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"THE METZAREF AVODAH: A Pro-Hasidic Response  
to the Nefesh ha-Hayyim"

In the plentiful and fascinating polemical literature surrounding the Hasidic-Mitnagdic controversy, one of the more interesting tracts is a slim volume by the name of "נפש חיה 432" (hereinafter: MA). Its special importance derives from its explicit references to R. Hayyim of Volozhin (1749-1821), the leading ideologist of the Mitnagdim, and from its arguments which are, in effect, rebuttals to the criticisms contained in R. Hayyim's Nefesh ha-Hayyim<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter: NH).

MA was first published in Königsberg in 1858<sup>2</sup> by Dov Segelowitz, and purported to be the record of a debate that took place seventy-two years earlier between a Mitnaged and a Hasid. It is quite obviously a pseudepigraphic work, abounding in innumerable contradictions and inconsistencies. The moderateness of its polemic and the respectful forcefulness of this Hasidic apologetic tract, preclude 1786 as the date of the alleged dialogue; the tone and temperament clearly mark it as the product of a later, more conciliatory period. It is important to note the nature of this work, its probable authorship and date of composition, and the reliability of its contents and its relationship to the NH.



The MA appeared in two editions. The first has been mentioned above. The second was published by Meir Greenspan in Zytmierz, 1865.<sup>3</sup> The title page asserts that the contents of the volume was composed in the year 1786; the ~~1st~~<sup>first</sup> edition refers to the debate as having taken place seventy-two years earlier, and the 2nd edition dates it as eighty years earlier. Similarly, the correspondence which forms the major part of the book is dated ת"ת נ"ו or ת"ת ק"ו = 1786. The two correspondents are referred to as: <sup>ה'אדמו"ר</sup> <sup>של סלנימ</sup> <sup>וה'אדמו"ר</sup> <sup>של נמיר</sup> <sup>ה'אדמו"ר</sup> <sup>של סלנימ</sup> and are identified as Benjamin Ze'ev of Slonim (the Mitnaged) and Joseph of Nemerov (the Hasid). Both editions carry, as an addendum, an undated letter by R. Shneour Zalman <sup>of Ladi</sup> to his followers in Vilna,<sup>4</sup> which appropriately refutes many of the Mitnagdic charges and relates the HaBaD leader's efforts at mediation and reconciliation.

The literary form of the MA is that of an exchange of correspondence on the differences between the Hasidim and Mitnagdim. The second letter contains a lengthy recounting by the Hasid of a debate he carried on with another Mitnaged, and the latter's conversion to the Hasidic view. It is this latter debate-within-a-debate that contains most of the items of significance in the MA. The style of this inner



dialogue is reminiscent of Yehudah Halevi's Kuzari. The Mitnaged, like the King, begins with a self-assurance which, under the searching scrutiny and superior wisdom of his partner (the Rabbi in the one case and the Hasid in the other), he gradually surrenders until he is persuaded of his conversationalist's point of view. The Mitnaged's questions, like the King's, are merely foils for the author's thesis. Of course, the analogy is restricted to form; the MA cannot by any means be regarded as a work of literary distinction. Furthermore, the narrative context of the Kuzari is meant as a literary device, despite the authenticity of its general historical background, whereas the story related in MA was intended to be taken as factual truth. Nevertheless, despite the pseudepigraphical nature of the "correspondence" and debate, it is quite probable that a number of incidents related in MA did indeed occur, although this does not necessarily mean we must accept the author's assertion of personal knowledge of these events. Were they untrue, the reliability of the work would become immediately suspect and its pretensions exposed. Thus, for instance, the author is no doubt correct in asserting that young Hasidim were students in the Yeshivah under R. Hayyim, and that he -- the author -- studied there; although one may question the veracity of his claim of having been close to R. Hayyim or, indeed, that he personally knew him at all. <sup>5</sup>



Likewise, the reliability of the author's report is strengthened (though not established beyond question) when he quotes names and places, as when he identifies a visiting Hasid to whom R. Hayyim extended hospitality as R. Israel Jaffe, a printer of Kapust,<sup>6</sup> although, as will become evident shortly, he had no personal knowledge of this <sup>incident</sup> ~~fact~~ but was probably repeating "well known facts."

There are thus three principal characters in the story told in the MA: the Hasid, the Mitnaged he writes to, and the Mitnaged with whom he debates orally in the inner dialogue (and which debate he recounts in his second letter). Furthermore, there are occasional additions entitled " הערה ", or compiler's notes. Since the letters are all the invention of the author, it is clear that the "compiler" and the writers of the letters are one and the same person -- the author of the MA.

