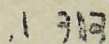


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גמר מעשר "גמל"
 קיבלץ כפר הדגל

שבת/אדר תשל"ד
קיבוץ דגניה א'

על פי 2.10



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Aaron David Gordon

(1856 - 1972)

Biography

A.D. Gordon was a Labor Zionist and one of the most outstanding personalities of the second Aliyah period. His philosophy, whose center is the relationship between man and nature, had a profound influence on the yishuv and the Jewish Labor Movement.

In the province of Podolia, Russia, A.D. Gordon was born into an orthodox family. He received the traditional Jewish training in Torah and Talmud. For 23 years he helped manage the estate of Baron Gunzburg. During this time he worked with the children of the community.

At the age of forty-eight, he decided to make Aliyah to Palestine, leaving all he had; he left his wife and children until he could bring them over. Upon arriving in Palestine, Gordon insisted upon being a laborer of the land, despite his age and weak physical condition. He spent over fifteen years in Petah Tikva, and in the Galil doing hard physical labor alongside young and strong youth. The last few years of his life were spent at kvutza Degania (A) where he died of cancer.

Thoughts

On Labor and National Revival

A.D. Gordon called for a return to the land, to nature and to the

national language. Redemption and self-fulfillment of man could only be achieved through labor. For centuries the Jewish people had been parasitic - divorced and alienated from the land and nature. Labor, for Gordon, was the beginning and the end of the revival of the Jewish People - labor was not just a condition but the essence of life.

Returning to our homeland and working the soil should not be looked upon as a sacrifice but a duty of each one of us. In building our nation, the foundation stones we lay are for a new collective life, a new national spirituality (not just an improvement of the economic status). No title deeds can give us real title to our country - only through a personal effort of giving of one's whole body and soul, as well as unfolding and revealing of oneself can there be a claim to the country. Gordon was not at all enthused by the Balfour Declaration and was opposed to the jubilation over it. No nation or man could give us national independence - this could only be achieved through daily national work.

He criticized harshly those Jews who hired foreign labor. Only by Jewish labor - self labor - could we achieve self-fulfillment and build our nation. We could not build our life on exploited labor. The Talmudic saying that when the children of Israel will do the Lord's will, their work will be done by others, was not a blessing but rather a curse in Gordon's opinion- This was so typical of the narrow and meagre existence of the ghetto Jews.

Each of us must settle an account with our own self - to reform ourselves. The way which Gordon outlined, the creation of a national renaissance, was to be quite arduous.

On Nature and Man

For Gordon, man is an inseparable part of nature. Nature is to man like water is to the fish. One should not "know nature and live it", but Live Nature! Man has conquered nature and subjugated it but has not lived nature. By the harnessing of man's physical and spiritual strength along with the natural forces of the earth, a plant lives. This unites man and nature. This to Gordon was one of the highest religious expressions. Work in his eyes was the renewal of the face of the earth - creation.

The history of civilization is of concealment and restrictions in all manners of dress, customs, fences, hiding from one's fellow man; even in language there is concealment - Gordon writes that we have to learn to be silent and to return to nature.

On Politics and Nationalism

Gordon never considered himself a socialist nor a party member. He shunned political activity, seeing it as destructive of our highest ideals. After some time he was deeply concerned with the problems of the Yishuv and the formation of the Histadrut and Hamashbir.

Nationalism in Gordon's belief will cause people to concentrate more on their land and develop its natural resources. Individualism, not egoism, will be the outcome. Only in Palestine can the Jewish people enrich their national individualism (The natural environment of a people was a necessity for the national revival in order that the true conditions would exist).

Man

In Gordon's opinion the kvutza requires no nobler men than the

moshav ovdim. The form is not important; the important fact is man. No form should be like a barrel where man is preserved and neatly arranged - only having fit nicely in a barrel - not man.

The Example

The question arises - why was Gordon so influential, so central a figure? After all, many Zealots of Labor Zionism called for a return to the land, revival of the national language and insisted upon self-labor. The answer is that these ideas find expression not only in his writings but in his life style. Gordon's philosophy of man and nature was a living reality for him. His outstanding example will be much more clear in the next section "Hazaken". (How Degania's members remember him.)

- Dov Gordon

" Labor is not only the Force which binds man to the soil and by which possession of the soil is acquired; it is also the basic energy for the creation of a national culture. "

A. D. Gordon

HAZAKEN

"The Old Man", as A.D. Gordon was reverently called by the members of Degania, was very simple and well liked. He dressed quite plainly; a tunic, a pair of patched working trousers and a pair of boots, whose age almost equaled his. One of the most outstanding features mentioned by members is his beautiful and gentle eyes. Gordon loved to sing and dance, as well as tell jokes. He was very meek and despite his old age refused to accept any special privileges.

