

ISRAEL ZINBERG ON CHASIDISM:

**A Translation of Chapters 2-4 of Volume VII, Part 2,
of Israel Zinberg's HISTORY OF JEWISH LITERATURE;
Together with a Critical Essay on Zinberg's Contri-
bution to the Historiography of Chasidism.**

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DIGEST

This dissertation consists of two main parts. The larger is a translation of that part of Zinberg's HISTORY OF JEWISH LITERATURE which deals with Chasidism and its literature. This translation provides a comprehensive picture of the literary history of Chasidism from its beginnings up to the death of Shne-ur Zalmon, including the writings and theosophical systems of the Besht, the Magid, Jacob Joseph Hakohen, Elimelech of Lizensk and Shne-ur Zalmon. Also included is a delineation of the social and economic causes which led to the rise of Chasidism and to the great controversy with the Misnagdim.

For the reader who handles Hebrew, the many quotations from the sources, both in the text and notes, are reproduced in transliteration.

The second part of the dissertation is a critical essay which attempts to present Zinberg's contribution to the Historiography of Chasidism. After a short statement on general and Jewish historiography, the contributions of Graetz, Horodezky and Dubnow to the historiography of Chasidism are analyzed and their weaknesses shown and the work of Euber and Minkin are criticized. The correct understanding of the Chasidic movement is

shown to lie in S. Zeitlin's theory that Chasidism was essentially a revolt of the Jewish masses against the prevailing social order. The investigations of B. Dinanurg are utilized to substantiate this theory.

The contribution of Zinberg is shown to lie primarily in a lucid, comprehensive presentation of the literature of the Chasidic movement. Subsidiary to Zinberg's main purpose of presenting the literature of the movement is his excellent sociological analysis of the rise of Chasidism which is shown, however, to suffer from his adherence to other faulty historiographical premises, which prevented him from carrying his own analysis to its logical conclusion.

The conclusion is reached that a great desideratum in the field of Jewish history could be filled by a new history of Chasidism along the lines indicated by this dissertation and for which Zinberg's work might serve as a foundation.

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CHAPTER I

Judaism contains within itself a number of mutually exclusive pairs of elements. All these elements are legitimate and attested threads in the fabric of Jewish culture. Each has, at one time or another in Jewish history, taken the upper hand in Jewish thinking while its antithesis has been pushed into the background, although, in general, each pair of elements has exerted a simultaneous and continuous influence. As examples of such disparate couples in Judaism, we may cite universalism and particularism, and rationalism and mysticism.

Here we are concerned with the last pair, with rationalism and mysticism. Surely it can be said without fear of exaggeration that the most characteristic trait of our generation is the rationalism which pervades its thinking. Both the world at large as well as the community of Israel, are dominated by the scientific, analytical, quantitative thought patterns which are so distinctive of twentieth century man. Nevertheless, in spite of the seeming dominance of rationalism in the Weltanschauung of modern Judaism, we can discern in it an ever growing interest in and spread of the mystical element. This seemingly anomalous intrusion of the mystical and irrational into a world operating under and controlled

by reason and logical thought is manifested today in Judaism by a growing interest in religion in general, by an increasing preoccupation with the formalistic and ritualistic elements in Judaism, by an ever widening harking back to and glorification of the past, and most particularly by a revival of interest in and an intensification of love for Chasidism.

Chasidism has generally been represented as the last manifestation of Jewish mysticism. And as such it would naturally be deserving of status and consideration in present day Judaism, because, as we have pointed out above, both mysticism and rationalism are valid and legitimate aspects of Judaism. However, in view of the extended dominance of the rationalistic approach in our day, it is clear that the recent upsurge of veneration for the mysteries of Chasidism is often the result of a blind falling in with the fashion of the times without the necessary basis of understanding. Many have permitted themselves to join the Chasidic band wagon without a preliminary acquaintance with the rudiments of Chasidic teachings and of the origin, history, and development of the movement.

For the reader who is limited to the English language, there is very little to turn to in the way of expositions of Chasidism. There are collections of Cha-

sidic stories and various secondary works on the subject, a few books and a few articles and monographs, most of which are written from a very naive historiographical point of view, and are in general quite inadequate and brief. Most of these works on Chasidism in English as well as in other modern languages are based on certain studies on the subject, written in Hebrew, which have formed the mold and the model for the contemporary picture of Chasidism. These basic Hebrew works all give an erroneous and often prejudiced view of the Chasidic movement; these faults have of necessity been repeated in the subsequent literature on the subject. The modern Jew who is interested in learning about Chasidism, and especially the liberal rabbi who feels the need of acquainting himself with this movement which has played such a vital role in Jewish life in the past, and which, as we have pointed out, is in our own time drawing so much attention to itself, is quite hard put to attain his ends in a simple manner and in a short time, within the confines of the English language. By reading everything which is available in English, one receives only a naive and distorted view of Chasidism. By adding the extant literature in Hebrew, upon which the English writings are based, the situation does not improve appreciably. To go the sources of the Chasidic movement and study the vast primary lit-

erature which it has produced would be a Herculean undertaking. It would require years of preparation and concentrated study in order even to acquire the basic tools necessary for such a task. Thus does it become necessary to rely on those inadequate ²secondary sources mentioned above for an understanding of Chasidism.

Among the secondary sources which are available, we shall concern ourselves here primarily with the work of Graetz, Dubnow and Horodezky. Their respective treatments are representative of the historiographical methods which have prevailed in the past and which have left their imprint upon subsequent writings in this area. It will be necessary to consider these three pioneers in research on Chasidism before we turn our attention to the historiography of Israel Zinberg, the translation of whose work forms the bulk of this thesis, and whose contribution to the understanding of Chassidism is the main subject of this introduction.

Before, however, proceeding to the consideration of the work of the three investigators mentioned above, it would perhaps be in place to discuss the question of historiography in general. The aim of all historical writing is supposedly to achieve objectivity. But this is clearly seen to be a contradiction in terms when we consider that

the writing of history assumes a writer, an individual personality, whose peculiar characteristics must manifest themselves in the selective processes which are involved in the creation of a historical narrative. No man is capable of shutting out his personality from his thinking. The very fact that a historian must sift and choose the facts that he will work with and mold them into a unified structure (to give all the facts without discrimination, would not be writing history, but would be merely a cataloging of data) implies that pure objectivity cannot exist in the writing of history. Every historian has an ax to grind, and every historical work reflects the ax the author is grinding.

In the Jewish historiography of recent times there is also reflected this tendency to write from a particular point of view. Jewish historians have in general written from a theological and from an apologetical point of view. The attempt was continually being made to demonstrate the uniqueness of the Jew, to prove that he was entitled to the same status as the rest of the world, and to justify his striving after enlightenment and equality. The assumption was always made that the history of the Jews is a particular history, having no relation to

the history of the contemporary environment and never being affected by the causes, factors and influences which determine the course of general history. Jewish history was conceived as an isolated phenomenon, and its motivation was always spiritual, patriotic and idealistic. In essence, the view of Jewish historians of recent times was really not much different from that of Judah Halevi who explained the uniqueness of the Jewish experience in theological terms, by means of the inyan elohi. It is true that by means of the inyan elohi we can arrive at a concept of Jewish history; but it is a concept which leaves nothing for man to do. It is a concept which assumes that we can not find laws in operation which can explain the history of the Jewish people in a synthetic manner and in human terms.

But in actuality, there are laws operating in Jewish history; there are nomothetic principles, by means of which a coherent and comprehensive picture can be obtained. And these laws are the same laws which operate in general history. These are the sociological principles, the economic and social considerations which manifest themselves among all peoples. In this respect, Jewish historiography of the past has been most delinquent in its

tendency to regard the phenomena and processes of Jewish history as sui generis and in its failure to apply to them the same sociological principles which operate generally. By applying to Jewish history these commonly known and accepted principles of social and economic motivation, it becomes possible for the historian to go beyond the illusory aim of being merely objective and he can proceed to a much more useful and fruitful goal; he can strive for a structurization of intelligently selected data within the framework of general principles, the understanding and control of which are within the purview of human ability. This gives a meaning to history and it has value for man.

With these preliminary remarks concluded, we can now turn to a perusal of the more specific aspects of our subject. The historiographers of Chasidism in the past have operated with two major axioms. They have assumed that the Chasidic movement came into being as a result of a difference of religious opinion between the Chasidim on the one hand and their opponents, the Misnagdim, on the other. The latter were religious rationalists and the former religious mystics. The rationalistic trend had become very strong in Judaism and so the

mystically inclined Chasidim rebelled and instituted a new religious sect with a non-rationalistic emphasis. The second axiom which these early historians of Chasidism assume is that Rabbi Israel Ben Eli-ezer (Besht) founded the Chasidic movement; that he was the first to rebel against the rationalism and pilpulism of the rabbis; that he taught his first disciples to believe as he did and that they in turn taught others, and so the movement came into existence.

This second axiom we spoke of here is an example of that type of historical writing which sees history in the light of personalities. It is a sort of hero-worshipping attitude which assumes that individual men create movements and provide the impetus to change. It is undoubtedly true that great minds and mighty spirits do leave their impress upon other men and on society, and that they play a role in determining the particular forms and detailed expressions of social change. But this does not mean that history is the result of one man's influence, nor does it mean that given a particular set of historical circumstances and a figure connected with them, that it was the figure who produced the situation. Rather is it more plausible to postulate that the configuration

of operative historical factors inexorably leads to the appearance of men on the stage of history and should one man happen to miss the performance the show would go on just the same.

The first historian of Chasidism whom we shall consider is Heinrich Graetz. His attitude can be summed up very concisely. He believed Chasidism to be the essence of unreasonableness and superstition, "a daughter of darkness, born in gloom and proceeding stealthily on its mysterious way." Chasidism was an ugly order called into being by a man as ugly as his name, Besht. He was a deluded and superstitious mystic and miracle worker, a wild visionary who attracted followers of a similar disposition because of his noisy, delirious praying and his supernatural powers. Graetz compares the Chasidim to the Jumpers and Shakers. But he concedes that the Besht was not necessarily a trickster, since mysticism and madness are contagious. In these early Chasidic circles, it became the fashion, Graetz tells us, to scoff at the Talmudists because they mocked the Besht's ignorance in Talmud. All this was possible because the general environment in eighteenth century Poland was one of delusion and superstition.

As for the Magid, Dov Ber of Mezheritch, whom Graetz

considers the real founder of the movement---he was simply a charlatan interested only in advancing his own ends. Graetz attributes to the Magid erudition in the Talmud and the Cabala, a shrewd mind and a clear insight into human nature, all of which he used to further his purpose. The Magid indulged in vulgar jokes to produce a happy frame of mind in his followers, introduced the use of strong drink to produce inspiration and enthusiasm in prayer, and resorted to outright dishonesty to make himself seem omniscient. And in order to strengthen respect for himself, Dov Ber propounded the theory of Tsadikism, magnifying certain Cabalistic statements to the point of blasphemy. According to this theory, the Tsadik, or Chasidic leader, is the embodiment of power and splendor on earth; he has the ability to influence events both on earth and in heaven, and is therefore deserving of human adulation. All of this foolishness owed its origin to the superstitious doctrines of the Zohar, and was calculated by the Magid to bring him honor and revenue. For, while the Tsadik cared for the conduct of the world, for the obtaining of heavenly grace, and for Israel's preservation and glorification, his adherents were obliged to draw near to him, to enjoy his sight---he always dressed in a splendid manner---to make occasional pilgrimages to him, confess their sins to him, bring him presents and attend

to his personal needs. All this excess, this coarse reversion to fetish-worship, was possible because of the over-excited state of the minds of Polish Jews.

According to Graetz, this barbaric teaching attracted rogues who could now procure money in an easy way, simple-minded men who inclined to enthusiasm and belief in miracles, idlers who found occupation in the court of the Tsadik, and also earnest men who found no religious satisfaction in the fossilized rabbinical Judaism of the time.

Chasidism flourished, according to Graetz, because of the fraternization of its members and their feeling of brotherhood, the petrified character of Talmudic pilpulism, the political decay of Poland, the dissolution of the Council of the Four Lands, and the ravaging of *the* southern areas of Poland by the Haidamaks and the Turks.

As for the conflict between the Chasidim and their opponents, Graetz sees in this purely religious motivations. The Misnagdim, with Elijah Gaon at their head, fulminated against the Chasidim because they considered them to be dangerous and obnoxious heretics. Even the Gaon, Graetz informs us, was under the delusion that the Cabala was a true daughter of Judaism, and he considered the Chasidim hateful not because they used the Cabala but because they misused and misconstrued it.

Graetz despised Chasidism and everything connected with it. He does admit, however, that two of its early leaders were honest men, namely Israel of Koznits and Shne-ur Zalmon of Liyadi. But all efforts made to suppress the Chasidim were in vain because in a measure they represented a just principle, that of opposing the excesses of Talmudism.

This completes the statement of Graetz's point of view in regard to Chasidism. At first glance, it is clear that it is a point of view fraught with prejudice and imprecision; it is completely ineffectual as an explanation of a problem. The very fact that Graetz's exposition of Chasidism only takes up approximately twenty pages is an indication of its weakness. The subjectivity and venom which fill every paragraph would be enough to disqualify Graetz's work even if his overall analysis were correct. Graetz's naive view of Chasidism as a purely religious phenomenon aiming to counteract the excesses of Talmudism and his attributing to a few men the creation of a movement which went on to conquer half the Jewish population of Eastern Europe is typical of the early idealistic, theological Jewish historiography. As a son of nineteenth century rationalism and progressivism, and as a virulent foe of the mystical element in Judaism and a detractor of East European

Jewry in general, Graetz was eminently disqualified to present an exposition of Chasidism that would be of worth. He should have refrained from touching upon this subject altogether. For since his approach was theological and his theology was biased, the results could not have been otherwise.

Having summarized the view of Heinrich Graetz, we now proceed to the second of the three historiographers of Chasidism^m who we shall consider, Samuel Aba Horodezky. This author published a series of essays in various German and Hebrew periodicals on various subjects connected with Chasidism which were collected and published as a four volume work entitled Hachasidus V'hachasidim. The aim of this work is ostensibly to give a comprehensive picture of the nature, origin and development of the Chasidic movement. Actually, Horodezky's work does not concern itself with the movement itself but rather with its leaders and representatives and their teachings. We are given a series of biographical studies of a large number of Chasidic leaders from the Besht through Israel of Rizhin (died in 1851). The emphasis throughout is upon the doctrines, attitudes and modes of conduct of the leading Tsadikim with no attempt to integrate, structurize, or relate to the external world. The

entire work is rife with a spirit of partisanship which warps the judgment of the author in regard to every aspect of his investigation.

Horodezky belongs to that class of historians who see in Chasidism a revolt against the exaggerated legalism of Rabbⁱnism. They view it as a religious revival stemming from the wells of the popular religious sentiment which set out to combat the rigidity and formalism of the current orthodox Rabbⁱnism. They glorify it as the preserver and saviour of the true, authentic piety and poetry of the Jewish religion. They refuse to see any defects or exaggerations in Chasidism, and Horodezky is a firm adherent ~~to~~^{of} this school of glorification; his entire work is permeated with this biased attitude.

Horodezky's panegyric of the Cabala and his calumination of the Halacha in his introduction is an example of pure emotional writing, without substantiation or regard for the facts; it is full of contradictions, exaggerations, and inexcusable misrepresentations. This attitude to the Cabala sets the tone for the entire four volumes on Chasidism.

For each Tsadik lengthy quotations are reproduced from his works and numerous legends are re-

counted. There is no attempt made to comment on these accounts, to assume a critical attitude, to discard the chaff and to extract the kernel of truth, if there be one. In the presentation of his material there often creep in examples of conduct and attitude on the part of the various Tsadikim which contradict completely the virtues which Horodezky is defending. A glaring fault of the entire work is the absence of a consideration of the contribution of Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon and of the entire "Chabad" school of Chasidism.

Thus Horodezky, besides manifesting an excessive bias in his approach, is in essence guilty of the two major faults which we ascribed to Graetz: the assumption that Chasidism was the creation of certain specific individuals and that the movement was a revival of religious mysticism, as opposed to fossilized Talmudism. Horodezky approved of this mystical revival and was opposed to Talmudism, whereas Graetz hated both, (although he probably hated Talmudism somewhat less than Chasidism), and rather saw the answer to the Jewish problem in rational enlightenment.

The third of the three historiographers of Chasidism whom we shall consider is Simon Dubnow. Dubnow wrote a three volume work in Hebrew called Toldos

Hachasidus which is by far the best and the most comprehensive of any attempt made to understand Chasidism. It is a well-organized work, a statement which cannot be made concerning Horodezky's product; it is extensive---a feature that is certainly not applicable to Graetz's efforts. It is the first complete history of Chasidism in which its rise, development, spread and struggles with its opponents are related in a detailed and objective manner.

Dubnow opens the first volume of his work by attempting to evaluate the place of intensive piety in Jewish life. His philosophy of Jewish history assumed that the entire complex of religious laws was only a means for the preservation of the Jewish nation. He considers every outburst of piety at various times as a struggle of individual religiosity against the leveling influence of standardized group-religion with its cut and dried form. In other words, Jewish history is a reflection of a continuing struggle between the national and individual elements. Whenever the national element became excessively strong and dominant, a reaction took place, and the individual element asserted

itself. Chasidism for Dubnow is just such a manifestation---a revolt of the individual religious approach against the national element which by the middle of the eighteenth century had developed to an excessive degree.

This basic theory of Dubnow as here outlined prevents his Toldos Hachasidus from arriving at a proper explanation of the reasons for the rise, spread and decline of the movement.

In his introduction to his Weltgeschichte des Juedischen Volkes, Dubnow pointed out that he was abandoning the idealistic-spiritualistic historiography of the past in favor of a sociological approach. This is a great step forward. There are however, certain inherent assumptions which Dubnow makes, as we have sketched above, which delimit his so-called sociological point of view. That is, he fetters his social outlook with the chains of his national theory. This prevents him, for instance, from seeing class divisions within the Jewish population. He devotes a chapter in his work on Chasidism to the social conditions of eighteenth century Poland. But the contrast is always drawn between the Jew and the non-Jew, and never between one class

of Jews and another. He theoretically is concerned with economic factors, but it is always a delineation of the economic difficulties of the Jewish group as a whole within Polish society; no contrast is ever made between the varying economic levels within the Jewish population.

Dubnow is in every respect a great improvement over his predecessors, but when reduced to essentials, we can see that his work suffers from the same basic defects which have marred Graetz and Horodezky. He is not prejudiced either for or against the Chasidim as they were, although he too has a bias, namely, his theory of continual balancing between the national and individual factors. But like Graetz and Horodezky, he cannot rid himself of the notion that Chasidism was essentially a movement of religious reform and that personalities are vital in the origin and spread of the movement.

Dubnow did not really succeed in explaining any more than did Graetz and Horodezky in a coherent and synthetic manner, how it came about that Chasidism arose, why it arose when it did, who the people were who joined it, and why; he does not

satisfactorily explain the feverish opposition to the movement on the part of the Misnagdim, the reasons for the rapid spread of the movement, and the factors which led to its degeneration and decline.

An indication of the correct answer to these questions was sketched by Solomon Zeitlin in a popular article written by him (Jewish Tribune, Vol. 97, August 1, 1930) entitled "Chasidism: A Revolt of the Masses." In this article Zeitlin presents the thesis that Chasidism was a revolt of the masses of lower class Jews against the intellectual upper class elements in the Jewish social structure; that the animosity between these two classes was very great and had been smoldering for a long time but could not come into the open as long as the Council of the Four Lands remained in power. With the decline of Polish as well as Jewish autonomy in the eighteenth century, the masses revolted, claiming that all Jews were equal before God. The revolt itself produced its own leaders according to the demands of the period. These leaders tried to organize the revolution into some definite form, and to bring into existence a new sect with a defi-

finite conception of Judaism. These leaders substituted the Tsadik for the rabbi, the Tsadik being merely a better type of ba-al shem who had arisen previously in the Ukraine as a new type of leader, advisor and healer of the masses of Jews living there. Originally, the Tsadik was nothing more than a more pious chosid. As a substitute for the Talmud, they turned to the Cabala, but reversed the interpretation of its tenets from one of asceticism and self-denial to one of rejoicing.

Thus was the whole purpose of the Chasidic movement the breaking down of the old aristocracy. Eventually, however, this Chasidism, Zeitlin tells us, instituted an aristocracy of its own. This led to the decline and degeneration of the movement and to the consequent perversion of its original force and vitality.

This point of view has been supported by B. Dinaburg who wrote a series of articles on the subject in the quarterly Zion (Vols. VII-VIII and IX-X, 1941-1945). Here we quote from the English summaries which are provided for each article:

"On the basis of first-hand evidence from many mussar sources...it becomes clear that the crisis of the period was due to the seizure of power by takkifim, persons associated with the courts of the local nobles and authorities. In this way the kehillot became part of the administrative apparatus of the authorities for the exploitation of the Jews by the nobility, who reigned supreme in the country as a whole, instead of being organs of Jewish autonomy. This led to the emergence of a 'rebellious' spirit toward the kehillot and their loss of moral authority...the decline of the Kingdom of Poland in general, the civil wars, the weakening of central authority, the bad roads, the absence of security, the political activities of the nobility, their neglect of their estates and their increasing need for a financial economy, with the increasing severity of the struggle of the urban population against the Jews---led to the rise in the kehillot of three groups who 'profited' during that period of crisis. These were large-scale merchants, particularly dealers in foodstuffs, money lenders and those who leased land from or managed it for the nobility. The third group became particularly important. They helped to organize the estates of the nobility and the exploitation of their serfs. They financed the estates by arranging loans and exporting produce; also by a maximal exploitation of the Jewish inhabitants on behalf of their overlords, and to their own advantage. This group seized power in the kehillot, abolished the distribution of functions which had been customary in the kehillot between the heads and the parnassim (administrative), the rabbis (judicial), and assessors (fiscal). They concentrated all these functions in the hands of their group and its associates. This was the chief reason for the accentuated social differentiation between the kehillot and the general moral decline of the age." (Zion, vol. VIII, no. 3)

"...The author deals with the processes of disruption within kehillot and the restriction of the social basis of the kahal, which so weak-

ened Jewish self-government in Poland and enabled takkifim to seize power...The author describes the increasing social differentiation in the communities and the resultant moral decline... [he] brings evidence regarding the great and numerous differences in the standards of living of the various sections of the Jewish population, and the difference between the chief lessees and their assistants in the villages. The lowest level of all was that of the 'professional poor' and unemployed, part of whom were constantly on the move. Next came those engaged in service, amounting to about 8%, who were also regarded as a very low class. The relatively 'established' section of the Jewish masses was that of the artizans [sic], who apparently constituted more than a quarter of the Jewish population. The 'intellectual proletariat' of the kehilloth [sic] seems to have been particularly important. The most important offices were in the hands of the leading families, while the position of scholars, dayanim, preachers, teachers, and the like was one of semi-starvation. The accentuation of the social difference also helped to produce a decline in social morality throughout the community. This found expression not only in the attitude of contempt and mutual disregard between the various groups, but also in the increased contact between the well-to-do classes and the Polish squirearchy, in adaptation to their manner of life, and the increasing number of poor who permitted themselves to break the law...At the same time, however, active opposition was also aroused by these disruptive tendencies, and the masses and residents of villages began to establish an opposition in the kehilloth, headed by the circles of the intellectual proletariat." (Zion, vol. VIII, no. 4)

"The opposition within the communities of Poland and Lithuania accompanies the oligarchic control of the communities like a shadow from its very commencement. This can be observed from the numerous regulations by communal local and country-wide authorities, the general purpose

of which is to strengthen the authority of the kahal, in order to ensure its unity of organization, the suppression of all public criticism of communal matters, any appeal against communal decisions or any disrespect towards leaders. Despite all these regulations the opposition was vital, lively and organized. It was headed by the maggidim and darshanim (homilists and preachers) who occupied a semi-official status in the community. Although their economic position was in general a poor one, they were socially very important. Their public support lay in the lower classes of the community, and their cell units were the artizan corporations, charitable societies, and all kinds of religious and Torah institutions." (Zion, vol. IX, no. 1)

The author goes on to point out that "the organic association of the Hassidic Movement with the opposition within the communities, as shown by the sources of early Hassidic legend regarding the Baal Shem Tov, and the evidence of early Hassidic traditions. The social framework to be found in legend and literature is that described [above]...Information on the social position of the leaders of the movement demonstrates that they all belonged to the lower and under-privileged sections of the religious services (Hebrew teachers, preachers, slaughterers). The Hassidic tales of the life of the Baal Shem Tov tend to unify all the social classes of the movement, serving as a social reflection of the founders..." (Zion, vol. IX, nos. 2-3)

"...the author deals with the Hassidic groups and the character of Hassidic life prior to the Baal Shem Tov. From the "Praises of the Besht" and other works of the period he sets out to demonstrate the existence of prior Hassidic groups, and the association of the movement with them. The revelation of the Besht was only, according to the Hassidic sources, his recognition by these groups, and particularly by that of Brody which was the most important of all, as their head...that way of life [of the

pre-Beshtian Chasidic groups] really included all the 'new customs' which the Hassidim introduced in the days of the Besht and which awakened so much opposition..." (Zion, vol. IX, no. 4)

These extensive quotations from the English summaries of Dinaburg's studies have been cited here because they substantiate in a clear and incontrovertible manner the correctness of Zeitlin's theory as outlined above and the manifest incorrectness of the approaches of Graetz, Horodezky, and Dubnow. We shall see further on that Zinberg also holds to this more satisfactory view of the origin of the Chasidic movement.

But before proceeding to a consideration of Zinberg's contribution to the understanding of Chasidism, it is necessary to make a few remarks concerning the work of two other investigators in this field. One of these is Martin Buber; he has played a vital role in the rebirth of interest in Chasidism by means of his books and articles on the subject and through his translation of large numbers of Chasidic tales into German, whence they were retranslated into English. To discuss the historiography of Buber is really an impossible task, because Buber is not a historian. Buber is

a philosopher, and an esoteric one at that. The author must admit that he found it extremely difficult to follow the trend of thought in Buber's work. Buber has no historical, let alone sociological, approach whatsoever. His studies are essentially philosophical, cryptic, and shrouded in mystery and fanciful speculation. And therefore, since they provide us with nothing but theological casuistry, and contribute nothing towards a fruitful historiography of Chasidism, we can dispense with any further inquiry into their value for our purpose.

Finally, it is necessary to include in our survey of contributions to secondary Chasidic literature, Jacob Minkin's The Romance of Hassidism. In order to desist from repetition, Minkin's book can succinctly be subsumed under the category of the apologetic, theological school of historiography which sees in Chasidism a mystical, pietistic, contemplative movement in opposition to the dry Talmudism of the time, conceived, created and spread by a group of individual Tsadikim, and whose presentation and analysis is taken care of by the biographies of these Tsadikim. For the interested reader who is limited

to English, Minkin's book provides essentially the same information, in more succinct form, as does Horodezky.

Having now completed the survey of all the necessary preliminary material, we turn to the consideration of the contribution of Israel Zinberg to an understanding of Chasidism. The main part of this thesis consists of a translation into English of the major sections of Zinberg's Yiddish work History of Literature Among the Jews which concern themselves with Chasidism. A statement as to the procedure followed in the translation precedes the text itself. This work was chosen for translation because it was thought that as an extended work on the subject, by the relative recentness of its publication, by the high reputation of its author, it would provide a valuable aid and fill a distinct lack for those interested in the problem of the understanding of Chasidism.

Before proceeding to a more detailed consideration of Zinberg's contribution, it is essential to understand that we are dealing here not with history as such, but rather with a history of

literature. Zinberg's goal is not so much the explanation of the rise, spread and decay of the Chasidic movement, as it is the presentation of the literature of the Chasidic movement and also of its opponents within the cultural framework of the period. The bulk of Zinberg's pages are devoted to a careful, organized, understandable presentation of the thinking of the leading Chasidic rabbis from the Besht through Nachmon of Bratslav. Each Tsadik's system of Torah is presented in a systematic manner, with copious quotations both in the text and the notes of the original statements from the primary sources. Zinberg throughout manifests a very objective yet sympathetic attitude. He dispassionately sets down the teachings of the various Tsadikim, analyzing and organizing as he proceeds, not withholding his praise when it is due and also not repressing criticism when it is called for.

Closely intertwined with the presentation of the literary output of each Tsadik, whether his own directly or the work of disciples, Zinberg gives us the necessary biographical material and the historical circumstances which prevailed

in each case.

Zinberg's finest contribution, perhaps, is to be found in his extended digression to explain the causes of the conflict which broke out between the Chasidim and the Misnagdim. Here he manifests a very keen historical sense and a clear sociological understanding. He shows that this conflict was in essence not a religious one, since purely secular and social factors played the main role. He draws a sharp picture of the social and economic conditions of the Jewish population in Poland and the Ukraine, showing us the sharp cleavage between the oppressed lower classes on the one hand, and the oligarchic upper classes, the takifim in alliance with the Talmudists, on the other hand. He pictures the Chasidic group as representing the lower classes and suppressed elements who were trying to wrest power from the upper classes, the Misnagdim. These latter were the money and Torah aristocracy of the Kahal leaders who strove to keep the power in their own hands. But the fight against the Chasidim, according to the mores of that milieu when every-

thing was put in religious terms, was "wrapped in a Shulchon Oruch coat" and carried on in a religious framework. At a time when the religious Weltanschauung was the ruling ideology of society, any opposition to the prevailing social and political system was forced to express itself as a religious sectarianism.

Zinberg takes up the "Great and Terrible Anathema" which the Misnagdim of Brody issued in 1772 against the Chasidim and in consideration of the "religious sins" which were ascribed in it to the new sect, he indicates how artificial and invalid the accusations actually were. The real "sin" of the "heretical sect" was that the masses found in the Torah of the Chasidim an ideological weapon, a justification and support in their stubborn battle for equality against the parnasim and the oligarchical community leaders.

Zinberg is deserving of criticism, however, in regard to several major points. In regard to the ^{social} ~~special~~ basis of the conflict between Rabbinism and Chasidism, and his assertion that the masses found support for their ideology in the teachings of the early Chasidic leaders, the

question immediately comes to mind, which came first---the social conflict or the Chasidic Torah? Zinberg seems to contradict himself on this point. In his analysis of the social structurization of the Jewish population at the time of the rise of Chasidism, and also before its rise, Zinberg leaves the clear impression that it was the situation which called forth the movement and not at all the reverse. Yet his delineation of the Besht's role in the rise of Chasidism is written from the naive historiographical point of view, which for the sake of simplicity we can call the hero-worship approach. It is true that Zinberg is fully aware that the life story of the Besht is enveloped in a web of wonder stories and folk legends. Nevertheless, after reconstructing the life and Torah of the Besht from this maze of legends, Zinberg leaves the reader with the distinct impression that Chasidism sprung fully developed from the mind of Israel ben Eliezer. In fact, he begins his account of the Besht with the same words as Dubnow, quoting him directly. Further on he tells

us: "A modern cultural historian, of whatever point of view, understands very well how naive and inept such a characterization of the Besht's personality is [the Misnagdic view that he was a "drunken and insane prophet"]. We emphasize the last word [personality] because the Besht is first of all a significant and deep personality..."

On the other hand, Zinberg does provide an acceptable explanation for the differing ideologies of two of the most important disciples of the Magid, Shne-ur Zalmon of Liyadi and Elimelech of Lizensk. The teaching of the former became dominant in the north, in White Russia; that of the latter prevailed in the south, in Galicia. Laying great stress upon the study of the Torah and ritual observance, the first taught a sophisticated and intellectual doctrine, whereas the second laid great emphasis upon the cult of the Tsadik and the more emotional, less sophisticated elements of Chasidic teaching. Zinberg demonstrates how each of these, the Lithuanian and the Galicians versions of Chasidism, was called

forth by the specific conditions of the areas in which each was later to hold sway. The low social, economic and intellectual level of the Jews in the southern provinces required a doctrine of simplicity and naive faith. These largely rural Jews who had been without leadership for a long time were anxious to be given leadership, especially a leadership of supernatural powers which could provide them with comfort and sustenance and scoff at learning and study while demanding only faith and simplicity. An answer to these requirements came in the person of Elimelech of Lizensk with his No-am Elimelech. He taught an expanded, fully developed doctrine of Tsadikism which became the dominant faith of the Galician Jews for years to come.

But in the north, on the other hand, the situation was entirely different. There Rabbinic leadership had been and still was strong. Talmudic erudition was very highly thought of and the general level of culture among the Jews was much higher. As a result, we find that the Chasidic teaching of Shne-ur Zalmon of Liyadi is much more sophisticated and intellectualized.

Knowledge of Rabbinic literature is considered important; a new Shulchon Aruch is written by Shne-ur Zalmon, and the supernatural powers of the Tsadik are denied completely. Thus do we see two differing historical situations calling forth correspondingly differing religious ideologies, each suited for and growing out of the milieu with which it was connected.

Zinberg can thus be seen to be weak in his general historical perspective. He is weak in the sense that he does not completely apply his essentially correct analysis. He fails to see the full implications of his basic approach. Inasmuch as we have pointed out previously that Zinberg is primarily interested in the literature of Chasidism, and not in the analysis of the forces which produced the movement and led to its degeneration, his weakness along these lines can be understood, if not condoned. Surely as a source book for the literary history of Chasidism, as an aid to the understanding of the religious teachings of Chasidism, and as a critical, objective study of the legendary material and the complex, extensive writings of the move-

ment, Zinberg's contribution is invaluable. Combined with his basically sound historical understanding, Zinberg has produced a basic and solid work in this field. It is to be regretted that this work closes with the death of Nachmon of Bratslav in 1810.

The writing of this thesis and the readings I have done in connection with it have left me with one major conclusion---that the field of Jewish historiography would be greatly enriched, and the modern awakening of interest in Chasidism greatly benefited by a new and thoroughgoing history of the Chasidic movement based on the primary sources and conceived along the lines outlined in this introduction. The modern historian who would proceed to such a task would find the work of Israel Zinberg a distinct help and an invaluable foundation for further analysis and development.

PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION

In the translation of Zinberg's text, the attempt has been made to achieve a combination of the literal presentation of the Yiddish and Hebrew phraseology together with an idiomatic rendition into clear and simple English. The overall aim of the translation is to provide for the reader a lucid and understandable handbook of the teachings of early Chasidism. The translator's literary limitations as well as the inherent nature of the subject matter prevented him from ever hoping to recapture in English the flavor and the tang (Volkstuemlichkeit) of Zinberg's Yiddish. However, it is hoped that this translation has achieved the more modest aim set forth above.

Throughout the assumption has been made that the reader is acquainted with the basic religious terminology of Judaism. All of Zinberg's copious quotations from the Hebrew sources have been transliterated. To have cited them in Hebrew was deemed unwise from a practical point of view, inasmuch as their large number would have involved a typing project of considerable magnitude. The system used ^{was} the transliteration

is described at the conclusion of these remarks. The transliterated Hebrew is enclosed by quotation marks if the original was either in quotation marks or appeared without any punctuation whatsoever. If the original Hebrew was in parentheses, the transliteration likewise is here given in parentheses. The translation of the Hebrew follows immediately upon the transliteration, and appears enclosed by square brackets if it ^{is} my direct translation of the Hebrew, Zinberg^{not} having ~~not~~ translated into Yiddish. If it is my translation of Zinberg's translation, no punctuation is supplied. Certain Hebrew words have not been translated, because they are found in the English dictionary, or are of the type which the reader is expected to know. Several words or phrases which occur only once have been explained in notes at the bottom of the page. Other terms, especially those of a Cabalistic nature, occur many times; they are explained in a glossary at the end of the thesis. Exceptions to the system of transliteration as here given occur with well-known Hebrew words commonly transliterated differently, with Biblical names, and with parts of quotations when

the transliteration differs. The reader who is not fluent in Hebrew can, with the use of the glossary and with the knowledge of certain well-known Hebrew phrases which have not been translated, omit the transliterations, and, reading only the English, obtain a flowing, complete narrative.

