

The Modernization of Judaism According to the Teachings of Rabbi A.I. Kook

Abstract:

The article examines the main concepts involved in the modernization of Judaism per the teachings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, one of the great Jewish thinkers of the 20th century. Furthermore, it shows how these ideas have affected the dynamics of growth within Judaism over a long period of time all the way through to current events. Rabbi Kook's approach to religious modernization is striking because it sets out a concrete and comprehensive program for growth and development, something that does not exist in any other religion or strand of Judaism. This article will critically examine the program for modernization put forth by Rabbi Kook in an attempt to answer two questions. First, how consistent and compatible is Rabbi Kook's program with the tenets of religious orthodoxy? Second, to what extent has Rabbi Kook's program been successful in achieving its real-world goal in the hundred or so years since its intellectual inception?

1. The concept of "orthodox modernization"

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook is universally considered to be one of the most outstanding Jewish religious leaders of the 20th century. In 1904 he arrived in Palestine having been invited to the positions of Chief Rabbi of the Zionist movement (the position at that time was called "Rabbi of Yaffo and the new (Zionist) settlements"). Later, at the beginning of the British mandate in Palestine, he was appointed to the position of the Chief Rabbi of Israel in which he remained until his death in 1935. That means for a period of thirty years he was the religious leader of the Zionist movement and the Yishuv ha-Hadash (community of the new Jewish immigrants at the beginning of the Zionist movement). In that capacity, he was able to affect profound changes within Judaism, without straying to any degree from its orthodox standards¹.

It is widely accepted that religious modernization takes on one of two approaches. The first approach is when the religion is modernized in the sense of moving closer to the needs of not so religious contemporary people and certain rulings or traditions of the past are pronounced to be not very significant and not binding (for example, taken by Reform Judaism). However, such a process loses the strength of its religious vitality because when traditions are deemed expendable the degree of attachment to religion declines. Thus, its significance declines for the members of the religion.

The second approach to modernization is fundamentalism, in which "man-made strata" accumulated over time is put aside and the religion attempts to return to its "God given original principles." This is the path that was taken by Protestantism which cast aside the teachings of the Catholic Church and declared a return to the biblical text. As widely known in religious studies, fundamentalism is by itself a form of modernization because it declares a reversion to the origins of the religion. All historical and cultural legacy cannot be separated from the viewpoint based on ones cultural and spiritual development while viewing the original basic texts of the religion with new eyes after a millennium and a half. Thus, instead of simply reverting to the original religion of a millennium and a half ago one acquires a modernized religion². The fundamentalist approach usually yields very strong results since a declaration of "a return to the God-given foundations of the religion" inspires a sense of religious fervour. Yet, such an approach is not acceptable for orthodox religion, in particular not for orthodox Judaism. Within Judaism, the Karaites wanted to proceed in such a direction by casting aside the Talmud and reverting to a direct reading of the biblical text. However, as history has shown, the Karaites were not

¹ For details about the approach of Rabbi Kook see: Ben-Shlomo, Yosef. *"Poetry of Being: Lectures on the philosophy of Rabbi Kook."*

² Ish-Shalom, Benjamin. *"Rav Avraham Itzhak HaCohen Kook: Between Rationalism and Mysticism."*

able to establish a functioning religion. Despite there being periods when the Karaite movement engulfed significant portions of the Jewish population, in the end, the movement lost its momentum and the basic Jewish focus in Judaism remained rabbinic Judaism.

Therefore, for an orthodox person there cannot be modernization, neither through the weakening of the importance of religious texts and institutions, nor through a “reversion to the original.” Orthodoxy supposes the permanent significance of not only the basic original texts of religion but also its all subsequent developments. Thus, “modernization with preservation of orthodoxy” requires an entirely different approach and Rabbi Kook developed one.

2. The social-national modernization promoted by Zionism, requires an adequate religious modernization

The Zionist movement brought about a huge revolution for Jewish people. Over the course of many centuries, Jewish people longed for the reestablishment of a Jewish state in the Land of Israel. At the same time, it was assumed that a return to their own land would only be possible upon the coming of the Messiah, only through an act of God who would return the Jewish people to their historical homeland. Zionism, however, declared that Jewish people could drive the return themselves without waiting for anyone to re-establish them there. This complete transformation in mindset came into conflict with the traditional religious tendencies. Since according to classical Judaism, Jewish people were expected to stay in the Diaspora and wait for the arrival of the Messiah who would return them to their homeland, it was expected that a vast majority of those who joined the original Zionist movement rejected religion. Zionism, on the other hand, declared that they should take fate into their own hands and return to the homeland themselves³.

