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PIETY, PIETISM AND GERMAN PIETISM:  
SEFER ḤASIDIM I AND THE INFLUENCE  
OF ḤASIDEI ASHKENAZ

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*This article questions the considerable influence attributed to German Pietism in the Middle Ages. It begins by arguing that the first 152 sections of the standard Sefer Ḥasidim is a separate work (called in this essay SH I) and is set apart from the rest of Sefer Ḥasidim in language, religious leit-motifs and spiritual demands. Indeed, in many ways SH I is opposed to the most basic tenets of Ḥasidei Ashkenaz. More than half of the extant manuscripts of Sefer Ḥasidim are of SH I only. The essay then attempts to chart the putative influence of German Pietism in Germany, France, Provence, Spain, and Eastern Europe. It finds that other than the doctrine of penance which took a deep hold of the Jews in central and eastern Europe, there was no influence whatsoever. Confusion has arisen in great part because three very distinct terms have been confused—piety, pietism, and German Pietism. The first means simply scrupulous adherence to the dictates of one's religion. The second connotes a form of spirituality common to many religions, among them Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Its occurrence in Jewish communities in France and Spain in the Middle Ages has nothing to do with Ḥasidei Ashkenaz. The third term, German Pietism, denotes a very distinctive form of pietism that arose in the late 12th century characterized by an idiosyncratic ideology and a radical social and religious agenda. This movement was without influence. Indeed, no mention is made of it in the entire literary corpus of the Ashkenazic community.*

I. SEFER ḤASIDIM I AND SEFER ḤASIDIM\*

More than one hundred thirty-five years ago, Jacob Reifmann noted that the first 152 sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim* (what we now call

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\* A shorter form of the first section of this essay was presented at the annual convention of the Association of Jewish Studies in Boston on December 16, 1998, and again at the quadrennial conference of the World Union of Jewish Studies held in Jerusalem in August, 2001. The second and third sections were delivered in abridged form at a conference sponsored by the University of the Negev at Beer Sheba in May, 1999. My thanks to Avishai Braverman, Daniel Lasker, and Ed Framm for their gracious hospitality at this conference. I would also like to thank Talya Fishman for reading and commenting on this essay.

ed. Bologna, but was then called simply *Sefer Ḥasidim*, as the existence of another version was yet unknown) constituted an independent work.<sup>1</sup> Section 153 was no continuation of what had preceded, but an introduction to a second *Sefer Ḥasidim*. (And, indeed, several decades later, a larger and considerably different version of *Sefer Ḥasidim* was published by Wistinetzki,<sup>2</sup> and its introductory opening section was none other than section 153 of the Bologna edition.) Reifmann further noted that sections 1–152 (henceforth SH I) had numerous Maimonidean citations from *Hilkhot Teshuvah*, *De<sup>c</sup>ot*, and *Tefillah*, and that the author evinced in one passage, in striking contrast to other sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, a negative attitude towards soothsaying (*niḥush*), as did Maimonides. In addition, he noted, there were fewer infelicities of language in SH I than in the subsequent sections. Güdemann, while disagreeing somewhat with Reifmann's division, noted that in fact there existed a manuscript which had only sections 1–152, which would augur in favor of its separate existence.<sup>3</sup> More recently, Ivan Marcus further observed that the

<sup>1</sup> Ya'akov Reifmann, *Ma'amar Arba'ah Ḥarashim Yedabber* (Prague, 1860), pp. 6–20. This edition of the *Sefer Ḥasidim* will be referred to henceforth as SHB.

<sup>2</sup> *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Jehuda Wistinetzki (Berlin, 1891). Henceforth designated as SHP when giving a citation or simply *Sefer Ḥasidim* when speaking generally of the work authored by *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*.

<sup>3</sup> Moritz Güdemann, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur des abendländischen Juden während des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*, vol. 1 (Wien, 1880), p. 286. The manuscript is that of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Opp. 340 (Neubauer 875), ff. 131r–151r. (Sections 103–116 of the printed Bologna text are missing, apparently as a result of a scribal error.) Further note that while almost all of the shorter text of the Bologna edition is contained within the larger and far more comprehensive Wistinetzki text, this is true only of the 982 sections that follow section 152. Of the first 152 sections of that edition, what I have termed SH I, only 43 are reproduced in Wistinetzki's text. Thus more than two-thirds of SH I is not found in the comprehensive statement of German Pietism recorded in the Parma manuscript. Even after we subtract from this count the numerous sections of Maimonides, still close to 50 percent of SH I is without parallel in the comprehensive Parma text. There is no similar gap in any other part of the Bologna edition. I say "982 subsequent sections," because sections 1135–1179 of the Bologna edition are not taken from any manuscript of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, but rather from the *Hokhmah ha-Nefesh* of the R. Eleazar of Worms, as Güdemann and others have long noted. The printer of the Bologna text was not a scholar versed in the bibliographic intricacies of German Pietism. To him, one work of these Pietists was the same as another, and he noted the change in manuscript by simply writing מספר חסידים אחר. I give the sum of 43 parallels because one must add to the list of those given by J. Friemann in his introduction to the reprinted text of the Wistinetzki edition (Frankfurt a.M., 1924) at p. 57: SHB #29, 94 = SHP #955, 359.

Rhenish penance of mortification of the flesh is noticeably missing from SH I, and in its place are found extensive passages from Maimonides. Following Reifmann, he tentatively suggested that this block (SH I) was written by “French or Rhenish Jews who rejected the Rhenish Jewish penitential system in favor of the less ascetic views of Maimonides.”<sup>4</sup>

I would like first to amplify the remarks of Reifmann and Marcus and then attempt to show that the differences between SH I and *Sefer Ḥasidim* are not incidental but systematic, radical and far-ranging rather than narrow and circumscribed. I will proceed to propose that SH I emerges from a group of religious virtuosi other than *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* and expresses a spirituality thoroughly unlike that of *Sefer Ḥasidim*. Finally, I will suggest some of the broader conclusions that may be drawn from the separate existence of SH I.

What I take to be the most distinctive element of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, the *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>, is missing in SH I.<sup>5</sup> The hundreds of novel demands, making bold claim to divine mandate, that fill the pages of *Sefer Ḥasidim* and set it apart from all other ethical works are missing from these sections. Nothing is demanded in SH I that might not be found in any other ethical work. The virtues of love of God, fear of God, humility, Torah study, and the like are found without the distinctive cast that *Sefer Ḥasidim* usually gives them. True, “the will of the Creator” (*reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>) is mentioned several times, as is a reference or two to acting for the common good (*lezakat et ha-rabbim*), a passing mention of “cunning in God-fearingness” (*‘arum be-yir’ah*) and an allusion to *lilmod ‘al menat leqayyem*,<sup>6</sup> all of which were key words which the cognoscenti would recognize as referring to distinctive Ḥasidic doctrines.<sup>7</sup> However, these and other scattered terms with strong Ḥasidic overtones are never expounded on in the text of SH I. They lie there encoded and unexplicated and will pass unnoticed by the uninitiated. There is no overt reference to, not to speak of advocacy of, the hundreds of novel dictates of the

<sup>4</sup> Ivan Marcus, “The Recensions and Structure of *Sefer Ḥasidim*,” *PAAJR* 45 (1978) 152–153.

<sup>5</sup> Haym Soloveitchik, “Three Themes in *Sefer Ḥasidim*,” *AJS Review* 1 (1976) 311–325.

<sup>6</sup> *Reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>—SHB #1, 2, 29, 53; *le-zakat et ha-rabbim*—SHB #13 and see #65; *‘arum be-yir’ah*—SHB #13; *lilmod ‘al menat le-qayyem*—SHB #17.

<sup>7</sup> Soloveitchik, “Three themes,” pp. 311–135, 317, 325–327, 344–345; especially nn. 8, 17, 40, 41, 74 end, 109.

covert will of God that figure so prominently in the other sections of the *Sefer Ḥasidim*. The Ḥasidic doctrine that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, that misfortune befalls individuals for the sins of their ancestors runs like Ariadne's thread through the tangled text of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, yet it too is totally absent from SH I. Neither ancestral guilt nor unwitting violations of God's covert will constitute the theodicy of SH I. The individual and the individual alone is wholly responsible for his own fate.

Numerology (*gematriyah*) was not simply a major instrument of Ḥasidic exegesis, but a basic mode of Ḥasidic thinking. Ubiquitous in *Sefer Ḥasidim* and other writings of the movement, it is almost entirely absent in SH I. Two simple *gematriyot*, both on the word *herem*, emphasizing the dread power of the communal ban—the key instrument of social discipline in the Middle Ages—are all that we find in the 152 sections that comprise SH I.<sup>8</sup>

The fierce penance of the Pietists, the very ark of the Ḥasidic covenant and the subject of so many and so widely diffused handbooks,<sup>9</sup> makes no appearance in SH I. Not penance, but repentance—inner and experiential—is advocated in SH I. Maimonides' *Hilkhot Teshuvah* replaces the *sod ha-teshuvah* that *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* so widely proffered, both to the God-fearing (*yir<sup>2</sup>ei ha-shem*) who rendered unto God the full measure of His due and to the broader community at large that sought to escape the hell-fire of the World to Come.<sup>10</sup> Prayer alone could rival penance for pride of place in Ḥasidic thought. Proper prayer formed the focal point of the

<sup>8</sup> SHB #106, 143. The dual *gematriyah* given in #106 was apparently a common one. R. Abraham ibn Yarḥi of Provence cites it in his work *Sefer ha-Manhig*, ed. Yitzhak Raphael (Jerusalem, 1978), 1:33 in the name of R. Isaac ha-Lavan. The first equivalence of *herem* and the Pentateuch is found also in the medieval biblical commentary, *Da'at Zeqenim* (on Gen 23:5), reprinted in *Tosafot ha-Shalem*, ed. Ya'akov Gellis, (Jerusalem, 1983), 2:235; R. Zedekiah ha-Rofē, *Shibbalei ha-Leqet II*, ed. Simḥah Ḥasidah (Jerusalem, 1987), 1:231; *Kol Bo*, ed. David Abraham (Jerusalem, 1993), vol. 4, #66 (col. 214). The second equivalence of *herem* and the number of limbs of the body is found also in the late 13th-century French work, *Pa'aneah Raza* (Warsaw, 1860), p. 41a, *parshat egev*, beginning.

<sup>9</sup> Ivan G. Marcus, "Hasidei Ashkenaz Private Penitentials: An Introduction and Descriptive Catalogue of Their Manuscripts and Early Editions," in Joseph Dan and Frank Talmadge, eds., *Studies in Jewish Mysticism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), pp. 57–83.

<sup>10</sup> SHB #19, 20, 21, 23, 27, 43. A passage from Saadiah Gaon's equally experiential doctrine of repentance is cited in #42. See Ya'akov Elbaum's remarks in his *Teshuvah ha-Lev ve-Qabbalat Yissurim* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 13, n. 7; 17, n. 19.

Ḥasid's quotidian aspiration, and its public practice generated fierce antagonism. It occupied hours of the Pietists' days, as they pondered its esoteric meanings and intents and sought to put them into practice.<sup>11</sup> Finally, in an effort to secure its future, they stripped the centuries-old veil of secrecy and disseminated publicly the esoteric lore of the divine service.<sup>12</sup> Yet the Ḥasidic doctrines of prayer are wholly absent from SH I. The lengthy sections on prayer are comprised of selections from Maimonides' *Hikhot Tefillah*.<sup>13</sup> Most of what Maimonides wrote on prayer, and all that is found in the edited form that it assumes in SH I, would be accepted by all. The significance of these passages in SH I lies not in the adoption of any Maimonideanisms, for no significant ones are to be found there, but in the total absence of the Pietists' own doctrine of prayer, so central to their movement, to their world-view, and, most importantly, to their own religious experience. What emerges from the comprehensive presentation in SH I is a meticulously envisioned but still traditional image of prayer—one to which all might aspire and with which none could take issue.

If the Maimonidean passages from *Hilkhot Tefillah* are not transformative, the passages from *Hilkhot De'ot* are very much so. SH I rejects not only the harsh asceticism of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, but even the milder and far more widespread forms of such spiritual discipline as articulated by Rabbenu Baḥyah, for example. The Golden Mean replaces asceticism in SH I as the model spirituality. Physical impulses are not to be eradicated by persistent mortification of the flesh; rather, an equilibrium is to be sought between the legitimate needs of the body and those of the soul. Supererogation, the very essence of German Pietism, is rejected. Extremes of all sorts are cast out, and Maimonides' formulations of the "Golden Path" of balanced living are quoted at length and presented as the religious ideal to which all people should aspire.<sup>14</sup> The only minor concession—if a concession it be—that the author of SH I makes to the severe ascetic regimen of the German Pietists is to implicitly advocate

<sup>11</sup> Soloveitchik, "Three themes," pp. 330–334.

