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Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of

Requirements For The Degree Of Rabbi

IX. By

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Hebrew Union College, 1939.

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CHAPTER ONE

Section A: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTORY:

CHAPTER ONE:

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CHAPTER ONE

Section A: INTRODUCTION

I approach this study with that feeling of humility which is confessed by many students who pause at the eve of an arduous scholastic undertaking. For "Gordonism" is more of a mood than a philosophy, more of a spirit than a Weltanschauung. And only he who has been close to the soil, to labor; only he who has been filled with that sublime passion for life which was Gordon's, may penetrate Gordon's teachings with the spirit that Gordon himself would have desired. One who dwells in a world of books and urban conventionalities - as do I - might experience great difficulty in capturing this spirit.

The Role Of Gordon

It was my reaction, as I proceeded with this study, that Gordon was more the poet than he was the philosopher. Certainly he does not rank among the greatest of Israel's creative thinkers and philosophers. Even the Zionist movement, in my humble opinion, has produced a number of thinkers who have eclipsed him in profundity of analysis, in depth of thought, and in breadth of vision.

But what Gordon did bequeath to the Jewish world was a spirit and a following -- a devoted following that was to mould the form and texture of Zionism since his day; a following that lifted him reverently upon its shoulders until he reached a stature far greater than his own abilities, and indeed seemed to tower above other contemporaries who were equally gifted in pen and in intellect.

"Gordon the man towered high above Gordon the writer," writes Alexander Kohansky.⁽¹⁾ "He was one of those few Jews who realized the principles of their teachings in their everyday life. It was, by example, as a worker among workers in the Kvutza Daganian, that he exerted his influence on his own generation and on the generations that followed. His character was of the saintly quality. Every one who was privileged to live in his immediate sphere of influence, was elevated to a higher level of being and action."

Gordon's Sources

Gordon differed from other pioneers of the Second Aliyah in that he was not fostered in the confines of a movement.⁽²⁾ He was alive to all events in public life and reacted to the political happenings of the country. He was versed not only in the ancient and modern Hebrew lore but also in world literature, French, German, and Russian. "Yet, he did not draw his ideas from foreign sources nor was he captivated by high-sounding slogans of Socialist theories that were in vogue in Russia at that time. He had fountains of his own whose sources sprang from our ancient Hebrew culture."⁽³⁾ Another source of his ideas he found in the inner contradictions of our miserable existence in the Galuth as compared with the bright past of our people in ancient Palestine. Yet another source of his teachings was the close proximity to nature in the days of his youth which he spent in the Ukrainian village.

Writes Adolf Bohm in Die Zionistische Bewegung:⁽⁴⁾ "It

is true that Gordon and his associates were influenced by the great prophetic seers of their former country, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. (In the Demons of Dostoevsky, a revolutionary calls to the degenerate prince Stawrogin: 'Renew your life by simple farm-labour.') But their thoughts in their essential kernel are taken from the Jewish heritage..."

Gordon's "was a philosophy which drew upon the thought of such men as Spinoza, Rousseau, Fichte, Nietzsche, and Tolstoy. At the same time, it was a philosophy which was directly continuous with the development of Zionism, a philosophy in which the theory of Zionism reached its high point and culmination."⁽⁵⁾

Joseph Aaronovitch, a biographer of A.D. Gordon and his personal friend, informs us that Gordon's parents engaged a private tutor for him, under whom he studied Talmud, Bible, and grammar. "When he reached the age of seventeen, he felt a strong desire to study languages and science, to which he devoted himself with great diligence. His parents did not interfere with his secular studies, but did not consider them important enough to necessitate the assistance of a teacher; neither did he himself demand any assistance. By chance only, he received instruction in Russian for a short time. In the course of one month he learned to read, and acquired the fundamentals of the grammar. This was the only instruction he ever received in secular studies. During the ensuing four years he learned Hebrew, Russian, German, and French, read upon diverse subjects and memorized poems in

all these languages. During that time he acquired the equivalent of a secondary school education..." It was not until later life that Gordon developed his intense and fervent love for Hebrew.⁶

Gordon's Style

As one peruses the writings of Gordon, one feels that he is often merely shifting the burden of proof. He opposed many policies or opinions which were prevalent in his own day; it would seem, consequently, that it should have been his duty to clarify and defend his own point of view in a positive and systematized manner. This he rarely succeeded in doing, however. His work - except when it reaches out into flights of poetry and rare literary beauty - is prolix and diffuse. His essays reveal a tendency to "beat about the bush" even while they are devoted strictly to the topic under discussion. / ?

There are several reasons for this apparent failing of Gordon's. First, his Hebrew writing is largely a carry-over from his earlier Yiddish training, and reveals both the Yiddishisms and the verbosity of style which are characteristic of that tongue. Perhaps the paramount reason, however, is the fact that Gordon wished to be "a worker at the roots of life and not the flower of its expression."⁷ He conceded that flowers perform essential services in plant life; and likewise agreed that the people's leaders could at times draw out its best potentialities. But he had witnessed too

frequently how these positions of leadership were sought solely for the purposes of parasitism and self-aggrandizement. Both because of this reason and because he felt uncertain as to his qualifications for speaking as a "genius", he wished to remain a common worker. When he wrote, consequently, it was generally on some matter which directly affected the concrete interests of his life as a worker, and in which some practical issues were involved.

Many of the issues with which Gordon was preoccupied are of only slight interest to us today -- either because they have met with their solution since Gordon's day (such as the controversies relative to the Hebrew University, for example) or because other issues loom more menacingly on our own horizon. Thus it is one of those ironies of history that Gordon became exactly what he did not wish to be -- a literary figure, rather than a practical guide.

CHAPTER I

Section B:

GORDON THE MAN: A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

"Fields and forests molded him from the day of his birth in an obscure Podolian villiage, Troyano, to the day of his death in the famous Galilean settlement, Dagania. The sixty-six years that elapsed between the beginning and end of his life were spent, with rare exceptions, in close proximity to nature. Yet he had to work himself up to enlightened peasanthood. For he belonged to a race that had roots nowhere and memories evrywhere."⁽⁹⁾

Such is the summarization of the career of Aaron David Gordon presented by Dr. E. Silberschlag in the preface to the Selected Essays of A.D. Gordon recently translated by Dr. Frances Burnce. Perhaps no more apt summarization of his character and career could be found. For, labor and soil were not only the key-note of Gordon's philosophy; they were also the key-note of his life and aspirations.

He who was to be known as the champion of the strenuous life of toil was of delicate health in childhood, and the son of well-to-do parents. He was born in the village of Troyano, in Southern Podolia, on the holiday of Shevuoth in 5616⁽¹⁰⁾ (1856). Four other children born of his parents had died early in childhood, and Aaron David, therefore, became their only hope and consolation. As an only child, he was pampered and watched with undue care. He was constantly under the

surveillance of doctors, who -- because of his frail condition -- advised his parents against teaching even the Aleph-Beth until he was seven years of age. At that age a private tutor was engaged for Aaron David. Several years later he left the village and studied for short periods in Golovnievsk, Obdovka, Vilna, and Hashchovata.

Meanwhile a change had taken place in the status of his parents. The "temporary laws" had been promulgated which restricted the Jews of Russia to the Pale of Settlement, and his parents were therefore compelled to leave the village. They entered the timber business and made their home in the midst of the forest, where Aaron David was again given a tutor. He studied Talmud, Bible, and grammar, until he was seventeen -- when he felt a strong desire to study languages and science. Though his parents did not interfere with his wishes in this matter, they did not deem it necessary or important to procure a teacher for secular studies. Nor did he demand any assistance. With the exception of one month -- when he was taught Russian -- he studied without instruction, the Hebrew, Russian, German, and French tongues; read upon diverse subjects; and memorized poems in all these languages. All this occurred within the period of four years, during which he acquired the equivalent of a secondary school education. Observing his assiduity and remarkable progress, his parents advised him to enter a university and study medicine. Gordon, however, declined to do either.

At the age of twenty-two, he married his cousin, and

settled down in Obodovka. Two years later he was given the position as clerk and supervisor on one of the rural estates and business enterprises of his relative, the wealthy Baron Ginzburg, in Mohilna (interior Russia). He remained in this capacity -- with several brief interruptions -- for approximately twenty-three^{years.} Despite his propitious economic circumstances, he was not entirely happy during this time. Five of his seven children born to him had died in their infancy. His fellow-officials were for the most part petty, unidealistic, and "emancipated" from religion. Then too, the nature of his position revolted him; he disliked business, commerce, and parasitic occupations.

There were several compensatory factors, however. He gained the love and reverence of the workers and the young officials on the estates. He exercised great influence over the parents of the community, which he regularly addressed in the synagogues on the Sabbaths. But it was the youth in which he was primarily interested. His home became the intellectual center, where they arranged gatherings, debates, readings, lectures, a choral society. He attended personally to the education of his own son and daughter, composing outlines of study, reading pedagogical works, and consulting teachers. He also established a library for officials, and which he himself supervised.

His fervid interest in Hebrew, as we shall see in a later chapter, developed later in life. During those years when he first pursued secular studies, he stumbled upon "Haskalah" literature. His reaction was that of disgust:

ספרות זך היה רשמי סא קולנו ויריגנו, אכא אכ
ההרהקתי "מאמ". 11)

He regarded it as crude, parasitic, dilletante in spirit, and lacking evidences of real culture. For years he scrupulously refrained from reading the modern Hebrew literature, until -- at the persuasion of a disciple -- he read an article by Achad Ha-am in the "Hashiloah". So stirred was he by the article and the vast improvements in Hebrew culture that it was portended, that he cried out: "Has our literature indeed been so revolutionized while I have been sleeping the sleep of Honi Mam'agel?" Immediately he reopened a volume of Achad Ha-am's AL PARASHATH D'RACHIM, which had been lying unread in his room for six months, and read it from cover to cover in two days. From that time on there was a noticeable change in his attitude towards recent Hebrew literature.

In 1903 Mohilna was sold, and Gordon was left without employment. Though he could have procured another position without excessive difficulty, he determined to settle in Palestine. His decision was delayed, however, by family considerations. Upon his shoulders there weighed heavily the problems of maintenance of his aged parents, his wife, and two children. (Meanwhile, his son had been studying in a Yeshiva in Lithuania. The son was more pious than his father, and differences arose between them, although their family relationship always remained affectionate. The son had insisted upon entering the Yeshiva, despite the arguments advanced by his father that he could imbibe as much Jewish erudition outside the Yeshiva.)

When Gordon's parents passed away, he found the opportune occasion for the fulfillment of his dreams. By this time his son no longer required financial assistance; and his daughter, who was teaching, was able to assist her mother. Moreover, Gordon left at the disposal of the family a modest sum of money, which he had either accrued from his earnings or inherited from his parents. In 1904, at the age of forty-eight, he embarked on a venturesome voyage for his new home.

The hazardous nature of Gordon's undertaking may be more apparent to us when we bear in mind that he had never occupied himself with physical labor previously. His upbringing and habit-patterns established as an "only son" of middle-class parents, and his entire physical make-up rendered him unfit for the rigorous conditions of a laborer's existence. An added obstacle was the fact that he was commencing a new life in a new land at an age when most individuals' lives have become encrusted with unalterable habits.

Immediately upon his arrival in Palestine, Gordon sought work in the colonies, but was confronted with many discouragements. At that time it was difficult enough for any laborer to obtain employment with a private farmer -- and for Aaron David Gordon it proved doubly difficult. No employer would believe that he was fit for strenuous manual labor. He was offered a post as an official in some

institution, but he steadfastly refused -- for had he not come to Eretz Yisroel to establish a covenant with Labor? Finally, he succeeded in obtaining a position as a day-laborer in the vineyards and orange-groves of Petach Tikvah. The remuneration from this work, however, was not sufficient to enable him to bring his family to Palestine. He therefore procured a more lucrative post in the wine-cellar (Yekev) at Rishon L'Zion. Through his augmented earning capacity, he was able to bring his wife and daughter to the Yishuv in 1907.

Unfortunately, the arrival of his wife and daughter was a harbinger -- not of greater happiness -- but of greater personal misfortunes to come. While journeying from Rishon L'Zion to Jaffa to greet the newcomers, Gordon was shot, stabbed, and seriously wounded by Arabs. He soon recuperated; but four months later his wife passed away. His daughter likewise became ill, and was compelled to remain in the hospital for two months. To add to the distressing circumstances, Aaron David Gordon could find only sporadic employment. But this succession of adversities failed to crush his spirit. In fact, "as he became weaker physically, he seemed to grow stronger in spirit, and he was always immovable in his devotion to his life-work."

In 1912 Gordon moved to Galilee, where he resided for the remaining ten years of his life. During this period, he became increasingly an almost legendary figure.

But he never exploited his preeminence by asking for special privileges. In fact, he so consistently declined to convert his "Torah" into a "KARDOM LACHPOR BOH", that he took pains not to benefit in a material sense from his writings. He lived like a worker among workers in Daganah, sharing a room with three other men, tilling the soil, and participating in communal life.

Such is the general impression, and such are the general accounts, which remain to us of Gordon's role in Daganah. However, Samuel Dayan -- who participated in the founding of the "Hapoel Hazair" organization twenty-five years ago, and who assisted in the founding of the K'vutzah Daganiah and the Moshav Nahalal -- reports differently: "Even in the K'vutzah, he sought certain personal rights. It seemed strange that Gordon, who came of his own free will to live in the K'vutzah where, of course, the concept of private property was entirely abandoned, should demand privileges that would distinguish him from other members of the group. He felt that he had to have a room of his own, a lamp and ink. When it was impossible for him to have a room to himself, he used the shower-room or the hay-loft. There he nailed his lamp to a piece of tin which was fastened to the table. Here under lock and key he kept his ink and paper.

"Sometimes, while he was walking back and forth in the dining room, he felt himself compelled to go to his room and write his thoughts down. He used only one kind of paper,

the halves of sheets, about 15 centimeters square, and always had a stock of it prepared. Any other kind of paper annoyed him. At times, terribly distressed, he ran about looking for a lamp, a chair or ink, conveniences he often lacked in the K'vutzah."⁽¹²⁾

Young men from various parts of Galilee and the Emek would make regular pilgrimages to Gordon, to ask his advice, to discuss the problems of the day with him, and to gain the inspiration his personality ever seemed to radiate. He refused to tolerate gloomy faces and insisted upon gaiety. He would frequently demand a dance, which he himself would lead or provide music for. Even his dancing seemed a religious act of joy and confidence, of boundless love and reverence, "symbolizing dramatically his extraordinary capacity for enduring hardship and disheartenment. Those who watched him dance and sing, were often either moved to poignant tears or stirred to joyous exhilaration and hopefulness."⁽¹³⁾

Gordon was severe with his opponents. He fought proudly, and was honest and outspoken in his criticisms.