Although Zionism always had some religious groups among its members, this strong tension between Zionism and traditional orthodoxy led to the fact that a large portion of the Zionists stopped being religious. It is worth noting though, that while Rabbi Kalisher⁴ and Rabbi Alkalai, heralds of Zionism, were religious, the whole Zionist religious group called Mizrahi, under the leadership of Rabbi Reine, was part of the Zionist movement from the beginning as well.

As a whole, however, Zionism was not a religious movement prior to Rabbi Kook, who was not just a supporter of Zionism but considered Zionism to be religiously vital. Rabbi Kook was not just a religious Jew who supported Zionism but he considered Zionism to be a religious activity. One of the big challenges from his perspective was the modernization of Judaism to make it current with new times.

3. The principal significance of the Concepts “Continuous Revelation” and “National Dialogue with God”

The concept that Rabbi Kook put forward for the process of harmonization and modernization was based on the idea of “Continuous (Natural) Revelation” - a classical concept within Judaism, which previously was not emphasized strongly and remained on the periphery of Judaism⁵. Rabbi Kook transposed this idea to the forefront and built his entire new approach around it. This demonstrates one of the properties of orthodox modernization: taking a concept, which was already accepted in the religion but was peripheral, transposing it to the center, and building a new approach on top of it.

Opponents of the concept may disagree, but they cannot claim that the concept is not a natural feature of the given religion. Such transposition of a concept from the periphery of the religious consciousness to its forefront preserves the orthodoxy and ensures complete religious continuity. R. Kook’s idea of Continuous Natural Revelation fits this concept.

³ The tension between religious and secular ideologies during this period are thoroughly described in: Luz, Ehud. *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement.*

⁴ Kalischer, Zvi Hirsch. *Drishat Zion*, (Lyck, 1862). Online version: <http://hebrewbooks.org/38529>

⁵ <http://www.machanaim.org/philosof/feminism/t-ros.htm#p5>

As we know, within the domain of the Revelation, there are three distinct approaches to the past and the present revelations. The first approach states that revelation existed in the ancient world but now has ceased to exist. Such an approach is supported by many mainstream movements within all of the major religions. In Christianity, this position is expressed through the view that Jesus has already revealed all of God's teachings, and all we need to do now is to follow his revelations. In Judaism, it is taking what was pronounced at Sinai as the basis of Judaism and elaborated upon. The second approach is "Continuous Miraculous Revelation" which means that new prophets arise and provide further revelations. The question arises about introducing new texts, because, if the revealed prophecy persists, then new Holy texts are introduced. Although through this process new religions are formed, Christianity from Judaism or Mormonism from Christianity. However, for the orthodox religion it is understandably intolerable.

Commonly used term "religion of Continuous Revelation" ("Progressive Revelation" or "Continuous Revelation") follows that very same approach. It means that religious leaders receive new supernatural revelations that are being added to the previously accepted Holy texts. This was a situation with the Bahai religion and with the Mormons.

Separate from above (and on a par with "Miraculous Revelation") exists the concept of general revelation or natural revelation which is usually interpreted to be God's Revelation through the existence within man of a "moral law of conscience" or natural occurrences. Francis Bacon introduced it to European philosophy by stating that "God gave humanity two revelations of truth, each of which is fully authoritative in its own realm". As such, it became a question of the relationship between religion and science which is captured in the famous statement by Kant about "the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me." Notably, general revelation or natural revelation given through nature is not continuous and is established in its entirety at the beginning of creation, and we, humans, are just continually progressing in our understanding of it.

In contrast to the other two, the third approach, suggested by Rabbi Kook, was "Continuous Natural Revelation" given to us in History's ongoing development of the society and the culture and not in Nature. As with every "Natural Revelation" there is no specific prophet and therefore no new Holy texts or prophetic teachings being revealed. However, this is not the classical "Natural Revelation through Nature or morality" because it specifically involves the development of culture or society where development understood to be the active Word from God. God has not stopped speaking to people. Rather, He does not simply speak to each individual, because speaking to each separately might affect the realization by each of the previously revealed prophecies, but speaks to the entire religious community as a whole. In Judaism, for example, He speaks to all the Jewish people or with humanity as a whole.

