

# HASSIDUT AND THE RHETORIC, MECHANICS AND METAPHYSICS OF CHANGE

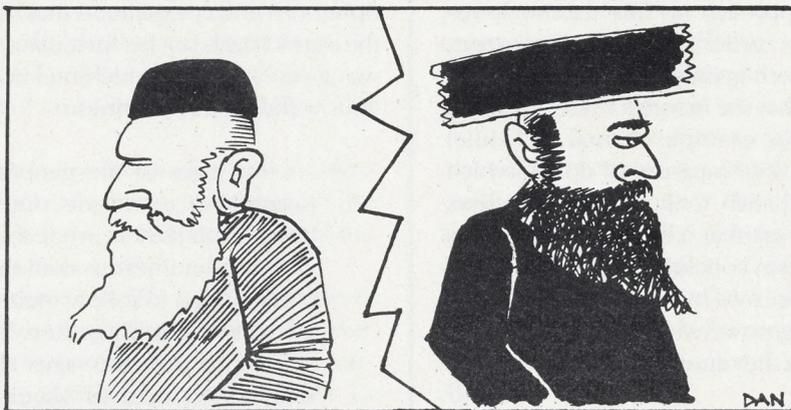
By Rabbi Mayer Schiller

**H**assidim are generally viewed as rigid, "arch-conservatives" on the Orthodox scene. Outsiders see their Eastern European dress, use of Yiddish, rejection of secular knowledge and so forth as manifestations of an "ultra-traditionalism;" an unwillingness to change any other forms of previous centuries. *Hassidim* themselves foster this image by employing a brash, absolutist rhetoric in their contemporary literature which emphasizes and glorifies their rejection of all innovation.<sup>1</sup> In fact, a strong case could be made that the non-compromising vigor of the *Hassidic* rejectionist stance has frightened the *Yeshivische velt* into the adoption of a host of Eastern European norms and practices undreamt of by that school's leaders and masses when they first came to these shores.<sup>2</sup> Be that question as it may, *Hassidim* now stand secure (or so it seems) as the last remnant, defenders to the end of that which always was and, if they had things their way, always will be. Old school Judaism, *derech Yisrael saba*, they practice and preach, yesterday, today and forever.

It is an idyllic picture full of much strength, confidence and condescension. Three attributes (especially the last) with much appeal to a generation intent upon believing that its own apprehension of and response to Being was and is the only one.

As usual, however, reality sits uncomfortably with ideology and even philosophy. One cannot, despite all the will and rhetoric summoned to the task, strip existence of time, place, culture and personality variables. The *Hassidic* (and generally *yeshivish* as well) self image of monolithic changelessness is, although arguably good tactics<sup>3</sup>, historically false. This historical distortion is not merely a matter of academic curiosity for its reflective result is a denial of Orthodoxy's dynamic qualities and, on a deeper level, a severe cheapening of Torah's eternity, its message "to every man, every time and every place."<sup>4</sup>

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The image of Jewish changelessness is clearly mythic for, obviously, Eastern European Torah culture also had a beginning in specific times and places. "Traditional Jewish" dress, speech, music, food (and some inner attitudes as well<sup>5</sup>) would by no

means have been "old school" in twelfth century Spain or second century Babylon. The complete abandonment of history by rightist Eastern European traditionalists reaches absurd heights when, for example, *mishnayot* are illustrated with pictures of *tanaim* dressed in *shtreimlich* and *be-kesbes* in order to maintain the illusion, known to be false,<sup>6</sup> that pious Jews always dressed as they did in nineteenth century Poland. *Hassidic* elementary school illustrations regularly portray all Jewish figures in the Torah itself as similarly garbed. Changelessness may be idyllic, aesthetically soothing and provide metaphysical comforts beyond those of Judaism itself, but it is decidedly not the story of how Jews, Torah and time have interacted.

