

Article

Land, Work, and Redemption in the Religious-Zionist Philosophy of Isaiah Aviad (Oskar Wolfsberg)

Amir Mashiach

The School of Education, Ariel University, Ariel 40700, Israel; amirma@ariel.ac.il

Abstract: This article seeks to examine R. Dr. Isaiah Aviad's outlook with regard to the Land of Israel, worldly labor, and redemption, as reflected in his teachings. R. Dr. Isaiah Aviad (Oskar Wolfsberg) (1893–1957) was born in Germany. He was one of religious Zionism's main thinkers. He was a pediatrician, and since the establishment of Israel served as an Israeli diplomat in Scandinavia and Switzerland. R. Aviad thought that religious Zionism is the complete Judaism, that which combines Torah and labor, spirit, and matter—multi-dimensional. In addition, R. Aviad believed in natural redemption and human effort, linking the redemption to the Land of Israel and to cultivation of the earth. He thought that human activism—i.e., redeeming the soil of the Land of Israel and cultivating it, is a religious precept that will bring about the redemption.

Keywords: Isaiah Aviad; religious Zionism; labor; the land of Israel; Jewish theology; redemption; Judaism; Torah

1. Introduction

The religious-Zionist “Mizrahi” movement was established in 1902 by R. Reines. The movement professed innovative theological ideas, for instance, worldly labor having religious value and not only being an existential need (Mashiach 2017, 2018), human activism as a means of hastening the redemption, believing in a natural rather than miraculous redemption, and others (Schwartz 1999). However, over the years, the movement's members became more conservative, engaged primarily in commerce, and became city dwellers. Physical work did not occupy a major place in their lives. Therefore, in 1922, the “Hapoel Hamizrahi” movement was established (Fishman 1979), which realized these ideas in practice. Members of the movement shared common elements both with the socialist labor movements and with the Mizrahi. Nevertheless, due to disagreements with the Mizrahi bourgeoisie on one hand and with the secularism of the labor movements on the other, they formed a synthesis—“Hapoel [=worker] Hamizrahi”.

Hapoel Hamizrahi called for a “holy revolt” against the parent movement, the Mizrahi. The purpose of the revolution was to change the exilic Jewish conception of a merchant Jew to a Land of Israel Jew occupied with agriculture, as described in the Bible. Let us clarify this point. When reading about Jewish identity in ancient times, we encounter two forms: the biblical Jew who lives in the Land of Israel, cultivates its land, fights its wars, and is distinguished from other nations by the monotheistic faith. In contrast, there is the exilic Jew who does not fight and does not till the land, rather is occupied with survival (Mashiach 2014). Hapoel Hamizrahi called for a return to the authentic biblical Jew.

The principles of the “holy revolt” were voiced in the “call of the founders”, with its implicit criticism of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish orientation that engages only in spirituality and of secular Zionism that engages only in materialism and nationalism: against the exilic Jewish identity; against bourgeoisie Jewry; a call to return to a complete, original, biblical, multi-dimensional Judaism that engages in both Torah and labor and not only in religious spirituality; a call to connect to nature and to the land (Don-Yahia 1960).

We desire a life of work and creation that has its roots in traditional Judaism. We must not engage only in spirituality and reduce ourselves to the four cubits of halakha, and



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on the other hand we must not make do with the external nationalism of language and land, departing from our Torah that is the foundation of our national culture to follow our national character. We desire a Judaism of Torah and labor, by which Judaism will come into contact with nature, life, and the nation . . . We strive to return to the ancient Hebrew life, the original biblical Judaism.

