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**Messianic Footsteps in the Third Solitude:  
Currents of Canadian Jewish Mysticism in  
Tosher Hasidism**

*Critics have suggested that in Canadian literature there are “two solitudes” of Anglophone and Francophone linguistic and ethnic clusters, which give way to the unique “third solitude” of Montreal Jewry. I argue there are uniquely mystical currents of the messianic footsteps within the “third solitude” as embodied in one such Jewish community in Boisbriand, Quebec. To explore this claim, I turn to this Jewish community’s mysticism as manifest in a specific ritual during Passover. While a passion for Passover retains its pull on diaspora Jewry, the question remains why this homebound ritual retains such strong influence on North American Jewry, and in particular on the highly insular Tosher Hasidism. By analyzing the Passover seder, I suggest that Passover reflects a deeper concern with the eschaton of messianic footsteps in the “third solitude” of Canadian Jewish mysticism. I build on the case already made for Canadian Jewish mysticism in this journal, claiming that such a mysticism enables the aspirant to be exceptionally well-equipped to transform their exile into homecoming, all the while succumbing to the transformation of their soul within a “third solitude” of the host culture. This experience of homecoming, felt especially by Quebec Jews during the Passover season, calls the mystic to interpret and unify living and eating during the family reunion of the seder, through a cultural preoccupation of exile, dislocation, and memories of an abandoned homeland. I am concerned with how the messianic archetype of Elijah is rendered in the ‘Avodat haLevi haggadah of the Tosher Rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy. I argue that the post-messianic messianism of Tosher Hasidism appears paradoxical in its strong resistance to cultural assimilation, though it is nurtured by the cultural context of political messianism in Quebec. This essay compares the ‘Avodat haLevi haggadah with Rabbi Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin’s Megillat Setarim, to set into relief the need for a greater awareness of the variegated spiritual landscape of Canadian Jewish mysticism. Only once these revisionary currents are articulated can there be an appreciation for the messianic impulse within the Komarno-Zidichov Hasidic lineage as manifest in Tosher Hasidism, which transcends and includes markers of a uniquely Canadian Jewish mysticism.*

*In memoriam:*

“Ring the bells that still can ring  
 Forget your perfect offering  
 There is a crack, a crack in everything  
 That’s how the light gets in...”<sup>1</sup>

Leonard Cohen, *z”l* (d. 6th of Cheshvan 5777)  
 and Rabbi Ron Aigen, *z”l* (d. Rosh Hodesh Iyyar 5776)

Along the road to redemption in Canada for much of its Jewry, at times, there can be much solitude—three degrees deep. Most frequently there are the “two solitudes” of Anglophone and Francophone linguistic and ethnic clusters which give way to Montreal Jews’ “third solitude” that I have rehearsed elsewhere in this journal.<sup>2</sup>

What I hope to continue exploring here are some uniquely mystical currents of the messianic footsteps within the “Third Solitude” of one Jewish community in Canada through Passover. While a certain passion for Passover retains its pull on diaspora Jewry, the question remains why this homebound ritual retains such a strong influence upon North American Jewry, and its particular Québécois inflection within the community of Tosher hasidism.<sup>3</sup> Given that part of the genius of Jewish survival has, in part been due to the creative tension of Jews throughout the ages adapting and eating according to the norms of their host cultures, then the passion for Passover manifest in the North American *seder* should also serve to challenge and critique, all the while reflecting more general aspects of its host identity.<sup>4</sup> The core of what is being ritualized through the Passover *seder* reflects a deeper concern with the eschaton of messianic footsteps in the Third Solitude of Canadian Jewish mysticism. The Canadian Jewish mystic, as I have already argued,<sup>5</sup> is one exceptionally equipped to transform their exile into homecoming, all the while succumbing to the transformation of his/her soul within a Third Solitude of the host culture. Such an experience of home-coming, felt especially during the Passover season in the Quebec Jewish community, calls the mystic to interpret and unify living and eating during the family reunion of the *seder* through a cultural preoccupation of exile, dislocation and memories of an abandoned homeland. Specifically, I argue presently that the post-messianic messianism of Tosher hasidism appears paradoxical in its strong resistance to cultural assimilation while paradoxically being nurtured by its Québécois cultural context of political messianism. By delving deeper into the messianic impulse in the Canadian Jewish mysticism of Tosher hasidism as garbed in the material world of the *seder* as celebrated its home base in Boisbriand, Quebec, there emerges a spiritual reality of the divine name imbedded in the letters of a language that transcends Québécois culture, albeit nurtured by it. Messianic redemption then is hidden in plain sight as a secret that is no secret—this is the post-messianic messianism to be explored shortly.