Zinberg's notes which appear at the bottom of each page have, for the sake of simplification^{and} easier manageability, been placed at the conclusion of the text. The remarks made in regard to the text apply equally to the notes. No attempt was made to check each and every reference, since this would have taken an inordinate amount of time. Moreover, in many instances the editions used by Zinberg were not available to me. The only references checked were those where it was necessary for the translation. Certain minor errors or misprints in the text and notes were corrected and the corrections incorporated without being noted. Certain obvious errors in the citations were noted, although it was not possible to correct them. Preceding the notes is a listing of the abbreviations used therein and their resolutions.

All translations of Biblical passages have

been taken from The Holy Scriptures, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1917.

Hebrew letters and vowels

Equivalent

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| aleph | depends on the vowel |
| bes (with dagesh) | b |
| bes (less dagesh) | v |
| gimel | g |
| daled | d |
| he | h |
| vov | v |
| zayin | z |
| ches | ch |
| tes | t |
| yod | y |
| chof (with dagesh) | ch |
| chof (less dagesh) | k |
| lamed | l |
| mem | m |
| nun | n |
| samech | s |
| ayin | depends on the vowel |
| pe (with dagesh) | p |
| pe (less dagesh) | f |
| tsadi | ts |
| kuf | k |
| resh | r |

Hebrew letters and vowels

Equivalent

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| shin | sh |
| sin | s |
| tov (with dagesh) | t |
| tov (less dagesh) | s |
| komets | o |
| pasach | a |
| segol | e |
| chirik | i |
| kubuts | u |
| tsere | e |
| shuruk | u |
| cholem | o |
| sh'vo (when vocal) | ' |
| sh'vo (when silent) | disregarded |

CHAPTER II

Rabbi Israel Ba-al Shem Tov.- His childhood.- His seclusion.- The orphan becomes a primary teacher's assistant.- His love for tunes and song.- The teacher's assistant becomes beadle in the chapel.- His attraction to Cabala.- The beadle becomes acquainted with the writings of the cabalist Rabbi Adam.- His friendship with the son of Rabbi Adam.- The young cabalist is married off and he soon becomes a widower.- Israel ben Eli-ezer's years of wandering.- His marriage to the sister of the Rabbi of Brody, Rabbi Gershon Kutover.- The Rabbi and the ignorant man.- The seclusion of Israel ben Eli-ezer in the Carpathian mountains.- The revolution in the young cabalist's Weltanschauung.- Israel ben Eli-ezer's livelihoods.- The tavern keeper and village teacher becomes a "Ba-al Shem."- The Besht reveals himself.- The world view of the Besht.- "There is no place ~~for~~ of Him."- The optimism of the Besht.- The influence of Nachmanides and Isaac Luria.- The Besht's opposition to asceticism; the meaning of prayer; one can also pray "al y'de dibur zol" [with common speech].- Concerning sweet and bitter potions.- Only through joy can man serve God.- The Besht and the learned men.- The masses and the Tsadik in the Besht's system.- The Besht's letters concerning "ali-as n'shomos" [rising of the soul, visions during religious ecstasy].- The Besht and his group.

"The historical figure of the creator of Chasidism appears to us through a mist of miracle stories with which folk legend has crowned the head of its beloved hero. A thick veil, woven in the

imagination of the people of his generation and of the following generations, hides from our eyes the true figure of the Besht, so that at times it seems to us that he never existed as a living person, that this is only a fancied name which was attached to the religious movement that shook the Jewish world." With these lines the historian Dubnow begins his history of Chasidism. At the threshold of a new era, in the second half of the eighteenth century, in the age of reason and understanding, when wholesome human reason was declared the only reliable guide on the twisted paths of human life, there occurred the great wonder: a human life, the life of a simple Jew, is transformed into a fantastic legend, into a myth of primordial times. So powerful was the effect of this wandering village teacher and exorciser upon his environment. And through this fantastic and often naively superstitious fabric there shimmers through a real, distinct figure, singularly beautiful in its harmonious unity and masterful simplicity...

Israel Besht was born about 1699 in the small Podolian village of Okup, near the Turkish border. The breadwinner of the family was, it seems, not

the father of Eli-ezer, but rather his mother Sarah, who was a midwife. The boy was therefore called "Israel, the midwife's son."² The young Israel lost his father at a very early age. Before his death the dying father enjoined the lad: "My dear child, remember as long as you live that God is always with you, and therefore be not afraid of anything." Soon the mother also died and the young orphan passed over to strangers. The community took care that the orphan should study in a Jewish elementary school, however. But the benighted, old-fashioned elementary school filled the dreamy and imaginative boy with fear. "His way," the Shivche HaBesht relates, "was to study for a few days and then to flee from the elementary school." We already know that Jacob Frank also did not have any diligence to study. But the latter, when he ran away from school, would gather around himself a mob of immoral fellows, play at "bandits" with them, and they would terrorize the neighborhood with their wild forays;³ but when people went out to search for the runaway orphan Israel ben Eli-ezer, they would find him sitting all alone in the forest. So they would bring him back to his teacher; after a short time he would again run

away to the forest to be alone. It seems that the forest with its cloak of mysteries was more pleasing to the dreamy boy than the constricted, benighted elementary school and the subjects taught in the "Bes Hamidrosh" [house of study] with their overly-sharp dialectical acumen. Therefore the community leaders gave up hope for the orphan. It was clear that he would never become a learned Jew, so they began to leave him alone.

The young Israel had to begin thinking about making a living. He soon became assistant to a primary teacher. With great diligence he carried out the tasks that were laid upon him: to return home or transport the young tots on his back to the primary school or the "house of study." "When he would conduct the children," relates the Shivche HaBesht, "he would sing with them in a sweet voice." The biographers of the Besht point out rather often his great love for music and song. He would even listen with great affection to the songs which the non-Jews sang in the taverns. His confidants used to relate that he was able immediately to recognize, according to the tone of a musical instrument, the way of life of the musician himself. ⁴ Soon the young assistant was transformed into a beadle of the

chapel. Also there Israel ben Eli-ezer showed his love for seclusion; during the day when learned men sat in the chapel and studied, the beadle would sleep. Then late at night, when everybody else would be asleep, he would ^{be} awake ^{and} quietly, so that nobody should know, ^{he would} ~~and~~ engage in his "avodo tamo" [pious worship]: praying or perusing his beloved books. And those books which he loved the most were the En Ya-akov and the Zohar. He also devoted much time to the Ari's Cabala. The works of Chayim Vital which elucidate the teaching of the Ari were not in print at that time, however; they would only circulate in various transcripts. The Shivche HaBesht tells the fantastic legends of how the young Israel ben Eli-ezer penetrated the deep secrets of the Ari's "kabolo ma-asis" [practical Cabala]. It is not difficult however to extract the kernel of truth from this mass of legends. In the town where the young Israel grew up, there settled the son of a certain Cabalist Rabbi Adam. This young man brought with him loads of manuscripts which he had inherited from his father. The young beadle became very friendly with him. They would both seclude themselves in a little hut outside the

village and there delve into the secrets of the theoretical and practical Cabala. They would also fast and often engage in ritual immersion in order to be fit to occupy themselves with the techniques of the Cabalists and wonder workers.

When the young Cabalist reached the age of eighteen, the people of his town considered it their responsibility to marry off the orphan who spent his time so diligently in study and prayer. Israel's wife, however, died very shortly thereafter. Soon he also lost his friend who had become greatly emaciated because of frequent fasting. At that time the young widower left his birthplace, and headed for Eastern Galicia. For a considerable length of time he was a village teacher, in which capacity he had the opportunity to become acquainted with the woeful state of the rural Jews which is pictured in such black terms by Solomon Maimon in his Autobiography. Thereafter he settled as a teacher in a community not far from Brody. The young teacher made a very good impression on the populace because of his piety, his cordiality and his sense of right. When there would be a dispute between two parties, he would very often be the arbitrator. During one

such arbitration between two parties, Israel ben Eli-ezer happened to meet Ephraim Kutover, the father of the then famous Rabbi of Brody, Rabbi Gershon. The old man Ephraim liked the young teacher very much. When he found out that the latter was a widower, he suggested that he marry his daughter, Hannah, who was divorced. After the match was arranged, the "t'no-im" [stipulations] were agreed upon and set in writing. But the old Ephraim Kutover soon passed away, and his son, the great Rabbi in Israel, found to his great wonder among his father's documents the written "stipulations," from which he learned for the first time that his sister was engaged to a certain Jew called Israel ben Eli-ezer. Soon the bridegroom himself appeared. Legend has it that he appeared in simple garments "k'achad horekim" [~~like one of~~ ^{like one of} the frivolous fellows]---in a short fur coat with a broad belt---and rushed into the room of the Rabbi of Brody speaking bluntly in the manner of a boor. He produced the written document of "stipulations" and demanded: "Hovo es ishti" [Give me my wife]. There is not doubt that there is a kernel of truth in this legend, because in the subsequent relations

of the Besht, until his "hisgalus" [self-revelation], to his brother-in-law, the Rabbi, one can discern a distinct, latent irony towards the haughty man of learning, the giant of acumen with his disdainful attitude to the uneducated, simple man of the people. The Rabbi of Brody, Rabbi Gershon Kutover, seized with trembling at this outburst, proceeded directly to his sister in order to tell her the whole story, and to ask her if she could agree to marry such an unlearned lout. She, however, responded that it was her duty to carry out the will of their deceased father. But it was not pleasing to the great Rabbi to have near him such a coarsely boorish brother-in-law. So immediately after the wedding he proposed to his sister that she and her husband move away from Brody; as compensation he gave her a horse and a wagon. The couple settled near a village between Kutov and Kosev, well into the interior of the Carpathian Mountains. As was the custom of the young Ari in his time to remain along on the banks of the Nile, so also did the Besht spend an extended period in seclusion amidst the high, thickly forested Carpathian Mountains. Twice a week his wife would come to him with her horse and wagon; he would dig

clay in the mountains, fill up a wagon load which would be transported by his wife to the neighboring city for sale. In this manner the couple managed to eke out a bare living.

During the first period of his seclusion, the Besht, according to legend, conducted himself in the manner of the Cabalists and anchorites of the extreme ascetic school. Solomon Maimon gives us a very clear picture of such ascetic Cabalists in his Autobiography. He tells us about a certain Rabbi Simeon Lubitcher, who devoted his entire life to purifying his soul through the strictest repentance. After "T'shuvas hakone" he went on to "T'shuvas hamishkol" [repentance by weighing], that is, the weighing of each sin and the mortification of the body in proportion to the weight. He calculated, however, and discovered that sum of his sins was too great to be expiated by means of the "T'shuvas hamishkol." He therefore decided to find atonement

may be

*Penance of "Kone"; reference to Kanah Abigdor. See Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. VII, p. 432. For explanation of the term, see Solomon Maimon, An Autobiography, p. 44, New York, Schocken Books, 1947.

The "Kone" reference more probably is derived from the Cabalistic book Kanah of the fourteenth century. See Schalem, passim, s.v. Kanah.

for his sins in a simple manner---to go without food until he would breathe his last. He actually executed this plan. A short time later he was found dead in the vicinity of a village ^{lying with} the Zohar ~~in~~ ⁵ in his hand. In the early period of his seclusion the Besht also would fast "hafsokos" [at recurring, predetermined times], eating only a piece of bread between one fast and the next. During the time that the young Cabalist spent in seclusion amid the high Carpathian Mountains with their majestic grandeur, there seems to have taken place a certain change in his entire Weltanschauung. The words of his dying father, "Remember as long as you live that God is always with you and therefore be not afraid of anything" which produced such a strong impression on the delicately sensitive child, received for the young Cabalist here, on the very lap of divinely beautiful nature, a new meaning, with a much wider and deeper scope. Surrounded by the mighty mountains with their sharp peaks ever covered with snow and shimmering with thousands of colors in the dazzling sunlight, hearing the rustle of the thick forests and the gurgling of the mountain

streams, and the springs modestly hidden in thick verdure and green foliage, the Podolian recluse saw the revelation of the profound mystery hidden in the words "M'lo chol ho-orets k'vodo" ["the whole earth is full of his glory"], and "Les asar ponu-i mine" [there is no place where God is not]. There is a certain symbolic truth in the legend that there in the Carpathians the Besht learned to understand the language of birds and plants (sichos ofos v'sichos d'kolim)⁶. Not through speculative investigation, but with his entire being, with the pulsing of his warmly sensitive heart did he comprehend that everything in the world is a corporeal manifestation of God; everything bears upon itself the seal and the reflected glory of God, which is pure mercy and grace. He sensed that God can be served not only with the study of Torah and with self-affliction and "T'shuvas hamishkol" [see above, p. 52], and that these are not the only means which lead to God and to the recognition of the divine.

In this way the Besht spent several years separated from people. It seems that living in such privation became repugnant to his wife and even to himself; therefore they returned to Brody.

His brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon Kutover, in order to keep the "ba-al mum" [blemished one] as far as possible from himself, rented a tavern for him in a village not far from Kutov. As was usual in those days, the tavern also served as an inn for transients. The breadwinner was the Besht's wife, Hannah. She busied herself in making a living, with the Besht only helping her on occasion. In his leisure time the Besht would sit in a little hut on the bank of the river Prut, and there he would study the secrets of the Torah. This episode in the Besht's life is reported in two versions in the Shivche HaBesht---one in the name of the Besht's scribe, Alexander Shochet, and the other in the name of Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon. According to the first variant, the Besht, while living in the village near Kutov, also spent his days fasting and ate only once a week. The more reliable version of the Chasidic Rabbi, however, mentions nothing about the Besht's fasting; there it is only pointed out that the Besht derived ample sustenance from the tavern: "vadonoi sholach brocho v'hatslocho b'ma-ase yodov v'hoyu machnisim orchim l'ha-achilom ul'hashkosom

b'chovod godol" [and the Lord blessed his actions with success, and they received guests and gave them food and drink graciously]. Some time later, the Besht, however, was outbid for the tavern rights, whereupon he was forced to return to his previous source of living---teaching. For a time he travelled about from village to village, teaching Torah to the children of the rural Jews. He also opened an elementary school in the city of Tlust. But it seems that he eked out a bare living as a teacher, for the Shivche Habesht relates that at that time he would go about "dressed in a short coat of coarse material, and his toes would protrude from the holes in his shoes, because he was very poor." Little by little, however, the Besht turned to an additional livelihood besides teaching---the teacher became a "ba-al shem." In that period of outlandish superstition, when the entire atmosphere of the Jewish ghetto was permeated with all sorts of fiends, evil spirits, sorcerers, and demons, a "ba-al shem" played an important role in Jewish life, especially in the life of the village-dwelling and rural Jews. A Jew living in a village would very rarely turn for medicinal help to a doctor, but rather to a whisperer

[one who exorcises evil spirits by means of spoken incantations] or a "ba-al shem." A "ba-al shem" would heal all illnesses by means of various charms, conjurations and amulets; he would show his greatness primarily by casting out "dibukim" [evil spirits], or by banishing devils and demons from Jewish homes.⁷

The Besht already had the opportunity in his early youth to become acquainted with many charms which were recorded in the writings of the Cabalist and miracle worker, Rabbi Adam. It is very probable that during the years which the Besht spent in the Carpathian Mountains he became acquainted with the healing power of various grasses and herbs. During the time that he was a teacher in various hamlets, he would often heal ailing village Jews with all types of charms, conjurations and amulets. A man with such a strong belief in God's grace and with the conviction that God was always with him could surely have had a hypnotic effect on hysterical and neurotic people. Thus was the tavern keeper and teacher gradually revealed as a "ba-al shem" and miracle worker who was able to cast out evil spirits. His fame continued to spread. Already he would be invited to various towns and villages. His name

became so famous that he no longer had to travel about; people journeyed from all corners of the Ukraine to see him in the town where he resided, first in Tlust and then in Medzhibozh, to which the Besht moved approximately in 1740 and where he remained in his last years.⁸ If people were unable to come to him directly, they addressed themselves to him by letter, asking his advice and requesting amulets from him as charms. His clientele became so large that the Besht found it necessary to obtain a secretary to assist him, and in later years he even had two secretaries. In order to distinguish him from all the other "ba-al shems"⁹ he soon was called not simply "ba-al shem" but the Ba-al Shem Tov. For already there were coming to him not only the physically and mentally ill, but also people whose searching souls did not find any satisfaction in the old ways, in the old religious Weltanschauung. They sought from him neither charms nor miracles, but rather the living source of the knowledge of God, the right way to serve God. To this untutored commoner, whom the giant in Torah, Rabbi Gershon Kutover, refused to allow into his

immediate presence because it would be an insult to his dignity, there journeyed very learned men and rabbis who became his ardent followers. Rabbi Gershon Kutover himself also repented and finally recognized the greatness of his brother-in-law.

Why did they become so amazed? How did he, the simple "ba-al shem" and writer of amulets, become the legendary hero of the Shivche HaBesht and the founder and teacher of a great and powerful folk movement?

Just as Isaac Luria in his time, so also the Besht did not personally record his teaching in written form. There has come down to us only one letter of his to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon Kutover. The letter is rather important for the Besht's Weltanschauung, but it can only serve to a very small degree as building material if one wishes to become acquainted with the system and teaching of the founder of Chasidism. "He possessed," writes the historian of the Chasidic movement, S. Dubnow, "a peculiar ability---he taught through conversations with every individual, through aphorisms and sayings as did the ancient founders of

religions. While conversing, the 'Holy Spirit' would rest upon him, and his thoughts would assume the form of proverbs, short sayings and novel interpretations of verses in the Torah, which would amaze his listeners, because of their originality, their depth of religious feeling and the basic thought which united all these sayings into one distinct system." The Shivche HaBesht, as well as the opponent of Chasidism, the preacher David Makov, relate that the Besht would love to walk about over the streets and market places with his cane in his hand and his pipe in his mouth, telling stories and proverbs to simple village Jews (anshe k'forim) and women. The aphorisms and sayings of the Besht were preserved in the memory of his disciples. While the Besht was still alive certain of them attempted to write them down as his Torah. It seems however that people without ability betook themselves to this task. One of the Besht's admirers, the Shivche HaBesht relates (p. 28b), wrote down the Torah which he would hear directly from the Besht. But once the Besht saw a demon walking about holding a book. The Besht asked him: "What book are you carrying?" The

demon answered: "It is your book." The Besht immediately understood that somebody was writing down his teaching. He then assembled all those who were close to him and asked: "Who of you has written down my Torah?" One of them confessed and brought his writings to the Besht. The Besht read them through and declared: "En kan afilu dibur echod she-omarti"---there is not even a single word here which I have actually said.

It was about twenty years after the death of the Besht that one of his most important disciples, the Rabbi of Polonnoye, Jacob Joseph Hakohen, first published three books in which he quotes, in his long sermons on the Torah and the Talmudic Agada, hundreds of the Besht's short aphorisms and sayings which he himself heard directly from his teacher,¹¹ or in the name of his teacher from his friends. These citations are accompanied by the stereotyped notice: "Shomati mimori" (I heard from my teacher), or "Shomati b'shem mori" (I heard in the name of my teacher). All these aphorisms and parables, as well as the Besht's sayings cited in the two books Magid D'vorov L'Ya-akov (1784) and Likutei Amorim (1792)

which were published by the disciples of the Besht and of the Magid of Mezheritch, were soon collected in special editions: Keser Shem Tov by Aaron Hakohen of Apt (first part 1784; second part 1792) and Tsavo-as Horibash (collected by Rabbi Isaiah of Yanov, 1792). For all of these collections the opinion of the well known leader of the "Chabad Chasidim," Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon, which he pronounced in regard to the book Tsavo-as Horibash, more or less generally hold true: "Although in truth this is not altogether the testament of Rabbi Israel Ba-al Shem, but only a collection of his pure words (likute imrosov hat'horos), which his disciples gathered together one after another, and these did not know how to adapt properly the language, nevertheless the content is the accurate truth."¹²

On the basis of these collections,^{and} of certain other books composed by the close disciples of the Besht, and of the Magid of Mezheritch, such as the Degel Machane Ephraim (the author of which was the grandson of the Besht), Or Hame-ir (by Rabbi Velv'l of Zhitomir), Yismach Lev (by Rabbi Nochum of Chernobyl), K'dushas Levi (by Rabbi Levi Yitschok of

of Berditchev), one can obtain a more or less correct idea about the Besht's Weltanschauung and religious system. It is even very probable that certain dicta and short sayings were engraved verbatim in the memory of his disciples in the exact style of the master, as for example the saying of the Besht which is cited in the Toldos¹³: People say that the truth extends over the whole world; that means, people chase it from one place to another.

The entire system of the Besht is based on the fundamental principle which is so clearly expressed in the Zohar: the complete fusion of the divine and the cosmos, of the divine world and the human world, of the heavenly and the earthly. "Sheyeda odom k'lal ze"---the Besht teaches---let man know this principle---"shehu k'lal godol" [for it is a vital principle]: that during study and prayer there is no separation between man and his God (en shum mosoch mavdil), even when a man thinks extraneous thoughts at the time, for also these extraneous thoughts are after all, only garments and wraps in which the Holy One Blessed Be He hides Himself. As soon as a man knows that beneath them the divine is hidden, they are

then no longer a hiding place. The divine---explains the Besht---really does hide itself through many partitions, but understanding people (anshe hada-as) know that all these partitions and iron walls, all these garments and hiding places are also "etsem me-atsmuso yisborach" [part of God's essence]. In his usual manner the Besht explains this with a parable: There once was a king, a very wise man, who because of an optical illusion (achizas enayim) put up great walls, towers and gates, and promulgated a command that whosoever wishes may come to him through these gates. But he ordered at the same time that there should be placed at each gate riches from his treasury. Thus nobody reached the king's presence because each one, as soon as he saw the riches at the gates, filled his pockets with them and set out immediately for his home. But there came the king's son who exerted all his energies in order to get to his beloved father. And then he realized that there was no partition whatsoever to separate him from his father, because everything is only a delusion. ¹⁵ And immediately there follows the explanation of the parable: The Holy One Blessed Be He, hides Himself in many substances and partitions

(b'kamo l'vushin um'chitsos), but everything is created out of His own essence---'v'hakol nivro' (na-aso kiv'yochol me-atsmuso yisborach), and no partition separates man from God Blessed Be He. "v'les asar ponu-i mine" (there is no place whatsoever where God is not). The world is from God and in God---"mine uve." "Sheyeda ho-odom"---let man know---that in every movement one can sense the Lord of the world ('alufo shel olom hu b'chol t'nu-o), and wherever man may be, there also is God. We have already pointed out how in the Zohar there flow together in a dialectical manner the sharpest of contrasts: the infinite and the finite, the universally hidden and incomprehensible 'no' and the corporeal 'yes.' The Besht goes even further, drawing logical conclusions. "K'vodo mole kol ho-olom" [His glory fills the whole world]---even the place of sin and the sensual pleasure at the time of sin, derive from that place where the heavenly felicity (ta-anug ho-elyon) is found. The "sh'chino"---the Besht says further---is spread in the highest heavens as far as the depth of the lowest spheres, and herein lies the secret of the

words "v'ato m'chaye es kulom," "and Thou preservest (dwellest in) them all." In the expanse of the world, which the Kav Hayoshor and the Shevet Musor filled with destructive demons and evil spirits, the Besht saw only the splendor and the glory of God, the infinite grace and love of God. Even when man, God forbid, commits a sin, even then "hash'chino mislabeshes bo," the "sh'chino" is embedded within him, for without it man is after all not able to stir his smallest limb; it is after all his life spirit, the sole source of his energy and life. ¹⁸ "Hash'chino koleles kol ho-olomos"--- the "sh'chino" includes within itself all the worlds and creations---"dumom, tsome-ach, chai, m'daber" (the inanimate, the growing plants, the living animals, the speaking humans), and all the creatures of the world---both good and bad. But one may wonder: "hayichud ho-amiti hi hash'chino," the true unity being only the "sh'chino," how then can it contain within itself "sh'ne hafochim b'nose echod," two such opposites, such as good and evil? This contradiction is to be explained, however, by the simple fact that people live in error; the

opposites are actually not absolute opposites.

Beneath the outer shell (k'lipo) of the evil there is hidden the good and the pure. "En ra b'hechlet, ki hora hu kise el hatov;" the absolutely evil does not exist, for evil is a footstool for the good.

It is only thanks to evil that the good receives its real actuality, its true worth. Darkness and light also are not two separate worlds, for---"yisron ho-or nimshoch min hachoshech," light derives from darkness, the one is bound up with the other (na-aso kise ze loze), as it says in Scripture: "Vay'hi erev vay'hi voker yom echod" ["and there was evening, and there was morning, one day"]. From light and ¹⁹darkness there resulted a unity.

"V'hakol tov gomur!"---the Besht concludes; everything in the world is pure goodness. He, the son of an orphaned generation, having grown up in the stifling degeneration of social decline and bloody oppressions and persecutions, remained his entire life a firm optimist. Also he, the ignorant dreamer and mystic of Podolia was no less than the European educated "enlightener," convinced that

"man was born unto happiness..."

It is not at all an accident that the Besht mentions Nachmanides rather often in his conversations. We have seen that for Nachmanides, the wonderful was the most usual; the whole world was for him one great wonder---a wonderful revelation of God's unlimited power. ²⁰ Saturated with the firm belief in the Creator's mercy and in the infinite splendor of His deeds, Ben Nachmon, with the enchanted eyes of an innocent child, contemplated with amazement the surrounding world, where everything is so wonderfully beautiful, where everything bears the stamp of God's grace and indescribable wisdom. With the same eyes the Besht also contemplated the world. "Oi va-avoi" [Woe is me] he calls out; the world is full of radiant splendor and the most wonderful mysteries, and man's little hand juts out before his eyes concealing all these shining lights! ²¹ With fine irony the Besht tells a parable about a deaf man. A musician was once standing on the street with his instrument in his hand and was playing a strain. The playing was so sweet and full of harmony that people stopped, and, enchanted by the beautiful melo-

dy, they gradually began to dance to the tempo of the tune until all the movements of their bodies were in time with the rhythms of the music. The dance became more and more tempestuous; the rapture became stronger and stronger. A deaf man happened to pass by and he gaped in amazement--- someone seemed to be standing and moving his hands while all those around him were dancing like madmen with great ecstasy; he could not understand what the joyous occasion might be. However, had he known that the people were dancing because of the surpassing sweetness of the wonderful melody, he would have²² joined them in the dance. The Besht, the village teacher of Podolia, heard and marvelled at the wonderful melody which sounds in the infinite expanse of the cosmos...

In the aforesaid letter to Rabbi Gershon Kutover, the Besht mentions his teacher, without, however, specifying his name. His disciple, the author of the Toldos Yosef, gives the tradition that the teacher of the Besht was Ahijah the Shilonite of the time of King Solomon. Ahijah would come to him in a dream and reveal deep, mystical secrets. In the teaching

of the Besht we find the strongest influence to be not of the almost unknown prophet of ancient Biblical times, but rather of the mystic of Safed, Ari. The Ari was a man with open ears, who, in every sound and movement, in the quiver of a wave, in the vibration of a leaf and the quiet rustling of the reeds on the shore, even in the silent, rigid stones---everywhere, he perceived the mighty breath of undying life; everywhere he sensed living souls yearning for "Tikun," longing to be freed from the narrow prison, redeemed from the terrible bewitchment, from the choking bands in which lifeless and formless matter held them shackled. ²³ This was also the credo of the Besht. Everything is the manifestation of God. The unending chain of phenomena are merely the various, many-colored garments of the one divinity. "B'chol dover yesh olomos n'shomos elohus," the Besht teaches---in everything there are whole worlds of divine souls. God is in everything that exists. Every time man uses and benefits from a thing, the Besht teaches, he thereby brings to perfection the "Nitsotsos," the divine sparks which are in the thing, for without this "Nitsots," without

the spark of spirituality, "lo hoyo shum kiyum l'oso dovor," no thing would be able to have existence. For this very reason man should conduct himself with great love towards everything he comes in contact with and uses, for in it are hidden the "Nitsotse hak'doshos" [holy sparks].²⁴

In poetic form the Besht describes how each "Nitsots" which is found in a plant or "Dumom" [inanimate object] is like a creature which is confined in "Bes ho-asurin," in prison, unable to move its arms and legs and lying doubled up with its head between its knees. Whoever is able by his good thought, to raise the "Nitsots" of a ^[inanimate thing] "Dumom" [^]or a growth to the level of a "Chai m'-daber" [speaking animal---human]---he brings the "Nitsots" from slavery to freedom, "Me-avdus l'cherus," and no greater "Pidyon sh'vuyim" [redemption of captives] can be pictured in the world.²⁵

The medieval Perek Shiro, where each creature sings its song of praise to the ²⁶One Creator, is full of deep meaning for the Besht. "Even the worm---explains the Besht---worships the Creator Blessed Be He with its entire strength and under-

standing." ²⁷

Nevertheless, there is a great difference between the world of ideas of the Besht and that of the Ari. Already one of the first historiographers of Chasidism, the author of the Seder Hadoros He-
²⁸
chodosh, Mendl Bodek, pointed out:

Our rabbi, the Besht, followed the Ari to reveal the divine in this lowly, earthly world in every separate detail. That which the Ari revealed pertains to the heavenly worlds and the upper lights, and not every mind is able to grasp what takes place in the great heights. The Besht revealed the divine here on earth, especially in lowly man, in whom there is not a single limb or a single force which is not *an embodiment of* ~~the~~ the divine power which is hidden within him... In previous generations the rabbis and very learned men occupied themselves with God's Torah, but the people of the poor masses, who were very preoccupied with making a living, did not understand the Torah and did not benefit from it; so they went about in darkness, because they could not study the Torah and penetrate into its chambers... So the Master of the Universe in His great mercy sent down for us an angel from heaven, the Besht, of blessed memory, to illumine the path of chasidic life in the world, the path in which a man should go even when immersed in his troubles.

But it is not only in this regard that the ways of the Besht and the Ari part. We have already pointed out how in the murmuring of the waves of the Nile, the ear of the Ari discerned the sad epic of a fearful number of worlds that are perish-

ing in the nets of evil. Also our world is in mortal danger, because from all sides there stream against it the bewitching powers of sin and evil; the magic circle must immediately be severed, the imprisoned soul liberated from the material "K'lipos" which surround it on all sides. He, the lonely hermit on the banks of the Nile, he must accomplish this; he must be the liberator who fights against the "Sitro Achro" [the forces of evil] with conjurations and magical "Shemos" [using the divine name]. He must atone for the sins of the world by means of self-mortification and fasting; he must bring closer the "kets" [end], the radiant day of the coming of the Messiah. Entirely different was the Besht. He wanted to cleave the heavy as lead vault of gloom which hung over the Jewish world, scatter the dark spirits of fear and terror which dominated the Weltanschauung of the Kav Hayoshor and the Shevet Musor. As guiding light and steersman in the problem of "olom haze" [this world], the Besht followed not the Ari, but rather the aforementioned Nachmanides. He did not wish to go on the path of asceticism, to regard this "sinful" world with scorn and derision. To him, just as to Nachmanides, all

the manifestations of the surrounding, earthly world were dear and beloved. Because also in the earthly world, in every quiver and vibration of life, did the Besht, just as the mystic of Gerona in his time, see the hidden mystery of divine, unfathom-
 30
 able wisdom...

Very characteristic in this respect is the Besht's teaching concerning the role which prayer plays in the life of man. We have already pointed out more than once with what enthusiasm the Jewish mystics underline the great importance of prayer. Already in the Zohar, the "Sod hat'filo" [Mystery of prayer] occupies a very prominent position. Every word in the prayer lives, according to the Weltanschauung of the Zohar, a separate life; each word, full of deep significance, purifies and lifts the soul to the source of light and beauty. Also the Besht sees in prayer the deepest of mysteries. "Hat'filo hi zivug im hash'chino" [Prayer is the
 31
 mate of the "sh'chino"]. "Hat'filo shehi ever
 32
 hash'chino" [Prayer is a limb of the sh'chino].
 33
 "Tsloso shehi hash'chino" [Prayer is the sh'chino].
 The gist and the essence of prayer, which spills

forth out of the depths of the heart, is to cleave
 to the light of the "En-Sof" [Infinite]. Man does
 not understand that with his prayer he brings an
 abundance for all the worlds, and also the angels
 are fed through his prayer. ³⁴ Man should know that
 "Mehamayon ho-elyon," from the divine source, the
 divine abundance flows continually; for the essence
 of the divine source is to send an abundance of
 goodness and grace upon all His creatures. The
 recipient, however, must be worthy of receiving the
 divine abundance. When man prays he becomes the
 suitable "Tsinar" (canal) for the divine source, and
 the divine abundance flows through him, for him,
 and for the whole world (Ul'chol ho-olom kulo). ³⁵
 Man, the Besht warns, must not aim at any personal,
 material benefit (To-eles gashmis) through his
 prayer, because by introducing profane, material
 demands into the spiritual, he creates a partition
 between himself and the "Sh'chino." ³⁶ To illustrate
 this point, the Besht relates a parable in the form
 of a commentary on the verse "T'filo l'oni chi
 ya-atof v'lifne adonoi yish'poch sicho" ["A prayer
 of the afflicted, when he fainteth, and poureth

out his complaint before the Lord"]. Once the king issued an order on the day of his great joy, that everyone of the inhabitants might come with his wish, and the wish of all would be immediately fulfilled by the king. But there appeared a certain wise man, who said that his only wish and desire was merely to speak three times a day personally with the king. It was very pleasing to the king, that for this man, a personal conversation with him was dearer than riches, power and honor. So he commanded that his royal palace be opened for this man, and that he be permitted to speak to him whenever he might desire to do so. Thereby, all the royal treasuries and all the riches of the world were opened for him.

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Prayer must be done with "Kavono" and "D'vekus," with "Hishpashtus hagashmi-us," with joy and with pathos. One should not at all take into consideration the possible derision of onlookers.

