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BETWEEN SABBATIANISM AND HASIDISM:

CONTINUITIES AND DIFFERENCES

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Cincinnati, 1977

Referee: Prof. Ellis Rivkin

To Those Who Gave Me

My Roots

My Parents

and

Grandparents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DIGEST

Both Sabbatianism and Ḥasidism represent major movements of change within Judaism, responding to urgent hungers for renewal occurring throughout the Jewish world during the latter half of the 17th century and into the 18th century.

Sabbatianism arose in 1665-66 when almost the entire Jewish world became caught up in fervor over the proclaimed Messiahship of Sabbatai Şevi. The 18th century Ḥasidic movement, in turn, arose among the masses of Southern Poland and soon spread throughout Eastern Europe. Ḥasidism sought renewal and redemption through intense individual spiritual devotion.

The critical factors behind the rise of the two movements include: 1) exceptional social frustration arising out of the extreme social and economic insecurities of the time; 2) a common underlying cultural value tradition of redemption rooted in Lurianic Kabbalah which both gave people a reason to hope and a direction with which to struggle against their fate.

This thesis sought to determine where major continuities, as well as differences, between Sabbatianism and Ḥasidism occurred. Continuities were traced in terms of historical continuation in common underlying value concerns. Differences were examined in terms of changes and shifts in these underlying value currents, as well as in terms of there being distinguishing particularities in the concerns and the actual ways people in each movement lived and related to themselves and the world at

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large. These particularities, in turn, were examined in light of the distinct socio-economic situation behind each movement.

Special attention was given throughout the thesis to exploring the active dynamics of value and identity change in light of socio-economic and socio-psychological forces acting in combination with the role played by historically continuing cultural value concerns. Examination of value development included major concerns and priorities plus symbols and beliefs.

The central chapters in the thesis include an examination of 16th century Lurianism plus the subsequent rise of Sabbatianism and Hasidism.

Specific value and identity variables include attitudes toward Messianism; attitudes towards redemption through Tikkun and through sin; the plane of reality upon which people proceed in attempting to bring redemption: external or internal, massive universal change or primary emphasis on community and individual level change, whether people's activities and longings are subject to immediate empirical verification, the relationship of people of authority and to leadership figures; the dynamics of leadership formation; other change dynamics and general organization of priorities; and the nature of people's alienation and its relationship to their psychic equilibrium and ability to affirm life in the here and now.

The most significant conclusions include that the social frustrations underlying the rise of Sabbatianism were universal and all-pervasive. This produced a severe state of psychic dis-equilibrium among people, which made them almost inevitably vulnerable to Sabbatai Sevi's proclamation of Messiahship. Lurianic Kabbalistic roots, in turn, served to exacerbate the situation. This was due both to Lurianism's confusion of

internal and external processes of redemption, and due to the implicit negation of the present in its gnostic myth of redemption.

Hasidism, by contrast, developed in response to a specific source of agitation, as well as to an underlying malaise. The specific focus was the corruption and loss of spiritual vitality in the Jewish leadership elite. This contributed to a strong concern for spiritual renewal in the world of the present, as well as for a future time of redemption.

As a consequence, they would radically alter the Lurianic system of redemption to place new emphasis on personal <u>Tikkun</u> (spiritual reintegration). This constituted a radically new ability to affirm their own lives, as well as to hope for the future, and would introduce an important new element of psychic stability into their lives. Between this factor and their negative reaction to Sabbatai Ṣevi's false Messiahship, they, unlike their predecessors, would be almost immune to the lure of false Messiahs.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background--Defining the Subject Matter

Both Sabbatianism and Hasidism represent major movements of change

within Judaism, responding to urgent hunger for renewal occurring through-

out the Jewish world during the latter half of the 17th century and into

the 18th century.

During this period the Jewish community world-wide was in a state

of disarray. In 1648 the previously pre-eminent Jewish community of

Poland was smashed into shambles by the Chmielnicki massacre. Simul-

taneously, as will be shown in Chapter III (and contrary to Gershom

Scholem's position), the once bright prospects for Jews in the Ottoman

Empire were disintegrating due to a breakdown in the ability of the

Turks to foster major economic development.

In Western Europe meanwhile, the promise of coming renewed success

was still unsure and tenuous. The early stages of capitalistic entre-

preneurship had already begun to give limited numbers of Jews signifi-

cant upward mobility, yet the political and economic structures in

Europe were very much in turmoil. While the new entrepreneurial forces

had little concern about people's religious preferences, they were far

from having an upper hand in society, being in direct conflict with the

old guard powers of the Church and the Divine right monarchies who were

not readily amenable to giving up their absolute power over the economic

realm or anything else. This left the Jews, whether among the wealthy

elite or among the many poor, still in a very vulnerable position and without any stable citizenship rights.[1] Further complicating matters, the larger societal turmoil (including the after effects of the 16th century Protestant Reformation) helped produce great popular unrest throughout Europe including major upsurges in Christian Millenarianism (right through the 1600's) and this in turn pointed to the overall precariousness of existence that held true for the period as well as to the widespread credibility of Messianic speculation.[2]

The combination of all these developments means that for the Jewish community there existed simultaneously strong memories of past successes and hopefulness plus a continuing hopefulness for well-being for which there was now no secure and tangible this-worldly basis in any major Jewish population center. Unlike previous periods, a downward trend in one part of the world did not immediately give way to the promise of security and improvement in another part. As a consequence vested interest in the status quo everyday world would be exceptionally low for all strata of the Jewish population and this would tend to mitigate any resistance to upsetting cries for liberation and redemption from the pain, suffering and anguish of everyday Jewish life. Simon Dubnov comments on this phenomenon in regard to the rise of Sabbatianism:

> The exhausted Diaspora did not forsee any end to its actual
> tribulations during the second half of the 17th century;
> thus the desire for liberation and the yearning for redemp-
> tion led it astray into the mists of Messianic dreams.[3]

Dubnov's response also reflects the great strength of contined hoping in the Jewish community including their own long tradition of Messianic yearning.

This strong will to hope together with the extreme and all-pervasive

nature of their frustration (with no this-worldly prospects for improve-
ment) proved to be a critical combination. Through Sabbatianism it would
produce a Jewish Messianic upsurge unprecedented at least since the 2'nd
century movement surrounding Shimon Bar Kohba, and this despite count-
less Messianic pretenders through the centuries. Conditions were never
better and the result was an incredibly electrifying and all-encompas-
sing movement.

Within one year, 1665-66 (from the time Sabbatai publicly revealed
himself until his conversion under pressure to Islam) the Sabbatian
movement spread from Palestine and a few port cities in the Ottoman
Empire into a worldwide apocalyptic movement affecting every major Jewish
population center and every socio-economic strata, from Holland to Po-
land to Italy to Yemen and Morocco. Most community leaders (religious
and secular) as well as the Jewish population at large fell in behind
the movement.

So ready were the people for Messianic redemption and so suggestive
to reports of same, that ecstatic dancing and even mass hallucination
and prophesying were very frequent responses to the fast spreading ru-
mors and communications about Sabbatai's Messiahship. Followers every-
where readied themselves to follow the new Messiah to Palestine. Further-
more, fervor and commitment was so strong that Sabbatai would retain a
significant following even after his conversion to Islam and the loss of
at least the mainstream majority of the Jewish community.

Dubnov notes that continued yearning for renewal served as a major
force behind both the 18th century rise of modern Hasidism, and the gene-
sis of the "other" movement beginning in the 18th century, the West
European Haskalah, Enlightenment.[4] Hasidism's concerns were expressed

particularly in terms of personal spiritual renewal as a prelude to Messianic redemption, pulling away from the Sabbatian notion that Messianic redemption had already begun, as well as from the anti-nomism attitudes of at least Sabbatai's immediate circle of followers and the underground movements which were to arise after his conversion. Nevertheless, as will be seen in Chapter IV, Hasidism did continue building upon many of Sabbatianism's central concerns and symbolic conceptions of redemption which the earlier movement in turn had largely developed out of Lurianic Kabbalah.

Hasidism, as Sabbatianism, was also an immensely popular, fast spreading movement, with a strong accent on emotional and spiritual fervor. Unlike Sabbatianism, however, it did not immediately become a world-wide movement. Instead, its primary base of support was from the non-elite masses of Southern Poland and its initial growth was limited to Eastern Europe. The Jewish community of the Ottoman Empire meanwhile was slipping into a long term downward period which would be marked by an almost total eclipse in its active involvement in international Jewish movements of any kind. Western European Jewry in turn was already beginning to turn in a radically different direction. They were beginning to see a tangible this-worldly solution to the long tribulations of their Diaspora.

The continued development of capitalism in Western Europe brought continuing increases in socio-economic opportunities and made Locke's doctrine on the primacy of secular "natural" rights (individual sovereignty over one's own life, liberty and property plus freedom of thought and religion) into a very concrete potentiality for the future.[5] By the middle of the 18th century the promise of such new Western European

humanism was actively embraced by such Jews as Moses Mendelssohn. They

saw in their actions a path to Jewish liberation and enlightenment, and

thus was begun the Jewish Haskalah Enlightenment movement.

Very unlike Sabbatianism and Hasidism, however, the Haskalah set

as a primary value, interaction with the larger non-Jewish community and

accommodation to their values and beliefs. Because this inter-societal

orientation represents such a different kind of developmental process,

the decision was made to limit the scope of this thesis to studying the

development of Sabbatianism and Hasidism.

Objectives

This thesis will seek to determine where there are major continui-

ties as well as differences between Sabbatianism and Hasidism. Conti-

nuities will be traced in terms of there being any historical continu-

ation in common underlying value concerns. Differences will be examined

in terms of changes and shifts in these underlying value currents as well

as in terms of there being distinguishing particularities in the concerns

and the actual ways people in each movement live and relate to themselves

and the world at large. These particularities in turn will be examined

in light of the distinct socio-economic situation behind each movement.

Furthermore, special attention will be given throughout this thesis

to exploring the active dynamics of value and identity change in light

of socio-economic and socio-psychological forces acting in combination

with the role played by historically continuing cultural value concerns.

Examination of value development will include major concerns and priori-

ties plus symbols and beliefs.

My analysis will begin (Chapter II) by reviewing important cultural

value roots that both movements have in common with the 16th century

Kabbalistic school of Isaac Luria. Chapters III and IV will then examine

the rise of Sabbatianism and Hasidism themselves and explore continuities

and differences in value concerns and the actual ways the concerned indi-

viduals relate to the world and to their longings.

Specific value and identity variables to be examined in this thesis

will include attitudes toward Messianism; attitudes towards redemption

through Tikkun and through sin; the plane of reality upon which people

proceed in attempting to bring redemption: external or internal, mas-

sive universal change or primary emphasis on community and individual

level change, whether people's activities and longings are subject to

immediate empirical verification; the relationship of people to authori-

ty, and to leadership figures; the dynamics of leadership formation;

other change dynamics and general organization of priorities; and the

nature of people's alienation and its relationship to their psychic equi-

librium and ability to affirm life in the here and now.

Sources of Information

A considerable part of my major source material is from Gershom

Scholem, who is probably the most important compiler in this century on

both Jewish mysticism in general and Sabbatianism in particular. I have

also used a wide variety of other secondary sources, including studies

of broad historical perspective and specific analyses of each movement

(Lurianic Kabbalah, Sabbatianism and Hasidism), as well as utilizing

studies on change mechanisms, social dynamics, and the sociology and

psychology of religion.

Of additional note, my bibliography brings together some important

additions from the last five years to a once relatively sparse collec-

tion of English language sources having significant bearing on Sabbati-

anism and Hasidism. These include two major translations of Gershom
Scholem's works, Sabbatai Sevi (1973, and with corrections 1975), and
The Messianic Idea in Judaism (1971); also English versions of Simon
Dubnov's History of the Jews (1971), and Israel Zinberg's A History of
Jewish Literature (Vol. 1-9 as of 1976); also of special significance
among English language originals--Bernard Weinryb's The Jews of Poland
(1973), which provides extensive social and economic perspectives on the
Polish Jewish community, 1100 to 1800, and Ellis Rivkin's ground
breaking study The Shaping of Jewish History (1971), which provides a
profound over-arching perspective on the centrality of socio-economics
to the development of Jewish history, and for my present thesis, a very
important specific analysis on the Ottoman Empire and how it ceased to
be a promising place for successful, untroubled Jewish development.

As a consequence of these new books I have been able to make English
language works the major part of my sources, while still augmenting them
with some important untranslated works such as Simon Dubnov's Toldot Ha
Hasidim.

