

Life in Two Worlds - the “Middle-Way”
Religious Responds to Modernity in the Philosophy of
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“Doctor of Philosophy”

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Prof. Shalom Rosenberg and Dr. Michael Silber

A B S T R A C T

This dissertation deliberates the results of the research in which I examined the responses of three religious Jewish thinkers, between the 1820s and 1870s, to four phenomena of modern thinking: Bible criticism, religious reform and change, the Haskalah (Enlightenment) and general studies, and the Return to Zion movement and the relation to the Land of Israel.

The three thinkers I chose – Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Chajes from Galicia, Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch from Germany, and the scholar, Shmuel David Luzzatto from Italy – belonged to middle way Judaism at that time. This stream was characterized by its desire to combine tradition and modernity without relinquishing any of the Jewish laws set down in Jewish Oral and Written law. This thinking is in contradiction to that of the Reformists who were left of center and wanted to reform the Jewish laws by reason and not blind acceptance of the Written Law as given from heaven in Sinai, and to that of the right-of-center Orthodox Jews, who were battling to minimize as much as possible the integration of modernity in their lives, and opposed scholarly reasoning. This middle way of proponents included Neo-Orthodoxy and the messengers of the historic-positive school which appeared towards the middle of the century and split it in two.

Gradual emancipation and a decline in the strength of the community in favor of central government characterized this period. The three scholars internalized some of the ideology of the Haskalah period. They experienced the move of contemplation and the European milieu from egalitarian universal rationalism to romanticism which limited reasoning and elevated adherence to the past and emotional experience. Despite their leaning towards romanticism these followers of the Haskalah could discern between these signs of romanticism and the mysticism and kabala which they rejected. All three of them experienced the great emphasis placed on historical studies, although not everyone understood

their importance or the difference between the old, unified perception of history and the awareness of historical evolution which had replaced it. The three all contended with the signs of the times of a changing concept by which God intervenes with history, giving way to the concept that human reason controls the world and takes over nature, using modern scientific tools developed for the good of mankind.

Religion was put aside, while secularization, licentiousness and pursuit of luxuries and materialism characterized society more and more. The spellbound Jews were drawn to the European culture which had begun to open its doors to them, and the fate of the Jews as an independent entity was facing danger. The scholars I researched were not philosophers. Chajes and Hirsch were community rabbis and Luzzatto headed a rabbinical seminar, however developments necessitated their ideological, religious response to what was happening.

The first chapter constitutes the introduction to the subsequent chapters, each one dedicated to the responses of one of the four phenomena of modernity which I researched. This chapter gives a brief account of the crisis the communities underwent at the beginning of the century and explains the influence of modern thinking. It goes on to describe the various streams of Judaism that century, which evolved as a result of events which had taken place at the end of the previous century. It offers Mendelssohn's perspective, and provides insight into how the middle way thinkers came to see their philosophy as the true way and not as a compromise, resulting from their seeing themselves as being between the right and the left. These people strove to adhere to religion and observe the religious laws which they saw as a gift from God and the right way of life, in which they wanted to combine all that was true, moral and esthetic in European culture, to become a more perfect Jew. The middle way was somewhat complex being open to attack from both sides, and with dialectic tensions emanating from the desire to live in two worlds at the same time. In order to clarify the middle way position, I have explicated the four bones of dialectic contention in which the

middle way followers found themselves involved: between the holism of the Holy Scriptures and the moral standards of European culture, between theocentricity and anthropocentric humanism (revelation and reason), between universalism and emancipation, and particularism and the salvation of Israel, and between self-indulgence and moral sanctity. While describing these four bones of contention I have explained the difference between the traditional viewpoint in Judaism and modern philosophy and the stance of the modern-religious middle way caught up in this tension.

Further on, I have given a political and societal background illustrated by short biographies of the three thinkers in which I have combined important details on their homeland and history, which should throw light on understanding their position. At the end of the chapter I have detailed questions for discussion and given a diagram illustrating what the three thinkers had in common and where they differed. I have also given a comparative model summarizing the fundamental innovations of this research.

There are three questions to be considered and examined. The first question is: what are the specific fundamental occurrences of modernity and the subsequent tension between it and tradition, which the middle way followers had to confront – Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto - and to what degree were the phenomena mutual and their responses similar? The second question is: against whom and what (ideas) did each of these thinkers struggle against in the overall framework of controversy, and how did they each choose to combine tradition with modern thinking in order to combat these phenomena and the crises which evolved from the high tension that such a viewpoint produced. How did each one solve the problems which cropped up during the controversy, and the answers given by the right and the left. The third question is: how was the special combination offered influenced by each biography, by their philosophy about God, epistemology and ethics, and from whom did they draw their Jewish and general philosophy?

