

**Rav S. R. Hirsch—  
His תורה עם דרך ארץ Ideology**

by  
Rabbi Shelomo Danziger

Objectivity requires an honest examination of the criticisms of תועד"א which have emerged since the time of Rav Hirsch. Some of these criticisms are based on the changing times, and some have simply taken time to emerge and to be formulated. Now in Torah circles such as ours a lecture is called a שיעור. So in the manner of a שיעור, I propose to begin with a number of קשיות, that is to say, criticisms, which I have read and heard, and to conclude with a חידוש, a חירוק, a solution, which will solve the various difficulties raised by the critics.

Let us begin the list of קשיות with the criticisms contained in an article written in 1957 by Rabbi Elie Munk of France, himself a product of the תועד"א experience. He mentions three criticisms, which I may summarize and paraphrase as follows:

1) The attractive culture of Rav Hirsch's time, which was congenial to Torah values, has degenerated into today's culture, which is *hardly* congenial to Torah values, but rather destructive of them;

2) With a few notable exceptions, the hybrid approach of תועד"א did not produce great חלמידי חכמים, when compared with those produced by the Yeshiva world;

3) The Torah, תורה ה', should not need to be supplemented by the external cultures of the העולם. The demand for such supplementation

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would seem to be an *עלבון התורה*, an insult to the perfect תורה of G-d.

These are strong *קשיות*, serious criticisms. There are more.

Jacob Rosenheim, in his small book published in 1951, entitled "Samson Raphael Hirsch's Cultural Ideal and Our Times," mentions the problems of *מינות* and *אפיקורסות* contained in many secular subjects. He also mentions the *איסור* and the problem of *ביטול תורה* caused by a deep involvement in general studies. Of course, even without Rosenheim we are all aware of these problems, which become *criticisms* of the תועד"א approach.

"Secular learning has become today so highly specialized that it requires a major effort to master even a small segment of it . . . This . . . problem escalates in the same measure that science marches forward. Where would the required time be forthcoming which is needed for profound learning and research in the vast field of T'nach, Shass and Poskim? With meager and superficial Torah-learning we have not done our Divinely ordained task. What about the command 'to meditate therein day and night' (והגית בו ימים ולילה) until one is able to know all laws and 'answer without hesitation' (שאלך אדם דבר שלא תגמגם ותאמר לו מיד)." (ש"א יס"א).

In case these words sound familiar, do not accuse me of plagiarism. I freely admit that they are quoted from the *ואלו* of our own Rav Schwab שליט"א, who puts these words in the mouths of the critics of תועד"א. When an audience does not realize that words are being quoted, they are more likely to listen more attentively. That's why I waited until the end before disclosing that it is a quote. Let's call it method, rather than plagiarism.

Let's add one more *קשיא*, one more criticism, to the list before we begin our answer. What is the *מקור*, the source for תועד"א? The usual sources that are given are doubtful, and certainly debatable. *יפה תלמוד תורה* refers primarily to the ways of earning a living, not to an educational approach. Rav Hirsch himself was, of course, fully aware of this. Thus in a letter to his great opponent, the Wuerzburger Rav, Rav Seligmann Baer Bamberger, Rav Hirsch himself wrote that the concept *Derech Eretz* in the saying *יפה תלמוד תורה עם ד"א* as "a principle of education" ("Bildungsprinzip") was open to question and even dispute. Obviously, if one is convinced of the תועד"א principle, then one sees the means of earning a living as simply one aspect of among many, as Rav Hirsch does in his commentary on *פרקי אבות* on this *משנה*. But it seems fair

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to say that the different uses of the term חז"ל found in חז"ל are not really the initial source of Rav Hirsch's חז"ל conception. They are explained and expanded by him to coincide with his חז"ל principle only because he recognizes that principle in the first place. But if so, we still have not discovered the real source of the חז"ל principle.

So we have quite a list of complaints and criticisms—six קשיים to be exact.

Before launching into our answer, our חירוק, let us first zero in on the first word of the title of tonight's lecture. The title of tonight's lecture opens with the word "Hirsch"—"Hirsch: The Relevance of חז"ל in Our Time." In order to give a basic definition of חז"ל, we must begin with the word "Hirsch"; we must realize who Rav Hirsch was. This is a preface to and a part of the answer.

Rav Hirsch was a Gaon in Talmud and in מקרא. That was the title of the first lecture, given by Rav Perlow שליט"א. Rav Hirsch was a warrior. That was the title and the content of the second lecture, given by our Rav שליט"א. But there is still another aspect of Rav Hirsch which is essential to an understanding of what he really meant by חז"ל. In addition to being a גאון, in addition to being a fighter, he was clearly a צדיק, a man on fire, on fire with the flame of the אש of Hashem's Torah. Now this is meant to be a lecture, not a sermon with oratorical flourishes. So I shall make an objective statement, befitting a lecture. To understand the חז"ל principle of Rav Hirsch we must realize that he was clearly a צדיק, a man on fire with the flame of the אש of Hashem's Torah. And do you know what the אש of Hashem's Torah is meant to accomplish, in the view of רבנו הצדיק? Only one thing: the nearness of the שכינה, an awareness that we are always in the Presence of G-d, שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד, we are always in the House of our Father, כל ימי חיי שבת בבית ה' כל ימי חיי, not only in the המקדש, not only in the הכנסה, not only in the המדרש, but from there the awareness overflows into the world of business, into the world of the professions, into the street, into the dining-room, into the bedroom, into the places of work and into the places of relaxation—into all aspects of normal living! In all the vicissitudes of life, in sorrow and in joy—שבת—always in our Father's house, always in His Presence, always aware of His nearness! This is the goal of Hashem's Torah! This is the goal of חז"ל! This is what חז"ל meant to Rav Hirsch!