## HASSIDIC REVOLUTIONARIES?

It is also most specifically for *Hassidim* a highly posterous position. For it was less than two centuries ago when *Hassidic* doctrine itself was viewed not as reactionary but as dangerously revolutionary and its adherents as radicals intent on destroying "traditional Judaism." In fact, in 1772 and again in 1781 the "Orthodox establishment" of the time led by the Vilna Gaon and Lithuania's leading scholars officially excommunicated the new "heretical sect." The 1772 ban reads:

... Our brothers of Israel you know of the new sect which has arisen ... whose religion is different from all the children of Israel. ... This leprosy has spread to every country and city ... their disgusting and perverted ways have led many good men astray. ... Thanks to God that their sins are now revealed. ... Therefore all communal leaders are called upon to destroy them and to pronounce upon them excom-

**“BOTH BELZ AND SKVER EXPERIENCED REBELLIONS IN THE NAME OF SPIRITUALISM WHEN THE CURRENT REBBES OF BOTH GROUPS REPLACED THEIR ILLUSTRIOUS PREDECESSORS IN THE SIXTIES.”**

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munications, bans, insults and all curses. . . . So shall they be uprooted everywhere that they be not remembered or mentioned or thought about by anyone for all eternity.<sup>7</sup>

This ban was signed by the head of the Vilna Rabbinical court, R. Shmuel Avigdor, the Gaon R. Eliyahu and eighteen other scholars. Now, whether *Hassidic* innovations were evil, was clearly a matter of fiery controversy. What is important for our purposes, however, is that there were plenty of innovations. *Hassidim* not only introduced significant changes in various areas of accepted *p'sak Hala-cha*,<sup>8</sup> set aside Ashkenazic customs governing prayers and rituals<sup>9</sup>, but they also absolutely rejected the entire communal and Rabbinic hierarchy of Eastern European Jewry. Rival synagogues and community authorities were set up wherever the movement flourished in open defiance of hundreds of bans, prohibitions, legal procedures and incidents of physical violence. Family traditions of centuries were set aside and families themselves often torn apart all in order that *a new approach to God's service* come into being.

**A**s ironic as it seems, these radical departures in practice and philosophy<sup>10</sup> were condemned because they were not “done by our forefathers.”<sup>11</sup> The same rhetoric which *Hassidut* would later employ to defend its own intransigence was used by the movement's initial opponents. This phenomenon is not as surprising as it seems. Revolutions, be they political or spiritual become, if successful, establishments. The fervor which sends small numbers of idealists to storm assorted fortresses throughout history cannot be maintained when the dull business of normalizing day-to-day life and the governing of large numbers become the new task. Stability is inevitably the paramount goal once one is on top. Paradoxically, revolutionary commitment can only threaten revolutions triumphant. The fire of Adams or Henry gives way to the conservatism of a Washington or Hamilton, or else revolutionary children wind up devouring their parents as in France during the Terror.

So too, *l'havdil* with religious revolutions. R. Yisrael Salanter's “Mussar Movement” is accepted (after much struggle, ban and counter ban). The result: the *yeshivishe velt* now has its fifteen minute *mussar seder* pursued by

most with disinterest and cynicism. All very much a far cry from the constant spiritual catharsis and introspection called for by the movement's revolutionary founder.

**STAGNATION, DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION**

*Hassidut* triumphed. In Poland, Galicia and the Ukraine it became the dominant form of Judaism. In White Russia and the Baltic regions it succeeded in establishing its own communities and schools. The inevitable result of this was that a new authority structure was created intent, as by definition it must be, on preserving its control. Yes, the doctrines espoused were those of the early religious, revolutionary fervor, with its emphasis on the inner life of every Jew and individual response to his needs, but spirituality and individualism do not yield an orderly community lifestyle. Thus, the preservation of the earlier *forms* of passionate piety rapidly became the order of the day. Eventually, as modern secularism began to spread, it became a matter of maintaining intact *everything* of those prior times. Nothing of the movement's outer manifestations or provincial attitudes (many of which were seemingly time and place bound) were to be changed. A deep establishmentarian freeze came over the *Hassidic* movement.

Now, contemporary *Hassidim* would claim, in response to the above, that the changes introduced by the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples were of direct Divine Origin. It was those changes alone which were and are legitimate. Everything else is prohibited. The leaders of the movement's inception were possessed of a unique form of Divine Inspiration. It will not be repeated.<sup>12</sup> After their revelation we must deep freeze all and everything until the Messiah's coming.

