The Relations Between Homeland and Diaspora
As Seen in Zionist Ideology

by Prof. Eliezer Schweid

Two main constructs emerge from the writings of pioneer Zionism
with regard to relations between homeland and Diaspora. One is best
expressed in the thought of Theodor Herzl, founder of the Zionist
Organization, the other in that of Ahad H'am (Asher Ginzberg), thinker
and writer.

Herzl thought the "Jewish problem" would be solved once and for
all by the establishment of a Jewish state through a massive political
effort. All the political, economic, and organizational resources of
the Jews in the Diaspora would be mobilized for the purpose of gaining
international consent for the establishment of a Jewish state, and of

long that it would bring Eastern European Jewry no relief from their intolerable plight. Second, even after a long time Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel—subsequently to be referred to as Israel, although at the time of these early Zionist thinkers it was still Palestine), will not be able to take in the entire Jewish people. Most Jews will remain in the Diaspora, though continuing to identify themselves as Jews. The task of Zionism, in Ahad Ha'am's view, is to solve "the problem of Judaism and Jewishness" and not "the problem of the Jews." And the problem that Zionist must cope with is one of having to keep Jews alive as a people with a common, distinctive way of life, even though there is no prospect whatever of total redemption from Exile, and even though modern conditions have eroded the distinctions of faith and religious lifestyle that sustained Jews till now.

Ahad Ha'am, then, gave priority to the cultural-educational over the political determinant in his approach to the problem of the relations between homeland and Diaspora. The very return of Jews to Israel, the building up of the land and the attempt to raise in it a sovereign Jewish society capable of spiritual creativity would, in his view, provide the Jews with the leverage to stem the tide of assimilation in the Diaspora. Jewish life in Israel would have to be a base for far-reaching cultural-educational operations abroad which would train idealists for participation in the upbuilding of Israel, and provide Jews with the foundations for a new, cultural, non-religious identification. The Jewish center in Israel would be a focus of national identification: Jews throughout the Diaspora would take pride in their homeland. They

would not see themselves as "homeless", and they would have a center of Jewish spiritual creativity upon which to model themselves.

In sum: According to Herzl, the Diaspora will build the homeland and disappear; according to Ahad Ha'am, the Diaspora will build the homeland as a prop for itself.

These two constructs may be seen as expressions of two separate states in the crystallization of Zionism as the form that the thrust towards Jewish national liberation takes in modern times. In the first stage, a reaction to the shocked awareness that, where the Jews were concerned, the Emancipation in Europe had proved a false hope, Zionism emerges as a movement striving for a total and final resolution of the issue. The distinction between "the problem of the Jews" and that of Judaism and Jewishness is only a matter of semantics, since both are two sides of the same question. And if the early Zionist theorists and activists had before them the example of the European national movements, like them they sought a simple and categorical solution: redemption from Exile. Herzl was not alone in this way of looking at things, but shared the same outlook as Moshe Leib Lillienblum and Yehuda Leib Pinsker in Eastern Europe.

If the early religious Zionists contented themselves at the outset only with a small pioneer venture that would gradually find room for expansion, that was because they saw these initial measures, taken on their own initiative, as only a preparation for the final, universal Messianic redemption that would be brought about by supernatural forces.

The second stage constitutes a reaction to the initial efforts of
the early Zionists, and reflects revulsion from a great Messianic
expectation whose prospects of realization are slight and liable to
end in a tremendous anticlimax. In this stage, an attempt was made
to view the Zionist movement as a partial solution for what would
otherwise constitute the total assimilation of the Jewish people.

It seems to me that these two constructs contined to operate side
by side within the Zionist movement as two realistic assessments of the
contemporary Jewish situation, and paradoxically also as two modes of
Utopian expectations—on the one hand, a realistic appraisal of the
prospects for survival in the Diaspora in the light of the conditions
of the modern world combined with a Utopian expectation as to the
prospect of a total solution by building up Israel; and, on the other
hand, a realistic assessment of the prospect of achieving a total
solution through the upbuilding of Israel along with a Utopian expecta-
tion as to prospects of survival in the Diaspora.

These are the two cruel alternatives that constitute the Zionist
dilemma till the present day. There is no future for the Jewish people
in the Diaspora. But if this is so, how can a total solution be achieved
in Israel? Here Zionist thought found itself torn between despair and
despair, hope and hope. And the thinking of the fathers of Zionism,
while continuing to seek some common ground for present action, reflects
the vacillation of Zionist thought between these opposite points of view.

From the foregoing we can see the significance of the debate between Herzl and Ahad Ha'am for our own time. On the other hand, neither of the two constructs really confronts the problem of the relations between homeland and Diaspora.

This is very clear with respect to Herzl. He opposed gradual settlement in Israel and strove for a political solution that would not leave in its wake any problem of interaction between homeland and Diaspora since the latter would have ceased to exist. Ahad Ha'am, too, did not see the question of relations between Israel and the Diaspora as a bi-lateral matter. For him, Israel was just a budding project, and he regarded it from the perspective of a "lover of Zion" in the Diaspora. No wonder, then, that he spoke about the future, too, from the same perspective, and that what he had to say here had no basis in reality. Whatever substance there was in his words was owing to the fact that they served as true reflections of the attitude of the Diaspora Jew to Israel at that time and of what they thought should be done at that particular time to save Jews from assimilation and oblivion.

I suggest that Ahad Ha'am's vision of the future of Israel as a spiritual center for all Jewry was meant only to make possible in his own day successful educational activity with a field and center not in Israel, but in the Diaspora. For the debate between Ahad Ha'am and Herzl actually turned on the issue of cultural-educational activity in the Diaspora. For Herzl, this was a redundant issue. What is more, raising it when the need of the hour was political action on an agreed program was apt to create a serious rift between religious and secular

Zionists. For Ahad Ha'am, this was the main issue, and he was ready to fight over the necessity for finding a spiritual consensus, because he did not think political action would succeed.

