In memory of Joel A. Linsider

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Prologue

This volume is the translation of a book that was originally published in Hebrew in 2006. Great efforts were invested in the English translation, primarily by Joel A. Linsider, of blessed memory, who did the translation itself. With the completion of the translation, Joel passed away, as if he had completed the last mission that he had taken upon himself. Joel was a wonderful individual. An American Jew who had a thorough knowledge of Hebrew and an intense love for his fellow Jews, he made aliyah a year before his death in order to be with his children and grandchildren, who had made aliyah before him. This book is dedicated to his memory.

This book is the continuation and enhancement of my previous work, *Religion and Zionism*, which was published in 2002. The issues that it raises include the relationships between the Land of Israel, the Torah of Israel, and the Jewish people, as manifested from the pre-Zionist period at the beginning of the nineteenth century until our times. The discussion traces the development of these issues on the theoretical and the practical levels, both within non-Zionist Orthodox society and among the thinkers, leaders, and members of the Zionist movement and the State of Israel. Chapters of the book focus at times on prominent individuals and at times on thematic issues related to the historical matters under discussion. Writings that I published previously on these topics have been updated and revised.

The difference between this volume and the Hebrew original is that one chapter relating to Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever which appears in the Hebrew edition is missing in the English version, because it was published previously in *Religion and Zionism*. In its place, I have added a chapter on the "new Jew" in Religious Zionism, which serves in a sense as a general conclusion to the topic.

Most of this book's chapters are based on articles that previously appeared only in Hebrew. The English translations of those chapters in this volume are entirely new. Earlier versions of Chapters 2, 7, 11, and 12 have appeared in English in various forums. Some of these chapters have been substantially revised, and all are newly translated here. Nevertheless, I relied on the earlier translations to varying degrees in preparing the new translations that appear here. Chapter 10, which also appeared previously in English, has not been newly translated for this volume. What appears here is an edited version of an earlier translation. (For bibliographical details on that earlier translation, see the first footnote to that chapter.)

This work quotes extensively from documents and other sources more or less contemporaneous with the events recounted. Few of these documents have previously been translated into English, and the extracts from them are newly translated here. The book also quotes from other primary sources and classical Jewish texts, some of which are available in English. Where I have used previous translations of the materials, I have cited those translations. In most instances, however, the translations are my own. In translating biblical verses, I relied heavily on the Old JPS and New JPS versions (*The Holy Scriptures* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917]; *The Tanakh*, 2nd ed. [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1999]).

In transliterating Hebrew words, I aimed for a balance between precision and readability. I have used the following conventions:

> ' = '*alef*
> *ḥ* = *ḥet*
> *k* = *kaf*
> ` = `*ayin*
> *ẓ* = *ẓadi*
> *q* = *qof*

Where ‘*alef* and `*ayin* appear at the beginning or the end of a word, they are not represented unless needed for clarity. In most instances, transliterations of personal names follow the foregoing conventions, but where a name is widely familiar in a different transliteration, I have retained the familiar form (e.g., Rabbi H̲ayyim of Volozhin, but Chaim Nah̲man Bialik; Chaim Weizmann).

The conventions used with respect to the titles of Hebrew works cited are set forth in the introductory note to the bibliography. Note that I have followed the practice of capitalizing only the initial word of a Hebrew title (*Shivat ẕiyyon*, not *Shivat Ẕiyyon*).

Introduction

Principles and Concepts

Religion and Nationalism

For many scholars—historians, anthropologists, and sociologists—religion as a social phenomenon signifies a conservative, even medieval, perspective on politics and ethics alike. Nationalism, in contrast, is regarded as a modern and, for many, secular phenomenon.[1] Some scholars posit that nationalism as a social movement arose to replace, for societies and individuals alike, religious identities that had been lost.[2] But this stereotypical and unidimensional understanding of the past two hundred years of human history is now being subjected to penetrating criticism by historians of society and historians of religion.[3]

Even if it is granted that nationalism arises in societies in which religious identity has been attenuated, it still cannot be denied that national identity employs aspects of the religious tradition in fashioning itself, and doing so is sometimes warranted by the religious differences between national groups. In many cases, nationalism enlists religion