Their slogan was “Sanctify your life with the Torah and purify it with work”. They believed in social and economic equality and perceived socialism to be a Jewish religious value. However, religious socialism is not identical to general socialism and it differs on several points (Salmon 1990, pp. 340–52). Jewish socialism, for instance, mandates private property and objects to the concept of class conflict (Zehavi 1923, pp. 6–9). In addition, Jewish socialism did not see worldly labor as the ultimate issue, as did general socialism. They added to the value of work the religious precepts and the “spirit of Judaism”. In time, Hapoel Hamizrahi established the “Beni Akiva” youth movement, whose slogan was “Torah and labor”. The Jewish socialist does not aim to “change the orders of society in its entirety”. It does not subscribe to a socialist conception with universal implications and aspirations, rather to an individualist socialism: “We wish to change our life to fit the Jewish spirit” (Gardy 1923, p. 30). They aspired to revive the ancient Judaism, as in the course of two thousand years of exile Judaism had acquired several deficits. Compared to Judaism as it evolved during the exile, “pure” Judaism that had existed in the Land of Israel in biblical times and during the Second Temple period had been consistent, as they saw it, with socialist values. The Torah is socialist, and it preceded Marx and Engel by thousands of years (Engel 1923, p. 12). In contrast to the Marxist conception, which advocates a dialectic and synthesis, they declared: “Religion and work as we see them are not two separate things that should be synthesized, rather they are one” (Gardy 1923, p. 30). Hence, they called for a rural way of life and for physical labor, “A life that is pure of all those deficiencies and faults that appeared within us during our lengthy exile” (Ibid).

R. Dr. Isaiah Aviad (Oskar Wolfsberg) (1893–1957) was born in Germany and after the rise of Nazism immigrated to the Land of Israel. He was one of religious Zionism’s main thinkers. He was a pediatrician, and since the establishment of Israel served as an Israeli diplomat in Scandinavia and Switzerland (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1986, pp. 11–65).

R. Aviad did not serve as a rabbi in practice, neither the spiritual leader of a community or the head of a yeshiva. Nonetheless, he was a rabbi, and that is the designation I shall attach to him in this article. This is because the title “rabbi” is given to a learned Torah scholar and R. Aviad certainly meets this definition. This title also grants one who holds it supreme status, one of a man who has something to say, and his words are worthy of attention. This was the stature in which R. Aviad wrote his many texts and in which people read and discussed his various opinions and views: as a rabbi, not as a pediatrician. Therefore, many designated him a rabbi and I shall do so here, too.

R. Aviad wrote dozens of books and articles on different issues that were on the agenda in those days, both in the soon-to-be established state and in the recently established state of Israel, issues that occupied religious Zionism and regarding the Holocaust. His articles were steeped in Torah, philosophy, and criticism of events in the Jewish settlement. His audience was comprised mainly of religious Zionists, but many were exposed to his writings and views.

Two factors attest to R. Aviad’s status within general Israeli society and to his literary–social enterprise: One is a jubilee volume written in his honor during his lifetime, when reaching the not-so-advanced age of 60. Many intellectuals and socialites of all sectors contributed learned articles to the book published in his honor. The second is that promptly after the founding of the state, David Ben Gurion, the first prime minister, asked him personally to serve as a diplomat and to represent Israel in the Scandinavian countries. This occurred because R. Aviad was well known as an intellectual, even outside the religious Zionist sector, so much so that he merited a personal offer by the prime minister.

The current article seeks to examine his outlook with regard to the Land of Israel, worldly labor, and redemption.

The three topics selected for this article are his attitude to the land, to work, and to the redemption. These topics represent R. Aviad's theological innovation as a religious Zionist thinker. They express his active approach and his objection to the passive approach, as explained below. The active approach was manifested in material work and redemption of the land, as well as in the call to settle the Land of Israel, with a connection to the redemption, which according to R. Aviad, as opined by many who espoused the religious Zionist theology, was the essence of the current times, where one must take action, through work and settlement, to hasten this redemption.

2. The Significance of Work and of the Soil

R. Aviad does not see the land as a geographical area, rather as a fundamental element. He was familiar with mythical and ideological theories centering on the land, but his approach to the Land of Israel is theological. As early as ancient Greece, we encounter the myth whereby the natives were in fact born of the earth, autochthones—a myth presented in Plato's "Republic". This is the origin of the expression "mother earth", a concept that links a nation to their land and that in modern nationalist ideologies constitutes the basic link to "organic" nationalism, legitimizing armed struggles. According to Anthony Smith, the territorial component, the land, is one of the three elements that comprise the nation, together with clan-based blood relations and the rules of the political community (Smith 1971, p. 174).

The Jewish Torah does not agree with the autochthonous concept. Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees, not in the Land of Israel; the Israelites are called a "people" for the first time in Egypt of all places, and the Torah stresses that the earth belongs to God rather than to mankind: "For the land is mine" (Leviticus 25: 23).

