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Translator's Note

In his third book, Dr. Chamiel takes a thematic approach, drawing attention to those Jewish philosophers and theologians in the twentieth and twenty first century who believed that religion and reason, while both true, often contradict each other. This book discusses a wide range of responses to this dilemma: harmonization or dialectical synthesis, unsuccessful struggles to attain such a resolution, and acceptance of an imperfect world in which the tension is irresolvable and two contradictory truths prevail.

As with any translation certain challenges presented themselves as I progressed; I would like to draw attention to one. While many of the thinkers discussed by Dr. Chamiel express their philosophical musings in English, others formulated their ideas in Hebrew. It is certainly possible to express abstract, philosophical ideas in a very "modernized" Hebrew, replete with foreign terminology and vocabulary. Such language lends itself relatively easily to English translation. However, the very nature of the dilemma explored in Dr. Chamiel's book – the interplay and relationship between religion and reason – meant that many of the thinkers discussed chose to formulate not only their thoughts – but also their language – in close dialogue with the traditions of the Bible, Talmud, and rabbinic literature. While I could rely on previous translations when they existed (as I have documented in the footnotes), I was often required to provide translations of my own. Needless to say, it was no small task and I can only hope my translation does justice to the works of these writers, as well as to Dr. Chamiel's insightful analysis of their various approaches.

My gratitude to Avi Staiman, CEO of Academic Language Experts, and Professor Marc Shapiro who reviewed and corrected the translation as I proceeded. And of course, my many thanks to Dr. Chamiel who took an active part in the translation process offering insightful comments throughout.

Avi Kallenbach

Introduction

The duality in the attitudes of the cognitive man and the homo religiosus is rooted in existence itself. (Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man*, trans. Lawrence Kaplan, Philadelphia 1983, 9).

The distinction between religion [דת] and reason [דעת] is in the eye [עין] of the beholder. (E.C.)

This book is the first volume of the third installment of a trilogy, a series on modern, religious Jewish thought from the beginning of the nineteenth century to present today. My first study focused on the historical and ideological background behind the rise of modern forms of religiosity among European Jewry. My goal was to identify the first religious thinkers in the modern period who, instead of rejecting the phenomena of modernity, sought to incorporate them into a framework of traditional Jewish observance. I encountered Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888) from Frankfurt, Germany; Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) from Padua, Italy; and Rabbi Tsvi Hirsch Chajes (1805–1855) from Żółkiew (Zhovkva), Galicia. Wishing to contend with the challenges modernity posed to believers in divine revelation, these three nineteenth centuries figures formulated elaborate philosophies. After conducting a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of their philosophies, I began to understand how they sought to combine religion with human knowledge, tradition with modernity, and the dictates of reason, attained from philosophy and the sciences with the dictates of revelation encapsulated in the Written and Oral Torah. I submitted my findings to the doctoral senate of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. An adaptation of my doctorate was later published as a book: *The Middle Way*.[1]

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1   Ephraim Chamiel, *The Middle Way: The Emergence of Modern Religious Trends in Nineteenth-Century Judaism, Responses to Modernity in the Philosophy of Z.H. Chajes, S.R. Hirsch, and S.D. Luzzatto*, trans. Jeffrey Green, 2 vols. (Brighton, MA, 2014).

In order to analyze these different approaches, I adopted the model advanced by Shalom Rosenberg for the study of Jewish philosophy, adjusting and expanding it as needed.[2] Using this model, I demonstrated that Chajes advocated a restrictive identicality approach, the approach espoused by Judah Halevi based on the teachings of the Mu'tazila students of Al-Ghazali. According to this approach, the dictates of religion and philosophy are, in principle, identical—meaning, any contradiction between them is impossible. However, in cases of putative contradictions or difficulties, it is the revelation of Scripture which must make the final determination. This is the approach of classic fundamentalism.