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1   S. N. Eisenstadt, "Studies of Modernization and Sociological Theory," *History and Theory* 13 (1974): 226, 230; C. J. Hayes, "Nationalism," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 11 (1933): 243; A. D. Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Robertson, 1979), 16, 33. According to Smith, the transition from religion to secular nationalism took place via unsuccessful attempts at religious reform: see ibid., 37. Smith even suggests a causal connection between religion and nationalism: nationalism arises to save the group's identity after religion fails to maintain it. On Jewish society's aspirations to shed its religious component in the wake of modernization and the reactions to those aspirations, see J. Katz, "The Jewish Response in Western Europe," in *Patterns of Modernity*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 102–103. On tendencies in European society to separate religion from modern life, see H. Daalder, "European Political Tradition and Processes of Modernization: Groups, the Individual and the State," ibid., 22, 23, 28.

2   A. D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth, 1971), 43; ibid., *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, Introduction.

3   On the role and place of religion in the formation of nationalism, see Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 12, 30-42, 56–57; M. H. Boehm, "Nationalism," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 11 (1933): 236–237. Smith deals as well with the tension that is generated between religion and nationalism and with the transformation of religion within nationalism; see S. Almog, "Religion and the State as Seen through Jewish Nationalism," in *Priesthood and Monarchy*, ed. I. Gafni and G. Motzkin (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 1987), 285–287.

to sanctify its symbols.[4] This view of history binds nationalism and religious tradition into a Gordian knot that bears the potential for perpetual conflict within its strands. Owen Chadwick put it this way with respect to European nationalism: "Christianity and nationality stood in tension. On the one hand, the national religion helped to make part of the national consciousness. On the other hand, Christianity proposed to cross the barriers of race and unite men in an order of charity."[5]

Because of Christianity's ecclesiastical and international nature, religion served as a tool for the rise of European nationalism, but sometimes it also impeded its realization. Even within Christianity, the Christian community that formed the majority in a particular country did not always identify with the dominant church within that country, a state of affairs that promoted ethnic separatism, as in the cases of Ireland, the Balkan states, or the states of the Former Soviet Union established following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[6] In other countries, nationalism tended to unify, or at least protect, different streams within the church, as in the case of Germany, with its Lutheran majority and Catholic minority. A similar situation can be found in Islamic lands, where governance may be in the hands of one religious community even though the majority of the populace identifies with a different one. That is the case, for example, in Iraq, and it was formerly the case in Lebanon, where the government was dominated by Christians even though the majority of the populace was Muslim. The religious element is central in the shaping of national identity.

In Judaism, the relationships between religion and ethnicity are made even more complicated by their total overlap. No important Jewish nationalist thinker, and no mainstream Jewish nationalist movement, called for or believed in drawing a line between religion and nationalism. Some urged that religion be severed from tradition and that nationalism replace tradition in giving religion its meaning. But even those who sought separation of church and state did not extend that demand to encompass the Jewish national movement overall.[7] Treitschke made a

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4   H. Ben-Israel, "The Study of Nationalism as a Historical Phenomenon," in *Jewish Nationalism and Politics*, ed. J. Reinharz, Yosef Salmon, and Gid'on Shimoni (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar and Tauber institute, 1997), 79; Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, 3.

5   O. Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 130.

6   Ibid., 127–131.

7   Treitschke made a similar observation with respect to German nationalism, ibid., 131. According

similar observation with respect to German nationalism.[8]

The dispute between advocates of a religious concept of the community and proponents of a secular one pertained primarily to the relationships between the religious and national entities. One group sought to make religion a tool of the nation, while the other sought to make the nation a tool of religion. The line dividing the two positions has been blurred and muddied in various ideological formulations, but it remains a substantive matter of principle.[9]

Anthony Smith, a student of nationalism, offers another insight in this context. Smith argues that in minority communities, the nationalist thinker seeks to synthesize tradition and modernity. He does not abandon tradition so much as reinterpret it in a manner consistent with the spirit of nationalism.[10]

Modernization and Secularization

Within the study of Jewish nationalism, one can likewise find the idea that nationalism was the heir to religion, but that view is more prevalent among historiographers and sociologists of Jewish nationalism than among its principal thinkers. It is enough to mention the programmatic remarks of Dov Weinrib:

> Zionism means the establishment of a secure refuge, a national home, a territorial center, a Jewish state, and so forth, through the systematic actions of human beings, without awaiting the actions of supernatural or meta-rational forces—which is to say, Zionism's goal is secular, in man's hand and not in the hands of Heaven.

