variously in different lands. 15

The Zionism he urged, therefore, had the motive power of an ideal, and that ideal was, along with "the rebirth of Israel's national consciousness, ...the revival of ... Judaism..." 16

As Norman Bentwich points out, he shared with Ahad Ha-Am

a distrust in the idea of the Jewish State and a secular nationalism, and a belief in the fusion of religion and nationality, in the spiritual quality of the Jewish National hope, in the vital element of the Hebrew language. Palestine must be the spiritual center of the Jewish people, the country in which the ingathering of a remnant would create a common bond and a common inspiration for the scattered communities. 17

He strongly urged, therefore, to ensure the protection of Judaism and Zionism from well-meaning, nationalist, and religiously uncommitted Jews themselves, "the settlement in Palestine of Jews of religious leaning, and a spiritual revival in the dispersion..." 18 Ultimately, his Zionism took on an almost eschatological tinge. As Norman Bentwich
The return was for him not merely, or mainly a national revival, or a reaction against Anti-Semitism, but a fundamental part of Judaism, an essential element in the tradition as the observance of the Sabbath. 19

God, Israel and Torah

Schechter often muses on the fact that the ancient sages never articulated formal philosophic positions, took certain axioms about life and God for granted. The same may be said about him. He can hardly be called a philosopher even in less abstract matters than the existence of God. As Bernard Mandelbaum says, he was "primarily the great expounder of ideals, rather than idealogies" 20 (sic) He stressed the performance of rituals, and the observance of mitzvot such as the Sabbath and the dietary laws. "There must always be a point round which all these ideas concentrate themselves. This centre is Dogma." 21 And the center of belief in and practice of dogma is belief in the God behind it.

Schechter, however, does not make his God concept and his appreciation of dogma something rigid; he is willing to admit - and even to enthrone - the People's effect on its Torah. This he calls the "Secondary Meaning of the Bible."

Jewish Tradition..., the Secondary Meaning of the Scriptures, is mainly embodied in the works of the Rabbis and their subsequent followers during the middle ages. 22

He summarizes Zunz' position towards the "Secondary Meaning" with approval in his voice:
It is not the mere revealed Bible that is of first importance to the Jew, but the Bible as it repeats itself in history, in other words, as it is interpreted by Tradition.

Since then the interpretation of Scripture or the Secondary Meaning is mainly a product of changing historical influences, it follows that the centre of authority is actually removed from the Bible and placed in some living body, which, by reason of its being in touch with the Ideal aspirations and the religious needs of the age, is best able to determine the nature of the Secondary Meaning. This living body...is...represented...by the collective conscience of Catholic Israel as embodied in the Universal Synagogue.

...this Synagogue, the only true witness to the past, and forming in all ages the sublimest expression of Israel's religious life, must also retain its authority as the true guide for the present and the future. 23 Schechter meant, of course, the traditional orthodox synagogue, which he considered as linking together, in an unbroken chain of believing Jews, two thousand years. This synagogue was, for him, the repository of the selective genius of Israel, wherein lay the laws which had passed the sighting of general approval and custom and were solidified into the matter of life. This "living body" - catholic Israel - maintained, even endowed, the authenticity of Torah. As it is a "living body", temporal laws are sloughed off when times change; as it is a "true witness," it has a memory which can record, and in so doing make eternal.

It is recalled that Ahad Ha-Am, too, spoke of memory as a leading component in the development and continuity of the organic People of Israel. He regarded memory as a creative force in the entire cultural development of the Jewish People.
Schechter, however, considered the major task of memory to be that of validating the authenticity of the Jewish tradition.

There is something vulnerable in Schechter’s endorsement of the "secondary meaning" as more authentic than its primary source. The traditional view is not this at all. The traditional view holds that the oral law is implicit in the Torah and made explicit in the Talmus. Therefore, there is no "secondary meaning" as such; there is only one meaning which is to be discovered in accordance with certain canons of interpretation, for the exegetical principles are also handed down and may not be freely manipulated.

Schechter’s concept of the Torah differs from Ahad Ha-Am’s; Schechter asserts that the Torah is donnee, Torah min ha-shamayim. Yet his ideas on the Torah authorship are contradictory. If Torah is min ha-shamayim (from heaven), then it must have been given all of one piece, and not at various times and places (except for the Takanot and Gezerot, the validity of which is also implied in revealed Torah). Schechter holds firm to this contention, yet he maintains that he will "yield to no one in the modern interpretation of Bible criticism." 24

Of all the educators discussed in this study, Solomon Schechter is closest in his approach to the theory of the historical school of Judaism as defined by Ahad Ha-Am. It is recalled that Ahad Ha-Am insisted that the historical process must never involve conscious manipulation. It consists essentially of an unconscious, gradual, imperceptible development.
Solomon Schechter, who is considered the father of the historical school in America, tried, in his introduction to *Studies in Judaism* to define the historical school. He maintained that the school had been concerned primarily with research about historical origins and the originators of the school placed little emphasis on the reinterpretation of the law according to the necessities of time and place. He went on to describe the school as marked by enlightened scepticism:

How long the position of this (historical) school will prove tenable is another question.... The main strength of this school lies in its scientific work....Its theology, as far as it goes, will "do" for us, though I neither hope nor believe that it will do for those who come after us. I may, however, humbly confess that the sixth essay in this volume was written in a spirit of rebellion against this all-absorbing Catholic Israel with his decently veiled scepticism on the one hand, and its unfortunate tendency with many people to degenerate into a soulless conformity on the other hand. I...venture to hope that, with all its shortcomings, it will contribute something towards destroying the illusion...that Judaism is a religion without dogmas...25

Thus, it may be assumed that Schechter sensed the weaknesses and, perhaps, the inconsistencies in the historical school because he felt that his school, as conceived by many in his time, was fraught with dangers of radical misinterpretation. He proved to be right. This we can observe in the historical approach as conceived by our Jewish educators following Schechter, as I shall presently demonstrate. If not in all his philosophy, in this one aspect of the historical school of Judaism, Schechter, like Ahad Ha-Am is truly a follower of Krochmal's thought-world.
Samson Benderly was born on March 31, 1876, in Palestine in the city of Safed, a city of old synagogues and a mystic, medieval atmosphere which attracted scholars from all parts of the world. His early education took place in the Heder and Bet Hamidrash of Safed. Near his home was an English mission hospital, and partly as a result of his friendship with Dr. Henderson, director of the clinic, Benderly decided to study medicine. At the age of fifteen he went to Beirut to study at the American College of Beirut, and after receiving his A.B. degree on July 8, 1896, he immediately began his medical studies there. While at college he made the acquaintance of the famous American Jewish physician, Dr. Aaron Friedenwald, who was visiting Beirut, and at the encouragement of Dr. Friedenwald, Benderly decided to continue his medical studies in the United States. Through Dr. Friedenwald he met Dr. Benjamin Szold, and was engaged to teach Hebrew to Dr. Szold's two daughters, Henrietta and Bertha, and to Dr. Friedenwald's son, Harry. Both Henrietta Szold and Harry Friedenwald remained his close friends and colleagues throughout life. He also taught Hebrew in the Sunday School at the Hizuk Emunah, and began to use modern teaching methods such as visual aids and music. At the same time he continued his medical course at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Baltimore and received his degree in June 1900.
While interning that fall as Assistant Resident Physician at the Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Benderly was asked by friends to become the director of a little Hebrew school known as the Hebrew Free School for Poor and Orphaned Children. Through his work in this school Benderly began to find Jewish education intensely interesting, and when the hospital authorities objected to the amount of time he was spending in this avocation, he decided to give up his career as a doctor and devote himself entirely to education.

His first aim was to make the Baltimore Hebrew School a "model" school where he could experiment with new ideas on education. He had the school transferred from a basement to better quarters, and after converting it from a Sunday School to a week-day school, he set out to modernize it. In order to have well-trained, enthusiastic teachers, he instituted his own teacher-training program, and picked for this course only those who were interested in trying out new methods. Among his graduates was Jennie C. Miller, whom he married in 1909, and who continued for many years as a teacher in his school.

In the same year, 1909, a central organization was formed of the Jewish Community (Kehillah) of New York, and a committee was appointed by the Kehillah to survey the Jewish educational situation in New York. Two large sums of money were contributed for the survey, and when Dr. Magnes, chairman of the Kehillah, asked Dr. Benderly for advice as to
how these funds could be used to benefit Jewish education, Benderly suggested the organization of a Bureau of Education. In 1910 his suggestion was carried out, and he was appointed the first director of the Bureau of Education for the Jewish Community. The work of the new Bureau was to be the study and improvement of Jewish education in New York City, and it is interesting to note that the Trustees included Israel Friedlaender, Mordecai Kaplan, Judah Magnes, and Henrietta Szold. Through this Bureau Benderly set out to revitalize American Jewish education. He introduced many innovations in teaching methods—visual aids, music, drama, dance, Hebrew conversation—and also compiled more interesting textbooks. Benderly, with the help of Dr. M. M. Kaplan, selected a group of outstanding young men and women from the colleges of the city, and encouraged them to enter the profession of Jewish education. Some of these disciples of Benderly, who were known as "Benderly boys", later became leaders in the Jewish educational field. In 1912 Benderly established the first Hebrew High School in New York, and in 1916 he initiated a School for Jewish Communal Service, where workers were trained for Jewish institutions throughout the country. Although this school lasted only a few years, it formed the pattern on which schools of this type were established in later years.

Benderly continued his dynamic leadership in the Bureau of Education for about eight years. After that time, however,
the strength of the Bureau was considerably weakened by the breakup of the Kehillah organization after the resignation of Magnes.

After 1918 the Kehillah rapidly disintegrated. As a result, Dr. Benderly lost his community backing and community base. ...What saved the Jewish educational program from complete disintegration was the fact that the Federation of Jewish Philanthropic Societies which was organized in 1917, was persuaded by him to affiliate the Bureau, and also several of the larger Talmud Torahs and schools. 26

After the Balfour Declaration in 1917, Dr. Benderly, although still engaged in his educational work with the Bureau, became deeply interested in the development of Palestine. He had always been convinced that Palestine must be restored as the spiritual center of the Jewish people. He described Palestine as "the hallowed land that gave the Jews the prophets of yore and is giving them the chalutzim of today." 27 In an effort to contribute to the rebuilding of Palestine, he organized the American Palestine Company which was to provide, primarily, low cost housing for the immigrants. Within a few years, however, due partly to lack of funds, the project was discontinued, and the Company was absorbed by the Palestine Economic Corporation.

Benderly, greatly disappointed at the failure of this venture, once again turned his creative force to the ever challenging field of Jewish education, and particularly secondary education. With the collaboration of Israel Goldberg he began work on a 12-volume encyclopedia, "The Outline of
Jewish Knowledge", of which only three volumes were finally published. Benderly also formed two new groups - one for children of elementary school age - Hanotim (The Planters), and one for students of High School age - Habonim (The Builders). "These new groups emphasized the idea of the rebuilding of Palestine as a spiritual homeland of the Jewish people." 28

The training of young rabbis also became a challenge to Benderly, and through his lectures in pedagogy at the Jewish Institute of Religion (where he was invited to teach by Dr. Stephen S. Wise) he influenced many student rabbis to channel their energies into Jewish educational work. To Benderly, a rabbi was a failure "if he failed to raise up, at least in his congregation, a generation of Hebrew loving, Zionist oriented young Jews." 29

During these years he began to select talented young boys and girls from the high schools and from his own Hebrew High School, and in 1927 he formed the Kvutzah (Fellowship Group). These students were given intensive training in Jewish leadership, with the purpose of stimulating their interest in the potentiality of teaching, the rabbinate, or social work, as professional careers. From this project he developed the idea of a Jewish cultural summer camp for young people - Camp Achvah - situated on a beautiful estate in Godeffroy, New York. At this camp the historic Hebrew traditions were blended into the cultural activities of camp life, and through the mediums of drama, music and Hebrew conversation,
the young people learned to appreciate more fully the beauty and strength of their Jewish heritage.

Dr. Benderly was keenly interested in the organization of the Jewish Educational Committee of New York, and was in fact a member of the Survey Committee which formulated the plans for the establishment of the J.E.C. in 1939.

He realized that while the program, the setting and scope of the J.E.C. would be quite different from the Bureau of Jewish Education, nevertheless many of the experiences, impulses and fundamental ideas which he had cherished would find expression in it and through it.... In 1941, the Federation turned over all of the Bureau activities to the J.E.C. and Dr. Benderly was retired on a pension for the rest of his life. 30

He spent the last few years of his life in his home on the picturesque estate of Camp Achvah, and in the well-chosen words of his disciples, "Even the ravishing illness which finally caused his death in 1944 was unable to destroy the clarity of his mind, the sweep of his imagination and that deep faith in the future which he transmitted to all who were touched by his fire." 31

The Doctrine of Jewish Peoplehood

Like Ahad Ha-Am, Benderly was intensely aware of the "Peoplehood" of Israel. "Through his people, its history and its literature, he saw the world, both the human and the divine." 32 He was an avid reader, and among his favorite works, in addition to the writings of Maimonides, were the essays of Ahad Ha-Am. He shared with Ahad Ha-Am a strong
sense of the national spirit of Judaism, and by making Jewish education a community project Benderly was aiding in the development of a culturally evolving Jewish peoplehood.

Benderly indicated his awareness of the organismic nature of the Jewish people, for he spoke of this People as an oak tree whose roots are in Palestine and branches in the Diaspora. He maintained that "Jewish institutions must be revitalized." His first step in this direction was to advocate that the Hebrew language be taught in a more interesting fashion and that Jewish history be presented in dramatic form in order to give school children an actual sense of experiencing the Jewish past. By these and other educational innovations Benderly attempted to produce in Jewish youth a new awakening of the national Jewish consciousness. Benderly, in short, undertook with enthusiasm the task of infusing Ahad Ha-Am's spiritual Zionism into American Jewish education.

The Centrality of Palestine

In Benderly's keen interest in Palestine as a spiritual center, the reflection of Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy is again apparent. Benderly makes the emphatic statement that "Palestine as a Jewish spiritual center is an indispensable force in the production of that resultant which we call the American Judaism of tomorrow." To Benderly, the center which is Palestine imparts genuine, intrinsic Jewish expressions to
every field of cultural endeavor, such as music, art, literature, and language. In America the situation is significantly different; there is a clash between the culture of the majority - the American culture - and the specific Jewish culture, which is a minority culture. Benderly believed, therefore, that in order to strengthen this specific minority culture of the Jewish people in America, we need the inspiration of the center of Palestine where creative Jewish life and culture could freely develop.

When one compares the attitudes of Ahad H-Am and Benderly toward the importance of Palestine as a spiritual center, one cannot help noticing a striking difference in emphasis. We may conjecture that this difference resulted from the fact that Ahad Ha-Am lived in the Russian environment where freedom was curtailed to a much greater extent than in America. Ahad Ha-Am exalted Palestine as the main hope for securing Jewish survival as an integral people in the Diaspora. Benderly, however, cast Palestine in a slightly less important, but still vital role.

In the past the Jews in the Diaspora tried to maintain, as far as they could, that Judaism which their ancestors brought with them from Palestine. They refused to reckon willingly with the forces of their environment, believing them to be only temporary. They hoped to escape from them as soon as their exile or golus would be over. The Jews of today, however, particularly of Western Europe and America, even though they look upon Palestine as an indispensable Jewish spiritual center, no longer consider themselves as exiles. 34
He maintained that there is much scope for American Jewish indigenous creativity if we will only utilize our freedom of expression and encourage dedicated leadership — Haksharat Halev (preparation of the heart). His assertion was that Zionism (and as he said, "By Zionism I mean spiritual Zionism") may be aroused to its full potentiality not only through the revival of Palestine but also right here in the American Diaspora. Dushkin sums it up aptly:

With...mystic romanticism, he viewed American Jewry and Palestine. He loved both passionately. America and Zion were the two felt around which his spiritual world revolved.

As we shall see later, in the context of education, Benderly attempted, through the media of pageantry, song and drama, to bring the influence of Eretz Israel to bear in the Jewish school, and especially in the Jewish camp, by re-creating within these institutions Palestinian life in miniature.

The God Idea

In regard to Benderly's God-concept, his writings do not yield sufficient data for one to form a definite conclusion. He does, however, allude to the 'Great Unknown'. "The synagogue must be not only a unit of organization, which is its communal aspect, but it must also be a center for religious self-expression and the contemplation of the Great Unknown in terms of the Jewish conception of God." Benderly is apparently in agreement with Ahad Ha-Am's idea that the essence of the
Both Alexander Dushkin and Mordecai Kaplan, in their interpretation of Benderly, found him to be in harmony with Ahad Ha-Am, although according to Dushkin, Benderly was more of a mystic. "...he loved to commune with the phenomena of Nature and with the destiny of Israel in the consecrated expansive mood of mystics." 36

In discussing the religious attitude of Dushkin, Berkson, and other Benderly disciples, all of whom were directly influenced by Benderly, Kaplan wrote this criticism:

But what I can never get myself accustomed to in those men has been their attitude toward Judaism. It reflects, of course, Dr. Benderly's attitude, which in turn is that of Ahad Ha-Am. I might, in fact, say that Benderly is perhaps the only man who is working out Ahad Ha-Amism in Galut in terms of education. I have always missed in Ahad Ha-Am's conception of Judaism an appreciation of the indefinable religious longings and aspirations. ...I have often wished that these men were drawn into the Seminary. 37

Obviously Kaplan would have preferred educational leaders to be more observant of Torah precepts. Benderly and Ahad Ha-Am however, were content to inspire Jewish educators with a sense of identification with the ideals of spiritual Zionism. Instead of speculating on the metaphysics of God, both Benderly and Ahad Ha-Am were convinced that the greatest spiritual satisfaction and be found in the love of Zion and in service to the Jewish people.

_Judaism - Continuity in Change_

In his theories on the development of Judaism Benderly
exhibited basically the historical approach to the Jewish tradition.

At all times the Judaism of a given age was a resultant of the Judaism that came down to that generation by heritage, and the forces of the environment in which that generation lived. This resultant did not satisfy the purists of that generation who insisted that the only true Judaism was that inherited from the previous generation or period. The condition, however, in which the Jews of that particular period lived made their impress upon the inherited Judaism and modified its content. In the course of time the modified Judaism became the normal Judaism and the rallying cry of the purists of the following generation. So that the Judaism of today is really the resultant of the original Mosaic Judaism and the forces that affected the Jews during their contact with the Canaanites, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, the Catholicism of Medieval Times, the Renaissance and the Reformation in Europe. This process is also operative in creating the Judaism of tomorrow. 38

This acceptance by Benderly of the theory of Judaism's evolutionary process of modification does not necessarily indicate that Benderly negated belief in revelation. Like Ahad Ha-Am, he evidently questioned the anthropomorphic interpretation of revelation. Both men took exception to the notion that the decalogue or the pentateuch were dictated by voice or perceived by any of the human senses. Benderly maintained, as Ahad Ha-Am had done, that the question of the archaeological existence of Moses is not of primary importance.

It is impossible to distinguish between the historic and the legendary. ...Various theories and conjectures have been advanced with regard to Moses, some of them even denying that he ever existed. ...But we need not linger over those theories and conjectures. Moses the liberator, the divine legislator, and prophetic statesman, the pure and humble man of God, is a definite personality in the consciousness of the Jewish people and of all mankind. And, as a modern Jewish philosopher has pointed out, it is the personality of Moses
as so conceived and generally accepted, which is historically important. This personality, embodying as it does the highest ideals of the Jewish people, has been an active force in their history through the ages. Expressing the Jewish character at its noblest, the personality of Moses has contributed to the molding of this character. 39

We note that Benderly did not take a definite stand as to the authenticity of the Biblical story of Moses. He pointed out, however, that the character of Moses, as depicted in the account of the revelation at Mount Sinai, has been a genuine inspiration to the Jewish people.

Benderly's references to Moses as the divine legislator and man of God, lead us to believe that Benderly shared with Ahad Ha-Am the idealist approach in his God-idea. In this philosophy the significant factor in the Revelation was the mental communication, without involvement of sense perception, between God and man. Thus to Benderly, as to Ahad Ha-Am, it is the impact and influence of Moses' personality that has been of vital importance to history and to the Jewish creative spirit.

As we have already ascertained, Benderly believed that modern Judaism is a result of the interplay of heritage and environment. He went even further; in his opinion, the influence of environment should not be left to chance. He strongly advocated that not only the synagogue, but also the home and the school, should play an equally important part in developing present day Judaism to its full creative essence.
In order to bring into play the Judaic forces so that they may contribute their full share toward the resultant, it is very essential that the Jewish home be revitalized. • • • The synagogue • • • must also be a center for religious self-expression. • • • The Jewish school, or the Jewish community center, must be filled with a Jewish spiritual atmosphere that will permeate and penetrate into the consciousness of the Jewish boy and girl. 40

That the school and the home should join the synagogue as contributing forces is highly commendable; one problem, however, presents itself. Benderly does not indicate by what criteria we are to effect modification of the tradition. Does he agree with Schechter that Catholic Israel should be the final judge? According to M. M. Kaplan, there was a clash of opinion between Schechter and Benderly in regard to the academic preparation of Jewish educators. Benderly prescribed that they study for their doctorate whereas Schechter preferred them to join the Seminary and become rabbis. Schechter maintained that only those Jewish educators who were trained in rabbinical scholarship would be able to distinguish between authentic traditions and the so-called Judaic usages which are merely a home-grown variety. Benderly was confident that the home could create; but such is not always the case. Supposing the home is ignorant of authentic, traditional forms, and imparts distorted Jewish customs or superstitions to the child? Are these superstitious usages to join in shaping the resultant? In many instances the home negates the efforts of the school program.
There is only one solution to the problem. If more parents were educated in the tradition, then the home could in turn make a valid contribution to the resultant. Jewish educators are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that adult Jewish education is of paramount importance in producing harmony between the school curriculum and the religious practices of the family. Only then can the home, the school, the synagogue, the camp, and the community center, work together as a team to inspire the child with his magnificent spiritual and cultural heritage - Judaism.

Language

According to Benderly, the Hebrew language is a living link that ties the Jewish people together. In the school curriculum he proposes that the original Hebrew should be used in the introduction of all Jewish classics, foremost of which is the Bible. It should not be taught as a written language only, but it should be taught as a spoken living tongue. With the aid of music, song, and drama, its study should be a living, aesthetic emotional experience. Benderly, like Ahad Ha-Am, asserted that Hebrew classes should be conducted in Hebrew (ivrit b'ivrit). He emphasized his conviction of the importance of Hebrew to Judaism by this statement:

This is not the place to enter into a theoretic discussion whether a Hebrewless Judaism in the Diaspora is permanently possible. During the last two thousand years, the Jews have wandered to many lands, have estab-
lished a number of centres, and have written some fine books in other languages than Hebrew. But the only Judaism that survived is the Hebrew Judaism... We have seen that a Hebrewless Judaism is a makeshift, and carries with it a great danger to Judaism - the destruction of the unity of Israel. What loyal Jew, then, can be opposed to a study of Hebrew? 41

The Role of the Tanakh

The principals of the large Talmud Torahs were requested by the Bureau of Education to work out the program of studies for the Talmud Torahs. Benderly recorded the fact that these principals "place the Bible and Prayer Book in the centre of the curriculum, and insist that they be studied in the original." 42

Benderly agreed that the Bible should be taught as the basic sacred treasure of the Jewish people. However, instead of presenting the Bible to the children with modern scientific criticism, he suggested that it be taught through dramatic pageantry so that young people would be inspired by the Biblical history of their Jewish heritage. At Camp Achvah the children looked forward eagerly to the weekly pageants where they themselves acted out the Bible stories. "the story had acquired a deeper meaning for them because they had been active participants in the unfolding of the drama." Even in school, he devised new methods of making Bible classes interesting. By using maps and colored slides the settings of the Biblical stories were beautifully portrayed, and the children derived a richer understanding of the Bible and of the Jewish national spirit.
The Function and Meaning of Jewish Literature

We recall Ahad Ha-Am's contention that the term national deserves to be applied only to that Jewish literature which is capable of arousing in the reader an awareness of the Jewish spiritual unity. Benderly evinced the same outlook in his insistence that text books containing the Jewish classics should be made available to the Jewish child in America. "In addition to regular text books and teachers' guides, we need several series of stories on Jewish heroes, legends, and customs. Such juvenile Jewish literature to be read by the children at home would supplement the work done in the school." One of the main projects undertaken by Benderly in the Bureau of Education was the preparation and publication of such texts. In this way he made it possible for even a young child to be instilled with a love of Jewish culture.

Education

Benderly might be said to be the first American Jewish educator to bring to the attention of the American Jewish community the vital urgency for Jewish education. He set squarely before the eyes of the Jewish public a picture of the great potentialities of Jewish education.

His novel ideas on education were like a shot in the arm to the languid parents. They began to sit up and take notice; some opposed him, but at least he got action. As a
result of his initiative Jewish community bureaus were organized in many large Jewish communities in the United States. Through his dynamic leadership the public soon realized that education is a community affair, and that the Jewish school must develop a spiritual atmosphere which will enrich the life of every Jewish family.

In his essay on the subject of national education, Ahad Ha-Am had expressed a similar opinion; he criticized chauvinistic teaching methods, and instead suggested that, by creative teaching, a genuine love of his heritage could be imparted to the Jewish child. Benderly carried out Ahad Ha-Am's theory, but with one difference. In Ahad Ha-Am's community in Odessa, the secular and Jewish programs were separate; Benderly, living in America, advocated the supplementary Jewish school. "We who are interested in this American system of Jewish education are gully convinced that the only hope for Jewish education in this country lies in schools supplementing the public school system." 44

In spite of this divergence of opinion in regard to the curriculum, Benderly was admittedly inspired by the spiritual Zionism of Ahad Ha-Am, and set out to promote Jewish education in the Diaspora in accordance with the Zionist ideology. To Benderly this was a challenging task. As he said:

Jewish education is the only real problem confronting American Jewry of this generation. The difficulty and the fascination of the task of the restoration of Palestine has rallied 10,000 Chalutzim to give themselves completely to it. We, American Jews, are surely not wanting in men and women of the spirit. But we have so far not offered a cause worthy of their sacrifices.
If we, American Jews, are to build here the Jewish Center of the Diaspora, then Jewish education must become that cause, a cause which will rally the American Chalutzim and Chalutzoths to a task as difficult, as fascinating, and as significant as that which is being performed at present in Eretz Yisrael. 45

Thus Benderly chose courageous, imaginative teachers who would stimulate the minds of their students and convey to them the spiritual beauty of Jewish culture. He wanted the students to think of Judaism as something more than a set of ancient doctrines and ceremonies. For, in Benderly's formulation, the pupil who is imbued with the love of the Jewish heritage will in later years be a vital member of the Jewish community, and as a result, Jewish peoplehood - to use Ahad Ha-Am's term - will be revived and strengthened.

Kaplan summed up the impact of Benderly's personality on American Jewish life by saying: "Like the comet which is supposed to have collided with, and enflamed the torpid mass of matter whence out planetary system arose, Benderly burst upon American Jewry and set it into motion in the orbit of its true destiny." 46
Israel Friedlaender was born in Poland on September 6, 1876. Even in his youth he displayed the intense Jewish consciousness characteristic of Eastern Jewry. In 1896 he went to Germany, and entered Berlin University and the Rabbiner Seminar, where he studied until 1900. The following year he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Strasbourg, and in 1902 was appointed "Privatdocent" in the Department of Semitic Languages. He also began to translate the works of Ahad Ha-Am and Dubnow, men whom he regarded as the foremost thinkers of Eastern Europe. In his work as a translator, Friedlaender considered himself a mediator between Eastern and Western Jewry. In 1903 Professor Solomon Schechter invited him to lecture in Biblical Literature and Exegesis at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. On September 26, 1906 he married Miss Lilliam Bentwich of London, England, a woman of understanding and devotion who encouraged him in his work.

Friedlaender was keenly interested in Jewish education. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Educational Alliance, and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bureau of Education of the New York Kehillah. He was also asked to assist on the publication committee of the Jewish Publication Society. While active in several Zionist organizations, he was at the same time teaching Bible literature at the Seminary,
making frequent public addresses, as well as writing and translating in Hebrew, German, and English. He often introduced young students to modern Hebrew literature by having them read the Hebrew essays of Ahad Ha-Am, whom he regarded as the leader in cultural Zionism. In his classes, and even after class, Friedlaender enjoyed conducting long student discussions on the themes of the essays.

On July 5, 1920 Friedlaender was murdered by bandits in the Ukraine. At the time he was on his way to bring help to Jewish people in those war-torn lands.

In his book, Great Jews I have Known, Dr. Max Raisin recalls a memorable visit one Friday evening, in 1909, to the home of Ahad Ha-Am, in London. On this occasion, he noted that he observed the close friendship between the philosopher and another guest, Israel Friedlaender. Notwithstanding Ahad Ha-Am's well-known reticence and generally withdrawn manner, the closeness between them was evidently like that of patron and protege. Raisin described his impressions:

The conversation at the table moved at a lively pace. Dr. Friedlaender, a handsome young man with a jet black beard which lent him an air of great distinction, was the leading spirit and told many Jewish stories and anecdotes....Later that evening, we took our leave, Ginzberg and Friedlaender accompanying us to the station. 47

It is not to be wondered that Friedlaender in his writings should have shown the influence of Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy nor that he should have been in general guided by
them. It would be remarkable, however, if no divergencies or modifications appeared in the writings of a man separated from his mentor's standpoint by a generation and, subsequently, by an ocean. In the following paragraphs, I shall explore these similarities and differences of opinion.