A.D. Gordon lived in a small room with three other chaverim. In his room, by kerosene light, he would do all his writings in the late hours of the night (never sacrificing his working hours). He wrote on small pieces of paper which he would cut very carefully. There was no closet in his room, but he kept all his belongings very well ordered. Gordon was somewhat aloof and did not regularly participate in the Kvutza's Asephot. As one member said - his mind was occupied with everything going on in Palestine. He also loved to visit the young people in Poriah from a Hashomer Hatzir group.

Gordon never rode to and from work - he loved to walk and be with nature. His favorite work was to pull out (Yabaliot) scotch grass, which was one of the most difficult work to be done. (This involved digging one meter down around the weed and combing the earth for the tiniest trace of the root - otherwise it would immediately grow back). One member told me that Gordon worked with a Turiah (type of hoe) as one would play a violin - so well did he control this instrument in his hands and enjoy it! For Gordon the quality

of work was more important than the quantity of work. He himself was a perfectionist. Arranging the wheat sheaves in piles was also one of his favorite jobs. When he arrived home from work he would never take a shower but bathe in the kinneret.

He was very traditional in his Jewish practices. On Shabbot he never rode and on Holidays he fasted. He also ate only natural foods. (He did not want to eat any animal or animal products out of respect for them as living beings.)

One member said that Gordon was like every one of us - only he had a beard. He never liked to be photographed and always tried not to be conspicuous.

Gordon was a close friend of Rachel, the poetess. Gordon wrote a series of letters to her when she was studying agronomy in Paris. His letters are very frank and warm and encouraging. Gordon lived within his letters as he did in nature. He writes to Rachel, who is homesick for Israel and depressed that she cannot look at her 2½ years there as preparation for life. He stresses to her that she must live and she can learn so much from Europe and the people with whom she came in contact.

During World War II, Degania was one of the few settlements which had wheat. This was a time when wheat was scarce and the market price was sky high. A.D. Gordon insisted that Degania should set an example and not exploit the war situation. The price of wheat should be the same as if there was no war.