The Zionist movement, too, addresses the land and cultivation of the land, particularly within the socialist ideology. The main ideologue of this approach was Aaron David Gordon. Gordon saw a life of labor, and particularly of agricultural work, as the main route to redemption of the individual, the people, and the land (Shtrassberg-Cohen 1995, p. 8). Labor was the main dimension in his philosophy, and it can be summarized on three main dimensions (Ibid, pp. 148–53): the first is that labor is a purpose in and of itself and not merely a means of subsistence (Bergman and Shohat 1952, Part I, p. 308). "We will be able to create the nation only when each one of us will create himself anew by means of labor and natural life" (Ibid, p. 128). The second relates to the relations between labor and religion, but not in the traditional sense. According to Gordon, the religious value of labor is that it allows one to reunite with nature. When a person performs practical work, he takes part in creating life itself, and "his work is more religious than that of one who observes all the precepts of the given faith with fear and trepidation" (Ibid, part II, p. 123). Unsurprisingly, his teachings are called "the religion of labor". The third dimension is the relations between labor and the nation. According to Gordon, labor has collective, national, and universal human value, as it facilitates realization of the organic relationship that links together the different individuals as cells to form one body (Ratzabi 2008).

Gordon even talks about devotion. Not in the Hassidic-mystical sense of human devotion to God, but rather devotion to nature and life, which will be achieved through labor. "The revival of the people, its renewal as a working and creating people, can only come about by labor . . . Also, the redemption of the land can only come about by means of labor" (Schweid 1983, p. 265).

Also, R. Aviad relates to the land and to cultivation of the land; however, his approach is different. The Torah promised the Land of Israel to the People of Israel. "Abram traveled through the land . . . The Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.'" (Genesis 12: 6–7). However, the land is more than a promise. He sees the land as a symbol of stability and faith:

More than all other types of ownership on earth, the soil represents and symbolizes the permanent in a transient world. As King Solomon said (Ecclesiastes 1: 4): "Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever" . . . The

relative stability compared to all other changing things is worthy of being the foundation of everything in life . . . Entire cultures have disappeared and been forgotten, however the earth is not damaged . . . The Torah of Israel means to implant in one's soul a recognition and love for the foundations of that which is existing and permanent . . . The earth is the very ideal vessel of blessing.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946a, p. 56)

He saw the earth as teaching one simplicity and humility: "The earth educates people to be simple and humble . . . Work that demands much labor and toil, as well as limited success . . . is important from a religious perspective" (Ibid, p. 57). Since the Torah commands modesty, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6: 8).

R. Aviad further explains the significance of the earth and its cultivation in Judaism. He cites a midrash:

"It is the Lord your God you must follow . . . and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13: 5), But are human beings capable of ascending to heaven and holding fast to the Divine spirit?... Rather from the beginning of the Holy One Blessed be He's Creation of the world, He engaged first in planting, "Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden" (Genesis 2: 8), you too, when you enter the land, engage first in planting.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946a, p. 57)

This midrash positions engaging in agricultural work as observing the precept of "Walk in his ways" (*Imitatio Dei*) (Deuteronomy 30: 16; Bavli, Shabbat 133b; Rosenberg 1983, pp. 72–91), which requires one to walk in God's ways by imitating his attributes and actions.

It should be noted that everything that pertains to our topic is insinuated here: "When you enter the land"—that is the political dimension: occupying the land, founding the state; "and plant any kind of fruit tree"—this reflects agriculture. Both things together emphasize the role of agriculture in the state as well as the superior level of its earth . . . and this matter should bring man closer to his Creator, who is normally far from all grasp and comparison (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946a, p. 57).

From the precept "Walk in his ways", R. Aviad understands that the "political dimension" should be learned, by which he means "occupying the land," "founding the state," and "agriculture in the state," which he sees as being on a "superior level". Although God, in any theological thought, is infinitely far from man, nonetheless as he sees it, these actions bring humankind closer to its Creator than anything else.

Furthermore, according to R. Aviad, work in the Land of Israel leads the People of Israel to realize their historical designation: "Only if the People of Israel occupy their land . . . cultivate their land and live a life of independence, a life of a nation in its state, then the nation reaches its ultimate height, only then is its historical function realized" (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, p. 16).