<sup>12</sup> Yosef Dan, "Rabbi Eleazar of Worms' *Sefer Ha-Hokhmah* ("Book of Wisdom") and its Significance for the History of the Doctrines and Literature of Ashkenazic Ḥassidim," *Zion* 29 (1964) 168–191.

<sup>13</sup> SHB #18.

<sup>14</sup> SHB #51–52.

fasting one day a month so as “not to enjoy too much the pleasures of this world.”<sup>15</sup>

No less striking than the absence of the *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>, asceticism, and other defining themes of the Pietist movement, is the parallel absence in SH I of *exempla*, which abound in the other sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*. *Sefer Ḥasidim* is a casuistic work, in the classic sense of the word. It deals with the concrete and problematic issues of life on a case by case basis. Indeed, these vivid, individuated discussions account for a good part of the work’s staying power. They shifted the discussion away from the clear-cut realm of theory, where most ethical works reside, to the messy and ambiguous real world, and offered to readers the concrete guidance they sought. Yet *exempla* are scarcely to be found in SH I, if at all.<sup>16</sup> Concomitantly, SH I lacks topical specificity. What characterizes *Sefer Ḥasidim* is the particularity of its directives. It does not simply set forth general

<sup>15</sup> SHB #97. There may be no advocacy even here. The case is given simply to illustrate the unwitting sinfulness of the so-called “righteous.” However, SH I does qualify Maimonides’ strictures against fasting by adding that fasting is permitted to stop a growing sexual drive that threatens to overpower the believer (#52 end). Contrast #97 with #225: שלא יעברו עליו שמונה ימים בלא תענית. The latter is adopted by *Sefer ha-Yir’ah*, #102. This weekly regimen, though mild in itself, was apparently appropriated by some aspiring pietists, and the author of *Yesod ha-Teshuvah*, possibly R. Yonah of Gerona, cites Rabad of Posquières’ critique against it: אל יחשוב אדם לגמרי שלא יאכל בשר ולא ישתה יין, כי די לנו במה שאסרה תורה. אך בעוד שהמאכל לפניו ועודנו תאב לאכול ממנו ימשך ממנו לכבוד בוראו ולא יאכל כדי תאותו. וזה יזכירו אהבת הבורא יותר מתענית אחת בשבוע כי זה כל יום מידי אכלו. The passage is found in *Orhot Hayyim* (reprint, Jerusalem, 1956), p. 228a, *Hilkhot Rosh ha-Shanah*, end. Significantly, SH I also draws upon this passage from Rabad’s *Ba’alei Ha-Nefesh* in #12.

<sup>16</sup> 18 end, 46, 58, 97, 122, 135. Strictly speaking, none of these are *exempla* but simply reports of punishment. They are not independent narratives that illustrate a moral lesson nor do they portray borderline cases so common to the situational ethics of SH, which oppose conflicting values. They are simply accounts of seemingly righteous individuals who, appearing in a dream, state that retribution is being exacted from them in the Other World for having transgressed a principle spelled out in detail by the author of SH I. They are proofs of penalty, not ethical narratives or illustrations of a moral principle or dilemma. The same holds true for #4, which is simply an application of the talmudic dictum, כל השומע הזכרה מפי חברו צריך לנדונו, (bNed 7b) cited at the end of the preceding section. (For #122, see #149 which is probably out of place, as it makes a far better preface to #122 than does #121, which strictly speaking is unrelated to what follows.) The only apparent exception to the dream pattern is #18, which simply reads הראו מן השמים לאותו חכם. The oldest manuscript of SH I, Oxford, Bodleian, Opp. 340 (Neubauer 875), however, reads (f. 137v): הראו מן השמים בחלום לאותו חכם.

principles, as do other ethical works, but provides a handbook of guidance to some of the thornier of life's problems. It addresses explicitly and in much concrete detail such topics as marriage and matchmaking, marital relations, parental relations, care and handling of books, child raising, educational curriculum, and instruction. Indeed, large sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim* are headed "On Books," "On Charity," "On Study," "On Honoring Father and Mother," "On Women," "On Trusting Other People," "On the Dead," "On Oaths and Malevolent Forces (*maziqim*)," "On Demons (*shedim*)," and the like. There are, at most, a few passing references to these topics in SH I and on those rare instances where instruction is given, the singular doctrines of German Pietism are noticeably absent. There are three indistinctive passages regarding holy books that stress their sanctity rather than their dangerous potency, which was so emphasized by German Pietism.<sup>17</sup> The elaborate and highly distinctive marital directions of *Sefer Ḥasidim* are reduced to one phrase: שיומן לו הקב"ה אשה טובה.<sup>18</sup> The complex Pietistic doctrine of charity is reduced to one paragraph, and its elitist tendencies, which would have denied access to charity to all those who were not of the Ḥasidic persuasion,<sup>19</sup> are thoroughly tempered. In SH I, only wastrels and whoremongers are excluded from personal and communal benevolence.<sup>20</sup> SH I exhibits the customary doctrines, the abstract dicta, and the admonitory formulae found in other ethical works. This is not to say that SH I is indistinguishable from the writings of Baḥyah or R. Yonah of Gerona. Emphasis, style, and the mix of topics differentiate each work from the others. However, there are few passages in SH I whose messages we could not envisage reading in these other works. There are hundreds upon hundreds of passages in the rest of *Sefer Ḥasidim* that would be inconceivable in any other work of the Middle Ages. Soothsaying (*niḥush*) is, indeed, frowned upon in SH I, as Friemann noted long ago,<sup>21</sup> but this is only part of a larger difference. There is not a trace in these sections (1–152) of the rich supernatural world, and a heavily Germanic one at that,

<sup>17</sup> SHB #97, 101, 141. (Perhaps one should add #136, see below, p. 475. However, these are instructions to scribes how to transcribe holy texts and not instructions how these potent texts are to be handled.)

<sup>18</sup> SHB #135.

<sup>19</sup> Soloveitchik, "Three themes," p. 337, n. 86.

<sup>20</sup> SHB #61.

<sup>21</sup> SHB #59 and n. 1 above.



with which the rest of *Sefer Ḥasidim* is deeply infused. Missing entirely from the pages of SH I are *shedim* and *genii loci*, revenants and the all-too-alive dead. One hears nothing whatsoever of the frequent and easy intercourse between the dwellers of this world and those of the other (*alterius mundus*) so prevalent in SH.<sup>22</sup> Of sooth-saying and necromancy, of dreams and miracles, of foreboding and foretelling, of the dangerous power of the sacred, of the taboo—not a word is to be found in all of SH I. SH I is culturally disembodied—uprooted from the rich soil of Germanic folkways and stripped clean of the thick underbrush of local beliefs in which the rest of *Sefer Ḥasidim* is so enmeshed.

SH I is also set apart by its language. The Hebrew is not simply smoother, as Reifmann noted; the language is of a wholly different order. Phrases of classical Rabbinic Hebrew abound here that, while scarcely unusual, are not found in the other sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*: דרשו חכמים, צא ולמד, בוא וראה, הזהר ושמור נפשיך, במעלת היראה.<sup>23</sup> The language of *Sefer Ḥasidim* is translated Middle High German, and is invariably clumsy and asyntactic, as its writers sought to render the language and speech patterns of spoken German into a Hebrew they had not entirely mastered. Awkward and prone to circumlocution, the Hebrew is at the same time choppy, and the thought often digressive. The shorter paragraphs abound in anacoluthons, that is, shifts of grammatical constructions in mid-sentence, such as beginning a sentence with one subject or predicate and shifting in mid-sentence to another. The longer paragraphs are full of ideas interrupted by other associations. Easy access is thus denied to the reader of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, and only too often the text of *Sefer Ḥasidim* does not yield its meaning on first encounter but demands a second, or even third reading by those unaccustomed to its diction. These difficulties are only aggravated by citations of verses, frequently entire strings of verses, whose bearing on the subject at hand seems tenuous, if not outright idiosyncratic, to the contempo-

<sup>22</sup> Any knowledge of SH I of punishment in the World to Come (see n. 16 above) is by means of dreams, not through direct communication with the dead, as is common in SH. This difference is preserved even when the authors narrate the same story. SHP 555 reads שמת בפני כמה שנים while the parallel passage in SHB #46 reads שמת לפני זמנו כמה שנים . . . נתגלה (להם) בחלום לאחד ממקורביו.

<sup>23</sup> SHB #121, 135; 45, 53, 32, 56; 30; 151.

rary reader. Certainly, *Sefer Ḥasidim* can make no claim to literary merit or to brief and apt exegesis.

In SH I, on the other hand, the verses cited are few and invariably apt; the Hebrew clear and idiomatic. For example, קרוב אתה בפייהם, ורחוק מכליותיהם (ירמיהו י"ב, ב) אלו בני אדם המוציאים חטא ונבול פה או דבר רע על חביריהם בכונה ואומרים "המקום ימחול לנו" ואינם במעלת היראה.<sup>24</sup> So smooth is the language that multiple sentences and even entire sections of Maimonides are interwoven with words of SH I, and the mix that results seems so natural, the transitions so seamless, that one is hard pressed to detect where one ends and the other begins. For example, in section 145, where the first nine lines (in Margolies' edition) on anger are those of Maimonides, the following five are those of SH I. The text blends with the *Mivḥar Peninim* no less smoothly as in section 36: ברוב השתיקה יהיה המורא. הירא מהאלהים השומעו ורואהו ויודעו: וחוקרו והוא שותק מיראתו, הוא מוסיף על המורא. ואם מתנשא ומגביה קול מפסיד את המורא, כי שכח שהוא עומד לפני האלהים. הרי הוא כסומא העומד לפני המלך, שמרבה דברים ואינו ירא ממנו, לפי שאינו רואה את מי שיש לו. ליראה ממנו. והמרבה לשתוק מחמת המורא, לא במהרה הוא חוטא. Only the first four words are those of *Mivḥar Peninim*.

The diction of SH I, like that of the other sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, is often oral. However, the orality embodied is that of the preacher's sermon, not a layman's daily discourse. Indeed, its oral, hortatory cadences have few, if any, parallels in medieval literature. Not only does the text literately and effectively meld biblical verses and midrashic phrases with its own articulations, but it even rises occasionally to the level of eloquence as, for example, in sections 30–31:

הזהר ושמור נפשך, פן תלכד ברשתו של יצר הרע, המדיחך מארץ החיים והמשיאך לדבר עבירה קטנה להמשיך לבך לגדולה, השפילהו והכניעהו להמסר בידך, ואתה לא תהיה נמסר בידו, פן יביאך לבאר שחת באש לא נופח. ולא יהיה יצרך הרע נמסר בידך אם לא על ידי תשובה לבוראך. ולהרחיקך מבשר תאוה—זכור נא לימים אשר יבואו ולרב טוב הצפון. כי אם תיטיב שאת, ואם לאו לפתח חטאת רובך. ואתה בן אדם, שוב ליוצרך בכל לבבך, והכן לבבך שלם לבוחן כליות ושא נא עיניך אל השמים, ויאר אליך בשמחה. ואל יכשילך יצר הרע בחיידך. ובכל יום ולילה שוב אל לבבך: כי אחר המות יש חבוט הקבר, ואחריו דינה של גיהנם המר, כי במר יבכיון (ישעיהו לג, ז)—שיתנו כח לאדם

<sup>24</sup> SHB #151.

שיסבול כח היסורין. ועוד, אחר שינצל מדינה של גיהנם, יש דינים אחרים קשים ומרים. גם הרמה אשר תצא מבשרך, תאכל את נבלתך. ואמרו חכמים: קשה רימה למת כמחט בבשר חי.

גם בכל עת ועונה יש לך לאהוב את בוראך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך השב אל לבך וקח משל מאנוש רמה. . . . בוא וראה, כמה יש לך לאהוב את בוראך, המפליא חסדו עמך: הוא בוראך מטפה סרוחה ונתן בך נשמה, מוציאך מבטן, אחרי זאת נתן לך פה לדבר ולב להבין, אזנים לשמוע דברי פיו הטהורות והמוזקקות ככסף ומצורפות כזהב, הוא המוליכך על פני הארץ, הוא הנותן מחיה לכל, הוא ממית ומחיה כל, אשר בידו נפש כל חי ורוח, הוא המטריך לחם חוקיך. מה אומר? כי אין הפה יכולה לדבר, והאוזן יכולה לשמוע, כי לו דומיה תהילה (תהלים סה, ב). אין קץ לאורך ימיו, לא יתמו שנותיו, הוא מלך מלכי-המלכים, הקדוש-ברוך-הוא, יתברך שמו ויתברך זכרו, הוא שברא שמים וארץ הים וכל אשר בס, הוא הזן את הכל, כי עיניו פקוחות על כל דרכי בני-אדם, לתת לאיש כדרכו וכפרי מעלליו, הן טוב הן רע.