Dubnow has pointed out some of the major anachronisms in the MA, which make the alleged 1786 date utterly impossible. Thus, there are mentioned in the book the Yeshivah of Volozhin (1802), the Gaon's Commentary on Sifra di'Tzeniuta (1820), and the NH (1824).<sup>7</sup> Many other instances may be cited as evidence that the work post-dates 1786;<sup>8</sup> the latest date of any specific event or book mentioned is 1824, the year of publication of the NH.<sup>9</sup>



Any attempts to learn something authentic about the author from the words of the compiler and the Hasidic correspondent, who is his mouthpiece, are bound to fail. The Hasid's information about himself is a hopeless jumble of contradictory statements and hints. So blatant are these inconsistencies that one must conclude that either the author was incredibly inept or, more probably, that he was perpetrating a practical joke at the same time that he was seriously confronting certain theoretical and social problems. Yet his acquaintance with Mitnagdic doctrines and lore lend <sup>S</sup> credence to his assertion that, at one time, he studied at the Yeshivah of Volozhin.<sup>10</sup>

The author, to take his Hasid at face value, claims personal acquaintanceship with R. Hayyim.<sup>11</sup> In his role as "compiler", he maintains that he, the compiler, heard personally from R. Saadia, disciple of R. Elijah, <sup>of Vilna,</sup> the Gaon, a story of the Gaon told by the Mitnaged.<sup>12</sup> This is probably untrue; R. Saadia, the zealous antagonist of the Hasidim, and brother-in-law of R. Shelomoh Zalman, the brother of R. Hayyim, emigrated to Palestine in 1809 - 1810.<sup>13</sup> Since MA was first published in 1858, the "compiler" <sup>would</sup> <sup>have been</sup> was thus repeating a tale he heard at least almost half a century earlier.

The "Hasid" can be shown to have no less than four different allegiances. Dubnow has already noted the similarity of many of the Hasidic arguments to the



doctrines of R. Shneour Zalman in the Likkutei Amarim and concludes that the author most probably was a member of the HaBaD movement.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the MA's position on the Study of Torah she'lo lishmah<sup>15</sup> parallels exactly, even in language, that of Likkutei Amarim;<sup>16</sup> so, too, his ideas on the progressive spiritual degradation of the generations from the pre-Patriarchal to the post-Talmudic period<sup>17</sup> follow that of R. Shneour Zalman;<sup>17</sup> and so his views on Prayer in relation to Study.<sup>18</sup> The author has his Mitnaged assert openly that the Gaon ignored certain Lurianic practices,<sup>19</sup> which reopens the same charge made against the Gaon in a letter by R. Shneour Zalman, to which R. Hayyim responded in his ~~Introduction~~ <sup>Foreword</sup> to the Gaon's Commentary on the Sifra di'Tzeniuta.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, he repeats the earlier implication by R. Shneour Zalman that the Gaon's rejection of Hasidic immanentism is philosophically inspired.<sup>21</sup> The fact that the MA bears, as an appendix, <sup>this</sup> letter by R. Shneour Zalman to his followers in Vilna, indicates that the author was a Hasid of R. Shneour Zalman. More directly, he traces the mainstream of Hasidic tradition from the Besht through the Maggid to R. Shneour Zalman, whom he refers to as ר"א א"ל (literally, "two lights," by breaking into two the name רמב"א),<sup>22</sup> and as ר' אהרן מלך לאדי,<sup>23</sup> as if he were alive and residing in Ladi.



Yet in other places the Hasid in the MA professes to be a follower of R. Dov Ber, the son of R. Shneour Zalman. In one passage he refers to the latter as "our Rabbi" (רבינו האוון נלאדי), and to the former as "the Rabbi" of Ladi (הרב האוון נלאדי), citing the latter's "זאורי הכהן" (first published in Kapust, 1816).<sup>24</sup> Towards the end of his work, the Hasid offers the Mitnaged a resume of the genealogy of Hasidic leaders, from the Besht through the Maggid through R. Shneour Zalman to R. Dov Ber.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to posing as a follower both of R. Shneour Zalman and R. Dov Ber, which would have been not at all improbable, for most of the Hasidim of the former transferred their allegiance to his son and successor, the Hasid speaks of becoming a follower of the Rabbi of Amdur.<sup>26</sup> Amdur -- or Hamdura or Indur -- was a town in northwestern Lithuania in the province of Grodno, where the Rabbi was R. Hayyim Hayy'ke, a disciple of the Maggid and a zealous missionary for the new movement of Hasidism.<sup>27</sup> Under R. Hayyim Hayy'ke, Amdur was an isolated island of Hasidism in Lithuania; from 1785 to 1787, when he died, he was the only Hasidic Zaddik in Lithuania, R. Shelomoh of Karlin and R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev having been exiled by the Mitnagdim.<sup>28</sup> Amdur Hasidism came to an end with the death of R. Hayyim Hayy'ke's son, R. Samuel, in 1798.<sup>29</sup> The anachronism here is painfully obvious: the Hasid's claim is to have



left the Yeshivah of Volozhin, founded in 1802, to become a follower of a Zaddik who died in 1787. In all probability the author, unaware of or ignoring the late date of the founding of the Yeshivah, invented the Amdur episode to lend credibility to the early (1786) dating of the alleged correspondence.