While this approach provides basic positive attitude toward all developments in the areas of social-ethnic norms, arts and science, it does not stop severe criticism of various manifestations. Moreover, it poses fundamental challenge for religion to find Divine sparks and integrate them into religion, which is impossible without positive attitude toward science as a starting point. "Theology after Auschwitz" talks about Church's need to review its relationship with Jewish people due to the Holocaust and subsequent return to their Biblical homeland and establishment of the State of Israel. In some aspects, it is positioned similarly within contemporarily Christianity, particularly Catholicism.

If such a dialogue exists and we treat it seriously, in nationwide (or all of humanity's) dialogue with God, the Almighty must be speaking of some new things. Otherwise, if the Almighty is only reiterating old things and indicating their significance, then our dialogue is not with God personally, but with the book, the text, that has already been given. The tendency in religion that emphasizes a nationwide dialogue with God, as oppose to a one-on-one dialogue, must lead to Continuous Natural Revelation where the progress of history itself is understood as God's Revelation. In this case, the development of society, science, ethical principles, human relationships and all aspects of culture has Godly foundation. For religious people, this means trying to understand the message that is being conveyed to them in everyday life and correctly integrating the message into the framework of the religion.

Although such an approach existed in Midrashic and Talmudic texts, as well as medieval literature⁶, it was peripheral in Judaism. Rabbi Kook transferred the approach to the center of Judaism.

⁶ <http://www.machanaim.org/philosof/feminism/t-ros.htm#p5>

It must be pointed out that the specific idea of the central role of a national dialogue with God and Continuous Divine Revelation was not unprecedented in Judaism. In fact, when we examine biblical Judaism, we find that one of its key aspects is precisely the dialogue between God and the nation as a whole and not just individual people. Later on, following the destruction of the Second Temple and especially during the period of scattering, expulsion and the Diaspora when the Hebrew nation stopped functioning as a unique national entity and people acted only as individuals or localized communities, the existence of a sense of national dialogue with God declined and only the individual dialogue with God was exclusively accentuated.⁷

It is worth noting that in Christianity, which broke off from Judaism precisely at the end of the Second Temple period, all the emphasis is placed on the individual dialogue and national dialogue plays no part at all. In Christianity, the "nation" is not a religious entity. This way, the approach of Christianity fundamentally differs from the approach of the Hebrew Bible. In Hebrew Bible the dialogue takes place on two levels, the level of the individual dialogue with God and the level of the national dialogue with God, while in Christianity there is only the level of the individual dialogue with God.

Essentially what Rabbi Kook did was to take the important (and one of the central) elements of biblical Judaism which were cast aside for two thousand years and bring them back to the center of contemporary Judaism. This could have been taken to be a sort of "fundamentalist movement", in terms of "return to basics", but in NO way it could be fundamentalism because there is no elimination of what was "produced during the intermediary period." From the point of view of Rabbi Kook, such a "revival of elements of Biblical religion" is only natural in light of the return of the Hebrew people to their homeland. Rabbi Kook distinguishes between the "Judaism of the Nation of Israel" and the "Judaism of the expulsion-Diaspora." In Judaism of the Nation of Israel both types of dialogue, individual dialogue with God and national dialogue with God, are promoted and spiritually important. During the period of the Diaspora only the individual dialogue with God dominated and the national dialogue is barely sensed and is expressed only in culture.

Notably, national dialogue with God is not only associated the establishment of a national government, in as much as government is akin to the body of a nation, and not just with a sufficiently large number of Jewish people living in Israel. In fact, a nation, just like an individual, carries on a dialogue with God not only through its words but - first and foremost! - through its actions. Thus, in order to carry out complete dialogue with God, a nation needs a body, its national government⁸.

In the absence of a national government God dialogue with the whole nation also occurs. However, since the nation is in a dispersed state can only make decisions in the realm of its own culture, the dialogue is expressed in the development of culture, specifically in the cultural-religious principles which the nation adopts for itself. As a result, the level of the dialogue is substantially lower than in the presence of a national government. In this sense, from the perspective of Rabbi Kook, the creation of a Hebrew national government is the opportunity for a national dialogue with God. This nationwide dialogue that explicitly characterizes biblical Judaism is being brought back and regenerated in contemporary Israel.

Thus, from the point of view of Rabbi Kook, the national government of the state of Israel carries religious significance regardless of whether it is religious or secular. The very fact of the existence of such a government revives a comprehensive national dialogue with God that has a huge and complete fundamental religious significance transforming the relationship between the Jewish nation and God, and by extension, of God with humanity. Such cardinal change in the religious situation in the world should be seen as the word of the Almighty presented to man. As such, we need to accept this word and consequently modernize the religion.