Hirsch's approach was similar. However, unlike Chajes, he was forced to admit that, in certain instances, scientific facts have been proven beyond a doubt yet persist in contradicting tradition. In such cases (and only in such cases), he shifted to the interpretative identicality approach advocated by Maimonides, who was, in turn, influenced by the Aristotelian rationalists, Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. According to this stance, while both religion and science are in principle identical (and thus cannot contradict each other), in cases of difficulty or contradiction, it is reason which must make the final determination. In such cases, Scripture is to be reinterpreted allegorically. Based on the definition of James Barr, I have characterized Hirsch's inconsistent approach as Neo-Fundamentalism.[3]

My contribution to the field was my explanation of Samuel David Luzzatto's approach. Luzzatto's statements on the subject are *prima facie*, incoherent and contradictory. This was at least, how my scholarly predecessors characterized his philosophy. I believe, however, that I have successfully demonstrated – based on a study of the majority of his writings and a review of their chronology – that Luzzatto's approach shifted and evolved over the course of his life. His final approach can be characterized as akin to the "dual truth" stance. Historically, this was a very rare approach circulating in certain scholastic medieval circles. It was advocated by R. Isaac Albalag (the late thirteenth century)[4] and Elijah Delmedigo (1460–1497)[5] who followed the lead of Christian Averroists, followers

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2 See Shalom Rosenberg, *Torah Umada' Bahagut Hayehudit Hahadasha* (Jerusalem, 1988), 23–45. Chamiel, *The Middle Way*, 351–357. An overview of the model is offered below in chapter one, under the heading: "Between Revelation and Reason – The Spectrum of Approaches."

3 See James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia, 1978); Chamiel, *op. cit.*, 112–13, 289, 349.

4 Y. Gutmann, *Hafilosofia Shel Hayahadut* (Jerusalem, 1989), 184–187.

5 Ibid., 234–236.

and interpreters of Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes). Some modern Straussian interpreters of Maimonides, believe that Maimonides also maintained such a position, as I will explain below in a chapter on Leo Strauss. According to the "dual truth" stance, one cannot escape contradictions and challenges by crafting an illusory harmony between the conclusions of reason and those of revelation. These two fields constitute two full, and often antagonistic, truths. Humans cannot in this world and with their reason reconcile them. I labeled this the "irresolvable dialectic approach" in order to denote something less scholastic and more existential; according to this approach, one should not celebrate both truths but rather ponder the tension between them. In truth, however, no real escape is possible until the final redemption. According to the "resolvable dialectical approach" advanced by German philosophers Johannes Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), each stage in the history of the human spirit and religious belief consists of a thesis and an antithesis. These opposites can be fused into a synthesis – which may be either ephemeral or long-lasting. At this stage, the contradiction is resolved, and the process recurs until a new contradiction arises.

By contrast, the irresolvable dialectic approach, based on the philosophy of Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling (1775–1854) maintains that a permanent or enduring synthesis is, at least in this world, nothing but an illusion. One should not seek to resolve opposites, but rather willingly resign oneself to acceptance of the two contradictory truths.[6] This approach in which historical development progresses towards a redemption—as described by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel—was taken up by Jewish thinkers seeking to resolve contradictions between Jewish revelation and reason. It is important to note that the dual truth approach not only stands in opposition to the resolvable dialectical approach maintained by Nahman Krochmal (1785–1840)—in terms of the historical process and the difficulties prevailing between religion and reason according to Fichte and Hegel[7]—but also to the compartmental approach adopted by Isaiah Leibowitz based on the philosophy of the founder of the Haskalah movement Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786). According to this approach, religion and reason are two parts of one great truth, each discipline pertaining to a separate area of inquiry, each one employing a different language and terminology. Consequently, any contradiction between them is impossible.[8]

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6 See Chapter 2, below.