He goes on to say that even in the case of rabbis who supported Zionism and based their position

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to Baruch Kimmerling, only five percent of the Israeli Jewish population can be defined as anti-religious, see B. Kimmerling, *Migrants, Settlers, Natives* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2004), 188.

8   See Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind*, 131.

9   On this conflict in the State of Israel, see C. Liebman, "Religion and Democracy in Israel," *Zemanim* 50-51 (1994): 134–144; B. Kimmerling, "Religion, Nationalism, and Democracy," *Zemanim* 50-51 (1994): 116–131.

10   G. Shimoni, "Jewish Nationalism as Ethnic Nationalism," in Reinharz, Salmon, and Shimoni, *Jewish Nationalism and Politics*, 85–86, 91.

on statements by the sages of blessed memory, those [statements] served as the permissive ruling—one might even say as the prooftext—that they hoped to find, allowing for the resolution of secular, real-world questions regarding the Land of Israel and the Diaspora.[11]

In that same spirit, Ben-Zion Dinur formulated the characteristics of Jewish nationalism in poetic terms: "… the sanctity of life instead of the sanctification of God's name [i.e., martyrdom]."[12]

A more recent but no less biting formulation is that of David Vital in his opening remarks at a conference on Zionism and religion held at Tel Aviv University: "Zionism, whether as a movement or as a social concept, was primarily a movement that rebelled against tradition in general and Orthodoxy in particular." As he sees it, Religious Zionism divests modern Jewish nationalism of "its primary, historical, original content."[13] The same argument appears in an article by Baruch Kimmerling, who saw "religious Jewish nationalism, or people who came to it [that is, to Jewish nationalism] from a religious perspective," as merely

> a drop in the bucket of the religious-Jewish collective, for religion in principle did not permit "hastening the end" or realization of collective redemption without realization of the vision of the End of Days.[14]

Weinrib, Dinur, Vital, and Kimmerling all mold Zionist historiography to an axiomatic, subjective model at odds with historical facts. Even the secular Zionist thinkers did not deny the existence of Religious Zionism as a stream within the national Zionist movement—"the pious national course," in the words of Aḥad Ha-Am (1856–1927). They simply insisted, in the name of pluralism and tolerance, on secular Zionism's

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11   D. Weinrib, "Foundations and History of Zionism," *Tarbiz* 8 (1937): 71–72.
12   B-Z. Dinur, *As the Generations Change* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik 1954), 9.
13   D. Vital, "Introduction," *Topics in the History of Zionism and the Yishuv* 2 (Tel Aviv, 1983), 12, 17.
14   Kimmerling, "Religion, Nationalism, and Democracy," 116. Kimmerling's account in his article is inconsistent with his initial premise that religious Zionists played—and continue to play—only a minor part in the formulation of Jewish nationalism. Later, Kimmerling offered some new insights regarding the relationship between religion and nationalism in Jewish society, noting "the substantial difficulty of separating religion from nation within the Zionist version of Jewish nationalism" (Kimmerling, *Migrants*, 15).

right to exist, and refused to grant the religious community a monopoly over Jewish religion or, even more so, over Jewish history. To be sure, the secularists advanced a different view regarding the place of religion in national life, as Samuel Almog has shown,[15] but the Religious Zionists had no difficulty in bringing their interests to bear within Zionist society in its early days, from the 1860s to the late 1880s. Even if no one will dissent from Shlomo Avineri's maxim that Zionism is "the Jewish response to the challenge of modernization,"[16] it seems clear to me as well that no one will accept the determination that Zionism equals secularization.

Having agreed that the Zionist national movement was modern but not secular, we must try to describe the weight assigned to religion and its place within the movement. In presenting the question, we have already determined in principle that religion is an element in the historical embodiment of Jewish nationalism, though not its bearer. We have acknowledged a shift from religion as the bearer of Jewish identity to religion as a component of national identity. Ehud Luz accurately found that "Jewish nationalism drew its legitimacy from the Jewish religion," and that the bearers of secular nationalism needed carriers of religion "in order to realize the Zionist dream."[17] The need for religion in this context may have a certain instrumental quality, and nationalism therefore felt itself empowered to adopt, from all the elements of religion, those that suited its spirit.