What was all this on the part of Rav Hirsch? Artistic license? Literary style? High-sounding, pious platitudes, meant to "kosher" the inherent



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compromise of חז"ל? חז"ל ושלום. Perhaps some of the distorters of "א" take it as literary style, but *by Heaven, רבנו הצדיק meant it!! Literally, in every fiber of his being!* If it is true, as Dayan Grunfeld wrote, that "the certainty and absoluteness of (Rav Hirsch's) religious convictions are awe-inspiring," then especially awe-inspiring is his sense of holiness, his awareness of שכינה-nearness, which is a constantly recurrent theme throughout his writings. No man was ever so consistent in everything he wrote. No one who has read all this will believe it to be a הוראה שעה of compromise for certain conditions. It is the sincere understanding of a גאון and a warrior and a צדיק of the true, undistorted meaning of the Torah in its original, pristine glory, as he saw it. In a letter addressed to Rabbi Lowenstein of Mosbach, dated January 1, 1839, Rav Hirsch wrote: "I have not set out to create a new Judaism; instead I want to grasp and describe—as far as is possible—the ideas of Judaism *as it is.*"

Let me document what I have said about the recurrent theme of שכינה-nearness in Hirsch's writings. In פ' בראשית, on the פסוק: 'ישמעו את קול ה' וישמעו את קול ה' אלקים ממהלך בן לרוח היום וגו' Rav Hirsch comments:

"On this verse our Sages remark: עיקר שכינה בתחתונים, that originally and essentially the principal nearness of G-d was to rest down here on earth. . . . To open the gates of Paradise once again, . . . and to bring (the שכינה), the Glory of G-d back to earth—that is what is proclaimed on every page of the Word of G-d as the result and aim of the Torah."

In פ' נח, on the פסוק: 'ישכן באהלי שם', Rav Hirsch, commenting on the word וישכן, from which root we get שכינה and שכן, writes:

"The Divine is the שכן of Man, and Man of the Divine, but neither becomes completely absorbed by the other. . . . While Judaism does teach the most intimate nearness of G-d to Man, it wants to keep us to the clearest, most comprehensible, we would say sober, way of contemplating it. Not by a fanatic gushing over into the Divine, not by a so-called absorption into G-d . . . do we become servants of G-d." And now the words are italicized: "Only in using the mind and the freedom of will which G-d had given us *in the earthly sphere to which He has appointed us*, in the most complete faithfulness to G-d, with deliberation and the clearest human insight, do we ourselves attain the height of human perfection, and our earthly management of life *gains the holiness that makes it worthy of the nearness of G-d.*"

In פ' ויקרא:

"קרבן שלמים seeks to get nearer to G-d on account of feeling complete-



ly satisfied with life, feeling that there is nothing lacking in one's circumstances, the only thing that is still necessary is *the crowning feeling that one is near to G-d*. . . שלמים is the very summit of the Jewish 'lebensanschauung'. Not trouble, joy is to be the eternal bridge up to G-d, and *to enjoy this life on earth in the Presence of G-d is the highest service of G-d.*"

פ' קדושים:

"Realizing (the significance of the שם יקוק), we pay attention to all our feelings, think all our thoughts, speak all our words, do all our actions *before Him, conscious of His Presence . . . which is to render our whole existence becoming a holy one.*"

פ' אמור:

"For קרבת אלקים, bringing the nearness of G-d into earthly material life and existence is the purpose which is aimed at with all קרבנות, all טהרה and מועדי ה' קדושה, all the מועדי ה'."

פ' נשא:

"(פניו אליך וישם לך שלום) expresses the highest final result of blessing. . . *It is the most intimate, personal nearness to G-d.* It is attained when all the material and spiritual possessions and gifts . . . are used . . . entirely for the realization of the godly purposes revealed by G-d. The nearness of G-d is not to be desired for receiving in it and through it material and intellectual blessings. *But all material and spiritual blessing is only desirable for using it in the ways indicated by G-d to become worthy of the nearness of G-d.* קרבת אלקים, *nearness of G-d is טוב in itself, is the absolute good* (Psalms 73,28—*ואני קרבת אלקים לי טוב*)."