To appreciate this concern with the eschaton of messianic footsteps in the Third Solitude of Canadian Jewish mysticism, it is necessary to rehearse more generally Gershom Scholem’s regnant thesis of messianism in hasidism. Scholem’s thesis maintained that the neutralization of the messianic impulse in Jewish mysticism was, in a sense, a response to anarchic Sabbatean messianic tendencies that had to be domesticated if the mystical path of hasidism which followed in its wake was to have any hope of an afterlife in normative religious piety.<sup>6</sup> Just as Scholem’s thesis has undergone numerous revisions by Idel, Wolfson, and Magid, so too the current analysis serves as a further reflection on the currents of messianism within Canadian Jewish mysticism.<sup>7</sup>

The classic North American case study in modern Jewish messianism is the hasidic sect of Chabad, formerly under the renowned charismatic leadership of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson of Lubavitch.<sup>8</sup> No other post-Holocaust hasidic sect

has had as great success and influence on the currents of messianism in the Jewish community; through its extreme readings, Chabad often succeeds at further normalizing what was once considered a fringe current of messianism.<sup>9</sup> This certain success does not come without its challenges. On one hand, Berger expresses a deep despair over modern Orthodoxy's indifference to the seemingly heretical current of contemporary hasidism as exemplified in Chabad through its extreme messianism.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, Wolfson's recent revisionary studies on Chabad's hasidic mysticism posit more nuanced readings of a more "post-messianic messianism."<sup>11</sup> While an in-depth comparison of the messianic mysticisms of Chabad and Tosher hasidism is outside the scope of the research at hand, it is important to set into relief a few key implications shared by both streams. It is precisely Wolfson's revisionist challenge to Gershom Scholem's neutralization of messianism thesis which moves us beyond the 'either/or' question, rather opting for "the consciousness of the oneness of all being, which is the epistemological and ontological subtext of the messianic secret, transl[ati]ng the historical into the symbolic."<sup>12</sup> What Wolfson's insightful revisionist reading brings to light is a much-needed nuance in understanding the messianism of early hasidism as one that "entails cultivating of a spiritual consciousness such that emancipation consists of being emancipated from the bind of emancipation."<sup>13</sup> I will show here how aptly Wolfson's revisionist reading of messianism abides and even applies to Tosher hasidism in Boisbriand. In reading the messianism of early hasidism as "the possibility of pneumatic enlightenment [a]s itself an acute form of messianic activism and not a deferment in the least," what Wolfson points to is a deeper appreciation of messianism as contemplative gnosis that does not remain in the offing but is practiced in the present.<sup>14</sup> It is precisely in complicating this 'either/or' binary that Wolfson's analysis suggests that the messianic process itself is a "transformation of the carnal body into the linguistic body, the restoration of all things to their 'first matter.'"<sup>15</sup> This keen insight will prove salient in analysing how Tosher hasidism transforms the carnal body into the linguistic body during its ritualization of the Passover *seder*, all within the shadow of the contemporary cultural and political context of Quebec.