I would maintain that, despite their background similarities, and the mutual phenomena and problems, there is a biographical, philosophical and political-societal link for resolving the various combinations between tradition and modernity by these middle way followers – Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto. These resolutions took hold in a different tenet which evolved in the context of tension and argument with other resolutions from the right and the left, giving rise to a multifaceted stream. At the end, I present my *modus operandi*, the wide-ranging methodology, status of the research, and the unique approach compared to previous studies of Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto. I explain that I have no intention of writing three intellectual biographies, but to examine their philosophy in response to the four phenomena of modernity and answer questions raised not only from that perspective, but also from an historical, social, ideological and hermeneutical one. It follows that, the deeper you dig the more comes to light about the character, personality and philosophy of the person being researched which had not been denoted in previous researches. Take Luzzatto, for example. No comprehensive research based on most of his writings has chronologically examined his particular philosophy and its part in the middle way. Therefore, this work could be considered as pioneering since it reveals the continuing development of his opinions and philosophies hitherto not divulged, thereby explaining the contradictions which other researchers had difficulty interpreting. Chajes' character is also shown in a new light which emphasizes the internal conflict he was undergoing. The charting of the stances of the three thinkers was carried out in relation to the phenomena of modernity with three different approaches for integrating tradition and modern thinking being displayed in front of the reader and all being connected to the run-of-the-mill way of life of people living in two worlds at one and the same time.

The second chapter addresses the response of the three thinkers to Bible criticism and the Bible revolution. At the beginning of the chapter I give the background of these two phenomena which took place throughout the 19th century, the debate on the origin of the Written Law, and the revolution which

started with the transition of the Talmud (Oral Law) as the formative book to the Bible, and the dialectics between them. I have given a short description on the history of Bible criticism starting from Spinoza till Velhausen at the end the 19th century. I then examine the responses and stances of Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto in this respect of modern thinking, which is usually negative and constant. I closely examine the texts about their argument on the importance of the Talmud and the Bible; proof of the Divine source of the Written Law; on the critique system and its boundaries; on the middle way approach to research in general – being the right one; on the Sages' commentaries on passages of the Torah; on the mistakes and dangers associated with Bible criticism; and on the use of philological-historic research tools with the Holy Scriptures. Regarding Luzzatto I debate the premise of Lawrence Kaplan based on James Barr, according to which Luzzatto was a non-traditional fundamentalist. I present a textual argument that, according to Barr, Luzzatto could only have been a traditional non-fundamentalist. I set aside space in this chapter to examine the middle way followers' response to the critical findings on the timing of Deuteronomy, the documents' theory and Ezra the Scribe as the editor of the Torah. In this chapter I have expanded on the differences between Hirsch and Luzzatto regarding the Sages' interpretation as the original meaning of the text, and examined their different opinions regarding the meaning of the term "Ger" in the Torah. According to Hirsch, the Torah means a convert, a proselyte, but according to Luzzatto it means a stranger in our midst.

The third chapter deals with the responses of the three thinkers to the Reform and historic-positive movement which expressed itself by debating the Oral Law. At the beginning of the chapter I discuss models of the relationship between revelation and reason in the Middle Ages. Following the models of Rozenberg and Halbertal I describe briefly the mindset of the Gaonim (e.g. Ibn Daud) regarding the Sages being the reconstructionists of the Halachot of the Oral Law which originated in Sinai, the views of the Rambam regarding the Halachot of the Oral Law as an accumulative codex, partly from Sinai and in large from the

Sages' legislation, the Ramban's approach regarding the Sages being the exposures of the Halachot of the Oral Law which all originated from Sinai, including the arguments, and the approach of some of the Ramban's students (e.g. HaRitba) regarding the Sages as the constituters of a practical Halacha of the Oral Law. The first three viewpoints and the arguments between the Ramban and Rambam subsequently served as a debate on this subject in the 19th century, on which I have elaborated in this chapter. The reform and historic-positive school approaches are detailed further on and conclude the background. From there I go on to examine the responses and various viewpoints of Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto. The text shows the harsh critique of the three on reform, and their different approaches regarding the source of Halachah of the Oral Law. Throughout the chapter I discuss their viewpoints on the source of Aggadahn (Narration) and examine their ethics in detail. It appears that, in contrast to the reformists, philosophers and Christians, they see Jewish ethical teachings which are embodied in both the Written and Oral Laws, as the ultimate moral way which was given to man from a Divine source unfettered by materialism, and they reject the Kantian and Christian ethics. Jewish ethics give a solution to the low moral standard of the generation and is hoped that it will save mankind. The discussion on Hirsch details his opposition to the Reform Movement in Frankfurt and his efforts to separate from the Reform community, and the determined altercations he had with Graetz and Frankel on their views on the human source of the Oral Law. There are brief discussions on Luzzatto about his confrontations with Jost and Horin and his part in the circumcision controversy.

