

The writings of Rabbi Kook, one of modern Jewry's most creative and original philosophers, are unfortunately known only within a select circle. In this essay, Rabbi Gewirtz recaptures the most salient features of this brilliant system of thought which is so uniquely geared to the spiritual needs of our time. Rabbi Gewirtz, spiritual leader of Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth Congregation in Wilmington and Hillel Counselor at the University of Delaware, was ordained at the Hebrew Theological College of Chicago. He holds a B.S.S. degree from City College of New York and is presently completing his doctoral thesis for Dropsie College. His recent book, *The Authentic Jew and his Judaism*, will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue.

ELEMENTS IN RAV KOOK'S LEGACY

Each generation will adopt from the legacy of a spiritual giant what it needs most. It will appreciate best those insights and teachings which it finds especially meaningful in view of their relevance to its own needs and deficiencies.

Our generation, which follows that of Rav Abraham Isaac Ha-Kohen Kook, of blessed memory, will find certain aspects of Rav Kook's legacy of special significance.

AHAVAT YISRAEL (Love for Israel)

Rav Kook's *Ahavat Yisrael* is legendary and is accepted as a basic doctrine of his legacy. Though not original in this teaching, he was very original in its interpretation and application. His famous analogical illustration of *Ahavat Yisrael* became classic during his lifetime. He pointed out that once the Temple was built, only the High Priest, on the Day of Atonement, was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies. But in the process of its construction, laborers were allowed to enter the Holy of

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Holies in their working clothes. The analogy suggested that even the irreligious *chalutz* served an important religious function in the upbuilding of *Eretz Yisrael*.

To many, this attitude may sound like a bit of pious sentimentality; to others, it will seem naive and vacillating. We would be doing Rav Kook's doctrine a grave injustice if we misunderstand him on such a superficial level. It is necessary to analyze in depth the foundations of Rav Kook's doctrine of *Ahavat Yisrael*.

The Love of Israel rests upon the doctrine of *Knesset Yisrael*, the Ecclesia of Israel. Israel is a people uniquely endowed with a spiritual capacity that surpasses that of all humanity — a capacity which manifests itself in its history in the phenomena of prophecy (*ruach ha-kodesh*) and miracles (*Orot Yisrael* p. 138). This *uniqueness* is the consequence of two spiritual forces:

(1) *Israel is a chosen people (Segulah)*. The holiness in Israel's collective soul (and also in each Jew's soul, to be explained below) is a gift bestowed by the grace of God. It does not result from inherent worth. It would be an error for the Jew to deny such holiness for, by recognizing it, Israel is able to fulfill her potentiality and make a genuine contribution to mankind and civilization. By denying it, she negates herself and deprives all mankind.

(2) *Israel is a choosing people (Bechirah)*. During the course of its history, Israel displayed devotion, sacrifice, love for and loyalty to God through the observance of His *mitzvot* and by adhering to Torah.

In contemporary Jewish life, many segments of *Knesset Yisrael* do not follow the divine precepts. They fail thereby to *choose* God and His commandments (they negate *Bechirah*) but by heredity and birth are of the *Knesset Yisrael* (they enjoy *Segulah*). "In everyone of Israel there lives within, the spark of holy light derived by heredity from his fathers" (*ibid.* p. 146). "The nature of the collective soul of *Knesset Yisrael* is its divinity, which is so endowed because of God's grace and goodness . . . There is also the result of choice, which refines, exalts, and purifies its given divinity. However, when rejecting

this choice, the collective soul can blacken, darken, and defile its unique luster. But this darkness cannot remain forever because the natural uniqueness of Israel's soul must rise and reawaken to life" (Introduction to *Shabbat ha-Aretz*). In the process of expounding this doctrine of *Knesset Yisrael* and its unique endowments, Rav Kook ingeniously interpreted the following passage of the *Avot* prayer, "Who rememberest the pious deeds of the patriarchs, and in love wilt bring a redeemer to their children's children for Thy Name's sake." He observed that "if the irreligious have rejected the *Bechirah*, though they do not deserve it, God will redeem them for his 'Name's sake' because He remembers 'the pious deeds of the patriarchs'" (*Igrot*, vol. I, p. 188).