⁷ For details about the course of history in the dynamics of the various aspects of the dialogue with God see, the basic works of Rabbi Kook "Le-mahalakh ideot be-Israel' and "On the Dynamics of Ideas in Israel" which were published in a newspaper in 1912 and later reissued in the Orot collection.

⁸ The concept of the course of history as a dynamic of various dialogues with God is profoundly explored in the foundational work of Rabbi Kook: *Limahalach Ha'idiot Beyisrael* (On the Progression of Ideas in Israel) Which is now part of the collection of Rabbi Kook's writings: *Orot*

Therefore, the modernization of religion is not simply a desire to make religious life easier or a desire to adapt to the current situation when things which might have little spiritual value on a religious scale of priorities. The modernization is a desire to give an appropriate response to Divine activities of restoring the Jewish people to the land of Israel. While from the perspective of non-religious Zionism this restoration was the result of purely human effort, Rabbi Kook saw it as a Divine act having for us only the appearance of a completely human activities. Such a Divine activity as the restoration of the Jewish people to their homeland cannot but trigger a very serious rethinking of religious fundamentals. When two thousand years ago, Jews were expelled from their homeland, the Second Temple Judaism transformed into Talmudic Judaism or Judaism of the Expulsion. Now, similarly, the return to the homeland must trigger a similar change on Judaism in the sense of a return to its sources.

4. Religious anti-fundamentalism, and the essential need for modernization.

It may appear that the approach can be called fundamentalism, although as it was explained earlier in the article, it is not the case; it does not negate previous developments but rather bringing back the elements that were forgotten during the Diaspora period.

Furthermore, Rabbi Kook put forward the principle which could be called "religious anti-fundamentalism." As previously noted, fundamentalism is based on the notion that religious tradition (the corpus of religious texts) is divided into two parts. First one is a Divine part, which usually takes the form of the Holy texts of the given religion having a prophetic character that are to some degree dictated by the Almighty or through His spirit. The second one is the human part which represents the teachings of subsequent generations of adherents of the given religion. The human part is seen as having a potential for containing errors and thus obscures and distorts the results from the Divine part. As a result, fundamentalism proposes setting aside of the human part and reverting to the original Divine part. Usually, fundamentalism has a very powerful energy component of "religious zeal" and therefore, often becomes stronger than the original orthodox religion, which does not agree to set aside the religious achievements of past centuries.

Classical orthodox religion generally also acknowledges that the human achievements do not have a direct Divine source like the original basic text and are only the deepened learnings of the Divine text.

The position of Rabbi Kook on this is completely different. It is not simply a rejection of fundamentalism but, as we have established above, is religious anti-fundamentalism. Specifically, all the historical development of religion is interpreted as a dialogue between God and the people. That means that all of developments of religion that took place after the Holy Scriptures also has a Divine source. Even though, as we have stated, during the Expulsion the national dialogue with God was only in the realm of culture.

Since the central hypothesis of the teachings of Rabbi Kook is that God continues to speak to people, then all previous and future developments of religion must be attributed to this dialogue of God with man. The established position is that nothing achieved is to be rejected while simultaneously acknowledging the necessity of continuous development. This way, modernism is the necessary consequence of the need to adopt the new word of God which comes to us today and not concession to problems or a desire to be easier for contemporary people.

Therefore, through such an approach toward orthodox religion, modernism embeds itself into the very core of the religion and does not establish itself as a negative term as it frequently is taken to be in orthodox religion. It implies that without modernization, real religion is not possible since if the dialogue with God continues then new things that are being communicated by God must be accepted and incorporated, meaning being modernized.

All of what was "revealed by God previously" cannot be discarded since it also has Divine character. Such an emphasis on the Divine significance of all previous results defines the orthodox approach. The very concept of "Continuous Natural Revelation" leads directly to the concept of "orthodox modernization."

The term "modern orthodox" usually refers to "contemporary orthodox" which means an orthodox person leading a contemporary way of life in a physical and cultural sense whose religion is classical and

orthodox but not "modernized" at all⁹. On the contrary, the term "orthodox modernization" means that the religion itself is modernized while retaining its orthodoxy.

The move of the concept of "Continuous Revelation" to the centre of religious thought, which results from the concept of "national dialogue with God", leads to the concept of "orthodox modernization". In "orthodox modernization," religious legacy is completely preserved on one hand and, on another hand, modernization is a religiously necessary activity in so far as revelation continues.