והנה הוא הנותן לפניו שני דרכים: דרך החיים ודרך המות, ואומר לך: ובחרת בחיים (דברים ל, יט). ובכל זאת אנו, המלאים רמה ותולעה, לא חשבנו ולא שמנו על לבבנו כי-אם למלאות תאוותינו לרצון. וכי צבא לאנוש ימיו?<sup>25</sup> היום—כאן, ולמחר—בקבר! הלא בפתע פתאום ימות,<sup>26</sup> כי אין אדם שליט ברוחו לכלוא את הרוח.<sup>27</sup> לכן אין טוב לו לאדם כי אם להרחיק עצמו מכל תאוה, ולתת לבו לאהוב וליראה את הצור בכל לבבו ובכל מאדו, ולמאוס בחיי הבל.

If parallels to these oral cadences exist in other medieval works, they are unknown to me. From the vantage point of language, diction and voice, few ethical works of the Middle Ages are further apart than *Sefer Ḥasidim* and SH I.

Lacking *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>25</sup> and *gematriyot*, penance and asceticism; bereft of ghosts, demons, dreams, and soothsaying, and without miracles and *exempla*—what then is left in SH I? What is left is pietism, though not German Pietism. What is left in SH I is: introspection and religious inwardness, an aspiration to virtue and not just good deeds (important as the latter may be), an accountability for thoughts and feelings no less than for actions, a call for moral education and for the cultivation of virtue (for virtue, if inborn, is a tender shoot that needs vigilant nurture), a divine discontent with the pygmy-like standards of the common herd together with refusal to compromise with the way of the world or to accept man as he is, a haunting fear of sin coupled with an acute and heavy sense of

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Job 7:1.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Num 6:9.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Qoh 8:8.

God's abiding presence and especially of His ever-watchful eye. In short, pietism as it is found the world over.

What does this mean? It means that not all pietists in Germany were German Pietists. Indeed, the most influential pietists in Germany were not German Pietists, for SH I had a diffusion far greater than that of *Sefer Ḥasidim* itself. Four of the seven extant manuscripts of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, including the oldest dated one, contain only SH I.<sup>28</sup> In other words, more than half the manuscripts of *Sefer Ḥasidim* are *not* manuscripts of *Sefer Ḥasidim* and their existence does not attest to the influence of German Pietism, but on the contrary, to the influence of an ideology opposed to many of the basic tenets of German Pietism. Two of the three remaining manuscripts contain all of SH I followed by sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*. That is to say, they are composites,<sup>29</sup> as is the standard *Sefer Ḥasidim* itself. The standard *Sefer Ḥasidim*, first printed in 1538 and reprinted over twenty times before the 20th century,<sup>30</sup> is in reality a compound. It contains two separate and distinct *Sifrei Ḥasidim*, each with its own religious vision. It embodies the teachings of two sharply divergent groups of religious virtuosi, who offered their readers radically different itineraries to God. Only one manuscript, that which Wistenetzki published in 1891,<sup>31</sup> lacks SH I, that is to say, only one manuscript is cut wholly from the cloth of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*. One 14th-century manuscript and only one accurately reflects the teachings of German Pietism. Apparently the radical and idiosyncratic doctrine of that movement awakened little interest, found very few followers, and, to all appearances, had little to no cultural resonance. Whatever pietism there may be in French writings of the 13th century, as the *Semag* and *Semaq* (I believe, as we shall see, that there was none; however, let us grant for argument's sake the opinion of many that

<sup>28</sup> MSS Moscow-Günzburg 103, Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana X 111 Sup., Nîmes, Bibliothèque Municipale 26 (contains SHB #1–62) and Oxford, Bodleian, Opp. 340 (Neubauer 875), which is the oldest extant manuscript, copied in 1299. I should add that Oxford, Bodleian, Or. 608 (Neubauer 453) does not contain any copy of *Sefer Ḥasidim*.

<sup>29</sup> MS Oxford, Bodleian, Opp. Add. fol. 34 (Neubauer 641); MS Cambridge, Add. 379,2.

<sup>30</sup> Ch. B. Friedberg, *Bet Eqed Sefarim: Bibliographical Lexicon*, vol. 1 (Tel Aviv, 1952), p. 385 (#1076).

<sup>31</sup> See n. 2 above. The manuscript is registered as Parma, Biblioteca Palatina 3280 (De Rossi 1133; Richler 1367).

it existed), it is entirely conventional pietism, not of the radical sort. And, as for the borrowings from *Sefer Ḥasidim* by Rabbenu Yonah mi-Gerundi in his *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*, of which so much has been recently made, in fact all such borrowings are, I must sadly report, from SH I and from SH I alone.<sup>32</sup> All in all, reports of the influence of German Pietism would appear to be rather exaggerated.

## II. PIETY, PIETISM AND GERMAN PIETISM

I have said that the most influential pietists in Germany were not German Pietists. But are we even sure that SH I is a product of Germany? All the glosses in the printed SH I are French. The oldest dated manuscript<sup>33</sup> has three times as many glosses as the printed text, but they too are all French. To be sure, French was spoken in the Rhineland until the mid-13th century, and works of unquestioned German provenance, such as those of R. Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz (Ravan) or of R. Eleazar of Worms himself, are extant with French glosses.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, we must be open to the possibility that the widely disseminated SH I is of French rather than Rhenish origin, that it was a Frenchman who stripped the teachings of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* of all its Germanic folklore, expunged its eccentric notion of *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>?</sup>, eliminated its pervasive *gemaṭriyot*, and substituted the Golden Mean for severe asceticism and mortification of the flesh. Conceivably, a Frenchman rewrote the bad Hebrew of sections of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, and eliminated the rest of it, substitut-

<sup>32</sup> Nehemia Brüll, "Zur Geschichte der jüdisch-ethischen Literatur des Mittelalters," *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte* 5–6 (1883) 83–87. More than half of Brüll's list of "borrowings" consists simply of similar statements or parallel quotations of talmudic or midrashic texts. However, there are enough statements lifted almost verbatim from the first 152 sections of SHB to fully validate his claim. See below, pp. 474–475.

<sup>33</sup> MS Oxford, Bodleian, Opp. 40 (Neubauer 875), dated 1299.

<sup>34</sup> M. Güdemann (above, n. 3), pp. 273–280. He contents that in the Rhinelands, Jews spoke French among themselves. This would not have been particularly anomalous, since while French was scarcely the first language of communication of the German aristocracy, it was widely known. Indeed, a knowledge of French may well have been part of a well-rounded education for the German "gentry" in the 13th century. The cachet attached to French in the governing classes may well have encouraged its maintenance as the primary internal language among the Jews of the old Rhineland communities. See Hugo Suolahti, *Der französische Einfluss auf die deutsche Sprache im dreizehnten Jahrhundert* (Helsinki, 1929), 1:5–41.

ing the sober words of Maimonides together with the eloquent ones of an unknown preacher, and thus supplanted the singular, indeed, peculiar agenda of R. Judah he-Ḥasid with a conventional pietistic one. Whoever the editor was and wherever he stemmed from, he capped off his labors by entitling his work *Sefer Ḥasidim* or *Sefer Ḥasidut*,<sup>35</sup> thus appropriating the name of the movement's handbook.<sup>36</sup>

The next step appropriated the movement's historic image. Over the course of time, different editors appended SH I to various collections of material of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, always taking care that SH I opened the collection, ensuring that the reader would first encounter not the startling tenets of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* but rather page after page of conventional pietistic discourse on love of God, fear of God, humility, and so on. One of these composites made it into print quite early, in 1538, and achieved wide popularity. It is remarkable to what extent SH I and those passages in *Sefer Ḥasidim* that were in the spirit of SH I shaped the historic image of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*. Study of the influence of *Sefer Ḥasidim* on the subsequent literature of Ashkenaz, whether halakhic or ethical, shows that not only was the new ritual world of *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>37</sup> or the book's radical social teachings (not to speak of its numerous idiosyncratic counsels), wholly without influence, but also that they went literally unnoted. One will search in vain the literature of the subsequent centuries for any reference to them. What was absorbed from this composite work were the conventional messages of pietism, not the extremist ones.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the radical passages went wholly unnoted, even by

<sup>35</sup> SHB #1, 38. (The referent in #2 is not clear.)

<sup>36</sup> See below, Appendix II.

<sup>37</sup> As for ghosts and the like, as long as Jews in central and eastern Europe lived in a culture that saw itself populated with the "living dead," and as long as their notions of the active creatures of the "other world" coincided with that of *Sefer Ḥasidim* (the demonology did change in part with the spread of Lurianic kabbalah), the counsels of *Sefer Ḥasidim* were probably heeded by most. To act otherwise would have been viewed as defying the forces of nature and inviting disaster. However, the literary and, in a sense, ideological innovation of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, that is, the incorporation of such notions and counsel into an ethical work, went wholly unemulated in Europe of the Middle Ages. Kabbalah did, indeed, incorporate *shedim* into its *Weltanschauung*, but *shedim* were intrinsically part of the kabbalistic system. They were generated by kabbalistic theory. *Sefer Ḥasidim* stands out because it incorporates—wholesale—the *shedim* of the surrounding world into its normative system. Admittedly, *shedim* from the surrounding culture are also present in the kabbalistic world.

scholars. It is the visage of the meek, humble, and God-intoxicated pietists that confronts us (until very recently) in the *Wissenschaft* literature, not the harsh and elitist reformers who had uncovered God's previously hidden will with its multitude of novel demands, and sought to reshape both man and society in light of the revelation to which they alone were privy.

In only one area did the viewpoint of *Sefer Ḥasidim* triumph over that of SHI. Its notion of penance struck a deep, responsive chord in Ashkenaz, not through the agency of *Sefer Ḥasidim*, but rather through penitential handbooks. Expiation for sin is a common enough impulse, and it ran strong in 13th and 14th century Germany. R. Eleazar of Worms, one of the founders of the Ḥasidic movement (d. ca. 1227), and certainly its leading literary exponent, wrote a handbook of penitential demands detailing the penance that must be done for a lengthy list of sins. The work apparently answered an acute need and urgent impulse of the community, for it was widely copied, freely edited, and broadly disseminated. There are some fifty extant manuscripts of it, and it is clear from the Germanic literature of subsequent centuries—both ethical and halakhic—that penitential expiation was seen as obligatory. The rigors of the Ḥasidic penance became the cultural norm for Ashkenazic communities of the late Middle Ages.<sup>38</sup> A few of these Ashkenazic works, such as the *Orhot Šaddiqim*, were adopted by the Safed kabbalists, with the result that Ḥasidic penance ultimately achieved a very wide diffusion in the early modern period.

Before I turn to the impact of *Sefer Ḥasidim* in other cultures, it may be wise to say a few words about another source of misunderstanding concerning the extent of the influence of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*. The German Pietists were the carriers of two separate and distinct messages. They bore the message of God's covert will in all its distinctiveness, and they were also the proud inheritors of an esoteric tradition, *torat ha-sod*, about the mysteries of the Godhead, the structure of the soul, and esoteric meanings encoded in prayer. The new religious message was the work of Judah he-Ḥasid. Those of *sod* were the traditions that his family and that of R. Eleazar of

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This is inevitable as the invisible forces governing the visible world tend to cross cultural lines. However, *shedim* are naturalized citizens in a domain richly populated by indigenous residents.

<sup>38</sup> See Yedidyah A. Dinari, *Ḥakhmei Ashkenaz be-Shilhei Yemei ha-Benayyim* (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 85–93; Ya'akov Elbaum, *Teshuvat ha-Lev*, (above, n. 10), pp. 18–36.