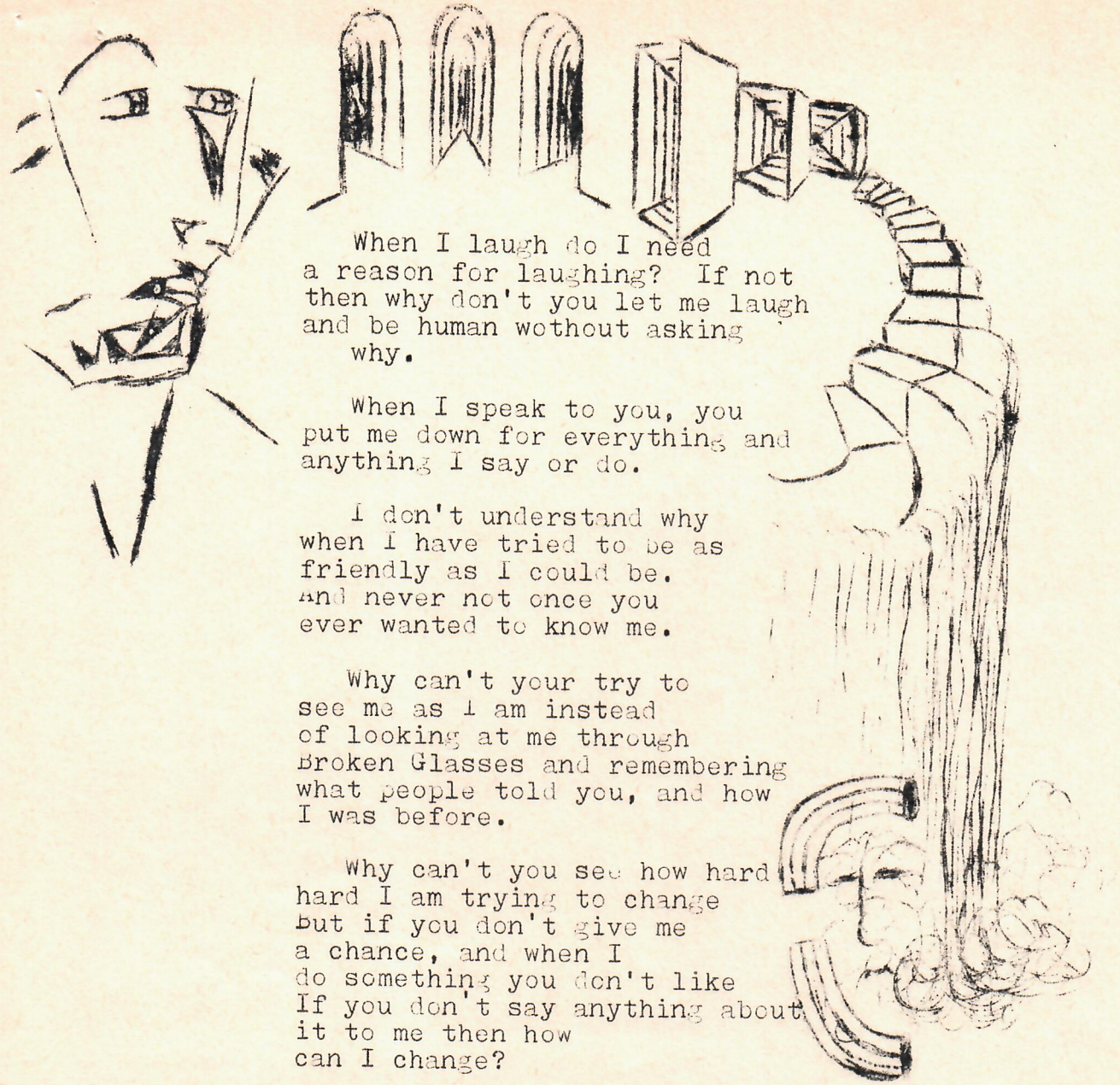
Q

As the seasons change
And winter's snow turns into rain
So swiftly did he enter my life
And so quietly did he leave.

Still a stranger am I to him
But now I know his smile
Oh could I only have known
his touch
As well as I know his eyes



270



When I laugh do I need
a reason for laughing? If not
then why don't you let me laugh
and be human without asking
why.

When I speak to you, you
put me down for everything and
anything I say or do.

I don't understand why
when I have tried to be as
friendly as I could be.
and never not once you
ever wanted to know me.

Why can't you try to
see me as I am instead
of looking at me through
broken Glasses and remembering
what people told you, and how
I was before.

Why can't you see how hard
hard I am trying to change
but if you don't give me
a chance, and when I
do something you don't like
If you don't say anything about
it to me then how
can I change?

And yes believe it
or not I am a human
being, a person, I do have
feelings and I do get easily
hurt so

Please I hope the
next time we meet you will
will try to remember
this

To-da ra-bah

- A person

P160 3281
(10)

EINS ZWEI DREI



Take bodies piled up
naked, warm, dead bodies
one upon the other pressed.

Add kerosene generously
Don't forget the match
Play Beethoven's Symphony
that is a must

Then wash away the ashes
with the greatest care

Remembering to replant
grass seed

As if no Jew was there.

TO DO



Dov
Amherst
Nov., 72

1918

The warmth of your smile sent
Chills singing through my being .
And then when you held me close and
touched my forehead with your lips
I could not help but smile back.

VL

I listen to the Dylan record (of Yedida's)
play in Lenny's room- somewhat distrated by Ina and
Barera talking over it while I

Lie in my bed writing these lines (my feet lying
on the cushion.)

Yedida is wondering what to do for chofesh and
laughingly telling Suzy she'll have a falafel in Tiberias,
but outside the winds blows.

The rain is falling on a sun washed landscape
and small muddy pools reflect a water colour

Sky. "B.B.C. World Service" just mentioned an army
take over in Ethiopia and British electoral problems (as
for the latter I couldn't give a damn)

I must joined the Cilture Committee and hope to join
the Tiyulim Committee & perhaps the absorption one that
Dov is taking). It's still raining outside and windy and
thunder crashes, rattling

the windows

But life is good

And I feel

Just fine

1 313



Poem for a Distant Lover

so,
it comes to
this - no more
cyntic poems or
sweet daydreams
now is now
you are there
and I'm here with
miles in thousands
tumbled between us.
changed,
now is now
only,
I still love thee.