THE DIALECTICAL ANALYSIS OF SIN

Since the individual Jew, though he be a sinner, by heredity and God's grace retains the spark of holiness in the core of his soul, his sin can only be superficial. "The evil in them (the sinners) is only external, but in the depths of the soul all is good and holy. They are, therefore, aroused to many thoughts of goodness and righteousness, though they stray in their path" (*ibid.*, p. 175). (The "thoughts of goodness and righteousness" refer to the social and national idealism of the irreligious members of the *Kibbutz*.) If "in everyone of Israel, from big to small, there shines and glows the divine light" (*Orot Yisrael* pp. 89, 64), then irreligious behavior cannot flow from the inner essence of the person, but must be caused by external circumstances. One ought, therefore, look upon these irreligious *chalutzim* as *anusim* (involuntary sinners) or *shogegim* (unintentional violators). Rav Kook appreciated and valued the social idealism of the religious radicals, their devotion to national rebirth, their concern with social justice, their efforts to build a just social order and their devotion to science and truth. For such idealism revealed the divine essence of the Jewish soul.

This is the dialectical analysis of the irreligious-idealist: the praiseworthy idealism comes from the source that is essentially good, the Jewish soul; the irreligious behavior stems from the

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environment and non-Jewish influences. This analysis is followed by an explanation of the idealist's antagonism or indifference to religion. The explanation also proceeds along dialectical lines.

Because of basic misconceptions (aided, too, by a segment of religious leadership) and lack of knowledge, the idealistic youth believes that his ideals of universal brotherhood, equality, and peace are not found in the Torah. He believes the Torah to be concerned with rituals, pedantic observances, petty details and minutiae. Its laws impress him as cumbersome, limiting and constraining. He wants exaltation and he turns to non-Jewish sources for inspiration and uplifting idealism. He is a member of an arrogant generation which wants challenge and edification, new visions, new freedoms, new deals, new frontiers, and new hopes. Unfortunately, these idealists are unaware of the fact that Torah is the true source of all their aspirations in behalf of humanity. "These men of poetic spirit, who with proper training could develop into the finest scholars of *aggadah*, because they did not find the right sources of influence, became disposed to look upon the *chok* (law) as something spreading fear; they begin to despise *chukiyut* (legalism) and thus all the defection of this generation comes about" (*Chazon ha-Geulah* p. 100).

The secession from Judaism occurs on two levels, i.e., there are two levels of arrogance (*chutzpah*):

On the higher level (higher *chutzpah*), because of misconception and ignorance, the idealist, motivated by social-idealism, breaks away from Torah. This rebelliousness leads to a weakening of religious institutions and communal modes of behavior.

On the lower level (lower *chutzpah*), since traditional institutions and sources for spirituality are undermined, a preoccupation with materialism, pleasure, and chauvinism ensues.

This dialectical analysis helps explain how a spiritual-social rebellion begins as a protest against religious-narrowness, seeking new sources of idealism, and ends in a materialistic rut for the masses. All the masses want is the satisfaction of their physical needs. The intellectuals soon find themselves bereft of their

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social-idealism, for without spirituality their “new sources” run dry.

DIALECTICAL APPROACH TO THE SINNER

A. When Segregation is Necessary

This is basic to Rav Kook’s whole outlook on *Ahavat Yisrael*: just as evil must be fought and hated, so it is equally essential to sever all relationships with the *chofshim* (irreligious) when they resist *dialogue*, i.e., when they display disrespect towards the sanctities of our people (*ibid.*, pp. 236, 238, 239). The religious must preserve their strength by refusing to work together with such antagonists, for communion with them will bring destruction into Jewish national life. The dialectical approach to the sinner is applicable only when a respectful relationship between the religious and irreligious camps can be maintained. Rav Kook was convinced that given conditions of respectful dialogue the religious outlook would ultimately be communicated to the *chofshim*.

