This study explores the philosophical *lamdanut* (scholarly orientation) of R. Joseph Rosen (1858-1936; also known as the Rogatchover Gaon, or simply, the Rogatchover). “Philosophical *lamdanut*” is a unique method of learning developed by the Rogatchover, which employs philosophical tools and language for studying Talmud and Halakha. The philosophy the Rogatchover used to create his “philosophical *lamdanut*” is primarily that of Maimonides’ *Guide of the Perplexed*. Therefore, the crux of this study is an examination of the Rogatchover’s attitude towards the *Guide*, demonstrating the connections he forged between the *Guide*’s philosophy and Talmudic and Halakhic thought, and emphasizing the scholarly product of the synthesis between these two intellectual worlds.

After presenting the Rogatchover’s biography and writings in the first chapter by means of a basic bio-bibliography, the second chapter serves as a comprehensive introduction to the Rogatchover’s scholarly method, and it highlights the primary and original characteristics that shaped it. These characteristics are presented by analyzing one unique responsum he wrote, which includes elements of each of the said characteristics. This responsum contains a request to point out the connections (direct or indirect) between most of the characteristics and the notion of “philosophical *lamdanut*”. The characteristics discussed in the chapter are: speedy, shorthanded writing with many references, in response to any petitioner and touching on any Halakhic-religious topic; a synthesis between different topics, usually by identifying one abstract idea that is common to all of them; admiration for Maimonides and his work; commentary by means of “analytic *lamdanut*”, “philosophical *lamdanut*” and “philosophical-theological *lamdanut*” grounded in the philosophy and theology of the *Guide of the Perplexed*; use of the *Guide*, which he consistently interpreted in light of rabbinic literature, including discussions of a midrashic or aggadic nature; a conception of Halakha as dealing with ontological essences, as well as allowing space for the natural world within the framework of the Halakhic world; integrating Aggadah and homiletics within Halakhic discourse; independent Halakhic rulings based on the Talmud as part of his strict adherence to early rabbinic discourse, including: a high regard for the Jerusalem Talmud and perceiving everyday reality through the lens of early rabbinic discourse, while at the same time rejecting – and sometimes ignoring completely – the accepted post-Talmudic literature; a critical stance towards commentators of the *Guide* along with a willingness to accept some of their writings; a measure of influence from the world of Kabbalah and Hasidism; interpretation of customs (*minhagim*) in a way that grounds them in Talmudic literature and is halakhically orientated.

The third chapter is dedicated to the Rogatchover’s annotations on the *Guide of the Perplexed*, which serves as a means for characterizing his hermeneutic method with respect to the *Guide*, and for comparing it to other modes of exegesis. Research has shown that the Rogatchover’s exegesis was one of the most original of all of the different interpretations to the *Guide to the Perplexed*, and that this originality is the flip-side of a coin that is traditional to the extreme: the manner in which the Rogatchover interpreted the *Guide* according to the Sages of the Talmud (per Maimonides’ instructions in the introduction to the book) was what led him to take note of philosophical thinking hidden in the Talmud, not only in its aggadic parts but also in the Talmud’s Halakhic details. The Rogatchover’s “philosophical *lamdanut*” is but one dimension of a broader hermeneutic approach, which examines Talmudic Halakha in relation to the thought of the *Guide*. The study shows that this interpretation should not be perceived as merely homiletical in its interpretation of the philosophical book, in service of the scholarly-Halakhic discourse: one can see how the Rogatchover felt at home with the philosophical discussions of the *Guide* and was fully aware of the “radical interpretation” of *the Guide*, and that from within this framework he perceived himself as someone who fully grasped Maimonides’ view. Even when the Rogatchover chooses to disagree with Maimonides by juxtaposing Talmudic Halakhic rulings to Maimonides’ philosophical approach, he maintains his belief in the philosophical discourse presented in the *Guide* and sees the questions that it presents as relevant to the Talmudic discourse.