7 Chamiel, *The Middle Way*, vol. 1, 197–199; vol. 2, 331–337.

8 For a discussion of Rosenberg's model, which I expanded and applied to the philosophies of Chajes, Hirsch, and Luzzatto. See Chamiel, *The Middle Way*, vol. 1, 351–357, 366–370, 402–447, 447–492.

In my second book, *To Know Torah*,[9] a popular commentary on the Pentateuch, I show how a close reading of the biblical text based on the method of *peshat* already uncovers contradictions which should not be resolved but rather accepted. This shows that "dual truth" approach is already anticipated in the Biblical period.[10]

In my third book, *The Dual Truth*,[11] I dedicate an entire chapter to an analysis and description of Luzzatto's evolving views about the relationship between reason and revelation. Luzzatto specifically discussed the issues of free will, divine providence and reward and punishment. Ultimately, he was forced to concede that human reason is unable to resolve the contradictions between these subjects (or other subjects), that is, between the conclusions of pure philosophy and science—which advocate causality and determinism—and the conclusions of revelation, embodied in the Torah (when stripped of erroneous interpretations), which teaches the existence of free will, providence, and reward and punishment.[12] Likewise, in another chapter, I discuss a figure influenced by Luzzatto's approach to this subject, namely, Rabbi Umberto Cassuto (1883–1951).[13] I also dedicate a chapter to the dialectical thought of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935), seeking to trace the developments and changes in his approach. His philosophy only became dialectical with his immigration to the Land of Israel. Ultimately, he realized that the rift in his soul was irreparable and also adopted a notion of the dual truth. Rav Kook did not, however, resign himself to full acceptance of this insight, and spent his entire life struggling to reconcile reason and revelation but to no avail.[14]

The last chapter of the *Dual Truth* offers a brief overview of the dialectical approach in Jewish thought. It presents various approaches that attempt to resolve the contradictions between the sacred and profane, beginning with a gamut of theosophical-kabbalistic approaches. These were perpetuated in the thought of the Maharal, Hasidism and the writings of Rav Kook and continue to find expression in the stances of modern-day philosophers: those from the past generation such as Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik (1903–1993) and

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9 Ephraim Chamiel, *To Know Torah: To Understand the Weekly Parasha, Modern Reading in the Peshat of the Torah and its Ideas*, 5 vols (Herzliya, 2018).

10 Ibid., vol. 1, 115–116 and note 134, 118 and note 137, vol. 2, 112-113 and note 137, 122 and note 142, 164 and note 226, 173 and note 237; vol. 5, 67 and notes 63, 163.

11 Ephraim Chamiel, *The Dual Truth, Studies on Nineteenth-Century Modern Religious Thought and its Influence on Twentieth-Century Jewish Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Brighton, MA, 2018).

12 Chamiel, *The Dual Truth*, vol. 1, 73–104.

13 Ibid., 500–536.

14 Ibid., 449–499.

Leo Strauss (1899–1973) and those still alive today: my colleagues Micah Goodman, Avinoam Rosenak (an interpreter of Rav Kook), and Moshe Meir.[15] Today I realize that other philosophers should be added to this list. From the past generation we can name Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972), Shmuel Hugo Bergman (1883–1975), Akiva Ernst Simon (1900–1988), Rabbi Emil Fackenheim (1916–2003), Rabbi Mordechai Breuer (1921–2007), his uncle Rabbi Isaac Breuer (1883–1946), and Rabbi Shimshon Gershon Rosenberg (Rav Shagar 1949–2007). Also belonging to this list are some of our contemporaries: Tamar Ross, Haim Otto Rechnitzer (an interpreter of Leo Strauss), and Elhanan Shilo.

The resolvable dialectical approach is complex; it demands a solution. The dual truth approach is even more complex; it is paradoxical and difficult to understand and "digest." Nevertheless, and perhaps surprisingly, more and more religious thinkers today are reaching the conclusion that these two approaches are the only viable ones, the only ones that avoid illusions and apologetics. Each one of these contemporary philosophers, whom I did not discuss in the past, have been given their own chapter in the present book. The historical evolution of the dialectical approach is barely addressed in the present book. This book is dedicated to illuminating and exploring the contradiction between religion and reason as understood by dialectical philosophers and believers – it is not a historical survey.