As to primary sources, I am utilizing the writings of Ya'akov Yosef
of Polnoy, the disciple and designated scribe for recording the teachings
of the Baal Shem Tov. Also, for general background perspective, I have
examined several medieval Messianic and apocalyptic Midrashim as part of
a Midrash course with Dr. Jacob Petuchowski on medieval Messianic con-
ceptions and speculations. I will not, however, be delving into the
fine details of the Kabbalah itself, as I will be limiting myself to
examination of broad value orientations and a few central symbolic con-
ceptualizations which I can gather from what already has been presented
by Scholem and others.

Significance of this Study

The subject matter and holistic approach of this thesis (examining the active interplay between social dynamics and value development) are of special significance to 1970's America. In the wake of the Bicentennial, Watergate, and the many crises of the 1960's, there has been greatly increasing society-wide interest in value and identity development.

Concommitantly, a significant growing minority has been drawn to religious renewal activities (and on a secular level, overlapping onto the religious, we might even point to the religious ground swell behind Jimmy Carter). Along Jewish lines this has particularly meant an interest in neo-Hasidism. This has been reflected in the popularity of Buber's neo-Hasidism and the growing interest within many temples and synagogues for greater emotionality and spirituality, as well as concrete modeling after Hasidic forms within the Havurah movement which I studied in my Oberlin M.A. Thesis (1973) and my Brandeis Senior Honors Thesis (1970). Interestingly, some of the members of the Havurat Shalom group I studied specifically expressed concern to avoid the destructive antinomian excesses of Sabbatianism and yet still to explore the far reaches of spirituality and self-actualization. Very pointedly this reflects the importance of understanding conceptions and tensions within Sabbatianism for understanding such a contemporary model of religious renewal as well as for better understanding conceptions and basic tensions within Hasidism itself.

Further areas of significance for this thesis include 1) shedding additional light on two of the most volatile movements of change in their own right in Jewish history, 2) clarifying the development of

continuity and change in central enduring Jewish values, and 3) adding insights to the nature of socio-psychological processes involved in the development of religious change movements.

CHAPTER II

COMMON CULTURAL VALUE ROOTS

AND PARADIGMS FROM LURIANIC KABBALAH

The decisive innovation of Lurianic Kabbalah was the fusion of
Messianism with a new mystical conceptualization on redemption from
exile and the dynamics of world perfection. Gershom Scholem explains
the nature of this fusion:

> For Luria, the appearance of the messiah is nothing but the
> consummation of the continuous process of restoration, of
> Tikkun. The true nature of redemption is therefore mystical,
> and its historical and national aspects are merely ancillary
> symptoms which constitute a visible symbol of its consummation.[1]

The new mystical conception of restoration, Tikkun, marks a major
break from most earlier Kabbalistic doctrine, which through preoccu-
pation with esoteric knowledge and/or communion with the Divine, almost
totally ignored ongoing historic concerns. Simultaneously it marks a
radically different conception of Messianic redemption. Previously the
restoration of Israel from exile to the Land of Israel had been con-
ceived of on a very concrete, historical plane, and contrary to the new
concept of Tikkun, exile and redemption had not at all been seen as
part of an inner mystical process.

Now that a distinction has been made from earlier Messianic and
mystic conceptualizations, an explanation is in order for what this
newly conceived mystical process is in its own right. In the Lurianic
system, Tikkun refers to the restitution and re-integration of a now

fragmented, originally whole state of being. According to the mythic (and very gnostic) imagery of the system, during the first stages of creation there were cosmic vessels of supernal light (representing emanations from the Divine source of life) which subsequently shattered apart. This in turn caused many of the life-force sparks of light to become embedded in the vessels' scattered fragments which were called "Kelipot" and which represented Din, the force of life-constriction and evil. The role of restitution (Tikkun) then was one of reuniting the life-force sparks by freeing them from the Kelipot and in so doing also purging them of the force of Din.[2]

The external historical world in turn was perceived to be merely an outward intimation of inner mystical reality and the cosmic redemption of the raising of the sparks was conceptually merged with the national redemption of Israel and the ingathering of the exiles. In other words, the path to Israel's redemption was to come through the process of Tikkun and the raising of the sparks from the Kelipot.[3]

This phenomenon of combining mystic concerns with Israel's exile and redemption had its origins in the early 16th century when in the wake of the traumatizing expulsion from Spain, many Spanish Kabbalists (and then others) began coming to Palestine and settling in Safed. The ideal of peaceful, holistic Jewish life in exile was felt to be a painfully destroyed illusion, and reflecting their own worldly plight, the Safed Kabbalists became engrossed in mystic contemplation and speculation about the pain and fragmentation of existence and the need for repentance and ultimate total redemption from exile. What was developing here was quite important, for this newly emerging community of Safed would become the major center of 16th century Kabbalah (the otherwise

important center of Jerusalem being in eclipse due to harsh rulers and heavy taxes) as well as the setting where Luria himself would develop and teach his doctrines of Tikkun in the latter part of the century.[4]

Significantly, Lurianic doctrine would be a direct and very powerful response to the extreme feelings of alienation in Safed. In the face of continuing anguish over exile and the fragmentation of life, the Lurianic system would provide a new mythological understanding of the world (different but compatible with earlier Kabbalistic thinking) through which people could gain a renewed sense of worth and hope. For the very first time a positive significance was given to the tribulations of Israel's exile. Instead of being merely a test of faith or a punishment for sins, exile (and in fact the very existence of evil) was seen as a central necessary element to the unfolding of creation and ultimate world redemption.[5] The very dispersion of the Jews throughout the world, furthermore, was a means by which they could lift the fallen sparks from all their various locations.[6]

The raising of the sparks through Tikkun points to an additional dimension of hope offered by Lurianism. The means for helping to complete the process of Tikkun were seen to be directly within the power of every Jew. This meant the promise of significant self-help power by which any Jew could directly and actively contribute to the process of ultimate world redemption. Gershon Scholem explains this power:

> It is the Jew who holds in his hand the key to the Tikkun of
> the world, consisting of the progressive separation of good
> from evil by the performance of the commandments of the Torah.[7]

In other texts Scholem includes additional specific ways by which a person could contribute to the process of Tikkun: prayer, specially directed meditations, and close contact with the divine life.[8]

The process of redemption being discussed here is one that occurs as a logical evolutionary process where the Messiah's coming merely marks the consummation of <u>Tikkun</u>. It should be noted, however, that at least as a marginal part of the Lurianic system there is still a possibility for sudden redemption <u>if</u> a generation would become worthy of it, and then even the possibility of the Messiah coming a little early before all of the <u>Kelipot</u> would have been purged.[9]

Another important fact about the nature of the redemptive process is that its main focus is on universal redemption even while it does give attention to the role of the individual person in separating good from evil and part of that process includes man's raising sparks from his own soul which (as is the case everywhere in the world) are mixed with the realm of the <u>Kelipot</u>. In the end all such efforts are seen as part of the overall <u>universal</u> process of <u>Tikkun</u>.[10] With regard to the raising of sparks from within individual souls, unlike subsequent developments in Sabbatianism there is no expressed desire <u>here</u> to deliberately participate in sin so that <u>Din</u> (evil) may be purged away.

We now have at least a basic picture of the Lurianic attitude towards Messianism and the nature of redemption. Still of importance for understanding the impact of Lurianism (and another one of the key variables mentioned in the Introduction) is the relationship of people to authority. The analysis of this variable will include 1) the fact that people focused primarily upon a person rather than upon a recorded tradition and the inherent implications of this, 2) the role of self-discipline and asceticism, and 3) the dynamics of leadership formation and Luria's rise to power. Also to be examined in this chapter will be the way in which Lurianism would spread so as to establish on a world-wide basis a

Kabbalism familiar at least on some level to both the spiritual elite

and the masses, and from which Sabbatianism and ultimately Ḥasidism

could develop.

One of the major features of 16th century Safed was that it provided

rich opportunities for people to do some studying with all kinds of dif-

ferent individual religious masters: less educated people could at the

very least listen to popular homileticians on the Sabbath and other

special occasions; for those with more learning there were religious

masters one could go to for studying Tanach or rabbinic texts and practi-

cal rulings; and for the spiritual elite of the time, there were masters

of Kabbalah.[11]

The disciple-master relationship was thus very prevalent in Safed

and not at all unique to Kabbalistic study. The specific role of the

Kabbalistic master was, however, often very unique. Teachers of

Kabbalah, by virtue of their involvement in spiritual exploration,

would often come to serve the role of a holy man/Zaddik. Unlike the

traditional rabbinic style leader, the Talmid Ḥaḥam, the religious value

of such a man's teaching would no longer be seen primarily in terms of

the cognitive knowledge content he would be conveying. Instead his

total life as a holy man would be seen as the primary value. Every-

thing that he would do, would be seen to represent an important source

on learning how to live a holy life.[12]

This kind of Zaddik role is apparently precisely the kind of leader-

ship role that Isaac Luria would eventually have. As other such figures,

Luria would gather about himself an inner circle of Ḥaverim (disciple

associates who would also be committed to mystic spiritual exploration).

According to Solomon Schechter, Luria's Ḥaverim disciples were so de-

voted to him that they would even watch to see such diverse things as how he rose from his bed and when, how he washed his hands and cut his nails, how he read his prayers, his habits of eating and of fasting, his relationship with others, and his preparation and celebration of the Sabbath.[13]

A personal encounter with Isaac Luria furthermore meant an encounter with the living embodiment of the mystic path to life-redemption. With very little exaggeration Luria could even be said to have become the living incarnation of the Torah. While he and his followers did maintain official commitment to the traditional two-fold written and oral Jewish law, the mystical conception of the "bottomless depths" of potential meaning within Torah[14] made whatever he said and did (or what was said that he did) ultimately authoritative as well as the primary focus of his followers attention (rather than the previously established traditions).

All of this combined with the fact that none of Luria's doctrines were written down during his lifetime means that the primary source of authority and guidance was in a person rather than in a text or any kind of previously recorded tradition. An immediate implication is that an important niche (and prototype for the future) is being carved out for the holy man/Zaddik kind of leader. Also, this kind of relationship to authority makes the ongoing development of a community potentially quite volatile. Development becomes strongly subject to potentially changeable subjective criteria (the inclinations of human beings responding to changing life-pressures) even as the authority of fixed objective criteria (fixed texts and established traditions) is being undercut and destabilized. The fact that people would look to a spiritu-

al master for affective as well as cognitive learning furthers the pos-
sibility for major transformations in individual identities and accentu-
ates the incredible amount of power lodged in the master.

A very different kind of authority was simultaneously operating with-
in the Lurianic system as well as within the entire Safed community.
This was the authority of self-discipline wedded to asceticism. Not
only did people bind themselves to traditional ritual disciplines and
other standard practices required by Jewish law (such as the dietary
practices) but they went far beyond this to practice severe self-abne-
gation as a means of repentance and of getting closer to God. Fasts
extending over three or four days and nights were not at all unusual,
particularly during the changes of the seasons. Other frequent prac-
tices included refraining from wine and meat during weekdays (except
the Sabbath) or of observing on selected days of the year the extreme
laws of levital purity in respect to food that the priests in the time
of the Temple observed in respect to sacrifices.[15]

There are two strongly opposing tendencies here: a yearning to break
the bonds of the spirit and of exile even while there is a severe bind-
ing of the self to get there. Complicating things further, this strug-
gle takes place in the context of an alienated, unsatisfied kind of
existence. These people never do achieve their central yearnings (i.e.,
for redemption from the bonds of exile) and unlike the case of an indi-
vidual artist or writer who very well may use self-discipline/self-de-
nial to achieve fulfilment and new freedoms, in their case the self-
denial primarily serves only to accentuate their alienation.

There is a mitigating factor however. The observance of the Sabbath
as well as other festivals in Safed gave the people frequent opportuni-

ties for full-bodied celebration and some active life affirmation in lieu of life negation. The Sabbath, particularly, was a day of joy and recreation in every respect, physically and spiritually. Fasting was not only prohibited but it became a positive religious act to partake of three meals and partake of wine and special delicacies. The Sabbath, in fact, was perceived as a foretaste of the blissful Messianic times when sin and sorrow would have disappeared from the world.[16]

It may be remembered that one of the appeals of Luria's system and his notion of Tikkun was that there could be some sense of positive accomplishment and self-worth; this did not, however, mean that there could ever be a sense of self-fulfilment, since everything was seen only as a means to ultimate complete redemption and never as an end itself. Still, the Lurianic system did hold out the promise of making life considerably less alienating.