All this amounts to is a debate on how Jews in the Diaspora should have acted concerning an Israel whose upbuilding was still only a vision of the future—a state of affairs no longer valid. It is for this reason that the whole argument is only relevant to Zionist thought in our own day as a stimulus to an assessment of the contemporary Jewish situation, giving an answer to the question as to the conditions necessary for Jewish survival in the Diaspora.

In considering these questions, we must examine one of the most important elements of classical Zionism: "The negation of the Exile." Despite the above-noted difference between Herzl and Ahad Ha'am, they both concur on this issue. In fact this concept can be regarded as the negative common denominator of all the Zionist parties. But there are differences of emphasis, and these are important because they are a crucial aspect of the debate about positive goals and the means of attaining them.

The simplest formulation of "negation of the Exile" is that it is a reaction to disappointment over the European Emancipation. It seemed to these cynics that, despite the Emancipation, the Jew remains an outsider to European society even when he relinquishes his national and religious distinctiveness and is ready to accommodate himself to European culture. He encounters resistance that is explained on

religious, racial, or economic grounds, all adding up to one thing:
The Jew is considered an interloper. The waves of anti-Semitic perse-
cution, carrying along not only the ignorant masses but also some of
the educated elite, and at times even supported by the authorities,
prove that Jews have no prospect of being accepted as equal citizens
in the Diaspora countries. On the other hand, a Jew is no longer
prepared to accept meekly his discriminated-against, despised, and
persecuted destiny. Influenced by modern European culture, he demands
all the rights of a free citizen, and no longer finds any meaning in
his suffering as his ancestors did. Therefore, runs the argument,
Jews have no future in the Diaspora--not as individuals, and not as
a people.

"Exile" in this context refers to the situation of a national
minority living in a country where it has no territorial privilege and
no political framework capable of safeguarding its existence and its
rights. In this sense, "negation of the exile" means abolishing the
situation of a minority without a land of its own and without poli-
tical sovereignty, a minority lacking the tools to defend itself
and be responsible for its own viability as a group and for the lives
of its individual members.

While such thinkers as Lillienblum, Pinsker, Herzl and Max Nordau
were disillusioned by the failure of the Liberal movement to bring
about genuine emancipation for the Jews, Ber Borochov probed the hopes
that Jews were beginning to have in Socialism as the movement of the
future.

He did not reject Socialism as a panacea for conflict between classes and nations, including those between Jews and Gentiles. But the road to the realization of Socialism, he believed, would aggravate the situation of the Jews. The class warfare preceding the victory of the workers would crush the Jews who were in the middle. Persecution and pogroms would increase, Jews would be deprived of their sources of livelihood, and the Jewish people as a whole would not survive all the economic, social and moral pressures.

Borochov's prognosis led him to an even more extreme "negation of the exile" than the one described above. He felt that time was running out for the Jews. The very concept "Exile" acquired a new dimension for Borochov. To him, it meant not merely the situation of a national minority lacking territory and sovereignty, but a distorted socio-economic reality. He contended that Jews lacked a proper economic base--that their economic existence was parasitic--which was why, on the one hand, they evoked such opposition and, on the other, did not have the means to defend themselves. To Borochov, therefore, "negation of the Exile" meant the elimination of the trade and sources of liveli-hood on which the Jews in the Diaspora subsisted, and "redemption" meant a radical socio-economic transformation.

To this, Ahad Ha'am added the dimension of socio-economic life. He was much less sensitive to the question of the lack of territory and political sovereignty than Pinsker and Herzl. On the economic question, however, he was no less sensitive than Borochov, even though

he did not bring to bear on its analysis well-formed scientific or ideological tools. But he was concerned chiefly with the Jews' socio-cultural plight. What troubed him most was the phenomenon of their depreciation of their national identity and culture vis-a-vis that of their host societies' not because the latter were better, but because they were dominant. On the other hand, he was also troubled by the enclusiveness and fossilization of Orthodox Judaism in Eastern Europe which clung to the old not because it was good, but because it was old.

In Ahad Ha'am's view, the new cultural florescence was poor, and the growing generation of Jews were not finding enough in it to enrich their lives, but were even repelled by everything defined as "Judaism."

This, he believed, was the greatest threat to the survival of the Jewish people. In other words, to him, "Exile," especially in the modern sense of the term, meant Jewish national self-depreciation vis-a-vis an alien cultural power, on the one hand, and a reality of Jewish national cultural and spiritual degeneration on the other. And it was in this sense that the return to the homeland had to be a redemption from Exile: the creation of conditions for a national renaissance that would be fed from Jewish sources and would select environmental influences according to its own independent criteria.

Writers like Micha Yosef Berdichevsky and Yosef Haim Brenner carried Borochov's analysis and Ahad Ha'am's concept of Jewish national self-depreciation even further. To them, "Exile" was not merely a certain socio-political or socio-cultural condition, but a fundamentally

negative existential situation expressing itself in all facets of Jewish life. They were revolted by the maleficent Jewish existence in the "Pale of Settlement" in Czarist Russia, and by the inauthenticity of the assimilationist Jew in the West. They saw both these classes of Jews as defective in their human stature, their personal morality, and their lifestyle. Exile, in this respect, was a defect in human existence itself, a removal from complete and natural human existence with respect to livelihood, interpersonal and societal relations, and all spheres of cultural creativity. Therefore, the departure of the Jews from Exile would mean not only a transformation in their situation, but also a realignment of the structure of the Jewish personality through a reorientation of the entire organization of Jewish social life.