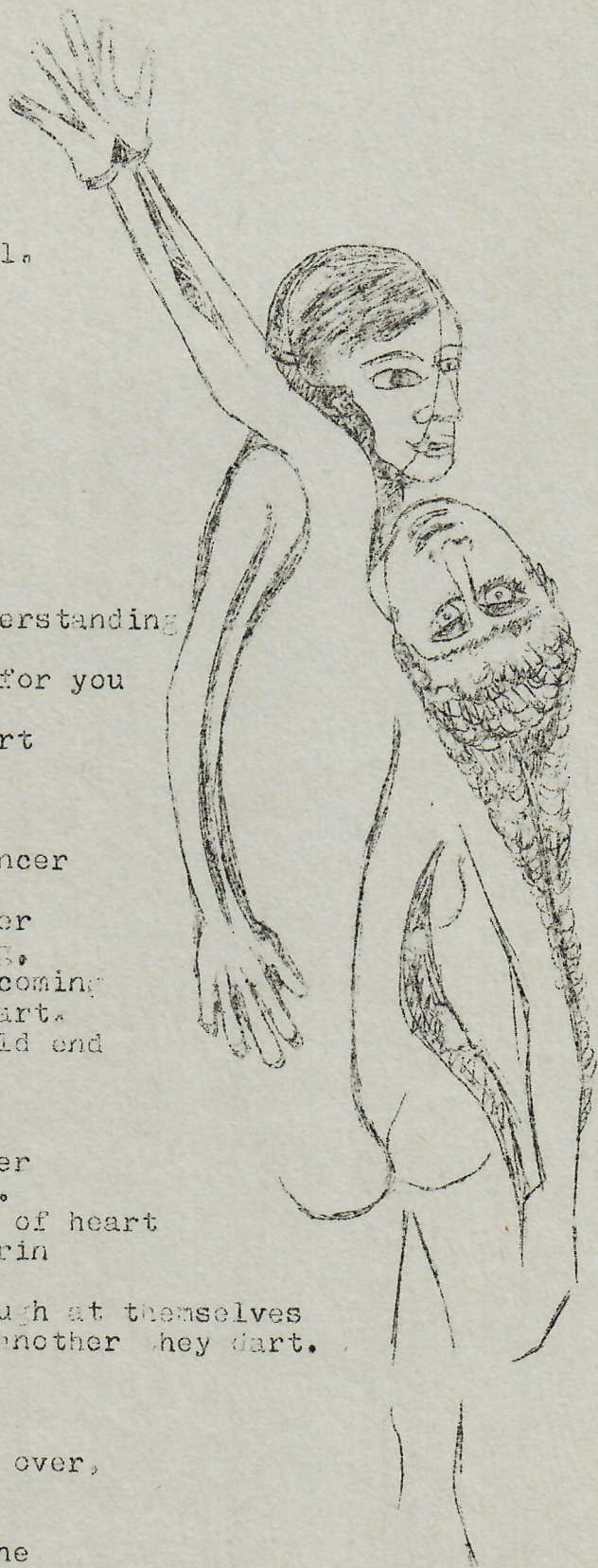


Dancer of the Heart

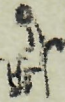
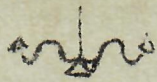
Silver light
purple sky
charcoal clouds
hung high
music played
for a masquerade
so many dreams
and actors for them all.
No sun, no moon
just rain.
flowing darkness then
another round of pain.
A smooth glass button
to pop over the eyes
a distorted disguise
Thunder and lightning
applause, applause,
out right behind
a little pause
and welcome in the understanding
for a moment, or two
a song for me and one for you

Dear dancer of the heart
of words I must depart
for you to say and
for you to play
but not for me dear dancer
of the heart
for you I have no answer
for words are something,
but there's more to becoming
and words are only a part.
And where does the world end
and begin
when circles spin?
And when worlds after
are filled with laughter
Oh how the actors grin.
Tis a pity dear dancer of heart
that the actors must grin
like elves,
because they cannot laugh at themselves
and from one thing to another they dart.

One last note
the symphony ends
the masquerade ball is over,
but no one comprehends
and so the dew form
and we begin another one
a misty curtain
and what we see we see alone