This sort of thinking may suffice in the folksy, provincial world of *Hassidic* insularity, but it ignores several basic questions. First, assuming the uniqueness of the Baal Shem Tov's revelation,<sup>13</sup> we are left with no means to understand change among Torah Jews *prior* to his arrival. How were those changes legitimated (which they obviously were because they became part of the ongoing spiritual baggage of *K'lal Yisrael*) without explicit Divine revelatory impetus? Two, who is to say that the same methodology (whatever it might be) that existed before the Baal Shem Tov cannot continue after his departure? In short, since *Hassidut* clearly did not open the book on Torah legitimat-

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## “THE HASSIDIC SELF IMAGE OF MONOLITHIC CHANGELESSNESS IS, ALTHOUGH ARGUABLY GOOD TACTICS, HISTORICALLY FALSE.”

ed changes, why should we assume that it closed it? Might it not be a tenable premise to suggest that all change in *K'lal Yisrael* is initiated by an interplay of Divine Providence and human input? The Baal Shem Tov was, conceivably, particularly influenced by the former, but that cannot end the obviously ongoing process of change itself which has always taken place, co-authored as it were by both God and man.

In fact, the *Hassidic* movement itself was, almost from its inception, stimulated by changes and resultant conflicts reflecting that its particular apprehension of Torah was always subject to diversification or modification of time, place and person. The Great Maggid's approach to the Baal Shem Tov's path was not shared by many of the latter's prominent disciples.<sup>14</sup> Later, each of the former's disciples added to, or subtracted, from their master's teachings in some way. Following the movement through later generations it became obvious that every school of *Hassidut* modified in many ways the movement's beliefs and practices in order to suit the needs of different times and places, and personalities of its varied leaders. The differences between the Ukrainian dynasties of Rzyhn and Tschernobil and the Polish schools following Pszycha-Kotzk are immense. Worlds of significance separate Lithuanian *Hassidic* schools such as Slonim and Stolin from those of Galicia such as Zanz and Belz. In fact, in each of the geographical areas just mentioned there were noted exceptions to the general drift where new and different courses were charted such as Breslav in the Ukraine, Lubavitch in Lithuania and Zidichov in Galicia. All of the above parting of the ways represented shifts of emphasis, basic doctrine, lifestyle and ritual observance. In short, they were all change incarnate.

Many of them were greeted with the heated opposition that all innovation faces. The fiery opposition of the Lubliner's Galician disciples to Pszycha or the Zanz Rav and his children to Sadigura, was as stormy a defense of the status quo as had been that of the Vilna Gaon to the entire movement. Stagnation followed by a renaissance accompanied by established opposition is as much a part-and-parcel of the *Hassidic* movement as it is of the tale of Jewish history in general.

### HASSIDIC COMMUNAL CHANGE

Leaving aside the lofty realms of *derech avodah* for a moment, *Hassidim* have experienced the normative process of change in a host of practical, communal areas. What is most fascinating about these changes is that they hap-

pened in communities pledged to a rhetoric of “no change.” Apparently, the natural processes involved are so primal, that they occur beyond the conscious reaches of public policy articulators. To cite just a few examples from the post World War II *Hassidic* experience, we note the introduction of universal Yeshiva education until marriage for all males (undreamt of in Europe for assorted practical and theoretical reasons) of formal female education (non-existent outside of Agudah influenced *Hassidim* pre-War), of near universal Kollel training post marriage and, perhaps most significant of all, a profound liberalization of educational technique with heightened individual attention, use of non-textual aids and lessened physical punishment becoming widespread. All the above were due to a combination of changed economic circumstances, the need to respond to a new cultural backdrop and the coming to power of American born and subconsciously influenced *Hassidic* youth. Thus, change becomes revealed as an inevitable part of individual and communal life. Its need is so great that it will proceed even when lacking a theoretical support system to substantiate it.

### RECENT HASSIDIC REVIVALS\*

**T**he wellsprings of radical *Hassidic* innovation and spiritual renaissance seem at first glance to have run somewhat dry as the twentieth century draws to a close. To the non-initiated observer the post World War II resurgence of *Hassidut* in America and Israel has been the personification of monolithic communalism and resistance to change. This impression is a vast oversimplification of the truth. Actually, in four of those *Hassidic* groups most associated with uniform intransigence there have been explosions of religious revival and, in some cases, striking change. Although most of the following cases are garbed in a rhetoric of a “return to tradition” they are, in essence, communal breakoffs motivated by renewed spirituality.