The fourth chapter is about the responses of the three scholars to Haskalah, the Science of Judaism and the integration of secular studies in education. At the beginning of the chapter I discuss the principles of the Haskalah, and its important parts which were internalized by the middle way followers, as well as its meaning including moral universalism and pluralism. I give a short history of this approach to Judaism which can be found with Rambam, and the argument between the radical commentators of Rambam who, in their opinion, divided

religion from supreme philosophy, and the moderates who claimed that he had synchronized philosophy and religion. I present two models: a brief one on the three fundamental methods of education in Jewish tradition; the rabbinical, the philosophical and the kabalistic. The second very detailed one, following Rozenberg, on the different approaches in Judaism to the possibility of bridging the gap between the Torah and science in the Middle Ages and in this new era. I go on to describe the educational revolution of the Haskalah, the components of this educational system and its theory, which can be seen with Wiesel, and conclude the background with a presentation illustrating 'The Organization for Jewish Culture and Science', 'The Science of Judaism' and 'Jewish Literature'. I then continue to examine the various responses and mind-sets of Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto regarding the relation between Torah and science, between revelation and philosophy, and on the function of reason, emotion and experience. In this context I discuss the points of view of the three scholars regarding subjects such as: what does the Torah teach us?; what is man's mission in life?; the contradictions between science and the Torah; the attitude towards secular studies; the relation between Greek culture and the Science of Judaism. In the discussion on Luzzatto I detail the controversies of both the Rambam and Spinoza which Luzzatto prompted and the reasons for it. As an addendum to the chapter I discuss the viewpoints of the three scholars regarding the importance of studying 'history'.

The fifth chapter is about the responses of the three scholars to Emancipation, and their stance regarding the Land of Israel and a realistic Return to Zion. I describe the Emancipation and its challenges from the end of the 18th century as background, and following Ravitsky I present models in Judaism from the beginning of the Middle Ages till Mendelssohn regarding the Land of Israel, the Exile and Redemption and the possibility of a realistic Return to Zion. On the one hand, extra emphasis is placed on the viewpoints of Rabbi Judah Halevi and the Rambam in this regard and, on the other hand, their ability to see the Exile as a mission. Concluding the background I detail the approach of Mendelssohn and

the Reformists. I go on to closely examine the responses and viewpoints of Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto regarding the Emancipation, the arguments about double loyalty of the Jews and against according rights to the Jews, universalism and humaneness, the reason for the Revelation only to the People of Israel, a realistic organized return within the history of the People of Israel to their own land, the mission of the People of Israel, progress and the messianic future. In the discussion about Hirsch's point of view I present the perspective of the Land of Israel and the Temple in Judaism, their own particular sanctity, why Israel was chosen by Providence for the People of Israel and the perspective of the Exile. I also describe Kalischer's efforts to bring Hirsch around to the idea of a realistic Return to Zion.

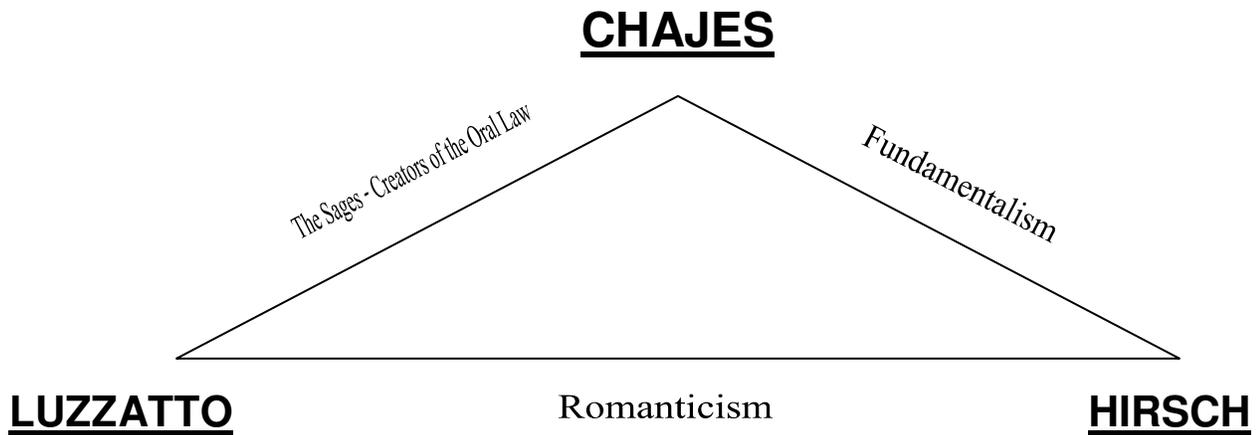
The abstract on the positions of the three scholars regarding the four characteristics of modern thinking that I examined is as follows, starting with an illustration and a comparative chart for clarification:

The Middle way

Three scholars – religious – traditional – modern

The Written Law is Divine, no change should be made in the Jewish Law
Supremacy of the Torah's ethics – on account of its Divine origin and
not being dependent on reasoning which is limited by sensualism
The return of the People of Israel to their Land shall only be
through future messianic utopia.

