

Jewish Secularism as a Challenge for Modern Jewish Theologians

The Case of David Hartman's Thought

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Abstract

In this paper, I claim that, among modern Jewish religious thinkers (both Orthodox and non-Orthodox), David Hartman (1931-) is the one who goes furthest in his willingness to see Jewish (primarily Israeli) secularism as an equal partner of religious Judaism.

I present the various definitions of secularism implicit in Hartman's writings, alongside his changing attitude towards the phenomenon of secularism. This survey, coupled with the variety of Hartman's definitions of secularism and his reaction to them, will indicate the significant theological innovation that emerges from his religious thought. An examination of Hartman's statements regarding secular Judaism indicates an authentically pluralistic stance, one of mutual respect and a quest for shared ethical values among religious Jews and secular ones.

Keywords: David Hartman, Jewish secularism, religious Judaism, secular Judaism, pluralistic stance

The secularization of the Jewish people in modern times has been, and continues to be, a source of confusion and challenge to the various schools of Jewish religious thought, as well as a difficult test of its degree of tolerance and acceptance of the other. For the past several generations modern Jewish religious thinkers have found themselves in a quandary over the disjunction between pre-modern categories of Jewish law that call the Jew who doesn't define himself as religious a heretic or evil person (or, alternatively, as deficient in his own identity, an "infant who was taken captive"), and the Western approach that sees the secularist as a person who adheres to a well-defined system of ethical-humanistic beliefs and values stemming from his own free choice. The difficulty of harmonizing these two opposing worldviews, particularly within the Israeli political reality, generates arguments and divisiveness, alongside dialectical theological stances that combine the two ideological poles, the traditional and the Western-modern, with limited, albeit creative, success.

In this paper I wish to claim that, among modern Jewish religious thinkers (both Orthodox and non-Orthodox), David Hartman (1931-) is the one who goes furthest in his willingness to see Jewish (primarily Israeli) secularism as an equal partner of religious Judaism. I shall begin by presenting other positions concerning the status of the secular Jew and secular Judaism in the eyes of twentieth-century Jewish religious thought and thinkers.¹⁾ Further on, I will present the various definitions of secularism implicit in Hartman's writings, alongside his changing attitude towards the phenomenon of secularism. This survey, coupled with the variety of Hartman's definitions of secularism and his reaction to them, will indicate the significant theological innovation that emerges from his religious thought. An examination of Hartman's statements regarding secular Judaism indicates an authentically pluralistic stance, one of mutual respect and of a quest for shared ethical values among religious Jews and secular ones.²⁾ In fashioning this stance, Hartman attacks the attitude of religious superiority and arrogance that finds strong expression among Orthodox theologians, both Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) and modern. Hartman also rejects in passing the validity of applying the traditional, pre-modern definitions of Jewish Law regarding the Jew who does not accept the authority of the *halakhah* (Jewish Law) to the contemporary secular reality.

Nevertheless, the considerable ambivalence towards secularism that likewise emerges from Hartman's religious thought raises with full force the following question: to what extent is any religious thought, particularly that based upon the consciousness of a covenant between the people of Israel and its God, able to allocate a place of respect to a Jewish identity that is not focused upon a belief in God, given that the model for relation to Him is the metaphor of a covenant of marriage and love between God and humanity? In my opinion, Hartman's ability to transcend this ambivalence towards Jewish secularism depends upon the degree to which he recognizes the unique exegetical aspects of secular Judaism in Israel. The paper's final section shall thus be devoted to an examination of some aspects of the secular exegesis of Jewish sources. In conclusion, we shall examine the extent to which Hartman's writings allow or encourage true cooperation with this secular exegetical approach in answering the current spiritual challenges of the Jewish people.

During the course of this article I shall be discussing the concept of secularism in two different senses. In one, universal sense, secularism is an intellectual stance that entails the definition of ethics on an independent basis, lacking in religious symbols and nations, an ideology that struggles for freedom of religion and freedom from religion, and that aspires to determine the proper path for man by means of reason, examined by experience, and confirmed by humanity. According to this definition, secularism differs from atheism in that, unlike religion, it is indifferent towards the unknown—that is, towards the issue of the existence of God, the afterlife, etc.³⁾ In the sociological sense, the secular ethical stance entails the creation of a social situation in which space, time, and human and economic resources are removed from the responsibility of the religious establishment and from the hold of religious

assumptions that previously governed them, and are given to authorities that have one sort or another of professional, rather than theological, training. According to this understanding, secularism transforms religion from a power that dominates all to a distinct compartment within the social order.⁴⁾

In the second sense, the concept of the “secular” is regarded in its Jewish context.⁵⁾ Secularism, according to this definition, involves the propounding of an exegetical stance which constitutes an alternative to the religious interpretation of the classical sources of Judaism—primarily of the Bible, but also of Rabbinic Judaism (Mishnah, the Talmud), Jewish mysticism (the Kabbalah), and Jewish philosophy throughout the generations. A secularist-Jewish stance necessarily involves a universalist understanding of secularism, from which it draws its inspiration and authority: just as secular humanism bases its ethics upon independent-rational elements, so does secular Judaism strive to ground Judaism upon rational bases, independent of religious faith or the acceptance of one or another religious authority. There follows from this the definition of secular Judaism or Judaism as a culture. Within the modern Jewish consciousness, this definition is identified primarily with the secular Zionist thought of Ahad Ha-Am (1856-1927).

As the study of the history of Zionist thought has demonstrated, at the inception of the Zionist movement the revolutionary definition of Judaism as a culture threatened to create a radical split between Orthodox religious Zionism and secular “cultural” Zionism.⁶⁾ This split was prevented by removing the cultural issue from the agenda of the Zionist movement and focusing on political activity, upon which agreement between the secular and the Orthodox was possible. Nevertheless, the echoes of this century-old polemic continue to reverberate and ferment in the Jewish and Israeli milieu to this very day. There is no doubt that the translation of Judaism from a religious language to a national-public idiom, to a “civil religion” open to an infinite variety of meanings (from which derives the close connection between Zionism and Jewish secularism), of contents, values and symbols, lacking in a transcendental dimension, has been one of the most exciting and difficult revolutions in the history of the Jewish people.⁷⁾ The tensions within Hartman’s thought regarding the nature and status of secular Judaism add an additional layer to this ongoing polemic conducted between the understanding of Judaism as a religious essence, and the secular approach that sees Judaism as the sum total of the spiritual creation of the Jewish people.

1. Theological Models for Relating to Jewish Secularism in Modern Jewish Religious Thought

In surveying the map of modern Jewish religious thought, we may distinguish a number of models through which Jewish theology relates to secular Jews.⁸⁾ Surprisingly, this brief survey indicates a certain union of opposites or, to be more precise, some surprising pairings of thinkers whom one would expect to be as distant from one another as East and West, and who yet share similar stances with regard to secularism among the Jewish people.

The first position is one that is hostile towards secularism, seeing it as a transgression and as the polar opposite of the religious world. This position is common to such anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox groups as Satmar Hasidism and Neturei Karta, on the one hand, and to Yeshayahu Leibowitz (1903-1994), on the other.⁹⁾ The difference between them is that, as opposed to these ultra-Orthodox groups, Leibowitz emphasizes his conscious ideological choice, as a Zionist, to cooperate with “transgressors”—both those acting out of convenience (*le-te'avon*) and those motivated by anti-religious spite (*le-hakh'is*)—whose spiritual outlook is totally opposed to his own religious worldview.