Friedlaender admired Ahad Ha-Am for the keen analysis with which he approached the problems confronting the Jewish people in our times. He stated:

There is scarcely a Jewish problem of importance which has not been touched upon by Ahad Ha-Am, and has not received through his magic touch a new and striking illustration. 48

Nevertheless, in the preface to his German translation of Ahad Ha-Am's essays "At the Crossroads," Friedlaender stated that he disagreed with the former on several important points. A far reaching example of his disagreement is found in his essay, "Moses Maimonides," where he questioned Ahad Ha-Am's conclusions, in the essay "The Supremacy of Reason," concerning Maimonides' faith. Friedlaender, taking into account the theological orientation of the middle ages, asserted that faith was not open to question but only to metaphysical validation in that period. Thus, he concluded that Maimonides equated faith with reason, in contradistinction to Ahad Ha-Am's assumption that Maimonides enthroned reason over faith. This, however, was a misunderstanding by Friedlaender of Ahad H-Am's position. As we have noted in Chapter I, Ahad H-Am interpreted Maimonides in the same manner as Friedlaender; for Ahad H-Am asserted that in the philosophy of Maimonides faith and reason are identical.
The Doctrine of the Peoplehood of Israel

Paralleling Ahad Ha-Am's theory of the organic nature of the Jewish people, Friedlaender equated Judaism to an organism. As Friedlaender pointed out: "Definitions are almost unattainable in the case of an historical organism like Judaism, which, during...its history has been undergoing uninterrupted though imperceptible changes, which...has encountered innumerable influences of every origin and description, and, in consequence, presents in almost every age and country, a modified appearance." 49

It will, however, suffice for our immediate purposes, if I say, vaguely perhaps, but briefly, that Judaism represents the sum total of those inner characteristics as instincts, sentiments, convictions and ideals, which are to a lesser or larger degree common to the individuals of the aggregate known as the Jewish people. If the Jews, or Jewry, represent the ethnological or physical appearance of the Jewish people, Judaism may be said to represent its spiritual, or psychical make-up; in other words, Jewry constitutes the body, Judaism the spirit, or the soul, of the Jewish people. As the soul of the individual, so the soul of the nation is in itself invisible. 50

To Friedlaender, it is really the articulation, the expression, the sum total of the culture of the Jewish people that is organic in nature, not the people itself, who, physically change but little over the centuries.

It (the soul of a nation) finds its visible expression in a certain manner of life, such as customs, habits, and ceremonies, and in a certain spiritual productivity such as literature, art, and the like - in short, in two spheres, which, taken together, form what we call the culture of the nation. Judaism would thus, more exactly, represent the Jewish soul, or spirit, and its outward manifestation in Jewish culture. Jewry without Judaism is no more than a body without a spirit. 51
Israel Friedlaender did not assume a spirit that directs the destiny of the people in the Hegelian or Krochmal manner. Krochmal, whose influence on Ahad Ha-Am has been discussed in Chapter I, spoke of a spirit or entity that determines the course of a people's destiny. Friedlaender also wrote of the "soul" or "spirit" of the people, but he obviously referred thus to Judaism itself, or, as indicated above, to the sum total of the characteristics, sentiments, ideals, convictions of the Jewish people. For Friedlaender, the spirit was not a separate being, but the essence of the Jewish people.

This soul of the Jewish people - Judaism - has been in a process of steady decay ever since the Emancipation of the Jews. This process was the "plight of Judaism," noted by Ahad Ha-Am. Indeed, the alleviation of this decay of Judaism constituted the central theme of his essays.

Friedlaender was also concerned with the deterioration of Jewish culture, and especially with its causes and symptoms in America, where he noted the Jewish spirit weakening and threatened with complete decline. For him, Judaism was the only reason, the only foundation for the existence of the Jews:

Jewry without Judaism is no more than a body without a spirit, a dead inanimate mechanism, which may, by sheer mechanical momentum, move on for a little while but must in the end come to a complete standstill. 52

This decay, paradoxically, is coincident with the exodus of the Jews from the Ghetto and with their subsequent
communion with the life and culture of the nations around them. ("The dawn or the emancipation of Jewry is the dusk of Judaism.")

But what is the solution? Is it "either return to the Ghetto or accept complete absorption?", Friedlaender asked. The answer, he believed, as shown during similar circumstances in the great Jewish-Arabic period, was the abandonment of the narrow view of professing Judaism to be merely a creed, and resuming its original function as a culture, as the "expression of the Jewish spirit and the whole life of the Jews."

It (Judaism) will not confine itself to a few metaphysical doctrines, which affect the head and not the heart, and a few official ceremonies, which affect neither the head nor the heart, but will encircle the whole life of the Jews and give content and color to its highest functions and activities.

**Judaism - The Historical School**

Friedlaender saw Judaism as an evolving responsive organism, accommodating itself to the needs of the Jewish people. Modern Judaism, to be more than merely a creed, to fulfill its proper role, would have to take into account other cultures, new developments in science and seek to meet new conditions and interests.

This modern Judaism...will develop and be modified along the lines of its history, prompted by inner necessity, not by dictation from without. While the Judaism of isolation accentuated the ceremonial side
of Jewish life and crystallized itself by a natural process into an Orah Hayyim - a "Mode of Living", (as the ceremonial part of the Shulhan Arukh is entitled) - the modern phase of Judaism will probably tend to emphasize more strongly its cultural aspects. 54

Friedlaender's historical approach is akin to the German historical school which holds that all human culture, including laws and institutions, undergoes constant change prompted by the particular conditions the people face in each age. In Ahad Ha-Am's and Drocchmal's conception, the change does not involve the fundamental character of the people, for this essence is rooted in the unchangeable Absolute Spirit. Moreover, their formulation posits that the evolving change is always within the design of the Absolute Spirit.

Judaism, according to Friedlaender, developed gradually reflecting the needs of its people, and he believed, this was as it should be. He was not in favor of radical dismissing of those precepts which have outgrown their significance, but believed that the people, in the same way in which they had originally codified the various laws, would gradually discard those no longer germane to their contemporary life.

Some day perhaps we may feel the need for a new approach to tradition: we may not want to understand the natural process of its evolution. We may then have a new Maimonides, who will codify the law from the historical point of view, not on the principles of an artificial logic, but on the basis of the order in which the various laws emerged in the course of an age-long development. 55

Friedlaender urged that for the purpose of the enrichment of Jewish life, such hitherto neglected art forms as
music and poetry should now become part of a more meaningful Jewish culture.

It (Judaism) will have to take in and digest the elements of other cultures, and will seek and meet new conditions and interests....It will regulate our spiritual demand and supply and will make Judaism a living, flourishing, impregnable organism that deserves to be loved, to be respected, to be lived for. 56

The Centrality of Eretz Yisrael

Ahad Ha-Am's views on the role of Palestine as the source of inspiration, example and encouragement to the fostering of Jewish culture are well known. Palestine, for him, was not merely a safe harbor, a Nachtasyl, a temporary shelter from the ravages of the anti-semitism suffered in the Diaspora; for him it was also the answer to the problem of the decay of Judaism among the newly emancipated Jews, who had gained certain civil liberties but had lost their "soul".

He believed that the freedom of thought and action afforded to a Jewish citizen in his own state would be decisive in unifying the scattered Jewish communities all over the world so that they would once again be inspired to give expression to their inner nature.

The centrality of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine, he held, implied that true Zionists must live and work in the state itself, that Zionism implied the negation of the Diaspora. "If I believed that a complete creative life in
the Diaspora was possible, I would not call myself a Zionist," he once said.

On the subject of the need for a national homeland in Palestine, his most illustrious adversary was S. M. Dubnow. What was Friedlaender's position in this respect? Friedlaender summarized Dubnow's position thus: "Jewish Nationalism, being a purely spiritual nature, needs no territory of its own." 57

In his essay, "Dubnow's Theory of Jewish Nationalism," Friedlaender noted that although Dubnow felt his theory of Jewish nationalism was a synthesis between assimilation and Zionism, "he (Dubnow) is naturally more favorably inclined towards Zionism... than to Assimilation, ... despite this, his opposition to Zionism is well known." Dubnow, according to Friedlaender, made the point that "it (Zionism) is impossible, since its ideal can never be realized." 58

Friedlaender, himself, respected and greeted Dubnow's contention warmly that the Jews are a nationality and not merely a religious community, and said of it:

A nation, according to the definition of Dubnow, is an historic-cultural group, possessing, by virtue of its origins and conditions of its development, certain traits of character, a certain disposition of mental and moral faculties and a certain stock of historical traditions, distinguishing it from other equal groups - in short, constituting a characteristic collective personality. 59

A spiritual nation, then, as conceived by Dubnow, the Jews, having outlived the stage of territorial nationalism, should not seek to concentrate themselves in a country of
their own, but should claim the right to live their distinctive national lives in all the countries in which they had been settled for generations. To Dubnow, it was of far greater importance to establish conditions in the Diaspora to preserve their national individuality without sacrifice of freedom. Thus, Dubnow and his school advocated the concentration of effort on the acquisition of "national autonomy" for the Jewish communities in the Diaspora.

Originally, Friedlaender held that the views of Dubnow and Ahad Ha-Am made a synthesis, that both approaches were needed to deal with the double problems of active anti-semitism and the need for an opportunity for an atmosphere in which Judaism could flourish. He felt, in other words, that the view stressing the need of the centrality of Israel and that stressing national autonomy whereby Jewish life was to be encouraged to reach its intrinsic expression in the Diaspora - both these attitudes were to be supported. The Jews should not try to assimilate; they should try to foster their own culture and, if the national homeland is not exactly indispensable, it is certainly very important.

A change in Friedlaender's emphasis toward the views of Ahad Ha-Am at a later date is noteworthy: During a lecture delivered as late as 1917, some twelve years after the one on the Dubnow controversy, and only three years before his death, Friedlaender made the following statement:
The significance of Palestine for the Jewries of the world is just as great today as it was ever before. Those who believe that the emancipation of the Jews will solve the Jewish problem, and the Messianic ideal will be consummated by the removal of Jewish disabilities, short-sightedly overlook that the Jewish problem has two aspects: it has a material aspect, ... the problem of Jewry, and it has a spiritual aspect, ... the problem of Judaism. The material problem, the problem of discrimination, suffering and persecution, must and will be solved by Jewish emancipation. But the spiritual problem, the problem of our higher destiny, with be and cannot be solved by Jewish emancipation. The solution of our material problem depends on the nations around us; the solution of our spiritual problem depends on our own endeavors. ... What we need is a true unity, a unity based on liberty, a unity based on cooperation, and there is no more noble unity than that of a common ideal, the ideal ... of a genuine Jewish life on genuine Jewish soil. 60

Friedlaender's views on this subject are simply and succinctly summarized in his preface to his book Past and Present, where he said:

This volume ... is based upon the fundamental conception of Judaism as a living organism, which is one and indivisible at all times and in all climes; changing and yet unchanged; harking back to a great past and struggling, in the midst of a harassing present, towards a glorious future. That conception views Israel as a community in which the religious and racial element is inseparably intertwined with one another, in which the universal ideals and the national aspirations form a harmonious combination - a combination which can be realized only through the untrammeled and unhindered development of the Jewish genius on a Jewish soil. 61

The God Idea

Neither Ahad Ha-Am nor Israel Friedlaender gave, by any explicit statement, his personal views in regard to his conception of God, but there is much we may infer from the context of their writings.
In Ahad Ha-Am’s "Moses", we have a very clear view of his theological views in his reconstruction and paraphrasing of the Biblical account of Moses. We note that "God" resides in the consciousness of Moses, that the prophet is intoxicated by an all-consuming inner force that motivates him to struggle for absolute truth and its realization in human relations in the form of absolute justice. The prophet Moses does not experience a dialogue or confrontation, and the "burning bush" episode is not a supernatural visible phenomenon. In the heart of the prophet, however, the experience he does undergo is just as real; Divine revelation takes place in Moses’ heart. It is the manifestation of the Divine will.

In Friedlaender’s essay, "The Prophet Jeremiah", we are able to discern a strong resemblance, almost an echo of Ahad Ha-Am’s "Moses". Friedlaender began his essay with the definition of the prophet as an idealist. He discussed the nature of the idealism of the prophet, and said that his idealism is essentially unpractical, that the prophet is a noncompromiser, and that his justice is an absolute justice.

As in Ahad Ha-Am’s essay, "Moses", the prophet here did not have an experience of communion with God in the form of a dialogue, but the reality of God was so convincing to the prophet that he was ready to lay down his life for Him.

Friedlaender stated that:

Communion with God, a phrase nowadays heard so often from the pulpit, was to the prophets more than a
phrase; it was palpable reality which filled their lives and ruled their actions. 63

Friedlaender did not venture an explanation of the meaning of this communion, for, as he said,

What this communion with the Divine really meant, we know not, and, so long as our senses are hedged in by time and space, we shall not know. The believing Jew has at his disposal the vast possibilities which lie between the vision of Ezekiel, who swallows the scroll presented to him by God, and the abstract doctrine of Maimonides, who conceives of prophecy as the conjunction of our mind with the Active Intellect of the sub-lunar world. But the fact as such impresses itself irresistibly upon the mind of everyone who reads and understands the prophets. 64

Apparently, Friedlaender identified himself with this believing Jew in that as a mortal, with all the limitations placed upon his perceptions, he did not know God. And with this "believing Jew", he had ample freedom of choice among a variety of possible revelations within a large area. On the one hand, he was offered the extreme choice of Ezekial, in his tangible encounter with God; on the other, an abstract cognition of our mind with the Active Intellect of the sub-lunar world.

How are we then to understand Israel Friedlaender's position? Upon what choice did he devolve? Was he himself the modern believing Jew, undogmatic in his formulation, allowing for a wide variety of God experiences? At his point, it is difficult to define his position. However, in another context, his essay on Moses Maimonides, Friedlaender shed further light on his God idea:
Describing Maimonides' "universe of discourse" as in keeping with the medieval period in which the philosopher lived, Friedlaender concluded that with the "death of the stars" (the Aristotellean concept), the entire structure of Maimonides' theology also fell apart. For the death of these stars, or spheres, which were the realm in which the Active Intellect was supposed to reside made meaning less the entire construction of a communion of our minds with an Active Intellect. By the death dealt to these spheres indirectly, by the discoveries made by modern astronomers, man could no longer communicate with the Divine through them, since they were now no longer endowed with intelligence. Neither, then, could Friedlaender bring his mind in that manner into contact with the mind of God, for

As for the philosopher Maimonides, need I point out that the downfall of Aristotle involves the downfall of Maimonides? The stars of modern astronomy have grown infinitely in size, but the spectral analysis has torn their souls out of them. The death of the stars has caused the death of the Separate Intelligences and of the Active Intellect which connects the mind of man with God. Thus the tremendous edifice of Maimonidean thought seems to be one magnificent ruin. 65

If this then was Friedlaender's, or "modern man's" position, was there no comfort or solace whatever to be derived from this magnificent ruin. Was there nothing to be retrieved? Friedlaender gave his answer:

In the ruins of Maimonides' edifice there are many corners which might grant shelter and rest to the
"perplexed" of our age. I am firmly convinced that a thorough study of Maimonides' writings would reveal an abundance of thought which, after some transformation and adaptation, might become of great value for our own modern times. 66

Friedlaender advised for the modern Jew profound study, scholarship in order to discover the answers to his question.

Friedlaender, in advocating study, made reference to a metaphorical situation: "If you are sick, you place yourself in the hands of a great surgeon, and put your faith in him." This "great surgeon" refers to a thorough knowledge of Judaism, and the sickness the decay which has taken over the patient, Judaism itself. The two requirements for a restoration to a state of health are, first, the high qualifications of the doctor, and, second, the faith of the people.

However, if the patient is already dead, as dead as the stars in Maimonides' firmament, to what avail are the skills of the best physician and the patient's former faith? What shelter to the perplexed can be offered after the edifice has been crumbled in ruins? In answer, Friedlaender seemed to anticipate reconstructionism by M. M. Kaplan, the subject of Chapter III of this study.

Of smaller significance, but nevertheless worthy of note are the expressions used by Dr. Friedlaender in alluding to a Divine force. In addition to referring to God, he also used such expressions as "Providence", "a kind Providence", "History", and so forth. Thus, in the following extract we read:
It is, therefore, natural to expect that a study of
the Spanish Period of Jewish history will yield to us
many a valuable lesson, which, with the help of a
kind Providence, we may turn to good account...... 67

Education

Education in Judaism was, for Ahad Ha-Am, the sine
qua non of the survival of the Jewish people. The place of
education was higher and more meaningful than religion for
that survival, for,

Without knowledge of Judaism (in the broad sense,
as including everything created by the Jewish spirit),
we have no weapon with which to fight for our exist-
ence.....But the heart of the Jewish people has always
been in the Bet Ha-Midrash (House of Study); there
was the source from which they drew the strength and
the inspiration that enabled them to overcome all dif-
ficulties and withstand all persecutions. If we want
to go on living, we must restore the centre to the
Bet Ha-Midrash, and make that once more the living
source of Judaism. 68

Ahad Ha-Am even believed in reverting to the ancient
system of making the Synagogue itself the House of Study,
with Jewish learning as its first concern and prayer as a
secondary matter. To this system he attributed the sur-
vival of the Jews in days gone by. ("But learning - learn-
ing - learning: that is the secret of Jewish survival.") 69

Again, we may assume that Friedlaender subscribed to
these attitudes of Ahad Ha-Am, namely, that education, study
and cultural pursuits were more vital to the preservation of
the Jewish people than was religion. He treated the subject
of the importance of learning vis a vis that of religion in
an essay, "The Function of Jewish Learning in America" in which he compared the period of the Jews in Spain with that of contemporary America.

The first lesson which impresses itself upon our mind as a result of our study is the unique significance of Jewish learning in the life of the Jewish people. What alone has survived the ravages of time and the vicissitudes of the Golus and what alone has been woven inextricably into the texture of the Jewish consciousness are not their political, economic or charitable achievements, but the Jewish learning which they acquired and developed.

And he continues

...the standards by which a later age will judge the American phase of Jewish history will be...that alone which will remain the inalienable possession of the entire House of Israel, our additions to the spiritual armory of the People of the Book.

To the question of the problem of acclimatizing to the environment in the New World, to the problems of living in a powerful environment whose "culture...stands before us like an iron wall," Friedlaender advised adaptation without sacrificing essential beliefs and practices of Judaism.

Hebrew Language and Literature

Both Ahad Ha-Am and Friedlaender had specific suggestions and recommendations on education, its methods, aims. Ultimately, however, both writers emphasized that Jewish learning, to be authentic, meaningful and effective, should be transmitted in the Hebrew language. Not only did he (Ahad Ha-Am) wish to remove from Jewish teaching the influence of the Western Jews who wished to make religion synony-
mous with Judaism, he also opposed the retainment of Yiddish as the national Jewish language.

His strong insistence upon Hebrew's being the language of Judaism, was indicated in the following excerpt of a letter to S. Dubnow:

You are right in saying that "the question of Yiddish is what divides us." It is becoming a sort of acid test of Judaism; and I must say that I should regard the victory of Yiddish as the most serious threat to Judaism as we understand it. If the Jewish people really cannot survive unless Yiddish wins, then - absit omen - I am prepared to forgo its survival. If after thousands of years the Jewish people is to start developing its culture from the very beginning, if it is to fashion for itself a new literary language and new "literary and cultural values" which are nothing more than a pale reflexion of other cultures: then I can see no point and no purpose in a national existence on so low a level. 73

However, on the issue of religion in education, he was somewhat more compromising, for he felt that much could be gained in the way of education in Judaism even through the means of religious study.

But the present-day western Jews, who want an "orthodox" Hebrew education, are not so dangerous. If the pupils acquire a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew language, the Bible and the Talmud (even on orthodox lines), and an adequate knowledge of Jewish history, and if at the same time they get a good general education, Palestine will be very much better off from the cultural point of view, even if their ideas do not agree with ours. 74

Instances of Ahad Ha-Am's flexibility and far-sightedness in the struggle of education with or without a religious milieu are typified by the following:
Consequently, we have to choose between two alternatives. One is to part company with the western Jews and make up our minds to wait until we are strong enough to establish a school system without any help from any of them. ...The other...is to persuade ourselves that it is better to have good schools in Palestine, even if the pupils wear caps in class and there is no Higher Criticism. ...I prefer the second alternative.

The above passage indicates in still another context Ahad Ha-Am's almost Solomon-like willingness to sacrifice certain relatively minor considerations in the interests of the greater good, that is, compromising on the issue of religiosity and exercising a certain amount of tolerance on that score in the hope of achieving a high level of education, rather than having no education at all or waiting interminably for the means to get it.

Friedlaender was not as outspoken on the issue of religion in education. The question of the survival of the Jebrew language, however, was to him a matter of first importance. Participating in the opening ceremonies of the Hebrew Courses for Adults in Berlin, in 1899, he delivered an address outlining the history of the language, its declines and ascendences.

Tracing the history of the Hebrew language, he called attention to the recent revival of Hebrew, which derived a great impetus with the rise of the Zionist movement. He rejoiced:

Innumerable publications dealing with every phase of life and thought are brought out in uninterrupted
succession. Numerous magazines and newspapers are coming into existence, which, using the rejuvenated idiom of the Bible as their medium of expression, discuss the events of the day and the problems of our times. Writers of great force and poets stamped with the mark of genius constantly enter the arena of Hebrew literature. There is no thought or sentiment stirring modern humanity which is not echoed in the Hebrew language. 76

In connection with his admonition to American Jewry to concern itself with the revival of Hebrew, Friedlaender said:

What then would be more natural than that we Jews should be the first to study and the first to present to the world this unique linguistic phenomenon. ...Verily the Jews of America who boast of their practical sense and are the same time alive to the claims of Jewish learning cannot neglect this particular claim....77

Moreover, he adjured his fellow Jews that they give more than just financial support to scholarship and learning. The scholar, he said, needs more than just backing of a material sort; he needs recognition and moral support, in order to be sufficiently encouraged to carry on. He recommended following the example of Jews throughout Europe, who have established various societies for the furtherance of study, such as the then more than two hundred and twenty-one Societies for Jewish History and Literature throughout Germany. In exhorting his hearers to implement these suggestions speedily, in his essay, "The Function of Jewish Learning in America", he concluded with an appropriate quotation from Hillel in the following passage:
And standing, as we do, on the threshold of a new period, which we hope will figure in future Jewish history as the Rise of Jewish Learning in America, we cannot but be guided by the motto of the wise Hillel: "If I am not for myself, who is for myself?" and, above all, "If not now, when then?"

In judging Israel Friedlaender's own estimation of the role of the Tanakh in the life and education of the Jewish people, we need only remember that he devoted his life to the study of the Bible, wrote on it extensively, researched it and expounded upon it, and was himself professor of Biblical Studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. In his introduction to the selection of essays by Friedlaender that comprise the book, *Past and Present*, Israel Finkelstein says of him:

He knew the Bible by heart, and had a thorough grasp of its commentators. ...He was considered by the Semitists of his day the foremost Arabist of the country; and by Bible scholars one of the foremost of their own group. ...Immured as he was in Scripture, appropriate verses for specific occasions and to describe specific situations came to him, apparently without effort. 79

Friedlaender agrees with Ahad Ha-Am that the Tanakh is the most important connecting link of the Jewish people of the present times with its intrinsic life as portrayed in the Biblical period.

There are many ways of looking at the Bible. One of them which strangely enough has been largely neglected record of the Jewish people during the formative period of its existence and of the great issues which were fought out during that period, with results determining the entire subsequent development of our race (1). 80
His own approach to the Bible, particularly to the teachings of the prophets, was essentially a humanistic one. The following is an excerpt from his essay, "The Political Ideal of the Prophets":

But the prophets of Israel were at the same time men of this world, deeply rooted in this earth, closely associated with their fellowmen, alien to nothing that is human. ...The true prophet is a ben Adam, a "son of man", in the best human sense of the word: he is an affectionate husband, a loving father, a loyal citizen, a self-sacrificing patriot. 81

In the Ahad Ha-Am spirit Friedlaender envisioned that the realizations of the ideals set forth by the prophets would be finally realized in Zion.

Those of us who still cherish the memory of the prophets and pin their faith to their ideals see in Zion above all the consummation of our spiritual strivings. ...where the ancient ideal is realized in a modern form: "For out of Zion shall go forth Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." 82
JUDAH L. MAGNES

Judah Magnes, the first child of Sophie and David Magnes, was born in San Francisco on July 5, 1877. His father, David Magnes, had come at the age of fifteen to America from what had been Russian Poland. Judah Magnes had great admiration for his father, who had received a Jewish education at the talmudic school of his native town. Judah Magnes was brought up in an atmosphere of reference for Jewish learning, and love for the land of Israel.

Even as a boy, Magnes was an excellent orator, and the speech which he made at his Bar-Mitzvah was highly praised by the local Oakland newspaper. This gift of public speaking served him well all through the course of his life. In high school he excelled as a scholar, and also as a baseball player and debater. He took weekly lessons in Hebrew from Rabbi M. S. Levy, an Orthodox Rabbi in San Francisco, and was also taught the Talmud by Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger, a leader of Reform Judaism. The latter encouraged him to enter the ministry. So at the age of seventeen, Judah Magnes, a handsome young man of keen intellect, entered the Hebrew Union College and at the same time the University of Cincinnati. At the university he was editor of the students' magazine, The Cincinnatian, but after a dispute with the authorities over freedom of the press, he resigned as editor.

While still at college, Magnes served for brief periods as apprentice rabbi in two congregations: Stockton in Calif-
ornia, and Wabash in Indiana. Many of these early sermons were brilliant and intense, and drew the interest of the local population. In a sermon which he gave at the age of twenty one, he advocated the Jewish return to Palestine. This was an unusual attitude for a Reform rabbi, but Magnes was an individualist. As we trace his career, non-conformity can be said to be one of his dominant characteristics. At the same time, his sincerity and magnetic personality made him a natural leader.

Magnes graduated from the university in 1898, studied two more years at the college, and in June 1900 was ordained Rabbi. As Europe was then considered to be the center of Jewish learning, Magnes decided to pursue his graduate course in theology at the Berlin University, and at the same time to do advanced study at des Judentums Lehramstalt. Magnes joined a small group of fellow-students, ardent Zionists, who were eager to learn more of the Hebrew language and literature. He soon became devoted to the Zionist movement, and was particularly influenced by the Hebrew essays of Ahad Ha-Am on spiritual Zionism.

In December, 1902, Magnes received his doctorate of Philosophy at Heidelberg where he had spent his second year of study, and in 1903 he returned from Germany to America. For a year he was librarian and a teacher of Bible translation at Hebrew Union College, and during this time was active in the Zionist cause. In both his writings and speeches he criticized the anti-nationalism which at that time seemed to
characterize Reform Judaism.

Magnes planned to edit a Zionist magazine at the College, but when Dr. KaufmannKohler, a strong supporter of the Reform movement, and especially opposed to the "national" idea of Judaism, became president of Hebrew Union College, he warned Magnes not to go through with his plan. Magnes then decided to accept an offer to become rabbi of a Reform Synagogue in the poverty-stricken Brownsville section of Brooklyn.

Soon after his arrival in New York, Magnes met Professor Solomon Schechter, who had come from Cambridge University in England to be president of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Magnes found in Schechter a man of high principles, and a leader in the emphasis of Jewish peoplehood. Magnes became a disciple of Schechter.

He would be at once the apostle of Schechter, the new mastermind in American Jewry, and the standard bearer of the national revival conceived as a spiritual awakening in accordance with the teaching of his earlier East European mentor, Ahad Ha-Am. He would form a synthesis of the two doctrines.

Two years later Magnes was appointed rabbi of Temple Emanu-El on Fifth Avenue, which had a wealthy, sophisticated congregation, and then in 1911, after some differences with the trustees at Temple Beth-El regarding the return to some traditional forms of worship, he accepted a position as rabbi in the Conservative congregation, Bnai Jeshurun. Although Magnes considered himself a Reformed Jew, he made a distinc-
tion between an official and unofficial Reformed Jew. He classified himself with the unofficial Reformed group, because he did not believe in specific, fixed changes in Judaism.

Magnes remained an even shorter time at Bnai Jeshurun than at Temple Emanu-El. Although, as at Temple Emanu-El, he drew the young people into the synagogue, the congregation as a whole did not respond to his ideas of turning the synagogue primarily into a place of study, and of removing the organ, which he regarded as a distraction to serious thought.

Magnes finally resigned from the rabbinate and devoted himself to the Zionist cause. He became leader of a society called the "Advancement of Judaism" which was founded by some of his friends. He had already been secretary of the Federation of American Zionists for three years after his return from Europe, and while at Temple Emanu-El he had helped organize the Jewish community in New York into a unified group known as the Kehillah, of which Magnes was chairman during the entire period of its existence, 1909 - 1922. Its Bureau of Education which Magnes formed in 1910 made a remarkable contribution to Jewish community life and education.

Although active in Zionist affairs in America, for Magnes this was not enough. Intensely imbued with the "Love of Zion", and inspired by the spiritual Zionism of his friend, Ahad Ha-Am, Magnes decided to leave America for Palestine.
and to found in Palestine a Hebrew University as a cultural center. In 1925, three years after his arrival in Palestine, his dream became a reality. To this Hebrew University, which was opened on April 1, 1925, Magnes devoted the last twenty-five years of his life.

**The Jewish Peoplehood**

Magnes does not actually emphasize the organismic nature of the Jewish people; yet he certainly views the Jewish people as a unit with a unique national character. He strongly opposed the idea of assimilation, and instead emphasized, as did Ahad Ha-Am, that the Jewish national spirit is the very foundation of Jewish life.

The Jews are a People, with a national past, a national present, and a national future. Zionism is based upon the idea of internationalism, i.e., the preservation of nations—the Jews among them—the development of their distinctive characters and their peaceful interaction one upon the other. Zionism opposes a vague cosmopolitanism that would reduce all men and nations to one type. As a consequence, it opposes the assimilation, the absorption of the Jew, by the peoples among whom he lives. Zionism is the expression of the Jew's belief in himself, in his power to be of service to humanity as a Jew.

In keeping with his rationalist outlook, we can readily understand his definition of the Jewish people in purely sociological terms. Magnes often refers to the Jewish "spirit", but he uses the word in a different connotation than Ahad Ha-Am. "Whatever be the material fortune of the Jewish people,
their real life is the life of the spirit, and their real goal the strengthening, the deepening, the beautifying of the life of the spirit..." 85 He does not assume the existence of a Krochmalian Absolute Spirit that determines the nature and course of a people's historical path. To Magnes, and likewise to many other disciples of Ahad Ha-Am, the word "spirit" is to be taken in its sociological designation, as the sum total of the cultural forces in which the Jewish people's intrinsic genius finds expression. And although Magnes does not describe the Jewish people in the words of Ahad Ha-Am, as a living organism, yet his concept has the same fundamental implication.

