Reworking the Past: A Censorship Reader

By: Yehuda Fogel

Can the present influence the past?

Let's take a jaunt through literary theory for a moment to answer this question, and eventually wiggle our way back to censorship. James Wood, the English literary critic, sketches a fun little dynamic between two great critics: T. S. Eliot and Harold Bloom, regarding the relationship between the individual and the tradition. Check it out.

Eliot, in one of his most celebrated pieces, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," argues that when a new work of art (or words of Torah?) is created, the tradition that precedes it is forced to shift the slightest bit: "something … happens simultaneously to all the works of art that preceded it." The new shapes the old which then shapes the new, each eternally remaking the other, as the past is "altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."

This is to say that when a new insight or paradigm enters the world, it is not just the product of its own past and tradition, but it also forces us to reconsider the past—the tradition from which this novelty emerged—anew. Put more simply, one can say that at each moment our understanding of the present invites us, challenges us, demands us to think of the past differently—the present changing the past. Rabbi Michael Rosensweig, a contemporary Talmudist and thinker at Yeshiva University, jokes (in my rough paraphrase) that: *The Written Torah, or Torah Sh'Bichtav, is really a commentary on the Oral Torah, the Torah Sh'Baal Peh*. Rabbi Rosensweig's point is more germane to the intricate relationship between the textual nuances of the Written Torah and the later debates of the Talmud, which he sees as often attempting to work through the very same textual challenges that we often gloss over. However, his formulation helps: just as the present is a commentary on the past, so too the past is a commentary on the present, as each rework and rethink each other.

Enter Harold Bloom. Bloom, a very literary sort of literary person, writes about the "anxiety of influence." (*For those anxious about how this connects to censorship, we are getting ever so closer now*.) The anxiety of influence refers to our steering away and around the influences with which we disagree. This influence is apparent in our rejections, avoidances, and willful forgettings, in our anxiety to not be influenced. By 'strongly misreading' our predecessors—in our attempted escapes from the river of history and influence—we trace a path that is equally as influenced as those that embrace the influence.

If for Eliot, the past can't escape the influence of the present, for Bloom it is the present that can't escape the influence of the past—no matter how hard he might try. And yet the past and present run away from/towards each other, escape-chasing each other until they clash

together in a sweet explosion of time.

This brings us to censorship. Both Eliot and Bloom are right, when applied to censorship. For Eliot, we are engaged in a reconstruction of our past every time we birth something new. It isn't only censorship that creates the narrative of our history, but it is every creative endeavor that we engage in. But Bloom cuts deeper—it is through the anxiety of influence, through the ways we lean away from uncomfortable words, narratives, ideas, institutions, and individuals, that we shape our own narratives. Importantly, the shadows and edges of the undesired narrative is often remnant, marking the edges and urges under the surface of our stated narratives.

To think more about what this set of ideas might tell us about censorship, we will leave the rest to you. We've included some readings that might just guide your way. Each article focuses on an underappreciated moment of contemporary censorship: Naomi Seidman's "Elie Wiesel and the Scandal of Jewish Rage" and Avinoam Rosenak's "Hidden Diaries and New Discoveries: The Life and Thought of Rabbi A. I. Kook." Each tells a story about censorship, and self-censorship, that the paradigms of Eliot and Bloom are useful in utilizing.

We hope you enjoy and don't fall asleep too deep into reading. And always—let us know what you think!

Elie Wiesel and the Scandal of Jewish Rage

Naomi Seidman

> This language is beginning to invent
> another me.
>
> —Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation*

It may not have been Elie Wiesel's *Night* that first sounded the note of silence or elicited it from its readers. *Night*, though, is its purest, most powerful expression, as a work and in the literature that has arisen around it. The theme of silence, in its theological, existential, and linguistic dimensions, dominates the commentary on *Night* (this commentary cannot be called criticism, in the usual sense): the mystery of God's silence in the face of evil; the muteness of the dead; and the incommensurability of language and the events of the Holocaust—the naming of these enormities, in other words, as unnameable, unsayable.[1] To these one might add a fourth silence, the proper awed stance of the reader and spectator in the face of Holocaust testimony. The only thing more predictable than this injunction to silence is the regularity with which it is broken. And even this has been said before.

Let me be clear: the interpretation of the Holocaust as a religious-theological event is not a tendentious imposition on *Night* but rather a careful reading of the work. In the description of the first night Eliezer spends in the concentration camp, silence signals the turn from the immediate terrors to a larger cosmic drama, from stunned realism to theology. In the felt absence of divine justice or compassion, silence becomes the agency of an immense, murderous power that permanently transforms the narrator:

> Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.[2]

This famous and powerful passage describes a loss of faith, but faith can be lost in many ways. In Wiesel's description, the murder of God does not collapse eternity or strip it of religious mystery. Where the eternal God once reigned, henceforth shall live the eternal memory of the witness. In the aftermath of God's abdication, the site and occasion of this abdication—"the Holocaust"—takes on theological significance, and the witness becomes both priest and prophet of this new religion. "Auschwitz," Wiesel has said, "is as important as Sinai."[3] The near-religious silence that pervades *Night* also appears in Wiesel's accounts of its composition. Wiesel begins the essay "An Interview Unlike Any Other" by explaining not so much why he became a writer, but rather why he did not write his Holocaust memoir sooner:

> I knew the role of the survivor was to testify. Only I did not know how. I lacked experience, I lacked a framework. I mistrusted the tools, the procedures. Should one say it all or hold it all back? Should one shout or whisper? Place the emphasis on those who were gone or on their heirs? How does one describe the indescribable? How does one use restraint in re-creating the fall of mankind and the eclipse of the gods? And then, how can one be sure that the words, once uttered, will not betray, distort the message they bear?
>
> So heavy was my anguish that I made a vow: not to speak, not to touch upon the essential for at least ten years. Long enough to see clearly. Long enough to learn to listen to the voices crying inside my own. Long enough to regain possession of my memory. Long enough to unite the language of man with the silence of the dead.[4]

Night was written, then, only after Wiesel's decade-long, self- imposed moratorium on speech had elapsed. But it was also written, as the essay goes on to explain, at the insistence of the French Catholic writer and Nobel Laureate François Mauriac, who was its first reader and shepherded its publication. When, at the end of their first fateful meeting, Mauriac asked why Wiesel had not written about "those events," the young journalist replied that he had taken a vow not to speak. But Mauriac would not relent. Escorting Wiesel to the elevator, he spoke again: "I think you are wrong. You are wrong not to speak. . . . Listen to the old man that I am: one must speak out—one must *also* speak

out." Wiesel continues: "One year later I sent him the manuscript of *Night*, written under the seal of memory and silence."[5]

This image of the former concentration-camp inmate, speaking haltingly and reluctantly from within "the silence of the dead," unites Wiesel's account of how *Night* came to be written with the final passages of that text. For *Night*, we should remember, depicts not only a witness to the Holocaust but also a survivor—one might say *the* survivor. In the final lines of *Night* when the recently liberated Eliezer gazes at his own face in a mirror, the reader is presented with the survivor as both subject and object, through his inner experience and through the outward image of what he has become. And while the emaciated boy who sees a corpse in the mirror may have changed, the man he becomes has never forgotten this deathly reflection (in the original French, the sense that this gaze of the corpse remains within the survivor is even stronger). Precisely because the image of the corpse in the mirror is so unfamiliar, so unassimilable to the living consciousness of the survivor, that image must live on; the survivor will always be, in some sense, a corpse:

> One day I was able to get up, after gathering all my strength. I wanted to see myself in the mirror hanging from the opposite wall. I had not seen myself since the ghetto.
>
> From the depths of the mirror, a corpse gazed back at me.
>
> The look in his eyes, as they stared into mine, has never left me [*Son regard dans mes yeux ne me quitte plus*].[6]

Read together, the text of *Night* and Wiesel's account of its composition form a single portrait of the artist as a young survivor, haunted by a cosmic, deathly silence he can break only at the urging of another. This portrait has come to stand for the ineradicable effects of the Holocaust on the psyche of those who experienced its horrors.[7] Because *Night* has nearly always been received as an unmediated autobiographical account, the complexity of Wiesel's interpretive craft, his *writing*, in other words, has been very nearly invisible. It is a measure of the profundity of the influence of *Night* on the discourse of Holocaust literature that its distinctive tone and approach has come to seem simply inevitable, the only response imaginable.

Yet an alternative to this image of the survivor, this set of responses to Jewish catastrophe, exists in Wiesel's own writing. The reluctant young journalist whom Mauriac had to implore to speak ten years after his liberation had already written a Holocaust memoir called *Un di velt hot geshvign* (And the World Kept Silent). According to the Wiesel's 1994 memoir, *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, the Yiddish memoir was composed

and submitted for publication in 1954, several months before his fateful interview with Mauriac; Mark Turkov, the Buenos Aires–based Yiddish editor and publisher, accepted *Un di velt* for inclusion in his series *Dos poylishe yidntum* (Polish Jewry) not long afterward. *Un di velt* was written, Wiesel recounts, on board a ship to Brazil, where he had been assigned to cover Christian missionary activity among poor Jews: "I spent most of the voyage in my cabin working. I was writing my account of the concentration camp years—in Yiddish. I wrote feverishly, breathlessly, without rereading. I wrote to testify, to stop the dead from dying, to justify my own survival."[8]

Night emerged on the scene of European writing in 1958 as a work that stood alone. By contrast, when *Un di velt* had been published in 1956, it was volume 117 of Turkov's series, which included more than a few Holocaust memoirs. The first pages of the Yiddish book provide a list of previous volumes (a remarkable number of them marked "Sold out"), and the book concludes with an advertisement/review for volumes 95–96 of the series, Jonas Turkov's *Extinguished Stars*. In praising this memoir, the reviewer implicitly provides us with a glimpse of the conventions of the growing genre of Yiddish Holocaust memoir. Among the virtues of Turkov's work, the reviewer writes, is its comprehensiveness, the thoroughness of its documentation not only of the genocide but also of its victims:

> At the end of the second volume is an index that includes 800 names of actors, writers, poets, and various other artists, not all of whom are well known, demonstrating that the writer collected a mass of details and names he mentions and remembers. Not only has he erected a monument on the graves of these wandering stars, but he has also included much useful historical material that can serve as a primary resource for historians of Yiddish theater from the beginning of the Second World War until its tragic destruction.[9]

For the Yiddish reader, Eliezer (as he is called here) Wiesel's memoir was one among many, valuable for its contributing an account of what was certainly an unusual circumstance among East European Jews: their ignorance, as late as the spring of 1944, of the scale and nature of the Germans' genocidal intentions. The experiences of the Jews of Transylvania may have been illuminating, but certainly none among the readers of Turkov's series on Polish Jewry would have taken it as representative. As the review makes clear, the value of survivor testimony was in its specificity and comprehensiveness; Turkov's series was not alone in its preference. Yiddish Holocaust memoirs often modeled themselves on

the local chronical (*pinkes*) or memorial book (*yizker-bukh*) in which catalogs of names, addresses, and occupations served as form and motivation. It is within this literary context, against this set of generic conventions, that Wiesel published the first of his Holocaust memoirs.

Although the English translation closely follows the original French version of *Night*, the relationship between the published Yiddish and French texts is more complex. *Un di velt* has been variously referred to as the original Yiddish version of *Night* and described as more than four times as long: actually, it is 245 pages to the French 158 pages.[10] What distinguishes the Yiddish from the French is not so much length as attention to detail, an adherence to that principle of comprehensiveness so valued by the editors and reviewers of the Polish Jewry series. Thus, whereas the first page of *Night* succintly and picturesquely describes Sighet as "that little town in Transylvania where I spent my childhood," *Un di velt* introduces Sighet as "the most important city [*shtot*] and the one with the largest Jewish population in the province of Marmarosh."[11] The Yiddish goes on to provide a historical account of the region: "Until the First World War, Sighet belonged to Austro-Hungary. Then it became part of Romania. In 1940, Hungary acquired it again."[12] And while the French memoir is dedicated "in memory of my parents and of my little sister, Tsipora," the Yiddish names both victims and perpetrators: "This book is dedicated to the eternal memory of my mother Sarah, my father Shlomo, and my little sister Tsipora—who were killed by the German murderers."[13]

The Yiddish text may have been only lightly edited in the transition to French, but the effect of this editing was to position the memoir within a different literary genre. Even the title *Un di velt hot geshvign* signifies a kind of silence very distant from the mystical silence at the heart of *Night*. The Yiddish title indicts the world that did nothing to stop the Holocaust and allows its perpetrators to carry on normal lives; *La Nuit* names no human or even divine agents in the events it describes.[14] From the historical and political specificities of Yiddish documentary testimony, Wiesel and his French publishing house fashioned something closer to mythopoetic narrative.[15]

But even more radically transformed in the move to French than "the most important city in Marmorosh" was the image of the survivor. In both the Yiddish and the French, the narrator criticizes the other survivors for thinking of nothing but food, and "not of revenge." The following passage is taken from the Yiddish, but the French is similar:

> The first gesture of freedom: the starved men made an effort to get something to eat.

They only thought about food. Not about revenge. Not about their parents. Only about bread. And even when they had satisfied their hunger—they still did not think about revenge.[16]

[6]

But the Yiddish continues: "Early the next day Jewish boys ran off to Weimar to steal clothing and potatoes. And to rape German girls [*un tsu fargvaldikn daytshe shikses*]. The historical commandment of revenge was not fulfilled."[17] In French this passage reads: "Le lendemain, quelques jeunes gens coururent à Weimar ramasser des pommes de terre et des habits—et coucher avec des filles. Mais de vengeance, pas trace."[18] Or, in Stella Rodway's English rendition: "On the following morning, some of the young men went to Weimar to get some potatoes and clothes—and to sleep with girls. But of revenge, not a sign."[19]

To describe the differences between these versions as a stylistic reworking is to miss the extent of what is suppressed in the French. *Un di velt* depicts a post-Holocaust landscape in which Jewish boys "run off" to steal provisions and rape German girls; *Night* extracts from this scene of lawless retribution a far more innocent picture of the aftermath of the war, with young men going off to the nearest city to look for clothes and sex. In the Yiddish, the survivors are explicitly described as Jews and their victims (or intended victims) as German; in the French, they are just young men and women. The narrator of both versions decries the Jewish failure to take revenge against the Germans, but this failure means something different when it is emblematized, as it is in Yiddish, with the rape of German women. The implication, in the Yiddish, is that rape is a frivolous dereliction of the obligation to fulfill the "historical commandment of revenge"; presumably fulfillment of this obligation would involve a concerted and public act of retribution with a clearly defined target. *Un di velt* does not spell out what form this retribution might take, only that it is sanctioned—even commanded—by Jewish history and tradition.

If the two versions characterize the larger group of survivors differently, they also present different views of the recently liberated Eliezer. *Un di velt* presents us with the writer gazing at his deathly reflection, but it does not end there as *Night* does; the last few paragraphs of *Un di velt* follow the young survivor out of the camp and into the larger world of postwar Europe:

> Three days after liberation I became very ill; food-poisoning. They took me to the hospital and the doctors said that I was gone.
>
> For two weeks I lay in the hospital between life and death. My situation grew worse from day to day.

One fine day I got up—with the last of my energy—and went over to the mirror that was hanging on the wall.

I wanted to see myself. I had not seen myself since the ghetto.

From the mirror a skeleton gazed out.

Skin and bones.

I saw the image of myself after my death. It was at that instant that the will to live was awakened.

Without knowing why, I raised a balled-up fist and smashed the mirror, breaking the image that lived within it.

And then—I fainted.

From that moment on my health began to improve.

I stayed in bed for a few more days, in the course of which I wrote the outline of the book you are holding in your hand, dear reader.

But—

Now, ten years after Buchenwald, I see that the world is forgetting. Germany is a sovereign state, the German army has been reborn. The bestial sadist of Buchenwald, Ilsa Koch, is happily raising her children. War criminals stroll in the streets of Hamburg and Munich. The past has been erased. Forgotten.

Germans and anti-Semites persuade the world that the story of the six million Jewish martyrs is a fantasy, and the naive world will probably believe them, if not today, then tomorrow or the next day.

So I thought it would be a good idea to publish a book based on the notes I wrote in Buchenwald.

I am not so naive to believe that this book will change history or shake people's beliefs. Books no longer have the power they once had. Those who were silent yesterday will also be silent tomorrow. I often ask myself, now, ten years after Buchenwald:

Was it worth breaking that mirror? Was it worth it?[20]

By stopping when it does, *Night* provides an entirely different account of the experience of the survivor. *Night* and the stories about its composition depict the survivor as a witness and as an expression of silence and death, projecting the recently liberated Eliezer's death-haunted face into the postwar years when Wiesel would become a familiar figure. By contrast, the Yiddish survivor shatters that image as soon as he sees it, destroying the deathly existence the Nazis willed on him. The Yiddish survivor is filled with rage and the desire to live, to take revenge, to write. Indeed, according to the Yiddish memoir, Eliezer began to write not ten years after the events of the Holocaust but immediately upon liberation, as the first expression of his mental and physical recovery. In the Yiddish we meet a survivor who, ten years

after liberation, is furious with the world's disinterest in his history, frustrated with the failure of the Jews to fulfill "the historical commandment of revenge," depressed by the apparent pointlessness of writing a book.

