

THE LIFE AND BACKGROUND

OF

JACOB FRANK.

BY

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during the 18th Century in Poland.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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P.S. Introduction based on Vishnitzer

CONDITIONS IN POLAND DURING THE 18TH CENTURY.

One of the few contemporary sources for Jacob Frank, a source which throws light on the political, social and religious background, is the memoirs of a man by the name of Ber of Bolechow. He was a burgess and tradesman of Bolechow, and a wine merchant in Lemberg. These memoirs throw considerable light on Jewish life in Eastern and Central Europe of the 18th century, a century of ^{the} French Revolution and the dismemberment of Poland. To be sure, Ber was not a wholly unprejudiced observer of the events of his time. Toward the mystical movements that were influencing Jewish mass life, he was an indulgent observer, But he was ready to fight the aberrations of the mystics when they menaced the foundations of Judaism.

These are
the only
words
of Ber of
Bolechow

In the 18th century, conditions took a decided turn for the worse. Aside from the general uncertainty prevailing in the country there was a chronic state of anarchy and lawlessness, a decline in the authority of the crown, a weakening of the foundation of the state and a final disruption. Naturally the Jews were kept in a state of continuous insecurity and anxiety.

To add complication to complication, Poland suffered a series of invasions by the Cossacks, Tartars, Muskovites, Swedes and Turks. This series of invasions left in its wake a train of misery, destruction, and pestilence. It would have needed several decades of peace for the country to recuperate. However, Poland became a puppet in the hands of neighboring states, an object of international diplomatic intrigues that lasted for about seventy years. Civil strife and domestic fury convulsed the state. The nobility was split into two camps that waged war the one on the other. The great chaos into which Poland was plunged may be gauged from the statement that there was no law or court of law in the Polish country. Might was superior to right. Poland was fast and irretrievably marching to her ruin. A saying coined by a satirist probably is as true an indication of Poland's condition as any imposing array of facts. Said he, the satirist Opalinsky "Poland exists by disorder."

There is some literature on the anarchy of Poland of this time. All are agreed in their general description of prevailing conditions. The peasantry was enslaved and towns were without political rights. Two sections of the population dominated, the nobility or szlachta, and the clergy. If once there had been a vital response to the watchword of noblesse oblige, that was all gone now. The nobility cared nothing for the welfare of the country, only for their own happiness and comfort. The long-sought political utopia of the nobility had been realized. They lived in a land where every gentleman had nothing to do but to please himself. As for the clergy, the same story repeats itself. Recruited from families of the nobility, the Polish clergy helped turn Poland into a bigoted nation.

Another indication of the way the wind was blowing, was the state of the Polish coinage in the 18th century. It too reflected the confused and unsettled condition in the country at large. According to Ber, the writer of the memoirs, this seriously affected trade. In the meantime, more and more of the debased money streamed into the country and these grossly depreciated coins drove out the good heavy pieces of silver. Depreciation led to rise in prices and money lost all of its value.

The Jews were in an extremely difficult position. For the most part they were tradesmen or artisans, small farmers or inn-keepers. The condition of the mass was extremely trying. The time had gone by when public revenues were held on lease by Jewish tenants, and it was only in the farming of private property that Jews were engaged in the 18th century. Oftentimes they took to farming under the compulsion of protection.

Not only did they find no livelihood in it, they even involved themselves in losses for the sake of protection. What made the life of the Polish Jews intolerable was the amazing number of taxes, direct and indirect. In time the economic condition of the Jews became appalling. The number of paupers outgrew the number of tax payers. Such in outline, was the country in which Jacob Frank lived and worked for the greater part of a lifetime. Opinions aside, we see that the confusion and anarchy of the times were favorable for the advent of such a man as Jacob Frank and the movement which he organized.

You give no sources for the above 2 pages but evidently you culled your data together from Kischewitz's Introduction to his edition of memoirs of Jacob Frank which fast you cannot think of the sources.

BACKGROUND OF THE FRANKIST MOVEMENT.

Unquestionably the influence of Sabbatai Zevi was an essential factor in the growth of the Frankist movement. Had there been no Sabbatean sect in Saloniki, it is extremely doubtful if there would have been a successor in kind. The one bred the other. We have abundant precedent for all the vagaries of the Frankists in the Sabbateans sectarians. "Kraushaar"²³⁰ devotes a lengthy foot note to this point. The central belief of the Sabbateans was the belief in the Messiahship of Zevi. He had proclaimed himself the Messiah in 1666, had drawn thousands of adherents from all parts of Europe. In the hour of trial, however, he winced and turned renegade. Nevertheless, there were many faithful ones who believed in him after he had died. The followers looked upon him as a true saviour; they went further and looked upon him as the incarnation of God. Attached to this theory was the Kabbalistic notion of the wandering of the soul. According to this notion of the Kabbala, the soul of the Messiah contains a portion of divinity. In every age this incorporates itself in the body of a fully developed man, who by virtue of this complete power works his will over spirits, and over nature, and accomplishes wonders. This messianic soul found its fullest expression in Sabbatai Zevi.

The direct descendant of Sabbatai Zevi was his brother-in-law, Jacob Querido. The group had at this time received the name of Denmah, ^{(Dönme) = Turkish} meaning faithless ones or apostates from Judaism. Querido's successor in turn was his son Berachya, whom Frank must have seen, for the former lived from about 1690 to 1740. The Saloniki Sabbateans honored Berachya greatly, and even offered prayers to him. He seems to have left no male descendants. There was a widow whom the sect members called the holy matrona, and a young granddaughter called the holy maid ^{חורין קדושה} (חורין קדושה). The latter was destined to be the bride of the next incarnation of divinity. For the Denmah, Judaism was a thing outworn. With the appearance of the true Messiah, or with the last incarnation of God, its meaning had gone. Therefore they cast off Judaism.

*Sabbateans
so throughout*

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how far
the Sabbateans
were
in Saloniki*

They preserved only the circumcision on the eighth day after birth. Of sacred scriptures they kept only the Song of Songs, which provided them with a broad field of fantastic interpretation. (Graetz, bottom of page 14 ck.)

The book that served as a groundwork for the activities of the sectarians during this period was the Kabbalistic Zohar, a forgery of Moses de Leon, who lived about 1300. The book was attributed to a Talmudic sage Simon ben Jochai. As Graetz¹⁵ exclaims "the droll incongruity of these sectarians." They repudiated both Bible and Talmud, yet clung to a book whose reputed author was a Talmudic authority. Be that as it may, the Zohar was a source of their mysticism. From it they drew their doctrine about the divinity, and the Messiah, and the corporealization of God. They had their own version of the Trinity, and even this bit of heterodoxy was based on quotations from the Zohar.

The first person in the Trinity was called The Highest Cause (אין אופן גאון). This cause exerted no influence on the world order. The second person was אלהים אלהים. This was to be identified with the Messiah. The third person in the Trinity was a womanly complement to the Messiah אלהים אלהים. The three formed a unity. Trinity was dissolved into unity through prayer. Worshipful acts were the means of reaching divinity in its completeness. "Unity was described in the equivocal, even lascivious designations of intercourse and sexual love. The text of the Song of Songs served them excellently. Opponents charged that they set the mysteries to extravagant uses." If we are to agree with Graetz^{15, 16}, they repudiated Judaism and the body of laws emanating therefrom, rejected the law of chastity, entered upon incestuous relationships after the manner of Christians of the 2nd century, who followed many Gnostic sects. They treated marriage lightly and changed wives often. Niebuhr met such a Sabbatean sect in Saloniki on one of his trips. He found them living externally as Turks, yet the Turks did not look upon them as full fledged Mohammedans. They were looked upon with distrust, especially because they did not marry outside the group.

There grew up in Poland in sporadic fashion, a similar Sabbatean sect. Its founder was Chayyam Moloch. According to Graetz¹⁶ he indulged in Kabbalistic swindle.

Moloch (783n)

He made trips to the Orient, and spent some time with the Donmeh & Saloniki, returning to Poland about 1710. He found many willing followers. The Polish groups had to do their work in secret, for they were under ^{the} close watch of the Rabbis. Evidence of this strong opposition is to be noted in the "fate" of one of their emissaries, Moses Meir Kamenker, who was caught and exposed at Frankfurt in 1725. Despite the anathemas of the German Rabbis and the Jewish synod in Poland, against all kinds of Sabbateans, the sect continued in South Poland, Podolya and Lemberg. They indulged in propaganda, circulating secret scripts containing the contents of Kabbalistic lore. From these they drew their edification. They too honored the Zohar as did their brothers in Turkey. They looked upon it as a holier scripture, as the Torah of the spiritual life. The poverty, the lack of life's elementary necessities, the sloping of Polish Jewry to mysticism, to fantasy and to vagrancy, made fertile soil for a sectarian life. To quote Graetz¹⁷ "... raised in school as they were since cradle days on the Talmud and the Zohar, with an iron memory retaining every word of this vast literature, with a passion for hermeneutics, for penetrating observation and for criticism, there was a search in everything for something higher and more mystical. They were predestined for the mystical and sensual swindle. In mysticism they sought an anodyne. In mysticism they achieved an escape from cheerless reality."

The Polish Kabbalists swung from one extreme to another. Acquainted with every folio of the Talmud they took a special joy in the work of spite, of doing what they were forbidden to do. According to Ezekiel Landau, first, a Rabbi in Podolya, and later an honored Rabbi in Prague, drew a frightful picture of them. According to him, they considered it a holy duty to break every religious and moral law, to tread under foot the marriage relation, the sentiments of chastity. Confessions made by penitent Sabbateans of Podolya accord with this description. This sect counted in its midst also Rabbis and preachers, men versed in the Talmud. A family that associated itself with Frank, and played a considerable role in the movement, was the family of Shor. At its head was Elisa Shor, surnamed von Rohatyn. His two sons, Solomon and Nathan, &

from Rohatyn (a city in Eastern Galicia)

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later converted to the name of Woloski, were Frank's chief assistants who carried on after his death. The daughter Chaya was an oracle of the Podolya Sabbateans; she understood the Zohar, spoke enchantingly about its language, and if witnesses may be trusted, committed adultery with the permission of her husband.