B. How to Understand and How to Approach the Sinner

The religious have the obligation to influence their opponents. This is basic to *Ahavat Yisrael*. Every Jew is a member of *Knesset Yisrael*; every Jew is a part of the uniquely endowed people; every Jew is a part of the instrumentality for redemption. If one may be guided by the events in the Holy Land, one sees that God did use “our brothers seemingly distant from holiness” for the rebirth of Zion, and therefore “there must be a hidden, inner good, which ultimately will return them to goodness. Therefore, we should draw them with ropes of love, and great humility, which are more likely to succeed than hatred and scorn” (*Igrot*, vol. II, p. 160). At the outset, there may not be success, but gradually all factions and groups will unite to be elevated and sanctified.

In correcting the irreligious, the religious faction should realize that it is not necessarily all-good, as the former is not all-bad. What is good about the irreligious must be recognized

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and granted. For it is strength of goodness present in them that gives them a following and the capacity for achievement. To criticize indiscriminately the good and bad will only confuse the issues and make the followers of the irreligious resist the attacks upon the good. Good and bad qualities must therefore be identified and separated; and disapproval should be directed only towards the evil, but the sinner should remain free of criticism.

The theological concept of *Knesset Yisrael* implies logically, according to Rav Kook, that the manifestation of impiety on the part of the Jew is superficial, for the *chosen side* of the Jewish personality can never be corrupted. We dare not overlook this fact in our attempt to win over irreligious Jews. Furthermore, if the dialectic analysis of the "arrogance" of sinfulness (higher and lower *chutzpah*) is correct, those whose sinfulness stems from the need for idealism and commitment, the irreligious-idealists, can be won over to Torah by showing them that the idealism they seek has its foundation and sustenance in Torah.

Rav Kook is convinced that this dialectic approach to the sinner is correct. Let the *chofshim* follow the consequences of their revolt. If it is authentic idealism they seek, they must find their way back to Torah. The unique quality of their racial heritage (*Segulah*) and the spark of higher *chutzpah* will unite to bring them back to Torah — the well of idealism and spirituality.

The greatest aid in assisting the *chofshim* on the road to return is an effective literature. This literature must, in the highest tradition of the *Aggadah*, include original thinking and research in *Kabbalah*, *Chasidut*, philosophy, and ethics. Those who believe in Torah must demonstrate that the fullness of Torah is as rich as life itself and all its cultural and spiritual currents. The more the Torah tradition becomes alive and reacts, through the studies of Torah scholars, to the problems of contemporary life, the more it is demonstrated to be a *Torat Chayyim*, a dynamic tradition with a capacity to provide for the spiritual needs of the generation. This is the great responsibility of Torah scholars.

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In Rav Kook's dialectic approach to sin and the sinner in *Knesset Yisrael*, we have a guide for our generation on how to bring straying Jews back to God and Torah. In a free society, where religious behavior and commitment is a voluntary matter, the dialectic approach coupled with attitudes of love and patience will produce the most successful results. At all times, the Rav followed this principle: if the Jewish world was destroyed by *sinnat chinnam* (groundless hate), it will be rebuilt by *ahavat chinnam* (groundless love).

The dialectic approach that grows out of the idea of *Knesset Yisrael* is also applicable to the extreme "right" in the religious camp that denies the validity of Rav Kook's approach and would refuse *Ahavat Yisrael* to every Jew. He appreciated the sharp reaction of the religious "right" to the irreligious and to Zionism as an instinctive and simple opposition to the negation of religious values. In their simplicity they reacted instinctively, but they were driving the *chofshim* further away by their anger and contempt. Nevertheless, though the religious "rightists" opposed Zionism, they influenced it. The *chofshim* were aware of the opposition and it had a sobering and purifying effect. The extreme "right" counterbalanced the extreme "left" and prevented Zionism from wandering too far away from the Jewish spirit.

REDEMPTION AND REPENTANCE

Pursuing the doctrine of the Election of Israel, Rav Kook taught that Israel was endowed with unique spiritual qualities. Mankind and the cosmos both need and are influenced by these qualities of *Knesset Yisrael*.