There is yet a fourth Zaddik to whom the Hasid pretends to offer his allegiance; although, in fairness to the author, it should be mentioned that this element is only indirectly implied in the MA and explicitly announced in the "  $\eta\epsilon\eta$   $\iota\epsilon\eta\iota\epsilon$  ", which is but a later version, slightly modified, of the MA. The title page of "  $\eta\epsilon\eta$   $\iota\epsilon\eta\iota\epsilon$  " (hereinafter, VR) clearly identifies the Hasid, R. Joseph of Nemerov, as a disciple of R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev.<sup>30</sup> In both MA and VR, the same Hasidic Zaddik is mentioned in the text, identifying him, together with R. Yehiel Michel of Zloczow, his fellow-disciple of the Maggid, as the one who introduced the Hasidic habit of delaying the morning prayers.<sup>31</sup> There are certain differences in the manner in which these works refer to him. Thus, the VR, the later work, writes of him as if he were alive, and in terms reserved by Hasidim for one's own Rabbi (  $\eta\iota\eta\iota\epsilon$  ).<sup>32</sup> In the same context, the MA, the earlier work, writes of R. Levi Yitzhak as if he were already deceased, without the  $\eta\iota\eta\iota\epsilon$ , and, to make matters worse, his two names are given in reverse order!<sup>33</sup>



The only conclusion is that internal criticism is inconclusive in yielding any reliable information about the author of this tract. All we can say with any certainty is that the author's claims are false, the letters are spurious, and the incidents invented -- if not completely, then at least for the most part.

However, we do have some information as to the identity of the probable author of this work. Dubnow mentions, en passant, a theory identifying the author as a Jacob Bachrach of Bialystok.<sup>34</sup> Weiner, who considers VR as simply the same MA reprinted under a different title, unhesitatingly declares Bachrach the author.<sup>35</sup> Zinberg, for reasons he does not make clear, rejects this suggestion.<sup>36</sup>

The first one to name Bachrach as author of the MA was Ephraim Deinard, who lived in the United States at the turn of the century. Deinard was a close friend of Bachrach,<sup>37</sup> who superintended a Hebrew printing establishment in Koëningsberg. The latter, born in Russia in 1824 and died in Bialystok in 1896, was an assiduous student of Karaitic literature (engaging in controversies with Karaites) and an expert in problems of the Jewish calendar.<sup>38</sup> In order properly to evaluate the MA, it is important to consider critically the evidence and theory proposed by Deinard; apparently this has not been done heretofore.



Deinard's theory embraces not only the pro-Hasidic apologetic, the MA, but, somewhat fantastically, the Mitnagdic polemic "פ'י'נ'ס נ'ר'ס" <sup>39</sup> and the bitter anti-Hasidic diatribe, "פ'י'נ'ס נ'ר'ס." All three, Deinard asserts, were written by Bachrach. Deinard is aware of the obvious discrepancy in style that separates the three books. Bachrach possessed a fine literary style and was a competent grammarian, yet MA and Shever Posh'im reveal neither good style nor correct grammar. Deinard's explanation is to declare that these literary defects are contrived, part of a conscious effort by Bachrach to disguise his authorship. But, then, what of the Zemir Aritzim which is well written? Deinard has an easy solution: Bachrach slipped and allowed himself to write with literary grace! <sup>40</sup> It is important to note Deinard's facility in inventing theories for it sheds light upon his general reliability.