Furthermore, any analysis of the messianism of Tosher rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy must take into account Wolfson's analysis of the classic dictum "in the footsteps of the footsteps of the Messiah" and become transformed by Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson's locution into the more immediate "in the footsteps of the footsteps of the Messiah" and its correlation to the project of disseminating mysticism beyond the elite and to the masses, which is part of the Chabad ethos. Part of the secret of Chabad's success in America is a function of an American, pragmatist religious ethos that privileges selfhood over sainthood.<sup>16</sup> An important guiding question that emerges is whether Schneerson's post-messianic messianism could have been fully realized anywhere other than in the culture industry of America, a culture that exploits its own fetishization.<sup>17</sup> Yet, as Wolfson notes, we must reconcile this with how "the final redemption [*serves as*] a spiritual modulation and not a political-geo-

graphical modification, a logical consequence of the symbolic understanding of the nature of what is calculated as real.<sup>18</sup> This insight adds another challenge to our proposed analysis of Tosher hasidism's reliance on the collapse of the political-geographical hegemony of the Québécois cultural vacuum.

I will continue Wolfson's line of interrogation surrounding "in the footsteps of the footsteps of the Messiah," and how this becomes manifest in the cultural context of the Third Solitude of Canadian Jewish mysticism. Recall that Wolfson interrogates the very real possibility that the messianic impulse of contemporary hasidism is nothing but an open secret, that is, a real parable of the imaginal, or as he renders it: "[t]he messianic moment is described as a seeing of the divine glory without any garment... but the enlightened one knows that the promise to see without any garment implies that there is no seeing without a garment, that is, the light of the infinite cannot be envisioned except through the material world, which is constituted ontically by the letters that are contained within the name."<sup>19</sup> I argue for the need to delve deeper into the messianic impulse in Canadian Jewish mystical messianism of Tosher hasidism as garbed in the material world of Boisbriand, yet constituted ontically by the letters of a language that are contained within a name that transcends Québécois culture, albeit nurtured by it.

If, as I have argued elsewhere, there is something called "Canadian Jewish Mysticism," then as far as messianism is concerned surely there is no greater passion for it than what is found in the *'Avodat haLevi haggadah* of the Tosher rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy – a devotional-ritual document worthy of deeper analysis.<sup>20</sup> The recurring messianic motifs expressed by the Tosher rebbe in his *'Avodat haLevi* stand as an exemplar of Canadian Jewish mysticism as evaluated through its revision of certain messianic archetypal stations within the *seder*, including: the *Maqid* narrative that concludes with the opening of the door for Elijah and Elijah's cup; *Zafun* that seeks to reveal the concealed *matzah* already broken at *Yahatz*; *Nirzah* as the culmination of yearning to close the *seder*. To appreciate the continuity that the Tosher rebbe occupies within the Komarno-Zidichov hasidic lineage, I argue that these moments along the path of messianic archetypal stations should also be compared with the messianic archetypal stations in the recently-published secret mystical diary of R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin.<sup>21</sup>

The mysticism of the Tosher hasidic dynasty is idiosyncratic, insofar as it contains a certain hybridity of the Komarno hasidic tradition fused within the local host culture of Boisbriand. The hybrid approach of the continuous kabbalah in the Komarno-Zidichov hasidic lineage is renowned for its intensive correlations of Beshtian hasidism with Lurianic kabbalah, both of which present a mysticism with strong messianic currents.<sup>22</sup> These intensive esoteric correlations are revisionist in the sense of formulating a reconciliation between two seemingly divergent mystical schools of kabbalah and hasidism. Such hybridity is by no means incidental

to the texture of mystical visions in this lineage, especially in the case of the late, great Tosher Rebbe, R. Segal-Loewy (1924-2015), who is the focus of the present analysis.<sup>23</sup> The Komarno-Zidichov hasidic lineage retains its long-standing connection to the devotional aspects of hasidism while transmitting its own form of hypernomianism (a devotional mode of fulfilling the law; see footnote).<sup>24</sup> To what degree does this devotion to reconciling Beshtian hasidism with continuous Lurianic kabbalah inspire the messianic impulse in the mysticism of Tosher hasidism?