38

"When a man is drowning in a river, he makes all sorts of movements in order to tear himself from the waters which are engulfing him, and those who observe this will surely not laugh at him and his

movements. In the same way, there is no reason to laugh at anyone who makes movements when praying, for he ^{is} saving himself from the stormy waters, the "K'lipos" [forces of evil] and the "machashovos zoros" [extraneous thoughts] which come to distract him from his "Kavono" while praying" (Likutim Y'korim, p. 14b). The Shivche HaBesht relates that once while praying, the Besht became so ecstatic that full barrels of grain which were standing in the room danced along with him. The Besht, however, knows to tell about another sort of prayer. Occasionally, declares the Besht, a man prays to God and makes no movements whatsoever. An observer might think that he is entirely devoid of "D'vekus," but this is nevertheless the highest level, for here it is the man's soul itself which is praying; this is an inner prayer which draws itself with the greatest love to God the creator. This is the highest order of "D'vekus," without an iota of corporeality. ⁴⁰

As in the case of burning wood, the Besht explains in another instance, it is only the flames which rise to the heavens; the heavy parts, however, remain in the form of ashes, cold and grey. In the

same way, it is only the "Hislahavus" and the "D'-
 vekus" of a man which rise up during prayer, while
 the words, however, disperse like ashes. But
 nevertheless, the Besht emphasizes many times that
 prayer is not the only means for the union of man
 and his Creator. "Yesh yichudim badibur," the
 Besht teaches, *one* can achieve union with the Crea-
 tor through words in various ways: "Hen b'dibur toro
 ut'filo" [Through words of Torah and prayer], but
 also "B'dibur im chover bashuk"---with the words
 that one speaks to a friend in the market place.
 "Yesh yichudim b'chol diburim v'sipur gashmiyim"---
 one can unite with God even through the simplest
 stories. "V'yesh shemispalel b'es shem'daber im
 chavero d'vorim gashmiyim,"---it is possible to
 pray even by speaking about material matters with
 a friend.⁴¹ Not only through "Dibur d'kodesh" [speak-
 ing of holy matters], but also "Al y'de dibur zol"---
 through common words that one speaks to one's friend
 in the street, can one rise to the highest divine
 levels.⁴² Everything that you are able to do, teaches
 the Besht, you should fulfill; but you must purge
 your profane, materialistic deeds through thought,

and unite them with the Creator (Shehu yichud ha-kodesh boruch hu)⁴³ [which is union with God] . *And the Besht concludes further -*
 "Ki ho-odom hu sulom," man is a ladder, which stands with its lowest rungs on the earth, and is appointed "La-asos ma-ase artsiyus b'gashmi" [to engage in earthly pursuits], "V'roshe magi-a hashomoimo", and the top of it reaches to heaven, however. The head through the power of thought is able to raise the plain, material things to the highest heavens.⁴⁴

We have seen how urgently the "Nishm'so d'mishno" [the spirit of the Mishna] warns its "beloved son," Rabbi Joseph Caro, not to interrupt even for a moment his study of the Torah, because entire worlds could thereby be destroyed.⁴⁵ The Besht proposes an entirely different thesis. A person has many occasions for speaking to other people, and thereby he interrupts his study. Or he may find himself on a trip, in which case he is unable to pray and study Torah. He should not be grieved by this, because "Hashem yisborach rotse sheya-avdu oso b'chol ho-ofanim" [God desires to be worshipped in all manners], sometimes in one way and sometimes in another way.⁴⁶ Sometimes God wants to be wor-

shipped through study, and sometimes through simple things, "Afilu ba-achilo ush'siy~~o~~ ush'or d'vorim gashmiyim" [Even through eating, drinking, and other material pursuits]. A person has only to remember, and, through everything that he does and thinks, to unite that which exists in the world with the name of God, for there is nothing in the world which is outside of Him and outside of His unity. Finally, man has always to remember the "Sod achduso yisborach" [mystery of God's unity], that "Hu v'hem hakol echod" [God and the material are one], and every "Ma-ase gashmi" [material deed] which man does should be connected by means of the power of thought to "Kodosh boruch hu ush'chinte" [God and His "sh'chino"]].

Concerning this point the Besht relates a parable about the son of a king whose father sent him away to an isolated village in order that he might yearn with a great longing to return to the king's palace. But in the village environmeht, the son became coarsened and emulated the neighboring peasants, both in dress and conduct, so that he forgot entirely about the splendor of the king's palace. After some time the king sent his ministers after the son in order to

bring him back to his father, but he did not wish to return. So the king sent minister after minister, each one greater than the last, to bring his son, but they were unable to prevail on the prince to leave the village and return to his father.

However, there was one wise minister who removed his rich garments, put on poor village clothing, and came to the prince speaking with him in his corrupt village speech. He pleased the son of the king who saw him as an equal. Thus, lowering himself to a simple level, the minister was able to bring the prince back to the royal palace.⁴⁷

The Besht therefore completely rejects the way of asceticism. There are two kinds of doctors, says the Besht. One heals with bitter potions, and the other, the better one, heals with potions that are sweeter than honey.⁴⁸ The Besht himself also finds that one should cure with sweet potions. "Sigufim gormim atsvus" [self-mortification leads to melancholy], the Besht says; "En tsorech la-asos sigufim,"---one should not torment oneself. It is the evil inclination which persuades man to be melancholy.⁴⁹ Through fasting, self-tormentation, and

continuous study, the Besht points out, man falls into melancholy, and regards with reproach all other people who do not conduct themselves as he does, and forgets life eternal (umanichin chaye olom),---this is the cure resulting from bitter potions. "V'ho-ikor l'hosir ho-atsvus v'le-echoz b'simcho," the Besht repeats many times---the essential thing is to cast off melancholy and be in a happy frame of mind. When the body is weakened, the soul thereby also becomes weakened, "l'chach tsorich ho-odom lishmor b'rias gufo m'od" [therefore a man must be very careful about the health of his body].⁵⁰ Each time he reminds his disciples that eating and drinking also are a divine service, and that material pleasure can be elevated to the level of divine pleasure.⁵¹ Since the material (a person's body) becomes sated through eating and drinking, it gives to man the possibility also to enjoy spiritual happiness (l'same-ach b'simchas nefesh); in this manner the material (hak'lipo) becomes a chair for holiness; the material is thus raised to the level of form (ruchoniyus)[spirituality]. "V'na-aso mehachomer tsuro," the material is transformed into the spiritual. "Hakol tov, v'en hefresh

ben hachomer v'hatsuro" [everything is good, and there is no difference between matter and form].⁵² When a man fasts, says the Besht, even from Sabbath to Sabbath, and if it can even enter his mind that thereby he is doing a great thing, he immediately falls prey to the "sitro acharo"⁵³ ["the other side", i.e., the forces of evil].

In the time of the Besht, legend relates that there was a man who practiced self-tormentation and continually ran to the ritual bath in order to attain to the level of "ruach hakodesh" [the Holy Spirit]. Concerning him the Besht said the following: In the other world (b'olom hat'muros) they laugh at him.⁵⁴ The Talmudic statement "Harbe osu k'rabi Shim'on ben Yochai, v'lo olso b'yodom" [Many emulated Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai, but did not succeed] is explained by the Besht in this manner: Since they wanted to attain to the level of Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai by means of self-tormentation and fasting, they therefore did not succeed. But also Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai, points out the Besht, when with his son he came out of the cave in which they were hidden for so many years,

and saw that people "manichin chaye olom v'oskin b'chaye sho-o" [were abandoning eternal life, and occupying themselves with the life of the moment], became very angry and cursed the world, because he thought that one could heal only with "bitter potions," i.e., that God can be served only with Torah, prayer, fasting, weeping and the like. Then a divine voice went forth and called out: It is you who want to destroy the world---"chizru lim'oraschem," go back to your cave! So they returned there for another full twelve months, and only then did they become acquainted with the right way, the way of curing with "sweet potions." This is the way of compassion, which teaches that God can be served "b'chol pirte ma-ase ho-odom," through all human activities. ⁵⁵ It is written: "Kol b'isho ervo" [hearing a woman's voice is indecency], but in the instance when the woman's voice aids "l'hosir ho-atsvus" [in removing melancholy] it is elevated from its lowly status... In the preserved letter of the Besht which he sent to the Rabbi of Polonnoye, Joseph Hakohen, in reply to the latter's writing, the Besht reports that he read with great chagrin his

disciple's statement that "he must engage in fasting" (muchroch l'hisanos). The Besht asks him not to bring himself into such a danger, for this is "ma-ase moro sh'choro v'atsvuv" [an act of melancholy and sadness], and the "Sh'chino" does not come to rest because of melancholy, "rak mitoch simcho shel mitsvo" [but only because of joy in fulfilling a commandment]⁵⁶. Therefore the Besht was asked: "Mahu ikar ho-avodo" [What is the essence of religion]? To this he replied: I have come to point out a new way. Man should know that he must take upon himself three things: love of God, love of Israel, and love of Torah; self-tormentation is not necessary.⁵⁷

It happens quite often, the Besht teaches, that precisely such profane matters as eating and drinking or business affairs, which lead to desisting from the Torah, refresh the soul so powerfully that thereby it first becomes fit to reach the highest level of "d'vekus."⁵⁸ Therefore the Besht reiterates that a man should not become dejected "im yizdamen lo eze bitul toro" [should he happen to desist a little from Torah]. The Shivche HaBesht

relates that once when the Besht was shown an amulet which a pious cabalist had written "b'odo b'mikve uv'sa-~~ais~~" [while still under the effect of ritual purification and fasting], the Besht said with a smile: And I will write just such an amulet immediately after eating, while sitting on a bed.⁵⁹

He had the courage to explain to his generation, which was raised in the oppressive, melancholic atmosphere of the Kav Hayoshor and Nachalas Ts'vi, that when depression of the spirit becomes strong in a man, "he should conduct himself in the manner of the wicked"---he should sit and eat and drink and enjoy himself.⁶⁰ In his usual manner, the Besht

tells a parable about a prince who lived among coarse villagers. He receives^[sic] a love letter from his father, the king, and is beside himself with joy. But he is ashamed to show his great joy before those around him, so he calls together the villagers and offers them wine. Thus were they joyous in their manner, and he, the prince, was happy "b'simchas oviv" [with the joy caused by his

⁶¹ father]. Not only did the Besht preach pleasant things, but he acted in conformity to his preach-

ing; he would regale his close disciples with wine and they would joyously dance around their "rebe," the Ba-al Shem. Concerning one of these joyous "rikudim" [dances] in the home of the Besht, the Shivche HaBesht relates: Once on "Simchas Toro" the "anshe s'gulo" [particularly close disciples] of the Besht were enjoying themselves greatly, dancing and drinking much wine from the Besht's cellar. The Besht's pious wife, seeing that the Chasidim would not leave any wine for "Kidush" and "Havdolo," went to the Besht and requested that the Chasidim cease drinking and dancing, for if not, he would remain without wine for "Kidush" and "Havdolo." The Besht said with a smile: Actually, you are right; go tell them to stop and to return home. So she opened the door to the room where the Chasidim were dancing in a circle; the dancing was so spirited that she actually saw a fiery band stretched around them. Immediately she took the vessels, went to the cellar herself, and brought them as much wine as they wanted. Later, the Besht asked her: Did you tell them to leave? "You had better tell them yourself," the pious woman answered

him...

The Besht points out that when one tells another simple stories, and thereby drives melancholia away from him, ~~that~~ this is the greatest "yichud" [union with God], for God can be served only through joy. ⁶³ "V'yih'ye tomid b'simcho," "l'harchik es atsmo me-atsvus v'yih'ye libo some-ach badonoi," "man should always be joyful, [to keep himself far from melancholy, and his heart should rejoice in the Lord] and believe with perfect faith that the "Sh'chino" is with him" ⁶⁴ —the Besht never tires of reminding; ^{and} he often quotes the Midrash about two simple "badchonim" [public merry-makers] for whom a portion in the world to come was set aside, "shehoyu mafkichin tsa-ar ho-odom al y'de milso div'dichuso," because they banished man's sorrow by means of humor, and thereby raised man to "d'vekus." ⁶⁵ The Besht finds that the way of asceticism is a dangerous way, which quite often leads men far from the true service of God. It is the evil inclination which incites man and makes him afraid, lest he is not fulfilling his obligations; thus man falls into melancholy (Likute Y'-

karim, p. 1), and melancholy is a great hindrance to the service of God Blessed Be He. Even when man has committed a sin, "lo yarbe b'atsvus" [let him not fall ~~exceedingly~~ into melancholy], ^{and} because he repents with perfect heart, "yachazor lismo-ach b'habore yisborach" [he may return to rejoicing in God Blessed Be He].⁶⁶ Do not be too pious, and do not be too strict in ritual matters, the Besht repeats many times. The Besht teaches that whoever fulfills only one commandment, but with "kavono" and great love and "d'vekus", it is as if he has fulfilled all the commandments of the Torah.⁶⁷ The Shivche HaBesht tells many stories concerning the Besht's leniency in matters of ritual. When, for instance, a ritual slaughterer slaughtered an animal and declared it to be ritually unfit, the Besht, who himself had also for a time occupied himself with ritual slaughtering, calmly ordered a piece of the meat cut and roasted for himself.⁶⁸

Faith, not fear, the Besht teaches, should be the guide of man. "Mokom sheyesh yiro en gilo," where there is fear there can be no joy, and the tremble of joy leads to the fear of God. Whoever

lives with faith and believes strongly in the grace of God lives in the "S'firo shel chesed" [sphere of love (of God)---a cabalistic term]*; he, however, who has constant fear of God's punishment, unites with the "sphere of stern judgment" [see above] and this alone may, God forbid, bring him to evil.⁷⁰ Therefore the Besht complains strongly against the preachers, who, like the author of the Kav Hayoshor, frighten the people with threats of dreadful punishment. One time, relates the Shivche HaBesht, when the Besht was spending a Sabbath in Nemirov, a preacher there was violently chastising the congregation in the synagogue by raising an uproar as to why the Jews do not properly fulfill all the commandments and ordinances. This displeased the Besht very much; he said that this preacher is "malshin al yisro-el"---an informer against the people of Israel. The preacher having been told of this came to the Besht the next day. He introduced himself to him and asked why the Besht was angry with him. Immediately the Besht jumped up from his place, and with tears in his eyes, said to him: You are speaking ill of

* See Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. XI, p. 154f; Scholem, p. 212ff, *passim*.

Jews. Know that when a simple Jew wanders about in the market place the whole day, and in the evening when he reminds himself "Woe is me! I may transgress the time limit for reciting the Evening Prayer!" And he hurries into a house, quickly recites the Evening Prayer, but doesn't even know [the meaning of] what he is saying; nevertheless, all the seraphim and angels in the heavenly household become greatly agitated because of this prayer. 71

Not only against the stern preachers does the Besht rage, but also against the learned men and scholars. He combats them with the sharpest weapons---with the sarcastic smile, with arrows finely sharpened by biting humor. "The evil inclination," says the Besht with a smile, "comes to the scholar disguised in the form of the good inclination which ostensibly desires to fulfill a commandment." 72 The evil inclination, continues the Besht, does not try to talk a person into not studying the Torah in general, since the evil inclination knows that the person will not listen to him, because if he will not study, he will not have any standing among those around him and [redacted] will not be considered learned.

What then does the evil inclination do? He convinces ^aman not to study that which may lead to fear of God, such as a book of ethics, or the Shulchon Oruch, so that a certain law might be clear to him. But what else? He convinces him to occupy himself always with G'moro and its commentators. The close disciples of the Besht relate that their master once contemplated a scholar sitting deeply engrossed in study. The Besht said concerning him: See, the man is so preoccupied with his Torah that he has even forgotten whether there is a God in the world. ⁷⁴

We have already pointed out above with what a hidden irony the Besht conducted himself, before his self-revelation, to his brother-in-law, the great scholar and rabbi, Gershon Kutover. Once, when Rabbi Gershon, in great anger at his brother-in-law's manner of putting on the phylacteries, asked him "Where did you get this rule?", the Besht answered calmly: "I saw it 'b'sifre 'taits'", in ⁷⁵the Judeo-German books. It is enough to recall how the majority of scholars and rabbis felt about the "sifre 'taits'" in regard to the determination of ritual law, in order to understand the biting irony

of the Besht's answer. The Besht speaks with bitter sarcasm about the scholars for whom the essence of things is dry learning, sharpness of casuistical subtlety without an ethical basis and drive for truth which elevate and purify the soul. The frozen form, the purely mechanical execution of a commandment without fervor of feeling repulsed him. He, the simple writer of amulets, regarded with contempt those "asher be-emes'enom lomdim rak mitsvos anoshim m'lumodo l'ma-an yech'kamu" [who really are learning merely rote matters]---in order to be considered learned and to be accorded great honor.

Concerning them Scripture says: "Hoi chachomim b'enehem" [Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes]⁷⁷. True Torah is only that which leads to union with Him who is concealed in it (l'hisdabek b'mi shene-elam bo). Without "Kavono" and "D'vekus," says the Besht, both study and prayer have no value whatsoever; they are blasphemy. The Besht relates that there are two kinds of people. One is completely wicked; he knows that there is a God, but he purposely disobeys Him. The second, however, has his eyes covered by the evil inclination; consequent-

ly, he is completely righteous in his own eyes, and is considered righteous by others. In truth, however, although he studies constantly, recites his prayers, and practices self-tormentation, this is all in vain and ~~he~~ has no value---for he does not have any "D'vekus" with God. Moreover, he lacks the perfect faith to always attach his thought to God. Nor does he know in what the essence of religion consists, how to study Torah, pray, and carry out a commandment for its own sake. The difference between the two is as follows: the wicked man still has the possibility of finding the right way, if the sense of repentance awakens in him and he re-
"en lo takono" [has no "Tikun"] -
 turns to God wholeheartedly. The second one, however, [^] is not improvable], since his eyes are closed to the greatness of the Creator, although he nevertheless considers himself righteous---how then, can he re-
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 pent?

For the same reason, however, the Besht regarded with a certain respect those who sought God and thereby stumbled, going astray on false paths. About Shabsai Tsvi, he said that within him there was a "holy spark". When the Frankists, strongly

persecuted by the rabbis, turned informers and caused the Talmud to be burned at the stake in Kamenets, the Besht poured out his anger not at the sectarians, but at the rabbis. It was they, he argued, who brought this about, who concocted lies and falsehoods (shebodim sheker milibom b'hakdomos sh'korim) [who invent lies out of their own heads based on false premises] ⁷⁹. When the Frankists had no way out other than to resort to apostasy, the Besht said concerning this: "The "Sh'chino" laments and says that as long as the limb is still connected to the body, there is still hope that it will become healed; but if the limb is severed, it is lost forever. And each and every one of the people of Israel is a limb of the "Sh'-chino". ⁸⁰"

Typical is the story related in the various sources that the Besht once came to a community where a meeting of the Council of the Four Lands happened to be taking place. At the meeting the question was raised concerning what attitude should be assumed towards the Besht, who although not a learned man yet was considered by many to be a

miracle worker, and who asserted that the Holy Spirit rested upon him. Accordingly he was summoned to appear before the Council. When the Besht came, the President of the Council, Reb Abraham Abo, addressed him as follows: "According to the manner of your conduct, it seems that the Holy Spirit rests upon you; however, there are others who say that you are an ignorant man. Therefore, let me hear from your own mouth if you know the Jewish Law." Because it happened to be the New Moon at that time, the Besht was asked what was to be done if, when praying on the day of the New Moon, one should happen to forget the special insertion for that day, "Ya-ale v'yovo"? In regard to this question, whole mountains of casuistry and subtle speculations have accumulated in rabbinic literature; however, the Besht answered the President with simplicity: Neither I nor you is in need of such a law, inasmuch as you will forget the second time also (for to him, the scholar, the main thing is the casuistical argumentation about the law, and the prayer itself he says purely mechanically and inattentively), and I will not forget it in any case.

On another occasion, the Besht tells a story about a simple hose-maker (umon hanikro "shupoval") who would stand the whole day at his hard work, from which he supported himself. He would hurriedly drop into the synagogue and join with the worshippers in public worship if a ritual quorum were present, and if not, he prayed at home. Even Psalms he would recite only the chapters he knew by heart. Nevertheless, when the Besht saw him, he became very agitated, because the merit of this simple man "hanehene migi-a kapo b'kashrus" [who enjoys honestly working with his hands] sustained the entire community.⁸²

Legend recounts that the Besht himself was given to understand that the reason for his elevation to the highest levels,⁸³ that there should be revealed to him "d'vorim elyonim" [the loftiest matters], was not because he had learned many Talmudic tractates and Codes, but because of his praying with great "Kavono."⁸⁴ The Shivche HaBesht tells us how a learned rabbi stopped to spend the night at the inn which the Besht was then operating. During the night the rabbi awoke and saw that a fire

was burning under the oven. Thinking that the wood which was placed there to dry had caught fire, he immediately jumped out of his bed and wanted to extinguish the fire. As he approached the oven, he noticed that the Besht was seated there, and round about him there shone a light full of splendor and magnificence. The rabbi fell in a faint and was revived only with difficulty. In the morning the rabbi asked the Besht, who at that time had not yet revealed himself, what this could mean. The Besht answered him: "I was only reciting Psalms; maybe I was then united with God (efshor shnisdabakti b'hashem yisborach)."

Did the Besht himself---and not only his disciples---believe that the Holy Spirit rested upon him, that he could perform wonders because his will was taken account of in the upper worlds? Here we touch upon the most interesting and central point in the Besht's Weltanschauung.

The fighters of the Enlightenment simplified to the nth degree the question of the essential nature of the founder of the Chasidic movement: some ignorant swindler who wanted to lead the common

people astray. The dry scholars, the "Misnagdim," pictured the Besht as a plain ignoramus and in the heat of religious controversy even declared him a "novi shikor umishtage-a" [a drunken and insane prophet].⁸⁵ A modern cultural historian, of whatever point of view, understands very well how naïve and inept ^{is} such a ~~sort of~~ characterization of the Besht's personality ~~is~~. We emphasize the last word [personality] because the Besht is first of all a significant, deep personality, which considers world phenomena from the viewpoint of a world consciousness, a personality which feels itself responsible for the fate of the entire world and possesses the ironclad faith that it can, on the basis of this responsibility, ameliorate the most tragic problems of the world.

The Besht's Weltanschauung is of course purely idealistic. In place of the Gospel statement: "In the beginning was the Word," the Besht puts forth the basic thesis: "In the beginning was the thought, the idea." "Reshis hakol hu hamachashovo"---thought is the beginning of everything, "V'hadibur hu anaf hamachashovo"---[and speech is the branch of thought].

"Hamachashovo nikr'o ov ladibur v'hadibur ben"---

thought is the father of the word and the word is the son. "Hamachashovo hi hachochmo v'hadibur hu

hatolodo" [thought is wisdom and speech is the re-

⁸⁷sult]. Thought, the Besht says, is called "ayin"

[with alef, infinite], because it is limitless like

⁸⁸the "ayin." But when it becomes embodied in speech,

it already is limited and is called "ani" [I]---

really the same substance, the identical letters,

⁸⁹but of an entirely different scope. Only man is

in need of speech. "Hadibur hu hachiyus shel ho-

⁹⁰odom"---speech is the life principle of man.

"Haloshon hu kolmos halev"---speech is the pen of

⁹¹the heart. But there, in the heights, says the

Besht, in the world of thought and pure ideas, "v'en

omer v'en d'vorim" ["there is no speech and there

⁹²are no words"]. When a man finds himself in union

with the "Sh'chino" and at that moment thinks about

the upper world---then he is immediately in the

upper worlds. Because a man is where he is think-

ing about, and if he were not in the upper world,

⁹³he would not be thinking about it. Everything

thought of exists, since everything that exists

is thought of. In this regard, it would not be superfluous to note that already the Zohar expresses the thought which subsequently took such an honored place in German idealistic philosophy: the doctrine concerning the complete equality between thinking and being, between the ideal and the real.⁹⁴ It must be pointed out in particular that in the Besht's mystical Weltanschauung it is not only "D'vekus," fervent ecstasy, but also meditation, ennobling thought, which play a central role. It is very characteristic that the Besht, who taught that the most important principles of life are belief and faith, considers it important to point out that there exist two levels of belief.⁹⁵ One man believes in God because his faith has been handed down to him from his forbears; another man has arrived at his faith through reason. The difference between them is that the first one has the advantage that he cannot be dissuaded even if one should try to shake his faith through reason, because his faith is strong, having come down to him through his forefathers; but he has the disadvantage of his faith being "rak mitsvas anoshim m'lumodo b'li ta-am

v'sechel" [only a faith learned by rote and without reason or understanding]. The second man therefore has the advantage that he has arrived at his belief in God the Creator as a result of much reasoning--- therefore his faith is strong and full of great love. However, he has the disadvantage that he can be readily shaken in his faith by the presentation of logical proofs which contradict his belief.

Therefore the highest level of faith is found in the man who has both qualities: he is supported by the tradition of his ancestors as well as having become convinced through his own reasoning that his belief is correct and good. Therefore, adds the Besht, we say "elohenu velohe avosenu" [our God and God of our fathers]---"elohenu" [our God], whom we have sought out by our own reason, "velohe avosenu" [and God of our fathers]---through the tradition of our fathers.

In order to clarify how the Besht looked upon his own personality, it is first necessary to consider the exclusive role which the human personality plays in his system. We already know that according to the Weltanschauung of the Zohar, man is the

embodiment of the divine, the manifestation of the absolutely infinite, in limited, concrete form, and that without the active will of the human personality, even God's blessing cannot hold sway. ⁹⁷ This thought is also the keystone of the Besht's system. We have already pointed out that the Besht conceives of the divine in relation to the world and nature, not transcendently but immanently, that is, ^{as} not ~~as~~ ^{above the world, but rather as internal,} external, ^{within} the world itself. God is never outside the world, set apart by partitions and space, because---"b'chol dovor yesh elomos n'shomos elohus," in everything there are whole worlds of divine souls. These divine souls are in prison, however, walled in like separate sparks in the rigid "k'lipo" of the matter, and the "pidyon sh'vuyim" [redemption ⁹⁸ of the captives] is brought about by man. The spring, the stone, the plant, every creature in nature, every object and event in the world---is redeemed through man's eye and ear, is brought from non-being to being and becoming, by means of man's conscience and man's thought.

Man is thus a participant in "ma-ase b'reshis," in unending creation and becoming. The world is in-

fluenced not only by God's will, but also by the will and striving of man, who is the reflection of God on earth and is created in the image of God, as it says in the Psalter: "Vat'chasrehu m'at me-elohim," he is but little less than God. The Besht who grew up in an environment of human rightlessness and enslavement, of cruel persecutions and bloody accusations, is filled with a steadfast belief in man's divine rights---"ho-odom halo ikar mishkan hashem,"---the Besht explains, ---man is the most important tent where God rests. 99

It is stated [Pirke Ovos, II, 1]: "Da ma l'malo mimeko" [know what is above you]---which is to be translated according to the Besht: "da," know, "shekol ma l'malo," that everything which is above, "hakol hu mimeko," is all from you. Between God and man, the Besht teaches, there is a continual, reciprocal stimulation and effect. "Hu" [he], man, "mistakel b'habore yisborach, v'habore mistakel bo" 100 [looks at God and God looks at him]. "Adonoi tsilcho"--- the Besht teaches---"The Lord is thy shade," that is: just as the shadow does everything that a man does,

so does God, as it were, do everything that man

¹⁰¹does. "When a man, a simple human being of flesh and blood (ho-odom hachomri) elevates himself

through his thoughts to the upper worlds, the angels

become agitated and gape in great amazement." ¹⁰²From

such a point of view, the conclusion is quite logical

that a man can approach so near to God that

he feels himself a partner in creation, in everything

which is unceasingly being created; man is also capable,

by means of the loftiest and ^{the} most profound in

him, of discovering the Godhead itself, comprehending

the essence of the highest force, which he feels

and senses within himself, of wonder at the infinite

light in its splendor and magnificence, of which he

himself is a shining spark. The Besht is strongly

convinced that man is capable of weaving himself into

the divine infinite in certain moments of spiritual

ecstasy; since God is the all-embracing and the all-

inclusive, it is not possible that God should be

exterior to man, that God should be a being that

cannot be recognized or perceived by man. There must

exist an understanding from the lower to the upper

and the reverse---a reciprocal effect between man and

God.

It is not without reason that the Besht cites quite frequently the parable of the ladder; that man is like a ladder whose lowest rungs are on the ground and whose top presses against the heavens. The top, the pride and crown of mankind, is the Tsadik. We already know what an honored place the Tsadik holds in the Weltanschauung of the Zohar.¹⁰³ "Tsadik y'sod ho-olom"---the Tsadik is the foundation stone of the world, and his level cannot be attained even by an angel. Also the Cabalist Me-ir Ibn Gabai assures us that "Tsadik moshel b'chol hanivro-im" [The Tsadik rules over all creatures]---all creatures are sub-servient to his will.¹⁰⁴ Also the Besht finds that "Tsadikayo anon sh'luche d'matroniso,"---the Tsadik-im are the messengers of the "Sh'chino."¹⁰⁵ The Tsadik, says the Besht, is like a tree planted on fruitful soil. Just as the tree takes up all the moistures of the earth and creates out of them the most beautiful fruits, so also the Tsadik "b'olom haze" [in this world]: he gathers together all the "nitsotsos" that are scattered in the world and raises them to the Creator.¹⁰⁶ Scripture states: "Tsadik be-emunoso

yichye" ["The righteous shall live by his faith"],¹⁰⁷

because faith is "d'vekus bo yisborach," union with

¹⁰⁸God, and thereby, with their strong faith the Tsa-

dikim transform "midas hadin l'midas horachamim"

[the attribute of justice to the attribute of mercy],¹⁰⁹

sweeten the just decree "b'shoresh hachesed", by means

¹¹⁰of the root of love. The Besht illustrates this

thesis with the Talmudic Agada about Nahum Ish Gam

Zu, who saw only the good in every happening; every-

thing was for the best. The Besht explains that Ish

Gam Zu's faith and confidence was strong as iron that

God's will is only for good, and that the contrary

was inconceivable, since God's will leads everything

to one determined goal---to a world as it ought to

be. And because Ish Gam Zu was completely permeated

with this ironclad faith, therefore "v'chach ne-eso

be-emes," everything turned out for good; and in

this---the Besht explains---he saw no miracle at all

("v'en ze etslo nes k'lal"), but because he relied

so strongly on his faith and confidence---"v'chach

¹¹¹also lo," it turned out that way. The Besht says

that there are two levels of people: one conducts

himself in his actions "al pi hateva," in a natural way, according to the order which reigns in nature, that is, according to the forces of nature which are the same as "elohim," [God], which equals "hateva" [nature] in the sum of the numerical value of its letters.¹¹² But there are people of a higher level: these raise themselves by means of their "d'vekus" above the "K'lipos" of matter, and they conduct themselves in a manner which is higher than nature--- according to the divine laws of "Adonoi" [the Tetragrammaton],¹¹³ the creator and ruler of the world, according to the laws which annul the "g'zeros elohim," the strict laws of nature. There, in the upper levels, the "nitsotsin" are liberated from the "K'lipos" which rule over matter through the power of thought, and the attribute of justice is raised to the attribute of love.¹¹⁴ Upon the wings of exalted thought, through union with God, man first comprehends that that in which he saw, only strict law and justice with his nearsighted eyes---is really the attribute of love, the graciousness of the divine wisdom.

But the Besht points out that people should not be surprised that also the Tsadik occasionally finds

himself^o in a rather low level. This happens because of two reasons: first of all, even the Tsadik is not capable of so strongly exerting his spiritual powers in order always to find himself in the highest levels. Therefore he temporarily drops down below, refreshing his strength, in order subsequently to raise himself with new energy to the divine heights. But there is also a second reason: in order that the Tsadik be able to carry out his mission perfectly---to rise from the lower levels to the higher ones, he himself must lower himself to the depths, unite there with the "nitsotsin" imprisoned in matter and liberate them, raising them to the upper worlds. With this, the Besht comments, is also connected the secret of "hislabshus hatoro b'sipurim gashmiyim"---the frequent use by the holy Torah of the garment of stories taken from simple, everyday life...

Here it is necessary to point out one important detail to which the investigators of Chasidism have unfortunately paid little attention up to now. The Besht, it is true, does say that "tsorich l'kasher es atsmo im g'dol hador"---each individual should tie himself to a Tsadik. The Besht considers it im-

portant, however, to emphasize here that it is not only the simple masses which need the Tsadik, but also the Tsadik who needs people of the low level; they complement one another and one becomes the "l'vush v'chise lachavero" [the garment and chair¹¹⁵ for the other]. We have already seen how the Besht explains in a purely dialectical manner that even evil is "the chair," the basis, for the good, because the concept of the good really obtains its real content only as against its opposite---evil. The Tsadik and the masses---the Besht repeats many times---are like the body and the soul, the male¹¹⁶ and the female; one must influence the other. The masses and the Tsadik are like the days of creation and the Sabbath. "Yesh chibur v'kishur," the Besht says, closely bound up between themselves are the ordinary weekdays and the Sabbath, because the Sabbath only receives its real value when it is supported by the weekdays, and the weekdays become sanctified and draw nourishment from the holy Sabbath day. "En ze b'loze"---one cannot be without¹¹⁷ the other. It is written: "Esh tomid tukad al hamizbe-ach," "Fire shall be kept burning upon the

altar continually." The Besht explains that the common person, the simple man, ought also to bring about with his sparks that the fire on the altar which the "Sh'lome emune Yisro-el," the greatest Tsadikim of the generation, support, should not be extinguished. ¹¹⁸ The level of the Tsadik depends on the level of his generation. As the generation is, so are the Tsadikim; in a downcast body the soul is also downcast. ¹¹⁹ Therefore the simple masses ought to fight together with the Tsadik (la-amod b'kishre hamilchomo gam hem imo) and should not rely on the Tsadik alone. "Not rely on the Tsadik alone" is frequently repeated by the Besht. A person should remember well the principle that "im en ani li, mi li" ["If I am not for myself, who will be?"], as long as he himself will not strive with all his force to raise himself and to lift himself from the narrow limits of the "ani" ["I"] to the universal extents of the "ayin" [with aleph, ¹²⁰ the infinite], ¹²¹ nobody will be able to help him. During the Days of Awe the congregation does not rely on the cantor alone, the Besht shows; everyone ¹²² prays to God individually. The Besht relates the

following parable: A certain country once had to wage a difficult war. In this land there was a mighty warrior, upon whom the people relied completely in their hard fight. The valiant soldier was well supplied with various weapons and courageously waged the war. The enemy, however, took counsel and quietly stole the hero's implements of war; with the hero not having anything more to fight with, the people of the country who had relied completely on him, were taken captive together with him.¹²³

Naturally, the Besht saw in himself the ^{"gibor orite"} [mighty hero], the Tsadik of the generation. In certain ecstatic moments he felt himself organically woven together with God, sensed in himself the personality whose depth and sublimity influences the eternal being and unceasing becoming of the universal cosmos. In the Weltanschauung of this mystic, the dividing line between making and dreaming, between real and imaginary, was erased, because in the real his exalted eye saw only the ideal and the dream; in lifeless, congealed matter---there were the languishing sparks which long for the heights and await

liberation. Highly interesting in this regard is the letter which he wrote from Medzhibozh to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon Kutover, in Jerusalem, ¹²⁴ in which he describes in detail two of his "aliyos n'shomo." The first occurred Rosh Hashono of 1746 and the second, three years later, on Rosh Hashono of 1749:

"On Rosh Hashono of 1746 I performed the incantations for "aliyas n'shomo" as is known to you; and in my vision I saw wonderful things, the likes of which I have not seen since attaining to my senses (miyom omdi al dati). And that which I saw and learned when I was uplifted there cannot be related or even told from mouth to mouth. When I returned to the 'Gan Eden hatachton' (the lower Garden of Eden) I saw many souls of people living and dead, some that are known to me and some that are not known to me. Numberless and limitless, the souls wandered from one world to another with a great and wonderful joy which cannot be described or related. And also many sinners repented and their transgressions were forgiven...and all together they beseeched me strongly and said: God has favored you with great understanding to grasp and to know about these matters; you will arise with us and support us and be helpful to us. And because of the great joy which I saw among them, I decided to arise with them. And in my vision I saw (v'ro-isi bamare) how the Satan, "Samo-el," arose to present accusations with a joy that had no equal. And he managed to obtain decrees of religious persecution against many souls, they should be killed and die unnatural deaths. I was seized with a deathly fear and I was prepared to suffer martyrdom and I requested my teacher and

master to go with me, because it is very dangerous to ascend to the upper worlds, for since I have come to my senses it has never happened that I should ascend to such heights. And I arose from level to level until I entered the 'Hechol' ['palace']* of the Messiah where the Messiah teaches the Torah to all the 'Tano-im' and Tsadikim and the seven shepherds¹²⁶ and there I saw a great joy that was indescribable. I did not know what this gladness could mean. I thought that the joy was because of my taking leave of the world. But I was given to understand that I was not yet to die, because there above they were delighted by my seeking after union with the divine, by Cabalistic means, here below, with the help of their holy Torah... So I asked the Messiah: "Emos osi mar?" When will my lord come? And he answered me: Know that when your teaching will become spread and will be revealed all over the world... and also others will be able to achieve union with God and attain to "aliyas n'shomo" like you, then all the "K'lipos" will be destroyed and the time of favor and salvation will come. And I wondered at this and I grieved greatly that this time was still so far away: When can this take place? But because I learned, while I was there, three kinds of charms and three holy "Shemos"... I comforted myself and thought to myself: maybe my contemporaries can also through this attain my level and status; also they will become worthy of such "aliyos n'shomos" as I. But permission was not given to me during my lifetime to reveal this..."