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THE LIFE OF JACOB FRANK.

Frank's name originally was Jankiew Lejbowicz. The name Frank he acquired in Turkey. *This was a name generally given to a European.* His father was either a teacher or a Rabbi, we are not quite certain which. There is a difference of opinion as to his birth place. Graetz⁴⁷ in his essay mentions Korolavko, or Buczacz. In the "Kronika,"⁴⁷ the village of Bereczenko is mentioned. However, Frank in his testimony before the court in 1760 gives the name of his birth place as Korolavko. There is likewise a variation in the date set for his birth. This ranges all the way from 1712 to 1727.

Early Years.

We have little factual information about the circumstances surrounding Frank's birth. The sources provide us with meagre references to his mother, father, and grandparents. There is doubt expressed in Kraushaar⁴⁸ as to whether his father ever enjoyed the dignity of Rabbi. According to Frank, his father's name was Leb, his mother's Rachel. She came from a wealthy family in a town of Galicia. According to Frank, she was skilled in handiwork, and embroidered beautiful things in silver and in gold. When Jews out of Poland came to ask for aid in the marriage of a poor bride, his mother gave these embroideries away as gifts. Of his grandmother he writes, she was skilled in star-lore. She is credited with having protected him from the evil eye of witches who surrounded the house when he first saw the light of day. She it was who impressed the parents to watch the child and rear it well, that through him something new would come into the world. His further account of her describes her as a

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very righteous soul and of exceeding generosity. Never a man went out of her house empty-handed. In time of famine she drew no distinguishing line between Jew and non-Jew in the distribution of charity.

Frank speaks of his father without any special affection. He mentions his hardheartedness, his strong temper and the rod with which he used to chastise him for every slight disobedience. Says Frank ^{Kr. 49} "my father used to seat a child at the table, when the child was five and teach him how to behave at table, and if the child did something displeasing to him, he punished him, if the child was angry and refused to eat, he would beat him a second time." According to Kraushaar's ⁴⁹ accounts given by Frank himself, we are allowed to infer that already at an early age he displayed signs of willfulness and imaginative dreaming. We know what use Frank made of these dreams in his later life activities. To quote Frank again ^{Kr. 49} "my uncle Jacob told me that when I was a child about two years of age and he took me to his bed, I did not let him go to sleep until he said goodnight with me to all creatures, to things great and small, to all the beasts of the field and to all the birds." His mother is supposed to have told him when he was a boy four years of age that he dreamt he saw God's face, that it was wonderful ^{that}. He took him on his knee and gave him a bow made of golden thread and said to him "my son, see when the day comes to draw this bow see that you do not let it go from your hand." There were nursery tales galore. In these early accounts we discern too a knack for driving a bargain as well as for visioning secret things. There are outcroppings of antipathy to the Torah and the commandments. ^{Kr. 62.63.}

The accounts throw little light upon Frank's early years. About all we know with certainty is that he traveled with his parents from one town to another. They wandered considerably. In Kraushaar's ⁵² account we note this statement "... at the age of twelve Frank and his parents came out of Poland to Wallachy."... They settled first at Faron and went thence to Romany and then made their abode in the city of Bucharest where they spent seven years. A story coming from this period may shed some light on the character formation of Frank. When his father put him in the

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employ of a merchant, the young man found little satisfaction in the work. Rather than weigh and measure goods, he preferred the freedom of running around the streets of the town with boys of his own age. He relished contests of strength, whether with a stick or with a fist. This characteristic came into mature development in his later struggle with the Talmudists. According to Kraushaar Frank became acquainted with merchant Jews out of Poland in the city of Smyrna. In conversation with them, he picked up many ideas current amongst the Sabbateans. Frank seemed to have found his kind when he found them.

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If we may trust Graetz, Frank turned Mohammedan, of a kind, in Turkey.

Whether from conviction, or from convenience, or from necessity, we do not know. As for his relation to the Sabbateans we are told that he looked upon Sabbatai Zevi as a man of God and visited the grave of Nathan of Gaza to draw the spirit of the sainted ones into himself and become joined to them. Why he left Turkey we cannot say definitely, both Graetz²⁰ and Kraushaar⁶⁴ speak of the bitterness of the Jews as manifested toward him in Turkey. Certainly he was not stoned for great love. It is said the Jews hired a Turk or a Greek to kill him. May 15, 1755 Frank left Saloniki; from there he went to Poland. As^{the} story goes, Sabbatai Zevi appeared to him in a dream and told him that God had selected him for a mission, and that if he refused to submit, He would drag him there in iron chains. "See, wherever I cannot go, you will reach easily, if only you will not set yourself up in opposition to it." Graetz²¹ charges Frank with the lie that Elijah had appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to go to Poland. Frank even boasted that a guardian angel had accompanied him on his way to Poland, a thing²² his father had not been able to make clear. In Kraushaar⁶⁶ we find a somewhat extensive account given by Frank himself, purporting to be an account of his going to Poland. In dreams that came to him at the time of a serious illness we find him ordered to go to Poland, tho he pleads ignorance of the language. The Voice charges him with a mission and promises him a revelation of Elijah every time he might be in danger. At this vision Frank jumps out of his bed, perfectly healed and well, ready to eat and drink like a healthy man. There is a strong temptation to dismiss as of no account

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the colored and fantastic reports of Frank himself. We shall see repeatedly that he never wanted long for a vision, or a revelation that would suit his purposes and provide a romantic background for what might have been otherwise a prosaic utterance. The irrefutable fact remains that Frank went to Poland. Quoting Graetz²¹ who is eager to hit upon a motive for Frank's going to Poland, "the truth will soon appear that Frank made no impression in Turkey among his co-believers, the Donmah. He wanted to play a role, that was his ambition. Having no underlings he wanted followers, blindly devoted followers who would soon honor him as their prince." Fact is, Frank did not go directly to Poland. If we may trust his accounts he spent about one and a half years in Wallachy, ⁹Moldavia and Hungary; the longest stop he made being at Bucharest, where he cast his nets and caught a few souls.

Description.

Frank did not possess as striking an appearance as did his predecessor, Sabbatai Zevi. Quite the contrary, he was ugly. According to a description of one who saw him, we have this far from flattering picture - "his face was ugly and pock-marked. When these severe and cold features struck a friendly pose they aroused fear and dread." The usual picture of Jacob Frank seen in most histories does not present us with a charming face, nor a charming personality. There is something hard, brazen and determined about the looks. Beneath the turban is a brow that might well be horned. The eyes are ready to spring at opposition, facial lines and the chin bespeak combat. There is every reason to believe that Frank possesses an iron will and that once a plan was conceived it was pursued with unflagging zeal. There can be no question that Frank exerted a mighty influence, though he was not magnetic in the ordinary understanding of the word. That he was far from prepossessing you may judge by the picture usually given of him. Though he was comparatively unlearned, he was nevertheless able to set himself up as a leader and to win a considerable body of followers. Of course Graetz found an explanation ready to hand. For Graetz, the key words that unlock Jacob Frank's personality are money and swindle. Again and again in his treatise "Frank und die Frankisten" Graetz heaps abuse upon the name of Frank. In one passage

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he exhausts the vocabulary of slander, in his attempts to riddle the masked charlatan "Messiah", tale-bearer, mystagogue. For Graetz^{ss 77}, Jacob Frank is an incarnation of all that is evil, repellent, malicious, dangerous, and ungodly. Time and again we receive the impression from Graetz's treatise that he is burning the charlatan messiah in effigy, so that neither trace nor echo shall remain.

Frank's eye fell on Podolya where the Sabbatean sect carried on secretly. The cities mentioned by Graetz relevant to our account are Laskoron, Lemberg, Brody, Szargod and Nadworna. It maybe that the sharp division that had broken out among the Jews of Poland at this time provided the opportunity for Frank's agitation. The Eybeschütz-Emden controversy split the Polish community into two camps. Recriminations and charges of heresy went back and forth, and one group persecuted the other. There is a possibility, as Graetz²² indicates, that Frank entertained the hope of finding a following among the partisans of Eybeschütz. Accounts are agreed that late in the year of 1755 we find Frank at the Polish border, the strip of Podolya. He had come with two so-called Rabbis, Moses and Nachman, and an intimate servant, Mattheus, of whom Frank said that he served him in the same capacity that Nathan of Gaza served Sabbatai Zevi.

Frank's Entry Into Podolya.

When the Sabbateans got wind of Frank's entry they invited him to visit their homes. He began to make the rounds and spread his doctrine. He arrived most "miraculously" in Karolovko and began to perform his wonders and attract his followers. The doctrine he preached was the Trinity we mentioned above, the holy Uralter, the holy King or the God-like Messiah, and the womanly figure, the Schechina. Frank's revelation consisted in his being the Messiah. Through a process of transmigration of soul, he was the God-man appeared on earth. The report runs that Frank made the declaration "my name is Adonai." According to reports of Abraham of Szargrod, quoted by Emden, Frank enticed them to believe that he was filling the place of Berachya, who wanted to redeem Israel and that he, Frank, was the soul transmigrated from Berachya. (cf Graetz²⁴).

Methods of Action.

Kraushaar ^{71 de} gives abundant illustrations of wonders performed by Frank to draw crowds. Miraculous recoveries, miraculous arrivals, practicing of healing, ascription of another's death to his own powers, the evocation of shining light on converts' heads were all used to further his purposes. The light shining over his head like a star, is explained as having been produced by some sort of mirror. When once Rabbi Mordecai said (says Frank) "Jacob, show your powers, I mounted an oak staircase and every step of my slipper was printed in the wood." This is his own story. Frank never hesitates to forecast the future. Graetz ²⁴ blurts out his sarcasm and contempt by saying .." in a word, Frank Lebowicz practiced every kind of deceit and swindle to attach the Sabbateans to him." Graetz ²⁴ claims that he taught his followers the practice of communism in wives, and what was more disgusting to Graetz, incest. According to Graetz, ²⁴ money was the chief snare that drew the largest part of the sectarians in Podolya. And if we are to believe, as believe we must, Ber's account in the Memoirs, it is not so difficult to understand how the appalling condition of the Jews in Poland drove them into the arms of a man like Jacob Frank. Extreme need and utter despair must have made any promise seem like the light of salvation.