Bachrach wrote MA, Deinard avers, in response to a request by Segelowitz (the publisher of MA), who was a proof-reader in Königsberg in 1860. <sup>41</sup> The date, of course, is inaccurate; MA was first published in 1858. Bachrach, according to Deinard, did this for two reasons: to ridicule the naive and credulous Hasidim and to enable Segelowitz to make money by selling the MA to them as an authentic record of the 1786 correspondence which it pretends to preserve for posterity. <sup>42</sup>

If Deinard was indeed a close friend of Bachrach why did he have to resort to "theories" about



his alleged authorship of these various volumes instead of confirming it with him personally? Deinard's answer is that Bachrach wanted this to be a closely guarded secret, perhaps because he did not enjoy the reputation of being a "ghost" and, out of consideration for Bachrach's feelings, not wanting to irritate him, Deinard refrained from broaching the subject during the three years (1873-1876) they spent together in Sevastopol.<sup>43</sup> However, by the time of the publication of this volume (1899), Bachrach was already dead three years and Deinard considered it a sin against Jewish history not to make the fact of Bachrach's authorship known.<sup>44</sup>

Deinard is the source of all others who have attributed the MA to Bachrach. Dubnow, who tends to accept this information with regard to the MA,<sup>45</sup> is not wont to regard as reliable the theory that he wrote all three works mentioned earlier; it is an "astounding theory" of the same order as Deinard's insistence, against all historians of Hasidism, that R. Israel Baal Shem Tov never existed!<sup>46</sup>

Enough has been said about Deinard to indicate that his conclusions are suspect, based upon a series of inaccuracies and speculations, and must be taken with more than a grain of caution. Certainly, Bachrach's authorship of all three works is improbable. Bachrach's reputation as a serious scholar and convinced Rabbinic Jew does not lend credence to the implication that he



was so unprincipled a literary hack as to write such contradictory works, simultaneously attacking and defending Hasidism.

Nevertheless, Deinard's insistence upon Bachrach's authorship of the MA is more convincing than the rest of his theory. At the very least, Deinard offers some evidence for this assertion: the end of the Introduction to the MA is an acrostic of Bachrach's name!<sup>47</sup> The entire passage reads as follows, with the appropriate letters underlined:

וה' צבאות קדוש ישראל יאחד ויחבר את האהל  
להיות אחד, וכלנו נהי' כאיש אחד חברים,  
יקבץ פזורינו, יאסף נדחינו, אל הר קדשנו,  
ובית תפארתנו ירום עוז קרננו בכבוד במהרה  
בן רוממות כבוד נצח יראנו. אמן

48

The entire passage has been cited in order to underscore the fact that this is no coincidence; the last five words are somewhat awkward in style compared with the rest of the passage, and were probably placed in this strained order in order to make the acrostic possible.

There is yet one more indication that may be cited in support of Bachrach's authorship or that the author's name was Jacob: the names of the fictitious Hasid and Mitnaged in the MA are, respectively, Joseph and Benjamin. The Biblical Joseph and Benjamin were full brothers and sons of Jacob.



If, then, as appears probable, Bachrach is the author of MA, certain conclusions must immediately be drawn as to the reliability of the reports contained therein. Bachrach was born in 1824. This means that he never knew R. Hayyim (d.1821), or R. Dov Ber of Ladi (d.1828), or R. Levi Yitzhak (d.1809), or indeed any of the historical figures with whom he feigns such intimacy. All the "factual" information offered by the author is suspect; it cannot be accepted without independent corroboration except, perhaps, in such cases where a fabrication would be immediately recognized as such.

This would be true, on the basis of internal criticism, even without the particular identification of Bachrach as the author. With this information, however, we are confronted with additional obstacles in attributing some credibility to the MA. Bachrach was a careful investigator, who produced serious works of scholarship demanding a high degree of accuracy and meticulousness. If he were to set about inventing a piece of pseudepigraphy, he would take certain elementary precautions to avoid obvious inconsistencies; certainly he would never permit his work to abound in fantastic anachronisms and contradictions, some of which have been noted above. This could happen only if the author took a very dim view of his audience, and, out of a sardonic sense of humor, decided to play upon their gullibility. This, indeed, was the assertion of



Deinard.<sup>49</sup> It certainly appears that some of the statements in the MA border upon meaningless gibberish, intending to mystify the ingenious reader; such obscurantism may very well be the product of wry wit.<sup>50</sup> Were this the end of the matter, the whole of the MA would have to be dismissed as historically irrelevant and of no value whatever for the scholarship dealing with significant religious and theological issues that agitated some of the best minds of this period.