Worms, the Kalonymides, had brought with them from Lucca, Italy sometime in the prehistory of Ashkenaz. Admittedly, R. Judah he-Ḥasid and R. Eleazar may well have amplified this esoteric lore and even added boldly to it, but these teachings, whether new or old, were viewed as ancient and authoritative by the Ashkenazic community. They were perceived as the traditions of the Kalonymides, the founding family of Ashkenaz—guardians of its secret lore and authors of much of its sacred poetry. While most Jews were skeptical of the new revelations of the Pietists, no one, other than the singular R. Moses of Dachau, doubted the veracity of their traditions of *sod*. Whoever aspired to know the nature of God, the mysteries of the *Kavod*, or the true intent of the prayers and how it acted upon the divine potencies would turn to *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* for instruction. There were no other competing systems of explanation. However, to follow R. Eleazar of Worms and R. Judah in the esoteric understanding of prayer is not to follow them in *ḥasidut*, because there is no organic link between the two nor was any perceived to exist at the time. The writings of R. ṢAzriel of Bohemia, a pupil both of Rabbenu Tam and R. Judah the Pious, vividly illustrate this. In his encyclopedic commentary on the prayers, the *ṢArugat ha-Bosem*, R. ṢAzriel draws extensively on the esoteric teachings of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*; however, there is not a word of German Pietism—not even of penance!—in his work.<sup>39</sup> The acceptance of the *torat ha-sod* of the Kalonymides and the influence that these guardians of the covert, potent meaning of prayer may have had over the exact text of prayer and its understanding<sup>40</sup> is no indication of the spread of German Pietism as a social and religious ideology or movement.

The same holds true for the use of numerology. The mighty reputation of R. Eleazar of Worms probably popularized the use of numerology in Ashkenazic culture. Numerology, however, is not an ideology. It is a method for showing how information found in one place is encoded in another. The information discovered depends on the interpreter. He may unearth numerical equivalents of any and all varieties of truth. Use of numerology does not a German Pietist

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *ṢArugat ha-Bosem*, ed. E. E. Urbach (Jerusalem, 1963), 4:179–180; Yaʿakov Elbaum, *Teshuvat ha-Lev*, p. 43.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., R. Naftali Hirṣ Treves (Drifzan) in his kabbalistic commentary on the prayerbook, *Diqdukei Tefillah*, published in Thiengen in 1560. (I am indebted to the anonymous reader for *JQR*, who drew my attention to this work.)



make—unless the contents discovered by *gematriyah* are the distinctive teachings of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*.

Finally, we would do well to remind ourselves of what Yosef Dan pointed out over a decade ago: other than a single passing reference to their distinctive *tallit*, not a trace of *Hasidei Ashkenaz* as a social or religious movement is to be found in the entire medieval literature of Ashkenaz.<sup>41</sup> R. Eleazar of Worms makes no mention of any such group in his voluminous esoteric writings, nor does R. Abraham ben ʿAzriel in his multi-volumed and wide ranging commentary. The religious and social programs of the Pietists should have triggered numerous communal controversies, however, not a whisper of this is to be found in all the responsa of the period, indeed, in the entire halakhic corpus of Ashkenaz. The German Pietists were too few, their doctrines too radical and idiosyncratic to merit any mention by their contemporaries. True, many passages in *Sefer Hasidim* evince the air of a virtuous and embattled elite,<sup>42</sup> however, those who sharply divide the world into states of grace and damnation generally see life as a clash between themselves and the sons of darkness. The people standing in Times Square with placards inscribed “Repent Now—The Day of Judgment is Near” envision themselves as engaged in a titanic struggle with the forces of evil. Others see them differently, if they see them at all.

If the impact of *Sefer Hasidim* on its native soil was minimal except in the realm of penance, what was its impact on other cultures such as France and Spain? The answer: it had even less impact than in Germany. With the partial exception of penance, *none* of the distinctive doctrines of *Sefer Hasidim*, which I will elaborate, are to be found in the literature of France or Spain.

As for penance, in France, it was pointedly ignored by R. Moses of Coucy in his great code, *Sefer Mišvot Gadol* (*Semag*), composed in the fourth decade of the 13th century. It first attained muted mention a generation later, though we do hear dissenting voices. R. Isaac of Corbeil (d. 1280) refers elliptically in his code to the fourfold penance that the German Pietists advocated, but he gives no explanation of what these four terms mean, which is atypical of this re-

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Dan, “Ashkenazi Hasidim, 1941–1991: Was There Really a Hasidic Movement in Medieval Germany?” in *Gershom Scholem's Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism 50 Years After*, eds. Peter Schäfer and Joseph Dan (Tübingen, 1993), pp. 94–101.

<sup>42</sup> Soloveitchik, “Three Themes,” pp. 325–338.

markably clear codifier.<sup>43</sup> His glossator, R. Pereš of Corbeil (d. 1298), fills the noticeable lacuna, spelling out fully what the fourfold ways were.<sup>44</sup> Was R. Isaac a reluctant advocate of the Pietist penance or was this explanatory lapse simply an oversight? We shall never know.<sup>45</sup> We do know that a pupil of his and of R. Moses of Evreux, or at least one who recorded their practices, did register dissent from the Pietists' penance, writing "And if one sinned, he should study more Torah than before, for the Torah atones, as is written (Prov 16:6), 'By charity and truth shall sin be atoned' and there is no charity and truth other than the Torah."<sup>46</sup> Similarly, R. Abraham ben Ephraim, the author of a second and less successful abridgment of the *Semag*, makes no mention whatsoever of penance.<sup>47</sup> The northern French community was effectively dispersed a few years later by the exile of 1306, and one can only conjecture whether penance would have taken as deep a hold there as it did in Germany.

The penitential handbook of R. Eleazer also made its way into the last halakhic work composed in England, the *ḤEṣ Ḥayyim* of R. Jacob Hazan of London, penned in 1286, six years before the Expulsion.<sup>48</sup> In the second half of the 13th century, an unknown author, apparently a Frenchman living in a port town of Italy, penned a manual with strong ascetic overtones and under the clear influence of German Pietism. The author remains anonymous to this day. This work was wholly unknown in the Middle Ages and was first published in the 20th century.<sup>49</sup> Historically, it is of little importance. More significant and far more typical of Italy is the work of R. Zedekiah ha-Rofē, scion of the leading Jewish family of Rome. He studied in Germany, and his *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, a frequently cited and copied work, is a rich repository of German writings. He cites a responsum from an unknown German master imposing penance for unwitting Sabbath violation. This is the only instance of

<sup>43</sup> *Semag* #53.

<sup>44</sup> *Haggahot Rabbeinu Pereš*, ad loc.

<sup>45</sup> I do not include R. Isaac's remarks in #123 as evidence for a critical stance towards penance, מרפא לשון (משלי טו, ג), יעסוק בתורה שנאמר (משלי טו, ג), because R. Isaac is here referring to the cure for gossip, not its penance.

<sup>46</sup> MS Cambridge Add. 3217, fols. 165b–166a. See Appendix III, #27.

<sup>47</sup> A. Havazelet, "Qisṣur Semag shel R. Abraham ben Ephraim," *Sefer ha-Zikaron le-ha-Rav Yiṣḥaq Yedidyah Frankel* (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 282.

<sup>48</sup> Ed. Israel Brodie (Jerusalem, 1962), 1:203–205.

<sup>49</sup> M. Z. Weisz, "Sefer Minhag Tov," *Ha-Ṣofeh le-Hokhmat Yisra'el* 13 (1929) 217–245.

penance mentioned in the two-volume work. He never refers to, much less cites, the widespread penitential handbooks with which he was undoubtedly familiar.<sup>50</sup> Is Sabbath violation somehow different, because there was some geonic precedent for penance in this instance? Too little has survived from Italy of the 13th and 14th centuries to speak with any degree of confidence. In Provence, one early 14th-century florilegium, the *Orhot Ḥayyim* (and its abridgment, the *Kol Bo*), cites sections of the German penitentials, alongside contrary instructions for a repentance that is wholly internal and experiential.<sup>51</sup> What the compiler himself advocated, if anything, is difficult to say. However, no other writer of Southern France ever advocated penance, and no one else, to the best of my knowledge, even mentions it.<sup>52</sup>

The story of penance in Spain is identical with that of Provence. R. Isaac al-Nakawa, the author of one large ethical compendium, reproduces a German penitential tract, though it is not clear how this penance squares with other passages in that work, as the editor of that compendium had already noted.<sup>53</sup> Be that as it may, this is the sole appearance of penance in Spanish sources known to me. No writer ever actually advocated it and no one ever troubled himself to oppose it. This silence, it should be emphasized, occurs at a time when a growing number of German emigrés made their way to

<sup>50</sup> *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, ed. S. K. Mirsky (New York, 1966), p. 276.

<sup>51</sup> *Orhot Ḥayyim* (Jerusalem, 1955), #22 (pp. 224–226); *Kol Bo* (n. 8 above), vol. 4, sec. 66 (cols. 201–218). (It is irrelevant here whether the *Kol Bo* is an abridgment of the *Orhot Ḥayyim* or whether it is a first draft of it. The important point from the perspective of intellectual history is that these two works effectively constitute only one reference. They register but a single occurrence of an idea.)

<sup>52</sup> R. Jacob Anatoli opposes penance as well as all other forms of asceticism. See his *Malmad ha-Talmidim* (Lyck, 1866), p. 174b; he views penance and asceticism as a distinctly Christian practice, not a Jewish one. See Marc Saperstein, “*Your Voice Like a Ram’s Horn*”: *Themes and Texts in Traditional Preaching* (Cincinnati, 1996), pp. 61–71, especially nn. 33–34. There is no evidence of any penetration in Provence of the penance of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*.

<sup>53</sup> Isaac Al-Nakawah, *Menorat ha-Maʿor*, ed. H. G. Enelow (New York, 1931), 3:113–119. How this passage is to be reconciled with that of pp. 43–47, especially p. 44, lines 11–14, is problematic. The inquirer in *Teshuvot ha-Rosh* 19.16 is, as we now know from Y. S. Yudlov’s new edition of that work (Jerusalem, 1994), a nephew of R. Asher, and thus his query does not evidence any penetration of penance among Spanish Jews. For the tradition of the specific penance cited there by R. Asher, see *Teshuvot Maharil he-Hadashot*, ed. Yitzhak Satz (Jerusalem, 1973), #89 and notes ad loc.

Spain, as 14th-century German Jews sought to escape their increasingly precarious position. The rich religious literature of Spain makes no more mention of penance than it does any of the other distinctive doctrines of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*.

Rabbenu Yonah mi-Gerundi (Gerona) is sometimes presented as a German Pietist, or at least as having been decisively influenced by that movement. To my mind, this is a result of failing to differentiate “pietism,” a well-known mode of spirituality, from the radical and idiosyncratic mode of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*, a distinction which I have already adumbrated. For all the varieties of religiosity that the venerable term *ḥasid* has encompassed, and for all the differences that exist between Rabbenu Baḥyah, Rabbenu Yonah, and R. Yisrael Salanter, there nevertheless remains a core meaning to that word and some quintessential commonality to those figures. *Ḥasidut* has long and aptly been translated as “pietism,” for it has much in common with a religious type found in Christianity (whence the term is borrowed) and Islam. Roughly speaking, pietism is characterized by introspection and religious inwardness, ethical accountability and an emphasis of the experiential over the intellectual. Possessing a keen understanding of individual sinfulness and of the frailties of the will when pitted against instinct, pietism calls for sustained moral training and provides a program for the vigilant disciple of the soul. *Sefer Ḥasidim* has much, though not all, of this spirituality. What characterizes it and sets it apart from all other Jewish movements is, as I have previously noted: first, its harsh asceticism and even harsher penance; next, its religious elitism together with its claims to a new revelation (the *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>3</sup>) with its myriad of new dictates; and further, its complete identification with the popular beliefs of medieval Germany—not simply the belief in demons, vampires and werewolves, not to speak of romantic predestination, but rather the large role that these notions play in religious counsel.

R. Yonah was, indeed, a pietist, as was Rabbenu Baḥyah before him, but he was not a German Pietist. Not a trace of their distinctive and radical notions is found in his writings, major or minor, early or late. To be a pietist doesn’t require being a German Pietist, and to become a pietist, one doesn’t have to have been a German Pietist or to have been influenced by them. The passage from believer to pietist is far simpler, and the footway well trodden. The same mounting path has been taken in every century by *âmes d’élites* all over the world, and though variously inscribed, its mile-posts are identical.

Influence for the very distinctive German brand of Pietism on the classical pietism of R. Yonah can be claimed only if such an influence can be documented, yet there is not a trace of the teachings of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* in any of the works that were unquestionably authored by R. Yonah and on which his fame is based—the *Sha<sup>c</sup>arei Teshuvah*, or his commentaries on Avot or on Proverbs. All claims of filiation hinge on the borrowings from *Sefer Ḥasidim* found in a small pamphlet entitled *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah*, attributed in some sources to R. Yonah. Passing the problematic issue of attribution,<sup>54</sup> suffice it to remark that all the passages borrowed are from SH I and from SH I alone.<sup>55</sup> Whatever influence *Sefer Ḥasidim* in any of its guises had south of the Pyrenees, and I believe it to have been trivial, it was SH I that exercised that influence, not the *Sefer Ḥasidim* of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*.