Frank As A Leader.

Though we cannot trace step by step the growth of Frank's influence in Podolya, we are now at a point where the Sabbateans in Poland turned Frankists. They begin to revere him as leader, as Messiah. They pray to him as to a God. Frank realizes the value of privileged intimacy shared by a few. He surrounds himself with a secret circle who gather in his room a few days in the week and direct their prayers to him. The Hebrew prayer formula later found amongst them, Frank seems to have brought with him from the Sabbateans of Saloniki. ^{It was} They were of a Jewish-Spanish origin. For it contained both Spanish and Turkish words. The chief content of the prayer was ^{of} Sabbatai Zevi as the true Messiah, a divinity descended to earth who abrogated the lower Torah and gave a higher teaching in its place. Says Graetz, ^{25.26.} "let it not be overlooked that this prayer, even though addressed to the pseudo-messiah at Smyrna, refers to his followers as well as to Frank and Querido and his son, Berachya, in whom Sabbatai is reborn. Even Jesus was hidden in Frank, he taught. "

Frank made the rounds of the cities in secret, going to those places where Sabbateans dwelt, traveling from the south of Poland to Lemberg, collecting followers around him, and finding recognition with them as the Messiah, the incarnation of God. Then one fine day in January of the year 1756, Frank and his group were caught in a tangle. The thing was dragged out into the light of publicity, (which is another name for critical investigation.) According to Graetz,²⁶ Frankists were caught one day in the midst of their mystic act at Laskoron.

The Laskoron Incident.

The Laskoron incident is pivotal ⁱⁿ of the Frank story because it marks the first open contact with the rest of Jewry. The days of quiet secret activity may be counted as over. From now on the Frankists are under severe scrutiny. There is a continuous threat of open opposition hanging over them. They must fight now to preserve themselves alive. The Laskoron incident prepared the way for a show down between the Frankists and the loyal body of Jews. The Frankists evidently were surprised. There are differences of opinion in the details of the surprise. According to one story^(Sachs 26) they danced and sang ecstatically around a half-naked woman. She was kissed repeatedly by those dancing. Attracted by the song and dance, witnesses observed the orgiastic ceremony through a window opening. When the onlookers attempted to break in and get a closer view of the scene, the Frankists made a quick getaway. The story of the affair spread. The Frankist record of the incident runs as follows: at Laskoron, on the yearly market day, the annual fair, a hostler arranged a convention for Frank and twenty persons to be held in secret. The entrance to the house was barred so as not to betray Frank's presence. The latter had ordered his followers to sing a Zohar song out loud. This attracted folks from the outside. Some surrounded the house; others preferred charges against Frank before the magistrate. He was charged with being an alien, with planning to lead the Jews over to Mohammedanism. He and his followers were likewise charged with living in promiscuity. Graetz²⁷ and Kraushaar⁷³ agree that city authorities put him in prison. According to Kraushaar, he stayed there six days. Frank suffered the loss of a costly ring, a watch and eighty

eight hundred

ducats. Upon the intercession of Turks who had come to the fair, Frank was released next day as a Turk. The other captives, however, at the request of Bishop Dembowski, were held in custody for another fourteen days. This outbreak of hate between the Frankists and their opponents was the first of a series. It was like a flash signal that trouble had begun. If we may believe reports, some of the Podolyan Sabbateans informed against the Sabbateans and the Frankists. The Rabbis were moved to take action. The matter was too serious to overlook. For here was something that struck at the foundation. In accordance with rabbinic custom of those days, a ban was proclaimed ^{against} the sectarians. A Ban was proclaimed in the synagogue at Brody against all those believing in the pseudo-messiah, Sabbatai Zevi, his prophet Nathan of Gaza, and all those showing no repentant spirit. ⁷⁷ Kraushaar gives us the complete version of the ban proclaimed in the synagogue, in Poland at this time. The gist of it we find in Graetz. ²⁹ The victims were excluded from rabbinical and praying positions, from functioning in any religious capacity whatsoever. Wives and daughters were to be considered as prostitutes; the children bastards brought up in adultery. Every Jew was exhorted to report every secret sectarian and to reveal the misdeeds. This solemn ban was proclaimed in the communities of Lemberg, Luzk, Duhnow and other cities and confirmed later by the official synod of the four countries meeting in Constantinow. If the Laskoron exposure dragged the Frankists into the glare of opposition, the official action of the Rabbis only served to whip up hatred against the Frankists. If there be a law of action and reaction in human experience, we may conclude that Frank's whole future policy of revenge, his arraignment of the Rabbis before the powers of the Church, his resurrection of the blood libel sprang directly from the damnation into which the Rabbis had cast him. The following fact is a keen illustration of the extremity to which Rabbinical zeal went. All Jews were forbidden to accept him in their homes; they were forbidden to sell him provisions or even feed his teams as they passed by the town on the way. Chayyam Hakohen Rappaport of Lemberg seems to have been the chief Rabbinical persecutor. The Rabbis singled out the Zohar as a cause of the heretical swindle. They forbade young people under thirty to read it and the writings appertaining thereto. Even those of later years who had

also the writings of 7 Luzya

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not familiarised themselves with Talmudic literature were warned against it. The Rabbis felt they must destroy the noxious plant. Just a few words about the study of Jewish mystic law. Two decades previously, Moses Chayyam Luzzato had been entangled in the matter, and a proposal was made by the zealot Moses Chagis and by the rabbi-nate of Altona and Hamburg for a limitation of the study of Kabbala. And now the old trouble was cropping up again. The mystical vein so necessary for the preservation of a healthy emotional depth in Judaism was running the risk of pollution. So we find representatives of Judaism fostering mysticism and then turning sharply against it. Again a fear of losing something fundamental; again a bitter fight to preserve theological bed rock. For the fact is, this mystic lore caused great deal of trouble.

Frank's Plan of Revenge.

Quoting Graetz ³¹ - "as a result of the unmasking at Laskoron and the confession of witnesses at Satanow, some of the Frankists were imprisoned and others fled." The Church is now for the first time drawn into the controversy. The offense of the Frankists had been of a religious nature. So the Bishop of Kamieniec Podolsk, Bishop Dembowski, stepped in and brought the case before his tribunal. According to Kraushaar ³², the bishop issued an order on the 1st of February, 1756, for the Frankists imprisoned in Laskoron to be brought to Kamieniec. What for? A sort of inquisition was used against these heretics; they in turn sought to escape the snare by hypocritical explanations. Cross examinations went on until the end of March of that year, when the Frankists were released. Frank himself was probably not on the scene; he was devising plans somewhere in security and at ease. As for revenge, Frank seems to have possessed a talent, if not a genius for it.

From his exile in Chochin, Bessarabia, whither he had gone after his release from prison, Frank had secret word sent to the prisoners that they should declare these two things before the Christian court. First, that they believed in a Trinity; second, they rejected the Talmud which was full of errors and blasphemies. Now when this (bit of knavery) met with no bit of response from the prisoners, Frank issued an order for twenty or thirty men to meet him in secret in some small town in Galicia, there to make haste and baptize. They were to denounce their opponents.

The Jews ^{having} received wind of the secret meeting, planned the arrest of Frank. Caught with no other way out, the Frankists went on record denouncing Judaism in its entirety. The Talmud, they claimed, falsified the teachings of Moses. In their sight, the Zohar was a much truer interpretation of these teachings, and the Zohar's teaching of a sort of Trinity brought them closer to the Church. Hence the bitter persecution on the part of the Talmudists. This gave rise to the names of Talmudists and contra-Talmudists. The contra group claimed that the irreconcilability of Talmud and Kabbala was of ancient origin. From Graetz³².. "long ago in the pre-Christian era, Simon ben Jochai and Jonathan ben Uzziel had combatted and rejected the false interpretation of the Talmud.".. The defense went so far as to claim that the Frankists were far from being a mere sect; they were of equal lineage with the Talmudists. Graetz's³² emotional reaction is revealed in the statement.." what mattered a lie, more or less to such impostors".. The most significant thing in their declaration before the bishop's tribunal was their acknowledgment of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Bishop Dembowski and the Frankists.

Whatever the motive that prompted the bishop, he declared them innocent of the charges and crime preferred against them. It may be, as Graetz³³ suggests, that he saw an opportunity for the glorification of the Church. In the light of apostolic zeal shown by the Church, we may be near the truth in cleaving to Graetz's suggestive motivation of the bishop's action. Without troubling to investigate closely as to the correspondence of the Frankist and Catholic Trinities, he allowed them to settle in freedom, granted them permission to remove to Kamieniec and to live freely in accordance with their beliefs. Here again Graetz³³ offers the reasonable suggestion that the Bishop's intention was to draw them completely into the Church. A point in Frankist strategy worth mentioning here - provided of course that our sources are to be trusted- is their exaggeration of the number of their adherents. Maybe this was a rich bait held out before the eyes of the Bishop. For he thought that the Frankists would out of necessity, or through the Kabbala, enter the Church. He was certainly deceived. If we may trust Graetz³³, Frank was secretly in the town and undoubtedly at the Bishop's ^(NoPe) ~~house~~ where he corroborated the statements of his followers.

palace (and)

The Tables Turn - Persecuted Turn Persecutor.