Certainly, as was mentioned earlier, one must under the best circumstances be circumspect in using the MA as a valid source. Yet it appears that despite the author's clever playfulness, perhaps despite himself, he has confronted some important issues in a mature and substantial manner. His analyses, his rebuttals of the main Mitnagdic criticisms, including those of R. Hayyim, reveal a deft mind that grasps the heart of the issue, that understands the true nature of the problems, and that offers solutions which, whether they are or are not adequate, are at least credible and merit further consideration. It is obvious that the MA filled a definite need felt by the Hasidic community for a reasoned defense of its position against the Mitnagdic animadversions. Hence, the MA went at least into a 2nd edition. It was deemed worthy of plagiarizing; thus, the VR which, as stated, is essentially the same as the MA.<sup>51</sup> This volume, too, was republished; we know of at least three editions.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the



same work appeared later under yet a different title, which has seemingly escaped the notice of scholars, the "פני נצח", published in Warsaw in 1900.<sup>53</sup> It may be assumed, therefore, that even were the MA a literary hoax, its wide acceptance and imitation by Hasidim warrant its consideration as representing -- intended or not -- the reactions of the Hasidim to Mitnagdic criticisms, and the readiness of the Hasidim to respond in a conciliatory manner to the overtures of the Mitnagdim, particularly R. Hayyim in his NH. Moreover, it may be assumed that the ideas put forth in the MA were not completely original but represented, in more systematic fashion, ideas which were already circulating in informed Hasidic circles.

Dubnow has already recognized the MA as embodying a new tendency in the Hasidic-Mitnagdic polemics: one of peaceful conversation, a dialogue which seeks an accomodation.<sup>54</sup> The Hasid, in the book, lays down four conditions to guide the dialogue: that there be no hatred, no rancor, no arrogance, and no seeking "victory" -- i.e., merely scoring debater's points without dealing with the issues proper.<sup>55</sup> These four conditions -- which are appropriate to any genuine dialogue -- were noticeably absent in the polemics prior to this period. The work announces its own purpose as the re-establishment of fraternal harmony. It castigates the Hasidim for regarding the Mitnagdim



as wanting in faith, and the Mitnagdim for ridiculing the Hasidim and disbelieving the tales told of the Zaddikim; the latter must not be taken at face value, in which case they sound like fables, but as containing profound inner mysteries, as with the stories told by R. Nahman of Bratzlav. Only mutual love and respect can unite the House of Israel and turn their hearts as one to their Father in Heaven.<sup>56</sup>

Dubnow ventures the opinion that the MA is perhaps a sort of response to the NH.<sup>57</sup> A careful reading of the volume shows that it is indeed primarily a response to the NH, which was first published thirty-four years earlier. The author mentions R. Hayyim and his works explicitly a number of times. Thus, he maintains that he was a student at the Yeshivah of Volozhin under R. Hayyim, and that the latter's conciliatory attitude towards the Hasidim, despite the Gaon's harsh strictures, contributed to his eventual transformation into a Hasid.<sup>58</sup> To a comment by the Mitnaged, the "compiler" adds the note that the theme is elaborated upon in the book by R. Hayyim;<sup>59</sup> the passage does appear in the NH.<sup>60</sup> The Mitnaged makes reverent reference to R. Hayyim's description of the Gaon's awesome spiritual prowess, in the former's ~~Introduction~~ <sup>Foreword</sup> to the latter's Commentary on the Sifra di'Tzeniuta.<sup>61</sup>

But more important than these direct mentions of R. Hayyim and his writings are the substance of the



MA's arguments which are, for the most part, reactions to ideas propounded in the NH. A brief summary will suffice to establish the nature of MA as, above all, a response to the NH.

The MA reopens the question of the Gaon's loyalty to Lurianic teachings, which had been questioned by R. Shneour Zalman and defended by R. Hayyim in the latter's Foreword to the Gaon's Commentary on the Sifra di'Tzeniuta; in this matter is it attempted to secure the legitimacy of the antecedents of Hasidism as against its opponents.<sup>62</sup>



R. Hayyim accuses the Hasidim of habitually ignoring the time limits set by the Halakhah for the performance of various commandments, especially prayer.<sup>63</sup> The MA simply denies this, conceding only that if such condition does exist, it is only amongst the very ignorant and is atypical of most Hasidim.<sup>64</sup>

R. Hayyim rejected the Hasidic requirement that study of Torah be accompanied by devekut, which for Hasidism implied an experiential, ecstatic communion with God.<sup>65</sup> R. Hayyim offers an analytic criticism of this principle, and maintains that the two <sup>a</sup>re irreconcilable simultaneously.<sup>66</sup> The Mitnaged in MA restates this challenge by R. Hayyim to this important Hasidic teaching; the Hasid denies any exclusive insistence upon conscious devekut during study -- a patent evasion.<sup>67</sup> <sup>The author</sup> ~~He~~ discusses R. Hayyim's analysis of yirah (piety, religious devotion) and Torah.<sup>68</sup> R. Hayyim consistently maintains the superiority of the study of Torah to the observance of the practical commandments, asserting that Torah, even if not studied for its own sake, is superior to the commandments even when the latter are performed for their own sake (lishmah): Torah, even when not studied lishmah, defends one against sin.<sup>69</sup> The author of MA counters this argument, offering proof for his thesis from the Ore Ha-hayyim to Behukotai.<sup>70</sup> He rejects R. Hayyim's principle which denies the possibility of simultaneous conscious devotio and ratio, and offers instead a psychological insight, namely, that the devotional mood (yirah), derived from a preliminary study of Musar texts, remains active on a subconscious level during the time the mind is overtly