Diagram No. 1



		CHAJES	HIRSCH	LUZZATTO
Motive	Ideology	Rationality (following the Rambam)	Romantic (following Rabbi Judah Halevi)	Romantic (following Rabbi Judah Halevi)
Motive	Fundamentalism	Classic Fundamentalist	Neo-fundamentalist	Non-fundamentalist
Motive	Formative book	Talmud	Talmud	Bible
Outcome	Relation between religion and science	"Limiting identical" approach. In the debate between religion and science - the criteria for determining truth is revelation and not reason.	"Limiting" or "interpreting" approach. In the debate between religion and science – the criteria for determining the truth changes between revelation and reason.	"Double truth" approach. Religion and science are both truth of contradiction with one not being a yardstick of the other.
Outcome	Inerrancy	Inerrancy of the Torah, Midrash Halachah and Midrash Aggadah.	Inerrancy of the Torah and Midrash Halachah. Midrash Aggadah is a product of the Sages and not necessarily inerrant.	The Torah does not have to be inerrant. Even more so the Midrash which is a product of the Sages.
Outcome	Research Tools	Only the Sages were permitted to use philological-historical research tools regarding the Holy Scriptures.	No-one is permitted to use philological-historical research tools regarding the Holy Scriptures.	The use of research tools regarding the Holy Scriptures is essential.
Conclusion	Layers of Jewish Law and the role played by the Sages	Only part of the Jewish Law was actually given on Mt. Sinai. The rest only potentially existed. Using the Thirteen Divine Attributes handed down on Mt. Sinai, the Sages divulged parts of the Oral Law by putting them into effect, ascribing them to the highest layer of the Written Law.	The whole Jewish Law was given on Mt. Sinai. The Oral Law preceded the Written Law and is placed higher than it. Using the Thirteen Divine Attributes, the Sages were able to reconstruct the forgotten parts of the Oral Law	Only the Written Law was actually given on Mt. Sinai. Through legislation the Sages were able to create the Written Law, and the Thirteen Divine Attributes which they used. The Written Law is placed higher than the Oral Law.
Conclusion	Commentary	The Sages' commentary is the original meaning of biblical verse.	The Sages' commentary is the original meaning of biblical verse which had been worded at the highest level which was not yet fully understood.	The rational biblical commentary is the original meaning of biblical verse which was worded at the level of the people who accepted it on Mt. Sinai.

Diagram No. 1. In order to highlight the innovations in this essay, the three scholars are presented on a triangular diagram. The heading is common to all three and at each vertex appears the name of one of them. Each side denotes a common factor to the

two scholars at either end of it, and the distance of each side to the vertex opposite presents the gap and difference between them and the scholar at the opposite vertex. Therefore, this diagram gives a visual model which has not yet been put forward, and the table which schematically presents the basic characteristics of each scholar has not yet been discussed.

Chajes – The Rational Talmudic Scholar and the “Limiting Identical” Approach

Chajes was isolated compared to the other two. Since the northern tip of the Austrian Empire where he lived was far from the cultural centers of Europe, changes only reached Chajes after they had already been established in Western Europe. Judaism in that area remained mostly traditional and the Hasidim were very powerful. That is why Chajes remained loyal to the old rationalism more than the others, anchored in the Talmud and loyal to the Rambam. The town in which he was born, Brody, where he studied and his personality was formed, was accustomed to moderate Haskalah but not reform, and was a center for theoretical teaching of the Talmud and Rambam which determined the route his views were to take. As a rational Talmudic scholar who had absorbed the Haskalah he focused on research aimed at proving the veracity of the chain of delivery of the Written and Oral Laws since Sinai according to the Talmud and to his own fundamentalist-classic conservative interpretation of Rambam; the Bible revolution never reached him. Chajes’s general education was autodidactic and he received a degree from the College in Lvov.

He ruled out high and low Bible criticism, but not because the modern research was basically unacceptable. Unlike his friend, Rabbi Nachman Krochmal, he had not internalized historical evolution and so claimed that the research of the Holy Scriptures was nothing new. By the power of their authority the Sages were involved with interpreting the Holy Scriptures, and this had been sufficient so far. The tools of modern analysis should be applied to the Oral Law, and this is what he did. He deliberated on what the Torah teaches us and what man’s role in life is. The Rambam’s approach on the hidden philosophy in the Holy Scriptures and man’s mission to contemplate is that it can no longer be accepted at face value because of

the attacks on rationalism and the international emphasis on ethics as a mission and anti-elitism as a method. Chajes is, therefore, shown as only partially coherent.