פ' ואחתוך:

"Love is the most intimate bond between two beings. . . Accordingly, ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאודך, means: 'Seek to get near to G-d by devoting . . . the whole of your heart, the whole of your soul and the whole of your fortune. Everything that you think and feel, everything that you strive for and desire, and everything that you possess, shall be unto you only the means, only have value to you, for getting near to G-d, for bringing G-d near to you. But not the other way around. Do not seek G-d to obtain and keep what you think of, wish for, and have, or would like to have. The nearness to G-d is to be for you the greatest 'good in itself.' As David expresses the Love of G-d (in Psalms 73): ואני מי לי טוב, 'But for me the nearness of G-d is what is good, קרבת אלקים לי טוב. בשמים ועמך לא חפצתי בארץ. 'Whom shall I have in heaven one day, and besides Thee I have no other desire on earth'".



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I could go on and on. Because of the limitation of time, I have eliminated many quotations from the חומש-commentary. And, of course, especially in the commentary to the Psalms do we find the same recurrent theme of the love of G-d and the constant awareness of His nearness, of His Presence, in all our earthly endeavors as the only source of true happiness.

And so, as we begin to answer the six קשיים, the six criticisms, that have been levelled against Rav Hirsch's חומש, we must bear in mind that we are defending, not a pragmatic principle of compromise, not some kind of היתר, but an exalted G-d-conscious, religious principle of a great G-d-conscious צדיק, a spiritual giant, a religious genius.

Bearing this in mind, let us begin our answer, our חירוק, with the last criticism, the sixth קשיא. What is really the מקור, the source for חומש, and why have only some flimsy, questionable and debatable sources been offered? Let me give a simple, "lomdische" חירוק. You may say that is oxymoronic. If it is simple, it is not "lomdisch" and if it is "lomdisch," it is not simple. But an astute colleague of mine once said, "אמתא לומדות איז," "אנטאפען די פשטות" Real לומדות is putting your finger on the פשטות, on the simple explanation, which often eludes us.

So, to the point. What is the מקור, the source, for חומש? Our simple, "lomdische" חירוק is: *There is no such source!* And do you know why? Because the basis of חומש is *axiomatic, self-evident*, and therefore *no source is necessary!* The first, the most *primary* fact of our existence is not that we are Jews, who have been given the Torah. The first, the most *primary* fact of our existence is that we have been given life, and have been placed in *this* world, in *this* century, in *this* living generation of fellow human beings who comprise the society, culture and civilization of our allotted time on earth. This is fact number one, chronologically and logically. Fact number two is that ה' gave us the Torah to teach us how to live in this world, in this century, in this living generation of fellow human beings to comprise the society culture and civilization of our allotted time on earth. These are the do's and don'ts of the Torah, the השקפות (the outlooks), which guide us in the use of the physical, social and cultural raw material which comprises the world in which we live. First there is life—חיים—the physical, social and cultural raw material—that is the great given!—And then there is the Torah—חורא חיים—which shapes this given life, this physical, social and cultural raw material, and tells us what to use of it and how, and what to reject. In the process, the raw material of life becomes



"Toraized" (to coin a word)—it becomes Torah. But there must be a raw material for the Torah to work on. The Torah is not the raw material. The raw material is supplied by the life around us, into which we were born.

No man understood Rav Hirsch better than רב יעקב יחיא Weinberg, the Lithuanian גאון פוסק, ראש ישיבה, and academic scholar, the מחבר of שו"ת אש שרידי אש. Let me quote from an article he wrote in the Hebrew anthology, הרב ש.ר. הירש משנתו ושיטתו:

התורה היא איפוא לדעת רש"י הכוח תצר צורה, והצורה אצל אריסטו פירושה: מהותו ואין דרך ארץ אלא החומר אשר עליו פועלת התורה. "The Torah, then, is according to Rav Hirsch, the force that gives *form*; and *form*, in the Aristotelian sense, means: the essential nature of a thing (as distinguished from the matter in which it is embodied). דרך ארץ is simply the matter on which the Torah works."

You realize, of course, that in the process of answering the sixth קשיא ("What is really the מקור, the source for תועד"א?") we have automatically answered also the third קשיא, which was that תורה ה' תמימה should not need to be supplemented by some external culture. *There is no supplementation!* There is only raw material, which the Torah does not supply, but which it molds and transforms into Torah. Not supplementation, but "Toraization"—of the given raw material!

If we still insist on some מקור, the closest would be the חז"ל מאמר חז"ל כ"ו: "מאמר חז"ל". The raw material of דרך ארץ precedes the Torah, chronologically and logically. It is the given raw material which the Torah must shape, mold, "Toraize"—transform into Torah into שכונה nearness.

So is תועד"א still relevant today? It's a silly question! Once we understand the basic source and the basic definition of תועד"א it becomes clear that as long as there is a world, a generation of men, a civilization—and as long as there is a Torah, there is תועד"א. תועד"א is as relevant today as it always has been and always will be—כימי השמים על הארץ—Because it is the plan of the Creator of the world, Who is the הוהה נותן.