True to the reactions of men released from prison on more or less false charges, the Frankists who had been released from prison nursed but one thought against their assailants, revenge. They even sought to stir the fanaticism of the Catholic Church against the Talmudists. In a secret session at Rohatyn, they resolved upon a counter-attack, the resurrection of the blood libel. They pointed to all the passages of the Talmud that might be made to appear as poisoned arrows towards the Christians. Here was the spilling of blood between blood brothers. Certainly a dangerous sea to embark upon. The action of the Frankists is all the more striking when we remember the learned Christians like Wagenseil, Wolf and others on the evangelical side, and many ~~quakers~~ even on the Catholic side, ^{who} had branded this charge as a foul lie. Fact is, that this dangerous charge was made. Sure as thunder, consequences flowed.

When Christian children were missing, blame was cast upon the Jews. In Jampol, near the recent settlement of the Frankists, several Jews were arraigned on the charge and laid under heavy imprisonment. Frank now began to play his cards for a disputation between the Frankists and their opponents. At about this time, the Archbishopric of Lemberg became vacant, and Dembowski was promoted to the post of Archbishop. Circumstances were shaping themselves for a dramatic moment. Graetz ³⁴ would have us believe that the occasion of a disputation would serve as a glorious dedication for the new post, especially now that the church dogmas were to receive confirmation out of the mouths of Jews. The triumph would be a double one, for the Church and for himself.

Disputation of Lemberg ^{Kamieniec}.

Dembowski ^{pro-} claimed the disputation between the Talmudists and the contra-Talmudists, though Graetz ³⁴ sees the entire incident under a highly-colored lens. His remarks are worth quoting in toto; at least his point of view leaves nothing wanting in definiteness. "Under penalty for failure to appear, the Rabbis were ordered to present themselves and refute charges made against the Talmud, or else surrender. This was as strong a challenge to conscience as possible. The century-old Judaism was to be defended against a handful of reprobates, and how were they ^(the Rabbis) to approach the dogmas of Trinity and Incarnation against the defenders of the Church?

The Rabbis were pained in spirit. Another hardship made their task even more challenging. Their language which was neither Polish, German, nor Hebrew, made clear and coherent speech a difficulty. Who better than the Frankists were aware of the perplexity of the Rabbis? For that reason they pressed the matter of the disputation, ^c Thinking to enjoy a ticklish, malicious, exaltation at the expense of their enemies.

The Frankist Program.

It contained eight or nine points which served the double purpose of being a kind of declaration of faith and a bill of charges against the Talmudists. The points are; one, that true Israelites should not only love and honor God, they should also think of seeking and recognising His secret, innermost being. Two, the Torah and the Prophets have such an end in view, that is of revealing the true nature of God, but they are so full of obscurity and mystery that a deeper insight from above is necessary to understand them. Three, that Talmud was also intended to interpret the Torah and the Prophets, but it is full of insipidity, lies and contradictions. There was another source of interpretation that opened to them the mysteries of God. It was the Zohar. ^{Jews} They, the Frankists, really believed in a single God and Creator, whose Providence extends over all things both great and small. Five, they believed also that God consisted of three persons. Scripture hints at it and explicit statements are to be found in the Zohar. "Why, we ask you Jews, why don't you believe in the Trinity, which even Scriptures and the Zohar are full of?" Six, we further believe that God entered a body, ate, drank, and slept, satisfied other bodily needs, quite like the rest of mankind, but without sin. Seven, Jerusalem will never be rebuilt. Eight, the Messiah will not come to bring near the salvation of Israel, but he will appear in the flesh to redeem men from sin. Nine, God himself will lift the curse from the first progenitors, and through them to the whole nation. That will be the true Messiah. At the instigation of the Archbishop Dembowski, this provoking program was handed to the Rabbis, preparatory to the day of controversy. The Rabbis were in despair; in vain did the Polish communities spend large sums of money to frustrate the disputation. Dembowski stubbornly refused to withdraw the command. Most of the Rabbis incurred severe money punishments rather than meet their despised enemies. So far as we know, just a few

appeared for the disputation. Some of the names are Mendel Menachem, Rabbi of Satanow - Laib of Miedzyboz, Joseph Kremenitz, Rabbi of Mohilev. The Frankists were represented by about thirty men, amongst whom were Laib Krysa of Nadworna, Solomom Shor of Rohatyn, Nachman of Busk; Frank was not present at the disputation. He is said to have gone on a journey with his wife to Nikopolis.

Results.

Exactly what happened at Kamieniec remains unknown, but Jewish sources concede that the defenders of the Talmud left vanquished. As Graetz³⁷ remarks "the poorest spokesmen can spoil the best of cases." The Talmud was condemned and the Jews were bidden to refute every charge made against the Talmud, or else accept the consequences. A complete account is found in Kraushaar^{88.89}. There we learn that the disputation lasted about eight days, mornings and afternoon³, Sabbaths and holidays excepted. We note too that the Rabbis were very circumspect in their answers. Part of their apology consisted in maintaining that נצרות did not mean Christian, and that אברהם maybe a good man. On the scores of Trinity and the Messiah, the Rabbis maintained a discreet silence. They knew the opposition was only waiting for a chance to spring at them. In the meanwhile, Dembowski set October 14, 1757 as the date of the disputation. The contra-Talmudists wanted the Talmud destroyed, and insisted upon reparations for the Laskoron incident. Whatever the terms, the incident was definitely a Frankist victory. By the edict of Dembowski, the losers had to pay five thousand Polish guildens to cover the cost, and one hundred and fifty four gold guildens for the improvement of the Cathedral. Copies of the Talmud were to be hunted out, brought to the Capital of Podolya and burned by executioners. According to Kraushaar⁹¹ the charges made at Laskoron were disallowed. Frankists' meeting there was justified, and the money was to be paid by the Jews within a month. In vain did the Jews refer to the privileges extended to them by Casimir, the Great, and down to the latest times by all succeeding Polish kings, leaving them intact and uninjured in matters pertaining to their internal affairs. The possession of the Talmud was a special religious concern of the Jew. In vain did friendly noblemen plead in behalf of the Jews. Dembowski was unswerved in his resolution.

Burning of the Talmud.

The wild hunt was begun against the Talmud. The scenes at the beginning of the 16th century in Frankfurt A. M. and in Italy in the middle of the same century-- repeated themselves in Poland. Conditions in Poland, however, were more brutal. The Frankists were spurred on by vengeance and lent all possible aid to the persecutors in ferreting out copies of the Talmud from their hiding places. Graetz³⁸ and Balaban³² both confirm the report that copies of the Talmud were tied to horses' tails and dragged to Kamieniec. The copies were then flung into a pit and burned. There is an estimate in Kraushaar⁹⁵ that sets the number of copies burnt as one thousand. The burning occurred in October 1757. Graetz³⁹ reports ^othe burning to have taken place on the eighth day of Succoth, before the eyes of sorrowing Jews. There can be no question of the slant of Graetz's³⁹ sympathies, saying, "the Frankists triumphed. They had dealt their foes a piercing blow in a sensitive spot. Who could predict what further pain this lust for revenge would yet inflict upon the Talmudists." Copies were burnt in the large communities of Brody, Lemberg, and Zolkiew, November 12, 1757. The Talmudists were powerless. The day when the Talmud was burned in the pyre, was turned into a day of prayer and fasting. [If we trust Graetz,⁴⁰ the fast was no less severely observed than the Day of Atonement.] The extremity of sorrow pervading the occasion may be seen in the remark that mothers drew their babes away from their breasts. There is a reference in Emden to this declaration of affairs.

The Death of Dembowski and Consequences.

What the Jews were not able to achieve through a man by the name of Baruch Javan and Count Brühl, chance, or as many believed Divine Providence, achieved for them. The death of Dembowski has in it all the savor of high melodrama, for with its occurrence came a remarkable turn in fortune for the Jews. It was their turn to persecute, with the Frankists in the role of persecuted. Fact is, that the Archbishop Dembowski took suddenly ill, fell into a state of delirium, and after a short period of illness, died in November 1757, on the 17th day.

Whatever the cause, the atmosphere changed. Maybe the superstitious environment caused people to see in the death of the Archbishop a sign of punishment for his hardness to the Talmudists. Suffice it to say, that the protection enjoyed by the

Frankists ceased with the death of Dembowski. They were once more looked upon as sectarians outside both Jewish and Christian pales. They had to abandon their asylum around Kamieniec. They were stigmatized by having half of their beards cut off. (This report is given in Emden.) There was every reason to believe that the Rabbis played their hands to the limit, and outdistanced their opponents in a policy of counter revenge. The Frankists were now in the position of poor devils where every man's hand was raised against them. Elisha Sher¹⁴ of Rohatyn was slain in this persecution. There was nothing else for the Frankists to do but flee. There is a brief pertinent reference in the ^{Kr⁹⁶} Kronika which epitomizes the Frankists' reversal of fortune. " The Jews won the upper hand and they humiliated the people of our group." The burning of the Talmud was so sore in the Rabbis' minds that they wished nothing less than the annihilation of Frank and his following. The Frankists, in their bewilderment, broke ranks like an army in flight and made for the border of Bessarabia, then Turkey. The hand of persecution followed them even there. The Jews set the Turkish authorities against them. The Frankists were free spoil, the prey of Jew, Catholic and Turk.

Frank's Next Move.

The despair was great but Frank was by no means overwhelmed. He turned to the King of Poland for help and in his plea made reference to the privileges extended by Dembowski. The plea was for tolerance and protection bestowed upon them as Trinitarian believers. The King confirmed the decree and granted them leave to settle in Podolya and all parts of the kingdom. The internal conditions of the kingdom made the king's word of little worth. The nobility and clergy, the real powers of the day, rose against the Frankists. Far from enjoying protection, these latter continued to suffer maltreatment.