In arguing that Zionist nationalism was not a secular movement, I do not mean to deny the (correct) claim of *haredi* anti-Zionists that Zionism is a movement that fosters secularization. The two issues must be distinguished. Even though affiliation with the movement was not conditioned on acceptance of a secular identity, and even though the definition of Jewish nationalism was not secular in content, the fact remains that many people, on joining the movement, shed their *halakhah*-observant identities. For many youngsters, the movement served as a way-station on the path from the world of religious observance to the

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15   S. Almog, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness*, trans. Ina Friedman (New York: St. Martin's and Magnes, 1987), 122–128. See also ibid., chs. 14 and 15 on messianism and secularism.

16   S. Avineri, *Varieties of Zionist Thought* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1980), 24.

17   E. Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement (1882–1904)*, trans. L. J. Schramm (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988), X, XI.

"free" world, that is, the world free of religious obligations.[18] That was the haredi argument against Zionism as formulated by Rabbi Eliezer Gordon of Telz, one of the greatest Russian rabbis of the time: more than "purifying the defiled, it defiles the pure."[19]

The Scholarly Literature

In the study of Zionism's history and development, little attention has been paid to the place of religion as a system of beliefs and ideas and as a social organization within the Jewish national movement. That omission can be explained in various ways. Because religion was represented by parties within the Zionist organization, its study has been limited primarily to inter-party political discussions. In addition, the broad opposition to Zionism within the various streams of Orthodoxy gave the impression of enmity between Jewish religion and Zionism from the earliest days of the Jewish national movement. But once the subject of political factions within Zionism had faded from the stage, and support for the State of Israel had come to characterize most segments of Orthodoxy that survived the Holocaust, there was a revival of interest in the original ideas of Zionism in general and Religious Zionism in particular.

Only in recent years has much attention been paid to the relationships between Jewish religion and Jewish nationalism. Two important perspectives on the matter bear noting: the examination of Orthodox anti-Zionism as a matter of historiography as presented in the studies of Ehud Luz, Jacob Tsur, and Shalom Razabi as well as in my own work, and the sociological and ideological inquiry into Religious Zionism as it appears in the work of Aryeh Fishman, Aviezer Ravitzky, and a number of books by Dov Schwartz. Ravitzky nicely surveyed and analyzed the religiously based opposition to Zionism within Eastern European Orthodox society, an opposition that shaped Jewish Orthodoxy in that

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18   An instructive example of the process can be seen in the correspondence between Chaim Naḥman Bialik and Rabbi Isaac Nissenbaum, both members of the Ḥovevei Ẓiyyon organization in the Volozhin yeshivah known as Neẓaḥ Yisra'el. After Bialik published his first poems and it became clear that he was becoming secularized, Nissenbaum, in the name of their membership in the organization, tried to persuade him to suppress these ideas and even proposed to support publication of an edition of edited, "improved" poems. See the letter from Nissenbaum to Bialik, 8 Av 5654 [10 August 1894] in *Letters of Rabbi Nissenbaum*, ed. I. Shapira (Jerusalem: Aḥvah, 1956), 20–21.

19   Z. A. Ribner, *The Great Scholar Rabbi Eliezer Gordon of Blessed Memory* (Tel Aviv, 1968), 134.

part of the world until the Holocaust. Schwartz demonstrated in striking detail the degree of intellectual innovation that characterized all aspects of Religious Zionism, but considerable work remains to be done in the study and description of religion's role in shaping Zionism's ethos and symbols. Moreover, the struggles associated with haredi opposition to Zionism have not yet been exhaustively studied. Today no one denies that religion was the central subject on the Zionist agenda throughout its pre-State history and later within the State of Israel, and that it remains the decisive domestic issue shaping the movement and the State.