Causes for Luria's rise to power quite naturally include the appeal and brilliance of his ideas. He was also apparently quite able to excel at the charismatic aspect of the Zaddik role. Gershom Scholem sees Luria as a visionary, teacher, and spiritual master, and feels that it is precisely because of Luria's ability and power to inspire that he rose to pre-eminence and ultimately came to be known as the leader of Safed Kabbalism. Scholem also notes that Luria was the first Kabbalist whose personality so deeply impressed his disciples that "some thirty-odd years after his death a kind of 'saint's biography' (Shivhai HaAri) began to circulate, which gave not only a multiple of legends, but a faithful description of many of his personality traits."[17]

During his lifetime Luria's teachings, conveyed only through direct oral transmission, were limited to a small circle of associates and stu-

dents. His abilities were so strong and creative, however, that very early in his career he attracted the attention of some of the leading intellectuals of Safed. While he was yet a student and studying with Moses Cordovero, the pre-eminent Safed Kabbalist until Luria, Cordovero very early acknowledged that Luria was more of a disciple-colleague than a disciple. Joseph Caro, the pre-eminent Talmudist and author of Codes (The Shulhan Aruch) was also an early admirer.[18]

When Cordovero died in 1570, Luria succeeded him as the head of the mystical school. Luria, himself, would die only two years later at the young age of 38, yet, during those two years he would be able to consolidate most of the former associates of Cordovero into a more cohesive unit than ever before and with his concept of Tikkun lead them to new conceptual heights marking the culmination of the Kabbalistic thought that developed in Safed.[19]

After Luria's death, two of his disciples, Hayim Vital and Joseph Ibn Tibul, committed his oral teaching to writing. They jealously guarded their notes, however, and did not permit them to circulate. Not until the end of the 16th century did some of Vital's writings begin to circulate throughout Palestine and beyond, and even then much against Vital's wishes. Vital, in particular, spent most of his long life (1534-1620) concealing his master's teaching from his contemporaries who, he thought, were not yet worthy of receiving it. By that time, however, some descriptions of Luria's works (including stolen copies of Vital's writings) had begun seeping out and were gradually spread.[20]

Ironically, the popularization of Kabbalah (previously all Kabbalistic learning had been limited to a small elite) was just beginning to happen about the same time (the latter part of the 16th century) and it would be

Cordovero's teachings, which had been written down from the start, which would have the first wide impact and dominate Kabbalistic thinking for about half a century.[21]

The concept of popularization was a very important development and had evolved quite naturally out of the Kabbalistic thinking of Cordovero and other earlier Safed Kabbalists. While they lacked the concrete focus of Luria (in his utilization of Tikkun and the "raising of the sparks"), there was a central concern over the fragmentation of exile and the need for universal Jewish repentance which inherently demanded the popularization of at least the broad outlines of their beliefs.[22]

The actual spread of Kabbalah developed through growing networks of schools and disciples of Kabbalistic enthusiasts and even more through the homilies of popular preachers. According to Scholem, a comparison of typical moralizing and edifying treatises and writings between the beginning and end of the 16th century reveals that during the first half of the century there was no trace of Kabbalistic influence and that by the last part of the century the vast majority of these writers were becoming actively involved in the propagation of Kabbalistic doctrines.[23]

The ultimate spread of Lurianism itself would be through these same networks and would help insure extensive grass roots involvement even while simultaneously setting the stage for extensive popular embellishments on the local level.[24] The masses also continued to cling to ancient apocalyptic legends and images of the Messiah (elements which were ignored though not obliterated by the mystical elite.[25] Nevertheless, wherever Lurianism came it produced a unique Messianic impetus of its own, and people increasingly embraced at least the broad outlines of the Lurianic world view, including the fusion of its mystical con-

ceptions to Messianism whereby fragmentation and Tikkun were seen as

the natural processes preceding Messianic Redemption.[26]

This development, in turn, would provide a central foundation upon

which both Sabbatianism and Hasidism would build, and by the middle of

the 17th century according to Scholem, Lurianism would become the one

generally accepted form of Jewish theology:

> As the influence of the religious revival radiating from Safed
> became more and more specifically Lurianic, it impressed its
> characteristic traits on Jewish religion everywhere. The ritual
> liturgical and other practical innovations of the Safed kabbalists
> became public property with a distinctively Lurianic slant. By
> 1650, only one generation after the actual dissemination of
> Lurianism had begun, the system had established an almost unchal-
> lenged supremacy. In fact Lurianic Kabbalah was the one well-
> articulated and generally accepted form of Jewish theology at the
> time.[27]

The success of this movement suggests that as in Safed, its expla-

nations about the frustrations of exile and its particular concrete

hopes to actively help bring on redemption again found a deep resonance

in people's actual lives.

Scholem sees the primary social function of Lurianic Kabbalah to be

precisely in the fact that despite aristocratic origins it could make

coherent sense of real popular needs and experiences:

> The inner world which the Kabbalists discovered in their symbolic
> forms did not have a function primarily in terms of a social ideo-
> logy of any kind. But once kabbalism came to perform a social
> function, it did so by providing an ideology for popular religion.
> It was able to perform this function in spite of its fundamentally
> aristocratic character, because its symbols reflecting as they did
> the historical experience of the group, provided the faith of the
> masses with a theoretical justification.[28]

As will be seen in the next chapter the tension between people's

hopes and the frustrations of their historical experience would come to

a head as a factor behind the emergence of the Sabbatian movement and

intensely involve the entire Jewish world.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF SABBATIANISM
INTO A WORLD-WIDE JEWISH MESSIANIC MOVEMENT
(THE PRE-CONVERSION STAGE)

In the mid-17th century the total world Jewish community would become an intense macrocosm of the frustration experienced by 16th century Safed. Past experiences of glory had either been forcibly ended (as the expulsion from Spain had been for Sephardic Jews going to Safed and the 1648-56 bloody Chmielnicky Massacres now had been for Polish Jews) or had entered into decline as was the case in the Ottoman Empire. To make matters worse, the 17th century situation was characterized by blocked opportunity throughout the Jewish communities of the world as the prospects for future growth and self-fulfilment steadily deteriorated.

Gershom Scholem, in a rare instance of unsubstantiated assertion, maintains that the position of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire was still at its prime, and he dismisses consideration of any socio-economic factors in their regard which would point to the contrary.[1] While some Jews still were financially well off, Scholem overlooks the steady disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, a disintegration marked by a steady erosion of its economic and social well-being. It is a matter of record that by mid-17th century the Ottoman Empire, despite continued military control over a vast expanse of territory had begun to undergo a major economic decline. This radical deceleration in economic activity came in the wake of a period of unprecedented (and never to be repeated) growth of trade and industry throughout the 16th century.

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Of crucial significance is the fact that the rise and decline of Ottoman economic development was inextricably interwoven with the economic status of Marrano and Jewish entrepreneurial interests. Ellis Rivkin in his The Shaping of Jewish History, presents an incisive analysis of this relationship, by uncovering a crucial alliance which made this economic upsurge possible. This was the alliance between the Ottoman dynastic rulers and the House of Mendes, a once Marrano, now turned Jewish entrepreneurial family. As professing Christians, the Mendeses had previously gained both great experience and reputation for their work in large-scale entrepreneurial development while operating out of Portugal and other major European trade centers. During the 16th century this kind of ability was extremely attractive to the Ottomans, for they lacked entrepreneurial expertise, and very much desired to find ways of heightening their economic development so as to match the growth in the sheer size of their empire (which extended all the way across Northern Africa and into the Balkans and Hungary), as well as to offset trade losses (particularly in the lucrative spice trade) to Portugal. This need coincided with the growing of the New Christians' persecution as the Portuguese Inquisition adopted the patterns of the Spanish and spread fear throughout the Marrano community in Antwerp. With the dire threat of confiscation, even death, the New Christians more and more looked to the Ottoman Empire as a welcome haven of refuge.

These developments made for an Ottoman-New Christian alliance grounded in mutual economic interests and in shared adversaries. When in the mid-1550's the House of Mendes formally decided to move its center of operations to Constantinople, the coadministrators of the fortune, Dona Gracia Mendes and Don Joseph Nasi, were received with all the pomp

of royalty. Don Joseph, in turn, was given direct access to the Sultan plus substantial trade and economic privileges throughout the empire and beyond. He was also given direct control over the village of Tiberias in Palestine. By using skilled Jewish artisans, especially from Italy, he turned it into a major center for silk production and cloth manufacture.

A very important consequence of this move to the Ottoman Empire was the reembracing of Judaism by the Mendeses and their fellow Marranos. This had followed from the need to reassure the Sultan of their utter loyalty to him, and of their burning of bridges to Christian Spain and Portugal. It also allowed them to link-up with the indigenous Sephardic Jewish population whose economic activities could be drawn upon by the Mendeses as a precious asset. To facilitate their transfer of religious loyalties, eminent rabbis found convincing legal grounds for exempting them from the need to re-convert. It was argued that these New Christians had always been Jews, since even when they lived as Christians, they had intended to return to Judaism as soon as this was possible.

Whether the Marranos had always wanted to return to Judaism or not (and Rivkin makes a strong case for assuming that the Mendeses would have remained Christians had the threat of confiscation not compelled them to emigrate to Turkey)[2] their new union with the Jewish community was to prove to be highly compatible and enduring. The benefits were manifold: mutual affirmation, social acceptance, and substantial economic benefits. The more than one million Jews of the Ottoman Empire were predominantly city dwellers and small-scale merchants, shopkeepers, and artisans. The Mendeses and the other large-scale Marrano entrepreneurs who came were able to make extensive use of the skills of Ottoman

Jewry for their own more complex economic ends (international trade, shipping, finance, and industry). They could also count on a substantial ready market for their goods and services.

As a consequence, economic development in the Ottoman Empire subsequently skyrocketed and the apex of Marrano-Jewish power and wealth was reached during the reign of Selim II (1566-77) when Don Joseph Nasi would become virtually co-vizier. He was made Duke of Naxos and given the title muteferiḥ along with a monopoly of the wine trade, control over the collection of taxes and customs and a major advisory voice in affairs of state. In this latter capacity Don Joseph was able to gain support, speeding the pace of economic development and for gaining a monopoly of trade in the Mediterranean, and thereby induce the Sultan to give top priority to economic aggrandizement rather than mere territorial expansion.

Selim thus conducted the Cyprus War (1570-73) to crush the economic power of Venice. If he had been successful the Mediterranean would have become an unprecedented single, rich and self-sustaining common market, protected by Ottoman absolutism and nurtured by the entrepreneurship of the Mendeses and the ever-growing network of Ottoman commerce.

The Turks, however, were resoundly defeated at the battle of Lepanto (1572), and Selim's dream was shattered. At the urging of his vizier Sokolis and other conservative forces, the Sultan now decided to abandon his mercantilistic goals and opt for traditional dynastic power. The Mendeses were to continue to enjoy the right to pursue profits but without the full power of the State to support them. This meant, to all intents and purposes, cessation of the Mendes-Ottoman alliance and the disruption of the complex economic ties which had knit together a world-

wide economic network. Although heightened economic activity continued

for several decades, a permanent decline was evident by the beginning of

the 17th century. Many of the old Marrano and Jewish families continued

to be active in trade and commerce, their leadership declined as their

prospects for sustained economic growth dimmed. With the end of the

Mendes-Ottoman alliance, the unified international trading network link-

ing the Jewish entrepreneurs in Turkey with the old Marrano contacts (as

well as the newly emerging Jewish ones) in Europe. Without a strong

economic force in the East and in the face of the increasing, yet still

precarious opportunities in the economic patterns of the West, there was

simply no natural force which could draw them together.

These insights on the Mendes-Ottoman alliance, the reasons for the

16th century economic upsurge, and its implications for Jews and Mar-

ranos are all based upon the new analysis presented by Rivkin.[3] The ex-

tensive economic decline throughout the Ottoman Empire in the 17th cent-

ury, however, was well-documented long before the Ottoman-Marrano con-

nection was discerned.

According to Lord Eversley's classic study of the Turkish Empire,

by 1622 Turkey's economy had entered into such bad times that the

English ambassador could observe:

> All the territory of the Great Seignior is dispeopled for want
> of pasture and by reason of violent oppression--so much so that,
> in the best parts of Greece and Anatolia, a man may ride three
> or four, or sometimes six days and not find a village to feed
> him or his horse whereby the revenue is so lessened that there
> is not wherewithal to pay the soldiers and to maintain the court.
> It may be patched up for a while out of the treasury, and by
> exactions which are now onerous upon the merchants and laboring
> men to satisfy the harpias.[4]

Clarence Rouillard likewise records many similar reactions. He

cites, for example, a letter written by a merchant of Aleppo in 1627,

which points to the existence of a deep chronic malaise in the once

thriving empire:

> L'état Ottoman est maintenant en grand désordre; et si n'aurait
> que c'est un grand corps; la maladie qui l'afflige depuis
> plusieurs anées l'aurait déja accablé.[5]

Strong rulers in the middle of the 17th century did indeed prevent

the empire from total collapse, but the entrepreneurial achievements of

the 16th century was never regained. Also, the Jewish communities of

Palestine and outlying areas of the empire, such as Morocco and Yemen,

were severely impoverished, and often subject to the whims of cruel

local Ottoman overlords. Palestinian Jewry, in particular, became more

dependent than ever on sending out emissaries to the Diaspora to raise

money.[6]

The precariousness of existence affecting the Jewish communities

of Western Europe has already been discussed in Chapter I. The level

of anxiety of the Jews in Europe, as well as in the Ottoman Empire, was

further raised by the fleeing of Polish Jewish refugees into Turkey and

adjoining lands. This spread of refugees accompanied as it was by the

loss of such pre-eminent centers of Jewish culture and scholarship meant

that the Chmielnicki massacres of 1648 would have a wide impact. Through-

out the Jewish world, many synagogues began reciting penitential hymns

over the destruction of Poland, lauded in the synagogues of Venice as

"the splendor of the world, the seat of the Torah, the domicile of God."