In exile, Israel lost these qualities of *Segulah* and its unique spiritual "self." However, the *Galut* (exile) experience was not merely a period of alienation from the Source. It helped to eliminate the corruption that was accumulated in Israel because of sinfulness and gave Israel added spirituality through the exercise of *Bechirah*. But this increase in spirituality was not from the Source, like prophecy. Israel must, therefore, return to the Source — its spiritual fountain.

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Furthermore, Israel must return to its homeland, for the homeland is as indispensable to Israel as the body is to the soul. With the growth of Israel's body (the land), its spiritual potential will increase. The Soul of the nation will be awakened as its body is healed. Nor need we fear a materialistic nationalism, that is, that the nation will forget its soul and be interested only in the strengthening of its body. For Rav Kook, a physical return brings with it a spiritual return. Redemption is intertwined with Repentance.

First, therefore, the body must be firmly established and the physical externalities assured. Just as the *Shekhinah* rests only on a person who is wise, strong, tall, and rich (*Shabbat* 92a), so the Divine Presence will rest on a nation only after it is endowed with strength, riches, and dignity. These physical qualities will find their true fulfillment in serving as a basis for the divine spiritual light.

Every nation has its own unique character and wants to develop its innate abilities. When a nation does not guide its own destiny, it cannot grow according to its native capacities. Only in freedom, on its own soil, can its collective character, its national Soul, find expression. The feelings and attitudes of the people must be purged of the effects of Diaspora life for the nation to become truly free and ready to express its real national character. Spiritual return is sure to follow after national redemption has taken effect. "The rebirth of the nation is the basis for the occurrence of a Great Repentance, a higher repentance for Israel, and a repentance for the whole world, which is to follow" (*Orot Teshuvah*, Chap. 13). Herzl felt that a return to Zion must be preceded by a return to Judaism. Rav Kook felt that a return to Zion will bring with it a return to Judaism and a return to God. For a return to Zion is closely allied to another aspect of Israel's nature, its need for God. When the soul is in a healthy condition, it is close to God. "We are striving for the rebirth of the nation and the land in order to revive the condition of our soul" (*Orot Techiyah*, p. 17).

Furthermore, Israel's return to its land and to God will be accompanied by a redemption of all mankind. Israel's redemption sets into motion Israel's repentance; and Israel's repent-

ance will set into motion mankind's repentance and mankind's redemption.

Needless to say, the contemporary situation and the social-religious developments in the Land of Zion indicate that Rav Kook's expectations have not yet been fulfilled. Physical growth and national redemption is not being accompanied, in equal measure, by repentance and spiritual development. But this delay in religious repentance would obviously not throw Rav Kook into a state of despair. He was convinced that the *chofshim* (irreligious) who experienced *geulah* (redemption) would in time also display *teshuvah* (repentance). This was an inevitable consequence of his idea of *Knesset Yisrael*.

Rav Kook's insistence on the ultimate spiritual return of Israel and all humanity was supported by a Kabbalistic doctrine which he held as a metaphysical first principle: All of nature seeks a return to God, the source of all creation. This meant that ultimately all Jews, including the *chofshim*, will return to God. "All of being desires to be better, and purer — and this means *Teshuvah*" (*Orot Teshuvah*, Ch. 6). Man and nature have a character which drives them constantly to seek improvement, betterment, and purification. *Knesset Yisrael* was God's instrumentality for the betterment of His universe; and *Knesset Yisrael* meant all of Israel — including the *chofshim*. Rav Kook was therefore confident. In due time the *chofshim* will repent and return to God.

DISCOVERY OF SELF

Rav Kook was aiming at the religious transformation of *Knesset Yisrael* and ultimately of all humanity, so that all of *Knesset Yisrael* — including the *chofshim* — and all of mankind would recognize the *unity* of the universe under the unity of God. Such recognition is simply a matter of beholding the truth which is there for all to behold. But the vision of this truth will come only at the end of the chain reaction of Redemption and Repentance, which, in turn, demands a transformation and an elevation of the individual. To achieve this, Rav Kook leads man back to himself, to discover divinity with-

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in "the self." The discovery will liberate the individual from enslavement to materialism and mechanism.