What I hope to do in this book is present a broad view of the issue from the pre-Zionist period to the establishment of the State of Israel and after. The book's chapters represent a continuation of the articles in my earlier book, *Religion and Zionism: First Encounters* (originally published in Hebrew as *Dat ve-ẕiyyonut: imutim rishonim*). The historical picture painted in that book provides the underpinning for this one, which extends the inquiry to additional social and ideological aspects. This Introduction will focus on the implications of those inquiries, grouped by subject: the Land of Israel and the religion of Israel; the Land of Israel and modernity; halakhic implications of Land of Israel-based nationalist concepts, social and political processes that follow from Religious Zionist teachings, and the influence of religion on the Zionist ethos.

Interrelationships between the Land of Israel and the Religion of Israel
The place of the Land of Israel within the religion of Israel has been considered from various perspectives by students of Jewish thought and society throughout the ages. It is unlikely that there is any other religion in which the territorial element figures as significantly as it does in Judaism. The Land is a prominent element in every aspect of Judaism: theology, halakhah, eschatology, and apocalypse. Indeed, there is no Judaism without the Land of Israel. To be sure, the nation of Israel has survived since the destruction of the Second Temple without the Land of Israel as its territorial center, but the Land of Israel elements that have remained in Jewish collective memory and ritual make the Land a central element of Jewish consciousness, the very core of its life.

From a theological perspective, the Land is sacred and endowed with unique divine protection, and its residents are eligible to fulfill the commandments that are dependent on it. From a halakhic perspective, the Land must be redeemed from foreign ownership and settled, and one

must carry out the commandments that can be carried out only there. The unique status of the Land within the Jew's world is unaffected by the differences of opinion over whether living in the Land of Israel nowadays should be listed as one of the 613 commandments (Naḥmanides believed that it should be included, while Maimonides did not).

These issues were on the table long before the establishment of the Zionist movement and even before ideas about immigrating to the Land of Israel had taken on a nationalist component. The historical context in which these discussions were renewed involved the introduction of modernity into Jewish society and the struggles over Jewish identity that it engendered. Modernity and its ramifications—that is, Enlightenment and the Reform movement in all its forms—generated a reaction within traditional society, a reaction that made its way through a complex process to Orthodoxy and to Zionist nationalism.

This book presents several different ways in which Orthodox Jews dealt with the question of modernity and the Land of Israel. The interrelationships between the Land of Israel and the religion of Israel had already been considered by the father of Central European Jewish Orthodoxy, Rabbi Moses Sofer (known as the Ḥatam Sofer; 1762–1839). Rabbi Sofer's writings are replete with statements regarding the sanctity of the Land of Israel and its central place in the consciousness of the believing Jew. Nevertheless, he did not support immigration to the Land of Israel in his time, either because he did not believe the commandment to settle the Land of Israel was then applicable or because he had reservations related to reports of various mystical activities—applied Kabbalah and graveside rituals—that were developing there at the time.

At the same time, his reliance on the centrality of the Land of Israel in Jewish thought as a counter-argument to Reform tendencies to downplay it, and his concern about mass immigration taking place in the absence of an economic base adequate to support it, made his treatment of the issue inconsistent and perhaps even misleading. On occasion, one gets the sense that the Ḥatam Sofer did not ascribe much importance to the physical Land of Israel and was interested only in "the higher Land of Israel," the spiritual future dwelling place of the Jewish people. At other points, he deprecates Diaspora life in no uncertain terms, characterizing it as "an artificial life," in contrast to life in the Land of Israel.[20]

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20   Y. Salmon, "The Land of Israel in Nineteenth-Century Orthodox Thought," in *The Land of Israel in*

The Ḥatam Sofer sets up a confrontation between the two key Jewish values of settling the Land of Israel and studying Torah. His writings do not tell us which of them takes precedence, but it is clear that in the circumstances of his era, he saw a life of Torah study in the Diaspora as preferable to a life dedicated to the settlement of the Land of Israel. Could that judgment have been tied to the dangers and economic hardships of life in the Land of Israel at the time? Or might it have been more of an a priori judgment about what is primary and what is secondary within Judaism?[21] What can clearly be said is that the Ḥatam Sofer poured cold water on expectations that the Messiah would come in his time.[22]