There are two survivors, then, a Yiddish and a French—or perhaps we should say one survivor who speaks to a Jewish audience and one whose first reader is a French Catholic. The survivor who met with Mauriac labors under the self-imposed seal and burden of silence, the silence of his association with the dead. The Yiddish survivor is alive with a vengeance and eager to break the wall of indifference he feels surrounds him. The question of how he can hope to break through the world's apathy by writing, to his "dear reader," in Yiddish is one Wiesel never raises in *Un di velt* nor explicitly answers anywhere else. But the answer is implicit in the gap between volume 117 of the Polish Jewry series and that "slim volume of terrifying power," as the blurb on my copy of *Night* puts it. Wiesel found the audience he told his Yiddish readers he wanted. But only, as it turns out, by suppressing the very existence of this desire, by foregrounding the reticent and mournful Jew who will speak only when at the urging of the older Catholic writer. Wiesel began by preaching to the Jewish converted, but soon enough, one might say, the preacher himself underwent a kind of conversion. By the time Wiesel was negotiating with his French publishers, the survivor who pointed an accusatory finger at Ilsa Koch, then raising her children in the new postwar Germany, had been supplanted by the survivor haunted by metaphysics and silence. It is this second version of how *Night* came to be written that has attained mythical status, most directly because it appears in Mauriac's foreword to the work (included in each new edition and translation) but also because of Wiesel's own accounts of the interview. And the myriad works of commentary on Wiesel have seized upon this theme, producing endless volumes on the existential and theological silences of his work, on the question of what has been called "the limits of representation." What remains outside this proliferating discourse on the unsayable is not what cannot be spoken but what cannot be spoken *in French.* And this is not the "silence of the dead" but rather the scandal of the living, the scandal of Jewish rage and unwillingness to embody suffering and victimization. The image that dominates the end of *Night*—the look, as Mauriac describes it, "as of a Lazarus risen from the dead, yet still a prisoner within the grim confines where he had strayed, stumbling among shameful corpses"—is precisely the image that Wiesel shatters at the end of his Yiddish work.[21] And resurrects to end the French one.

The Interview: Mauriac Remembers

If we have two memoirs, the Yiddish and the French, we also have two stories about how the French version came to be. Both Mauriac and Wiesel have written accounts of the fateful 1954 interview that resulted in the publication of the French memoir. The two versions, from different perspectives, describe a meeting that began uncomfortably and ended with a strong friendship, but only after the young East European journalist and the older French Catholic writer had overcome the reticences native to the situation and painfully confronted both what united and what separated them. Of the two versions, it is Mauriac's that serves as the foreword, and something of a frame text, to *Night.* The foreword begins with a description of his unease at the prospect of being interviewed by a foreign journalist: "I dread their visits," Mauriac confesses to us, "being torn between a desire to reveal everything in my mind and a fear of putting weapons in the hands of an interviewer when I know nothing about his own attitude toward France. I am always careful during encounters of this kind."[22] Mauriac, apparently speaking as a spokesperson for France, a sort of minister of its defense, does not explain why he should be worried about a foreign journalist's opinion of his country; in the next passage, however, he goes on to talk about the Occupation years, although the transition from his mistrust of journalists (particularly those writing for Israeli papers?) and his decision to confide in this one is left unexplained:

> I confided to my young visitor that nothing I had seen during those somber years had left so deep a mark upon me as those trainloads of Jewish children standing at Austerlitz station. Yet I did not even see them myself! My wife described them to me, her voice still filled with horror. At that time we knew nothing of Nazi methods of extermination. And who could have imagined them! Yet the way these lambs had been torn from their mothers in itself exceeded anything we had so far thought possible. I believe that on that day I touched for the first time upon the mystery of iniquity whose revelation was to mark the end of one era and the beginning of another. The dream which Western man conceived in the eighteenth century, whose dawn he thought he saw in 1789, and which, until August 2, 1914, had grown stronger with the progress of enlightenment and the discoveries of science—this dream vanished finally for me before those trainloads of little children. And yet I was still thousands of miles away from thinking that they were to be fuel for the gas chamber and the crematory.

> This, then, was what I had to tell the young journalist. And when I said, with a sigh, "How often I've thought about those children," he replied, "I was one of them."[23]

Having identified himself as a survivor, the young journalist tells Mauriac of his experiences and, more particularly, of his loss of faith in God. There is no evidence from the interview that Wiesel, who raged against non-Jewish indifference in the Yiddish memoir he had so recently completed, implied by word or gesture that the French writer need examine his own actions as a witness to the Jewish deportations (though, as Mauriac makes clear, hardly a witness at all, except second-hand, and one who was "thousands of miles away" from even the thought that these Jewish children were to be murdered) or those of France, whose national honor Mauriac is inclined to defend. The introduction does speak of passivity, of the failure to act, in the next passage, in which Mauriac recommends the book he is introducing because it is speaks of "the fate of the Jews of the little Transylvanian town called Sighet, their blindness in the face of a destiny from which they would still have had time to flee; the inconceivable passivity with which they gave themselves up to it, deaf to the warnings and pleas of a witness who had himself escaped from the massacre, and who brought them news of what he had seen with his own eyes; their refusal to believe him, taking him for a madman."[24] With that, the vexed question of political responses to Nazi terror is left squarely in the Jewish court.

What interests Mauriac even more profoundly than the blindness of the Transylvanian Jews, their "inconceivable passivity," is the innocence of the story's protagonist and narrator, whom Mauriac refers to throughout as a "child":

> The child who tells us this story here was one of God's elect. From the time when his conscience first awoke, he had lived only for God and had been reared on the Talmud, aspiring to initiation into the cabbala, dedicated to the Eternal. Have we ever thought about the consequences of a horror that, though less apparent, less striking than the other outrages, is yet the worst of all to those of us who have faith: the death of God in the soul of a child who suddenly discovers absolute evil.[25]

With this passage, Mauriac lays out an implicit hierarchy of Holocaust horrors; for people of faith what was "worst of all" about the murder of six million Jews was "the death of God in the soul of a child."[26] The foreword ends with Mauriac's reaction to the story Wiesel tells about how he lost his faith:

> And I, who believe that God is love, what answer could I give my young questioner? Did I speak of that other Jew, his brother, who may have resembled him—the Crucified, whose Cross has conquered the world? Did I affirm that the stumbling block to his faith was the cornerstone of mine, and that the conformity between the Cross and the suffering of men was in my eyes the key to that impenetrable mystery whereon the faith of his childhood had perished? Zion, however, has risen up again from the crematories and the charnel houses. The Jewish nation has been resurrected from among its thousands of dead. It is through them that it lives again. We do not know the worth of a single drop of blood, one single tear. If the Eternal is the Eternal, the last word for each of us belongs to Him. This is what I should have told this Jewish child. But I could only embrace him, weeping.[27]

Mauriac describes Wiesel as his "young questioner," but from Mauriac's own recounting, Wiesel questions neither God nor the person to whom he relates his story. On the contrary, Mauriac quotes Wiesel's description of Rosh Hashanah in the camp: "That day, I had ceased to plead. I was no longer capable of lamentation. On the contrary, I felt very strong. I was the accuser, and God the accused." It is Mauriac who responds to this story as if he had been asked for counsel. With Wiesel's implicit invitation to theological meditation in hand, Mauriac explains how the Jewish boy's loss of faith is an impetus to his own, that the contradiction Wiesel feels between the suffering of the Jews and God's love for them is only an illusory one. But presumably because he respects Wiesel's right to interpret his own experience, the Catholic writer weeps and keeps silent. The story of the Holocaust, after all, is a Jewish one to tell.

Or is it? Mauriac, in a paradoxical assertion, claims for himself the virtue of silence, presents a Christian perspective while framing it as tactfully and respectfully withheld—despite an implicit Jewish invitation to express it. The foreword begins by acknowledging the position of European non-Jews as witnesses to the deportation of Jewish children, but only to divert the implicit indictment of such witnesses, in two distinct ways. Mauriac describes the scene his wife witnessed at Austerlitz station as the end and antithesis of everything France and enlightened Europe stand for. But he also speaks of that day as the beginning of a new era, with a new kind of knowledge: even as Mauriac insists that he was far from imagining the fate of the Jewish "lambs" at Austerlitz, that day was a "revelation" of "the mystery of iniquity." By contrast, Mauriac couches the Transylvanian Jews' response to evidence of Nazi intentions in the language of deafness, blindness, refusal to

believe (the same language, not coincidentally, of the Jewish rejection of Christ's divinity). His own disbelief points to his innocence—he cannot even imagine the possibility of such evil—while his dawning comprehension gains its significance only as a philosophical and theological event. Whether as French humanist or Catholic initiate, Mauriac distances himself from the charge of having been a cowardly bystander of the Nazi genocide. And by drawing attention to the narrative of the protagonist's loss of faith, Mauriac frames the Jewish catastrophe within existentialist religion, and then reasserts his own authority as a religious thinker. The effect of all these moves is to place the Jews in the position of those who do not know and assert Mauriac's own privileged access to the knowledge they lack.

The meeting between Mauriac and Wiesel was strained, but it would probably have been far more strained if the French writer had not opened a theological channel for Jewish-Christian communication. If the survivor's complaints were primarily directed against God, all of Europe might breathe easier. Moreover, as Mauriac makes clear, Christian faith need not be troubled by Jewish doubts, since "the stumbling block of [Wiesel's] faith was the cornerstone of mine."

I do not mean to imply that Mauriac is undisturbed by the Holocaust because he believes the Jews to be guilty of crucifying Jesus. For Mauriac, Jewish suffering is theologically meaningful in the same way as the suffering of "that other Jew." Mauriac responds to Wiesel's story by constructing a reverse typology: the fate of Elie's father, for instance, is described as "his martyrdom, his agony, and his death."[28] Neither is the resurrection missing, in the rise of Zion from the ashes of the Holocaust. Mauriac, in his Christological reframing of the Jewish Holocaust, never touches on the question of Jewish guilt for Christ's crucifixion; but what also vanishes in his reading of Jewish catastrophe is the other half of that story—the historical animosity of Christian against Jew.[29]

The Interview: Wiesel Remembers

Wiesel published his own account of the interview, although not until 1978, twenty-four years after it took place. He also confessed to an unease before the interview began, for reasons different from the ones Mauriac implies. Wiesel was far from wanting to acquire anti-French ammunition from Mauriac; he writes, in fact, that the request for a meeting with the writer was no more than a journalist's ploy—what Wiesel wanted from the well-connected writer was an introduction to the Jewish prime minister of France, Pierre Mendes-France, whom the journalist very much

wanted to interview. Wiesel describes how he reproached himself for manipulating the old man: "Impostor, I thought, I am an impostor."[30] But his guilt dissipated, Wiesel writes, when he realized that "the Jewish statesman had ceased to interest me, the Christian writer fascinated me."[31] The friendship between the older Christian and younger Jew began, then, with Wiesel relinquishing his aim of manipulating Mauriac for Jewish purposes and turning, in all sincerity, to the man himself. With this psychological shift, Wiesel began his transformation from Hebrew journalist and (still unpublished) Yiddish memoirist to European, or French, writer.

Mauriac's interest in Jews is just as strongly subjective, if less obviously manipulative, as Wiesel's initial interest in him. As Wiesel describes it, Mauriac spoke at length about the chosen and martyred people of Israel, but only as that suffering echoed the martyrdom and divinity of the Jew Jesus. Mauriac's "impassioned, fascinating monologue," Wiesel recalls, "was on a single theme: the son of man and the son of God, who, unable to save Israel, ended up saving mankind. Every reference led back to him."[32]

Mauriac, by his account, began by speaking of Jewish children and tactfully refrained from mentioning Jesus, whereas by Wiesel's account Mauriac began by speaking of Christ, not mentioning the suffering of Jewish children until the Jewish journalist demanded that he do so. What Mauriac claims to have thought, but not said, in response to Wiesel's story becomes, in this version, what he said, apparently unprovoked by anything the interviewer asked. And Wiesel remembers Mauriac as at least hinting at the adversarial relationship between the Jew Jesus and Israel, whom he was "unable to save," a tension Mauriac only implies by his reticence in speaking to a Jew. After listening to Mauriac with growing annoyance, Wiesel writes, he responded with anger and "bad manners":

> "Sir," I said, "you speak of Christ. Christians love to speak of him. The passion of Christ, the agony of Christ, the death of Christ. In your religion, that is all you speak of. Well, I want you to know that ten years ago, not very far from here, I knew Jewish children every one of whom suffered a thousand times more, six million times more, than Christ on the cross. And we don't speak of them. Can you understand that, sir? We don't speak of them."[33]

After Wiesel's outburst, Mauriac questions the emotional and apologetic journalist about his experiences, and he responds, "I cannot, I cannot speak of it, please, don't insist." It was then that Mauriac implored him to write; Wiesel's acquiescence, though always qualified by silence, is implied in the final sentence of the essay: "One year later I

sent him the manuscript of *Night*, written under the seal of memory and silence."[34]

In this version of the interview between the two men, the burden of silence is shouldered by the Jew, not the Christian. Where Mauriac writes that he suppressed his religious reaction to the survivor's story, Wiesel describes his unwillingness to tell his story to the older man. And both men tell their stories from within a paradoxical affirmation of silence; the two essays end with nearly parallel descriptions of stifled or qualified expression. But where Mauriac's foreword is "silent" on the Christian reading of Jewish martyrdom, Wiesel's essay presents the genocide itself as unspoken by both Christian and Jew, only belatedly reminding the pontificating Christian of the Jewish children of whom "we"—the referent is ambiguous—"don't speak." That Mauriac or the French may have been implicated in the genocide or in the silence that accompanied and followed the genocide of the Jews remains outside this narrative, just as it is pushed below the surface of Mauriac's—except for the mild accusation implied in the phrase "not very far from here." Mauriac's measure of the gap between French civilian and the murder of Jewish children vacillates between the proximity of Austerlitz station and the distance of "a thousand miles." And even the accusation is softened by the journalist including himself among those who have been silent on the fate of the Jews: "We don't speak of them." In the passive-aggressive logic of the Jewish-Christian post-Holocaust encounter, every utterance must be introduced and framed by a declaration of silence, and only by proclaiming a reluctance to speak can the speaker—Jewish or Christian—hope to heard. The Jewish survivor's desire for an audience he also mistrusts and hates cannot, it seems, be uttered in earshot of that audience. Of all the silences inherent to "Holocaust representation," that one has been least often broached.

Negotiating Memory

The French reworking of *Un di velt hot geshvign* and Mauriac's framing of this text together suggest that *La Nuit*—read so consistently as authentically Jewish, autobiographical, direct—represents a compromise between Jewish expression and the capacities and desires of non-Jewish readers, Mauriac first among them. I do not mean to suggest that this compromise, these negotiations, were either calculated or hypocritical; any conversation is a balancing act between two speakers, any text a reflection of its audience as much as its writers. That Wiesel wrote his Yiddish memoir first and to a Jewish audience makes it no more "au-

thentic" than his better-known French work; the Yiddish genre in which Wiesel participated imposed its own set of cultural conventions. If I choose to focus on these operations, this cultural translation of Jewish into Catholic idioms, in the encounter between Wiesel and Mauriac, it is because what happened between the two men has turned out to have the farthest-ranging of repercussions.

The question I would put to the 1954 interview, then, is this one: What happened between these two men to explain the tranformation of *Un di velt hot geshvign* into *La Nuit*, the survivor's political rage into his existentialist doubt? The encounter, it seems to me, could be described as a series of delicate negotiations, in which the survivor's first concession was to relinquish all talk (if not thought) of Jewish revenge—and why not?[35] As an author whose audience crossed ethnic borders, it made sense for Wiesel to suppress an impossible fantasy whose clearest effect would be to alienate Christians. It is only in later writings that Wiesel makes the further move of seeing this failure to take revenge as a sign of Jewish moral triumph—a nearly Christian turning of the other cheek—rather than the unfortunate result of cowardice or realism. In an open letter "To a Young Palestinian Arab," Wiesel compares the Jewish response to their victimization with that of the Palestinians:

> We [survivors] consistently evoked our trials only to remind man of his need to be human—not of his right to punish. On behalf of the dead, we sought consolation, not retribution.
>
> In truth, the lack of violence among these survivors warrants examination. Why deny it? There were numerous victims who, before dying, ordered him or her who would survive to avenge their death. [. . .] And yet . . . with rare exceptions, the survivors forced themselves to sublimate their mandate for revenge.
>
> Whereas you . . .[36]

There is something disingenuous, it seems to me, about Wiesel's description of the Jews as having "sublimate[d] their mandate for revenge." This sublimation, after all, was Wiesel's ticket into the literature of non-Jewish Europe.[37]

Wiesel's second concession was to narrow the target of his hatred to avoid accusing Mauriac or his countrymen of the crimes of complicity or silence. Even more significantly, the survivor redirected his complaints against the Jewish God—while the Christian God remained unscathed. With these moves, Wiesel established channels of communication between Jewish survivor and Christian theologian while ren-

dering the Holocaust harmless for Catholic pieties and French loyalties. The survivor is no longer the enraged seeker of revenge but rather a [16] religiously potent emblem of martyrdom, and Jewish martyrdom in particular.