However much Jews may differ, however varying our views of life and the world, there is one requirement, one test, that can bind us all together in the living tradition of the living Jewish people... This one requirement, this one test, the one evidence of our living hope is: Faith in the creative, spiritual power of the living Jewish people. 86

The Centrality of Israel

Magnes was well aware of the potentiality of the land of Israel as a spiritual center.

Zionism is the name of the attempt on the part of the Jews to bring the land of Israel into the center of Jewish life. ...This attempt to establish the Jewish Center in Palestine has of itself already enriched the Jewish People with an increase of character, of ideas, of actual achievement. 87

It was a bold act of heroism for Magnes, rabbi of the prominent Reform synagogue of New York, Temple Emanu-El, to
champion the cause of Zionism, and thus come into open conflict with his trustees who were nearly all anti-Zionists. The reason for this outright rebellion was his ardent love for the Jewish people and its heritage, which he felt could only be preserved in the Diaspora providing there was the spiritual center in Palestine. This center, like the sun, would spread its rays of light and warmth to the far-flung Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Magnes alleged that the American Diaspora, ever growing, is still in need of the inspiration of the Palestinian center in order to avoid tribalism and disintegration.

The Zionism, however, which Magnes supported, was not within the framework of the typical Zionist leadership of his time. Magnes opposed the program of political Zionism as formulated by Chaim Weizmann. In fact the very work "political" was repugnant to him. This attitude was perhaps the result of Ahad Ha-Am's influence. And as Magnes sought above all to avoid open conflict between the Jews and the Arabs, he advocated a bi-national State - Ihud. We recall that Ahad Ha-Am had envisioned a Jewish state in which the Jewish population would constitute a majority; thus it is difficult to determine whether Ahad Ha-Am would have endorsed Ihud. As to Magnes' views on this subject, Dushkin has written:

He disagreed with the official Zionist leadership by expressing doubts about the possibility of establishing a Jewish commonwealth that would be accepted
peaceably by the Palestinian Arabs. His counter-suggestion was that "bi-national" parity be established in Palestine between Jews and Arabs, that agreement with them be reached on the rate of Jewish immigration, and that the country be made part of an Arab Federation in the Near East. He made several unsuccessful efforts to implement his plan of bringing together the moderate Arab spokesmen with the Zionist leadership in Palestine. 68

Would Ahad Ha-Am have agreed with these suggestions of Magnes? We do know that Ahad Ha-Am had often expressed his abhorrence of bloodshed; therefore it is quite probable that if Ahad Ha-Am had been alive during that critical period in Palestine, he would have approved of Magnes' plan as a solution to the problem.

At any rate, Magnes was devoted to Ahad Ha-Am's brand of spiritual Zionism - with Palestine as the center of Jewish culture. In Magnes' own concise statement:

As to the Land of Israel, Zionism has emphasized the fact that it is today and has never ceased to be the center of Jewry. 89

He chose to spend the latter part of his life in Palestine, where as president of the Hebrew University, he applied all his energies to the cause which he cherished above all else - Zionism. As his biographer, Norman Bentwich wrote:

Zionism possessed Magnes; sympathy became a passion, and a movement became a mission. His whole outlook on life was determined by it. 90

The God Idea

Magnes did not enjoy the good fortune of having an emotional experience of the personal presence of God. At
times he expressed uncertainty about his religious beliefs:

In matters of religion I feel myself to be altogether at sea. Do I really believe in God, that he watches over the world and over men, that he hears prayers and interferes in the affairs of men? 91

In his groping for the answer to these questions, he delved deeply into Jewish history; he sought proof of a personal Deity. There he found realization of the existence of God in the fact that the Jewish people had made its choice from many alternatives, and its choice had been God. It could have made a pagan, godless choice which would have enabled it to embark on a road less exposed to suffering and martyrdom; but it did not take the easy path. Thus, Magnes found the reality of God in the indomitable will of the Jewish people, and its heroic struggle throughout history as it clung to its faith. In his own words (translated from the Hebrew):

When we meditate on our being and our experience as the people of Israel, with what stubbornness we have chosen and said "yes"! - A hard-necked people that turned its neck and made gigantic detours from the main highway, and drank the cup of hemlock to its dregs, and suffered to an extent that no other people in the history of humanity has suffered. 92

Magnes concluded, however, on a note of doubt, begging God to explain the meaning of suffering. "But this (mystery) unravel for us, O Lord, whether man suffers for Thy sake."

Although Magnes did not find a solution to the problem of evil, yet, in another passage, in which he discussed the
Prophets' experience of a personal God, he took a more hopeful position. Since we mortals, according to Magnes, cannot attain an awareness of personal communion with God to the same degree of certitude that the prophets did, we must, therefore, as a second alternative, accept their account of God's reality.

I am convinced from the words of the Hebrew prophets that not alone from the human beings of flesh and blood are we to discover the affirmation of the prophetic ethic, but ...we must believe that, in the creation of that ethic, they (the prophets) were privileged to approach (spiritually), (that is, to experience a sense) of actual nearness to the higher Entity - the God of Israel. To ordinary mortals it is not granted, nor are we qualified, to possess this privilege. - The word from this higher source does not reach us, and in spite of all our efforts we are still standing before a blocked wall - blind, deaf, and dumb in the face of suffering and evil.

...But here before us in the Tanach, a marvelous line of ethical genii have stamped upon us the seal of their personalities. Facing all humanity, these prophets experienced the original fountain, the root and foundation of our ethical character and aspiration. And if we exert all our effort to live up to this, our inner ethical nature, we are following in the footsteps of the prophets, in accordance with our inner voice - the deepest and highest Reality. 93

In other words, Magnes maintained that when we investigate the world of nature and of man, and try to find its ultimate meaning, we come to a point where reason is no longer sufficient, and we must resort to a "leap of faith".

In every logical formulation we reach a point where we must postulate a hypothesis (by basing it) on the support of an act of faith - "Salto mortale". 94
In the writings of Ahad Ha-Am, however, we have seen no evidence of a groping for this "leap of faith", as it is expressed in the usual theological parlance. Ahad Ha-Am was apparently satisfied with the pantheist position in which the individual must learn to find self-fulfillment through identification with his people and through the acceptance of the universe as constituted. Perhaps a "leap of faith" would be termed by Ahad Ha-Am as merely a pleasant means of escape. To the sober, rationalistic mind of Ahad Ha-Am, this alternative did not characterize sound metaphysics.

Judaim - Tradition and Change

Magnes, although rabbi of a Reform temple in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, was fascinated by the East European Jewish people of this community, who, like himself, were of orthodox background. Their orthodox rituals and hasidic enthusiasm were a nostalgic reminder of his own upbringing.

In his theological position, however, Magnes was a Reform Jew, with his beliefs firmly grounded in Prophetic Judaism. This was a philosophy which stressed the highest Utopian ideals as the essence of theology. In his essay, "The Ethics of the Prophets and Its Source", Magnes, with a direct quotation from the Bible, brought forth what he considered to be proof that the Tradition existed even before the time of Moses. In this passage, God was speaking:
And Abraham...I have known him so that he may command his children and his household after him - and they shall keep and observe the way of the Lord to do justice and righteousness. 95

According to Magnes, this "way of the Lord" which God recommended to Abraham was a living tradition even at the time of Abraham.

Tradition, perhaps mainly on an unconscious level, by interpretation, has been constantly at work, changing laws, institutions, concepts, and personalities, in the historical process. As an example of this process, Magnes claimed that tradition affected a radical transformation on the image of David as portrayed in the Bible. David the warrior was gradually changed by tradition to David the prophet and psalmist. "She lifted up David - from David, the spiller of blood - to David the repenter, the sweet singer of psalms."

The Books of Isaiah also revealed to Magnes the Modifying force of the tradition. "The first part of Isaiah is removed from the second part by at least 200 years - yet the true pulse of the tradition combined them to one unique Isaiah."

In other words, even in Biblical times the Tradition was operating and creating. The following passage is Magnes' description of the manner in which the gradual development of the tradition was brought about:

The later scholars - the "learned of God" felt themselves to be suffused with the true prophetic tradition, and indeed they were. This tradition made it possible for the prophetic ethic to dispense with many ways of life from time to time, and to change them, and also to absorb into this ethic the great ethics of many of the prophets of the (other)
nations. Yet at the same time she (tradition) had remained faithful to her foundation. Multitudes of the learned of God, in the course of generations, interpreted, loved, amended anew (italics mine) this tradition, and she remained ever open to every Jewish person. 96

The last phrase, in which Magnes refers to tradition as remaining "ever open to every Jewish person", reveals his standpoint that the Jewish people, create their own Law. As to the means by which changes in the Tradition occur, however, Magnes diverged from Ahad Ha-Am's theory. As we have previously noted, Ahad Ha-Am contended that the Law amends itself through a gradual evolutionary process. Magnes, on the other hand, like Mordecai Kaplan, believed that it is permissible for the Law to be deliberately amended, if deemed wise and necessary under existing circumstances. In this liberal view, however, which was actually the Reform position, Magnes made a curious distinction between two types of Reform. "I am a Reformed Jew - if we must use the word Reform at all - because I believe in the principle of development, of change in Judaism; but not because I believe in this or that definite change as fixed by Official Reform." 97 We assume that he meant that there should always be a certain flexibility in the modification of the Tradition, and that no amendment should ever be allowed to become a rigid law.

Magnes agreed with Ahad Ha-Am that, although the Law outwardly changes to some extent, its basic element has a stable, permanent quality. It is like a living organism
that is constantly recreated and yet remains essentially the same. And from this, essential ethical tradition - men throughout the ages have derived guidance and inspiration. To illustrate his point, Magnes quoted again from the Bible: "Lo, let every thirsty person go to the water; go and buy without silver, without price." And Magnes added that "from these living waters we are drawing to this day." 

The Role of the Tanakh

When Ahad Ha-Am visited the Jaffa Hebrew schools he reported that the children had difficulty in remembering the text of the Tanakh because they were being taught too much Bible criticism. The teachers, inspired by the ideal that Palestinian life meant fulfillment, tended to negate the Diaspora. Thus, they pointed out to the children the obscurities and discrepancies that found their way into the Bible during the Diaspora period. Ahad H-Am criticized this approach; he asserted that, in presenting the Tanakh to the Jewish child, one cannot overlook almost 2000 years of Diaspora life, for that entire period was undeniably a part of the history of the Jewish people. And as the Bible, more authentically than any other document, portrays the intrinsic nature of the Jewish spirit, he considered Bible study to be the best possible means of enabling a Jewish child to identify himself with his people.
Magnes supported Ahad Ha-Am's theory that the Bible is a superb presentation of the spiritual qualities of the Jewish people. In spite of its discrepancies, Magnes regarded the Bible in its entirety as a sacred possession. As he said:

We have to realize that the Tanach is not simply an exalted literary work, or even a history of the Jewish people. Its power flows from the fact that generations have believed that this book is our sacred writ. 100

While Magnes was President of the Hebrew University which he had helped found in Jerusalem, "an enterprise of the war years near to his heart, but not achieved in his lifetime, was the printing of the Hebrew Bible by the University Press. It was a paradox that the Hebrew Bible had never yet been printed in Jerusalem by Jews, but bore the imprint of the London Jews' Missionary Society. To produce there the most authentic text that scholarship could provide...was a fitting task for the University." 101

The Hebrew Language

As Chairman of the Kehillah (Jewish Community of New York) which he organized in 1909, and Trustee of its Bureau of Jewish Education, Magnes took an active part in assisting Samson Benderly with the reorganization of American Jewish education. Magnes and Benderly shared Ahad Ha-Am's enthusiasm for the natural method of teaching Hebrew. Ahad Ha-Am had advocated that Hebrew be taught to Jewish children as a
spoken language, for he considered the Hebrew language to be an expression of the soul of the Jewish people. Magnes, too, took the position that Hebrew, if taught in an interesting manner, can be the most important vehicle for imparting to the Jewish child a genuine love of the Jewish people and of Judaism.

Magnes believed that if a child learned to read the Bible and the Prayer Book in their original language - Hebrew - there would be a more complete understanding of these great works.

In addition to its importance as the language of the Tanakh, Magnes recognized Hebrew as an invaluable aid in the study of the great Jewish classics, many of which were written in Hebrew. It is true, of course, that some of these literary works have been translated into English, but something is usually lost in the translation. Magnes approved of Ahad Ha-Am's recommendation that a Jewish person, in order to absorb the history and spirit of the Jewish national culture, should read as many of the original Hebrew texts as possible. As Magnes noted:

Hebrew literature is one form of Jewish culture which, though not part of the religion, is distinctly Jewish. Today, when the Jewish nation is again witness of the marvel of its own renaissance, the Hebrew language is again fulfilling its mission as the national vehicle through which young Judah expresses its fears and its hopes. 102

As implied in the final statement of the above quotation, Magnes also encouraged young writers in the use of the
Hebrew language as a medium. In fact, Chaim Nahman Bialik, a close friend of Magnes, was the national poet of the Hebrew renaissance. Magnes keenly appreciated the influence of the Hebrew rebirth effected by Bialik.

The very founding of the Hebrew University in Palestine, a task to which Magnes gave dedicated support, is an embodiment of the profound influence of Ahad Ha-Am's thinking on Magnes. He set out to put Ahad Ha-Am's ideas on spiritual Zionism into action; the University of Jerusalem was to be a center of Jewish culture.

The Zionism of Magnes was nurtured in the writings of Ahad Ha-Am: Palestine should be the spiritual and intellectual center of Jews and Judaism. For him idea must lead to action; and after his first visit to the Land, he resolved to help create a University as an integral part of the Center. 103

**Literature**

On the subject of classical literature Magnes was again in complete harmony with Ahad Ha-Am. Magnes was convinced that worthwhile literature consists only of the classics, and by "classics" he meant profound historical studies and other great works of scholarship. Magnes did not explicitly say that "belles-lettres" should be excluded, but he did not mention them as classics. Ahad H-Am clearly stated that he did not rank "belles-lettres" with the great Jewish classics.

At any rate, both men agreed that the revival of the Jewish classics was essential to the revitalization of Judaism. Moreover, they advocated that modern Jewish writers choose
subjects that will reflect the character and needs of the Jewish people. To both Magnes and Ahad Ha-Am the primary purpose of a book should be as a source of knowledge and study; therefore the Jewish author should attempt to convey in his writing his ideas on Judaism and the future of the Jewish people.

However, they did not take the chauvinistic attitude that foreign literature should be excluded. They appreciated the universal appeal of all great artistic endeavors and suggested that foreign classics could be studied by Jewish readers and interpreted in the light of the emotional experience of the Jewish people. By synthesizing world culture with his own background, the Jewish reader has the opportunity of utilizing the insight of great writers, such as Shakespeare and Tolstoi, and making this knowledge a part of his own Jewish culture.

Ahad Ha-Am, in his essay, "the Man in the Tent" objected to Y. L. Gordon's Haskalah formula that a Jew should practice Jewishness at home and humaneness on the outside. Ahad Ha-Am maintained that there should be no contradiction between the two. In his opinion, one could be a Jew and a man - both in the home ("in the tent") and in the outside world. His advice was that the Jew should effect a synthesis between world culture and Jewish culture.

Dr. Magnes was even more broadminded in his outlook; he went so far as to actually equate the best in world cul-
ture with the best in Jewish vulture. In his universal stance he viewed the entire culture of the world - whether science, art, music, or literature - as Torah; and as such, it should, where possible, be given Jewish form, or at any rate, absorbed as a part of the Jewish national self.

Magnes suggested that a set of Jewish classical books be published by the Hebrew University Press; all outstanding Jewish classical texts from antiquity to present times were to be included. Thus it is evident that Magnes was in complete accord with Ahad Ha-Am's enthusiasm for the Jewish classics. Magnes saw classical literature as a potent influence on Judaism; in the revival and production of meaningful literature lay the hope for the further development and preservation of the Jewish national spirit.

Perhaps... all the institutions of Jewish science the world over, and our publication societies, will unite one day and work out a mutual program for the appropriate publication of our classical works and fundamental documents - our sources from which we draw the living waters - in order to bring them anew into Jewish life with all their strength and their glory. 104

Education

Dr Magnes, as we have already noted in the biography, was the founder, in 1910, of the Jewish Bureau of Education of the Kehillah. With Samson Benderly Magnes attempted to work out, in New York City, a system of education which would
unite the Jewish community and make Judaism the guiding force in it. "Magnes realized that a common bond of Jewry was the need of educating the children to be Jews."

Aware that certain fundamental ideals form the nucleus of Judaism, Magnes and Benderly set out to organize Jewish education on a broader scale than ever before. The main purpose of their program was to inspire Jewish children with a pride in their common heritage, and to impart to them the basic traditions which are shared by all branches of Judaism. As Magnes said:

The children of the Reform Jew are as dear to us as the children of the Orthodox Jew; and so are the children of the Jew who is without religious faith. 105

Magnes' plans for American Jewish education clearly reflected Ahad Ha-Am's conception of

...a Judaism which shall have as its focal point the ideal of our nation's unity, its renascence, and its free development through the expression of universal human values in the terms of its own distinctive spirit. This is the conception of Judaism on which our education and our literature must be based. We must revitalize the idea of the national renascence, and use every possible means to strengthen its hold and deepen its roots, until it becomes an organic element in the Jewish consciousness and an independent force. 106

To Ahad Ha-Am, Palestine was the logical center for this Jewish spiritual renascence; he visualized a Hebrew University in Jerusalem where there could be complete freedom for the development of Jewish learning. Magnes threw all his energy and enthusiasm into the task of making Ahad H-Am's dream a reality. On April 1, 1925, the Hebrew University
was officially opened in Palestine.

At the second graduation address in 1932, Magnes spoke of the function of this great Hebrew University:

The University is needed by the Jewish people primarily because the intellectual and spiritual life of the Judaism of today is stagnant, mediocre, banal. It represents a conscious attempt to create the intellectual atmosphere in which a serious, historical people can face its vital problems wholly, profoundly. ...The present-day Jewish people without a University is a personality without a mind. With a University serving as center, laboratory, powerhouse of intellectual activity for Jewish minds the world over, the people may find guidance in its wanderings and answers to the riddle of its dreams. 107

It is interesting to note that, at the time of the ceremonial opening of the University in 1925, Ahad Ha-Am, who could not attend the ceremony because of illness, sent a long letter to Magnes, expressing his joy at the founding of the Hebrew University in Palestine. Ahad Ha-Am himself had founded the first Hebrew school in Jaffa some years before. He told Magnes that he saw "the building of this second house...with a heart full of joy. 108 To him it was a temple of learning; he wrote:

...Our people has never ceased hoping for the fulfillment of the prophetic promise: "that from Zion shall come forth the Torah." Now, this day has arrived, and this promise is beginning to assume a tangible form. And our hope will cease being merely a dream "for the end of days" beyond time and place, in this scientific institute and in other institutes surrounding this place, we are laying the foundation on which our people will continue to build the temple of its culture for generations to come. 109
PART III

CHAPTER III THE IMPACT OF AHAD HA-AM ON MORDECAI KAPLAN

The title of Ahad Ha-Am's collected essays, *At the Crossroads*, suggests that their author travelled an arduous and often perplexing spiritual journey from a narrow Hasidism to a historical-evolutionist approach to Judaism, the details of which he recounted in his *Reminiscences*. As Mordecai Kaplan travelled much the same path, as he himself acknowledged Ha-Am's influence, and as he is considered by many to be Ha-Am's chief disciple in America, I have chosen to discuss his biography in detail.

Mordecai Kaplan notes, at the beginning of "The Way I Have Come," the glee of William James at "Chesterton's statement that the most important thing about a man is his view of the universe." He seems, in these first words, even to imply further that the most important thing about a biography or an autobiography of a man is his view of the universe. He then goes on to equate "view of the universe" with "philosophy" and to associate philosophy directly with the idea of God. If, he says, these preliminary definitions are accepted (and he does not tell us yet if he accepts them), then

my idea of God would be the most important thing about me, since one's idea of God necessarily reflects one's idea of the universe or cosmos.
One would expect then "The Way I Have Come" to be a spiritual, or rather, an intellectual autobiography. Yet such has not been Kaplan's "way," and that the tract is not such a record of such a way aptly demonstrates Kaplan's constant awareness of — and, indeed, allegiance to — human experience.

No idea as such, not even an idea of the cosmos, can exercise that potency over a man's conduct as to outweigh all other influences that go into the shaping of his life. For a view of the universe and of God to rate as of primary importance, it must be seen in the entire context of the experiences which have led up to it. In fact, any view whatever, whether it be scientific, political or theological, to be properly understood, should have as much of its ancestry known as possible. We should know what were the problems that led to its being arrived at or accepted. What experiences, or what other views, gave rise to those very problems?...A view of the universe or of God that is accepted uncritically as part of one's upbringing, is bound to remain inert. Far from being the most important thing about a man, it is apt to be the least important. 5

He continues,

The importance, therefore, which attaches to anyone, by virtue of his idea of God, derives from the way that view is arrived at, from the road he had traveled, the difficulties he has overcome and the problems he has had to solve in order to get his destination. 6

"The Way I Have Come," then, is a record not so much of "the way I have come to see the cosmos" as of the "way I have come to see the cosmos." 7 Like Ahad Ha-Am, Kaplan's way has been one of arduous struggle with the problem of self-adjustment...The significance, therefore of my basic theology or philosophy of life resides, I believe, in the particular experiences and problems by which I came to it, and in demonstrating the general truth that
a person's view of the universe is the most telling
index of his character only when it has functioned
as a means of helping him find his way in life. 8

These remarks remind one of Ahad H-Am's remark that "when
he saw a contradiction between religion and life, 'life
tipped the scales.'" 9

As Kaplan is very like Ahad Ha-Am in this - one might
almost say - "favoritism" to life and, as I have said, as
much of his thought is derived from Ha-Am, I am going to dis­
cuss him, in this dissertation, in the terms of Ha-Am's
thought, in the very categories I have employed to discuss
Ha-Am: Doctrine of Peoplehood, The Centrality of Eretz
Yisrael, the Idea of God, The Role of Ethics, The Definition
of Judaism, and the Place of Religion in Judaism.

But first, the biographical notes I promised in my
introduction to this chapter, in order to indicate the way
Kaplan did come.

He was born, like Ahad Ha-Am, into a world which he
describes as the "extremely circumscribed one of a small town
in the Jewish Pale of nineteenth century Russia." 10 His
childhood was passed in the habits of ritual observance, and
until he was eight years old, his was the life of the
"ordinary" Jewish boy of much the same milieu. And then his
parents brought him to Paris and subsequently to the United
States of America. "Ever since then I have been living in
two civilizations, the Jewish and the non-Jewish." 11
Attendance at an American public school intensified the conflict in him between the old and the new worlds. Yet his Bar Mitzvah address, which was written by his father but which he paraphrased and in which he sincerely believed at the time, implied an uncritical acceptance of ritual as religion. It was about "the survival power of the Jewish People as due to its observance of the mitzvet." 12

Kaplan hints at the enormous change in himself occurring about the time of his college career in noting that the "little speech then spelled for me complete self-identification with the Jewish people and its struggle for survival. It also meant a vivid awareness of ritual observances as the sine qua non of its survival." 13

In college he had a "hunger for concrete information concerning the authorship, the dates and the historical circumstances pertaining to the writing of the texts (which subject matter) was completely ignored by the Seminary." 14 With the help of Arnold B. Ehrlich, a family friend, he began to "penetrate through the vast layers of traditional commentaries to the rockbottom original intent of the biblical authors." 15 Ehrlich, by encouraging such critical study, "undermined my belief in the Mosaic authorship of the Torah and in the historicity of the miracles." 16 And so, what had begun as an exploration of the sources of ritual closed (in itself a beginning) as a doubt in the historicity of miracles. This first intellectual doubt led to the
formulation of Kaplan's considered beliefs and ultimately to the formation of "Reconstructionism."

Also,

I had to turn to the Zionist movement, and for evidence that we had begun to adventure beyond the stereotypes of medieval philosophy, I had to turn to Ahad Ha-Am with his version of spiritual Zionism. Through the impact of both Zionism and Ahad Ha-Am's writings, I became fully aware of the essential character of the Jewish universe of discourse, of which, despite my having moved and having had my being in it, I was either unaware or had a wrong idea.

That impact effected in me nothing less than a Copernican revolution. I discovered that throughout Judaism's universe of discourse, the people of Israel was the central reality, and that the meaning of God, and of Torah can be properly understood only in relation to that central reality. The main concern of Judaism was the Jewish people, its origin, its vicissitudes, its sins and repentance, and the laws it had to conform to in order to achieve its destiny. In the course of that concern, God played the role of father, king and redeemer, that is, or provider, ruler and savior. What God was, metaphysically or ontologically, mattered only to a few intellectuals now and then. But what God meant morally, socially, economically, politically mattered to all of Israel's spiritual leaders, beginning with Moses.

Thus I arrived, by way of a clearer awareness of Judaism's universe of discourse, at what I soon recognized to be pragmatism, the philosophical method which insists upon rendering thought, if it is to be more than word-play, relevant to man's needs. Any idea, to have meaning, must be seen in a context of natural conditions and human relations. The function of the belief in God is to make us aware of the moral and spiritual context of our conduct, so that we come to move within the orbit of the "Power that makes for righteousness". Judaism uses the belief in God is to make us aware of the natural conditions that have to be maintained for the Jewish people, if it is to achieve salvation collectively and individually.
Kaplan and the Doctrine of the Peoplehood of Israel

Ahad Ha-Am's conception of "the Peoplehood of Israel" was colored by Hegelianism; the People has a soul. Kaplan's more sociological orientation, or rather, as he calls it, "social idealism," leads him to conclude that, while the People may have a soul, that soul is an integral part of its organism, the People. Typical of Kaplan's reaction to the very work "soul" is his parenthesis after it in the index to The Future of the American Jew: (Personality).

Ha-Am's Hegelianism is second-hand, derived largely from Rabbi Nachman Krochmal in his Contemporary Guide to the Perplexed. Kaplan gives the substance of Krochmal's thought, discusses it, discards much of it, and takes what he can use (as Ha-Am also took what he could use) for his own movement.

"Hegel's philosophy of history," says Kaplan,

Though it purports to be a description of the progress of the spirit, ...nevertheless assumes that the law of inner necessity, like that of birth, growth, and decay, or the dialectic of process, controls the course of the progress. Therein it merely repeats in different terms the fundamental error of paganism.

Krochmal's amendment of this part of Hegelianism is acceptable to Kaplan, for

To Krochmal, all organisms point to an aspect of reality which cannot be accounted for merely in terms of mechanical necessity, insofar as they display a certain degree of freedom from environmental factors. Every organism has a determining influence on each of its parts, and each part on the organism as a whole. That constitutes the organicity of living beings, which is a manifestation of purpose.
Necessity, then, is an impulse different from purpose, and purpose is commendable because it is, in its way, logical, rational. "It reveals itself in (a) people's culture or civilization, which is tantamount to its consciousness." 22

Kaplan elsewhere implicitly endorses such consciousness as the signal characteristic of a People. "What essentially distinguishes a people from any other societal group," he says,

and what alone constitutes the common characteristic of groups designated as peoples, is their own identification of themselves as such; a group is a people, when and because it knows itself as such. 23

A people, then, like an individual, is self-conscious. A people, then is a live being in which other live beings consciously participate, both for the sake of sustaining the single being which is the People and for the sake of sustaining themselves.

According to Krochmal, however, "Only in the cultural heritage of the Jewish People ... did purpose achieve self-consciousness." 24 From his Hegelianism intermingled with his Judaism emerges the belief in history as a spiritual cycle, and the conviction that "Judaism is at present undergoing metamorphosis, from which it is likely to emerge as a greater Judaism." 25

Kaplan continues, in summary of Krochmal's brand of Hegelianism, praiseworthy because it leads to the above conclusion:
We may be sceptical of the Hegelian assumption underlying that philosophy, namely that history is the progressive incarnation of Reason, as the Absolute and as the Creator of the universe. The entire approach is based on the doubtful assumption that the immanent and essential nature of things determines all human behaviour and history. It ignores the law of cause and effect in the empirical changes in human life... 26

Yet, once these objections are registered, Krochmal's philosophy has its merits. "The specific merits of Krochmal's philosophy," Kaplan says, are that

1) It points the way to a conception of God that is the product of progressive human experience and knowledge as the basis of Jewish religion. It thereby frees Jewish religion from commitment to the doctrine of the supernatural origin of the Torah;
2) It shifts the center of Judaism from dogmas and rituals to the will-to-live of the Jewish People;
3) It frankly recognizes not only the legitimacy, but also the necessity, of studying the tradition in the light of so much historical context as it is possible to discover and reconstruct. 27

One may question Kaplan's interpretation of Krochmal in the above summation - particularly his statement that Krochmal's philosophy "frees Jewish religion from commitment to the doctrine of the supernatural origin of the Torah."

In our understanding of Krochmal's philosophy, an awareness of the Infinite, Absolute Spirit has been grasped by man on three progressive levels. Primitive man perceived the Absolute Spirit simply through the medium of the senses, and later on, as an abstraction from the sense perception; finally, in the advanced stages of civilization, man's grasp of the Infinite, Absolute Spirit has been on the level of pure intellec-


Does Kaplan's assertion that Krochmal's philosophy "frees Jewish religion from commitment to the doctrine of the supernatural origin of the Torah" imply a denial of the transcendental nature of revelation - the source of Torah? Apparently Kaplan's definition of God is a pragmatic one. Considering God as a concept that is functional only in the experiential life of man, Kaplan points out that as soon as the God-idea is abstracted from the texture of sancta, it becomes a subject for metaphysics." And thus it becomes insignificant in the dynamism of life. Therefore, when Kaplan maintains that Krochmal's philosophy "points the way to a conception of God that is the product of progressive experience" he obviously reads his own pragmatism into Krochmal's metaphysical system.