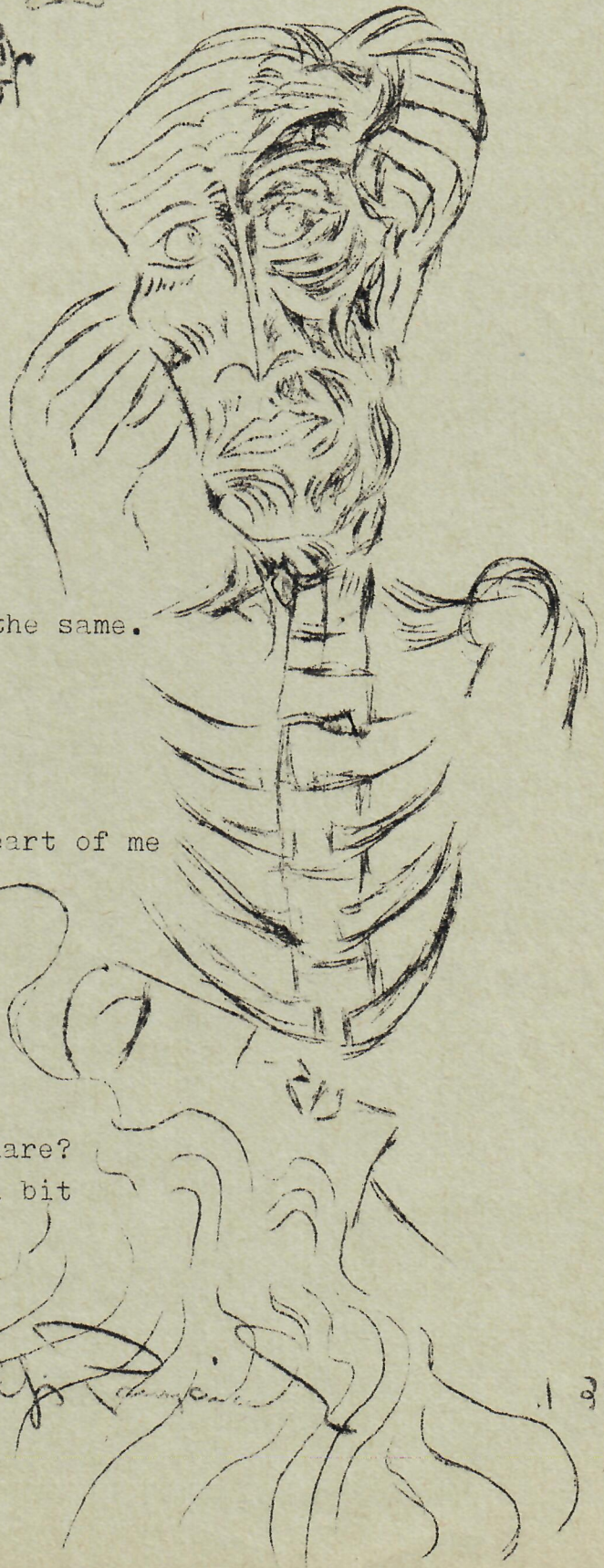


27/10/11
H. and



AT THE DINNER TABLE

Roses are Red.
Violets are blue?
Not so long ago.
Just a month or two
It went,
got bent,
was sent
Away I went off off
Haven't quite been the same.
Sane?
Always in my mind.
not so kind,
in a bind.
A part of me, the heart of me
The epitome
"Are you O.K.?"
"O.K." so I say
I do care.
Then don't stare.
and not there.
Say a prayer, do I dare?
So here I sit, for a bit
all broken hearted
Paid my dime.
And only farted.



Occasion: Rite Memory

(October 6)

Life is recovering
It's a frightening thing to see
It's cheeks are showering a promise of merely pink
It's eyes the hint of a future the colour of marble
A lustre of creation sets the arrow against
The cow-string while the right hand grips the net
And in its face, the wan smile of a convalescent