In 1960 Viznitzer institutions in Bnei Brak expelled dozens of their finest and brightest young *Hassidim* as well as some of their teachers. These “young Turks” had been pursuing a course of no holds barred *avodah* involving

\*The author wishes to state that he is merely relating the facts of the following interecine struggles without evaluating the justice of any of the causes mentioned. To do so adequately would require an extensive work. It might also prove unrewarding for the combination of loyalty, piety, truth and love which yields every man's spiritual preferences may not be reducible to rigorous, analytical terms.

## “REVOLUTIONS, BE THEY POLITICAL OR SPIRITUAL BECOME, IF SUCCESSFUL, ESTABLISHMENTS.”

much idealistic *perisbut* (asceticism) and, as could be expected, some elements of eccentricity. The participants were among the most learned and pious in the community. Their crime was that their heightened spiritual goals led them to question certain aspects of the Rebbe's *boyy* (court) and lifestyles of some of his family. It was feared that they would rapidly become a radical and rival spiritual power within the bosom of a stable community. Hence, their ostracization and label as the “Viznitzer *mordim* (rebels),” a title they carry till this day. So the expelled set out on their own as individuals. Some of them would, after the passing of R. Hayim Mayer the previous Viznitzer Rebbe, attach themselves to his son, the Monsey Viznitzer Rebbe, R. Mordechai. Many of them saw him as less interested in group advancement and more interested in spiritual renewal than his brother the Viznitzer Rebbe of Bnei Brak.<sup>16</sup> This was a case of *Hassidic* religious rebellion which (except to the extent that it survives in the current differences between Bnei Brak and Monsey Viznitz) was effectively snuffed out.

Both Belz and Skver experienced rebellions in the name of spiritualism when the current Rebbes of both groups replaced their illustrious predecessors in the sixties. In both cases the new Rebbes were seen by some *Hassidim* as most interested in the cause of group consolidation and expansion while de-emphasizing the particular self-demanding *avodah* of their traditions. Defections and expulsions of the critics took place in both groups.<sup>17</sup> Today, the Belzer dissidents are either isolated, have their own “Belzer *mitnagdim*” synagogues or have adopted another Belzer *aynikel* (descendant) R. Yehoshua (Shea) Rokeach of Bnei Brak as their leader. The alienated Skverer have in many cases gravitated towards R. Chai Yitchak Twersky, the Rachmistrivka Rebbe of Boro Park, to satisfy their spiritual yearnings. So we have two cases of spiritual resistance actually leading to the strengthening or founding of other *Hassidic* groups.

**F**inally, there is the case of Satmar<sup>18</sup> which has periodically been plagued with rightist dissidents who saw the movement's mainstream growing spiritually complacent as well as “soft on Zionism.” Here too, the dissidents have generally come from the *baalei avodah* portion of the population.<sup>19</sup> In recent years, though, Satmar has received a bit of a jolt from a surprising quarter. A young *bassid*, R. Yoseph Yehiel Mechal Leibowitz, left the community to assume the position of Rebbe of his own small group of Satmar defectors. This faction dedicated, in the eyes of its followers, to lofty *Hassidic* spirituality,<sup>20</sup> is seen by its opponents in the Satmar Kehillah, as maniacal fantasizers led

by an egocentric impostor. Having settled in Monsey, New York, they are referred to as *Mechelisten* by their opponents and Nikolsburger among themselves. Here then is a fascinating case of a new group formed in response to a real (or perceived) spiritual vacuum.