And what is the basic definition of תועד"א in the light of all this? Does it mean going to college? Does it mean becoming a professional? Does it mean becoming an artist, a novelist, a journalist, a musician, a physician, a scientist, a T.V. actor, etc.? Not so fast! Maybe yes and maybe no! The irreducible definition of תועד"א is Torah in relation to, in the contrast of, the world, the civilization, the raw material as it exists in time, in *our*



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time, in *this* time. Not as it existed in the sixteen hundreds, or the seven-teen hundreds, or even the eighteen hundreds or Rav Hirsch's day in Germany, or in Poland, or in Lithuania. *But in relation to the raw material as it exists today.* What that relation should be, however, what form it should take, what must be rejected and what may be accepted, must be decided, as any other question, according to the halachic factors and the values of the Torah.

What are these halachic factors and values? Obviously, this is not the place for involved halachic analysis, nor do we have enough time left for it, nor am I the authority to "pasken" for you. However, we must make some allusions to such analysis, if we are to answer the remaining קשיות, particularly those that deal with מינות and אפיקורסות and the איסור of ביטול תורה.

Nowhere in Rav Hirsch's writings do we find harsher and angrier expression than when he castigates אפיקורסות. "Fools," he calls them, though it be "argumentum ad hominem," and in various places in his writings we notice an angrier, less calm approach when he confronts the enemies of Hashem's Torah—both Jewish and non-Jewish. רבנו הצדיק was not easy-going about מינות and אפיקורסות.

Now the dangers inherent in many college courses should not, and cannot be minimized, especially when an isolated young student is enveloped in a classroom climate of אפיקורסות propagated by a professor who is a priest of secularism and כפירה.

Varied have been the attitudes of different רבנים even towards חכמה חיצונית in general, throughout the generations, down to our time. As the אומר, שו"ת writes in תשובה ו' in answer to the Maharshal's criticism: מחלוקת ישנה בין הפוסקים. In our time every Yeshiva man is familiar with the views of ר' אלהן ווסרמן זצוק"ל and of ר' ברוך בער זצ"ל which were given in response to a שאלה asked by our Rav שליט"א when he was a young man. Less known is the תשובה sent by the Telzer Rosh Yeshiva, ר' אברהם יצחק, בלוק. In it the Telzer Rosh Yeshiva writes that it is very difficult in such matters to give a clear answer, because these matters are very much dependent on outlooks and opinions ("השקפות דעות") which are more the province of אגדה than הלכה. A consequence of this is that one cannot render a decision which applies to everyone equally. Much depends on the student's temperament, his uniqueness, as well as on conditions of time, place, situation and surroundings (המקום והמצב). He goes on to enumerate certain guidelines, but even with "ההסתייגות".



Among the factors mentioned by the Telzer Rosh Yeshiva even with regard to subjects that incline towards מיונות are לא תלמד לעשות אבל אתה מינות which is the להחלם of היתר and also the ודע מה of היתר. This applies even to subjects which are in the main outright אפיקורסות. But with regard to truly scientific subjects (I am quoting now), which have some elements of מיונות intermingled in them, like the natural sciences and medicine, there is no איסור. Not only can they assist Torah study, but they contain elements which can lead to the strengthening of אמונה as mentioned in the שער הבחינה of ספר חובות הלבבות. Elements of מיונות have become intermingled with the objective scientific facts through irreligious persons who propound theories that do not lend themselves to experimental demonstration. One should discard these, and concentrate only on the truly objective facts. Indeed, there is a great need to have scientific texts written by בעלי תורה ויראת שמים. He goes on to give certain guidelines, among which is that לימוד התורה should remain עיקר.

Now my point is not that this or that תשובה is invested with canonical authority, but that there is a variety of views and factors which must be taken into consideration, and that the entire question is not given to precise halachic decision.

Personally, I removed my own children from the biology class in our Mesivta when the theory of evolution was being taught by a non-religious teacher, and I taught it to them myself, pointing out to them the serious weaknesses and defects of this unproven and unprovable theory. **אדרבה**! I convinced them of its falseness. They made out well on the Regent's Examinations. We need Torah-true teachers who will do this in the classroom.

When some of my children went to college mainly to study computer science, I told them, "Take courses, not *apikorsus*." My wife, who worked in college, used her influence when this was necessary.

Before leaving this subject, I should like to point out another source, which has been overlooked. פרק ו' ספר האמונות והדעות, רב סעדי גאון, states that his philosophical discussions, which include the opinions of the opponents of the Torah, do not lead to כפירה and אפיקורסות, nor do they violate the איסור of speculating about מה למטה, מה למטה, nor do they violate the איסור of speculating about מה למטה, מה למטה.



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מדעת עצמו בהעלותו במחשבתו ענינו ראשית המקום והזמן  
Whoever speculates in  
this way may either arrive at the truth or may err. But even if he arrives at  
the true אמונה, there is no guarantee that it will not be uprooted from him  
because of some subsequent error that might arise in his mind, which  
might corrupt his views. . . . But we . . . do not engage in research and  
speculation in this way." He goes on to say that our speculation is to  
confirm logically what we know from the Torah and the נביאים and,  
secondly, to refute anyone who argues against us in matters of our אמונה.