The historical designation, in his opinion, as a devotee of the "Torah with *derech erez*" school in Germany, is universal and particularistic. On one hand, it is a particularistic designation; the People of Israel cannot realize its potential without living in the Land of Israel and cultivating the earth; on the other, it is a universal designation, "a light unto the nations" (Isaiah 49: 6), a model for the nations presented by a nation that believes in monotheism and that successfully combines spirit and matter. I will expand on this later.

However, due to the lengthy exile of the People of Israel, the Torah in its entirety became encompassed by the concept of Torah study. Where in biblical times we encounter Jews who are involved in material matters and in the physical world as well, the Sages defined Judaism as a textual theoretical occupation alone. No longer an occupation with matter, rather only with spirituality (Mashiach 2020b). The thinkers of religious Zionism addressed this point. They contended that the Sages wanted the People of Israel to focus

on their spiritual uniqueness, although the physical occupation would consequently lose its significance, in order to survive the exile. However now, when the People of Israel were returning to their land, they called for a return to the original biblical Judaism.

Therefore, the ideologues of religious Zionism called for the integration of “Torah and labor,”; however, R. Aviad advocated basing Judaism on a single foundation—that of labor, as “The idea of ‘Torah and labor’ is still manifested in a duplicate slogan”. Therefore, “We are capable of basing the precepts of the movement on one: on labor. Of course, labor in both its meanings: worship of the Creator and labor in the living sphere. And it is not surprising that this concept contains it all” (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, pp. 35–36).

In order to further establish his outlook, he claimed that “the basic labor of life is also called work ‘to work it and take care of it,’ working the land, working the earth” (Ibid). God stationed man in the Garden of Eden “to work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2: 15), and thus he concluded that labor is part of humankind’s responsibility and essence.

Thus says Ecclesiastes in his wisdom: “The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields” (Ecclesiastes 5: 8). Labor is subjugation, endless subjugation, but this subjugation is an honor for human beings, as expressed in the Scriptures when they stress that even a king, who is above everyone, who rules and governs, even he is subjugated to the field, to the field of action that is the most basic (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, pp. 35–36).

The concept of labor is so fundamental that even a king must work. A king does not work for subsistence, rather labor is a religious value, part of man’s essence, and therefore even the king is not exempt from it.

3. Religious Zionism—A Multi-Dimensional Judaism

As stated, in rabbinical times, after the destruction of the Second Temple and the suppression of the big revolts, the Great Revolt (66–70) and the Bar Kochba revolt (132–135), Jewish identity changed. In biblical times the identity was multi-dimensional, encompassing spirit and matter, while from rabbinical times the identity focused on the spirit only.

Now, when the People of Israel have returned to their land and are founding a state therein, religious Zionist thinkers urged a return to the multi-dimensional biblical-Jewish identity, utilizing the slogan “Torah and labor”.

R. Aviad defined Judaism as “a great phenomenon . . . that does not forego any value . . . Judaism wishes to sanctify all paths of life” (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1962, p. 7). R. Aviad was not a Hassid, but from time to time he made use of Hassidic ideas. His statement “Judaism wishes to sanctify all paths of life” is compatible with Martin Buber’s insight whereby according to the Hassidic conception, there is a constant Divine presence in the world that allows one to encounter God even when occupied with materialist matters (Buber 1945, pp. 12–14). In his opinion, according to the Hassidic theology, “the distinction between the sacred . . . and the secular . . . is a temporary distinction . . . God wants everything to be sanctified” (Ibid, pp. 37–38, 40–41, 56, 89–90). However, R. Aviad calls for practical implementation, and if “God wants everything to be sanctified”, then we must sanctify the world of matter:

The labor of creating and building in society and as part of the state is an allegedly secular effort carried out in the field. But the intention is to sanctify the secular . . . the idea of labor contains a new form of religious elevation. Whoever bases his life on the ownership of work, on the realization of a productive life . . . advances the world and adds to its reparation.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1962, p. 12)

In the ultra-Orthodox conception, the act of “repairing the world” is implemented only by studying the Torah and observing its precepts, and not by involvement in the material world (Wurzbürger 1989, pp. 104–12). According to R. Aviad, “repairing the world” means

upgrading the material world by means of labor. Therefore, worldly labor is “a new form of religious elevation”.