⁴² According to Graetz the Frankists turned to Frank as their saviour, in an hour of need. Frank at this time was living in Nikopolis. He acceded in spite of himself and turned once more to Podolya. According to Kraushaar¹⁰⁹, he crossed the Dniester December 7, 1758. He appeared in Podolya January 7, 1759, clothed in Turkish garb, accompanied by about fifty persons, most of whom had come from Hungary, Wallachy and Moldavia. In his advice to the followers, Frank laid his new scheme down on the table:

surrendered to the Roman Catholic Church. What is told in considerable detail in

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Kraushaar is summarized by Graetz in the following words "... Fresh machinations on the part of the Frankists prompted by their leader and messiah ran on for about a year under various guises, until they were unmasked a second and a third time and driven into exile." In Kraushaar⁴⁴ we find Frank posing as a healer. The poverty of his flock contrasts sharply with his own splendor. The account runs that he conducted a court in Oriental fashion, that he chose odalisques, as sisters. In accordance with his usual practice, he invoked his imaginative powers to conjure up all kinds of fantastic promises. Some hypnotic influence he must have exerted on his followers. All of these allusions to Frank's activities are to be found in the Kronika, a kind of gospel recording the words and actions of the Frankist leader. In passing, it may be observed the Kronika will prove a valuable aid to study once it has been subjected to a critical analysis.

Frank and Catholicism.

February 20, 1759 a petition was sent to Wratisslaw Lubieniski, Dembowski's successor, telling of their sufferings and of their readiness to embrace Catholicism. Six men took the petition. They added their verbal testimony. We see Graetz's⁴⁴ reaction in the remark " this supplication was even more a compound of hypocrisy, than the one placed before the Bishop of Kamieniec. After they had told the history of their misfortunes in a mourning tone of piety, they promised to persevere in their Trinitarian belief, and to show obedience to the head of the Church. They emphasized the fact that inner conviction and not external necessity moved them to take this step." In Kraushaar^{44.45} we find the appeal quoted in full. Here we see clearly, in their overture to Lubieniski, their denial of oppression and poverty as the cause of their action. They beseech for an opportunity to come back at their opponents and to expose the sins of the Jews in the matter of shedding innocent Gentile blood. A tone of humble pleading runs through the message. We see the Frankists eager for another disputation with the Talmudists. It is difficult to say which was the more urgent motivation, the earnest desire for revenge, or a rapprochement with the Catholic Church. Graetz sees the matter simply. His statement is, " the Frankists evidently were more eager to rehabilitate

themselves and to see^{re}venge on their enemies. They thought they had found in Lubinski, a second Dembowski, one who would lend them a hand in pursuing and tormenting their enemies. There would be, moreover, no compulsion about their conversion.

It is true that Lubinski was slower to respond to the request than was Dembowski. Kraushaar¹³² says "from the words of Lubinski, which he delivered to the papal nuncio Serra, on the 17th of May, we see that the heads of the Catholic Church first looked with suspicion on the band of Frank and all their plans." Lubinski was promoted to the post of primate. In a letter sent by him to Serra, there occurs a statement which is our warrant for believing that Lubinski had his suspicions of the sincerity of the Frankists in their conversion. "... I sent the petition of Lemberg to Bishop Glovinski, and I requested him to investigate the plans of these men so as to decide whether there is the right spirit in them, whether they really want to convert." Lubinski's promotion delayed the Frankists' petition. The delay probably spurred them on to send a second to the king and the primate. In this second request they stated their purposes more clearly, especially in regard to conversion to the Catholic Church. The details we quote from Graetz,⁴⁵ "...they first wanted a decree covering Poland and Lithuania, which would allow all the secret Sabbateans and their comrades in belief to declare themselves openly as such. Second, that the latter be shielded from attack. Third, that their wives and children, so unjustly torn from them, should be returned. Fourth, they ask for permission to settle on some royal land and there earn their own livelihood. To these was appended a further wish, that the primate arrange for a disputation between the two contending groups. Here again they offered the motive of conviction and denied the charge that necessity drove them to the arms of the Church." Both Graetz and Kraushaar refer to the insinuating charges made by the Frankists against the Jews and the manner in which they earned their livelihood. From Kraushaar¹³⁴ "no man amongst us will open a place of drink in any of the villages, for this is the custom of the Jews, who sell drinks to the peasants and suck their blood. Such is an abomination to us. They consider it worthy, to us it is a disgrace."

The petition to the primate and the petition to the king brought no favorable results. The primate gave them a very discouraging reply. He assured them eternal

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salvation, which was assured all those who acknowledged the gospel with perfect heart.

As for their request to hold a disputation, he told them they had best familiarize themselves with the dogmas of Christianity before they entered a controversy about them. He reminded them too that there was compulsion and punishment to be set over against the freedom and the mildness of the gospel.

Canon Mikulski.

Luckily for the Frankists, the primate was called away from the scene of agitation, and the vacant post in Lemberg was occupied by Canon Stephan of Mikulski, who had other views about bringing converts into the Church. He was quite willing to make propaganda. This news quickly reached the Frankists. Nine days after their petition had been sent to both king and primate they forwarded one to the administrator in which they set down their confession of belief; in effect, an accusation of the Talmudists. Krysa and Solomom Shor were emissaries who presented the case before a Catholic priest. Their points run as follows. One, all prophecies about the coming of the Messiah have already been realised. Two, the Messiah appeared in human form and bore all the sins of the world. Three, since the coming of the Messiah commandments and sacrifices are void. Four, Every man must believe in the Messiah for that is the fountain of life. Five, This can only have merit in conversion to the Catholic Church. Six, the Talmud teaches the use of Christian blood. Hence all believers in the Talmud are seekers of blood. These points constituted the basis for the plea to hold a disputation. This petition was presented on the 25th of May, 1759. We see a clearer emphasis upon Roman Catholic dogma, a desire for salvation and baptism and an abandonment of the whole of Judaism. Their hate of the Talmud is a direct reaction to the hate of the Talmudists. In the words of Graetz "... the Frankists maintained a consistent point of view in their hate of the Talmud and the Talmudists."

Disputation at Lemberg.

What the primate had refused, the administrator granted. The date set for the disputation, according to Kraushaar, was July 17, 1759 at one P. M. The request was made for the appearance of all the Rabbis and leaders in the communities of the diocese, under the penalty of a thousand ~~Kalens~~ ^{florins} for non-appearance. A referee was appointed

and the nobility received instructions to compel the invited ones to appear at the appointed spot in Lemberg. When word went round the Jewish communities, they ^{were in a} turned to panic. They feared a repetition of the conditions that had prevailed two years before under Dembowski. They turned beseechingly to the primate on the one hand, and to the papal nuncio ^{at Lemberg} on the other. Their request was for a nullification of the unjust decree on the part of a subordinate in the Church, one who had just assumed ^{the} responsibility of a new post. This delicate matter of church authority, with a distribution of responsibility and the power of final decision, is given extensive consideration by Graetz.⁴⁹

We quote "... both higher prelates showed displeasure at the decree. The primate placed six questions before the administrator to which he expected immediate reply. The questions show a proper appreciation of conditions. He received an unsatisfactory reply on June 20th, showing that the contra-Talmudists acknowledged the Trinity, the Incarnation and other Christian dogmas on the basis of their own writings, the Zohar especially. They wanted to put the Talmudists to shame. The Archbishop supposed that they asked for the disputation mostly to satisfy their desire for vengeance. What if only their greed for gain moved them toward the Church? Let the day of disputation decide whether they are inclined towards conversion, whether these Jews, Kyrza and Solomon Shor, speaking in the name of all, have any importance whatever. They are just Jews out of the crowd, distinguished neither for wealth nor for learning. The primate's attitude showed small trust in the Christianizing Frankists. Nuncio Serra expressed his dissatisfaction with the proposal. It was difficult to lay compulsion on the Talmudists, little good came of the disputation; it was more likely to arouse feeling than to reach an intelligent goal. The reception of these newcomers with their dark teachings might do injury to those born in the Church. However, Mikulski was not swerved in his determination to hold a disputation between the opposing sides at Lemberg." The disputation took place on the day set by Mikulski in the Cathedral at Lemberg, July 16, 1759. The representatives of the Rabbis are generally given as Beer of Jazlowiec, Chayyam Hakohen Rappaport, Rabbi of Lemberg, Israel of Miedziboz. The representatives of the Frankists best known are Laib Rys and Elisha of Rohatyn. In a foot--note of Kraushaar the same names are mentioned as in Graetz. The Baal Shem Tov is mentioned as having been chosen because of his ability

to speak the Polish language. Balaban is at great pains to prove by all manner of documentary evidence that Baal Shem Tov was not present at the Lemberg disputation. He claims that Graetz and all the succeeding historians based their conclusions on an unreliable report that had been made by one Abraham of Szargrod. Balaban says that all Chassidic authors insist upon the presence of their master at the trial in Lemberg. They are rather proud of this feather in their caps. Horodecky, of all the Chassidic writers is the only one to acknowledge Balaban's conclusion.

The Theses.

In the presence of the clergy and the laity, in the presence of many who had paid handsome entrance fees, with the speech of the presiding official and the reading of the seven theses set up by the Frankists, the affair began. According to Graetz⁵¹ the affair lasted three days. The 16th, 23rd, and 30th of the month of July. According to Balaban⁷³⁷⁴ who makes the most thoroughly searching investigation of all the details connected with the Lemberg disputation, the dates range from the 17th of July 1759 when the session began until September 10th, allowing of course for a series of interruptions. The dates of the individual sessions are given by a contemporary weekly, Rurju Pulski. *Rurju Pulski*

In Balaban we find a careful analysis of the theses presented by the Frankists in this Lemberg disputation. He likewise devotes space to a comparison of it with the one at Kamieniec; he finds fewer Jewish elements here at Lemberg. Six principles are of pure Christian origin. As for the authorship of the theses, Balaban³⁶ attributes them to the Lemberg clergy. He finds in them the directing hand of the administrator. Were the Frankists advanced Talmudical proofs, according to Balaban³⁶, they are pointless and illogical. It is thesis seven to which Balaban devotes major consideration. It is the revival of the blood accusation. Balaban³⁷¹⁸ traces a series of trials that had centered around the blood libel. He brings it all the way down to the present case of Lemberg. This matter of the blood accusation was a matter of belief and not ill-will on the part of the Christians. Clergy, nobility, burghers, and peasants truly believed in the story of the blood and the desecration of the host. An investigation of a case implicating two bishops whose actions Rome could hardly countenance probably provided an

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added impetus to the Lemberg clergy for pressing the charges raised by the Franks in the blood libel. This accounts for the differences of opinion between the Archbishop and the nuncio on the one hand and the Lemberg clergy on the other. Balaban,^{44.45} therefore, reaches the conclusion that thesis seven was imposed upon the Frankists by the Lemberg clergy.