Election and Kaplan's Concept of "Vocation"

Ahad Ha-Am derived, from the concept of Jewish peoplehood, the notion that to share in the life of the people means also to share in its spiritual destiny. Kaplan endorsed this notion with some reservations. He writes, of the time of his youthful agreement with it, that it never occurred to him to teach the members of his first congregation to "love God and the Bible as a means of saving their own souls..."

Whatever individual salvation they were to achieve was always thought of by me as analagous to the
sense of triumph the individual soldier enjoys when his battalion or regiment wins a battle. For being a Jew has always been associated in my mind with sharing the life of the Jewish people, just as being a soldier is inconceivable except as one is a member of an army. 29

Yet he was not secure in this concept, or in his attitude toward its sponsor. In words that qualify his other statements on the matter of salvation, he writes,

With all due deference to Ahad Ha-Am, one cannot but regard as chimerical and unpsychologic his effort to bring about the renascence of the Jewish people by urging the substitution of loyalty and devotion to the Jewish national being in place of the individualistic yearning for personal salvation. 30

His divergence on this point is due to a recognition of the individual, he says, "as an end rather than a means in appraising the value of any social ideal or program." 31 The individual, for him, is not most importantly the being who, with other individuals, makes up the people, but for whose sake the people itself is to be formed. The difference between him and Ahad Ha-Am here is one of emphasis.

Kaplan also agrees with Ahad Ha-Am (with, again, a difference of emphasis) that the Jewish people has a task peculiar to itself among the nations. This is not to say that either man subscribed to the concept of "election" or to the Reformist idea of the "mission" of Judaism. In fact, both were scornful of it, and worked to refine it into something acceptable to their political sophistication. Ha-Am writes, summarising the evolution of the idea of "mission,"
It is indeed a unique feature of Judaism that it distinguishes its own adherents from the rest of mankind only by imposing on them a heavy load of duties and obligations... It is only during the last century or so, since the French Revolution spread the doctrine of universal equality and fraternity, and made the general well-being the supreme ideal, that Jewish thinkers have become to be ashamed of the idea of the election in its original sense, and have tried to adapt Judaism to modern thought by inventing the theory of "the mission of Israel"... The Jews - so the argument runs - are the chosen people, but they were chosen to spread fraternity and well-being among mankind by teaching the world the rule of life embodied in the Torah, which was entrusted to them for that very purpose. 32

Ha-Am calls this compromise of spiritual aristocracy and spiritual service "entirely without foundation in fact, and entirely dependent on a belief in the supernatural." 33 He then presents, and by so doing proposes, the historical understanding of the election.

... the Jews as a people have always interpreted their mission simply as the fulfillment (sic) of their own duties, and from the earliest times to the present day they have regarded their election as an end to which everything else was subordinate, not as a means to the happiness of the rest of humanity. While it is true that the Prophets expressed the hope that Judaism would have a good influence on the morality of the gentile world, their idea was that this result would follow automatically from the existence of a superior type of morality among the Jews, not that the Jews existed solely for the purpose of exerting themselves to bring this result about. 34

The Jews, then, if they only would, can fulfill the terms of the election, can fulfill their true "mission," by infusing into their individual and national lives a moral order, for "We still retain, though only as an instinctive feeling, the old belief in our unique genius for morality; we still
feel that it is our mission as a people to be a super-nation in the moral sense." 35

Kaplan proposes "vocation (as) a valid substitute for the doctrine of election." 36

Jewish religion would have Jewish civilization make for the enhancement not only of Jewish life but of the life of mankind, and thus help to render manifest the cosmic purposes of human life. Jewish religion expects the Jew to live the civilization of his people in a spirit of commitment and dedication. To live thus is to live with a sense of vocation or calling, without involving ourselves in any of the invidious distinctions implied in the doctrine of the election, and yet to fulfill the legitimate spiritual wants which that doctrine sought to satisfy. 37

The main difference between the doctrine of election and Kaplan's doctrine of vocation is that "No nation is chosen, or elected, or superior to any other, but every nation should discover its vocation or calling, as a source of religious experience, and as a medium of salvation to those who share its life." 38 (Italics his.) Kaplan dismisses the doctrine of election as rationally and pragmatically objectionable, "rationally, (because) it has no place in the realm of discourse

from which belief in the supernatural revelation of religious truth has been excluded (and) pragmatically..., as barring the way to peace and harmony among religions and as making for self-righteousness and cant. 39

And he substitutes the doctrine of vocation for it, for

What more important calling could a people have than to promulgate, by its way of life, the truth of the universal presence of God in his traditional sancta for glorifying not merely his own people or church, but mankind as a whole? 40
The Centrality of Eretz Yisrael

Ahad Ha-Am, it will be remembered, in his attack on Reformist "missionaries," indicated that, nevertheless, there was a mission to be performed: The simple, constant maintenance of Jewish peoplehood and of Jewish culture. As Leon Simon notes, "The real and important difference between the two theories (of mission) is that in the one case the mission is to be fulfilled by dispersion, in the other by concentration." The concentration, of course, is to be in the State of Israel. It is to be, as I have said before, a concentration of the Jewish national spirit as well as of the Jewish people; before the performance of the actual mission there must be established, then, a spiritual center in Palestine.

Yet until that center is ultimately established and reinforced, there must be temporary centers, way-stations for the Jewish people. Ahad Ha-Am wrote to Solomon Schecter in 1906:

For what do I rejoice? For the fact that in these times Russian Jewry is being destroyed, physically and spiritually, before our very eyes?....

In these bad times I see a ray of hope in the new land, where new forces are concentrating and where, gradually, a new center is being established for the spirit of our people. 42

The "new land" and "new center" referred to in this letter is the United States of America. Ha-Am believed at that time,
in the possibility of the development of a center there of Jewish life in the Diaspora.

This center of Jewish culture would not be an end in itself but in open communication with Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora. Nor would it be the pinnacle of Jewish achievement, but rather aid in the work to repossess and resettle Eretz Yisrael. Any center in the Diaspora, though almost literally a "Godsend," could only be conceived of as a necessary compromise.

Dubnow, it will be remembered, thought the concentration of Jewry in a single place not at all vital to its maintenance as a nation, for the Jews were, to him, a spiritual, rather than a geographic nation. Hence, the primary Jewish political aim should not be the establishment of a center in Israel but the development of national autonomy in the Diaspora itself, among and even within the nations.

Kaplan's youthful comment on Dubnow's position is succinct:

A few dreamers, like Dubnow and Kallen, look forward to emancipated Jewry becoming socially autonomous in the Diaspora. This is as little possible as that the sun should rise in the west. It presupposes that the Occidental nations will adopt the philosophy that the State is a federation of cultural groups. That runs counter to the trend of political development in most countries, particularly in the United States... The Jews...can claim no territory as their own anywhere in the Diaspora. They must, therefore, become integrated with the various peoples among whom they live.
Yet Kaplan tends to be, in a sense, more of Dubnow's party than of Ha-Am's, not, demonstrably, in that he believes the Jews ought to be an autonomous minority, but in the sense that he approves of the situation of the Jewish people's being able to operate freely in a pluralistic culture. "In America, religious pluralism is accepted as normal, while most other distinctions that are irrelevant to religious traditions tend, in the course of time to be obliterated. Thus, it is chimerical to hope for political recognition of minority groups, but it is not chimerical to hope for cultural absorption and toleration of what cannot be absorbed.

Highly desirable, of course, is existence as an autonomous majority, and the possibility of such an existence is the basis of Kaplan's endorsement of Eretz Yisrael.

For the culture and religion of Judaism to survive and flourish anywhere in the Diaspora, they must have rootage in the life of a thriving Jewry in Eretz Yisrael. Under the most favorable circumstances, it is impossible for an ethnic minority to retain its civilization indefinitely, without continual replenishment from some self-sustaining fountain of cultural creativity.

Kaplan endorses spiritual Zionism, then; he agrees that the spiritual center for the Jewish people be located in an actual place (thus reconciling the Ahad Ha-Am - Dubnow schism), Eretz Yisrael, but he does not, actually seem to agree that the Jews direct more than their spirits to that place.
... Eretz Yisrael Jewry will always be more indispensable for Jewish survival that Diaspora Jewry, as the heart is more indispensable than the extremities of the body. That is the new condition fo the Jewish people which has to be accepted as normal and in keeping with the evolution of mankind. Such acceptance is necessary, if Diaspora Jewry is to achieve "the power and status" that it requires in order that it be creative in a milieu like that which obtains in the United States. 47

All Jews are not, then, directed to leave their adopted homelands and emigrate to Israel, though some who have the pioneering spirit are urged to do so.

Never have masses of people been known to migrate from countries which offer greater security to those which offer less. Only individuals with a spirit of adventure do that. To elicit from some Jews in the free countries that spirit of adventure which would move them to settle in Israel, all Jews in those countries have to be made to realize that the Land of Israel, as the homeland of the Jewish People, is indispensable to the moral and spiritual salvation of the Jewish person anywhere in the world, as an individual human being. 48

Kaplan summarizes (and indicates agreement with) the point of view of Nahum Goldmann is expressed at an "Ideological Conference" in Jerusalem the summer of 1957:

... no less than Jewry in the Diaspora needs the State of Israel for its cultural content and self-respect, the State of Israel needs Diaspora Jewry in order to save it from being regarded as merely as a haven of refuge for homeless Jews. Zionism's function, therefore, besides fostering migration to Israel, should be that of nurturing Diaspora Jewish life. 49

Israel is to be the center of Jewish life, then, but the extremities are not to be hacked off. Some principle of organization is needed, however, some unhierarchical link.
between Eretz Yisrael and Diaspora Jewry. What is needed is "A permanent Jewish peoplehood which would transcend the boundaries of a Jewish homeland," a kind of transnationalism.

The Jews of all nations would, under transnationalism, maintain their Jewish identity yet participate as fully as possible in the culture of the adoptive homeland. American Jews, for instance, would absorb Jewish culture into the very marrow of the religion, making of it, in Kaplan's phrase, a "religious civilization." Yet the cultural traditions of the country in which the Diaspora is to be passed will not be superseded. Names, for instance, will not be Hebraized. (Kaplan does suggest, however, "the formal adoption, with proper ceremony, of a Hebrew middle name on reaching maturity.") The whole idea of transnationalism, with a day marked off in the religious calendar for the observance of Jewish Unity Day, a suggested annual ceremony for adults wherein they may renew their spiritual ties with the world Jewish community, and the afore-mentioned adoption of a Hebrew name, reminds one of nothing so much as of the Church, that cradle and guardian of Christian civilization.

The organization of the Church, in fact, is just what Kaplan has in mind. It affords just the possibility for religio-cultural solidarity, in local, national and international communities, that contemporary Judaism requires.
For the Jewish People to re-enter the stream of history, it must have a homeland. For the Jewish People to have its history contribute to the making of one world, it has to be a dispersed People in direct contact with other peoples and other civilizations.... Let us...accept our dispersion in the free countries of the world as the opportunity to demonstrate the humanizing influence which our spiritual rootedness in our ancestral homeland can exercise upon our individual lives. ...with proper leadership and with a militant following that need not be large, the Jews can become the Messianic society envisioned by our ancient Prophets. 52

God, Israel, and Torah

Judaism as defined and interpreted by Kaplan is a religion without supernaturalism. Though in the past it was accepted truth that God summoned the world, Jewish and infidel, into being, Kaplan's formulation was that the People (motivated, to be sure, by Spirit), summoned its God into being, or rather, extracted from its experience of God a definition of Him. In other words, God does not define Judaism; Judaism defines God.

Kaplan's is a "pragmatic approach to the belief in God, which is an imperative to render it meaningful by making evident the difference it makes in conduct and character.... 53

This pragmatic hypothesis is the method with which we may discover what is needed to render human life wholesome, meaningful and worthwhile... That is how I came to suggest the formulation of a new study, to be known as Soterics, which should deal with salvation as a problem embracing the whole man. 54
Kaplan sensed the shortcomings of the pragmatic approach in arriving at a philosophical definition of God or ultimate reality, yet he defended his position for he was convinced that man has to be content with assuming the existence of a noumenal reality to which the belief in God refers, and to let it go at that, just as he does with the idea of gravitation or personality.

God may be conceived of, therefore, as a process like gravitation or personality, a cosmic process, for this is the only way we experience Him. To the question of what God is ontologically, Kaplan offers this answer:

To conceive of fire as a process of rapid oxidation is scientifically and ontologically nearer the truth than to believe that it was snatched by Prometheus from the Gods on Olympus and brought down to earth, or that it is one of the four elements of the universe, or that it is a substance called "phlogiston." The average mind will have to undergo a long habituation in scientific thinking to experience "Process" as the form in which reality presents itself to us, whether it be sensible or invisible like personality, parenthood, or one's nation.

Kaplan's view then, is "by no means Pantheistic, since I consistently adhere to the principle that Godhead is only a particular aspect of the universe, that aspect of which makes for man's salvation." 57

As the Spirit activates the People, so God activates the cosmos, effecting life, civilized and uncivilized, bringing that life into being and bringing it to meaningful conclusion.
What we think of as a coherent universe or cosmos is more than nature; it is nature with a soul. That soul is God. As each cell in the body depends for its health and proper functioning upon the whole body, so each of us depends upon God. 58

According to Kaplan, the God of Judaism, a process, an activating force, is not a merely directionless power, but a functional one. God is the power that makes for salvation, social regeneration, the regeneration of human nature, cooperation, freedom, and righteousness. 59 He is, or rather, that aspect of (nature in) which men perceive Him is, "the creative life of the universe, the antithesis of irrevocable fate and absolute evil." 60

The concept of God as the maker for righteousness proceeds without any difficulty from this identification of God with the wholly good part of life. As I have said before, in my discussion of Ahad Ha-Am's national ethics, "there is a phase early in the development of each religion wherein the concepts of Deity and ethics are so closely linked as to be almost interchangeable. Ahad H-Am would have religion and ethics differentiated, so as to foster a more refined, more independent and rational, ethical sense in man, but Kaplan seems to retain the synthesis.

That God is all these good things man must accept on faith. Most critics of Kaplanism consider this a vulnerable point: How do we know that the world is good? How can we account for the existence of evil? Kaplan himself says that, "After all, the main purpose of theology should be to recon-
cile the belief in God with the dominance of evil in the world." The answer to this question has already been implied in Kaplan's assertion that God is "...the antithesis of irrevocable fate and absolute evil." In other words, God is only one part of nature, the benevolent aspect.

What, then, does Kaplan have to say about the practice of Judaism? Is it to be simply the performance of one's ethical duties, or are there other kinds of duties, characteristically religious? In Questions Jews Ask, Kaplan loads a question: "Since ethical character and conduct are the goal of religion, why is there so much ado about ritual?" He goes on, of course, to explain why there is "so much ado," but he seems unquestionably in favor of the first part of the question.

In accordance with Kaplan's aforementioned "pragmatic approach to the belief in God," his is a pragmatic approach to the performance of ritual. Prayer does not alter the course of the universe, but it can, in a sense, make for human self-realization. We pray to become self-conscious of the God in us. Religious observances in the past had "significance as means to forcing spirits or gods to do the will of human beings. (Such) rituals that may have been magical in origin (now) acquire symbolic significance." And symbolism is useful because "the participation in a common ritual helps to cement the 'we' feeling of the group."
There has been just such a change, he maintains, in the concept of the "role of ritual" even in orthodox Judaism.

The religious observances... claimed the fervent loyalty of the Jew primarily because they were a unique way of collective self expression. What often passes for orthodoxy is a mode of Jewish life that is not at all motivated by a conviction of the supernatural origin of those observances. If that mode of life were properly analyzed, it would be found that its chief purpose was to be identified with the Jewish people, a purpose that is just as ultimate as the will-to-live.

As Kaplan quotes from Hirsch, "The Jew who keeps Kashruth has to think of his religious and communal allegiance on the occasion of every meal ..." The practice of rituals, then, fosters national communion, the development of one's religion "as a civilization," and it also makes us commune with the God within ourselves. Their performance, then, is merely, if psychologically useful, ceremonial. Which rituals, then, if considered as mere ceremonies, would he hold on to? Which would he discard and which would he retain?

He writes, in a chapter called "the place of religion in Jewish life," that

So long as the God-idea finds expression in the sanctification of concrete objects, events, ideals, institutions and other elements in the life of a people, it has a chance of being interwoven with the people's needs and interests and therefore of possessing vitality. But as soon as it is abstracted from the texture of sancta, it becomes a subject for metaphysics.

Those rituals, therefore, which are to be retained as
the "idols of the tribe," are those which are directly relevant to the life of the people. Yet it is difficult to decide which is relevant and which is not.

What, exactly, are the criteria to be used in such a matter? He says in many places that we should hold onto as many mitzvot as possible, and in Judaism as a Civilization he says that the mitzvot dealing in social relations are more important than ritual, that man speaking to man is to be emphasized, rather than man speaking to God.

Before we consider Kaplan's radical reinterpretation (in his work, revaluation) of historical tradition, and his relationship to the Historical School, which believes in the gradual, imperceptible evolution of laws and ceremonies, we ought to consider in greater detail, in accordance with that school, the very origins of religion, or rather, mankind's experience of it. The question that then presents itself is, what induced the People to become aware of, to call forth, to articulate, and to worship its God?

According to some theories about the origin of religious feeling and expression, faith in God stems from two kinds of meditation, contemplation of and meditation about the wonders of creation (culminating in an assumption of a Creator), or the fear, the constant anxiety of primitive man about his environment (also culminating in an assumption of a Creator).

The second kind of meditation, anticipation of destruction, which reminds us, perhaps, more of superstition than
religion, sometimes coalesces with the first to produce something "fine": fear and wonder intermingled produce awe.

According to Durkheim, however, from whom Kaplan derived the foundation of his "god idea," religion does not stem from the individual and his anxiety, from the individual response to a cruel or kind universe, but is, rather, the reaction of man as a part of society to nature as viewed through society. 70 Kaplan writes, "on the higher level of spiritual thought and conduct, as on the lower level, the feeling of togetherness is indispensable to the realization of God, for without it we cannot experience God at all." 71

He goes on, in fact, to phrase this denial of individual religious experience even more strongly: "for it is only as a member of society that man comes to know God at all." 72 And he further claims that "only those who possess a feeling for the group, for the collective, have a feeling for God." 73

This link between religion and society is indissoluble, because the social function of religion is to preserve the sancta, the hallowed possessions of the group, whether it be tribe, nation, or people. Religion, therefore, works for the maintenance of the group, as well as being the expression of the group. Kaplan concludes from this, to him, that judaism owes its continuing vitality to the fact that it is a civilization, a way of life. As only national religions have a chance to survive, to endure, the secular element
of Jewish nationalism, the striving for a common national life is essential. Kaplan writes, "Paradoxical as it may sound, spiritual regeneration of the Jewish People demands that religion cease to be its sole preoccupation." 74

Undoubtedly Kaplan has been influenced in this aspect of his thought by Ahad Ha-Am. Ahad Ha-Am, in his essay "Early and Late in Life," discusses the evolution of the tribal God to the monotheistic object of worship. After the first destruction of the Temple in the Babylonian Diaspora, when the people had begun to suffer as a nation, the idea of one God developed and became a factor in the nation's life, for at that time it seemed appropriate to the new national concern.

Ahad Ha-Am, in answer to the question "What is Judaism?" expresses the opinion that religion is only one of many forms of Jewish culture. He goes a step further in saying that Judaism is actually neither religion nor culture but "it is the national creative power which in the past was revealed in the form of culture that was essentially religious..." 75

Kaplan, however, refusing to rely on the slow process of evolutionary development, appropriates for himself and other leaders of the Jewish people the perogative of forging boldly ahead in the endeavor of directing the destiny of the Jewish people. He foresees in the future development of Jewish civilization creative cultural elements in which religion will not play a major role.
Kaplan, like Ahad Ha-Am, concludes that Judaism differs, in the main, from Christianity in this: Christianity deals largely with individual or personal salvation, whereas Judaism can be understood only in terms of collective salvation.

In his essay "Judaism and the Gospels," where Ahad Ha-Am disputes with the English-Jewish reformer, Claude G. Montefiore, he writes,

There is no need to dilate on the familiar truth that Judaism conceives its aim not as the salvation of the individual, but as the well-being and perfection of a group, of the Jewish people, and ultimately of the whole human race. That is to say, the aim is always defined in terms of a collectivity which has no defined and concrete form. In its most fruitful period, that of the Prophets and the "giving of the Torah," Judaism had as yet no clear ideal of personal immortality or of reward and punishment after death. Even in later times, when the Babylonian exile had put an end to the free national life of the Jews, and as a result the desire for individual salvation had come to play a part in the Jewish religious consciousness, the highest aim of Judaism still remained a collective aim.

Herein lies one of the reasons behind Ahad Ha-Am's objections to Reform Judaism: that it holds too dear the salvation of individuals. His other objections to Reform Judaism can lead us back to the topic of the Historical School from which we had momentarily departed. He wrote, in the American Jewish Chronicle:

A real religion capable of holding together a large community from generation to generation must have its basis and cohesive power in the general belief that this particular religion embodies the true word of God revealed by Himself at a certain time and transmitted by tradition to all future generations. This granted, there can be no religious reform in the sense of arbitrary eclecticism, because reform of that description is the negation of Revelation. The true word of God cannot be arbitrarily altered.
He goes on to say that

their artificial Judaism can last only so long as there is no real Jewish life. When a National Jewish center is achieved in Palestine, their pale form of Judaism will disappear of itself... 77

And again he calls Reform Judaism a "lifeless invented form. 78

To deny arbitrary change is not arbitrarily to deny change. In "Ancestor Worship" he wrote that the reason people - all people - won't accept change is that they tend to worship their ancestors. A new kind of change is needed which will not find fault with our ancestors, but which can interpret their ways and institutions by placing them in their natural setting. He agrees with Lolli and Luzzago that "the Shulhan Aruch...'is not our Torah','that it is not '

'the book that we have chosen as our rule of life:' 79

but he goes on to comment that "it is the book that history has made our rule of life, whether we like it or not." 80

One must not consider one's ancestors' ways as outmoded, but must accept them as experientially relevant in their own settings.

Kaplan, on the other hand, is far less tolerant of the creations of history. He seems to feel that since we create, we may alter our own creations. He feels that Savigny, prime spokesman for the Historical School, in following Hegel and Schleiermacher, has helped to create a halo of romanticism around tradition smacking of sanctimonious ancestor worship. We ought not to be fettered by outdated ways simply because
they were relevant in the lives of our ancestors. This is a kind of naturalist "laissez faire" position. We should feel free to create, and to recreate, in accordance with the contemporary human condition, the needs of our time.

In his criticism of Savigny and Hegel, Kaplan is not as cynical in his denunciation of the sanctimonious attitude as Max Nordau, who wrote:

There: a spirit exists, Hegel knows this with certainty. This spirit has apparently lost itself. Where and when this is not quite comprehensible mishap might have occurred, we are not told. Then the poor spirit had the very understandable urge to find itself. And in this urge it made world history, thereby finding itself...And this delirious nonsense was and often still is proclaimed as deep sense. 81

Traditionally, religious and cultural changes were effected by "reading into" the inherited texts. Kaplan calls such a method "transvaluation." It consists in ascribing meanings to the traditional content of a religion or social heritage, which could neither have been contemplated nor implied by the authors of that content....The teachers and sages of a later period did not hesitate to read their own beliefs and aspirations into the writings of the teachers and sages of an earlier period. Both the sense of national continuity and the faith in the divine origin of the religious tradition made transvaluation soon perfectly plausible. 82

He documents this statement with examples taken from the different parts of the Bible itself as well as from actual historical "commentary." 83 The alteration of religious and ethical content is not all that is wrong, according to
Kaplan, with this method. First, it is a subtle process, whereby "those who resort to it are themselves unaware that they are adjusting or reconstructing tradition to meet the needs of their own day." Such unselfconsciousness, in this instance, would be called a virtue by Ahad Ha-Am and those who believe in the impetus of history, but for Kaplan it is not at all virtuous.

The transition from traditional Judaism to the Judaism of the future can be effected only in the glaring light of complete awareness of the change involved. The problem of maintaining the continuity of the Jewish religion can be solved only in one way, and that is by being convinced that the continuity is genuine. Such a conviction is compatible only with the certainty that whatever ancient meanings or values we choose to conserve and develop are read out of, and not into, the traditional teachings or practices.

And second, it is too slow to effect the changes immediately necessitated by modern conditions. He would substitute, for it, therefore, a method of quick and conscious change which he calls "revaluation, a system whereby outmoded sancta may be discarded and only those whose meaning can be extracted by psychologically insightful study of the traditional texts are to be retained.

Revelation consists in disengaging from the traditional content these elements in it which answer permanent postulates of human nature, and in integrating them into our own ideology. (Italics his.) When we reevaluate, we analyse or break up the traditional values into their implications, and single out for acceptance those implications which can help us meet our own moral and spiritual needs; the rest may be relegated to archaeology.
The main difference here is that choice is involved, not chance. Not only can the modern interpreter of his tradition discover the implications for his time within it, he can also choose among those implications.

It is highly essential that acquire the ability of getting at the really significant implications. They need not necessarily be such as the ancients themselves would have been able to articulate, but they should have psychological kinship with what the ancients did articulate. It is highly essential that acquire the ability of getting at the really significant implications. They need not necessarily be such as the ancients themselves would have been able to articulate, but they should have psychological kinship with what the ancients did articulate. It is highly essential that acquire the ability of getting at the really significant implications. They need not necessarily be such as the ancients themselves would have been able to articulate, but they should have psychological kinship with what the ancients did articulate.

The possibility for such selectivity virtually empowers the selector to recreate tradition. Kaplan supports his uneasy position by quoting, with approval, Gilbert Murray's statement that

The religious side of Plato's thought was not revealed in its full power till the time of Plotinus in the third century A. D.; that of Aristotle, one might say without undue paradox, not till its exposition by Aquinas in the thirteenth. To utilize the psychological truisms and intentions of the ancients is not at all to extend a continuous tradition, for rather than a logical extension of the text, such "psychoanalysis" of it is a virtual revision. To use one of his own anecdotes: A man is pulling the hair from a horse's tail one hair at a time. As he pulls hair by hair, at what point does it stop being a horse's tail? It is hard to see, therefore, that "revaluation," or "reading out of" is more admissible, using Kaplan's own criteria, than "transvaluation," or "reading into."
Admissible or not, it is the method he chooses through which to sift tradition in order to uncover those sancta which are to be retained.

Kaplan maintains:

...a new rationale is needed. Every ceremony and rite must be judged in terms of its value as a method of group survival and a means to the personal self-fulfillment and salvation of the individual Jew. 89

An example of the workings of this new rationale, revaluation, is in order, for "Any ritual...which helps the Jew to find life interesting, meaningful and worth living is clearly possessed of value." 90 Revaluation, Kaplan admits, may never have been intended or anticipated by the originators of many ancient customs. As long as they can be useful in a modern situation, they may be retained by superimposing new meanings on them, even though never imagined by their originators.

To illustrate the way new meanings may be read into traditional usages, we may consider the reinterpretation of the custom of breaking a glass in the wedding ceremony. This custom no doubt originated in ancient superstition. It was thought that the breaking of the glass served as a sort of substitute for any impending disaster which might mar the happiness of the couple. The rite, has, however, been reinterpreted in a way that dissociates it completely from any superstition and gives it genuine significance. It has been construed as a memento of the destruction of Jerusalem, in accordance with the passage in Psalm 137: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning...if I remember thee not above my chief joy."

The fact that the new meaning has no relation to the original significance of the rite in no way detracts from its value, but, without such reinterpretation, the performance of the rite would be so void of value that nothing would be lost if it became obsolete. 91
Is Kaplan, then, to be considered as part of, or even as partaking of, the Historical School? Has there been an influence of Ahad Ha-Am in this instance? I think not, I agree with Michael Alper that herein lies a question of semantics: Kaplan speaks of aiding in the continuity of tradition, but his sense of continuity is not the usual one. One sentence in particular demonstrates this most articulately:

...to construct a firm and wide-gauged bridge between the past and the present, nothing should be done to underestimate the distance that separates them.

To paraphrase this: in order to maintain one's ties with one's tradition, first one must separate oneself from it as much as possible, for only then can you set about reconstructing those ties. Indeed, this sounds as if Kaplan means to build the bridge after he has got to the other side. Nor is the bridge Ahad Ha-Am's bridge. One cannot quite say, however, that he has made a break with tradition and with Ahad Ha-Am. The fact is that he has successfully translated Ahad Ha-Am's theories into a dynamic program of activities as expressed in the reconstructionist movement.

In a statement to Max Weine Kaplan expresses his ideas on how Ahad Ha-Amism should be applied to American Jewish life:

The common understanding of Ahad Ha-Am's doctrine is that he deprecated political action and stressed the primacy of spiritual culture. He advocated that Eretz Yisrael be built up slowly by a process of selective migration, and hoped that, in this way, it would become the spiritual center of world Jewry, whence would
radiate guidance and inspiration to the Jewish communities of the Diaspora. All that is true, but it fails to convey the essential message of Ahad Ha-Amism. Ahad Ha-Am's work represents the climax of that Jewish Haskalah which attempted to revivify and transform the inner life of the Jewish People. He saw more clearly than any of his predecessors that, under the conditions of modern life, which are so radically different from those that preceded the Emancipation and the Enlightenment, the Jewish People would have to undergo nothing less than a complete metamorphosis in order to become a creative force in human life.

The principles of Ahad Ha-Amism still remain valid, and are bound to reclaim the attention of the Jewish people. There can be no future for the Jewish People in the modern world, unless it can effect that kind of metamorphosis implied in Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy... Indeed, Reconstructionism is an attempt to spell out some of the implications of that philosophy.

Yet he does continue to revere it, and to insist on its being in the background of the creation of everything new.

by failing to utilize the Jewish heritage as an aid in their struggle for economic justice, Jews must either permit that struggle to degenerate into one for individual existence bare of all social significance, or they must commit themselves to what is nothing less than a new religion which would throw into the discard the cultural and spiritual assets of the Jewish People acquired at great cost over a period of more than thirty centuries. Such an act of vandalism committed by a people against its own culture would be without precedent. The needlessness of it is all too apparent to any one who has a realistic understanding of the very origin and development of the Jewish people and the Jewish religion.