Adding still more to the resultant disquietude, the presence of

refugees often meant a new strain (particularly in the Netherlands) on

already strained labor markets. Also important was the fact that the

massacre had begun during a year (1648) which had been widely anticipated

(based upon Kabbalistic numerology) as a possible Messianic year. This

meant both added frustration and because of the many apocalyptic tra-
ditions (among the many multi-variegated traditions on Jewish Messianism)
speaking of major cataclysms immediately before the advent of the Messi-
anic Age, a re-doubled hope among many that the end might be at hand.[7]

As to the actual staggering losses to Polish Jewry, Dubnov sums
them up:

> The losses of Polish Jewry in the years of the horrible massacres
> from 1648 to 1656 were frightening. The Jewish chronicler's
> appraisals of those who perished fluctuate between 100,000 and
> 500,000 victims. If one were to take an average between these
> figures, it would also surpass the catastrophes of the crusades
> and the 'black death' in Western Europe. Approximately 700
> Jewish communities were laid waste completely or in part.[8]

This disaster in Poland, combined with the overall world Jewish
situation, meant the existence of considerable physical insecurity as
well as an all-pervasive sense of blocked opportunity for growth and
fulfilment. Such developments touch deep-seated emotional levels, and
in this case, in combination with a strong tradition of Messianic hope,
would trigger the incredibly fierce yearnings for renewal that would
propel the Sabbatian Movement.

Both great heights (of achievement and renewal) and great depths
(of lost self-integrity) are made possible by such a combination of in-
tense personal frustration and yearning. Abraham Maslow has warned that
it is precisely the threat to something central to one's personality
(central life goals, physical security, self-esteem and self-fulfilment
or actualization) that can cause the very most severe levels of psychic
stress and loss of self-equilibrium.[9]

Solomon Schechter has spoken along similar lines in regard to the
alienating sense of exile and central personal frustration felt in 16th
century Safed:

That this strain [of exile and intense alienation over against hopes for salvation] should produce certain psychological phenomena more interesting to the pathologist than to the theologian is hardly necessary to state. The literature of the time, abounding in stories of all sorts of demoniacs, bears ample evidence to this fact. We also have stories of men who through their importunate storming of Heaven for salvation were for some relapse from grace, suddenly hurled down to the very depths of hell and doomed to perdition.[10]

With the coming of the Sabbatian Movement and the all-inclusive frustration of the 17th century, volatile emotional responses (often overlapping into clear cases of destructive excess and lost self-equilibrium) would spread everywhere. Israel Zinberg, while not taking a totally negative view of the movement, chooses to call the entire phenomenon a "mass psychosis":

A tumultuous happiness filled deeply tried hearts. Yes it was a 'mass psychosis,' an epidemic madness. But in this madness the burning and thirsty longing for life, the longing which always flickered in the depths of the grieved soul of the people, disclosed itself with special power. The most fearful trials and catastrophes could not extinguish among the people the belief in better times, in the bright and beautiful day that will come.[11]

Zinberg also makes note of a particular severe psychic dis-equilibrium which affected all segments of the movement. This was the extreme and unceasing alternation that occurred between 1) severe mortification and fasting (often even leading to death) and 2) joyous wild ecstasies. The latter included mass circles of wild dancing and singing (which according to Zinberg often went far beyond contemporary standards of decency); also frequently mass hallucination and prophesying where people proclaimed the Messiahship of Sabbatai Sevi. In one instance in Constantinople, over 500 people became caught up in ecstatic prophesying. Zinberg provides a vivid description of one of them a gray-headed rabbi named Mordecai Hasid:

He had always wished to see with his own eyes the emissary of
God, but the face of the redeemer, the aged Mordecai later
related, shone with such dazzling light that he, Mordecai,
almost became blind. He only observed that above the 'head
of the Messiah' glistened a royal crown of pure fire which
flared up in the heavens. The old man fell to the ground in
terror. Then he began running through the streets and crying
in ecstasy: 'He, he is our lord! There is no king beside him.'[12]

Another example of extreme responses (though internally logical)
in the period before Sabbatai converted to Islam was the willingness of
so many Jews to act out on their beliefs by readying themselves to fol-
low the Messiah to Israel. Many sold their homes and suspended business
affairs, while others stored up provisions for the way (here perhaps at
times representing a hedging of bets or general preparation for crisis)
or moved to special cities of embarkation. Glückel of Hamlen (the 17th
century German Jewess) describes in her memoirs an apparently typical
scenario of how her father-in-law stored up provisions while awaiting
word from the Middle East that the time had come for the Messiah to as-
sume his Kingship over the world and (in accordance with traditional
Messianic beliefs) that all Jews should come to Israel. The following
comments by Glückel are taken from Solomon Schechter's Studies in Judaism,
Series II, and also reflect the alternation between mortification and
exultation that was taking place in Jewish communities:

'About this time (1665) people began to talk of Sabbatai Zebi.
Woe unto us, for we have sinned. When I think of the "repent-
ance done" by young and old I despair of describing it...and
what joy when there arrived letters from Smyrna! Most of us
these were addressed to the Sephardim. To their synagogue the
Germans, too, betook themselves to hear the letters read. The
Sephardic youth attending the meetings appeared in their best
dress, and wore the colours (green) of Sabbatai Zebi. Many sold
their houses and farms, and thus prepared for early emigration.
My father-in-law left his house and furniture in Hamlen and
moved to Hildesheim (to join the Jewish community there in the
new exodus), and even sent us to Hamburg two boxes full of good
things as provisions for the way' (to Palestine).... All proved

an illusion after nearly three years of excitement. 'O my God
and Lord, still thy people Israel despair not, but trust to
thy mercy that thou wilt redeem them whenever it will be thy
holy pleasure to do so....'I am certain that thou wouldst long
before have had mercy with us, were we but to fulfil the com-
mandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'[13]

The fact that not everyone immediately liquidated personal holdings,
even while the movement gained massive support from community leaders
and the masses, may or may not point to ulterior (non-true believer)
motives on the part of some people, particularly entrepreneurs who did
have a potential interest in transferring some of the unwieldy labor sur-
plus that had developed in the West or in regaining some economic power
in the East. To what extent such reasoning was operative is not easily
ascertained. Nor do we know how many of the leaders supported the move-
ment only because of the immense popular pressure to do so. Nonetheless,
the truly astounding characteristics of the movement is the tremendous
number of people who apparently did involve themselves with their entire
hearts and souls.

Interestingly, some of the most extreme reactions to the movement
came in Salonika which at the time, with about 60,000 Jews, was one of
the largest, if not the largest, Jewish community in the world. The
wealthier classes sustained some of the heaviest losses too, and accord-
ing to Gershom Scholem were completely impoverished. Shops and busines-
ses closed doen all over the community and throughout the winter and
summer of 1666 some 400 poor lived on major charity.

It was also in Salonika that believers activated the rabbinic dic-
tum that redemption could not be completed until all souls had entered
the bodies destined for them. In order to remove this last obstacle,
they began to marry off young children. About seven to eight hundred
such marriages were performed, resulting in much subsequent unhappiness

and misfortune.[14]

A very important key to understanding the dynamics of this far-flung movement, both in its beginning and in its subsequent spread, is the role leadership played and the relationship of the people to the legitimate structure of authority, vis-a-vis the emergent claims of Messianic authority. In Lurianism authority again centered around a person rather than an authoritative text. In the Sabbatian Movement, however, even during Sabbatai Sevi's lifetime the source of authority was more in the aura of his title and the image that people projected upon him, than in any active leadership of his own.

Even the beginning of the movement (which came in May, 1665) was not primarily the result of Sabbatai's initiative. Though he had had visions of being the Messiah as early as 1648, he had never been able to gather about him any significant body of believers in his Messiahship. Sabbatai, according to Gershom Scholem (and as will be examined in more detail as this chapter progresses) had frequent alternations between periods of manic illumination and severe depression (i.e., a typical manic-depressive syndrome) and apparently was incapable of managing a sustained organizing effort. He also had moments of serious doubt about himself. In the winter of 1664-65 he was not at all involved in preparing for the great Messianic movement to come, and had in fact performed an exorcism to try to rid himself of his states of manic illumination so (as he later confessed to Solomon Laniado in the summer of 1665) he could simply become an untroubled rabbi (or in the parlance of the Sephardim a hakham) among others.[15]

In the spring of 1665 Sabbatai heard of a prophet/spiritual seer from Gaza, known as Nathan (full name—Abraham Nathan b. Elisha Hayyim

Ashkenazi) who could read men's hearts, and much as Isaac Luria had done, could prescribe appropriate means of Tikkun (i.e., prescriptions for spiritual repair and reintegration which in turn could contribute to the spiritual reintegration of the entire world). Sabbatai then set out to meet Nathan with the express intention of seeking guidance on how to maintain peace in his own soul.[16]

Unbeknownst to Sabbatai, however, Nathan, mystic that he was, had had a major ecstatic vision earlier in the year and had perceived Sabbatai Sevi to be the Messiah. According to Scholem, Nathan, during earlier student days in Jerusalem (early 1660's) apparently had at least vaguely known of Sabbatai by reputation, and that memory now had seeped through his unconscious during a vision.[17] Whatever the precise process through which the vision came, the most significant factor for what would soon ensue, was that this was the first time another person had recognized Sabbatai in an ecstatic vision as the Messiah. And still, even with such recognition by such a personage, when Nathan told Sabbatai of his vision, the would-be Messiah at first resisted. Only after several weeks of intense discussions with Nathan, together reviewing his past experiences and sharing Messianic and Kabbalistic understandings, did he accede to take up his Messianic task.

The two men complemented each other to an extraordinary degree. Nathan possessed precisely what Sabbatai lacked: tireless activity, unwavering perseverance without manic-depressive ups and downs, originality of theological thought, considerable literary ability, and intuitive political genius. Sabbatai, on the other hand, by the very fact of his paradoxical personality, as well as his personal magnetism, had the power to inspire Nathan and provide him with the impetus for his actions

and ideas. Even for Nathan, according to Scholem, Sabbatai assumed the quality of an ultimate Messianic archetype rather than a real person. Nathan, in turn, by making himself the herald and standard-bearer of the Messiah, provided the crucial impetus to the formation of the Sabbatian Movement.[18]

The active beginning of the movement came during _Shavuoth_ (the holy-day of Pentecost, late May). During services Nathan fell once again into a prophetic swoon and called upon everyone to repent; then afterwards when he was explaining what had happened, for the very first time he publicly proclaimed Sabbatai's Messiahship.

Sabbatai meanwhile had stayed away from services in one of his periods of melancholia. Upon hearing of Nathan's renewed prophesying, however, and also in the knowledge that he had a significant group of avid followers, Sabbatai's spirits were revived. He had a new manic onrush and at that point he _did_ fully throw himself into the task of proclaiming his Messiahship.