In the memoirs gathered by Gordon's daughter after his death, it is reported that Gordon's neighbors were occasionally kept awake, as he amused and delighted his younger room-mates with stories and anecdotes. Once, when he and several associates were imprisoned and awaiting physical punishment in a nearby chamber -- these reports tell--

Gordon uplifted the spirit and enthusiasm of his younger associates, by executing one of his most joyous songs and dances. ⁽⁴⁾

At last, personal and national misfortunes took their toll of his frail, but stubborn, body. Not only the bereavement of his wife, but that of his son in post-war Russia; not only these family sorrows, but the Ukrainian and Palestinian pogroms, caused him much anguish. A dangerous illness began to manifest itself -- but Gordon continued to toil. Half a year before his death, he was forced to abandon his work and submit to medical care. He journeyed to Safed, and thence to Vienna to consult specialists -- but it was too late. He returned to Eretz Yisroel, cognizant at last that it was an incurable cancer which tormented him. There in Daganiah he awaited with a brave, calm stoicism, the coming of death. On the twenty-fourth day of Shvat, 5682 (1922), Aaron David Gordon departed this earth.

During his life-time, Gordon wielded a tremendous spiritual influence....."He seems to have touched the life of every second person who came to Palestine during the Second Aliya (1905). The man of fifty, the man of sixty, with his brooding eyes under the bald head, and the flowing white beard over the collar of his rough woolen coat, brought cheer to every one who was sick, caused all those who sometimes faltered to be shamed by his own flaming

courage, and thundered his contempt upon all those Jews in Palestine who did not live as they should: by their own toil and the sweat of their brow. He was the greatest pedagogue of Zionism who ever lived, for he taught by example and by act. But when he died, his influence declined steadily until today it is a very small influence." (15)

CHAPTER II

THE SYSTEM DEFINED

The theme of Gordon's philosophy is labor. Whatever subject his pen approaches -- and it ranges over the entire field of Jewish life and thought -- sooner or later is drawn within the orbit of that theme.

The nucleus of Gordon's system of thought is contained in the very terms "nation," "labor," "man," "nature." The bare outline of this system may be presented as follows:

G O R D O N ' S S Y S T E M

O F T H O U G H T

The redemption of the nation as a whole, therefore, is a prerequisite or a concomitant of the freedom of the individual man. But how can a people be redeemed? Through labor, claims Gordon. And by labor, he meant a creative force that produces not only the means of sustenance, but new life and new values. Labor regenerates man who today is debased from nature; it leads him back to the source of his human self and makes him one with the universe. Because work on the land is opposed to the forces of nature, it is clear that man may find his deepest expression.

"Labor was for Gordon," states Fradkinberg, "not alone the appropriate instrument for rebuilding the land; it was a powerful catalyst which could unleash the suppressed creative potential of the human spirit, and create anew the nation and

CHAPTER II

THE SYSTEM DEFINED

The theme of Gordon's philosophy is labor. Whatever subject his pen approaches -- and it ranges over the entire field of Jewish life and thought -- sooner or later is drawn within the orbit of that theme. ^ Labor

The essence of Gordon's system of thought is contained in the mere terms "nation, labor, man, nature." The bare outlines of this system may be presented as follows:

The individual may attain freedom and fullness of life -- or, as Gordon expresses it frequently, "regeneration" -- only in the degree that he realizes himself in his national milieu. The redemption of the nation as a whole, therefore, is a prerequisite or a concomitant of the freedom of the individual man. But how can a people be redeemed? Through labor, claims Gordon. And by labor, he meant a creative force that produces not only the means of sustenance, but new life and new values. Labor regenerates man who today is removed from nature; it leads him back to the source of his human self and makes him one with the universe. Because work on the land is closest to the forces of nature, it is thus that man may find his deepest expression.

"Labor was for Gordon," states Trachtenberg, "not alone the appropriate instrument for rebuilding the land; it was a powerful catalyst which could unleash the suppressed creative potencies of the human spirit, and create anew the nation and

the human race." (6)

It is but a short step from this world-view to the Jewish problem. The Jew too must redeem his land and his life by contact with the soil. And the Jewish nation - with which Gordon is primarily concerned - may be regenerated through abandoning the "parasitic" and unproductive nature of its Galuth existence, and returning to the normalcy of a creative life on its own land, bound to its own soil, and united in a cooperative process of national creativity.

This is the core and essence of Gordon's philosophy. All the philosophical speculation, political argumentation, and brilliant poetic outbursts of his numerous writings proceed from this central theme, and are, in a sense, peripheral to it. Much in the fashion of Hillel (in his discussion with the proselyte), we may state: "This is the law of Gordon; all the rest is commentary. Now proceed and study the commentary."

First, he yearned for a revival of the Jewish nation, which he could envisage only in the form of a return to the land; then he buttressed this subjective and emotional yearning with a profound philosophical system. For the constant refrain in his writings is not this philosophical argument which should have been the starting-point, but the "regeneration of the people" which was its conclusion.

And yet, if we are to hold a unity and coherence out of the disorganized welter of Gordon's writings; if we are to organize his ideology into an integrated, well-rounded

Chapter III

THE EPISTOMOLOGICAL BASES

In popular treatments of Aaron David Gordon and his *Weltanschauung*, the epistemological basis of his reasoning is often ignored. Partly this is due to a lack of knowledge of that basis; or, more frequently, to the fact that the average writer of Gordon is primarily interested in the pragmatic and propagandistic value of Aaron David Gordon. This emphasis is seen in Gordon himself, who -- once having established an epistemological fundament upon which his DAT VODAH might rest -- sets it aside and concerns himself with the practical questions of nationalism, labor, cooperative striving.

Perhaps I err in beginning my discussion of Gordon's *Weltanschauung* with his philosophical-psychological basis. For this "basis" -- in my own opinion -- was created ^{ex} post facto. First, he yearned for a revival of the Jewish nation, which he could conceive only in the form of a return to nature; then he buttressed this subjective and emotional yearning with a profound philosophical system. For the constant refrain in his writings is not this philosophic fundament which should have been the starting-point, but the "regeneration of the people" which was its conclusion.

And yet, if we are to weld a unity and coherence out of the disorganized medley of Gordon's writings; if we are to organize his ideology into an integrated, well-rounded

precedes the leaven that brings about the fermentation which gives the bread its taste."⁽¹⁾ Consequently, he had not yet learned to ask: Is there a God or no?

With the development of knowledge, however, man lost in some measure this feeling of oneness with the universe. He began to regard himself as being distinguished from the rest of animate (and inanimate) nature. "Only when the first ray of light of human thought shone forth was the division made between the soul of man and the soul of universal creation."⁽²⁾ Man began to feel that he differed from all other beings in two contradictory respects: on the positive side, he was filled with a sense of importance, of greater intellectual power; on the negative side, he felt an inner fear and weakness, an inner loneliness in the midst of a life overflowing with inner and outer contradictions.

Thus, step by step, Gordon traces man's spiritual development. Thus he prepares us for the next stage in this development, whereby man has become removed from nature, the source of his inner strength and potencies. "It is reasonable to assume," he informs us, "that infinite nature pours itself into the soul of man stimulating his sensation and cognition from two sides: from the one in which man senses and knows nature, and from the other by which he does not know or sense nature, but lives it."⁽²⁾

Intellectual knowledge, declares Gordon, is the only mirror by which man perceives all creation. In intellectual

knowledge is reflected boundless existence in all its various phenomena, which in their entirety are called "reality". According to its own laws, this intellectual knowledge does not perceive the thing in itself; only the impressions of the thing reach it through the channels of the mind of the knowing individual. Intellectual knowledge combines in its own way all these impressions, illuminates them, and endows them with a form of reality. In the final analysis, reality - that is, what we perceive as reality -- is essentially nothing but the creation of intellectual knowledge. ⁽²²⁾

But while intellectual knowledge has the power to comprehend all things, it is unable to comprehend the essential point -- the very essence of the mind of man. If intellectual experience affirms that all we perceive is but a phenomenon, that the thing in itself cannot be perceived, or that there is no such thing in the world of reality, then by that very verdict, intellectual knowledge admits its inability to perceive living thought, to be the spokesman of the "I" in search of the world. What is in me that knows? What exists within me? Whence does it come? Manifestly, we find here something above intellectual knowledge, something that is of the very essence of existence, something that does not enter into the realm of the knowable, but strikes deep roots into the soul itself. More correctly, it is something that is of the essence of the soul.

In order to solve this dilemma, Gordon makes use of

?

[illegible]

To the degree that man's life attains a depth of immediate experience, to that degree does he come to feel dimly that,

aside from the revealed life he also lives an unrevealed life, a kind of life of which his revealed one is a part. He feels to his innermost being that in some special manner, he is united to this universal and eternal creation. And this unity is so deep that man does not see himself attached to this creation or loving it, any more than he sees himself attached to himself or loving himself. ⁽²⁷⁾

To Gordon, the great tragedy which marked man's spiritual evolution was the fact that intellectual knowledge was permitted to develop at the expense of immediate experience. Immediate experience, therefore, remained defective and undeveloped -- that is, it did not continually develop, as did intellectual knowledge. Intellectual knowledge was thus assumed to be the supreme light of human existence, the only force underlying human perception, the prime factor in the development of human nature. And yet intellectual knowledge, to which this primacy in human development was assigned, was in reality only part of immediate experience, "the real basis of all human perception, of all human light". For intellectual knowledge is only the advance guard charged with the duty of conquering and opening a wider and wider path for the stream of immediate experience. Its role is to reveal the power of CHAVAYA, immediate experience, to create a situation in which it can function forcefully. Through the HAKARA (intellectual knowledge) man tempers his immediate experience, directing it in accordance with his ideas. Such is the role of intellectual knowledge; and thus far it has far from succeeded in fulfilling

that role. For human civilization from its beginnings has rested upon the attempt to give power to intellectual knowledge for dominion over immediate experience and nature. Through this power he has conquered nature, subdued it to his will, and compelled it to render life less arduous for himself. Because of this one-sided development -- and this neglect of his immediate experience -- man has not lived nature, has not expressed his own nature to the full. His life has been cut away at the source....

The path of progress, then, lies in the development of one superior perception, intellectual and intuitional at the same time; in which neither immediate experience nor intellectual knowledge will displace each other....⁽²⁸⁾

Chapter IV

LIFE AND CREATION

EXPANSION AND RESTRICTION IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The domination of intellectual knowledge over immediate experience resulted, as we have seen, in the removal of man from the sources of his being in nature, and in the consequent narrowing of his spiritual horizon.

This narrowing process is referred to by Gordon as TZIMTZUM, or constriction. And, based upon the previous dualism of CHAVAYA and HAKARA (immediate experience and intellectual knowledge), he now depicts a dualism which is manifest throughout human life and expression. This dualism consists in CHAYIM SHE'L HITHPASHTUTH (life of expansion) and CHAYIM SHE'L TZIMTZUM (life of restriction).

..... *
אמרתם פה אמרנו שחיינו מתחילתו הוא חסר וחסר יותר
ויותר זה חסר וחסר יותר..... *
הוא אמרנו שחיינו מתחילתו הוא חסר וחסר יותר
אמרנו שחיינו מתחילתו הוא חסר וחסר יותר..... *
אמרנו שחיינו מתחילתו הוא חסר וחסר יותר..... *
אמרנו שחיינו מתחילתו הוא חסר וחסר יותר..... *

Because of its great reliance upon intellectual knowledge, human civilization has tended to "scoop up life in buckets" and to produce the CHAYIM SHE'L TZIMTZUM. This process is seen in science and art, for example; the former seeking to confine nature into laboratories, the latter into museums and art galleries. "At most," Gordon comments disparagingly, "they invite man to take occasional excursions into nature in order to receive instruction, to observe and 'enjoy'

it." (30)

Buddha and Schopenhauer Refuted

At great length and with deep insight, Gordon refutes the pessimistic philosophies of Buddha and Schopenhauer. ⁽³¹⁾ He perceives that their pessimism is diametrically opposed to his passion for life -- life in all its expansiveness and richness.

Both Buddha and Schopenhauer contended that there is no other solution to the life of man than the complete denial of life, the negation of the will to live. Through negation, man will arrive at a complete negation of the will in general, to absolute nothingness or Nirvana.

Gordon argues that the striving for Nirvana, the very negation of the will, is but a manifestation of the will -- a desire to attain something. While refuting this Buddhist doctrine, he believed that it had made a valuable contribution in revealing the utter depths of emptiness of man's civilization; and the depths of hidden aspirations in the soul of man towards a loftier world. But instead of seeking the answer in a life of true expansion, in a life infinitely deepened and broadened, it made the error of seeking the answer in - complete negation.

לעולם לא ידענו, לעולם לא ידענו, לעולם לא ידענו.
אולי אולי אולי? אולי אולי אולי?
אולי אולי אולי? אולי אולי אולי?

Beauty

[illegible]

In beauty too there is this expansion and restriction.

In sculpture or painting we find an example of the YOFI SHEL TZIMTZUM. Here the form creates the content, which has no real bearing to the real material being moulded by the artist. Only the form lives; the object itself has no life. The YOFI SHEL HITHPASHTUTH is exemplified in living creatures or plants. The beauty of their form emanates from the life that is within them; the degree of their beauty exists in proportion to the current of life that flows within them. Every limb, every bone, every muscle abounds in life, and seems filled with some hidden charm, some secret power that flows throughout them continually. And when that plant or animal perishes, its beauty vanishes -- even though the form remains intact.

The basic characteristic of YOFI SHEL HITHPASHTUTH (beauty of expansion) lies in the absence of delineation, in the absence of delimited expression. Life itself is its greatest expression. The beauty which the artist creates is more perfect, but at the same time is more constricted....

[illegible]

Love and Creation

Gordon applies this principle of HITHPASHTUTH and TZIMTZUM not only to beauty, but also to love. He defines "superior love" as a love given independent of reward or recognition or response from the object of that love. Such a love is a truly "high reward for the privilege of living"; it is exemplified in the person who worships nature -- a love which is independent of reward, unrequited. When love seeks response, sympathy, etc., however, it turns away from this superior force. This is exemplified in the love of man for man, where either reciprocity of love is required or some special tie of family, intellectual kinship, etc. It is intense, but less assured. It contains a greater magnetism, but also a greater repellent force. It is based on form rather than on content, and any blemish in form mars it. In a word, it is "CONSTRICED".