Kaplan's aesthetics, as well as Ahad Ha-Am's have an ethical base. Art for Kaplan must be, it seems, both useful and pleasing. Music, for instance, receives his highest praise because it "speaks the universal language of man."
Of all the cultural creations that will emerge from Palestine, music will be most universally appreciated. The music of Eretz Yisrael will not have to hurdle the obstacles of language in order to reach our hearts. The new Jewish music will interpret Israel to the world and to its own constituents throughout the world. We stand in great need of this music. 95

The new Jewish music, it will be noted, will not be, according to Kaplan, music that happens to be written by Jews but music with a specific national intent and content.

Yet Kaplan maintains that

...creative art...is its own reward. The creative experience is an ultimate, not necessarily a utilitarian phenomenon. The life of a group that produces such creative expression becomes inherently interesting and worthwhile. The criterion of health in any civilization is the extent to which it stimulates creativity, and the extent to which the results of such creativity are joyously received... 96

Kaplan's is an essentially healthy, optimistic, and an undeniably Jewish point of view. Creation is a matter of effectiveness and joy. There should be in it no wasted effort, and all that effort ought to be directed to rein­vigoration, to creation of life as well as of art.

If Jewish life would make it possible for more and more young Jews to give artistic expression to their Jewish experience, we would destroy the brooding introspection which now gnaws at our hearts. 97

As Kaplan, diverging from Ahad Ha-Am, would allow the fine arts into the scope of the Jewish imagination, so he would permit literature to be written in other languages. This is not to say that he in any way de-emphasizes the importance of Hebrew; indeed, he says, in very bold italics,
"A Hebrewless Judaism is a Judaism in which the immediate awareness of Jewish peoplehood is lacking..." 98 And again he says, "Judaism must be Hebraic...Hebrew has come to be regarded as indispensable to the achievement of Jewish consciousness...Hebrew has become indispensable to that kinship of soul without which Jewish unity is unthinkable." 99

The Place of Tannakh in Modern Jewish Life and in Modern Jewish Education.

Mordecai Kaplan, in his emphatic endorsement of the Hebrew language as indispensable for the development of true Jewish consciousness, presented the Tannakh as the main work in that language, as the text of Jewish consciousness. It "has served, throughout the past, essentially as a means of giving continuity to the life of the Jewish people." 100 Nor is it "merely a text or collection of texts; it is what the interpreter derives from, or reads into, these texts." 101 It is, then, or should be, a living text, continually modulating with the tone of its readers. Yet, there is a vast difference, Kaplan says, between what should be and what is. In Ahad Ha-Am's words, the Jewish people, which had been a literary people, "one whose life and the life of its literature, its generations and its books, keep on developing together, the literature in accordance with the needs of the generation and the generation in accordance with the spirit of its literature," 102
is a literary people no longer. It is new, instead, a "people of the book," and "A People of the book...is a slave of the book, a people whose soul has departed from its heart and has gone entirely into the written word." 103

The effect of this character change is disastrous, both to the people and to what Ahad Ha-Am calls the "Torah of the heart."

To the People of the book the function of the book is not to enrich the heart with new forces but, on the contrary, to weaken it and to lower it until it will no longer dare to operate independently and in accordance with its needs, but only by means of its Scripture. Every natural and ethical phenomenon that is able to stir some movement in the heart becomes subjected to the approval of Scripture... Consequently, both of them, the people and its book, will remain static, frozen, and their form will not change in the course of generations since they will both lack motivation for this creative process. The people will have no intermediary between the heart and between all that is outside it. And the book will lack the heart's uprising against those things which are not in accordance with its needs. 104

Kaplan, always a practical man, feels that something must be done to prevent both book and people from congealing. After all, he says,

...Torah did not emerge at once as a fixed mode of law or canonized corpus of teachings. It originally designated the practice of receiving from qualified functionaries specific answers to questions concerning matters involving obedience to what was regarded as divinely ordained rule or law. 105

The concept of Torah's role changed again "during the main part of the Second Commonwealth era. By that time it came to be identified with the Pentateuch or the Torah
It was only later, during the Middle Ages, which were for many concepts a period of embalming, that "we Jews were in possession of a Torah that had become congealed into a fixed life-and-thought pattern.

That pattern conformed to the medieval frame of authoritarianism in belief and practice, and is externally enforced segregationism in group relations. 107

But this, says Kaplan, is the twentieth century, surely, as it is a new century, a brave one, surely, as it is a mechanical practical period, a reasonable one.

Now that the medieval frame has been shattered the Torah must achieve a new life-and-thought pattern within a larger frame, and one that is dynamic rather than static. To fit into that frame, the first requisite is to defrost the traditional concept of Torah. 108

To "defrost" the Torah tradition calls, in the first place, for a clear understanding of the role played by Torah in pre-modern Judaism, and secondly, for an awareness of the conditions necessary to bring about the revival in our day. 109

What must be done, therefore, is to make Torah a part of contemporary daily life, as it once was.

Torah was such normative knowledge fostered by Jews as helped them to constitute a distinct people and to achieve their salvation. Defrosting the concept of Torah, therefore, simply means turning that proposition around and making the predicate subject, and the subject predicate. It would then read thus: Whatever normative knowledge we Jews have to foster as a means to functioning as a distinct people and achieving our salvation should henceforth be known as Torah, and be accorded a position of primacy in our consciousness as Jews. 110
Thus, Kaplan implies that modern legislative methods and ethical codes should enlarge the legal machinery of the Torah.

To mention only one or two items to illustrate the kind of implementation for the larger Torah of our day: to throw light upon economic problems we have hardly anything of outstanding value from an ethical standpoint to compare with R. H. Tawney's *Acquisitive Society*, or with J. A. Hobson's *Economics and Ethics*. 111

Ahad Ha-Am would agree with the desire to defrost Torah, but he would not, I think, agree with the proposed methods. The danger here is obvious. If Torah is to be enlarged by contemporary materials, there is no way to guard against obsolescence, works and concepts of ephemeral value. Torah, after all, is a book dealing in eternal verities, and modern life is just what its name says it is: it varies with the mode.

**Summary and Critique of Mordecai Kaplan's Position.**

Mordecai Kaplan's philosophy of "Reconstructionism" was greatly influenced by Ahad Ha-Am, indeed his whole world view. A social idealist who believes, like Ahad Ha-Am, that the Jewish people is a self-conscious organism made up of self-conscious individuals, he feels that a people should be self-creative, self-renewing. Thus he interprets Ahad Ha-Am's stress on the cultivation of the spirit rather than immediate action to mean that the people must undergo "a complete metamorphosis. It will
have to review its foundations, to "revaluate" its texts and practices, keeping only what is viable in the modern world and discarding what would hinder it from taking its place among the nations. As the greater Judaism Kaplan envisages will be "Judaism as a civilization," it must have, like all great civilizations, a geographic base. It will have its center in Eretz Yisrael, as the Church has its center in Rome, and will maintain itself in its several adopted homelands, enriching Jewish, the adopted, and world culture.
Isaac B. Berkson was born in New York City in 1891. Twenty years later, while in his senior year at the College of the City of New York, Berkson, a brilliant student, was chosen (together with Alexander Dushkin and a few others) by Samson Benderly to join in the work of the Bureau of Jewish Education in New York. Benderly had founded this Bureau the year before and decided to offer to a few young college men of outstanding talent and scholarship an opportunity for intensive training in the field of Jewish education.

His choice of Berkson proved indeed a wise one; Berkson soon demonstrated unusual ability in the field of American Jewish education, and for many years, except for an interval from 1928 to 1934, when he was director of the Hebrew school system of Palestine, Berkson devoted himself to Jewish educational work in New York.

Being one of the "Benderly Boys," it is not surprising that Berkson was profoundly influenced by the principles of Benderly and the other personnel of the Bureau. Thus, while assisting in working out the administrative problems of the Bureau, Berkson at the same time absorbed the ideas of spiritual Zionism as formulated by Ahad Ha-Am. For Magnes and the other members of the Bureau staff, Berkson had these words of praise:
It was in the years of my association with the Bureau of Jewish Education that my idea of a community conception of Jewish life first took shape. I owe the development of my views to the influence of a notable group of leaders who supported Dr. Benderly in the work of the Bureau - Judah L. Magnes, Israel Friedlaender, Henrietta Szold, and yibadel lehavvim arukim Mordecai M. Kaplan. To each of them individually, as my teachers and inspirers, and to them all as representing a conception, I am deeply indebted. All of them, including Dr. Benderly, were proponents of Ahad Ha-Am's conception of Zionism and in their interpretation this meant that the affirmation of Jewish life in the Diaspora was as important as the establishment of an autonomous center of Jewish cultural and spiritual life in the land of Israel.

From 1917 to 1918 Berkson was director of the Central Jewish Institute in New York City, and for the following two years was a supervisor for the Bureau of Jewish Education. After completion of his thesis entitled "Theories of Americanization - A Critical Study" in 1920, Berkson received his Ph.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University.

For a number of years Berkson was lecturer at the Jewish Institute of Religion, first in 1926, and then again from 1935 on, as lecturer on education. In 1936 he was also appointed lecturer on education at the School of Education of City College, New York. From 1948 to 1956 he served as Professor of Education at the Dropsie College, Philadelphia, and at the same time continued as Professor at City College in New York. Although now Professor Emeritus, he is still a frequent and valuable contributor of scholarly publications in the field of educational philosophy.

In a chapter entitled "The value of Ethnic Groups" Berkson clearly spells out Ahad Ha-Am's doctrine of people-
hood, although he makes no reference to Ahad Ha-Am at this time. "The ethnic group is not a system of ideas but a nationality, a community of persons; it is a living reality related, indeed, to thought, but still flesh and blood and desire and no mere pale abstractions." 2

We note, however, one difference of opinion between the two men of this subject. Ahad Ha-Am regarded the Jewish people as a "chosen" people, whereas Berkson considered each nation as unique but not indispensable.

Every nation must be conceived as a personality unique but not altogether different; serving but not indispensable. Some nations are greater, some more gifted, some have longer and richer traditions - but they are all nations and each has the same right to live. 3

And Berkson maintained that each ethnic group, including the Jewish people, can make an important contribution to world culture. His idea of the interrelation of nations and the cultural value of each to the universe as a whole might be compared to the various instruments in a symphony orchestra, and the way in which each instrument lends its own distinctive quality to the overall musical harmony.

In Berkson's concept of Jewish peoplehood we have found no mention of a national spirit as an entity per se, as was posited in Ahad Ha-Am's mystical approach to the subject. Berkson, being a true rationalist, spoke of the Jewish people in purely sociological terms.

The Jewish People constitutes a historical, international community. We are an Am Olan (people of the world), a people enduring in time, a universal people
spread throughout the world. ... No doubt, external material factors and political forces... have played a part in preserving the Jewish People, but the essential cause is to be found in the ethical and spiritual heritage which until recent times was embodied mainly in religious forms. 4

In short, Berkson stressed the significance of the Jewish Community. He pointed out, "the Community' theory of adjustment makes culture the raison d'etre of the preservation of the life of the group." 5

Ahad Ha-Am's hope for a spiritual center in Palestine was shared by Berkson. The latter saw the potentiality of Palestine as a spiritual inspiration for the Diaspora. He clarified his attitude in this way:

The "Community" theory becomes a hopeful solution only if there will be established an autonomous Jewish center in Palestine. Our theory, then, becomes part of an international conception. The Jewish community in America is regarded as one of many sister communities throughout the world, each adjusted to the social and political conditions of the land of habitation, bound together by its cultural religious inheritance and by the spiritual inspiration of the Palestinian center. It is completely in accord and really an elaboration of the Culture Zionist theory formulated by Ahad Ha-Am. 6

Like Ahad Ha-Am, Berkson gave Zionism a cultural rather than religious interpretation. Likewise, for him the word "national" had mainly a cultural significance. Therefore, although he acknowledged the importance of Palestine as a unifying force, yet he maintained that "the future of the State of Israel depends on the maintenance and the development of the Jewish communities throughout the world." 7 In his opinion the international character of the Jewish People is
vital, for it can impart to the center in Israel a universal outlook. This is probably what Berkson meant by saying that his "Community" theory is an elaboration of Ahad Ha-Am's Culture Zionist theory. For Ahad Ha-Am emphasized the cultural value of Palestine to the Diaspora; Berkson agreed, but also observed that Palestine needed the Diaspora. He regarded the two as interdependent from a cultural point of view.

However much Jewish life may be strengthened and enriched by influences emanating from Israel, each Jewish community throughout the world must work out its own type of adjustment, build its institutions, and develop its educational program in the light of the needs and possibilities of each situation. It is essential to promote interchange of ideas, of forces and of personnel. 8

In an article which Berkson wrote for Ha_Aretz in 1935, he mentioned the influence of Ahad Ha-Am and discussed the similarities, as well as divergencies of his own Zionist outlook. He told of his membership in the Zionist Club at City College almost twenty five years earlier, and his study of Herzl and Ahad Ha-Am.

When we began to study Ahad H-Am, he penetrated deeply into our hearts. ...he filled our Zionist yearning with a content of great worth. He gave a clear direction to a deep force of emotion. 9

Berkson, as we have already determined, believed in the affirmation of the Diaspora. Indeed, his position was that Diaspora Judaism is an intrinsic part of the destiny and history of the Jewish people. He pointed out that the Jewish people were always a dispersed people, and in his opinion
this was a blessing, for it made Jewish peoplehood an internation, or a world community. The very fact of its dispersion made it possible for the Jewish people, throughout the course of its history, to contribute to world progress.

Ahad Ha-Am, on the other hand, felt that it was impossible for a fully creative Jewish life to be developed in the Diaspora. He viewed the Diaspora simply as a necessary evil. Yet Berkson seemed to overlook the fact that Ahad Ha-Am did not recognize the potentiality of the Diaspora. In fact, in the article which was published in the newspaper Ha Aretz, Berkson not only discussed his own affirmation of the Diaspora but also ascribed a similar position to Ahad Ha-Am. In a footnote to Berkson's article, the editor of Ha Aretz pointed out Berkson's mistake or misinterpretation, quoting Berkson's own statement (in the article) that his deductions about Ahad Ha-Am's affirmation of the Diaspora "were not said explicitly by Ahad Ha-Am, and perhaps he never admitted them." 10

The question then comes to our minds: Why did Berkson assume that Ahad Ha-Am believed in the circumference? Perhaps his assumption was a result of his own strong conviction of the soundness of this theory. He summed it up very concisely:

When we think of the Jewish loyalty, we must bear in mind that the allegiance is not to a land exclusively, but to an International Community of men whose interests include and are inextricably woven with the interests of many peoples and with the universal spread of liberal
thought. One who is loyal to the Jewish People rightly conceived must become loyal to all the families on earth among whom the Jews are scattered. ...If the necessity of adjustment can lead to an international and moral outlook, then, indeed, can we say that we have advanced a whole stage in the development of humanism which is the essence of Democracy. 11

Both Berkson and Ahad Ha-Am emphasized the national, rather than the religious, aspect of Jewish education.

Berkson made this observation:

What we call religion was, in the period when it was created, very much what we should call national culture today; the striving of a particular social group to transcend the limits of its own body of experience, and pursue ends humane, universal and eternal. 12

Berkson realized, however, as Dushkin did, that the national and religious elements in Jewish education were actually intertwined. "The most 'religious' of the subjects of the curriculum has a literary and national aspect, just as the cultural and literary aspect has a religious bent. It is necessary to bear in mind the unitary character of the curriculum." 13

In the following statement Berkson clarified his position on the God-concept: "Although I retained a high regard for the religious aspects of Jewish life, my views were grounded in a cultural humanism free from dogmatic theistic assumptions." 14 Berkson made an intensive study of the doctrine of evolution; whether the influence of Ahad Ha-Am led him into this study we do not know. At any rate, Berkson found it difficult to reconcile the God-idea with
the doctrine of evolution. Regarding the theory of evolution, with its destruction of absolute values, Berkson noted that

Into this situation of philosophic bankruptcy Democracy has come with a new vision of the drama of human life to relieve the world of the meaningless of an unevaluated universe. It is the new faith, the religious inspiration in which the modern man finds a unification for his experiences and aspirations. 15

He criticized both Reform and Orthodoxy for their formal, sentimental approach to the spiritual concept. And in his opinion the varying Jewish religious denominations served only to weaken the unity of the Jewish community. He opposed Dushkin's idea of "variety in unity"; Berkson approved of interdenominational schools. As for achieving unity in the Jewish group, Berkson considered culture to be the important factor, rather than religion.

The culture of the Jewish people, including as it does a language, a literature, and a profoundly spiritual social outlook, cannot be confined within the walls of the synagogue, where the erstwhile living thought is embalmed in liturgy, aspiration petrified into prayer, and social life ossified in ceremonies. 16

Yet despite his critical attitude toward organized synagogue ritualism, Berkson accredited Torah with the central position in Jewish life. This seeming contradiction is removed when we examine Berkson's definition of Torah. In his use of the term he included cultural as well as spiritual values. Through its interpretation of historical events Torah has provided the Jewish people with a philosophy of life.

Torah, we may say, is History in this broad sense, as it manifests itself in the life experiences of the Jewish people; Culture as it expresses itself in the rich inheritance of the Jewish people; Philosophy
and Religion as they become embodied in the social and spiritual ideals of the Jewish People. What brings Jews together is the significance and power of Torah, i.e. Jewish History, using the term in its richest sense. 17

Berkson, in his emphasis of the cultural aspect of the tradition, did not discuss the problem of modifications of the Torah - law. From his relativist point of view, values are never constant; they are undergoing a continual process of change in relation to the environment. Their significance depends upon whether their role is vital in the adjustment of the individual Jew to his environment. In other words, to Berkson a value-system is relative and functional, for "each generation has its interpretation, its own additional insight." 18

Ahad Ha-Am believed that the Law changes imperceptibly and should not be deliberately abrogated, whereas Berkson implied that the Law, which he considered to be simply one place of Jewish culture, may, like all other cultural possessions, be manipulated if necessary when it has lost its import.

Regarding Hebrew instruction in the Jewish school curriculum, Berkson voiced the same view as Ahad Ha-Am.

The study of Hebrew...is of supreme importance for the present and future of Jewish life. ...Hebrew must serve as means of interchange of thought between the various Jewish communities of the world and between them and Palestine. ...No Jewish community is ever known to have survived long after it had given up its distinctive mode of expression. Language and the thought of life seem inextricably bound up. 19

Ahad Ha-Am's sentiments are also reflected in Berkson's state-
ment that "Israel offers unparalleled opportunities for creative development of the Hebrew language and literature and for the maintenance of distinctive forms of Jewish life." Berkson also noted that most of the Jewish classics were written in Hebrew or translated into Hebrew, and accordingly that the study of these classics in the original language provided the best means of understanding Jewish thought. At the same time Berkson suggested that if the student were not far enough advanced in his study of Hebrew to read the classical literature in the original, then he should study it in English translation. For Berkson stressed that "the content of our classic literature is the end, and the Hebrew language the means." 21

Thus the passionate, almost obsessive devotion to Hebrew expressed by Ahad Ha-Am was more coolly formulated by Berkson. Ahad Ha-Am's entire striving had been concentrated on one main aim - the reconstitution of the Jewish national spirit. It is understandable that Berkson, the humanist, steeped in the tradition of democracy, did not display quite the same intensity of enthusiasm for Hebrew as Ahad Ha-Am. Yet Berkson unreservedly approved of the Hebrew language as a vital force in uniting culturally the Jewish world - community.

On the subject of classical literature, Berkson was in full agreement with Ahad Ha-Am. In his use of the term "classics" Berkson too was referring, not to belles-lettres
but to those outstanding creative writings which portray most vividly and authentically the life problems and experiences of a people's past. Both Berkson and Ahad Ha-Am found the Jewish national spirit to be rooted in the Holy Scriptures.

First among the resources of Jewish cultural and spiritual life is the treasury of Jewish literature to which each era in Jewish history has made its contribution. The groundwork is in the Tanakh, the Sacred Scriptures, at once the creation of Hebrew genius and a universal classic of Western thought. ... To this whole treasury of classic literature the term Torah is appropriate; since the classic Jewish literature is not belles-lettres written for amusement or aesthetic appreciation, but the response of the Jew as a human being to the existential problems of life. 22

As to the Prayer Book, Berkson included it as part of Jewish classical literature. Berkson, like Ahad Ha-Am, recognized the cultural overtones of prayer. To Berkson the Hebrew Prayer Book, expressing the strivings and hopes of the Jewish People throughout its history, had the beauty and power of a literary classic.

The Hebrew Prayer Book...is as much a body of literature as it is a collection of liturgy. It includes excerpts from the Bible and from Psalms and the portions of direct prayer are few. ...Nationalistic Jews, disclaiming the religious tie, might still study it as a literary expression of the national soul. 23

Both Ahad Ha-Am and Berkson were confronted with a serious problem in their work as Jewish educators, namely, the manner of dealing with the unquestioning, faithful practitioners of Orthodox Judaism in their communities. Both men had deep respect for the orthodox, pious elements of the religion, and did their best to keep harmony among the vari-
our denominational groups of the Jewish community. As Berkson said: "Education is at all times concerned with men-living-in-societies and its ends cannot be defined apart from a direct consideration of the character of the society into which the individual is to live." According to Berkson, the main purpose of education is to effect communication and understanding among the members of a community, and to develop personal growth of each individual so that he may co-operate with the others to achieve the common aims of the group.

Berkson approved of Dewey's proposal that

...we should think of the school as a "miniature community" which would reflect the activities of society and supply a rich and superior environment where the child and youth would develop their own personalities and grow into the life of the community. The school would become the conscious instrument created by society for the transmission and re-creation of its own way of life - the central agency for the survival of the community in its essential character.

Berkson, however, felt that the Jewish school complementary to the public school was best fitted to provide Jewish education in the American democracy. At the same time he was not opposed to all-day Jewish schools.

Berkson's conception of "community," embracing the international, universal quality of the Jewish heritage, was somewhat broader than Ahad Ha-Am's. Within the structure of American democracy with its cultural pluralism, Berkson held that the Jewish community can lend its distinctive contribution to American culture, and in turn to world culture, while at the same time retaining its Jewish identity. As to the
relation of his theory to Jewish education, Berkson interpreted it as follows:

Applied to Jewish education, the community theory means that Jewish education is to be non-denominational in outlook. Although it allows for a religious as well as a humanist interpretation, it implies that the Jewish heritage of values is universal and can be expressed in non-dogmatic and non-theological terms. The loyalty to be fostered among children and youth is to be a loyalty to the Jewish People as a whole, and not to one segment of it. Moreover, while affirming the possibility of a worth-while Jewish life in the United States and while conceiving the aim of Jewish education in terms of an adjustment to the character of American life, nevertheless it involves the idea that Jewish education in our day is an aspect of the Jewish Renascence, with its concomitant of the revival of Hebrew and the establishment of a center of Jewish life in Israel. 26

Berkson wrote several books on the subject of education, and in reviewing his book, *Theories of Americanization*, which was actually a doctoral dissertation at Teachers College, Columbia University, Meir Ben-Horin of Dropsie College referred to it as "a model for philosophical inquiry concerned with the nature and future of the Jewish people and with education as the chief instrumentality of its survival and regeneration." 27

As to the community theory, Dr. Ben-Horin summed it up aptly in these words:

Berkson's community theory brings together democracy, naturalism, pragmatism and Jewish cultural nationalism, ethnicism, and internationalism with education as the "central and the fundamental means of perpetuating the group." 28
WILLIAM CHOMSKY

William Chomsky, born in Russia on January 15, 1897, was educated in the United States. He received his B.A. from John Hopkins University in 1921, M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1925, and his Ph.D. the following year from Dropsie College.

An ardent Hebraist, Dr. Chomsky chose to make American Jewish education his career. Even before completing his graduate work, he became an instructor at Gratz College, Philadelphia, where he is now Professor of Hebrew and Education, as well as chairman of the faculty. Since 1957 he has also been Professor of Hebrew and Education at Dropsie College.

In addition to his career as a Professor, Dr. Chomsky is a distinguished author, as well as editor. He had contributed articles to Jewish Education, the Journal of Biblical Literature, and other publication. He is best known for his invaluable literary presentations on the subject of the role of Hebrew in Jewish education - particularly, for his book, Hebrew, The Eternal Language.

Many times throughout this book Chomsky made mention of Ahad Ha-Am's concepts on Judaism. In these references he has revealed beyond a doubt the profound influence of Ahad Ha-Am on his own thinking. Chomsky's introductory chapter, for example, contained a discussion of the meaning of the terms "Jews" and "Judaism." Are the Jews a race, a nation, a religious group, or what? Is Judaism only a body of be-
liefs and practices, or of nationalistic symbols and slogans, or of cultural ideas and literary compilations, such as could be conveyed by one linguistic vehicle or another?" 29
Chomsky then proceeded to answer this controversial question. He pointed out, first of all, that in arguing this matter, people tend to overlook the fact that "a feeling of kinship exists among Jews of all 'races' and colors, of all parts of the world, regardless of whether they are orthodox, reform or even atheistic." 30 (Is this not Ahad Ha-Am's doctrine of peoplehood?) Chomsky carried this theory further, comparing the Jewish group to a chemical compound, a comparison which distinctly related to Ahad Ha-Am's portrayal of the Jewish People as a living organism. In referring to the various elements, such as national, cultural, religious, etc., which seem to comprise Jewish peoplehood, Chomsky observed that

...some or all of the elements mentioned above may be found in the Jewish group or in Judaism, as the case may be, not in an additive sense, but rather in an integrative or chemical sense. ...The compound ABC is larger than the sum of the parts and different in character from each of them as a result of their integration and reciprocal influence. In such a compound the individual component elements are changed and modified. ...All this is equally true of the cultural, national and religious elements that make up Judaism. Jewish religion is, in effect, a distinctive, dynamic life-pattern constantly and progressively adapting itself to changing needs and circumstances; it is accordingly intimately bound up with the Jewish people, their history, culture and civilization. 31

In other words, to Chomsky the organismic nature of Jewish peoplehood became visible in its national culture -
the sum total of its national possessions. A similar position was noted in my discussion of Israel Friedlaender.

As religion is only one element in the compound, Chomsky perceived that even an atheistic Jew can feel kinship with other Jews. Ahad Ha-Am, we recall, had also been asked to express his opinion on this matter. He agreed that an atheist could be considered a good national Jew, but qualified his statement by saying that this could be the case only if the man "had a share" in the sacred possessions of the Jewish people - the Holy Scriptures, the Hebrew language, the Sabbath, and similar sancta of the Torah.

Ahad Ha-Am had great reverence for these religious sancta; yet he chose to regard religion as simply one aspect of Jewish nationalism. He remarked that in the past the Jewish national spirit had expressed itself chiefly in religious ritual, but that he was not certain in what form it would find expression in the future. To Chomsky, however, religion, even in modern times, plays a major role in the civilization of Judaism. In defining Judaism, he gave religion equal status with nationality and culture. "Judaism may be defined as the on-going historical experience of the Jewish people, in which are compounded religious, national and cultural elements." 32

In an article which he wrote on the life and thought of Perez Smolenskin, a writer whose name "will be remembered as the champion of the Jewish national renaissance," 33
Chomsky revealed many of his own ideas on Jewish nationalism. According to Chomsky, Smolenskin "anticipated Ahad Ha-Am in calling for a spiritual revival and for an intensive system of Jewish education as prerequisites for a Jewish national revival." 34

Like Ahad Ha-Am, Chomsky noted that nationalism is not to be confused with chauvinism. He upheld the right of the Jewish people to cling to their national uniqueness. Approving of cultural pluralism, Chomsky agreed that

National individuality is but an extension of personal individuality. A healthy nationalism implies the right and the duty of every national group, as in the case of every individual person, to develop fully and freely its distinctive individuality, to the fullest extent, without mutual interference and encroachment. ...Differentiation and diversification are the law of progress. It is only on the basis of such a healthy nationalism that real universal peace and human brotherhood may be established. 35

Chomsky made mention of the "Jewish will to live", 36 a fact which Ahad Ha-Am had considered the most significant weapon in the Jewish people's struggle for survival. To Chomsky, as to Ahad Ha-Am, the reawakening of the Jewish national spirit would make it possible for each Jewish person to have a more integrated life. He did not approve of J. L. Gordon's famous words of advice: "Be a Jew in your tent and a man abroad", for this advice, in Chomsky's opinion, was "setting Judaism and humanity against each other and implying, thereby, that Judaism should be sacrificed to
humanity." 37 Chomsky preferred Smolenskin's attitude: "In contrast to Gordon's dictum, Smolenskin charges that a Jewish individual cannot be a 'man' without first being a Jew, that a revival of national consciousness and self-respect is basic to the acquisition of human consciousness." 38

And the method of bringing about this revival of Jewish national consciousness? Chomsky had the same answer as Ahad Ha-Am - by encouraging the study of the Hebrew language and the Tanakh and by establishing a spiritual and cultural center in Palestine. Of the potential cultural influence of Eretz Yisrael, he had this to say:

The primary need is for a regeneration of the Hebraic spirit, a revival and resurgence of the prophetic genius of the Jewish people, and an opportunity to revitalize the Hebraic civilization on its native soil in consonance with that genius. ...In brief, the State of Israel is to be a homeland not only for the Jews living there, but also for a vital and burgeoning world Judaism - a center from which dynamic forces of creative Jewish living will radiate to the circumference of the entire Diaspora; or, to use Ahad Ha-Am's metaphor, Eretz Yisrael is to be the heart from which fresh bloodstreams will flow into the body of Diaspora Judaism, constantly revitalizing and energizing it. 39

Nor did Chomsky deny that Diaspora culture could also benefit Palestine. In fact, his opinion was that the reciprocal influence of the two cultures could produce a broader Jewish culture. He backed this idea with another reference to Ahad Ha-Am: "To pursue Ahad Ha-Am's metaphor consistently, the heart cannot function effectively unless the blood vessels in the body likewise function normally and are capable
of promoting and facilitating the blood circulation." 40 It seems, however, that Ahad Ha-Am placed greater emphasis on the vital importance of the "heart" - Palestine. Chomsky, on the other hand, although recognizing full well the tremendous potentiality of Palestine as a cultural center, was also aware of the fact that Palestine, being a small country, might tend to develop a chauvinistic nationalism which would in turn have a narrowing effect on its culture. He believed that this would be automatically controlled by the modifying effect of the international-flavored Diaspora culture.