According to contemporary reports by Rabbi Solomon Laniado, Sabbatai then would "go forth like a king" in the city of Gaza, mounted on a horse with a man walking in front of him. As was always the case with Sabbatai when in a state of illumination, his countenance literally became radiant and gave the impression of great magnificence of being. Subsequently a large congregation assembled in a synagogue and spent hours in fear and trembling simply watching Sabbatai's countenance. Many followers thus gathered about Sabbatai in Gaza, and either immediately or by the 17th of Tamuz a few weeks later (reports conflict), Sabbatai and perhaps some 40 of his followers would begin the spread of the movement by going to Jerusalem.[19]

Once they did get to Jerusalem, however, they met strong resistance from the majority of the city's rabbis. This resistance was in fact hardly surprising for it represented a continuation of old negative feelings towards Sabbatai (from his earlier days of living among them, 1662-63) based primarily upon the strange behavior he manifested during his states of manic illumination. This behavior often included open transgression of traditional Jewish law (e.g., the tabooed uttering of the four letter name of God--YHWH, and celebrating festivals on non-traditional dates) as well as very bizarre and culturally alien acts such as performing a ceremony where he married the Torah, and another where he dressed up a fish like a baby and put it into a cradle.[20] At this point (summer, 1665) with Sabbatai coming to Jerusalem with a body of supporters calling him "Messiah," and with his performing more of his strange acts, the rabbis there voted to expel him.[21]

Many rabbis of Jerusalem thereafter continued to oppose Sabbatai, but they lost much of their strength of unanimity when several of them went down to Gaza to examine Nathan. The conclusion of the examination was that "the spirit was truly upon him (Nathan)" and thus he was a "true prophet." On the basis of this examination many of the Jerusalem rabbis did come to support Sabbatai, at least until his conversion, and for the time being accepted Nathan's rationalization that Sabbatai's strange episodes of behavior were simply part of a larger Divine plan. The examination of Nathan also set an important precedent whereby the veracity of Nathan's prophecy became a primary criterion for the veracity of Sabbatai's Messiahship.[22]

Sabbatai Sevi himself, meanwhile, between July and early August traveled from Jerusalem through Safed and Damascus and on to Aleppo.

When he came to each of these new places the same and oft to be repeated phenomenon would re-occur: mass ecstasies with people falling to the ground and stammering prophecies. From August 12 (when he left Aleppo), however, until December (when Sabbatai would be present at major rallies in Smyrna), he largely disappeared from sight and desisted completely from any public Messianic activity. Scholem suggests that Sabbatai may have had a renewed spell of depression and then of "normalcy" until his manic illumination state returned in December.[23]

During these months of August to December, Nathan and his associates in Gaza engaged in feverish Messianic propagandizing, both through written communiqués sent to Jewish communities around the world and through personal encounters with the constant flow of people coming to see Nathan. As already noted, word spread incredibly fast and everywhere, building on extensive networks of interrelationship and soon including most of the leadership elite as well as the masses. Very significantly, at least some amount of world-wide commercial and family ties was still in existence, particularly among the Sephardim. Practically every Sephardic family in Europe in fact had relatives in Smyrna or Salonika (major early centers of support in the Ottoman Empire).[24]

Another important early and lasting communication link was Raphael Joseph, the Chelibi (chief) of the Egyptian Jewish community and treasurer to the Egyptian viceroy, who had befriended Sabbatai between 1663-65 when the latter had been in Egypt. Upon hearing of what was happening in Palestine, he, too, began to spread the word of Sabbatai's Messiahship, and helped insure that the entire Ottoman Empire, even to Yemen, would be quickly informed.[25] Also not to be overlooked is the fact that Sabbatai's own two brothers were wealthy merchants of Smyrna with inter-

national commercial connections[26] and that Nathan's father had spent

many years traveling as an emissary to raise funds for Jerusalem in Poland,

Germany, Italy and repeatedly Morocco.[27]

With Sabbatai himself remaining behind the scenes during the early

months of the movement (August-December), the explosive and non-sharply

delineated promise of imminent Messianic redemption as such, took front

stage. Relatively scarce attention was paid to anything concerning Sab-

batai's actual character as he came to serve the function of a slogan or

image rather than a living personality. Unencumbered by his actual pre-

sence the movement rapidly turned to follow the lines of popular apocalyp-

tic tradition as legends and miracle stories multiplied endlessly (even

including reports of the return of the 10 lost tribes of Israel as a

conquering army, and this particular tradition would lead to parallel

stories in Christian Chilianism too).

The apocalyptic turn in the Sabbatian Movement was the direct oppo-

site of what had been the case before Tammuz [June-July] 1665, when no

miracles at all had been reported. This was consistent with Nathan's

prophecy which had explicitly stated that Israel would have to believe

in the Messiah without signs and wonders, and the thought simply had not

come to credit Sabbatai with miracles. Once the apocalyptic emphasis

did come into play, however, no one was particularly disturbed. Gershom

Scholem seems to be somewhat surprised by this:

> Curiously enough the manifest and irreconcilable opposition
> between the two tendencies [Nathan's doctrine and the popular
> apocalyptic expectations] was hardly noticed, and certainly not
> disturbing.[28]

Despite Scholem's surprise, the "undisturbed" response was not at

all unpredictable. Significantly, Nathan's doctrine on signs and wonders

was grounded in the Lurianic tradition that the primary process of redemp-
tion was internal (still leaving open the possibility for external mani-
festations) and it was not a new fact that a separate popular apocalyptic
tradition might exist simultaneously without any awareness of blantant
mutual contradition. As noted in my Chapter II on Lurianism, that move-
ment developed along two tracks as it moved into the 17th century:
1) That of the Kabbalistic elite where the emphasis was almost entirely
upon the inner process of Tikkun and redemption; 2) that of the masses,
where even as the popularization of Lurianic traditions gave focus to
their sense of alienation and intensified their longings for redemption,
they still maintained all their multi-variegated apocalyptic traditions.

The simultaneous existence in Sabbatianism between an elite Kab-
balistic inner emphasis and a popular apocalyptic emphasis was simply a
continuation of a known pattern. Also, helping avoid any new conflict
between the two tracks during the early stages of the movement was pre-
cisely the fact that the large-scale popularization of the movement had
de-emphasized attention on Sabbatai's character, and made him instead a
common archetypal symbol read by people in whatever manner they desired.
Sabbatai's subsequent conversion to Islam, however, shattered this mythic
system and lead to an unavoidable head-on clash over whether external
events (external defeat and unignorable flagrant transgression) could or
could not contradict Sabbatai's Messianic mission.

Before the conversion, though, the two tracks went very much their
own ways. For the masses Sabbatianism would appeal to their traditional
longings for redemption, and direct them into immediately meaningful chan-
nels: penitence and mortification, as well as ecstatic celebration. For
a small elite of Kabbalistic initiates, the movement, through the doctrines

of Nathan, would also offer an explanation of the mystical significance

of Sabbatai's strange actions plus a profound new interpretation of

Tikkun which succeeded in splitting the traditional Kabbalistic camp

rooted in Lurianism.[29]

Nathan's interpretation significantly was based on an implicit as-

sumption central to the Lurianic concepts of creation and Tikkun. The

application that Nathan made, however, that of "Redemption through Sin"

represented a radical new direction that would be of great import for

Sabbatianism's future development. The logical derivation of the new

interpretation was actually quite simple and served perfectly to explain

Sabbatai's periodic strange actions and transgressions. In Lurianism the

very concept of creation was seen as a cathartic act in which latent Din

(evil) would be purged from the creative flow of life. The process of

Tikkun (life reintegration) similarly included the separation of the

sparks of life from the realm of the Kelipot (the fragments of Din/evil).

Nathan now applied the process of divine catharsis to the experience of

the Messiah's soul: Just as evil had become an absolutely necessary

part of the process of world completion and perfection (so as to allow

for the process of divine catharsis) so, too, the partaking of transgres-

sion/evil on the part of the Messiah's soul would be part of the same

process of divine catharsis and lead to universal Tikkun (the perfection

and reintegration of the world through the separation of the Kelipot and

the sparks of life).[30]

This doctrine of "Redemption through Sin" at first only was applied

to Sabbatai, but eventually, in the wake of his conversion it increasing-

ly became a justification for transgressions by members of remaining Sab-

batian sectarian groups. Even before the conversion, however, there were

some incidents of organized public transgression of traditional Jewish
law. On a large-scale level this was primarily only done with regard
to transforming traditional fast days (9 Av and 17 Tamuz) into cele-
brations, and since it was done in honor of the coming of the Messiah,
there was even some traditional precedent.[31] Among initiates close to
Sabbatai there is evidence that much more flagrant violations may have
occurred. Particularly significant, Scholem notes reports that Sabbatai
caused 10 other Israelites to eat Heleb (prohibited fat of animal kid-
neys), and this was among the 36 most severe offenses in Jewish law where
the punishment of Karet (that one's soul would be cut off from among his
people by God) would apply. The very fact that eating Heleb was an ob-
scure offense (even while categorized with serious sexual offenses)
served to accent Sabbatai's intention of transgressing the law for the
sake of transgression. Along with the prohibited action Sabbatai also
developed a heretical benediction by changing one of the traditional
morning benedictions which praises God for "freeing those who are bound
(matir asurim)" into praise for "permitting that which is forbidden
(matir isurim)."[32]

In addition to the obvious tendency towards possible greater and
greater transgression, there is another kind of trend reflected here
underlying almost all aspects of Sabbatianism. That is a trend towards
very extreme and ultimately very alienating dualistic modes of conscious-
ness. First of all, the Sabbatian sense of anti-nomianism does not mean
simply living without law, but points towards a direct state of war be-
tween freedom and order. Of necessity, the call for "transgression" must
define itself over against the traditional law. Another example is the
extremeness (even to the point of death) of peoples' alternations between

mortification and ecstatic celebration. Finally, underlying the movement
as a whole is its basic gnostic myth, developed from Lurianism, of pitting
total world redemption over against an all-pervasive state of alienation
which must continue until the redemption is completed (albeit human beings
can help with the process of eliminating that state of alienation).
Intensifying that sense of alienation in Sabbatianism (in addition to the
ultimate non-success of its Messiah-figure in the external world) is its
ever-increasing struggle (without concrete confirmation of success) with
the forces of evil and the tragic fact that particularly in the destruc-
tive excesses of several of the later sectarian forms of the movement,
many Sabbatian believers themselves would become active abbetors of evil
and life-destructiveness.

The beginning of the end of Sabbatianism as a movement of the Jewish
mainstream came in February 1666, when Sabbatai was imprisoned by Turkish
officials as he was traveling from Smyrna to Constantinople. The Vizier
of the Empire, Ahmed Köprülü, himself, had taken charge of the matter.
Fortunately for Sabbatai, even as the Vizier was concerned to control
this new Jewish Messianic movement (which posed an even greater threat
to business disruption than to mass insurrection) he apparently also de-
cided that it needed to be dealt with very delicately. Instead of killing
Sabbatai, he soon sent him for safe-keeping to a fortress at Gallipoli in
the Dardanelles.[33]

For a time, with Sabbatai at Gallipoli, the fervor of the movement
actually continued unabated. He had a very stately room, and stories
and fantasies about him multiplied more than ever, making him Lord of the
Castle and in waiting to take over the world. He also had endless streams
of visitors and Jewish community emissaries. Sabbatai's very real personal

magnetism and tact (when not taxed by extreme illuminations or depressions)
made a great impression on people, and in most cases, even among those who
had been skeptical, held him in good stead.[34]

In September 1666, however, the Turkish Sultan decided on a path of
action that would squelch at least the bulk of the movement and still not
make Sabbatai into a martyr. He had Sabbatai brought before his Privy
Council and gave him choice of conversion to Islam or death. Sabbatai
would choose conversion, marking the end of hopes for immediate redemption
and also bringing on the unavoidable conflict over the belief held by
those in the inner core of Sabbatianism that neither such a "redemptive"
sin, nor, in toto, their brand of inner truth, could be made subject to
any criteria from traditional Judaism). Even while many came to hold
this position, the large majority of the Jewish community would feel total-
ly alien to the Sabbatian advocacy of transgression and the potential re-
jection of all normative Judaism.[35] It is significant to note here that
even while 18th century Hasidism was a movement of inner renewal heavily
influenced by Sabbatianism, it would primarily be an heir of the majority
group above because it did maintain commitment to the normative two-fold
written and oral law of Judaism albeit with flexible and innovative inter-
pretation.