This can be described as the "house" of a religion constantly having new floors added which means that the building changes while the lower floors do not collapse. However, the overall look and functionality of the building changes and this change affects lower (original) as well as higher (newly added) floors. This was the building continues to naturally grow.

Perhaps, it also might be compared to a tree which continues to grow while remains being self.

5. The process of modernization through the retrieval of sparks [of wisdom]

Rabbi Kook worked out a special system of integration of Divine sparks from the surrounding ideological and cultural processes into Judaism so an orthodox modernization would not remain just a slogan and commonplace theory but become an actual tool for the development of Judaism.

This process of the integration of [wisdom] sparks should be structured in such a way that from one hand the modernization will be happening and [wisdom] sparks from this ideology and process will be integrated into Judaism, while, from another hand, the orthodoxy with its continuity from the past will be preserved. To achieve that, Rabbi Kook worked out a special system which is based on a Kabbalah and described in details in "Religious Zionism of Rav Kook"¹⁰. According this system, when an external ideology becomes active in cultural and social life surrounding Judaism, it triggers a corresponding "spark" based on the foundation of Judaism. Subsequently, when a great number of Jewish people adhere to a certain ideology or concept that may even conflict with Judaism it signifies that the [wisdom] spark has matured and ready for extraction. At that time, it is necessary to return to foundations of Judaism and uncover the appearance of the [wisdom] spark in the authentic Hebrew text that always existed but was not emphasized, and integrate that spark with contemporary Judaism. Uncover it and then transfer from the periphery to the centre of life and even include it in the centre of life. More examples of how this happens are outline in "Religious Zionism of Rav Kook"¹¹.

From the outside, the process looks like an integration of wisdom spark from the surrounding spiritual environment into Judaism while in essence it is realization of wisdoms that were not previously adequately realized.

6. The "Kabbalistic Sociology" of Rabbi Kook as a step in the development of the program

It can be said that Rabbi Kook created a Kabbalistic sociology, an important step in the development of the program.

It is known that during the Spanish - Provencal period of the 13 - 15 centuries Kabbalah was mostly a static program describing the Heavenly world which corresponded to the paradigm of the middle ages where constancy and stability were ideals. On the other hand, the Lurianic Kabbalah of the mid-16th century was dynamic and encompassed the processes of Heavenly world formation and development and not only the establishment of Heavenly world. This approach corresponded to the dynamic view of the world characteristics from the beginnings of the Renaissance. Later, in the 18th century, Besht and Hasidism developed the psychological scheme of the Kabbalah where Kabbalistic designations used to explain the soul of man and not only Heavenly realms. This corresponded to the growing interest in the

⁹ Such were the modernizing approaches of Rabbi S.R. Hirsch, and Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik who founded American modern orthodoxy.

¹⁰ "Religious Zionism of Rav Kook"», http://orot-yerushalaim.org/rav_kook.html

¹¹ "Religious Zionism of Rav Kook"», http://orot-yerushalaim.org/rav_kook.html

soul of man during this era in culture overall. As a final step in the development of Kabbalah, Rabbi Kook worked out sociological aspect on the base of Kabbalistic designations, the explanation of the sociological processes and the dynamics of separate social groups within the Jewish community¹².

It is well known that the concept "Kabbalah" denotes not only "acquiring" but also "recognizing someone". The essence of recognizing someone as "real (distinguished) Kabbalist" consists in the fact that he stated something intrinsically new in the Kabbalah and not only in the fact that he incorporates knowledge and wisdom. This "something new" must also be further recognized by other experts in the Kabbalah as its authentic development. This is exactly what Rabbi Kook accomplished by explaining social process of development of Jewish people with Kabbalistic designations.

7. Program for the Development of Judaism

Rabbi Kook worked out a program for the development of Judaism basing it on his Kabbalistic sociology. The program and its current realization status will be discussed later in the article.

First, it is important to note that "a program for the development of a religion" is not normally found anywhere in the history of religion. Usually when reformers and modernizers of religion, all types of modernization, establish their new approach, they carry out their reform immediately and completely announcing all the proposed changes. This way, the reform itself had been completed and they wait only for its acceptance by contemporaries and future generations. Their followers usually supplement and elaborate the ideas of the reformer(s). However, from the start the reformers thoroughly describe their proposed changes and do not contemplate any further changes, much less suggest them.

In contrast to this approach, Rabbi Kook created a program that only provides the outlines and the tools of development. This program designed for a significant number of future generations and not just for upcoming few decades. Thus, he starts the process but does not provide its final result.