All this has a very important bearing on our discussion. For if we do not have here concrete details of the relationship between home-land and Diaspora, we do have an attempt at a radical confrontation between their significance for the early Zionists. The practical importance of all this consists in the fact that facing the main body of the Zionist movement and the people who assumed the practical leadership, was the most extreme formulation of the polarization between homeland and Exile: While the latter was seen as an entirely negative and defective existential situation from the political, economic, social, and moral points of view, not only without any prospect of subsistence, but also without any desireability that it should do so, the former was viewed not only as the state where the Jews will be able to have a

majority and political sovereignty, but also as a base for a realign-
ment of Jewish national life from the level of the individual to that
of the community.

There is no doubt that this derogatory image of the Jews in exile
and the correspondingly roseate picture of   Return as promulgated
by the Zionist implementers left its stamp on the general conception of
this topic when the State of Israel became a reality. Moreover, when-
ever we set out today to deal with the question, these two concepts
first have to be re-evaluated.

To what extent are the various previously mentioned definitions
first laid down by classical Zionist thought still valid--if at all?
Only a clear-cut answer to this question can provide the basis for a
discussion of the historical perspective on this issue   as it affects
the future.

As previously noted, although the whole way of looking at the
question of homeland-Diaspora relations in the new reality emerging in
Israel was still based on the most extreme theoretical formulation of
"negation of the Exile," it also derived from direct existence of the
Israeli reality. It had grown more in touch with reality, not only
because of its contact with Jewish life in the Diaspora, but also be-
cause of its direct exposure to the difficulties involved in the up-
building of Israel as a national homeland and its
assessment of the viability of this venture.

The thought of Anaron David Gordon, even though it is far from typical, sheds light on this particular perspective. This is so not only because Gordon--unique among the thinkers living in Israel-- based himself on a comprehensive Zionist theory, but also because his thought was distinguished by a typically Israeli realism in its assessment both of the essential nature of the Diaspora and its difficulties involved in building the homeland. Gordon's thought may be seen as an Israeli version of Ahad Ha'am's thinking.

Although Gordon saw the Diaspora as a negative existential situation, he did not subscribe to Brenner's and Berdichevsky's negative attitude to Jewish creativity in Exile. He considered it remarkable that under those conditions the Jews had evolved a valuable spiritual heritage that had sustained them till modern times.

On the other hand, Gordon assumed that the process of building up the homeland would have to be a very long one. Only very gradually would the majority of Jews come to live a new life in their own country.

What would happen to the Diaspora meanwhile? Gordon's reply, surprisingly, was that an attempt must be made in the Diaspora, too, to launch the process of leaving the Diaspora. If "Exile" and "Diaspora" are not merely geographic and political terms, but primarily human, social, and cultural ones, then the process of leaving the situation they describe may be organized within that very situation. By Jews returning to productive labor and forsaking their economically parasitic existence; by their return to the use of the Hebrew language and by

an effort at educational and spiritual creativity in Hebrew. In this way the Jews would emerge from the situation of Exile in the Diaspora itself.

Gordon had no fear that this would alienate the Jews from Israel. On the contrary, he believed that this re-assertion of peoplehood in the Diaspora would bind them to the Land, guarantee a steady flow of aliyah, and enable Diaspora Jews to relate to the social and cultural effervescence taking place in Israel not in a subordinate role but as partners in that creativity.

If the entire Jewish people underwent one process simultaneously, Gordon maintained, the upbuilding of the Land would be the focus of the entire people's activity. Of course, Israel had to be the center, first, because, the leadership of the Zionist movement, which should guide the people as a whole, would reside and set up the movement's institutions there; second, because there would be a continuous aliyah from the Diaspora and finally because Israel would be the educational model. As we mentioned previously, however, a change in the situation of Exile should begin and continue in the Diaspora itself, for only in this way would the link between the Jewish people as a whole and the rebuilding taking place in the Jewish homeland have any real meaning. Here, it seems to me, we have a most interesting attempt to reinterpret Ahad Ha'am's idea of a "spiritual center" in a way that would give it real content.

Jacob Klatzkin had an altogether different approach. His outlook

stands on extreme and simple premises with respect to the future of the Diaspora. First, the Diaspora could not survive in modern conditions. The natural dynamics of Exile were total assimilation. In the past, the Jewish religion prevented assimilation by virtue of its binding organizational structures. In modern times, however, these forms no longer functioned and even though the Jewish people as a whole had not forsaken its faith, religion was no longer a national socio-political force, and there was nothing else that could replace it.

Second, the Diaspora was not worth keeping alive, because life in Exile was a culturally schizoid existence, involving individual and national self-debasement and degeneration. .

The logical conclusion of all this seemed to be the one Herzl had drawn: The Jewish people was at a crossroads. Jews wishing to remain would go to Israe; those wanting to remain where they were would assimilate.

The latter was certainly a viable alternative, though Klatzkin considered it a dishonorable and even immoral one. But, unlike Herzl, he realized that the settlement of Israel would be a long-drawn-out process, and the Diaspora had to be kept alive so that it should be possible to complete it. In other words: The Diaspora had to survive as long as the upbuilding of Israel was still taking place.

Klatzkin believed that this was feasible. In his view, it was impossible to stop assimilation altogether, but its pace could certainly

be slowed down by artificial means such as a network of national-Hebrew education in the Diaspora and the setting up of various Jewish communal institutions. These could be viable only if they concentrated on preparing Jews of the Diaspora for return to the homeland, for an educational program that aimed at manufacturing an inauthetic type of Jew who could survive in the artificial environment of the Diaspora would be morally unjustifiable and had absolutely no chance of succeeding.

On the other hand, Klatzkin believed that under the impetus of the upbuilding of the Land it would be possible to keep the Diaspora alive for another few generations. If in this time Israel became the national center, the fateful decision would have to be made, and those wishing to remain Jews would go there, and the rest would assimilate.