In other words, if we base ourselves at all times on the אמת לדעת  
of Hashem's Torah, and measure all opinions against this standard of  
truth, then there is no איסור in reading and discussing the views of those  
who oppose the Torah. The איסור is only to start from zero and attempt to  
arrive at our conclusions through independent speculation, independent  
of the Torah.

In the light of these words of רס"ג we can answer a seemingly per-  
plexing contradiction in the writings of the Rambam.

In the Rambam "paskens" at great length and in no  
uncertain terms that we are prohibited from reading books about עבודה  
עבודה and to dwell on such thoughts of ע"ז. Moreover, it is prohibited to  
dwell on any thoughts that might undermine any fundamental of the  
Torah. Reading such books and dwelling on such thoughts is a trans-  
gression of the לאו on which חז"ל comment: זו מינות.

And yet, on the משנה אבות, which in the Rambam's גירסא reads: הוי  
הוי—Be diligent to study what to answer the  
שקד ללמוד מה שתשיב את אפיקורוס  
and know before Whom you  
are toiling, and Who is your Employer, the Rambam comments: Study  
subjects through which you will be able to answer the non-Jewish  
למד דברים שבהם תשיב לכופרים מן האומות ותתוכח אתם  
should they question you ותענה להם אם ישאלוך.  
But, though you study their views in order to know  
how to refute them, take care that none of these views enter your heart  
ואע"פ שאתה לומד דעות העמים כדי שתדע היאך להשיב עליהם הוזהר שלא יכנס בלבך שום  
and realize that the One Whom you are serving knows your secret  
thoughts (ודע כי אשר אתה עובד לפניו יודע סודותיך).



In light of the overlooked words of רס"ג, the solution is simple. The Rambam's פסק הלכות ע"ז refers to the independent study of ספרי ע"ז, and the independent pursuit of doubts and thoughts of מינות and אפיקורסות for their own sake and on their own terms, in the manner of ספרי הנביאים להניח ספרי הנביאים, and saying: "Well, let us see בצד, of putting aside the Torah and the נביאים, the Rambam refers to the study of which is right." But in the פירוש המשנה, אפיקורסים in order to refute the אפיקורסות. Such study obviously does not put the Torah aside even for a moment. On the contrary, the Torah is the starting point and the standard by which one judges the words of the אפיקורסים.

The point is not that איסור דע מה שתשיב לאפיקורוס overrides, is דוחה the איסור of דברי מינות which does not put aside the Torah and the נביאים for even a moment, but which measures everything being real by the truth of the Torah, any reading which is not undertaken for the purpose of independent speculation and the dwelling on doubts for their own sake and on their own terms—any such reading is not אסור in the first place. To realize how blind are the gropings of men in relation to the enlightening truth of G-d's Torah is not an איסור. But even then, the person, and the circumstances, must be such that there is no danger of the אפיקורסים gaining a foothold in the heart. In most cases my advice remains: "Courses, not apikorsus!"

So the charge of איסור דע מה שתשיב לאפיקורוס is an oversimplification. There are many factors to be considered, and they must be considered in relation to each individual and his specific situation.

Let us go on to the next קשיא, the next criticism, to the איסור and the ביטול of ענין. Notice how I worded it: "The איסור and the ביטול of ענין." There is a difference between the איסור and the ביטול of ענין, the matter of ביטול התורה although many of us have been indoctrinated, in accordance with a minority view, to think they are the same.

There is little room for א"א in a comprehensive sense, if every minute not spent in eating, sleeping and working must be spent in "learning" Torah, and if to do otherwise constitutes an איסור of ביטול התורה. But this is not the view of the majority of מפרשים and פוסקים.

Thus, the well-known מצות מס' פאה of משנה enumerates that have no fixed limit: אלו דברים שאין להם שיעור הפאה והבכורים והראיון וגמילות חסדים ותלמוד תורה. The רע"ב comments: ותלמוד תורה אין לה שיעור דכתיב והגית בו יומם ולילה. This would seem to mean that ח"ת is a limitless obligation, day and night. However, the משנה ראשונה objects that this would not parallel פאה and



