I will always remember the first time I met R. Aharon. It was 1988 and I was a senior in Ramaz and came to the Rav's apartment at the Morg in YU for my entrance bechina to Gush. I remember thinking to myself, paraphrasing Marlowe, "Is this mind that launched a thousand ships of my imagination?"

I have long said that R. Aharon was first and foremost an educator rather than a scholar or thinker. His true legacy is the thousands and tens of thousands of ships that he launched over his long career in the hearts and minds not only of his students and students' students but of so many other Jews around the world. He inspired us to embark on lives of commitment, to Talmud Torah, Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael but also to intellectual inquiry, universal ethics and the wellbeing of humanity. Some of us sailed our ships into waters populated by Scylla's and Charybdis's that he counselled to steer clear of. To the extent that we succeeded in navigating these waters safely, it was only due to the skills and provisions which we acquired from R. Lichtenstein. We all remain his students, regardless of where the winds have taken us.

One of the things that distinguished R. Aharon as an educator was his methodical, at times maddening, consistency. R. Aharon was not a mechashe, he will not be remembered for his novel talmudic interpretations. Rather he was distinguished by his systematic and methodical analysis of Talmudic sugyot, which mapped out the range of conceptual possibilities and positions contained in or suggested by the Talmud and its medieval commentaries. His methodology produced consistent results, and with effort and diligence a student could learn to reproduce these results. Even if one did not have an encyclopedic grasp of rabbinic literature or a mind capable of juggling dozens of permutations simultaneously, one could still learn to systematically work through a sugya and coherently structure the centuries of debates contained within it.

Similarly, Rav Lichtenstein provided a clear and consistent worldview. Unlike the Rav, who constantly presented shifting and even contradictory perspectives on issues, over the decades Rav Lichtenstein seemed to always give the same answers to the same questions. When I was a more senior student at yeshiva and there was a "press conference" for the younger guys, I used to ask them to tell me the questions and I would give them R. Aharon's answers, often down to the gemara that he would quote. There was a "Derech" and R. Lichtenstein made sure that it was clearly marked and well lit. While the Rav was wracked by the existential tensions between universalism and particularism, the mind and the spirit, tradition and the individual talent, R. Lichtenstein lived a calm synthesis between these various poles. People think that R. Aharon always presented two possibilities for every question or issue, but in fact he frequently suggested a third, middle way, a katuv ha sheleshei that balanced the two opposing interpretations.

Our captain lies dead, but the ship sails on.

Moshe Simon-Shoshan ‘88