The program is based on the idea of integration of the value systems comprised of three ideological groups in the Jewish nation.¹³

Here is the text of the passage (in a summarized loose translation):

"Today, we can observe three large distinct groups among the Jewish people. The first group is the orthodox religious group defending the teachings of the Torah and the observance of the Commandments. The second group is the nationalist - Zionist movement which craves the renewal of national existence in the Land of Israel and the formation of a state. The third group is liberal, raising the banner of "European enlightenment" and is not satisfied with only a narrowly nationalistic scope but requires universal humanitarian ideals to inform culture, morals and so on. [Here it would be wrong to think, as some believe, that the future of Judaism as a religion is associated only with the first group, it is quite for the contrary.] Of course, in the normal course of things it is an essential that all three forces be together. We must always strive that they all guide us with their full force achieving harmony without a lack or excess, when the three forces - Holy, national and human - blend together in disinterested and true love and the groups and organizations come together, when each of them finds the ability to achieve things effectively together, rather than separately, with suitable amicability generously recognizing the positive role of its collaborator."

¹² See, for example, the well-known excerpt from Arfilei Tohar § 21, or for its English translation with commentaries see Pinchas Polonsky, "Selected Paragraphs from Arifilei Tohar with Commentaries," http://orot-yerushalaim.org/rav_kook.html.

¹³ It is contained at the beginning of the third of the "Eight Tetrads" (Shmona Kvatsim 3:1) which was written around 1910 and was published in 1920 in the book "Orot" (pg. 70). We note that exactly this collection has been one of the most important learning resources on the philosophy of Rabbi Kook and his Yeshiva and with it as a foundation for learning by all the supporters of its approach in religious Zionism.

In other words, Rabbi Kook suggests the true future of Judaism will be an integration of the ideals of the orthodox, the nationalists and the universalists and not a continuation and legacy of its contemporary orthodoxy. True stunning radicalism of this approach can be fully appreciated when it is translated into contemporary ideological-political language. It would be equivalent to a declaration that future Judaism will be an integration of the important ideals of Israeli political movements of Agudath Israel (strictly orthodox), Likud (general Zionist) and Meretz (left-liberal). Using earlier terminology of the "extraction of sparks for the development of religion" concept, the above can be interpreted that the ideologies of the "nationalist" and "universalists" groups should each have its own "group of sparks" that Judaism should adopt.

Such a concept is totally revolutionary even today. It was even more so at the beginning of the 20th century, when it was formulated when no one could even imagine this concept. In fact, Rabbi Kook's concept of "three groups in the Jewish people and the indispensable synthesis of ideals" on which these groups are based represents the overall "program for the development of Judaism."

8. Contemporary Realization Status of Rabbi Kook's "Program for the Development of Judaism"

Four generations and one hundred years have passed since the proclamation of the program. Throughout this time the group of religious Zionists, a.k.a. the "knitted kippas," that integrated classical orthodox values with nationalism, firmly established its place in the religious world. According to various estimates, today it accounts for about 15% of the Jewish society in Israel (Gutman Centre, Democratic Institute, PEW) and is one of the largest (if not the largest) movement in orthodox Judaism.

Moreover, the "knitted kippas" arose to the leading position of taking possession and developing the Land of Israel. Although the religious kibbutzim of this movement were not a major factor in the settlement movement at the beginning of the 20th century, they were fully active at the beginning of the Zionist movement and from 1974 to 1990 the students of the Yeshiva Merkaz ha-Rav and the Yeshiva of Rabbi Kook comprised the core of the settlement movement Gush Emunim. In addition, today, about 30% of the officers of the Israeli army and security forces originate from this group. This includes the former head of Shabak, Yoram Kohen, and the present head of the police, Ron Alsheikh. While 30% may not be statistically large number it is still very significant. The settlement of the Country and establishing of the security are classically national and not orthodox values. Recall that the Haredim, the "classical orthodox" in Israel, hardly serve in the army and security services at all and play a very small part in taking possession of the land.

At the same time, during the preceding century the integration of orthodox and universalistic values did not take place. In contemporary Israel this resulted in the strong polarization between orthodox and nationalist values on one hand and universalistic values on the other. This leads to the conclusion that Rabbi Kook's point of view, the integration of universalistic values into Judaism will be a subsequent stage in the development of Judaism. It is important to acknowledge that by putting the question of foreseeing the further progress of the development of Judaism over the next few decades we can only make a suggestion.