The Besht goes on to tell about his second "aliyas n'shomo" which took place in 1749. At that time the Haidamack movement in the Ukraine was very

*The highest of the seven "palaces" of light perceived by the soul of the devout after his death, or by the inner vision of the mystic during prayer. See Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, p. 160 and passim.

strong and many Jewish communities were destroyed by it. The Besht writes about this in his letter:

"And on Rosh Hashono, 1749, I experienced "aliyas n'shomo," as is known, and I saw a great accusation, to the point that permission was almost granted to the Satan, "Samo-el," to destroy entire districts and communities. And I took my life in my hands and prayed: 'Niplo no b'yad adonoi v'al niplo b'yad odom'---even if we fall from God's hand, may we not fall into the hand of man! And it was granted to me that instead of this there should be great feebleness whose equal had never been in all the lands of Poland or in the other lands which are near to us. And so it was; the feebleness spread until it was indescribable. So I arranged with my group to recite "K'tores"* early in the morning in order to annul the evil decree. Then it was revealed to me from heaven: You yourself chose to fall into God's hand, so why do you wish to annul the decree?...Since then I have not recited "K'tores" nor prayed for this. Except that on "Hoshano Rabo" I went to the synagogue with the entire congregation and recited "K'tores" once in order that the pestilence should not spread in our neighborhood,---and so were we successful with God's help..."

It is told that when the great poet Dante Alighieri finished the first part of his Divine Comedy, the Italian women would point him out reverently, saying: "This is the man who descended

*Reference is to "Pitum hak'tores," Talmudic section in the liturgy dealing with the preparation of the incense in the Temple. See Numbers 16:9-15, and Rashi and Toldos Aharon ad locum; also Shabos, 89a and Rashi, s.v. "mosar lo sodo," ff.

to the lowest depths of hell and returned to us." With the same reverence the "chavuro" [group] of Medzhibozh looked upon the Besht who experienced such "aliyos n'shomo," ate at the same table with the patriarchs and the seven shepherds and spoke face to face with the Messiah, son of David. And the impression which the Besht made with his teaching on his disciples, the learned men and rabbis, was even more stupendous in that they saw before themselves a simple "ba-al shem," not a pungent scholar, not an artful swimmer in the broad "sea of the Talmud." This was a true revelation, a singular "shinu-i arochin" (transformation of values)...

And full of enchantment, they set out into the world to tell about the great wonder, to reveal the teaching of their master.

CHAPTER THREE

The Besht's disciples.- His successor, Rabbi Dov Ber, the Magid of Mezheritch.- From Medzhibozh to Mezheritch.- The sources of the Magid's teaching.- Likutim Y'korim, Likute Amorim, Or Toro, and Or Hame-ir.- Concerning pantheistic views in the Weltanschauung of the founders of the Chasidic movement.- The teaching concerning "Tsimtsum."- "Tsimtsum" and the purpose of "Ma-ase b'reshis."- Love and "Tsimtsum" as "Achdus g'muro" [perfect union with God].- The mission of the Jewish people.- The Tsadik in the capacity of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement.- The Tsadik and the "Odom b'fo-al [the perfect man].- Theoretical tsadikism.- The first fight against the Chasidim.- The social foundations of this fight.- The booklet of anathema Z'mir Oritsim V'charvos Tsurim.- Jacob Joseph Kohen, the founder of Chasidic literature.- His struggle against the rabbis.- The significance of his Toldos Ya-akov Yosef.

It is told about the Besht that he once turned to God with the following prayer: "Ribono shel Olam! Golu-i v'yodu-a l'fonecho, [O, Master of the Universe]! It is revealed and known to Thee, how my heart runs over, and there is nobody to whom I can make all this known!" Another time the Besht explains: "When I occasionally speak words of Torah before others, it is only from the excess which flows over the rim, just as when a vessel is filled to the very top with fluid, a certain part of the

liquid overflows."¹²⁷ Just as every innovator and founder of a new system and a new Weltanschauung, the Besht felt his loneliness, sensed that the proper successor to whom he could entrust everything that he felt and thought was lacking.

Each of the Besht's close disciples---the historiographer of Chasidism, Mendl Bodek, points out---received from him "l'fi shoresht nishmoso¹²⁸ hak'dosho", that is, according to the level of the disciple's soul, but not the entire teaching of the master. The Besht's own son, Ts'vi Hirsh, had a very limited notion of his father's significance. In this respect it is typical that the Shivche Hakesht relates that on the day of the Besht's passing, all his disciples were standing around his bed, but his son "Hershele," was not there---he was sleeping. And when he was awakened and conducted to his father's bed and the latter commenced speaking "words of Torah" to him, the son declared:¹²⁹ "Eni mevin ma she-ato omer,"---I do not understand what you are saying. Also the above-mentioned Mendl Bodek, who is not miserly in praising highly any of

the Besht's disciples, is forced, when mentioning the Besht's only son, to limit himself to the remark that during his entire life the latter "hoyo hatsne-a leches im hashem v'hoyo misnaheg k'mo odom peshut v'lo nisvada l'ish tsidkoso."¹³⁰ [For translation, see note]. The Besht's successor, his spiritual heir and the leader of the movement he created was the Magid of Mezheritch, Rabbi Ber, who only in the Besht's last years became ^{his} close disciple and follower, ~~of his~~.

Very little of a detailed nature is known about the Magid's life. Out of all the legends which were created in Chasidic circles around him and his coming together with the Besht, we can establish only that before Rabbi Dov Ber met the Besht he followed the same path as did all the rabbis and learned men of that time. Born in a small Volhynian village, L¹³¹ukatch, he studied both the revealed and the hidden Torah, and already in his youth, as it is told in the Keser Shem Tov (II, 30), he was far famed as a very sharp-minded and erudite expert in the entire Talmud and Codes literature, and also in the Cabala. As a fervent follower of the Ari's Cabala, he

followed the path of asceticism and occasionally fasted from Sabbath to Sabbath. As "official city preacher" in the Volynian towns of Mezheritch, Dubno, Korets, and Rovne, he would also exhort the people to self-tormentat~~ion~~^{ion}, repentance and "Tikun" in his sermons.

For his Weltanschauung at that time the following story, which is told in his name by his disciple, Rabbi Wolf of Zhitomir, is characteristic: In his younger days, when the Magid was a teacher in a village, he was once sitting at home in a corner. There entered some local nobleman with a brazen woman of beautiful form whose breasts were uncovered, as was their custom. Unconsciously the Magid glanced at this beautiful woman with the exposed bosom, and immediately there arose in his heart a great grief. He then began to make this evil repugnant in his own mind in the following manner: The beginning of her creation derives from her father's and her mother's seed; from there her beauty stems, her whiteness and her ruddiness. And whence does their seed derive? From their ugly and repugnant foods, such as snakes, crabs and the like. And this is the

source of the seed with its empty beauty and charm. And he thought so long about these disgusting subjects, that he began to vomit before their eyes. Then the nobleman ordered him thrown out into the street.¹³²

It is interesting that the Magid himself, when he became the recognized leader of the Chasidim in his later years, quotes in one of his sermons the didactic saying of the Besht which is in such sharp contrast to the Magid's own former conduct: "When a man sees a beautiful woman, he should think, whence does this beauty come to her? If she were dead, she would not have this beautiful face; if this is so, then all this comes from the divine force which permeates her,---this is what gives her face the power of beauty and color. From this we can deduce that the source of beauty is the divine force,---therefore, why should I yearn and pine for only a part; it is better to join oneself to the cause of all worlds, which is the original cause of the beautiful.

Concerning the meeting of the Magid and the Besht, various legends are told in the Shivche Ha-Besht¹³⁴ and the Keser Shem Tov,¹³⁵ out of which it is

not difficult to filter^{out} the valid core: As a result of his continuous fasting, the Magid's body became so weakened that he was no longer able to walk on his feet unassisted, and he became bedridden. Friends advised him to journey for a cure to the Besht who was already famous in the entire district by his charms and medicaments. At the beginning the Besht regarded the Magid, as he did many other sharp-minded scholars, with a certain irony; he conducted himself in a boorish manner, told simple stories and popular witticisms. The Cabala of the Ari, however, was the field where these two men were able to draw near to each other. The Besht found it very desirable to win this Cabalist over to his group, to bring him to the realization that he had been going astray all his life, to prove to him that "lalimud shelcho hoyo b'li¹³⁶ n'shomo" [your study was devoid of spirit]. The Besht not only cured the Magid's body and his sick feet, but also produced a complete revolution in his Weltanschauung, liberated his soul from the leaden melancholia, from the fear of sin. He was successful in convincing the ascetic Magid that God should be worshipped not with fasting and self-tormentation, but

rather with joy and liveliness. The Magid, Rabbi Dov Ber, the Keser Shem Tov relates, then sent back home the servant who had accompanied the ill Magid on his journey to the Besht, and he himself remained with the Besht, "v'lo^{md} etsylo chochmos g'dolos va-amukos"---and learned from him great and deep wisdom. Thanks to his strong character and his organizing abilities, he became the leader of the new movement after the death of the Besht, and assisted greatly in its spread and stormy growth. The center of the Chasidic teaching passed from Mezhibozh to Mezheritch, from Podolia to Volynia, after the Besht's death.

Like the Besht, the Magid also did not publish any writings during his lifetime. A practical preacher, the Magid of Mezheritch would present his teachings to his listeners in the form of sermons---"mide chodesh b'chodsho umide shabos b'shabato" ["from one new moon to another and from one sabbath to another"]¹³⁷. A vivid picture of how the Magid Dov Ber would deliver his sermons at the table on the Sabbath and how artfully he would thereby interpret various Biblical verses is given to us in the Autobiography

(nineteenth chapter) of Solomon Maimon, who in his youth himself made the pilgrimage to Mezheritch in order to acquaint himself with the newly budding Chasidic movement. The Magid himself did not write down his sermons, yet he wanted very much that they should not become lost, and that his disciples should write them down and transmit them to the later generations. About this his disciple, Solomon of Lutsk speaks in detail in the preface to Likute Amorim. He relates that many of the Magid's chasidim used to commit his sermons to writing, but that they would shorten them and quite often also not transmit the true essence of the Magid's profound words, interpreting them according to their own understanding.¹³⁸ He himself also did not take the risk of recording the holy words of his teacher, since he was afraid that also he would not transmit them with the necessary accuracy. Once the Magid asked him why he did not write down his "Rebe's" sermons. He explained to him the reason why he was not taking it upon himself to do so. The Magid thereupon said to him: Nevertheless, it would be desirable that they be somehow written down, "in order that it be a re-

minder for the worship of God." And when the disciple asked why "he wishes and yearns so much for this?", the Magid answered him with a hint at a Biblical verse: Is it then a small matter in your eyes that which King David, may he rest in peace, asked for: "Oguro v'oholcho olomim" ["I will dwell in Thy tent forever"], ^(the word "forever" may also be rendered "worlds") which means---I will dwell in Thy tent in both worlds. Nevertheless Solomon of Lutsk did not carry out the will of his "Rebe" for years even after the death of the Magid. It was only after Jacob Joseph Hakohen published the Besht's letters and many of his sayings in his works Toldos Yosef and Ben Poros Yosef, that Solomon of Lutsk also decided to acquaint the general public with the spiritual legacy of his "Rebe." From all the manuscripts that were known to him containing the sermons of the Magid, he chose, taking the best which the venerable Z'ev Wolf of Grodno in Lithuania had written down, introduced certain improvements, and this he published in Korets in 1784 under a double title: Likute Amorim and Magid D'vorov L'ya-akov.¹³⁹

This work had great success and by 1792 it went through three editions. However, Solomon of Lutsk

himself points out in the preface that this collection of the Magid's sermons "hu rak tipo min hayom migodel chochmoso" [is only a drop from the ocean of his great wisdom]. It is therefore not at all surprising that in addition to the printed Magid D'vorov L'ya-akov there also circulated among the Chasidim many manuscripts and transcripts of the Magid's teaching. In 1792 Samuel the son of Judah Leb Segal Bodek of Lemberg published a collection, ¹⁴⁰Likutim Y'korim, in which he gives many sayings of the Magid of Mezheritch, thereby often referring to circulating transcripts and holy manuscripts in which many wonderful secrets of the Magid of Mez-¹⁴¹heritch were recorded. Once he even concludes with the remark: And I do not wish to quote here from the homilies which are found in the manuscripts of our teacher Rabbi Dov Ber, of Blessed Memory, because they are very profound and exalted and each word requires much commentary.¹⁴² In 1804 there appeared in Korets a new anthology of the Magid's sermons and sayings, Or Toro, which Rabbi Dov Ber's disciple, Isaiah of Dunovits, wrote down in his time. This transcript is a more extensive one than that of

Solomon of Lutsk, and it differs thereby from the Likute Amorim not only in its version of the text, but also in its completely different order. Whereas, in Lutsker's edition the sermons are printed without any system, they are arranged in the Or Toro according to the verses of the Bible and the dicta of the Talmud, Midrashim, and the Zohar.

Certain of the Magid's disciples cited in their own works a large number of sayings of their "Rebe" which are lacking in both of the above-mentioned anthologies. Particularly important in this respect is the Or Hame-ir of Rabbi Wolf of Zhitomir. This list of sources provides a more or less satisfactory material for becoming acquainted with the personality and Weltanschauung of the Besht's spiritual heir, of the second leader of the young Chasidic movement.

First of all, the following characteristic point must be considered: the disciple of the Besht, Jacob Joseph Hakohen, immediately indicates, each time that he cites the words of his mentor, ^{"shomati mimori,"} "shomati b'shem mori" [I ~~learned~~ ^{heard} from my teacher; I heard ~~in~~ in my teacher's name]. The Magid, Rabbi Dov Ber, is

different. Neither in the Likute Amorim nor in the Or Toro is the Besht given the title "mori" [my teacher]. The limited number of times that the Magid mentions the Besht, he does so only with the remark "Omar Ribash Zichrono livrocho" [the Besht, may his memory be for a blessing, said...], or "Rabi Yisro-el Ba-al Shem." But rather many of the Besht's sayings, and some of the most important ones, are not cited in the Magid's sermons in the name of their author, nor is the Besht's name mentioned at all. This is by no means accidental. These two men were too different in character, in feeling and even in their Weltanschauung. It was just in middle age that Rabbi Dov Ber, the scholar-ascetic, turned on to the road which Israel ben Eli-ezer, the wandering village teacher and "whisperer," intuitively laid out with his marvelous folk-instinct. The Besht succeeded with the great moral power of his personality in deterring the melancholy scholar from the path of asceticism. But the Magid grasped the richness of the Besht's Weltanschauung only with his mind, not with his heart, with the sharpness of his keen thinking, but not with burning feeling.

The teaching of the Magid depends on the same basic idea which is the fundamental point of the entire Weltanschauung of the Besht, namely, that the world is not only the creation of God, but carries the divine within itself---"mine uve" [from God and in God] and "les asar ponu-i mine" [there is no place devoid of God].¹⁴³ The Magid does not tire of repeating in his sermons that God "hu m'male kol olmin v'inu b'soch olmin." [fills the worlds and is in the world].¹⁴⁴ God carries upon Himself all the worlds, is above and beneath all the worlds, and fills all the worlds and is the place of all the worlds.¹⁴⁵ The understanding person, the Magid teaches, knows that "kol ho-olom kulo mole mehashem yisborach" [the entire world is full of God]; and how greatly that man is to be pitied who takes literally the meaning of Scripture and thinks "shehashem yisborach bashomayim hechin kiso" [that God "hath established His throne in the heavens"], and the entire world lies before His eyes empty, void and dead.¹⁴⁶ The Magid interprets in an artful manner the familiar words of the philosophical pessimist, Ecclesiastes: "Ki ho-elohim bashomayim v'ato al ho-orets, al ken yih'yu d'vorecho

m'atim" ["For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few" (Eccl. V, 1)]: He who does not understand that God fills all the worlds, penetrates all the worlds, surrounds all the worlds (m'male kol olmin, mil'gav kol olmin um'sabev kol olmin), "v'les asar ponu-i mine" [and there is no place empty of Him], and thinks that God is up above in the heavens, and he, the human being, is on the earth,---such a one should not speak much, because what can he accomplish with his words, what improvement can his words bring?¹⁴⁷ Even in the material things,---the Magid repeats the saying of the Besht,---God is concealed; and this is the meaning of "m'lo chol ho-orets k'vodo"---"the whole earth is full of His glory."¹⁴⁸

But here it is necessary to clarify an important detail: certain investigators lay particular emphasis on purely pantheistic views in the Weltanschauung of the founders of the Chasidic movement. But in this regard, it is essential to take into consideration that for the Besht and the Magid these thoughts are closely tied up with such concepts that divorce them completely from the pantheistic view of the world.

From the pantheistic point of view one cannot speak of differentiation and separation between God and nature, between matter and spirit. This absolute identity, however, is not the cause of the universe--- it is the universe, the God-Universe unity, the universal, absolute "du-partsufim" [double face]. The idea is diametrically opposed to the Weltanschauung of the founders of Chasidism. It is true that also they are fully convinced that the world is saturated with God, "mine uve" [from Him and in Him] and "les asar ponu-i mine" [there is no place empty of Him]; but God is above the world, the world is His creation; therefore God existed before the world, and the Magid repeats this thought many times---that "olo bir'tsono livro ho-olomos" [He willed the creation of the worlds], "¹⁴⁹harotson hakadmon livro ho-olomos" [the primeval will to create the worlds], "¹⁵⁰nis'havu kol ho-olomos b'rotson" [all the worlds came into being through God's will], ¹⁵¹i.e., the creation of the world is a voluntary act of the divine will. The Magid states---"Lich'oro en ho-^olom k'vodo yisborach," really the world cannot be considered as a glorification of God, for He is the immeasurable Infinite, and

all the worlds have no worth in comparison to Him¹⁵²
 (en kol ho-olomos necheshovim k'negdo k'lum). There
 is also a great difference in regard to the question
 of the role and significance of matter. For Spinoza,
 for instance, extension (hispashtus) and thought,
 that is matter and spirit, are the two divine attri-
 butes of equal status which man can comprehend; while
 the Besht still has a phrase such as: "v'en hefresh
 ben hachomer v'hatsuro" [there is no difference be-
 tween matter and form],¹⁵³ already for the Magid matter
 is an inferior substance. True enough, the Magid
 points out that "hashem yisborach m'lubosh afilu
 b'chol hagashmiyus" [God is embodied even in all
 matter]---in all matter there are found also divine
 sparks and man's mission is to liberate these sparks
 from the "K'lipo," from the matter. And matter, the
 Magid emphasizes, "hu hap'soles" [is the chaff] and
 form is the beauty---"hu haruchoni v'hachiyuni mize
 hak'li" [it is the spiritual and vital of this vessel].¹⁵⁴
 The Magid explains that it is well known that matter
 is the lowest of all levels, but because there is no
 place devoid of God (les asar ponu-i mine), it is
 nevertheless divine.¹⁵⁵

Closely connected with this is the teaching concerning "Tsimtsum" [contraction] which plays a very prominent role in the Magid's Weltanschauung. It is necessary at this point, however, to call attention to one rather important detail which is not satisfactorily clarified in the collections, thanks to which it is possible for us to become acquainted with the Magid's teachings. We have already pointed out above that according to the Magid's Weltanschauung creation is a voluntary act of the divine omnipotence. In both collections, however, there are cited two of the Magid's very meaningful statements: "Hakodosh-boruch-hu nikro m'nucho"---God is called "rest," "she-en shayoch bo t'nu-o" [for movement is not attributable to Him]; because "t'nu-o"---movement---is attributable only to a thing "shehu bizman uv'mokom," which is within the limits of time and space, but God---He is "En Sof" [The Infinite], "v'eno ne-etak mimokom l'mokom," and He does not move from place to place, and He is outside of the limitation of time. Even more typical is the second statement: "Ki b'en-sof eno shayoch rotson"---in regard to the Infinite one

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cannot speak of will. This sentence perhaps justified the hypothesis that just as Menahem da Fano¹⁵⁷ and Jonathan Eybeschuetz, also the Magid starts with the idea that not the First Cause but rather the God of Israel, the prototype of the "Eser S'firos" [the Ten Emanations], is the Creator of the world. And this is possibly one of the "sodos niflo-im," wonderful mysteries in the teaching of the Magid, concerning which the author of the Likute Y'korim speaks, and the compilers who wrote down the Magid's sermons considered it more appropriate not to reveal this "sod" [mystery] and therefore cited the saying of the "Rebe" without commentary.

On the other hand, the "sod hatsimtsum" [the mystery of contraction] is spoken about in great detail.¹⁵⁸ "Tsimtsem es atsmo uvoro es ho-olomos"¹⁵⁹--- God created the worlds by contracting Himself. "Bo-olom haze hakol tsimtsum gomur" [in this world¹⁶⁰ everything is pure contraction] declares the Magid. If it were not for "Tsimtsum", according to the Magid, the worlds would not be able to exist, since they would not be able to endure the tremendous¹⁶¹ divine light. Everything that exists in the world

was created through "Tsimtsum."¹⁶²

We have explained in the previous chapter that the Besht saw in the concept "Elohim" the forces of nature; the Magid declares on the other hand: "hine hatsimtsum nikro elohim" [behold, "contraction" is called God]; this divine light, diminished and weakened by partitions and embodiments is called "Elohim"; and he explains here, in a most singular manner, the words of the Torah: "B'reshis boro elohim" ["In the beginning God created"]---in the beginning "elohim" was created, i.e., at first there occurred the contraction of the light of the "En-Sof" [the Infinite].¹⁶³

The thesis concerning "Tsimtsum" is connected for the Magid of Mezheritch with the problem of the purpose of creation. Here the Magid repeats more than once the idea which was already put forth by the Besht in the following sentence: The attribute of "malchus" [kingdom] is in our hands and is bound up with us, i.e., with our recognition of His greatness and His kingdom, He attains His perfection in the attribute of kingdom, since there is no king without a people, and the royal glory first becomes manifest through the people.¹⁶⁴ "Ikar b'ri-as ho-olomos"---the

purpose of the creation of the worlds,---declares the Magid,---"sheyisgale midas hamalchus" [is the manifestation of the attribute of kingdom]: "she-en melech b'lo om" [there is no king without a people], the Magid says in another place, "lochen tsimtsem es k'vodo" [therefore He contracted His glory];¹⁶⁵ and the Magid repeats the Besht's thought which comes as a¹⁶⁶ commentary to the Biblical words: "Tsadik katomor yifroch" ["The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree"]; there are two types of Tsadikim [the righteous] and both are "Tsadikim g'murim" [completely righteous]. The difference between them is as follows: one is a Tsadik only for himself "and does not affect others with his righteousness;" such a Tsadik is compared to a cedar-tree which does not bear fruit. There is however a Tsadik of a different sort: he has a great effect on others "and increases the good in the world." This Tsadik is compared to a palm-tree, which produces many sweet fruits; such a Tsadik is on a much higher level.

We come across here among the founders of Chasidism the same thought which is expressed in Judah Abarbanel's beautiful words, when he speaks about

the highest manifestation of actively creative love which gives freely and influences, about the love of God for the world: "The fruit-bearing tree is more beautiful and more perfect than the fruitless one and the living spring which fructifies and is in constant motion is incomparably more beautiful than the motionless, even clear as crystal, water." ¹⁶⁷

The Besht's thought: "Hahashpo-o mimayon ho-elyon nome-a tomid ud'voro l'hetiv"---from the divine spring there flows unceasingly an abundance of love [whose purpose is goodness]---is further developed by the Magid. God, who is "b'sachlis hashlemus" [the essence of perfection]---the Magid teaches---embodied His divine thought, because of His great goodness and infinite love, in created worlds, in order that there might be someone to receive the divine abundance. But no creature is able to take in the wonderful abundance of light, the unceasing stream of active, divine love,---therefore God, as it were, in order to create the worlds, "tsimtsem es atsmo" [contracted Himself]. "Tsimtsum," the Magid emphasizes many times, thus occurred because of love---"mechamas ho-ahavo bo hatsimtsum," because of love "boro kol ho-olomos" [did

God create all the worlds]. Love and "Tsimtsum," the Magid explains, are "achdus g'muro," a complete unity, for out of love, out of the active, divine love, the worlds were created which were capable of receiving the divine light only "al y'de tsimtsum" [by means of contraction].¹⁶⁹ And here the Magid interprets in his manner the verse: "Ki shemesh umogen adonoi elohim" ["For the Lord God is a sun and a shield"]: just as the human eye can receive the light of the sun only through a shade (mosoch umogen), so also is it possible to receive the divine light (b'hirus havayo) only through a "mosoch mavdil" [a separating shade], in the image of "Elohim," i.e., through "Tsimtsum." "Adonoi, Elohim" [the Lord God],---the Magid adds to this, ---means love and fear, i.e., love¹⁷⁰ wrapped in fear.

In the same way as for the Besht, the question of the aim and goal of "ma-ase b'reshis" [creation] is closely bound up also for the Magid with the problem of the cosmic meaning of the human personality. For the Magid, however, the role of the individual human being is much more sharply bound up with the cosmic role of the Jewish people than for the Besht.

God and the Torah being one, "Tsimtsum" was therefore necessary also for the Torah in order that it could be revealed. "God found it necessary to contract the Torah in order that the light of His Torah should shine over all the worlds."¹⁷¹ The only bearer of the Torah, however, is the people of Israel. There, at Mount Sinai, there occurred the Holy Covenant, the great revelation, when the people of Israel recognized God as King over them. Only the people of Israel put forth the principle of God's Kingdom, of "malchus shomayim" [the Kingdom of Heaven], and proclaimed God as the sole king and ruler over the world and the community of men. God therefore proclaimed the people of Israel a "mamleches kohanim" ["kingdom of priests"], because they bring the kingdom of heaven to pass in the world. Therefore, the Magid Rabbi Ber explains, creation is also only for the sake of the people of Israel. "Olo bir'tsono livro ho-olomos bishvil yisro-el" [God willed the creation of the worlds for the sake of Israel],¹⁷² the Magid point out. If not for "Tsimtsum" these worlds could not have existed; also the people of Israel would never have been.¹⁷³ Israel, the Magid

emphasizes, is the essence of life (ikar hachiyus), and the peoples of the world draw and receive the necessary life fluids from the people of Israel, each nation separately. ¹⁷⁴ This idea which the Ari already propounded in his time concerning the "mission," the great responsibility, which Providence predestined for the Jewish people, ¹⁷⁵ is repeated many times by the Magid in his sermons. "Nafshos yisro-el hem ho-ikar v'lo umos ho-olom" [the souls of Israel are the essence and not the nations of the world],---teaches the Magid---but the nations of the world "yesh lohem chelek b'yisro-el" [have a share in Israel], from whom each nation individually draws and receives life (yonkim um'kablim chiyus). ¹⁷⁶ The role of the human personality, of the Jewish personality, *occupies the central position in* ~~the Magid's~~ the Magid's theosophic Weltanschauung. The divine attribute of kingdom is in our hands, for it is only when we recognize His greatness and marvel at His kingdom does He attain to ¹⁷⁷ perfection. But human understanding is limited; "atsmuso en onu y'cholim l'hasig," the essence of the divine we ¹⁷⁸ are not able to grasp, "uch'vod astmuso en onu masigim" [and the glory of His essence we do not grasp], the ¹⁷⁹ Magid repeats. "Olom habino les machashovo t'fiso k'lal"---

the world of divine thought cannot be comprehended by human thought. ¹⁸⁰ "Tachlis b'ri-as ho-olom hu bich'de shena-ale ho-olomos ¹⁸¹ L'shorshon," the purpose of creation is that we should raise the worlds to their original source, the Magid teaches, to the original source which we grasp only according to our understanding. The Magid interprets in his own original manner the well-known Talmudic expression "N'gid sh'me avad sh'me" ["Who-so makes great his name loses his name"]: Before God created the world, "lo hoy'so nikeres malchuso" [His kingdom was not recognized], because "en melech b'lo om" [there is no king without a people]; but because His wisdom, His greatness, and the infinitude of His omnipotence are not comprehensible by all the worlds, He, as it were, performed one contraction after another in order that the world should be able to endure His light. Therefore do we have the right only to address Him as "Adonoi" [Lord], i.e., Lord and Ruler, for we comprehend only a small level of the worlds, we grasp only His will, as it were, to manifest Himself as Lord and Ruler; but the ineffable name which is contained in His essence---we are unable to comprehend. This is the meaning of "N'gid sh'me avad sh'me," for He, as it were,

wished to reveal Himself as "Nogid v'odon" (Lord and¹⁸² Ruler), and His true name had to remain concealed.

God therefore reveals Himself in the world only in the form in which man can comprehend Him; as man conceives of God, the Magid explains, so is He, i.e., in this form¹⁸³

God reveals Himself to the world. As man appears before a mirror, the Magid explains, so is his image reflected back to him. The same applies to God, as it were---as¹⁸⁴ man appears before God, so does God appear before man.

This is the meaning of the Agada that when the Jews crossed the sea, God "nidme lohem k'bochur" [appeared to them as a young man], but at Mount Sinai, when they already had more refined concepts and were already worthy of receiving the Torah, "nidme lohen k'zoken" [He appeared¹⁸⁵ to them as an old man]. "Tsimtsum" and love are a

complete unity. Because of love God created the world by means of "Tsimtsum," for only by means of "Tsimtsum" is man able to comprehend the divine. Just as a father speaks out of love to his small son in "baby talk" so that the beloved child should understand his words with his childish comprehension, so are man's childish ideas¹⁸⁶ and concepts about Himself dear to God.

Here we touch upon the most important point in the

Magid's Weltanschauung. "En onu masigim rak madrego k'tano shebo-olomos shenits'tamts'mu"---we are able to comprehend only the lowest level even of the worlds that were created by contraction, the Magid teaches; we can comprehend God only in the aspect of "odom" [Lord], as Lord and Ruler, but the ineffable name which denotes the essence and nature of the divine---"en onu masigim" [we cannot comprehend]. "V'chen en onu masigim kol ho-olomos ho-elyonim," and thus do we not comprehend all the upper worlds, the Magid adds, unless "b'hispash-tus hagashmiyus v'higavrus ko-ach horuchoni" [by means of stripping away all corporeality and the triumph of the spiritual power]¹⁸⁷. The symbol of the "ko-ach horuchoni" [the spiritual power], the Magid Dov Ber explains, is thought, which leads to "D'vekus" and the stripping away of all corporeality. He does not tire of repeating the Besht's saying that the essence and the beginning of everything is thought. The Magid teaches "umachashovo zu hi ikro v'shorsho d'chol olmin v'hu m'kor hakol umi-menu nis'havo hakol" [thought is the essence and root of all the worlds and the source of everything and out of it everything comes into being]. The Magid explains the Biblical verse "na-ase odom b'tsalmenu" ["Let us

make man in our image"] in this manner: "b'oso tselem
v'tsuro shehoyo nech'kak b'machashovo," in the same
image and form as he was engraved in the divine thought. ¹⁸⁸

Also the Besht's dictum "b'mokom shechoshev odom shom hu
kulo" [a man is completely in whatever place he is think-
ing about] is reiterated many times by the Magid (without
his mentioning thereby, as was his usual custom, his

teacher's name). ¹⁸⁹ "Machashovo hi madrego y'sero al ha-
dibur" [thought is on a higher level than speech], teaches

the Magid; ¹⁹⁰ and here he interprets in his own way the Bib-
lical verse: "Va-ani q'ral s'fosoyim" ["I am of uncircum-
cised lips"]: When a man is of a high level the aspect of
speech becomes too narrow for him, that is, he is no
longer capable of expressing his experiences in words. ¹⁹¹

In order to publicly discourse on Torah, explains the
Magid to his disciples, a man must raise himself to such
a state that only his audience should sense and hear "she-
olom hadibur m'daber bo" [that the world of speech is
speaking in him], but he himself should not hear his voice;
he must raise himself to the level "ad she-eno margish
me-atmo k'lum" [of not sensing himself at all], but as
soon as he begins hearing his own words, he must immediate-
ly desist. ¹⁹² Man is the only creature in the world which is

illuminated by the light of thought; the Jewish personality is the only one which thanks to the Torah possesses the correct concept of God, the Creator, and therefore, "K'she-odom omed lifne hakodosh-boruch-hu kol ho-olomos omdim v'hamalochim omrim shiro" [when a (Jewish) man stands before God (in prayer) all the worlds stand still and the angels recite songs (of praise to God)]¹⁹³. We already know, however, that even the Jew can comprehend God only in the aspect of "adonai" [Lord], but not His essence---the ineffable name. Nevertheless, points out the Magid, at a certain moment, on the holiest day of Sabbath of Sabbaths, on the Day of Atonement, "she-en bo achilo ush'siyo" [when eating and drinking are forbidden], there was one man, the High Priest, who through "hispashtus hagashmiyus and hisgavrus ko-ach horuchoni" [stripping away of all corporeality and the triumph of the spiritual power] attained such a high level that he was already able "l'hasig mik'tsas hasechel shel'ma-alo me-ho-olomos" [to comprehend something of the intelligence which is above the worlds], and therefore he pronounced on that day the ineffable name of God "shehu shem ho-etsem yisborach"¹⁹⁴ [which is the name of God's essence].

The Magid is strongly convinced that also now there

are certain chosen individuals who can attain through "hispashtus hagashmiyus" the state of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. These chosen individuals are the Tsadikim.