This conception is defined by R. Aviad as a “revolution,” in direct reference to the “holy revolt”.

The horizon must be expanded . . . The first leaders understood in their greatness-innocence that we must depart from the regular paths of life and from the negative attitude to many occupations and enterprises, including the most fundamental: manual labor, toil, and agriculture . . . The concept of revolution applies to the orientation of Hapoel Hamizrahi and its actions—not as a transformation of the religious foundations, of the nature of faith, but rather as a transformation of the social structure and a new approach to the concepts of life.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, pp. 46–47)

The words “a transformation of the social structure and a new approach to the concepts of life” refer to “the holy revolt” or the “revolution,” transforming the one-dimensional exilic Judaism into a multi-dimensional Land of Israel Judaism.

He also identifies religious Zionism as “the true Judaism”. “The true Judaism, namely the national religious . . . to establish an eternal building for the Torah and for the people of the Torah in the land of the Torah” (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1948, p. 175). This statement is the slogan of the Mizrahi: “The Land of Israel for the People of Israel according to the Torah of Israel”. Also, of multi-dimensionality, he wrote: “The spiritual action of the Mizrahi was based on an orientation espousing a unity of life, thought, and action . . . This is the unity that we wish to renew” (Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, p. 22).

This he said despite criticism on two fronts: the ultra-Orthodox, representing people of spirit, and secular-socialist Zionism, representing people of matter.

Throughout its existence, the Mizrahi has faced a double front: versus the ultra-Orthodox who reject the concept of building the land and the obligation to immigrate, and versus the non-religious among the Zionists who regard the Torah of Israel and its faith with apathy or resistance. The Mizrahi was right to fortify a position that we may call **complete Judaism**.

(Ibid, p. 20; Emphases in the original text)

The aspiration for a complete Judaism and for being complete individuals was already expressed by the founder of the religious Zionist Mizrahi movement, R. Yitzhak Yaakov Reines (Mashiach 2018). He, too, saw human action and corporeal work as essential in order for the individual and nation to reach this state of completion and to realize their Torah-oriented designation and purpose:

Only this land is capable of being farmed in order to provide its laborers with a living in faith, and therefore . . . the Israelites who will receive the Torah, which is based on living in the land and farming, will arrive at their goal and designation only in the land of Israel, and while engaging in the desirable and worthwhile work, farming; and without this land and work they shall not reach their true aim and purpose.

(Reines 1889, p. 46)

Hence, work is capable of allowing one to make a living, “to provide its laborers with a living”, but it encompasses much more. Work is the way to bring the people of Israel “to their goal and designation”. He also stresses that “without this land and work they shall not reach their true aim and purpose”. Hence, work has beneficent and theological meaning, both for the Jewish individual and for the entire Jewish collective.

In summary, religious Zionism is the complete Judaism, that which combines Torah and labor—multi-dimensional.

4. Labor, Redemption, and Messianism

One of the fundamental disputes between the religious Zionist and ultra-Orthodox theologies relates to the issue of the redemption. Will it be a miraculous-Divine occurrence and we must wait passively for the Messiah, as the ultra-Orthodox believe, or will the redemption be natural, by active human effort, both political and involving corporeality and upgrading the world, as religious Zionists contend (Kalischer 2002, p. 37; Raphael 2004, Part II, pp. 557–70).

R. Aviad believed in natural redemption and human effort, linking the redemption to the Land of Israel and to cultivation of the earth.