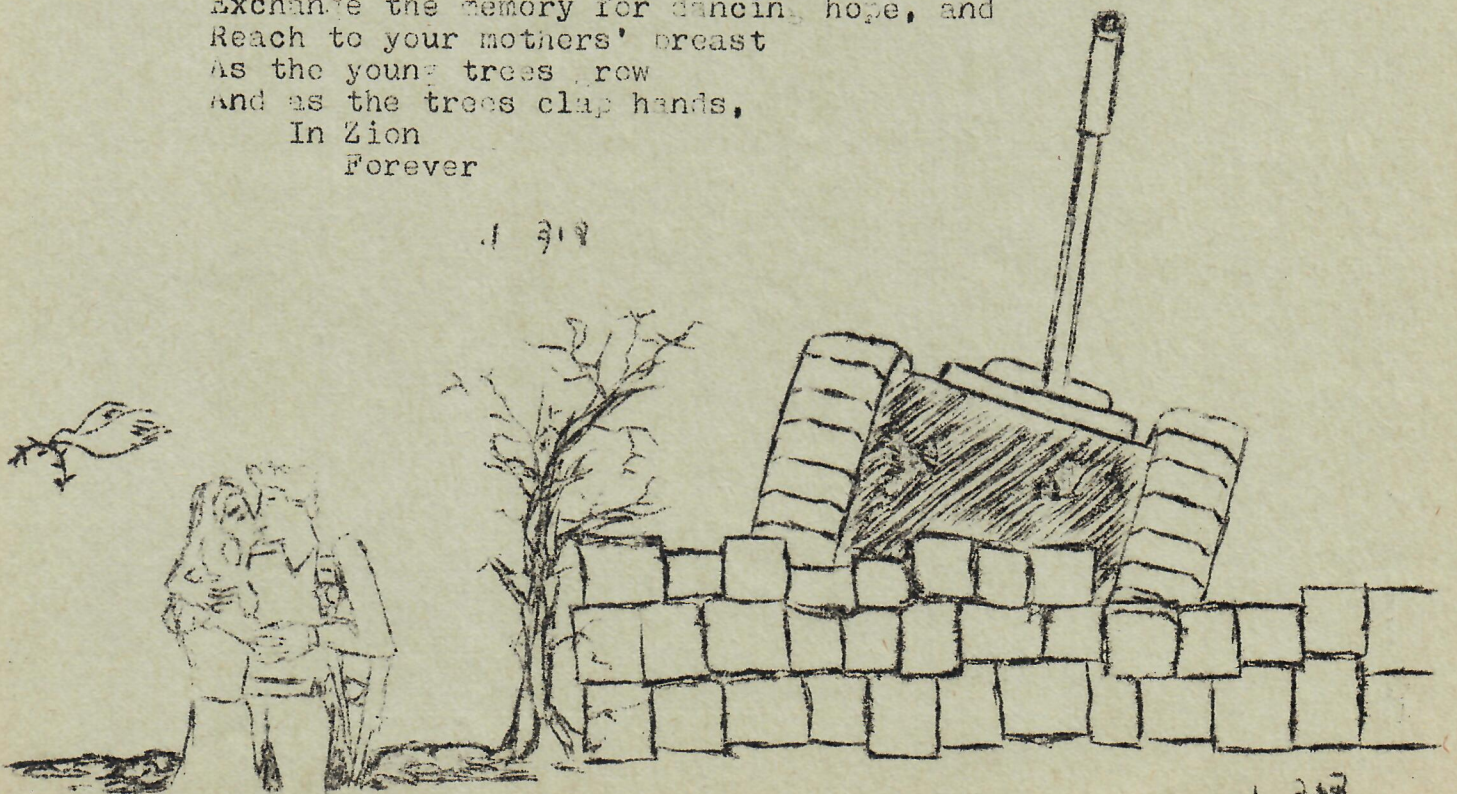
In the morning mists of time
When the savage guts of the quiver
Shook the four winds
And I, was neither the trees, the waters, of the creatures
I heard a calling, a wailing
And setting the desert crown upon her head
The moon fixed the boundaries of the world
And the whispered echo created summer and winter

Faint rumors, half forgotten memories
By pass the gateway to Eden
And the garden weeds spiral to the ominous clouds

A patient suspended in untutored individuality
No longer divided the sinking steps of age
While deep and rolling the bright hills of ~~s-lad~~ land
Mirror the sky with model joy.

Peacefull land, that once lay 'neath a cruel cast
Exchange the memory for dancing hope, and
Reach to your mothers' breast
As the young trees row
And as the trees clap hands,
In Zion
Forever


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.1 319

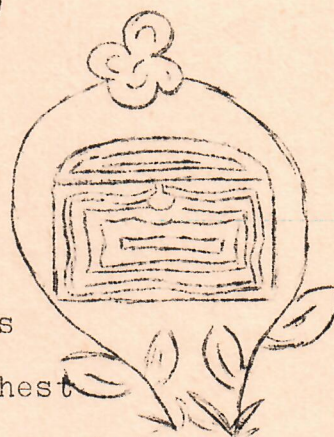
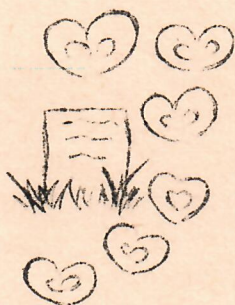



I thought I had discovered fire
like the first cave man
but now the sun has set
And I am cold again.

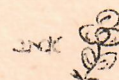
DOV 
11.10.72
Amherst



My head is no longer
a bleak cemetery
filled with tombstones
of abandoned loves
But a heavy treasure chest
filled with necklaces and chains
of unforgettable memories.