The second approach, which ignores the positive contents of secularism, was that formulated by Rabbi Isaiah Karelitz (the “*Hazon Ish*,” 1878-1953), leader of Lithuanian ultra-Orthodoxy in the mid-20th century, who referred to it, in conversation with Israel’s first prime minister David Ben-Gurion, as an “empty wagon”—that is, a world lacking in either positive or negative values. According to this worldview, the secular Jew is an “infant who was taken captive,” a person lacking in spiritual consciousness who is not responsible for his actions. There are those who find a certain breakthrough in this Haredi-paternalistic position, allowing as it does for tolerance towards the secularist in that it sees him as an empty vessel rather than as a sinner.¹⁰⁾

The third position, the organic-hierarchic, incorporates the secular world as the lowest, but still organic part of a hierarchic religious system. According to this worldview, secularism is a transient but necessary stage in the dialectic that is the evolution of the perfection of the world. Notwithstanding the profound differences between them, this approach is adhered to by the main leader of Orthodox religious Zionism, Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook (1865-1935), on the one hand, and by the leading scholar of Jewish Mysticism, Prof. Gershom Scholem (1897-1982), on the other. One of its numerous expressions in the writings of Rav Kook is that “the hidden shall dominate the world.... Rationalism develops only because the hidden performs its scientific and ethical activity beyond the threshold of consciousness.”¹¹⁾ Similar to Rav Kook, Prof. Scholem expressed in his various writings his opinion that secularism is merely a transitional stage in Zionism.¹²⁾ “I am convinced,” he wrote in 1974, “that behind its secular facade Zionism contains within itself religious contents.... The secular nature of the Zionism movement always contradicted the involvement of the religious question, which it cannot avoid.”¹³⁾

As opposed to this dialectic stance, the thought of those Orthodox rabbis who identified with Zionism, including Rabbis Soloveitchik (1903-1993), Reines (1839-1915), and Uziel (1880-1953), was characterized by a partial rejection of the secular system of values, known as the “dualistic” approach.¹⁴⁾ This approach advocated cooperation with secular Jews on the basis of an ideological identification with the national aspect of Judaism which, according to the rabbis of Orthodox religious Zionism, constitutes a significant layer within Judaism shared in common by the religious and the secular. There follows from this the sense of a “covenant

of destiny,” in the words of Rabbi Soloveitchik, with secular Zionists, leading to active cooperation on the political level.¹⁵⁾ But alongside this feeling of covenant the definition of the secular cultural-ethical stance as heretical is firmly maintained.¹⁶⁾ In this context one might question the grouping of Leibowitz with the ultra-Orthodox Satmar Hasidim rather than with the advocates of this “dualistic” stance. Indeed, the difference between Leibowitz and these other thinkers is very subtle, and Leibowitz’s identification as a Zionist would seem to locate him among them, specifically. But unlike the Orthodox religious Zionist rabbis, Leibowitz refused to define nationalism as a substantive part of Judaism, which is exclusively concerned, in his opinion, with the acceptance of the kingdom of heaven and the performance of Torah and mitzvot. “It must be emphasized,” he wrote in 1972, “that from a religious viewpoint the unity of the nation is not a holy thing, because nationalism and patriotism are not recognized by the religion as supreme values.”¹⁷⁾

Finally, one must mention a fifth religious approach to secularism, one which asserts an identity between religiosity and ethical humanist secularism. This approach has not yet been studied in depth, perhaps because of the fact that it characterizes a non-Orthodox religious stance. For this reason I shall devote somewhat more space to it in this discussion. This stance distinguishes and unites two very different thinkers: Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan and Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel (1907-1972), both professors at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York during the 20th century. In his work, *The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion* (1938) devoted to a modern interpretation of the meaning of the revelation on Sinai, Kaplan considers the question of the differences and hostilities between religious and secular people as follows:

[T]hose, who at great danger and cost to themselves, are identified with some cause of social reform or humanitarian benefit, enjoy and communicate the experience of life’s worthwhileness, despite all its tragic waste and ugliness, must be classified with religious believers. They act as witnesses of God, regardless of what they think.¹⁸⁾

According to Kaplan, religiosity is not expressed in “recognition of the division between the natural and the supernatural”—that is, in the belief in a supernatural God—but in the devotion of one’s life to the enterprise of redemption, the amelioration of the conditions of the world, and to recognition of the value of life despite the evil and imperfection found therein.¹⁹⁾ In this sense, according to Kaplan, the person who denies the existence of a supernatural god, and who is known in popular parlance as an “atheist,” is a religious human being so long as he believes and acts for the realization of a comprehensive and all-encompassing ethical vision in the world. It is interesting and surprising that similar things were repeated by Kaplan’s ideological opponent, Abraham Joshua Heschel, in a eulogy he delivered in 1945 for Eastern European Jewry destroyed in the Holocaust. This eulogy appeared as one of his first books, *The Earth is the Lord’s*:

There arose the Enlightenment movement (Haskalah), Zionism, the Halutzim movement, Jewish Socialism. How much of self-sacrifice, of love for the people, of Sanctification of the Holy Name are to be found in the modern Jews, in their will to suffer in order to help! The zeal of the pious Jews was transferred to their emancipated sons and grandsons. The fervor and yearning of the Hasidim, the ascetic obstinacy of the Kabbalists, the inexorable logic of the Talmudists, were reincarnated in the supporters of modern Jewish movements. Their belief in new ideals was infused with age-old piety. They could see a “daughter of heaven” in the message of rationalism, a holy temple in the revived Hebrew language or the essence of Judaism in Yiddish, the “mother tongue.”... [U]nlike the ancient sects, even those who felt that for the sake of adopting the modern they had to abandon the old, even those whom the revolutionary impetus had carried to the antithesis of tradition, have not severed the ties from the people; with few exceptions, they have remained within the fold. The powerful urge to redemption survived in their souls.²⁰

In his later books, Heschel would attack rationalistic, secular Western culture, holding it responsible for the processes of modern violence.²¹ But in describing Eastern European Jewry, he ignored the gap between the religious and the secular Jew, drawing an analogy between religiosity and pious dedication to a good cause. There is no doubt that, from the secular viewpoint, the position of Heschel and Kaplan enjoys an ethical advantage over the four previously-mentioned positions, all of which are imbued with a value hierarchy that, in the final analysis, prefers religious Judaism over secular Judaism. An offshoot of these religious stances is the perception that the ultimate spiritual-educational leader of the Jewish people will be an observant Jew and not a secular Jew (and certainly not a Jewess).

It should be emphasized that this criticism applies even to the dialectical positions of Scholem and Kook, which, while expressing great respect towards secular revolutionary enthusiasm, also express the hope that there will emerge in its place a more enlightened religious leadership than that which exists today, one which will guide the Jewish people towards a period of unmitigated blessing and goodness. Heschel's and Kaplan's perception of the secular Jew—of the revolutionary, the intellectual, or the Zionist who acts for the common good—as of equal spiritual value to the religious Jew, completely nullifies this hierarchy by negating the difference between himself and the religious person. From their viewpoint, every optimistic human being who devotes his life to the improvement of the world and to implanting the hope for the realization of this improvement in the hearts of the people is a deserving spiritual leader for all generations, and not only for this crisis-ridden generation in which “heretics” sprung up.