What Mauriac gave Wiesel in return for this tranformation was the weight of his moral authority and the power of his literary status. Mauriac found Wiesel a publisher, wrote his first and most glowing reviews, even dedicated his *Life of Jesus* to him, the "crucified Jewish child" (!); in short, Mauriac found and secured Wiesel the larger audience he wanted. And in conversation with Mauriac, Wiesel developed a language to talk about the Jewish genocide that could hold the attention of Jews and Christians, a considerable achievement indeed.

A final question, and one that echoes and reverses the question that ends *Un di velt hot geshvign*: Was it worth it? Was it worth translating the Holocaust out of the language of the largest portion of its victims and into the language of those who were, at best, absent, and at worst, complicitous in the genocide? Was it worth "unshattering" the mirror the Yiddish Elie breaks, reviving the image of the Jew as the Nazis wished him to be, as the Christian is prepared to accept him, the emblem of suffering silence rather than living rage? In the complex negotiations that resulted in the manuscript of *Night*, did the astonishing gains make good the tremendous losses? It is over this unspoken question that the culture of Holocaust discourse has arisen and taken shape.

Notes

This paper was helped along its course by many conversations with David Biale and Peter Eli Gordon, both of whom read and commented on early drafts. Karen Adler supplied the French version of Wiesel's work for me.

1 The critical works that examine the theme of silence, generally theologically defined, are numerous. Among the best known of these are André Neher, "Le Silence et l'être: Elie Wiesel," in *L'Exil de la Parole: Du silence biblique au silence d'Auschwitz* (Paris, 1970), 228–45, and Myriam Cohen, *Elie Wiesel: Variations sur le silence* (La Rochelle, 1988).

2 Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Stella Rodway (MacGibbon and Kee, 1960), 32; originally published as *La Nuit* (Paris, 1958).

3 A. M. Dalbray, "Les Juifs des Silence," *Amif* (November 1967): 1771, quoted in Ellen Fine, *The Legacy of Night* (Albany, N.Y., 1982), 30.

4 Wiesel, "An Interview Unlike Any Other," in *A Jew Today*, trans. Marion Wiesel (New York, 1979), 15.

5 "An Interview," 19.

6 *Night*, 109.

7 The most common variation on the themes I have outlined above is the banal misreading of *Night* as also presenting a message of "hope."

8 Elie Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea: Memoirs* (New York, 1995), 239.

9 Y. Palatitzky, review of Jonas Turkow's *Extinguished Stars* in *Dos Neye Vort* (Buenos Aires, 1955); reprinted in Eliezer Vizel, *Un di velt hot geshvign* (Buenos Aires, 1956), 253 (translation mine).

10 Wiesel writes in *All Rivers*, "I had cut down the original manuscript from 862 pages to the 245 of the published Yiddish edition. [French publisher Jerome] Lindon edited *La Nuit* down to 178" (319). But his earlier description of writing the Yiddish manuscript implies that no revisions were made of the pages he had frantically scribbled "without rereading" (239) before handing them over to the publisher. Wiesel also complains that the original manuscipt of *Un di velt* was never returned to him. These confusing and possibly contradictory reports on the various versions of *Night* have generated a chain of similarly confusing critical comments. Thus, Ellen Fine reports (*Legacy of Night*, 7) that the Yiddish version of *Night* is more than 800 pages long, whereas David Roskies states in *Against the Apocalypse* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 301, that "the original Yiddish version is not only four times longer and less unified than its French (and later English) version, but has a different message." It is not clear to me whether Roskies is mistaken about the length or is speaking of the unpublished manuscript, which Wiesel implies was lost. Roskies' very brief summation of the difference between the French and Yiddish contents remains the only comment, to my knowledge, on the editing of the writer's "appeal to fight the Germans and anti-Semites who would consign the Holocaust to oblivion." As Roskies puts it, "Since no one in the literary establishment of the 1950s was ready to be preached to by a Holocaust survivor, existentialist doubt became the better part of valor" (ibid.).

11 *Un di velt*, 7. The critics faithfully echo this description, virtually always referring to Sighet as a "*shtetl*" (see Fine, *Legacy of Night*, 8). Mauriac also calls Sighet "a little Transylvanian town" in his introduction to *Night*, viii.

12 *Un di velt*, 7. Wiesel describes his French publisher's objections to his documentary approach in *All Rivers*: "Lindon was unhappy with my probably too abstract manner of introducing the subject. Nor was he enamored of two pages which sought to describe the premises and early phases of the tragedy. Testimony from survivors tends to begin with these sorts of descriptions, evoking loved ones as well as one's hometown before the annihilation, as if breathing life into them one last time" (319).

13 *Un di velt*, n.p.

14 Wiesel ascribes the choice of the title *La Nuit* to Lindon's editing (see *All Rivers*, 319). Wiesel, however, has so embraced the theologi-

cal and existential principles underlying the change that his original Yiddish title seems strangely uncharacteristic. Thus, one critic mentions the Yiddish title only to suggest that a theological variation of this title, *Un Got hot geshvign*, would have been a more appropriate title for Wiesel's *Twilight* (third volume of the *Night* series).

15 The double way of looking at the book, as literature or memoir, is reflected in the schizophrenic handling of the text by libraries. For example, the University of California at Berkeley library has the English version but not the French or the Yiddish, though it continues to list the Yiddish as the original version of *Night*—an unread ghost haunting the French and English. The Jewish Theological Seminary library responds to the double generic affiliations of the books by shelving *Night* among its other French Jewish literature and *Un di velt* with its Holocaust memoirs and *Yizker Bikher*.

16 *Un di velt*, 244. The French and English versions are nearly identical.

17 Ibid.

18 *La Nuit*, 178.

19 *Night*, 109.

20 *Un di velt*, 244–45. This passage is also partially reproduced, in a somewhat different translation, in *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, 320.

21 Mauriac's foreword in *Night*, ix.

22 Ibid., vi.

23 Ibid., vii–viii. In a rather literal-minded comment on Mauriac's account, Wiesel denies his having said that he was at Austerlitz: "[H]aving never been at the Austerlitz station during the Occupation, I could not have said that I was on that train packed with Jewish children. I probably remarked that I had been in a camp with Jewish children" (*All Rivers*, 271). The account and its denial speak volumes for the difference between Mauriac's approach to Jewish history and Wiesel's. For a man who prefers not to distinguish the suffering of Jewish children from the agonies of Christ, the difference between a Transylvanian and a French Jewish child would presumably seem minor indeed.

24 *Night*, viii.

25 Ibid., ix. The insistence that Wiesel is a "child" serves to underline his innocence in both senses, as one who does not deserve the treatment the Nazis accord him (as if adults are less clearly victims!) and as a pure soul whose fall from religious grace Mauriac mourns. It is interesting to me that Elie's age is the basis of his first exchange in the camp, when another prisoner advises him to lie about it: "'Here, kid, how old are you?' It was one of the prisoners who asked me this. I could not see his face, but his voice was tense and weary. 'I'm not quite fifteen yet.' 'No. Eighteen.' 'But I'm not,' I said. 'Fifteen.' 'Fool. Listen to what *I* say'" (*Night*, 28). It also seems significant to me that Wiesel, who was born in September 1928, should have represented his narrator Elie as younger than himself by nearly a year (Wiesel was deported in the spring of 1944) while describing him as exaggerating his age by three years to Dr. Mengele. It is clear what was at stake in seeming older during the selections;

Mauriac's impulse (and perhaps Wiesel's, as well) to see the Jewish victim as a child is rather more complex in its motivations.

26 Mauriac's hierarchy of outrages, in which the loss of faith ranks as worse than the extinguishing of life, appears in similar form among other theologians of the Holocaust. As Amos Funkenstein points out in "Theological Responses to the Holocaust" (in *Perceptions of Jewish History* [Berkeley, 1993], 335), the privileging of religious-theological concerns over the importance of human life, any human life, historically has been both dangerous and unethical. Commenting on post-Holocaust theologians' Heideggerian interest in what he calls "a chimera of the authentic self," Funkenstein writes: "A commitment to higher values above the sanctity of the individual not only distracts from the study of man, but can and did lead to abuses and crimes of much greater extent than selfish self-interest ever perpetrated. Granted, this is not a necessary consequence of commitments to absolutes, but it has often enough been so. Now it matters little whether the higher values were transcendental or immanent, God, fatherland, race, or the ideal society of the future. In the name of all of them crusades were fought, genocides committed, persons degraded" (335).

27 *Night*, x-xi.

28 Ibid., viii.

29 It would also be wrong to ignore the contribution of Wiesel's own narrative to Mauriac's Christological framing. Wiesel enables, if not invites, such a reading, in at least one passage in *Night*—the one Mauriac quotes most fully. Three Jews are being hanged, the middle victim a child who dies agonizingly slowly: "Behind me, I heard the same man asking: 'Where is God now?' And I heard a voice within me answer him: 'Where is He? Here He is. He is hanging here on this gallows'" (62). Without denying the Christian echoes in this passage, I would argue that the narrator's words here must be read ironically, as a rebuttal to the concept of the religious (Jewish as well as Christian) significance of suffering. To read the strangling child as Christ is to turn the dying child into God, rather than signal that God has died alongside him.

30 "An Interview," 16.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., 17.

33 Ibid., 18.

34 Ibid., 19.

35 For a fascinating discussion of post-Holocaust Jewish revenge (and its absense or sublimation), see Berel Lang, "Holocaust Memory and Revenge: The Presence of the Past," *Jewish Social Studies* 2, no. 2 (1996): 1–20.

36 Wiesel, "To a Young Palestinian Arab," in *A Jew Today*, trans. Marion Wiesel (New York, 1979), 126–27.

37 In some sense, the intifada was a similarly shrewd move on the part of the Palestinians; by throwing stones at soldiers instead of hijacking airplanes or attacking schoolchildren, the Palestinians won a sympathethic audience through American television.

Hidden Diaries and New Discoveries: The Life and Thought of Rabbi A. I. Kook

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This article considers the contribution of Rabbi A. I. Kook's recently disclosed writings (the three volumes of *Shemonah Qevazim* [Eight Files]) to our understanding of his dialectical teaching and intellectual biography. The files encompasses R. Kook's writings between 1904 and 1921, and their fresh insights add unrecognized depth to the figure we know from his previously published writings.

In the article I explain R. Kook's disciples' motives for concealing the files; I conduct a phenomenological examination of the distinctiveness of these writings from intellectual and philosophical points of view, and I compare these writings to R. Kook's previously published writings. Furthermore, I examine R. Kook's personal and intellectual development in light of these files, and I conclude by raising the cultural question of what underlies the phenomenon of censorship.

I.

This article will attempt to trace some little-known aspects of the inner life of one of the twentieth century's greatest Jewish thinkers: Rabbi Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook (1865–1935). Kabbalist, visionary, rabbinic decision maker, messianic figure and community leader, R. Kook has stimulated Jewish thought since the start of the twentieth century and continues to do so to this day.[2]

This article, unlike the extensive existing literature on R. Kook,[3] considers the contribution of his recently disclosed writings to our understanding of his dialectical teaching and intellectual biography. Toward the end of 1999,

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[1]This is a revised version of my article "Who's Afraid of Secret Writings? Eight Files from the Manuscripts of Rabbi Kook," *Tarbiz*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2000): 257–291 (in Hebrew). The historical section of the article, including its implications, is not included in the Hebrew article. The article has been translated from the Hebrew by Joel Linsider.

[2]R. Kook served first as the rabbi of Zeimel and then of Bausk. He immigrated to the Land of Israel in 1904 and was the Rabbi of Jaffa until 1914; from 1919 he became the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem.

the scholarly world and students of R. Kook were favored with the three volumes of *Shemonah Qevaẓim* (*Eight Files*),[4] published by the family of the late R. Eliyahu Shlomo Ra'anan. The files encompass R. Kook's writings between 1904 and 1921, and their fresh insights add unrecognized depth to the figure we know from his previously published writings. (R. Kook's thoughts between 1921 and 1935 remain under wraps, for his disciples remain unwilling to disclose the texts in which they are reflected.)

These files permit us to see R. Kook's stormy, pained, multi-faceted personality, his contradictions and instantaneous compromises. They constitute the material from which some of R. Kook's major works were crafted: *Orot ha-Qodesh* (*The Lights of Holiness*),[5] *Orot* (*Lights*),[6] *Orot ha-Emunah* (*The Lights of Faith*),[7] *Olat Re'ayah* (*The Burnt-Offering of [Rabbi Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen]*),[8] *Orot ha-Torah* (*The Lights of the Torah*),[9] *Orot ha-Teshuvah* (*The Lights of Repentance*),[10] *Middot ha-Re'ayah* (*Attributes of [Rabbi Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen]*),[11] and *Ḥadarav* (*His Chambers*).[12] At long last, after decades of painstaking research limited to his published works, we have now been "ushered into R. Kook's study" and can observe the intellectual workshop in which his thinking took shape—a set of ideas hitherto available to us only in edited, processed,

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[3]The literature on R. Kook encompasses dozens of books and hundreds of articles. See below, n. 49–50.

[4]R. Kook, *Eight Files* (Jerusalem: Budinger, 1999) (in Hebrew) (henceforth: EF).

[5]R. Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, ed. Rabbi D. Ha-Cohen, Vols. 1–3 (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985); Vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1994) (in Hebrew).

[6]R. Kook, *Orot*, ed. R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1982) (in Hebrew). It should be emphasized that this book was first published during R. Kook's lifetime.

[7]R. Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, ed. Rabbi M. Gorevitz (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985) (in Hebrew).

[8]R. Kook, *Olat Re'ayah*, ed. R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook, Vols. 1–2 (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1989) (in Hebrew).

[9]R. Kook, *Orot ha-Torah*, ed. R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985) (in Hebrew).

[10]R. Kook, *Orot ha-Teshuvah*, ed. R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985) (in Hebrew).

[11]R. Kook, *Middot ha-Re'ayah: Thy Father's Teachings*, ed. R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985) (in Hebrew).

[12]R. Kook, *Hadarav: Personal Episodes*, ed. Rabbi Sarid (Mevasseret Zion: Reut, 1998).

censored, and undated form. To be sure, the texts now in our possession have also undergone redaction, as the editor states at the outset: "In this edition the eight files have been published as they are, verbatim . . . , with the exception of a few halakhic and other points recorded in these notebooks that do not belong to the written train of thought."[13] We can only hope that it someday will be possible to examine the manuscript itself and study these files in light of R. Kook's marginal halakhic musings.

Still, the publication of the files offers a highly novel perspective on R. Kook and his work. Indeed, that is why the dissemination of these volumes was halted following the printing of the first thousand copies, in an attempt to turn back the clock and return the secrets to their clandestine archives. And if that were not sufficient, the texts were again published and again immediately re-secreted; only after the third effort to print them are they now available.

Why are these texts so disconcerting to R. Kook's disciples, and what are their overall implications for our understanding of his personality and work? I attempt to answer those questions through a series of distinct yet interconnected units. First, these diaries enable us to undertake a new examination of Rabbi Kook's spiritual and intellectual biography. Second, the files permit us to uncover a new equilibrium within R. Kook's complex theology. Finally, in light of the foregoing, we can now sketch anew the axis of R. Kook's spiritual development—a line of development whose nature could not be determined before publication of the hidden files.

The complexity of the inquiry requires the use of various types of scholarly discourse. In part II of the article, I trace R. Kook's disciples' motives in concealing the files; in part III, I conduct a phenomenological examination of the distinctiveness of these writings from an intellectual and philosophical point of view; and in part IV, I compare these writings to R. Kook's previously published writings. In part V, I examine R. Kook's biographical-intellectual development in light of these files, and I conclude, in part VI, by raising the cultural question of what underlies the phenomenon of censorship.

II.