After the third chapter attempts to clarify the way in which the Rogatchover read and interpreted the *Guide* *of the Perplexed*, the fourth chapter examines the place of the *Guide* within his Halakhic writing and in so doing presents a unique phenomenon in the history of Halakhic literature. The chapter begins by outlining the gradual process of integrating *the Guide* and its concepts into the Rogatchover’s scholarly writing, but the discussion of his mature “philosophical *lamdanut*” focuses on the Halakhic responsa that he wrote. The reason for this choice is that only when a scholarly orientation is reflected in a manner that goes beyond interpretative-scholarly writing into the practically applicable genre of responsa, does this testify to the scholar’s total belief in the orientation. Indeed, the chapter shows how the Rogatchover viewed his integration of the *Guide* into his Halakhic writing not as mere casuistic argumentation (*pilpul*), but rather as part of his attempt to identify legal categories with practical implications. The Rogatchover’s use of the *Guide* was not limited to a particular method or to a particular type of idea presented in the *Guide* (such as understanding Halakha based on Aristotelian assumptions or conceptualization, which is a primary method of “philosophical *lamdanut*”), but rather extended to additional methods and types of ideas that appear in the *Guide* (such as borrowing an idea from the Kalam or mentioning the *Guide*’s interpretation of Scripture). Most centrally, one can see how this use of *the Guide* was not limited to a particular type of Halakhic responsa and appeared in a variety of topics and contexts: in a responsum to an individual relating to the *Orach Chayim* section of the *Shulchan Aruch*, as well as responsa pertaining to public issues in *Even* *Ha-Ezer*, and also a critical personal issue with a public dimension. Each of these cases is situated in the study, as much as is possible, within the historical and realistic context in which the problem appeared, thus highlighting the uniqueness of introducing the *Guide* into the discussion. The study emphasizes that the Rogatchover’s use of the *Guide* cannot be viewed only as widespread instrumental use of Maimonides’ work in the service of Halakha; rather, his extensive use of the *Guide* should be understood as an expression of the Rogatchover’s perspective, according to which the Talmud, the Halakha, and the matters they address are imbued with the philosophy of the *Guide of the Perplexed*.

After dedicating the preceding chapters to the Rogatchover’s attitude towards the *Guide of the Perplexed*, the fifth chapter discusses his attitude towards the *Guide*’s commentators. The Rogatchover was familiar with a wide array of commentaries on *the Guide*, including some that were printed separately from the *Guide*’s various editions. In the Rogatchover’s writing, especially in his comments on pages from the Zoltzbach edition of the *Guide* which included the commentary of Moses Narboni, Salomon Maimon’s *Giv’at Ha-Moreh* (on Part 1), and Isaac Satanow’s commentary (on Parts 2 and 3), he engages with a wide array of commentaries on *the Guide*. Despite his critical stance towards the *Guide*’s commentators, the Rogatchover was able to contain their ideas and use them to generate a “philosophical *lamdanut*”. The study contextualizes the “philosophical *lamdanut*” created by the Rogatchover through his discussion of the “Spinozism” that appears in *Giv’at Ha-Moreh* within the broader conversation the Rogatchover had with the modern science and philosophy mentioned in Maimon’s book. A significant part of the chapter is dedicated to a phenomenon whereby a pair of terms that appear in the commentaries on the *Guide* are transformed in the Rogatchover’s work into a sort of sub-method within his method of philosophical *lamdanut* – a sub-method that went on to appear in the work of later Halakhic scholars who were influenced by him. The study makes the claim that recognizing the Rogatchover’s attitude towards the Guide’s commentators could impact our understanding of the sources of some of his ideas that were influenced by them.

The epilogue is dedicated to the Rogatchover’s internalization of the philosophy of the *Guide* and emphasizes the “Halakhic hylomorphism” that tends to appear in his work even without reference or mention of *the Guide*. It points to the benefit of this philosophical thinking for the attempt to solve problems and conceptualize ideas in Halakha, by means of comparative research. It shows how expanding Halakhic language into the philosophical domain enabled the formulation of a Halakhic idea that ought to have been said already in the past, under similar circumstances, but was impossible to fully formulate because the language required to do so did not exist. It also shows how the philosophical abstractions the Rogatchover extrapolated from a concrete situation emerged only after he was asked to explain some of his earlier ideas, which were insufficiently clear given the absence of the necessary philosophical terminology, and how this abstraction created an opportunity to bridge the ancient realities of the Talmud with those that appeared in later periods.