preoccupied with the rigorous study of Halakhah.<sup>71</sup>

He counters R. Hayyim's argument for the superiority of Study over Prayer by summing up R. Shneur Zalman's thesis that without Prayer the Study of Torah loses its spiritual efficacy.<sup>72</sup> He opposes R. Hayyim's limiting the means of achieving repentance to the Study of Torah by declaring teshuvah, rather than Torah Study, an all-inclusive and all-embracing spiritual therapy.<sup>73</sup> Many more such examples may be cited; indeed, with few exceptions of problems not mentioned in the NH, the MA is the direct pro-Hasidic rebuttal to the NH.

Dubnow, who recognized both the new conciliatory spirit of the MA and its nature as a response to R. Hayyim,<sup>74</sup> failed, however, to make the connection between them. The NH, as I have attempted to demonstrate elsewhere,<sup>75</sup> was the first conciliatory Mitnagdic gesture. It endeavored to confront the substantive issues raised by Hasidism without recourse to personal recrimination and invective. The MA was the answer, upholding the Hasidic views but, in the same fraternal spirit, refusing to read the opposition out of the Jewish people. Since, the first such attempt at reconciliation came from the



Hasidic side, with R. Shneur Zalman's efforts,<sup>76</sup> the eventual harmony that was effected was about half a century in the making: the Likkutei Amarim, the NH, the MA.

It must be repeated that this significance of the MA transcends the intentions of the author of this pseudepigraphic tract. Its importance lies in the acceptance accorded to it by the Hasidic community and the substantive arguments, and is independent of the goals and purposes that may have been entertained by the author, probably Jacob Bachrach.



NOTES

1. The NH was first published in Vilna and Grodno in 1824, three years after the death of its author. Seven editions have appeared to date, all of them identical in wording. For purposes of pagination, references here will be to the Rogozin edition, Brooklyn (no date on title page, but probably 1944). For a more elaborate discussion on the NH and the religious thought of R. Hayyim, see my heretofore unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Study of Torah Lishmah in the Works of Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin (submitted at Yeshiva University, 1966) and shortly to be published in Hebrew by Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem.



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"תורה לשמה במשנת רבי חיים מוולוז'ין ובמחשבת הדור"

(מוסד הרב קוק, ירושלים, 1972).

The present essay was submitted for publication before my book on R. Hayyim appeared in print.



2. This was the actual date of publication, and is so recorded by all who have written on the MA; see, for instance, Dubnow, "גאון וחסידות", p. 380f. However, the title page of this first edition gives the following as the publication date: (תקצ"ז) שנת ה'תקצ"ז... ה'רפ"ז or 1837, a full twenty-one years before 1858. Apparently, the final "ה" is not meant to be counted as five, but as twenty-six, the numerical value of the Tetragrammaton which may not be written out for non-sacred purposes.
3. The first edition contains a rather lengthy Introduction lacking in the second edition. They are otherwise identical.
4. This letter has been reprinted by Hayyim <sup>הי</sup>Mar Hielmann, Bet Rebbe, chap. xii, and D. Z. Hillmann, Iggerot Baal-Hatanya U-vene<sup>הי</sup>Dora,<sup>pp. 95-98.</sup> The latter fixes the date of the letter, from internal evidence, as between 1797-1798.
5. MA, p. 29.
6. Ibid. -- הנהגת ישיבת אשכנז.
7. Dubnow, loc. cit.
8. Several illustrations follow: the reference to the Gaon as ר"ז (p.5), whereas the Gaon died in 1797;  
The reference to R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev as



ז" (p.52), whereas he died in 1809; and his reference to R. Shneour Zalman as <sup>הרז הגאון מלאדי</sup>, whereas R. Shneour Zalman first moved to Ladi in 1801.