Various techniques of concealment were applied to the files: in some instances the text was edited; in others, entire passages were left unpublished. It is im-

[13]EF, File 1, p. 9.

portant to consider the various levels of editing and suppression as well as the various types of editors who, out of diverse motives, altered the files in one way or another.

Practical Suppression and Defensive Suppression

There are various possible grounds for withholding manuscripts from publication. Even during R. Kook's lifetime, his redactors (R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook[14] and R. David ha-Kohen [the *Nazir*][15]) adopted a policy of *practical suppression* with respect to passages whose ideas had found more precise and extensive expression in other texts already published.[16]

At the same time, there also developed a practice of *defensive suppression*, prompted by a wish to protect the author/thinker from criticism. Some passages were censored, for example, because they took direct personal aim at individuals or movements; these include, for example, R. Kook's disparaging remarks about Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the founder of German neo-orthodoxy,[17] and his trenchant critique of Eastern European ultra-orthodox Jewry. We are familiar with his pejorative remarks about members of the "Old Settlement,"[18] such as his sharp criticism of religious streams that espouse a morbidly fearful form of piety[19] and about the religious public's "darkening of the concept of the Deity";[20] and with his observations about the contrast between the spirit of the "New Settlement"[21] and of those reared in the Old Settlement.[22] These biting remarks are problematic enough for a rabbinic fig-

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[14]R. Kook's son and one of the main leaders of the *Gush Emunim* political movement and the spiritual leader of the *Mizrahi* [religious Zionist] public.

[15]Rabbi David Ha-Cohen, the *Nazir* (1887–1982), a philosopher and kabbalistic figure; one of R. Kook's primary students. He edited two volumes of *Orot Ha-Kodesh* (Lights of Holiness), one of Rabbi Kook's most important writings.

[16]For example: EF, File 1 [1904–1914], p. 141, sec. 428; File 1, p. 153, sec. 482; File 1, p. 158, sec. 492;. File 1, pp. 223–224, sec. 701; File 3 [Jaffa, until 1914], p. 108, sec. 300; File 4 [Jaffa and Kissingen, 1914, St. Gallen, 1915–1916; and Jerusalem from 1919], p. 182, sec. 131 et al.

[17]EF, File 6 [St. Gallen, 1915–1916], pp. 12–13, sec. 28.

[18]The "Old Settlement" (*ha-yishuv ha-yashan*) refers to the ultra-orthodox and largely anti-Zionist public inhabiting the Land of Israel throughout the 19th and into the 20th century.

[19]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, pp. 26–30 (Foreword); R. Kook, *Arpelei Tohar* (Jerusalem: R. Zevi Yehuda Kook Institute, 1983), p. 46 (in Hebrew); EF, File 2 [Jaffa 1914], pp. 330–331, sec. 126.

ure seeking to establish himself in Orthodox Jewry's leadership, but they turn out to be softer and less pointed than what we now find in the newly available files. R. Kook there expresses his *personal* revulsion and spiritual misgivings regarding the constricted world of the Old Settlement, and his diaries convey a deep loathing for components of the religious world in which he was raised. His critique goes to the very core of the halakhic worldview underpinning the orthodox way of life. His journals suggest that he considered himself to have transcended the humdrum concerns preoccupying the Old Settlement, such as reverence, *halakhah*, and norms; such matters—reflecting the confining world of those around him—had become repulsive to him. R. Kook portrays his ultra-orthodox counterparts as spiritually base persons characterized by a merely external reverence, filled with malignant fear and melancholy that endanger the soul of the pious lover of God.[23] What brings this about is sin, a sin that leads, in turn, to another sin: the distancing of oneself from any form of enlightenment. By contrast, the pious or righteous person inclines within the depths of his heart toward transcending the boundaries of the social and religious order. His spirit is "beyond all fixed logic . . . or any practical established *halakhah*, and his heart aspires to ascend on high." Life within the framework of fixed boundaries constricts his soul.[24]

But these remarks appear not to reflect the full range of R. Kook's statements. As mentioned earlier, the available journals reflect R. Kook's writings from the time of his immigration to the Land of Israel in 1904 until his return to Jerusalem from Europe in 1920. It seems fair to assume that the journals still being withheld, which describe the time of his residence in Jerusalem (1921–1935) are even more pungent. His Jaffa period (1904–1914) and the time he spent in Europe (1914–1919) were certainly stormy, but his Jeru-

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[20]T. Yaron, *The Teachings of Rabbi Kook* (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985), p. 44 (in Hebrew).

[21]These were the participants in the pioneering waves of immigration who arrived in the Land of Israel beginning in the late 19th century and the 20th.

[22]R. Kook, *Iggerot ha-Re'ayah*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1981), p. 185 (Jaffa, 1908) (henceforth: *Iggerot*). It is interesting to compare these remarks with Aḥad ha-Am's observations in his account of his visit to the Land of Israel in 1891. Ahad ha-Am, *"Emet mi-Erez Tizmaḥ,"* in Moti Golani, *Zion in Zionism: Zionist Policy on the Question of Jerusalem* (Tel-Aviv: Ministry of defense, 1992), p. 10 (in Hebrew).

[23]EF, File 1, pp. 28–29, sec. 91.

[24]EF, File 1, p. 59, sec. 151.

salem period was characterized by bitter polemics, especially with the "hard core" of the ultra-orthodox world and the Old Settlement. Moreover, during that period, R. Kook was older and more mature, and he was transformed into the official representative of the Zionist public. During that time, the ultra-orthodox community cursed, abused, and persecuted him in every possible way. Matters reached the point that he was physically endangered, and the British police, responsible for public order in Jerusalem during the Mandatory period, were forced to intervene in defense of his life and dignity. It would not be surprising, then, if numerous passages attacking the ultra-orthodox remained sequestered in the archives. A hint of what those writings might contain can be found in the following remarks by Rabbi Shalom Natan Ra'anan:

> The Rabbi was very grieved that members of Agudat Israel do not understand him. When he saw their unruly behavior he sometimes called them "wicked." With regard to Rabbi Sonnenfeld he would say: "Even when he says something good, he says it out of wickedness, for evil, too, has good as its source." Nor was he satisfied with the members of the Mizraḥi, because he didn't think they ever took a [firm?] stand.[25]

Another set of passages was censored on account of their *audacity* in conveying R. Kook's self-perception. They are formulated as personal confessions and express both his pain and his sense of exaltation and of ecstatic bonding with the supernal; they shed light on how R. Kook understood himself. A number of these passages were published in the book *Ḥadarav* in 1998,[26] but we now know that there, too, the texts are censored.

To take one example, the passage quoted below was written toward the end of World War I, when R. Kook was living in London and following issuance of the Balfour Declaration[27]—an event that profoundly moved him and that he saw as a clear messianic portent.[28] At this point, R. Kook was beginning to recognize more and more the importance of the political factor and of

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[25]Interview with R. Shalom Natan Ra'anan, Interview Portfolio, R. Kook's House, Jerusalem, p. 1.

[26]See above, n. 12.

[27]The Declaration was published on 2 November 1917 by British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour; it expressed the British government's commitment to the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

[28]*Iggerot*, pp. 3, 130. He writes to his son that the sensational declaration "has awakened in me many old-new thoughts and spiritual and practical endeavors" (*Iggerot*, p. 133).

using it to advance his ideas; he sensed that without suitable political mechanisms, the ideas of a spiritual leader are doomed to be futile. At the same time, he was becoming increasingly critical of all existing political movements: secular Zionism, ultra-orthodox politics, and the Mizrahi movement (or religious Zionism). Each of these, from his standpoint, had its own importance, yet none grasped the overall picture, without which the Jewish people could not be established in the Land of Israel. R. Kook's own political movement, then, was to encompass all the existing political streams. In this context, he wrote a paragraph depicting the type of personality suited for kingship in the world at large and in Israel. Those persons "worthy of being mighty kings," he affirms, are already present in the congregation of Israel. They are those who "sense the grandeur of their spirit within, who brim with courage and humility, and yearn for the status of splendid liberty.... They recognize the power of unfettered holiness, the sublime living light of walking before God."[29] This passage has been published only now in *Eight Files*, perhaps because the depiction of the desired qualities resembles R. Kook's own self-portrait in numerous passages of his work.

Other texts that were concealed relate to R. Kook's inner troubles as an author,[30] the struggles within his own personality,[31] and his the difficulties growing out of his lack of public recognition.[32] He describes the alienation he feels from worldly life,[33] recognizing the need to focus on his "I" as the key to understanding life and the cosmos.[34] This focus is the gateway to a new creative experience that brooks no restraint or compromise.[35]

Intimations of Prophecy

In considering this category of sequestered writings, one cannot disregard the fact that many of them disclose the author's comments about his *prophetic sensations*. Scholars are already aware of the censorship applied by the *Nazir*,

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[29]EF, File 8 [London 1916–1919], p. 249, sec. 22. Elsewhere he describes the sensation of freedom that grips him, without connection to his body: EF, File 7 [Most of the file: St. Gallen, 1915–1916; the end: Jerusalem 1919], p. 230, sec. 196.

[30]EF, File 3, pp. 90–91, sec. 237.

[31]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 192.

[32]EF, File 6 [St. Gallen, 1915–1916], p. 20, sec. 52. See also: EF, File 8, p. 264, sec. 69.

[33]EF, File 6, p. 91, sec. 240.

[34]EF, File 7, p. 239, sec. 189.

[35]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 195.

editor of *Orot ha-Qodesh*, to a famous passage in this work, prominent because of the dots placed above it.[36] When the *Nazir* was questioned by journalists about the meaning of these dots, he replied:

> There are important matters in the Rabbi's teachings, which issue from that exalted supernal source whence all his teachings derive. In *Orot ha-Qodesh* . . . there is an untitled chapter . . . that begins with dots. . . . This is a sign of sublime matters penned in the holy man's own handwriting, which were omitted because they ought not be published, as the generation is not yet ripe for [them]. . . . We hope that the Rabbi's light will be gradually revealed, that every individual will be invigorated by the spirit of his teachings, and will then begin to understand the essence of these matters. In this way we hope that the redemption will be hastened.[37]

The section that was deleted reads as follows:

> And I listened and heard from the depths of my soul, from the passions of my heart, the voice of my Master calling. And I was intensely fearful [the editor of *Ḥadarav* censored the text from this point, p. 90]. Have I stooped so low as to become a false prophet, saying that the Holy One sent me, though the word of my Master was not revealed to me? I heard the sound of my soul roaring [the *Nazir*'s censorship ends at this point]. Prophetic sprouts are springing up, and the sons of prophets are awakening . . .[38]

R. Kook here documents a prophetic experience that alarmed him, using the account to describe the character of his generation. Elsewhere he tells that he senses lightning strokes before his eyes,[39] and that the voice of God speaks from within him, urging him to create, write and speak.[40] He bares his soul in all its expansiveness, unable to stanch its creative outpouring,[41] and he describes the thirst for God, the feeling of non-being,[42] the delight of encountering God, and the distress at those moments when God conceals Himself.[43]

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[36]See: *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 157.

[37]R. David Ha-Kohen, "The Teachings of Our Master the Rabbi, may the memory of the righteous be for a blessing," *Rabbi Kook's System of Jewish Thought—Selected Issues* (Jerusalem: The Ministry of Education, 1963), p. 8 (from a conversation with journalists in 1961) (in Hebrew).

[38]*Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 157; EF, File 4, p. 137, sec. 17.

[39]EF, File 3, p. 82, sec. 208.

[40]EF, File 6, p. 37, sec. 105; File 6, p. 37, sec. 106; *Ḥadarav*, p. 60 (with changes from the original).

[41]EF, File 1, p. 106, sec. 295; File 3, pp. 105–106, sec. 291.

[42]Kook, *Ḥadarav*, p. 43; EF, File 3, p. 102, sec. 280.

This elevated spiritual state necessarily entails feelings of exhaustion under a heavy burden,[44] along with a sense of being beyond the angels.[45] R. Kook exulted in his power (as he puts it: "Happy is the one who hears me, happy is he who ascribes to me the inner worth that befits my exceptional status. He will be exalted and set on high, elevated above all privation, sanctified and purified, and the Lord God is with him"[46]), and perhaps on that account he sensed that not everything stored up within him could be expressed outwardly.[47]

III.

Concealment and Changed Proportions: A Theological and Philosophical Analysis

Publication of the suppressed journals has done more than disclose new manuscripts; it has also changed our picture of his familiar writings. R. Kook's interpreters are numerous. Some regard him as a religious personality who was integrated into the world of philosophy and general intellectual culture;[48] others seek to identify him exclusively with the world of the Kabbalah.[49] There are those who stress his non-normative side,[50] highlighting the familiar pas-

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[43]EF, File 6, p. 26, sec. 72.

[44]EF, File 1, p. 104, sec. 283; File 3, p. 97, sec. 259; Kook, *Hadarav*, p. 95.

[45]EF, File 1, p. 168, sec. 524; File 3, p. 90, sec. 236.

[46]EF, File 3, p. 90, sec. 235.

[47]EF, File 8, p. 269, sec. 83.

[48]B. Ish-Shalom, *Rabbi Kook: Between Rationalism and Mysticism* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1990) (in Hebrew); B. Ish-Shalom, "Between Rabbi Kook and Goethe: Modern and Traditional Elements in Rabbi Kook's Thought," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, Vol. 13 (1996): 525–556 (in Hebrew). See also: A. Goldman, "Rabbi Kook's Ties to European Thought," in D. Stetman and A. Sagi, eds., *Studies and Inquires: Jewish Thought Past and Present* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1997), pp. 115, 217, 224 (in Hebrew).

[49]Yosef Avivi, "History is an Exalted Necessity," in M. Bar-Asher, ed., *Jubilee Volume for Rabbi Mordecai Breuer*, Vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Akadamon, 1992), pp. 709–772 (in Hebrew); Y. Avivi, "The Sources of *Orot*," *Zohar—Ketav Et Torani*, Vol. 1 (2000): 93–112. See also: H. Zeitlin, "The Basic Line of Rabbi Kook's Kabbalah," in *Safran shel Yehidim* (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1980), pp. 235–237 (in Hebrew); Y. L. Ashkenazi, "The Use of Kabbalistic Terminology in Rabbi Kook's Teachings," in B. Ish-Shalom and S. Rosenberg, eds., *Yovel Orot* (Jerusalem: The Israeli Ministry of Education Press, 1988), pp. 115–122 (in Hebrew); T. Ross, "Rabbi Kook's Concept of the Divinity," *Da'at*, Vol. 8 (1982): 109–128 (in Hebrew); T. Ross, "Rabbi Kook's Concept of the Divinity," *Da`at*, Vol. 9 (1982): 39–70 (in Hebrew); Y. Ben-Shlomo, "Lurianic Kabbalah and the Teaching of Rabbi Kook," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, Vol.10 (1992): 449–457 (in Hebrew).

sages concerning the ecstatic "holy silence," which groans under the yoke of the commandments and compulsory, institutionalized social frameworks;[51] and there are those who stress his image as a *ẓaddiq* (a righteous person, often, especially in Hasidic practice, having charismatic leadership qualities),[52] as a halakhic, institutional and harmonizing personality.[53] The disclosure of the files shows that R. Kook's writings encompass the normative along with the antinomian, responsibility towards the collective together with yearning for individuality; these opposing tendencies are expressed, albeit in varying proportions, throughout those writings. But further examination shows a shift in proportion and a tilting of the scale further in the antinomian direction than we previously realized; moreover, the observations are expressed in the first person, suggesting they are deeply felt. Antinomian statements, to be sure, could be found in *Arpelei Tohar* (despite its having been censored[54]), but the addition here of dozens of paragraphs in an ecstatic mode alters our earlier picture of the man.

In the present context, I can cite only a few isolated examples of these individualistic, non-normative, and even antinomian texts.

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[50]J. Garb, "Prophecy, *Halakhah*, and Antinomianism in *Eight Files* by Rabbi A. I. ha-Kohen Kook," in Z. Gries, H. Kreisel and B. Huss, eds., *Shefa Tal: Studies in Jewish Thought and Culture Presented to Berakhah Zak* (Be'er Sheba: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 2004), pp. 267–277 (in Hebrew); J. Garb, *"The Select Few Will Be a Multitude": Studies in Twentieth-Century Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Carmel Publications and Shalom Hartman Institute, 2005).

[51]See Kook, *Arpelei Tohar*, pp. 15–17.

[52]S. Sharlow, *The Zaddiq as Foundation of the World: The Secretive Mission and Mystical Experience of Rabbi Kook* (doctoral dissertation, Bar-Ilan University, 2003).