The Reform was severely criticized by Chajes. At first he thought that it was a moderate phenomenon that Judaism would overcome and was sure that it could be fittingly confronted and get those who had erred to mend their ways. Later on, when it became clear that the Reform was spreading, had a growing number of followers and was holding assemblies of rabbis, Chajes understood that the danger was intensifying and started a comprehensive polemic against it. The approach that the Oral Law was handed down by man was dangerous to the Jews and its considerations were not honest but were there to support the aspiration to please the non-Jews and throw off all restraints. This feeling made Chajes, the classical fundamentalist, to consider Rambam more moderately. In his opinion, he only explains and elaborates on the Rambam's method, although the Rambam's literal view was that the majority of the Oral Law was created by the Sages and would assist those who wanted to throw off the restraints of religion. Chajes therefore adopted the Aristotelic practice of Rabbi Nachman Krochmal and totally distorted the Rambam's methods. According to this practice the Sages, in their wisdom, put Jewish Oral Law into effect which had already potentially existed at God's level at Sinai but not delivered or revealed. Unlike Rambam who asserted that these Jewish Laws were of a low layer and not from Sinai, and unlike Rabbi Nachman Krochmal who decided on this practice to preserve some sort of binding validity for the Jewish Oral Laws which had evolved, Chajes raised these Jewish Laws to the level of the Written Law from Sinai. In this dialectic process he combines the extreme contradiction between the accumulated Codex of the Jewish Laws according to the Rambam, and the Oral Law from Sinai. Chajes also perceived the Aggadahl be part of the Oral Law from Sinai and determined that it is possible to rule according to the Aggadahl. Contradiction of de facto knowledge in parts of the Aggadahl emanate from the lack of comprehension of the Aggadahl or due to changes in the laws of nature. According to Chajes, the ethics of the Torah which embody the two Torahs from Sinai are the correct and only moral principles, and he does not accept Luzzatto's critiques of the Rambam, according to which he believed

that contemplation is a higher consideration than ethics, but here he is giving mixed messages.

Since the research is not basically unacceptable, Chajes is happy to bless the Science of Judaism movement and the books of the Haskalah which, as far as he was concerned, were the honorary keepers of the nation and ensured its continuing existence. Even those with opinions differing from his won his respect. Those who studied Jewish literature and history starting with the Tanaim and until his period are none other than a single, extended unity and, in his opinion, they are all positive. The combination of tradition and modern thinking must be under constant supervision. Chajes does not accept the critical opinion of Luzzatto whereby the Rambam perceived that reason was autonomous and that Aristotelic rationalism was a criterion for understanding the Revelation. He prefers moderate interpretation of Rambam according to which philosophy and revelation are identical, and in instances of difficulty and contradiction the “limiting” approach should be taken, according to which the Revelation is the unique criterion for examining and purifying the philosophical and scientific statements. Chajes also has a Mendelssohnian approach according to which the Torah does not teach eternal truth. In order to combine the extremes of contradiction of this principle to the fundamental principle of a complete Torah from Sinai, he carries out a dialectic process whereby at the revelation of the Torah at Sinai the whole nation received not only the Law but also a high mental ability. As for secular studies Chajes did not internalize the principles of the Haskalah. Only adults were permitted such studies in their spare time and according to the approach of Rabbi Jacob Emden.

Regarding the Land of Israel and the Return to Zion, Chajes was as loyal to Mendelssohn’s neutral approach as to his universalistic approach. The Jewish desire for the Return to Zion is a prayer for the End of Days (Day of Judgment) beyond history when all mankind shall be redeemed and isn’t a sign of the Jews’ double loyalty. The People of Israel are subject to the three oaths, and the more rights they have the more loyal they will be and more effective and beneficial to their host country,

according to the prophet Jeremiah. In contrast to the Reformists, Chajes remained loyal to tradition regarding the converging of the People of Israel in Zion where they would build the Temple and the kingdom for the End of Days.

Hirsch – The Romantic Teacher and the Neo-Fundamentalistic Identical Approach

Hirsch lived and worked in the center of polemic turmoil and in the eye of the storm. He experienced at first hand both the dimming of the beacon of reason and metaphysics and the move to romanticism; the continuing struggle with the Reform and then with the Historic School; and with the collapse of the communities. During his childhood in Hamburg, Hirsch was exposed to the Orthodox struggle with the reform temple and their powerlessness. This determined his decision to dedicate himself to saving tradition and the Torah in an alternative way. Wiesel's method which combined secular and religious study, Jewish philosophy taught by Bernays according to Rabbi Yehuda Halevi, and Talmud taught by Ettlinger, all helped form his middle way approach whereby he would revitalize the Torah. He called this "Torah with Derech Eretz", which evolved into modern orthodoxy or neo-orthodoxy. Hirsch served as a community rabbi, emphasizing the campaign and the educational system. He became slightly acquainted with the academic world and taught himself the speculative philosophy of his generation.

He totally rejected the Bible criticism. Contrary to Chajes he discerned the hidden danger in the newly developing historic approach, and so he essentially rejected the use of philological-historic interpretation methods to examine the Holy Scriptures. Hirsch categorically determined that the Torah was the only authentic word of God and it is necessary to study it thoroughly and as it stands. As the word of God the Torah is perfect and contains no errors and comprises truth unknown to the generation who received it. It is man's task to rise to it and not degrade it as the reformists were trying to do. Therefore, any criticism, whether high or low, is unacceptable. Hirsch does not accept Chajes' point of view regarding the Sages' Bible criticism and, in his opinion, they had not actually examined anything but just

passed on information. Regarding man's mission and the teachings of the Torah, Hirsch was staunch in his romantic post-Haskalah approach, that there is no philosophy or mysticism in the Torah but that it is a book of Divine ethical norms whose acceptance by mankind will bring about redemption. The mission of mankind is ethical sanctity, a non-elitist obligation, with Torah principles being the only way to achieve this since it is a Divine ethic free of any worldliness preventing reason from fulfilling pure ethics. Hirsch was greatly influenced by the revolution of the Bible. He aligned himself more to commentaries of biblical verse rather than to the Talmud, but the Talmud still remained for him the fundamental book of Judaism.