concerning which maximization is possible, but purely voluntary. וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע אִישׁ אֶת הַקוֹלָם וְלִילָהּ, וּמִשְׁמַע לְכָאוּרָה דַּתְּ אֵין לוֹ שִׁיעוּר לְמַעַלָּה שְׁחִיבָה הוּא לְעִסּוּק יוֹם וּלִילָהּ. וְאִם לֹא דַם לְכָל הַנִּי דַּאִין לְהֵן שִׁיעוּר לְמַעַלָּה וְרִשּׁוּת הוּא אִי בְּעִי עֵבִיד. Therefore, the משנה ראשונה explains that maximization of ת"ת is also purely voluntary, because, minimally, one may be יוצא the obligation of ת"ת with ביום ובלילה by fixing some time during the day and some time during the night for ת"ת, and this is the view of the Poskim ומיהו נראה דת"ת נמי ליכא חובה שלא להפסיק ממנה כלל אלא לקביעות זמן ביום ובלילה. Similarly, the תפארת ישראל explains that ת"ת in relation to ת"ת to mean that there is no minimal שיעור since, as the גמ' states in מנחות, one may be יוצא with שחרית וערבית וק"ש שחרית וערבית (דיצא בק"ש שחרית וערבית כמנחות צ"ט: אמר ר' יוחנן משום ר"ש בן יוחי אפי' לא קרא אדם אלא קרית שמע שחרית וערבית קיים לא ימוש). This statement is also referred to by the סתמא דגמ' in נדרים ח. where it is stated that although a שבועה cannot be חל on something which we have already been commanded at Sinai to do, nevertheless if one swears to "learn" a given פרק or a given מסכתא the שבועה is חל because the Sinaitic obligation of ת"ת may be fulfilled minimally with שחרית וערבית וק"ש שחרית וערבית (כיון: ק"ש שחרית וערבית בק"ש שחרית וערבית משום הכי חייל שבועה עליה (דאי בעי פטר נפשיה בק"ש שחרית וערבית משום הכי חייל שבועה עליה).

Since this is the פוסקים' "pasken" according to it, as noted by the משנה ראשונה.

The ר"ן objects that one is obligated to know the Torah so thoroughly that one can answer any question without hesitation and to accomplish this one must learn constantly day and night, as much as possible ת"ת ושננתם שיהו דברי תורה מחודדין בפין שאם ישאלך אדם דבר שלא תגמגם ותאמר לו מיד שיהרי חייב כל אדם ללמוד תמיד יום ולילה כפי כחו מפורש וישננתם שיהו דברי תורה מחודדין בפין דרשה because חל שבועה בקרא בהדיא.

However, the רדב"ז points out in his סו' תט"ז that all the ראש and ריטב"א, רשב"א, רבנו יונה, ספר היראים, Rashi—מפרשים disagree with ת"ת and hold the view that "learning" Torah beyond שחרית וערבית וק"ש is voluntary, a רשות, not a חובה (אדם חייב להו דאין). In מנחות the same רשב"א who said in ברכות ל"ה: that one is יוצא ת"ת with שחרית וערבית וק"ש says: "If a man be occupied with plowing, planting, etc., what will happen to the Torah?" In answering the contradiction, the יהודה החסיד states that מ' ברכות תוס' ר' יהודה החסיד is referring to the obligation of ת"ת which can be fulfilled minimally with שחרית וערבית וק"ש but מ' ברכות רשב"א is referring to



the voluntary maximization of ת"ת as a מצוה בעלמא (לא משום דס"ל לר' שמעון): שתי הלחם במנחות איהו קאמר דאפי' לא קרא אלא ק"ש שחרית וערבית שהיא חובה דהא בפי' שתי הלחם במנחות איהו קאמר דאפי' לא קרא אלא ק"ש שחרית וערבית (קיים לא ימוש אלא מצוה בעלמא הוא דקאמר מפני ביטול תורה gives a similar answer.

In other words, beyond ת"ת there is no איסור of שחרית וערבית, but there is an ענין, a matter of ביטול תורה. One should be involved in significant "learning" as a מצוה בעלמא, in the sense of כולם ות"ת כנגד כולם.

According to this majority view, the דרשה will obviously refer to the sharp *quality* of "learning," not to *quantity*. Subsequently, I found this explanation also in Prof. Leo Levi's ת"ת ספר שערי which I found very useful in this entire area, especially in its disclosure of sources.

Very instructive in this matter are the words of the הלכות in אור שמח. He writes that ת"ת beyond שחרית וערבית has no fixed halachic definition. It is given to each person to decide for himself, according to his abilities, his habitual necessities, his natural diligence or lack of diligence, his love of Torah, etc. לפי ההכרחיות. וכן כל אחד לפי האיש אשר נפשו מרגשת שלפי הרגלו, וכן לפי טוהר נפשו של אדם, כי אינו דומה בחיוב ת"ת האיש אשר נפשו מרגשת בשכלה הוה ונקשרה בעבודת אהבה לת"ת לאיש אשר כוחות נפשו נרפים ועצלים. לכן איך היה מחוק הבורא לחוק חיוב ת"ת לכל ישראל? ונתן תורת כל אחד בידו. . . . לכן באו חכמים ופירשו לנו גדר מרכז האמיתי של ת"ת—ק"ש בשחרית וק"ש בערבית קיים והגית בו יומים ואין נוח לי מה שלמד הרן שם מהא דבר דאחיא מדרשא חייל שבועה עליה. He concludes by saying that he is dissatisfied with the Ran's explanation. It is self-evident that one should try to maximize ת"ת, this greatest of all מצוות, this very foundation of our relationship to G-d. הקב"ה gave us His Torah to learn it and to know it, not only to say שחרית וערבית ק"ש. But this is not defined halachically in terms of איסור והיתר.