The integration of the values means that religious groups move to the forefront of the most active proponents of these values and not just adopt nationalist and universalistic values which previously were foreign to them. As we have noted, in present day Israel, it is precisely the religious Zionists who have taken the foremost positions in the settlement movement or in military service; areas that a hundred years ago appeared absolutely secular and were mostly opposed to religion rather than integrated with it.

This indicates that further integration of universalistic values will lead to a flow of religious Zionists into the foremost positions in the advancement of science, culture, democracy and similar fields which today are not at all associated with religion.

9. The splintering of religious Zionism into two groups: "Hardal" and Modernists.

It is expected that the process of integration of values creates a rift of a society. When a society that is united through certain ideological constructs begins to recognize new values from the outside, some parts of the society will accept these values at various degrees, while others may reject them; this

society starts to divide. At first, this division can be purely philosophical while later evolving into ideological distinctions, and finally becoming a sociological split into different social groups.

This is exactly the process that has been taken place in Israel's orthodox community over the past hundred years as a result of the absorption of nationalist values. Orthodox Judaism split into two distinct groups. One group is religious Zionists, the so-called "*knitted kippah*" group that included those who accepted nationalistic values in addition to the original orthodox ones. The other group is Haredim who united all those who remained with only the orthodox values and did not take up the nationalist ones.

As a result, the orthodox Jewish world in today's Israel is divided between two entirely different societies with very different ideological principles, social patterns, education systems, political parties, population centers, and even dress codes. All this change took place during first phase of the implementation of Rabbi Kook's program of Judaism development. Now we are at the verge of the second phase of the program that includes the integration of universalistic values into religious Zionism. As such, we can expect that religious Zionism will also split into two directions. While this effect cannot yet be observed sociologically, it is already becoming noticeable in Israeli religious culture at the ideological level.

Specifically, the part of the religious community that absorbed nationalist values but now rejects the idea of further integration of universalistic values is what has recently been dubbed "Hardal" (an acronym in Hebrew for "Haredi-national-religious"). "Hardal" is referred to those religious Zionists who in some ways are similar to the Haredim, the non-Zionist ultra-orthodox group. Such a naming indicates that they do not want any further progress and modernization. Their opposing subgroup has not yet been defined by a name, but its formation is already very obvious. It includes such prominent rabbinical organizations in Israel as Tzohar, led by Rabbi David Stav. Rabbi David Stav together with Rabbi Nachum Rabinovitch, are ones of the most prominent rabbinical authorities of religious Zionism, recently proclaimed the establishment of an organization for activities on the issue of conversion to Judaism (giyur) differing significantly from the position of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.

Today, we are just beginning the process of integrating universalistic morals into mainstream religious Zionism so disputes that are arising are mostly on a philosophical level; meaningful social changes are not yet tangible. However, recently, Rabbi Benjamin Lau, one of the ideologists of further modernization, published an article in which he suggested that in the next generation the ideological rift within the religious Zionist movement is going to lead to a sociological split. Thus, over a generation or two, the religious-ideological map in Israel will change. Instead of two groups that exist today, Haredim and religious Zionists, there may be three: Haredim, who have not integrated values and just maintained the original religious orthodox ones; Hardal, who have integrated orthodox and nationalist values; and "modernist religious Zionists", who have integrated orthodox, nationalist and universalistic values.

It is important to note that the conflict between the two groups within religious Zionism is now becoming more apparent even in the public domain. For example, the most recent elections of the Chief Rabbi of Israel can be observed through the lens of this conflict. There were three candidates for the post of Chief Rabbi in this election. The principal rivals were Rabbi David Lau, who represented the Haredi camp, and Rabbi David Stav, who represented the modernist group among religious Zionists. However, there was also a third candidate Rabbi Yaakov Shapira, who represented the Hardal group. Rabbi David Lau received 46% of the votes from the voters, Rabbi David Stav received 37%, and Rabbi Yaakov Shapira received 20%.¹⁴ It is worth noting that the voting is done by a special electoral committee, which does not truly reflect the views of the population but rather a combined view of the rabbinical establishment on the one hand and the political representatives on the other.