If A.D. Gordon's view was a reinterpretation of Ahad Ha'am's, Klatzkin's was a reinterpretation of Herzl's.

Alongside Klatzkin's ideas it is worth placing those of Yehezkel Kaufmann. The two are very close in their treatment of this question. Kaufmann's contribution to the discussion is important chiefly for the methodical and incisive historical research on which he bases himself, but also because of what he has to say about the function of the Jewish religion in modern times.

Kaufmann agreed with Klatzkin that religion sustained the Jewish people in Exile till the dawn of the modern age--but not only or primarily because of the binding organizational framework, but because

of the inexorable force of a faith that lays down an all-embracing way of life. In Kaufmann's view, Judaism at its roots was not and is not a national religion but a universal one! In practice, however, it became the religion of a particular people. But because it was not essentially national, it sustained the Jews as a nation even in conditions in which other nations disintegrated.

In modern times, Kaufmann maintained, religion no longer has this kind of force. Not, however, because modern culture doesn't allow for faith or a religious way of life. Religion as such is of the essence of the human spirit, and not even modern cultural can make it disappear. The weakening of religion stems from the fact that, in secular culture, religion no longer shapes all spheres of life and creativity, but is only one of the many modes of cultural expression.

Therefore, it is certainly possible in Kaufmann's view to have a Diaspora containing a considerable community of people remaining faithful to the Jewish religion, either in its Orthodox form or in any other adapted to modern concepts and the modern style. But the religious definition will not automatically mean a national definition. In other words, it is Jewish national life that becomes impossible in the Diaspora.

Yet Kaufmann pointed out that the process of Jewish national assimilation had failed, and that it was precisely the enfeebled Jewish religion that had brought this about, though in a negative way. The insistence of a large sector of Jewry on remaining faithful to their

religion, and the refusal of another sector of Jewry to convert to
another religion for the sake of total emancipation, caused the non-
Jewish environment--whose culture was shaped by Christianity--to
continue to reject the Jews as outsiders.

Thus the Jews remained a national group without national possessions
and national rights, as a result of which the plight of the Jews in
Exile became even more acute. Of course, since, in Kaufmann's view,
this may also be seen as the main impetus for the continuation of the
Jewish national movement in the Diaspora, but, it does not operate
only in a negative way. The Jewish people, will, nevertheless,
continue to be enfeebled by massive assimilation and by the disap-
pearance of the positive hallmarks of an independent national culture.
At most, it will be possible to slow somewhat the pace of assimilation
by such artificial means as Hebrew and Zionist education in order to
maintain the Diaspora as a resource for the upbuilding of the homeland
and even this will be possible only for a limited time.

In order to understand the characteristic line of Zionist thought
in Israel on the future of Jews in the Diaspora, we must add to our con-
sideration of Klatzkin's and Kaufmann's analysis that of two trends in
the thinking of Lillienblum, Pinsker, and Borochov.

These are, first, that anti-Semitism was endemic to European
society, at least for the foreseeable future, and might even grow,
eventually threatening the physical security of the Jews in Europe.

Second, that there was no solution for the economic plight of the

Jewish masses of Eastern Europe. Their former bases of livelihood had been destroyed, and there was no chance of their finding a place in the general economic realignment that would be brought about through a series of upheavals. There was, to be sure, the haven of the United States, and there was a mass immigration flowing there. But that was only a temporary haven. In the end, not even there would Jews escape the fate that awaited it in Exile. Therefore, Israel should be prepared as a haven for the wandering and homeless Jew, for only by returning there en masse would the problem really be solved.

If we take this assessment into account, immediate action should have been taken to set up a practical network of relations between the Zionist community in Israel and the Jews in the Diaspora. I shall only point to the general direction of decisions arrived at in the framework of the Zionist Organization.

First, steps were taken to ensure that the Zionist community in Israel should occupy a leadership position in the main organization of the Zionist movement thus exerting pressure towards increased aliyah in order to broaden the Jewish population base in Israel.

Then, steps were taken to secure for the Zionist movement a leading position in Jewry, thus consolidating all the economic and political resources at the disposal of Jewry for use in opening up Israel for mass aliyah, and financing the upbuilding of the Land so that it should be able to provide sources of livelihood and the institutions necessary

for all the   of returning Jews.

Measures were also taken to strengthen as much as possible the activities of the Zionist _halutz_ (pioneering) movements which trained people to come to Israel for the purpose of establishing farming and labor settlements. In this respect, Zionism certainly served as a "spiritual center" for Diaspora Jewry. Here we had a vigorous educational struggle to save the souls of Jewish youth from assimilation, to bring them up in the Hebrew language and culture, and to steer them towards a pioneering life in Israel.

It is easy to see that at the base of all this activity was the premise of Klatzkin and Kaufmann that it was possible to maintain the Diaspora by the "artificial" means of Hebrew-Zionist education only if this was orientated towards the upbuilding of Israel as a homeland. But time was pressing with respect to the threats both of assimilation and of anti-Semitism. To be sure, there was tension between the gradualism required to guarantee a healthy growth for the Jewish community in Israel and the realization that it was urgent to bring as many Jews as possible there as quickly as possible. And there was vacillation between these two exigencies. But, generally speaking, the prognosis about the disaster threatening the Jewish people predominated. It seems to me that the feeling that as many Jews as possible had to be rescued as quickly as possible determined the attitude of Israeli Zionists to the Diaspora, and the nature of their educational and socio-political activity among Diaspora Jewry.

What I have said here must be qualified slightly. All the above
was crystallized against the European background. The classical
Zionist ideologists tended to speak in generalizations about the
nature of the Diaspora, even though there were blatant differences
between Eastern and Western Europe, and these differences were ex-
pressed in the different ideologies that were developed in the
different settings. But already at the outset, the United States
was regarded as a totally different case.