It behooves me here to express my thanks to Carmel Publishing house headed by Israel Carmel and to his team, especially Maayan El-On Feder and Dana Schiller. Dana spent much time and effort editing the book with intellect, understanding and expertise. Maayan worked on its beautiful external design. Carmel publishers stood behind me with the publication of my last two books in Hebrew, and successfully published them. My thanks to Tzippi Fisher who formatted and designed the book with exquisite talent. Likewise, my thanks to renowned London painter and sculptor, David Breuer Weil, who agreed to my request to use one of the works in his repertoire to adorn the cover of this book, asking for nothing in return. The greatest thanks goes to my wife Gulie, without whom none of this would have been possible. This book is dedicated to my ten beloved grandchildren who give me strength and furnish my life with meaning.

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15   Ibid., 537–545.

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Background

In the Middle Ages, the poles of contradiction pertained to the question of the correct sources of knowledge and authority—rational science and philosophy versus divine revelation. This tension was expressed in the form of binaries such as rationalism versus mysticism, free will versus determinism, and the eternity of the world versus creation ex nihilo. Jewish mysticism – the Zohar, Lurianic Kabbalah and Hasidism – incorporates a system of dialectic states into its teachings. These states already inhere within the godhead, where, according to kabbalistic thought, the dialectic flow of emanation takes place.[1] Man's relation to supernal worlds and the Shekhina are also dialectical. The hasid, tzadik or kabbalist dwell concurrently in parallel worlds; they stand between heaven and earth. Their consciousnesses move between these worlds, sometimes in a dialectical and dynamic back and forth.[2] In addition, the Shekhina, the *sefirah* of Malkhut, bestows its divine influence upon them from up high, using them as a conduit to the world as a whole. In their prayers and deeds, they theurgically influence the Shekhina from below. They help it unite with the *sefirah* of Tiferet and thus balance and unite the dialectical forces it encompasses.[3]

With the advent of the modern era, new binaries would become the subject of discussion. The philosophical discourse addressed conflicts such as rationalism versus romanticism, heteronomous morality versus autonomous morality, materialism versus spiritualism, pantheism versus transcendentalism, and deism versus theism. The beginning of the nineteenth century marks a turning point in the scope of dialectical thought. I believe that this can be attributed to three main factors:

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1   G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1967), 217–218; 252–253; I. Tishby, *Mishnat Hazohar*, vol 1, (Jerusalem, 1949), 265–270.

2   R. Elior, *Yisrael Baal Shem Tov Uvnei Doro*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 2014), 433, 438–439, 461.

3   I. Tishby, *Mishnat Hazohar*, 266–268.

1) Philosophy: in their philosophical systems, Fichte, Hegel and Schelling theorize a world progressing through history (primarily the history of religions and cultures) and undergoing a series of dialectical processes. They propose that one can portray these contradictions and tensions as a thesis and antithesis and attempt to resolve them through a higher or more advanced synthesis. Ever since it was conceived, this approach has challenged modern thinkers and believers, forcing them to consider new solutions to problems and contradictions—that is, the conflict between their religious beliefs and the dictates of rational philosophy and scientific discovery. Gradually, several Jewish thinkers adopted this model, incorporating an imitation of it into their philosophies. However, only a few after Krochmal, such as Rav Kook and Emil Fackenheim, continued to address dialectical evolution of history as well.[4]

2) Society: the ideas of the French Revolution of 1789, its slogan "freedom, equality and fraternity," spread throughout Europe, resulting in the gradual emancipation of European Jewry. The Jewish *maskilim* were gradually exposed to the world of European academies and were allowed to study in them. Jewish communities in general began to integrate into European society and culture. This exposed them to the attainments of human reason, scientific inventions, economic prosperity and the physical and spiritual pleasures they confer. In the Middle Ages, Jews had considered civil society and general culture anathema. These were societies which had in the past mercilessly persecuted, discriminated against and murdered Jews. Now their values and culture were suddenly enchanting growing circles in the Jewish communities and being treated as eminently valuable. A new legitimate source of authority thus arose, assuming its place alongside religion, revelation, and the Torah—reason, philosophy, and science.