There is—and there always was—a spectrum in כלל ישראל ranging from those who make תורתם אומנתם, day and night, to those who are יוצא with ת"ת with the majority in between these two extremes. Although infrequently achieved, the ideal is, of course, to make תורתו קבע עראי (דורות הראשונים עשו תורתן קבע ומלאכתן עראי, זו וזו נתקיימו בידן) and מלאכתו עראי. The knowledge of Torah is acquired through מעוט דרך ארץ. Rav Hirsch comments: "All of the earthly life, both individual and communal, constitutes the subject of the Torah's wisdom, and the Torah seeks to teach us to view and arrange all human affairs on earth in the light of the Teaching of G-d. . . . Nevertheless, *moderation* is essential even in this aspect of living, if time, mental clarity and emotional



לא משום דס"ל לר' שמעון: מצוה בעלמ  
שהיא חובה דהא בפ' שתי הלחם במנחות  
(קיים לא ימ). The ראש gives a

ביטול תורה איסור ק"ס  
One should be involved in signi-  
ficant sense of כולם כולם.

ושננתם יהיה דברי תורה מיוחדים  
will obviously refer to the  
Subsequently, I found this  
which I found very use-  
disclosure of sources.

הלכות in אור שמח  
has no fixed halachic  
for himself, according to  
diligence or lack of dili-  
וכן למשל אדם חלוש המון וכן  
שלפי הרגלו, וכן לפי טוהר נפשו  
בשכלה הון ונקשרה בעבודת  
היה מחוק הכורא לחוק חוב  
ופירשו לנו גדר מרכון האמת  
qualified with the Ran's  
ואין נוח לי מה שלמד הן  
this greatest of all  
gave us His  
ק"ס שחרית. But this

כלל ישראל ranging  
those who are יוצא  
the two extremes.  
תורתו קבע  
מלאכתו עראי  
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emotional

calm are to be preserved for the cultivation of the Torah's wisdom (which is to say, for ח"ת). "ח"ת, yes! But we should seek to increase our study of Torah, and to decrease, or as Rav Hirsch puts it, to "moderate" our ד"א for the sake of ח"ת. "If one is to attain the prize of [Torah] knowledge, then he must restrict his business activities also to a minimum (במיעוט סחורה)." That was written by Rav Hirsch.

And so the Rambam first rules, in פ"א of הלכות ח"ת that the halachic obligation is to have fixed times for Torah study during the day and during the night. כל איש מישראל חייב בתלמוד תורה בין עני בין עשיר בין שלם בגופו. בין בעל יסורין ואפילו בעל אשה ובנים חייב לקבוע לו זמן לת"ת ביום ובלילה שנה והגית בו יומם ולילה. Beyond this halachic minimum, however, the Rambam speaks in פ"ג of voluntary maximization in terms of one whose heart prompts him to carry out the מצוה fittingly, and wishes to be crowned with the crown of Torah. (מי שנשאו לבו לקיים מצוה זו כראוי ולהיות מוכתר בכתר תורה).

And so, in choosing a profession and a life-style in accordance with א"א all these halachic factors and Torah outlooks must be weighed and considered in relation to each individual's personality and situation. In choosing a vocation and a life-style let's not forget the warning of an earlier Torah גדול who wrote: "Today's dangers threaten not from sword and arson, but from the allurements of enjoyment, the enticements of profits, the attraction of world cultures. . . . 'Pious' fathers and mothers entrust their sons to 'vocations,' occupations, in which the Torah of G-d counts for nothing. [As for the daughters], domesticity bores them. Their minds, longing for 'higher' purposes, are no longer satisfied and fulfilled by the duties of . . . a wife, a mother. And so they grow up, the future wives and mothers of our generation." The earlier Torah גדול who wrote these words was Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch וצ"ל.

In choosing a profession and a life-style according to א"א let's not forget that the goal of תועד"א is שכונה-nearness in every area of life. (You begin to see, I am sure, how inappropriate, how contradictory to the spirit of רבנו הקדוש is the establishment of Samson Raphael Hirsch chairs in academic institutions here and in Israel, which strive for academic achievement, not שכונה-nearness. As a matter of fact רבנו הקדוש was not happy even with the academic approach to Torah of the Berlin Seminary. You can make your own "Kal vachomers.")

Time is running out. So let us address ourselves briefly to the criticism, that the attractive culture of Rav Hirsch's time was congenial to Torah values, but today's culture is destructive of them. In the first place,



the culture of Rav Hirsch's time was by no means congenial to Torah values, as is evident from the quotation you just heard. There are other passages from Rav Hirsch's essays, too numerous to quote, that warn against the atheistic science of *his* time, the immorality of *his* time and the gross materialism of *his* time. Rav Hirsch rejected all aspects of *his* society that were inimical to Torah and accepted as raw material only what could be "Toraized." We can do the same.

Of course, in our society agnosticism, immorality and gross materialism are far more pervasive, more accepted as the norm, than in earlier times. The *חזו"ל* *ומלאה הארץ זמה: פסוק* describes our society literally, without exaggeration. The growing university population, in contrast to earlier times, has an increasingly secularizing influence on our culture. To this anti-Torah philosophy we must apply the teaching of *חזו"ל* *תורה באומות יש*. אל תאמין.