"KNOW THYSELF"

The Rav bids man to know the whole reality, but most important "*know thyself.*"

Deep within the self is the mystery of life; there are in the self, intelligence, self-awareness, value-judgments, the recognition of truth, the whole epistemological process of learning and knowing, the feeling of love and compassion, the sentiments of altruism and selfless magnanimity, the emotion of love, and the attitude of self-sacrifice. Where do all these come from?

Rav Kook suggests that the soul look into itself and draw from itself, not from the outside, i.e., from the "conditioned" or "learned." In the self-beholding itself (within man's self-consciousness) "all being is made to behold itself" (*Orot ha-Kodesh*, vol. 1, p. 95). No part of nature, besides man, possesses self-awareness. Man is part of nature, is part of the biological and chemical order of things. But in man, physics, chemistry, and biology reach self-awareness. Through man, nature and reality are elevated to self-awareness. "And from this inward recognition of self flows all of the creative-abundance of life" (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, man is not a passive cell responding to a stimulus, nor an animal governed by instincts, nor an automaton controlled by photo-electric cells. Man's consciousness is neither rooted nor imprisoned in his inorganic and organic self. Man's consciousness is free to think its own thoughts, free to get beyond itself.

The ability to think marks the beginning of a free life. It is in self-awareness, the ability to think abstractly about self, that thought finds its starting point. Man's self-consciousness gives him freedom and independence. In this, man is beyond nature, although in other aspects he is part of nature.

Man can think about nature; nature cannot think about man. "The most wonderful ability is this ability to delve into the depth of ourselves" (*ibid.*, p. 177).

Man does not passively describe and record facts about nature; nor does he regard himself as entirely part of nature. Man consciously processes, combines, organizes, and theorizes about the facts. Rav Kook asks: Who knows physical reality? Who knows that he knows reality? The laws of gravity or thermodynamics cannot know themselves! These laws are knowledge in man's mind. It is man's mind which formulates law and establishes it; it is man's mind which establishes conceptions of nature. It is man's mind that thinks mathematical equations, physical and chemical formulas. It is man's mind that discovers (does not create or make) cosmos in seeming chaos. Rav Kook, therefore, advises the scientist, the painter, the poet and the social reformer to look into their respective minds. Man's mind is active and free; nature, its facts and laws are passive.

At this point Rav Kook has already broken through the matter-mind continuum. Mind is not an extension of matter. Mind is not merely matter that thinks. *Hakarah chitzonit* (the thought process which is externally directed) sees itself as a mere extension of the external world. Rav Kook forces the thinker to behold himself not as a higher form of matter, rooted in matter, but as an independent creator of thought.

"*Hakarah penimit* (the thought process which is directed inwardly) of man is the foundation of the world" (*ibid.*, p. 96). Here we have a first principle in Rav Kook's system of thought: In man's self-awareness, the creative and independent power of human thought and all scientific, artistic, and social creativity resides.

Rav Kook is thus the exponent of personal freedom and individual creativity. He reviews man's contemporary mechanization and de-personalization as brought on by external thinking, through thinking enslaved to methodological, particularistic, factual norms, which he calls *hakarah chitzonit*. And, "Whenever the world rises in its external culture, it declines in its appreciation of *hakarah penimit* . . . It continues to deprecate *the hakarah penimit* and because of this the true worth of man diminishes and declines" (*ibid.*). He calls upon modern man to develop the faculty of *hakarah penimit*. Instead of

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moving in his thinking "from down upward," he should think "from top downward" (*ibid.*, p. 70).

Every person who indulges in introspection knows well that some thoughts going through consciousness (mind) correspond to an external reality, whereas other thoughts are the pure subjective reveries of a highly imaginative mind. This phenomenon does not escape Rav Kook's awareness; he is not suggesting that all free thought, free association, is creative thinking. He warns us to distinguish between creative imagination, which reflects reality and can advance man's knowledge of and control over reality, and wild imagination, man's escape from reality, which leads to false doctrines about reality and removes man from contact with and control over reality.