3) Science

(A) The scientific discoveries of Charles Robert Darwin (1809–1882) and his successors regarding the evolution of species and the descent of man, processes taking place over the course of millions of years, and the idea that the world had existed for billions of years provided an impetus and basis for a necessary corrective to the narrow perspective of religious fundamentalism.

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4 For a discussion of the dialectic of spirit and religion in Hegel's thought (which originated in the philosophy of Fichte), see Y. Yovel, *Hida Afela: Hegel, Nietszsche Vehayehudim* (Jerusalem; Tel Aviv, 1996), 68–73; see also below, Chapter 4, n. 5.

(B) Impressive advancements in historical, philological, and archaeologi-
cal research led to the rise of Bible Criticism. This approach made sig-
nificant inroads into those Jewish circles that were open to academic
studies, and even had a significant impact on the rise of the Reform
movement. These developments helped broaden the perspective of
traditional Jews, forcing them to offer a response.

Because of these processes, the nineteenth century witnessed new discus-
sions revolving around the tension between tradition and modernity, ones
that should be directly attributed to developments in philosophy, science, and
reason-based scholarship. Topics discussed included the meaning and purpose
of history as well as the tensions between reason and religion: secular stud-
ies versus religious studies, universalism versus particularism, evolution versus
creationism, Bible criticism and scholarship versus traditional modes of study,
tradition versus historical evolution, Reform versus Orthodoxy, and the status
of women.

        After the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, coinciding with the
beginnings of post-modernism, the interests of dialectical scholars and philos-
ophers began to shift. This became even more pronounced after the Six Day
War and the conquest of Judea and Samaria. Most of these thinkers were not
unduly concerned about the contradictions between Torah and science-
philosophy, the focus of thinkers up to that point. Rather they began to
direct more attention to the gap between two sets of priorities: on the one
hand, practical modern life developing in the State of Israel and in the Jewish
Diasporas in the United States and Europe alongside the values and ethics of
Western Culture, on the other hand, the life of a believer in the Torah and the
divine commandments, based on a different set of values and ethics. The dis-
cussions primarily pertain to subjects such as socialism and capitalism versus
spiritual life; intermarriage versus separatism; a Jewish state versus a demo-
cratic one; religiosity versus secularism; inclusion of women in religious rituals
and their halakhic status in light of feminism; treatment of the Arab minority,
and non-Jews in Israel in general; the proper approach to homosexuality and
non-standard sexual orientations; the proper treatment of refugees and foreign
immigrants; the proper approach to academic studies; and the proper approach
to the Israeli occupation and the non-Jewish residents of its conquered or lib-
erated territories etc. It is my hope that by analyzing the texts of philosophers
who subscribe to the dialectical approach—from the second third of the twentieth
century to the first two decades of the twenty first—it will be possible to attain

a clearer understanding of the dialectical approach, specifically the "dual truth" approach. I also hope that it will allow us to identify other disciplines and subjects which can be better understood in light of this method.

Between Revelation and Reason—The Range of Approaches

Before delving into a detailed discussion of the dialectical approach and its modern proponents, I wish to offer a brief summary of a subject discussed at length in my previous books: the spectrum of opinions about the relationship between revelation and reason, religion and rationality, according to my expanded version of Rosenberg's model.