We have already shown in the previous chapter how enthusiastically the Besht speaks about the universal role of the Tsadik; the Besht, however, considers it necessary to emphasize here that not only do the plain masses need the Tsadik, but also the Tsadik is in need of the people of a lower level; they complement one another and each must affect the other. According to the Weltanschauung of the Besht, each person is capable, in certain moments of spiritual ecstasy, of becoming part of the divine eternity, and a simple hose-maker, who lives all his life "migi-a kapov b'kashrus" [from honest use of his hands], can attain such a high level that because of his merit, the whole community should be sustained.¹⁹⁵ But the attitude of the Magid Dov Ber is different. We see before us here not the man of the people strolling with staff in hand and pipe in mouth over the streets and market places and telling parables and aphorisms to simple village Jews and women; the Besht's disciple and successor, the erudite and perspicacious Talmudist, was a typical spiritual

aristocrat, permeated with the spirit of "ato bochar-tonism" ["Thou-hast-chosen-us-ism," i.e., a feeling of superiority]. Maimonides in his time was strongly convinced that the true "odom b'fo-al" [the man who has achieved the activation of his intellect], the man of complete perfection, is the expert in all the sciences, who is immersed in the upper worlds. The only task of the "hamon" [the masses], of the simple human being of flesh and blood, is to serve the "odom b'fo-al," to be concerned about the needs of the chosen one, in order that the latter should be able peacefully and undisturbed to occupy himself with speculation and philosophical truth. According to the Weltanschauung of the Magid of Mezheritch, the "odom b'fo-al" is the Tsadik, who is also immersed in the upper worlds, but not with the help of the natural sciences and philosophical speculation, but rather by means of "hispashtus hagashmiyus," "d'vekus," and "hislahavus." Many of his sermons are really nothing but hymns of praise to the crown and lord of the world---the Tsadik. "It is only thanks to the Tsadikim and God's love for them that the world was created," the Magid states. The world exists only for the sake of the Tsadik, and it was only for the sake of the Tsadik that

"hakodosh-boruch-hu tsimtsem es atsmo" [God contracted Himself], so that the worlds should be able to endure Him, as it were. ¹⁹⁸ The Torah of the Tsadik is God's play-
¹⁹⁹ thing. God created the world in order to have pleasure from the Tsadik. ²⁰⁰ The will of the Tsadik "zehu r'tsono yisborach," is also God's will, because, the Magid explains, God contracts His wisdom according to the understanding of the Tsadik, just as a father adjusts himself to the understanding of his beloved child; ²⁰¹ "hu yisborach m'chashev ma shehatsadikim chosh'vim" [God thinks what the Tsadikim think]---for God's thought reveals itself most sharply through the thought of the Tsadik. "Im hem b'ahavo m'vi-im hakodosh-boruch-hu b'-
²⁰² ahavo"---through their love God's love is revealed; the souls of the Tsadikim are the limbs of the "Sh'chino;" everything is in the Tsadik's hands, "hakol al y'de hatsadik." ²⁰³ "Hatsadik m'vatel g'zerosov shel hakodosh-boruch-hu" ²⁰⁴ [the Tsadik annuls God's decrees]; the Tsadik ²⁰⁵ can produce changes in nature, when he wants to. Great are the Tsadikim who transform the attribute of justice ²⁰⁶ into the attribute of mercy; the stories of the Tsadikim are greater than the story of creation, for at creation a "yesh me-ayin" [a something out of nothing] was cre-

ated, but the Tsadikim, they transform the something,
the existing, that is, out of all simple things, even
material things, they raise the holy "nitsotsos" [sparks]
to the status of "ayin" [infinite].²⁰⁷ It is written:

"Yismach adonoi b'ma-asov" ["Let the Lord rejoice in
His works"]---that means that the Master of the Uni-
verse rejoices at his finest creation---the Tsadikim.²⁰⁸

Also the well-known Biblical verse: "Yom l'yom yabi-a
omer" ["Day unto day uttereth speech"] is interpreted
by the Magid in this manner: It means that one day is
priding itself to another day because of the glorious
deeds of the Tsadikim.²⁰⁹ "K'shehatsadik misorer es atsmo
b'yiro oz misorer yiro us'shuvo b'lev kol yisro-el,"

when the Tsadik arouses himself to piety then he arouses
piety and repentance in all Jewish hearts], the Magid
teaches.²¹⁰

The Tsadik, the Magid continues, can raise up
with himself all the people (hatsadik yochol l'hamshich
imo kol ho-anoshim),²¹¹ and herein lies the deep signifi-

cance of the words "Sheva yipol tsadik vokom" ["For a
righteous man falleth seven times, and riseth again"]

(Proverbs 24:10)---each time that the Tsadik falls, it
is only for the sake of rising again and so to raise up
with himself as many "nitsotsos" [sparks] as possible.²¹²

Therefore no one should wonder "mipne ma hatsadik nofel mimadregoso" [why the Tsadik falls from his level] and he sometimes speaks trivial words; this is to be compared, the Magid explains in the style of the Besht, to a king's son who goes about among the villagers to search for a treasure, which is hidden among one of them; he therefore has to dress like a peasant so that it should not be recognized that he is a prince and they should reveal to him where the treasure is; in the same way does the Tsadik speak trivial words. He unites these words with God, as it were.

The "odom b'fo-al" [see above] of Maimonides, the man of complete perfection, keeps himself as far as possible from the masses and thinks only about avoiding damage which the masses might cause him when he comes into contact with them,²¹³ but the Tsadik of the Magid, upon whom the world is supported, is the watchman of the masses and raises up all the people with himself--- "ho-aliyo hi bo-o al y'de hatsadik" [the rising up comes through the Tsadik].²¹⁴

It is true that the Magid develops only the system of theoretical Tsadikism in his teaching. The Tsadik may not think about practical, earthly needs during

his prayers. The entire purpose and being of the Tsadik when he engages in prayer, is only "avor hash'chino she-hi m'komo shel olom" [for the sake of the "Sh'chino" which is the place of the world].²¹⁶ Some of the Magid's disciples, as we shall see later on, made the logical deduction from the master's teaching, and from theoretical Tsadikism they went on to practical Tsadikism. If the Tsadik is "kol yochol" [omnipotent], if he is capable "la-asos hish'tanos b'chol yom sheyirtse" [of performing (miraculous) changes whenever he wishes], and even to annul "g'zerosov shel hakodosh-boruch-hu" [the decrees of God], then he can abundantly supply all the needs of a man---"chayim, bonim um'zonos" [life, children and sustenance].

This stage Chasidism went through later on, but already ⁱⁿ the last years of the Magid's life there broke out a bitter struggle against the young movement, a struggle which divided the entire East European Jewish community into two opposing camps for decades.

To describe this thirty-year struggle between the Chasidim and the Misnagdim is outside the limits of our theme;²¹⁷ our task is only to determine what echo this struggle found in Jewish literature and to evaluate

the influence which it had upon the ideological strivings and the cultural development of the Jewish community in Eastern Europe. Here it must be noted, however, that this struggle was not at all a purely religious one, for actually purely worldly and social motives played the main roles in it. We have already shown in the fifth volume of our work, ²¹⁸ how the process of disruption, which in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seized the Polish kingdom with its backward and stagnant regime, was felt most strongly in the vulnerable, ruined Jewish community. The foundations of autonomy, of Jewish social and communal life were strongly shaken. The debts of the impoverished Jewish communities grew frightfully, and in order to pay these debts and ~~to~~ ^{to} buy themselves off from the local temporal and clerical powers, so that they should not persecute so heavily and not manifest their upper hand and their viciousness by means of all sorts of false accusations against the Jewish population, the heads and leaders of the Jewish community were forced to put a huge head-tax and other levies on each individual member of the community. At the head of the Jewish community there stood the wealthy and the powerful who had connections with the local nobility and the courts of the regional

powers. These Jewish community leaders, getting the power into their own hands, would emulate the local nobility and oppress the poor masses. Little by little, as the disintegration of the government organism grew, the management of the Jewish community became metamorphosed²¹⁹ into a real oligarchy, which brutally made use of its power in order to oppress and exploit the general folk masses in a most disgraceful manner. In regard to the fixing of the tax payments the community heads perpetrated all kinds of frauds: they would exempt themselves and their cronies from payment while heaping everything upon the masses, on the rank and file of the common people. The multitude, which very painfully felt the burden of the tremendous taxation, began to wage a struggle against the community leaders with their unfair division of tax responsibility and unjust manner of collecting the government and community levies.

We have pointed out above that at the head of the Jewish community there stood the wealthy and the powerful, who had connections with the local nobility, and in the courts of the regional powers. The wealthy, however, had to share their power with another group. Whereas wealth led to power, the easiest path which led both to

power and to prestige, was that of Torah and knowledge. Knowledge and erudition in Talmudic lore played such a dominating role in Polish-Jewish life in the eighteenth century, that Solomon Maimon considered it possible to divide the Jewish population into the following three categories: unlearned people who were engaged in trade and all kinds of occupations and work; learned people who made their knowledge their profession; and erudite scholars who devoted their lives only to study and did not engage in any profession and were supported by the merchant-industrial class. The second class consists of rabbis, judges, and the like. The third class consists of the "iluyim" [prodigies] who with their extraordinary abilities and great erudition and sharp-minded-²²⁰ness elicit veneration from those who are unlearned. Often the wealthy would buy a rabbinical position for their sons-in-law, the scholars and "iluyim" [prodigies], and in such a manner there would be united in the family both "Torah ug'dulo" [learning and power]. The community heads, the Torah and money aristocracy, strove to keep all the power in their own hands, and in many communities voting restrictions would often be put into effect in regard to the working class in order to keep them from

the ballot box, and so that they should have as little
 say as possible in community matters. ²²¹ The workers
 tried to fight for their rights, but they had very
 little success in their battle; the community heads,
 having prestige with the local powers and their cronies,
 were allowed to do as they pleased. This brought the
 rightless community members into such a state of em-
 bitterment that in certain places (as, for instance, the
 community of Shavel) they applied to the government
 authorities with the declaration that they did not need
 either the community heads or the rabbi, who knew only
 how to plunder the poor masses and to take away the
 last morsel of food from their mouths. ²²²

But suddenly a new movement appeared which aimed
 to overturn the established order of things. Had not
 the Besht aimed the arrows of his sarcasm against those
 who "be-emes enom lomdim rak mitsvos anoshim m'lumodo
 l'ma-an yechochmu"---study the Torah only for the sake
 of sharpening the mind so as to be considered learned and
 obtain prestige? He placed emotion, the fire of "Kavono"
 above learning, faith above study and investigation, and
 a simple worker "hanehene migi-a kapo b'kashrus" [who
 enjoys the honest labor of his hands] and prays with

"Kavono", is worth much more than the dry, haughty scholars concerning whom Scripture says "Hoi chachomim b'enehem" ["Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes"]. The heads of the community, the potentates and the scholars, saw in the new movement the danger of a real revolt aiming to wrest power from their hands and to bring about a complete social change. "Amcho," the simple rank and file of workers, saw in the Besht's followers their faithful helpers and protectors. Only in this way is it possible to explain the bitterness and hatred with which the community leaders and the majority of the rabbis came out against the Chasidic movement, as soon as it had spread far enough to become a noticeable factor on the social scene. According to the mores of the period, when everything was wrapped in a religious cloak, the struggle against the new movement was also enveloped in a "Shulchon Oruch coat," and was declared a "milchomo l'shem shomayim" [a war for the sake of Heaven] and the battle slogans were of a purely religious nature. But just these religious battle motives that were put forth were rather feebly founded and not particularly convincing. The Chasidic circles could not be accused of moral turpi-

tude as were the Frankists, and unfounded also was the suspicion that they had leanings towards the "false Messiah," for it was the Besht, even more than Rabbi Jacob Emden and the other rabbis with all their anathemas and persecutions, who brought it about that the Frankists and the Sabbatians should lose their last influence in Podolia, Galicia, and in the entire Ukraine.

It is therefore worthwhile to stop to consider the proclamation with the "great and terrible anathema" which the leaders and rabbis of the community of Brody issued in 1772, on the twentieth day of "Sivon," against the new "sect." In this proclamation which is written in a mixed language, half Yiddish and half Hebrew, there are collected the heaviest crimes and sinful acts of which the Misnagdim accused the Chasidim. One of the main accusations is that the new "sect" "had made for itself new and unusual customs, different from the entire Jewish people, which are against our Torah and the Talmud and the codifiers, both former and latter." Specifically there is pointed out as a non-permissible "minhog chodosh um'shune [new and unusual custom] the fact that the Chasidim make for themselves separate

"minyonim" [prayer quorums] and pray "b'shinu-i nus'-cho-os" [with changed versions (of the liturgy)]. It is explained further in what these changed versions consist: they do not pray according to the "Ashk'nazik" version (of the liturgy), but rather according to the "S'fardic" rite, "mitoch hasidur shel ho-ari hakodosh" [out of the prayerbook of the holy Ari]. It is clear that the "S'fardic" rite and the prayerbook of the holy Ari were not in the category of "minhagim chadoshim shonos mikol ho-om hayisr'eli" [new customs different from the entire Jewish people], because this version (of the liturgy) was traditional not only in the "S'fardic" communities, but from the proclamation it becomes clear that in Brody itself there was at that time "the chamber next to the chapel of our community" and there people "already for many years had been praying from the prayerbook of the Ari of blessed memory," and the leaders and rabbis of the community of Brody had no objection to this and spoke of the Jewish burghers who prayed in this chamber with the greatest respect. ■■■

The rabbis were no less angry because the Chasidim "make for themselves grinded slaughtering knives which cannot be found in the entire Talmud and all the codes,

both former and latter, and which all ritual slaughterers declare as impossible to slaughter with.²²³ Precisely one of the most outstanding authorities in the Misnagdic camp, the well-known Rabbi Chayim Volozhiner, subsequently declared openly that he saw no prohibition against the grinded slaughtering knives, and he relates thereby that his teacher, the Gaon of Vilna, expressed the same opinion.²²⁴

And it was because of these "sinful acts" that the community leaders and rabbis found it necessary to announce in their proclamation that "people should put on garments of revenge, ferret them (the Chasidim) out and uproot them, eradicate their memory from the earth and spill coal on their heads with anathemas, bans and excommunications..." Not however, in the separate religious services, not in the "S'fardic" rite, in the great shouting and peculiar movements during their prayers did the danger of the "Kat Chashudim" [sect of suspected ones] lie.^{224A} The "ugly deeds" of this "sect" consisted essentially in the fact that the multitude, the working people and the other democratic elements obtained in the Chasidic teaching an ideological weapon, a justification and support in their stubborn struggle for equal rights

against the "p'ne" [aristocrats], against the leaders and the bosses of the community.

Just as the struggle between the Maimunists and their opponents in its day found an echo in the literature primarily in the form of proclamations, public announcements and open letters, so was it also in the struggle between the Chasidim and the Misnagdim. Already in the year 1772, as soon as the first conflict against the Chasidim broke out, there appeared in the small Volynian town, Oleksenits, a collection with the flowery title Z'mir Oritsim V'charvos Tsurim.²²⁵ The collection appeared anonymously, but the historian Dubnow proposed the theory which is quite correct, that the arranger and editor of Z'mir Oritsim was the scribe of the community of Brody, Judah Leb ben Mordecai. A fiery opponent of the Chasidim, this scribe collected all the documents which were written against the new "sect" in the year 1772: the Igeres Hakano-us [Letter of Zeal] of the community of Vilna, the proclamation of the leaders and rabbis of Brody, the "Takonos" [decrees] of the community of Leshnov against the Chasidim; the letter which the community of Vilna sent to the community of Brisk, the open letter of the community

leaders of Vilna to all the communities of Lithuania with a special document of accusation against the Chasidic sect, who "call themselves by the name Mezheritchians and Karlinians." To these documents the publisher added his own anti-Chasidic pamphlet, written in a very haughty and flowery language. From the vast number of rhymed verses and verse fragments, flowery phrases and "loshon nofel al loshon" [alliterated expressions], one can barely extract the following grave "sins" on the part of the Chasidim: they do not think much of the revealed Torah, but occupy themselves only with the hidden Torah; they throw themselves about and jump when praying and shout so that "hakol nishmo l'-'merochok" [the sound can be heard at a distance]; they sing "z'miros" [hymns of a religious nature usually sung on Friday evenings] with hand-clapping and dances; they do not mourn because of the bitter exile---"ach sosim us'mechim ochlim v'chag'gim" (they only make merry and rejoice, eat and have a good time).

The pamphlet Z'mir Oritsim V'charvos Tsurim which was sent out "b'chol t'futsos yisro-el" [to all the dispersions of Israel] according to an announcement in a letter from the Misnagdim of Vilna, made a great im-

pression; but still the Chasidim at that time did not dare to come forth with an open answer, so confused and frightened were they because of the anathemas and proclamations with which the communities of Galicia and Lithuania came out against them. They limited themselves to the following defense tactics: everywhere they would buy up the copies of the proclamation of anathema and burn them. They carried this out in such a diligent manner that there remained of the entire edition only two rare copies.

It was ^{only} ~~first~~ eight years later that the Chasidic movement felt itself strong enough ~~so that it found it possible~~ to come out openly against the Misnagdim, not only to protect themselves against the attacks of the enemy, but rather ~~so that they themselves~~ ^{to} become the aggressors ^{themselves} and bombard the enemy camp with sharply pointed arrows dipped in hatred and derision. Up to this time the Chasidic teaching was essentially an oral one, which would be passed on from mouth to mouth; only rare transcripts of the teaching of the Besht and the Magid would circulate from hand to hand. In 1780 there appeared simultaneously in two neighboring towns, in Korets and Mezheritch, a complete compendium of the Cha-

sidic teaching, the Toldos Ya-akov Yosef.

The author of this work was one of the Besht's most beloved disciples, the Rabbi of Polonnoye (Volhyhia), Jacob Joseph Hakohen. Jacob Joseph was only a few years younger than his teacher, the Besht.²³⁰ He came from a long line of eminent ancestors and already in his youth he was famous as an erudite and perspicacious scholar of both the revealed and the hidden Torah. He soon occupied the rabbinical pulpit in Shargorod, and led the same kind of life as other learned men in his time: devoted himself extensively to "pilpul" [Talmudic casuistry],²³¹ was greatly preoccupied with the Cabala of Ari, and engaged in frequent fasting. Chasidic legend relates that at first the Rabbi of Shargorod looked with derision upon the amulet writer and exorciser, the Besht. Once Rabbi Jacob Joseph came early in the morning to the synagogue, as was his custom, to engage in public worship. But to his great amazement he found an empty synagogue with only the sexton sitting in the corner. The sexton explained to him that the entire congregation is now in the market place around the Besht, listening to him tell stories and aphorisms. The Rabbi was astonished. He immediately invited the Besht to him, entered into conversation with him, and

from then on became one of his most faithful disciples. The community soon discovered that its rabbi had leanings to the new "sect," and it began to persecute him until finally, he had to leave Shargorod, and he became rabbi in Rashkov. It seems that he lived there in great need, because a Chasidic legend relates that when the author of the Toldos was "av bes din" [chief of the rabbinical court] in Rashkov, "the angels reprimanded the Besht: why are you ~~so~~ silent, seeing the Rabbi of Rashkov is without sustenance!" (lomo ato shosek v'horav mik'hilo k'dosho rashkov en lo parnos²³²o).

But it was not easy for the scholar-ascetic to accept the teaching of the Besht. From the letter of ²³³the Besht cited above, it can clearly be seen that when Jacob Joseph was already a "chosid" of the Besht, he still maintained his old, ascetic way of life, and engaged in fasting and self-tormentation. Ultimately, he became one of the Besht's most faithful disciples and apostles, the ²³⁴founder of the Chasidic literature.

His main work, the Toldos Ya-akov Yosef, is divided according to the weekly Torah portions, but the material of this voluminous book is put together without any system at all. The same matter is repeated there tens of

times, and often in the very same words; in one place (Sh'mos) the author actually admits this himself and states: "V'hine kosavtize b'li sidur dovor dibur al ofano"---and I wrote this without any order, not properly discussing each matter in its place. A subject is often interrupted in the middle while the author proceeds directly to another matter without any transition. It is therefore difficult to agree with the investigator of Chasidism, S.A. Horodezky, that the author of the Toldos Ya-akov Yosef was gifted with a great literary talent. But the author of the Toldos Ya-akov Yosef does have a great virtue: he has a combative temperament, and there where he gives the opponents of his master's Torah their due, he becomes pathetic; his style becomes forceful and weighty; one can sense the brave warrior with the heavy hammer in his clenched ⁿagry fist. He is self-conscious of his role---he has the responsibility of paying back for all the persecutions and excommunications, for the venomous proclamations and public announcements, with which the enemy mercilessly attacked his colleagues and the teaching of his beloved mentor,---and he requites the enemy in full measure.

The Toldos speaks with biting irony about the

scholars who are so proud of themselves (datom gaso)
 because they have studied much Torah; he finds that even²³⁶
 he who has learned the entire Torah is still not called
 a wise man (lamdon), for a wise man is only the one whose
 purpose in studying the Torah is "l'dabek es atsmo al y'de
 hatoro bish'mo hakodosh" [to bring about a union between
 himself and God's holy name through the Torah], which is
 the essential goal.²³⁷ They, the learned men, the author
 of the Toldos says, they demand that everything be ac-
 cording to the strict law; they argue: because I have
 studied a section of Talmud with "Tosofos" [medieval,
 recondite commentary on the Talmud] or the like, I am
 deserving of reward.²³⁸ When the evil inclination, the
Toldos declares with sarcasm, entices one of the multi-
 tude and the latter commits a sin, there are no clever
 tricks which follow: he confesses that he is not acting
 properly and he thus does not bring anyone else into tempta-
 tion. But with the learned ones it is entirely different;
 if a learned man commits even the gravest sin, he will
 exert himself to prove to you that he is really perform-
 ing a good deed; he searches for sanctions ⁱⁿ the Torah
 and so perverts the law in order to demonstrate the rea-
 son why it is permitted to do as he did.²³⁹ Scripture says:

"Uvocharto bachayim l'ma-an tich'ye...l'ahavo es adonoi"
 ["Therefore choose life, that thou mayest live...to love
 the Lord"]. In the last generation, the Toldos complains
 "nismatu hal'vovos," hearts have become small, people
 only want to make a crown of the Torah in order to
 flaunt themselves and show off with it; as soon as
 somebody learns one law he already begins to show off;
 should he study further, he shows off even more; if he
 studies more Codes he already becomes very great in his
 own eyes and thus drifts away from God. The scholastics
 break their feet marching from one city to another to
 study in the "Y'shivos" [schools of higher rabbinic learn-
 ing]; this is what Scripture seems to mean: "Al me suku"
 ["On what part will ye be stricken"]---the more you smite
 your feet to go and study in the "Y'shivo---"od tosifu
 soro" ["seeing ye stray away more and more"], you drift
 and turn away more and more from God.²⁴⁰

The well-known verse of the Song of Songs "Echezu
 lonu shu-olim k'tanim m'chablim k'romim" ["Take us the
 little foxes that spoil the vineyards"] is interpreted
 by the Toldos as follows: the little foxes that spoil
 our vineyards---these are the rabbis which chase after
 money.²⁴¹ Whoever occupies himself with community matters,

the Toldos complains, soon acquires a great fortune; we can see with our own eyes the conduct of the rabbis and leaders who occupy themselves with communal affairs "asher lo nitan lich'tov"---it is beyond description.²⁴² With anger does the Toldos speak about the rabbis who are appointed by the local nobility and owners of the cities (rabonon shema-amidin al pi hasar she-orets shelo), and these rabbis commit acts "al adonoi v'al m'shicho" ["against the Lord, and against His anointed"]²⁴³. It is written: "Som tosim olecho melech" ["thou shalt surely set as king over thee"]; "man malche---rabonon," what does a king mean for us---a rabbi, therefore the meaning is: thou shalt set a king over thee,---choose such a one who does not pursue after honor, for such a one is surely a God-fearing man. If not, if you do not choose yourself, then such a one will come who will forcibly sit himself in the rabbinical chair, and he who strives for this is assuredly a nefarious person²⁴⁴ (mi shehu rodef achar ze b'vadai ish b'liya-al).

With a very fine sarcasm the Toldos relates^{an} interesting story about the changes which a venerable tradition had gone through---that rabbis should travel about in the villages among the rural Jews at Chanuko

time. In previous generations, the Toldos points out, the rabbis had only the interests of Heaven at heart, so they instituted the custom of travelling among the villages also for the sake of Heaven. The reason for this was that in the cities the rabbis were always busy with their Torah in their "Y'shivos" and with other religious matters; and it was only during the days of Ghanuko, which are "yome d'pagre" [vacation days], that they would have free time to travel to the villages, to educate the rural Jews in the straight and narrow path, in regard to profanation of the Sabbath, ritual slaughtering, and many other matters. The rabbis did all these things for the sake of Heaven and profited from the villagers not even "hano-o shovo pruto" [a profit worth a penny]. In later generations the rabbis who would travel to the villages to supervise the local course of conduct found for themselves a sanction for receiving gifts from the village Jews, as "s'char b'telo," [remuneration for time that could otherwise have been used to earn money], because they had desisted from their livelihood during the journey. But the fear of Heaven became continually smaller. And with the passage of time the rabbis ceased providing supervision over the conduct

of the villagers, but they would still travel about specially to gather gifts for themselves. Later the local nobility placed a special tax on the village Jews and they had to send "Chanuko money" home to the rabbis, and the latter were no longer required to exert themselves and travel to the villages for this purpose.²⁴⁵

The author of the Toldos Yosef cannot forget the persecutions which his "sect" had to endure from the rabbis and leaders of the communities. The learned men, the author of the Toldos cries out in anger, are wise only to do evil and about doing good they do not want to know; they are only "m'charch're riv umatso" [provokers of strife and contention];²⁴⁶ they are Jewish devils. Jacob Joseph Hakohen, who witnessed the seven-year rabbinical struggle between the two camps of Rabbi Jacob Emden and Rabbi Jonathan Eybeschuetz cries out with bitterness: "rabonim m'vazin ze es ze" [rabbis disparage one another], they stab each other with the swords of their tongues, each one wants to demonstrate his extraordinary sharp-mindedness, is ready to run the other one through just to prove that he is greater; each one screams: I should reign, I am a greater scholar! The "erev rav" ["mixed multitude"], the Toldos proclaims with anger, these are the learned men

who are wise only to do evil, who have separated the simple masses from the Tsadikim. ²⁴⁷ The hatred which the learned scholars bear towards the Tsadikim derives from jealousy, because the latter are so beloved among the people. ²⁴⁸ The struggle of the rabbis against the leaders of Chasidism is explained in the Toldos as a "milchemes amolek" [a war of the type enjoined by the Torah against Amalek], because of which "shocho le-ofor nefesh tsadikim ~~vachasidim~~ v'govru ba-ale z'ro-a" [the souls of the righteous and saintly were bowed to the ground and the users of force prevailed]. It is written: "milchomo la-dono'i ba-amolek" ["the Lord will have war with Amalek"]--- in every generation Amalek wages war, ostensibly for the sake of God's name and creates a "perud ben had'vekim" [separation between those who cleave (to God)] and divides the people from the Tsadikim (eno meni-ach l'-his'chaber ba-ale hal'vush v'hachomer im ba-ale hatsuro) [not allowing the corporeal and material ones to join with those who attained form]. ²⁴⁹ The Talmud relates, the author of the Toldos writes, that Jerusalem was destroyed only because they derided true scholars and shamed the messengers of God. This means, adds the Toldos, that Jerusalem was destroyed by the learned ones who are called

the false prophets, as Scripture says: "N'vi-ayich chozm loch shov...umaduchim" ["Thy prophets have seen visions for thee of vanity...and seduction"]²⁵⁰.

In direct opposition to the "lomdim" [learned men] and "chachomim l'hore-a" [those who are wise to do evil], the Toldos puts forth the Tsadikim with his teacher, the Besht, at the head. We have already shown previously, that the primary significance of the Toldos consists in the fact that ^{it} ~~he~~ was the first ^{book} to make known the teaching of the Besht, and laid the foundation stone for Chasidic literature. The ideas which Jacob Joseph expresses in his own name have no independent significance, because they are actually nothing more than an explanation or paraphrase of the Besht's thoughts.

The Toldos made a tremendous impression, not only in Chasidic circles, but also among the opponents, the Misnagdim. The sharp polemical tone of the work particularly enraged the rabbis. Their wrath grew even more, because the antagonist who allowed himself to come out so incisively against the learned men and the rabbis, was himself a rabbi. And as soon as the Toldos arrived in Vilna (month of "Ov," 1781), a proclamation was announced in all the synagogues, according to the

decision of the rabbis and leaders of the community of Vilna, in which, among many other anathemas, it is stated that "each person should push away with both hands the people who are called Chasidim--^{"*tae tomar lo*"} ~~go~~ and tell him]! And they are excommunicated and under the anathema and divorced from the entire congregation of Israel. And how much the more so that it is forbidden to have close contact with them or speak to them. Also the people of the above-mentioned sect which are in our community and under the great anathema must depart from our community together with their wives and children. Also it is forbidden under penalty of excommunication for anyone, whether of our community or from Shnipishok or Antokol or those who recognize our authority, to rent them living quarters, and whosoever will transgress shall be excommunicated and under the ban, and all the curses and maledictions [of the Bible] should fall upon his head. And whosoever will obey, it shall be well with him and the blessing of goodness shall come upon him." ²⁵¹

The leaders of the community of Vilna were not satisfied with this, and also sent out messengers with a public announcement, signed by Elijah Gaon and all the rabbis and community heads, to the other communities, to

the effect that there also they should issue a strict ban against the Chasidim. But the renewed struggle of 1781 was even less capable than the first one of 1772 of choking the Chasidic movement, because during these nine years the new movement had strengthened itself and spread out even more.

In the proclamation just cited, the rabbis of Vilna are forced to state that "the misfortune" (the Chasidic movement) "has expanded to all the dispersions of Israel, and especially in the province of Ukraine there are tens of thousands of such unclean people."

Because the young movement spread to various provinces, it lost its original, unified character, and under the influence of the environment in question, it took on various forms.

About this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

From theoretical to practical Tsadikism.- Elimelech of Lizensk and his No-am Elimelech.- The manifesto of practical Tsadikism.- "Hatsadik gozer v'hashem yisborach m'kayem" [the Tsadik decrees and God fulfills].- Two kinds of Chasidism.- The Rebe of Liyadi, Shne-ur Zalmon.- In the heat of conflict.- Shne-ur Zalmon's hatred of Napoleon.- Death en route.- The significance of the Tanyo.- The problem of "Tsimtsum" as elucidated by the author of the Tanyo.- "Or mislabesh" [immanent light] and "Or makif" [transcendent light].- God is both immanent and transcendent.- The extreme idealism of the author of the Tanyo.- The purpose of "ma-ase b'reshis" [creation].- "The world was created for the people of Israel."- The three "l'vushim" [embodiments of the divine]: "machashovo, dibur uma-ase" [thought, speech and deed].- The significance of study of the Torah and fulfillment of the commandments.- The doctrine of the three "b'chinos" [categories]: "chochmo, bino, da-as" [wisdom, understanding, knowledge] (Chabad).- Two kinds of love and fear.- "Ahavas olom" [everlasting love] and "Ahavo rabo" [abundant love].- Two b'chinos [categories] in man's heart.- The highest form of love is "l'ma-alo mib'chinas hada-as v'hat'vuno" [beyond the category of knowledge and understanding].- The Cabalist prevails over the scholar.- The Tanyo on the role of the Tsadik.- The author of the Tanyo on the "chochmos acheros" [secular knowledge].

We have acquainted the reader in the previous chapter with theoretical Tsadikism which plays such an important role in the Magid Dov Ber's theosophical system. We have seen that the Magid places particular emphasis on the idea that the relation between the Tsadik and the masses must be a purely ^{ideal} ~~what~~ one. The Tsadik must not

strive for the satisfaction of any worldly needs through his prayers; his only wish and purpose should be the "Sh'chino" ²⁵² "shehi m'komo shel olom" [which is the place of the world].

We have pointed out in the previous chapters what the causes were which brought it about that the movement founded by the Besht should find favor in the eyes of the great masses of the Jewish population. The profound theosophical speculations of the Magid concerning the cosmic role of the human personality in general and of the Tzadik in particular could, however, interest only those rare individuals who were expert in the "kabolo iyunis" (theoretical cabala) and in the romantic world of Jewish mysticism. The wide masses, however, the unlettered village Jews, tavern-keepers, innkeepers, merchants, small store keepers, working people, indigents and quixotic dreamers in the southern provinces---in the Ukraine, in Volhynia, Podolia and Galicia---they longed for practical help and support, they dreamed of a leader and guide who would be close and understandable to them and would stand by them in their great needs. If the Tzadik is a "kol yochol" [omnipotent], if he is so beloved of God, if he is capable of annulling the most evil decrees and bring-

ing about alterations in "ma-ase b'reshis" [creation], then let him demonstrate "what he is capable of," let him reveal the great miracles, let him first of all provide his Chasidim with sustenance and free them from all misfortunes and afflictions. The economic condition of the Jewish masses was very shaky and uncertain, and the sources of sustenance hinged on miracles only. The Jewish masses were so impotent and vulnerable against the persecutions and false accusations of their clerical and civil foes, against the smallest whim of an insane nobleman, that they therefore awaited with all the fire of the believing soul him who could perform the great wonder, who possesses the required power to be their protector and provider.

A conclusive answer to the demands of the general populace was given by the disciple of the Magid of Mezheritch, the Galician Elimelech of Lizensk, with his ²⁵³
No-am Elimelech, which first appeared two years after its author's death (in 1788).

The No-am Elimelech can with full justification be called "the manifesto of practical Tsadikism." Just as the Toldos, so also is the No-am Elimelech written in the form of a commentary on the Torah; and the entire text

of the five books of the Pentateuch is interpreted as a "Song of Songs"---as a hymn of praises in honor of the Tsadik and his marvelous deeds. For instance, in the scriptural portion Genesis, it is related: "Vayar elo-him es ho-or ki tov"--"and God saw the light that it was good;" the No-am Elimelech immediately explains that "the good" consisted in that the light which was revealed from God was appointed "l'ma-an y'he ezer v'siyua latsadik l'ha-alos hanitsotsin" [to be a help and support to the Tsadik to raise up the "sparks"], because God "rotse davko ba-avodas hatsadikim" [has a special desire in the ministrations of the Tsadikim].

The author of the No-am Elimelech teaches that the level of the Tsadik is higher "mimadregas hamalochim" [than the level of the angels].²⁵⁴ "B'yad hatsadik l'kasher kol ho-olomos," the Tsadik has it within his power to join together all the worlds;²⁵⁵ all the worlds are under his authority and he can do with them as he sees fit;²⁵⁶ the Tsadik can accomplish anything, even causing the coming of the Messiah;²⁵⁷ "hatsadik hu mam'sh_ich hashpo-os lo-olomos" [the Tsadik brings extended abundance to the worlds];²⁵⁸ "al y'de hatsadik nepach mar l'mosok" [the Tsadik can turn bitter to sweet];²⁵⁹ "hatsadik ka-asher yig'zor

omer ken yokum" [just as the Tsadik says and decrees,
 so does it come to pass]²⁶⁰. The Tsadik transforms the quality of justice into the quality of mercy, "v'af im nig'zor al ho-odom miso chalilo yochol l'vatel hag'zero ul'haf'cho l'chayim" [and even if death should have been decreed against a man, God forbid, the Tsadik can annul the evil decree and reverse it to life]²⁶¹; the Tsadik is able to atone for the sins of the entire generation.²⁶² It is written: "B'chor bonecho" ["the first-born of thy sons"]---this refers to the Tsadik who is already sanctified in his mother's womb, and it is he who is called: "ben lamokom boruch hu" [a son of God]²⁶³. The Tsadik can reach such a level that he can see without eyes and hear without ears;²⁶⁴ "ene adonoi hem b'yad hatsadikim" [the eyes of the Lord are in the hands of the Tsadikim]---through the eyes of the Tsadik does God consider the world; the Tsadik can obtain through his holy mouth "kol horachamim v'hachasodim"²⁶⁵ [all the mercies and compassions]; "hatsadik gozer v'hashem yisborach m'kayem" [the Tsadik decrees and God fulfills]²⁶⁶. God blessed the Tsadik with a gift to be able to give life to all the worlds by means of the power of the divine portion which he has received from above (shehatsadik yiten chiyus l'chol ho-olomos b'cho-ach

chelek ho-elohi mima-al). It is written in the Bible:
 "Tov adonai lakol" ["The Lord is good to all"]! God's
 goodness is the divine portion with which the Tsadik is
 blessed and with it he gives abundance "l'chol ho-~~olom~~"
 [to the entire world]; and in this very giving of abun-
 dance by the Tsadik to all the worlds, there lies the
 meaning of the words: "V'rachamov al kol ma-asov" ["and
 His tender mercies are over all His works"]; because,
 if God, as it were, would be the abundant provider, the
 material world (the "olom hama-ase") would not be able
 to receive the tremendous divine abundance; it is only
 when the abundance flows through the agency of the Tsa-
 dik---"nuchal l'kabel hashpo-o" [that we are able to re-
 ceive the divine abundance]. All the mercies which God
 dispenses in the world---all this is done through the
 agency of the Tsadik. The Tsadik is the go-between
 (ham'matse-a) and the "sirsur" [middleman]: he receives
 the divine abundance from above and distributes it to
 all.