CHAPTER IV

CONTINUITIES AND DIFFERENCES

IN THE RISE OF HASIDISM

Eighteenth century Hasidism arose both as a response to very particular socio-religious conditions existing in Poland, as well as a continuation and development of many Kabbalistic concerns for renewal and redemption found in Lurianism and Sabbatianism. Unlike the other two movements, Hasidism was a direct conscious reaction against abuses and frustrations caused by the _Jewish_ leadership elite, consisting of the wealthy and of rabbinic Talmudic scholars. In the wake of the Chmielnicki massacres and the general decline of Poland this once religiously vigorous and universally respected elite was a dim spector of its former self, and hung desperately to the status quo, their financial control of the community and their privileged position with government authorities. Political abuse and corruption increased and religious vitality became most notable for its absence.[1]

Simon Dubnov describes the growing schism that developed between the elites and the rest of Jewish society:

> The lower social strata were moving away more and more from the upper--not only according to economic status, but also in the spiritual realm. The masses, the simple Jews, became even more hostile toward the communal leaders, to the kahal oligarchy, which consisted of the wealthy and the Talmudic scholars. Similarly the latter looked with disdain at the 'dark masses.' The everyday Jew also alienated himself from the upper levels of Jewish society, whose criterion for religiousness and dignity was gauged by the degree of scholarship, not depth and genuineness of the religious feeling.[2]

The above conflicts, in turn, were directly reflected in the
writings of Ya'akov Yosef of Polnoy, the disciple and designated scribe
for recording the teachings of Hasidism's founder, Israel Baal Shem Tov.
These writings gave extensive attention to criticizing the pride and cal-
lousness of the rabbinic elite, and according to Samuel Dresner, pointed
towards three main consequences:

> 1) The breakdown of the place of Torah, which became for the
> scholar a means of achieving glory and fame;
>
> 2) The drive for personal security, which resulted in cor-
> ruption and subservience to the rich;
>
> 3) The concern for spiritual security and the salvation of
> the leader's own soul which led to the neglect of the
> people's salvation.[3]

Bernard Weinryb corroborates the subservience of the scholarly
elite to the rich by noting that the Gaon of Vilna, among many such
examples, was completely supported (room and board and allowance) by the
wealthy leadership of his community and subsequently strongly supported
them against the growing popular protest of leadership corruption and
abuses.

Significantly, from 1771 on, after Hasidism had begun to grow into
a substantial force in Vilna, the Gaon spear-headed a vehement campaign
against them. It is quite possible that the vehemence and determination
of his opposition was at least as much if not more due to Hasidism's
being a potential vehicle for social protest than due to her diverging
religious priorities. Weinryb's analysis suggests that simply joining
a Hasidic minyan (prayer group) represented a potential act of rebellion
and a stick with which to beat communal leaders because it represented
an alternative source of allegiance focused on the Hasidic leader, the
Rebbe, rather than the traditional rabbinical elite. Both the power of

the economic and rabbinic elites were thus being directly threatened.[4]
Another very powerful factor in the new movement's appeal was that it
was directly aimed at grass roots involvement and offered people a po-
tentially more fulfilling way of life. This could hardly help but gain
the movement popularity points when juxtaposed with the antagonistic and
neglectful attitude of the elite.

Hasidism's proselytizing nature represented both a continuation of
the already existing tradition to popularize Kabbalah (carried on by
Lurianism and Sabbatianism) and an introduction of very new elements.
Rather than merely going out to preach the message of Kabbalah to the
people (as had been done), Hasidism now held out to everyone the possi-
bility of direct spiritual discipleship (previously only possible for
the spiritual elite).

In establishing for the first time a bridge between a spiritual
elite and the masses, Hasidism also insituted on a massive scale a new
form of more "accessible" learning. They de-emphasized the technical
and highly esoteric aspects of Kabbalistic study and in turn provided
very tangible paths to spiritual devotion and Tikkun (spiritual re-
integration and perfection). The facilitative concept they used for
achieving this was Devekuth (meaning to make mystical union with God an
ongoing part of one's life). While at first glance the concept may ap-
pear very abstract, they interpreted it in a practical way to mean
merging with the ethico-religious ideals understood as "God's Way," and
pointed to such virtues as piety, service, love, devotion, humility,
clemency, trust, and ability to rise to greatness.[5]

The medium of learning changed too--away from emphasis on textual
study and towards the now well known Hasidic predilection for teaching

spirituality through oral traditions, sayings, stories, song and cele-
bration.[6] This emphasis on non-textual learning, as well as the entire
notion of spiritual discipleship, in turn helped to create a very high
degree of authority in leadership figures which will be examined later
in this chapter.

All told, the popularizing character of Hasidism, combined with
their giving priority to active devotion, prayer, and spiritual intensity
over formal learning, put them at direct odds with the established rab-
binic forces of the period who emphasized the degree of scholarship and
not the depth of religious feeling.

A final background factor concerning the uniqueness of the Polish
situation is the geographic difference between the North and the South.
In the North (Lithuania), the real bastion of rabbinic power, Hasidism
developed only after considerable struggle because Talmudists had all-
pervasive control over the common people as legistators, advisors and
judges. In the South (the Ukraine), however, where Hasidism was start-
ed and had its initial successes, people were further away from the main
sources of scholarship and consequently less subservient and apt to have
very different values. A Ukrainian Jew, in fact, was more in need of an
emotional, not an intellectual faith and traditionally had tended more
towards mystic and Messianic teachings.[7] Now in the 18th century, except
for membership in the extreme Sabbatian sectarian groups, the only way
for an average person to meet such needs was to join Hasidism (other
Kabbalists having backed away from proselytizing movements in the wake
of the Sabbatai Sevi's apostasy).[8] The stage was thus set for Hasidism's
rapid rise in the South. As the fusion of populism and Kabbalah that it
was, it would emphasize both reform of the "here and now" and continuing

aspiration for ultimate redemption (from strife within Judaism and in the rest of the world).

On the specific relationship of Hasidism to the Sabbatian tradition, Isaiah Tishby seems to at least touch the heart of the matter in the first page of an article entitled "Bein Shabtaut LeHasidut" (Between Sabbatianism and Hasidism). He points out here the two-edged nature of the relationship where on the one hand Hasidism defined itself as being different from Sabbatianism, and on the other hand, as a movement concerned with Kabbalistic traditions, Hasidism was concerned with and built upon Sabbatian interpretations of that tradition.

Tishby relates the need for sharp differentation precisely to the fact that Hasidism was the only other popular Kabbalistic movement at the time and that the rabbinic establishement continually tried to lump the two groups together as "strayers from the path." As a consequence, there was a strong built-in reinforcement to define themselves as "different" and to make crystal clear their opposition to the suspending of the two-fold law even while advocating flexible interpretation.

Nevertheless, Hasidism was not as antagonistic to the Sabbatians as to the rabbinic elite, seeing the former more as brothers who fell while making the effort to achieve spiritual perfection, than as aliens. Thus it seems that Hasidism did have some sense of kinship with Sabbatianism and could feel free to explore and develop some of their thinking, albeit to censure out the anti-nomian part and overt Messianic elements.[9]

Tishby's overall focus, indeed, is to directly establish some link between Hasidism and Sabbatianism. The means by which he does this is to examine parallel texts of Kabbalistic exegesis (on spheres of Divine emanation) by Nathan of Gaza and by Ya'akov Kofil, a leading 18th century

Polish Kabbalist who had some personal associations with followers of Hasidism and was a strong polemicist against Sabbatianism.[10] The texts are strikingly similar and as Tishby analyzes them he infers that Kofil directly drew upon Nathan's work. The inference appears to be a very reasonable one and in his conclusion Tishby suggests that Hasidism might even be thought of as an internal permutation of Sabbatianism which simply elected to reject its anti-nomianism.[11]

This last suggestion may have an element of truth to it (in terms of the continuity of some Kabbalistic conceptions) but if taken as an absolute statement about Hasidism it would ignore that movement's radical break from belief in the Messiahship of Sabbatai Sevi (together with the concept of an internal Messianic kingdom without redemption in the external world), as well as the entire social protest aspect of the movement directed against the inadequacies and injustices existing under Poland's 18th century Jewish leadership elite.

The real import of Tishby's article is that by providing evidence that Kofil worked with the writings of Nathan, it substantiates the existence of a bond of continuity between the original Sabbatian thinking of Nathan and later Kabbalists who might also polemicize against Sabbatianism and have ties with Hasidism.

Significantly, direct observation of continuity and change can be gained by examining the official Hasidic writings of Ya'akov Yosef. This is particularly true for the concept of Redemption through Sin. Ya'akov Yosef seems to have seen some kind of definite validity in this concept, even while striving to keep its anti-nomian implications within strict bounds.

He applied the concept specifically to the role of the Zaddik (holy

man, spiritual leader) in descending to the "realm of sin" in order to
raise up from that realm the souls of specific people. According to
Ya'akov's Toldot Ya'akov Yosef , p. 66a (translated in this instance by
Samuel Dresser):

> When the leader of the generation who is a perfect man whishes
> to join himself to the common man, [to raise the man up from
> his sinfulness] he must in himself find some small transgres-
> sion, an aspect of worldly sin by means of which a bond can
> be formed....12

With an apparent eye toward differentiating Hasidic doctrine from
Sabbatianism, however, Ya'akov repeatedly warned against remaining in
the realm of sin and established a general principle prohibiting in-
tentional sin which he viewed as complete denial of God.[13]

Instead, the requirement for transgression was only to be met by
either the Zaddik's becoming aware of some small sin that he had pre-
viously committed[14] or by an "as if" sin where he was a victim of un-
avoidable circumstance (e.g., his wagon breaking down on a Friday after-
noon between towns, preventing his full observance of the Sabbath) or
where he accepted the guilt of others without actually having committed
an offense.[15]

Ya'akov did, however, have a small niche for "acceptable" intention-
al transgressions and categorized them as "as if" transgressions.
According to Dresner, Ya'akov's reference to this kind of sin was strictly
limited to "neglect of Torah" (bitul Torah), "praying later than the pre-
scribed time" (over zeman tefilah), "idle talk" (devarim betelim), "anger"
(ka'as), "pride" (ga'avah), and "falsehood" (sheker). Dresner also notes
further limits on this concept, including 1) it only applied to a select
religious elite (the Zaddik spiritual leader), 2) the transgression was
not to be done for personal pleasure, 3) it was only to be undertaken if

there was a good possibility that it actually could help some fallen person or persons.[16]

An example of this type of transgression would be a Zaddik who one day decides to begin his preaching with an intricate display of learning (pilpul), a custom he ordinarily condemns in other scholars because it leads to the sin of ostentatious display. He does this precisely because it will lead to the transgression of the sin of pride, for once having transgressed he will no longer be above the people but at one with them and therefore can more easily include himself in his own preaching. Being at one with the people, he is able to raise them with himself.[17]

The parameters for transgression clearly were small, and considerable attention was given to limits. Nevertheless, it is inescapable to recognize that this tenuous compromise between the transgression of the Zaddik and commitment to tradition marked the closest that Hasidism ever came to breaking out of the framework of traditional Jewish law.

Very important changes also occurred in Hasidism's basic understanding of Tikkun. According to Gershom Scholem, for the first time the concept was differentiated into two separate and distinct stages: 1) individual Tikkun (personal spiritual reintegration in the here and now), and 2) the traditional notion of ultimate universal redemption.[18] As previously indicated in this thesis, the practice of individual Tikkun can be traced as far back as Luria. Before Hasidism, however, individual Tikkun had only been considered as part of the larger and always elusive task of ultimate world redemption. As a consequence, a person might have been able to feel a positive sense of involvement in his active contribution to ultimate redemption, but would never have been able to have a really satisfied sense of personal fulfilment and completion.

Now under Hasidism, however, there was a radically different situation. No longer would all sense of self-realization and fulfilment lie "out there" beyond the here and now. The individual was being assured that he could have some sense of personal fulfilment, even though ultimate total redemption had not yet been achieved. In this very important sense, the extremeness (and implicit alienation) of Lurianism's gnostic character was significantly mitigated.

While not eliminating aspirations for universal Tikkun and redemption, Hasidism now perceived man's role in the process of Tikkun to be limited basically to the salvation of the soul of the individual. Scholem cites Ya'akov Yosef:

> The lifting up of the sparks can accomplish only the 'ge'ulah peratit' the individual salvation of the soul which therefore is the task of man and can indeed be wrought by man himself.[19]

Ya'akov's comments indicate a very real possibility for success. Through work on individual Tikkun and the practices of Devekut mentioned earlier in this chapter, it seems that a follower of Hasidism could indeed have a very strong sense of positive self-realization.

Among modern scholars, men of such widely differing perspectives as Simon Dubnov and Martin Buber have inferred from this shift of emphasis to individual Tikkun that Hasidism (in this classical period) eliminated the concept of Messianism as an acute immediate force, and that this was its way of reacting to the destructive outbreak of Messianism in the Sabbatian movement. Buber seems to have developed this position in the most detail and claims that Hasidism ushered in the complete end of the belief in personal Messianism and instead substituted a concept whereby all mankind would be accorded co-working power to bring redemption as an evolutionary historical process.[20]

Such a position on the total elimination of personal and apocalyptic
Messianism is simply too extreme, both because it ignores the many prayers,
stories and longings for personal Messianic redemption expressed in early
and later Hasidic tradition, and because it overlooks the implications of
Ya'akov Yosef's very pointed statement (cited above) limiting man's power
of Tikkun to the individual salvation of the soul and thereby making ex-
ternal Divine intervention an absolute necessity to complete the process
of ultimate world Tikkun.

At least on a theoretical level (compared with the earlier concept
of continuous universal Tikkun) this actually increased the justification
for belief in a personal Messianic intervention and in one that was at
least in some way disjunctive with the natural flow of human history.