The proceedings themselves were long-winded and dull. The Jews on both sides understood neither Polish nor Latin, while the Polish clergy understood no Hebrew. There was constant recourse to the interpreters. The Rabbis challenged theses one through four and omitted five and six. August 27th was the date set for the next session at which thesis seven was to be dealt with. We gather this from Ber's Memoirs. A postponement was effected until September 5th and 10th. From Ber we also learn that thesis seven was given to Rappaport on Sunday August 26th thus giving him only one night to work, if he intended to be prepared with the answer on the following day. Ber himself acted as an interpreter for the Rabbis. Acquainted as he was with members of the Cathedral chapter at Lemberg, he gave the Rabbis considerable assistance. The remarks of Rabbi C. H. Rappaport in his refutation of the blood accusation are quoted in Kraushaar.¹⁴⁸

"..What fool will believe that we, the seed of Abraham, have turned killers and blood-spillers. Our sacred Torah says ' he who spills a man's blood his own blood shall be spilled. God made man in his own likeness.' So testified also a Catholic scholar, Hugo Grotius. Like this scholar, all the other Christian scholars agree that this charge is a lie... We beseech you, honored priest, our Lord Mikulski, to give heed to the slander of this evil community which charges us unjustly. "

According to Graetz⁵¹ the Frankists achieved one great success in this verbal tournament. They had the satisfaction of seeing their desire for vengeance fulfilled. In the neighborhood of Przemyśl, five Jews fell martyrs to the blood libel.

Frank and the Disputation.

According to Graetz⁵¹, Frank was not present when it started. He was represented by Ignatz Molodtva, an enigmatic character. He served in the capacity of interpreter. When the disputation seemed to swing in his favor, Frank came on in pomp. He knew the effect this display would have on the mob and made use of it. The Kronika presents us

with Frank's own supposed explanation for his non-appearance at the disputation of Lemberg. For one thing, he was much too busy visiting the sick, for another thing he advances his unfamiliarity ^{with} of the gospel and his ignorance of the language. He is credited with saying "... prior to this, I never read the gospel. 'Twas only in Lemberg that I read one of the gospels that is translated into Hebrew."..

The Frankists' Conversion.

The number of converts to the Catholic Church in Poland after this disputation at Lemberg is anywhere from one to seven thousand. We have no authentic information. Graetz ⁵² sees in the outcome a striking failure of all the Frankists' plans. It is also the disappointment to achieve revenge or gain a strip of territory, says he, that led the Frankists to delay conversion from day to day. The attitude of the Catholic clergy may be seen from this quotation in Kraushaar. ¹⁵⁰ "... the Catholic priest, Mikulski, urged Frank to speed his entry into the Church. Frank dallied. Then the priest began to suspect him of insincerity. Furthermore, he rebuked him for enjoying the glory of horse and carriage, saying it was not proper for a poor man ^{to be} receiving gifts and contributions." ¹⁵¹ Kraushaar gives us a list of conversions, the first of which is August 20th, 1759.

⁵³ Graetz is at some pains to trace the steps leading to Frank's own conversion. Mikulski was fretful and disappointed. He felt he had been taken in. The Frankists, furthermore, were a considerable expense. Many of the poor Podolyan sectarians were receiving food and clothing. The pressure on the Frankists was a double one. The Jews were eager to oust them completely from their midst so as to save the faith. Mikulski was eager to take them in to save his face. A circular letter sent around to the clergy and the monastic orders, spoke of preparations for the conversion. Graetz leads us to believe that the conversion would not have taken place had not Frank himself been present and urged his followers on. ⁵⁴ Graetz characterises the conversion as "... unexampled hypocrisy." Frank himself underwent half of the conversion at first. His god-parents were people of noble caste. Shrewdly enough, he wanted to complete the act in Warsaw with the King as his god-father. We now see Frank heading for Warsaw. A stoning at Lublin shows the attitude of the Jewish population to Frank. It was unchanged.

October 27th Frank appears in Warsaw with followers. He is received in the great hall of the council house. Accompanied by his interpreter, he visited the Polish magnates. The newspapers wrote the matter up as if it were an important event. In the eyes of the crowd he was an oriental prince, who together with his followers, had entered the Church through conviction. At the intercession of the prelate, the king assumed the title of god-father. He was represented by the Bishop of Zaluski. Frank assumed the name of Josef. Wife and daughter converted with him.

Suspicious of Frank and his Subsequent Arrest.

His integrity was suspected. As Graetz puts it ⁵⁶ "... the secrecy in which he wrapped himself, his extraordinary conduct, the power he exercised over the neophytes, their blind devotion to him, caught the notice of observers. His authority over them must have been great, because when he laid punishment on them they rarely complained."... The nuncio Serra, the administrator Mikulski, and other clergymen raised questions and suspicions in their minds. ¹⁶⁰⁻¹⁶¹ Kraushaar cites the letters of the nuncio and the letters of Mikulski to show this suspicious attitude. From the correspondence of the papal nuncio, we can see that Frank was pressing again the point for a strip of land that he might use as residence for himself and his followers. Evidently the nuncio anticipated difficulties in adjusting and assimilating these new-comers. ¹⁶⁵ Kraushaar refers to Frank's effort to gain a particular locality where they might settle down, work diligently, and win new converts for the Church from the surrounding Jews. The papal nuncio was opposed to settling them anywhere near the border of Russia.

For whatever reasons, we know that Frank was betrayed by his followers. We do not know exactly what prompted them to make their confessions to the priests under Mikulski. In the words of Graetz, ⁵⁷ "...whether in innocence or in malice, they betrayed him and also gave a clear idea of the reasons why they held Frank in such esteem." They confessed to seeing in him a prophet and wonder-worker, a Christ waiting to be reborn. The confessions of the six Frankists were passed on to the administrator ¹⁷³ who in turn passed them on to the nuncio. According to Kraushaar, the nuncio ordered Mikulski to confiscate Frank's letters written to his wife and followers at Lemberg and their replies to Warsaw. There is a declaration that he wants to go to the bottom

of this Frank matter, and imprison him for a definite time. He then had the king's confessor Pater Rauch, take Frank into custody and quiz him about the declaration of the six Frankists in Lemberg. What Kraushaar records extensively, Graetz summarizes⁵⁸ as follows, "... In the meanwhile there was little to be dragged out of Frank. Astute as the confessor was in setting catch questions, Frank was even trickier in his answers." Charges were piled up, leading eventually to the betrayal and imprisonment of Frank. There were charges of bigamy, charges that Frank paraded as prophet, wonder-worker and a messiah. It was said that his bodyguard of twelve was made to correspond to the twelve apostles. Another neophyte who worked under Frank's discipline, declared that the name of Jacob was substituted for Jesus in the prayer book and that the Zohar was used during the services. The net result of all these disclosures was the arrest of Frank by Turski, chief of the inquisition. Frank was brought to the Bernardine cloister where he was kept for seven days. This was in January 1760.

Frank Before the Tribunal.

An interpreter who spoke Turkish was called in for Frank. The clerical judges of the inquisition left no stone unturned to wring every possible bit of information from their victim. Some of the questions asked were..."what did he do in Poland at first? Why did he go to Turkey? Why return to Poland?"... and then a host of theological questions. And in and through it all was the desire to test the sincerity of Frank in his conversion to the Catholic Church or else brand him as an impostor. In passing, we may say that there is one certain thing apparent from Frank's answers; he was no trained theologian, nor did he display any acumen in declaration or refutation. His learning was scanty, his fumbling for old and new testament quotations to prove a statement are clear enough evidences. There is a very definite cleavage of opinion in the matter of torture. Graetz says⁶⁰ "... it seems that the inquisition called torture into play; the torture must have been used against Frank, otherwise it becomes difficult to explain how this arch-impostor could have made so open a declaration." Kraushaar¹⁸⁹ on the other hand tells us definitely that "... all the reports about torture are fictional" and a foot-note underscores this statement, denying the foundation to Graetz's story of torture. It is reasonable to conclude that Graetz

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overshoots the mark of prejudicial taunt in ascribing to Frank's every move and every remark made to the tribunal, the worse possible interpretation.

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We quote from Graetz who speaks with the relish of gusto now that Frank has fallen upon his untoward days "... the torture must have been used against Frank, otherwise it becomes difficult to explain how this arch-impostor could have made so open a declaration as to concede that he, born a Jew, had gone over from his faith to Mohammedanism in order to wrest an advantage from the Porte. Deceived in his expectations, he went on to Kamieniec to throw himself at the head of the contra-Talmudists. He had faked Christianity and converted, so as to carry on the same game he had carried on in Turkey. On the double basis of confession and charges leveled against him by his own followers, Frank was condemned as an out and out impostor. He was sentenced to a term of imprisonment within the fortress; in reality as a charlatan, he had deserved death. But the tribunal took into consideration the fact that the king was his god-father, and therefore his spiritual father in a measure, so that he was let off with a term of imprisonment."

Frank at Czentochow.

In March 1760, Frank was brought to Czentochow, where he was detained for thirteen years. According to Graetz ⁶¹ he was severely dealt with and harshly disciplined. According to Kraushaar ¹⁹⁹ he was not without his privileges, inasmuch as the men on guard were not above bribery. The imprisonment in Czentochow gives Graetz ⁶¹ an opportunity to express complete satisfaction with the turn events had taken. It is as though the villain in the drama had received his mortal thrust. "At present the magnificence of the Podolyan God-man is over."