DOV 
12.11.72
Amherst





Conglomerations From Here and There

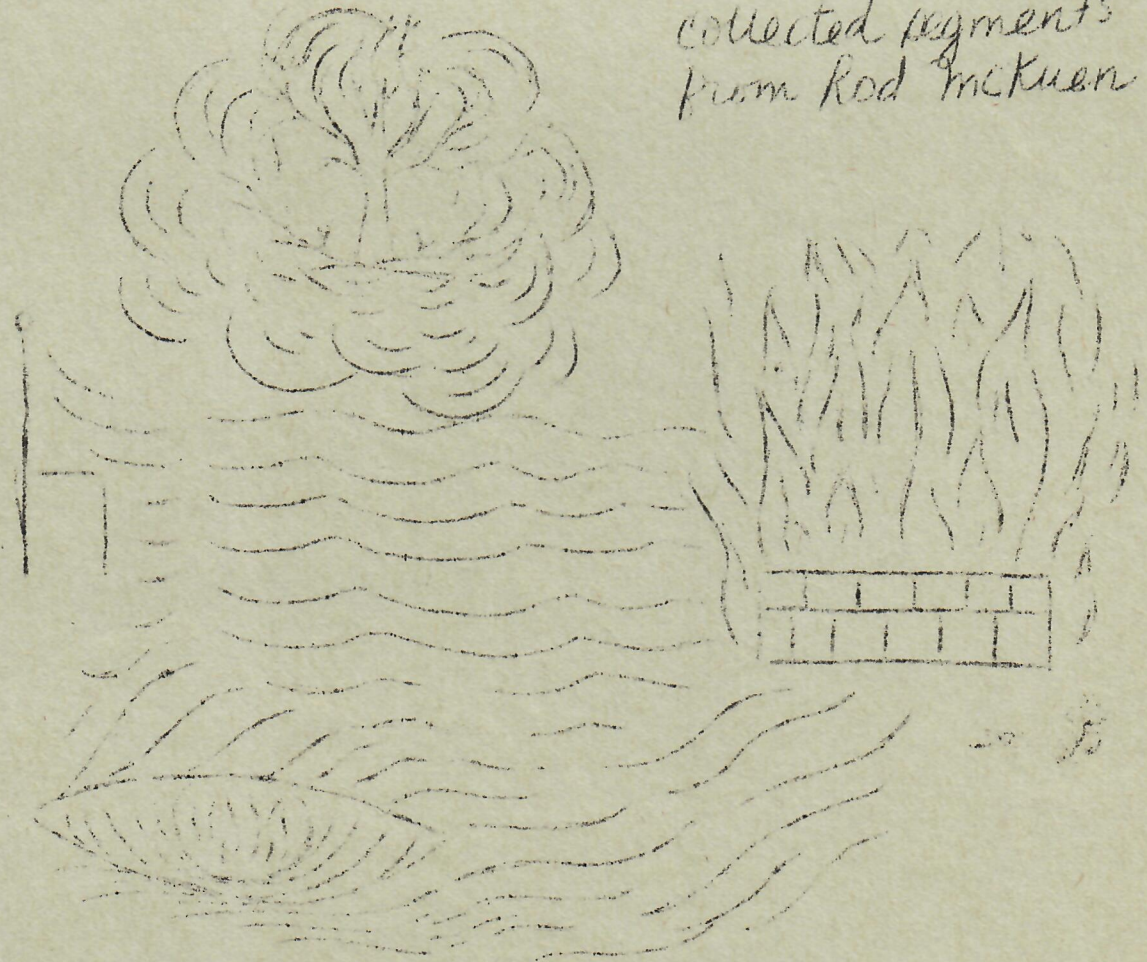


On this Tuesday away from you I wonder if the time will ever pass till we're together even for a while again. How can we be sure of anything; the tide changes, the wind that made the grain wave gently yesterday blows down the trees tomorrow and the sea sends sailors crashing on the rocks as easily as it guides them safely home. I've been going a long time now. Along the way I've learned some things. You have to make the good times yourself, take the little times and make them into big times and save the times that are all right for the ones that aren't so good. I'm not sure what it means. Why can't we shake the old loves from our minds? It must be that we build on memory and make them more than what they were. And is the manufacture just a safe device for closing up the well? I do remember. The only fuzzy circumstance is sometimes, where and how. Why, I know. It happens just because we need to want and to be wanted too. Love is a sweet thing caught a moment and held in a golden eye. You can borrow but never own it. After a while it says good bye. Heavy is the heart that has to turn and to say good bye but as we love so do we learn. For every star that falls to earth a new one glows. For

every dream that fades a new one grows.
When things are not what they would seem
you must keep following your dream.