[53]Rabbi Moshe Zevi Neriyah, *Mishnat ha-Rav* (Bet-El: Orot, 1992); Neriyah, *Bi-Sedeh ha-Re'ayah* (Kefar ha-Ro'eh: Defus Lino Foto Seder, 1987); Neriyah, *Hayyei ha-Re'ayah* (Tel-Aviv, Moriah, 1983); Neriyah, *Tal ha-Re'ayah* (Benei-Beraq: H. Fisher, 1993); Neriyah, *Re'ayah ve-Hazon* (Kefar ha-Ro'eh: Yeshivat Benei Akiva, 1985); Neriyah, *Mo`adei ha-Re'ayah* (Benei-Beraq: Zela, 1991), etc.

[54] See below, p. 35. Interestingly, Shilat (the editor of *Eight Files*) published *Arpelei Tohar* in 1983, on behalf of the Rabbi Ẓevi Yehuda Kook Institute. Shilat admitted that *Arpelei Tohar* was published under the constraint of "pedagogical considerations," which led to the censoring or alteration of some sections of R. Kook's writings. See H. Segal, *Nequdah*, Vol. 113 (1987): 20–21, 25.

Individualistic and Antinomian Remarks

Clearly individualist sentiments,[55] as noted, can be found particularly in the suppressed texts. R. Kook struggled with the nature of Torah study. In his view, a person should know himself and the personal flavor of his study and maintain its distinctiveness even if it differs from the social norm. Moreover, he acknowledged his weakness in practical (halakhic) matters resulting from his attention to kabbalistic studies.[56] He recognized that by nature he was "a man of *aggadah* and of mysteries," and he knew that there was a price to be paid for this in the realm of *halakhah* and exoteric study.[57] R. Kook's yearning to plumb the mysteries of the Torah led him to what people perceived as "laziness" and "neglect of [conventional] Torah studies,"[58] but his critics failed to grasp the gravity of his mission. He believed himself assigned to reconcile all of the cultural differences and conflicts of the generation. These ideas find concise expression in his statement that "[s]ometimes there is a kind of *diligence* [in study] that destroys all the spiritual capital of the diligent one and a kind of *idleness* that fills a person's entire world with holiness and valor, the *secret of silence*."[59]

R. Kook considered exoteric Torah studies a type of "materialism" that his soul could not bear,[60] and he considered feelings such as those to be the lot of "great *zaddiqim* [righteous individuals]."[61] His discomfiture extended to the moral and halakhic act itself. His soul disdained the character trait of "measured meticulousness":

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[55]Individualism, of course, stresses the elements of personal liberty and freedom of choice, enhancing the standing of the individual vis-à-vis society. The term is generally attributed to Alexis de Tocqueville. On the nature of individualism and its association with Nietzsche, see Steven Crowell, "Existentialism," in Edward N. Zalta, ed., *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existentialism/#1.2. On Rabbi Kook's links to these new movements, see E. Goldman, "Rabbi Kook's Ties to European Thought," in *Yovel Orot*, pp. 115–122 (in Hebrew). For additional background, see M. Hellinger, "Individualism, Religiosity and Spiritualism in the Post-Modern Period: Sociological Background," *Akdamut*, Vol. 14 (2003): 9–14 (in Hebrew).

[56]EF, File 8, pp. 249–250, sec. 24. See also File 3, pp. 89–90, sec. 233.

[57]EF, File 6, p. 25, sec. 69.

[58]EF, File 6, pp. 5–6, sec. 6.

[59]EF, File 1, p. 145, sec. 445.

[60]EF, File 8, p. 317, sec. 208.

[61]EF, File 1, p. 217, sec. 332; File 1, p. 82, sec. 206; see also p. 83, sec. 212.

> Sometimes a person is overcome by inspired ideals, which transcend all fixed logic, and certainly any practical established *halakhah*, and his heart yearns to take flight. *On no account is he capable of confining his soul to prescribed studies. He must therefore set loose his spirit to wander in accordance with its inclination. Let him seek the Lord wherever his soul, hovering above the many waters, leads him. . . . It is impossible for such a spirit to order and limit itself. It is impossible to burden it with a measured meticulousness. . . .*[62]

It is the fate of *ẓaddiqim*, in Rabbi Kook's view, to observe the commandments in great distress,[63] not for the sake of their inherent vitality but for the sake of the world and of society and for educational purposes. Comparing himself to someone awake amidst the sleeping[64] (the latter being those who man the ramparts of *halakhah*, strictly attending to every detail and legalism), he describes how he suffers on account of his communal responsibility to a society preoccupied with halakhic details and legalistic arguments that afflict his spirit. Submission to social norms, he argues, produces "immeasurable pain to the soul"[65] and ultimately harms the entire community, for it keeps the *ẓaddiq* from fulfilling himself, thereby limiting his unique contribution to society. Rabbi Kook acknowledged that "it is very difficult to tolerate society, the encounter with people whose entire beings are immersed in a different world."[66]

Writing, as noted, in the first person, R. Kook describes his suffering and his torment: "Society, surroundings, practical life—they bear down on me like weights . . . Whenever I come into human society, I feel perplexed. . . ."[67] Elsewhere, he says:

> Who knows the depth of my sorrow; who can measure it! Here I am, imprisoned in tight straits, within various limitations; but my spirit yearns for exalted expanses. My soul thirsts for God. . . . Anything that is limited is profane in comparison to the supernal holiness I seek. I am lovesick. How difficult it is for me to study; how difficult to accommodate to details.
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> I love the oceans, sailing through the heavens; for them I long.[68]

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[62]EF, File 1, p. 59, sec. 151.

[63]EF, File 1, p. 137, sec. 410.

[64]EF, File 3, p. 88, sec. 228; p. 109, sec. 304.

[65]EF, File 1, p. 212, sec. 665.

[66]EF, File 3, p. 112, sec. 315. See also File 3, pp. 113–114, sec. 318; File 4, pp. 153–154, sec. 67.

[67]EF, File 8, p. 281, sec. 122.

[68]EF, File 3, p. 86, sec. 222 / Kook, *Hadarav*, p. 50. See also EF, File 6, p. 35, sec. 98; Kook, *Ḥadarav*, p. 51.

His yearning for the broad expanses can tolerate no moral, rational, or conventional limitation;[69] moreover, even the limitations of language can stifle thought and creativity. An author must know, R. Kook argued, that the creative spirit concealed within every text is "the lofty content floating through the air . . . which cannot be grasped or written down."[70]

Similarly, *Eight Files* contains a wealth of expressions referring to the need not to be dismayed by an onerous fear of God, by sins, by failures, or by feelings of spiritual decline. All of these will eventually contribute to the *ẓaddiq*'s upward journey to the elevated spiritual plane he seeks.[71] This is true as well of many passages dealing with the image of the *ẓaddiq* (which parallel Rabbi Kook's self-portrayals)[72] and his ability to integrate good and evil or, indeed, to nullify evil and extract the good concealed within it.[73]

IV.

Censorship and Redaction of Printed Texts: A Comparative Study

The texts described above were not published at all because of their audacity. But to trace Rabbi Kook's concealed image, not only must we consider those texts, but we must also examine his published texts anew, critically comparing them with their newly disclosed sources. We will thereby discern the great degree of editing to which the published writings were subjected and come to appreciate the implications of that redaction—a process that directly follows from the disclosure of the hidden writings.

Redaction, of course, profoundly affects a text. Altering even a single word or letter—to say nothing of deleting an entire passage—can change or conceal the writer's essential meaning.[74] For example, the following quotation was first

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[69]Kook, *Hadarav*, p. 49 / EF, File 3, p. 102, sec. 279.

[70]EF, File 4, p. 175, sec. 115 (quoted in a letter to Hillel Zeitlin).

[71]EF, File 1, p. 88, sec. 230. See also File 1, p. 101, sec. 274; File 1, p.104, sec. 283; File 1, p. 113, sec. 319; File 1, p. 125, sec. 368; File 1, p. 133, sec. 395, and see, among other places, File 1, p. 143, sec. 438.

[72]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, 4, p. 468; EF, File 1, p. 263, sec. 821; Kook, *Hadarav*, pp/ 149, 95 / EF, File 3, p. 97, sec. 259; File 8, p. 317, sec. 208 (and see above, n. 54–60).

[73]EF, File 1, p. 191, sec. 599; File 1, pp. 232–233, sec. 729, etc.

[74]See the well-known redaction of "*Ma'amar Shir ha-Shirim*," which transformed "literature, painting, and sculpture" into "literature, its depiction and sculpting," thereby deleting the main point of the sentence (Kook, *Olat Re'ayah*, Vol. 2, p. 3). Compare also "As a foil to those who strictly and diligently persevere [in their studies], there must be a force that shows how to reveal the free inner light, through wandering and leisure . . ." (EF, File

cited by Yuval Sherlow to illustrate R. Kook's sense of mission. But if we compare the quotation to the text in *Eight Files*, we see that the heart of R. Kook's comment has been deleted.[75] The quotation reads as follows; the deleted lines are included in square brackets:[76]

> Not for nothing did the God of all souls instill in me a constant craving for all that is concealed, for all that is lofty and exalted. Not for nothing did He bring me to the Land of Israel. And not for nothing did He form in me a courageous spirit and inner purity, even though [I am limited by innumerable weaknesses and failings, many more than are the masses or ordinary Torah scholars and perhaps even more than all elevated, spiritually sensitive people, who feel the stirrings of the soul]. All these (qualities) were instilled in me to be used to illuminate the world, to create a literature filled with the light of the Torah's secrets, popular and accessible to all ....[77]

The earlier published version thus conceals the passage in which R. Kook acknowledges the weaknesses and failings that form the background for his remarks. This is but one of many similar instances.

R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook and the *Nazir*

Sometimes, entire passages were concealed from the reader's eye; on other occasions, entire ideas were removed from the passages that were published. As noted, R. Kook's writings had two principal editors: R. David ha-Kohen (the *Nazir*) and R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook. Each of them in his own way dulled the spiritual intensity of the original files.[78] The *Nazir* arranged the texts by subject but generally preserved the structure of each passage as it appears in the original file; R. Ẓevi Yehuda, in contrast, intruded into the construction of individual sentences. He interwove passages from different places, and he

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2, p. 327, sec. 112), with the version in *"Arpelei Tohar"*: "As a foil to those who diligently persevere ... in spiritual wandering and leisure." See additional examples in Haggai Siegel, *Nequdah*, Vol. 113: 25.

[75]R. Sherlow was surprised by the deletion and told me that R. Kook's statement had been given to him in a censored version.

[76]That convention will be adhered to throughout.

[77]EF, File 3, p. 97, sec. 259; Y. Sherlow, *The Torah of the Land of Israel From the Perspective of Rabbi Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook's Teachings* (Ḥisfin: Golan Books, 1998), p. 15, n. 13 (in Hebrew); Kook, *Ḥadarav*, p. 95.

[78]See, more broadly, D. Schwartz, *Religious Zionism Between Reason and Messianism* (Tel-Aviv, Am Oved 1999), pp. 198–234 (in Hebrew).

crafted extended new paragraphs to the point that the reader of *Orot* cannot discern the presence of collage or rewriting.

Sometimes the changes do not affect the meaning, but occasionally they do, apparently deliberately—either to protect R. Kook from his attackers or to prevent the public from seeing his words in all their forcefulness.

A few examples will clarify my point. As noted, R. Ẓevi Yehuda's editorial changes sometimes constitute non-substantive wording modifications, having no effect on the reader's ability to comprehend R. Kook's meaning;[79] at other times, they represent explanations or expansions of his father's remarks.[80] Occasionally, however, the deletion or insertion of a word or a sentence blunts or even alters the sense of his remarks.[81] If R. Ẓevi Yehuda found sentences or words to be problematic in their original contexts, he would move them to alter the meaning,[82] change the grammatical tense,[83] substitute other words,[84]

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[79]For example, R. Ẓevi Yehuda modified, in what appears to be a non-substantive way, his father's comments on the connection between Israel's Holy Spirit and the imaginative powers of the nations of the world (EF, File 5, pp. 288–289, sec. 190 / Kook, *Orot*, 35, s.v. "*koaḥ ha-medammeḥ*." Similarly, Kook, *Orot ha-Teshuvah*, p. 16, chapter 4, sec. 9 / EF, File 1, pp. 210–211, sec. 661; Kook, *Orot*, pp. 70–71 / EF, File 3, p. 3, sec. 1; Kook, *Orot*, p. 171 / EF, File 3, p. 100, sec. 284).

[80]For an example, see Kook, *Orot*, p. 73 / EF, File 1, p. 254, sec. 793. See also Kook, *Orot*, p. 26 / EF, File 5, pp. 204–205, sec. 36.

[81]See Kook, *Orot*, p. 132 / EF, File 1, p. 79, sec. 199; Kook, *Orot*, p. 127 / EF, File 1, p. 114, sec. 321 and p. 74, sec. 179; Kook, *Orot*, pp. 71–72 / EF, File 3, pp. 3–5, sec. 2.

[82]R. Ẓevi Yehuda removes the sentence "Israel among the nations is as a human among all creatures" and incorporates it into *Orot*, p. 129, and see EF, File 1, p. 108, sec. 303.

[83]When R. Kook describes exalted souls that emerged in the past and present, R. Ẓevi Yehuda changes the tense to future. Compare Kook, *Orot*, p. 65 with EF, File 1, pp. 237–238, sec. 744.

[84]For example, with respect to R. Kook's demand to re-sanctify the body; compare EF, File 3, p. 100, sec. 273 with Kook, *Orot*, p. 80. R. Ẓevi Yehuda there transforms a direct, positive attachment to the physical body into a general connection only. R. Kook directs all his attention to physical repentance and strengthening the body, but R. Ẓevi Yehuda blurs the point and reduces that repentance to one ingredient among others. R. Kook speaks of the spirit suffusing the actual, physical muscles, but R. Ẓevi Yehuda speaks of the spirit shining on them. Where R. Kook refers simply to "the flesh," R. Ẓevi Yehuda speaks of "the holy flesh"; and he brushes aside R. Kook's critique of R. Simeon bar Yoḥai by describing it as "[the view of some] individuals." See Kook, *Orot*, p. 77 / EF, File 3, pp. 127–128, sec. 366. Compare as well *Orot*, p. 85 with EF, File 4, p. 140, sec. 25; Kook, *Orot*, pp. 22–23 with EF, File 5, pp. 201–201, sec. 32. R. Kook speaks of "the praise of Israel," which R. Ẓevi Yehuda changes to "the praise of God," which is what makes Israel praiseworthy.

add clarifying terms,[85] or delete the words entirely.[86]

The *Nazir* proceeded more discreetly. He generally took pains to preserve R. Kook's original section divisions and did not interweave or blend paragraphs. Most of his editing involved classifying and grouping passages in an effort to make the writings more philosophical—notwithstanding the poetic and intuitive nature of the personality reflected in them. But the *Nazir*, too, engaged in some defensive editing and redaction.

We saw above how the *Nazir* deleted an entire passage in order to conceal R. Kook's intimations of prophecy.[87] He likewise deleted part of a passage in which R. Kook likens the sense of revelation to that of hearing voices over the telephone.[88] In general, however, the *Nazir*'s editorial changes were marginal;[89] many of them are incidental wording improvements,[90] intended only to preclude what he regarded as potentially "dangerous" misinterpretations of R. Kook's writings.[91]

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[85]Compare Kook, *Orot*, pp. 78–79 / Kook, *Ḥadarav*, p. 186 / EF, File 3, p. 86, sec. 223.

[86]Compare Kook, *Orot*, p. 129, with EF, File 1, pp. 45–46, sec. 167; Kook, *Orot*, p. 76 with EF, File 3, p. 71, sec. 171. We see something similar in a paragraph written by R. Kook at the height of the First World War. He there sharply criticizes the nations of Europe, which he calls "idolatrous," and he envisions their destruction under the heel of resurgent Israel. It is clear that R. Ẕevi deletes every passage directed specifically at the European nations, transforming the citation to one speaking only against idolatry. See EF, File 5, pp. 333–334, sec. 267 / Kook, *Orot*, p. 16.

[87]Above, n. 37.

[88]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 174 / EF, File 4, p. 172, sec. 111. See also Garb, "The Select Few," p. 163.

[89]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 232 / EF, File 1, pp. 216–217, sec. 678.

[90]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, pp. 255–256 / EF, File 1, pp. 54–55, sec. 142; Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 64 / EF, File 1, pp. 58–59, sec. 150; Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 28 / EF, File 3, p. 94, sec. 250, and many others.

[91]See Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 123 / EF, File 1, p. 93, sec. 248. The *Nazir* wanted to stress meticulousness with respect to actions and therefore deleted the word "also," which had made meticulousness regarding actions only a single aspect of the various forms of meticulousness observed by the *ẕaddiq*. Similarly, regarding the issue of "certainty," R. Kook detracts from the value of certainty if it is not related to significant content; but the *Nazir* tries to limit R. Kook's downplaying of certainty by adding some clauses that do not appear in the text of *Eight Files* see: EF, File 1, p. 203, sec. 641 / Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 217.