But alongside its advantages there also emerges the main limitation of this standpoint: the complete obscuring of the difference between the religious and the secular negates the possibility of a different self-definition of either of the sides, dulls the edge of both religious

and secular stances, and in its wake also removes both the edge of the legitimate debate between them, as well as the possibility of mutual fructification.

Hartman, as we shall see, strives (albeit not always successfully) to avoid the limitations of all five of the above approaches. “One cannot look upon the secular Zionists who built this state as misguided children who are deprived by the environment of their culture or by their upbringing.”²²⁾ In these opening words of his book *Conflicting Visions*, Hartman challenges the Orthodox aloofness towards the secularist. He emphasizes to his American readers, who recognize or understand neither the nature of Israeli social disputes nor the secular Jewish culture, that many secular Jews do not see themselves as spiritually lost and do not seek to return to the path of the Torah. Like Leibowitz, Hartman condemns the fact that the Orthodox community, particularly the ultra-Orthodox, places the task of military defense and the building and strengthening of the state upon the shoulders of secular Jews, thereby converting them into a kind of “*Shabbos goy*” (Sabbath Gentile) who, by means of his work and sacrificing his life and that of his children, facilitates the devotion to the fulfillment of the mitzvot by the Orthodox religious Jew.²³⁾ But unlike Leibowitz and other modern Jewish religious thinkers, Hartman also stresses the fact that in Israel the secularists created a significant alternative to the halakhah, which defined the life of the Jewish people in the past.²⁴⁾ Speaking out of great respect for and cherishing of the secularist enterprise, he wishes to create a covenant between these two very different, independent, and equal groups, in which there will exist a shared ethical consciousness among religious and secular. This consciousness—thus he hopes—will draw inspiration from the storehouse of aggadah of Hazal, but will not be dependent upon the acceptance of joint theological directives.²⁵⁾ The principled picture depicted in these words sees in the worldview of the secularist an inclusive approach, albeit with shortcomings, just as the religious approach is an inclusive one with its own shortcomings, which Hartman does not hesitate to criticize.²⁶⁾

2. Sources of the Rationalistic-Pluralistic Approach: Hartman’s Understanding of Maimonides

The authority for this worldview that seeks, in Hartman’s words, a “*shared spiritual language*” for different groups among the Jewish people who do not share basic theological assumptions, is found by Hartman in the personality and thought of the medieval Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides, particularly in Maimonides’ adoption of Aristotle’s Nichomachean ethics.²⁷⁾ Hartman’s presentation of Maimonides as the model for a Jewish philosopher-theologian who incorporates extra-revelational knowledge, including ethical and not only scientific knowledge pertaining to the understanding of God and His law, emerges as a central theme in Hartman’s various studies of Maimonides.

The assertion that knowledge whose source is from outside of Torah is not irrelevant to the religious person passes like a golden thread through all of Hartman’s thought and

research. Hartman does not hesitate to criticize the Orthodox position, a result of the struggle with modernity, for limiting that external knowledge to which it is willing to relate seriously to scientific and technological knowledge alone. Maimonides' thought proves, according to Hartman, that "the halakhic Jew can approach the aggadah with knowledge gained from sources independent of the tradition."²⁸⁾ By means of his loyalty to the Maimonidean model, as he understands it, Hartman calls upon the Jewish-Orthodox community to listen to ethical and intellectual voices that are outside of their understanding of revelation. "[T]here are many things in this world whose legitimacy and significance have to be acknowledged by halakhic Jews, even if the tradition has nothing explicitly to say about them."²⁹⁾

Maimonides thus enables Hartman to sketch the image of a religious personality whose commitment is rooted in reason rather than in unconditional obedience to authority,³⁰⁾ and whose religious sensibility was nurtured by "intelligibility and the capacity to understand Judaism through universal criteria of truth."³¹⁾ In light of this model, Hartman articulates the challenge of integrating "Jerusalem" and "Athens" in the modern era, a combination which may "provide a wider understanding of what the Sinai-moment of revelation implicitly demanded."³²⁾

Hartman's definition of secularism as a liberal ethic stems directly from his longing to create in the modern era a cultural synthesis similar to that created by Maimonides in the Middle Ages. The liberal ethic and the set of values that derive from them—rationalism, freedom of religion, pluralism, criticism, etc.—are for Hartman the extra-revelatory contents parallel in our day to the Nichomachean ethic adopted by Maimonides. However, as is required by his full adoption of this critical-modern approach to ethics, Hartman does not settle with incorporating them into the framework of his understanding of Judaism, or in resolving the contradictions between Judaism and the liberal ethic. He is forced to take an additional step beyond Maimonides, and to give preference to this external ethical system above certain portions of the traditional-Jewish ethic, as shall be elaborated below.

3. Secularism as a Liberal Ethical Doctrine

Hence, the ethical question is the central crux on account of which Hartman rejects the thought of his mentor and teacher, the late Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. Soloveitchik's thought implies the inferiority of ethics as against the higher levels of religion.³³⁾ Again, relying upon the precedent of the inclusion of Aristotelian ethics within Maimonides' halakhic exegesis, Hartman demands religious attentiveness to and internalization of the secular-humanistic ethical imperative expressed, among other things, through dialogue with people belonging to other religions and beliefs.³⁴⁾ Soloveitchik's attack upon the universal "majestic" community, combined with his elevation of the loneliness of the believing Jew, leads the Orthodox community, according to Hartman, to apathy and closedness towards "what may be serious moral criticism."³⁵⁾

Hartman's criticism of Soloveitchik, who in his reading represents those who do not observe mitzvot as utilitarian, selfish and ambitious people, leads him to repeatedly emphasize the lack of arrogance in his own position vis-a-vis humanistic ethics. At the beginning of his book *A Living Covenant*, Hartman argues: "[nor] do I claim that a system of ethics must be founded on the authority of divine revelation."³⁶ This claim is expanded and receives added force at the end of the book, where he maintains:

I am not arguing for either the superiority or the necessity of a covenantal orientation to life for the realization of human responsibility and dignity. In thinking about Judaism, I cannot ignore the fact that atheists act with moral dignity and compassion in the world. I believe, in contrast to many contemporary religious thinkers, that secular humanism is a viable and morally coherent position. What I am claiming is only that neither the critique of halakhic Judaism found in the Christian tradition nor the moral critique found in Spinoza is convincing. There are many different approaches to human life that encourage initiative, intellectual freedom, responsibility, and the sense of personal adequacy and dignity. I am not arguing that faith is necessary in order to have these values, but only that faith in the covenantal God of Judaism does not have to contradict or undermine them.... the *halakhah* expects from Jews not just a dedicated will to serve God but also a reflective, sensitive, and critical moral disposition.³⁷