Let us linger a moment or two on R. Yonah before turning north to France. How much of SH I actually is there in *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah*? Very little; and of substance nothing at all. Of the thirty-two par-

<sup>54</sup> See below, n. 89.

<sup>55</sup> See n. 32 above. Further parallels are noted in the text of the *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* contained in the 1990 edition of the *Sha<sup>c</sup>arei Teshuvah* published in Jerusalem by the Sifte Chachamim Institute for the Dissemination of Torah and Mussar. It lists four more parallels. Section 69 of *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* is listed as parallel to SHB #459. However, this is simply a translation of the talmudic dictum in bPes 110b. Anyone seeking to discourage soothsaying, as do both *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* #69 and SHB #59, and seeking to allay his reader's fears, will cite the passage in *Pesahim*. The parallelism lies in the strong and unc customary position of opposing the ubiquitous soothsaying. Citing the talmudic passage in support follows naturally. Sections 18 and 27 are listed as parallels to SHB #822. This is correct. It is, however, also parallel to SHB #57. Section 75 is parallel to SHB #313, but this is simply a statement of universal practice. Section 93 has indeed partial parallels with SHB #546 and 949, as does section 95 with SHB #917. Note, however, that all the parallels and borrowings deal with one and the same subject, that is, soiled places (*meqomot meṭunnaḥim*) and their relationship to sacred objects and the recitation of sacred words. Clearly the author of the *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* had a few more sections in his SHB on soiled places, which fleshed out the position stated more generally in SHB #57. (There is after all nothing canonical in the number 152, and copies of SH I may well have circulated with 160 or 170 sections.) Also note that SHB #917 deals with the fear of passing wind in the presence of sacred books, while *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* deals with nakedness in their presence. The religious sensitivity is the same but there is, strictly speaking, no literary borrowing. Be that as it may, other than on the topic of *meqomot meṭunnaḥim*, all parallels between *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* and *Sefer Ḥasidim* are actually between *Sefer ha-Yir<sup>a</sup>ah* and SH I.

allels cited by Brill (all taken from SH I), only fifteen are genuine parallels; the others are simply common citations of indistinctive talmudic or midrashic passages. However, there is no doubt that the author of *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* had in front of him SH I. Passages in SH I such as *ואל תסרוק ראשך על הספר*, *ואל תהרוג כנה על השלחן כי הוא נקרא* and *ואל יחשוב בתורה במקום המטונף אלא יחשוב חשבונות וזה נקרא ערום* or *מזבח* appear in *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*, as do instructions such as *ואל יבוא* and *אם שומע אנשים מדברים רע על* or *פתאום אצל אנשים המתלחשים זה עם זה* אדם. <sup>56</sup> These ideas, however, are of no significance to the *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*.

The central thrust of that small pamphlet entitled *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* is to create a morning and evening regimen, so that so long as the Jew is found in his private space, from the moment he rises in the morning to the moment he steps into the alien, public, gentile space to earn his daily bread, his thoughts are directed uninterruptedly toward God. A full 50 percent of this short work is dedicated to that goal. The other 50 percent is devoted to virtues to be practiced in the public sphere of human intercourse: humility, courtesy, sensitivity to other human beings, and honesty both in deed and speech. A few phrasings of these directives come from SH I, but not many. Only three directives are found in *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* that are probably distinctive to SH I. The first is that a Jew should contribute weekly *מחצה* or *פרוטה* to charity to show that he is a tenant (*rentier*) of God. A lovely idea found in SH I, but one that is in no way developed in either of these two works.<sup>57</sup> The second is the injunction against scribes encoding their names in the works that they copy.<sup>58</sup> The third is the injunction to fast once a month. (*Sefer Hasidim* itself suggests once a week, SH I characteristically reduces the demand to once a month.)<sup>59</sup> Yet these very cases of influence reflect at the same time a contrary tendency of *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*, that is, to mute or soften the very dictates that it occasionally does borrow from SH I. *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* qualifies the monthly fast, writing: *ותמיד בכל חודש ישב יום אחד בתענית או לא יאכל כי אם לחם ומים*.<sup>60</sup> SHB opens the section

<sup>56</sup> SHB #101, 102 *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #75; SHB #949, *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #93; SHB #64, *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #51.

<sup>57</sup> *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #62 = SHB #61.

<sup>58</sup> *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #90 = SHB #136.

<sup>59</sup> *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* #102, SHB #97, though see n. 15 above.

<sup>60</sup> See SHB #617.

against the scribal practice of encoding one's name in books thus: and שם רשעים ירקב (משלי י' ז') אלו הסופרים המוסיפים תיבות וכו' concludes: וכי בשביל שם הנמאס יחסרו תיבות או יוסיפו? *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* simply writes: אם אתה סופר אל תחסר או תייתר אות כדי לחתום שמך בראש שיטה, without any derogatory remarks. Both forbid raising one's hand in anger against his fellow man, but SHB adds ואין לו תקנה אלא ואין לו תקנה אלא. <sup>61</sup> Again, and even more significantly, when advocating walking *be-qomah shehuhah*, *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* writes ובלכתו בדרך אל יסוח יותר מדאי ואל ישפיל סודרו על עיניו פן יחשב ללעג. <sup>62</sup> And yet again, while advocating *kavvanah* in prayer, *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* writes: ואל יהיה מאריך בתפילתו יותר מדאי פן יחשבוהו לכבוד (?) ולץ. <sup>63</sup> In other words, the very few facets of extremism that SH I does share with *Sefer Hasidim*, <sup>64</sup> namely, the occasionally sharp language and the willingness, indeed, the insistence on suffering mockery for the public practice of its forms of piety, are repudiated by *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*. Indeed, *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* insists that such a path is counterproductive. <sup>65</sup>

All in all, the influence of SH I on *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* is real but trivial, that of *Sefer Hasidim* and *Hasidei Ashkenaz* nonexistent.

North of the Pyrenees, a finger has been pointed at two figures as having been influenced by *Hasidei Ashkenaz*: R. Moses of Coucy, the author of the great French code, *Sefer Mišvot Gadol (Semaq)*, and R. Isaac of Corbeil, the author of the abridgment of that work, commonly known as the *Semaq*. R. Eliezer of Metz—a city nominally in the Empire, but culturally part of France—the late 12th-century author of the *Sefer Yere'im*, has also been suggested a number of times as a forerunner of the German Pietists and has been portrayed as a prototypical *Hasid Ashkenazi*.

Confusion has arisen on this issue from the start, repeating the mistake made with Rabbenu Yonah, namely, failure to distinguish between “pietism” and German Pietism. This error is compounded

<sup>61</sup> *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* #67, SHB #49.

<sup>62</sup> *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* #42, SHB #57.

<sup>63</sup> *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* #29.

<sup>64</sup> Soloveitchik, “Three themes,” pp. 334–338.

<sup>65</sup> Interestingly, the author or compiler of the ethical passages in MS Cambridge Add. 3126 (see Appendix III), were also aware of the dangers of counterproductive behavior—apparently both had seen enough supererogatory conduct in their times and the reaction it provoked—and when advocating abstemious eating habits on all days other than Sabbath and holidays (#19) he used the same words of counsel: ובפני רבים מותר פן יחשב ללעג.



by a further failure to distinguish between “pietism” and “piety.” The latter error is largely a product of the English language, less likely to occur in German, in which “piety” is termed *Frommigkeit* (whence the Yiddish *frumkeyt*) while “pietism” is *Pietismus*. Piety, unlike pietism, is not a distinctive mode of spirituality. It is simply, as Webster’s *Dictionary* puts it, the “devout fulfillment of one’s religious obligations,” whatever those obligations may be, as external as oblation or as internal as meditation.

That these three halakhists are not German Pietists is clear. There isn’t a word of that group’s distinctive teachings in all of their writings. Are they “pietists” at all? Do we find in them—as we do in R. Yonah—a concern for the religious formation of the whole person? Are their writings suffused with a pervasive sense of God’s power and presence and with the fear that this presence should instill in humans? Do they possess a pungent sense of individual sinfulness and are they animated by concerns for constant vigilance against the evil instinct? Since guiding the heart and the will is at least as difficult as guiding the hand, as every pietist from R. Baḥyah to R. Yisrael Salanter knew only too well, do they attempt to show a path to the attainment of these inner goals? Do they provide us with some regimen for the maintenance of the health of the soul? The answer to all these questions is the same: not at all. On occasion these writers urge their readers to greater piety, to greater *Frommigkeit*, that is, to a fuller and more scrupulous fulfillment of their religious duties, including those “of the heart,” but they are in no way “pietists” nor do they advocate “pietism” to their readers.

What has possibly led some interpreters astray is the fact that these writers, unlike most of their fellow Tosafists, do address such imperatives as “love of God,” “fear of God,” and “cleaving to Him,” and speak of the injunctions against pride and covetousness, or against testing God. Unnoted has been the less than bashful fact that these authors are not simply codifiers but *monei mišvot*, “counters of commandments.” That is to say, they are codifiers who have chosen to organize their work by enumerating and then discussing the nature and specifics of each imperative (*mišvah*). This is significant. A chronological framework for presentation such as the school of Rashi (*sifrut devei Rashi*) or later the *Ṭur* adopted would begin with the morning prayers, blessings on food and the grace after meals, then move on to the evening prayers, and then to Sabbath and so on. This approach might never get around to discussing the more



interior duties of loving God, fearing God, and cleaving to Him, or injunctions against anger or pride, which have no set time or framework for their fulfillment. However, if one adopts a framework of *minyān ha-mišvot*, one must address the commandment “And thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart,” and that of “And Him shalt thou fear and to Him shalt thou cleave.” Thus the discussion of these topics does not reflect any choice on the part of individual authors. Rather, we should ask how these commandments are discussed. How large do they bulk in the respective works? Do the various authors seek to give the “duties of the heart” some centrality in the halakhic system, as Maimonides does in the *Sefer Mada*? Do the writers content themselves with a few talmudic quotations, or do they seize these occasions for extended discussion on the nature of these “duties of the heart”? The answer is that these commandments occupy a minute part of each respective code, and there is either no discussion at all (as in the *Sefer Yere'im*),<sup>66</sup> or no extended or serious discussion (in the other two works) of these “duties of the heart.” And needless to say, none of these authors provides any spiritual regimen, or anything even vaguely resembling one.

These authors are codifiers, who composed works that spell out in detail the full range of religious obligations. On occasion, they exhort their readers to observe the laws which have been observed laxly, such as *tefillin* and *mezuzah*, and summon them to greater intentionality (*kavvanah*) in prayers.<sup>67</sup> They heatedly call for more decorum in the synagogue and plead for greater honesty in their dealings with their fellow men, especially gentiles.<sup>68</sup> They inveigh against the dangers of pride, covetousness, and anger and remind people to ever walk humbly before God.<sup>69</sup> But all this scarcely constitutes “pietism.” Indeed, the author of the *Semaq*, Rabbi Isaac of

<sup>66</sup> See the perfunctory treatment of the commandments to love and fear God, and to cleave to Him and walk in His ways in #404–408, #153–154. The discussion consists entirely of citations of rabbinic passages. The imperative of “cleaving to Him,” which lies at the heart of pietism, is taken simply in the rabbinic sense of cleaving to scholars. As far as interpersonal conduct is concerned, see the brief and purely technical discussions throughout the fifth section (*Amud ha-Ḥamishi*) of the work.

<sup>67</sup> See *Sefer Mišvot Gadol* (*Semag*), ed. Elyakim Schlesinger. 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1989–95), *aseh* #3; *Sefer Mišvot Qatan* (*Semaq*) (reprint, Jerusalem, 1965), #11.

<sup>68</sup> *Semaq* #11; *Semag*, *aseh* #74, *lo* *ta'aseh* #2 and see also *lo* *ta'aseh* #152, #170. For a possible contemporary moment for R. Moses' exhortation, see Jeffrey Woolf, “Some Polemical Emphases in the *Sefer Mišvot Gadol* of R. Moses of Coucy,” *JQR* 89 (1998) 81–100; *Semaq* #85.

<sup>69</sup> *Semag*, *lo* *ta'aseh* #64, *aseh* # 16; *Semaq* #14, #19, #22 (#9).