The matter of prophecy, as we know, is one that troubled the *Nazir* personally,[92] and his repeated efforts to censor and edit R. Kook on this issue in particular are fascinating. For example, R. Kook has the following to say with respect to the quality of prophecy and its connection to the inner self:

Eight Files	*Orot ha-Qodesh*
1. Prophecy and the holy spirit come from a person's inwardness, and from within him, he overflows to everything related to the world as a whole. 2. Its model is the *aggadah*, which flows from a person's soulfulness but also sets matters in order in the external descent of the world.[93]	1. Prophecy and the holy spirit come (by the word of God to) a person's inwardness, and from within him (they) overflow to everything related to the world as a whole. 2. (A sort of) model for them is the *aggadah*, which flows from a person's soulfulness, but also sets matters in order in the external descent of the world.[94]

In sentence one, R. Kook's own words attribute prophecy solely to a person's inwardness. The *Nazir* qualifies that and adds "the word of God," which is joined with that inwardness. Moreover, in sentence two, R. Kook characterizes the *aggadah* as a model for prophecy pure and simple, but the *Nazir*'s qualification says it is "a sort of" model but not an actual one.

And that is the case wherever R. Kook's writings manifest their anarchic aspect.[95] In a passage published in *Orot ha-Qodesh*, *Orot ha-Emunah*, and *Eight Files*, R. Kook considers the course of historical-cultural progress. In his view, religion in the past served the role of suppressing natural barbarism. Today, however, science and the development of society strengthen natural tendencies toward the *sanctioning of anarchy*. The passage suggests that R. Kook aligns himself with the progressive tendencies having roots both in Kabbalah and in European intellectual trends of his time. Here is the original version of his comment, as censored by the *Nazir* in *Orot ha-Qodesh*:

> The development of the human spirit prepares his essential intellect and his inner drive to desire absolute good, which is the divine good, the basis for the divine revelation and the influence of Torah and prophecy in the world . . .

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[92]See Schwartz, *Religious Zionism*, pp. 174–197.

[93]EF, File 8, p. 250, sec. 127.

[94]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 23.

[95]See Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 152 and the analysis by Ish Shalom, *R. Kook*, p. 76.

> Corresponding to that portion that has already been purified, liberality must spread, [*and anarchy*] *assume a place.*[96]

The *Nazir* went ahead and published the passage, but the word "anarchy" was omitted from the printed editions.[97]

Another instance of the *Nazir*'s intervention appears in a passage describing the holiness of silence (noted earlier). R. Kook depicts the nature of *halakhah* (which is to be set aside in the drive for "holiness of silence)," but the *Nazir* redirects the sentence so that its object is not the *halakhah* as much as the various aspects of a person:

Eight Files	*Orot ha-Qodesh*
1. One suffers great torment in going from the broad expanses of pure speculation, melded with emotion and glorious song, into halakhic confines, black as a raven. 2. Even though it is *their beauty and the power of their holiness* [i.e., that of the *halakhot* (A.R.)] to rule in the world filled with darkness, impurity, and tumultuous agitation, 3. *this* soulful person, splendid in holiness, feels his awful torment, the chains that bind him, when he goes forth from Talmud to Talmud. . . .[98]	1. One suffers great torment in going from the broad expanses of pure speculation, melded with emotion and glorious song, into halakhic confines, black as a raven. 2. Even though it is (his beauty and the power of his holiness [i.e., that of the person (A.R.)]) to rule in the world filled with darkness, impurity, and tumultuous agitation, 3. [---] a soulful person, splendid in holiness, feels his awful torment, (all) the chains that bind him, when he goes forth from Talmud to Talmud. . . .[99]

[96]EF, File 1, pp. 36–37, sec. 109; Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, pp. 66–67 / Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 2, pp. 544–545. See also Aviezer Ravitzky, *The Revealed End and the Jewish State—Messianism, Zionism, and Religious Radicalism in Israel* (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1993), pp. 144–145 (in Hebrew).

[97]Elsewhere, R. Kook compares Israel to the other nations. He writes in one passage that "the Jews, *like all men*, are also confined to their own sphere" (EF, File 1, p. 42, section 118). The *Nazir* altered the sentence to read: "The Jews (who differ from all the nations) are also confined to their own sphere" (Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 2, p. 539.) The words likening Israel to all nations were deleted despite the context's need for them.

[98]EF, File 3, p. 94, sec. 250.

[99]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 28.

V.

Eight Files as a Biographical Window: Historical Analysis

And so we see a systematic excision or suppression of antinomian expressions, a process that is part of a general struggle to shape R. Kook's image.[100] But even that editing could not totally eliminate R. Kook's ecstatic and antinomian aspect. The published writings show, on the one hand, his rabbinic side, centered on the life of commandments and community, and, on the other, his individualistic expressions of yearning for autonomy and withdrawal from social obligations.[101] *Eight Files* intensifies this division and reveals the rich range of dichotomies in R. Kook's writings;[102] beyond that, we can now locate the appearance of various observations against the background of the time they were written. It is now evident the degree of emphasis placed on various positions changes from period to period in R Kook's life, and our understanding of R. Kook's spiritual and intellectual development has been modified as a result. Contrary to my earlier judgment that R. Kook's contrary positions were constantly and contemporaneously held,[103] we can identify various periods in R. Kook's thought, just as one can trace the development over time of other thinkers' ideas.[104]

In order to review this process of development, we must become familiar with the distinctive qualities of R. Kook's encounter with the Land of Israel, the principal events that took place while he was there, his time in Switzerland and England and its significance, and his return to the Land of Israel following the First World War. This historical examination and description will help us understand the connection between R. Kook's biography and the development of his writing and thought.

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[100]On the various schools of thought in the interpretation of R. Kook's teachings, see A. Rosenak, *The Prophetic Halakhah: Rabbi A.I H. Kook's Philosophy of Halakhah* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press [in press]), chapter 3 (in Hebrew).

[101]See above, n. 55.

[102]The journals include progressive and optimistic theories on the nature of the world and of history (EF, File 3, p. 95, sec. 25) along with skeptical and pessimistic struggles and distress (File 3, pp. 101–102, sec. 278); statements and their opposites regarding the definition of mankind in relation to Israel (Cf. EF, File 7, pp. 217–218, sec. 169; *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 337 / EF, File 7, p. 216, sec. 166; File 7, p. 138, sec. 38.)

[103]See Rosenak, *The Prophetic Halakhah*.

[104]The various periods are determined by place, culture, and time. For example, R. Joseph Dov Soloveitchik moved between neo-Kantianism (in *Halakhic Man*) and existentialism (in *The Lonely Man of Faith*); and Hermann Cohen likewise had his neo-Kantian

The Jaffa Period: Controversy and Redefining the Limits of the Jewish Community

In 1902, while serving as rabbi of Bausk—where as a rabbi he first confronted, albeit on a small scale, the phenomena of Zionism, Jewish Enlightenment (*Haskalah*), and ultra-orthodoxy—R. Kook received a letter from his father-in-law in Jerusalem, R. Elijah David Teomim (known as "the *Aderet*"), urging him to come to the Land of Israel. The previous rabbi of Jaffa, R. Naftali Hertz ha-Levi, had died, and the community was seeking a suitable replacement. R. Kook hesitated at first, but after a delay of over a year, he finally decided to immigrate. At that point, he began to write *Eight Files*. Its composition thus coincided with R. Kook's undertaking his new role, in which he was destined to confront, in an existential way, the Zionist enterprise and the secular/ultra-orthodox dispute with all that it entailed.

As rabbi of Jaffa, R. Kook's role was to navigate the tensions within the city. A microcosm of the Zionist society taking shape throughout the Land of Israel, Jaffa was a tapestry of conflicts between secularists and religious, capitalists and socialists, Ashkenazim, Sefardim, and Yemenites, modern *Haskalah* intellectuals and Old Settlement pietists.

The first passage in R. Kook's journal speaks not of the experience of immigration to the Land nor the Land's uniqueness; rather, it speaks of "the soul of the nation."[105] The nation is made up of diverse spiritual forms, of physical and spiritual dimensions—all of them linked, in his view, to a single essence. His far-reaching comments raise high the banner of people who had moved far from their parents' homes, slamming the door on the traditional world behind them and despising the way of life and spiritual path embodied by Diaspora Judaism. In R. Kook's view, even that slamming of the door constitutes part of the "soul of the nation." His diary opens with the formulation of a new standard of judgment different from anything known in orthodox thought; influenced by Hegelian rhetoric, it forgoes orthodox halakhic categories. The "other" should be judged not on the extent of his faithfulness to *halakhah* but in light of the insight afforded by the generality of Israel, in all its forms, re-

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Marburg period and his Jewish and existential Berlin period, which produced his book *The Religion of Reason from Jewish Sources*. A new study of the differences between R. Kook's Jaffa and Jerusalem periods can be found in Hagi Ben-Artzi, "R. Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook as a Halakhic Decisor—The Innovative Element in the Halakhic Writings of R. Kook and their Philosophical Background" (in Hebrew), dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2003). Ben-Artzi's conclusions differ from my own, but our disagreement is beyond the scope of this article.

[105]EF, File 1, p. 3, sec. 1.

garding the "spirit" of the "nation of Israel" in all its aspects and expressions. These are novel comments, of a sort not to be found in his earlier writings. His faithfulness to *halakhah* is joined in his writings by new emphases: the obligation to extend the walls of "the Jewish house" and to understand that various Jews in various ways unconsciously strive for the same goal. In his opinion, history proceeds under divine providence, and the instrumentalities activated by providence are not necessarily halakhic. It is necessary, he believed, to perceive the light concealed within what appears to be dark.

Creative Awakening in the Land of Israel

A comparison of *Eight Files* to R. Kook's earlier writings[106] readily shows the changes that took place following his arrival in the Land of Israel, when a wave of creativity overtook him and he began to compose his journals. Influenced by the power of his unmediated encounter with the historic events under way in the Land of Israel and the messianic hopes he pinned on those events, he was drawn to write on subjects involving both *society* and *halakhah*.

Called upon to bridge the gaps that had opened up within the fractured Jewish society, R. Kook did so by applying his principle of "unity of opposites." The principle makes it possible to see and strive for the common source that embraces the opposites.[107] Expressions of this stance are evident in his first sermon in the Land of Israel, dealing with the illusory nature of the dispute. The sermon considered the connection between "Truth and Peace," and he wrote the following diary entry:

> In a dispute over opinions and beliefs, grounded on spiritual and abstract matters, it is more common than in other sorts of disputes for the two disputants, who appear on the surface to be very far apart from each other, *to in fact be saying the same thing. And the nub of the dispute*, which sometimes appears to rage to the heavens, *is nothing more than verbal*, with neither participant understanding what the other is saying.[108]

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[106]As a young man, he wrote an article summing up the literary achievements of his teacher, R. Naftali Ẓevi Yehudah Berlin (the *Neẓiv*); he founded and edited a Torah journal (*Ittur Soferim*); he wrote his first halakhic book, *Havash Pe'er* (Warsaw, 1891); and he attempted some Zionist writing in his Hebrew articles "Israel's Mission and Nationhood," "Advice From Afar," and "Streams in the Negev," published in various issue of *Ha-Peles*, 1901–1904.

[107]On the doctrine of unity of opposites in R. Kook's teachings, see Rosenak, *The Prophetic Halakhah*, chapter 2.

[108]EF, File 1, p. 5, sec. 10.

The dispute, he maintains, is frequently illusory, yet something going on within it may be worth preserving. Each disputant is attempting to express and protect something that makes him distinctive, and that distinctiveness is worth preserving despite the desire for peace; indeed, preserving that pluralism is what makes peace possible.[109]

The death of Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), charismatic leader of the Zionist movement, also left its mark on Kook's diary writing. Herzl died about two months after R. Kook's arrival in the Land of Israel; R. Kook was invited to eulogize him; and the various groups that made up Jaffa's social and cultural tapestry were eager to see how he would handle the task. Despite the tensions attendant on the event, he did not hesitate to speak about the connection between the Messiah son of Joseph (associated with physical redemption and embodied in Herzl's image) and the Messiah son of David (associated with spiritual redemption, a task assigned to the Old Settlement). The two components need each other, just as spirit needs body and vice versa. Neglecting the powers of the body, as happened in the Diaspora, impoverishes the soul as well. Meanwhile, he wrote in his journal that "strength, physical fortitude, must reside in righteous and upright people, so that the desire for good will exercise its influence in the world. The weakening of the righteous . . . weakens the light of the world."[110] And in the ensuing section: "At times a spiritual gap cannot be filled by any labor or any response except the strengthening of the body."[111]

R. Kook's eulogy kept the forces in balance[112] and noted the vital nature of the Zionist movement, without which there could be no revival of Jewish spiritual life. Herzl (i.e., Messiah son of Joseph) died, according to R. Kook, because of spiritual constriction and a narrow, univalent view of existence and of history. A failure to understand the unity of "opposites"—to whatever extent they really are opposite—brought about his death.

The journals also set forth R. Kook's vision of the new generation of rabbis to be trained in the Land of Israel. They would be required to forge firm links between the spiritual and material dimensions, between metaphysics and

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[109]EF, File 1, p. 8, sec. 24.

[110]EF, WHAT FILE?, p. 14, sec. 44.

[111]EF, WHERE?, sec. 45.

[112]*The Articles of Rabbi Kook (Ma'amarei ha-Re'ayah)* (Jerusalem: Naḥalah, 1984), pp. 98–100.

physics.[113] He taught the need to translate lofty ideas into a form comprehensible to the general public and to "bring them down" to the real world. In this manner, R. Kook treats the connection between Kabbalah and philosophy, *aggadah* and *halakhah*, tradition and modernity, Torah and general learning, traditional and open education, Israel and the nations, Torah and worldly ways, the spiritual and the physical, and many other subjects flowing from the idea of "unity of opposites."[114] His purpose was to bring together the participants in seemingly irresolvable disputes, and to widen freedom of thought and deed and incorporate them in a single broad, dialectical framework. At the same time, R. Kook was caught up in several bitter halakhic controversies,[115] which enhanced his standing as the halakhic leader of religious Zionism.[116]

The Desire for Solitude and the Social Role of the Ẓaddiq

His position at the forefront of public life did not eclipse another characteristic we have already seen in R. Kook's writings: his desire for solitude and his failure to find personal satisfaction in public leadership. He writes repeatedly that he would have preferred to be a cloistered scholar and thinker. In 1910, at the height of the controversy over working the land during the sabbatical year,[117] in a communication to his teacher and colleague, R. Pinḥas ha-Kohen Lintoff (chief judge of Birz), he compares the burden of communal leadership to the experience of being expelled from Eden.[118] He recognized the communal obligations that had been thrust on him and that he had taken upon himself, but his heart was torn. On occasion, the yoke of the community became unbearable; but even then, he maintained his silence and believed that one "must only work for the benefit of the Holy Land and the people of God who dwell in it, and I have no desire or concern for personal matters that are as nothing in comparison to the general good of the nation as a whole."[119] In his journal, he

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[113]EF, File 1, p. 158, sec. 494.

[114]These subjects are considered in detail in Rosenak, *The Prophetic Halakhah*.

[115]For example, the issue of kosher slaughter in Jaffa and his attempt to unify Ashkenazi and Sefardi governance of it; the ruling authorizing arrangements for working the land during the sabbatical year of 1910; and the controversy over allowing the production of sesame oil on Passover (contrary to Ashkenazi custom).

[116]See H. Ben-Artzi, "Kook as a Halakhic Decisor."

[117]See A. Rosenak, "Prophetic *Halakhah* and Reality in Rabbi Kook's Halakhic Decision Making," *Tarbiz*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (2000): 591–618.

[118]See Kook, *Iggerot* 1, p. 301.

[119]Kook, *Iggerot*, p. 263.

writes of the pain of the *ẓaddiq*, who bears "the sin of the generation, atoning for them by his suffering."[120] The more elevated a person's soul, the greater his love for all Israel and the more his burden encompasses all Israel's needs.