These statements and emphases on the part of Hartman clarify in an unequivocal way his position that the religious person has absolutely no ethical superiority over the non-religious man. At the same time, in his polemic with MacIntyre, Hartman emphasizes what he sees as indicating the superiority of religious-halakhic ethics over secular ethics: in the covenantal framework, claims Hartman, the realization of the ethical life does not take place in an atmosphere of absolute autonomy, which ultimately implies human isolation. The ethical advantage of religious over humanistic ethics lies in anchoring and locating it within the framework of the congregation and its relationship with God.³⁸ One might argue that this statement revives the sense of religious supremacy over secularism. I reject this reading, if only due to the sincerity of Hartman's statements that express authentic respect and valuing both of humanistic ethics in general, and of its secular carriers. But the lack of development and concretization of these ideas leaves the claim regarding the uniqueness of the ethical decision, in the context of religious faith, not sufficiently convincing. In any event, even those who argue that this claim expresses the superiority of the religious ethic over the secular will be silenced once they read Hartman's statement in his more recent book, *A Heart of Many Rooms*, in which he says that:

In modern societies, people have little patience with exclusive, doctrinaire religious attitudes. Notwithstanding its problems and limitations, secular liberal society has created conditions for the emergence of religious humility by constraining the human propensity to universalize the particular.³⁹⁾

In this statement Hartman goes far beyond the Maimonidean precedent. He reveals therein both his consciousness that he is interpreting the Jewish tradition from within a secular-humanistic ethical perspective and under its influence; more than this, he indicates the superiority of this ethical teaching over large portions of the Jewish heritage that contradict it. These ideas are stated in a context in which Hartman attempts to present a messianic, pluralistic model, one which does not wish to impose a Jewish-particularistic vision of the End of Days upon all of mankind. In this way Hartman establishes the superiority of universal-humanistic ethics (secular in source) over the particularism accepted in the messianic view, rooted in the halakhah as it is observed nowadays. In light of this preference, Hartman draws upon the rich store of concepts found in Jewish halakhah, the religious language that is consistent with his understanding of humanistic ethics in general, including the prayer for the ingathering of exiles, concepts of the value of love of one's fellow and love of the stranger, the seven Noachide commandments, and more.⁴⁰⁾ By means of this religious language he hopes to bridge the gap between groups having different affiliations and, among other things, between secularist and religions people, so as to create a common life within the framework of human and religious variety.⁴¹⁾

4. Secularism as Modern Technological Culture—Assimilation or Paganism

Hartman's epistemological framework is fundamentally pluralistic, one that is largely influenced by William James, who claims: "Neither the whole of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any single observer."⁴²⁾ Hartman goes far in applying this cognitive doctrine to his discussions of conservative and Reform Jewry.⁴³⁾ There also follows from this the absolute tolerance towards atheists and secularists that finds expression in the following passage:

The modern-day recognition of the human sources that influence religious outlooks on life—a particular community, particular teachers, a specific family tradition—prevents us from giving convictions of faith an absolute epistemological status like that ascribed by Maimonides to statements about God's existence, unity and incorporeality, with regard to which he said, "perfect certainty is obtained" (*Guide* 1:71). Accordingly, I do not regard those with different understandings of the meaning of human existence—including atheists—as affected by hubris or malice that prevents them from seeing what is obviously the truth...⁴⁴⁾

But despite these far-reaching statements, reflecting Hartman's unconditional commitment to humanism which paves his pluralistic intellectual course, there are also expressions in his thought that identify secularism with the faults of modern technological culture. It is interesting that, specifically in Hartman's later articles, there is to be found a motif identifying secularism with assimilationism and with the casting off of values found in the technological era. Thus, his essay "Memory and Values" contains a one-dimensional description of the family in the technological age.⁴⁵⁾ The modern family depicted in this article, as opposed to the traditional-religious family, encourages the rebellion of young people, perpetual dissatisfaction of its members, domination by the children, an arrogant attitude towards the elderly, lack of interest in the past, lack of respect in the attitude of children toward their parents, etc. While this essay contains no direct statement to indicate that one is speaking specifically of a secular family, the associations of secularism with technological culture and the description of an alienated and atomized family hint at this quite clearly. Similarly, it seems noteworthy that in the essay "Torah and Secularism" Hartman enumerates all of the ills of modernity—alienation, hedonism, cynicism, etc.—under the heading of secularism.⁴⁶⁾ From the inner tension inherent in these passages, there are revealed the remnants of a hierarchical approach that places religion above secularism and identifies secularism with assimilation, alienation, and lack of identity.⁴⁷⁾

The placing of the responsibility for social and spiritual disintegration upon secularism in its universal and political sense is parallel to Hartman's ambivalence in relation to secular Judaism. In one of his first essays, "Joy and Responsibility," Hartman identifies Israeli ultra-secularism with the classical secularism of Herzl, which preached the normalization of the Jewish people. According to Hartman, this secular view indicates the acceptance of every Israeli phenomenon, including prostitution, as a desirable sign of normalization and as an expression of alienation from the Jewish past in which normalization was a synonym for paganism. In paraphrasing this doctrine, Hartman equates normalization with assimilation, thereby blurring the internal debate within secular Zionism among those who advocated the vision of the normalization of the Jewish people.⁴⁸⁾ It should also be mentioned that even political Zionism, which advocated the "normalization of the Jewish people," saw this normalization as a means of slowing or preventing assimilation and as a solution to the problem of Jewish identity. I will not venture at this point into the question whether the use of the term "normal" is valid as a way of characterizing peoples and religions, each one of which has its own uniqueness. I will only note that the Zionist vision in the work of the contemporary Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua (1936-), *By Virtue of Normality*, presents a classical Zionist stance of negating the Jewish Diaspora and opposing the idea of the election of the Jewish people. Simultaneously it advocates a deepening of the pluralistic Jewish identity in Israeli society, a call that Hartman would, without doubt, join enthusiastically.⁴⁹⁾

5. Jewish Secularism as a Zionist-Political World View

The inconsistency in Hartman's position regarding the phenomenon of secularism and its influence upon Judaism and the Jewish people seems to be related to his attitude toward secular Zionism as a political movement, and his ignoring of it as a cultural phenomenon exerting decisive influence upon Judaism's self-understanding of itself and its sources. For Hartman, Zionism is political Zionism, concerned with a critique of the lack of ethics and lack of honor embodied in the figure of the religious person, "revulsion for the passive, emasculated human type associated with a life disciplined by traditional *halakhah*."⁵⁰ Therefore, for Hartman, the paradigmatic Zionist-secular text is Hayyim Hazaz's (1898-1973) "The Sermon," in which the hero delivers a speech or, to be more exact, hurls an indictment against the political weakness rooted in the worldview of halakhic-exilic Jewry.⁵¹ By means of this identification of secularism with Zionism and of Zionism with political Zionism, Hartman continues in an ironic manner the ideological line of the Mizrahi movement. This line already began during the first Zionist congresses, and is characterized by the historic covenant made by Rabbi Reines with the political Zionism founded by Theodore Herzl (1860-1904) while opposing cultural Zionism.⁵² The cultural contribution of secular Zionism lay, according to Hartman, in the creation of the necessary political conditions and challenges for Jewish spiritual renewal.⁵³ This claim is repeated in all of his essays relating to Zionism.⁵⁴ The value of Zionism, in his opinion, lies in the fact that it created a political reality that forced pluralism upon the Jewish people, expanded the realm of responsibility potentially subject to the covenant, and expressed determination to carry Jewish existence with pride in the face of the disasters and suffering that befell the Jewish people in modern times.⁵⁵ Secular Zionism led the Jewish world to a dialogue with the wider world, not from a position of lowliness,⁵⁶ but rather, beyond all these:

Secular Zionism has inspired and given Jews the means to return not to a spiritual and secure heaven but to an unredeemed and uncertain earth. Zionism is a rejection of the belief that Jewish sovereignty must be the expression of a messianic reality. Political Zionism expresses the power of a community to act as a nation in an unredeemed world.⁵⁷

But while Hartman praises the new conditions that were created by Zionism and expresses hope in the possibilities inherent in these conditions, his stance in relation to the contents of the secular Jewish culture which emerged in Israel is not clear. In his book *A Living Covenant*, Hartman recognizes the fact that, "[u]ltimately, however, the commitment to live in a theistic or an atheistic framework has its source in the individual concerned and in the influence of other human beings... on the value system of that individual."⁵⁸ But further on he states: "That is why Judaism, with its emphasis on the covenant, will remain a living

possibility for Jews as long as there is a Jewish community that organizes itself on the basis of *mitzvah*" (a commandment).⁵⁹ A close reading of this sentence reveals that he equates Judaism with covenantal consciousness and claims that Judaism as a living option for Jews depends upon the existence of a community that observes commandments. What then is the contribution of the secular Jewish community, whose Judaism does not depend upon the consciousness of covenant, to the existence of Judaism as a living option for Jews? Are we to conclude that its function is limited to the creation of the conditions or challenge that will lead to the flowering and expansion of the circles of the religiously observant?

A similar lack of clarity emerges from Hartman's attempt to explain Leibowitz's position to Diaspora Jews. In the wake of Leibowitz, Hartman points out that secular Zionism competes with the traditional halakhic frameworks with great force, as its ideology defines the Jewish people in a non-religious manner as a national-political community.⁶⁰ It would seem that Hartman himself simultaneously has reservations about the Orthodox claim that sees continuity for Jewish existence only within the framework of its religious roots (a statement championed by Leibowitz), and about the claim that sees such continuity only as a tool for the transformation of the Jewish society and its self-definition.⁶¹ His own stance regarding the resolution of the opposition and confrontation between halakhah (Jewish law) and the frameworks of the political reality and alternative Jewish identity offered by secular Zionism thus remain unclear.

In answer to this question, Hartman states that one of the revolutionary messages of the State of Israel is the expansion of the dimension of the holy in Judaism from its position in the Exilic Jewish entity, where it was limited to the narrow confines of the synagogue and the family, to the public and political arena, which are run by Jews and for that reason demand to be fashioned by Jewish values. Whether consciously or not, Hartman continues here the thought of A. D. Gordon (1856-1922), one of the first figures to outline the contours of secular cultural Zionism in Israel, who held that in the Land of Israel not only festivals and special days, but everyday life ("the day of small things") become sanctified.⁶² The significance of this transformation, according to Hartman, lies in the expansion of halakhic responsibility to the point of its touching upon economic and political questions, in addition to the questions of ritual that were the realm of its authority in the Diaspora.⁶³

What is the meaning of this statement? One who is not familiar with Hartman's thought in depth might think that these things imply a call to set up a halakhic state. But this possibility is unacceptable in light of Hartman's declared and full-hearted commitment to the humanistic ethic and to religious and cultural pluralism. Alternatively, one might find in these words an avoidance of decision regarding those points on which the halakhah confronts the democratic authorities of the Jewish state, as in the case of laws of personal status. Thus, we have here yet another respect in which Hartman's thought is unwittingly backed into a corner.

6. Can Jewish Secularism Represent a Legitimate Interpretation of Traditional Judaism?

In light of a close reading of the discussions regarding secularism found in Hartman's writings, it seems ironic that the definition of Judaism as a culture, one that originated specifically within secular Judaism, is that which can free his thought from the quandary of inner tensions in which it is entangled. True, Hartman seems to ignore this definition. At the beginning of his book *A Heart of Many Rooms*, he describes Judaism as an exegetical process, but throughout his work one finds nary an echo of the extensive interpretations propounded by secular Judaism for the sources of classical Judaism.⁶⁴⁾ Hartman extensively discusses the importance of transmitting the historical consciousness and remembering Mount Sinai within the framework of the family, but he does not relate to a reality in which the national historical consciousness is passed on within the framework of the secular family (without connection or commitment to Mount Sinai). This familial-national heritage is the product of the Zionist cultural ideology and of the social reality that emerged during the modern period, primarily, but not exclusively, in the State of Israel.

Hartman specifically approves of Gershom Scholem's observation as to the dialectical nature of secular Zionism.⁶⁵⁾ However, as we mentioned above, it is doubtful whether Scholem himself understood secular Israeli culture in depth, as even he evidently longed, in his innermost heart, for realization of "the theocratic hope that accompanies the return of the people of Israel to the eternal words, which is in truth a utopian withdrawal to its own history."⁶⁶⁾ In any event, like Scholem, Hartman finds it difficult to identify the element of continuity in the dialectical relation of secular Zionism to its religious past, beyond the political ability of Zionism to create a Jewish national public life based upon the myth of the Bible.⁶⁷⁾ Similarly, even when Hartman presents Leibowitz's cultural critique to Jews of the Diaspora, he seems to identify with Leibowitz's identification of secular Zionism as a culture that limits itself to a relationship to the Bible alone, cut off from later Jewish sources.⁶⁸⁾

Hartman, following Leibowitz, writes that the new Israelis see the Tanakh not as a source of miracles, but as a source of human heroism. True, Hartman criticizes Leibowitz for refusing to attribute holiness to any human institution, including the various aspects of everyday secular reality. He nevertheless does not question the extent to which Leibowitz's stereotypical description of Jewish-Israel secularism is in fact correct. Is it proper to say that the only thing preserved of pre-modern Judaism by secular Zionist culture is its attachment to the Bible as a source of stories of heroism or, alternatively, as a source of prophetic ethics? Moreover, is it correct to characterize the emphasis on study of the literal meaning of the Bible within the framework of Zionist education in the State of Israel as the adoption of a Christian point of view, as claimed by Hartman?⁶⁹⁾ Or should the observer of secular Israeli culture perhaps refine and expand his viewpoint so as to distinguish the various different layers within it?