The question here is whether or not Canada's "third solitude" has influenced the mystical visions of Tosher hasidism, and if it has even intensified its messianic fervour. The Tosher Rebbe confronted rising nationalism during the Quiet Revolution, pushing against Quebec Catholic cultural roots to create an insular community of Kiryas Tosh, set apart and at the same time nestled in Boisbriand, in the municipality of Sainte-Thérèse, Quebec. Between such diverse Quebec cultures, I am interested in identifying the emergence of a unique Canadian Jewish mysticism. Are such mystical visions of the final eschaton reacting to the "legacy of the Quiet Revolution, and the moral, spiritual vacuum that has followed the collapse of clerical power in Québec," or are they *sui generis*?<sup>25</sup> The oscillation of such messianic textures within a diverse Quebec cultural mosaic is what this investigation attempts to explore. It is precisely this post-Quiet Revolution culture that Lacasse considers one of the contributing factors that enabled the growth and vibrancy of the Tosher community within the rural population of Boisbriand.<sup>26</sup> I suggest that it is very much a messianic process of nestling this ultra-religious community into this unlikely industrial landscape in a predominantly Catholic and francophone population that continues to provide an ideal post-Quiet Revolution context for seeding such a highly devotional community. It is precisely in this cultural environment, coupled with an affirmative nationalism whose principal vector was the French language, that a highly-insular and deeply messianic Tosher hasidism could flourish. The dialectic of withdrawal from modernity in Kiryas Tosh within this rural industrial municipality in the south-east known as Ste-Thérèse which became the municipality of Boisbriand in 1968, suggests a veritable messianic process.

Recall that Boisbriand, just outside Montreal, is the home of this "third solitude" – a community of Jews between the Anglophone and Francophone worlds, neither of which fully accepts them, yet has supported their growth for decades. Kiryas Tosh resurrects the hasidic dynasty, originating in Nyirtass ("Tosh"), Hungary, that all but perished in the Holocaust.<sup>27</sup> Tosh is one of the largest hasidic groups in the world today, with settlements and synagogues across New York in Borough Park and Williamsburg in Brooklyn, Kiryas Joel and Monsey in New York, and New Jersey. Its tremendous growth is in no small part due to the pioneering vision of the Tosher Rebbe, who emigrated to Montreal 1951 after being exiled from Nyirtass, wandering from Hungary to Montreal via Austrian DP camps. In 1962 the Tosh-

er Rebbe had a vision to create Kiryas Tosh.<sup>28</sup> It was this doubly liminal moment, when the Rebbe took on a self-imposed exile from Montreal to the rural industrial space of Boisbriand, where we see the beginnings of a post-messianic messianism.

To appreciate the nuances of the Tosher Rebbe's post-messianic messianism as a unique expression emerging from post-Quiet Revolution Quebec culture, it is necessary to examine the process of the reconstitution of a hasidic community within a predominantly francophone milieu in the wake of their near destruction in the Holocaust. While there is a striking parallel to the collective reconstitution of Chabad hasidism in the melting pot milieu of New York under the auspices of the Lubavitcher rebbe, Tosher hasidism finds itself in the multicultural reality of Quebec and appears to have taken advantage of the province's post-Quiet Revolution culture of decreased religiosity and spirituality to enable its growth.<sup>29</sup> What interests me here is the degree to which Lacasse's supposition holds, namely, that it was the unique conflation of factors that signaled a radical change in the Québécois perception of Jews which nurtured the flourishing of the Tosher rebbe's post-messianic messianism. Lacasse identifies the religio-cultural conflation as including: (1) the anarchy and consequent vacuum of the first years of the Quiet Revolution of 1960-66; (2) the transition from a nationalist Catholicism to a territorial neo-nationalism based on language; (3) the consequent diminished perception of Jews as antagonists within the French-Canadian discourse as a Yiddish-speaking religious minority; (4) the effect of Pope Paul VI's *Nostra Aetate* declaration in 1965 as a phenomenon of openness towards non-Christian minorities cultivating more tolerance; and (5) consequent local and federal support for the creation of a unique space in which a non-Christian ultra-religious group can articulate a social isolationist project in the Montreal suburbs.<sup>30</sup> These factors may shed further light on the innovative approaches to the Tosher rebbe's post-messianic messianism.