The Ḥatam Sofer's spiritual disciple, Akiva Joseph Schlesinger (1827–1922), maintained forcefully that he was continuing in his teacher's path. As a practical matter, however, he turned things completely around. Although Schlesinger reacted even more stridently to modernization than the Ḥatam Sofer had, he saw no way to defend against it in the Diaspora. His unambiguous and far-reaching call for immigration to the Land of Israel and his activities in that connection were not at all in accord with the Ḥatam Sofer's views. In Schlesinger's opinion, the Land of Israel had to serve as Judaism's refuge from the Diaspora, where it was melting away. Only in the Land of Israel was it possible to erect a barrier between Jews and their surroundings. The idea of such a barrier had already been raised by the Ḥatam Sofer—"They spoke partly in Yiddish and partly in Hebrew and Aramaic, and it was all mixed up with other languages, a bizarre language, so that we would be a community and not be intermingled with the nations"[23]—but only Schlesinger gave it full voice. The Land of Israel, in his view, was a land of refuge.[24]

Different from both of the foregoing men in image and perspective was Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795–1874), who had no doubt that the commandment to settle the Land of Israel was applicable in his time. The sanctity of the Land of Israel inhered in the land itself, and only there were the people of Israel destined to be redeemed. Kalischer

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Modern Jewish Thought, ed. A. Ravitzky (Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1998), 426.

21   Ibid., 428 and n. 19.

22   Ḥatam Sofer, *Discourses* 2, Discourse for 7 Av 5595 [2 August 1835], s.v. "*hashiveinu ha-shem eilekha*," in *Sefer ḥatam sofer*, ed. J. Pollack (Michalovce: Grünfeld, 1939), 56.

23   Ḥatam Sofer, *Discourses* 1, 166 (discourse for 7 Tevet 5577 [26 December 1816]).

24   A. J. Schlesinger, *The Book of the Society of the Restoration of Things to Their Former Glory* (Jerusalem, 1873), 26–1.

did not suggest that the commandment to study Torah might be superseded by the commandment to settle the Land, but he considered the ideal to be to "grasp the one without letting go of the other" (Eccl. 7:18). The two commandments, which represent Judaism's central value systems, can be united and fulfilled jointly. Settlement of the Land of Israel is not merely a positive commandment, it is a condition to redemption overall. To be sure, it is only "the beginning of redemption," the first steps of the process, attainable by natural means, that the Jew may grasp without clear divine aid. Yet, he believed, those initial steps are a necessary precondition to complete redemption: one who enters upon the performance of a commandment will ultimately merit its full realization.[25] Religious redemption and national redemption become blended: "And that is the essence of the redemption—that we will be free people."[26]

The Ḥatam Sofer, Schlesinger, and Kalischer shared the idea that the Land of Israel could serve as a shutter behind which traditional society could secure itself against modernity. In that sense, all three may be considered Orthodox thinkers, and they differ only in the extent of their reaction to modernity and the role assigned to the Land in their reactions. Schlesinger totally rejected modernity, and his perception of the Land of Israel was that it would serve to separate the Jews from the world, becoming the land of a "people that dwells apart" (Num. 23). Kalischer, in contrast, saw nationalism as a positive modern phenomenon, and he therefore integrated tradition and nationalism by promoting settling the Land of Israel, contrary to the view of the Reform movement. The Ḥatam Sofer, for the most part, rejected modernity, but he believed one could protect oneself against it even in the Diaspora context. For the Ḥatam Sofer, the Land of Israel served only a conscious spiritual purpose, that of making the Jew unwilling to be absorbed into his surroundings.

Kalischer's successor in crystallizing Religious Zionist thought was Rabbi Samuel Mohilever (1824–1898). He adopted Kalischer's idea of redemption by stages and characterized the first stages of redemption—"redemption by natural means"—as "low-level redemption." Unlike Kalischer, however, Mohilever was confronted by a new set of

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25   Salmon, "The Land of Israel in Nineteenth-Century Orthodox Thought," 444–445.
26   Z. H. Kalischer, *Passover Haggadah* (Warsaw, 1864), 20, 38.

circumstances including widespread Jewish emigration from Russia, increased Jewish suffering, the rise of secular Jewish nationalism, and a developing Jewish national movement. He enlisted in a range of Zionist activities, but his theoretical discussions are sporadic and scattered.