With Frank in prison, the condition of the Frankists was far from happy. Their lot was a wretched one, cast out by Jews, and suspected by Christians. They begged at church doors and received mere pittance. In October 1760, the clergy had some hundreds of the Frankists transferred to the neighborhood of Zamocz. ⁶² Graetz tells a story of bitter vengeance which, if true, is a striking indication of the deep animosity between Frankists and Jews. Quoting "... it is said the Frankists dressed one of their women up as the Rabbi's wife and inspired her to go to the clergy

and to make the charge that a number of Jews of the place, her own husband included, had murdered Christians. The true Rabbi's wife was forcibly led to conversion along with her five children, and the rest of the Jews in the town had to save their skins by flight."

²⁰²
Kraushaar in a foot-note repeats the incident and refers it back to the writings of Jacob Emden. Rabbi Lippman Cohen is credited with having told this tale to Jacob Emden. There is more than one version of this story. In one account, for instance, a Christian boy makes the accusation. In another, Christians themselves. There is some confusion about it. What stands out of course is the blood accusation, ²⁰³ which is a monstrosity. Kraushaar gives a horrible account of the death meted out to the guilty ones. In accordance with a custom of the time, the heads were cut off and put on high posts by the roadside. Whether this story is fiction or reality, it is clear enough indication of the atmosphere that hovered above Frankists and Talmudists. No extremity was extreme enough in this warfare. How the Frankists retailed stories of the Jews maybe seen from an accusation written by Mikulski, catechist of the sectarians and entitled " The Wickedness of the Jews Against God and Man. " He mentions the use of Christian blood, basing himself on Frankists' utterances. He recounts stories of Christian children being carried off by Jews and of the manner in which they were killed. The attitude of Rome to which the Jews turned for protection in this libel, was rather favorable. Rome, thru its papal nuncio, went so far as to seek protection for the Jews through Minister Bruhl. There is a foot-note in Kraushaar ²¹⁰ which speaks of this message in which the nuncio completely denies the blood accusation, declaring that the Pope had investigated the matter and found not a grain of truth in it.

To return to Czentochow. ²¹ The fortress was a pilgrim spot for the worshippers of Mary; the place had considerable mystical importance for believing Christians. ²³ Graetz tells us he was told by a native of the town who had received the tradition from his father that Frank was allowed free movement in the prison, and was likewise able to make contact with his followers on the outside. Frank pursued his old policy of having visions and dreams, of curing the sick, and reviving the dead. Of the stories

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about his attempts to smuggle followers into the fortress, the following is one of the most eccentric possible. The plan was as follows: "...I was to have exhorted you not to betray the fact that you belong to my men, that you are no different from other converted Jews. Then I would have called three of you to come to me at Czentechow. I'd not have requested you to come into the fortress, but to establish yourselves in a town near the fortress. During this time you would buy a small portrait and after shutting yourselves up, in a room with barred windows, and in the deepestst silence, lasting three days and three nights, go without food, drink or sleep. You would pray on your knees before this portrait, three hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon, and as many hours in the evening. Then you would see something. Then I'd command you to bathe yourselves well, to cut off the nails of your hands and feet; then, dressed in white⁶ come in front of the fortress with eyes cast down to the ground, with heads bowed, and in the deepest silence. Natives and strangers alike would say that you are mad. This would last until you reached the wall. After awhile you would come into the fortress; they would call you to me. " This certainly touches a high spot of extravaganza, though we have no way of detecting the truth of this story. Frank does seem to have succeeded in getting in touch with three of his chosen ones, through whom he sent messages to the Brody community, warning and threatening them, unless of their own free wills they accepted the Roman Catholic faith.

The dissolution of Poland which preceded its partition gave Frank a free hand in his manipulations, activities which to Graetz are always swindles. Catherine, the second, had caught Poland in her net. She had the revolt against the king discouraged and weakened. She succeeded in dividing Poland and her troops held the zealous patriots in check. Now that the Russian troops swept over Czentechow, Frank conceived a plan of making overtures to the Greek Catholic Church, to which the Russians belonged. He sent three followers to the Greek Bishop at Warsaw, and lodged a complaint with him about his imprisonment. Graetz writes that Frank expressed himself to the effect that he had seen from the Kabbalistic writings that the Greek Catholic confession was the only right one and his open expression of it had won him sentence in prison. The Russian Bishop gave the Frankist representatives letters of recommendation to the Pope in

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Moscow. In December 1767, they came to the old Russian capitol and received a favorable reception. But there was an astute figure ready to bar and block Frank's movement in this direction. He was Baruch Jawan, one-time agent of the minister of Bruhl. Graetz⁶⁵ says that Baruch Jawan succeeded in blocking Frank's plan by disclosing the fact that Frank's followers were poor as beggars and would therefore fall as a burden upon the Russians. ^{He mentioned to Frank's "swindlers"} In 1768, the messengers returned from Russia with their mission unfulfilled. According to Graetz⁶⁷, during the first partition of Poland Frank himself was able to move freely, and carry on his activities. After the partition in 1772, with the revolt of the Polish confederation crushed, the fortress was surrendered to the Russian field-marshal. The fortress was captured on the 19th of August, 1772. Graetz and Kraushaar agree that Frank's approach to the conquerors and his intercession with them effected his release. According to Graetz's statement⁶⁷ "... Frank seems to have produced a belief in the Russian general or in one of his underlings, that he and his followers were linked up in the Greek Catholic Church and that on this account they were kept in prison so long by the Roman Catholics. Otherwise it is puzzling indeed to account for Frank's release right away." Graetz⁶⁸ even goes so far as to say that he has reliable sources for saying that Frank served as a Russian spy, and that in this way he was furnished with financial resources.

Frank's Release From Czentochow.

Just where Frank went after his release we do not know, probably to Brunn. Graetz⁶⁸ says he hardly showed himself in public in Poland proper, where he had been largely condemned as a heretic. Those who followed him he called brothers and sisters, and from stories told in the Kronika, we have reason to believe he exacted from them unlimited obedience. Submission, blind and unreserved, he considered the highest virtue; even the most menial tasks, such as the splitting of wood or the drawing of water, were to be executed as joyfully as though they were consecrated duties.

Frank's Egoistical Pretensions.

It is true that Frank could not have wielded an influence over his following had he not set himself up as a person of importance. It is a truism to state that he created an impression largely because he was taken to be an impressive personage. We

have no doubt that he used all available devices to surround himself with an appropriate atmosphere. The Statements recorded in the Kronika show that Frank attached an enormous importance to the words that he spoke, the deliverances he made, the stories he told, the parables he uttered, the visions he proclaimed, the prophecies he foretold. He practically said, that over and above all rights and ceremonies, over and above all laws and practices, he, the leader, stood. And he must be followed. He once said "I have been sent that I might bring eternal life to the earth." He is said to have called himself God. He was called Holy Lord and Master by his followers. Frank never made any conscious effort to instill a skeptical attitude in his followers; he rather preferred the halo they had wreathed about him.

Even if Graetz does leap beyond the mark in his declaration that money and the swindle of it constitute the frame-work of the entire Frankist structure, it is true that the lure of gold was one of the dominating urges in the life of Frank. There is no denying the huge role that money did play. In the Kronika we find ever so many stories whose central theme is gold, whose conspicuous images are heaps of gold, caves where gold lies buried, horses and wagons carrying bags of gold &c. Remembering the acute economic distress of the Jews in Poland at this time, we can well believe the appeal of large fortunes would go a long way. In his promises to the followers, Frank built for them golden castles of fancy. If he deceived them and despoiled them, he nevertheless led them to the realm of illusion, and for awhile at least, drew them out of their shabbiness. He must have touched some pulse of their imaginative fancy. If he exploited them ruthlessly, they certainly proved most condescending victims.

To maintain an impressive front, to play an imposing role, to catch the eye of the crowd, he surrounded himself with a bodyguard. It ^{was} is a stroke of talent, almost of genius, this odd combination of Kabbala and military discipline. 'Tis a rather rare experience in Jewish history. Maybe the seeming incongruity of it is but another symptom of Frank, himself, the incongruous one. The magnetic power which drew the young men to this service, a service which under ordinary circumstances would have been most distasteful, was his daughter Eva. According to Graetz she was his finest drawing card.

Frank's Daughter Eva.

In these last years of Frank's life, after his release from Czentochow, we find his daughter Eva playing a central role in the more intimate life of the group. It seems she was raised in an aristocratic circle, adopted their manners, and carried herself about as a lady of standing. The impression that Graetz gives of Eva's connection with the Frankists group is one of exploitation for profit. By means of a Kabbalistic motif, she found her place in the scheme. She was the embodiment of ^{אמונה} Emuna had entered the body of this pretty young woman - ^{230ff} By way of passing, it should be stated, there is a lengthy foot-note in Kraushaar to the effect that Frank vulgarized and materialized every fine spiritual concept of the Kabbala. His mind was too coarse to grasp any finer implication, any subtler motif. Maybe his will to hold the minds of his followers, a mob after all is said and done, ~~that~~ led him to this vulgarization and materialization. One statement gives the gist of the matter "... if this young woman were to leave us, we should all be like flesh without soul. When she reveals herself there will be eternal light, and everything good will henceforth be waiting for you." The positive information we possess about Eva's early upbringing, is scant indeed. We have no authentic source.

Frank as Baron at Offenbach.

One strong desire of Frank had been to possess a strip of territory where he and his followers might enjoy independence under his leadership. What eluded him in the years of aggressive search was realized in the years of calm decline. Frank enjoyed the twin blessings of solitude and companionship as Baron at Offenbach. Graetz ⁷⁷ ill conceals a savage delight in telling the world that Baron von Frank is none other than the notorious Jankiew Lejbowicz of Galicia, accuser of Lemberg, sectarian of Nikopolis, false messiah of Podolya, prisoner of Czentochow, cheat of Warsaw, mystagogue of Brunn. The fact is that Frank purchased a castle from a prince by the name of Wolfgang Ernst Isenburg-Birstein of Offenbach. The prince was hard pressed for debts. Along with the castle went the prerogatives of a special court and special protection. And what was probably one of Frank's central desires, complete independence of a sovereign.