Turning to the evidence from within the hasidic sect, wherein a good part of the Tosher Rebbe's devotional talks or *sihot qodesha* have been transcribed in Hebrew in a series of five books entitled *Avodat Avodah: Dibrot Qodesh*, there is an emergence of a unique post-messianic messianism. This series of devotional discourses or *Dibrot Qodesh* (printed in Hebrew) are organized around the weekly Torah portions and Jewish holidays with guidance for spiritual practice. The *Imrot Qodesh* (printed in Yiddish) parallel the aforementioned Hebrew version in scope and structure. It is primarily in the Tosher Rebbe's *Dibrot Qodesh* where the contours of a post-messianic messianism recur throughout the devotional cycle of the Jewish communal calendar. It is important to consider whether this recurrence is a function of contextualizing Tosher hasidism as part of a continuum of the (dis)continuous kabbalah of Komarno-Zidichov, which in fact challenges the extent to which Tosher hasidism is a unique expression of Canadian Jewish mysticism. Is it possible that the messianic impulse takes on a new, more radicalized meaning once re-contextualized in the

local culture of Boisbriand rather than its satellite in Borough Park?<sup>31</sup> Is this pronounced messianic impulse a reaction to the antisemitism “that lies just beneath the surface of [Québécois] society,” or is it to an extent fueled by the political neo-nationalism that emerged in the post-*Quiet Revolution* cultural context, or is such a messianic impulse intrinsic to Komarno-Zidichov hasidic lineage?<sup>32</sup>

While I have examined the implications of the post-messianic impulse regarding redemption elsewhere, here I explore the post-messianic messianism as practiced in Kiryas Tosh, Broisbriand.<sup>33</sup> In comparing the Tosher rebbe’s edited discourses on the weekly Torah readings to his *haggadah* for Passover, I analyze why and how such a process of post-messianic messianism emerges and empowers the contemporary Tosher hasidism. I challenge the assumption accepted by Lewis and Shaffir, that when “Asked directly about the books, the Toshiers we spoke with agreed that they accurately represent the Rebbe’s approach to spiritual life – except that some of his most demanding teachings were left out because they were seen as being addressed only to an earlier, spiritually stronger generation.”<sup>34</sup> My own contention is that rather than self-censoring the post-messianic messianism, it is made quite explicit by the Tosher rebbe and thus empowers a communal process of spiritual growth.

I am interested in how the Komarno-Zidichov perspective enables or challenges the Tosher Rebbe’s idiosyncratic conflation of the personhood of Elijah as the harbinger of the messianic footsteps of this generation as an insular, communal process that reflects something unique about Canadian Jewish mysticism. I argue here that the post-messianic messianism of the Tosher rebbe takes on a new, more radicalized meaning once re-contextualized in the local, multicultural, post-*Quiet Revolution* context of Boisbriand. This multi-cultural Québécois re-contextualization stands in contrast to the post-Woodstock melting-pot of Borough Park, New York.

To unpack the post-messianic messianism of the Tosher rebbe, it is necessary to examine how the recent dynastic leader’s apparent intolerance for ritual heterodoxy could make space for such a mystically open-ended vision of the messiah. This post-messianic messianism needs to be contextualized within the taxonomy of what Garb proffers as either “classical/continuous” or “contemporary/discontinuous” transmission of Jewish mysticism known as kabbalah.<sup>35</sup> In the case at hand, we are concerned with a self-consciously “continuous kabbalah” as manifest in one of the most innovative and radical predecessors of the Komarno-Zidichov lineage, R. Yitshak Ayzik Yehudah Yehi’el of Komarno (1806–1874), son of Aleksander-Sender (d. 1818), himself the brother of Tsevi Hirsh of Zhidachov (1763–1831), one of the most important Galician *tzaddikim* of his day. Recall how the Zhidachov-Komarno dynasty proscribed the reading of any philosophical books that might be tainted by the heretical mystical speculation of the fallen messiah, Sabbetai Tsevi, and its ensuing echoes in neo-Sabbatianism. While R. Tsevi Hirsh only made general references



