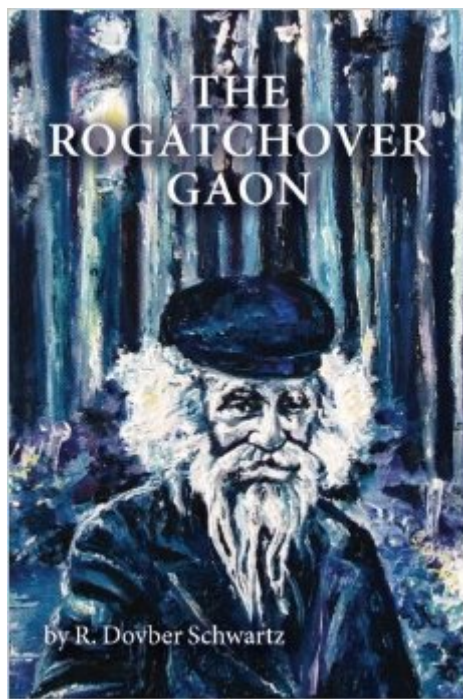


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The Rogatchover Gaon



Synopsis

Rabbi Yosef Rosen, the Rogatchover Gaon, was one of the greatest Talmudic scholars in recent memory. He was a seminal figure in the 20th century project of conceptualizing and systemizing Talmud and Halakha. He was perhaps the most abstract and philosophical Talmudist and Posek, ever to have lived. He merged classical Talmudic thought with Philosophy, Metaphysics, Political theory and more. He represents an alternative school to the Brisker method which has dominated Yeshivot to the present day. One of the most integrated rabbinic thinkers, his works have remained obscure and inaccessible due to their cryptic nature. This is the first attempt to present this giant revolutionary scholar and his writings to the English-speaking public.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the most well-known characteristics of Rabbi Yosef Rosin, the Rogatchover Gaon, was his long hair. Ultimately, it is also one of the most meaningless traits of one of the greatest minds in the history of Jewish thought. Fortunately, in this fascinating biography of Rosin, author Dovber Schwartz spends a page on that fact, and leave the nearly 300 other pages to a mesmerizing overview of the Rogatchover's methodology and worldview. In chapter 2, Schwartz notes that as a means of conceptualizing halachic minutiae, the Rogatchover used 9 analytical frameworks to extract the core concepts from halachas. In the book, he provides an overview of 4 of the 9 frameworks. Schwartz writes that the Rogatchover was one of the greatest rabbinic minds of the last 1,000 years. Yet 3 facts lead to his lack of overall prominence. Those are his extremely cryptic and terse writing style, that he did not have a Yeshiva, and his lack of direct students. Contrast that with

his contemporary Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik, whose 6 main students in turn created myriad Yeshivas and other students. The Rogatchover himself was a master of Talmud, all writings of Maimonides, and much more. This combined with his photographic memory and breathtaking analytical skills enabled him to show the complete unity of Torah. Schwartz provides many examples of his ability to connect many seemingly disassociated ideas and shows their symmetry. Schwartz also provides scores of examples of seemingly Talmudic contradictions, and how the Rogatchover is able to easily reconcile them. The book succeeds on numerous fronts. It provides an honest and respectable biography of the Rogatchover.

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