Religious Zionism would have received combined 55% of the vote and would have won the Head Rabbi post had the representatives of religious Zionism, Rabbi Stav and Rabbi Shapira, acted together and had only one candidate representing religious Zionism. However, since the votes within the religious Zionist group got split, Rabbi Lau received majority among three candidates and was elected for the post

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<http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Rabbi-David-Lau-voted-Ashkenazi-chief-rabbi-Rabbi-Yitzhak-Yosef-voted-Sephardi-chief-rabbi-320928>

of Chief Rabbi. (Voting only goes through one round and the winner is the one who obtained the relative majority of the votes). As a result, the post of Chief Rabbi went to the representative of the Haredim although they no longer comprise the majority even in the electoral committee. Since the electoral committee is not large and the views of its various members are public knowledge, the result was predictable and the delegates of the Hardal movement and Rabbi Shapira knew that if they did not withdraw Rabbi Shapira's nomination to the post of Chief Rabbi, it would go to the representative of Haredim rather than to a representative of religious Zionism. Nonetheless, knowing that they could not win, they did not withdraw Rabbi Shapira's candidacy. This is just another example of the relatively common situation in the world of the fierce "internal rivalry" when the minority group within a movement would rather have the whole group lose just so the competing representative of the other group in the movement does not win the general election.

Thus, it is expected that the differences between the two groups within religious Zionism will continue to grow apart as the integration of universalistic values progresses within Judaism and it will become the main trend of development within Judaism in the coming decades in Israel.

SUMMARY

The Influence of Modernization on the Formation of the Start-up Nation in Israel

In the modernization of orthodox Judaism is directly related to the level of involvement of orthodox religious communities in the development of contemporary science and technology.

Rabbi Kook's concept broadens the meaning of the holy into the secular aspects of the life, This way science, technology, and development of social and economic models, the efforts of developing all aspects of secular life, acquire the status of religious-value activities. "Holiness extends to the everyday life." As a result, an orthodox religious person, who adheres to modernist ideas in Judaism and is involved in the development of science and technology, having his religious outlook supporting him and creating the basis for these being "spiritually motivated involvements." Therefore, many more modernized-orthodox people are active in the areas of science and technology compared to those following classical religious viewpoints.

It must be noted that even in previous centuries there was always an attitude in Judaism favoring the idea that "wealth is a positive goal". Therefore, there has always been great number of Jews, even with classical Judaism views, occupied in business. Since the saving of lives has deemed work pleasing to God, classical Judaism always related positively to the work of medical science as religiously valuable and not only pragmatically important. Nevertheless except for business and medicine, classical Judaism did not have a positive attitude toward the study of secular science or the development of technology. The modernized-orthodox approach of Rabbi Kook establishes such an attitude.

This effect of such an attitude on Judaism can be compared to the classical influence of Protestantism's "religious value of successful honest enrichment" on the emergence and development of capitalism described by Max Weber.

Similarly, when modernized-orthodox Judaism establishes a positive religious attitude toward science and technology, more religious people involve themselves in the process. Particularly, it is the case for people with good religious education, especially Talmud since it includes the habit of serious analysis of texts. When those people are guided by science and technology as a supplement to a religious orientation toward success, it brings about a significant contribution to the development of a "nation of start-ups" as can be seen today in Israel.

The well-known highest pinnacles of science have been attained only by certain representatives of the modernized-orthodox approach. So far there was only one such laureate of the Nobel Prize in Science, professor Israel Robert Aumann. However, among the laureates of the Israel Prize there is no shortage of modernized-orthodox scholars. In addition, among professors of natural and technological sciences such scholars are encountered very frequently in all the universities of Israel. Also, one of

Israel's top universities is Bar-Ilan University which as a whole is fully adherent to the modernized-orthodox approach of Rabbi Kook and engaged in a large number of advanced scientific studies.

Unfortunately, statistical data regarding the religious attitudes of the professors and students of Israeli universities is not readily available but any person coming to any university in Israel can personally notice the extent to which adherents to the modernized-orthodox approach are conspicuous on account of their dress code ("the knitted kippa").

The general operating principle is that the function of religion in science is to identify a system of values which establishes the direction for the development of society and not to come out in favour of one side or another for any scientific theory, which was the main reason for collisions between science and religion in previous centuries. If religion establishes the attitude that "activities in science and technology are religiously valuable", far more religious people enter science fields than would be otherwise if religion would come with the attitude that "science and technology are not useful to anyone and what counts is only the study of religious texts and the observance of religious instructions." The later attitude is what was commonly accepted in classical Judaism.

Generally, it is vital to realize that one of the most significant functions of religion in society is precisely the establishment of guidelines. Without diminishing the concrete religious activities in all their classical aspects, it is important to mention that while the aspect of "establishing guidelines as the most significant function of religion" is recognized in the scientific world, it is not sufficiently recognized in the society. The modernized-orthodox approach on this question produces a vast effect on Israeli society.

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