Corbeil, who was sometimes called *he-ḥasid* or *ha-qadosh* (“the saintly” or “the holy”),<sup>70</sup> who fasted one day a month as suggested by the *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*,<sup>71</sup> and who, in good supererogatory fashion, waited twenty-four hours between meat and milk as did the father of Mar Ukba in the Talmud,<sup>72</sup> nevertheless was heard remarking that he “regretted that he had gotten so accustomed to going to the synagogue [to pray] as he enjoyed study so much.”<sup>73</sup>

Should such admissions surprise us? Not at all. The Ashkenazic community in the high Middle Ages was, indeed, lax in observance of *tallit* and *tefillin*,<sup>74</sup> as were most other European Jewish communities. And has there ever been a community that was free of pride or of lust or of quarrel or one that did not warrant admonition about the earnestness of its prayer or its decorum in synagogue? Nor is the presence of such exhortations in these codes surprising. French writers never adopted Maimonides’ spartan notion of a *summa*, a comprehensive and impersonal statement of the totality of the Oral Law. Their codes are far more mundane than Maimonides’ olympian work. They have clear practical purposes in mind that they state openly in their respective introductions. They intend to enlighten their fellow Jews as to the fullness of their duties, to inform people of laws of which they may be insufficiently aware, to raise their religious sensitivities, and to encourage them to seal the breaches in their observances. Hortatory remarks are integral to the spirit of these works and to their avowed goals. However, religious exhortation isn’t piety, piety isn’t pietism, and pietism itself is scarcely German Pietism.

<sup>70</sup> Ephraim Kanarfogel, “*Peering through the Lattices*”: *Mystical, Magical and Pictorial Dimensions in the Tosafist Period* (Detroit, 2000), p. 90.

<sup>71</sup> MS Cambridge, Add. 3126 f. 166a. See Appendix III, #32. R. Isaac’s compatriot and glossator, R. Pereš of Corbeil, spoke approvingly of fasting for one’s sins, *Haggahot Rabbenu Pereš, Semaq* #175.

<sup>72</sup> “Pisqei Ri mi-Corbeil,” MS Cambridge, Add. 3126 fol. 167b and see bHul 106a. This set of rulings immediately follows the ethical prescriptions described above and reproduced below in Appendix III. On the various versions and manuscripts of these rulings, see Simḥah Emmanuel, *Ha-Sefarim ha-Avudim shel Baʿalei ha-Tosafot* (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1993), pp. 237–243.

<sup>73</sup> “Pisqei Ri mi-Corbeil,” fol. 169a. פעם אחת אמר מצטער אני שהרגלתי כל כך לילך לבית הכנסת, שטוב לי ללמוד.

<sup>74</sup> Aviezer Ravitzki, *ʿAl Daʿat ha-Maqom: Mehqarim be-Hagut ha-Yehudit ve-Toldoteha* (Jerusalem, 1991), pp. 37–40; Ephraim Kanarfogel, “Rabbinic Attitudes Towards Nonobservant Jews in the Medieval World,” *Jewish Tradition and the Non-traditional Jew*, ed. J. J. Schachter (Northvale, 1992), pp. 7–14.

## III. PIETY AND RELIGIOSITY

While these authors were not pietists, do their works breathe religiosity, does one discern passion in their exhortations? In the *Sefer Yera'im* and the *Semaq* one senses conviction more than passion. The *Semaq*, however, evinces a passion whose force is not diminished for being a quiet one. It was not simply hortatory skills that made its author, R. Moses of Coucy, the “preacher” among the Tosafists but also his animating impulse to improve and uplift his fellow Jews. R. Moses the Preacher, while in no way a pietist, nevertheless exudes a religiosity that is palpable.

He sees man as a day laborer of God who must daily fulfill his *opus dei*, which is the end and purpose of his existence. God must be worshipped and obeyed for His own sake and not out of fear of punishment nor from seeking to win favor in His eyes. Anger is sinful, but the greatest of all sins is the sin of pride, for it means forgetting one’s nothingness before God and becoming oblivious to God’s infinite grace in granting our existence.<sup>75</sup> As sinning is human, penance always befits us. R. Moses penned a special prayer for penitents, which he mentions but does not reproduce in his code. R. Yonah of Gerona found this prayer so attractive that he apparently copied and embellished it and, as often happened with short devotional works in the Middle Ages, it soon went under R. Yonah’s name in his homeland.<sup>76</sup> R. Moses further suggested that his readers spend an hour a day on their knees supplicating God’s forgivingness for their inevitable sins.<sup>77</sup> But recommending this protracted kneeling posture is the closest R. Moses of Coucy comes to a pietistic stance.

His contemporary Rabbi Moses of Evreux, the author/compiler of the Tosafot of Evreux, similarly emphasized in a small ethical

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<sup>75</sup> Yehudah D. Galinsky, *Rabbi Mosheh mi-Coucy ke-Hasid, ke-Darshan u-Fulman* (M.A. diss., Yeshiva University, 1993), pp. 27–59. To date, Galinsky’s work, done under the direction of David Berger, is the most sober treatment of R. Moses of Coucy generally, and of R. Moses’ putative relationship to German Pietism in particular. See now his recent articles, “‘Ve-lihyot le-Fanekha ‘Eved Ne’eman Kol ha-Yamim’: Pereq be-Haguto ha-Datit shel R. Mosheh mi-Coucy,” *Daat* 42 (1999) 13–31; “Qum ‘Aseh Lekha Sefer Torah mi-Shenei Halakim,” *Ha-Maayan* 38.1 (1995) 23–31, esp. p. 25, n. 10.

<sup>76</sup> Yitzhak Gilat, “Shetei Baqashot le-Rabbi Mosheh mi-Coucy,” *Tarbiz* 28 (1959) 54–58.

<sup>77</sup> *Semaq* (see n. 67 above), *aseh* #16.

broadside the danger of anger, the importance of humility—always walking, in good medieval fashion, with bent head and downcast eyes—of seeking repentance for one's inevitable sins, and of weeping honest tears in prayer, “for he who weeps [in prayer] in the night, the stars and constellations weep with him and his prayer is heard.”<sup>78</sup> For a brief moment the author/compiler of the *Tosafot* of Evreux,<sup>79</sup> who partook very lightly of meat so as to deny himself one of the pleasures of the world,<sup>80</sup> drops the impersonal format of “objection” and “reply may be made” in which his other writings are couched, and we glimpse a deeply religious man, not crushed by his sin, but aware of its existence and disturbed by it. No less aware is he of the harsh, adamant ego and mindful that only by contraction rather than by expansion, by withdrawing rather than by asserting oneself, can the resistant, inviolate self be conquered.

There were those who did not pen spiritual advice but drew up lists of vices to be avoided and practices to be encouraged. Spurning penance, not to mention the ascetic rigors of the German Pietists, one writer, apparently a pupil or votary of R. Isaac of Corbeil, the author of the *Semaq*, suggests minor denials of bodily wants designed to remind man of his higher nature and calls upon him to partake very lightly of meat; to eat only on weekdays and only as much as is necessary “to sustain and strengthen the body”; not to partake in festive meals unnecessarily (except Sabbath, of course, which was to be fully celebrated at the table); to fast twice or three times

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<sup>78</sup> *Orhot Hayyim* (reprint, Jerusalem, 1956), p. 228, end of *Hilkhot Rosh ha-Shanah*; *Kol Bo*, ed. David Avraham, vol. 4 (Jerusalem, 1993) #66, col. 220. The phrase is talmudic (bSan 104b), but R. Moses is the only writer, to my knowledge, who draws on this passage. The entire passage on prayer found favor in the eyes of R. Isaac of Corbeil and he quoted it in his glosses to the *Semaq* (#11). I say “in good medieval fashion,” for while walking with a bent head has talmudic precedent (bBer 43b), walking with eyes downcast, to the best of my knowledge, does not. (See Rashi, bNid 24a s.v. *simi at*, bMen 110a s.v. *simi at*. Rashi has heard this explanation; however, he has no explicit source for it. See the עשרה מילי דחסידותא cited in the *Sefer ha-Oreh*, Lwow, 1905, pp. 3–4.) Yet this is a trait advocated by SH I (SHB #53), *Sefer ha-Yir'ah* (#42), and R. Moses of Evreux. Downcast eyes are taken to be emblematic of piety by all three, not surprisingly, as “custody of the eyes” to avoid temptation and also as a mark of humility was viewed as a hallmark of the religious, and its practice widespread in the surrounding society.

<sup>79</sup> E. E. Urbach, *Ba'alei ha-Tosafot*, rev. ed. (Jerusalem, 1980), pp. 479–485.

<sup>80</sup> MS Cambridge, Add. 3126, fol. 165b. See Appendix III, #21. His practice was probably a compromise between not forbidding what the Torah had permitted and not partaking in the pleasures of the world.

a year, or once a month or once a week (he is not sure what to endorse); and on those fast days to confess to a rabbi and repent bitterly of one's sins. He also enumerates the need to walk humbly, to deal justly with one's neighbor, neither to flatter nor to lie, to respect all men, not to offend anyone by word or deed nor seek power over others.<sup>81</sup> Self-improvement rather than self-abnegation is the goal. Abstemious habits, moral conduct, and some sense of human worthlessness and sin had to accompany the quotidian Jewish life of ritual.

There were still others who neither wrote manuals nor even drew up lists, but on finding a line or two in one of these lists that resonated with them, inserted those lines into the long catalogue of ritual prescriptions and judicial rulings that they were copying—with no sense of incongruity.<sup>82</sup> And then, of course, there were hundreds of owners of manuscripts who instructed their scribes to include the widest variety of ethical writings and prescriptions into their copies of halakhic works.<sup>83</sup>

Should these inclusive practices surprise us? Not at all. The voluminous writings of the Tosafists tell us their thoughts, not their feelings or muted aspirations. We have every reason to suppose that in this large group of thinkers, as well as in their eager audience, every variety of individual existed. There were “once born souls” and “twice born” ones, the religiously indifferent, the spiritually casual, the somewhat interested, the wholly dedicated, and those who had indeed passed through the light and darkness of religious travail. “The spirit blows where it listeth,” and we would do well not to tie its coming and going to any specific movement nor should we think that were it not for some eccentric Rhenish pietists, there would have been no spiritual hunger in France and Germany in the High Middle Ages.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., fols. 165b–166a, reproduced in full in Appendix III.

<sup>82</sup> The scribe or editor of *Pisqei Rabbenu Pereš* of Corbeil (found in MS Bibliothèque Nationale, Heb. 407, ff. 236b–237a) inserted several ethical prescriptions from MS Cambridge, Add. 3126 into his transcriptions of the *Pesaqim*. See Shelomoh Sha'anani, “Pisqei Rabbenu Pereš ve-‘Ašerim be-‘Inyanei Oraḥ Ḥayyim,” *Moriah* 17.9–10 (1991) 12 (#15–16). See Appendix III, #19, #21, #29.

<sup>83</sup> In fact, many of the owners transcribed the ethical works themselves. At least 50 percent of Hebrew manuscripts are owner-copied. See Malachi Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Manuscripts of East and West: Towards a Comparative Codicology* (London, 1993), pp. 79–83.

## IV. FRANCE OR GERMANY

Truth to tell, if we were to judge on the basis of the written remains, there was more spiritual hunger in France than in Germany. Perhaps the time has come to remind ourselves that the traveler and inveterate recorder R. Abraham ibn Yarḥi mentions *Ḥasidei Ṣarfāt* at least as often as *Ḥasidei Alamania*.<sup>84</sup> I have already noted that all the glosses in SH I are in French, which in itself proves little. However, SH I speaks approvingly of swaying in prayer and cites as support Ps 35:10: “All my limbs should say, God who is like Thee.”<sup>85</sup> R. Abraham ibn Yarḥi mentions this swaying in prayer (together with the very same verse as proof text) as a hallmark of the “rabbis and *ḥasidim* of *Ṣarfāt*.”<sup>86</sup> It should be further noted that the version of *Sefer Ḥasidim* published by Wistinezki, which faithfully reflects the teachings of German Pietism, makes no mention of swaying in prayer.<sup>87</sup> *Sefer ha-Yirʿah* equally recommends swaying citing the same proof text.<sup>88</sup> All three seem to reflect the tradition and practice of a religious and spiritual elite in France. While debate continues over the authorship of the *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*, even those who argue for the authorship of Rabbi Yonah of Gerona concede that it was composed during his stay at the yeshivah of Evreux or very soon afterwards, when he was still under its influence.<sup>89</sup> The *Sefer ha-Yirʿah*

<sup>84</sup> *Sefer ha-Manhig* (above n. 8), 1:85, 363; 2:607, 626 (a repetition of the same report).