The most important instrument with which the Tsa-
 dik carries out his great wonders (mafli nifl'osov) is
 the word. "An angel is created out of each word which
 leaves the mouth of the Tsadik;" "k'shehatsadik mas'chil

lomar diburim," when the Tsadik begins to speak, this creates a great effect in all the worlds "v'ze dugmas hag'ulo" [and this is an inkling of the redemption];²⁷² the words which leave the Tsadik's mouth shine up to the very heavens.²⁷³ "Ikar hachiyus shel hatsadik hu al y'de hat'filo" [the essence of the Tsadik's vitalizing power is prayer], because by means of the prayer the Tsadik unites "b'habore yisale" [with God];²⁷⁴ through the power of his prayer the Tsadik is able to annul all evil decrees; God decrees and the Tsadik annuls.²⁷⁵ And because of this, the No-am Elimelech emphasizes, there arises no change, God forgid, in the unified, unlimited divine will. We must keep in mind, that "mipi elyon lo tetse horo-us," through God's command no evil is created, but man who is connected with all the worlds, severs his bond with the divine because of his sins and falls, God forbid, (rachamono litslon), because of this into great danger; here the Tsadik comes to the rescue and reestablishes the bond between man and the previous source,²⁷⁶ in view of the fact that the Tsadik creates new heavens through his prayers.²⁷⁷ Why does the Tsadik's prayer have such a tremendous effect? The No-am Elimelech answers this question as follows: The Torah is pure love, as it

is written in the prayerbook: "Habochoer b'amo yisro-el b'ahavo," God chose his people Israel with love, and the Tsadik---he is also pure love (gam ken ohev es hashem...v'es kol ho-odom b'ahavo)[also loving God...and all men with love]. Thus all the letters of the Torah are purified through the Tsadik's prayer, "ho-ohev la-kol" [who loves all]. And this is shown by the verse (Psalms CIX:140): "Ts'rufo imros'cho m'od v'avd'cho ahevo" ["Thy word is tried (purified) to the uttermost, and Thy servant loveth it"]. Everything derives from
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 love.

The No-am Elimelech reminds continually that the Tsadik does not think about himself, but rather about the general welfare and is ready to sacrifice his life
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 for all of Israel. "Hatsadik tsorich lih'yos hefker l'chol yisro-el" [the Tsadik must be at the disposal of all Israel], the No-am Elimelech reiterates---he must always
 280
 be ready to do good for each and every individual, prepared "afilo lih'yos b'gehinom" [^{even}to be in Hell], as long as he attains his goal---"lachazor tomid achar tovas yisro-el" [always to look out for the welfare of
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 Israel]. Here the No-am Elimelech underlines that there are two kinds of Tsadikim: Tsadikim who are removed from

this world and are only concerned with the upper worlds; the entire function of this sort of a Tsadik is to purify and emend souls in order to raise them "l'shorsho v'lim'kom machatsavto" [see note 282 for translation];²⁸² but there are also Tsadikim who think and worry continually only about the tribulations of Israel, and their aim and all their thoughts are directed at bringing an abundance of goodness to the world, to bring "b'rocho v'rachamim v'chayim v'chol tuv" [blessing, mercy, life and all²⁸³ goodness].

It is clear that the most important is the second class of Tsadikim, and only the Tsadikim "sheyesh lohem hiskashrus im kol'los yisro-el" [who are bound up with the totality of Israel]---are those who abundantly provide for all the needs of the Jewish people.²⁸⁴ The first type of Tsadikim are ascetics who torment themselves and fast; the others, however, eat with sanctity and purity "l'ma-an avodas yisborach sh'mo" [in order to serve God], and it is these Tsadikim who "yesh lohem ko-ach l'hash'pi-a v'ligzor kir'tsonom" [have the power to provide in abundance and to decree according to their will]; they provide ~~to~~ the world^{with} the three most important requirements: "bonim, chayim um'zonos" [children, life, and²⁸⁵ sustenance]. Because, the No-am Elimelech teaches, in

order for the Tsadik to influence the world, he must benefit from the world (nosen lo k'tsas hano-o gashmis gam ken, k'de sheyeda k'tsas olom) [he is given a taste of physical pleasure also so as to know the world a little].²⁸⁵ The Tsadik who wishes to have an influence on the world must get down from his high level and descend to the Jewish masses in order to be able "l'vatel mehen kol horo-os v'hashiflus" [to remove from them all evils and degradation].²⁸⁶ This thought that the Tsadik "yored mimadregoso l'tovas yisro-el" [descends from his level for the benefit of Israel], is repeated many times in the No-am Elimelech. If the Tsadik would be completely without blemish, how could he give power over the "K'lipo"?²⁸⁷ The majority of the common people is so materially oriented, that it is not able to lift itself to the service of God. Therefore, God, in His great mercy, involves the Tsadikim in some sin, so that they also sink to a low level, and when they exert themselves to raise themselves back to their previous level, they thereby raise the entire multitude along with themselves.²⁸⁸ If the Tsadik were clean from even the minutest sin, he would then have no relation whatsoever to our sinful world, and how could he then influence it? But when he stumbles in

an iniquity, he then repents and thereby also saves the world; and herein lies the true meaning of the words:
²⁸⁹
 "Ashre hador shehanosi chote"---happy is the generation whose leader sins.

But the No-am Elimelech does not forget the ancient principle: do ut des---give yourself if you want others to give to you. It is true that the Tsadik is "kol'los yisro-el" [the totality of Israel], he elevates all contemptible deeds done in Israel and brings them to the holy levels;
²⁹⁰
 "en ho-olom miskayem b'lo tsadikim"---the world can have no existence without the Tsadikim; "hakol tolu-i batsadik" [everything depends on the Tsadik], "en hashefa bo elo al y'de hatsadik" [the divine abundance comes only through the Tsadik], "hatsadik hu hab'rocho ats-mo" [the Tsadik is blessing itself]; the Tsadik performs great wonders, heals the sick, frees the captives, provides sustenance in abundance and blesses with "chaye,
²⁹¹
 m'zone uvone" [life, sustenance and children]; the Tsadik brings it about by means of his great righteousness that even during our bitter exile, we should find favor
²⁹²
 in the eyes of the nations of the world; the Tsadik is dear and sweet "b'chol mine m'sikos" [with all kinds of
²⁹³
 sweetness], et cetera, et cetera. But in order to derive

all this benefit from the Tsadik, it is necessary to become closely attached to him. "Ts'richin Yisro-el²⁹⁴ lih'yos his'chavrusom im hatsadik"---the Jewish people must be closely tied to the Tsadik; if a Tsadik wishes to direct his influence on a person and bless him with sustenance and the like, then he must tie that person's soul with his soul.²⁹⁵ In order to benefit from the Tsadik's blessing and his great abundance, one has to believe in the Tsadik and agree with him in everything.²⁹⁶ One must be concerned for the Tsadik in this world and see to it that the latter has "mo-os b'revach" [sufficient funds].²⁹⁷ "Al y'de n'sino latsadik," the No-am Elimelech teaches, through giving the Tsadik "pidyonos" ["redemption" money; payment for services rendered], the individual becomes "niskasher b'kesher shel kay'mo" [permanently tied with] the Tsadik, and the evil inclination no longer has any control over him to be able to bring him to sin; on the contrary---"yiskadesh al y'de hatsadik," he becomes sanctified through the Tsadik. "G'dolo ma-ase hatsdoko" [great is charity], the Tsadik of Lizensk points out, "hanosen latsadik hushlom!" [he who gives charity to the Tsadik reaches perfection]. Then, he assures us, the world is full and sated with all that is good, with

abundance, blessing, mercy, life, children, sustenance
 and peace without end or limit. ²⁹⁸ The "tsadik hasholem"
 [the true Tsadik], the No-am Elimelech adds, does not
 consider at all that the charity which is given to him
 is for his use and benefit; his entire intention is
 only thus to induce "shefa tovo l'chol yisro-el" [good
 provision for all Israel], and his entire intention
 is only---"liros b'simchas yisro-el shelo yech'sor lo-
 hem kol tuv" [to see the happiness of Israel and that
 they should lack nothing of the best]. ²⁹⁹ It must be re-
 membered that the Tsadik's only function is "l'ha-alos
 ul'hokim es hash'chino" [to raise up and exalt the "Sh'-
 chino"]; ³⁰⁰ the material blessings which he receives are
 "bishvil horuchoniyus" [for the sake of the spiritual];
 even "ba-achilo us'shiyo" ^{by} [eating and drinking] he ele-
 vates the holy sparks (nitsotsos k'doshos); even when he
 speaks about worldly matters---it is all "l'habore yis-
 borach" ³⁰¹ [for the sake of God].

The following is typical: It is written in the To-
 rah (Numbers 15:24): "V'hoyo im me-ene ho-edo ne-es'so
 lish'gogo" ["then it shall be, if it be done in error
 by the congregation, it being hid from their eyes"].
 "Eyes of the congregation," the No-am Elimelech explains,

means the leaders of the people who are compared to the eyes of the entire congregation. But when "the eyes of the congregation," that is, the heads and leaders, walk in a path which is not good, then God in His great mercy takes pity on his people, Israel, and sends them great Tsadikim (v'ya-amid lohem tsadikim g'dolim), who are continually concerned for the multitudes of Israel and with their prayers they sweeten all the harsh decrees against Israel [based on the attribute of justice], and transform them into ~~decrees based upon the attribute of~~
³⁰² mercy. Therefore, every man is required "lilmod meha-
 tsadik es ma-asov" [to learn from the Tsadik his deeds];
³⁰³ it is an act of religious merit to tell stories about the
 great Tsadikim and their ~~religious~~ righteous qualities,
³⁰⁴ and the No-am Elimelech warns, he who allows himself to
 come out with sharp words against the Tsadik, it is
 tantamount to blaspheming against God, and this person
³⁰⁵ will be heavily punished.

This work of the Galician, Elimelech, was, as we have shown, very well suited to the requirements of the
³⁰⁶ numerous leaseholders, innkeepers, tradesmen, small store
 keepers, and all sorts of middlemen and quixotic dreamers
 of Galicia and Ukraine. The young Chasidic movement,

however, did not wish to limit itself to the unlettered masses of the southern provinces; it set out to spread its influence also over the northern provinces of White Russia and Lithuania; its energetic emissaries and propagandists courageously penetrated into the main fortress of rabbinical erudition, Vilna, and successfully acquired Chasidim and followers from among the close disciples of the Gaon of Vilna himself. It is clear that here it was necessary to come forth with a different ideological approach than for the village Jews of Galicia and Ukraine. The disciple of the Great Magid, Elimelech of Lizensk, emphasized his Master's teaching concerning the universal role of the Tsadik, and on the basis of this teaching founded his system of practical Tsadikism; the sharp-minded learning of the Magid, his spiritual aristocratism and theosophic metaphysics were at the same time artfully employed by his youngest and most beloved disciple, Shne-ur Zalmon, the recognized leader of Chasidim in White Russia and the founder of a new way in Chasidism which became famous under the name "Chabad."

Shne-ur Zalmon, the progenitor of the Chasidic dynasty Shne-urson, was born in 1747 in the White Russian town of ⁺Liozne, to a family of distinguished descent. His

father, Boruch, a learned Jew, carried his lineage back to the famous Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague. At the age of twelve the young Shne-ur Zalmon was already famous as a prodigy; at the age of fifteen he was married and while living in his father-in-law's house in Vitebsk, he studied Torah day and night. The "Chabad" Chasidim have many legends about his stupendous diligence and extraordinary talents. At the age of eighteen, he was already widely known as one of the most erudite experts in Talmudic literature. In order to better understand certain problems which are discussed in the Talmud, Shne-ur Zalmon also occupied himself greatly with the study of astronomy and mathematics. This knowledge he obtained exclusively from Hebrew sources, such as the Elim of Joseph Solomon Delmedigo and others, because outside of Yiddish and Hebrew, he understood no other languages. He did not, however, satisfy himself with "toras hanigle" [revealed Torah]. In this great keen-minded genius and tremendously diligent scholar, there vibrated somewhere in the deepest recesses of the soul, a delicate poetic string. He would chant his prayers with his own melodies which came from the depths of his heart, "ki hanigun hu inyan hispalus halev v'hanefesh," he would say, melody

springs from the rapture of the heart and the soul.
 Thus he could not be satisfied with Talmudic literature alone, and he engrossed himself in "chochmas hanistor" [hidden knowledge, Cabala]. He finds deep mysteries in Isaiah Horowitz's notes to the prayerbook, and explains that "t'filo y'sod kol hatoro" [prayer is the basis of the entire Torah]. At this time, he heard for the first time about the Great Magid who was great both in "nigle" [revealed Torah] and "nistor" [hidden Torah] and who was going on a new path of his own. Most probably it was one of the energetic emissaries and agitators whom the Magid Dov Ber sent out to the various provinces who acquainted Shne-ur Zalmon as well as the young Solomon Maimon with the new Chasidic movement. A Chasidic legend relates that at the beginning, Shne-ur Zalmon stood "al poroshas d'rochim" [at the crossroads], not knowing where to go: to Vilna, the capital of rabbinic learning, or Mezheritch, the headquarters of Chasidism: "I have heard^{in Shne-ur Zalmon's name}---a Chasidic legend relates^Λ---"that in Vilna they study well and in Mezheritch they pray well. In Vilna the essential thing is study and in Mezheritch it is "Avodas halev" [worship of the heart]; in study I am proficient, but to 'worship of the heart' I have paid but little attention." And he decided to seek

his life's course in Mezheritch. Like Solomon Maimon, also his contemporary, the prodigy of Liyozne, had no money for fare, and he set out on foot for Mezheritch. The Magid Dov Ber soon recognized in the young scholar and "seeker" future greatness in Israel, and therefore became very close to him, and, as Chasidic legend has it, transmitted to him "kol sisre chochmoso" [all the secrets of his knowledge]. Shne-ur Zalmon became very friendly with the only son of the Magid, who, because of his renunciation of all this-worldy interests, was known as Abraham the Angel. The latter was a passionate Cabalist; he also led his young friend into the deep ³⁰⁹ mysteries of the Cabala. From then on (this was in approximately 1767) Shne-ur Zalmon would return home for occasional short visits with his family and spend the rest of the time with the Magid Dov Ber, accompanying him on his journeys to Rovne and Anipoli. ³¹⁰

The Chasidic legend that Shne-ur Zalmon turned from the path which led to scholastic Vilna and set out on the road which led to Chasidism is actually not altogether correct. The scholar of Liyozne tried to combine and unify both ways, and in this his teacher, the Magid Dov Ber himself, assisted him. On the advice

of the latter, Shne-ur Zalmon set out on his first major work---to write a commentary to the Shulchon Oruch, or, more correctly, to produce a new Shulchon Oruch in which all the laws and regulations which are given in the Shulchon Oruch are interpreted and explained in an easily understandable form, in order that "also those who because of preoccupation with making a living are not able to devote much time to the study of the Torah" should be able to easily find every necessary law. In determining the actual laws, Shne-ur Zalmon is among the "machmirim" [those who are rigid and strict]. "Olenu l'dakdek b'divre sofrim v'chumrehem"---we must, he warns, faithfully follow the words of the Scribes and their rigid interpretations in all details, and also all the rigid interpretations of the Talmud and the Codes.
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Soon after completing the first part of his Shulchon Oruch (Orach Chayim), the first conflict against the Chasidim broke out, and the leader of the Chasidim, the Magid Dov Ber, passed away. For the Chasidim there began troubled years of anathemas and persecutions. Shne-ur Zalmon, who possessed a calm and collected character, exerted himself, but without success, to quench the fire of

conflict. When the eldest of the Magid's disciples,
 Rabbi Mend'l of Vitebsk, decided to leave his home and
 to settle in Palestine, he journeyed to Vilna together
 with his younger colleague in order to see the Gaon of
 Vilna, and to demonstrate to him personally that he ^[the Gaon]
 was "choshed bich'sherim" [suspecting innocent people],
 because the Chasidim were honest Jews and did not trans-
 gress any command or prohibition of the Torah. The
 zealot, Rabbi Elijah Gaon, however, shut the door in
 their faces and refused to see them, since there was a
 specific law in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 38b): "im min osur
 l'hisvake-ach"---it is forbidden to debate with a wicked
 person and a heretic, and it is forbidden to look at their
 face. Three years later, when Shne-ur Zalmon was already
 practically the recognized leader of all the Chasidim in
 White Russia, he issued an open letter to all his follow-
 ers which began with the words "ad'rabo no sholom" [on
 the contrary, peace],³¹² and in which he asked the Chasidim
 to refrain as much as possible from angering the opponents
 and to keep from controversy. But this letter could help
 very little. Precisely the next year (in 1781) there
 broke out a new struggle against the Chasidim,³¹³ and it was
 not only Jacob Joseph Hakohen with his Toldos Ya-akov³¹⁴

Yosef who caused it. When one reads the documents which describe the first controversy of 1772, it is possible at least to imagine that we are concerned here with purely ideological motives: the rabbis and community leaders struggled against the new "sect" because they suspected it of the Sabbatian and Frankist heresies; but already in the years 1780-1781 we see among the fighters against the Chasidic movement the plotter and informer Avigdor, who purchased the rabbinical post in Pinsk from a Polish nobleman.³¹⁵ His hatred of the Chasidim derived from his fear of losing this rabbinical position, and he therefore approached the Gaon of Vilna with a libelous denunciation of the Chasidim, picturing them as schismatic and dangerous heretics.³¹⁶

The social motives of this struggle become even clearer in its later stages---in the last years of the eighteenth century, when the main target of the hostile attacks of the Misnagdim became the leader of the White Russian Chasidim---Shne-ur Zalmon, who, because of his great organizing abilities and extraordinary authority as a scholar, had acquired tens of thousands of new adherents for the Chasidic movement in Lithuania and White Russia.³¹⁷

In the eighties of the eighteenth century, the struggle against the Chasidim subsided because of purely political reasons. The disintegration of the Polish Kingdom was proceeding apace at that time. The three neighboring countries ripped away from her entire provinces; thus the compact community of Polish Jewry was divided into four parts. The largest portion of the Besht's disciples, however, still remained in the moribund Polish Kingdom. This weakened considerably the struggle against the Chasidim, since at the slightest danger the Chasidic leaders and their followers had the possibility of removing to the neighboring province, which was already under another government. The situation changed, however, in the middle part of the nineties,³¹⁸ after the complete collapse of the Polish Kingdom; except for Galicia, all the other formerly Polish provinces with significant Chasidic communities came under the hegemony of the Czarist Kingdom. This brought it about that when in 1796 the conflict against the Chasidim broke out again, it assumed new forms entirely: there were appeals not only to the communities and the weapons were not only excommunications---the governmental power was called to help and accusations and letters of denunciation were sent to the

proper authorities against the hostile side which it was desired to overcome and destroy by means of the new power. As is known, the beginning of this controversy which broke out in 1796, was connected with two events. The Chasidim started a rumor that the Gaon of Vilna supposedly regretted his previous persecution of the Chasidim. When the Gaon found out about this and came out with an open denial, the Chasidim tried to demonstrate that the denial was a forgery and that the Gaon did not write it. At this time Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon's Tanyo came off the press; the Gaon of Vilna saw blasphemy in certain expressions there. Fanatical Chasidim-haters of the Gaon's close disciples played no small part here, and soon (October 2, 1796) the Gaon of Vilna came out with a wrathful open letter to the communities of all the large cities against those who "transgress against the Torah and interpret it in a manner at variance with tradition," and he demanded that all "take revenge for the desecration of the Torah whose beauty those dissolute people have cast to the ground; nobody should take pity upon them, all must go forth with the sword of revenge against those who destroy the Holy Covenant." When the leaders of the Jewish community in Minsk received the Gaon's angry

summons, they immediately appointed a special commission to work out the strongest measures against the Chasidim. Concerning these measures which they determined on, they informed the other communities with the characteristic remark that in their struggle against the Chasidic "sect" they could rely on the power of the government: "we have the possibility of persecuting the Chasidim, because with the help of God we have obtained the authority for this from the great lord, our Governor-General."³¹⁹

The Gaon of Vilna, who was completely removed from any this-worldly interest, sincerely regarded his struggle against the Chasidim as a "milchomo l'shem shomayim" [a war for the sake of Heaven]. His object was only to protect the holy Torah against those who "m'gale ponim shelo k'halocho" [interpret it in a sense at variance with the adopted one]. Those who had personal accounts to settle with the Chasidim and their leaders³²⁰ knew very well how to make use of this fact.

But as soon as the Gaon died the fight against the Chasidim took on other forms. As soon as the old Gaon was brought to burial, the rumor spread in Vilna that the Chasidim were rejoicing and dancing because of the good news that their dangerous opponent was dead. The circum-

spect and composed leader of the Chasidim, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon, dispatched a proclamation to his adherents soon after the Gaon's death warning them not to dare to come out with words of derision against the deceased Gaon.³²¹ But it was to no avail. The leaders of the community in Vilna soon dispatched an accusation to Petersburg against "a new Jewish sect" which they pictured as politically dangerous and as the leader, they pointed the finger at the Rabbi of Liyozne, Shne-ur Zalmon.³²² Upon orders from Petersburg the Rabbi of Liyozne was arrested in September, 1798 and taken to Petersburg. The arrest of Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon made a great impression in Chasidic circles. Soon 60,000 rubles were collected and immediately Chasidic "shtadlonim" [intercessors] departed for Petersburg with this sum. The collected sum of "pidyon sh'vuyim" [money to redeem captives] helped considerably to speed up the trial in the "Privy Council." From Shne-ur Zalmon's written answers to the questions that were put to him, it was easy for the officials of Paul I to become convinced that the ideas which this Chasidic rabbi and his helpers were spreading had no political character, and on the 19th of "Kislev" Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon was released from the Peter-Paul Fortress.³²³ With great joy

Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon sent the news of what had happened to him by letter to Rabbi Levi Yits'chok in Berditchev and to Rabbi Boruch in Medzhibozh: He was reciting Psalms while sitting in the fortress, and as soon as he came to the verse "Podo b'sholom nafshi" ["He hath redeemed my soul in peace"], the door was immediately opened and they told him the good news that he was free. ³²⁴

But this joy did not last long. The Chasidim did not want to forgive the Misnagdim for the persecutions they had suffered at their hands, so they allied themselves with the democratic elements of Vilna, who for years had been waging a stubborn battle against the community leaders, ³²⁵ and in this manner they succeeded in February, 1799 in overthrowing the community heads and closing the "Bes din" [rabbinical court], and at the new elections in putting into office their candidates, and in placing at the head of the community one of the "anshe sh'lomenu" [chasidic adherents], Meyer Raphaels. The former community leaders, however, did not want to surrender. Here the Rabbi of Pinsk, Avigdor ben Chayim, who is already well-known to us, came to their aid. This money-hungry rabbi was hated by the masses of Jews in Pinsk and also by the Chasidim there who saw in him their bitter foe. By uniting

forces they finally succeeded in evicting the hated rabbi from Pinsk. This former Rabbi of Pinsk allied himself with the former community leaders of Vilna, and together they came out against their enemy. Avigdor ben Chayim made a special journey to Petersburg and there presented a document of accusation against the Jewish Community of Pinsk which had discharged him from his rabbinical post there, and in a special, rather long memorandum, he presented, in nineteen points with citations from Chasidic literature, various accusations against the "new Jewish sect," which represented a great danger for the government and for society. As leader of this highly dangerous sect, the Rabbi of Liyozne, Shne-ur Zalmon, was again put forth. Avigdor finally attained his goal. In October, 1800 an order was sent from Petersburg to the Governor of Mohilev to arrest the Rabbi of Liyozne and to bring him to Petersburg. Once again the leader of the White Russian Chasidim sat imprisoned in the Peter-Paul Fortress, and had to carry on a debate with Avigdor and give written answers to all the accusations. This time also the Rabbi of Liyozne succeeded in demonstrating that the accusations were of a purely personal character, and that the teachings of the founders of the Chasidic

movement were absolutely devoid of political rebellion. He also composed a rather long letter to the Czar Paul in which he gives a mass of citations from the Bible and Talmudic literature in order to prove that all are required to be subservient to and to carry out the commands of the king. At the close he expresses his certainty that the Czar will see the justness of his position and he humbly accepts in advance the Czar's decision "k'din mish-³²⁶pat melech elyon" [as the royal decree of an exalted king].

Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon was soon freed, and speedily after Paul's unexpected death, he also received permission to leave Petersburg and to return home.

Soon after this Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon left the city of his birth and settled in the town of Liyadi where he spent his last years, and it was as "Horav miliyadi"--- the Rabbi of Liyadi, that the founder of the "Chabad" school of Chasidism went into history. In order to bring to an end the controversy between the Chasidim and the Misnagdim, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon visited in many cities the most important rabbis and scholars of that time, such as Moses Chefets, Joshua Tseitlin and others, and in personal conversations assiduously tried to demonstrate that the teachings of Chasidism should not be suspected of con-

taining harmful ideas and that in them there was no danger whatever for the Torah or the people of Israel. The Chasidic movement became so strong at that time that the Misnagdim themselves were forced to recognize it as a significant social force; this forced them to lay down their arms and to make peace.

The Rabbi of Liyadi, who was by nature a man of peace, was destined, however, to spend his life in an atmosphere of contention. After the Misnagdim ceased persecuting him, he had much to put up with from his colleague, Rabbi Abraham of Kalisk, who, by his nature and his Weltanschauung had to come into conflict with the always composed and calmly circumspect author of the ³²⁷Tanyo. Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon was destined to spend the last year of his life amid the thunder of the great War of the Nations, and he breathed his last in a strange place---in an isolated Russian village in the plains of Kursk. In 1812, when the war between France and Russia broke out, and Napoleon's victorious legions crossed the Vistula and the Niemen, the leaders of Chasidism divided into two camps according to their sympathies: the Tsadikim who lived in the Polish provinces, such as Elimelech of Lizensk and Jacob Isaac of Lublin, sided with Napoleon

and prayed that their "Sar" [Lord] should be victorious. Here we must take into consideration that in the "Duchy of Warsaw" which Napoleon formed in 1807, equal rights were decreed for all citizens with regard to religious belief. The Jews of Poland, therefore, were very sympathetic to the "Great Napoleon." Only a few Tsadikim, such as Israel of Kozenits, were unfriendly to Napoleon because of fear that the victory of revolutionary France might lead to heresy. The Chasidic leaders living in the Russian provinces also maintained this point of view. The "Rebe of Liyadi" was the most unfriendly of all to the "Great Corsican." He was strongly convinced that "as soon as France will be victorious, heresy will spread among the Jews" and that Napoleon was "the Satan who is the greatest enemy of the good, and that his entire striving is only after evil." When he discovered that Moses Meisels was friendly to the French Army, he immediately sent him one letter after another warning him that he must remain faithful to his fatherland and do everything in his power for the benefit of the Russian government. The following is a typical letter:

On the first day of Rosh Hashono I was shown (from heaven) that if Bonaparte will be victorious, wealth will increase among the Jews, and their

status will be improved, but the hearts of the children of Israel will become separated and distant from their Father in Heaven. But if our Lord, Alexander, will be victorious, then, it is true, poverty will increase among the Jews and their status will deteriorate, but the hearts of the children of Israel will cleave to and be united with their Father in Heaven.³²⁸

The son of the Rabbi of Liyadi, Dov Ber, also emphasizes³²⁹ in his letter to the same Moses Meisels, how strongly convinced his father was "that the Jewish religion is protected best under the government of Czar Alexander," and he points out in the same letter how energetically his father had agitated among his adherents that they should try to assist the Russian Army against the French by all means including espionage.³³⁰

But Napoleon's victorious legions approached closer and closer. When they captured Borisov, which is quite close to Liyadi, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon gathered his entire family and fled together with the Russian army. The sixty-six year old patriarch was forced to wander from village to village for months on end, in the wintry frosts which had broken out early, until he became ill on the way, and in the village of Faini in the area of Kursk he passed away on the fifteenth of "Kislev."

The "Old Rebe of Liyadi," Shne-ur Zalmon of Liozne, went into history as the founder of a special school of

Chasidism, called Chabad. He developed his teaching most thoroughly in his important ethical-theosophical work Likute Amorim, which is better known under the title ³³¹Tanyo. This work which has become so famous is not a unified creation, but really a "likute amorim" [collection of sayings], a collection of various pamphlets. In the early period of the flourishing of Chasidism, the recognized heads of this movement were true "ⁿma'hige hador" [leaders of the generation] and "more derech" [teachers of the way]. With the growth and territorial spread of the Chasidim, the leaders were no longer able to have frequent personal relations with their adherents and admirers--- therefore people would turn to them with written questions concerning all possible social and religious-ethical matters. The leaders would respond to the questions with ³³²open letters and pamphlets, which would be multiplied into many copies in the local communities and thus spread over the entire district. The copyists, however, would often make errors or for various reasons introduce changes into the text. Therefore, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon decided to publish his "ma-amorim" [writings] and responsa as a separate book. The first part of his work, consisting of two parts: Sefer shel Benonim and Sha-ar Hayichud V'ho-³³³emano, is the most important.

In the preface the author modestly explains that the bulk of his Likute Amorim is taken from works composed by "sofrim k'doshe elyon" [writers of the highest holiness]. But this is not entirely correct. Because out of these various and often even differing elements, out of the separate sayings and thoughts, he succeeded in building a complete structure, an original theosophic-ethical system. In the creator of this system we can discern a great master, an unusually sharp and perspicacious mind. It is true that this structure seems too old-fashioned and medieval for the threshold of the nineteenth century, the era of revolution and enlightenment; but the responsibility for this is not so much the author's as it is the narrow and backward environment in which he happened to live and to create.

It was not without reason that the young Shne-ur Zalmon was so loved by the old Magid of Mezheritch. Just as his master, so was the disciples devoted heart and soul to scholarly rabbinism, standing solidly for the most rigorous observance of the commandments, and loyally and vigorously behind the motto: "v'talmud toro k'neged kulom" [and study of the Torah outweighs all the other precepts]; Shne-ur Zalmon, precisely as the Magid did,

desired to warm up the icily frozen rabbinism with the fires of mysticism, with the enthusiasm and fervor of the Besht's teaching.

Just as with the Magid, so also does the problem of "Tsimtsum" occupy an important place in the Weltanschauung of the author of the Tanyo. Just as his teacher, so also does Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon interpret the Ari's teaching concerning "Tsimtsum" in a manner at variance with the majority of the Ari's disciples. According to the Ets Chayim, the Ari gives the following picture of creation: When the "En-Sof" [Infinite] willfully decided to create worlds, in order that His name and His deeds should become manifest, then "tsimtsem es atsmo" [He contracted Himself]; the "En-Sof" shrank Himself in the midst of His unending light. So there was formed a space at this midpoint, and in this space God, Blessed be He, "radiated, created, completed and brought forth all the worlds."³³⁴ The Magid, however, gave another explanation to the Ari's teaching concerning "Tsimtsum;" he could not³³⁵ agree with the idea that God "tsimtsem es atsmo," contracted Himself, and left an empty space (mokom ponu-i) for the worlds, because this contradicts the basic tenet of the founder of the Chasidic movement: "Les asar ponu-i

mine"---there exists no place which is empty of God.
 We have already previously cited the Magid's words to³³⁶
 the effect that God created the world because of love
 by means of "Tsimtsum;" because the worlds would not
 have been able to endure the tremendous stream of di-
 vine light, God, as it were, "tsimtsem es oro"---weak-
 ened His unending light through partitions and substances;
 and this weakened, hidden light is called "Tsimtsum,"
 which, according to the Magid's explanation, is identical
 with the Biblical concept "Elohim" [God as distinct from
 "the Lord"], and through it, through the "Tsimtsum,"
 were the worlds created.

The author of the Tanyo also proceeds from this
 idea: he finds that the concept of "Tsimtsum" cannot
 be explained in such a manner that there occurred a
 "siluk ~~mo~~Kom lits'dodin" [a removal of space to the
 side] in regard to the light of the "En-Sof" [Infinite],
 because the "En-Sof" is to begin with not limited as to
 place and space, and it is written: "Ani adonoi lo sho-
 nisi" ["I the Lord change not"]---with God there occurred
 no change whatever from before the creation of the world
 until after it.³³⁷ It is therefore clear that by "Tsimtsum"
 we cannot understand a movement from one place to another,

but rather does it mean the hidden conditon in which
the divine light reveals itself. ³³⁸ The Rebe of Liyadi
handles in a profound and clear-sighted manner in his
Tanyo the acute contradictions and difficulties which
already the Cabalists of the generation of Ezra and Ez-
ri-el ³³⁹ exerted themselves to answer and explain: How the
"yesh" [existing] is born out of "ayin" [nothing], out
of the infinite---the finite and limited and speedily
changeable.

The author of the Tanyo emphasizes that in regard
to the problem of understanding God, he agrees with the
point of view of Maimonides, that the concepts which man
can have concerning God must be limited to purely nega-
tive qualities. ³⁴⁰ The author of the Tanyo reiterates often
that no creature in the world is able to comprehend the
secret of "creation out of nothing" and to have the slight-
est concept of the essence of the Creator and His thought. ³⁴¹
"Dibro toro kil'shon b'ne odom" [the Torah speaks in hu-
man language], the sages of the Talmud explain; but the
language of men is so pale and poor, it is not able to
give a true and correct concept of the essence of the
things and phenomena which surround man and fill the space
of the world; man uses word-pictures and word-symbols, but

how is it possible to give a concept in pictures and images of something which has no likeness or representation? How can one speak of divine characteristics and attributes when all the characterizations and comparisons which exists in human speech are fitted for purely human concepts and ideas? They reflect human feelings and desires, but the essence of God is entirely different, absolutely distinct from the human essence. Therefore we have to remember, the author of the Tanyo reiterates, finding support in Maimonides, that human beings designate essentially differing concepts with the same word. We use, for instance, the expressions: thought, word, and the like, both in regard to human beings and also in regard to God, whereas here we are actually dealing with two essentially differing concepts. When we use the expression "dibur" [word] in reference to human beings, we understand thereby the word which is born and emitted through human thought and through human sound separated from one human being and imparted to another. That, however, which in reference to God is designated as "dibur" [word], is the manifestation, the change from potentiality to actuality, "mehelem el ha-gilu-1" [from the hidden to the revealed] of the divine

light. This manifestation is also called "Eser S'firos" [the "Ten Spheres"] by means of which all the worlds were created and sustained. All the "contractions" by means of which the worlds were created are only in the category of "hester ponim"³⁴² [see note], because in the divine itself there occur no "contractions" and concealments, and both darkness as well as light (k'chashecho k'oro), and also all the "contractions" and "corporealizations"---not one of them is separate from God; He remains in the unending eternities "yochid um'yuchod," the one and only unity; also now, after the creation of the world, it is as it is written in the Torah: "Adonoi hu ho-elohim" ["the Lord is God"]---"Adonoi"-[the Lord] and "elohim" [God], which is identical with nature (elohim hu b'gimatri-o hateva) [the word "elohim" is numerically equal to the word for nature, "teva"], are unified and indivisible, "b'li shum shinu-i k'lal" [without any change whatsoever]³⁴³. The change comes about only according to the standpoint and limited concepts of the "m'kablim" [recipients], that is,,deriving from man. With great acumen the author of the Tanyo eliminates the philosophical problem of whether God is immanent or transcendent, that is, whether God is the external or internal first-

cause of the world. According to his Weltanschauung God is both at the same time, both in the world and above the world. "God, Blessed be He," the author of the Tanyo explains, "penetrates all the worlds in equal measure;³⁴⁴ human beings can endure and comprehend the divine light only through marvelous "contractions," wrapped in thick veils, until the abundance of divine light is transformed from the state of "bilti ba-al tachlis" [infinite] to the state of "g'vul v'sachlis" [limited and finite]. There can be no comparison between these limited human concepts and the real divine essence, and the light which the creatures receive according to their understanding is such an incomparably diminished reflection of the infinite light, that no comparison can be made between them (v'en benehem erech v'yachas k'lal).³⁴⁵ The author of the Tanyo therefore underlines most sharply the colossal difference between "or mislabesh" and "or makif"---between immanent and transcendent light.³⁴⁶ In reality, "hakodosh boruch hu m'male kol olmin b'shove" [God fills all the worlds in equal measure] and the author of the Tanyo warns: "It should not even enter your mind that the heavens and all the stars and the earth with its creatures are a
³⁴⁷
"dovor nifrod bifne atsmo" [see note for translation],

since "hakodosh boruch hu m'male kol ho-olom,"³⁴⁸ God fills the entire world. From this point of view the divine light which "fills all the worlds equally" is an "or mislabesh," an immanent light. But the concepts which the "m'kablim" ["recipients"], the creatures, have of the world and the divine light which fills it, are "k'ayin vo-efes mamosh" [really as nothing]. These limited human concepts are in comparison to the divine first-cause "b'telim bim'tsiyus mamosh" [utterly dissipated], like a weak ray of light becomes nullified against the sea of light carried by the sun itself, or as the sound of a word is nullified in comparison to the rich world of feelings of the soul.³⁴⁹ In regard to these limited human concepts, God is "muvdol umufrosh me-ho-olomos" [divorced and separated from the worlds] and His infinite light is in the category of "sovev umakif"---³⁵⁰ it is transcendent, above and outside of the world.