In other words, the fulfillment of the Hebraic cultural ideal is, in effect, a cultural two-way passage, and the effectiveness of its fulfillment will be determined by the establishment of proper and efficient channels of intercommunication. Thus, there is no real dichotomy of Israeli and Diaspora Judaism. Judaism is one and indivisible, with its center or nucleus in Israel and its "field" or sphere and cultural influence over the whole Diaspora. 41

Chomsky referred to the Jewish way of life as "dynamic and evolving," 42 and to the Jewish religion as a "distinctive, dynamic life-pattern, constantly and progressively adapting itself to changing needs and circumstances." 43 Thus, he declared himself an evolutionist and an adherent of the historical school, and again we may draw a comparison with Ahad Ha-Am. Chomsky, like Ahad H-Am, was opposed to fixed changes in the religious tradition; he believed that Changes must come about gradually and by an evolutionary process, through the initiative or sanction of the people. But, and this is significant, in order to be competent to discharge such a responsibility,
the people must be educated and grounded in the knowledge of the Torah, in its wider aspects and implications, and of the Hebrew language in which this Torah is written. 44

According to Chomsky, this evolutionary characteristic of the Jewish religion, as well as its intimate relationship with Jewish life, probably accounts for the fact that there is no specific word for "religion" in the Hebrew language. As to the prominent part the Jewish People have played in shaping the tradition, Chomsky described what is said to have occurred in talmudic times:

When the rabbis were in doubt about the legality of certain rituals and practices, they would say: "Go and see how the people conduct themselves." (Erubin 14b) "The conduct of the people in a normal traditional environment served as a guide for establishing and codifying certain laws and rituals; indeed a custom may nullify a law." (J. Baba Metzia 7a). 45

To Chomsky, this incident from the Talmud was evidence that the evolutionary process was in effect even in talmudic times. In his opinion, the talmudic rabbis, although unaware of such a term as the "historical school," seemed to use an identical approach to the law. This quotation from the Talmud has been similarly interpreted by other followers of the historical school. They have interpreted it to mean that the People create their own laws, and that they do so without deliberate planning but simply in response to the demands of their environment. Thus, the creation or change in the law is gradual, instinctive process; first comes the general practice of the group, the tacit agreement of the majority,
and lastly, the codification of this practice into law.

It is questionable, however, whether this talmudic passage quoted by Chomsky actually corroborates the historical school in the Savigny formulation. Is it not more possible that the talmudic rabbis meant, by their directive to go and observe the conduct of the people, that the people or common folk were the best source for verification of genuine, traditional practices? Errors or distortions could easily occur in the copying of books, but it was more likely that laws passed from Parent to child would be unalloyed. For these peasants, their way of life not having been disrupted by war surroundings where the authentic Torah law had been handed down from generation to generation.

Belonging to the historical school, Chomsky obviously supports the idea that the tradition is created and developed by man's instinctive motivation in relation to the circumstances and necessities of his daily life. What then is Chomsky's God-concept? In response to my inquiry regarding his God-concept, Dr. Chomsky replied that he had intentionally refrained from formulating a precise definition of God in his writings as he felt that we do not have sufficient knowledge and data for the construction of such a definition.

He pointed out, however, that as young children cannot grasp abstract ideas, he approved of the use of midrash, with its anthropomorphic God-presentation, in the Jewish educational program. For instance, in discussing the school
curriculum for a child in the second year, Chomsky suggested that

A good deal of religion, character values, and history could be woven around the migrations, adventures, struggles and efforts to establish a God-loving people. ...Much of this material, especially as centering around the majestic character of Abraham, can be called from talmudic and midrashic sources and can be organized and rendered in simple Hebrew. 46

Chomsky envisioned an ideal national future in which the dominion of God would be established. Challenging the Jewish people to combine their efforts for a restoration of the Hebraic spirit and for the development of a spiritual center in Palestine, he specified: "This means the establishment of an ideal society, the object of which is 'to perfect the world under the kingdom of God' - a society based on social justice, democracy, humanity, universal brotherhood and peace." 47

Chomsky agreed with Ahad Ha-Am as to the supreme worth of the Tanakh in Jewish life. As Chomsky said: "The Sefer must again become the dynamic and vital source of stimulation and guidance in our cultural and religious life." 48

We note, however, that Chomsky stresses its importance in "cultural and religious (italics mine) life", whereas Ahad Ha-Am had emphasized its cultural and ethical value. Chomsky's use of the word "religious" includes of course the ethical meaning; on the other hand, to Ahad Ha-Am the use of the word "ethical" did not necessarily indicate a religious connotation. Basically their attitude to the Bible was the same; Chomsky described it this way:
The Bible is to the Jews not a mere compilation of ancient writings, representative of an ancient civilization, ancient modes of thoughts and beliefs. ... The Bible has been to the Jew a dynamic book, a living fountain, the mainspring of Jewish civilization, a book that has grown and evolved in the creative imagination of the Jewish people and has been brought near to our own times by the "mouth" of Jewish tradition and reinterpretation. The prophetic spirit that animates this Book is the life blood coursing through the best of Jewish literature and tradition of all time, and it is as fresh and timely today as it was in antiquity. 49

As for Hebrew, the language in which the original Tanakh was written, Chomsky has the highest esteem. He recognizes the fact that this language has become for the Jewish people a "symbol of Jewish unity, distinctiveness, hope and renascence." 50 This was likewise Ahad Ha-Am's view.

Both Chomsky and Ahad Ha-Am prized the Hebrew language as a medium for penetrating into the meaningful depths of the Jewish classics. In addition, it could serve as a vehicle for creative literary expression of the Jewish national spirit. Chomsky designated Hebrew as "the open sesame to the original sources of Judaism and of Jewish experiences." 51 As he pointed out, some of the fine shades of meaning in the Hebrew language cannot possibly be duplicated in English; therefore much more insight can be gained by reading the original.

Although Chomsky had great admiration for the beauty and profundity of the Hebrew language, he did not overemphasize its importance as a language per se. Always in his mind was the realization of its power to open the door to a deeper knowledge of Judaism.
Judaism without Hebrew is a disembodied soul. Hebrew without Judaism, without an interest in the study of Torah in its broader implications, especially in the Diaspora, is an empty shell. 52

In other words, the mastery of Hebrew simply as a language is not enough. Hebrew study should succeed in increasing the student's understanding of the culture from which the language evolved. "Language must be regarded as a master key wherewith to unlock the storehouses of original literary sources. But unless it is used for this purpose the key is a useless tool." 53

In the Jewish spiritual and cultural renascence Chomsky regarded the Hebrew language as the main integrating force, for by giving access to the cultural sources it could unite the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora and inspire a resurgence of the Jewish national spirit.

Hebrew is the nerve center which unites and integrates the Jewish people in time and in space. It serves as an intellectual and an emotional bond among all Jews throughout all generations, and throughout all the lands of dispersion. ...As the universal language of study and prayer, Hebrew is a major unifying force of the people of Israel. ...Hebrew is the symbol of regeneration and self assertion in Jewish life. The Jewish will to live, and the undying faith in the creative destiny of Judaism in the face of all difficulties, are symbolized by the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language in Eretz Yisrael and elsewhere. Hebrew is a potent medium for revitalizing the Jewish community of America, for rendering it dynamic and creative. ...By means of it, channels are established leading directly to the fountainhead of Jewish creativity throughout the generations. Through these channels the living stream of the accumulated Hebraic wisdom of the past and the new creative resources of modern Israel will flow pure and undefiled, constantly refreshing and regenerating. 54
Regarding his approach to American Jewish education, Chomsky made a concise statement: "Our slogan in modern Hebrew education must be: back to the source, to the book." 55

To Chomsky, the three fundamentals of the curriculum should be the Tanakh, the Hebrew language, and Palestine, for "the central idea in this curriculum is the process of recreating Jewish civilization and racial experiences." 56 Ahad Ha-Am also stressed the Tanakh and Hebrew, but of course at that time Palestine as the envisioned spiritual center in the becoming could not be included in the Russian-Jewish school curriculum as a present reality.

As to teaching methods, Chomsky favored the dramatic presentation of the Tanakh and Palestine. With this method the children could be transplanted imaginatively into the setting of the story, and the Jewish heritage would become vividly real to them. Although the experience-curriculum had not yet been practiced in Ahad Ha-Am's time, he had advocated that Hebrew be taught as a living language. Chomsky advised that the reading method and the direct method be combined in the teaching of Hebrew.

Chomsky followed Ahad Ha-Am's advice that, in order to hold children's interest in the Tanakh, it is best not to teach them Bible criticism. Unlike Scharfstein (as I shall discuss later in this chapter), Chomsky did not draw from
Ahad Ha-Am's advice the implication that it is permissible to present in the classroom Bible stories with a supernatural approach. Chomsky approved of John Dewey's distinction between the imaginative and the imaginary in the teaching process. (*Democracy and Education*, p. 276 ff.) He considered the former "very wholesome" whereas the latter "may lead to mind-wandering and wayward fancy." 57 Chomsky recommended that an anthology of Bible stories be compiled - selected stories suitable to the age of the child and containing present-day moral standards.

Chomsky stated that "the only guarantee for the survival of the Jewish community as a creative force in Jewish life is an effective, functional, Torah centered and Hebraic type of education." And he concluded: "This, therefore, is the direction, and this is the challenge to American Jews and to American educators." 58

Observing Dr. Chomsky's dedication in his career both as professor of Hebrew and Education and as author of noteworthy books and articles concerning the Hebrew language in its relation to Jewish education and Jewish life - and especially his great opus, *Hebrew: The Eternal Language* - it becomes apparent that the revival of the Hebrew language and the Hebraic spirit has been the central passion, the leitmotif of Chomsky's life. Thus, Ahad Ha-Am's influence is being realistically translated into lifelong devotion to an endeavor which finds its expression in creative service to American Jewish education.
SAMUEL DININ

In 1909 a seven year old Russian boy from Zarawitz, Russia, immigrated to the United States with his parents. This boy, Samuel Dinin, was destined to become a leader in the field of American Jewish education.

Fond of study, Samuel Dinin attended the College of the City of New York and received his B.A. degree at the age of twenty. After post graduate work at Columbia University, he received an M.A. in 1925, and eight years later a Ph.D.

Dinin has brilliantly served the profession of Jewish education in various capacities. While still a college student he worked for the Bureau of Jewish Education - from 1919 to 1926 to be exact - and in the preface to his doctoral dissertation he made special mention of Dr. Benderly's influence: "It was under Dr. Benderly that I first received a thorough and extensive training as teacher, principal, and supervisor in the Jewish school system." 59

For the next nineteen years, that is, until 1945, he was a registrar and associate professor of Jewish history and Jewish education at the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He was then appointed executive director of the Bureau of Jewish Education in Los Angeles. He has capably filled executive positions in a number of Zionist organizations, and in 1945 Samuel Dinin received from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America a
citation for outstanding work in Jewish education.

In referring to the years spent at the Teachers Institute, first as a pupil and later as an instructor, Dinin spoke of his "fifteen years of continuous association with Professor Kaplan" and went on to say that he (Dinin) was "profoundly influenced by his teachings." Thus, through Dr. Mordecai Kaplan, as through Dr. Samson Benderly, there is revealed in Dinin an Ahad Ha-Amist influence.

Since 1947 Dinin has been Professor of Education at the University of Judaism, and at the present time he is vice president of this university and chairman of its faculties.

Dinin's discussion of Jewish nationality bears a marked resemblance to Ahad Ha-Am's doctrine of peoplehood. Dinin assigned to nationalism the dominant role in the unification and preservation of Jewish life. Both men identified nationalism, not with the geographical home of a People but rather with the cultural possessions shared by the group. As Dinin said:

...we must approach Jewish life from a national point of view. Religion must be within this structure a leaven, a transforming principle, but not the basis of Jewish group existence. He justified his preference for nationalism by the fact that religious beliefs tend to divide, whereas nationalism, in the sense of culture, unites a community. "The concept of the organic community...is a guidepost as to how
Jews of diverse ideologies and beliefs can work together in harmony." 64

Dinin's views also indicate an orientation toward the school of thought of Mordecai Kaplan, for Dinin, a rationalist like Kaplan, rejected completely the Hegelian or Krochmalian formulation of the mystical spirit - a formulation which seemed to be incorporated into Ahad Ha-Am's theories of Jewish peoplehood.

Nor did Dinin consider the Jewish people a "chosen" people as Ahad Ha-Am did. Dinin believed that cultural pluralism is an essential aspect of a true democracy:

Real democracy of necessity demands divergence of cultures, nationalities, and religions, and free interplay between ethnic, cultural and national and religious minority groups. 65

He advocated that a practical program "be worked out which will make for rich democratic minority group living." 66

Thus, Dinin, in much the same manner as Berkson and Dushkin, took the basic principles of Ahad Ha-Am and attempted to adjust them to Jewish life in the American environment. He examined Jewish nationality not only from the standpoint of the Jewish community itself but also in its relation to the American community as a whole, and finally in its connection with the entire world. "The Jewish nationality is and will continue to be international, and as such will be an excellent leaven for peace and a restraining influence on integral nationalisms." 67 Dinin, however, did not probe as deeply
To stimulate the Jewish national spirit, Dinin outlined a plan:

What we must do then is cultivate together as many of the elements which make for a people's nationality as possible. The first task is obviously to get all Jews - or as many as desire it - together in some community organization which can include all of them. The second is to get a common unifying center - Palestine. The third is to cultivate a common language - which can serve as a universal means of communication and expression. The fourth is to provide a comprehensive system of education, recreation and community living which will expose young and old to the best and widest possible Jewish culture... (This would include religion). The fifth would be to cultivate as a national group, ways of behaving, folkways, customs, etc., which have a social and national sanction.

As may be noted in the above quotation, Dinin is in favor of the establishment of a cultural center in Palestine. However, to him this center does not represent the main hope for Jewish survival, as it does to Ahad Ha-Am. Dinin acknowledges that Palestine can serve as a Jewish homeland, and as an inspiration for the revival of the Jewish national spirit, but at the same time he does not underestimate the value of the Diaspora. His argument is that

...for the present and for a long time to come the Jews will continue to survive as a people with or without Palestine, that if their nationality is a fact and a reality, then steps must be taken to bring about a living and creative Jewish national life in whatever countries they happen to dwell.

Dinin also voiced the fear that Palestinian culture, gradually developing its own distinctive national character-
istics, might eventually become too local or narrow an outlook, and thus would not have sufficient significance for international Jewish culture. Such a fear had never been entertained by Ahad Ha-Am; his attitude toward the Palestinian center was completely optimistic.

Dinin drew his inspiration mainly from secularist sources. Essentially a humanist, he maintained that nationalism must replace religion as an integrating force in Jewish life, and that the concept of a personal God is an outdated belief:

Jewish life...has become and must become secularized and humanized, whether we like it or not. We can no longer believe in the personal God of our fathers nor in the Aristotelian First Cause of our philosophers. We can no longer accept the doctrines of revelation and election and reward and punishment and the countless others upon which the whole structure of the Jewish life of our ancestors had been reared. 70

Although he approved of the secularization of religion Dinin advised that children should be given some instruction, both at home and at school, in the God-idea. For if a child is taught nothing about God, there is a danger of his getting knowledge from other sources, and the result might be confusion in the child's mind. Dinin hastened to add, however, that "it is not suggested that children be subjected to formal courses of study on the God idea, or the formal worship." 71 As to what God-idea to teach children, Dinin preferred of course the "humanistic conception which identifies God with all that is significant and worthwhile in human life." 72 Religious teaching should impart to the child the
meaning of God in his own life experiences, so that he connects God with what is good, true and beautiful in life.

Dinin presented his analysis of the modern religious trend:

The revolution which is taking place in religious thinking is shifting the emphasis of religion from an otherworldly to a this-worldly attitude, from seeking salvation in a future world to seeking salvation for mankind here and now. Such religious thinking has no place for a personal, supermundane God, for a God who is outside human existence. It can conceive God only in terms of human experience, in terms of the values human beings themselves have created and developed.

As to Dinin's attitude toward the tradition, the last sentence of the quotation above is very revealing; he refers to "the values human beings themselves have created and developed." In his doctoral dissertation he elaborated this theory fully, identifying himself with the historical school of thought:

The science of Judaism, modern historical criticism, revealed to us that the Judaism we looked upon as immutable and eternal was itself the product of many changes, of slow evolutionary development....Judaism just first change its attitude toward change. It must come to look upon it as normal. It must be prepared and expect to undergo increasingly rapid changes. It must shed old forms and folkways and laws which have lost their meaning. ...It must create new attitudes, new laws, new folkways, which will have psychological and functional utility in the world we live in. ...Values and ends must be found in the processes of living - in the actual work and play and communication. The processes of life cannot be subordinated to ends and goals set up in another age and another clime, whether of 2000 years ago or 2000 years hence. It must expose its truths and its values to criticism and evaluation in the light of modern knowledge; it must test them in the crucibles of science.
Although Dinin recognized that the tradition gradually evolves and changes, he suggested, as Kaplan did, that if laws and ethics are found to be outmoded, they should be discarded. Ahad Ha-Am, on the other hand, had been confident that these changes would take place subtly and naturally, without any deliberate action on the part of the People.

In regard to the place of the Tanakh in Jewish education, Dinin considered it a prime source of cultural inspiration for modern Jewish life. "The Bible should not be taught as static and revealed for all time, as an exercise in language and dialectics, but as a source of living waters, as a depository of cultural values which can still guide us in our present world." 75 Dinin emphasized that the Torah was the product of an evolutionary process.

The Torah and the ideas and ideals embodied in it was no sudden revelation. It was the product of slow growth, of change and conflict, of human experience. The Bible is a book of inspiration...only as long as it continues to inspire men to realize themselves to the utmost. We cannot set up the Torah, a fixed concept of God, tradition, the past, as fetishes to be worshiped and enforced as they are, and to be transmitted as they are. For these things never were and never will be constant and unchanging. 76

Although Dinin referred indirectly to the ethical content of the Bible by noting its "cultural values which can still guide us," and also its power "to inspire men to realize themselves to the utmost," yet he did not seem to regard the Tanakh with quite the profound reverence of Ahad Ha-Am. The latter put the Scriptures in the category of a sacred
treasure, and he had immense respect for the traditional sancta.

Dinin, the relativist, did not look with such awe on the Tanakh. In his outline of a possible curriculum for Jewish schools, he included "knowledge of the Bible, Talmud, and other masterpieces of Jewish literature." In a long list of other items he also included "knowledge of Jewish arts and crafts, of Jewish home-furnishing, cooking, etc.," and in his discussion of these various crafts, he revealed his attitude toward the study of the Hebrew prayer-book:

There is a Jewish art, a Jewish cooking, Jewish designs for embroidery and knitting and sewing, Jewish things to construct such as Tabernacles for the feast of Booths and other such things. These are as much part of Jewish living as reading the Hebrew prayer-book, and in the future will be even more a part of Jewish living.

In advocating the study of Hebrew literature in a program of Teacher Education, Dinin was concerned with Hebrew mainly as a means of enabling the student to read modern Hebrew literature whereas Ahad Ha-Am had valued its use in the study of the great Jewish classics, particularly the Holy Scriptures. Dinin thought it more vital for the student to gain a complete understanding of modern Hebrew thinking and its relation to the literature produced by other nations.
Our students are not made sufficiently aware of all the movements, currents and ideas which modern Hebrew literature expresses and of their relationship to the ideas and movements reflected in world literature. ...it is evident we need a reassessment of the place of modern Hebrew literature and a reorganization of our course of study accordingly. Such a reorganization should include greater emphasis on current Israeli and American Hebrew literature as well as greater stress on the movements and ideas confirming this literature against the background of the literature of our time. 79

Ahad Ha-Am had also regarded the Hebrew language as an important link with world culture, and he had suggested that world classics be translated into Hebrew and thus be made a part of Jewish national literature. But Dinin placed the emphasis on modern times, even in the teaching of Hebrew to children. "Language as such, and literature, should be a means of giving the children new insights, outlooks, meanings, appreciations, etc., into Jewish life of the present." 80

Ahad Ha-Am's advice that Hebrew be taught in a conversational manner, as a living language, was followed by Benderly and in turn by his disciples, including Dinin. In fact Dinin was very much in favor of the Hebrew summer camp for children, a project which Ahad Ha-Am had scarcely even envisioned, but which was decidedly an outgrowth of his theories on methodology of Hebrew teaching.

Dinin challenged the members of the Jewish community to work together to build up a unified system of education that would best serve the interests of all the children of the community. Ahad Ha-Am had likewise called for community
effort in education and had adopted the national rather than the religious approach. In his dedicated endeavor to unite the Jewish community Dinin was frustrated by the existence of various denominational divisions. "Why cannot we look forward to a time when Jewish schools may come to an agreement on a common core of Jewish study to be offered to all the children in all our schools?" 81

Dinin was an enthusiastic supporter of the "experience-curriculum", that is, a curriculum based on the needs and experiences of the children.

Obviously what we have to do is to organize the curriculum of the Jewish school not around subjects and text books, but around the activities and experiences and interests of children, and educate for values, attitudes, insights and the like rather than for knowledge and skills alone. We must first make a study of the interests, activities, and experience of children at different age levels in terms of their Jewish environment. We must simultaneously go through our traditions, literature, and history and seek in them the answers to the needs and problems of the children at different age levels. We should teach that in our literature and tradition which can help enrich the present Jewish experiences of children, which can give children guidance on the personal, ethical, social, and Jewish problems which they face today. 82

Approval of the experience-curriculum has not been unanimous among Jewish educators. Solomon Schechter, for example, questioned the approach that the needs of the child should dictate the curriculum. Schechter asserted that in addition to the task of helping the child adjust to his environment, the educator has the important goal of transmitting to the child his Jewish heritage. Ahad Ha-Am referred
to the imparting of the heritage as a consecrated task, both for the educator and the learner. He realized that a thorough knowledge of this rich and age-old heritage requires prolonged effort on the part of the student. Some educators doubt that the same results can be achieved by games, play and other methods of the activity program. They point out that the "will-to-exist" is somewhat weak among the modern American Jewish youth. Scharfstein maintained that, as there is actually no ideal modern Jewish community, the best method of arousing the national Jewish consciousness in Jewish children and youth is by imparting to them the prophetic ideals as exemplified in the Tanakh and the other great Hebrew classics. He considered the "experience curriculum" inadequate for this purpose.

Dinin, however, was an ardent advocate of progressive education. To him the activity program - in which the child could actually experience Jewish folkways, through singing, music, learning handicrafts, taking part in plays and story-reading, etc. - was the best method of truly stimulating the Jewish national spirit. Breaking away from the system of Jewish education which relied chiefly on Text-book learning, Dinin was convinced that the ideals of the tradition could best be absorbed by the student through guided activity in Jewish projects. Thus by making his heritage an integral part of the Jewish child's way of life, a subtle moulding of
character could be effected. "The function of Jewish education is to establish the continuity...between the present life of the Jewish child and the past life of his people; to integrate him into the life of the Jewish community and the American community, to transform his personality progressively in the light of the best ideals of the Jewish people and the American people." 83

Actually, although his methodology may have been at variance in some respects, Dinin's goal in Jewish education was essentially the same as Ahad Ha-Am's - the emphasis on Jewish nationalism and culture, and the training of both children and adults in the ethics of the Jewish heritage. Dinin pointed out that the aspirations of Judaism and of Jewish education are synonymous.

If the aim of Judaism is to help us realize ourselves to the utmost here and now, and if we are to identify God with the element of purposiveness and worthwhileness in the universe, with whatever is good and true and beautiful, then the aim of Jewish education is correlatively the same. Its problem is not so much to transmit knowledge of the language, literature and traditions of the Jewish people to the young, as to utilize whatever can be utilized in the literature and traditions of the Jewish people to help them realize themselves here and now as Jewish human beings. 84
ALEXANDER MORDECAI DUSHKIN

Alexander Mordecai Dushkin was born in Suwalki, Poland, on August 21, 1890. At the age of thirteen he arrived in the United States, and became a naturalized citizen nine years later. In 1911 he received his A.B. degree at the College of the City of New York, and in 1918 his Ph. D. at Columbia University.

While still a student at City College, Dushkin was selected by Dr. Mordecai Kaplan and by Dr. Samson Benderly for a special training in the field of Jewish education. He became one of the "Benderly Boys"; and in describing Benderly's influence on these disciples of his, Dushkin wrote:

Not only did he provide opportunities for them to teach in the schools which he himself organized, and to obtain research and administrative experience in the Bureau, but he was their mentor, teacher, friend, and vocational counselor. ...Dr. Benderly, Prof. Kaplan and Prof. Friedlaender were the first teachers of that first group of "Benderly Boys" to which I belonged in 1910-1911.

Serving first as a teacher for the Bureau of Jewish Education of New York, Dushkin later became head of its department of research. In 1919 he was appointed secretary to the Board of Education of the Zionist Commission in Jerusalem.

Three years later Dushkin returned to the United States to take the position of Associate Director of the Bureau of Jewish Education in New York, and then from 1922 to 1934 he was superintendent of the Board of Jewish Education in Chicago. During part of that period he also lectured at the University of Chicago.
...As the head of the two largest Bureaus in the country, New York and Chicago, he built up model agencies which became patterns for other cities. 86

The following five years were spent by Dushkin in Palestine where he was associate professor of pedagogy at the Hebrew University, and also principal of the Hebrew Secondary School, Beth Hakerem. However, when the Jewish Education Committee of New York was established in 1939, Alexander Dushkin was summoned from Jerusalem to head the new organization. After ten more years of dedicated service in the field of American Jewish education, he once more returned, in 1949, to Jerusalem at the request of the Hebrew University, in order to establish and conduct its undergraduate studies. Dushkin is still residing in Jerusalem.

In Dushkin's theories on Jewish education we find once more the influence of Ahad Ha-Am's thinking. As Dushkin was a disciple of Benderly, Ahad Ha-Amist inclination may have been affected indirectly through Benderly. However, the fact remains that this motif is apparent in all of Dushkin's evaluations of Jewish education, even though at times his ideas differ from those of Ahad Ha-Am in certain respects.

For example, in the following statement by Dushkin, one may be reminded of Ahad Ha-Am's portrayal of the Jewish people as a living organism.

There is ...one article of faith which I believe all of us hold in common, and that is: the common desire to see Judaism continued as the living spirit of a living people, and a common faith in the possibility of such continuance in this country, in Palestine, and wherever else Jews will make the effort to live as Jews. 87
Dushkin's effort was directed toward a community-wide educational program in which artificial boundaries would be removed, and with this basic attitude of moderation, he hoped to bring about unity in the Jewish educational system. He tells us that his policy is based on his

...firm belief in the importance of creating a common framework within which all of these various elements in our cultural tradition can find an opportunity for full self-expression and at the same time impinge upon each other and influence each other. For if our Judaism is to develop within the spiritual atmosphere of American democracy, it will have to follow the basic democratic pattern, that of variety within unity. 88

In order to accommodate various traditional viewpoints (whether orthodox or conservative) Dushkin accepted the reality of God yet considered this element difficult to implement in the Jewish school curriculum; for as he pointed out, children do not readily grasp abstract ideas.

We hold to the traditional Jewish principle that Israel, Torah and God are a unity, an organic unity. Just as in the case of the individual organic personality it is impossible to separate the body corporate from the living spirit and from its sum of experiences and ideas, so it is not possible for us as Jews to separate Israel from Torah and God. ...In stressing Israel we are convinced that we are stressing the concrete instrument of both Torah and God, and that, pedagogically speaking, we do better, with children at any rate, by stressing this complete instrument, the people, than by stressing the abstractions of Torah and God for which it exists. 89

In one of his articles on education Dushkin remarked that "our religious education partakes of the undefinable character of our religion." 90 He affirmed the reality of God even though he spoke of God as "undefinable". 91
We Jews never visualized God in any particular form, nor did we try to define Him in particular words. In the deepest sense, all of us in Jewish education are in the service of that same Invisible and undefinable, and we must accept the difficulties in working for a cause which cannot be concretely imaged nor neatly defined. To be sure, in our days, this task has become somewhat easier, because another element in our faith as Americans, namely, "democracy", too, cannot be easily and completely defined. And yet we know that these two, democracy and Judaism, are realities, the deepest realities in our lives. We are called upon to believe in these realities, and to teach others to believe in them, even though we find it hard to visualize or to define them.

We recall that Ahad Ha-Am had also looked with approval upon traditional approach in the curriculum - not because he believed in it philosophically, but for the simple reason that he did not want to antagonize the segment of traditional-minded Jewish people.

In regard to his concept of the incorporeality of God, Dushkin, whether he realized it or not, was actually voicing the formulation of Maimonides. The latter, in asserting that "God" is beyond the grasp of mortal man, had gone even further than Dushkin.

As to the connotation of the word "religion", we note in Dushkin's writings a divergence from the Ahad Ha-Amist usage. To Ahad Ha-Am Judaism meant the sum total of Jewish life, with religion included as one element only. When Dushkin, however, referred to "religious education," his use of the word "religious" included the national element, for, as we have already pointed out, he was convinced that the two
were inseparable. He explained it in this way:

Our religious life...has been so inextricably and indissolubly bound up with our entire Jewish life, both social and individual, that it is unwise to speak of Jewish education as religious education without explaining our broader use of the term. Jewish education is a popular education, a system of religious-national training, and nothing which is the creation of the Jewish people, from the simplest folk ditty having human worth to its most world-embracing conceptions of God, is foreign to the Jewish teacher. 93

On the controversial question as to the importance of the centrality of Israel Dushkin was in agreement with Ahad Ha-Am, and yet at the same time Dushkin was more fully aware of the great potentiality of the Diaspora for Jewish cultural activity. In analyzing several possible solutions to the problem of Jewish survival, Dushkin referred to Ahad Ha-Am's recommendation of a "normal, developing national center in Palestine" 94 so that the Jewish people might "preserve their cultural traditions and institutions." 95 Dushkin sincerely approved of this project.