Hirsch dedicated his life to education and the struggle against reform. When the historic school appeared in the arena, he was immediately aware of the danger of that approach to his own. In his opinion, the approach that the Oral Law is a creation of the Sages undermines the foundations of Judaism, because then it would mean that, like the Sages, we could go on changing the Halachah according to our perception and the needs of the time. Hirsch identified with the fundamentalist approach of the Gaonim and the Ramban, according to which the whole Torah, both the Written Law and the Oral Midrash Halachah, is a Divine source from Sinai. The publicity of the Revelation of God at Sinai was proof of this. In order to distance the view of the reformists as much as possible, Hirsch carried out a major change over and above the view of the Gaonim and the Ramban. The whole of the Oral Law was given to Moses by God, only after which, during the wandering in the wilderness, was he also given the written book of codes in which the Oral Law is successfully condensed. Thus, he was given the Thirteen Divine Attributes which are used as the key for deciphering and reconstructing the forgotten laws. This is intended to keep the Halachah from being forgotten and maintain the connection between the two Torahs. In this way, Hirsch, like Chajes, raised the level of the Midrash but surpassed himself by turning it – in his characteristic fundamentalist way – into the highest level, and the Written Law to the second level. It is clear that also according to Hirsch, the ethic of the Torah which is included in both the Divine Torahs, is the highest and only ethic which can bring redemption to mankind. Only this ethic can elevate man towards holiness

meaning that man is in control of his licentiousness and moves nearer to the spiritual God.

Hirsch also internalized important principles of the Haskalah. Equality among men of reason, universality and the combination of man's law with Divine law were basic to his philosophy. In contrast to Chajes, he rejected the Science of Judaism movement because, in his eyes, it also expressed the desire for reform in the spirit of the times, and especially the unacceptable principle of the use of modern interpretation tools to research the Torah and the developing historic approach regarding the Halachah. Hirsch considered the Torahs from Sinai to be beyond history, time and place, and so he argued at length with Graetz and Frankel from the historic school, who considered the Sages to be the creators of the Halachah and not only as reconstructionists or messengers from Sinai. The view that the Sages were exemplary beings, creators of laws according to their humane leanings and to their deep understanding of the nation's needs and the times, were thought to lower the standing of the Sages and legitimize the law reforms. Hirsch was more daring than Chajes regarding the Aggadah and unequivocally determined that it did not derive from Sinai but reflects scientific opinions which were acceptable to men of science at that time. Here the Sages could also err and, therefore, we cannot decree any law according to the Aggadah. Hirsch did not agree with Mendelssohn's view on the relation between revelation and reason. Mendelssohn understood them to be two important but separate spheres in Judaism, while – as already determined by the Rambam – universal reasoning is a yardstick. Influenced by Kant, Hirsch determined that reason which is subject to sensuality cannot be used as a benchmark. Philosophy and the Revelation are identical, but the criterion for examining adversity and contradiction should be as determined by Rabbi Yehuda Halevi – in the Revelation. Those who do not accept the identical point of view deny that God is the source of nature, reason and the Torah. As a neo-fundamentalist who believes that the two Divine Torahs cannot err and that they reflect a supreme and complete truth, Hirsch fluctuated in the identical approach between the “limiting” and the “interpreting” approaches. Regarding unsubstantiated viewpoints which seem scientific or speculatively

philosophical, Hirsch takes the “limiting” approach. However, when it is about experimental science which, in his opinion, has already been proven beyond a reasonable doubt, he is prepared to consider the “interpreting” approach and adapt the Torah to science without admitting that there are errors in the Torah and Midrash Halachah. Unlike Chajes, Hirsch totally absorbed the education revolution of the Haskalah and was for teaching secular studies from a young age. However, they should be integrative studies from the Torah aspect using the method “Torah with Derech Eretz”. Hirsch believed that the combination with modern learning was not a compromise of the times, and that the true Jews were always willing to also receive truth other than from Judaism, and that there is self-worth in European culture that is quantified by the Torah. Hirsch daringly determined that the right combination of Torah and secular studies would produce a result which would be dialectically bigger than the sum of its parts.