At the beginning of the Hibbat Zion (Love of Zion) movement,
there were some who saw the United States as an alternative to Israel
with respect to the political emancipation of Jewry. When Jews
started emigrating to the United States en masse, Zionism provided
the idealistic alternative for Jews fleeing from any kind of trouble.
The two new Jewish centers of the 20th century--Israel and the
United States--came into being simultaneously, and under identical
demographic impulses. This was a very significant fact, and one that
could not be ignored. For an ideologist like Ahad Ha'am, this was not
a matter of composition. Since he did not believe that Israel alone
could solve the "Jewish problem," he divided up the tasks of rescue.
The masses seeking to escape economic disabilities and anti-Semitic
persecution would go to the United States. The few idealists troubled
by the "Jewish problem" would go to Israel. The "spiritual center"
that would then arise in Israel would, however, also solve the "Jewish
problem" of those Jews who would find physical security in America,
or even in a Europe now relieved of its surplus Jewish population.

But for those thinkers who sought in Zionism a solution to both the "problem of the Jews" and the "problem of Judaism and Jewishness," this presented difficulties. The success of this one-time historic undertaking required, so it would seem, that the movement of the masses should come in the wake of the idealistic elite. But things did not happen this way--in any case not during the main period of the migration to the United States. At the same time, it was clearly impossible to think of trying to re-channel the stream of migration when the upbuilding of Israel was proceeding slowly, and was en-countering internal and external difficulties.

The ideological reaction to this problem deserves a thorough-going analysis--which is beyond the immediate scope of this discussion. In general the migration to the United States was seen by the Zionist theoreticians living in Europe as a direct continuation of the Exile experience: Once again the Wandering Jew had taken to the road. How often had he been expelled from countries in which he only had a temporary respite! The present migration to the United States, also, was in their eyes only another stampede from one alien territory to the next. The United States would not solve the "Jewish problem." At best, it would prove a temporary haven. Soon all the dangers the Jews had faced in the European Diaspora would arise there, too. Therefore, the real solution lay in _aliyah_ to the homeland and not in emigration from one Diaspora to another.

None the less, in the view of these European Zionists, a re-orientation--at least on the practical level--was needed in the

sphere of the direct contact between the leaders and representatives of Zionism in Israel itself and the reality of Jewish communal life in the United States, particularly within the American Zionist movement.

In Haim Arlosoroff's writings, we find an especially cogent treatment of this subject. In his view, the American Jewish Diaspora was not to be seen in terms of the categories of the different European Diasporas. The rapid consolidation of Jewish migration to the United States, and the free and pluralistic socio-political setting they found on arrival, would make possible the new phenomenon of a Diaspora achieving Emancipation without having to assimilate. The American Diaspora would be able to maintain its Jewish cultural-national distinctiveness in conditions of liberty. But all this depended on motivation and orientation. Thoroughgoing educational activity would be able to prevent assimilation and generate a Jewish national-cultural revival in the United States.

It should be emphasized, however, that this assessment did not cause Arlosoroff to amend his basic Zionist thesis. For him the United States was Exile. Here he based himself also on a gloomy prognosis of economic developments and the ability of Jewry in the United States to fend for itself in the area of Jewish national-cultural creativity.

The only difference between Arlosoroff and the other Zionist thinkers I have mentioned is that he saw in the United States a real field for educational activity that would ensure that American Jewry

would remain linked to Zionism and to the Jewish community in Israel, and he demanded an Ahad Ha'am-type of cultural activity for American Jewry.

It was clear to Arlosoroff that the role of American Jewry in the realization of the Zionist undertaking would be different from that of European Jewry, for in the United States there was a different kind of Diaspora and, therefore, a different kind of Zionism, and the relationship between it and Israel required a radicallly new definition.

The formulation that was lacking in the Zionist ideology of Israel itself began to crystallize in the thinking of American Jewry. This may be characterized as an American version of the though of Ahad Ha'am, containing an outlook that does not belittle the Diaspora, but which sometimes even has an element of affirmation of an experience which has made a valuable contribution to the heritage of the Jewish people.

According to the secularist viewpoint of Louis Dembitz Brandeis, Israel has to confer on Jews the same freedom that other peoples enjoy-- the freedom to choose between living in their own countries or in any other that is open to them. The practical implication of this is to put American Jews on an equal footing with all the other ethnic groups that immigrated to the United States. The American Jew, too, was entitled to a land of origin which was not an "exile" but a national-

cultural home. Of course, to Brandeis this did not mean that the Jew or any other American of any other national-cultural-ethnic origin had to live in that home. For the Jew this meant that in Israel the Hebrew language and a total, integrated Hebrew culture would come to life again. A Jew not living there would emphasize that he belonged to the people of that culture, and he would take pride in it. A small, but socio-culturally active Jewish community (in Israel) would suffice to give American Jewry the desired sense of belonging and equality.

The link with Israel would be expressed by helping in its growth economically and politically. Jews (not necessarily those of the United States), needing or wishing to go to Israel would build up the homeland with their persons. Others would help as much as they could.

Brandeis entertained no contradiction between helping in the up-building of the ancestral Jewish homeland and new loyalties to the United States. On the contrary: Since the upbuilding of Israel would put American Jews on an equal footing with other Americand and enable them to function in terms of what they conceived as the moral-political ideal of the United States, these two loyalties complemented each other. In Brandeis' view, a Jew who was a Zionist was a better American citizen than a non-Zionist Jew.

The Reform (in the American Jewish religious sense) Zionism of Judah Leib Magnes went even further in its affirmation of the Diaspora. In Magnes' view, the Jewish people could survive without living in

Israel. The Jews would never assimilate because they were not a
nation like all others but were unique because of the Torah founded
on universal moral-ethnical principles, and by virture of which they
were capable of remaining united by fraternal ties as a "world people"
no matter how far and wide they were scattered.