While Rav Kook recognizes the danger of severing relations with reality through the employment of *wild* imagination, he insists that a slave-like subservience to reality will shrivel man's *creative* imagination; a balance between creative-intuition and external pragmatic thinking is necessary.

Rav Kook, in trying to elevate man, is also concerned with the psychology of spirituality. Following in the tradition of the great Jewish rationalists and mystics, he explores the *kochot ha-nefesh* (powers of soul) hidden in man. To Rav Kook cultural and spiritual activity are of one category; they differ only in intensity of spirituality. Hence, any kind of intellectual activity deepens spiritual awareness. Indispensable to the development of spiritual awareness is freedom of thought and of the will, "and as freedom grows, so will Holiness grow" (*ibid.*, p. 168). Rav Kook's insistence on freedom is now clear. A free consciousness mirrors the divine essence; it is a reflection of higher light.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Let us pause and analyze Rav Kook's notion of the creative surge within consciousness. Intellectual creativity is an aspect of higher and infinite creativity. Rav Kook sees in human consciousness an aspect of divinity. In free thought there is a divine activity.

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The creative thinking process, to Rav Kook, is an illustration of the soul in action. To behold the creative process is to see spirituality in action, the self in free-flowing expression. As an idea or a thought is born, as it comes from the hidden supra-conscious area to the conscious area, our soul is revealed to ourselves.

The usual concomitant of creativity is freedom and effortlessness. The creative process seems effortless and moves by itself, without direction. It is the will moving freely. "The freedom of creation and its blessings spread through the mind and heart . . . no fatigue and no mishap, no effort and no trying, but only satisfaction and joy" (*ibid.*, p. 171). Its own full depth and height is grasped by the soul in the process of its creativity. It is like having the conscious part of the mind look in on the supra-conscious, creative part of the mind, observing how the latter pushes the raw idea to consciousness. (In modern psychological nomenclature it is correct to speak of the non-conscious area of the mind as *sub*. Rav Kook gives the opposite evaluation to the non-conscious area, and hence it is necessary to refer to that area as *supra*).

Every thinking person can experience this glorious phenomenon. "All men of creativity and discovery, for whom discovery is the basis of their life, always recognize the expansion of their essential being in the flow of discovery . . . They recognize the essential depth of the soul as it overflows always" (*ibid.*, p. 172). The rational mind cannot keep up with the quick flow of ideas that come from the inner being (*ibid.*, p. 173). This creativity is constantly emerging, consciously and unconsciously, in vast amounts. We would be fortunate if we could only learn to apprehend it and bring it into the realm of recognition.

THE SOUL: SOURCE OF CREATIVITY

Rav Kook analyzed at length the process of creativity to help us realize that the mind is not a passive instrument; it is also a creative force, an independent force. "The soul sings always . . . the soul discovers wisdom and logic, poetry and holy dialogue" (*ibid.*, p. 66). The soul is the supra-rational force in consciousness.

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By analyzing the psychological experience of creativity, Rav Kook isolates the functional presence of soul. Since the process of creativity reveals a flow of forces that transcend rationality, rationality seems to be a non-participating bystander. Hence, those streams of creativity must be coming from a source other than rationality, other than passive mind. Rationality is the co-efficient of the instrumentality called mind; supra-rationality is the co-efficient of the instrumentality called soul. "Inward examination into the depths of the soul reveals the constant active force of the true higher life, which does not stop from its work even a second" (*ibid.*, p. 174). The creative flow emanates from the depths of soul in a vague, nebulous fashion, when ideas, solutions to problems, answers to questions arise by themselves, adequate and finished. Nobel Prize-winning biologist Albert Szent-Gyorgyl offered a comparable description of the "Secret of the Creative Impulse." "As far as I can remember, I have rarely found the answer to any of my problems by conscious thinking. This only acts as a primer for my brain, which seems to work much better without my muddling when I am asleep. I think that without such concentration and devotion nothing serious can be achieved, be it in art or in science."