The purely idealistic Weltanschauung presents itself even more clearly in the author of the Tanyo than in the Besht and the Magid of Mezheritch. "We, with our corporeal eyes, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon teaches, are not able to comprehend God's power and His breath revealed in the creation of the world; if we were capable of grasp-

ing and perceiving all this, we would then see no material things. We would then understand that all this is really "botel bim'tsi-us [utterly dissipated] compared to the living spirit which is in all material things, and without which everything is "ayin vo-efes mamosh"³⁵¹ [utter nothingness]. We would understand, the author of the Tanyo repeats, that every material object, even stones, earth and inanimate objects, are all really "eno dovor bifne atsmo" [not independent, separate entities], but that they owe their entire existence to the sparks of life with which they are blessed by God, and without which they return to the lap of non-being (yachazor lih'-yos ayin vo-efes).³⁵² The pious "Rebe of Liyadi" had no idea that in regard to his attitude to the material world, he came by his own methods to the same conclusions as the Irish Bishop Berkeley and the great sceptic Hume.

But what is the purpose of creation, of "ma-ase b'reshis"? The author of the Tanyo is strongly convinced that everything in the world was created "l'shem tachlis"--- for a specific aim and purpose. Just as his teacher, the Magid,³⁵³ so also does the author of the Tanyo present the same explanation: "En melech b'lo om" [there is no king without a people].³⁵⁴ The purpose of all the "contractions"

and stages of creation, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon teaches, is in order to create man, who must wage war with the material of his body, fight against the "sitro achro" [forces of evil], unite by means of his free will with the light and cast away the darkness, elevate his soul and the forces of his body "lashem l'vado" [to God alone]... everything is because of love for man here below, in order to raise him to the divine.

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Just as for the Magid of Mezheritch, however, so is for his disciple, Shne-ur Zalmon, the role of the personality, of the individual, closely bound up with the problem of the cosmic role of the congregation of Israel. The author of the Tanyo explains that God contracted His infinite light and put it into the same category as the finite world, out of love for His people Israel, in order to bring it near to Himself and include it in His unity (lich'lol b'yichudo v'achduso yisborach).

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The Congregation of Israel, the source of all Jewish souls--- is the "Sh'chino."

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Every individual, we read further, must remember his great responsibility and is required to say: "Bishvili nivro ho-olom"---the world was created for my sake, and I have to improve it. But he should not forget that the mother of his divine soul is the Con-

gregation of Israel---the source of "nafshos kol yis-ro-el" [all the souls of Israel].³⁵⁹

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We have already shown in the previous chapter how the Magid motivates his standpoint: God and the Torah are one, and therefore the Torah also, in order to become revealed, required "Tsimtsum." The sole bearer of the Torah, however, is the people of Israel; therefore, the creation of the world was only for the people of Israel. This thesis is developed into an entire system by the author of the Tanya.

To carry out his mission---to raise the world to God, "to illuminate the darkness with the divine light" (sheyo-ur or hashem, en-sof boruch hu, bim'kom hachoshech) and to fill the world with God's glory (lih'yos k'vod hashem mole kol ho-orets halozu)---man can achieve with the help of three "l'vushim" [embodiments of the divine]: "machashovo, dibur, uma-ase" [thought, speech and deed]. Thought and speech---this is study of the Torah, and deed---that is fulfilling the 613 commandments of the Torah.

Here we have before us the typical rabbinical scholar and codifier. The author of the Tanya does not tire of repeating that "Talmud toro k'neged kulom" [study of the Torah outweighs all the other commandments], "en tov elo

toro" [there is no good except the Torah], ³⁶¹"talmud toro shokul k'neged kol hamitsvos" [study of the Torah outweighs all the other commandments], ³⁶²"ma-alas ho-osek ba-toro mosor mikol hamitsvos" [the level of one who occupies himself with the Torah is superior (to one occupied) with any of the other commandments]. ³⁶³"Les machashovo dile t'fiso be k'lal"---man is not capable of comprehending God's thought, therefore God, Blessed be He, wrapped His wisdom and His will in the Torah by means of the mystery of "Tsimtsum," ³⁶⁴and at the time when a man occupies himself with words of Torah, his soul is united with "diburo umachashavto shel hakodosh boruch hu" [the word and thought of God]. ³⁶⁵Each and every "halocho" [law] concerning "mutor" [permitted] and "kosher" [allowed] and "potur" [absolved] and "zahal" [innocent]---everything is a manifestation of God's will. ³⁶⁶

No less important, according to the Weltanschauung of the author of the Tanyo, is the fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah. In a way contradicting the above-cited statement "v'talmud toro k'neged kulom" [study of the Torah outweighs all the other commandments], Shne-ur Zalmon states: "ma-alo y'sero b'kiyum hamitsvos afilu al divre toro" [there is a greater virtue in fulfilling the com-

mandments than even in (occupying oneself with) words
of Torah];³⁶⁷ God, we read in the Tanyo, contracted His
infinite wisdom and His will "b'taryag mitsvos hatoro
uv'hilchosehen" [in the 613 commandments of the Torah
and in the laws corollary to them].³⁶⁸ The "En-Sof" [In-
finite], the author of the Tanyo states, and His wis-
dom are one, and no son of man is capable of comprehend-
ing them; God's wisdom, however, descended from one level
to another in the chain of worlds, by means of many "con-
tractions," until it became embodied (ad shenislavsho) in
material things and these are the 613 commandments of the
Torah.³⁶⁹ "V'en ikar gilul sh'chino elo davko b'mitsvos
ma-asuyos" [and there is no revelation of the "Sh'chino"
except through the practical commandments], the author of
the Tanyo repeats.³⁷⁰ The commandments are the manifesta-
tions of God's will, which is embodied in all the worlds,
the highest as well as the lowest worlds, all of them,
derive abundant sustenance and life from the commandments,
which are carried out by men here below.³⁷¹ All the worlds,
we read further, both the highest and the lowest, all of
them are dependent on every commandment which is carried
out;³⁷² by means of fulfilling the commandments of the Torah
man unites with the light of the "En-Sof" [Infinite].³⁷³

Through fulfilling the commandments the Jewish people
³⁷⁴redeems the world.

But study of the Torah and fulfilling of the com-
 mandments have no value if they are done without "kavono."³⁷⁵

"Kavono," the author of the Tanyo states, comes not only from the heart and derives not only from the purely impulsive and emotional. Here the author of the Tanyo appears before us not as a scholar and codifier who produced his own Shulchon Oruch, but rather as a cabalist and a creator of a new school of Chasidic thinking. We³⁷⁶ have already previously cited the words of the Besht to the effect that the highest level of faith is attained by him who possesses both qualities---he relies on the traditions of his forefathers and also convinces himself of the truth of his belief through his own investigation. Feeling and the enthusiasm of the heart, we read in the Tanyo, must be controlled by the understanding of the mind. Rapturous emotion cannot make a man worthy "l'hasogas ho-elohus" [of comprehending the divine], as long as it is not accompanied by clarity of understanding. It is necessary to have both qualities: the flame of the heart and the logical deductions of the mind. It is necessary to recognize the divine power which reigns in

all the worlds, and this recognition is attained with the aid of human understanding which seeks God and buries itself in thoughtful investigation concerning God. Man's soul, the Tanyo teaches, consists of two parts: the "sechel" [intelligence] and the "midos" [ethical qualities].³⁷⁷ The intelligence includes the three levels of "chochmo" [wisdom], "bino" [understanding] and "da-as" [knowledge], and the ethical qualities are love of God and the fear and awe of God's greatness; and "Chabad" (abbreviation formed by first letters of "chochmo," "bino," "da-as")---they are the wombs and the source from which the ethical qualities derive. He who does not concentrate and unite his thinking and understanding "bigdulas en-sof boruch hu" [with the greatness *of* the Infinite One, Blessed be He], for such a one the real love and awe of God are not born in his soul, but rather are "dimyonos shov" [vain imaginings] created; and therefore---"hada-as hu kiyum hamidos v'chiyuson"---knowledge is the existence and the sustaining breath of life of the ethical qualities. The ethical qualities are in proportion to the intelligence,³⁷⁹ the Tanyo repeats; the mind rules over the heart,³⁸⁰ "ho-avodo shebalev hi l'fi hada-as" [the service of the heart

(1.e., prayer) is according to the intelligence]. But,³⁸¹
 the author of the Tanyo emphasizes here, "ikar hada-as
 eno hay'diyo l'vado," the essence of knowledge is not
 simply knowing, to know about God's greatness from books
 of philosophy; the essence is to concentrate on God's
 greatness, to allow one's own thought to penetrate the
 divine with all the force and power of heart and mind,
 to the point that the thought will be united with God
 in a union as strong as that which binds a man to some-
 thing material which he sees with his corporeal eyes.³⁸²

Here we touch upon the most interesting point in
 the Weltanschauung of the author of the Tanyo. We have
 just seen that through "bino" [understanding] and "da-as"
 [knowledge]---through the last two rings of the triplet-
 ring "Chabad," love and awe of God are born in man's soul.
 Already the Magid of Mezheritch had emphasized very strong-
 ly that true love of God first comes as a result of fear,
 of great reverence for God.³⁸³ If man has complete fear of
 God---"mimelo tonu-ach olov ahavo," then love will also
 awaken in him.³⁸⁴ But fear should express itself not in
 dread of punishment,³⁸⁵ not like man's being afraid of a
 "wild bear," but rather should it be a "yiras horom'mus"

[an exalted fear], a "yiro shel busho" [a fear based on shame], that is, it should be a feeling of great reverence for and amazement at the tremendous exaltedness [of God] and man begins to be ashamed of his own
³⁸⁶
 littleness and nothingness. The author of the Tanyo also maintains this idea; also he states that "b'li k'dimas hayiro i efshor l'hagiya l'ahavo"---without fear coming
³⁸⁷
 first, love cannot be attained. It is written: "V'ovad'to es adonoi elohecho" ["And thou shalt serve the Lord thy God"]; in order that one's service should be an "avodo shlemo" [a perfect service], each person must serve God according to two categories and on two levels: both as a son and as a slave. Finding support in a statement of the Zohar: "d'chilu ur'chimu hen tren gadfin...ud'chilu
³⁸⁸
 nichlal bir'chimu [see note for translation], the Tanyo also compares fear and love to two wings: just as a bird cannot fly with only one wing, so also is fear by itself only one wing with which it is not possible to raise oneself to the heights, and also love by itself is only like one wing with which one is unable to rise to the heights; God should be served not as a son alone or a servant
³⁸⁹
 alone, but rather should both aspects be combined.

But there are two kinds of fear as well as two kinds

of love. First of all there is a "yiro tiv'is" [natural
³⁹⁰love]. In every "odum miyisro-el" [man of Israel], the
Tanyo states, there is hidden in the depths of his "binas
halev" [understanding of the heart] a treasure of "yiras
shomayim" [fear of Heaven]; this treasure is first
brought from potentiality to actuality with the aid of
the second ring in the above-mentioned triple-ring---
through "da-as;" by means of the consciousness, the trea-
sures of the natural "binas halev" [understanding of the
heart] are first raised to the category of pure thought,
that everything above and below, everything which the eyes
see in heaven and on earth is only "l'vushim chitsonim,"
external embodiments of the divine, as it is written:
"m'lo chol ho-orets k'vodo" ["The whole earth is full of
³⁹¹His glory"]. But this category of knowing, that "m'lo
chol ho-orets k'vodo" ["The whole earth is full of His
glory"] is, according to the Weltanschauung of the author
of the Tanyo, still not the highest level. There is yet
another level of "yiras shomayim" [fear of Heaven] and
this is "yiro ilo-o" [the most high fear], "yiro p'nimis"
[internal fear] which reaches the level of "chochmo" [wis-
dom]---the third and highest element of "Chabad." It is
written in the Talmud: "ezehu chochom horo-e es hanolod"

[who is wise?---he who foresees what will be born, i.e., the future], that is, a wise man is one who sees whence everything is born, and knows that everything "me-ayin timotse"---derives from "nothingness" and is transformed into "yesh" [something] by means of God's word "v'ru-ach piv yisborach" [and the breath of His mouth] and thereby he comprehends that this earth and all the heavens and their lights are, compared to God's word, "ayin vo-efes," [nothing and naught] and they fade into insignificance against the tremendous light of the sun itself.³⁹²

Also love of God is divided in the Tanyo into two levels: into "ahavo tivis" [natural love] or "ahavo rabo" ["great love" as in the morning prayer before "Sh'ma"] and "ahavo sichlis" [intellectual love] or "ahavas olom" ["everlasting love" as in the evening prayer before "Sh'ma"]. "Ahavas olom" ["everlasting love"] derives from "t'vuno v'da-as" [understanding and knowledge], from thinking about the wonderful greatness of God, which fills and surrounds all the worlds. Through this consciousness, love of God becomes strengthened in man and does not desire to cleave to anything material or also to any other spiritual thing in the world except God

who is the source of life. But yet this simple, natural love (ahovo tivis), which is also "the great love" (ahavo rabo)³⁹⁴ is higher than this "intellectual love" which finds support in "bino" [understanding] and "da-as" [knowledge]. The Tanyo reiterates---"ho-ahavo tivis hi l'ma-alo min hada-as hamuseg v'hamuvon, v'hi elyon v'govo-ah mehada-as" [natural love is higher than knowledge which is grasped and comprehended and it is above and higher than knowledge]. It is like the love of a child, which is not conscious and is not illumined by and based "b'hasogo uv'havono" [on comprehension and understanding] and on logical, rational grounds. The child does not understand in what the "father-ness" of its father consists and why he should love him, but its entire soul is closely bound up, without any conscious reason, to the soul of its father; and this binding is so strong and powerful that it yearns and pines continually for its father and cries its heart out bitterly.³⁹⁵

And yet this love also is not the highest category of love. The author of the Tanyo explains that there is another category of love "ho-ole al kulono k'ma-alas hazohov al hakesef," which surpasses in value all the others like gold surpasses silver in worth.³⁹⁶ The Tanyo states that there are two categories in a man's heart:

one is external (b'chino chitsonis), this being "his-lahavus" which derives "mib'chinas habino v'hada-as" [from the category of understanding and knowledge], from concentration on the thought of the greatness of the "En-Sof Boruch Hu" [the Infinite One, Blessed Be He]. The second category is an internal one which is hidden in the furthest depths of the heart (han'kudo shebap'nimiyus halev). This love which streams forth from these depths and concerning which it is written in the Song of Songs: "rishpe esh shalhevesyo" ["flashes of fire, a very flame of the Lord"]---it is "l'ma-alo ma-alo mib'chinas hada-as v'hatvuno" [see note for translation]³⁹⁷; it possesses a man "b'hesach hada-as" [inadvertently], it is a gift which man receives from God, this is a grant of God's mercy, which is higher "mibino v'da-as" [than understanding and knowledge]; this is a reflection of the true divine light which is revealed in the highest member of the triple-ring---in "chochmo" [wisdom], which is the crown of all the divine emanations and attributes, the implement of the light of the "En-Sof" [Infinite]. But the Jewish people is bound up in an eternal covenant with the Torah which is the manifestation of the divine wisdom, and we receive it as an inheritance from our forefathers

and it passes on from generation to generation. Therefore, is it written: "Ki korov elecho hadovor m'od" ["But the word is very nigh unto thee"], and we have been commanded: "K'doshim tih'yu!"---"Ye shall be holy..." We are holy because in the soul of "yih'ye mi sheyih'ye miyisro-el" [whoever it may be of Israel] there is a reflection of the "En-Sof" [Infinite], as it were, in the form of "chochmo" [wisdom] (ki en-sof boruch hu m'lubosh bivchinas hachochmo sheb'nefesh ho-odom yih'ye mi sheyih'ye miyisro-el). And this is the meaning of the words: "Hachochmo t'chaye v'oleho"---["wisdom preserveth the life of him that hath it"]. And wisdom, the Tanyo repeats, is "l'ma-alo mehabino v'hahasogo",³⁹⁸ is above understanding and comprehension, but is their source. That is why it is called "chochmo" which means "ko-ach ma" [play on the Hebrew letters which is not transferable to the English]---a concealed and secret power which is incomprehensible and inconceivable by human apprehension; nevertheless, it is the embodiment and instrument of the light of the "En-Sof" [Infinite]---"d'les machashovo t'fiso be" [no thought can grasp It]. And therefore do we read in the Tanyo that every member of the Jewish people which carries on a long chain of tradition from its forefathers and whose

ancestors are compared to the divine "merkovo" [chariot]³⁹⁹---
 even women and people ignorant of the Torah, even "kal
 sheb'kalim" [the most worthless of the worthless] and also
 "poshe yisro-el" [Jewish sinners]⁴⁰⁰, are prepared to suffer
 martyrdom, not because they grasp and understand the
 greatness of God (mechamas da-as v'hisbon'nus bashem k'lal),
 they do so without any reflection and logical reasoning,
 without any "ta-ano uma-ane k'lal" [debating whatever];
 they conduct themselves so, and not otherwise, because it
 is impossible for them (hu dovor she-i efshor k'lal) to
 deny the One God, to dissociate themselves from God.
 Thanks to the long chain of tradition the divine shines
 in the depths of each man's soul, shines in the form of
 "chochmo" [wisdom]---"shehi l'ma-alo min hada-as v'hasechel
 hamusog umavon" [which is higher than knowledge and in-
 telligence based on comprehension and understanding]⁴⁰¹.

The scholar and codifier is overcome by the Cabalist,
 the mystical fervor breaks through the artful web of
 coldly logical reasoning.

When we peruse these pages of the Tanyo, composed in
 a heavy, flat style, in which we can sense sharply not
 only a tremendous scholar and a highly pungent mind, but
 also a great moral-ethical personality, we begin to see

in what the extraordinary power of agitation of the "Rebe of Liyadi" consisted.

Here we must bring out, however, one more detail of the Weltanschauung of the author of the Tanyo: his relationship to the question of the role of the Tsadik. Tsadikim are higher than angels, for the latter are not "ba-⁴⁰² ale b'chiro" [possessors of a free-will], and whoever clings "b'talmid chochom k'ilu nidbak bash'chino" [to a learned man, it is as if he were clinging to the "Sh'chi-⁴⁰³ no"]. In every generation, we read in the Tanyo, sparks "minishmas moshe rabenu olov hasholom" [of the soul of Moses our teacher, may he rest in peace] descend and attach themselves to the body and the soul of the "chachme hador, ene ho-edo" [wise men of the generation, eyes of the congregation], who teach the people how to know and understand the greatness of God, and how to serve Him with one's whole heart and soul.⁴⁰⁴ But directly after this it is pointed out by the Tanyo that in every "nefesh vo-nefesh mibes yisro-el" [individual of the House of Israel] there exists "mib'chinas moshe rabenu olov hasholom" [a speck of the greatness of Moses]. The author of the Tanyo also repeats that the highest level of love is "shove l'chol nefesh miyisro-el virushe lonu me-avosenu" [equally

present in every Jewish individual and an inheritance that has come down to us from our forefathers⁴⁰⁵], and he assures us that even in the soul of a "bor v'am ho-orets gomur" [uncultivated and completely ignorant person] the holiness of the Sabbath and Festivals shines just as much as in the soul of the Tsadik---"ki toro achas l'chulon⁴⁰⁶u," we all have one and the same Torah. And when certain of the Chasidim of the author of the Tanyo began to turn to him with requests concerning material needs, as if to a miracle worker, in the hope that he would be able to influence the upper worlds [in their behalf], he came out with an open protest against this in his pamphlet Igeres Hakodesh, which he sent out to all his adherents. Therein he explains that "there never was such a custom among Jews to ask the leading lights of the generation for advice concerning material matters; even to the "tano-im and "amoro-im", before whose wisdom all secrets were revealed, people did not turn, for they knew well that they were not prophets to be able to foretell the future."⁴⁰⁷ In complete disagreement with the teaching of the No-am Elimelech, the 'Rebe of Liyadi' teaches that when a person finds himself in need and has been heavily punished, it is better he should himself turn to our Father in Heaven directly, and not

seek any intermediary, for God is a Merciful Father. The Tanyo is, generally speaking, suffused with optimism. "En^{re} yored mil'ma-alo v'hakol tov" [evil does not descend from on high and everything is good], the 'Rebe of Liyadi⁴⁰⁹ holds; it is only because people do not understand "l'rov tuvo" [God's manifold goodness] that they think it is evil. And because God is "rak tov" [only good], therefore, the Tanyo teaches, "reshis hakol sheyismach ho-odom v'yigal b'chol es"---a man should always be happy and content. We therefore also come across more than once in the Tanyo the beloved thesis of the Besht: "En hash'chino shoro elo mitoch simcho" [the "Sh'chino" only rests (among people) when there is joy]. On the other hand, in opposition to the teaching of the Besht, the Tanyo emphasizes that joy should be only "simchas hanefesh" [joy of the spirit], but a man's body should be "nivze v'nimos b'enov"⁴¹⁰ [despised and scorned in his eyes].

In conclusion one more point must be taken up. Certain of the investigators of Chasidism find that the Tanyo can "with complete justification undergo a comparison with the best works of the medieval Jewish thinkers." This, however, is not completely true, since we must consider that the authors of the Kuzari, More N'vuchim and Or Adonoi stood

at the pinnacle of the culture of their time, but this cannot be said of the author of the Tanyo. In spite of everything, he did grow up in a community which, like a collective Rip Van Winkle, slept through many generations. Disregarding the fact that the "Rebe of Liyadi" acquired his ideas about mathematics and astronomy from the Elim,⁴¹¹ nevertheless, on the threshold of the nineteenth century, he still operated within the old Ptolemaic system. A contemporary of Lavoisier, he still operates with the "four elements" and one hundred years after Newton, he still had no idea about the seven primary colors.⁴¹² Like a typical son of a backward environment, the author of the Tanyo looks with a certain derision upon the "chochmos chitsoniyos" [secular knowledge]. He finds that to occupy oneself without a good reason with "chochmos acheros" [other (non-Jewish) branches of knowledge], ~~this~~ is "bichlal d'verim b'telim" [in the category of vain matters]; the only condition under which there is a sense in becoming acquainted with them is when one can use them "la-avodas hashem" [to serve God].⁴¹³ He therefore decides in his Shulchon Oruch that even if one has already studied the entire Torah, it is still forbidden to study "chochmas hagoyim" [the culture of the gentiles]; only occasionally is the learned man

permitted to take up non-Jewish sciences---in the case
when he can learn from them "divre toro v'yiras shomayim"
[words of Torah and fear of Heaven].⁴¹¹⁴

In regard to this point, both wings of the Chasidic movement were in agreement; both the White Russian "Chabad" as well as the Volhynian and Galician Tsadikism. This, of necessity, led to a sharp conflict with the Enlightenment Movement and concerning this we shall have occasion to speak in the following chapters.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

| | |
|--------|---|
| B.R. | Bes Rabi |
| D. | Dubnow, Toldos Hachasidus |
| H. | Horodezky, Hachasidus V'hachasidim |
| I.H. | Igeres Hakodesh |
| K.S.T. | Keser Shem Tov |
| L.A.M. | Likute Amorim (Magid D'vorov L'ya-akov) |
| L.A.T. | Likute Amorim (Tanyo) |
| L.T. | Likute Toro |
| L.Y. | Likute (Likutim) Y'korim |
| O.H. | Or Hame-ir |
| O.T. | Or Toro |
| N.E. | No-am Elimelech |
| S. | Scholem, G., Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism |
| S.H. | Shivche HaBesht |
| S.H.H. | Seder Hadoros Hechodosh |
| S.H.V. | Sha-ar Hayichud V'ho-emuno |
| S.S.B. | Sefer Shel Benonim |
| T. | Toldos Ya-akov Yosef |
| T.H. | Tsavo-as Horibash |
| T.O. | Toro Or |

Z. Zinberg, Geschichte fun der Literatur bei Id'n

J.E. Jewish Encyclopedia

The life story of the Jewish Encyclopedia, which is richly illustrated with portraits and pictures of the authors, was published in 1911 in 10 parts by the New York Public Library, 410 Fifth Avenue, New York. The first part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The second part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The third part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The fourth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The fifth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The sixth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

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The eighth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

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The fifteenth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

The sixteenth part, which is the most interesting, contains the history of the project from its origin in 1897 to the present time. It also contains a list of the authors and a list of the subjects.

NOTES

1. The life story of the Besht (Shivche HaBesht), so richly adorned with legends and fantastic details, was published in 1815 in Kopust by Dov Ben Samuel Shochet, whose father-in-law, Alexander Shochet, was the Besht's scribe. In the same year ~~that~~ the Shivche HaBesht appeared with great textual changes in another edition in Berditchev and also in a Yiddish rendition.
2. See S.H., p. 25; "Vayikore sh'mo yisro-el ben ham'-yaledes" [and he was called "Israel the midwife's son"].
3. Frank V'edoso, p. 51.
4. Abraham Cahana, Rabi Yisro-el Ba-al Shem Tov, p. 14.
5. Autobiography, p. 132.
6. See the preface to the Berditchev edition of Magid D'vorov L'ya-akov; S.H.H., p. 3.
7. Z., vol. V, pp. 191-193.
8. The Besht died Shovuos, 1760.
9. The S.H. relates that in the early period of the Besht's settlement in Medzhibozh he was not particularly notable among the local learned and pious Jews, such as Rabbi Z'ev Kutses and Rabbi David Furkes, "mechamas hashem shekoru oso [Ba-al Shem Tov],^{*} ki shem ze eno no-e l'tsadiq" (27). The same is also told concerning the Cabalist Israel, the author of Tiferes Yisro-el. Also he reproached the Besht in the beginning: I would like you if only you were not a ba-al shem (Ma-asiyos Uma-amorim Y'korim, p. 11-12). There it is also related concerning another learned man who comes to the Besht

*These words are omitted by Zinberg, but appear in the Horodezky edition of the S.H.

with the complaint: "lomo korin eschem ba-al shem? ki shem ze eno hogun l'odom godol" [why do people call you "ba-al shem"? Such a name is improper for a great man].

10. Printed at the end of Jacob Joseph's Ben Poros Yosef; see also the end of K.S.T. In recent times there has even appeared (Jerusalem, 1924) a collection of letters and documents, Ginze Nistoros, where several letters of the Besht are also published. However, the suspicion is very great that these letters, just as the majority of the letters in this collection, are forged (see Dubnow's article in Kiryas Sefer, vol.II, p. 290).
11. The author of the T. indicates in various places that he is not reproducing the entire teaching of his master. He writes, for instance: "kibalti mimori pe el pe v'i efshor l'vo-er b'sefer" [I received this tradition from my master orally, but it is impossible to explain it in a book] (T., Noso); or: "k'vod adonoi histir dovor" [the glory of the Lord has hidden the matter]. In another instance he indicates: "shomati mimori v'cho-es nishkoch" [I heard from my teacher, but now it is forgotten] (T., K'doshim).
12. I.H., supplement to T., page 20b (cited according to the edition of Shklov, 1814).
13. T., Bo.
14. T., B'reshis.
15. K.S.T., p. 7. (Cited according to the Lemberg edition of 1858).
16. Ibid.: "uvamokom she-odom shom k'vodo yisborach motsu-i" [in whatever place a man is, there also is God's glory found].
17. Z., vol. III, pp. 58-60.
18. Degel Machane Efrayim, Tetse.

19. T., B'reshis; T., Lech L'cho; T., Mishpotim;
K.S.T., p. 4b; K.S.T., vol. II, p. 19.
20. Z., vol. III, p. 30.
21. Likute Moharan, Chelek Alef, Simon 133.
22. Degel Machane Efrayim, Yisro.
23. Z., vol. IV, p. 323.
24. T.H., p. 9.
25. K.S.T., p. 22, 25.
26. The old "Mendele" redid (1875) the Perek Shiro
into Yiddish.
27. T.H., p. 2.
28. Mendel Bodek, S.H.H., pp. 3-4 (cited according to
the Lemberg edition, 1865). See also Divre Tsa-
dikim, p. 45 (Lublin edition of 1899).
29. Z., vol. IV, p. 323ff.
30. Z., vol. III, pp. 30-32.
31. T.H., p. 5.
32. T., Vayikro.
33. T., Vayetse.
34. K.S.T., p. 16.
35. K.S.T., p. 24.
36. T.H., p. 5.
37. T., Vayigash.
38. T.H., p. 9.

39. Ibid. [No indicator for a note "3" appears in the text, although the reference here given is on the bottom of the page].
40. T.H., pp. 8-9; K.S.T., p. 26.
41. Toldos, poroshas 29 [sic].
42. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 23.
43. T., Vayero; T., Vayeshev; T., B'har.
44. T., Vayetse.
45. Z., vol. IV, p. 287.
46. T.H., p. 1; L.Y., p. 15a.
47. T., Emor.
48. T., supplement at end.
49. L.Y., p. 1b.
50. K.S.T., p. 26; T.H., p. 9; L.Y., p. 16: "ka-asher gufo chole gam nishmoso necheleshes" [when his body is ill his soul also becomes faint].
51. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 6; T., Vo-ero.
52. T., Bo.
53. K.S.T., p. 25.
54. O.H., Vayero.
55. T., Vayetse; T., supplement at end.
56. H., vol. I, p. 37. [Correction of Zinberg, who has p. 38].
57. Ibid., p. 38.
58. K.S.T., p. 5.

59. S.H., p. 31.
60. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 2.
61. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 25.
62. S.H., p. 13.
63. K.S.T., p. 11.
64. T.H., p. 12.
65. K.S.T., p. 5; T., Vayetse.
66. T.H., p. 4.
67. T., Yisro; K.S.T., p. 13.
68. S.H., p. 26; see also S.H., p. 31, the story about "tsitsis" [ritual fringes].
69. T., B'chukosai.
70. K.S.T., p. 26.
71. K.S.T., p. 29.
72. T., Ki Siso.
73. T.H., p. 9.
74. Abraham Cahana, Rabi Yisro-el Ba-al Shem Tov, p. 95.
75. S.H., p. 5.
76. Z., vol. VI, p. 246.
77. K.S.T., p. 27.
78. T.H., p. 15; L.Y., p. 16a.
79. S.H., p. 9.
80. S.H., p. 10. Certain investigators such as, for example, Graetz in his Frank und die Frankisten,

David Cahana in his Toldos Ham'kubolim, Abraham Cahana in his Rabi Yisro-el Ba-al Shem Tov, and others, state as a clearly established fact that the Besht also participated in the disputation at Lemberg with the Frankists together with a representative of the Rabbis at whose head stood the Rabbi of Lemberg, Chayim Rappaport. Recent investigators have established, however, that this is no more than a legend. In the memoirs of Dov Ber Birkenenthal, who had a personal relation to the disputation, the name of the Besht is not mentioned at all. Especially important is the thorough-going research of Meyer Balaban, Studien Zur Geschichte der Frankistischen Bewegung (published in the Festschrift in memory of S. Poznansky, 1927), where it is shown that the Besht's participation in the disputation is not mentioned in any of the Polish sources which describe the disputation between the Rabbis and the Frankists.

81. S.H., p. 35; Yisro-el Lebel, Sefer Viku-ach, p. 9. (1798).
82. S.H., p. 18.
83. K.S.T., p. 23; T.H., p. 3.
84. S.H., p. 8.
85. See D., vol. I, p. 101.
86. K.S.T., p. 24.
87. L.Y., p. 4a.
88. Concerning the meaning of "ayin" [nothing], see Z., vol. III, p. 21.
89. T., Vayeshev.
90. T.H., p. 8.
91. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 6.
92. Ibid., Tsav [appears thus, but should be "T., Tsav" (Warsaw edition, 1890---Hebrew date 1881---

page 166, right column, bottom of the page)].

93. T.H., p. 67 (1793); T., Chaye Soro; L.Y., p. 1:
"k'sheyachashov bo-olom ho-elyon hu bo-olomos
ho-elyonim, shekol ma sheho-odom m'chashev shom
hu, v'im lo hoyo bo-olom ho-elyon lo hoyo m'cha-
shev bo k'lal" [Translation in the text, p. 100, l. 22].
94. See Z., vol. III, p. 60.
95. If one wishes to punish someone, the Besht says,
one takes away from him his faith---"uch'sherotsin
lipore-a ho-onesh l'mi shehu ro-u-i l'onesh, azai
notlin mimenu madre gas habitochon" (T., Mishpotim).
96. K.S.T., p. 23.
97. Z., vol. III, pp. 65-67.
98. See above, p. 103, line 16.
99. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 28.
100. T.H., p. 12.
101. Cited a few times in K'dushas Levi: B'shalach (twice),
D'rush L'furim, M'tsoro, Noso.
102. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 28.
103. Z., vol. III, p. 67.
104. Z., vol. IV, p. 298.
105. T., Vayigash; K.S.T., p. 7.
106. K.S.T., vol. II, p. 4.
107. In another instance the Besht paraphrases this
verse into: "tsadik be-emunos yichaye" (piel)---
the tsadik quickens everyone with his strong
faith.
108. T., Vayishlach.
109. T., No-ach.

110. Ibid.
111. T., Vay'chi.
112. The letters of "elohim" [God] and "hateva" [nature] each add up to 86.
113. But the Besht emphasizes that even the Tetragrammaton exists only for man, but really God "govo-ah mikol hashemos" [is higher than all names]; (see O.H., Shoftim).
114. T., vol. II, Mishpotim.
115. T., Mishpotim.
116. T., Sh'mos: "hamone om nikro-im guf ush'lome emune yisro-el hem han'shomo l'hashpi-a ze loze k'mo zochor un'kevo" [the masses of the people are called 'body' and the tsadikim (literally, 'those in Israel perfect in faith') are the 'soul', to influence one another like male and female].
117. T., Vayakhel.
118. T., Vo-ero.
119. T., K'doshim.
120. See above, pp. 99-100.
121. T., K'doshim: "im en ani li, r'tsono lomar k'she-en ani b'atmi m'sukon t'chilo lehofech mechomer el hatsuro sheyishapech v'ye-ose ayin min ho-ani,---im ken mi li...mi me-acherim sheyih'yu li sheyiskorvu li liv'chinosi achar shelo tikanti hadovor t'chilo li" ['If I am not for myself,' this means that if I myself am not, to begin with, prepared to be changed from matter into form so that there be a transformation of the 'ani' [I] to 'ayin' [nothing],---if so 'who is for me...' what other person will be for me and draw near to my status in view of the fact that I did not improve the matter for myself initially?].