The love of man for woman is an indication to Gordon that nature intends man - as it does all living things - to have a greater share in the process of creation. (Herein lies the strength of sexual desire.) Only when it is exercised for this process of creation, does it exist in its loftiest form; when it steps out of the limits demanded by creativeness, it becomes degenerate, defiled and restricted.

Artistic or scientific creativeness, too, may be expansive, when there is a complete devotion of man, of all his powers of body and soul, to the content of his creation; or they may

become restricted by the limited desires of his ego.

Ideas And Their Creation

In speaking of ideas and their creation, Gordon departs from the generally accepted notion that the validity of ideas may be determined by their objectivity and universal applicability. This point of view tends to regard an idea with suspicion if it is subjective, and tinged with passion.

The truth of an idea, he contends, lies not in its objectivity or universality, but in its expression of the essence of individual subjectivity, or "of the complete subject". A false idea or a wrong idea, is not one that is not absolutely objective, but is one that is not absolutely subjective -- the expression of the complete subject. "To the extent that a life-account is more subjective, to the extent that its roots are more deeply grounded in the individual, to that extent the life-account is more valid, more endowed with primordial matter, and therefore too to the same extent it is more of an object⁽³⁾ve truth." And every such idea is a new creation out of that primordial matter.

This creativeness is stronger when the ideas of individuals clash in the process of their becoming. A conflict of ideas is valuable in that it leads to a clarification and deepening of ideas. This does not mean that one of the disputants is convinced of the superior truth of the opposing side. Rather, each disputant becomes persistent and clarifies to himself his own ideas. Such a clash need not generate

opposition and enmity. On the contrary, it makes room for mutual understanding and respect, since, insofar as the ideas are original, they complement and enrich each other. Hatred and strife, states Gordon, result not from the diversity of original ideas, but from their petrified and stagnant forms. This is particularly true of dogmatized religious or political parties, or even among great thinkers who insist on establishing the truth of ideas by exact formulae.

Gordon's labor was not - as it has been to many of his followers - a mere instrument for actualizing social, political, or national aims. To him it was a powerful catalyst which could unleash the suppressed creative potentialities of the human spirit, and create anew the nation, and the human race. It was the highest medium of regeneration of man, when, the nation, the nation, and humanity as a whole.

One of the ideas of labor there must be the purpose of creating life. For thousands of years man has been taught that life consisted in an aim which his entire world was directed. But in the city, he was told, could be found the source of civilization and culture. Whatever exists outside the city serves merely to meet the needs of the city. The life outside the city belongs to a lower caste, and neither man nor is capable of enjoying the art, science, and poetry, in which aristocracy delights.

A similar tradition had fastened itself upon Jewish life for centuries - a tradition which Gordon deeply resented. To him this tradition, labor was a curse imposed upon

Chapter V

THE CONCEPT OF LABOR

We are now prepared to consider the principle which permeated all of Aaron David Gordon's thinking and writing - labor. It was to him the supreme fulfillment of man, the process by which man would join his own life with that of all nature, and attune his spirit to the "universal idea".

To Gordon labor was not - as it has been to many of his so-called followers - a mere instrument for actualizing social, political, or national aims. To him it was a powerful catalyst which could unleash the suppressed creative potencies of the human spirit, and create anew the nation, and the human race. It was the highest medium of regeneration of man, woman, the family, nation, and humanity as a whole.

Back of the idea of labor there must be the purpose of recreating life. For thousands of years man has been taught that life resembled an ant-hill within which his entire world was restricted. Only in the city, he was told, could he find the fruits of civilization and culture. Whatever exists outside the city serves merely to meet the needs of the city. Whoever lives outside the city belongs to a lower caste, and neither needs nor is capable of enjoying the art, science, and poetry, in which aristocracy delights. (40)

A similar tradition had fastened itself upon Jewish life for centuries -- a tradition which Gordon deeply resented. (41)
According to this tradition, labor was a curse imposed upon

man at his departure from the Garden of Eden. During the Middle Ages, the good life was regarded in terms of religious contemplation and study, rather than in terms of productive (manual) labor. In the social hierarchy of the ghetto, the rabbis and scholars stood highest, then came the merchants, and at the foot of the pyramid stood the manual workers. Nor did the Emancipation of the Jew alter fundamentally this outlook. Under capitalism the highest honors were bestowed upon the liberal professions; then upon business and finance; and the manual worker still failed to achieve a place in the sun.

It was this tradition and this attitude that Gordon strove to overcome. He wished to reverse the historic process, "to create a life not only strong enough to overcome city influences, but to draw the city under the influence of the village." ⁽⁴²⁾ He wished all workers to see themselves not as wage-earners, but as active agents in the creation of a new national life, each enriching it by his labor, each contributing his share to satisfy the needs of all. In his own words:

"Labor now proposes and lays down the challenge to draw man from his environment, to break up the ant-hill, and to guide him to a life eternal. Labor even sets itself the goal of freeing the spiritual possessions of man -- science, poetry, art -- from their bonds and to guide them to a life eternal." ⁽⁴³⁾

Gordon took issue alike with the attitude of the "older generation" that the worker was a lower creature, existing only by the grace and charity of the non-worker (and therefore should be pleased with whatever remuneration was offered him); and with the attitude of the proletariat that the worker is a "special creature", by whose grace and labor others exist (and therefore all that he acquires belongs to him anyhow). Gordon wanted a normal attitude. The laborer is a person, neither more nor less. He is a person working, who has chosen to work for a livelihood, working to redeem the land. He wanted the worker to be no parasite, but to provide for himself, to worry for himself, to rejoice for himself. ⁴⁴

Far from being a drudgery thrust upon those who are unable to rise higher in the social-financial hierarchy, labor is a goal to be striven for, a form of spiritual self-expression, an expression of the dignity of man, an essential element in a life of expansion. Gordon applied to labor the Rabbinical maxim, *הא נפחא פיערן קבוצא נה*, for he believed that "the reward of labor is inherent in the work; otherwise it falls short of its innate nobility." ⁴⁵ A poem, for example, which does not reward its author with complete spiritual satisfaction is not a work of genius.

Labor must not be viewed as a force that absorbs the entire man, leaving him no possibility for fulfilling his hunger for knowledge and art. As long as men cling to the banal view that work and culture are mutually opposed to each

other, that a worker should not be a highly cultured man, and that a highly cultured man cannot be a laborer, then the whole philosophy of labor is worthless. ⁽⁴⁶⁾ Gordon goes so far on this point that he refers repeatedly to the intellectual professions as "non-laboring, non-productive elements." ⁽⁴⁷⁾

Can we find in labor a force potent enough to fasten the laborer to an unattractive career of labor? This is the question which Gordon poses; but in his characteristic fashion, he completely evades answering the question and contents himself with making a dramatic appeal to the reader to find this force. ⁽⁴⁸⁾

האם נמצאנו כוח מספיק חזק, המסוגל להצמיד את העובד לעבודתו, ולמנוע ממנו להימלט ממנה? זוהי השאלה שהעלה גורדון, והוא לא ענה עליה. הוא רק הציג אותה, וזוהי הבעיה. ⁽⁴⁹⁾

Perhaps we should clarify the terms "labor" and "return

to the soil". This does not mean, to Gordon, that every individual should toil several hours per day, tilling the soil. In typically circumlocutory fashion, he explains that AVODAH merely means that every individual - even though he never takes plow in hand or concerns himself with the tilling of the soil - must perpetually be an active agent in the continuous process of creational labor. It means that the Jewish people as such should renounce the "parasitic" position economically and culturally that it has maintained in the centuries of its Diaspora history.

"אין גרוסע סתם, דין לאנושית דע, אומצ'י, כי אין גרוסע
 חייך אנושית סתם — כז האדם הוא דין לאומה יבואה וחי
 את ח" אומתו (או ח" אומתאחרת), כי החייך הקבוצי"ם דה
 תמיד לאומי"ם. " 53)

Gordon aptly compares a nation to a funnel. "At its wide receiving end endless existence is poured in, while through its concentrated, restricted end, the funnel empties its contents into the soul of man... The nation therefore is the force which created the spirit of man. It is the link which unites the life of the individual to the life of man-kind and to the world at large." 54

We must reinstate the nation to its former strength, he argues. The full power of the creativeness of the human spirit has not yet been realized. The human spirit must grow in proportion to the growth of the human consciousness. This cannot be achieved without a thorough regeneration of the nation. 55

The author approaches the question of nationalism from the vantage-point of its component elements - the individual and the nation. For the individual Gordon prescribes a return to nature, to a life of expansion and creation. He frankly recognizes, in spite of his nationalistic thesis, that human nature as a whole cannot be regenerated unless the individual has undergone the process himself. How the individual may liberate himself from basic enslaving and perverting factors will be discussed in the coming chapter on "Psychological Bases For Glass Dominance".

The family, which is the link between the individual and the nation, is another requisite for the revival of the nation. In the family are found all the normal ties - physical and psychological, material and spiritual - that are essential for the perfect collective life. "The fundamentals underlying the family must be radically different from those which dominate its life today." But just how this radical alteration is to take place - (beyond the emphasis upon self-discipline, loftier attitudes, equality of sexes, and of course the general prescription of labor) - Gordon nowhere states clearly or specifically.

It is through the "large family", the nation, that the complete revelation of natural collective life is achieved. Although the nation originated human relations and human life, the nation of today shows an arrested development at the stage of primitive man. Restrictions that today are presumed to limit the individual in his acts -- theft, cheating, forgery, murder, abomination -- are not only tolerated by a nation, but they serve to add to its reputation for heroism and for glory. Because of these abuses on the part of nations, some thinkers claim that the concept of nationalism is a remnant of ancient days, a force that checks human salvation, a thing of evil which truly emancipated individuals should uproot from their hearts and destroy.

That Gordon differs vitally from this point of view we have seen above. Not only does he view nationalism as an instrument for the spiritual redemption of mankind, but he

There are two different types of "historic moments":

One, characterized by conquests, changes of boundaries, etc., which affected the human spirit greatly, but only on its external side, in practical relationships between nations, states, and individuals. Only indirectly did it produce fermentations of the spirit in its inner relations and on its spiritual side. The second type of "historical moment", typified by the emergence of new religions, produced deeper and more profound changes in the human spirit. A new life-account is opened up; and a new relationship ensues with nature, life, existence, man. (63)

The "cosmic moment"* - as Gordon defines it - is that moment when the spirit of the physical nature, topographic and climatic factors of a people's homeland, becomes fused with the spirit of the people. "This is the source of the greatest riches of a nation; herein lies the difference between a nation that is a collective body - alive, creative - and a society that is a mechanical unity, moving and working."

"הציונות היא לאומית, כאלו תאמר: רוח הטהור של ארץ אברהם
האומה, שגמול ברוח של האומה. וזה דיקר. זהו מקור החיים והיצירה
מקור השפע העולמי של האומה, וזהו ההבדל בין אומה, לזו קבוצה
חי ויוצר, ובין חברה, לזו איכר מתבודד וחסר. כדן הארץ זרה,
(א) כמה האומה הקוסמית דיקר, יש דמיון בקבוצה של ארצות הברית
(האמריקה). (64)

Applying these terms to the Jewish people, Gordon finds that in the diaspora the "historic moment" operates within the Jewish people, preventing it from dying, and yet unable to give it life. The "cosmic moment" cannot be attained for the Jewish national independence, in the diaspora; it must be attained in Palestine. The "national individuality" is restricted and shrunk in the diaspora, for there it feeds -- not upon its life-sources -- but only upon its past, or upon the life-source of others. (65)

NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM

COMPARED

Though Aaron David Gordon is widely regarded as the philosopher of Labor Zionism, and as a leading influence in the socialistic developments in Palestine, he opposed vigorously the group within Zionism that over-emphasized its unity with the world socialist movement.

[illegible]

We who seek the national revival in Palestine have much more in common with the "Jewish bourbons", he argued, than with the world proletarian movement. It is precisely these Jewish bourbons "who must suffer in revolution and counter-revolution, together with their humbler Jewish brethren. The same socialists who proclaim their sympathy and good-will towards the Jews in their meetings, have not manifested any great desire to aid the Jews in solving their problems. In Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, etc., they took no action to prevent or mitigate the anti-Jewish violence. They took no steps to counteract discrimination against the Jews in factory employ-

wake of capital as though it had no national or human account except to benefit the capitalist. By basing most of social phenomena upon a mechanical, materialistic interpretation (although it admitted non-materialistic factors as well), it became impregnated with technical thought. "The labor movement has not yet originated any profound body of poetry or thought, except the one-sided thought of predicating all of life on economics, and in the poetry of elegies on the bitter lot of the worker." ⁽⁷²⁾

From the vantage-point of nationalism, the struggle between capital and labor ceases to be a totally economic one. It takes on the complexion of a nation's struggle against its parasites, of a struggle of life against decay. From this vantage-point, one sees work as "the strength of the nation".. and the strength of the nation must not be squandered recklessly. It is thus imperative that the worker shall eat fully of the fruits of his labor; that he shall produce what the nation as a whole needs, both for the creation and for the spirit of its life; and not what is needed only by the parasites bringing about both national and human waste.

The labor movement, then, must take on a national form. It must primarily become of direct, of concrete interest to the mass of the nation. Only thus can it become a truly potent agency for bringing "the idea of the future" to the nation. In somewhat Utopian fashion, Gordon imagines that the power will pass from the hands of the capitalists to the

workers if the strength of labor - i.e., of its justice and creativeness - is great enough to attract new devotees to its ranks from the non-laborers.

Gordon differs from those who believe a cooperative social order exists when the workers control the means of production and distribution, regardless of what commodities are thus produced and distributed. "When labor produces that which is not needed by the entire nation but only by the wealthy class, by parasites; or when labor produces instruments of warfare while the nation is in want of necessities, then that labor becomes capitalistic, even though the laborers work on a cooperative basis and receive their full share of the returns."⁽⁷³⁾

Chapter VIII

PSYCHOLOGICAL BASES FOR CLASS DOMINANCE:

(THE CLASS STRUGGLE RE-DEFINED)

Aaron David Gordon ridicules the attitudes of those radical thinkers in Palestine who would seek to apply the principle of the class-struggle to the entrepreneurs and workers of the Yishuv. He regarded this attitude as but a "sterile and false reflection of the attitudes prevailing in the lives of the nations among whom we live." ⁶⁴ Among these nations, he admits, there does exist a working-class and a capitalistic class that provides employment for this class. The basic relationships and conflicts existing between these two classes are economic in nature. The Palestinian scene, however, provides an instance of a national struggle. The workers are natives; the employers are foreigners. If we do not till the soil with our own hands, the soil will not be ours -- not only in a social or national, but also in a political sense. (As we have seen in the previous chapter, this applies equally well to the Jewish position in the Diaspora.)