to these heretical works, R. Yitshak Ayzik of Komarno provided an exact list of the proscribed heretical books. This is most curious in relation to the central claim of Scholem's thesis that Hasidism made a concerted attempt to neutralize the messianic impulse. If so, why do these mystics of the Zhidachov-Komarno dynasty make such concerted efforts to curb this neutralized messianic impulse?

In perusing the mystical commentaries of the Zhidachov-Komarno dynasty, it seems more apt to consider this process as one of channeling rather than neutralizing the messianic impulse, as evinced by the remarkable creativity in the speculation of many such masters, especially in innovative second-generation leaders like R. Yitshak Ayzik of Komarno. Through his charisma and creative mystical speculation, R. Yitshak Ayzik founded a new hasidic dynasty, that of Komarno.<sup>36</sup> Eventually the dynasty became known by the double name Zhidachov-Komarno, and often associated with the deep mystical contemplation of R. Yitshak Ayzik Yehudah Yehi'el of Komarno (1806-1874), Aleksander-Sender's son. In addition to his kabbalistic commentaries, most important to our present investigation is Yitshak Ayzik's spiritual autobiography which collects his mystical visions, called *Megilat Setarim*. As the title suggests, Yitshak Ayzik considered himself a mystic in the lineage of fellow visionaries, like the renowned disciple of R. Isaac Luria of Safed, R. Hayyim Vital (1542-1620), who wrote his own spiritual autobiography called *Sefer haHezyonot*, and Reb Nahman of Bratslav who wrote his own *Megilat Setarim*.<sup>37</sup> Rabbi Yitshak Ayzik – akin to Rabbi Hayyim Vital and Reb Nahman – seems to have had no qualms about revealing his secret mystical visions in this book. Notwithstanding the self-censorship by close disciples, what one discovers in reading these mystical journals is just how much the mystic considered his soul to be woven from the tapestry of the messiah, son of Joseph. This degree of self-proclaimed messianism is noteworthy, and gives context to the bold post-messianic messianism claims of the Tosher rebbe which are addressed later in this article.

Let us turn to the mystical visions of this Zhidachov-Komarno precursor, R. Yitshak Ayzik Yehudah Yehi'el Safrin in his spiritual journal, *Megillat Setarim*.<sup>38</sup> From the outset, R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin sees a messianic arc to the narrative of his own personal life, given that he was born in the year of the messiah (the year 1807 is linked through numerology with the Messiah son of Joseph).<sup>39</sup> R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin recounts how during the second night of Passover, in taking the shank-bone from the seder plate, the father to this six-year-old, R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin, reveals through divine inspiration how his soul was a reincarnation of the soul of R. Isaac Luria.<sup>40</sup> It is no coincidence that such a purportedly reincarnated soul as Luria's would have also seen himself as a messianic figure. It is even more messianically-charged that at seven years old, R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin's encounter with Elijah does not appear to have taken place on Passover, but likely on a weekday

when his father encouraged him to:

“Go forth unto the *Shekhina* and She will get you something to eat’ which meant going out to beg for food at a neighbour’s doorstep. When he encountered a gentile at the doorstep, he asked the [burgeoning] rabbi: ‘My son, do you want bread, wine and spirits?’ And he gave it all to me. Anyone who saw this would have been shocked. But due to my great hunger, I was not able to focus on really understanding what took place. Afterwards my father said to me: ‘You see my son, because of the gravity of your sins, you only merited seeing this Elijah experience through a veil.’”<sup>41</sup>