Because this effortless, constant, fecund stream of creativity cannot be coming from rational-consciousness, it must be coming from another source and that source, the soul, must be receiving its abundant creativity from the Source of all creativity. "One hears the voice of holy dialogue from the heights . . . From the source of knowledge, from the treasury of life which is in the soul of the life of the universe . . . The force which comes from the source of highest Unity is a revelation of truth" (*ibid.*, p. 176). "As long as man is forced to wait, until the *geist* of creation comes to him . . . this is proof that he does not cause the appearance of the light in his soul" (*ibid.*, p. 175).

Spirituality is an immanent and autonomous force in man's consciousness. This is the microcosm. Corresponding to it, but on an infinite level, is the transcendent source of spirituality. This is the macrocosm. *This polarity of macrocosm and microcosm is the key to Rav Kook's philosophy of subjective person-*

alism. As Job puts it: "From myself, I saw the Lord" (Job 19:26). If we appreciate the mystery in our own soul, we can appreciate the mystery in the universe. If humans display abilities and talents, they must reflect the power and wisdom of the Source of all abilities and talents. Rav Kook moves back and forth between Creator and creature as the latter is witness to the greatness of the former. Like the Psalmist, he sees the intelligent complexity of the creature as evidence of Divine Intelligence. It is not the impersonal phenomena of the "starry sky that virtually annihilates us as physical beings," that arouses Rav Kook's awareness of God; it is rather "the infinite dignity as intelligent agents," the latter half of the Kantian dictum, which provides Rav Kook with the best evidence for Infinite Intelligence in the Universe. "All the wonderful abilities . . . that we find in living creatures, about which we are often amazed, whose laws man cannot understand even after extended study . . . came to them because they are all gradations of life, 'pieces' of the great exalted Soul, full of wisdom and ability, which was divided into many branches, each branch reflecting in its particularity the light of the great soul, but in an infinitesimal way, like a drop in the ocean . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 370). In poetic fashion, Rav Kook relates the part to the Whole, and what is true of the "part" must also be true of the Whole:

"Each individual must first find himself within himself; then he must also find himself in the world about himself: his society, his community, his nation."

"The community must first find itself within itself; then it must find itself in all of humanity."

"Humanity must first find itself within itself; then it must find itself in the world. The world, must first find itself within itself; then it must find itself within the universe which surrounds it."

"The surrounding universe in its generality must first find itself within itself; then it must find itself in the highest category of universality."

"Universality must first find itself within itself; then it must find itself in the fullness that fills, in the highest light, in the hub of life, in the Divine Light" (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 461).

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To Rav Kook the category of the "Whole" is crucial. He stresses the *Achdut Hakolelet*, the unifying wholeness of the universe. Rav Kook has been criticized for including too much in the "Whole," for uniting what is contradictory. The following is his reply to this objection:

There are two tendencies at work everywhere: the force for separation or particularization and the force for unification or generalization. The force for separation arises from a desire for spiritual aloneness in opposition to the tendency to spiritual wholeness. Sectarianism comes from the force of separation. The Tribe of Levi is separated from the rest of the nation; the priests from the Levites; more recently the learned from the ignorant; Israel from the nations; and on a more primitive level, man is separated from the animal. But deep within these separations is hidden the force of unification.

Man is separate from all living creatures. But when he elevates himself and raises through himself all the world he unites with the world. Each nation is unique; but as a nation develops, while remaining true to its own uniqueness, it brings blessings upon other nations. Each nation is thus separated, but in bringing its contribution to humanity, it lives in union.

If the learned who are separated from the ignorant, and who guard their own intellectual acquisitions, influence the less educated and spread their blessing upon the less fortunate through education, they at once remain true to their own uniqueness (separated), and they help others by educating them and raising them (thereby, uniting). "This is the divine inheritance in the path of holiness . . . *separation for the purpose of unification*" (*ibid.*, p. 454).

Rav Kook did not underestimate the forces of separation; he also recognized the temporary need for separation, *Havdalah*; but he believed that, ultimately, man will become fully aware of his own spirituality, and he will seek unity with all, under God. The separations then serve the purpose of realizing the ultimate unity. Particularity leads to a higher universality.