Magnes claimed that these delicate affiliations between all Jews
the world over exist because of their common spiritual heritage. Israel
was necessary in his view so that there should be one place in space
where Judaism's spiritual ideal was fully realized and where there
might arise a Jewish society that was morally and ethically just in the spiri
of the ideals of the Hebrew Prophets. In this way, the Jewish model
society would strengthen the affinity of all Jews for Torah and, ipso
facto, also fortify their physical existence.

But by no means was Magnes thinking of making the Jews like all
other nations, just because they posessed their own territory and
government. On the contrary: As a "special people" divinely chosen
for a universal mission, the Jews ought to have a presence in the
Diaspora, too. The mutual relations between a homeland which realizes
the spiritual ideals of Judaism within a complete social-existential
setting, and a Diaspora which preserves its international character
would protect the unity and uniqueness of the Jewish people.

A third version of American Zionism that made a unique contribu-
tion to the Ahad Ha'am outlook is that of Mordecai Menahem Kaplan.

To Kaplan, Israel is vital to the survival and full development

of Judaism as an all-embracing culture. But it cannot solve the
Jewish problem by providing a home for all Jews within its own
borders, and cannot even survive without Diaspora Jews who are a
dynamic part of the countries in which they are living and, at the
same time, loyal Jews.

In Kaplan's version, "negation of the Diaspora" in the extreme
sense was tantamount to a denial of the prospects for success of the
Jewish national renaissance in Israel. Zionism, according to Kaplan,
could be realized and a Jewish State survive only if we found a
possibility of maintaining the cohesiveness of the Jewish people when
they are not being persecuted. And Kaplan believed that this could be
brought about. Modern democracy allows for the setting up of communal
frameworks that would make an organized and thriving Jewish communal
life feasible. In the Diaspora, this society would live in creative
tension between the preservation of its distinctive religious character
and a positive affinity for the humanistic culture of the democratic
countries.

The organized flourishing Jewry of Israel, meanwhile, would live
along the line of its own cultural integrity.

Unlike Magnes, however, Kaplan did not content himself with
leaving the recommended interactions between the Jewish community in
Israel and those in the Diaspora ill-defined. His third contribution
to Zionist thought was the idea of bringing the whole Jewish people
into a single organizational framework that would institutionalize the

mutual relations between different sections and embody the spiritual

principle that unites all Jews.

With a certain degree of schematization, it may be said that

the Zionism eminating from Israel itself especially its pioneering

variety was informed by a more realistic interpretation of the

Herzlian construct with respect to the difficulty of realizing

Zionism in Israel and doing so with the speed that Herzl considered

necessary, whereas American Zionism provided a more realistic inter-

pretation of the Ahad Ha'am construct with respect to the aspirations

of Diaspora Jewry.

However, when the state of Israel came into being against the

background of the destruction of European Jewry, a moment of truth

arrived which required the adherents of both constructs to measure

their respective position against each other. Since the establishment

of the state, precisely against the background of the Holocaust, the

question of homeland-Diaspora relations enters an entirely new phase.

It immediately becomes obvious that the question had ceased to

be a concern of the Zionist movement alone, and had become the general

concern of all Jews. Of course, before this too, no self-respecting

Jewish movement could ignore Zionism and the organized community in

Israel. But now the viability of Zionist aspirations ceased to be an

academic affair and became one of de facto recognition. The state of

Israel removed Zionism from the confines of the Zionist movement,
bringing entire Diasporas home and giving Jews representation in the
international arena. Israel became a symbol of Jewish unity and a
focus for Jewish commitment and inter-relatedness.

The fact that the state came into being after the Holocaust
helped in the consolidation of the national consensus. Those apathetic
to and even violently opposed to Zionism recognized the crucial
importance of the existence of a Jewish state in modern times.

However, all this does not mean that Jews were now unanimously
in favor of Zionism. What existed here was a de facto acknowledgement
of the accuracy of the Zionist forecast. The questions still remained
as to whether it was possible to support the state without accepting
Zionism as an ongoing objective.

Here, especially where American Zionists were concerned, was the
source of the quandary after the establishment of the state. From
their perspective, it was very difficult to differentiate between a
Zionist, and a non-Zionist support of Israel. What they realized
was that, in the course of the struggle for the fulfillment of
Zionism, some far-reaching transformations took place in the situation
of Jews both in the Diaspora and in the homeland.

The first change was one which affected Jewish identity in the
Diaspora. As I have noted, classical Zionist ideology concerned itself
mainly with Europe. After the Holocaust, after the Iron Curtain had
descended on Soviet Jewry, and after most of the Jews of the Islamic

countries had come to Israel, the issue of homeland-Diaspora relations was mainly relevant to American Jewry and to several smaller Diasporas in the free world. The change was not only geographical but qualitative in nature, for Diaspora Jews who live in these areas are emancipated and integrated into the lives of the countries in which they reside.

All this presented a perplexing paradox: The Holocaust that proved the accuracy of the Zionist propaganda, and the establishment of the State that proved the viability of the Zionist solution took place at the same time that the Emancipation, which had taken a direction opposite to the one taken by the Zionist idea, also attained its objective. There came into being a wealthy Jewry, well integrated into the modern economic body, occupying a place of honor in the cultural, scientific, literary, and artistic development of its country of residence, and also wielding considerable political influence as a group.

The characteristics of the "negation of the Exile" as laid down in classical Zionist ideology did not apply to this Jewry, which was not even inclined to define itself as an Exile. Now a new term gained currency: "Dispersion." Furthermore, just as a consensus had crystallized among Jews as to the importance of the existence of the state of Israel, a general agreement also developed that the existence of this new kind of Diaspora was a condition for the survival of the state. Still more: According to this consensus, the Diaspora does not merely provide the resource material for the upbuilding of the homeland.