But our culture consists, not only of the present-day materialism of a large segment of society, but also of the more positive elements of the past, which are part of the *cultural heritage* of today's society and which are still acknowledged by many. The raw material contained in this cultural heritage can be "Toraized." To this applies the other part of the *חזו"ל* *חכמה באומות יש, תאמין*: מאמר *חזו"ל*. Certainly, there is more scientific knowledge, *חכמה* in today's society than ever before. Moreover, the *חכמה* of a civilization is not only its science, but also its artistic and literary productions . . . the sum total of human thought and accomplishment throughout the ages down to our time. While a great deal of this, perhaps *even most of it*, must be rejected, especially the more recent literary productions, yet there are some gems here and there that lend themselves to "Toraization." But these gems are really few and far between.

On the other hand, personally, it seems to me that it is almost impossible to "Toraize" TV-viewing, and even listening to the radio requires careful selectivity. "Careful selectivity"—those are the key words. We must reject much, even most, of today's values and productions. But we can select the best of the human spirit, the best of civilization's legacy, and "Toraize" it. This is the approach of "Mensch-Yisroel," as Rav Hirsch termed it. We can in this way remain the surviving representatives of the best of the human spirit. We go even further. We "Toraize" it. We transform the raw material into Torah and *עבודה ה'*. We certainly cannot and do not accept the life-style of the general society. We Toraize the best of the human heritage and make it part of our Torah life-style.



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In conclusion, what about the one remaining קשיא, the criticism, that with a few notable exceptions, the תועד"א approach did not produce great תלמידי חכמים when compared with those produced by the Yeshiva world? This is true. But it is not a function of the תועד"א approach, but rather a result of historical conditions.

The production of great תלמידי חכמים requires an ongoing tradition of intensive Torah "learning," carried on by a large pool of scholars. This situation existed in Eastern Europe, but had been interrupted in the West. It was Rav Hirsch who complained of this historical condition, when he wrote:

"We have lost our seminaries for youths and men, our Yeshivas and schools for children and adolescents. The study of תורה, that central luminary of Jewish life, that Divine fire of the Jewish people, has been allowed to go out. Why, then, should we be surprised that spirits have become bleak and hearts cold, and that there is no zeal left for Judaism? Why should we be surprised that winter has come to Judaism? . . . Harbingers of a Jewish springtime must come to us not from the outside, but from within Judaism itself. . . . The yearning for Torah has been reawakened in many. They labor to reintroduce the knowledge of תורה . . . These impulses and endeavors have already generated action."

(If there is any element of הוראת שעה in תועד"א it is not in its ideal conception, but in the way it had to be carried out because of historical circumstances.)

But it takes time. It has taken a century to reintroduce התורה לימוד in the United States to the point of producing outstanding תלמידי חכמים.

We spoke earlier of a spectrum in כלל ישראל ranging from those who make תורתם אומנותם to those who are יוצא with the halachic minimum, with the majority in between, who strive, or should strive, to maximize their לימוד התורה. A healthy Torah community has always been based on many and varied occupations and professions. But those among us who choose to make תורתם אומנותם should be considered the most valued resource of the community, members of the highest of all professions. We Hirschians must and can produce our own גדולים בתורה in our own Yeshiva, if necessary, to whom תועד"א is relevant, גדולים בתורה who even as recognized Torah authorities will still maintain an interest in general thought and affairs, and relate to them, despite severe limitations of time.

In writing of גדולי יסודי התורה in קידוש השם, the Rambam speaks of the גדול עוסק בתורה עמוך בציצית who is perceived by his community as always generating a קידוש השם. But קידוש השם as מוכתר בתפילין ועושה כל מעשיו לפנים משורת הדין



he adds the significant phrase: *והוא שלא יתרחק הרבה ולא ישתומם*; גדול בתורה; the must not go to extreme and must not become a recluse. Indeed, too many budding *חכמים* תלמידי חכמים slowly abandon effective ways of speaking, abandon dignified manners and behavior patterns and dress, abandon conversance in general affairs, as though the *בטלנות* of a recluse were a Torah virtue, ח"ו!

We should go our own way, convinced of the correctness and relevance of *תועד"א* as the ideal Torah system, as the *לכתחילה*. We should promote it as such *vigorously*, no less aggressively than the non-Hirschian Yeshiva world and Chassidic groups, who see themselves as *בדיעבד*. We may respectfully grant the usefulness, *לכתחילה* and others as *הוראת* and indeed, the hidden blessing of the non-Hirschian approach as a *שעה*.

Perhaps, too, as communal ties are loosened, we should think of *תועד"א* less in terms of community, and more in terms of a movement in Torah Judaism, to be promoted and fostered wherever possible.

In the *והצדיק* of *זכות* and through our own sincere efforts, both spiritual and material, may we succeed to bring the *שכינה* nearness of *תועד"א* in all areas of living to more and more of our brethren, and may we restore Torah life to its original glory—*ליושנה* and *תועד"א* approach. It is a challenge worthy of a mature *שם שמים* ברבים.