The first category includes three positions which are unconcerned by the relationship between the dictates of revelation on the one hand and the dictates of philosophy on the other. The "Haredi-fundamentalist" position maintains that human reason lacks an objective or legitimate basis and cannot guide man towards the true and ethical. Thus, when reason contradicts revelation—it is because the former is false. The only source of truth is God, who relayed his dictates and messages through revelation, and through his exclusive transmitters—Orthodox rabbis.

The atheistic or deistic approach maintains precisely the opposite. According to this approach, there is no God—or at least not a God who has any interest in or affinity to mankind. Therefore, the only way towards the true and good is through reason. Dictates which claim to be those of a revelation, but contradict reason, are false. The third approach is that of "full identicality." According to this stance, because both sources of authority—reason and revelation—derive from God, their claims must be, by definition, completely identical. This may have been the view of Saadia Gaon, a proponent of the strongest rationalistic philosophy formulated by a Jewish believer.

The second group also contains three approaches. All of them maintain that while the relationship between revelation and reason have some problems and challenges, in truth no contradiction exists, and neither one is false. Two of the three approaches maintain that in principle the conclusions reached by both disciplines are identical. According to the first approach, when such challenges arise, revelation should be used as the criterion for determining the truth. Claims of reason that seemingly oppose it should be re-examined and adjusted accordingly. This was the position of Judah Halevi and Hasdai

Crescas. Rosenberg refers to their position as the "restrictive identicality approach" (that is, restricting philosophy and science).

The second approach maintains precisely the opposite view. In cases of contradiction, the proper criterion for determining the truth is reason. Revelation should be reinterpreted in light of reason, sometimes through allegorical hermeneutics. This was the position of Maimonides and it is referred to as the interpretative approach (that is, interpreting revelation).

The third approach is the modernistic position of Moses Mendelssohn. According to Mendelssohn, the greater overarching truth can be divided into two separate, non-overlapping categories, distinct in both language and areas of inquiry. These two parts of the bigger picture are both important to some extent; both are necessary and both complement each other, and one who unites them can become a greater, more complete person. This position was also adopted by Naphtali Herz Wessely, Luzzatto (when he was younger), Franz Rosenzweig, and Yeshayahu Leibowitz.

The third group is that of the dialectical approach: all attempts at harmonization are illusory. There is a real dialectical contradiction between both sources of authority; this cannot be ignored or avoided. That being said, both are still true. This group also includes three positions. According to the first position, a person should strive to understand and analyze both sides of the tension, the thesis and antithesis. By doing so, a person can sublate both opposites (*aufhebung*) and reach a higher synthesis and fusion. This is also how history unfolds. As mentioned, the proponents of this view were Fichte and Hegel, followed in the world of Judaism by Nahman Krochmal (and others). Krochmal, however, maintained that Hegel's historical dialectic does not apply to the Jewish people, who are connected to the Absolute, and who instead undergo recurring processes of ascent and descent.

The second approach, the "transcendental" approach, can essentially be characterized as Kantian. The contradiction between science and Torah is ascribed to the duality of the world of phenomena versus the world of things in themselves. Science pertains to the sphere of intellectual apprehension, i.e., phenomena; religion and faith, by contrast operate in a prophetic transcendent sphere, a different reality. These two layers of reality stand in opposition to one another. It is not a contradiction that intellect can solve. This was the approach adopted by Rabbi Dr. Isaac Breuer and, as I will discuss, his followers.

According to the third approach, both contradictory disciplines belong to the same sphere. Each contains a full truth. The rift between the two truths

cannot be mended in this world and remains irresolvable. This approach is referred to as the dual truth, and was adopted by Isaac Albalag, Elijah Delmedigo, and Luzzatto later in his life. Many of our contemporaries have followed in their footsteps, as I will discuss shortly. All proponents of the dialectical approach, in all three of its iterations, have doubts as to how and when the two opposites can be united, if at all. Scholars have searched for signs in their teaching for the conditions which allow such a unification. I will now begin my analysis of all three stances of the third group in modern day Judaism.

