The Ramban argues strongly against the Rambam, stating that according to the Moreh’s explanation we should expect that on Mashiach’s arrival, when idolatry will be eradicated from the world, there will no longer be any need for korbanos. Yet, says the Ramban, we know that korbanos will be brought regularly even after Mashiach’s arrival.

What’s more, the Rambam writes (Yad Chazakah, end of Hilchos Me’ilah) that “the laws of korbanos fall into the category of chukim, unexplained laws, and the world’s very existence is dependent on the faithful execution of these laws; the fulfillment of chukim and mishpatim are the tickets to the World to Come.” The Rambam’s assertion that korbanos are necessary for the world’s existence seems to contradict his statement in Moreh Nevuchim.

One might suggest that the Rambam’s statement in Moreh Nevuchim pertains only to Nedarim and Nedavos, voluntary korbanos that a person brings to fulfill an oath or as a donation. Our rabbis teach us (Chullin 2a) that “one who makes an oath is a sinner, even if he fulfills his oath.” Nonetheless, Hashem permits a person to vow to bring a korban if he senses the yetzer hara urging him toward idolatry. The purpose of this korban is to redirect his desire toward Hashem. These korbanos will become superfluous when Mashiach comes. However, the sacrifice of korbanos chovah, korbanos that we are obligated to bring on various occasions and in certain situations, are chukim that are of the utmost importance and sustain the world.

The pesukim quoted here discuss voluntary korbanos, which may well be an accommodation to the yetzer hara for idolatry, as the Rambam writes in Moreh Nevuchim, but have no bearing on korbanos in general.

Torah im Derech Eretz

You shall fulfill My laws and you shall keep My statutes to follow them... (Vayikra 18:4)

The Toras Kohanim expounds on these words:

 Leoneh bemos: hashem sh'er avo Meshesh shekula
Leoneh bemos: she'el neke meshak maamor aleh bemos. she'el neke meshak barev harome emolos she'el emor
Leoneh bemos: neke meshak barev meshak emolos she'el emor
e- lomdei haknots sharcha emolos meshak amon shekula. halomdei loyem, leneh bemos, leneh bemos, leneh bemos, leneh bemos, leneh bemos

To follow them: Make them primary [essential, the essence] and do not make them

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subordinate [nonessential]; “to follow them”: that you have no dealings except in them.
that you not admix them with other matters, that you not say, “Now that I have studied
Torah, I will study other sciences.” As the Torah says, “To follow them”—You are not
permitted to take leave of them.

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, in his commentary on Chumash, points out that
the words “make them primary and not subordinate” do not forbid a person from
pursuing secular studies as a means to gain a deeper understanding of the Torah.
On the contrary, “make them primary” implies that there exists something that is
subordinate, auxiliary, and that is the study of other disciplines.

Rav Hirsch based his educational system of Torah im Derech Eretz on the Torah
Kohanim’s words here. This approach, says Rav Hirsch, is supported by the Rambam
who writes in his letter to Reb Yonasan Hakohen that secular studies should be the
spices and seasonings that enhance the food of Torah. Torah study must be one’s
top priority, and one may not equalize other sciences to the wisdom of the Torah.
Even when one studies other sciences he may not exempt himself from Torah study
meaning he should study other disciplines as an enhancement to his study of Torah.

In 1934, when I was a young man, I posed a question regarding the permissibility
of secular studies to the great Torah giants of that generation. I received a number
of responses. The answers of Rav Baruch Ber Leibowitz, Rav Elchanan Wasserman,
and Rav Avraham Yitzchak Bloch are well known (mostly advising great caution
in the pursuit of secular studies), while the responses of the Rogatchover Gaon
and others are less so. My saintly rebbi, Rav Leizer Yudel Finkel, the Mirrer Rosh
Yeshivah, advised me not to pursue the matter further, for fear that the responses
would constitute “a decree that the majority of the community cannot uphold.” I
also had the good fortune of meeting with the former Gerrer Rebbe, the Imrei Emes
who admonished me to protect the honor and reputation of Rav Samson Raphael
Hirsch, saying: “Remember that Rav Hirsch was a great tzaddik, a living book of
mussar, and you must be very careful to safeguard his honor.” In the meantime,
many of these responses have been published by others, and the issue of Torah Jews
studying secular studies remains a controversial matter to this day.

In 1984, the Rav published a pamphlet entitled “These and Those,” in
which he elaborated on the two sides of the controversy. The following
are some excerpts delineating the principles of Torah im Derech Eretz, as
he understood them.

Nothing exists outside the scope of the Divine teaching; all is contained
within the Torah and is subject to application. Nothing the Creator has
fashioned could escape the attention and the concern of the revealed will of the Divine Lawgiver. Therefore, the “four squares of halachah” encompass the whole wide world, as the Sages said, אין ולו לקוות בקודך והו הגלל המלך.

This nation, with all of its material endeavors and intellectual striving, is to become a ממלכת הקב' הגדולה והmighty קדוש, a Divinely controlled organism unlike any other political, cultural, or economic entity, subject only to the sovereign rule of the Torah. The Torah nation is to blaze the trail for all other nations to follow toward the universal messianic goal of free man’s total submission to the absolute will of the Almighty.