Elsewhere, R. Kook writes as follows, using the first person:

> Listen to me, my people; I speak to you out of my innermost soul, out of my living bond with all of you, and all of you are tied to me with that feeling that I sense more deeply than any other, that you, only you, only all of you, your collectivity, all your souls, all your descendants—only you are the content of my life. In you I live; in you, in you as a collective, my life gains the content called life. Except for you, I have nothing . . . you give meaning to my life, work, Torah, prayer, song, and hope. Through the conduit of your existence, I sense everything. I love everything. On the spiritual wings of your love, I am carried up to the love of God, and it becomes clear to me, purified within me, burning brightly in my heart, polished in my thoughts.[121]

It is fair to infer that the background for this emotional call was a rabbinical tour of secular Zionist settlements in the Galilee, conducted by R. Kook in 1914. He was joined on the tour by several rabbis, among them R. Joseph Ḥayyim Sonnenfeld (1849–1932), a leader of the radical ultra-orthodox faction in the Old Settlement.[122] In contrast to his colleagues, who saw the tour as an opportunity to inspire Jews to repent of their sinful ways, R. Kook saw it as an occasion for the participating rabbis themselves to repent with respect to their view of the Zionist enterprise—a journey on which to become deeply aware of the complexities of real life (as R. Kook understood them). His journals suggest that the tour offered the *ẓaddiq* the chance to unify sacred and secular by blurring the boundaries between them. Summing up the tour, he writes: "It is obvious that all of the *ẓaddiq*'s acts are done in holiness, and all his physical actions contribute to the repair of the world." But it is the laborers, R. Kook goes on, who "repair the world," for repair and expansion of the holy light are to be found in *all labor*. Every act that rescues some portion of existence from the dominion of chaos is something great."[123] In light of this diary entry, R. Kook's own role is to be the *ẓaddiq* who unites the souls of the

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[120]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 330; EF, File 1, p. 58, sec. 149.

[121]Kook, *Orot ha-Re'ayah* (Jerusalem: Harav Kook Institute, 1985), p. 54 / EF, File 1, pp. 65–66, sec. 163.

[122]R. Sonnenfeld was the chief judge of Jerusalem and a relative of R. Diskin, a leading zealot of the Old Settlement.

[123]EF, File 1, p. 219, sec. 887.

Zionists "with the communal soul itself."[124] Thus, the negative qualities of the world of labor are transformed into positive ones,[125] though after the cleansing that the *ẓaddiq* performs by joining with the workers, "it becomes progressively more clear-headed, moving from being cursed to being blessed."[126]

The Swiss Period and War-Time Writings

Upon his return from the Galilee tour, R. Kook decided, after considerable struggle and unenthusiastically, to sail for Europe to participate in the world conference of Agudat Israel. He believed he would be able to change the attitude of Agudat Israel toward the Zionist Settlement in the Land of Israel—a change he regarded as extremely important. He arrived in Germany as World War I was breaking out. The world conference of Agudat Israel was canceled, and R. Kook, unable to return to the Land of Israel, was spirited off to Switzerland by his friends. He found refuge in the city of St. Gallen under the patronage of R. Abraham Kimḥi, who saw to all his needs throughout his stay, until 1916.

R. Kook was required to settle in for an extended time. Worried about the welfare of his daughters, other family members, and the rest of the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel, and aware of the oppressiveness of the Turkish authorities there and the ever-harsher financial constraints they were imposing, he tried to help and initiated various projects to that end.[127] More and more, however, he became caught up in a new experience: immersion in literary and philosophical work. Relieved of the burden of public office and other demands on his time and confined to a continent torn by war, R. Kook was free to undertake creative intellectual activity.

During this period, R. Kook composed in his diaries the literary materials later to be published in book form as *Orot*. We find the ripening of his thinking about historiosophy in general and, in particular, about the internal-spiritual and messianic nature of the Zionist enterprise. Articles such as "The Land of Israel," "The War," and "On the Progress of Ideas in Israel" (all in Hebrew) take shape; they would become exhibition windows through which R. Kook's

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[124] EF, File 1, p. 219, sec 887.

[125] For there is a negative side to "cursed . . . with toil," which comes from "one person's envy of another and his hatred of humanity, which draws much from the battle of life against its accursed form in the degenerate world" (EF, File 1, p. 219, sec 887).

[126] EF, File 1, p. 219, sec 887.

[127] Kook, *Iggerot ha-Re'ayah*, 2, pp. 319–322.

teachings can be studied. (They would also draw fiery criticism when they were published in 1920, while their author was in the heat of battle with the ultra-orthodox community in Jerusalem.)

While his writing continued along paths previously taken, it now partook of a new intensity. The journals convey his renewed encounter with the nations of Europe. The war stirs him to sharper expressions of the distinction and dichotomy between Israel and other nations in general and, more specifically, to consideration of the negative aspects of Christian culture and what he terms, in some of his letters, "*minut*" (heretical sectarianism).[128] He reemphasizes Israel's special epistemological stature;[129] and he distinguishes between Jewish ethics, understood (by some) as formalistic, and Christian acts of grace, which had culminated, before his very eyes, in murder and warfare.[130] Embracing the entire world within his historisophical approach, he considers the pinnacle of all historical processes to be the redemption of the nation of Israel on its land,[131] a process that necessarily entails the moral redemption of the nations in general, which aspire to that redemption but lack it.[132]

But new subjects begin to appear in his thought as well. A pessimistic spirit becomes manifest in his writings, as he agonizes over the evil to be found in the world and in human history.[133] He writes of the sorrow to be felt over mankind's putting its wisdom and understanding to evil use;[134] and he devotes

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[128]EF, File 5, p. 298, sec. 205; File 7, p. 170, sec. 86; File 5, p. 283, sec. 182; Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, p. 90 / EF, File 5, p. 207, sec. 40, and many others. And see: EF, File 7, pp. 201–201, sec. 138.

[129]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, 67–68 / EF, File 4, p. 172, sec. 110; Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, pp. 68–69 / EF, File 4, pp. 175–176, sec. 116.

[130]EF, File 5, p. 237, sec. 98 and 280–281, sec. 177; File 5, p. 238, sec. 99; Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, pp. 14–15 / EF, File 4, pp. 316–317, sec. 238, and many others.

[131]EF, File 4, p. 144, sec. 38; Kook, *Orot*, p. 16 / EF, File 5, pp. 219–220, sec. 64; Kook, *Orot*, p. 15 / EF, File 6, pp. 53–54, sec. 152.

[132]These comments provide a sort of response to Hegel's critical view that the Jewish world-historical role had been completed. See Kook, *Orot*, p. 136 / EF, File 1, p. 61, sec. 156; Kook, *Orot*, p. 157 / EF, File 3, p. 125, sec. 354. At the same time, he continues to write about the Jews' religious and moral distinctiveness (see EF, File 1, pp. 34–35, sec. 102 and compare: Kook, *Orot*, pp. 135, 165 / EF, File 1, p. 170, sec. 528; File 4, pp. 138–139, sec. 22); Israel and its ties to other nations (see Kook, *Orot*, p. 147 / EF, File 1, pp. 113–114, sec. 320; Kook, *Orot*, p. 156 / EF, File 1, pp. 158–159, sec. 496); and the profound gap between them (see Kook, *Olat Re'ayah*, Vol. 2, p. 391 / EF, File 1, p. 169, sec. 526).

[133]EF, File 5, p. 188, sec. 3.

[134]EF, File 5, p. 190, sec. 7.

time to thinking about the human desire for death, to the point that "the thirst for it [death] is greater and loftier than the faint thirst for life."[135] He vividly describes the "lust," "wickedness," "folly," "evil qualities," "murderousness," and "deceit" of the nations of the world, contrasting those qualities with the "exalted goal of knowing God"[136] that binds Israel.[137] The difference between Israel and the nations grows ever deeper.[138] Implicit in this is a declaration of war to the end against evil,[139] materialism,[140] and Christian culture, which led to the corruption of history.[141]

But alongside these melancholy descriptions—and consistent with the doctrine of the unity of opposites[142]—R. Kook's writings from this period also include a progressive thread. The progress in human nature, which has a profound connection to goings-on in Israel, is likewise tied up with the events of the War,[143] which signifies and heralds an age of refinement in the nature of humanity and the world.[144] In this new age, Israel will be able to reclaim political sovereignty free of the defilement of blood and of capacity for evil.[145] In light of this Hegelian-dialectical position, R. Kook saw the Great War as

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[135]And see more: EF, File 5, p. 311, sec. 232. It is interesting to note the parallel between these ideas and the general European *zeitgeist*, in which these matters were treated, for example, in the writings of intellectual figures such as Sigmund Freud and Thomas Mann.

[136]EF, File 8, pp. 252–253, sec. 33. See also Kook, *Orot*, pp. 22–23 / EF, File 5, pp. 201–202, sec. 32.

[137]Kook, *Orot*, p. 21 / EF, File 5, pp. 196–197, sec. 20; *Orot*, p. 23 / EF, File 5, p. 202, sec. 33; Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 4, p. 493 / EF, File 5, p. 247, sec. 120.

[138]EF, File 5, p. 200, sec. 30; File 5, p. 214, sec. 54. See also Kook, *Orot*, p. 15 / EF, File 5, p. 15 and File 6, p. 53, sec. 151.

[139]Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, p. 15 / EF, File 5, pp. 215–216, sec. 57.

[140]EF, File 5, pp. 214–215, sec. 55.

[141]EF, File 5, pp. 280–281, sec. 177; Kook, *Orot ha-Emunah*, pp. 14–15 / EF, File 5, pp. 316–317, sec. 238.

[142]See above, n. 107.

[143]Kook, *Orot*, p. 15 / EF, File 6, p. 53, sec. 152.

[144]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 131 / EF, File 5, p. 249, sec. 124.

[145]Kook, *Orot*, p. 14 / EF, File 6, pp. 35–36, sec. 101. See also A. Holtzer, "The Concept of Force in the Teachings of Religious Zionism," dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2000) (in Hebrew).

heralding or preparing the way for the impending redemption of Israel, which he portrays brightly and boldly.[146]

Hardships in Exile; Inner Creativity

R. Kook's Diaspora writings manifest as well his distress at being outside the Land of Israel. That distress is connected to the concept of "the Torah of the Land of Israel,"[147] which R. Kook developed, on the basis of classical rabbinic sources, into what I have elsewhere termed "prophetic *halakhah*."[148]

Interestingly enough, most of R. Kook's observations about the uniqueness of the Land of Israel and its special qualities date from his Diaspora period, beginning in 1914. While living in Switzerland, he wrote at length about how the Land of Israel was suited to the national spirit.[149] He noted the Land's importance to anyone pursuing authentic thinking and reasoning, in contrast to the dross and impurities with which Diaspora thought is caught up.[150] He also clarified the distinctions between the locations. In the Diaspora, he argued, one can sense the Land of Israel's distinctive ideas, but one can grasp them only in the manner of one who sees light refracted around a wall that obstructs it.[151] The ideas of the Land of Israel are abstract and natural, serving as a firm foundation for the sacred. Outside the Land of Israel, there is a need for Torah, commandments, and actions, which set bounds to one's ideas.[152] The prevalent outlook in the Diaspora separates the components of experience from one another, entailing a materialist slant that is the basis for all manner of evil; but the Land of Israel is able to bring all the components together, thereby providing the basis for nullifying idolatry.[153] Still, he argues, encountering the world outside the Land of Israel has its benefits: it provides the opportunity to extract the sparks of light hidden in it; though only when

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[146]Kook, *Orot*, p. 16 / EF, File 5, pp. 119–120, sec. 64; *Orot*, p. 15 / EF, File 5, pp. 333–334, sec. 267; *Orot*, p. 15 / EF, File 6, pp. 57–58, sec. 165.

[147]See Sherlow, *The Torah of the Land of Israel*, pp. 5–9.

[148]Rosenak, *The Prophetic Halakhah*, pp. 122–137.

[149]Kook, *Orot*, p. 9 / EF, File 7, pp. 121–122, sec. 13.

[150]Kook, *Orot*, p. 10 / EF, File 6, p. 62, sec. 177.

[151]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 288 / EF, File 6, p. 82, sec. 211. See also EF, File 6, p. 82, sec. 211.

[152]EF, File 6, p. 105, sec. 281.

[153]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 2, pp. 423–424 / EF, File 7, pp. 154–155, sec. 62.

they are returned to the Land of Israel will their previously hidden full force be revealed.[154]

All this accounts for the unease felt by the exiled R. Kook and for his longing for the insights of the Land of Israel, from which he felt distanced.[155] Immediately on reaching Jaffa in 1904, he had experienced a strong sense of the encounter with "the light and the bliss to be found in the Land of Israel by scholars who seek God" and that "cannot at all be found outside the Land. And I, in my insignificance, can attest to that."[156] Outside the Land of Israel, in contrast, he found a place of darkness, ill-equipped "to actualize perfect forms." The people who grow up here, he writes in *Orot*, tremble "at the sound of a driven leaf," and it follows that there is no way for "holy sages in their exalted might" to develop outside the Land of Israel, "for prophecy has departed and the holy spirit has turned away." If there do exist individuals able to rise above their circumstances, they are like nothing more than "smoldering embers."[157] In his letters to his student and friend Rabbi Charlop, he similarly discussed his spiritual distress over being separated from the Land of Israel (thereby sounding a theme prominent throughout Jewish literature, in thinkers such as R. Judah ha-Levi and in texts such as the *Zohar*).[158] He grieves over God's decision "to distance me from the holy land, my spirit's delight," and he sees himself as "a prisoner of hope, thirsting for salvation" and as "a yearning soul in an exhausted and desolate land."[159]

Surprisingly, in view of these observations, R. Kook suffered neither from depression nor from a diminished creative impulse during his time outside the Land of Israel. Quite the contrary: his journals show his works advancing to a level of profundity beyond that reached during his period of public service. At various points in his diary, he expresses a sense of spiritual exaltation and even of some form of prophetic experience (of a sort he had felt at the end of his Jaffa period as well).

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[154]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 116 / EF, File 6, p. 87, sec. 226.

[155]Kook, *Ḥadarav*, pp. 158–159 / EF, File 6, p. 26, sec. 71.

[156]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 1, p. 113.

[157]Kook, *Orot*, p. 73.

[158]See: R. Judah ha-Levi, *Ha-Kuzari*, II:22; Zohar, part II, 26, side 1, and see: Moshe Idel, "On the Land of Israel in Medieval Jewish Mysticism," in M. Halamish & A. Ravitzky, eds., *The Land of Israel in Medieval Jewish Thought* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Publication, 1991), pp. 198, 207.

[159]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 2, p. 312.

To reconcile the seeming contradiction between his existential situation and his religious position, R. Kook distinguishes a Diaspora Jew who has never encountered the Land of Israel from one who has been in the Land and experienced its spiritual bounty; the latter continues to receive that bounty even after returning to exile.[160] (The idea had already been taught by R. Judah ha-Levi.[161]) In R. Kook's scheme of things, life outside the Land of Israel, if laden with anticipation of the Land, has the capacity to instill at least a reflection[162] of the Land's spirit (in the aspect of "understanding" [*binah*]) if not the actual spirit itself (in the aspect of "wisdom" [*ḥokhmah*]).[163] This anticipation manages to refine the gross material of the world outside the Land.[164]

It is in Switzerland that he writes how, before his very eyes, "there shines the sacred torch of the light of the world."[165] He describes the bounty streaming toward him, and he senses how his finite being is too limited to encompass the divine overflow alighting on him.[166] He experiences feelings of exaltation and inner calling overflowing their banks,[167] and the glow of the Land of Israel permeates his soul. Later, in London (where he arrived in 1916), he writes with prophetic pathos: "The value of speech is being revealed to me . . . the majesty of the holy light throbs . . . come to me, all who are weak; I will strengthen you with the spirit of God, with my very mouth I will energize you."[168] He describes the visions that burst forth from within himself.[169] A comparative reading easily shows that his prophetic accounts during the Swiss period are less inhibited than those written in Jaffa. The development is understandable: in Switzerland, he is on his own, removed from any official leadership capac-

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[160]Kook, *Orot*, p. 11 / EF, File 5, pp. 296–297, sec. 202.

[161]Judah ha-Levi, *Ha-Kuzari*, II:14.

[162]EF, File 6, p. 30, sec. 85. See also EF, File 8, p. 248, sec. 19; Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 187 / EF, File 6, pp. 60–61, sec. 173.

[163]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 133 / EF, File 7, p. 208, sec. 148.

[164]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 295 / EF, File 6, p. 34, sec. 96.

[165]EF, File 5, pp. 190–191, sec. 8.

[166]EF, File 5, pp. 231–232, sec. 84.

[167]EF, File 6, p. 37, sec. 106 (and see, above, n. 39).

[168]EF File 8, p. 286, sec. 136.