Gordon's criticism of the "class-struggle" philosophers is more basic, however. In his opinion, this so-called "realistic" interpretation is based upon the same fundamental fallacy which he notes in all social and cultural phenomena; namely, the fallacy of forcing the expansive totality of

There was a time when the fist actually did rule; again, there was a time when power was vested in religion. Today this power lies in money. Perhaps tomorrow it will be in the hands of science. Wherever authority is vested, the same results will follow. One does not have to be a prophet to foresee that in the social order sought today - if realized in the future - the passion for ruling will find possibilities for reaching its goal. "If, for example, the rule be vested in science, the power will be no better than in any other form, for it will not be exercised by scientists who sacrifice themselves for the sake of the science, but by professional scientists, by the arrogant, the men who force themselves into the limelight, just as when religion dominated. The real rulers were not men of great and profound spirituality who sought God in order to satisfy a deep-seated, inner need. So it will ever be even if in some future time power will be vested in supermen." (78)

Uproot from the heart of the individual the innate respect which he has developed for the fist, his own sense of futility in the face of it; take away the prestige of the ruling power -- and its hypnotic power will vanish. Human nature as a whole cannot be regenerated unless the individual has experienced this inner change. All attempts to regenerate a people by means of laying out new social orders without reaching down to the roots of the problem are mere palliatives. "The form may change, but the essence will remain the same, for man himself will remain unchanged." (79)

[Cont.] יותר, האדם שאדם מכיר יותר, לחיות את שהוא
מכיר יותר אתה שהוא מכיר. והחיות כמות ממקור החיים,
החיות חסר את הכוח והיכולת לחיות יותר משל הוא לעולם,
כאמור עמנו, פנטיסטים חיים, של אחרים.
"היחידים היחידים אדם עמנו? אדם החיים? ... הדבר
אחרת און להקט את שהוא מקובל, כי תקון האדם והוא החיים
החברתיים לא יקומו ולא יהיו יחס חרש את הטבע, את החיים
הקוסמים, וכי מכאן צריך להתחיל כל העבודה החברתית, לאומית,
אנושית." (18)

(Continued from preceding page) Marx and Herzl; no one would have resented this implication more than he. His cooperative economy was non-Marxist in origin, being but the natural outcome of his "land, labor, and nation" philosophy. He opposed bitterly the class-struggle ideology, the concept of economic determinism which belittled subjective non-economic factors, and the anti-nationalism of Marx. And he despised the "investment" and "philanthropic" Zionism which Herzl in his day sought to encourage in the rebuilding of the land.

Jew has no land. Language? He has no one living language; he possesses several non-national tongues. Religion?

But gradually religion is losing its influence; and it provides no ^areason for the survival of the irreligious Jew.

The answer lies in "that certain something within the Jew which fights for his individual existence, which seeks a method of revealing itself in an individual form." It is this certain something which Gordon defines as the Jew's national individuality. ²⁹ (cf. "THE CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM")

Nor is Gordon content with type of nationalism which exists among the many nations. To him the Jewish people is still sufficiently the AM SGULAH to require a nationalism of the most exalted, enriching and spiritual nature; for he would prefer assimilation to a petty degraded nationalism. ³⁴

Berdichevsky and Brenner Refuted

In evolving his own pattern of Jewish nationalism, Gordon contrasts the three divergent systems of thought relative to the individuality of the Jewish people. The first of these--represented in part by the Chovevei Zion and Achad Haam--is closely akin to Gordon's point of view. This system attributes the economic and cultural parasitism of the Jew to his tragic Diaspora status, which has thwarted and restricted his own inherent individuality. With a return to Palestine, the Jew's dormant powers and abilities will be aroused, and ³⁵ he will find his regeneration.

A second system of thought--typified by Berdichevsky--maintains that the character of Israel has been decrepit

from its beginnings and is incapable of attaining loftier heights. Our spiritual affliction is not the transient phenomenon resulting from our Disapora status, but is to be found in our wretched Judaism, in our despicable Jewish culture. According to this theory, if we are to redeem ourselves, we must transform our character, and make it similar to that of the European nations. The proponents of this view were strongly influenced by Nietsche, who decried the "slave morality" super-imposed upon European civilization by Judeo-Christianity, and who developed--in rebellion against this slave morality--his own doctrine of individualism and the emergence of the super-man.

Despite his admiration of Berdichevsky, Gordon deploras the fact that the latter-despite his brialliance-could do

[illegible]

The paradoxical nature nature of Berdichevsky's viewpoint is keenly analyzed by Gordon. While the key-note of Berdichevsky's entire philosophical system is individuality, he has adopted the blurring-out and the demolition of the Jewish national individuality, in order that it may ape the culture of other nations. Thus his attitude leads not to self-fulfillment and regeneration, but to a negation of ourselves. (89)

On similar grounds Gordon criticizes the views of his friend I.Ch.Brenner. Brenner disparages the Jewish people, and unduly emphasizes "self-criticism". He wishes us to become a nation "different from what we have been" in order to gain the respect of other nations.

ובא ברור ונוער בגופה בקירוב כך: קרדים? - על איזה סמך קרדיטורים מסוממתי מוח ולב? הלא אין לנו כלום, הלא אנחנו קבצנים מזוולים, שלא רק שאין לנו במה לשלם אלא שאין בנו אפילו תכרת החובת לשלם, קבצנים גבוים, היודעים רק לחזור על הפתחים ולצפות לשלחן אחרים... ואיזה אור אתם מוצאים בנו מוכי סגורים, חועים ומתעים? הלא באמת, באמת אין בקבצנו רק חשך ואפלה, אור מהגיק, רקבון ורפשו" (81)

Gordon relies that we need not become different, but must only bring forth our own natural potentialities from within ourselves. Where Brenner sees deep-seated failings and inadequacies in the Jewish people, Gordon sees only want of self-confidence, self-expression, and self-regeneration.

"ברור כי במקום שאני רואה לקוי הרגש עצמו, התבטלות בפני אחרים, עצמותו, בו במקום רואה ברור התבטלות עצמותו באופן מכוון בסחף פראי בעצמו, הונאת עצמו, היוניות יהודית-סנסית רבה, וכי מאותה הנקודה נופת שהוא רואה רק חשך ואפלה, אני רואה אור גדול. ברור כי ההבדל שבנינו מונה לא כגבול דברים שבהכרח שאפשר להוכיחם בסופת'ם הגיוניים, כי אם כגבול דברים שבלב, כגבול דברים שבהרגש, כגבול היחס הנפשי." (90)

Gordon advocates for the Jewish people, not a "transformation of character", but the developement of a national culture that will be true to Jewry's essential character, and that will develop to its fullest its latent powers.

Content of the Jewish National Culture

This culture he felt, we could never hope to attain in the Diaspora, for a living culture must develop from within itself and must draw nourishment from life. "Whatever man creates for the sake of life is culture; the tilling of the soil, the building of homes, of all kinds of buildings, the paving of roads, and so on. Each piece of work, each

act is an element of culture. Herein is the foundation of culture, the stuff of which it is made. Arrangement, method, shape, the way in which a thing is done -- these are the forms of culture. What a man does, what he feels, thinks, lives, while he is at work, and while he ~~is~~ is not working, the conditions arising from these situations, together with living nature underlying all these relations -- these mold themselves into the spirit of culture." ⁽⁹⁾ Higher culture draws its nourishment from science, art, ^ebeliefs and opinions, from poetry, ethics and religion. Higher culture or culture in its restrictive sense, the culture to which we especially apply the term when we speak of culture is the butter of culture in general, of culture in its broadest sense. But is it possible to make butter without milk or will man make butter from milk belonging to others, and will the butter then be his very own?

What then are we seeking in Palestine if not that which we cannot find anywhere else in the world -- the living milk of culture? Our object is not to create today an academic culture when we have as yet nothing; what we have come to create is a living culture in which the academic quality will impregnate life in all its cells and atoms, a living culture which will need only sufficient churning to produce butter, the highest culture. We aim to create beliefs, opinions on life, the ethics of life, the religion of life; furthermore, from all this we come to forge that link in life, that living link, that connects the present with the

past. We are trying to create a life, a life of our own,
animated by our own spirit through ways that are not our ways. (2)

As a logical fulfillment of his philosophy of nationalism,
Gordon would find no soil in which the Jewish spirit could
revivify itself than in Palestine.

And yet, Palestine was not seen as an instrument
for the people, either as a goal in the abstract
or as an outlet for labor, for regeneration,
or for anything else. For -- Palestine exists for Israel,

not Israel for Palestine. "Palestine exists only for your body and soul, or it exists
for nothing at all. Only when it begins to give you something,
something of great value; only when you come to search for
something here, for that certain something which a Jew has
and nowhere else; only then are you fit to do something for Palestine,
something of vital importance. Mean and worthless
things will be the gift for you and for Palestine, if only you
give to her and take nothing from her. Palestine is not a
weak pauper with an extended hand. With generous and lavish
hand she repays a faithful donor who gives in the proper
spirit."

As a result of his labor and creativity, Gordon was

Chapter X

PALESTINE AND ITS PROBLEMS

"העיקר הוא כי בארץ ישראל כמובן, במדה שאיננו עושים אותה לעסק אחרון
יכלים לרצות, לרצות עד כלות הנפש, לרצות עד כדי לקמן את כל כחול הנוף
והנפש ביהר עם הנוף ועם הנפש." (9)

As a logical fulfillment of his philosophy of nationalism, Gordon could find no soil in which the Jewish spirit could be revived other than in Palestine.

And yet, Palestine too must serve as an instrument for the people, rather than existing as a goal in the abstract. It must either serve as an outlet for labor, for regeneration -- or not exist at all. For -- Palestine exists for Israel,

and not Israel for Palestine. (10)
לציון חשבנו לתהיה אין צורך ביהודים.
התקועים בחול-לארץ לא בכסף ולא בעצות ואפילו לא במסכה מונמית.
רק את אלה היא זכורה לקבל בירועות מחולות - עובדים בעלי כשרון
ומסווים הנכונים לשאת ולטבול הכל שהם יעלו ויבשרו פה. זאת העבודה
הלאומית האמתית הראויה לשם ציונות. ורק לה תכבד לחקא בשם זה." (11)
"Palestine asks only for your body and soul, or it asks

nothing of you.....Only when it begins to give you something, something of great value; only when you come to search for something here, for that certain something which a Jew can find nowhere else; only then are fit to do something for Palestine, something of vital importance. Mean and worthless will be the gift for you and for Palestine, if only you give to her and take nothing from her. Palestine is not a mere pauper with an extended hand. With generous and lavish hand she repays a faithful donor who gives in the proper spirit." (12)

As a zealot for true labor and creativity, Gordon was

ments will Palestine be redeemed. "The energetic forces among us....must neither advocate nor open the road to encourage private holdings, nor private initiative, and the like." We cannot deceive ourselves in the belief that investing money in business, parcelling out work, and superintending affairs, constitute the essence of labor, the essence of such national creativeness as will give us title to the land. Private initiative, finance, and land-holding, have been responsible in Palestine for "middle-class stupidity in various forms, bureaucratic dealings, and loafing among workers, proletarian demands, strikes, etc." If our national treasury has not yet sufficient capital, insisted Gordon, we can wait. But, if for the present, we do not close the gate upon private capital -- which will find an entrance in spite of us, as it has done elsewhere -- we must not devote to it those of our positive powers which are essential for our creative work. (99)

As a natural corollary of his conception of labor and the nation, Gordon insists that the land as a whole should be a national possession, "That it should be nationalized just as industry should be nationalized." "What is this National Fund?" he asks in an indignant vein, in an article in the Hapoel Hazair, "a beautiful phrase, a delightful decoration, a sweet dream of a distant and hidden future -- or a concrete conception which we desire to concretize as a foundation for all our national labor?" He accepted the hiring of Jewish laborers by Jewish farmers in Palestine as only a temporary expedient; but looked forward to the ideal situation

when all the laborers would participate in a cooperative Moshavei Ovdim or Kvutzoth. He frequently charged the private farmers in Palestine with being self-centered, irresponsible, selfish, and unconcerned with the upbuilding of Jewish labor on the land. However, he believed that they should be eligible^{ib} to membership in the Histadruth, i.e., when they and their families subsist by the labor of their own hands. (101)

The Histadruth must be limited to manual workers, he maintained. Teachers, writers, intellectual professions, white-collar workers, etc., should have no place in it unless they also work on the soil or are engaged in a Labor Kvut^oth. Moreover, the Histadruth "must conquer the fixed ambitions in the hearts of our young men to enter the field of the intellectual professions." (102)

Gordon did not accept the Moshavim and the Kvutzoth complacently even though he regarded them as the ideal forms of communal organization. They too could decline in spirit and enthusiasm, unless they would be broad, humane and cooperative -- not only in their inner relations -- but also in their relations to the communities, Moshavim, Palestine, and the entire world. If the Moshav does not succeed in exerting a wholesome influence on its environment, then the environment will exert an unwhole-

some influence on the Moshav. כללו של דבר: אם בקבוצה אתם רוצים או באיזו צורה שהיא אל תראו בצורה מין חב"ה, שאתם נכבשים בה, ותחמכים איש ברעהו כרגלים מלוחים ובוזה אתם סמוררים יפה. בני אדם אינם רגלים מלוחים, ואין למרדם בחב"ה סודור של קיסא. בני אדם יש בהם תנועה וחיים ועולם מלא. הכניסו לחוך הצורה את החיים והעולם. יותר נכון, פלשו את הצורה לכל מפירות החיים ולכל העולמות, או תחכים הצורה כחלקים החיים והעולם. (103)

Hebrew Literature in Palestine

With characteristic frankness, Gordon was unsparing in his criticisms of the Hebrew literature in Palestine. One who peruses this literature gathers the impression that is for Palestine, and not of Palestine. First, wherever one turns, one sees translations of the works of other cultures. Moreover, most of the original writing, he felt, did not seem inspired by the life in Palestine. Works concerned with Palestine appeared only accidentally so; had the same writer landed in America, he could as easily written about that locale and with the same spirit. ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Gordon disputed the claim of certain apologists for the Palestinian writing of his day, that "life in the process of its creation is not suitable material for epic literature." On the contrary, he contends, "life is being molded; it demands self-expression, not lyric merely, but the expression of concentrated intellect."