This culture created and creates new *midrashim*, commentaries on Biblical texts, weaving a tapestry of secular exegesis that was and will, in the final analysis, exert a decisive influence upon Judaism and the Jewish people as a whole. The following three examples concretize Hartman's lack of familiarity with or misunderstanding of the characteristics of secular Jewish hermeneutics as it interprets the classical sources of Judaism. These examples are taken from the inexhaustible storehouse of modern Hebrew poetry, but nearly any work of modern secular Hebrew literature or thought indicates the rich midrashic layer present in this culture.⁷⁰

Hayyim Guri's (1936-) poems about Esau are a good example for examining the degree of "Christianity" of the secular interpretation of the Bible that rejects rabbinic interpretation. The traditional interpretation of the figure of Esau reads, in wake of the words of the prophet Malachi (1:2-3): "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" says the Lord. Yet I have loved Jacob and hated Esau..." Essentially, this interpretation assumed a sweeping identity between Esau and the forces of evil that are hated by God, as summarized in Rashi's words: "It is a well-known rule that Esau hates Jacob" (Rashi to Gen 33:4, s.v. *vayishaqehu*, quoting *Sifre, Beha'alotkha*, §69). Against that, based upon the straightforward sense of the biblical text that describes Esau as a tragic figure, a simple person against whom an injustice has been done, Guri expresses empathy for Esau. In his poem *The Smell of the Field*, Guri sees in Esau sadness and a willingness to endure calumny,⁷¹ while in his later poem *Esau* he describes the silence of the aging man, the rejected son who has lost the blessing, the man who "ponders a lot," who wonders, "If I would have come home earlier on that day from the mountains, with game on my shoulders..."⁷² There is no doubt that Guri's viewpoint marks a clear rebellion against rabbinic interpretation and its authority, but it would be an error to claim that this represents Christian exegesis, for two reasons. First, because Christianity, like the rabbinic tradition, identified Esau with wickedness.⁷³ Secondly, there is no doubt that the interpretation of the Church fathers and of Christian theology are totally irrelevant to Guri, whereas for him Jewish midrashim constitute a cultural element against which he rebels for clear ethical reasons.

A second matter to which one should turn one's attention in explaining the components of the process of secular midrash (commentary on the Bible) has to do with the secularization of the language of prayer. Hartman extensively discusses the importance of the prayer experience for the modern person. He understands prayer as a prophetic experience, but discusses it only within the halakhic framework, ignoring its existence in the secular cultural world.⁷⁴ Writing in this case for a religiously observant audience, Hartman emphasizes the flexibility that exists in the laws of prayer and those sources according to which the halakhah does not see prayer merely as repetition of the experience of sacrifice or of the *Akedah* (i.e., the binding of Isaac).⁷⁵ His approach to prayer allows room for the individual, but not for the rebellious individual.⁷⁶ If one examines the vast wealth of lyrical prayer, both in Hebrew folk songs and modern Hebrew poetry, one discover therein an intimate experience of

connection with God. Beginning with personal experience, it extends its reach to become a national language of prayer. Such prayer departs from the halakhic, traditional-legal, framework, but bears a profound connection to the language of prayer found in the Siddur even when it rebels against it. One example of this exegetical approach may be found in the well-known line from the poem of Yehudah Amichai (1924-2000): “God full of mercy! If God were not so full of mercy, there would be mercy in the world and not just in Him.”⁷⁷⁾ There is no need to elaborate on the profound existential meaning of this poem, which cries out against the reality of suffering and cruelty in the world while protesting against the language of the traditional prayer that facilely accepts the divine decree. One might see in this poem a modern reincarnation of the chilling rabbinic commentary that places responsibility for the murder of Abel on the Holy One, blessed be He, who is compared in that midrash to a king who orders two gladiators to duel before him (*Genesis Rabbah* 22.9). Another example is the poem *Blessed is He who made me a Woman* by the poetess Esther Raab (1894-1981), which has enjoyed renewed interest thanks to the influence of feminism during recent decades. The poem opens with the words, “Blessed be He that made me a woman—that I am earth and human” (an alliterative wordplay on the Hebrew *adama ve-adam*). Of course the poem is not only a midrash on the creation of man in Genesis, but also a protest against the blessing recited each morning by observant Jewish men: “Blessed is He... who has not made me a woman.”⁷⁸⁾ Above all else, this poem expresses the woman’s deep and intimate connection with God, and thereby not only protests but also renews, or influences the renewal of, modern prayer language.⁷⁹⁾

“Judaism reduced to ethical activism and moral seriousness, without the religious intimacy and mystical dimensions expressed through many of the symbolic ritual *mitzvot*, would be deprived of much of the richness of the spiritual life.”⁸⁰⁾ Thus Hartman, who is unwilling to compromise ethical principles for the sake of spiritual goals but who also thinks that focusing upon ethics alone while ignoring ritual harms the common family and communal structure. Again, he is grateful to political Zionism for placing the Hebrew liturgical year at the center of the public experience in the Land of Israel, but nevertheless seems unaware of the process by which the symbols and commandments of Jewish ritual are secularized within the secular communities, such as the kibbutzim and moshavim or the State (secular) system of education.⁸¹⁾ This cultural revolution led to the enriching of the Hebrew calendar by reviving various hitherto neglected dates on the Jewish calendar (celebrating the New Year of the Trees on Tu Bishvat and the Jewish day of romantic love on Tu be-Av), and introducing new special dates (such as Holocaust Day, Soldier’s Remembrance Day, and Independence Day).

Hartman, as mentioned, disagrees with Leibowitz’s position that sees the secularist as a heretic and as one who has no shared language or system of values with the religious person.⁸²⁾ Relying upon his master and teacher, Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik, but going beyond his

thought, Hartman argues that the covenant creates conditions for a dialogue concerning a shared covenant of destiny for the religious and the secular, and that the separatist approach of the Orthodox public is likely to lose both this opportunity and the people as well.⁸³⁾ As we have seen, he openly demurs from the attitude of regarding the religious person as superior to the non-religious.⁸⁴⁾ Nevertheless, the Jewish people is defined in his writings as a religious community. Thus, he writes in *A Living Covenant* that: “God *invited* the Israelites to participate in the drama of building His kingdom in history.”⁸⁵⁾ As we have seen, this statement leaves the Jew who does not see himself as a participant in the theological pattern of the covenant excluded from the creative and active force sustaining the vitality of Judaism and of the Jewish people in our day.

Conclusion

There are a number of reasons for Hartman’s ambivalence regarding secularism and his non-recognition thereof as an important (if not the most important) exegetical path among the Jewish people today. One probable source of this ambivalence involves the degree to which Hartman is still partly connected to paternalistic or hostile models concerning secularism that exist in various parts of the religious camp, notwithstanding his sincere willingness to create an egalitarian system of relations between the different groups that constitute the Jewish people. An additional source of his ambivalence towards secularism has to do with the covenant model, an important aspect of his religious thought. Even though Hartman strives to interpret it as a non-hierarchical model of compatibility and maturity and not as one of dependence,⁸⁶⁾ the historical sources of the value-concept “covenant” in Judaism are filled with explicitly hierarchic significance.⁸⁷⁾ The concept of the covenant, both in the Torah and in the language of traditional prayer, is replete with connotations of being bound thereby. From an halakhic-legal standpoint, one party, the masculine side or the one symbolically depicted as masculine (the Holy One blessed be He; the man entering the marriage covenant) realizes his superiority over his covenantal partner (the Congregation of Israel; the female partner in marriage) by means of the covenant. Hence one wonders to what extent the very use of the term “covenant” is desirable in the context of defining relations between religious and secular communities, and to what extent it carries a hierarchical assumption of superiority of religious people over secularists. Finally, one ought to note that the self-definition of the secularists deals on the whole with attacks on religious coercion and on the institutional symbiosis between religion and state in the State of Israel. There is hardly any serious and positive discussion dealing with bringing to consciousness the *midrashic* process that occurs daily, unconsciously and unnoticed, during the ordinary course of secular-Jewish life in Israel, and attempting to characterize its exegetical ways.⁸⁸⁾ This exegesis, even though it flourished as a result of the Zionist framework, existed before it and unrelated to it in the *Haskalah* (Jewish