Admittedly, the above instances of spiritual struggle are light years away from the depth and sincerity of two hundred years ago. For the most part, though, *Hassidic* change and revivalism have ground to a halt. *Hassidim* are consumed for the most part by “party” advancement and “no change” rhetoric.<sup>21</sup>

Ah, but does that make them all that different from their contemporaries? Has not the *yeshivishe velt* attempted to resurrect in America, forms and feelings relevant to Volozhin and Kletzk but perhaps somewhat in need of redefinition in Peoria, or Queens for that matter? And, oh yes, the Modern Orthodox, with their disinterested masses serviced increasingly by a clergy shaped by modified “*yeshivishism*,”<sup>22</sup> seem blissfully content to enjoy their abundant treasures of capitalism without recourse to a Judaism capable of addressing their particular needs. Our collective arteries have hardened and the twin phenomena of conservatism and apathy settle over the land.

### A PROFOUNDER INSIGHT

Yet, some earlier visionaries of the *Hassidic* movement sensed the need for periodic renewal and change. R. Mordechai Yoseph of Izbitz and his descendants did much groundbreaking work on the metaphysical dynamics of change. In his breathtakingly original *Hassidic* work *Mei Ha-Shiloakh*, he postulates that the superiority of Moshe to other prophets was the formers' awareness of time and place limitations on all Torah apprehensions.

... for all prophets their message to Israel ... was according to time and place; and according to their understanding so they prophesied. It appeared in the spirit of their prophecy that the word of their prophecy would last forever. But, in truth, changes occur according to the value of each generation. Moshe was superior to them ... in that he grasped everything in its time and place. He understood that prophecy is only for a time and after that time the Holy One Blessed Be He desires something else.<sup>23</sup>

This profound theme is further amplified by his grandson, R. Gershon Hanoach Henech of Radzin:

This is the deeper meaning of vow nullifica-

tion, for it is clear that if the words of Torah were a set thing it would be impossible to have the addition of a vow or its nullification. But since they are the Will of God (we see that) just as He "lives and exists" so too His word "lives and exists." It has renewal and explanations every hour according to the time and place.<sup>24</sup>

"Renewal . . . according to time and place." What manner of renewal does our time and place demand? Of *Hassidim*? Of others? Who can say for sure? God and the Jewish soul are sure to combine to yield some new beginnings in the not too distant future. Briefly, though, if the reader will indulge the author's personal affections for a moment, then let us imagine a future in which prayer will once again become a solemn meeting with the Divine,<sup>25</sup> when Torah study will be made relevant and comprehensible to all, when *midot* and not *chumrot* will be our primary calling, when the dogmas of capitalism will be denied, when all of existence and knowledge and life's joys become part of a Jews' world, when irreligious Jews and non-Jews of all nations are treated with dignity and concern, when . . . ah, but need we go on? The time is ripe but not yet ripe. We must still sleep a bit till the dawn.

#### Footnotes

1. A lucid articulation of the total rejectionist stance may be found, expounded upon at length, in the Introduction to the *Birkat Shamayim* by R. Rafael Blum, the *Kasbo Rav* pp. 8-20 (Balsbon: Brooklyn, 1971). R. Blum is an example of a common contemporary phenomenon, a Hungarian *Rav*, steeped in the teaching of the Hasam Sofer, who has in recent years gravitated strongly to Hassidic ideology. Many Hungarian congregations and their leaders have undergone similar metamorphoses here in America to greater or lesser degrees such as Pupa, Zelem, Nitra etc. Another significant example of rejectionism interwoven with Hassidut is the three volume *Torat Aleph* of R. Shimon Yisrael Pozen, the *Shopraner Rav* (no publisher given: Brooklyn, 1971). See throughout the work, but as a case in point Volume I, Letter 3, p.25. Of course, the *Shopraner* regarded himself as a disciple of both the previous *Shverer Rebbe*, R. Jacob Joseph Twersky and the *Satmar Rav*, R. Joel Teitelbaum which easily accounts for the fervor of his Hassidism and rejectionism. As for the *Satmar Rav* his impassioned rejectionist perspective was not based upon reference to Hassidic tradition (a tradition which fascinatingly he saw as no longer comprehensible or relevant to our epoch, see his *Hidushei Torah* (Edison: New York, No date given) p. 240 and *Va-Yoel Moshe* (Jerusalem: Brooklyn, 1985) p. 175) but upon Talmudic, Midrasbic and Halachic sources. Perhaps the greatest of those who combined staunch rejectionism with a love and knowledge (voluminous) of Hassidut was the previous *Munkacher Rav*, R. Hayim Elazar Shapiro. His life and times may be approached via a fine biography *Toldot Rabeinu* by David Kabana (No publisher given: No place given, 1968).