To the American Jew the most important "foreign" land will be Palestine. Whatever may be the attitude of the Jewish school toward Zionism as party doctrine, there seems hardly any doubt that Palestine and the upbuilding of Palestine will play a most important role in the life of American Jews. The ceaseless yearning of the Jews for reconstituted Palestine is in our day approaching fulfillment, and the meaning and potency of that fulfillment will depend upon the devotion and the understanding with which this generation and the next will participate in the "Restoration." 96

He also advised that the study of Palestine should be an integral part of Jewish education in the American Diaspora.
"For any Jewish school to fail to give Palestine, its history, its geography and its institutions an adequate place in the curriculum, seems to be a clear neglect of duty towards the pupils." Here Dushkin was in harmony with Ahad Ha-Am who had also advocated that the Jewish school curriculum should include a course on Palestine.

However, Dushkin had greater confidence than Ahad Ha-Am in the American possibilities for self-development. As Dushkin pointed out:

Palestine alone cannot suffice as a basis for upbuilding American Jewry. It must form part of a larger program of education in which, besides Palestine, the Jewish Past, the Jewish Present the world over, and the life of American Jewry, are essential elements. Education, in its widest meaning of "transmission of group consciousness and of common civilization from one to another" seems to be that kind of union among American Jews that has the greatest promise for the continuance of Jewish life.

Dushkin's enthusiasm for the Hebrew language and literature brings to our minds Ahad Ha-Am's statement that "Jewish literature, then, is the literature written in our own language." Dushkin, in similar vein, observed that

The trend to intensify Jewish education is responsible for the growing desire of teachers to teach directly from the literary sources of Judaism rather than from textbooks and anthologies, or through oral stories and talks about Judaism. The influence of the "great books movement" in American education has helped to restore emphasis upon direct study of the Bible and of other Jewish classics.

In his opinion a Hebraic atmosphere should be developed in the schools, summer camps, and indeed in all the educational institutions of the Jewish community. Following the policy of both Ahad Ha-Am and Benderly, Dushkin encouraged children,
and parents as well, to study the Hebrew language and culture, for as he noted:

Jews may differ among themselves regarding forms of religious expression and nationalist ideology; but there is general realization that the core of our spiritual and cultural life as Jews must be Hebraic. That Hebraic core must not only connect us with our classic past, but must also enable us and our children to share in the Hebraic contributions of Jews in modern times and more particularly, in the living culture of the living Yishuv. 100

In order to stimulate the world-wide study of the Hebrew language and culture by all Jewish people in the Diaspora, Dr. Dushkin sponsored, for adults, a project called "The Jerusalem Examinations in Hebrew." As he said, its aim was

...to promote an honorable fellowship of Hebraically cultured Jews. ...Its values for us in American Jewish education are incalculable. 101

The keynote to Dushkin's approach to American Jewish education was the democratic ideal. He concentrated his entire effort on developing a system of American Jewish education which would involve and unite the whole community.

The Jewish training which is offered in New York City cannot be characterized as "religious instruction in the ordinary denominational sense of the term. It is rather religious-national, or "community" instruction, in that it strives to satisfy all the religious-cultural-national interests of the American Jew. 102

He believed that Jewish education should be non-partisan, for as he said, "Differences in interpretation are natural and good as long as they remain within the framework of the national religious tradition of Judaism and its development." 103
Ahad Ha-Am, we recall, did not find this synthesis, on a community basis, among the different denominations of Judaism. Perhaps this is one reason why Ahad Ha-Am preferred to refer to Jewish education as "national" education rather than "religious," for his great hope was that education should unify the Jewish community and stimulate the national consciousness.

Dushkin, however, made the important observation that "the democratic recognition of the pluralistic spiritual character of nationality is evidently of utmost importance to Jewish education." He noted that both Torah and democracy affirm the sacredness of human rights; therefore, even though a community may be made up of orthodox, conservative, and reform Jews, yet it is still quite possible to coordinate the Jewish educational program in that community. And he did not hesitate to call this "religious-national" education, for, as he visualized it:

The grand aim of both Torah and democracy is ultimately to establish human society on the brotherly, neighborly ethics of the family, and not on the ethics of hunter and hunted, or of master and slave.

Ahad Ha-Am was aware that in the Jewish tradition as conceived by the orthodox there are some elements which are not endorsed by the reform Jews. He realized that it would be difficult to effect harmony in religious education among the various denominations. To him, the Jewish educational program could be unified only on the basis of the Jewish national spirit.
Dushkin, on the other hand, suggested a democratic approach even in religious teaching.

For the curriculum...we would need to develop a sort of "democratic midrash" for teaching the Bible; a literature of interpretative commentary which would include much of the materials found in the earlier midrashim, but would also give present-day interpretations in terms of emergent democracy. 106

Dushkin's outstanding contribution to the advancement of Jewish education was aptly summed up in a tribute paid to Dushkin by Judah Filch on the occasion of Dushkin's departure for Jerusalem in 1949 to become Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Professor in Education at the Hebrew University:

In numerous ways and in various capacities Dr. Dushkin devoutly and zealously served the cause of Jewish education. As Editor of the "Jewish Teacher" and "Jewish Education" he sought to broaden our outlook on Jewish life and deepen our insight into the educative processes. ...He interpreted very eloquently the community approach to Jewish education. 107
Leo Lazarus Honor was born in Volhynia, Russia on June 1, 1894, and brought to New York by his parents in 1901, at the age of seven. His father was a physician and an ardent Zionist, and young Leo was brought up in a home which was "intensely Jewish in spirit," religious though not orthodox, and in an atmosphere of scholarship of ten associated with the Jewish Lithuanian mind. His religious education was begun under the direction of his father and continued under private tutors.

During his years in public school and at Townsend Harris High School, New York, Honor met and became friendly with Alexander M. Dushkin, who later became a force in Jewish education. He received his B.A. from the College of the City of New York in 1914, and his Ph.D. from the Department of Semitics at Columbia University in 1926.

By Honor's mid-teens he was associating with the people and the forces then gathering momentum for the struggle toward Jewish integration as a community. Among these people the emerging leaders were Judah L. Magnes, Samson Benderly, Israel Friedlaender and Mordecai M. Kaplan, all of whom were moved by the spirit of the historical approach to Judaism.

In college Leo Honor was active in both the Zionist and Memorah Societies, and was elected president of the latter in 1911. He early developed the qualities of commitment
without compromise, intense concentration (which led to some amusing stories about his absent-mindedness), meticulous scholarship, a warm, soft-spoken manner and an apparently unbounded capacity for friendship. When he married Jenny Jaffe in 1919, their home became a center of hospitality and warmth in the mainstream of American Jewish educational life for students, teachers, strangers and friends from around the world. He had two children, a daughter, Ruth Naomi and a son, Herzl. Although not an Orthodox Jew, Honor maintained a home devout in religious observance, remained a Zionist throughout his life, and travelled twice to Palestine.

Honor began his teaching career at the Hebrew Orphan Asylum shortly after graduation from City College, and in 1916, was appointed teacher of history at the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. In 1919, under the leadership of Mordecai M. Kaplan, Dean of the Teachers Institute, he entered fully on his two-fold life work: the education of teachers and the teaching of Jewish history. He contributed much to the growth of the Teachers Institute during his ten years there, expanding the curriculum, encouraging teachers to use new methods in keeping with the demands of modern knowledge and life and devising a cyclic method of teaching Jewish history at the elementary and high school levels. At this time he acquired a reputation among his colleagues as a master teacher of teachers. He also engaged himself in extensive work with the
Religious Education Association, the Graduate School for Jewish Social Work which had been established in New York with the help of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies.

In 1929, Leo Honor became Director of the College of Jewish Studies in Chicago. He held the post until 1935, when he became Superintendent of the Jewish Board of Education in that city, retaining a close association with the college until 1946. He led the small, financially troubled school to its place as a first rate college with a permanent location, international staff, large reference library and, finally, affiliation with the University of Chicago, where he was able to establish and teach courses in Jewish studies. This second era of Honor’s career brought him a national reputation and afforded him scope for the implementation of his pedagogical ideals. His altruism and soft-spoken ways often led him to be called on as moderator and reconciler of divergent viewpoints.

His famous story of the ten Jews who came to a meeting and expressed twelve different opinions which ends with the typical Honorian commentary: "But the fact is that they did come together in one room and that this is the important thing to stress - has become a point of departure in the philosophy of all bureaus of Jewish education in this country."

In 1946, Honor was appointed Professor of Education at Dropsie College in Philadelphia. He established a graduate department there as well as continuing his reforms in methodology. This final decade in Philadelphia, overburdening as always with committee and editorial work, allowed little time
for his writing and scholarly pursuits. His last three years were devoted to planning a national conference on the shortage of teaching personnel, the establishment of a summer school at Dropsie and an extension branch in New York City, and acting as Dean at Gratz College in Philadelphia as well as serving on the Board of Governors for that institution.

On October 1956 Leo Lazarus Honor died. The survival and creative advancement of Judaism in its noblest traditions and highest aims through education had been his lifetime concern. "Jewish education," he wrote, "is not to be conceived as a preparation for life, but as life itself." This reassertion of the ancient dictum that the study of Torah is a way of life is but a reiteration of Honor's most constant personal example.

Not taking fully into account Ahad Ha-Am's idealist position, Honor considered his own philosophy to be an extension to that of Ahad Ha-Am. Of primary import is Honor's developmental work on the cause and effect of memory on the Jewish people. Dr. Honor enlarges on Ahad Ha-Am's view of the Jewish people as an evolving organism. Honor maintains that a people, as in the case of an individual organism, makes effective adjustments wherever possible by the manipulation of its environment. This environment also includes psychological forces, convictions, traditions, memories, e.g. components of the inner environment. By constantly selecting elements in its memory that harmonize with the present environment, the Jewish people brings about its successful adjustment and thus
its survival. Following Ahad Ha-Am's premise that the course of history is directed by the instinct of self-preservation utilizing memories of the past and hopes for the future, Honor observed the contribution of selectivity in historical memory, of subjectivity in a people's view of its cultural past, and the direct benefits derived thereof in a people's survival through an adjustment to environment. The development of the idea of other-worldliness as a tradition by the Jewish people under oppression is illustrative of this concept and its relation to hopes for the future.

In his essay, "The Role of Memory in Biblical History," Honor carefully constructs his argument that "...what a people chooses to remember may be dependent upon its Volksgeist - how it came to have a particular Volksgeist is the resultant of what it chose to remember." He first considers the familiar factors of geography, social environment, racial or biological characteristics, and experience, and concludes that none of these alone nor even all of them taken together fully explain the identity of the Jewish people. The key to full explanation, he suggests, is the sum of these elements plus, and most importantly, the role of memory.

...memory is a selective process, ...the destiny of a group is affected not alone by its previous experiences, but also by the nature of that which, from its total previous experiences are remembered. It is not impossible that a people may carry amongst its memories tradition of experiences which do not correspond to the actual occurrence. Such memories will also affect the stream of history.
Honor notes the likeness of this concept and that of Ahad Ha-Am when he writes:

This is the conception which Ahad Ha-Am had in mind when he differentiated between the Moses of history and the Moses "whose image has been enshrined in the hearts of the Jewish people for generations"... 114

The relation is also shown in another portion of the essay to which Honor has referred, where Ahad Ha-Am expresses more explicitly his functional treatment of the great men of history as they are recollected in the collective memory of a people.

There is not a single great man in history of whom the popular fancy has not drawn a picture entirely different from the actual man; and it is this imaginary conception, created by the masses to suit their needs and their inclinations, that is the real great man, exerting an influence which abides in some cases for thousands of years - this, and not the concrete original, who lived a short space in the actual world, and was never seen by the masses in his true likeness... 115

Honor, throughout his teaching career, maintained that the history and nature of the Jewish people is at all times comprehensible in terms of natural cause and effect, and that its unique character is not God-given but the product of its experience through a long and gradual evolution, the response of a people to changing circumstances. He, necessarily including himself, wrote "for those who take a genetic view of the universe, everything that is is a result of everything that has gone before." Honor uses the phrase "continuity in change" 116 to express this dynamic view of a unique people, made so by its vivid experiences and memories, in a constant process of development; not fixed, ever in a flux. He, as Ahad Ha-Am before him,
saw the similarity between the Jewish cultural tradition and the River Shiloah, where change is gradual but continuous.

Honor, in his writings, considers the God-concept in a historical and sociological context. He regards the God-concept as a gradually evolving element in the thought world of the Jewish people.

In two significant essays, *Early Experiences, Memories and Conceptions Which Affected the History of Israel* 117 and *The Role of Memory in Biblical History*, 118 Honor presents his views of early Biblical events, interpreting them from the genetic standpoint. He adheres to Ahad Ha-Am's formulation that the relevance of these Biblical accounts and heroes is not their archaeological existence or their historicity, but the function they serve in preserving Jewish mores.

Honor, in these essays, maintains that Israel's Torah is the product of the conflicts between the settled Palestinian people and the surrounding civilizations, and of the ideals instilled in the Israelites during their long period of wandering in the wilderness. He asserts that the God-concept was born of these early conflicts, slowly evolved, and was refined through the gradual historical process. One of the glories of Jewish tradition, according to Honor, is this conduciveness to reinterpretation with the unfolding of moral consciousness. When moral consciousness develops in response to an environmental situation the people redetermine of what the covenant with God consists. These thoughts are allied to Ahad Ha-Am's conception of the prophets in his essay, *Moses*, 119
where he implies that moral and ethical development always precedes a theology which is necessitated by the need to lend authority to the moral teaching.

It is evident, then, that Honor accounts for the Bible, Torah, and the God-concept as natural developments, recalled often in miraculous terms because of the theologic value of the concomitant element of awe and tone of authority. In this, as well as the other areas of Leo Honor's thinking, "The new history shifts the center of gravity from the abnormal to the normal phase of life..."

Although Leo Honor was convinced of the value of a spiritual center in Palestine, he was not plagued with Ahad Ha-Am's fear that Jewish life in the Diaspora would break up into innumerable separate cultures with ever widening differences were it not for the centrality of Palestine. Honor believed that Judaism could develop and thrive in America if we created the educational means for effecting it. But, on the other hand, "he held steadfastly to the parallel conviction that Judaism, to grow freely and to be spiritually creative in the modern world, needs to have a national center of its own, Palestine." Honor devoted his life to the advancement of Jewish education. In this field he offered his most original contributions to Jewish thought. That education is an essential prerequisite for the survival of the spiritual and cultural tradition of Judaism was an indisputable absolute both to Leo
Honor and Ahad Ha-Am. As a disciple of Ahad Ha-Am, viewing the Jewish people as an organism preserving itself through an instinctive, selective manipulation of its traditions, its hopes and memories, Honor, of course, considered this sustaining process itself as education. But how best direct its course? How insure not only the survival of the organism, but also its vital sustenance, its creative development, its dynamic growth? To these questions Ahad Ha-Am and Leo Honor found answers differing in response to a disparity in space and in time.

Honor, whose position in space was America and whose position in time was extended beyond the establishment of Israel as a nation, applied himself particularly to American Jewish education. While Ahad Ha-Am concentrated on educational aims and methods appropriate to the development of the centrality of Palestine, Honor, speaking as an American as well as a Jew, taught that

The Jewish teacher must be concerned with the future of Jewish life in America. He must be convinced that only through his efforts and those of his colleagues in his kindred profession, together with the influence and inspiration which will emanate from Israel, can we help build the kind of Jewish life which will make it a dynamo of future Jewish creativity.

Ahad Ha-Am's position in time deprived him of the benefit of the innovations of Dewey and Kilpatrick. His approach to education traditionally excluded the child's need of creative expression while Honor, an exponent of Benderly's application of progressive education to Jewish schools, emphasized the value of expression through the arts, and of learning through
the goals of Jewish education need to be conceived in terms of total personality development. ...Jewish education took an important step forward with the introduction of the singing of Jewish songs... and... should take similar initiative in regard to vitalizing the Jewish education process through the use of dramatics, art craft, and visual aids....Summer camping affords an unusually fine opportunity for educating Jewish youth to Jewish living through Jewish living. 124

Herein Honor recommends an explicit, pre-formulation of the learning experience which Ahad Ha-Am presents as an implicit, natural occurrence.

Among people who possess national health, this kind of education is a spontaneous thing without any artificiality. The spiritual atmosphere that surrounds the members of such a people is so full of national foundations what every child, from the day of its birth, continually develops a spiritual form of the national spirit unconsciously, by bringing into their hearts the spiritual and cultural possessions of general humanity in the national form. 125

Honor lectured freely in Hebrew and was devoted to the survival of the language as a living tongue. His major scholarly work was a commentary on The Book of Kings. Thus, he would seem to concur with Ahad Ha-Am's assertion that language imparts a complete national form to the whole inner world of the child and in the best national literature he finds a whole world of lofty thoughts, ethical and aesthetic that gradually become an intrinsic part of his spiritual self. ...Language if sufficiently mastered would enable the child to read the holy scriptures and the best of later literature. This kind of reading material should serve in our schools as a means of the development of the spirit of humanity in general in the hearts of Jewish children. From this source the Jewish child would draw his first knowledge about the verities that uplift the human spirit and his own great cultural possessions. 125a

But again their different positions in time create divergence in approach. Ahad Ha-Am, attempting to conciliate...
with the Orthodox minds toward the successful development of Israel as a national center, determined that the findings of Bible criticism, which he did not consider final, should not be taught to children. He would have the Scriptures learned per se, in spite of their possible historical errors, in order that the child might identify with that period in his legacy. Honor, educator and teacher of history, advocated that Scriptural study include the findings of Bible criticism for:

It is the function of the teacher of history to transmit the social habits of the group, so that the continuity of the past may not be broken, and, at the same time, to emphasize the thought processes whereby the group met new situations, so that the pupils may become aware that progress is attained through conscious adjustment of our inheritance from the past, to the currents and forces at work in the present. ...The child should be made to feel that at the various historical stages, the Jewish people has been able to adjust itself in such a manner that its group consciousness was never disturbed. 126

Thus in education, as in his other pursuits, Leo Honor advocated the natural reinterpretation of the supernatural in order to promote his primary concern, the successful adjustment of the Jewish people to their environment. Through education he presented them with a view of man that is in harmony with contemporary evolutionary thinking. Thereby Leo Honor has attempted to ensure the survival of Jewish tradition in the discourse of the twentieth century.
ZEVI SCHARFSTEIN

Zevi Scharfstein was born in Dunayevtzy, Ukraine, Russia, on March 15, 1884. He was the son of Dov and Hanna (Boeser). He was educated by private tutors. Before coming to the United States, he was the principal of two schools in Poland, one in Brzezany, 1906, and the other in Tarnow, 1909. He then became Secretary of the Bureau of Jewish Education, Hebrew Teachers Association, in Austria, which post he held until 1914, the year that he came to the United States. He married Rose Goldfarb in Tarnow, Galicia, in June, 1914 and had two sons. From 1915 to 1921 he was head of the Textbook Department of the Bureau of Jewish Education in New York City. In 1917 he became instructor and then Professor in Jewish Education and Hebrew Literature at the Teachers' Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York City. A dynamic leader and teacher par excellence, Scharfstein is also noted for his prolific writings in manifold areas of Jewish education. He wrote the following books: The Teaching of Hebrew; Methods of Teaching Hebrew; Education in Palestine; Methods of Teaching the Bible; The Jewish Primary School; History of Jewish Education in Modern Times, in four volumes; There Was Spring (autobiography), 1953; Education and Survival, 1957. He became editor of the magazine Shevile he-Hinnukh (Paths of Education) in 1940. He has been a constant contributor to many scholarly and educational periodicals, especially the Hebrew weekly HADOAR, and the quarterly,
Shevile ha-Finnukh, mentioned above. He has also written at least thirty Hebrew textbooks, and was the editor of the Matz Hebrew Classics, published in 1935.

Scharfstein, in a recent essay of reminiscences, acknowledges his indebtedness as a writer, as a human being, and as a Jew to the writings of Ahad Ha-Am, whom he numbers first among his most influential teachers. Although inclined to take issue with some of Ahad Ha-Am's views in his youth, he finds, in the sober reflection of maturity, many more areas of agreement and cause for unqualified admiration. He cites Ahad Ha-Am's farsightedness and logical analysis of the many proposals offered by his contemporaries for the solution of the plight of the Jewish people.

When I first read Ahad Ha-Am, I both admired him and opposed his sharp criticism in his exaggerated deliberation about our social phenomena. Everytime there was a proposition made that did not reckon with the far-off future or that lacked foresight, Ahad Ha-Am threw a pitcher of cold water on it.

Scharfstein appears to agree with Ahad Ha-Am that codification of Judaism, as exemplified by the Shulhan Arukh results in hardening and ossification of the law so that it is no longer creative, no longer prophetic.

This teacher of mine opened by eyes to understand the influences of environment and society (on the development of Judaism); to distinguish between the plight of the Jews and the plight of Judaism; to realize that sometimes our political greatness means the decline and the fossilization of Judaism.

Here is seen only an allusion to the acceptance of the Historical School's approach which is implicit in much of Scharfstein's work.
Ahad Ha-Am, in his organismic theory of the Jewish people, distinguishes the will to survive as the essence and motivating spirit of peoplehood. Scharfstein, in his considerations of the will in education, refines Ahad Ha-Am's concept through an analysis of the developmental processes involved in the integration of the national will. He asserts that the elite, because they are aware of their heritage, consciously formulate this national will and transmit it to the disunified crowd by reasserting their heritage in articulations of their common traditions, ideals, and institutions. This educational process brings the instinctual national will into consciousness and draws the crowd together into an integrated organic whole, which is the people. It is, according to Scharfstein, this process through which an idea becomes a basic tradition and a possession of the majority. He illustrates this process by relating it to Eliezer Ben Yehuda's role in the reviving of Hebrew as a living language.

...this revival of the spoken Hebrew language was but the fruit of the will...of isolated individuals... If Ben Yehudah had reckoned with the reality and environment he would not have attempted to revive spoken Hebrew...yet this man of spirit triumphed... by the strength of the will. 130

Scharfstein devoted himself to the formulation of a Jewish educational philosophy which would be conducive to the conscious formulation and integration of this national will to survive. To this end he advocated new approaches to pedagogical methodology, in the aims and content of Jewish education in America. Dismissing as inadequate the mere acquisi-
tion of facts in education, he says, "Erudition for its own sake does not distinguish between essentials and non-essentials." 131 In turn he stresses the need for selectivity in determining educational methods appropriate to current rather than past aims. Here his interest is in offering the child an integrated curriculum directed toward adjustment to his particular situation as Jew, American, and child. This approach parallels the similar efforts of Ahad Ha-Am to avoid dichotomies between life and education forty years earlier in Russia.

Scharfstein, grounded in the teachings of Ahad Ha-Am and also in the educational theories of John Dewey, examined the child himself, as well as his environment, in order to determine pedagogical methods geared appropriately to the needs of the child. "Go to the child, Educator," he admonishes, "study his ways and become wise." 132 Following his own advice Scharfstein viewed the child and found his memory filled but his intellect sadly lacking stimulation. He concludes, "...when education cannot stimulate interest among the children, it has only a transitory kind of effect. The material with which they (the traditionalists) deal lacks roots in the soil of the child's soul." 133 Following Dewey he taught that knowledge of the past could be of value to the child only if it served his needs of the present. Thus he stresses the use of games and play, the progressive methods of expressing and experiencing life which, while satisfying the child's present needs, also prepare him for future needs of adjustment and participation in his community and its development.
While Scharfstein valued and utilized progressive education as a tool, he was critical of it in the Jewish school, as an end.

The first aim of Jewish education in the diaspora is not only to prepare the generation for the existing society because we do not at present have a perfected Jewish society...but (our aim is): 1.) to make education a factor toward the strengthening of the Jewish will - the will to survive and the attainment of our national aspirations; and 2.) to impart to the child a national sense and its aspirations and national culture and its possessions and to strengthen within him the will for an active Jewish life. 134

Thus, the whole activity program which would prepare the child to adjust to the needs of the present community fails to take into account the additional problem of confronting the Jewish child - the problem of realizing and finding fulfillment in his prophetic idealism, in the essence of Judaism as it is embodied in his heritage. The Jewish educational program, according to Scharfstein, must prepare the child for an ideal future community by instilling in him the national will. He sees a primary source in the Tanakh as they lend an idea of the ideal which is appropriate to the future community. Scharfstein, then, favors the utilization of the methods of progressive education as a means to attainment of the end of National Education - the successful inculcation in the Jewish child of the national will to survive as a people. Scharfstein's emphasis is here on the future of the people concurs with Ahad Ha-Am's view that the people are the sum total of the ideals which would be realized in the ideal Jewish society of the future.
In his essay, "Why Study Hebrew," Scharfstein agrees with the view of Rabbi Gudemann (chief rabbi of Vienna) who, though not a nationalist, valued Hebrew and maintained that the authentic meaning of its literature is distorted through translation. In addition he considers Ahad Ha-Am's view, that human values become concretized only if acquired in a national form, as a more essential basis for the study of literature in its original language.

Nationalism is not a unique feeling separated from the pattern of feelings and relationships of life and society, but life itself as it is revealed and noted or viewed through the prism of the family, the nation and the environment. Ahad Ha-Am therefore demanded an education (built upon) the foundation of Hebrew literature from its original source. 135

He condemns those who would substitute English for Hebrew in hope of accentuating their Americanism for jeopardizing the survival of Judaism. In reference to this danger he wrote:

The spread of anti-Semitism in America has cast its fear upon the Jewish affluent and its leadership who wish to put their Judaism out of sight. ...Now as these people come to uproot our language from the curriculum there is no battle cry, no orations or pamphlets in English to warn our patrons of education to open their eyes, pointing to the danger that is threatening our survival by this ideology of denial. 136

Throughout his book, Hinnukh we-Qiyyum, (Education and Survival) Scharfstein pleads for a more intense study of the Hebrew language which, he assumes, may be mastered by the proper pedagogical approach; and without which, he warns, the Jewish child can never attain a true insight into the historical experience of his people.
Scharfstein concurs with Ahad Ha-Am's view that the Tanakh, created at the most prophetic period of Judaism, is the most important of cultural possessions. "...our national spirit is rooted in the holy scriptures..." This view is extended by Scharfstein who sees in the Holy Scriptures the civilization's assurance of continuity with the past, of gradual cultural change rather than sudden breaks with the past. In this regard he writes:

The Jewish people that was dispersed...acquired for itself...a great preserving force, the force of the will not to be subjugated spiritually, not to adjust to the essential culture of the peoples amidst which it dwells...Distance...did not prevent us from sitting together as brothers and being united in spirit by means of the verses of the Bible and sayings of the sages that spoke to us in one language. 137

Thus Scharfstein and Ahad Ha-Am are in essential agreement that it is through the medium of Tanakh that the Jewish people are cemented together, the present generation best linked with the authentic spirit of the people, through the invocation of a common association, a remembrance of an ideal past.

Scharfstein deviates from the historical approach in the presentation of Tanakh to young children. He assumes that the child in his early years is developmentally unprepared to deal with a critical approach, to find inspiration in a natural account of his heritage. He describes the child in the grades, dwelling in a fantasy world, as needing a romantic spur of his imagination to draw inspiration from his heritage. Thus, while agreeing with the Historical School on the question of authenticity, Scharfstein offers the original
supernatural account of Tanakh with its idealized heroes and events as the appropriate method of presentation to create a positive response in the child. He asserts that the child will naturally begin to question as his critical facilities develop and, at the high school stage, will be prepared to adequately deal with the Historical approach to his heritage. Scharfstein maintains that Ahad Ha-Am recommends the same approach. In his book, Methods of Teaching the Bible, he quotes the following from Ahad Ha-Am:

> It is sure that in many places matters were compounded together whose origins came from different sources and times but it is difficult to separate (the components of) a composite to its original foundation and to limit it with accuracy from here to here. This scientific gain we could leave to the professor whose occupation it is. In my case this (material) has no place in the Hebrew school which desires to make the Tanakh the foundation for national education. One does not lay a foundation with a structure lacking one. 138

But here Ahad Ha-Am is referring to Bible criticism which deals with the scholarly examination of textual amendments rather than with natural interpretations of supernatural accounts. Although in various writings Ahad Ha-Am suggests approval of inspiring the child through the original, idealized accounts of his heritage, the inference does not flow with validity from the above quotation.

The overall orientation of Scharfstein is an extension of the premises of Ahad Ha-Am. His recognition of the influence of the master is offered in the following tribute:

> His eye could see into distant times and into the depths of souls. If there was ever a sociologist with open vision and sharp perception, with an understanding of the problem of a minority's life within the majority, it is Ahad Ha'Am. 139
Nisson Touroff was born in Nieswiege (Minsk), Russia, August 15, 1877, the son of Samuel and Leah Touroff. He was educated in a number of schools, as follows: Hebrew schools; School of Fine Arts, Moscow; City School, Vilna, Russia; Hebrew Teachers' Institute, Vilna, Russia; Universities of Berlin, Leipzig, Jena, and Bern, Germany; Docteur-es-Lettres, 1906, University of Lausanne, Switzerland. He was the principal of the Girls' School and Teachers' Training School, Jaffa, Palestine, from 1907 to 1914, and was the Director of the Bureau of Hebrew Education in Palestine from 1914 to 1919. He came to the United States in 1919. He was the editor of Hebrew translations from foreign languages at the Styble Publishing House, New York City, from 1920 to 1921. In 1921 he founded and organized the Hebrew Teachers' College, Boston, Massachusetts, and was its Dean from 1921 to 1926. From 1926 to 1933 he was Professor of Hebrew language and modern Hebrew literature at the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. In 1953 he went to Palestine to serve as Professor of Philosophy of Education at the Hebrew University. He returned to the United States when the second world war spread. He was noted as an author, and contributed short stories, articles and essays on literature, art, psychology, and education to various Hebrew periodicals in Russia, Palestine and the United States. He wrote several books on education, translated books into Hebrew from English, French and Norwegian.
He was the editor of the Hebrew pedagogical magazines, Ha-Hinnukh, Palestine, from 1910 to 1914, and Sheville Ha-Hinnukh, New York City, from 1925 to 1927. He became an Honorary Fellow of the Jewish Academy of Arts and Sciences. He organized the Hebrew P.E.N. Club of America, of which he was president in 1939 and 1940. He died in New York City on March 29, 1953.