The liminal moment of opening the door for Elijah is no longer limited to the Passover *seder*. Rather, it is transformed into a weekday activity. This act of begging is a veiled search of the exilic presence of the *Shekhina*. R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Saf-rin’s encounter with Elijah occurs later, with even greater attunement on the Sabbath of the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish-calendar month of *Adar*, 1847, when he confronts the harbinger of the messiah who responds to the request to be blessed with peace.<sup>42</sup>

Such archetypal stories of Elijah encounters are intriguing insofar as they expand the messianic horizon beyond Passover, blurring temporal and ethnic boundaries. In comparison with the Elijah encounters now to be reviewed in the Tosher *‘Avodat haLevi haggadah*, the near total absence of cultural markers that could identify the context as Quebec or reflect an inflection of Canadian Jewish mysticism *per se* is indeed curious. As is the case with so much Elijah lore that spans centuries, with each encounter garbed in its own specific socio-historical context, in the Canadian Jewish mystical context, one would have expected the Elijah encounters with a local peasant at the doorstep to be dressed in the regional Quebecois style.<sup>43</sup> Even if temporal and ethnic boundaries are blurred, in the *‘Avodat haLevi haggadah* there appears to be an intentional erasure of markers of any regional Quebecois style.

And yet, as a harbinger of the messiah, Elijah serves as a staple archetype at most *seder* tables, even outside the pale of this insular hasidic community. How is this messianic archetype rendered in the *‘Avodat haLevi haggadah*? To this end, let us now analyze the selection of Elijah anecdotes compiled and included in this *haggadah*, as follows:

“There are many aspects regarding seeing the face of Elijah the prophet, his memory remembered for the good. For there are various degrees in the revelation of Elijah. The renowned *tzaddikim* like our holy rabbi, Elimelekh of Lyzinzk, his memory in Eden, would see Elijah completely, but in truth there is within every seeker of Israel a spark of Elijah the prophet, that remains as an embodied residue of his advent in the moment when Elijah

is welcomed at a circumcision. [According to R. Simha Bunem of Pryszi-cha, his memory in Eden,] revealed that the author of the *haggadah* was Elijah the prophet himself, his memory remembered for the good, for he arranged the order of the *haggadah* for Passover eve.”<sup>44</sup>

In cultivating the visionary capacity for seeing “a spark of Elijah the prophet within every seeker of Israel,” the Tosher rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, deconstructs the inside/outside dichotomy of messianism; he is moving toward a deeply non-dual mysticism that is embedded in the ritual structure. Not only do the interconnecting messianic sparks of all those gathered at the *seder* create the “contours of the prophet Elijah’s visage” proper, but the script of the *haggadah* itself is now attributed to Elijah.<sup>45</sup> In claiming an Elijah authorship of the *haggadah*, the choreography of the Passover *seder* itself is seen as a messianic process that is more of a *writerly* text of writing those gathered round the table into the text, insofar as it reveals its intention of constructing a meta-narrative from the *readerly* text of the *haggadah* itself. It is akin to what Barthes describes as “ourselves writing,” that is a self-conscious expression of the discrepancy between artifice and reality, whereby the Elijah encounter as authoring the *haggadah* itself, in a sense, destabilizes the expectations of participants as mere readers. Rather, here the Tosher hasidic approach is to turn the reader into the writer, given that each person has a spark of Elijah within. The ritual text of the *seder* then becomes a collection of those sparks that make the messianic process possible at the Passover *seder* table.<sup>46</sup> This writerly motif returns at the closing of the holiday, through its concluding ritual of the seventh day of Passover which is also known as the time for celebrating the Messianic Feast or *Seudat ha’Mashiah*. The writerly instruction is outlined as follows: “Sing ‘You have chosen us,’ ‘You are One’ (*Zemiort ‘Avodat haLevi*, p. 108) and then one recites the *Haggadah*...”<sup>47</sup> In enabling this devotional posture at the opening and closing of Passover, there is a strong sense of self-conscious expression aware of the discrepancy between artifice and reality that is transcended by this messianic process of ourselves writing and singing into redemption.