Because of its power and wealth, the present Diaspora is an economic and political prop for the State, in the same way as any economic, social, and political decline in the Diaspora immediately would make for an economic, social and political setback for Israel.

The processes of Emancipation and Auto-Emancipation, which at first moved in opposite directions, attained their objective to-gether, and the new state and the Diasporas in the free world had a mutual impact on each other's existence. This realization was what lay behind the quandary of Zionists in Israel as to whether the state should regard the free Diasporas from an ideological standpoint, de-manding aliyah as the highest expression of identification or, if what was wanted was mainly moral, political, and economic support, was there any difference between Israel's expectations from the Zionist movement abroad and its expectations from Jewish non-Zionist organizations? Was there place for a different set of relations and a different policy vis-a-vis the Zionist movement than towards the other section of Jewry.

Although the Emancipation and Auto-Emancipation made great progress at the same time, they are both very far from enjoying the results to which they had looked forward. The post-Emancipation Diaspora is far from being a serene and secure one. Jews are still on the defensive, they still have to fearfully feel the pulse of the sensibilities of the non-Jewish society and remain alert to danger. And already they face the grave problems arising from the Emancipation itself: the gap between the extent of the personal successes of

individual Jews and the paltry achievement of the community of Jewry
the weakness of the public frameworks of Jewish life, which do not
command the allegiance of the majority of Jews for whom they pretend
to   and, at the same time, the gap between the high level of
Jewish achievement in the secular world and the low level in the
Jewish cultural sphere.

The questions are: Are the Jewries of the free world capable of
stemming the tide of total assimilation? Do they have the capacity to
maintain a life rich in Jewish content outside the exclusive communities
of extreme Orthodoxy? Are they capable of sustaining an ongoing,
significant Jewish communal activity?

Parallel questions have to be asked concerned the situation of the
newly created state. From the day Israel was born it has faced an
increasingly well-organized and intense opposition on the part of the
Arab states. The international recognition granted the State is not
unequivocal. Within Israel itself there have come to the fore extreme
tensions stemming from two basic factors: the absorption of masses of
Jews coming from different lands, and the unmitigated antagonism
between the Orthodox and the secularists.

As a result of these tensions, not only has Israeli society been
undergoing severe shocks, but there are also appearing signs of a
growing internal schism and a diminishing sense of solidarity. Jewish
thinkers in the Diaspora who contend that Israeli Jewry is also under-
going a process of assimilation have grounds for saying this.

So a need arose for a re-definition of the meaning of the term
"Diaspora" and a new forecast as to its future, for a re-hauling of
life-value in the homeland, and for the   of a clear-
cut policy on homeland-Diaspora relations. A debate developed that has
not yet been resolved.

This survey may be summed up by saying that in this debate we see
again the two basic constructs of Herzl and Ahad Ha'am with which we
began our discussion. According to the former, the Jewish Dispersion
including that of the free world should still be seen as a Diaspora,
rather like the Western European Diaspora before the Holocaust. The
tranquility and security of the Jews of the free world are unstable
phenomena which are liable to sudden disruption, and Western Jews are
liable to find themselves suddenly faced with a new wave of anti-
semitism. On the other hand, assimilation rages apace. Certainly,
contemporary Diaspora Jewry is not an oppressed and backward one.
But they do not have the independent means to safeguard their rights,
and they do not possess the basis for any significant social and
spiritual creativity. All these things are possible only in Israel.

But Israel itself is not a finished achievement. So long as a
majority of Jews are not living there, and so long as Israel has not
surmounted the difficulties of immigrant absorption and settlement,
achieved a firm economic and cultural footing, it will not be able to
function properly as the country of the entire Jewish people. Furthermore,
Israel cannot yet guarantee its own security vis a vis the Arab states

and the rest of the world. There is still much to be done, then, and the Diaspora should concentrate on providing resources for the growth, strengthening, and development of the state.

According to the Ahad Ha'am construct, the Dispersion in the free world is not a "Diaspora." The Jews of the West have proven themselves capable of sustaining an organized communal life, of laying a solid base for Jewish education and Jewish spiritual creativity, and of defending their own rights by their own strength. The state of Israel, certainly, offers the advantages of complete Jewish living, is a focus of Jewish activity, and symbolizes the unity and the mutual responsibility of all sections of the Jewish people. But it also has some deficiencies which the Diaspora can supply. Therefore, the affiliation of the Jews of the free world to Israel is not a one-sided dependence or a sub-ordinate role. In this case, the ceter, too, is dependent on the periphery, which has a base and substance of its own.

From this standpoint, Israel is a finished achievement. To be sure, it still requires growth, strengthening and development. It has to absorb Jews coming from places of distress, and achieve peace and internal stability. But all this should be looked upon in terms of consolidation, not in those of the "completing" of an undertaking. In its broad, general lines the Zionist venture is an accomplished fact.

According to this construct, homeland-Diaspora relations are relations between independent centers, existing side by side, and helping each other in accordance with their respective qualities and

capacities. These relations are viewed in terms of cooperation aimed at the preservation and consolidation of an existing situation.

Even though the ideological debate has not been decided, it would appear that, practically speaking, the Ahad Ha'am line of thought has won the day in both the Diaspora and Israel. This is more convenient for the leadership of both parties, mainly for reasons of institutional independence. Israel's leaders wanted to exploit to the fullest the re-establishment of Jewish sovereignty, and was led to create the feeling that with the establishment of the state, the Zionist movement had accomplished its mission. This expressed itself most clearly on the domestic front, in such areas as the economy, settlement, social welfare, the absorption of olim (Jews coming to settle in Israel), and education. All these functions passed from voluntary social organizations to the purview of a centralized governmental administration. As a result, it was no longer possible to assign any practical meaning to the concept for people actually living in Israel, "Zionist", except so far as the fulfilment of civic duties were concerned.