All those who discuss the problem of the redemption emphasize its natural process ... beginning from the Talmud ... “Thus is the redemption of Israel, at first little by little, and as it proceeds it gradually grows” (Jerusalem Talmud Berachot 81). The issue further approaches our view if we read (Sanhedrin 98): “And Rabbi Abba says: You have no more explicit manifestation of the end of days than this, as it is stated: But you, mountains of Israel, you shall give your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel, for they will soon be coming”. Rashi commented: When the Land of Israel shall yield its fruit bountifully the end will draw near, and there is no more explicit manifestation of the end of days than this. And the Maharsha explains: As so long as the People of Israel are not in their land, the country does not yield fruit in its natural way, but when it shall return to yield its fruit this will be an explicit manifestation of the end of days, indicating that the time of redemption is drawing near, when Israel will return to their land.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946a, p. 48)

When the earth shall yield its fruit, that will be a distinct sign of the nearing redemption. However, this is not only passive waiting for the “explicit manifestation of the end of days”. The People of Israel must take action to bring it, and this will be done in his opinion by “redeeming the earth,” i.e., purchasing property in the Land of Israel, settling it, and cultivating it. It was clear to him that “The Torah that sanctified the earth by a series of religious precepts that are dependent on it, and that has an inseparable internal connection with this primary foundation of worldly existence, surely demands the idea of redemption, redemption of the soil”. Therefore,

The prophets and qualified thinkers wish to revive past glories, the ingathering of the exiles in the land of our heritage and becoming rooted anew in our land. A whole proper life is not possible without adding to the national hopes also the political inclination and the aspiration for the revival of our professional life, a life of labor ... which we have called the redeeming of the earth. Buying property in the Land of Israel is redemption for us first and foremost ... it is also redemption of the earth, which is reemerging from a state of desolation and major neglect and is about to become a settled land.

(Ibid, p. 66)

Hence, active efforts, both national and material, bear religious meaning: “Since the entire process of the Return to Zion is religious and holy for us, beginning with the longing of sons who were far from their homeland ... and culminating in the details of work in our land ... the redemption of the soil too is a religious action” (Ibid).

His approach, praise for human actions taken to hasten the redemption, contradicts the ultra-Orthodox perception that sanctifies passivity, rejects active operations, and believes in Divine-miraculous redemption. In order to clarify the ultra-Orthodox sanctification of passivity, I shall quote R. Shalom Dov-Ber Schneersohn, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe (Hassidic leader).

The Rebbe claimed that active efforts to hasten the redemption are forbidden. Redemption is a Divine process. “We must not heed their words in this matter of bringing about

the redemption on our own. Is it not so that we may not hasten the end of times, including pleading for this (Based on Rashi, Bavli Ketubot 111a), and all the more so with corporeal powers and ruses" (Landa and Rabinowicz 1900, p. 57). Complete passivity means it is even forbidden to pray that the redemption be hastened, all the more so through practical actions.

Human action, as he sees it, is destined to be partial and temporary even if it succeeds. Therefore, it is necessary to wait for the Divine redemption that will be complete and eternal:

Even the redemption brought about by Moses and Aaron was not complete redemption and they [Israel] were once again [subjugated in Babylon], and all the more so the redemption brought about by Hananya, Mishael, and Azarya [as they became once again subjugated to Ancient Greece] ... and in this present exile we must only anticipate our redemption and salvation by the Holy One blessed be He Himself, not by means of human beings, and then our redemption will be complete.

(Schneersohn 1982, Part I, siman 122)

Fundamental rejection of human actions for hastening the redemption means passive waiting for the Messiah.

In contrast, R. Aviad calls for activism and sees it as "religious action". He was aware of the fact that in his time there was a national arousal in favor of immigrating to the Land of Israel and cultivating the earth. He saw this as a sign of redemption and further proof that labor is a religious precept.

Redeeming the soil bases the revival enterprise on a religious foundation. The nation is not only waiting for a miracle that will occur at some future time ... rather is initiating action ... the arousal of the collective and of the individual ... denote the period of the revival ... redeeming the soil is the most prominent and typical symbol of the great transformation that is occurring in our era ... redeeming the soil is becoming a holy duty.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946a, p. 70)

The combination of Torah and labor, matter, and spirit, in the context of the redemption, was already voiced by religious Zionist thinkers even before R. Aviad. One example of this is the approach of R. Kook (Mashiach 2020a), the most prominent thinker to influence religious Zionism, who wrote: "The clear assumption is: The revival of our people must be a complete revival, a revival of the body and a revival of the soul, a revival of the secular and a revival of the sacred" (Kook 1988, p. 336). He declared steadfastly, "Because Israel's salvation can only flourish if it is fundamentally comprised of two forces, the sacred and the secular ... They complete each other and only when joined do they fulfill their duty in whole" (Kook 1988, p. 257). Accordingly, he criticized the ultra-Orthodox who deny the secular and the secular who deny the sacred:

And every Jewish person should know that so long as he engages only in the secular aspects of the national revival, he performs the labor of his people only from one angle, and his labor remains incomplete ... also, every Jewish person who builds the nation's religious values should know that so long as he does not help and support the secular construction of the nation, he detracts from the character of the required national labor. And the more this complete consciousness spreads, the more the nature of our national revival will receive its complete character.