But what was the actual role now of Messianism in the everyday re-
ligious life and thought of the people? That is a very different and
problematic question. Gershom Scholem encounters it directly and suggests
that Hasidism may have represented not a liquidation but a "neutralization"
of Messianic concern:

> Hasidism represents an attempt to preserve those elements of
> Kabbalism which were capable of evoking a popular response,
> but stripped of the Messianic flavor to which they owed their
> chief successes during the preceding period. That seems to me
> the main point. Hasidism tried to eliminate the element of
> Messianism—with its dazzling but highly dangerous amalgamation
> of mysticism and the apocalyptic mood—without renouncing the
> popular appeal of later Kabbalism. Perhaps one should rather
> speak of a 'neutralization' of the Messianic element. I hope
> I shall not be misunderstood. I am far from suggesting that
> the Messianic hope and belief in Messianic redemption disap-
> peared from the hearts of the Hasidim. That would be utterly
> untrue.... But it is one thing to allot a niche to the idea of
> redemption, and quite another to have placed this concept with
> all it implies in the center of religious life and thought.
> This was true of the theory of tikkun in the system of Lurianism
> and it was equally true of the paradoxical Messianism of the
> Sabbatians; there is no doubt what idea moved them most deeply,
> motivated them, explained their success, and is precisely what
> Messianism had ceased to do for the Hasidim.[21]

Clearly Messianism/World Redemption was not now such a singular source of attraction as it had been. Attention was also being given to individual Tikkun and improved life in the here and now. But did such emphasis on personal actualization contribute to a diminishment in the fervor for Messianic world redemption? The same kind of tension exists right up through our own day. The elements are often incompatible, but not always. In the case of Hasidism perhaps there was some resultant diminishment in the concern for Messianism but the continued fervor of Messianic prayers and stories indicate that any diminishment was not very complete.

There was, however, a change in the role that Messianism played. In Chapter III, I cited Abraham Maslow to indicate that a direct threat to one's personal sense of security and/or a serious blockage of self-fulfilment could lead to severe levels of psychic stress and dis-equilibrium. This was precisely the kind of situation that had existed behind the rise of Sabbatianism and Lurianism. Under such circumstances where people would be experiencing psychic dis-equilibrium and a lost sense of security, it is quite natural that Messianic beliefs would start them flailing at windmills and following false Messiahs with little rational examination of their qualifications.

Social conditions in 18th century Poland, as already indicated, were harsh and oppressive. The genius and magnetism of Hasidism's response, however, was that it could establish a series of supportive communities where people could overcome feelings of complete frustration and have at least some tangible sense of accomplishing self-improvement and community betterment (reflected in the more fulfilling, less oppressive human network of interaction they were creating with each other). In such a situ-

ation continued commitment to Messianic redemption may include strong

elements of comfort and/or escape (e.g., taking refuge from larger socie-

tal woes). It may also include another element, however. Significantly,

there is an underlying analytic principle constantly confirmed in the work

of Abraham Maslow, which confirms the reverse side of his paradigm. When

direct personal needs for security and a personal sense of well-being do

begin to be fulfilled, a degree of healthy psychic equilibrium is estab-

lished and the person involved is better able to strive for higher, more

abstract needs. This implies that at least among some there could also

have been an active non-escapist striving after Messianic redemption.

It is critical to note here, however, that in all of these potential

Ḥasidic Messianic tendencies there are strong elements of resistance to

any actual Messianic pretenders who might appear. On the one hand, the

people who would be yearning most strongly for comfort or shelter from

societal problems, would be apt to need some strong element of surety be-

fore taking the risk on a Messianic pretender; and on the other, even

those most actively seeking Messianic redemption would be doing so from

a base of relative security and psychic-equilibrium and thus would be apt

to have the strength and will power to make sure that a Messianic claim-

ant was the genuine article. It is also in this matter of scrupulousness

against false Messianic figures that there appears to have been the most

direct element of reaction against Sabbatianism. Messianic ardor was not

eliminated, but, in fact, joined hand in hand with scrupulousness against

false Messianic figures to both protect the movement against a self-contra-

dicting conflict and to ensure that the concept of Messianism would remain

alive at least in some form into the modern age.

One other important point on the understanding of Messianism in the

Hasidic tradition concerns the Baal Shem Tov's famous epistle to his

brother-in-law, telling of his visionary ascent to heaven and dialogue

there with the Messiah. This letter is repeatedly printed in the secon-

dary literature and is generally used to dismiss Messianism as an immedi-

ate hope. When the Baal Shem Tov, the Besht, asks the Messiah when he

will come, the reply is that it will happen when his teachings and spirit-

ual ways are spread throughout the world and then the Baal Shem Tov grieves

that the time is yet so long. Only Israel Zinberg goes beyond this point

in his chapter on Hasidism. This version confirms the notion that indi-

vidual Tikkun and the spreading of Hasidic knowledge were necessary pre-

requisites to set the stage for the coming of the Messiah, but it also

holds out the possibility that the contemporaries of the Besht or those

who would immediately follow him might after all be able to attain the

necessary spiritual levels (apparently affirming the possibility of a

fairly immediate hope). This is how Zinberg puts it:

> I then asked the Messiah, 'When will the Lord come?', and he
> answered: 'Know that when your teaching will be known and
> revealed throughout the whole world...and others will also be
> able to make unifications and ascents like yourself, then all
> the Kelipot will be destroyed and the hour of acceptance and
> help will arrive.' And I marvelled at this and was grieved
> that the time is yet so long, for when can this happen? But
> because while I was there I learned three kinds of formulas
> (segullot) and three holy 'names'...I was consoled and thought
> to myself: perhaps thereby my contemporaries will also be
> able to come to this level and state, like myself. They also
> will become suited for ascents of the soul such as mine. But
> I was not given permission, as long as I live, to reveal this.[22]

Whatever the form of Messianic thinking that early Hasidism may have

held, the most radical and influential shift was the elimination of the

all-pervasive sense of alienation from the gnostic character of universal

Tikkun in the Lurianic and Sabbatian systems.

This de-emphasis on alienation was also reflected in an easing of

emphasis on asceticism and flexible interpretation of the law. Precise-
ly because the law was not a tight binding garment, though it did have
definite guidelines, there was also less pressure to break away into anti-
nomianism.

The Baal Shem Tov first explained his concept of law and authority
to Ya'akov Yosef with the following story:

> This is a story that happened to me. I was riding in a coach
> drawn by three horses, each of a different color and not one
> of them was neighing. I could not understand why. Until the
> day we crossed a peasant on the road who told me to loosen the
> reins. And all at once, the three horses began to neigh.[23]

Ya'akov had been an extreme aesthetic at this point in time and had
his own synagogue in Sharogrod. According to the traditional account
(as retold be Elie Wiesel), immediately before the story Ya'akov had been
getting angry at the previously unknown Besht for making his congregants
late for services on account of the Besht's story telling. Immediately
after the story, however, he burst into crying and understood the meaning
of the parable in one blinding flash: for even man's soul to vibrate
and cry out the reins had to be loosened, too many restrictions would
stifle it.[24] The core of this account strikes a significant truth: the
breaking away of Ya'akov Yosef from his aestheticism and severe self-
restraint plus the considerable charismatic power of Israel Baal Shem Tov
and his message. The parable serves as well to enunciate the overall
position of Hasidism to loosen the reins of authority, but not to drop
them completely.

The Besht's first encounter with Ya'akov Yosef was typical of the
way he would meet and involve his first disciples. His style of leader-
ship was a very active one. From about 1636 on he traveled as an itin-
erant healer and preacher throughout Southern Poland and gradually

gathered about him a group of disciples. Just as with Ya'akov Yosef,
he would show them alternative and less repressive paths to spirituality.

The details of the Besht's life are known only through legend but
it is clear that his background was quite humble, as was the case with
most of his disciples who included itinerant preachers, rabbis without
positions, or with shaky ones, ritual slaughterers, and similar elements.
Weinryb labels them as "lumpen intelligentsia."[25] Unquestionably, they
represented a distinct alternative to the Kehilla oligarchy and soon
found strong support from the masses of villagers and other Jews who
were outside the spheres of the ruling elite.

As popularization began to occur, followers formed into small fel-
lowship groups and thus safeguarded and promoted a distinctive Hasidic
characteristic emphasizing individual and small group encounters.
Around the mid-1740's the Besht himself settled permanently in Medzibozh
allowing for a little bit more of a stable community base for himself
(even while still leaving to pay visits to other Hasidim). When he died
in 1760, the movement numbered in the thousands.[26]

The Besht's designated successor was Dov Ber of Mezeritch. He was
a brilliant organizer and arranged for each of his disciples to begin a
Hasidic spiritual center in different places all over Poland and Eastern
Europe. Thus began Hasidism's large dramatic growth. The centers re-
tained a certain degree of continuity through a common prayerbook
traced back to Isaac Luria (the Nusach Sephardi of Isaac Luria), the
writings of Ya'akov Yosef, basic similarity in their broad ideologies
and ongoing communication interchange.

Nevertheless, the most distinctive aspect of each center was its
spiritual leader to whom Hasidism gave the title of Zaddik. As a charis-

matic spiritual leader moving into an institutionalized niche, he was very much in the tradition of Isaac Luria. As with Luria, by being a spiritual master and a central source of authority, he had tremendous power over his followers. The Ḥasidic Zaddik quite possibly had even more power because of the almost exclusive reliance (at least in the early stages of Hasidism) on oral tradition. Also paralleling the role of Sabbatai Ṣevi was the Zaddik's task to take upon himself some of the burden to remove the sinfulness and guilt of his followers.

The role of the Zaddik in the spread of the movement ultimately both fostered and hindered the vitality of that growth. His role as individual spiritual counsellor and master was crucial to the movement and it was individual Zaddik leaders who had made it possible to open the new spiritual centers and actually begin the wide-spread growth of the movement. Nevertheless (and as so often is intrinsic to the process of institutionalization), by 1800 the concern for self-maintenance had to a very large extent severely curtailed any interest in innovation. The Zaddik was now apt to be part of an inherited dynasty with his own court traditions and conservative trends.[27] A new age began and a new story.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The critical factors behind the rise of both the Sabbatianism and Hasidism movements include: 1) exceptional social frustration arising out of the time; 2) a common underlying cultural value tradition of redemption rooted in Lurianic Kabbalah which both gave people a reason to hope and a direction with which to struggle against their fate.

The social frustrations underlying the rise of Sabbatianism were universal and all-pervasive. This produced a severe state of psychic dis-equilibrium among people in all sectors of the Jewish world. This made them almost inevitably vulnerable to Sabbatai Şevi's proclamation of Messiahship. Sabbatai, himself, became merely a symbolic archetype upon which people, desperate for any hope of redemption, could project their own personal yearnings and fantasies about the coming of the Messiah. This held true, apparently, both for most of his massive popular support as well as for individuals such as Nathan who propounded the movement's doctrines.

The underlying traditions of Lurianic Kabbalah even helped to further exacerbate the situation. One of the crucial factors behind this fact was the gnostic nature of Lurianism's basic myth of redemption. The shattering of the primordial cosmic vessels of life in this myth confirmed and reinforced, on a very deep psychic level, already existing feelings of pervasive alienation. The hope of escape from alienation that the myth offered, in turn, was that of ultimate world redemption

through victory in the struggle against evil (to be accomplished by
purging evil from the mystic life-force sparks of light). In Sabbatian-
ism (as a way of explaining Sabbatai Ṣevi's conversion out of Judaism
and other odd behaviors) this conception and its intrinsic sense of dis-
ease with the present, would be carried to a logical extreme in the de-
structive and nihilistic concept of Redemption through Sin.

In a very ironic way Lurianism's emphasis on the inner mystic nature
of the redemptive process became a major disorienting and confusing force
in Sabbatianism. At the beginning of the movement the orthodox Lurianic
concept of Tikkun (the mystic re-integration and ultimate perfection of
the world) was fused with the even older and popularly held myth of a
physical Messiah who would lead the Jews back to Israel and bring social
and religious redemption to the world.

Under this synthesis the Messiahship of Sabbatai Ṣevi could be ac-
cepted both by many Kabbalistic purists among the religious elite (who
could accept Sabbatai's Messiahship as an external manifestation of the
final stages of the process of Tikkun) and by the masses (who were apt
to project their hopes primarily onto the promise for concrete physical
redemption).

After Sabbatai's conversion and failure to bring external redemption,
however, the synthesis disintegrated, and among Sabbatian diehards the
belief in the essential inner nature of the redemptive process was now
used as a justification for continued belief in this physical Messiah
despite his inability to accomplish a Messiah's traditionally appropri-
ate tasks. For those who continued belief in Sabbatianism neither their
Messianic belief, nor, "in toto," their brand of inner truth, including
redemptive sin, could ultimately be made subject to any criteria from

the external world. This would inherently lead to a total break with traditional Judaism as well as to a future path of much pain and self-destruction.