Regarding the Land of Israel and the Return to Zion, Hirsch, like Chajes, adopted Mendelssohn’s neutral approach. Close scrutiny of the text shows that it is impossible to regard Hirsch as a harbinger of Zionism. The Return to Zion is a utopian dream since the Jews are loyal to the present place of birth and bound by the three oaths. The Exile is gradually becoming ideal allowing the people of Israel to realize its mission to other nations and teach them the ethic of the Torah in readiness of their redemption. Hirsch adopted the Rambam’s opinion which rejects the unique quality of sanctity of the Land of Israel and its people. Unlike Rabbi Yehuda Halevi and as a universalist embracing emancipation, Hirsch determined that the people of Israel are first among equals, and the Land of Israel is only an instrument for the existence of the Torah, a failed instrument. This is a dangerous instrument which brought the nation to moral corruption through too much licentiousness. Like Chajes he was loyal to tradition and determined the entry of the People of Israel into their country and state at the End of Days, although he was not particularly enthusiastic about it. The religious Jewish community’s integration into a cultural and flourishing Germany and the ability to behave unfettered according to the ethical norms of their Torah, appealed to him

much more. He also didn't indicate the advantage of a separate national existence of the People of Israel in their country at the End of Days.

Luzzatto – Romantic Scholar and the “Double Truth” Approach

Although geographically isolated and living in a relatively small community in Italy, Luzzatto kept very close contact with followers of the Science of Judaism in the west and with his friends who were followers of Jewish literature throughout the Austrian Empire, thereby knowing what was going on without delay. He was loyal to rationalism and the Rambam only during his youth, but very quickly allied himself to the romantic concepts which rejected the contemplative elitism, clung to the national and religious past, to ethics and to sensitivity. The Emancipation induced the Jews of Italy to cast off religious restraints and become indifferent to the commandments but Luzzatto experienced mostly ignorance and not organized reformism or Hassidism close-by. Luzzatto was also a post-Haskalah romanticist who rejected mysticism. He internalized the principles of the Haskalah on equality and universalism, and adopted the free research which strives for totally pure truth as his motto. As a man loyal to the Divine Torah and who kept the commandments while believing in their supreme moral value, Luzzatto found himself in the center as a member of the middle way, between the religious reformists and the Bible critics who deny the Divine Torah, prophecy, retribution and punishment, and between the orthodox who rejected all rational research as endangering tradition. As was customary in Italy, Luzzatto studied secular and religious studies, continuing general philosophy and Judaism autodidactically. His appointment to the rabbinical seminar of Padua demanded that his life's work comprise interpretations of the Bible, philology and the Hebrew language, Jewish philosophy and Jewish history.

As a romanticist, the Bible revolution had a decisive influence on Luzzatto and the Bible became the founding book of Judaism for him. Following an objective research Luzzatto reached the conclusion that the Torah was authentic and he believed in the knowledge it imparts about the Divine source. He also based himself on the recurring miracle of the manna and on how strictly the text had been preserved throughout

history. As a result he devoted great effort to the debate with those who claimed that the source of the Torah was from man and subsequently from the time of Moshe. Luzzatto, like Hirsch, determined that the Torah was not philosophical or mystical information, but a Divine ethical guide whose mission was not to hand down the truth but to make man more fitting. Luzzatto was a literalist and, unlike Hirsch, he was convinced that the Torah had been handed down with wording to suit the level of those who received it and in the nuance of those times. Luzzatto usually accepted the traditional view regarding the specific times that the Mikrah and the Prophets had been written, and agreed to accept a different opinion only if it could be proven without a doubt.

Luzzatto, like his middle way friends, also saw the reform as a threat to the existence of Judaism. He considered the reformists insincere, whose purpose was not to seek the truth but to throw off restraints, pursue riches and honor, and flatter the non-Jews. On the other hand, Luzzatto didn't see any threat in the historic- development approach of the Halachah. In fact, his view was close to that of the positive-historic school, and he should be considered as one of its ambassadors. He developed an evolutionary stance towards the Halachah as his research into the Bible critique and Mishnah advanced. He reached the conclusion that the laws of the Oral Law were, for the most part, a magnificent creation of the Sages who, with great inspiration, sincerity and deep insight into the needs of the nation, had legislated the laws, and invented the Thirteen Divine Attributes in order to link their ruling to the Mikrah to better validate them. Luzzatto did not assume from this that it would be possible to carry out reform during his lifetime, not even a moderate one, because he was sure that there was nobody of the Sages' standard who could carry out a really objective reform with a deep insight into the needs of the nation. On the other hand, he concluded, unlike Chajes and Hirsch, that the original meaning of the Mikraot definitely could not be the commentaries of the Sages. The Mikraot were autonomous and should be interpreted according to what was acceptable at the time they had been delivered. At first, Luzzatto determined that the Sages had had their own Torah secrets which had meanwhile got lost, according to which the laws had been ordained, thereby giving the

Oral Law a binding validity. He subsequently determined the obligation to fulfill the Halachah as per the Torah teachings: “Act as you have been commanded” (Deut. 17:10), according to the Rambam. The ethic of Judaism as reflected in its literature is, therefore, the only method of ethics which can succeed in educating the masses. It is Divine and not subject to the immorality to which human reason is subjected, but is based on a natural human characteristic – compassion, and provides a means of deterrent – God’s retribution and punishment.