החיים מתהווים - אורשים היום, לא היטוי עדי של השתכחות העם - לא רק היום עדי - כי אם היום קר היום של התכחות העם, של התכחות היום והיום, שהיה מעשה אמיתי נקודת שרפה מאירה בדרכם הקשה והמסוכנת להם היום - אלה שלח חיים בו ויזרים בו. (105)

Gordon was uncompromising in his insistence on Hebrew rather than any other tongue for the Yishuv. In a letter addressed to a conference held in Jaffa¹⁰⁶, he advocated the use of punitive measures (not "בוח אגרוף", but "קולטורים") to make Hebrew the language of the Haifa Technicum.

Typical of his mystical, almost evasive method of definition, is the following definition of the function of Hebrew in Palestine:

אם נכונה האמרה שהעליון הוא האדם, כי אז ראוי הדבר
לגרוס הוצאות שהעליון הוא האדם. "העליון" של האדם ישראלי
משמש לו כאלו נכון המשקל ההעליון את חינוך האדם, את
לבוש שאינו נוח כלל אף בן האדם ישראלי, לשחזור את
נשמתו מתוך ישיבה. מתוך זה לא יבא האדם ההעליון מבין
..... נוח שגור דור האדם הוא כוח של שפה לאומית נוח
כי נגד שהעליון מהוה בת-חיים לאומי כביר תן במקום שקימות
חיים מיוחדים, תכונות ויחידים בדרכי העליון המיוחדת
וארשים זה כן אמר-הוא מיוחדים דפס- שפה לאומית מיוחדת. (10)

Hebrew University

Now that the Hebrew University has long been an accepted reality, much of what Gordon wrote in those days when its very existence was a debatable subject, has lost significance. But the Hebrew University occupied a lasting and significant role in his philosophy of labor:

אם אכנה האוניברסיטה והוא אלמים לעולם — והתקנה
העליון כי חלק יחיד יבא — כי אז לא יאכל אשר יבא
מן העולם אל האוניברסיטה יבא אליו הדבר הנכון, הדבר
המשמש מתוך חיים ועליון של אף החיים והעליון.
אז תבא תוצאת העליון. (10)

While Gordon both the Hebrew University and the Higher Yeshiva in Jerusalem, he warned that these should not exhaust our Zionism, as indeed, they have done for certain "cultural Zionists."

The Arab Problem

It is his discussions of the Arab problems and relationships that Gordon reveals his essential humanitarianism.

"יחסנו אל הערבים, למשל, שאנחנו רוצים להיות
 חברים מלאים עם אנשינו — יחסנו אל הערבים
 צריך להיות יחס אנשי, אדם יחס עם אדם, אנשים, חברים
 חתומים במאות השנים, גם במקום של חתומים של חברים
 איננו רוצים, ולא יחס עם חברים, אנשים, שאין באזור אלמנט
 הקטנה, המסורה, "בזה תאמר נא רבך" חיים משה
 109) ".....פירוש"

"Truth is the basis of our world, and through truth we shall discover a way for life in partnership with the Arabs, for cooperative life and work destined to become a blessing to both peoples." We are in need of heroic courage which demands lofty ideals of conduct even when the conduct of others falls below this standard; in this conduct there must be no weakness, Neither submissiveness nor arrogance has any place in our relations with the Arabs. "Any sermonizing regarding proper relationships with the Arabs based on ulterior motives should have no place among us." (110)

In meticulous fashion, the human philosopher of Labor Zionism lays down the rules for business relationships with the Arabs. In buying land, there must be no infringements upon the rights of the Arabs nor any dispossessions of those who are actually working on the land. (Had this maxim of Gordon's been heeded by later Zionists, perhaps a larger number of fellaheen might have been less eager to join the wealthier effendis in their attacks upon Zionism)

"Rather than wronging them in any way, we must be prepared to pay many times the value of the land in order to compensate the real owners fully, those who live and those who work upon the land, if we have special need of their land." (111)

To avoid irritations or even the slightest infringements, Gordon suggested that the land of other sections to be given to those dispossessed by legitimate purchases. He insisted that the moral right and the deeper vital interest in the land will be acquired by the people -- Arab or Jewish -- which would labor more ardently, be more creative, and give more of its spirit to the task of reconstruction. This implies a peaceful competition, for which the Jewish people has derived its right, by virtue of its historical title to the land.

Gordon's tolerant attitude toward the Arabs of Palestine was remarkable, especially when we bear in mind that at least once -- during his life-time -- he was attacked by Arabs who shot at him, beat him, held a knife at his back, and robbed him of all his clothes. As early as 1914, he looked askance at the "altruism" of the Western nations towards the Zionist aspirations. On the contrary, he felt that they wished neither the Arabs nor the Jews any progress; and in this fact, he saw a common interest between the Jew and the Arab.

[illegible]

He warned his contemporaries against the belief-- which was

maintained even several decades after his death-- that the "Arab national aspirations" were merely machinations of the Arab effendis, to which the masses were either indifferent or hostile. While the leaders and the main sponsors of the movement were the effendis and Arab intellectuals, they did not -- in his estimation -- make up the entire movement or form its backbone. ("They delude themselves and us, who wish to persuade us that the Arab masses, and especially the Arab working masses, are or will be on our side and against the effendis.")⁽¹¹⁴⁾

The Arab mass is not a detached body, he insisted, to be likened to our own proletarians who call themselves the Jewish masses. The Arab mass is apt and parcel of a living people. On the other hand, the leaders of the Arab movement are beginning to grasp the meaning of a national movement and the task that confronts them. They always make their demands in the name of the Arab nation, and conversely on all occasions speak against the Zionists and the Zionist organization. The Jewish nation is never mentioned by name. It would not be so easy to waive the claims of Jews to Palestine if their demands were made in the name of the Jewish

"הערבים יש להם כל התכונות וכל הקנינים של עם חי. רק לא חפשי. יושבים הם בארץ חיים בה עובדים את האדמה מדברים בלשונם הלאומית, היחידה לכל העם וכן הלאה. לפיכך יש לתביעתם על הארץ צורה וערך של תביעה עם חי על ארצו הטבעית. אף אם התביעה מתבטאת בצורה לא יפה ולא תרבותית... ואנחנו? חובעים אנחנו את זכותנו על ארצנו, אבל הוא החובע איפה העם? יש לנו הסתדרות ציונית, הסדרת בשם העם, אבל לעומת זה יש אגודת ישראל. יש בוגדאים, בולשביקים וכל כח דילחון יש מתבוללים לפולין, בהונגריה וכו'. המדברים כולם גם הם בשם העם, מסש ההיפך מה שמדברים הציונים, ומסמלים את כל תביעתנו הלאומית... את הדבר הזה מבינים כנראה אנ' מרביתם כל שונאינו וסחנודינו, וקודם כל הערבים המדברים תמיד בשם העם הערבי וכוונתם לו הם מעמידים את הציונים, את המסלוגה הציונית, לעולם אין הם מזכירים את העם היהודי, את עם ישראל. עם ישראל חובע את זכותו על ארץ ישראל, זהו דבר שלא כל כך קל לבטלו בלאחר יד או להסיל עליו אבק." ⁽¹¹⁵⁾

Chapter XI

PHILOSOPHY OF THE DIASPORA

In our enthusiasm for Gordon, the philosopher for Labor Zionism, we tend to neglect completely Gordon, the philosopher of Labor Diaspora. For Gordon was completely preoccupied with, and achieved a broad perspective of, the role of the Jew in Diaspora. Out of the welter of his diffuse and scattered writings, one can discern a consistent philosophy and program for the Diaspora Jew -- a philosophy and program that have left a deep imprint upon the Labor Zionist policies in the Diaspora since his day. It is regrettable, however, that -- being a poet and a philosopher, rather than a political theoretician -- Gordon failed to outline specific techniques and organisms by which his ideals for the Diaspora could be fulfilled.

The Jews in the Diaspora, he felt, must be regenerated through the same media as those in Palestine -- through nature, labor, and the national language. They too must engage in all forms of manual labor, especially in the tilling of the soil; they too should avoid exploitation of the labor of others. Even in the Diaspora there is room for the Kvutza, the Moshav-Ovdim; for the spirit of the family in the economic - as well as the social life.

היה זה מה שחשב עליו רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו, ומה שחשב רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו, ומה שחשב רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו. (11)

The Jewish people striking roots in Palestine must send
 the sap of life to its branches that stretch into other lands,
 just as those branches must transmit part of their good
 to the roots which are in Palestine.

והיה זה מה שחשב רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו, ומה שחשב רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו, ומה שחשב רש"י בליל חמשה עשר באדר, כי תתאמתו
 ותרבו. (11)

The corroding power of the Diaspora, to Gordon, was this:

that its darkness caused Israel's body to shrink and shrivel;
 that its light resulted in a shrinking and shriveling of spirit.

"The cosmic moment in national independence is not
 ours in the Diaspora; that we must seek in Palestine. In
 the Diaspora the historic moment operates within us; it
 upholds us and prevents our dying, but it is unable to give
 us life. There in the Diaspora we have of necessity no
 national or creative life. From a creative standpoint we
 are parasites physically and spiritually. There our national
 individuality is naturally restricted. Unable to draw
 sustenance directly from its life source, it necessarily
 feeds upon the past, and continues to shrink more and more;
 or it feeds upon the life-source of others and so gradually
 wasted away and dies in the spirit of others." (11) (Cf. chapter
 on the "The Concept of Nationalism")

The Jewry of the Diaspora may not possess a true living culture, for it has no true life. It possesses only cultural wealth bequeathed unto it by the past, which it must continually adjust to the environment and times (and through the will, spirit, and channels of other nations).

אמנם שיל לא הגלות - פרוק קניין תרבותיים יבואים, שנספגו לאו בירושה
אין תעורר, שאנחנו מתקיימים בעולם שבת צורך ברוח המקום והמאמץ, כולו
התבאס אף אולם החיים שאנחנו מוכרחים לחיות על פי מנהג החיים של אחרים
ועל פי רגשות של אחרים, וגם התבאס אף הרוחות הממשכות בדילמות/מחשבות של
אחרים. יש לנו גם כשרון הסתגלות יבואי, שהתפתח אצלנו בגלות - עמדה אית
תוצאות חייהם של אחרים לפי רוחנו אנו. (120)

Herein the Diaspora-Jew differs from his Palestinian

brother -- and from the other residents of the Diaspora-lands. When a man belongs to a living people, he can permit himself the privilege or folly of being a cosmopolitan, anti-nationalist, or a nationalist with reservations. Such views may not be injurious to one who is an integral part of a nation that is alive. In effect, such a man in his habit patterns and psychological make-up remains devoted to his people; in his daily life he breathes enough for his needs. This prevents his dying in a national sense and binds him to his people with a vital bond. Nor is his share in the national work of his people diminished by his cosmopolitan leanings..... To the Diaspora-Jew, however, cosmopolitanism is an expensive luxury, which spells his death nationally. (121)

Gordon believed a greater normalcy in the status of the Diaspora Jew would result from the revival in Palestine. Commensurate with the progress of the revival, other lands would lose their character as lands of exile for the Jew. They would become lands in which the Jews dwell under the same

Chapter XII

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

In his Die Zionistische Bewegung, (p.223), Böhm declares that the entire system of thought propounded by Gordon and his associates was derived from their Jewish religious heritage:

".....doch sind ihre Gedanken im Wesenskern jüdisches Erbe. Die Einheit alles Lebendigen, die Verneinung aller Dualität von Leib und Seele, Materie und Geist, das Gebot der Verwirklichung der idealen Forderung (des Sittlichen) nicht durch eine Abkehr vom Irdischen (wie im christlichen Spiritualismus), sondern durch die Gestaltung des Realen nach ihren Geboten, das macht nach der Auffassung der meisten wirklichen Kenner des Judentums das Wesen jüdischer Religiosität aus, welche die Tat in den Mittelpunkt stellt, die Heiligung im Leben sucht und nicht in einer Askese." ⁽²⁵⁾

It is this Jewish outlook, claims Böhm, impelled Gordon to protest against the postulates of an abstract spirit and soulless matter; against the Marxian dialectic which would divide the social milieu into two conflicting classes, and reduce all social phenomena to mechanical formulae; and against all concepts which would divide life into dualities as spirit and matter, holy and profane, etc.

Traditional Judaism

During his first years in Eretz Yisroel, Gordon -- according to the reports furnished to us by Joseph Aaronovitch -- was an observant Jew.

"בשנים הראשונים לבואו לא"י היה נורדון דתי. כבר צוין למעלה שבין
ובין בנו היו חילוקי דעות בשל ענייני דת, מזה נראה שהיו לו בענייני דת
מושגים אחרים מהמקובל. ואם אני אומר היה דתי, הרי כוונתי לסימנים
השבלוניים בענייני דת. הוא היה מתפלל בכל יום ושומר את סוּפּ הַדָּת
כהלכתו... בשנים האחרונות נכר היה שבא לו שחרור מהסבל הזה, הוא פרק
מעליו את עול המצוות המעשיות ונשאר נאמן רק ל"לא תעשה", ויש יסוד
לחשוב שגם במחשבתו הפכה הדת מקום הרבה פחות מאשר קודם.
He was much opposed to the liberties which the workers took
publicly in the matters of religion. He saw in this a lack
of culture, as well as one of the causes for the strained
relations... Whenever a discussion of religious matters came
up, he was angered by some of the the opinions expressed and tried
to refute them, but never clearly revealed his own views.
Apparently this was still an unsolved question for him.
He was struggling for a solution and was deeply distressed
by his failure to arrive at one. "In his later years he seemed
to be less troubled; he cast off the burden of the positive
commands (mitzvoth) and remained loyal only to the prohibi-
tions." ⁽¹²⁷⁾ Apparently, he was afraid to remain godless even
for amoment, and so he clung to the God of his ancestors,
despite his heretical doubts, while he was slowly creating
a new God and a new religion. ⁽¹²⁸⁾
קודם כל אני יהודי מהדור הישן, ולא רק על פי חובי, כי גם על פי שורש נשתי, על פי כל יסודות
מין שריר קדומים מאותם היהודים, שמנדלי-מוכר-ספרים מצא אותם
בבטלון, בבטלון וכו'. ועד היום, אף על פי שאני היום רחוק מהחיים
ההם ומחמסרות העתיקה, אני מרגיש יותר קרבה נפשית אל החיים ההם
ואל המפרות העתיקה: חתונות, התלמוד, המדרש, הזהר וכו' - מאשר אל
החיים ברור הזה ואל המפרות החדשה, אף על פי שאני בכל אופן קורא
אותה, ויש לי עמה אולי גם יותר נקודות משותפות שתוף חיוני."