Enlightenment) literature written in Hebrew and Yiddish. It doubtless influenced the “Jewish street” in the State of Israel, but its contribution to the Jewish world was not restricted to that. Secularism as an exegetical posture released and transformed religious contents, sources and language from the realm of religious-rabbinic or communal authority to other areas that were free of this authority, thereby giving them new meaning. There is no doubt that, within the framework of a shared existence of religionists and secularists, this aspect of secularism constituted and constitutes a severe threat to the person concerned with the preservation of religious authority. It was for this reason, for example, that the performance by the Bat Sheva Dance Company of Ohad Naharin’s midrashic work “Who Knows One” was removed from the official fiftieth anniversary celebration of the State’s independence, *Pa’amonei ha-Yovel*, under pressure from Haredi elements. What was intolerable to the religious establishment, far more than the immodest dress of the dancers, was the secular interpretation given to the liturgical poem recited on Passover, “Who Knows One.” It is nevertheless specifically this kind of *midrashic* thinking on the part of secular Jews, interpreting the language of Jewish culture from a secular viewpoint, that forces the religious Jew to reinterpret the texts that underlie his own religious life.

Hartman’s attempt to translate the halakhah (Jewish Law) into the language of secular-liberal ethics is likely to be an important aspect of the religious response to this exegetical challenge, involving as it does a religious thinker taking up the gauntlet of the secular challenge. According to Hartman, identification with the community precedes revelation, just as the proselyte utters the declaration “your people is my people” prior to “your God is my God.” For that reason the goal of Jewish education, in his opinion, is to elicit identification with the cultural language of the tradition in general, and of the halakhah in particular.⁸⁹⁾ From this vision there emerges Hartman’s broad and courageous definition of halakhah, not as a legal system, but as a symbolic and ethical-communal language that bridges between ourselves and our community of identification through the axes of time and geographic space. The process for which Hartman longs in practice is the secularization of the halakhah: that is, the transfer of contents which in the past were subjected exclusively to religious authority, to areas free of this authority. Hartman does not elaborate sufficiently the manner in which this process is to take place, and seems to be unaware of the revolutionary aspect of this wish. Such a definition of the halakhah not only liberates the authority to interpret it from the hands of the rabbinic establishment and religious communities, but also imposes the responsibility for its interpretation *as* an ethical language upon both men and women, religious and secularist, together.⁹⁰⁾ If Hartman succeeds in awakening the secular community to marshal its energies toward this goal, the result may be a tremendous breakthrough of Jewish culture in our day, which even the founders of cultural Zionism such as Ahad Haam, Bialik, and Gordon, were hesitant to attempt.⁹¹⁾

NOTES

- 1) The books upon which I base this article are the following: David Hartman, *Maimonides: Torah and Philosophic Quest* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1976) [below: *MTPQ*]; *Crisis and Leadership: Epistles of Maimonides*, texts translated and notes by Abraham Halkin, Discussion by David Hartman (Philadelphia: JPS, 1985) [below: *EM*]; David Hartman, *A Living Covenant: The Innovative Spirit in Traditional Judaism* (New York–London: Free Press/Macmillan, 1985) [below: *LC*]; idem., *Joy and Responsibility* (Jerusalem: Ben Zion Posner, 1978) [below: *JR*]; idem., *Conflicting Visions: Spiritual Possibilities of Modern Israel* (New York: Schocken, 1990) [below: *CV*]; idem., *A Heart of Many Rooms: Celebrating the Many Voices Within Judaism* (Woodstock, Vt.: Jewish Lights, 1999) [below: *HMR*]; idem., *Israelis and the Jewish Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) [below: *IJT*].
- 2) “Pluralism requires an epistemological framework that limits the claims of revelation. It requires a political philosophy in which the unity of God does not imply one universal way for all humankind” (*LC*, 18). This is Hartman’s clearest statement of his intention to create a religious epistemological framework that wholeheartedly accepts a multiplicity of paths within God’s world.
- 3) Eric S. Waterhouse. “Secularism,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. J. Hastings (New York: Scribners, 1921), 11: 347-350.
- 4) Bryan R. Wilson, “Secularization,” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 13: 159-165.
- 5) It is interesting that a survey of Jewish encyclopedias revealed that in neither the *Hebrew Encyclopaedia* [Hebrew] nor the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* was there even a single entry on “secularism” or “secularization.” The only encyclopedia written in Hebrew (or that deals with Judaism) to include such an entry is the Israeli *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* [Hebrew]. See: Rivka Rahat, *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* [Hebrew] (Merhavia: Sifriat Poalim, Hotza’at Hakibbutz Haartzi- Hashomer Hatzair, 1964), 2: 494-495.
- 6) On the cultural polemic at the beginning of the Zionist movement and Ahad Haam’s place therein, see Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement (1882-1904)* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1988), 137-172. On the development of the definition of Judaism as culture, see Eliezer Schweid, *Towards a Modern Jewish Culture* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1995).
- 7) On the meaning of the concept “civil religion,” see: Robert Bellah, “Civil Religion in America,” *Daedalus* 96 (Winter 1967), 1-21. On the partial secularization of Jewish religious language in “the Israeli civil religion,” see Charles S. Liebman & Eliezer Don-Yihya, *Civil Religion in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983).
- 8) At the beginning of his book *Joy and Responsibility*, Hartman for the first time criticizes the Haredi positions towards secular Zionism, as well as those of the school of Rav Kook. See: Hartman, *JR* 7-8. In the second and third parts of his book *Conflicting Visions*, Hartman relates in a sympathetic but critical way to the thought of Leibowitz, Soloveitchik, Heschel and Kaplan. See Hartman, *CV*, 57-102, 142-206.
- 9) “The perception of the State of Israel as an entity unto itself, the problems of whose existence and whose governmental and political arrangements are values in themselves—is the essence