Touroff shares the essential ideas of Ahad Ha-Am. However, he was primarily an educator and his concern was in developing an effective curriculum reflecting these elements. He was concerned with such a curriculum in the Diaspora, especially in America, as a means for strengthening the Jewish national spirit and thus secure Jewish survival. As an educator and psychologist he analyzes the place of the individual within an ethnic group and applies his findings to the Jewish situation, thereby elaborating upon Ha-Am's concept of the Jewish National spirit.

In the educative process he considers the old curriculum, based on the traditional God-idea and on Judaism as a literally revealed text, as no longer germane for the majority of the Jewish people. Within the orientation of Ahad Ha-Am he advocates a shift of emphasis toward the ethical foundation of Torah. He attempts to demonstrate that the educational system based on this concept, in its broadest sense, would accommodate most segments of the Jewish people for this base represents to him, in essence, a truly religious Judaism. He
wrote that

...it is impossible, and there is no need to educate "saints" in the religious sense. There is a need and ability to educate the "pure" in the ethical sense and not only this but this purity includes in it all the foundations of true holiness... 140

Touroff maintains that religion is only one of several factors capable of assuring Jewish survival. He asserts that the decline of religious belief in the other-worldly orientation does not mean the decline of the will to survive and consequent assimilation. He assumes that ethical and national values may replace the old orientation, inspiring the Jews to continued existence as a self-conscious people.

Religious ideals are really national-ethical ideals. For example there is a replacement of feelings of religion which have decreased in our generation: Feelings of...righteousness, feelings of love...and compassion..., love of truth.... In short - ethical feelings. 141

Here is an extensive reapplication of Ahad Ha-Am's views of the Jews as a people who have developed a rich historical heritage and a unique system of ethics independently of religion. As Ahad Ha-Am writes in "National Ethics,"

The true relationship between religion and ethics is thus the contrary from the usual belief: religion verily lends strength to the ethical impulse, but the ethical content comes to the world through different causes and goes on and develops independently. 142

Touroff views ethics as the essence of the Jewish spirit; as the genuine expression of the nation will to live. Within this concept, religion was only a tortuous detour necessitated by the oppressions of the ghetto. But now that the need for religion has, in general, been eliminated, the authentic ex-
pression of the Jewish national spirit may be once again be enthroned in the form of the Jewish national ethics.

This ethical system when formulated and implemented in the Jewish educational system, with the broadest application as a way of life translated into the life activity programs, would, according to Touroff, once again arouse the national consciousness and thus assure the survival of the Jewish people. His main reflection of Ahad Ha-Am's thought is found in the attempt to spell out in greater detail the concept of "National Education." He maintains that in order to ensure the survival of Jewry, a spiritual center must be established in Palestine from which the Jewish people may draw inspiration. Touroff regards this center of inspiration as essential for the survival of the Diaspora.

Touroff, in his essay "Religion and Nationalism in Education," expounds on his concept of a national education in Israel. "Education," he points out, "expresses the aspirations and hopes of a generation. It is a tangible part of life itself. ... When radical changes take place in life, concomitant changes in education must take place." 143 But he expects the old forms in education to linger on, following a gradual, evolutionary process. Here again is the influence of Ahad Ha-Am who maintained that national life and history is a gradual evolutionary process, not an explosive or sporadic phenomenon. Touroff, not wishing to antagonize the religious and traditional, recommends patience, understanding
The school is duty bound not to hurt the feelings of most of the parents and children in regard to their demands for certain religious precepts whose national values are not in doubt. 144

Touroff, as Ahad Ha-Am, perhaps hoped one day there would appear a new Maimonides to compose a new Shulchan Arukh in total harmony with the needs of the time. For the present, Touroff advocates cooperation in order to preserve the national spirit of Judaism.

To avoid clashes between the old and the new systems of education in Israel, Touroff suggests that standards be devised and met by both systems - standards which would respect the old and the new while assuring an integrated curriculum under each system. He advocates that this curriculum include sports, instruction in trades, a minimum of general knowledge, and dominance of the Hebrew language. He also recommends that the curriculum be in keeping with reasonable health regulations, set hours of instruction per week, and adequate time for vacations.

Touroff, of course, agrees with Ahad Ha-Am that the foundation of Jewish education must be national for

In order to conserve the tie between the Jewish people and Jewish culture Hebrew education must not be religious alone as demanded by the extreme orthodox, nor religious-national...but national-religious, with a strong emphasis on the national element - in other words, the national factor shall be the main one...145

He emphasizes that, in order to give religion a less rigid form, the historical, national, esthetic, and ethical aspects
of prayers, rituals, and holidays should be stressed. "Ceremonial and ritual like prayers that have a religious, ethical foundation, ...would impart proper spiritual satisfaction to the aesthetic sense if given in a selective and attractive form from time to time on sabbath and holidays." 146

Touroff envisions a one-system institution of Jewish education in America where he felt differences were generally only superficial. He disapproved of the American Jewish school wherein the child is taught the alphabet, the Siddur, portions of the Bible, easy passages from the sacred books, in English or Yiddish translation. He believes that such a surface education was a wasted effort in that it contributed little to the preservation of the Jewish spirit, yielding only scarce and temporary results. "What," he asks, "can a Jew who is educated in such a superficial fashion give to his people not from his purse, but from his soul?" 147

Touroff emphasizes the importance of a national Jewish education for permanence, based on an awareness of the spiritual development of the Jewish people in the past and for the future. Furthermore, in accord with Ahad Ha-Am, he stresses the exclusive use of spoken Hebrew as a medium of instruction,

Because no translation from one language to another can transmit the actual essence of the literary work... The soul of every people finds its expression in the spirit of its national language...A language is a spiritual fatherland. 148

The first task toward the development of education for
permanence, according to Touroff, should be the organization of Jewish kindergartens. He believes that early familiarity with Judaism would eliminate the difficulty of studying "Roshis Daaas" (Beginning of Knowledge - the first reader based on the mechanical method), for example, in high school. Moreover, he assumes that the existence of such kindergartens would set a good example, providing a stimulus to enlightened parents. Touroff asserts that the kindergartens could become one of the cornerstones of a national Hebrew educational structure.

Secondly, Touroff recommends the establishment of a large, central Hebrew institution, including classes from kindergarten through high school, as well as adult courses. He expects such an institution to attract those who cherish Jewish culture and its survival, and to inspire emulation, thereby gradually effecting a broadening in scope of the facilities for Jewish national education. In the programs of such schools Touroff stresses an adequate and substantial knowledge of the Jewish literary heritage, including the study of the Tanakh, the Haggadah, the Prayers, and the "Ethics of the Fathers" - all in the original Hebrew.

For Touroff, even as early as 1920, there was no question but that American Judaism is destined to play a major role in the Jewish national renaissance. In answer to the pessimistic questioners of the future of Jewish education in America he writes:
All the national efforts are to unite for one mighty project in the field of national education. They should, of course, do everything for the expansion of Hebrew education in the land of our hope; but their main task at present is to build a magnificent structure of Jewish youth in the diaspora. And if they will do the sacred work with all their souls and all their might we may hope that in the course of time this type of education will cease from being artificial and approach being normal. 149

Touroff devoted his career to this realization - to the realization of a dim hope expressed by Ahad Ha-Am in a letter to Schechter, for an awakening of the Jewish national consciousness in the American Jewish Community:

...There appears to me a spark of hope in the new land (America) where little by little new forces are gathering and unnoticeably a new center is being established for the spirit of our people. "The sun also rises and the sun goes down". This is the law of development for Israel in the diaspora until the end of days.
CHAPTER V - RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION

Spiritual Zionism as exemplified in the writings of Ahad Ha-Am found expression in the significant contributions in the area of American Jewish educational activity conducted by his disciples considered in this study. Were it not for the profound influence of Ahad Ha-Am, it is likely that these educators would have found their place in the broader scope of American life and letters, their contributions thus being lost to the American Jewish community. Jewish youth who came under their influence may well have strayed from the spirit of Judaism had it not been for the impact of these men, who were convinced of the supreme worth of the prophetic traditional heritage as a means of character training and spiritual self-realization. For to these educators the Jewish tradition, as reinterpreted by the, gives spiritual sustenance to life, and when employed in the educational program, develops integrated, nationally conscious Jews.

Instead of the old system of education, with its emphasis on conformity, modern Jewish education began to assume larger responsibility in the guiding of the individual, as well as the group, toward a maximum spiritual development. These educators attempted to re-evaluate the Jewish tradition in the light of modern scientific concepts. They accepted the fact that change is an inherent factor in a creat-
tive, progressive culture and that the educational process is not only a passive expression of its environment but is also a challenging force for the reconstruction of an ideal future environment. These Jewish educators set out to organize a system of education which would develop the Jewish child into a person of ethical integrity and social purpose. He would be imbued with a sense of loyalty to Jewish peoplehood, as well as to his community, his country, and to humanity in general.

These were indeed inspired plans for improving Jewish education, but in the process of carrying them out, many difficulties arose, and the aims of the educators were not always achieved to the extent they envisioned.

Ahad Ha-Am himself had fully realized that his conception of Judaism could not be immediately implemented in an effective system of life and education. He expressed the hope that after much arduous work and concerted effort, the Jewish ethical philosophy of life would become the practiced norm. Meanwhile, he understood that if Jewish religious life and tradition should abruptly come to a standstill, the resultant vacuum could not effectively be filled by his system even though he considered his philosophy the only tenable one. On this subject Joseph Eliyahu Heller summed up Ahad Ha-Am's views as follows:

Ahad Ha-Am...knew that his free opinions and those of others equally oriented in regard to religion
could never serve as a basis of life for the common members of the Jewish people, and that religion would always have a very important influence on the structure of the national-cultural character of Israel. He also did not oppose the observance of a religiously Jewish way of life, if it only harmonized to the desired extent with the needs of true culture and enlightenment and with the principles of tolerance and freedom of conscience. And although he was prepared to fight for his free opinions and to criticize the "metaphysical" opinions that are connected with religious faith, he saw in the Jewish religion a positive national force of permanent value. 1

Heller quoted a letter which Ahad Ha-Am wrote to M. Sheinkin regarding religious education in Eretz Yisrael:

'You thought that all the people of Israel would hold on to free opinions? Let us hope that we will have in Eretz Yisrael a people in its true sense, even if it would be wholly Orthodox - not fanatic Orthodox, ...but enlightened and cultivated people...!' 2

Thus it was clear to Heller that Ahad Ha-Am did not think that spiritual nationalism would replace religious Judaism.

Spiritual nationalism...would complement and broaden the influence of the idea of Jewish ethics, which is a foundation in Judaism also outside the limits of the camp of the religious; and thus spiritual nationalism would become the connecting link that would combine all the national tendencies. And since "all the people will not hold onto the free opinions" it necessarily follows that the influence of the spiritual center upon the Diaspora will also have a practical-religious character and this influence will be realized in practice by the harmonization of the way of life of the Jews in Palestine with the religious ethical foundations for the conditions of existence in the various places of the Diaspora. 3

Ahad Ha-Am's approach to religious education may be understood in terms of the idealist sentiments which remained with him throughout his life. Actually, idealism forms the basis of his system of so-called positivism.
Ezra Spichalnker ("Reflections on Ahad Ha-Am," The Midstream Reader, New York, 1958) points out that Auguste Comte, the founder of French positivism, posed a similar contradiction:

Thomas Huxley was quite correct when he asserted, "Positivism was Catholicism minus Christianity". ... Ahad Ha-Am had no pretensions to create a world-embracing philosophy. His main concern was to demonstrate that the values of Judaism, which he and his coterie of intellectuals felt to be true, could be fitted into the framework of European thought. ... The late Dr. Joseph Heller, however, has brilliantly demonstrated that his (Ahad Ha-Am's) positivism was "tactical" and never prevented him from resorting to quasi-idealist absolutism when his intuited truths demanded their use. ... Yecheskel Kaufmann was among the first to call attention to this flaw in Ahad Ha-Am's system. In a number of articles he pointed out the inconsistency of using a positivist vocabulary while simultaneously resorting to concepts such as "absolute morality" and the "spirit of Judaism". Kaufmann endeavored to explain this contradiction in thought by ascribing the biological-positivistic view to the earlier Ahad Ha-Am and the idealistic views to the later Ahad Ha-Am. He argued that Ahad Ha-Am's "positivism" ultimately led him into a blind alley. Biological explanations such as "the will to live" were no justification for the continuance of Judaism in the modern world. After all, many great nations also had possessed a will to live but nevertheless perished. An ultimate, idealistic reason has to be given to justify Jewish survival. Ahad Ha-Am was therefore compelled to forsake his position and posit the prophetic absolute ethic, the "Spirit of Judaism" as the raison d'être for Jewish historical continuity. However, Dr. Heller has, I believe, demonstrated that this chronological distinction simply does not fit the facts. Even in his earlier works Ahad Ha-Am resorted to idealistic concepts, albeit less frequently than later. But it seems to me that Dr. Heller's analysis did not go far enough. Ahad Ha-Am's recourse to ultimates and absolutes was not as unsystematic as appears at first sight. The contradiction in his system is characteristic of the general development of late French positivism and has its roots in Comte himself."
Indeed, Ahad Ha-Am's system is an organic synthesis of positivism and idealism, with added dimensions of Ahad Ha-Am's own original perception. Students of the history of ideas have pointed out that in original minds ideas grow and develop and take on new depths of meaning. Krochmal adopted the idealist concepts prevalent in his time and formed his own philosophy of Judaism. Ahad Ha-Am likewise absorbed the thought of his precursors and originated the philosophy of spiritual Zionism valid for the twentieth century. In his approach to Judaism Ahad Ha-Am was certainly consistent from the point of view of the historical school. He held that modifications in the law take place in a naturally evolving form. When inner necessity calls for a change in the law, this change comes about by a method of interpretation.

However, some of Ahad Ha-Am's American disciples made a marked departure from his concept of the historical school by assuming that the historical school's approach involved conscious manipulation and changes in response to needs dictated by time and circumstances, whereas Ahad Ha-Am depicted the historical process to be unconscious, gradual, imperceptible and inexorable. It may be recalled that Schechter, like Ahad Ha-Am disapproved of deliberate change in the Halakhah by any individual. According to him, only catholic Israel has the authority to bring about changes by interpretation. 4

Mordecai Kaplan, however, as I remarked in my study of
his thought, became impatient with the historical school, claiming that the process of change cannot be left to a slow, unconscious, random development. He was convinced that because of the rapid change of our civilization today we need a consciously directed reconstruction of Jewish life in civilization in accordance with pressing needs and problems that confront us, the Jewish people.

Even in the terminology of the historical school, there were conflicting interpretations of words. Judah Magnes, for instance, said that the very word "tradition" means change. Solomon Schechter, on the other hand, attributed some of his skepticism to the fact that the words "historical" and "tradition" as used by nonadherents of the historical school have been misinterpreted to mean the historical approach in the traditional manner (their traditional manner). Tradition does not always imply change; historical does not always imply a response to the necessities of historical times or conditions. It is dangerous to take words out of context.

According to Frederick Harrison, in "The Ghost of Religion," the very word "religion" has in recent times been given meanings drastically different from the traditional one:

We may accept with the utmost confidence all that the evolution philosophy asserts and denies as to the perpetual indications of ultimate energy, omnipresent and unlimited, and, so far as we can see, of inscrutable
mysteriousness. That remains an ultimate scientific idea, one no doubt of profound importance. But why should this idea be dignified with the name of religion, when it has not one of the elements of religion, except infinity and mystery? The hallowed name of religion has meant, in a thousand languages, man's deepest convictions, his surest hopes, the most sacred yearning of his heart, that which can bind in brotherhood generations of men, comfort the fatherless and the widow, uphold the martyr at the stake, and the hero in his long battle. Why retain this magnificent word, rich with the associations of all that is great, pure, and lovely in human nature, if it is to be henceforth limited to an idea that can only be expressed by the formula \(x^n\); and which by the hypothesis can have nothing to do with either knowledge, belief, sympathy, hope, life, duty, or happiness? It is not religion, this. It is a logician's artifice to escape from an awkward dilemma.

Regarding the historical approach, however, the differences were not merely a question of semantics. One can discern contrasting interpretations of the entire concept of the historical school. In some cases the historical approach grounded in the purposive philosophy of Krochmal was confused with the historical school of the relativist Savigny variety. Because some scholars failed to take into account the existing confusion of these two philosophies, cries of opposition to the historical school as such arose among orthodox thinkers.

For instance, Emanuel Rackman in his essay, "Sabbaths and Festivals in the Modern Age," points out several unfortunate effects of the historical approach. In the first place, he feels that it oversimplifies the process of legal development. "It tends too readily to accept as historical fact what are mere conjectures." Secondly, he asserts that
"though history plays an important part in the development of law, it cannot explain everything." 7

In attempting to show that Halakhah does not arise from historical causes, he says: "In Halachah, however, history was not resorted to principally to reject a given rule because it arose under given past conditions at a particular time and place, but rather to fulfill a philosophy of history which Judaism subscribes." 8

The later American Jewish educators did not, in their writings, delve into the difference between the two historical approaches to Judaism. Since both approaches contain the underlying principle of evolution, the educators affirmed the intrinsic worth of the overall historical school as such and its significance for Jewish education in the American setting. When applied to the educational system, the historical approach, which depicts Judaism as an ever-changing civilization, links the child's life experience with the noble Jewish heritage of the past, thus serving as the best means of arousing in the child his Jewish national-consciousness. Weaving from the warp and woof of the national and religious elements of Judaism a unified design, these educators have enabled Jewish children and their parents to share the uplifting uniqueness of their tradition.

In the course of the realization of these aims, American Jewish education has been confronted with many obstacles. For example, community support for Jewish edu-
cation - support which was direly needed in order to implement the recommendations of the educators - is still not adequate. Only a small percentage of the funds raised by Jewish philanthropy is allocated for Jewish education. If these funds were available they could be used with great benefit for the development of better texts, audio-visual aids, and experimental school pilot projects. In addition, the educators' plan for a community sponsored and supervised school system has been blocked because of congregational rivalries.

In spite of these and other problems, however, much has been achieved. When we recall the deplorable condition of Jewish schools half a century ago - the dreary basement classrooms, the untrained teachers, the monotonous memorizing of material unrelated to the child's life experiences - we realize the valuable progress that has been made on the upward road toward the attainment of the goals of our Jewish educators.

In contrast to the completely unsupervised heder schools of our grandparents' era, we have today in this country an organized system of Jewish education under the auspices of the National Association for Jewish Education. There are now almost forty communities, mainly in the larger cities, that have well-organized, efficiently functioning Bureaus of Jewish Education. These Bureaus formulate principles and set standards, publish school texts and other
educational media, offer in-service training courses for teachers, and furnish supervision and guidance.

To transmit the rich Jewish heritage to the child, and to imbue him with its ideals so that they become an integral part of his daily living, is not so easy to achieve in practice as in theory. The child reaches the school at an age when a deep imprint has already been made on his character and personality, and in many cases the child's home life is not in harmony with the attitudes which the school is endeavoring to inculcate. As Louis L. Ruffman and the Committee on Objectives for the Congregational School have pointed out:

The gap that often exists between school and home, especially in regard to Jewish life and observances, must be bridged if our teaching is to be effective. Under present conditions, the school and the classroom do not always enjoy the spontaneous support of the home. As a result schools are handicapped in their efforts to reach the children. Nor can they hope to replace the home as the primary environment for inculcating positive Jewish attitudes. For example, the Sabbath and the festivals cannot be effectively observed in the school only. Such observance will have lasting meaning to the child only if he experiences it within his family group and associates it with normal Jewish family life...

In addition, there is a need for a larger supply of qualified, dedicated teachers. The teacher shortage, and rapid turnover of personnel is no doubt due to the fact that Jewish teaching is, for the most part, a part-time profession. In regard to adequate training, the teacher training courses of the Bureau of Education have helped to
ameliorate this situation, and are an important step forward in the united community endeavor to improve Jewish education.

Community effort in education was one of the principal aims of our Jewish educators. Actually the theory of national education, as formulated by Ahad Ha-Am, anticipated the community theory of these Jewish American educators, for a national education would of necessity eliminate denominational divisiveness. However, this ideal of community education has been only partially achieved. It is true, of course, that the Bureaus of Education are under community auspices and are extending worthwhile service to the Jewish educational effort on a community-wide basis. Yet the actual learning institutions are now, unfortunately, under the sponsorship of the various religious denominations. Jewish education in America today is mainly congregation centered. Much time in the classroom is being spent on synagogue skills such as prayers, rituals, and holiday celebrations, with the child comprehending little of the content. Scant time is left for the language skills and the mastery of the classical literature in the original Hebrew. Such subjects as current events, Israel, Bible-Prophets, etc., are either left out of the curriculum or given only superficial treatment. In some schools the Siddue-centered curriculum has replaced the Bible and language-centered curriculum.

The fact that most children have no instruction at
home in ritual observances has actually forced the schools to take over this particular educative area. The disadvantage of the situation is that such training is time-consuming and deprives academic subjects of valuable teaching hours. For instance, in the Arts and Crafts classes of many Sunday Schools a great deal of time is spent in making such ritual objects as miniature succot, and "havdalah" spice-boxes.

At the same time this congregation-oriented school system has considerable merit. By providing the child with the Jewish environment which is no longer found in the home, the school prepares him to take part in the religious services of the synagogue. And through the synagogue, an authentic link with world-Jewry, the child learns to identify himself in a positive manner with the universal Jewish community.

Actually, the main problem of the supplementary school lies in the limited time afforded for the program of studies - six hours per week at the most. Moreover, the majority of Jewish school children, ages 8 to 13, do not complete the five-year course. Thus, all that can be accomplished in the supplementary school program is to impart to these children a rudimentary idea of our rich cultural heritage.

An encouraging development, however, in Jewish education consists in the rapid growth of the Day Schools. About 55,000 children (eight percent of the Jewish school population) are attending these allday schools. Formerly, edu-
cators looked with disapproval upon the Day school because of its tendency to segregate the Jewish child. Now they realize that the advantages perhaps overweigh the disadvantages. For one thing, the extra time available allows for more intensive study of the Bible in the original. In contradistinction to the congregational schools, the Day Schools use the ivrit be-ivrit method of teaching Hebrew. Thus, through the medium of the classical texts, presented creatively in the original Hebrew, our children are afforded an enduring appreciation of their Torah heritage and its value as a way of life.

Today we also have a number of summer camps that are conducted entirely in Hebrew. These camps are veritable reflections of Israeli life in all its aspects. Israeli sport activities and dramatic events are presented in the Hebrew idiom. The outstanding camps of this orientation are Camp Ramah and the Massed Camps. In addition, hundreds of Jewish children are spending their summer vacations in Israeli camps or on guided tours of Israel. The Hebrew University also offers summer courses for American students. Thus, in these various ways, Ahad Ha-Am's ideal of the spiritual center's radiating influence on the Diaspora is gradually being realized.

In both camp life and in the formal classroom situation many new psychological insights are being applied. These insights were to some extent anticipated by Ahad Ha-Am.
Ahad Ha-Am could not, of course, perceive in detail these methodological discoveries, but in general terms he knew full well that mere transmission of book knowledge is ineffective in a living educational system. He, too, emphasized that emotions and instincts are basic elements in character formation. It was left to his disciples to develop his ideas into the experiential program, which is constantly being applied in their ongoing, creative educational endeavor. Their aim was the awakening of the national Jewish spirit, which would link Jewish youth to their people by imparting to them the essence of Judaism as expressed in spiritual Zionism. Under their system a large segment of American-Jewish young people have developed profound satisfaction by their sense of identity with Kelal Yisrael, the international Jewish community.

Despite certain divergencies from Ahad Ha-Am's philosophy, the American Jewish educators of my study drew considerable inspiration from him as the chief spokesman of the National Jewish Renaissance, and dedicated their lifework to molding Renaissance ideals into concepts fitting for American Jewish education. This endeavor on their part must not be judged as a final product, for the goals envisioned present an ever-growing challenge. Considering the complexity of the problems confronting them, the extent of their achievement has been significant, and the direction they have indicated holds much promise.
Chapter I

1. The Hoveve Zion (Lovers of Zion) were the precursors of the modern Zionist movement, organized in the '70s of the 19th century.

2. Ha-meliz was the oldest Hebrew newspaper in Russia. Founded in Odessa in 1860 by Alexander Zederbaum, it was a weekly which was moved to St. Petersburg in 1871 where it began soon after to appear as a daily. Till its close in 1904, it represented the progressive or "Haskalah" movement. At one time or another, nearly every prominent Hebrew writer of that period was a contributor to Ha-meliz.

3. Ahad Ha-Am, Pirke Zikhronot ve'Igarot (Tel-Aviv, 1931, p. 11


6. Ibid., p. 312.

7. Ibid., p. 314.

7a. Ibid., p. 345.

8. Ibid., p. 318.


12. Ibid, vol. I Pitze Chev, p. 21


15. Kol Kitve Ahad Ha-Am (Jerusalem, 1953), p. 137

27. *KK*, p. 162.
34. Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
35. Ahad Ha-Am, *KK*, p. 374.
Chapter I

42. Krochmal, More Nebuche ha-seman, Portal 4, p. 16.

43. Ibid., p. 68.

44. ELM, p. 67.

45. Ibid., p. 67.

46. Ibid., p. 67.

47. Ibid., p. 70.

48. Ibid., p. 69.

49. Ibid., p. 60.

50. Ibid., p. 62.

51. Ibid., p. 63.

52. KK, p. 53.

53. Ibid., p. 53.

54. Ibid., p. 60.

55. Ibid., p. 128.

56. Ahad Ha-Am, Selected Essays, p. 73.

57. KK, p. 408.

58. ELM, p. 128.


60. Ibid., p. 408.

61. Ibid., p. 417.

62. Ibid., p. 404.

63. Ibid., p. 405.

64. Ibid., p. 93.

65. Ibid., p. 97.


69. Ibid., p. 128.
70. M. J. Berdichewsky, Kol-Maamare p. 155f.
71. J. Kalusner, "Our Aim" (Magamatenu), Haschiloah, vol. xi, Jan., 1903, p. 5f, 50c., Ibid., p. 6.
72.  
73. KK, "The Aim of Hashiloah." p. 413.
74. Ibid., p. 410.
75. Ibid., p. 410.
76. Ibid., p. 410.
77. Ibid., p. 412.
78. Ibid., p. 420.
79. ELM, p. 272.
Chapter II - Part I Schechter

2. 1887.
3. 1896.
4. 1899.
5. 1896, 1908, 1924.
6. 1915.
7. 1909.
8. 1906.
11. Ibid., p. 290.
17. Bentwich, p. 313.
18. Ibid., p. 313.
22. Ibid., p. xv.
23. Ibid., p. xviii.
24. Bentwich tells us that Schechter admired Zunz so much that he hand-copied some of Zunz' major treatises, as if they were holy writ.
Chapter II - Part I - Schechter


Chapter II - Part II - Benderly


31. Ibid., p. 80


34. Ibid., p. 91.


Chapter II - Part II - Benderly


44. S. Benderly, "50 Years of Jewish Education in America," *J.E.*, 1926.


Chapter II - Part III - Friedlaender


Chapter II - Part III - Friedlaender

60. Ibid., p. 471f.
62. Ibid., p. 67.
63. Ibid., p. 71.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., p. 143.
66. Ibid., p. 144.
67. Ibid., p. 190
69. Ibid., p. 269.
71. Ibid., p. 190.
72. Ibid., p. 191.
73. Ibid., p. 267., Ahad Ha'Am, *Essays, Letters and Memoirs*.
74. Ibid., p. 266.
75. Ibid., p. 266.
76. Ibid. p. 110 (1961 edition)
77. Ibid., p. 199.
78. Ibid., p. 205.
80. Ibid., p. 35 (1961 edition)
81. Ibid., pp. 2 and 3.
82. Ibid., p. 34.
Chapter II - Part IV - Magnes

83. Norman Bentwich, FZS, P. 38.
84. Judah Magnes, What Zionism Has Given the Jews - New York
86. Ibid., p. 11.
89. Ibid., p. 2.
91. Ibid., p. 27.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
98. Judah Magnes, "The Ethics of the Prophets and Its Source." In the Perplexity of our Times.
99. Ibid., p. 41.
100. Ibid., p. 37.
102. Ibid., p. 33.
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103. Ibid., p. 147.

104. Judah Magnes, In the Perplexity of our Times, p. 41.


Chapter III

1. See my Chapter I.


3. Ibid., p. 284.


5. Ibid., p. 284f.


7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.


11. Ibid., p. 287.

12. Ibid., p. 288

13. Ibid.


15. Ibid.
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16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 298f.
21. Ibid., p. 201
22. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 203
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 204.
28. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ahad Ha-Am, Essays, Letters, Memoirs, p. 81.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., p. 32.
37. Ibid., p. 229.
38. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
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41. Leon Simon, Introduction to Ahad Ha-Am's Essays, Letters, Memoirs, p. 44.

42. Ahad Ha-Am, Igrot, vol. IV, p. 54.

43. See Chapter I.

44. Kaplan, A New Approach to the Problem of Judaism (New York, 1924), p. 34f. He has since altered his position somewhat; vide the whole of The Future of the American Jew.

45. Kaplan, Questions Jews Ask, p. 408.


47. Kaplan, Questions Jews Ask, p. 399.


49. Ibid., p. 179

50. Ibid., p. 190.


54. Ibid., p. 321.

55. Ibid., p. 300.

56. Ibid., p. 284.

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59. Chapter headings from The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion.

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61. Judaism as a Civilization, p. 115.


63. Ibid., p. 226.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.
67. Judaism as a Civilization, p. 182f.
68. Ibid., p. 183.
69. Ibid., p. 329.
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74. Judaism as a Civilization, p. 345.
75. Ibid.
76. Essays, Letters, Memoirs, p. 130f.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., p. 684.
83. Ibid., pp 3-6.
84. Ibid., p. 6.
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49. Chomsky, ET, p. 152.

50. Ibid., p. 271.


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96. Ibid., p. 311.

97. Ibid., p. 311.


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133. Ibid., p. 11.
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