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The above lines were
collected fragments
from Rod McKuen



Hetto Plaulback '74

This grey cloud morning
I sit in a
small sidewalk café in
Tel-Aviv,
watching
an old beard Jew
who is staring at
the smashed-in window
of the jewellery shop next door.
He
shakes his head, and
muttering,
shuffles away
maybe remembering
crazed black nights of
shattering glass in
Warsaw Hetto rests,
lonely 31 years ago....

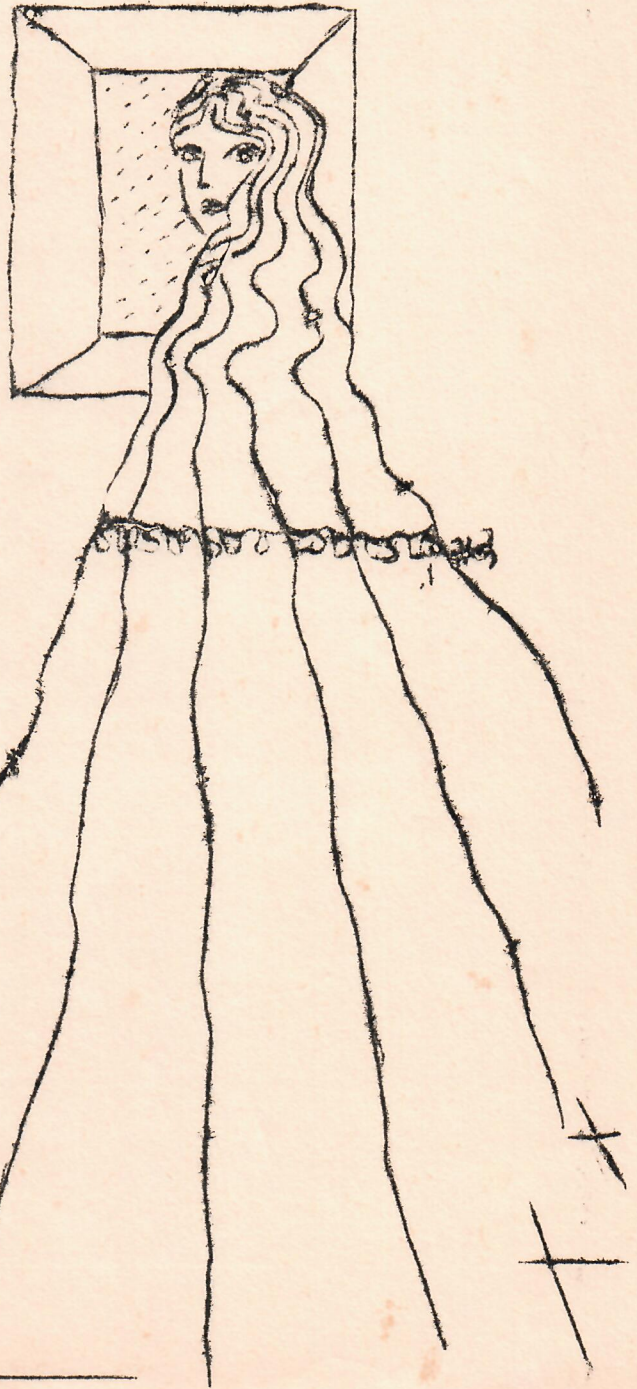
Daniel
F. Hersh

to ay was a day so far
unlike the others
the black sky threatened
rain;

the strong gusty winds threatened storm
her eyes threatened hatred
the room offered comfort
but not warmth
it gave light and held
books and music

and a hot cup of coffee
the dogs gave friendship
the rains came and gave
a sweet smell to the grass
made the earth soft
and the winds subsided
her eyes went cold and
dull with life
Suddenly the room was bare
and naked

Shadows were on the walls
and echoed no sound of
music
the books faded, because
all the words died



THE TREE OF LIFE

IN THE TREE OF LIFE
LEAVES FALL
AND GO WITH THE WIND.

IF THE TREE BE MY MOTHER
AND THE WIND MY FATHER
AND I THE LEAF, THE SEED,

THEN I MUST NOT CLING TO THE BRANCH
NOR DANCE FOREVER IN THE WIND'S CROWN
BUT FIND MY PASTURE, AND LIVE.