[169]EF, File 5, pp. 283–284, sec. 183. The passage is repeated in Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, pp. 202–203, but first person singular ("my eyes") is replaced with first person plural ("our eyes"). More broadly, the passage is transformed from an account of R. Kook's visions into a more general description.

ity, and he is no longer caught up in the fear that overcame him in Jaffa.[170] His spirit is free, and he does not recoil from varied spiritual experiences.[171]

With his isolation in Switzerland, his social alienation increases as well, and he feels distress at the loss of that atmosphere when he reaches London in 1916 and is thrust once again into the cauldron of community activity. He still senses prophetic voices,[172] and his suffering as an individualist accordingly mounts.[173] He writes to his son of his growing understanding that the obligations of society are not suited to "my inner inclination, my abstract spiritual calling."[174] Similar remarks appear in his journal from that period.[175] Now, more than ever, he is discomfited by social demands, and he writes that "I need to dig and to drink water from my well, a well of living waters, from the part of the Torah that is within my soul, from my special letter."[176] In the spirit of classic individualism, society becomes an impediment to him:[177]

> At times a person feels that his spirit had completely entered into his innermost self; he is highly focused then on his essential self, and the external world does not operate on him at all; he is tied up in the depth of inner solitude. If a visitor were to come [then], he would not know what was going on in [the recluse's] spirit and might well regard him negatively, noting how he is not sociable, how he keeps his distance from people, and how everything—the whole world and all of life—is strange to him.[178]

In his diary, he justifies himself by explaining that "my neglect of Torah study does not result from laziness but from inner longings for the divine

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[170]See above, p. 8 and n. 37.

[171]"With an innocent heart, a ready spirit, a humble soul . . . I must accept all the streaming bounty." He is called upon to experience "all styles, all subjects, all levels, all things . . ." (EF, File 6, p. 3, sec. 1).

[172]EF, File 8, p. 247, sec. 15.

[173]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 3, p. 30.

[174]Kook, *Iggerot*, p. 35.

[175]EF, File 8, p. 245, sec. 9; File 8, pp. 249–250, sec. 24. Two weeks later, he again writes to his son, telling him, with a degree of cynicism, about the recently concluded holidays see: *Iggerot*, pp. 3, 37. He begins his London-period diary by telling of the exhaustion that plagues his soul. See also EF, File 8, p. 243, sec. 2.

[176]EF, File 6, p. 3, sec. 1.

[177]See above, n. 55.

[178]Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 3, 269–270 / EF, File 7, pp. 114–115, sec. 3.

goodness of the Torah's secrets."[179] He wants freedom; he is no longer prepared to bear the chains of society. Why should I torment my soul, he asks himself, for "it wants freedom. If it feels itself to be free, why should I chain its legs like a prisoner's? Let it swim widely, imagine, be exalted as far as it desires, rise higher and higher."[180]

In Jaffa, R. Kook had claimed to feel a need to deal in a scattered fashion with various Torah-related subjects: Talmud, Jewish thought, Kabbalah, *halakhah*, and *aggadah*.[181] That was no longer the case; he now felt more and more that his soul was tied to the study of Kabbalah. Only there did he sense the abstract, separated from the existence of humanity and society.[182]

As part of this tendency, he sensed a risk in returning to communal-halakhic activity that might submerge the special quality of his soul. In his opinion, every manifestation of physicality is a sin, and even the study of *halakhah* can be a negative form of physicality: "My soul cannot envelop itself in any sort of physicality, even in the physicality of Torah and physicality for the sake of fear of Heaven."[183]

In any case, R. Kook's London period drew him into intensive community work, and he was pressed into front-line service on several weighty matters. He confronted the British rabbinate on whether the Jewish community should play power politics with the British government;[184] and, in the face of political and social pressures, he fought for the full religious rights of Jewish soldiers in the British army.[185] Most importantly, he founded the *Degel Yerushalayim* ("Flag of Jerusalem") movement, intended as an alternative Zionist organiza-

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[179]EF, File 6, pp. 5–6, sec. 6 (and see above, n. 57). See also Kook, *Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 173 / EF, File 8, p. 258, sec. 48.

[180]EF, File 8, p. 319, sec. 215. In effect, R. Kook is calling for a freedom grounded in his approach to repentance. True freedom can be attained only through a process of returning to one's innermost self.

[181]Kook, *Hadarav*, pp. 111–112 / EF, File 3, pp. 89–90, sec. 233.

[182]Nevertheless, one may not abandon outright all communal and social roles, and at the start of his stay in Switzerland, R. Kook still feels connected to all aspects of the spirit. See EF, File 6, p. 5, sec. 6; File 6, p. 269, sec. 83.

[183]EF, File 8, p. 317, sec. 208. Rabbi Kook's prophetic expressions during his Swiss period are numerous. He increasingly internalizes the idea that his soul cannot tolerate the things that society in general does tolerate, but religious and sociological restraints continue to hold him back. See EF, File 8, p. 264, sec. 69; File 6, p. 35, sec. 98.

[184]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 3, pp. 55–57.

[185]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 3, pp. 31–34; see also pp. 88–92.

tion that would embrace all the existing Zionist parties. Without doubt, these activities greatly detracted from the spiritual quiet that R. Kook had enjoyed during his Swiss period.

Yearning for Freedom: The Return to the Land of Israel

The more R. Kook becomes immersed in his community work, the less his writings give voice to the spirit that marked his Swiss period. One can, however, identify the point in the Files at which the Land of Israel again enters the picture; it is visible as early as the time he was preparing to return there. The editor of *Eight Files* identifies section 188 of volume 7 as the first passage written by R. Kook after returning to the Land of Israel, but winds of change can be seen earlier, in section 163. At that point, R. Kook suddenly begins to write about a subject that had preoccupied him in the late stages of his Jaffa period (Files 2–3): the figure of the *ẓaddiq*.

R. Kook's return to the Land of Israel is marked in his diaries by a stream of expressions (omitted from the printed versions) that call for liberation and freedom.[186] He now writes of a world uplifted;[187] of the awakening of new souls, redeeming, redeemed, and messianic.[188] He portrays the inner command not to retreat and not to be unnerved by enemies or by a possible sense of unworthiness for his tasks:

> I prepare the ground for the flowering of God, for the appearance of the light of salvation. I will turn aside from my path, even if many enemies rise against me, *but more than any enemies, I, myself, rise against myself*... but, my tide will not be stilled by fear of small shadows, for even if they lengthen, they remain shadows that will flee wherever the sun shines brightly.[189]

He deals with the importance of uncovering the inner truth within him, which is a light that must be revealed.[190] That revelation, in turn, is accompanied by a sense of liberation and freedom from bodily fetters,[191] and he admonishes

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[186]See EF, File 7, p. 229, sec. 189. But cf. A. Ravitzky, "'Set Up for Yourself Markers' for Zion: The Evolution of an Idea," in A. Ravitzky, *Al Da`at ha-Maqom* (Jerusalem: Keter 1991), pp. 34–73 (in Hebrew), showing that according to Naḥmanides, it is the Land of Israel that is characterized by the quality of harsh judgment, which is the *sefirah* of *binah*.

[187]"The social world and all its culture are blessed from the source of righteousness" (Ravitzky, "'Set Up for Yourself Markers'").

[188]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 192.

[189]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 192.

[190]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 195.

[191]EF, File 7, p. 230, sec. 196 (and see above, n. 29).

himself not to flinch in the face of "the fire of holiness that that burns at all times in the heart of one who stirs." When a person experiences that inner sensation, he should know that "his heavenly soul . . . is directing its illuminating rays to him," the marks of "*part the divine above, and part man from God.*"[192]

VI.

Our examination has brought us to the recognition that the materials sequestered for so many years are, in fact, profoundly important, shedding considerable new light on the image of Rabbi Kook. And the more we become aware of that reality, the more pressing several questions become: Was R. Kook aware of all this? Can the actions of the editors be explained and justified? Or do they warrant criticism?[193]

One cannot disregard the fact that the process of documenting a person's life—like that of making editorial decisions—can never be wholly objective; and any demand that documentation simply be the "*ding an sich*" appears unrealistic. Few if any scholars remain willing to earnestly defend the vision of early-twentieth-century historians regarding our supposed ability to document the past objectively.[194] But it is that very awareness that drives historians to uncover as much as possible, and to set aside all extraneous factors to the extent they can be identified.

This is a complicated subject requiring separate, extended examination, but it cannot be dropped without some comment. We saw earlier the various levels of censorship and editing to which R. Kook's writings were subjected,

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[192]EF, File 7, p. 231, sec. 197.

[193]On these issues, see Jacob J. Schacter, "Facing the Truths of History," *Torah u-Madda* Journal, Vol. 8 (1988–1989), pp. 200–273.

[194]See the editors' introduction to volume 1 of the journal *Ziyyon* (1936): 1–2 (in Hebrew), and contrast Nietzsche's comment, "There are no facts; there are only interpretations." So, too, Claude Lévi-Strauss: "History is therefore never history, but history-for. It is partial in the sense of being biased even when it claims not to be, for it inevitably remains partial—that is, incomplete—and this itself is a form of partiality. When one proposes to write the history of the French Revolution one knows (or ought to know) that it cannot, simultaneously and under the same heading, be that of the Jacobin and that of the aristocrat. . . . One must therefore choose between two alternatives. . . . The French Revolution as commonly conceived never took place" (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1966], pp. 257–258). See also Mordecai Rotenburg, *Re-Biographing and Deviance: Psychotherapeutic Narrativism and the Midrash* (New York: Praeger, 1987), pp. 60ff.

and we recognized the censored versions of his words (such as the famous transformation of his "literature, painting, and sculpture" into "literature, its depiction and sculpting"[195]). We have also seen the outright concealment of his writings, such as the hundreds of passages only now disclosed to us and the "New File" still held back by his disciples. Both forms of censorship are problematic, not only for scholars but even for disciples who see their master's teachings as binding guidance for life.[196]

In considering the foregoing questions, it is necessary to distinguish as well between R. Kook's writings published during his lifetime and those published posthumously. The former consist primarily of three works—*Arpelei Tohar*; *Orot ha-Qodesh*, and *Orot*—each of which underwent various forms of editing and censorship.

With respect to *Arpelei Tohar*, R. Kook wrote as follows to his son:

> I was overpowered by a desire to publish a few of my notes in order, in their present form, and I began to publish in *Ittin*, calling them *Arpelei Tohar* . . . I hope the comments as they are, without polishing or reworking, will also be for a blessing; and some of them may be found even more beneficial precisely because they haven't been reworked, as "warm bread freshly baked."[197]

Like *Eight Files*, then, this work enables us to peer into R. Kook's turbulent spirit and examine the way in which he wrote and organizes his ideas. That prospect unnerved both R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook, who sought by various means to prevent the book's publication,[198] and the publisher of *Arpelei Tohar*, who prefaced his (censored) edition with words of warning.[199] The first edition of *Arpelei Tohar* was quickly suppressed during R. Kook's lifetime and with his knowledge.[200]

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[195]Above, n. 74.

[196]See the Ḥazon Ish (Rabbi Abraham Isaiah Karelitz): ". . . the knowledge of the generation's sages, their hearts and their qualities, are essential principles of Torah" (Ḥazon Ish, *Letters [Qovez Iggerot]* [Benei Beraq: Mesorah 1955], pp. 121–122.)

[197]Kook, *Iggerot*, Vol. 2, p. 293, letter 687 (Jaffa, 1914).

[198]R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook advised his father to consider modifying the book's wording, clarifying his meaning at various points, and even deleting passages that warranted deletion. R. Kook replied that "I occasionally modify the wording to the extent I can, but I haven't tried to delete anything, and perhaps I haven't come across anything of that sort [warranting deletion]." And see: *Iggerot*, Vol. 2, p. 297, letter 693. R. Ẓevi Yehuda's intention is clarified in letter 694. See also Kook, *Arpelei Tohar*, p. 3, n. 6.

[199]See the introduction to *Arpelei Tohar* by R. Shilat: *Arpelei Tohar*, p. 3.

[200]For a full account of this incident and the role played by Prof. Rivka Shatz-Uffenheimer, see Haggai Siegel, *Nequdah*, Vol. 113, pp. 20–21.

Orot likewise was published during R. Kook's lifetime, in 1920, but edited by R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook. The textual and editorial changes are extensive, and the book lacks the spirit that characterizes *Eight Files*. But we cannot disregard the fact that R. Kook saw the published work, examined it,[201] and, as far as is known, said nothing critical about the nature of the editing.

Orot ha-Qodesh, too, was likewise published during R. Kook's lifetime. Its editor was the *Nazir*, whose editing practices, as noted, differed from those of R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook, and the books themselves are of different sorts.[202] But we have contradictory accounts by the *Nazir* regarding the nature of his involvement in shaping the book. In the foreword to *Orot ha-Qodesh*, he declares that the chapters of the book are printed with devotion to the source, with only light changes made under the author's supervision.[203] As Dov Schwartz has shown, however, his personal diary contains two significant statements inconsistent with this one—one pertaining to the *Nazir*'s intensive, personal involvement in the content and form of *Orot ha-Qodesh*,[204] and the other asserting that R. Kook declined to be involved in any way in arranging or editing *Orot ha-Qodesh* or in guiding its formulation.[205]

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[201]*Orot* placed R. Kook at the eye of the storm (as appears from more than a few texts in volume 4 of his collected letters), and it would be unreasonable to think that he did not go back and look over the book. See *Iggerot*, Vol. 4, index s.v. *orot*.

[202]In his introduction the *Nazir* describes the nature of the book (*Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, pp. 18–19).

[203]*Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 1. See also Vol. 1, pp. 22–23. Ish-Shalom argued that R. Ẓevi Yehuda Kook commented in a similar vein (to his students), though it appears there that R. Charlop was an interested party. See Ish-Shalom, *Rabbi Kook*, p. 285, n. 139. In his article "Do Not Break Through to the Holy" (in Hebrew), published in the wake of *Eight Files*, the *Nazir*'s son, R. She'ar Yashuv ha-Kohen, defends his father's editing practices, stressing the continuity and spiritual congruence between his father and R. Kook. (See *Ha-Zofeh*, Friday, 21 January 2000 [14 Shevat 5760], p. 10 [in Hebrew]). Dov Schwartz responded to R. She'ar Yashuv's attack in the same newspaper in an article titled "Who Is It Who Breaks Through?" (*Ha-Zofeh*, Friday, 4 February 2000 [28 Shevat 5760], p. 12).

[204]The *Nazir* puts it this way: "The words are the Master's, in many notebooks. . . . **I am, to be sure, a partner in this creation.** But this was done in so unassuming a way as to go unnoticed by the reader and analyst, for it is as if he has before him a complete work issued by the hand of its great creator, the Master, may his memory be for a blessing . . ." (This passage was published in the memorial volume *Nezir Ahiv*, Vol. 1, ed. R. She'ar Yashuv ha-Kohen [Jerusalem: The Institute for the Works of the *Nazir*, 1977], and in Dov Schwartz's study, *Religious Zionism Between Logic and Messianism* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1999–2000) (in Hebrew).

[205]The *Nazir* writes: "The Master [R. Kook] did not participate in the editing of his

Even if we assume that the *Nazir*'s comments in the foreword to *Orot ha-Qodesh* are the determinative ones, they would be surprising in light of what we found as a practical matter in the passages from *Orot ha-Qodesh* described above. His comments make it difficult to account for such drastic changes as the censorship of vol. 1, p. 157,[206] which is hardly just a matter of "grammatical and substantive precision," or for the modifications at p. 152.[207] In fact, these changes are more nearly consistent with the *Nazir*'s remarks in his diaries. But here, too, it seems fair to assume that R. Kook read the typed manuscript,[208] and I would imagine it was clear to him that his disciples were trying to protect him from the additional uproar that would be generated by publication of all his ideas—just like the controversy that raged after the publication of *Orot*.

While the works published during R. Kook's lifetime may have been censored for the purpose of protecting the author and with his knowledge, the posthumously published censored (as most were) writings present a rather different story; and over the years, an interesting dynamic has developed with regard to their editing.[209] At first, R. Kook's disciples sought to protect him from the rage of the Old Settlement rabbis and his other adversaries. Little by little, however, as his image grew more distant and became more established following his death, the editors began to try to protect us—the readership—from R. Kook's revolutionary ideas. They did so on the premise that "the generation is not yet ripe" for the revelation of his thought in all its grandeur. That appears to account for suppression until now of *Eight Files* and, perhaps, for the continued suppression of R. Kook's remaining unpublished writings. The ethical implications of these developments warrant a broad, comparative analysis beyond the scope of this article.

In this article, I have tried to show the origin of R. Kook's disciples' concern about publishing his writings. I have traced some implications of the release of the writings to scholars, and I have noted some novel insights that may be drawn from a new reading of the familiar texts in light of those recently made available. But the present study should be seen as a harbinger of the new and broad studies that ought to be undertaken around the figure of R. Kook.

Orot ha-Qodesh. When I turned to him on occasion for advice and guidance related to chapter titles and even to content, he declined to reply, saying he knows nothing of order. Only in a few places could I extract guidance from him, and it was, of course, followed" (*Nezir Aḥiv*, p. 302; Schwartz, *Religious Zionism*, p. 200.)

[206]Above, n. 36–38.

[207]Above, n. 93–94.

[208]*Orot ha-Qodesh*, Vol. 1, p. 22.

[209]I believe I first heard of this idea some years ago from Prof. Aviezer Ravitzky.