9. Compiler's note, p.16.
10. MA, pp. 23, 24, 29, 30.
11. Ibid., p. 29.
12. Ibid., p.23 -- <sup>אמר במס' וכן למחתי מפי ר' סדג' תלמידי</sup>
13. A. L. Frumkin, " <sup>תולדות חב"י ירושלים</sup> " with notes and additions by Eliezer Rivlin (Jerusalem: 1928-1930), Part III.
14. Dubnow, p. 381.
15. p. 24.
16. Chap. xxxix, p. 106f.
17. MA, p. 33; Likkutei Amarim, chap. liii; "Torah Ore," beginning of Exodus, and elsewhere.
18. MA, p. 38; for R. Shneour Zalman's attitude to this problem, as compared with that of R. Hayyim, see my article on the subject in the forthcoming Samuel K. Mirsky Memorial Volume.
19. MA, p. 5.
20. R. Shneour Zalman charged the Gaon with infidelity to Lurianic doctrine in a letter to his Hasidim in Vilna, probably in 1797. The best version of this letter, first printed in MA, may be found in Hillmann, pp. 95-99. On the date, see Dubnow, p. 251, n.1. R. Hayyim's rebuttal, uncharacteristically harsh for him, was published one year before his death in his <sup>e</sup>For<sub>h</sub>ward to the Gaon's Commentary on Sifra di'Tzeniuta, 1820.



21. MA, p. 54; see references in previous note.
22. MA, p. 61.
23. MA, p. 54.
24. MA, p. 30.
25. MA, p. 61. He refers to R. Dov Ber, whose name is often contracted to Duber (דבר) as ד"ר/ב, a pun which honors R. Duber as a ד"ר or well "whose waters flow from the Ancient of Days" (מיז נובלים מן עתיק יומין).



26. MA, p.20 -- ושמעתי שיש רופא מומחא באמדור ונסעתי  
לאדמו"ר אולי אמצא ארוכה
27. Dubnow, pp.130,146,158,367ff.
28. Wolf Rabinowitch, "החסידות הליטאית מראשיתה עד ימינו" (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1961), pp.94,97,107.
29. Ibid., p.108.
30. VR, ed. Munkács, 1894 -- מוה' יוסף מנעמירוב ז"ל  
תלמיד הרב הצדיק הקדוש הוצינא קדישא חסידא ופרישא  
אספקלריא המאירה מוהר"ר לוי יצחק מבארדיטשוב זלה"ה  
It is probably on the basis of this statement that  
Zinberg declares the Hasid in the MA to be a Hasid  
of R. Levi Yitzhak. Cf. infra, n.36.
31. MA, p.29f.; VR (no. 14), pp.27ff.
32. VR, loc. cit. -- רק צדיקים פרטיים כמו הרב הצדיק  
המפורסם ר' מיכל זלאטשינר זיעאו"א והרב הגאון אדמו"ר  
הצדיק מוה' ל' יצחק נ"י  
R. Yehiel Michel did indeed predecease R. Levi  
Yitzhak; the former died in about 1792 (Dubnow,  
p.189), and the latter in 1809 (Dubnow, p.194).  
However, towards the end of the VR (p.326), reference  
is again made to R. Levi Yitzhak, this time specific-  
ally as Rabbi of Pinsk; but he spent only a year  
or two in Pinsk, before he was forced by Mitnagdic  
opposition to leave for Zelichow, and that was in  
1771-1772. Hence here, too, we find an anachronism.
33. MA, p.306 -- . והגאון הצדיק ר' יצחק לוי ז"ל  
Elsewhere the name is rendered correctly; MA, p.52 --  
. והגאון הצדיק ר' לוי יצחק ז"ל



34. Dubnow, p.381.
35. Samuel Weiner, " קהלת משה אריה לייב פרידלאנד " (St. Petersburg: 1893-1902), p.394. This appears in the item (#3311) on VR. He refers to a later item (under 'מ') for MA; unfortunately, however, this part of the Friedland Bibliotheque was never published.
36. I. Zinberg, " די געשיכטע פון דער ליטעראטור ביי יידן ", Vol. VII, Book 2, p.226, n.2.
37. Ephraim Deinard, Introduction to (the second) " זמיר עריצים " (Newark, N.J.: 1899), p.xiv ff.
38. Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. II, under "Bachrach, Jacob b. Moses."
39. There are two anti-Hasidic tracts by this name. The first, published in 1772, is extremely harsh and vituperative; the second, first published in 1798, is more moderate and its style and tone far more elegant and restrained. Deinard (loc. cit.) attributes this second tract to Bachrach.
40. Deinard, loc. cit.
41. Ibid.
42. Ephraim Deinard, " ספר מפלגות בישראל " (New York: 1899), p.8f. Apparently this book was privately published by the author; the publication date is inaccurate. Probably the book was in the process of being printed for many years, beginning in 1899. In his previously mentioned work, in the



Introduction to the second " זמיר עריצים  
(1899) p.xix, he refers to the present work as  
" כחות בישראל ". Five years later, in his  
Introduction to his edition of the first  
" זמיר עריצים " (Kearny, N.J.: 1904), p.3, he  
again refers to this same work, this time as  
" ספר הכחות בישראל ". Probably the work  
finally named " ספר מפלגות בישראל " was  
already in manuscript early in 1899, before  
Deinard's edition of the second " זמיר עריצים "  
was printed later that year, and was tentatively  
entitled " כחות בישראל ". Five years later,  
when his edition of the first " זמיר עריצים "  
was printed, it was still in manuscript form, and  
its title now modified to " ספר הכחות בישראל ".  
Afterwards -- it is difficult to determine exactly  
when -- the book was finally published and renamed  
" ספר מפלגות בישראל ".