Hasidism, unlike Sabbatianism, developed in response to a specific need for immediate reform as well as to an underlying malaise and desire for ultimate redemption. The specific problem was the corruption and loss of spiritual vitality in the Jewish leadership elite. Significantly, this contributed to a strong concern for spiritual renewal in the world of the present and resulted in a radical alteration in the Lurianic system of redemption.

For the very first time, the concept was differentiated into two separate and distinct stages: 1) individual Tikkun (personal spiritual reintegration in the "here and now") and 2) the traditional notion of ultimate universal redemption. While the practice of individual Tikkun can be traced back to Nathan of Gaza as well as to Isaac Luria, always before it had only been considered as part of the larger and always elusive task of total world redemption.

With the new Hasidic system individual Tikkun had a worth of its own, as well as being a pre-requisite stage to ultimate world redemption. The primary way it was to be achieved was through the practical discipline of Devekuth (achieving union with God through the practice of His ethical and religious ideals). All told, this meant that people could have some sense of personal actualization and fulfilment even while universal redemption was still to be attained. In this very important way the extremeness and implicit alienation of Lurianism's gnostic character was significantly mitigated.

The decreased sense of personal alienation in Hasidism became re-

flected in an overall ability to affirm life and to find a creative
balance with law and authority. Hasidism's ideal was to loosen, but not
drop, the reins of authority so as to allow the soul to vibrate and shout.
Joyous celebration was plentiful and the severity of the asceticism found
in Sabbatianism and Lurianism was greatly curtailed.

Consistent with the movement's emphasis on intensive personal de-
votion and spiritual growth, as well as the lumpen-proletariat character
of its original constituency, Hasidism's founder, Israel Baal Shem Tov,
was of humble origin and rose to influence on the basis of his personal
and spiritual charisma.

The spread of the movement, in turn, was dependent upon the insti-
tutionalization of the Zaddik (holy man/spiritual master) role where dis-
ciples of the Baal Shem Tov and his successor, Dov Ber of Mezeritch,
would each form their own Hasidic fellowship and provide personal guid-
ance for the individual spiritual growth so intrinsic to the ideals of
the movement.

Their role was similar to that of Isaac Luria except that they had
even more authority vested in them, because most of their followers were
not well-versed in Judaism's written traditions and were almost totally
dependent upon them for religious direction.

A characteristic of theirs, somewhat similar to that of Sabbatai
Şevi, was their role of assuming the burden of their followers' sinful-
ness, and at times, even to performing certain specified small transgres-
sions in order to raise the souls of their followers. This was their
own approximation of the Sabbatian concept of Redemption through Sin.
But because of a strong negative reaction to the unbridled anti-nomian-
ism of Sabbatianism, they would keep the concept under very tight limits

and maintain basic commitment to Judaism's traditional two-fold law.

The ideal of ultimate personal Messianic redemption in Hasidism both remained an official category and (despite certain scholarly opinion to the contrary) a viable personal belief for people as reflected in many fervent Messianic prayers, stories, and yearnings. There was a critical difference between Hasidism and the pre-Sabbatian period. Hasidism's new ability to affirm the present as well as to hope for the future, had introduced a new element of psychic stability into their lives. Between this factor and their negative reaction to Sabbatai Sevi's false Messiahship, they, unlike their predecessors, would be almost immune to the lure of empirically unsubstantiated false Messiahs.

A final significant general implication arising out of this study is the light it sheds upon the psychic-disequilibrium inherent in gnostic systems of redemption and the importance of neutralizing same. The problem is much larger than Sabbatianism, Hasidism, or even all of Judaism. Arthur Green, Professor of Religious Thought at the University of Pennsylvania and a co-founder of a religious renewal community, Havurat Shalom, sees this same problem of Gnosticism as the great spiritual sickness of Western man:

> I refer to the spirit of Gnosticism, which I would characterize
> here as the great spiritual sickness of Western man. By Gnosti-
> cism, in this context, I mean a religion of exile--not political
> exile from a homeland (I think they are quite separate; politi-
> cal exile from the homeland is a fact of Jewish history), but a
> religion of metaphysical exile, the sense that man is a stranger
> on earth. This is a religious trend, by the way, that precedes
> the historical exile and infects Christianity as well as Judaism.
>
> It is this exile which is the religiously serious one:
> an exile from one another, from our bodies, and from the earth.
> As long as we maintain those mythic structures which separate
> the soul from the world of gashmiyut, our commitment to the
> earth will not be very strong. As long as we give free rein
> to those fantasies which tell us that we truly belong to another

time or another place, we will not have the openness to the here-and-now which is needed for the true liberation of the spirit.[1]

Green reveals his own neo-Hasidic tendencies when he shares his vision of an alternative to this sense of alienation and relates it to his involvement (1968-73) in Havurat Shalom:

> I still believe that one can find nitsotsot kedushah (sparks of authentic human life) in the morass of contemporary alienation. I believe that our task is still to gather and fan those sparks, to create small intimate cells of humanity concerned with the awful events of our times, but also not crippled by their weight, capable of loving and of cultivating the spirit of life.
> This is what the havurah was really about for me, by the way. For a little while, I think we succeeded in some significant degree there. This is what synagogues and churches should also be about in our age: creating small intimate cells where the human spirit will survive.[2]

There is no explicit mention here of an attempted synthesis with anything larger than personal change on the renewal of small disparate religious communities. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that many have worked on such syntheses, including Martin Buber. In his book, Paths in Utopia, Buber explicitly rejects striving for the future to the detriment of the present and instead (with his own de-personalized Messianism of co-working with history) advocates the development of healthy seed communities (e.g., the Kibbutz) and other institutions to form an infrastructure for future large-scale social transformations and improvements.[3]

Albert Camus touches the very heart of the matter in his book, The Rebel, and some of his words sound strangely close to the new emphases developed in 18th century Hasidism:

> Real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present.[4]

Notes to Chapter I

[1]Simon Dubnov, _History of the Jews_, Vol. 4, (New Jersey: Thomas
Yoseloff, Publisher, 1971), pp. 17-18.

[2]Gershom Scholem, _Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah_, (New Jersey:
Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 99-102.

[3]Simon Dubnov, _History of the Jews_, p. 19.

[4]Ibid., p. 20.

[5]Ellis Rivkin, _The Shaping of Jewish History_ (New York: Charles
Scribners Sons, 1971), pp. 162-164.

Notes to Chapter II

[1]Gershom Scholem, _Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism_ (New York:
Schocken Books Inc., 1946), p. 270. Hereafter referred to as _Major Trends_.

[2]Ibid., p. 264.

[3]Gershom Scholem, _Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah_ (New Jersey:
Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 46. Hereafter referred to as
Sabbatai.

[4]Gershom Scholem, _Major Trends_, p. 245.

[5]Gershom Scholem, _Sabbatai_, p. 45.

[6]Gershom Scholem, _Major Trends_, p. 280.

[7]Gershom Scholem, _Sabbatai_, p. 42.

[8]Gershom Scholem, _Major Trends_, p. 270.

[9]Gershom Scholem, _Sabbatai_, p. 75.

[10]Gershom Scholem, _Major Trends_, p. 276.

[11]Solomon Schechter, _Studies in Judaism_, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish
Publication Society of America, 1908), p. 250. Hereafter referred to as
Studies.

[12]Ibid., p. 268.

[13] Ibid., p. 268.

[14] Gershom Scholem, Major Trends, p. 339.

[15] Solomon Schechter, Studies, pp. 245-246.

[16] Ibid., pp. 248-249.

[17] Gershom Scholem, Major Trends, p. 249.

[18] Solomon Schechter, Studies, p. 264.

[19] Ibid., p. 265.

[20] Gershom Scholem, Sabbatai, p. 24.

[21] Ibid., p. 24.

[22] Gershom Scholem, Major Trends, p. 246.

[23] Ibid., p. 247.

[24] Gershom Scholem, Sabbatai, p. 67.

[25] Ibid., p. 52.

[26] Ibid., p. 67.

[27] Ibid., p. 25.

[28] Ibid., p. 23.

Notes to Chapter III

[1] Gershom Scholem, Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 4.

[2] Ellis Rivkin, The Shaping of Jewish History (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1971), pp. 149-151.

[3] Ellis Rivkin, The Shaping of Jewish History, pp. 140-158.

[4] Lord Eversley, The Turkish Empire from 1288 to 1914 (London: Fisher Unwin, 1924), p. 159.

[5] Clarence Rouillard, The Turk in French History, Thought, and Literature 1520-1660 (Paris: Boivin, 1938), p. 89.

Gershom Scholem, Sabbatai, p. 4.

[7] Simon Dubnov, <u>History of the Jews</u>, vol. 4 (New Jersey: Thomas Yoseloff, Publisher, 1971), pp. 49-50.

[8] Ibid., p. 45.

[9] Abraham Maslow, <u>Motivation and Personality</u> (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 105.

[10] Solomon Schechter, <u>Studies in Judaism</u>, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1908), p. 247.

[11] Israel Zinberg, <u>A History of Jewish Literature</u>, vol. 5 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1975), p. 144.

[12] Ibid., pp. 145-148.

[13] Solomon Schechter, <u>Studies</u>, p. 135.

[14] Gershom Scholem, <u>Sabbatai</u>, p. 634.

[15] Ibid., pp. 103-199.

[16] Ibid., pp. 213-214.

[17] Ibid., pp. 201-202.

[18] Ibid., pp. 207-208.

[19] Ibid., pp. 218-222.

[20] Ibid., pp. 159-162.

[21] Ibid., p. 243.

[22] Ibid., pp. 244-245.

[23] Ibid., p. 259.

[24] Ibid., p. 469.

[25] Ibid., p. 651.

[26] Ibid., p. 108.

[27] Ibid., p. 200.

[28] Ibid., p. 252.

[29] Ibid., p. 251.

[30] Ibid., p. 299.

[31] Ibid., p. 619.

[32]Ibid., p. 242.

[33]Ibid., pp. 448-449.

[34]Ibid., pp. 603-672.

[35]Ibid., pp. 672-689.

Notes to Chapter IV

[1]Bernard Weinryb, The Jews of Poland: A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 to 1800 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1973), p. 285. Hereafter referred to as The Jews of Poland.

[2]Simon Dubov, History of the Jews, vol. 4 (New Jersey: Thomas Yoseloff, Publisher, 1971), p. 395.

[3]Samuel Dresner, The Zaddik (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1960), p. 86.

[4]Bernard Weinryb, The Jews of Poland, p. 285.

[5]Gershom Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (New York: Schoken Books, Inc., 1946), pp. 337-338.

[6]Ibid., p. 344.

[7]Simon Dubov, History of the Jews, pp. 395-396.

[8]Gershom Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 324-325.

[9]Isaiah Tishby, "Bein Shabtaut Le Hasidut," Kenesset, no. 9 (Jerusalem, 1945), p. 204.

[10]Ibid., pp. 211-212.

[11]Ibid., p. 226.

[12]Samuel Dresner, The Zaddik, p. 192.

[13]Ya'akov Yosef of Polnoy, Toldot Ya'akov Yosef (Lemberg: Standard ed., 1863), p. 95c. Hereafter referred to as Toldot.

[14]Ya'akov Yosef of Polnoy, Ben Porat Yosef (Lemberg: Balaban ed., date unknown), p. 32c.

[15]Ya'akov Yosef, Toldot, p. 141b.

[16]Samuel Dresner, The Zaddik, pp. 209-210.

[17]Ya'akov Yosef, Toldot, p. 153a.

[18]Gershom Scholem, The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 184. Hereafter referred as The Messianic Idea in Judaism.

[19]Ibid., p. 194.

[20]Martin Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), pp. 90-112.

[21]Gershom Scholem, The Messianic Idea in Judaism, p. 180.

[22]Israel Zinberg, A History of Jewish Literature, vol. 9 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1976), p. 60.

[23]Elie Wiesel, Souls on Fire (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 41.

[24]Ibid, pp. 40-41.

[25]Bernard Weinryb, The Jews of Poland, p. 282.

[26]Ibid., p. 281.

[27]Ibid., p. 302.

Notes to Chapter V

[1]Arthur Green, "A Response to Richard Rubenstein," Symposium. Grappling with Theology for Our Lives, Conservative Judaism (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly and The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Summer, 1974), p. 30.

[2]Ibid., p. 27.

[3]Martin Buber, Paths in Utopia (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

[4]Albert Camus, The Rebel (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), p. 304.

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