That said, it was Mohilever who produced the most far-reaching Religious Zionist text. On his return in 1890 from a journey to the Land of Israel, while still aboard ship, he formulated his argument that residents of the Land of Israel who did not fulfill the commandments were on a higher spiritual level than Diaspora-dwelling Jews who fulfilled the commandments in their entirety:

> The Holy One Blessed Be He prefers that His children dwell in His land, even if they do not observe the Torah properly, than that they dwell outside the Land and observe the Torah properly.[27]

The sanctity of the Land of Israel takes precedence over the fulfillment of commandments, and the link between the nation and the Land thus acquires primal metaphysical status.

As far-reaching as it was, Mohilever's statement, which appeared in print a year after being uttered, did not immediately elicit criticism from within haredi society, and only after his death did haredi critics revile the statement in poisonous terms. In his article, Mohilever also reiterated something that Kalischer had already said: "Merely dwelling in the Land of Israel, without being involved in its development, is not to be considered so great a commandment."[28] The words constitute a clear devaluation of the Old Yishuv from a halakhic perspective in particular and a religious communal perspective in general.

An independent line of thought about these matters was pursued by Yeḥiel Mikhel Pines (1843–1913), a writer, journalist, and communal worker. His early work coincided with the Zionist activity of Kalischer and Mohilever, and he remained active until the time of Isaac Jacob Reines (1839–1915), thus spanning three generations of Religious Zionist thinkers. In his writing and thought, Pines abandoned the

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27 S. Mohilever, "The Purpose of My Journey to the Land of Israel," in *The Book of Samuel*, ed. J. L. Fishman (Jerusalem: Mizrachi, 1923), 38–39.

28 Ibid., 40. For a full description of Mohilever's philosophy and activity, see Y. Salmon, *Religion and Zionism: First Encounters* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2002), 140–176.

homiletical mode, and his writing employed a modern Hebrew idiom. Prooftexts from early sources do not serve as the fulcrum of his arguments, and he is the first Religious Zionist thinker whose Zionist teachings are unreservedly modern. Pines subscribed to an intellectual thesis that preceded his nationalist thesis: working the land was "the basis and foundation on which a social polity and national sanctuary might be built."[29]

The problem that burdened Pines in the late 1860s was finding economic support "for thousands of the afflicted of the time," a problem whose solution might be found in Russia, in America, or in the Land of Israel. The preference for the Land of Israel grew out of "feelings of love for the land of our fathers," which was also a nationalist consideration.[30]

Pines fully expressed his concept of the Land of Israel in several articles written in 1875. As he described it, the national revival and the revival of the Land were integrated. By its very character, the Land would respond only to its children, and only then are they destined to make it fertile. Pines aspired to establish a modern state in the Land of Israel, with its capital in Jerusalem. Jerusalem would be "like one of the glorious cities of Europe."[31] To these ideas, he added that of the ingathering of exiles to the historical land.

At this point, Pines introduced the idea of the sanctity of the Land, which provides the underpinnings for his positions on matters of public policy. He attributed to the Land a status independent of the nation dwelling on it. The nation is obligated to treat the Land "with unconditioned love" and "to restore it to its erstwhile glory."[32] In formulating the rules for the Teḥiyyat Yisra'el (Revival of Israel) society, however, Pines accepted the position of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858–1922), who held that the nation precedes the Land, and the association's declared goal was "to revive the nation of Israel and raise it out of its degradation."[33] As time went by, though, he seems to have returned to his original view

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29   Y. M. Pines, "On Improving the Situation of Our Jewish Brethren in Russia," *Ha-maggid* 13 (1869): 98.

30   Y. M. Pines, "On Working the Land," *Ha-karmel* 7 (1868): 27–28.

31   Y. M. Pines, "On Settling the Land of Israel," *Ha-levanon* 11, no. 35 (1875): 273.

32   Y. M. Pines, "May Those Who Love You, Jerusalem, Be at Peace," *Ha-levanon* 12, no. 9 (1875): 66.

33   By-laws of the Teḥiyat Yisra'el organization, Marḥeshvan 5642 [late 1881], in *Sources on the History of Hibbat Ẓiyyon and the Settlement of the Land of Israel*, ed. S. Laskov (Tel Aviv: Ha-kibbutz Ha-me'uḥad, 1990), 1, doc. 16, 122.

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