- of Canaanism.... There is a profound contradiction between an understanding of Judaism based upon its historical essence, and the Canaanite approach.... In terms of everything that is embodied in Judaism.... The 'obligation' is imposed upon parents to educate their children toward 'Torah and mitzvot.'" This is one of many expressions of the total opposition between secularism and Jewish religion as expressed by Leibowitz in a 1966 interview with Ehud Ben-Ezer, in Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Yahadut, Am Yehudi umedinat Yisrael* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1979), 250, 254.
- 10) Aviezer Ravitzky, *Herut 'al ha-Luhot: Qolot aherim shel hamahshava hadatit* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1999), 232.
 - 11) Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, *Orot* (Jerusalem; Mossad Harav Kook, 1980), 92.
 - 12) Gershom Scholem, "Secularism and Its Dialectical Changes" [Hebrew], in *Od Davar* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1989), 124.
 - 13) Ibid., "Reflections on Jewish Theology" [Hebrew], in *Devarim be-go* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1982), 587-588.
 - 14) Ravitzky, *Herut al ha-Luhot*, 242-249.
 - 15) Soloveitchik, "Kol Dodi Dofek," in *Ish ha-Emunah* (Jerusalem; Mossad Harav Kook, 1981), 86-95.
 - 16) Ravitzky, *Herut al ha-luhot*, 246. On the shaping of this position at the beginning of the Mizrahi movement and on the part played by Rabbi Reines in its shaping, see Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet*, 234-238; Yeshayahu Leibowitz, "Religious and Secular People" [Hebrew], in *Yahadut am Yehudi umedinat Yisrael*, 269. On the difference between Leibowitz's thought and that of the thinkers of religious Zionism, see: Dov Schwartz, *Emunah 'al Parashat Derakhim [The Theology of the Religious Zionist Movement* (Hebrew)] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1996), 254-267.
 - 17) Leibowitz, *Yahadut, am Yehudi*, 269.
 - 18) Mordecai M. Kaplan, *The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion* (New York: Reconstructionist Press, 1962⁵), 328.
 - 19) Ibid.
 - 20) A. J. Heschel, *The Earth is the Lord's* (Cleveland-New York-Philadelphia: Meridian-World-JPS, 1963), 103-104.
 - 21) For a critique of Heschel's lack of tolerance towards religious doubt and secularism, see Neil Gillman, *Sacred Fragments* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1990), 134-135.
 - 22) Hartman, *CV*, 8.
 - 23) Ibid., 9.
 - 24) Ibid., 8.
 - 25) Hartman, *HMR*, 105.
 - 26) Examples of Hartman's critique of the identification of religiosity with blind obedience to halakhah are scattered throughout his writing, particularly in his book *A Living Covenant*. See Hartman, *LC*, 58, 107-108.
 - 27) This term is invoked in Hartman's thought in connection with creating a common spiritual language for Jews of Israel and of the Diaspora, but in my opinion the discussion also bears indirectly upon the creation of a shared language with secular Jews in Israel. See Hartman, *HMR*, 104.

- 28) Hartman, *Maimonides*, 35.
- 29) Hartman, *LC*, 12. See a similar reading further on in the book, 98-99.
- 30) Idem, *Maimonides*, 145.
- 31) *Ibid.*, 159.
- 32) *Ibid.*, 7.
- 33) Idem, *LC*, 103-104.
- 34) *Ibid.*, 107.
- 35) *Ibid.*, 103.
- 36) *Ibid.*, 3, 98-99.
- 37) *LC*, 183-184.
- 38) *Ibid.*, 99-101.
- 39) Idem., *HMR*, 160.
- 40) *Ibid.*, 8.
- 41) *Ibid.*
- 42) W. James, *Essays on Faith and Morals*, 284, quoted by Hartman in *LC*, 258.
- 43) Hartman, *HMR*, 193-204.
- 44) Hartman, *LC*, 257.
- 45) *Ibid.*, 58-61.
- 46) *Ibid.*, 71-72.
- 47) *Ibid.*, 214.
- 48) Idem., *CV*, 25.
- 49) A. B. Yehoshua, *Bizekhut ha-Normaliyut* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1980).
- 50) Hartman, *LC*, 3, 306.
- 51) *Ibid.*
- 52) Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet*, 235-238.
- 53) Hartman, *CV*, 32.
- 54) *Ibid.*, 208, 225, 232, 262.
- 55) Idem., *HMR*, 208-209.
- 56) *Ibid.*, 116.
- 57) *Ibid.*, 88-89.
- 58) *Ibid.*, *LC*, 203.
- 59) *Ibid.*
- 60) Hartman, *HMR*, 269.
- 61) *Ibid.*, 270.
- 62) Idem., *CV*, 38; A. D. Gordon, "An Irrational Solution" [Hebrew], *Mivhar Ketavim* (Jerusalem: Histadrut Hazionit, 1983), 184.
- 63) Hartman, *CV*, 43.
- 64) Idem., *HMR*, 18.
- 65) On Scholem's inner struggle regarding the possibility of integration between religiosity and secularism, see his "Reflections on Jewish Theology," *Devarim bego*, 584.
- 66) Scholem, *Ibid.*, 587.
- 67) Hartman, *HMR*, 278.
- 68) *Ibid.*

- 69) Ibid., 125.
- 70) On the midrashic characteristics of modern Hebrew literature, see David C. Jacobson, *Modern Midrash: The Retelling of Traditional Jewish Narrative by Twentieth Century Hebrew Writers* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987).
- 71) Hayyim Guri, *Mahberot Elul* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1985), 39.
- 72) Hayyim Guri, *Haba Aharay* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1994), 48.
- 73) Yisrael Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Jews and Christians—Mutual Images* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved & Makhon Alma, 2000), 16-45.
- 74) Hartman, *LC*, 137-138.
- 75) Ibid., 137-138, 145, 155-159.
- 76) Ibid., 166.
- 77) Yehudah Amihai, *Shirim, 1948-1962* (Jerusalem-Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1977), 69.
- 78) See Anne Lapidus Lerner, “A Woman’s Song: The Poetry of Esther Raab,” in *Gender and Text in Modern Hebrew Literature*, ed. N. Sokoloff, A. L. Lerner, A. Norich (New York: JTS, 1992), 17-38.
- 79) See the article by Gili Zivan, “Blessed is He who has made me... a Woman/A Jewess—On the Urgency of Changing the Blessing” [Hebrew], in *A Good Eye: Dialogue and Polemic in Jewish Culture. A Jubilee Book in Honor of Tovah Ilan*, ed. N. Ilan (Tel Aviv: Kibbutz Hameuhad & Neemanei Torah va-Avodah, 1999), 278-301.
- 80) Hartman, *LC*, 97.
- 81) To extend the framework of this subject, see the following: Matti Davidson, “The Reflection of Components of Israeli Identity in Readers from the 1950’s and ‘60’s” [Hebrew] *Zemanim* 72 (Fall 2000), 32-43; Shoshana Siton, “Education and Culture in Early Childhood in the Yishuv: The Construction of a New Children’s Culture” [Hebrew], *ibid.*, 44-56.
- 82) Hartman, *CV*, 90, 97.
- 83) Idem., *HMR*, 113.
- 84) Idem., *LC*, 12.
- 85) Ibid., 5.
- 86) Ibid., 55.
- 87) To clarify the roots of the term value-concept and its use, see Max Kaddushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York: Bloch, 1972), 84.
- 88) See, for example, Dedi Zucker (ed.), *We Secular Jews* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Yediot Aharonot, 1999). There is a brief discussion of secular reading of Hebrew myths in Yedidiah Yitzhaki, *With Uncovered Head: Principles of Jewish Secularity* [Hebrew] (Haifa: Haifa University, Zmorah Bitan, 2000), 215-230.
- 89) Hartman, *HMR*, 129-131.
- 90) Ibid., 127.
- 91) On Ahad Haam’s drawing back from the process of secularization and thus from the renewal of halakhah, see: Eliezer Schweid, *Judaism and Secular Culture* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1981), 42-43. On A. D. Gordon’s drawing back in practice from this process (which he even advocated in his writings), see Einat Ramon, “Religion and Life: The Renewal of Halakhah and Jewish Religion in the Thought of A. D. Gordon” [Hebrew], *Zemanim* 72 (2000), 76-88. On the political-legal challenge of secularization of halakhah, see:

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Haim Cohen, "The Secularization of Divine Law," in *Jewish Law in Ancient and Modern Israel* (New York: Ktav, [1971]), 1-49.

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