For the reader with the patience and interest to pursue the matter further (a pursuit, in the author's view, sure to yield the conclusion that "ultra-rejectionism" is a coherent, consistent and vibrant position) there is the bulky, well referenced and researched volume *Ye'lemed Da-at* by R. Yeshaya Binyamin Holzler (No publisher given: Monroe, 1984) and the *Miktav Hitorerut* by R. Moshe Dov Ha-Levi Beck (No publisher, date or place given), a polemical history of the battle between Belz and the *kna'im* over the past two decades from the viewpoint of the latter. A perusal of any of the above works should serve to clear aside some of the forebodings caused by heavy caricaturing of this position in some circles. Radical

conclusions about history need not be illogical or, indeed, erroneous . . . Are all Torah world views, except one's own, wrong? Perhaps they each embody fragments of truth, and reality is multi-dimensional enough to be coherently perceived by all of them? Just asking . . . 2. Hats, gartels, halav Yisrael, mikveh attendance, the use of Yiddish and the abuse of English have all proliferated among b'nei Yeshiva since Hassidim have exploded in numbers and power in America. One could think of dozens of other examples.

3. Ah, but this is a painful question! Is faith best preserved in insular ignorance? Recent decades would seem to answer "yes" to this question. The usual critique of the "let's be ignorant" position is that it will not suffice when finally forced into heady intellectual conflicts with modernity. Yet, the questions loom large, Is there an 'intellectual modernity' around anymore? Will the kindergarten of bedonistic-capitalism of the contemporary West issue any challenge to the smug superficiality of the Orthodox right? Or, looking a few decades down the line, will an America or Europe composed of largely Third World peoples shatter or re-enforce provincial Jewish insularity?

4. This is a constant refrain of the early and fundamental Hassidic work *Toldot Yakov Yoseph* by R. Yakov Yoseph of Polnoye. See, one example on p.61. *Toldot Yakov Yoseph* (Seferati: Jerusalem, 1962).

5. For example, would a Spanish Orthodox Jew of the Golden Age or a German Orthodox Jew of the nineteenth century have the same philosophy and approach to existence, knowledge and non-Jews as would his eighteenth century Polish counterpart? A recently published, fascinating reference to the Hirschian *Kebillah's* response to the World War I German war effort could serve as an extreme, (and probably to most a painful) case of Jewish-Gentile relations undreamt of in Poland at that time (or America in ours for that matter!) See Leo Baeck Institute News, No. 55/Winter 1988, "The *Verein Mekor Chayim*" pp. 2-3.

6. Or are they aware that it is false? Probably few have ever thought about it. Then again how many people anywhere think about the "truth" of their own culture's axioms? Would we want them to?

7. This herem as well as that of 1781 are quoted in their entirety in *Mordechai Wilensky's* *Hassidim U-Mitnagdim* (Bialik Institute: Jerusalem, 1970). The former appears on pp. 58-61 of Volume I and the latter on pp. 102-104. An impish whimsy might lead one to ask if this ban is still in effect? Or, alternatively how would the proponents of infallible da'at Torah explain it away? Besides we've always wanted to know a bit more about this doctrine. Whose da'at Torah are the da'at Torahists speaking about? That of the majority? Or those who triumph historically? Or, possibly, just their own?

8. For a strident, passionate presentation and defense of many of these halachic changes see R. Yitzhak Izak Yehuda Yehiel the *Komarna Rebbe* in his *Shulchan Ha-Tahor* (No publisher given: Tel Aviv, 1963). The brave and bold are directed to his discussions on *Rabeinu Tam* tephilin, tephilin on *Hol Ha-Moed*, *Zeman Kriat Shma*, *Zeman tephilah* and *Brikat Kohanim* on pp. 36-44, 30-32, 68-69, 110-111 and 180 respectively for a strong sampling.