43. Deinard, Introduction to (the second) " זמיר עריצים ",  
p.xiv ff.

44. Ibid., and in his " ספר מפלגות בישראל ", p.8f.

45. Dubnow, p.381.

46. Ibid., p.421, note.

47. Deinard, " ספר מפלגות בישראל ", p.9, note.

Deinard mistakenly refers to the end of the book  
MA; the acrostic appears at the end of the  
Introduction to the volume.



48. Thus, יעק"ב בכר"ך נ"י . The last two letters are the abbreviation of a standard blessing appended to one's name in Rabbinic usage, נרו יאיר ("May his light shine").
49. Supra, n.42.
50. See, for instance, MA, p.61, where the Hasid traces the succession of spiritual leadership of the movement from the Besht through the Maggid through R. Shneour Zalman. The name of each is presented, with the appropriate Hasidic flourish, in the forms of acrostics and metaphors. Then come the following sentences: ונזירי עליון  
נינו תפארתו והודו ונכדו זיוו והדרו ירשו שנ"י או"ר  
עדי ביאת הדור עוד השם טוב זרח בדור הזה ברחמיו צדיקים  
גאוני עולם קדושי עליון אשר יציקו מים מנהר היוצא מעדן  
מפה קדוש ישראל אשר בו השם יתפאר ומפז רב ושליט באוצרות  
גנוזי הכמוסים הוא דובא"ר מים נוזלים מעתיק יומין ...

Even a cursory reading reveals the obscurities in this passage; thus the reference first to grandchildren (of R. Shneour Zalman), and then to R. Dov Ber (=Duber = דובער = דובא"ר) in "this generation."

51. <sup>עליון 2</sup> Zweifel ("שלום על ישראל", Vol. I, p.31) maintains that the name was changed from MA to VR in order to increase its sales.
52. The three editions are: Warsaw, 1866; Lwow, 1867; and Munkacs, 1894. The last-mentioned is entitled -- מהדורא חניינא and also shows some change of contents.



53. On the title page: זכרון יוסף לעזרניא/ן ואהרן אינקא זיחוד אדנאל  
No. 20. The beginning of the title-page reveals that it  
is a paraphrase of the VR: ספר מליצת נפשו והוא ויבואו רבא ז"ג  
הקטלוריא וההתנגדות שנכלה בישראל ...  
(emphases mine). The beginning of the Introduction shows  
that it was prepared for publication by HaBaD followers; hence  
the reference to אצמ"ר הנק"ן On p. 16 of this forty-  
four page book, direct reference by name is made to the NH  
of R. Hayyim.
54. Dubnow, p. 381.
55. MA, p. 19.
56. MA (first edition), Introduction.
57. Dubnow, p. 381.
58. MA, p. 29. This passage has been reprinted in the late  
Dr. Samuel K. Mirsky's "מחשבות הגורם זיכרון וזיכרון", p.15f.
59. MA, p. 24.
60. NH, pre-4:4,8, and elsewhere.
61. MA, p. 26.
62. MA, p. 5; see supra, n. 20.
63. NH 1:22; pre-4:4,8; and elsewhere. The attack on the Hasidim  
because of this was undertaken by others as well, but  
R. Hayyim develops the theme more systematically and less  
ad hominem; see, for instance, "נאמר ערוץ" (1772 -- ed.  
Deinard) pp. 4, 18; Dubnow, p. 462; Jacob Katz, "מסורת ומלצר",  
p. 277.



64. MA, p. 25.
65. See in my The Study of Torah Lishmah..., beginning of chap. VII; Gershom Scholem, "Devekuth, or Communion with God," Review of Religion, vol. 14, no.2 (January 1950), pp. 119 ff.
66. NH, 4:2.
67. MA, p. 45.
68. NH, 4:4,5, on the basis of B. T. Shab. 31a.
69. NH, pre-4:2.
70. MA, p. 23 and p. 25.
71. MA, p. 46.
72. MA, pp. 35, 36, 49.
73. MA, pp. 23, 24.
74. Dubnow, loc. cit.
75. The Study of Torah Lishmah... chap. II.
76. Ibid.