One story runs that Frank posed as one affiliated with royalty, one whom changes in the political scene had driven into hiding.

This is the sort of gossip he likely spread amongst the simple folk of the neighborhood. Rumor had it that his daughter too was descended from imperial Russian blood, she is actually supposed to have been a Romanoff, a legitimate daughter of the Empress of Russia. She was a foster child. On the table silverware we find the initials E. R. meant to read Eva Romanova. When Prince Isenburg expressed doubts about the strange behavior of the Frankists within the castle, Frank advanced the explanation that he and his sons were guardians of this daughter of the Empress. Frank played his assumed role well enough to convince the credulous.

The question arises, where did Frank obtain his money? Graetz is certain that the Russian court sent him subsidies, which because of their nature could not be given publicity. As for the inner workings in the Frankist castle, we ~~are~~^{are} dependent on hearsay evidence. Their ritual seems to have been a jumble of crucifix, picture of the Mother Goddess and the Zohar study. The ten Kabbalistic Sephiroth played their role. After reproducing the version of one who had spent some time in Offenbach at the age of sixteen, Graetz^{so} tells us the whole story thusly "...Kabbalistic legerdemain and military pomp."

Frank wore a long red coat reaching down to his knees; the coat was trimmed with ermine and lined with silk. Even his bodyguard dressed in red. Frank did play the despot, any one of the bodyguard refusing to bend the knee before him was severely punished. A system of espionage was used. Quoting "... if you observe that one amongst you speaks ill you must punish him; if that does not help you must keep away from him altogether."

Some form of a communistic regime prevailed in the castle at Offenbach. To maintain this regime intact, Frank probably forbade his followers to marry outside of the group. They associated neither with Jews nor Catholics.

Frank's End.

Feeling his end approaching, Frank sent a last call to his followers. It was also a most effective way of gathering funds. There was quite a movement of men and money to Offenbach, Shortly afterwards Frank died. He was buried in pomp. Descriptions of the funeral are to be found in the daily papers of Frankfurt and Warsaw.

In the treatise of Rubachov there is a picture of Frank on his deathbed. Of course we cannot vouch for its authenticity. In it Frank is surrounded by his bodyguard, standing at attention. Candles burn at his head and feet. There is no sign of mourning, other than that of stillness. On his chest there lies a crucifix. He was probably buried neither as Jew, Catholic nor Mohammedan. Graetz⁸⁴ quotes this description from a Warsaw newspaper "... before the procession began, they approached the body according to Jewish custom, touched his feet and begged for forgiveness. All those present, in accordance with Jewish custom, cast a handful of dirt on the grave."

Remains of the Frankist Movement.

The movement did not die out completely with the death of Frank. His daughter was not ^{his} a poor successor. She used her father's instructions well. The order and internal arrangement went on practically unchanged. From Graetz we notice that the three old Frankists continued to study the Zohar in order to discover typological interpretations for their sect, and to seek the groom-king for the virgin, Emuna. Graetz⁸⁴ pays his respects to the daughter as he paid them to the father. He calls her a sly cheat, who also had visions and dreams. Graetz⁸⁵ repeats an account given by a young man who was initiated into the company at Offenbach under Eva's leadership. Evidently the money he brought along with many another's, probably disappeared into Eva's chest. From this account, and the account of a younger brother, Graetz draws the conclusion that Eva was a smart trickstress, cut in the pattern of her father. She too tried to extract money from the faithful ones by threats and by promises. A report has it that many young men came to Offenbach to escape recruiting in the army. She managed to maintain court after a fashion, but the bills of butcher, baker and grocer soon began to make inroads on the splendor of the castle at Offenbach. To ward off the threats Eva sought once more to extract money from the faithful ones outside. One rumor has it that when Emperor Alexander passed through Frankfurt in 1813, Eva was granted an interview with him. It is said she received a money gift from him in honor of the services rendered by her father to the Empress Catherine. The end might be postponed. But it had to come. A family at Mayence that had poured an entire fortune into the Frankist coffers, preferred charges and demanded the arrest

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of the young woman. Investigation however had hardly begun when she died. Another report is that she made her getaway. She probably died in misery.

IV.

CONCLUSION.

It is not easy to reach a fair evaluation of the character of Jacob Frank. In the light of available material, unsorted, uncombed and unpurged of ornament and fancy, it is a task little short of impossible. Probably the most valuable gain that we can make in this regard is a healthy perspective. Rubachov, in his small but significant treatise on the Frankists seems to have achieved this goal. He is aware of all the shameful epithets that might be pitched at Frank's head. He is not unaware of the rent Frank's movement made in the corporate body of Jewish life. He is not ready to deny that so far as evil can seem to assume personal embodiment, it seemed to do so in the case of Jacob Frank. For here was an energy at work, an energy rising out of Jewish sources and then with some wild elemental force of nature, whipping back at the very source from which it sprang. Nevertheless Rubachov declares that we cannot disown Frank, but must accept him and give him place in the large historic household of Israel.

Before any genuine estimate of Frank can be made, there will have to be more sympathetic and more illuminating studies of all the ascertainable facts, of all the possible sources. Until that time we must rest content with more or less haphazard judgments, strong convictions based on emotional preferences, firm prejudices comported with our own established patterns of thought. The one outstanding certainty in the life of Frank is this - here we have an energy taking personal and bodily form and causing no end of trouble within a lifetime. Exactly why that energy should have been so disrupted, is a question that none of the sources conclusively answer. Was the damaging force present in the blood at the time of birth? Were the ideas that later generated strife in the camp of Israel already in seed during the earliest years of his life? Today we are especially interested

what was the cause?

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in tracing streams of energy back to their primal sources. This stream traced as far back as possible, leads us to a question mark. Our information about the birth of Frank and his antecedents is scanty in the extreme, and if the records now and then cast a point of illumination on some episode in the man's young life, we have our own doubts of the authenticity of such records. And so far as the religious life of Frank is concerned, the role he played as successor to the mantle of Sabbatai Zevi, constrained as we may be to condemn him for a minimum of sincerity and a maximum of hypocrisy, we are reluctant to pass a final verdict lest some unknown or unguessed evidence rise up to nullify it.

The fact beyond dispute is that the Laskeron incident set the furies ablaze. This precipitated the bitter controversy that was to go from vengeance to vengeance. Whatever vengeance is we know that it rose tower high on both sides. It unquestionably drove Frank into the arms of the Roman Catholic Church. It likewise spurred the loyal Jews on to reduce the Frankists' misery and possible annihilation. The blood accusation is the sign and symbol of the story as it threads itself out almost from first to last. It was a question of bad blood, very bad blood. On this basis we can explain the proclamations of Brody, the disputations at Kamieniec and Lemberg, and the eventual imprisonment of Frank at Czehetochow. Frank thwarted, he fought back with some blind and furious zeal that recked little of ways or means. Hit by insult and anathema, he lashed out hitting where he might. Ethical sensitivity was driven into obscurity. It was a fight for life, a fight to the death.

A motive closely interwoven with preservation is the economic motive to live and to toil under comparative freedom. Who knows what Frank might have become had he enjoyed the opportunities of a modern Jewish business man in America or in England? Unquestionably, organizing ability was his. The question remains, organizing for what? Time and circumstance had their say in dictating their answer to this question. In retrospect it seems that some evil spirit guided the organizing power of Frank against his own blood brothers. What he seems to have wanted above most things was a specific form of independence in things economic, social and religious. Maybe he wanted nothing more than a chance to exercise the power of rulership.

Considering the utter cramp of the social and economic life of the Jews in Poland in those days, it is really hard to pour anathemas on Frank for wanting to escape from it. True, he may have wanted freedom with such eagerness as to bother his head but little about the expensive means of reaching it. If others were involved in losses that he might gain, what of it? Here we catch him at his most vulnerable point. But a freer air than that breathed by Polish Jewry in the 18th century, Frank certainly wanted to breathe. No wonder he struck up such a persistent clamor for a separate strip of territory for himself and his followers, where they might live and toil in comparative freedom. Here is a matter that opens itself up for a more critical inspection and more fruitful conclusion.

And as for Frank's connection with Judaism, Mohammedanism, Roman and Greek Catholicism, we are nonplussed. Here is a fertile field for study and further investigation. The speculative tendency prone to run riot before such an alluring perspective, needs to be drawn in check. It would be beautiful if we could discover evidence in support of the conclusion that Frank stood at the meeting-point of these great religions. He is so open to damaging charges of out and out hypocrisy that he hardly belongs to the world of religion at all. Religions he seems to have put on and off as one puts on and off suits of clothes. They were conveniences, or shall we say tools? And yet it may well be that better than any contemporary, Frank may have seen behind the scenes, may have known too intimately for the sake of reverence, the wire-pullings, back stage by the leaders in these great formal religions. Here again we stand before a question mark and must satisfy ourselves with unsatisfying speculation. Frank may have been a downright charlatan, probably was, and yet experience may have so thoroughly have disillusioned him of all religious professions that in heart and in secret he turned somewhat of a free thinker. Not exactly a conventional way of looking at this man Jacob Frank, generally spoken of as a mystic and founder of a Judeo-Christian sect of Frankists. However, if we knew sufficiently his private thoughts, if we possessed a diary or a memoir preserved from his last years at Offenbach, we might be prepared to write an entirely different story of Jacob Frank. For the present, Frank must be presented to the historically curious in shades ranging

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from shadowy dark to deepest black. Maybe some revelation of new sources or new interpretations will strike a greater color harmony in years to come. It is hardly true to say that Jacob Frank's memory rests in peace. It is a troubling shadow, hovering over the horizon. It is not at rest now, it may be some day.