9. For the classic articulation of the Hassidic change of Nusach see (translated into English for the first time) the *Zanzer Rav's* responsa on the matter in *Rabbi A.Y. Bromberg The Zanzer Rav and His Dynasty* (Mesorah: Brooklyn, 1986) pp. 178-180. A contemporary halachic defense of changing Nusach irrespective of parental wishes is found in the work of a controversial Hassidic figure R. Yoseph Yehiel Mechal Leibowitz. See *Igeret Yehiel* (*Haverim Maksivim*: Monsey/Spring Valley, 1988) pp. 213-219.

10. For a calm and well grounded exposition of Hassidic doctrines see *Yesod Ha-Avodah* by R. Avraham of Slonim (*Yeshivat Beit Avraham*: Jerusalem, 1959) as well as *Nesivot Shalom* by the current *Slonimer Rebbe* (*Yeshivat Beit Avraham-Slonim*: Jerusalem, 1982) especially pp. 291-317. Here Hassidic doctrine comes alive in its fresh, demanding grandeur.

11. See *Vilna Herem*, op. cit. of 1771.

12. For a mind jolting collection of the Hassidic view on the uniqueness of the *Baal Shem* as stated by the movement's leaders see "Kuntres Me'irat Aynaim" in *Shivhei Ha-Baal Shem Tov im Hosafot* (*Talpiyot*: Israel, No date given) pp. 240-282. This section should somewhat dampen the aspi-

rations of those hoping to establish ecumenical dialogue among Orthodox Jews. Hassidim do not see themselves as a faction but as the faction in Judaism.

13. For those doubting the use of this term in this context see "Kuntres etc." op. cit. pp. 245-247.

14. See the valuable material on the relationship of R. Pinbat of Koretz and the Toldot to the Maggid gathered by Abramam J. Heschel in The Circle of the Baal Shem Tov (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 1985) pp. 15-29.

15. Part of the critique was also based upon a claim that some members of the hoyf were "soft on Zionism," which in practical terms meant anything from speaking Hebrew to embracing a Beit Yakov education for girls. Some readers may find this disturbing but it must be emphasized that in certain Hassidic circles (primarily Hungarian and Galician) anti-Zionism and spiritual sincerity went hand in hand.

16. This theme that a Rebbe is primarily concerned with spreading his "party's" popularity and cementing his adherent's loyalty as opposed to looking after his or their spiritual state is commonly heard among disgruntled Hassidim today. In fact, most Hassidim would view the Rebbes of other groups in this fashion, while denying their own leader's guilt. The legitimacy of this criticism is hard to assess. How does one measure the degree of any individual's inner commitment to various enterprises?

17. The two cases are different on many accounts. We have oversimplified a bit for brevity's sake.

18. The tale of Satmarer defecting to Lubawitch in the late seventies is another relevant and fascinating saga.

19. R. Moshe Dov Beck, see above note, is an example of a rightist dissident who has actually gathered a small following.

20. R. Leibowitz's writings were cited above in note 9.

21. The Satmar case against the group is long, well documented and fascinating reading. It can be found in the pamphlet Da'at Torah (No publisher given: No place given, 1988) and the book M'tei Shav (Yofi: Monroe, 1986).

22. The Rabbis in Modern Orthodox yeshivas are for the most part disdainful of the movement's philosophy seeing it as inferior to yeshivishism. (One of the leading Roshei Yeshiva at Yeshiva University recently gave a lecture there entitled "Torah U'Madab: Lebatchilah or B'deved" and concluded that it was largely the latter. Others on the faculty have spoken in a similar vein. One wonders if the Superintendent of West Point would deliver a talk entitled "Duty, Honor Country: Lebatchilah or B'deved" about his institution's stated motto?) On the other hand the movement's synagogue clergy are at a loss as to how to present a Judaism of greater attraction to their congregants

than twentieth century capitalist bedonism.

23. R. Mordecai Yoseph of Izbitza, Mei-ha-Shiloakh (Sentry Press; New York, 1973) pp. 54B.

24. R. Gershon Hanoch Henech of Radzia, Sod Yesharim (Simcha Graphics: Brooklyn, 1982)

333. See also pp. 328-331. Also see Torat Avot

for a fresh perspective on the time limitations of leadership in the Slonimer view (Yeshivat Beit Avraham-Slonim: Jerusalem, 1985) pp. 236-239.

25. On at least enough time given to recite it!

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