Dialectical Approaches in the Background: Rav Kook as Interpreted by Avinoam Rosenak

As previously mentioned, I provide an overview of the dialectical approach in Judaism in the final chapter of my book *The Dual Truth*. I found a more detailed and comprehensive discussion in the doctoral dissertation (later adapted into a book) of Rav Kook scholar, Avinoam Rosenak.[1] Rosenak asserts in this study that the best way to understand the entire scope of Rav Kook's thought is through a so-called "Unity of Opposites" model. To support this approach, he reviews those thinkers whose influence left an impression on Rav Kook's thought. This includes Rav Kook's mystical kabbalistic predecessors, whose thought can be characterized as dialectical, especially Rabbi Judah Loew (the Maharal 1520–1609), Rabbi Zadok Hakohen Rabinowitz of Lublin (1823–1900), as well as non-Jewish philosophers whose approaches influenced the dialectical thought of an entire generation—Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling.

With subtle analysis, Rosenak delineates the differences between these philosophers, showing how some thinkers maintained the possibility of unifying contradictory poles—holy and profane, the world of spirit and practice, Torah and philosophy-science, revelation and reason—while others envisioned such a fusion as something temporary and ephemeral.

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1   *Hahalakha Hanevuit: Hafilosofia shel Hahalakha Bemishnat Haraay"a* (Jerusalem, 2007).

Describing the difference between Hegel and Schilling in this context, Rosenak writes:

> In Hegel's opinion, reality's wave of oppositions represents a stage that pushes reality to a higher level. This level will *erase oppositions*, until a new and different antithesis is created to oppose it, and so the process repeats itself. This stage of opposition is necessary but temporary. This is unlike Schelling's vision of reality. In Schelling's thought, the oppositions of reality are permanent phenomena. They are a realization of the power of the Absolute which is their source; they express different elements of the Absolute.[2]

In other words, according to Hegel, the opposing poles are united in a synthesis. This synthesis is, subsequently confronted by a new source of opposition, a new antithesis. The second set of thesis and antithesis is eventually united in a second synthesis and so on. According to Schelling, by contrast, opposites are never united in normal reality. They are only unified within the Absolute, which is none other than God Himself. Rosenak argues that Rav Kook's approach more closely resembles that of Schelling.

Rosenak begins by emphasizing the importance of Rav Kook's assertion that in the divine sphere, lying beyond this world, everything is permanently united. By contrast, in our world, the world of man and his consciousness, unifications are possible but temporary:

> According to him [=Rav Kook], the human perspective of reality perceives or receives contradictions that require a solution. "From God's perspective"—multivariance and contradictions are part of the greater [divine] whole, a One that includes everything. However, a distinction must be drawn between the supernal unification in the spirit of God—which completely erases oppositions—and the dialectical unification of opposites in human consciousness.[3]

Rosenak goes on to describe the shared assumptions of the thinkers he examines, namely the possibility of temporarily unifying opposites. He explains the

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2   Ibid., 48. Emphasis in source. Unless otherwise stated, all emphases in excerpts are my own [E.C.].
3   Ibid., 49–50.

spiritual prerequisites demanded by each thinker in order to make such a rec-
onciliation possible:

> Furthermore, in all the dialectical approaches belonging to the aforemen-
> tioned "Unification of Opposites" [model] (both that of Rabbi Zadok
> Hakohen of Lublin and that of the Maharal, and Kabbalah in general),
> the theologian in question points to a spiritual option that makes [such]
> an experience possible, an experience in which oppositions are combined
> and (temporarily) drawn close to one another. This event requires a
> moment of transcendence above and beyond [man's] polarized reality. In
> the thought of Rabbi Zadok Hakohen of Lublin, this takes place during
> an experience of *devekut* [=cleaving to God]; in ecstatic Kabbalah, the
> individual can be absorbed into the divine whole; this holds true in philos-
> ophy and Romanticism as well, especially in the thought of Schelling. In
> Schelling's thought, unification is attained in the artistic work of the genius.
> He explains that this enlightened individual is the "artist who faithfully
> paints the kingdom of nature."[4]