On the whole, Gordon is much more positive than his colleague, I.Ch.Brenner, in his attitude towards traditional Judaism. In a letter published (but unsent), he chides Brenner gently for being so disparaging in his attitude towards traditional Judaism:

"Whence this unlimited antagonism to Judaism and the Jewish spirit? Why is it that although I am not 'religious' in the ordinary meaning, Judaism is so dear to me, as well as Rabbinic literature? To be sure there are in our religion certain unpleasant practices and certain dull points in our rabbinic literature but in what religion and in what religious literature are these not present? I have not seen in all others the greatness and the glory, while you spurn our own individuality like dust on the earth." (129)

Judaism and Christianity Compared

With keen insight, Gordon revealed the essential differences between Judaism and Christianity, and the superiority of the former over the latter conceptually. (130) One basic tenet which distinguishes Judaism from its sister religion is its firm admonition: "Thou shalt not look upon any idols"; for Christianity based itself upon a belief in the revelation of God in the form of man. The latter faith restricted God and the image of God by declaring that God needed an

aid; and that man likewise required a mediator between himself and his Creator. ⁽¹³¹⁾

Christianity transmitted to man a ready-made pattern of human perfection for him to accept and imitate; Judaism, disclaiming any such ready-made human pattern, saw the exalted life inherent in man's very striving towards the exalted life. It thus made of life a complete unit, in which the search as well as the achievement is a vital element. ⁽¹³²⁾

Christianity sets forth as a primary principle "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". This principle "which requires no preparation and is not capable of further development." While Judaism accepts this principle it prefaces it with the negative commandments "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart"; and only after ~~these~~ imperfections are removed is the stage set for the positive admonition of "Thou shalt love thy neighbor". Nor does this admonition complete the process of perfection. For Judaism declares further in the words of Hillel: "All else is a commentary. Go and acquire knowledge." Hence, while Christianity posits a simple, stereotyped pattern, Judaism asserts the free-will of man to create for himself, in his own way, the perfect form. ⁽¹³³⁾

According to Christianity, man lives in the world to fulfill the Supreme Will. This self-denial before the Supreme Will manifests itself in a certain passivity, an attitude of non-resistance to evil. Judaism views man as

an active force, not a force acted upon. "Man, all mankind, creates the world in the image of God." This purpose implies neither asceticism nor monasticism, but purification, naturalness, and santification; (hence, Judaism's preoccupation with the purity of family, sex, etc.) (134)

Form and Content in Religion

Religion, in its broadest connotations, was an important phase of Gordon's philosophic system.

הוא הוסיף לומר כי הדת היא תוצאה של תהליך התפתחות רוחנית, והיא איננה תנאי קודם לתפתחות רוחנית. הדת היא תוצאה של תהליך התפתחות רוחנית, והיא איננה תנאי קודם לתפתחות רוחנית. הדת היא תוצאה של תהליך התפתחות רוחנית, והיא איננה תנאי קודם לתפתחות רוחנית. (135)

As we have seen in the discussion of the "Epistemological Basis", (136) primitive man experienced a spiritual oneness with the Universe through his belief in God, Whom he beheld everywhere about him. It was the entire content of his soul, for all that he saw and did was consecrated to Divine Powers. (137)

But - as in all cultural developement - in religion, too, form developed at the expense of content. The religious content-which is essentially the individual's possession - has its roots in the depth of the individual human soul, with "stalks and foliage growing and spreading throughout the soul and mind to the horizons of loftiest thought." (138) The developement of religious content goes hand and hand with the advance of human thought and spirituality.

"התוכן הדתי שכולו דבר פנימי לאדם ששרשיו בתהום הומש האנושית ונזעזע עם גופו צומח ועולה בכל רחב' הומש וההכרה עד סוף המחשבה העליונה הוא בעיקר חלקו של היהודי של כל יהודי בתור פרט מהכלל שהרי הדת היא בעצם הנקודה המאחדת את כל אישי האומה לאישיות קבוצתית אחת. ומאחר שהתקדמות המחשבה והזדככות הרוח האנושית בכלל באות בעיקר על ידי יהודים הרי שהתוכן הדתי היה עלול ללכת רגל עם המחשבה והרוח המתקדמות, להתחלש ולהתעלות בידועם והנמדה אחת עשרה (140)

The form of religion is the possession of the group.

Generally, the group is less amenable to change and progress than the individual; and the form of religion, therefore, lagged behind progressive human thought until it became petrified. Nevertheless, human society viewed the form as being endowed with greater sanctity, until it superseded content in influence. As a result, the thinker was often compelled to leave the fold of conventional religion; and the deeply religious soul either had to compromise with the petrified form or withdraw entirely from the life of the group. "אולם הצורה הדתית, הגלוית, הממשית, היא בעיקר חלקו של הכלל, של הקבוצה, של האומה. מובן, כי הקבוצה מתפתח ביתר מהירות מהיחיד, בכלל מסבכו של הקבוצה שהוא יותר אינפנטי מהיחיד. כי על כן נשארה תמיד צרת הדת מאחורי המחשבה המתקדמת והרוח המזדככת. היא הייתה תמיד מפורת, נחשית, ואין פלא, כי לאחרונה נתאבנה." (141)

This emphasis upon form (which is but another instance of the process of TZIMTZUM in human development, which we have noted in Chapter IV) has resulted from the departure of progressive, creative thinking from the sphere of religion. Thus, it was possible for the ^Greeks -- who produced such distinguished philosophers and writers -- to cling to antiquated idolatrous practices. ⁽¹⁴²⁾ Thus the Hebrews -- who excelled all other peoples in their religious genius -- were unable to ~~unaided~~ ⁽¹⁴³⁾ to emancipate themselves completely from obsolete forms. And when Christianity attempted to

restore to content its original glory, it succeeded -- with its trinity, other-worldliness, and intermediary to God -- only in ruining both form and content. (144)

The tragic aspect of religious development, to Gordon, is that not only religion, but the very conception of religion, has stagnated -- for people conceive of religion as a fixed, static phenomenon that took shape thousands of years ago. Influenced by this conception, certain modern thinkers relegate religion to mythology, and regard it as an obsolete phenomenon that might best be removed from the world of men. (145)

This conception has caused men also to view religion as somehow apart from life; and to seek within the realms of aesthetics that which might properly be an expression of the

"הרגש האסתטי שאינו אלא מעין אור חוזר מאור הרגש הדתי" שאינו תופס אלא את הצד החיצוני, את הצורה של מה שהרגש הדתי תופס מעצם פנימיותו. כחון תוכו - הרגש האסתטי זכה להתפתח למוס מקום רחב בחיים התרבותיים על השלון הרגש הדתי, להבנות מחרצונן. הדת היתה לדבר שמתוך לחיים שמעל לחיים. לדבר שירר אלינו מן השמים אשר המאמין מאמין... וס' שאינו מאמין וזאת בו דבר שבדמיון שברגשות ילדית מיסטיקה חמלה, שאין לו לאדם הנון אלא לעקור אותם מלבו ולהתראם מהם. " (146)

Gordon's Totalitarianism In Religion

The conception we have noted above -- which regards religion as mystic and apart from life itself -- led also to the belief that one nation may include members of different faiths. כי הדת היא דבר נבדל לומר מהלאומיות וכי.

יכלים לפי זה להיות בני דתות שונות באומה אחת, מבלי אשר השלמות הלאומית תפגם על ידי כך במשהו, הדעה הזאת שרשה באותה ההשקפה המקובלת, הרגשה בדת לא דבר מן החיים, כי אם דברי מיסטי, שכל עקרו בצדו המסור והמקובל. (147)

Gordon, however, is a totalitarian in this matter.

Ardent nationalist that he is, he perceives religion as

צורת הרע היא (לפי זה) צורת החיים: strictly a national force:
הלאומים המבורים בקוים של חופי הקבוצות הלאומיות במצבם הנוכחי.
עיסוקם העליון ולחמיה העליונים. וזהו כלין נכחי למדיניות
העליונה של חופי הקבוצות הלאומיות. בעין סגורה סצורפת סכל
הקולות של כל נפשות האומה. כפי שהיא באה לידי נכחי במקומה
המדיניות במחיים הלאומיים. (14)

To him there is an essential contradiction in the notion that there may be one nation in which diverse religions (which express the spirit and mould of other nations) may flourish. For the people of such a nation experience a conflict between (1) the natural desire of each nation to reveal itself in its individual form, and to find its own relations to reality; and (2) the Weltanschauung of a highly developed religion contributed by another people.

עצומה וקרע שא"ן לאמותו ב"ן שא"פתה המבקיעת של רוחם העצמית לבוא
לידי גלוי בצורתה העצמית המיוחדת לה, למצא סקעצמה בדרך התפתחות

הודגת את יחסה העליון המיוחד לה אל המדינה העולמית ובין השבועות
האחרונים (1944/45)

Thus Gordon occupies a position strangely parallel

of taking a spiritual inventory of themselves whenever they feel disposed to do so. On Yom Kippur (and Rosh Hashona), however, all individuals feel themselves as units of a single, sublime organism -- a single nation -- and as such, they consider accounts of a national, human, and universal significance, rather than individual matters. As such, their personalities expand and rise to higher levels with the expansion of the total personality of the group, which in turn also grows with the growth of its units. (151)

Immortality

Gordon disbelieved in the generally accepted doctrine of immortality of the human soul. He also rejected the Nietzschean theory of immortality, which maintained that the number of combinations of matter are finite, and that therefore the forces of nature will be again combined in such a manner that all nature (including ourselves) will assume the same form it had previously. (152)

The conception of immortality which Gordon favors is in reality ~~no~~ ^{immortality} ~~immortality~~; at best, it is but a postponement of complete dissolution. "The individual personality is but a passing wave in the eternal sea of life and of existence. What is eternal in the individual personality is the hidden, vital impression that it leaves in life, that is eternal to the degree that it aids in the strengthening of the regenerative, the creative spirit of life." (153)

Gordon illustrated his point of view with two analogies:

(1) a post-humous child of a man who has died, leaving a pregnant wife; (2) the light of distant stars that reach the earth after they are extinguished, but which too will eventually die. ⁽¹⁵⁴⁾

The Religious Attitude Towards Animals

Gordon's refusal to eat meat was no mere device of convenience. It was a deeply rooted principle -- rooted in his reverence for all life, animal as well as human --- and in his quest for the natural life in its loftiest sense.

"What basic human, cosmic distinction is there between eating the flesh of an animal and eating the flesh of man? The difference lies merely in this: Those who eat of human flesh abstain from eating members of their own tribe; those who eat from the flesh of animals abstain from eating the flesh of their own species -- nothing more." ⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

In general, Gordon urged a more spiritual attitude towards plants and animals. He spoke caustically of the hypocrisy of men who utter sublime sentiments of justice, mercy, etc., in the name of religion or ethics. And yet these individuals complacently devour animals, hunt them ruthlessly, rob them of their freedom, and deplete their strength. The very terms "beneficial and "harmful" - as applied to animals - emphasize further the unspirituality of man's relation to the animal kingdom -- for these terms primarily allude to the exploitability of these animals. ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾

Has man a spiritual attitude to all living nature? Are not men prepared to annihilate ^{whole} ~~the~~ species of animals merely

for the sake of material gains derived thereby? Are not these ^{beasts} exploited and exhausted to gratify the basest of man's whims? And yet there is a deep spiritual affinity between man and these living creatures which he exploits - an affinity of which he is aware only, in rare moments of isolation from other men, when he enjoys the silent, but eloquent companionship of these same creatures. ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾

Religion and Nature*

Gordon defines religion as being -- at bottom -- the pure, the human relationship towards the essence of existence in all its phases. Pure religion is the pure natural life, a life amid nature and with human nature, a life expressing the sense of higher unity and higher responsibility. Religion, affirms Gordon, will not perish while there exists a human soul, a sense of responsibility, and a longing for life.

הנה פ"ח, זכרתי פ"ח זכרתי ק"ח פ"ח, פ"ח פ"ח פ"ח
— חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה
— פ"ח חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה
(157) "חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה חל"ה

In consonance with his naturistic view of religion, Gordon -- in one of his most inspired moments -- portrayed the religious emotion for the toiler on Palestinian soil:

*Author's note: The religious attitude towards sex, as Gordon conceives it, has already been indicated in Chapters IV and VI. The religious view of nature and labor - as Gordon conceives it - pervades his entire work, and is implied in almost every subject he discusses. Hence, I have been brief in the treatment of this question here.

"Then when you will perform your work, the expanse of the universe will be to you a vast shop, and you and Nature the workers. One heart and one spirit will animate both of you. On that day you will say: "Beautiful is the face of nature, but even more beautiful is the spirit of its life, of its work." When you will pause a moment to straighten your body, to draw breath, you will not inhale air for breathing, but you will feel that you draw in something else, something subtle which you do not know, but which will fructify your heart and your mind, and which will add life and light to your spirit. You will certainly have moments in which seemingly your whole being melts into eternity. Then you will grow silent. Not only speech but also song and even thought will be sacrilege to you. You will know the secret, the holiness of silence. You will sense that which cannot be expressed except by work; you will labor with all your strength, mightily, joyously. And you will hear a tiny voice rise from your task and say: "Work, O Man, each one of you work!" You will then know and consider in your heart that there is in work such a spiritual wealth of which you can see but the barest fringe; nor will all of this wealth be seen except by those who will look at it from all angles. After the sound of the tiny voice, Nature answers, "Amen!" as though to say: "Work, O Man, let not your work be insignificant in your own eyes. Then you make perfect what I have left imperfect..."