The object of true Torah education, therefore, is to make the student conscious at all times of this Divinely imposed task. To acquire Torah knowledge is our foremost duty, because without it, we cannot function at all. However, the prime purpose of all Torah study is its translation into conscious and enlightened Torah life.

At all times the Torah’s unchanging teachings must be applied to the ever-changing derech eretz. All of our actions, attitudes, relationships to man and beast, and positions within nature and history are subject to the jurisdiction and evaluation of the Torah.

What follows is that the Torah scholar should be well informed of the "ways of the Earth." The laws of nature and the paths of history should be known to him. He should be well aware of what happens in the world that surrounds him, for he is constantly called upon to apply the yardstick of halachah and the searchlight of hashkafah to the realities that confront him.

What also follows is that the greater the wisdom of Torah, the more crucial it is that this wisdom be conveyed to the Jewish contemporary world. It must be transmitted in a language that our generation understands and that will attract the searching youth, the ignorant, the estranged and the potential ba’al teshuvah to a joyous acceptance of the yoke of Heaven. The Torah leader must be able to dispel the doubts of the doubter and to counter the cynicism of the agnostic. He must, therefore, speak their language masterfully so that he can convince and enlighten them.

There is indeed a dire need for gedolei Torah, great Torah scholars, who devote their entire lives to the study and dissemination of Torah.

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The Jewish world today needs many talmidei chachamim whose life task is to enlighten and inspire it with the love and the fear of G-d. We are ready to accord to those “messengers of G-d” the highest respect and a loyal following. These are the kohanim and levi'im of today. Like the members of the Levitic tribe of old, they are to serve all the other tribes and teach them the living Torah.

Yet education and leadership cannot function in a vacuum. Therefore it becomes mandatory for the present day “Tribe of Levi” to initiate and encourage an educational system that can serve the other “eleven tribes” who comprise the vast majority of our people. It becomes mandatory for the Torah-conscious educator not to inspire fear of the world and hesitancy to meets its challenges, but rather, to fortify the vast majority of our youth to meet head-on the thousand and one pitfalls of professional and business life. Our youth must be inspired to courageously and intelligently brave the onslaught of scientific arrogance and the sensual poison that is masked as intellectual liberalism.

The Divine purpose for which Yisrael was created can be served in every capacity, in every profession, in all human endeavors, as long as they are not excluded by the halachah.

In his writings, Rav Hirsch stresses time and again the foremost obligation to make Torah the main object of study and never to forget to emphasize the essential, the ikar, above the non-essential, the tafel. On the other hand, the secular disciplines, which are the “Hilfswissenschaften” should also be pursued with religious sincerity for the “sake of Heaven.”

It is Torah im Derech Eretz.

Properly understood, it means G-d’s Torah, in its totality, utilizing derech eretz as a means to bring about the Torah’s full application. It means Torah as the Divine nourishment and human derech eretz as the aromatic ingredient that helps bring the Torah’s intrinsic flavor to its most perfect bloom. It means the Torah’s conquest of life and not the Torah’s flight from life.

It refers to Torah casting a light into the darkness, rather than hiding from the darkness. And it means applying Torah to the Earth rather than divorcing it from the Earth.
Rav Hirsch also had behind him a solid mesorah from gedolim who showed him the way. From the time of Chazal through the period of the Geonim; the Rambam; the Chachmei Sepharad through the talmidei HaGra all the way down to his own rebbi, the Aruch L’Ner and his disciples, Rav Hirsch had his mesorah.

To summarize the Hirschian worldview, it is not Torah “U”, it is not Torah “Ve”... or even Torah “Im”... but Talmud Torah im Derech Eretz, with emphasis on the first two words. He quotes, in his commentary on Parshas Acharei Mos, the words of the Torah Kohanim: שושן שרי כנף לא נביא ספרה. This implies that there is some involvement with studies that are outside Torah thoughts, but we are supposed to make the study of Torah the ikar, our main occupation. The goal of limud haTorah is to do so in the full sense of the word, לומדו ולקחו לשלום ולאשא על כל דבר מבית התורה ומכיתר חכמה נביאים מעשה ועלילה. Engagement with the world is tafel, secondary. All forms of human knowledge are the auxiliary sciences, or, as Rav Hirsch called them, Hilfswissenschaften, or as the Rambam says in one of his letters, הרחבת ונקודות—spice mixers and cooks, for the main dish, which is Torah.

The relationship between Torah and derech eretz is very similar to that which exists between the guf and the neshamah, the body and the soul. The Torah is the soul, without which we cannot live. But it pleased Hashem to place the soul into our body. Like a lamp, the soul’s light is to penetrate all the innermost chambers of the body. Our body has to be fed and groomed and clothed because most of our mitzvos are carried out by it. Yet the body is temporary; it came from the dust and goes back to the dust. While the body houses the neshamah it acts out the derech eretz of human behavior; and when the neshamah leaves it, the body disintegrates. The neshamah is the essential man and lives forever.