(Kook 1988, p. 43)

In conclusion: human activism—i.e., redeeming the soil of the Land of Israel and cultivating it, is a religious precept that will bring about the redemption.

5. Criticism of the Secular and of the Ultra-Orthodox

Based on these conceptions, R. Aviad criticized the one-dimensional Jews: the ultra-Orthodox conception that focuses on the spiritual dimension and the Zionist-secular conception that focuses on the material dimension, “the religion of labor,” while he himself advocated a multi-dimensional Judaism: “Torah and labor”.

Theologically, ultra-Orthodox Judaism was the target of his criticism.

One of the big gifts of the “Torah and labor” slogan is the aspiration for synthesis revealed therein . . . Proper human life is fully manifested only in the merging of these two spheres. “Anyone who says he has nothing other than Torah, does not even have Torah” (Bavli, Yevamot 109b). This unity was formerly a fact, but it has become lost to us. The exile led to disintegration and we were unable to realize the religious-social vision in its full scope. Hence, “Hapoel Hamizrahi” has emerged, in order to revive past glories.

(Wolfseberg-Aviad 1962, p. 12)

The words “Anyone who says he has nothing other than Torah, does not even have Torah” mean that anyone who is occupied only with spirituality does not even have spirituality. Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, as R. Aviad sees it, is a fundamentally misled Judaism. Spirituality without materialism lacks meaning.

He criticized ultra-Orthodox Judaism also for its lack of adherence to “redemption of the soil,” while idealizing exilic life.

The recognition that history has returned to its homeland is what motivated the God fearers [religious Zionism] to merge in one movement with people who rejected religious responsibilities [secular Zionism]. This approach separates the Mizrahi from its Orthodox opponents. Members of [the ultra-Orthodox] Agudat Israel neither knew nor understood the historical issue, why the time has come to leave the exile and build our home. The trend led by the separate Orthodoxy [R. Hirsch’s community model in Frankfurt] is flawed, one may say tragic, as it has lost sight of the course of [Divine] providence in history, it has lost sight of the intention of “natural” redemption . . . it has renewed its love of the exile and its idealization of life in the Diaspora.

(Tirosch 1955, p. 20)

On the issue of redemption as well, R. Aviad criticized the ultra-Orthodox and general Zionism for doing nothing to hasten the redemption.

While secular Zionism does not contradict the theory of the Messiah, neither does it uphold it or necessarily implement it. Orthodoxy that is distant from Zionism [the ultra-Orthodox] is not taking any real steps . . . to hasten the anticipated time called the End of Days.

(Wolfsberg-Aviad 1946b, p. 25)

In his criticism of the one-dimensional Jews, R. Aviad utilized Hegel’s tripartite model: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (Hegel 2018; Wheat 2012). The ultra-Orthodox are the thesis, the exilic Jews who engage only in spirituality, Torah; secular Zionism is the antithesis, neglecting spirituality in favor of materialism, “the religion of labor”; religious Zionism is the synthesis, “Torah and labor,” the authentic multi-dimensional Judaism to which it is necessary to return and that should be renewed. The ultra-Orthodox and secular Zionism have remained one-dimensional, and that is the gist of his criticism.

6. Conclusions and Discussion

We have seen R. Aviad’s multi-dimensional religious Zionist perception of Judaism, and it is self-explanatory. In order to understand the independent nature of his ideology, we shall describe the theology on which he was educated and realize how different it was from his teachings.