<sup>85</sup> SHB #56.

<sup>86</sup> *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:85.

<sup>87</sup> Noted by Yiṣḥaq (Eric) Zimmer, “Tiqqunei ha-Guf be-Sheʿat ha-Tefillah” in his *ʿOlam ke-Minhago Noheg* (Jerusalem, 1996), p. 100, n. 166.

<sup>88</sup> Section 33. One must distinguish between swaying in Torah study, swaying during the Torah reading, and swaying in prayer. Each has its separate source and advocates. See Zimmer, *ʿOlam ke-Minhago Noheg*, pp. 98–101.

<sup>89</sup> I. M. Ta-Shema, “Ḥasidut Ashkenaz be-Sefarad: R. Yonah mi-Gerundi ha-Ish u-Foʿalo,” *Galut Aḥar Golah: Mehqarim be-Toldot ʿAm Yisraʿel Mugashim le-Professor Hayyim Beinart li-Melʿot Shivʿim Shanah*, eds. A. Grossman, Y. Kaplan, and A. Mirsky (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 168–170. I have serious doubts whether Benyamin Richler’s argument for North European authorship has been effectively refuted. See Benyamin Richler, “ʿAl Kitvei ha-Yad shel Sefer ha-Yirʿah ha-Meyuḥas le-Rabbenu Yonah,” *Alei Sefer* 8 (1980) 51–59. The manuscript evidence is very strong and the citation of Riṭva seems to me an instance of misplaced authority. We know that this slender work went under R. Yonah’s name in Spain and we have every reason to believe that even if R. Yonah was not the work’s actual author, he endorsed both halakhic and moral contents and gave them currency and no little authority in the

is thus a product of northern French culture. The similarities between that work and SH I, together with the clear literary borrowings, would strengthen somewhat the claims of SH I to be a French work. A community of emphases has also been noted between SH I and the writings of R. Moses of Coucy.<sup>90</sup> If to this evidence we add the brief but moving remarks of R. Moses of Evreux against anger and pride and on the importance of humility and tearful prayer,<sup>91</sup> there is every indication that intense legal thinking had not stifled the aspiration for virtue among the French Tosafists, nor had dialectic desiccated their spirit. Some aspired to pietism, some to piety, and some simply wished to be humbler, better men and to insure somehow that the world would not be too much with them.

## APPENDIX I

### Minhag Ostreich and the East

We have discussed the putative influence of German Pietism in Germany itself, to the south in Italy, to the west in France, and southwest in Provence and Spain. A word may be in order about its supposed influence in the east, namely in Austria and Poland. This discussion can be divided into two parts: the underlying assumptions of influence and the actual documentation of specific influences.

In my laudatory review of Eric Zimmer's *Olam ke-Minhago Noheg* I indicated how the book's premises on this subject are problematic.<sup>92</sup> In that fine work Zimmer sees Ḥasidic influence on *minhag Ostreich*, the rite of Ostreich and Poland. I quote from my review:

Zimmer draws upon Ta-Shema's important article on the presence of numerous pupils of R. Judah he-Hasid in Slavic countries. Ta-Shema conjectured that R. Judah he-Hasid moved from Speyer to Regens-

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Iberian peninsula. In doing so, he tacitly endorsed whatever halakhic positions were contained in the *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*. A halakhist would be wholly justified in citing these halakhic passages as proof of R. Yonah's stand. The question here, however, is not legal endorsement but ascription of actual authorship. The issue is not halakhic but bibliographic, and I know no reason why the attribution of a cousin's pupil's pupil—which is what the great Riṭva's connection to R. Yonah was—is somehow authoritative in these matters, especially against the overwhelming evidence of the manuscripts.

<sup>90</sup> Yehudah Galinsky (see n. 75 above), pp. 36–66 with notes, esp. nn. 55, 108.

<sup>91</sup> See above, p. 480.

<sup>92</sup> “Yisḥaq Zimmer, *Olam ke-Minhago Noheg*: a Review Essay,” *AJS Review* 23 (1998) 223–234.



burg because of the opposition that he encountered in the old Rhineland city to his radical program and sought out the “frontier” zone as being more receptive to his innovative ideas. Similarly, pupils of his settled in the East precisely because in the new settlements there was a greater chance of instituting Ḥasidic doctrines. Adopting this line of thought, Zimmer sees in German Pietism a major force in shaping the rite of Ostreich and Poland. It is an interesting thesis and certainly worth pursuing. It should be noted, however, that Regensburg in the twelfth century was a burgeoning commercial center. Situated on the Danube, this imperial city was a gateway to trade with southeastern Europe and the lands of the Islam and quite possibly was also already playing a major role in financing the *Ostsiedlung*. And Jewish settlement in medieval times often followed commercial opportunity. To ask why R. Judah he-Ḥasid settled there is equally to ask why other prominent Tosafists, such as R. Isaac ben Mordecai (Ribam), R. Isaac ben Jacob (Ri Lavan), R. Ephraim, R. Baruch, and R. Shemaryah all made their new homes in Regensburg. Moreover, Regensburg, while considerably east of the Rhineland, was no *tabula rasa* waiting for the imprint of some distinguished emigre. It housed a distinguished line of Tosafists, who antedated R. Judah in residence by a half century.<sup>93</sup>

I would now add that many of these scholars had studied under Rabbenu Tam and maintained ongoing contact with him, because until the second half of the 13th century, Regensburg had some of the closest connections with France of any German city. If R. Judah he-Ḥasid's distinguished lineage did not obviate problems in his hometown of Speyers, he could scarcely have imagined that his singular doctrines would be welcomed in the French beachhead on the Danube, and certainly not by the stormiest petrel of the Tosafist movement, R. Ephraim of Regensburg. A man who once sent Rabbenu Tam a letter containing all the hairs he had torn out of his beard in exasperation at one of his teacher's rulings could scarcely be expected to put up with R. Judah's private revelations, his newly discovered covert will of God. If R. Judah he-Ḥasid was seeking in his move to Regensburg to outflank his opposition, he couldn't have been more mistaken.

Regensburg was also

the seat of one of the most venerable Jewish communities in Germany, whose recorded history stretched as far back as that of Rhineland cities. It is customary to picture the expansion of the German

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp. 229–230.



Jewish community as radiating eastward from the settlements on the Rhine. The written record, however, documents the simultaneous emergence in the tenth century of Jewish communities both along the Rhineland and in the trading centers near and along the eastern borders of the Empire—Regensburg, Magdburg, Merseburg, and Prague. True, the oldest academies were in Mainz and Worms, but the other ancient communities were scarcely deferential about their local customs and practices. R. Isaac Or Zarua—who numbered R. Judah he-Hasid among his teachers—juxtaposed with no sense of inferiority the traditions of his native Bohemia with those of the Rhineland.

As to the alleged influence of German Pietism on the Eastern Rite, we would do well to remember two things. First, rich and important as Ta-Shema's article is in new information that it provides about little-known medieval Polish erudites, the connection between these scholars and Ḥasidei Ashkenaz remains, nevertheless, conjectural. For example, that the scholar R. Ya'akov ha-Kohen belonged to the circle of German Pietists is based on the assumption that the Ya'akov ha-Kohen (not a very rare or distinctive name) mentioned in the halakhic sources is one and the same person mentioned in a now-lost kabbalistic manuscript. All that we know for certain is that R. Judah he-Hasid had Slavic pupils in his Bible classes. There is no evidence that these pupils were scholars of any standing or that they exercised any authority in their homeland.<sup>94</sup>

So much—to my thinking—for the premises. Let us now investigate the evidence for specific influences. Zimmer cautiously suggests influence in five areas: swaying in prayer, postnatal sexual relationships, added days of menstrual abstinence, restriction of priestly blessings to holidays, and spread of a certain formula in prayer. I see no evidence for any of these influences. In my review, I expressed my reservations about Zimmer's arguments for priestly blessings and postnatal relations,<sup>95</sup> and I have indicated above that swaying in prayer is a French practice rather than a German one.<sup>96</sup> I would like to register here my demurrals on the other two topics.<sup>97</sup>

First, no doubt the German Pietists opposed the French addition to the *el erekh appayim* prayer, however, there is no evidence that the French version was ever recited in Germany. Thus, *Ḥasidei Ash-*

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp. 226–227.

<sup>96</sup> See above, p. 480.

<sup>97</sup> Zimmer, *‘Olam ke-Minhago Noheg*, pp. 114–123, 240–250.

*kenaz* were but defending the German practice. The French rite had little to no influence on the Eastern rite, which is almost entirely German. Why attribute the victory of the German version of *el erekh appayim* to *Hasidei Ashkenaz*? The German rite triumphed here as in hundreds of other instances. Furthermore, I know of no evidence whatsoever that the German Pietists ever advocated an added seven-day menstrual abstinence. Indeed, as I pointed out in my remarks on postnatal relations, all the evidence that we possess for the hypersensitivity of *Hasidei Ashkenaz* to any form of pollution, whether physical or ritual, is with regard to *sancta* with their powerful taboo, not with regard to mundane sexual relations. Moreover, in light of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*'s vibrant awareness of sexual temptations and their almost lusty endorsement of marital sex, such a position is not only undocumented but also unlikely.

The proud claims of later cultures to be the heirs of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*, like that of R. Joel Sirkes (*Teshuvot ha-Baḥ ha-Yeshanot*, #79), should be carefully weighed, as I wrote in my review:

For time had passed and the more radical bent of the medieval Pietists had been long forgotten. Little now remained of the Pietists' legacy in the collective memory of pre-Chmielnicki Poland, other than sensitivity in human relations, personal humility, rites of penance, and an inclination to *humra*. A new culture finding its voice (as Poland did then) is often in search of distinguished antecedents, and in this case, a claim was easily made for descent from the venerated *Hasidei Ashkenaz*. Such assertions, however, may be more in the nature of acquired heraldry than actual lineage, or, if that be too strong a metaphor, more a pious self image than a fact.<sup>98</sup>

Zimmer's most recent book confirms these suspicions. R. Joel Sirkes spoke proudly of Poland's being the heir of Hasidic traditions. A generation earlier, R. Ḥayyim ben R. Bešalel of Friedburg inveighed against the growing Polish influence—best embodied in the growing sway of R. Moses Isserles—in Germany and claimed that these upstarts from the East were displacing the traditions of *Hasidei Ashkenaz* of which the German community was the proud bearer!<sup>99</sup>

I yield to few in my esteem for Zimmer's sober scholarship. However, the *Hasidic* influence that he occasionally invokes is not a

<sup>98</sup> P. 233.

<sup>99</sup> Yiṣḥaq (Eric) Zimmer, *Gaḥaltan shel Ḥakhamim* (Be'er Sheva, 1999), pp. 233–234.

conclusion but a postulate, and one I believe that we are best off without, for it obscures rather than solves the problems that he has so finely posed.

## APPENDIX II

### The Question of the Chronological Priority of SH I

While not essential to my argument (though it may be of wider significance), I do believe that the author of SH I knew of the basic doctrines of *Hasidei Ashkenaz* and had in front of him some Ur-text of *Sefer Hasidim*<sup>100</sup> rather than the other way around—that a German pietist interwove sections of a wholly independent SH I into the text of SH. Parts of SH I were ultimately included in both texts of *Sefer Hasidim* that have come down to us, however, sections of SH I were originally written, in my view, with at least some of the work and doctrines of the German Pietists in mind.

The author of SH I opens his work, as does the author of the *Sefer Hasidim*, with an announcement of the desire of many to follow the covert will of the creator, who only refrain from doing so out of ignorance of its demands. He therefore undertakes to lay bare the demands and prescriptions of this divine will. He preempts arguments against its strangeness or even nonsense (שטות) that some readers may register upon perusal of the work. However, what follows in SH I is not the tale of Balaam's ass or that of the Midianite war that are advanced in the opening section of SH as proof of an entirely new world of ritual and religious demands encoded in Scripture and in history,<sup>101</sup> which the following pages go on to partially explicate. This, indeed, would and did awaken astonishment and laughter in the minds of most Jews. The apologetic introduction of SH I is followed by a presentation of the "duties of the heart," an exposition of the religious demands made of the interior man with which few would take issue. The introduction of SH I makes little sense on its own. It appears as though the writer is borrowing the defensive introductory style understandably used by German Pietists when they introduced the novel demands of the *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> Let us remember that SHP (#1589) records וכבר כתוב בספר חסידים, and that shortly before his death, R. Judah he-Ḥasid wrote כרכין מן ספר חסידים (!) שנים (!), as cited by J. Friemann in his introduction to SHP (Frankfurt am Main, 1924), p. 11.