122. K.S.T., p. 5.
123. T., K'doshim; T., Emor.
124. This letter was to be delivered to his brother-in-law by his disciple Jacob Joseph Hakohen who was to journey to Jerusalem. But the trip never came to pass, and the letter remained with Jacob Joseph, who, many years later, published it at the end of his Ben Poros Yosef.
125. A hint at Ahijah the Shilonite (see above pp. 69-70).
126. Meaning the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then Moses and Aaron, Joseph and David.
127. "Uma she-ani omer lif'omim divre toro la-acherim hem rak mehamosoros, k'mo k'li shem'malim oso b'yoser v'nishpoch mil'malo m'at." [Translation in the text].
128. S.H.H., p. 10b.
129. S.H., p. 41.
130. S.H., p. 7b: "walked humbly with God, conducted himself simply and his righteousness was unknown to anyone."
131. The year of his birth is given differently in several sources: in Dubnow---about 1710, in Horodezky---1704.
132. O.H., beginning of Chaye Soro (cited according to the Warsaw edition of 1883).
133. O.T., p. 76 (cited according to the Lublin edition of 1884).
134. O.T., p. 13.
135. O.T., vol. II, p. 30.
136. Ibid.

137. See title page of L.A.M.
138. Ibid.: "ki ro-isi kosve k'sovim um'katsrim m'od mekavonas adonenu umorenu ulif'omim enom m'vinim v'chosvim l'fi havonosom" [I have seen those who when writing would shorten greatly, missing the intent of our master and teacher and sometimes they would not comprehend and they would write according to their own understanding].
139. The final letters of the three words Magid D'vorov L'ya-akov form the name of the Magid, Dov.
140. The name of the collector is not indicated on the frontispiece, but rather on the second page in the three rabbinical imprimaturs. Dubnow's observation that L.Y. appeared anonymously is therefore not entirely correct.
141. L.Y., end of page 25b; L.Y., p. 27a; L.Y., p. 28b.
142. L.Y., p. 24b.
143. See above, p. 65.
144. O.T., p. 121.
145. Ibid., p. 44: "hakodosh boruch hu sovel kol olmin ul'ela mikulo v'sachas kol olmin um'male kol olmin v'ihu m'komon shel kol ho-olomos" [Translation in the text].
146. L.Y., p. 23.
147. O.T., p. 106.
148. O.T., p. 104.
149. L.A.M., p. 23b; L.A.M., p. 39a.
150. L.A.M., p. 29.
151. O.T., p. 97.
152. L.A.M., p. 24 (cited according to the Lemberg edition of 1862).

153. T., Bo.
154. O.T., p. 76.
155. L.A.M., p. 43.
156. O.T., p. 82; L.A.M., p. 7; O.T., p. 4; L.A.M., p. 15.
157. Z., vol. V, p. 229.
158. The following sentence is also given in the name of the Besht: "v'ha'kodosh boruch hu oso kamo tsim-tsumim derech kamo olomos k'de sheyih'ye achdus im odom shelo hoyo yochol lisbol b'hiroso" [and God made many 'contractions' through many worlds so that there should be unity with man who (otherwise) would not have been able to endure God's brilliance](K.S.T., p. 5).
159. O.T., p. 67.
160. O.T., p. 30.
161. O.T., p. 29, 52.
162. O.T., p. 30.
163. O.T., p. 68
164. K.S.T., p. 7: "umidas hamalchus mitsidenu uv'yodenu, d'hai-nu she-onu makirim g'duloso umalchuso v'oz hu nishlom b'midas malchuso, ki en melech b'lo om shemechamas ho-om nishgalo hamalchus" [and the attribute of kingdom depends on us and is in our hands, that is, we recognize God's greatness and His kingdom and then He becomes perfect through His attribute of kingdom, for there is no king without a people, for it is due to the people that the kingdom becomes manifest].
165. O.T., p. 70; L.A.M., p. 15, 39.
166. O.T., p. 87; L.A.M., p. 35.

167. Z., vol. IV, p. 30.
168. O.T., p. 105.
169. L.A.M., p. 18; O.T., p. 29.
170. L.A.M., p. 105.
171. O.T., p. 45: "v'hutsroch hashem yisborach l'tsam-tsem hatoro, bich'de sheyuchal l'hazri-ach or to-roso b'chol ho-olomos" [Translation in the text].
172. L.A.M., p. 23, 29.
173. O.T., p. 29.
174. O.T., p. 33; L.A.M., p. 8b.
175. Z., vol. IV, p. 337.
176. O.T., p. 33.
177. See above, pp. 136-137.
178. O.T., p. 98.
179. L.A.M., p. 7a.
180. O.H., Vayetse..
181. O.T., p. 101.
182. L.A.M., p. 46b; O.H., Megilas Rus.
183. O.T., p. 51, 52ff.
184. L.A.M., p. 40b: "k'mo sheho-odom nischaze lifne hamare ken hapartsuf shebamare mischaze elov, ken kiv'yochol etsel hakodosh boruch hu: k'mo sheho-odom mare atsmo l'fonov yisborach ken hu misro-e elov" [Translation in the text].
185. O.T., p. 113, 114; L.A.M., p. 48.
186. L.A.M., p. 41.

187. L.A.M., p. 46.
188. O.T., p. 4.
189. O.T., p. 29: "b'chol mokom shehamachashovo shel odom m'chashev shom hu" [in whatever place a man's thought is directed, there he is]; see also O.T., p. 50; L.A.M., p. 18; L.A.M., p. 104: "ho-odom hu chelek elo-ah mima-al uch'shehu m'dabek machashavto l'malo yochol leda ma she-oso [sic] l'malo" [man is a part of the divine on high, and when he directs his thoughts on high he is able to know what transpires on high].
190. O.T., p. 78.
191. O.T., p. 32.
192. O.H., Tsav; O.H., Korach.
193. O.T., p. 110; L.A.M., at the end.
194. L.A.M., p. 46b.
195. See above, p. 97.
196. Z., vol. I, p. 212.
197. "Ki hatsadikim mechamas ho-ahavo she-ohav osom hashem unispo-er bohem, boro es ho-olom" [God created the world because of His love for the Tsadikim and His glory in them]... "umechamas ze boro es ho-olomos" [and because of this He created the worlds] (O.T., p. 80, 117; L.A.M., p. 7).
198. O.T., p. 32; L.A.M., p. 24, 41.
199. O.T., p. 14.
200. O.T., p. 32, 95; L.A.M., p. 17.
201. O.T., p. 25.
202. O.T., p. 98.

203. O.T., p. 60.
204. O.T., p. 26.
205. O.T., p. 40; L.A.M., p. 38.
206. O.T., p. 127.
207. O.T., p. 132.
208. O.T., p. 73.
209. O.H., D'rush l'fesach.
210. O.T., p. 84.
211. O.T., p. 127.
212. O.T., p. 84, 123.
213. O.T., p. 97.
214. Z., vol. I, p. 212.
215. O.T., p. 71.
216. O.H., Sh'mos.
217. This struggle is described most thoroughly in Dubnow's History of Chasidism and in Pesach Marek's work which was published in the twelfth volume of Yevreskaya Starina (1928).
218. Z., vol. V, pp. 161-163, 256-257ff.
219. The historian Bershadsky points out in his well-known work Litovskia Yevrei, p. 16: "In the course of the eighteenth century the Jewish community leadership had been selected from a small circle of families connected among themselves by a consciousness of the solidarity of its own interests and above all, by family connections." [Translated from the Russian quoted by Zinberg by Dr. Samuel Atlas].

220. Autobiography, p. 6.
221. See P. Marek, in Yevreskaya Starina, vol. XII, p. 83.
222. Ibid., pp. 89-90.
223. Z'mir Oritsim, p. 13 (cited according to Dubnow's reprint in He-ovar, vol. II, 1918).
224. See Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon's letter in B.R., p. 40.
- 224A. Play on words: "chasidim---chashudim" [Chasidim---suspected ones] (In the letter which the leaders and rabbis of Vilna sent to the Rabbi of Brisk, Abraham Katzenelenbogen).
225. Printed with the participation of the communities of Brody and Vilna (see D., vol. I, p. 211).
226. At that time the situation of the Chasidic groups was particularly critical in the Lithuanian communities. Some of the most important Chasidic leaders, such as Rabbi Menachem Mendl of Vitebsk, Rabbi Israel of Polotsk, and Rabbi Abraham of Kulisk, even left Lithuania and together with many adherents settled in Palestine.
227. One of these was in the possession of the historian Dubnow, and he reprinted the text in the journal He-ovar, vol. II, 1918.
228. These are undoubtedly the "k'sovim m'shunim" [unusual writings] and "kisve yod" [manuscripts] concerning which it is related in the open letter of the community of Vilna that they were found among the "sect," and that they were burned at the pillory before "kabolas shabos" [Friday evening services].
229. D., vol. I, p. 226.
230. Jacob Joseph died in approximately 1782 as a very old man. "V'hoyo zoken m'od" [And he was very old] the S.H. points out about him (p. 21b); the same is repeated by the author of the S.H.H. (p. 10b).

231. In his Ben Poros Yosef there appear some of his "chilukim" [Talmudic discourses] which he wrote in his youth (bime chorfo b'limud hay'shivo) [in his youthful (sharp) days of study at the school of higher rabbinic learning].
232. S.H., p. 32a.
233. See above pp. 84-85.
234. Soon after the Toldos there appeared (1781) his Ben Poros Yosef, and in 1782 his Tsofnas Pane-ach. His K'sones Pasim was published already after his death.
235. H., vol. I, p. 109.
236. T., Vayetse.
237. T., Introduction; Vayigash and Shoftim.
238. T., Vo-ero.
239. T., Shoftim.
240. T., Vay'chi.
241. T., Bo.
242. T., V'zos Hab'rocho.
243. T., Noso.
244. T., Shoftim.
245. T., Tsav.
246. T., Ki Setse.
247. Ibid.
248. T., Vayigash.
249. T., Shoftim.

250. T., Ki Setse.
251. See D., vol. I, p. 232.
252. See above, pp. 151-152.
253. Born in 1717, died in 1786. In his youth, the Chasidic sources relate, the Tsadik of Lizensk "hoyo lomed toro k'derech halomdim" [would study Torah in the manner of the scholars] and it was first under the influence of his brother, Zuse of Anipol, that he became a disciple of the Magid (See Ma-ase Tsadikim).
254. N.E., Likute Shoshano.
255. N.E., Sh'mos.
256. N.E., T'tsave.
257. N.E., Mishpotim; see also Vayeshev: "hatsadik l'vad al y'de ma-asov hak'doshim yochol lifol hakol" [the Tsadik only, by means of his holy actions is able to do everything].
258. N.E., Bolok.
259. N.E., T'rumo.
260. N.E., B'chukosai.
261. N.E., Achare Mos.
262. N.E., K'doshim.
263. N.E., Mishpotim.
264. N.E., Sh'mos.
265. N.E., B'ha-alos'cho.
266. N.E., Mikets.
267. Ibid.

268. Ibid.
269. N.E., B'ha-alos'cho.
270. N.E., Bo; see also Likute Shoshano.
271. N.E., Sh'lach; see also Vayishlach.
272. N.E., Yisro.
273. N.E., Ha-azinu.
274. N.E., Vayero.
275. N.E., Vayetse.
276. N.E., Likute Shoshano.
277. N.E., Vayetse.
278. N.E., Vayishlach; see also Vayigash where it is repeated several times: "hashabos hu rak ahavo, hayiro ts'richo lih'yos mitoch ahavo" [the Sabbath is pure love, and religion must be based on love].
279. N.E., Ha-azinu; Chukas.
280. N.E., Sh'lach.
281. N.E., Bolok.
282. To its source and root, whence it originates.
283. N.E., Sh'mos.
284. N.E., Vayetse.
285. N.E., Vayikro; see also Sh'mos.
286. N.E., Vayero; see also Toldos.
287. N.E., Toldos; see also Sh'mos.
288. N.E., Vay'chi.

289. N.E., Vayikro; see also Noso.
290. N.E., Vayetse.
291. N.E., Vayero, T'rumo, T'tsave. The following citation is also characteristic: It is written concerning Abraham: "Vayiso enov vayar v'hine sh'losho anoshim" ["And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men"], this means that he, the Tsadik, saw that it was his task to provide three things for Israel: "bone, chaye, m'zone" [children, life, sustenance].
292. N.E., Chukas.
293. N.E., Ki Siso.
294. N.E., D'vorim.
295. N.E., Mikets.
296. N.E., Lech L'cho, B'shalach, Bolok.
297. N.E., Likute Shoshano.
298. N.E., Pikude.
299. Ibid.
300. N.E., B'ha-alos'cho.
301. N.E., Toldos, Vayigash, Vo-ero, Sh'lach, R'e.
302. N.E., Sh'lach.
303. N.E., Ki Siso.
304. N.E., Bo.
305. N.E., Sh'lach.
306. It is worth noting that in the time of Elimelech of Lizensk about one third of the Galician Jewish population was rural.
307. See concerning this Borenstein's Simas Ayin, pp. 20-21, appendix to M. Teitelbaum's Horav

Miliyadi.

308. To this very day "the tune of the Rebe", a tune without words, in which the Chasidim see a deep mystery, a "hisdavkus elo-is" [a divine union] with the Holy "S'firos" [emanations], is very beloved.
309. Shne-ur Zalmon was seven years younger than Abraham the Angel.
310. In Anipoli the Magid spent the last months of his life and there he also died.
311. L.T., Matos.
312. Soon after Rabbi Mendl of Vitebsk departed for Palestine, Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon settled in Mohilev and a short time later he moved to the town of his birth, Liyozne. According to Chasidic legend Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon went through the entire Talmud for the sixteenth time while in Mohilev.
313. Published in B.R., pp. 33-34.
314. See above, pp. 174-175.
315. Avigdor himself points out in his letter of request to the Senate (Yevreskaya Starina, 1910, pp. 276-277): And I purchased the rabbinical post in Pinsk in Lithuania for good money from the Lord of the city.
316. See Teitelbaum, op. cit., pp. 34-35.
317. In the nineties the number of Shne-ur Zalmon's adherents is supposed to have reached 100,000.
318. Shne-ur Zalmon himself points this out in one of his letters (see B.R., p. 72, 53).
319. See Marek's cited work in Yevreskaya Starina, vol. XII, p. 147.

320. It seems that also Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon understood this. Only in this way can we explain the fact that whereas in a private letter he complains about the Gaon "shehitir es domom kamayim bishnas taklav" [who declared them as complete outlaws, (literally, permitted their blood to be spilled like water), in the year 1772], yet he still considered it necessary to point out in his proclamation to his Chasidim: "ki yodu-a lonu b'verur shelo me-ito yotsu had'vorim chas v'sholum lelech imonu big'dolos, v'chol y'me chayoy lo yotsu hamachshelo v'hashgogo milifne hashalit" [for we know for a certainty that it was not from the Gaon that these matters proceeded, God forbid, to use high-handed methods against us, and while he was alive the stumbling and the error (i.e., of persecuting the Chasidim) did not proceed from the master (i.e., the Gaon), God forbid (B.R., p. 71)].
321. See his letter in B.R., p. 72: "achar p'tiras rabenu hago-on zichrono liv'rocho mivilno kosavti azhoro noro-o l'chol siyas m'rachamenu shelo l'saper achar mitoso shel talmid chochom shum she-mets dofi v'shimitso d'shimitso b'li shum horo-as heter bo-olom" [after the death of our Master, the Gaon of Vilna, of Blessed Memory, I wrote a strong warning to all our adherents not to engage in the slandering of a deceased scholar or to impute even the slightest suspicion to his character, since sanction for such an action can not be found in the Torah].
322. As his colleagues the following are mentioned there: Rabbi Levi Yitschok of Berditchev, Rabbi Chayim Chaikl of Amdur, Rabbi Asher of Stolin, and Rabbi Solomon of Karlin. To this very day the "Chabad" Chasidim celebrate the 19th of "Kislev" in memory of this event.
324. See B.R., p. 70.
325. See the author's work Milchemes Hakohol B'horav Ho-acharon in He-ovar, vol. II.

326. For details concerning Shne-ur Zalmon's second arrest and Avigdor's false accusations, see: Y. Hisn's work on the religious struggle, Vos'chod, 1902: Marek, op. cit., pp. 153-162; Teitelbaum, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 90-122, 166-182, vol. II, pp. 185-200; D., vol. II.
327. For detailed information on the conflict between Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon and Rabbi Abraham of Kalisk, see: Teitelbaum, op. cit., vol. I, chapter XV; A. V. Braver's article "Al hamachlokes ben horav Shne-ur Zalmon miliyadi v'rabi Avrohom mikalisk" (Kiryas Sefer, vol. I, p. 144).
328. Teitelbaum, op. cit., vol. I, p. 156.
329. Published many times.
330. Also in the "public proclamation" which the Rabbi of Liyadi sent out to the Jews of White Russia after he fled from Liyadi, it is reiterated that the Jews, in gratitude for all the benefits which the Russian government bestowed on them, should assist the Russian military with all their power, spy out and inform the Russian generals as to the number and condition of the enemy army, in general "do everything which will keep any and all danger far from our beloved Czar Alexander I and bring benefit to his kingdom and our Fatherland" (first published in Saul Ginzburg's Otezestve Naya Voina, pp. 59-61). From the general style of this "public proclamation," however, it can be readily conjectured that the text was written at the Russian General Staff Headquarters, and the finished proclamation was given to the Rebe of Liyadi to sign.
331. This name is derived from the first word with which both parts of the book begin. We have used the Shklov edition of 1814. His sermons, which he delivered in the form of commentaries on the weekly portions of the Torah, were not written down by Rabbi Shne-ur Zalmon himself; this was done by his brother Judah Leb and by his children, who published them under the titles: Likute Toro

and Toro Or.

332. This is pointed out by the author of the Tanyo himself in the preface to his work: "Kuntresim elu hanikro-im b'shem Likute Amorim...v'chulon hen t'shuvos al sh'elos rabos asher sho-alin b'etso kol anshe sh'lomenu d'm'dinasenu tomid kol echod l'fi erko loshis etsos b'nafshom ba-avodas hashem" [these pamphlets called Likute Amorim...and they are all responsa to many questions which all our adherents in our province continually ask in order to obtain advice each one according to what is important for him to obtain spiritual advice for the service of God]. Also Rabbi Zuse of Anipol indicates in his imprimatur of the year 1796 that, since the pamphlets have spread among the Jews in many transcripts of many scribes and because of the great number of transcripts many errors have crept in, therefore the author is forced to have these pamphlets printed.
333. The first edition (1796) consisted of these two works only, and it was first in the later editions that the Igeres Hakodesh, Igeres Hat'shuvo and Kuntros Acharon were added.
334. See Z., vol. IV, p. 332.
335. L.A.M., p. 21.
336. See above, pp. 135-139.
337. L.A.T., p. 48: "Ma shekosuv tani adonoi lo shonisi' she-en shum shinu-i k'lal k'mo shehoyo l'vado kodem mib'ri-as ho-olom rak hu l'vado achar shenivro b'li shum shinu-i b'atsmuso v'lo b'dato ki bidi-as atsmo yode-a kol hanivro-im shehakol mimenu" [that which is written "I the Lord change not" means that there is no change whatever; just as He was alone before creation so was He alone by Himself after creation without any change in His essence or knowledge, for by knowing Himself He knows all that has been created, for everything comes from Him].

338. L.T., Vayikro, p. 102: "ech shayoch tsimtsum v'siluk mokom lits'dodin b'or en sof she-eno b'geder mokom k'lal, v'od dich'siv ani adono! lo shonisi she-en bo shum shinu-i yisborach ben kodem shenivro ho-olom l'achar shenivro, v'hare hatsimtsum zehu lich'ora inyan shinu-i b'ho-or" [Translation in the text]. Ibid., p. 90: "v'en perush siluk kifshuto b'histalkus hadovor mimokom ze l'mokom elyon me-achar shehu yisborach eno b'geder mokom, elo haperush shena-aso ho-or biv'chinas ho-olom" [And the meaning of "removal" is not to be taken literally, that is, the actual removal of a thing from one place to another, since God (the Infinite) is not limited as to space, but rather is the meaning that the light was changed to a state endurable by the world]. (Cited according to the Vilna edition of 1878).
339. See Z., vol. III, pp. 20-21.
340. "D'les machashovo t'fiso be k'lal v'eno biv'chinas hen rak biv'chinas hash'lilo...mima she-omar horambam b'inyan hato-arim shene-emru al hakodosh boruch hu rak bish'lilus v'enom to-arim astmiyim... l'fi shehakodosh boruch hu l'malo mehahasogo v'en efshor l'hasig mohuso b'shum ponim, al ken lo yitochen lomar olov yisborach hato-arim k'mo kol yochol v'chochom v'rotse, ki hu l'malo mimohus y'choles v'chochmo v'rotson shebanivro-im ad she-en erech v'dimyon beno uvenenu k'lal lomar olov to-arim elu bil'shon to-arim atsmiyim rak shehem ne-emru bil'shon sh'lilo" [For there is no human thought comprehending God at all and He is not in a positive category but only negative...concerning what Maimonides said in regard to the attributes which are ascribed to God being only negative and not being positive attributes...since God is above comprehension and it is impossible to comprehend His essence in any way, therefore it is not correct to ascribe to Him such attributes as omnipotent, omniscient and possessing a will, for He is above the essences of power, knowledge and will which are possessed by creatures, there being no estimation of Him nor any comparison at all between God and ourselves so that we cannot ascribe these positively couched attributes to Him---but rather should these attributes be stated negatively].

(L.T., Pikude, p. 7, 12).

341. "B'ri-as yesh me-ayin zu chochmoso she-eno museges l'shum nivro" [Creation out of nothing is by God's wisdom which is incomprehensible to any creature] (I.H.); "k'shem she-i efshor l'shum nivro bo-olom l'hasig mohus habore v'-atsumso kach i efshor l'hasig mohus dato" [just as it is impossible for any creature in the world to comprehend the essence of the Creator and His being, so is it impossible to comprehend the essence of His knowledge] (S.H.V., p. 49); "d'les machashovo dile t'fiso umaseges bo yisborach k'lal uch'lal shum hasogo bo-olom v'lo shemets minehu" [for there is no human thought which comprehends and grasps God at all, or even attains the slightest inkling of Him] (S.S.B., p. 24).
342. A mystical expression already found in the Zohar. See Z., vol. III, p. 397.
343. S.S.B., chapters 20-21; S.H.V., chapter 6: "adonoi hu ho-elohim perush shesh'ne shemos elu hem echod mamosh...ki shem elohim eno ma-alim um'-tsamtsem elo latachtonim v'lo l'gabe hakodosh boruch hu me-achar shehu ush'mo elohim echod" ["the Lord is God" is to be explained as meaning that these two names are an actual identity... for the name "elohim" (God) does not conceal anything contained in the name "adonoi" (Lord) and does not contract itself except in regard to those dwelling below (i.e., human beings) and not regarding God, since He and His name "elohim" are one].
344. S.S.B., chapter 40: "hakodosh boruch hu ihu m'-male kol olmin b'shove" [Translation in text].
345. S.S.B., chapter 48; S.H.V., chapter 6.
346. S.H.V., chapter 23, 48.
347. An independent separate thing.

348. S.H.V., chapter 6.
349. S.S.B., chapters 23-44, 46; S.H.V., chapter 6.
350. S.S.B., chapter 46: "ma shehakodosh boruch hu muvdol meho-olomos v'hu b'chinas sovev kol olmin ma she-eno yochol l'hislabesh bohen" [God is removed from the worlds and He is in the category of surrounding all the worlds and He cannot become embodied in them]. S.S.B., chapter 23: "r'tsono yisborach hanikro sovev kol olmin shehu b'chinas ma she-eno yochol l'hislabesh b'soch olmin rak m'chaye ume-ir l'malo biv'chinas makif... shekol ho-olomos elyonim v'sachtonim k'lo chashivi kame uch'ayin vo-efes mamosh, ad she-eno mislabesh b'sochom mamosh elo sovev kol olmin biv'chinas makif" [God's will is termed "surrounding the worlds," since it is in the category of not being able to become embodied in the midst of the worlds, only giving life and light from above in the category of transcendent...for all the worlds, both upper and lower, are as naught compared to Him and as nothing and vanity, so that He does not actually become embodied in their midst, but rather surrounds all the worlds in the category of transcendent].
351. S.H.V., chapter 3.
352. S.S.B., chapter 38.
353. See above, pp. 136-137.
354. "Tachlis b'rias ho-olom hu bishvil hisgalus yisborach en melech b'lo om" [The purpose of the creation of the world is for the self-revelation of God (since) there is no king without a people] (S.H.V., chapter 7); "Tachlis hishtalsh'lus kol ho-olomos lih'yos k'vod adonai mole kol ho-orets halozu" [the purpose of the development of all the worlds is so that the glory of God may fill this entire earth] (S.S.B., chapter 49).
355. S.S.B., chapter 36, 49.

356. See above, pp. 139-142.
357. S.S.B., chapter 19; see also T.O., Sh'mos: "Tachlis b'rias ho-olom bishvil yisro-el" [The purpose of the creation of the world is for Israel].
358. S.S.B., chapter 37.
359. S.S.B., chapter 41.
360. See above, pp. 139-140.
361. S.S.B., chapter 14; L.T., Pikude; and many other places.
362. S.S.B., chapter 5.
363. S.S.B., chapter 23.
364. S.S.B., chapter 47.
365. S.S.B., chapter 23.
366. Ibid.: "shekol hahalochos hen pirte hemshechos p'nimiyos r'tson ho-elyon atsmo, shekach olo bir'tsono yisborach shedovor ze mutot o kosher o potur o zakai o l'hefech" [All the laws are miniature reflections of the will of the All Highest Himself, for thus did God will: that this thing be permitted or allowed or absolved or innocent or the reverse]. See also chapter 52: "v'hahalochos atsmen hen mimidosov shel En Sof boruch hu" [and the laws themselves are of the attributes of the Infinite One, Blessed Be He].
367. The author of the L.A.T. himself refers to this seeming contradiction and also tries to explain it (L.T., Bamidbar, in the last comments).
368. S.S.B., chapter 4.
369. S.S.B., chapter 52.

370. Sidur, Sha-ar T'filo; See also S.S.B., chapter 17: "ho-ahavo lashem l'dovko bo b'kiyum mitsvos v'soroso v'ze kol ho-odom" [to love the Lord means to cling to Him through fulfilling His commandments and His Torah and this is man's entire function].
371. S.S.B., chapter 23: "shehamitsvos hen p'nimiyos r'tson ho-elyon v'cheftso ho-amiti ham'lubosh b'chol ho-olomos ho-elyonim v'sachtonim l'hachayosom, ki kol chiyus v'shefa tolu-i b'ma-ase hamitsvos shel hatachtonim" [the commandments are reflections of the will of the All Highest and His real desire which is embodied in all the worlds, both upper and lower, to sustain them, for all life and abundance derive from the carrying out of the commandments by those (dwelling here) below].
372. L.A.T., Kuntros Acharon: "V'chol olomos elyonim v'sachtonim t'luyim b'dikduk mitsvo achas" [and all the worlds, upper and lower, depend on the precise and careful fulfillment of one commandment].
373. S.S.B., chapter 37, 46; see also T.O., Sh'mos, Vo-ero.
374. S.S.B., chapter 31.
375. S.S.B., chapter 38, 40.
376. See above, pp. 101-102.
377. In another place (S.S.B., chapter 1) the author of the L.A.T. indicates that man's soul consists of two elements: the "animal soul" and the "divine soul."
378. S.S.B., chapter 3, 16.
379. S.S.B., chapter 6.
380. S.S.B., chapter 12.

381. S.S.B., chapter 34.
382. S.S.B., chapter 42; see also ibid.: "ho-ikor hu hahergel l'hagil dato umachashavto tomid lih'yos kovu-a b'libo umocho tomid asher kol ma shero-e b'enov hashomayim v'ho-orets um'lo-o hakol hem l'vushim hachitsonim shel hamelech hakodosh bo-ruch hu v'al y'de ze yizkor tomid al p'nimiyusom v'chiyusom" [the essence is the habituation of one's mind and thought so that it should always be fixed in one's heart and mind that whatsoever one sees with one's eyes, the heavens and the earth and everything in it, that everything is an external embodiment of the King, the Holy One Blessed Be He, and thereby one will always remember of what everything is a reflection and the source of the existence of everything].
383. O.T., p. 28; L.A.M., p. 18.
384. L.A.M., p. 23.
385. O.T., p. 77.
386. O.T., p. 60.
387. S.S.B., chapter 19, 43.
388. Fear and love are two wings...and fear is included in love.
389. S.S.B., chapter 41, and in many other places. The author of the L.A.T. demonstrates here great depth of understanding of various psychological and ethical problems.
390. Also called by the author of the L.A.T.---"yiro tato-o" [lowest form of fear].
391. S.S.B., chapter 42.
392. S.S.B., chapter 43.
393. Ibid.

394. S.S.B., chapter 44: "shesh'te b'chinos ahavos elu hen k'lulos min b'chinas ahavo rabo um'ulo mid'chilu ur'chimu sichliyim asher ho-ahavo nikro l'el ahavas olom" [These ~~are~~ two kinds of love (natural and rational) are derived from the category of "great love" which is greater and higher than rational "reverence and love" which is the same as the love referred to above as "everlasting love"].
395. L.T., Bamidbor; see also I.H., p. 14b (according to the 1814 edition of Shklov).
396. S.S.B., chapter 18, 44.
397. It is much, much higher than the level of knowledge and understanding.
398. In another place (L.T., Vayikro, in the commentary to "lo sashbis melach") the author of the L.A.T. concludes: "shehan'shomo atsmo hi l'malo mimohus hasechel" [the soul itself is higher than the essence of intelligence].
399. "Hen hen hamerkovo" [they are compared to the "chariot"]. For details concerning the mystic significance of the "chariot" see Z., vol. II, p. 99.
400. The following citation from the L.A.T. is typical: "ulifomim mamshichim poshe yisro-el n'shomos g'vohos m'od shehoyu b'imke hak'lipos" [and sometimes Jewish sinners pull up very exalted souls that were in the depths of the "K'lipos"] (S.S.B., chapter 18).
401. S.S.B., chapter 18-19, 25; T.O., Sh'mos.
402. S.S.B., chapter 39; S.H.V., chapter 11.
403. S.S.B., chapter 2.
404. S.S.B., chapter 42.
405. S.S.B., chapter 44.

406. S.S.B., chapter 46.
407. I.H., page 18b-19a.
408. On the other hand, the author of the L.A.T. does not tire of pointing out the great importance of charity, and that all the needy members of the community should be given material assistance. "En yisro-el nigolin elo bits'doko" [Israel will be redeemed only through charity]---the "Rebe of Liyadi" repeats many times (see L.A.T., chapter 37; I.H., p. 2, 4; T.O., Sh'mos).
409. I.H., p. 8b.
410. S.S.B., chapter 32.
411. See above, p. 192.
412. See T.O., end of Vayetse. The author of the K'dushas Levi, however, did know that "milovon na-asin kol hagavonim" [all the colors come from white] (see K'dushas Levi, Likutim).
413. S.S.B., chapter 8.
414. See Teitelbaum, Horav Miliyadi, vol. II, p. 17.

GLOSSARY

The following glossary lists certain Hebrew words used in the text. Those omitted are either explained where they occur in the text or may be found in the regular English dictionary, or are assumed to be known to the reader. Certain Hebrew words and phrases which have already been translated in the text are here given a more detailed explanation. A full analysis of the Hebrew terms in this glossary can be found in the book's Index in Hebrew. See also the previous articles in the Index.

1. ADAM, first of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

2. ABRAHAM, first of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

3. ISAAC, second of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

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4. JACOB, third of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

5. JOSEPH, fourth of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

6. MOSHE, fifth of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

7. DAVID, sixth of the world's spiritual beings, created in a state of religious ignorance.

GLOSSARY

The following glossary lists certain Hebrew terms used in the text. Those omitted are either explained where they occur in the text or may be found in the regular English dictionary, or are assumed to be known to the reader. Certain Hebrew terms and phrases which have already been translated in the text are here given a more detailed explanation. A full analysis of the Cabalistic terms in this glossary can be found in Scholem's Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. See also the pertinent articles in the Jewish Encyclopedia.

ALIYAS N'SHOMO, rising of the soul; mystical experience, vision in a moment of religious ecstasy.

ARI, abbreviation of Ashkenazi Rabenu Yits'chok; Isaac Luria, the famous Cabalist of Safed in the sixteenth century.

BA-AL SHEM, master of the name; one who by means of magical use of the divine name and by extension, through other means, is able to perform miracles, especially the curing of illness by means of the casting out of evil spirits; the master of the name par excellence, Israel ben Eli-ezer.

BA-AL SHEM TOV, the good master of the name; Israel ben Eli-ezer, so called to distinguish him from the other ba-al shems, and because he was so outstanding.

BESHT, abbreviation of Ba-al Shem Tov, q.v.

D'VEKUS, literally, attachment, joining; communion with God, fervent ecstasy, adhesion to God, unio mystica; the ultimate goal of religious perfection, perpetual being with God, an intimate union and conformity of the human and divine will.

ESER S'FIROS, the ten spheres or emanations of divine manifestation; *divine qualities.*

HECHOL, one of the heavenly halls or palaces through which the mystic passes, and in the seventh and last of which there rises the throne of divine glory.

HISGALUS, self-revelation; recognition of a Tsadik, q.v., by the multitude.

HISLAHAVUS, enthusiasm, ecstasy.

HISHPASHTUS HAGASHMIYUS, the stripping away of all corporeality; a state of pure spiritual ecstasy wherein a man attains true "D'vekus," q.v.

HORIBASH, abbreviation of Horabi Yisro-el Ba-al Shem; Rabbi Israel Ba-al Shem.

KAVONO, mystical intention or concentration; mystical meditation on the words of prayer while they are being spoken.

K'LIPO (K'LIPOS), bark (of a tree) or shell (of a nut); the forces of evil; the formless forces which fill the primal space.

MA-ASE B'RESHIS, the story of creation as told in the book of Genesis; the esoteric doctrine of creation.

MAGID, preacher; title of many Chasidic rabbis; in particular, the Magid par excellence, Dov Ber of Mezheritch, called "The Great Magid."

MISNAGDIM, opponents; term applied by the Chasidim to all those in the camp of Rabbinism who opposed the new Chasidic group.

NITSOTS (NITSOTSOS or NITSOTSIM), spark; all spheres of existence, including organic and inorganic nature, contain holy sparks of the "Sh'chino", q.v., according to the Cabala.

REBE, Yiddish distortion of Hebrew title "rabi," rabbi; used specifically as a title for the Chasidic rabbi.

SH'CHINO, God's immanence or indwelling in the world.

SHEMOS, names; the divine names used for mystical-magical purposes.

SITRO ACHARO, the other side; euphemism for the forces of evil.

TIKUN, literally, improvement, mending or restitution of a defect; redemption; cabalistic term for man's task in this world, to heal or mend the present unredeemed and broken state of the world which prevents the continuance union of God and the "Sh'chino," g.v., by means of religious acts; extinction of the stain and restoration of harmony; the freeing of the "nitsotsos," g.v., in every object in the universe from the "k'lipos," g.v., which hold them imprisoned; striving for the perfection of the world, salvation.

TORO (TORAH), the Pentateuch; by extension, the entire range of Jewish religious lore; in Chasidism, anything said or done by the "Rebe," g.v., especially his discourses to his disciples and adherents at the "third meal" on Saturday night whether dealing with Torah in a more restricted sense or not.

TSADIK (TSADIKIM), righteous one; term applied to the Chasidic rabbi.

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