Rosenak goes on to discuss Rav Kook's position, pointing to the similarities
and differences between him and his predecessors:

> In Rav Kook's thought, as in the thought of the Maharal, there are moments
> in which one can experience unification. However, the nature of this uni-
> fication differs from the notions of his predecessors. Both Rav Kook and
> the Maharal speak of an event or stage in which oppositions are overcome;
> however, they maintain, unlike Rabbi Zadok of Lublin, for example, that
> this event is part of *halakhic* thinking. Here one can see the difference
> between Rav Kook and the Maharal. As explained by Avi Sagi, according to
> the Maharal, [unification takes place] in the theoretical study of Torah as
> opposed to concrete halakhic praxis. The halakhic determination, because
> it is a decisive ruling, does not allow for integration; it is only theoret-
> ical study (whether halakhic or aggadic), [the stage] preceding halakhic
> determination, that can give expression to the moment of Unification of
> Opposites. By contrast, according to Rav Kook, [unification] can be imple-
> mented on a halakhic level, in both theoretical [study] as well as in prac-
> tical rulings. This implementation, as we will see, is clearly represented in

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4 Ibid., 50–51.

> [Rav Kook's] meta-halakhic approach. The same momentary synthesis
> achieved by the genius of Schelling is realized by the halakhic decisor
> through prophetic Halakhah.[5]

In other words, theoretical study and jurisprudence in accordance with prophetic Halakhah enables, according to Rav Kook, the unification of opposites in the consciousness of the halakhic decisor. Does this achievement of unity calm the tempestuous soul of a person pulled to and fro by the tension between these poles? According to Rosenak—no:

> Even after the summit of prophetic Halakhah or an illuminating, clear
> insight has been conquered, the contradiction does not disappear.
> Therefore, we reach a seemingly paradoxical conclusion: on the one
> hand, all is united and settled in the One; on the other hand, the One
> does not "suffer any mental dissonance from the contradiction and for
> Him there is no need whatsoever for clarification or determination." In
> other words, when source of multiplicity is the One itself, the contradic-
> tion or its resolution are considered the same. Polarity reveals a monis-
> tic wholeness and we are required to reach an integrationist approach
> that lies beyond the opposites. As we will see below, it is actually the
> spiritual schism and tension—and not the peaceful harmony that has
> been most commonly read into his thought—that [truly] reflects Rav
> Kook's worldview. In other words: as opposed to Hegelian dialectics,
> which in Hegel's opinion was realized within his own Christian state,
> Rav Kook remains within the twilight of a spiritual schism that is con-
> stantly in the process of being mended.[6]

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5 Ibid., 51. Emphasis in source. Rosenak's approach bears similarities to that of Yuval Cherlow. As I will show below, Sherlo maintains that Rabbi Soloveitchik, like Rav Kook, held that the mending of a dialectical split is only possible through Halakhah. This insight was a source of serenity for both Rav Soloveitchik and Rav Kook: "Rav Kook sought peace for his soaring soul. He sought an anchor. This he found in his halakhic-legalistic activity, in the internal order and logical systematicity of Halakhah." See Yuval Sherlo, *Vehayu Leahadim Beyadekha: Midialeqtiqa Leharmonia Bemishnato shel Harav Yoseph Dov Halevi Soloveitchik* (Alon Shevut, 2000), 113. As I will explain below, both Rosenak (in his discussion of Rav Kook) and I (in my discussions of Rav Kook and Rav Soloveitchik) maintain that the serenity of which Sherlo speaks was never attained. Sherlo's statement is aimed at bringing himself and his readers peace but does not necessarily reflect what Rav Kook and Soloveitchik themselves thought.

6 Ibid., 51–52.

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