Luzzatto kept to the Haskalah with every bone in his body. He was a member of the Jewish Literature movement in Eastern Europe and held widespread contacts with Jewish researchers at that time. Use of philological-historic research tools was a daily occurrence for him. Luzzatto developed a unique approach to the relationship between philosophy and revelation. Originally he was in favor of the “identical” stance according to the “interpreting” approach. However, he quickly arrived at the conclusion that it is difficult to elucidate between the philosophical truth and the revelational trend of educating the people to be good but not necessarily scholars of the philosophical truth, and so embraced the “Separate Disciplines” approach. This change was due to the adoption of rational philosophical opinions from the school of Aristotle, the Rambam and Spinoza, among some of the scholars in Germany and Galicia, which were alien to Judaism. In his opinion, this phenomenon caused the throwing off of restraints and denial of the Divine Torah. Luzzatto called this “Athizismus” (the Athens’s Hellenism), and differentiated between it and Judaism. He saw this as turning one’s back on the true Jewish scientific research which did not revoke prophecy, retribution and punishment in advance, or ethical corruption which prefers cold rationality to compassion. However, he found the “Separate Disciplines” approach unsatisfactory, since he saw that philosophy contradicted revelation and any compromise between them is just an illusion. In his opinion, there is nothing wrong with such a view and it is not heretical as Hirsch thought. Human perception is not able to reunite the gap and so God is unable to word a unified Torah in man’s language, and he preferred goodness over truth. Luzzatto therefore embraced the “double truth” approach which he had learned from another Italian – Elia del Medigo.

According to this view, there is a purified and true philosophical system which had not yet been worded as a single viewpoint, which contradicts the truth of the revelation – which had been cleansed of speculative rationalism and mysticism. The educated believer needs to be aware of the two truths and learn to live with and love them both. He has to understand that a dialectic synthesis between philosophy and revelation is not possible for man, and that the contradiction between them reflects the cosmic breach which can be joined only at infinity, with God. It therefore seems that those who claimed that Luzzatto was a fundamentalist were mistaken. On the contrary, he accepted the possibility that the Mikrah, although being godly, does not represent the philosophical truth. Furthermore, being a Divine ethical book of guidance, the Mikrah will relinquish the truth in order to teach altruism. The contradictions between science and religion did not bother Luzzatto at all since they were none other than a possible outcome of the “double truth” approach. It was accepted practice to study secular studies from a young age in Italy and Luzzatto did not devote space to it in his deliberations.

Regarding the Land of Israel, Luzzatto was close to his middle way friends. He was as certain as Mendelssohn that the Return to Zion was a dream of the End of Days, of a point in infinity when all nations will be redeemed, and like his middle way friends was also not an ambassador of Zionism. The young Luzzatto was a universalist who believed in the mission of the people of Israel to educate humanity in the principles of Judaism. The latter-day Luzzatto changed his point of view. He understood that such a view which had been adopted by the reformists, Athizists and rationalists was dangerous to Judaism’s self-preservation and also did not suit the “Separate disciplines” or the “double truth” approach which he had developed. He, therefore, rejected the principles of emancipation and the idea of the education of humanity and the mission of the Jewish people as an illusion and baseless dream. The Jewish people’s need to preserve its uniqueness as a family among nations, to let God fulfill His plans and await the End of Days and the Return to Zion and establish their kingdom. In general, it could be said that Luzzatto was ahead of his time. He recognized the evolution of the Halachah, determined that the text of the Mikrah is as

reliant on culture, location and time of its recipients as all hominid texts despite originating from God. From this he understood that religion is totally separate from science and that they have different spoken languages and only God can bridge the gap, beyond this world and human history. Life is lived with contradictions in this world. The planning of history, redemption and the Return to Zion should all be left to God, and historical events should not be interpreted, such as the dispersing of the People of Israel among the nations, emancipation and progress as significant religious events, and the desire to be part of them.

Chajes, Hirsch and Luzzatto, as modern, religious scholars, struggled with rightist and leftist opinions, and consolidated viewpoints combining revelation with human wisdom and science. They all developed common viewpoints in their responses to modern phenomena. Close observation of their writings reveals important and decisive differences in these approaches, and in certain critical and fundamental fields each one developed a different approach based on his social environment, his ideological-cultural background, his education and his life history. These approaches place Luzzatto to the left of Chajes and Hirsch. Although they displayed fundamentalist views Luzzatto exhibited more daring and modern views. This is shown by his positive opinion on the modern research tools used, the human origin of the Oral Law and position of reason opposite revelation.

This research can be developed further in two directions: breadth wise – by checking the responses to other phenomena of modern thinking such as the attitude towards women, government and state, permissiveness, the law of the land, Halachah and medicine etc. Length wise – by checking whether and how these three influenced latter-day Jewish philosophers, such as Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, M.D. Cassuto, Yeshayahu Leibowitz and others. This research could be used as a basis for such examinations.

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