First, we must say that R. Aviad was strongly influenced, as he testifies, by two important German rabbis: R. Salman Baruch Rabinkov (1887–1941) and R. Dr. Nehemiah Nobel (1871–1922). R. Rabinkov developed a unique socialist Jewish approach; however, he left no writings, and it is not possible to know how he affected R. Aviad, at least in regard to the contents of the current article. It can be assumed that it was not necessarily R. Rabinkov's words and ideas that influenced him, but rather his extensive knowledge, tolerance, and wide education. His perspective as a learned and well-educated man served as a model for R. Aviad throughout his own life, education, and activities (Raphael 1986, pp. 56–60, 89–91).

The second rabbi was R. Dr. Nehemiah Nobel, who was among the most prominent German religious Zionist rabbis (Heuberger 2005). He had a strong influence on many from R. Aviad's generation and on him as well (Raphael 1986, pp. 2–5). R. Aviad also published his essays (Nobel 1969). R. Nobel "tried to create a nostalgic synthesis between historical Judaism and modern culture" (Nobel 1969, p. 94), a principle that guided R. Aviad throughout his life. One of R. Nobel's ideas, on the issue of labor, contributed to R. Aviad's conceptions on this issue. R. Nobel saw labor extremely positively and wrote: "Creative work is uplifting. We do not find such an outlook among those of the biblical generation in ancient times or even among the representatives of the classical era within the ancient civilizations" (Nobel 1969, p. 95).

R. Aviad was educated also according to the method of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch, "Torah with *derech erez*" (Breuer 1987); however, he himself took a different approach on the issue of activism versus passivity and with regard to the Land of Israel.

Let us clarify. R. Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888) took a passive approach to the issue of the redemption. In a letter to R. Kalischer, who urged a natural redemption and human activism, he wrote: "We were never charged with progressing towards redemption by strengthening and improving the holy land, rather by strengthening and improving our hearts" (Hirsch 1951, letter 12). He refused to support the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel: "Because that which they consider observance of a great religious precept, I perceive as a not insignificant misdeed" (Hildesheimer 1986, pp. 195–214, quote from p. 199). He maintained that "we must not try once again under our own power to establish national independence, rather this national future should be left to the discretion of God's leadership alone" (Hirsch 1992, p. 148). Activism is a religious transgression.

R. Hirsch perceived the Land of Israel as a vehicle for observing the religious precepts, and nothing more (Horwitz 1998, pp. 447–66). The main focus is the Torah, not the land. The designation of the People of Israel is to live among the nations and to demonstrate that a nation that believes in God and follows His ways will be blessed and will succeed, and in this way will be a "light unto the nations".

Humanity is educated by way of experience, such that people will know God and themselves based on their destiny; but in order to promote and ensure this education . . . one nation has been placed on the stage of nations, a nation that demonstrates through its destiny and life that the single God is the purpose of life, that the only aim of life is to fulfill his wishes.

(Hirsch 1899, letter 8).

Also, of the Land of Israel, he wrote:

Israel received the Torah in the desert, and in the desert . . . Israel became a nation by means of the Torah, an entity whose soul is the Torah . . . The Torah and fulfilling God's wishes are the foundation of their life, the base on which they stand, and the purpose of their existence . . . The People of Israel indeed acquired a land and established a kingdom there, but these were not the ultimate aim, rather only means necessary in order to observe the Torah's precepts.

(Ibid; see also in letter 16)

It is easy to discern the essential difference between R. Hirsch and R. Aviad, where the latter believed in human activism, natural redemption, "redeeming the soil" of the Land

of Israel, and cultivating its land. In time, he contended that this approach is the proper response to the Holocaust of European Jewry, and that it could even have prevented the Holocaust to begin with. All this through the definition of Judaism as multi-dimensional and in a call to return to the biblical Jewish identity, a Jewish orientation is fully manifested in religious Zionism.

Concluding note—Although R. Aviad contributed considerably to religious Zionist theology throughout his life; subsequently, over time he was forgotten. At present, few have heard his name and even fewer have read his writings. He shares the same fate as many other thinkers of religious Zionism who have been forgotten. This is because, particularly from the 1970s, the religious Zionist sector was strongly influenced by the philosophy of R. Kook. The disciples of R. Kook are those who established the large majority of Israel's yeshiva-style schools, mediated by his son, R. Zvi Yehuda Kook.

Unfortunately, when the sun shines, the stars cannot be seen, regardless how bright they shine...

The current article endeavors to hail his memory, enterprise, and contribution.

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