<sup>101</sup> See n. 5 above.

Further I find it difficult to conceive that only by chance does the author of SH I use key terms in the thought of German Pietism, such as *reṣon ha-bore*<sup>2</sup>, *le-zakkot et ha-rabbim*, *arum beyir*<sup>3</sup>*ah*, and *lil-mod al menat le-qayyem*, and highlights them in the early, programmatic segment of his work (sections 1–17).<sup>102</sup> He neutralizes these pivotal phrases by employing them generally in their traditional sense. SH I has the introduction and the idiom of *Sefer Ḥasidim* but not its distinctive doctrines. This of course may be accidental; it may also be accidental that the author entitled his work *Sefer Ḥasidim* or *Sefer Hasidut*,<sup>103</sup> a name that bears some similarity to the name of a contemporary work of R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Ḥasidim*. Indeed, the titles are so similar that most scribes did not notice the difference, labelling both as *Sefer Ḥasidim*.

There are some forty-three parallel passages between the two works. To my untutored eye, a number of these passages in SH I appear as reworkings of material found in an Ur-*Sefer Ḥasidim* rather than the reverse. For example, I have difficulty seeing why someone would take the smooth formulation of SHB #137 and turn it into the rough one of SHP #125. The same holds true for SHB #84 and SHP #1000.

Again, it seems to me that the author of SHB #138 noted that a moral is more effectively made with a single biblical citation in clear Hebrew, and that further talmudic examples in Aramaic of the same point found in SHP #126 only weaken its force. He further noted that the final, alternative explanation in SHP #126 (ועוד כיון שחרה ואפי) makes a very effective ending for the biblical example originally given. A similar smoothing of the formulation coupled with compression of multiple verses and elimination of alternative explanations is found in SHB #11, in contrast to SHP #1979.

The issue of who copied from whom may have a bearing on the early diffusion of German Pietism. SH I was employed by the author of the *Sefer ha-Yir*<sup>3</sup>*ah*, a work either written by R. Yonah of Gerona or adopted by him during his stay in northern France.<sup>104</sup> R. Yonah appears to have left the French academies in the mid-1220s at the latest; SH I had to be written well before then. Thus we can conclude that word of some of the major doctrines of *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz*

<sup>102</sup> See n. 6 above.

<sup>103</sup> See n. 35 above.

<sup>104</sup> See n. 89 above.

and parts of *Sefer Hasidim* were circulating in France even earlier, perhaps as early as the turn of the 13th century.

### APPENDIX III

#### MS Cambridge Add. 3216 (fols. 165b–166a)

Nestled between the *Pisqei R. Isaac mi-Corbeil* and the *Sefer ha-Tashbeš* is a brief collection of moral dicta. It lacks the pietistic intensity of SH I and shares nothing with the emerging system of *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*. In fact, it even contains internal contradictions in the brief span of a page or two. Who the editor was we do not know. We do know that alongside his desire to transmit all the finer minutiae of ritual performance, as reflected in the practices of the great R. Meir of Rothenburg and the “saintly” (*ha-qadosh*) R. Isaac of Corbeil, he also aspired to better his relations with his fellow men, to distance himself a bit more from the vanities of the world, and to regularly confront his own sinful nature. I publish here this collection in the belief that there were others of his time and place who shared these aspirations.

[סליק תשב"ץ]

<sup>105</sup>[לקוטי מוסר]

אתחיל ליקוטים אחרים

[1] שלא להביט בנשים ובמלבושיהם<sup>106</sup> ולא בפני רשע<sup>107</sup> ולא בפני צלם.<sup>108</sup>

[2] שלא לעשות לחבירו דבר השנוי לו.

[3] שלא לרדוף אחרי הכבוד ולא לשמוע [חסר].

[4] שלא לעשות דברים של קלות [רא] ש ולא גנאי של תורה ולומדיה.

[5] שלא להנות(?) להביא את הממון.

[6] שלא להקניט בדברים [שלא לגנ] וב דעת בריות וכל שכן ממונם.

[7] שלא לחשוד בכשרים.

<sup>105</sup> The title is my own, as is the numbering of the sections.

<sup>106</sup> b<sup>6</sup>AZ 21a–b. Significantly, the editor of the earlier *Sefer ha-Oreh* (Lwow, 1905), p. 3, opened his work with the same talmudic passage.

<sup>107</sup> bMeg 28a.

<sup>108</sup> Possibly the writer's own aversion, possibly one acquired from the spirit of the teachings of *Hasidei Ashkenaz* (see Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance: Studies in Jewish-Gentile Relations in Medieval and Modern Times*, London, 1961, ch. 8), though no specific ban on looking at a cross is found, to the best of my knowledge, in *Hasidic literature*.

- [8] שלא ליטול שררה על איש אלא לשם שמים.  
 [9] שלא לחניף [!].  
 [10] שלא לשנוא התוכחות.  
 [11] שלא לזלזל בכבוד אב ואם וחכמים.  
 [12] שלא להזכיר ולישבע שם[!] שמים לבטלה.  
 [13] שלא ליהנות מסעודת הרשות ר"ל [רצה לומר] כמו הזמנת שכיניו אם לא לדבר מצוה.  
 נר[אה] שהוא הזמנת רבו או ר"ח [ראש חודש] וח"ה [יחול המועד] זהו סעודת מצוה.  
 [14] שלא למלא פיו שחוק מן הלב.  
 [15] שלא להתלוצץ.  
 [16] שלא לקפח שכר חברו.  
 [17] שלא לתת תפארת בעצמו לשום דבר.  
 [18] שלא לטייל בחינם.<sup>109</sup>  
 [19] שלא ליהנות מן העולם דרך תענוג בחול כ"א [כי אם] לקיים חיזוק גופו. ובפני רבים מותר פן יחשב ללעג.<sup>110</sup>  
 [20] שלא לפרוש מן התורה.  
 [21] והר"ר משה היה מחתך הבשר דק דק שלא לטעום טעם בשר חשוב.<sup>111</sup>  
 [22] שלא להלבין פני חברו.  
 [23] שלא לקרותו בכינויו.<sup>112</sup>  
 [24] אדם חייב להיות כשכיר יום<sup>113</sup> להיות זהיר ביום שאם תבטל ת"ת [תלמוד תורה] ביום שישלם בלילה.  
 [25] ואמת כי התורה נמשלת למים שיורדים בנחת לזכוכית.<sup>114</sup>  
 [26] וחייב לעשות מדברי תורה קבע ומכל דבר עראי, לבד מן המצות שהם חובה עליו בגופו כגון תפילין כתיק[ו]נו, ובשאר מצוות שאי אפשר לעשותן ע"י

<sup>109</sup> Strolling in the town was one of the few entertainments available in this period. See, for example, the medieval ruling, endorsed by the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* (*Orah Hayyim* 554.21), against strolling in the market on *Tish'ah Be-Av* "lest one come to שחוק [ראש] והתול [ראש]". More probable, however, is that טיול here denotes "relaxing" as in bSuk 28b אוכל ושותה ומטייל בסוכה. This secondary meaning also obtained in medieval Rabbinic Hebrew, as in Tosafot bBeṣ 12a s.v. *dilma* (end): דהא אשכחן נמי דמשחקין. בכדור ביו"ט ברה"י אע"י דליכא אלא טיול. A number of the exhortations in SHP against טיולן (#278, 770, 815) refer to relaxation rather than to strolling.

<sup>110</sup> This passage, together with #21 and #29, was copied into the *Pisqei Rabbenu Pereš* in MS Bibliothèque Nationale, Heb 407, f. 326d (see n. 82 above).

<sup>111</sup> Thus also in the above manuscript.

<sup>112</sup> bMeg 28a.

<sup>113</sup> The metaphor is that of the *Semag* (see above, p. 480), however, it is used here differently.

<sup>114</sup> I know neither the source nor the purpose of this statement.

אחר, ודאי הוא חייב להקדימן לתלמוד תורה.  
 [27] ואין לענות נפשו יותר מדאי. ואם חטא ילך וילמוד יותר מ(ל)פני שהתורה  
 מכפרת דכת[יב] חסד ואמת יכופר עון ואין חסד ואמת אלא תורה.<sup>115</sup>  
 [28] ואין לו לאדם לטרוח יותר מדאי בממון כי משלו יתן לו.<sup>116</sup>  
 [29] אילו<sup>117</sup> עבירות שחייב אדם להזהיר בנו כשהוא בן ח' או ט' שנים כדי  
 שיהא (יוכל) [רגיל]<sup>118</sup> להיות נזהר כשהיה גדול:  
 שלא ל[הוציא] שם שמים לבטלה.  
 שלא לספר לשון הרע [ולא דברי כזבים].<sup>119</sup>  
 שלא לדבר בחמ[ה].<sup>120</sup>  
 שלא לדבר דב[רים] ב[טלים] ומגאוה ומניבול פה ולצון.  
 [30] ואין לו לאדם [ליצטער בעיניו], לא בתעניות ולא בעיניו נפש, רק כפי  
 היכולת כדי שלא יבא לידי ביטול עסקיו וכל שכן מצותיו. אבל טוב להתענות  
 בכל כ"ד שבועות ב' או ג' להיות מאנשי המעמד.<sup>121</sup>  
 [31] ופעם אחד בכל חדש (המעמד) היה נוהג הק[דוש] הר"ר יצחק  
 [להתענות].<sup>122</sup>  
 [32] ובאותן הימים יתודה וישוב בתשובה שלימה ויתחרט במעשיו הרעים,  
 ויספרם לרב ויאמר כזאת וזאת עשיתי.<sup>123</sup> ויבק[ש] מאת הש[ם] מחילה (ו)מהם

<sup>115</sup> See bSuk 49b and *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, ed. Bernard Mandelbaum (New York, 1963), *pisqa* 15, s.v. *Rav Abba* (p. 255).

<sup>116</sup> The last phrase should probably be translated "for He [God] will provide for him."

<sup>117</sup> This section, barring שלא לדבר בחמ' was copied into the *Pisqei Rabbenu Pereš* (n. 82 above). On this basis I have indented these lines in my transcription; in the Cambridge manuscript there is no indication that these four dicta form a single unit.

<sup>118</sup> Thus in MS Bibliothèque Nationale (loc. cit.).

<sup>119</sup> Thus in MS Bibliothèque Nationale (loc. cit.).

<sup>120</sup> Missing in MS Bibliothèque Nationale (loc. cit.).

<sup>121</sup> Fasting once every twenty-four weeks yields two fasts per year or sometimes three, if one locates oneself at the beginning of the cycle of *ma'amadot*. (My thanks to Ya'akov Sussman for clarifying this point.)

<sup>122</sup> See p. 460 above and n. 15. At first blush it would appear that R. Isaac was relying upon the passage in pTa'an 2.12 according to the version found in SHB #617. However, in view of the fact that the reading found in our texts of the Yerushalmi is corroborated by *testimoniae* of both R. Eleazar Rokeaḥ (*Rokeaḥ*, *Hilkhot Ḥasidut*, end) and R. Isaac Or Zarua<sup>c</sup> I, #321), the passage in SHB would seem to be a scribal error rather than evidence of a version which was circulating in Ashkenaz in the 13th century. The parallel text in SHP #67 equally suggests a scribal error in SHB. (I would like to thank Ya'akov Sussman for pointing this out.)

<sup>123</sup> This is the only influence of German Pietism in the text, though note that the confession is to a רב, not to a חכם or חסיד.

ושיזכינו מעת[ה] הוא וכל ישראל לטובה ויפרש(!)<sup>124</sup> מה שירצה.  
 [33] וכל אותן הימים יתן בנדבה עבור שמיע[ת] תפילה.  
 [34] וטוב שלא לאכול יום אחד בשבו[ע].<sup>125</sup> ואם לא יכול להתענו[ת], טוב  
 שיתנדב(ד) ויפריש מידי יום [ב]יום(?) בקביעות.<sup>126</sup>  
 [סליק ליקוטי מוסר]  
 [מכאן ואילך פסקי ר' יצחק מקורביל]

<sup>124</sup> It is not clear whether one should emend מה to ממה, in which case the phrase would mean “he should abstain [from which pleasures] he chooses,” or whether one should emend יפרוש to יפריש, which would yield “he should set aside [for charity] what he wishes.” See n. 80 above.

<sup>125</sup> See p. 460 above and n. 15.

<sup>126</sup> The meaning is obscure. The text probably should read ויפריש, i.e., if he cannot withstand weekly fasts, he should refrain regularly from eating certain foods as a mark of abstemiousness. See n. 15 above.