The feeling that Zionism had achieved its objective also expressed itself in the area of Israel-Diaspora relations. The direct involvement of the Diaspora Zionist leadership through the World Zionist Organization in decisions concerning settlement, economy, and society in Israel was terminated. A principle was laid down that the Diaspora Jewish leadership would operate in its sphere and the Israeli governmental institutions would function in theirs, and the mutual relations between

them would be those of two separate, distinct bodies in cooperation.
It is obvious that such relations should express themselves in economic
and political support, and not in <u>aliyah</u>. For an <u>aliyah</u> that
originates not out of the negative motive of economic or political
harship and anti-Semitism, but because of the positive sense of
national identity felt by individual Jews, attracting them to make
their homes in Israel, such as <u>aliyah</u> requires the creation of a
direct sense of participation and involvement, making it possible for
the individual <u>olim</u>, through the organizations to which they belong,
to influence the absorption process in Israel.

In actual fact, Israel's Zionist leadership has stopped posing
<u>aliyah</u> as its main demand of the Jews of the free world. The assumption
with respect to <u>aliyah</u> was that all efforts have to be concentrated on
bringing the Jews from countries in which they suffer persecution. The
Jews of the free world would contribute the material resources needed
for the absorption of these victims. Their reward would be a newly
gained pride, the creation of a focus of Jewish communal activity,
and a direct affiliation with the living symbol of the unity of the
Jewish people.

It should cause no surprise, therefore, that the Zionist leader-
ship in Israel started speaking in Ahad Ha'am terms about relations
with the Jews of the free world, in the sense that relations between
the two centers standing side by side were defined as relations between
"the center" and "the periphery."

There was a paradoxical element in this. A leadership that had rejected the Ahad Ha'am outlook before the establishment of the state seized at the Ahad Ha'am line after its existence was a fact. The painful paradox is completed by the fact that, basically, the use of Ahad Ha'am's terminology was no more than a hollow rhetorical cover. Certainly the mere existence of the Jewish state made Diaspora Jewry proud and straightened their backs, since it provides them with a symbol of Jewish unity and solidarity. But is that what Ahad Ha'am meant by "spiritual center"? Did he have in mind solely economic and political activity?

What Ahad Ha'am was aiming at was a claim that the center had upon the periphery for a fuller, more complete Jewish life, with Israel serving the Diaspora as a source of spiritual inspiration. The truth to be derived from a comparison between the reality since the establishment of the state and what existed previously is that inspiration is only generated by active involvement. The cessation of participation creates a dynamic of estrangement between groups bent on flaunting their independence of each other. The signs of this alienation are quite evident today. In Israel there is an inclination towards "Israeli" rather than "Jewish" identity. While in the Diaspora an ideology has taken hold according to which Diaspora-Israel relations are seen in terms of "Babylon" and "Jerusalem" (with today's Diaspora, mainly American Jewry, seen as the modern counterpart of the economically,

socially, and above all culturally and spiritually superior Babylonian
Jewry of the Talmudic period). From time to time, to be sure, when
the existence of Israel seems directly threatened, the estrangement
is dispelled and Jews of all kind close ranks in a show of solidarity.

The logical conclusion of all this is simply that the assumption
that the state of Israel is a finished achievement of the Zionist
movement is premature. Only a minority, though a   minority
is living there; the country's settlement and economic base is weak and
not yet self-sufficient; Israeli society contains many tensions
stemming from the process of the _aliyah_ absorption which is far from
over; there is as yet no clear consensus as to its Jewish character;
and peace between Israel and the Arabs is still very far off.

On the other hand, the Diaspora is also far from having solved its
problems. The Jews of some parts of the Diaspora still have to struggle
to save themselves by immediate _aliyah_, while other sections are
hurtling at frightening speed toward total assimilation.

It is difficult to describe such a situation as a fulfillment of
the Zionist vision.

Therefore, we have to envisage a set of homeland-Diaspora relations
based on the opposite assumption--that the mission is not yet accomplished,
and that what is needed is not merely help in consolidation, but full
participation in the completion of the settlement, and laying the
social and cultural foundations of the state so that it shall be able
to cope with its own problems and with those of the Jewish people
as a whole.

Towards this end, Diaspora Jewry has to play a formative part in Israeli life. Such a contribution is expressed first and foremost in _aliyah_.

This does not, however, mean a simplistic return to Herzlianism. Our discussion has shown, I think, that both the Herzl and the Ahad Ha'am line were one-sided and unrealistic with respect to a certain sector of historic experience. The free Diaspora is in the middle of an extremely dangerous process of assimilation, and it is difficult to foresee a solid future for it. But it must survive for a long time and in order that it can--and also so that it may be a resource for the upbuilding of the state--it must strengthen its institutions, intensify its spiritual creativity, and exploit every favorable condition in the Diaspora that might be able to help towards this end.

There is no contradiction between the Diaspora's duty towards itself and its duty toward Israel. On the contrary: The two complement each other. Of course, ther will always be competition on practical terms in the allocation of resources between the needs of the Diaspora and Israel. But fundamentally, there is a strong connection between the strengthening of the Diaspora and an increase in participation in the upbuilding of Israel.

In this respect, therefore, A.D. Gordon's view seems to me the most creative and incisive one. But it needs supplementation with many authentic elements in Zionist thought from the beginning till our

time. It also needs updating based on a detailed analysis of the situation of the Jewish people at the present time.

On the basis of this two-sided and realistic thought-construct, which aims at sustaining the Diaspora while not abandoning the ongoing struggle for participation in the upbuilding of the homeland, we must come up with new organizational tools and methods of implementation.