On that day, O Man, the fruit of your work will be - life. For there will be life in your work." (57)

Chapter XIII

THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF EDUCATORS

The role and function of educators, in Gordon's system of thought, will become more apparent to us if we first list their prerequisites. In an essay on the Hebrew University,

Gordon epitomizes these prerequisites:

"הסוד המהותי, אם לצירי לנו באותה הצורה, שתפקידו דורש את זה צריך קודם כל להיות פילוסוף, בעל השקפה עולם שלמה משלו כלומר במסגרת בואו לחנך אדם הוא צריך לדעת את האדם: איך אדם יודע את האדם אלא מתוך האדם שבו בעצמו מתוך העולם אשר בלבו הוא צריך להיות בן הסבע שהרי תפקידו לחנך את האדם לא רק בתור פרודוקט חברתי ולאחר-כך אם בעקר כראש וראשונה בתור חזיון קוסמי שהרי בשביל האדם - בנידון ז'ידן בשביל המתחנך - אין כל העולם אלא בו בעצמו." (16)

The educator, then, must be a philosopher with a full world-outlook. Before he can educate man, he must know man; and he cannot know man except through his own inner world. He must be a son of nature, since his task is not only to train man as a social and national product, but also as a cosmic product. His life must be an incessant creation, a permanent example to his students, for it is thus -- and not through the world of books -- that he may influence them. (16)

All of these prerequisites may seem platitudinous to us. They were no less platitudinous in Gordon's day; and yet, in his eagerness to establish an integrated philosophy of labor and soil, Gordon reiterated the most obvious truisms in order to rearrange them into his system. He was convinced that labor and soil could be a mighty instrument of motivation for the educator; and nationalist Jewish education

(even in the Diaspora) since his day has adopted as a guiding principle this conviction of Gordon's.

Gordon did not believe that education must be practical and pragmatic in content. On the contrary, modern educators might do well to revive the age-old tradition in Judaism of TORAH LISHMAH.⁽¹⁶²⁾ Like John Dewey and other contemporary educators, he felt that the function of the educator was not to provide knowledge, but to induce men to self-education, to an inner awakening of their own latent powers. He inquires whether any person may presume to have the right to teach others -- or whose ideas are so absolute and universal that he possesses the moral right to impose these views upon others. (In this score, Gordon moves out of the orbit of totalitarian thinking, which frankly condones propaganda and educational

indoctrination. כלום יש או יכול להיות איזה נוסח כללי של חנוך, שיהיה שווה בן כלום יש איזה צלם אדם, צלם חיים, צלם לב, צלם דעות, אשר רק על פיהם מחויבים להיות מבוזים כל בני אדם, כל האומות, איי כל האומות מסוף העולם ועד סופו ורק על פיהם נערכים כלום על פ' האמת אין כל אדם, כל אומה, כל חיים צלם לעצמם, צלם אשר רק פיו הם יכולים להחזק, להתחזק, להשתכלל ולעלות עד לאותה המעלה, שהם מסוגלים להשיג, ורק על פ' הם יכולים להיות מובנים ונערכים כלום לא זה כל עסק עשירותה של האנושות, כל עסק עשירותה של החיים האנושיים?

Nor is there a universal method of teaching which is adaptable to every person, nation, or generation; since every nation or man presents a distinct psychic entity, in accordance with which he (or it) must be understood and evaluated, and in harmony with which alone (may he) be reclaimed.⁽¹⁶⁴⁾

The role of educators, and more especially of writers, is so ponderous a task that it has often caused them to stand

on the periphery of the creation struggle, and not in the center; hence, they fail to grasp thoroughly the significance of their role. The times demand that they be more than writers in the ordinary meaning of the term, who endow mankind with a product wrought in the confines of the studio. But to meet the challenge of life fully, they must live in all its breadth and depth the life that is being created, and must share fully in the duties of labor. (145)

It is interesting to note that throughout Gordon's writings on the role of writers, there is an absence of fervent entreaties for the freedom of expression. On the contrary, he argues that "the nation, like nature, knows how to obey man to the degree that man knows how to obey it, how to obey its individual laws." (146)

He compares the writer to a dynamo that transform the vital motive force that lies inert in the deepest recesses of a people's soul and converts it into visible, concentrated energy, which discharges light and heat. Similarly, whoever is able to draw upon the innermost soul of a people endows his own words with immortality and universal appeal.

מכאן זה אפשר לאסור כי הסופר הוא מעין מכוונת הכח המעבירה
את התנועה החיונית המתעלמת בכל רחבי נשמת העם ובכל מעסקיה
לכח מרוכז וגלוי מאיר ומחמם מובן כי המעולה הזאת צריכה
להיות מחסרת בלא פוסקת כי מכוונת הכח צריכה להיות חסיד
מפולשת לנשמת העם חסיד שואבת משם היים ונשמת העם לא חסיד
מקור שאינו פוסק מעיין מחובר. (147)

The education of children believed Gordon, should not be transferred from the domain of the parents to the community

or its agencies. On the contrary, all young people should receive training in child-education and child-guidance. (168)

The goal of education is the liberation of the inner man and inner consciousness. It must seek to eliminate the false reverence and striving for power - which is a basic cause for social dominance by parasitic classes - by directing men's strivings towards the labor of creation.

It "involves above all a striving for the inner freedom of man; for intensifying of the human consciousness in each member of society towards a task that will bring each member of society to self-analysis and self-education." (168) This is not a science of books, but a science of life; it is not "an outer struggle, but an inner struggle to capture new territory in the heart of the individual." (169)

CONCLUSION

As I have indicated throughout this study, the most arduous task which confronted me -- and perhaps the chief contribution of this study -- consisted in organization and synthesis. For Gordon himself was not overly concerned with the development of an all-embracing system of philosophy, as such. Generally, his essays were directed towards the clarification or solution of some specific problem, which affected practically the relationships of his fellow-workers in Palestine. Even the Kitzur Kisve A. D. Gordon prepared by Teradyon and Shohat, and their English counterpart in the Selected Essays (translated by Burnce), "bringing order out of the confusion" and do not succeed in presenting, in organized form, such a synthesis. They have only re-arranged and reproduced verbatim, in abridged fashion, a number of essays written by Gordon -- but still marred by Gordon's own imperfections of disorganization, discursiveness, and verbosity.

In the preparation of this thesis, I myself likewise affected by these imperfections of the author. In order not to lose the spirit and the emphases of Gordon, in the process of condensation -- it was often necessary to resort to the same diffuseness, parenthetical expressions, and appositions, that are so characteristic of Gordon.

It was my own feeling that -- in a sense -- it is ironical that Gordon should have been accepted so wholeheartedly by many Labor and socialist Zionists as the

one nation. On this score he stands in sharp contrast to the proponents of "cultural pluralism", and is more closely akin in spirit to the totalitarian concept of the national religion.

However, it would be a grossly unjust evaluation of Gordon's character and aspirations, to take too seriously these superficial resemblances to the spirit of modern totalitarianism. Gordon redeems himself from this stigma when he insists that nationalism must be exalted, ethical, idealistic -- or not at all. ⁽¹⁷¹⁾ Unlike the modern Fascist, he condemns unreservedly -- not only war -- but also, the martial spirit, military trappings, armies, etc. His entire approach to the Arabs -- who loomed as the immediate menace to Jewish aspirations in Palestine -- is pacifistic, tolerant, honorable, and unsullied by suggestions of ulterior political designs. ⁽¹⁷²⁾ He insists that the loftiest form of social life is to be found only in cooperative Kvutzoth or Moshavei Ovdim, and in the nationalization of land and industry. (Dayan accredits him with contributing the "ideology of the new form of settlement, the 'moshav ovdim', and with writing out a set of precepts for their constitution.) ⁽¹⁷³⁾ Unlike the reactionary of our day, Gordon resented and looked askance at the intrusion of private capital and "initiative" upon the Palestinian scene. He believed the Homeland should be the possession of the entire people -- the people who

were willing to toil for it with their hands and their hearts. ⁽¹⁷⁾ In his very emphasis upon the sanctity and individuality of the human personality; in his reverence for all life -- human, animal, and plant -- Gordon represents a spirit that is hostile to totalitarianism.

May Gordon's system of philosophy be properly termed a "DATH AVODAH" -- as so many writers are prone to do today? I believe so. His system is pervaded throughout with a consciousness of a creative God in a creative nature; of the sanctity of all living beings; of the dignity of man's role upon earth; of the mystic unity that binds man, beast, flower, to all forces -- seen or unseen -- that shape the course of the universe. Even his nationalism, his definition of the earthly functions of each segment of human society -- are impregnated with this spirit of sanctity and dignity.

Certainly, these are the indices of "religion" as it is commonly understood. If we accept religion, in

Gordon's own words, as:

והנה, למדקו אל דבר, וורי הוא נחם (הנני) וטעור אל אדם ההויה לא כל אלוהי;
... חיים טעדים טעורים, חיים דהוק אל אדם הטעם... דנה
הנה אדם אדם. 17

Then we may with justification interpret Gordon's world-view, and the program arising out of that world-view, as a "religion". We reach this conclusion, also, when we think of religion in such terms as "...the effort of man to orient himself to the universe in a way that reckons not only with the nature of things known (which is the sphere of science),

but also with the unknown and mysterious aspects of life. Whenever a man's conduct is consciously influenced by assumptions of the destiny of man, of the value of this or that course of behavior relative to a hierarchy of values assumed to be inherent in the nature of things, there we have religion." (176)

As we can readily see, the philosophy and program of labor evolved by Gordon conforms almost entirely with this description of religion.

It is a characteristic ingredient of most religious systems that they possess their own prophet. So too...

"This movement has had its saint and prophet, a man far removed from conventional authoritarian Jewish religion, but nevertheless a saint in the absolute consecration of his life to his ideal and a prophet in his insight into the spiritual needs of the modern world and, more especially, of the Jewish people in the modern world. That man is Aaron David Gordon." (177)

Gordon, however, would spurn the crown of prophecy, even within the frame-work of a "religion of labor". He casts aspersions upon the individual prophets and states, quite consistently with his nationalistic approach:

"Prophecy should be the heritage of the entire nation, of every individual...Salvation through a prophet will again bring to the world only hate and falsehood with all their concomitants....The nation is the prophet....As for me, I shall trust in the power of the people as long as I shall have faith in man and in life." (178)

- 170) Cf. P. 50 of this Thesis.
- 171) Cf. "CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM", p. 41f.
- 172) Cf. "Arab Problem In Palestine", p. 69f.
- 173) Dayan, "Gordon In D'ganiah", p. 9, Young Jew Series.
- 174) Cf. "Palestine And Its Problems"
- 175) Cf. p. 81, Thesis.
- 176) Kohn, "Torah From Zion", Reconstructionist, March 10, 1939.
- 177) Kohn, *ibid.*
- 178) Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 215c. "Mi-toch K'riah".

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

FOOT-NOTES

- 1) Kohansky, A. D., "Thought And Influence of A. D. Gordon", Bulletin of the League For Labor Palestine, June, 1938.
- 2) Gurion, "Personal Impressions Of A. D. Gordon", op. cit.
- 3) Ibid.
- 4) Böhm, Adolf, Die Zionistische Bewegung, p. 223
- 5) Halpern, Ben, "Aaron David Gordon", Jewish Frontier, March, 1938, p. 21.
- 6) Aaronovitch, Joseph, "רשימות לתולדות חיי א. ד. גורדון", (אגודת עברית בארץ), כרך ראשון, חלק II, עמ' 12.
(Also, "Biographical Notes" by same author, Young Jew Series, No. 3, p. 12.)
- 7) Halpern, Ben, "Aaron David Gordon", Jewish Frontier, March, 1938, p. 23.
- 8) Gordon's own conception of what he wished his role to be in Zionist literature after his death, is embodied in the following passage, culled from his "R'SHIMOTH ACH'RONOTH", Vol. V, KOL KISVE A. D. GORDON, p. 230:
"הנה שכתבתי זכרונות, וקראו להם 'רשימות אחרונות'... כאלו, לא זרק ספרותי אל פובליציסטי, כי אם זרק חומי השבוע החיים והמחשבות."
- 9) Silberschlag, Dr. E., "Aaron David Gordon: Biographical Sketch", In Selected Essays Of A.D. Gordon (Tr. by Burnce), p. xi.
- 10) Aaronovitch, Joseph, "רשימות לתולדות חיי א. ד. גורדון", (אגודת עברית בארץ), כרך ראשון, חלק VIII, עמ' 12.
(Also in "Biographical Notes" by same author, Young Jew Series No. 3, p. 12.)

The greater portion of the facts cited in my biographical study have been gathered from these

Wrong method of quoting! Correct order is: Title, vol., page.

"R'SHIMOTH" by Aaronovitch, published in the introduction to Vol. I of KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON (pp. VII-XXX) and in the introduction to KITZUR KISVE A.D. GORDON (pp. 10-5). These "R'SHIMOTH" have been rendered into English, in the "Biographical Notes" (Young Jew Series No. 3, pp. 10-30.)

Other basic sources for my biographical studies were: "פרידא ו"נא" (Memoirs gathered by Joel Gordon, daughter of A. D. Gordon, and several associates of Gordon. Published in introduction to KITZUR A.D. GORDON, pp. 10-15). Also, "Gordon in D'ganiah" by Samuel Dayan (Published in Young Jew Series No. 3, pp. 5-9). Also -- more essentially -- the autobiographical references made in Gordon's own writings.

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- 11) Aaronovitch, Joseph, "R'SHIMOTH L'TOLDOTH CHAYOV SHEL A.D. GORDON", p. XIV, Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON.
- 12) Dayan, Samuel, "Gordon In D'ganiah", Young Jew Series No. 3, p. 6. This is one of the only disparaging comments which Dayan makes of A. D. Gordon's idiosyncracies. On the whole, Dayan appears to revere the character of Gordon no less than other men associated with him.
- 13) of. Aaronovitch, Joseph, "R'SHIMOTH L'TOLDOTH CHAYOV SHEL A.D. GORDON", pp. XXV-XXVI, Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON.
- 14) Gordon, Joel, "פרידא ו"נא", p. 10-15, Introduction to KITZUR KISVE A.D. GORDON.
- 15) Halpern, Ben, "Aaron David Gordon", Jewish Frontier, March, 1938, p. 21-23.
- 16) Trachtenberg, Joshua, "Aaron David Gordon", Reconstructionist, March 25, 1938, p. 11.
- 17) Gordon, A. D., KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON, Vol. III, "Ha-adam V'Hateva", p. 112.
- 18) Gordon, A. D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 122, KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON, Vol. III.
- 19) Gordon, A. D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 123, KOL KISVE A.D. GORDON, Vol. III.

ibid.

ibid.

20) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 117, Vol. III,
KOL KISVE A.D.G.
 (Also p. 210, Selected Essays, Tr. By Burnce,
 "The Eternal Question".)

21) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 41, Vol. I,
KOL KISVE A.D.G.
 (Also Selected Essays, p. 174, "Oil For Light")

22) For entire discussion of question of intellectual
 knowledge and immediate experience, cf.
 "Ha-adam V'hateva", Vol. III, KOL KISVE A.D.G.,
 pp. 90-139. Also, "Ha-adam V'hateva" (Continu-
 ation of Vol. III), pp. 16-149, Vol. IV.
 Also, Selected Essays, pp. 181-205, "Intellec-
 tual Knowledge And Immediate Experience".
 Also, "Hakara Va'chavaya", pp. 164-180,
KITZUR KISVE A.D.G.

23) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", Vol. III, pp.
 90f. Quot. from KITZUR KISVE A.D.G., p. 167.
 Also, Selected Essays, p. 187.

24) Gordon, A.D., op. cit.

25) Gordon, A.D., op. cit. Also, p. 31, Vol. IV,
 "Ha-adam V'hateva".

26) Gordon, A.D., Vol. IV, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 32-33.
 Also, p. 168, KITZUR KISVE A.D.G.

27) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 33, Vol. IV,
KOL KISVE A.D.G. Also, KITZUR, p. 168.

28) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 51, Vol. IV.,
KOL KISVE. Also, Selected Essays, p. 194.

Because of his intuitional and naturistic ap-
 proach, one is tempted to link Gordon to such
 philosophers as Bergson, Rousseau, and others
 in whom such tendencies are marked. However,
 there is little in Gordon's own writings to
 indicate that he was directly under the in-
 fluence of these philosophers. (cf. "CONCLU-
 SION.")

29) Gordon, A.D., "Ha-adam V'hateva", Vol. I, p. 43.

30) Ibid. Also, Selected Essays, p. 176.

31) For discussion and refutation of Buddha and Schopen-
 hauer, cf. Vol. IV, KOL KISVE, "Ha-adam V'hateva",
 p. 96 ff. Also, Selected Essays, p. 220 ff.

- 32) Vol. IV, p. 97, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Ha-adam V'hateva".
- 33) Op. cit., p. 100.
- 34) Op. cit., p. 101.
- 35) Selected Essays Of A.D.G., p. 228-229.
Vol. IV, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 107, "Ha-adam V'hateva".
- 36) cf. KITZUR KISVE A.D.G., p. 200.
cf. also Vol. IV, p. 111, KOL KISVE A.D.G.
- 37) For this discussion, relative to love and creation,
cf. Vol. IV, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 112 ff.
Also, pp. 201-207, KITZUR KISVE A.D.G.
Also, p. 232-240, Selected Essays Of A.D.G.
- 38) For a discussion on the nature of ideas, cf.
Vol. III, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Hilchoth Deoth
U'milchemeth Deoth", p. 233-283. Also,
KITZUR, p. 143-151. Selected Essays, p.
159-170, "Clash of Ideas".
- 39) Vol. III, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 237.
cf. Selected Essays, p. 161.
- 40) Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Michtav Galui L'I. Ch.
Brenner", p. 109, 110.
- 41) cf. Kohn, Eugene, "Torah From Zion", Reconstruction-
ist, March 10, 1939, p. 6-7.
- 42) cf. Trachtenberg, Joshua, "Aaron David Gordon",
Reconstructionist, March 25, 1938, p. 14.
- 43) Vol. I, p. 110, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Michtav Galui
L'I. Ch. Brenner". Also, in Selected Essays,
p. 21.
- 44) Vol. I, p. 60-63, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "אברהם גורן
הפוסט" "פוסט" "פוסט" "פוסט"
- 45) Vol. II, p. 157-159, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "פוסט" "פוסט" "פוסט"
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הפוסט" "פוסט" "פוסט" "פוסט" Also, Selected Essays, p. 97.
- 47) Vol. II, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 10, "אברהם גורן
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p. 86.

- 48) KITZUR KISVE A.D.G., p. 66-67, "הבאיה פ'אדא"א
- 49) Vol. V, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 49, "Michtavim",
"Michtav L'Sh. Sh.", (Ein-Ganim, 1917).
- 50) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. V, "Michtav L'Mar G.,
(Migdal, 1912).
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- 52) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. V, p. 94, "Michtav L'M.
B.-W.M., D'ganiah, 1921.
- 53) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. I, p. 259-260, "L'vayrur
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- 55) Ibid.
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sented from Vol. II, p. 66-114, "L'vayrur
Ra'yonaynu" "Mi-y'sodo", the ideas presented
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in all of Gordon's writings, that it is impos-
sible to cite any one reference as a basic
source for these ideas.
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- 58) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. II, p. 266, "Michtavim
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- 62) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. II, p. 40, "הבאיה פ'אדא"א
- 63) Vol. II, p. 41.
- 64) Vol. II, p. 43,
- 65) Op. cit., p. 51.

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- 69) Kol Kisve A.D.G., Vol. I, p. 252, "התורה והמצוה".
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Also, Selected Essays, p. 46-47.
- 74) KOL KISVE A.D.G., Vol. II, p. 21, "Al In'yney Haw-avodah". Also, cf. general discussion on dominance, in article by Dr. Hugo Bergmann, in Hapoel Hazair, March, 1929 (No. 22-23), entitled "Gordon Hamoreh".
Also, cf. "Hav-emeth Ha-pshutah" in Kitzur, p. 54-59.
- 75) Vol. IV, p. 118, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Ha-adam V'hateva".
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- 77) Op. cit., p. 157.
- 78) Vol. IV, p. 191, KOL KISVE A.D.GORDON,
p. 158. Also, cf. Selected Essays.
- 79) Vol. IV, p. 151-152.
"התורה והמצוה".
- 80) Op. cit., p. 159.
- 81) Op. cit., p. 162-163. Also, cf. article by Dr. Hugo Bergmann on "Gordon Hamoreh" in Hapoel Hazair, March, 1929 (No. 22-23).
Cf. article by Eli Ginzberg on "A Mystical Economist" in Menorah Journal, Winter, 1939.
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- 82) Vol. II, P. 194-195, KOL KISVE A.D.G.,
"ה'תש"ח ח'סיון".
- 83) Vol. III, p. 31, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "ה'תש"ח ח'סיון",
cf. pp. 45-47 under "CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM"
of this Thesis.
- 84) Vol. II, p. 266, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Michtavim
May-eretz Yisroel".
- 85) cf. Vol. III, p. 13f., KOL KISVE A.D.G.,
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- 88) Op. cit., p. 38f.
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- 91) Selected Essays, p. 55f. Also, cf. Vol. I,
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- 92) Ibid.
- 93) (Continuation of above:) It is notable that, in his
criticisms of Brener, Gordon is always candid and
forthright, intpresenting his arguments, but is
courteous and deferential in referring to his
colleague:
"ואני חפצתי כי תקרא את המאמר. משם היית רואה הרבה מה
שחוצץ בינינו ועד כמה קשה עלי החציצה. אז היה אולי קל לי
יותר לכתוב אליך. קשה עלי ההבדל ולא רחוק לראות כי
בעיניך יהיה אולי מוזר אם לא נרשם מזה אבל מה לעשות, כך
היא תכונת נפשי. יש שנדמה לי כי עלי שרש נשמתך או על
פי שאימה נשמתך לעומק אין אולי בין כל סכארי אדם קרוב לי
ממך. אולם על פי אומן מחשבתך על פי חשבון העולם והעיקר
על פי חשבון החיים שלך אין אולי רחוק ממך ולעתים הנה נדמה
לי משום כור לי. יש שנראה לי כי יש כאן איזו טעות, אבל
מי יודע. אולי אני הוא המועת." (Vol. V, p. 56-57, 65. Michtav L'I. Ch. Brener.)
- 93) Vol. I, p. 172. "Ha-kongress".
- 94) Vol. II, p. 38, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "ה'תש"ח ח'סיון".

- 95) (Omit)
- 96) Vol. II, p. 225-226, KOL KISVE A.D.G.,
"Michtavim May-eretz Yisroel".
- 97) Vol. II, p. 226, KOL KISVE A.D.G.,
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Also, Vol. I, p. 30, "Pithron Lo Ratzionali".
- 98) Vol. II, p. 221-222. "Michtavim May-eretz Yisroel."
- 99) Vol. II, p. 31, "Al Iny'nay Avodah".
- 100) "Mee-kotzer Ru'ach", pub. in Hapoel Hazair, (Nisan
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- 101) Vol. II, p. 10, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "L'vayrur
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- 102) Ibid.
- 103) cf. "Y'sodoth L'takanoth L'moshavv Ovdim",
Vol. II, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 200 f.
- 104) Vol. IV, p. 1, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "May-inyan
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- 106) מכתב אוד ל'תאודות חיינו
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- 107) Vol. II, p. 274, 275. KOL KISVE A.D.G.
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- 109) Vol. II, p. 3-4, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Mee-bachutz".
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- 110) Ibid. Also, cf. Selected Essays, p. 23-28.
- 111) Ibid.
- 112) Cf. p. 14 of this thesis.
Also, "R'SHIMOTH L'TOLDOTH CHAYOV SNEL
A.D. GORDON", Vol. I, p. XXIV; (Aaronovitch)
- 113) Vol. V, p. 21, "Michtavim Mayeretz Yisroel".

- 114) Vol. V, p. 122-123, KOL KISVE A.D.G.
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- 115) Vol. V, p. 122-124. (Ibid.)
- 116) Vol. II, p. 195, "Avodath Hatchiah B'artzoth Hagolah."
- 117) Vol. II, p. 274, "Michtavim May-eretz Yisroel."
- 118) Vol. II, p. 191, "Avodath Hatchiah B'artzoth Hagolah."
- 119) P. 45-47, "Concept Of Nationalism", of this thesis.
- 120) P. 50, KITZUR KISVE A.D.G., "Ikar Haw-ikarim".
- 121) Vol. II, p. 265, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Michtavim May-eretz Yisroel."
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- 123) Ibid.
- 124) Vol. III, p. 6, "Haarochath Atzmaynu".
- 125) Bohm, Adolf, Die Zionistische Bewegung, p. 223-224.
- 126) Aaronovitch, Joseph, "R'SHIMOTH L'TOLDOTH CHAYOV SHEL A.D. GORDON", Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. XXVI.
- 127) Ibid.
- 128) Vol. V, p. 89, "Michtavim" (Written in 1920)
- 129) Vol. V, p. 61, "Michtavim".
- 130) This analysis of Judaism and Christianity was written by Gordon in essay, which he hoped to arrange as an Introduction to a translation of Tolstoy's work on "What Is Art?" Printed in Vol. III, pp. 197-232, "L'wayrur Ha-hevdayl bayn Ha-yahaduth V'hanatzruth".

On the question of Judaism and Christianity compared, cf. Vol. III, pp. 197-232, KOL KISVE ADG.
Also, Selected Essays, pp. 267-273.
Also, KITZUR KISVE A.D.G., pp. 247-251.
- 131) Vol. III, p. 223.

- 132) Ibid.
- 133) Ibid.
- 134) Ibid. Also, p. 225.
- 135) Vol. III, p. 135, "Ha-adam V'hateva". This essay presents in more detailed fashion the evolution of religion as Gordon interpreted it.
- 136) Cf. p. 23f. of this Thesis, on "The Epistemological Basis".
- 137) Vol. III, p. 116-117, p. 122f.
- 138) P. 213, Selected Essays; P. 132, Vol. III, KOL KISVE A.D.G.
- 139) p. 186, KITZUR KISVE A.D.G.. Also, Vol. III, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 132.
- 140) Ibid.
- 141) Ibid.
- 142) Ibid. P. 134, Vol. III.
- 143) Ibid.
- 144) Ibid. P. 135.
- 145) Ibid. P. 135. Also, cf. Vol IV, p. 93, "Ha-adam V'hateva", (KOL KISVE A.D.G.)
- 146) Vol. IV, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Ha-adam V'hateva", p. 93.
- 147) Ibid. p. 87.
- 148) Ibid. p. 87. Quot. from Vol. LII, p. 135.
- 149) Ibid. p. 87.
- 150) Vol. III, p. 135.
- 151) Vol. V, p. 214-216, (מחזורי חג) "חג חנוכה", (מחזורי חג) "חג חנוכה".
- 152) Vol. I, p. 132f., "Hanaytzach V'hay-rega." Also, Vol. V, p. 217f. "מחזורי חג חנוכה".
- 153) Vol. V, p. 137, "Hanaytzach V'hay-rega." Also, Selected Essays, p. 291.

- 154) Ibid.
- 155) Vol. V, p. 100f. (Quot. from p. 101)
- 156) Ibid. P. 102.
- 157) Ibid. P. 104. It is interesting to note that, despite his ardor as a vegetarian and despite the fervor with which he exalted vegetarianism as a principle, Gordon objected to the publicity of a special table for vegetarians in the D'ganiah dining-room. He considered vegetarianism as a very personal problem. ("Gordon In D'ganiah" - Samuel Dayan)
- 158) P. 188, "Ha-sh'aylah Haw-aylamith", KITZUR KISVE A.D.G.
- 159) P. 250-251, Selected Essays. Corresponding passage in Vol. I, p. 53, "Ha-adam V(hateva", KOL KISVE A.D.G.
- 16160) Vol. I, p. 128, KOL KISVE A.D.G., "Universitah Ivrit".
- 161) Ibid.
- 162) Vol. II, cf. "Ha-sofrim V'haw-ovdim", p. 157f.
- 163) Vol. I, p. 211-212, "Mi-toch K'riah". Also, p. 215.
- 164) Ibid.
- 165) Ibid. Also, cf. Vol. II, p. 157f., "Hasoferim V'haw-ovdim".
- 166) Ibid.
- 167) Vol. I, KOL KISVE A.D.G., p. 200f. "Y'sodoth L'takanoth L'moshav Ovdim".
- 168) Vol. IV, KOL KISVE A.D.G., pp. 149-163, "Ktzath (הכרחי לר' אברהם) הנהגת הדין /# אברהם" cf. Selected Essays, p. 259.
- 169) Ibid. For a presentation of the general goal of Jewish education (i.e., regarding the uprooting of the /הנהגת אברהם, cf. "Gordon Ha-moreh", article by Dr. Hugo Bergman, in Hapoel Hazair, (No. 22-23), Tel Aviv, March, 1929.

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...

(אלכסנדריה, ד' טבת, תרפ"ב)

לחשבונו עם הדת

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