And yet, there are distinct moments where this post-messianic messianism remains a process of seeking to reveal a current of redemption that is meant to remain in deferral. The contours of this messianic deferral emerge here in a story surrounding a disappointed child seeking Elijah at the door of the Passover *seder*:

“Once it happened with the holy rabbi, Yitzhak Itzik [Yehudah Yehiel] of Komarno, that while sanctifying the holiday Passover eve, he instructed his grand-daughter, Hinda Tzippa [daughter of the holy rabbi, Eliezer Tzvi of Komarno], to go and open the door for Elijah the prophet before the recitation of ‘pour out Your wrath.’ Her holy father, Rabbi Eliezer Tzvi of Komarno hinted that she should not go to the door, while her grandfather, Rabbi Yitzhak Itzik told her: ‘Go and you’ll see an old man sitting on a chair.’ So

Hinda wanted to go to the door, and once again her father told her not to go, so she did not know what to do and began to cry, and she did not go. After the *seder* concluded, her grandfather, Rabbi Yitzhak Itzik told her: 'Given that you did not walk over to open the door, you shall merit long life.' And so her years were elongated more than any of the children and grandchildren of Rabbi Yitzhak Itzik."<sup>48</sup>

This anecdote presents three generations of messianic impulses augmented and negated between one generation and the next. In reaction to Hinda Tzippa's messianic fervour, her father then rejects the invitation to open the door to Elijah extended by her grandfather, who apparently shared his grand-daughter's passion. Is this simply a question of generational difference in terms of the messianic process or does it point to a deeper divide? What did the elder, Rabbi Yitzhak Itzik Yehudah Yehiel of Komarno see that could not be seen by his son, Rabbi Eliezer Tzvia of Komarno? This unexpected scenario inverts the prophecy of Malachi who envisions the pre-messianic moment as a process of "reconciling the hearts of parents with children and the hearts of children with their parents" such that it should have been Rabbi Eliezer Tzvi of Komarno who was more open to being reoriented to seeing Elijah, as in the case of his daughter, Hinda Tzippa.<sup>49</sup> This anecdote suggests a concealment amidst double revelation of the messianic moment.

Another anecdote amidst the anthologized Elijah stories occupies its own section after *Maqid* section of the *seder* as follows:

"...One needs to pray for the advent of Elijah the prophet, so that he should speedily come as the harbinger of redemption. Thus may it be the will of the One that we shall merit arousing this speedy advent with complete redemption, and so this also is the harbinger of personal redemption..."<sup>50</sup>

This seemingly redundant passage on "the harbinger of personal redemption" initially demands the devotional posture of prayer as the vehicle appropriate for eliciting a speedy redemption. While redemption requires prayer for its advent, praying for redemption itself as the "harbinger of personal redemption" suggests a more non-dual attitude to messianism, as more of an all-encompassing contemplative process. This becomes even more radically attenuated in the next passage, whereby:

"...one should invoke Elijah's name, we must pray that he will herald good tidings, redemptions and solaces. For I have already told you, one should make it a spiritual focus when reciting the name Elijah the prophet, [to cultivate the awareness] that it alludes to the Tetragram, blessed be, in this manner [of an acrostic], El"YAHU Ha"Navi, which is the Tetragram in its ordering [=YHVH], and so too with Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah the Giladite."<sup>51</sup>

The name of the messiah, for example, in Chabad hasidism, as Wolfson notes, “bears within itself the connotation of infraction, an inevitable consequence of understanding the unity of the essence as the coincidence of opposites.”<sup>52</sup> Here in Toshi- hasidism it is the name Elijah as the harbinger of the messiah itself that serves as a substitution for the tetragrammaton itself. The very process of being that is becoming as manifest in the tetragrammaton is now aligned with the harbinger of the messiah. This is a highly idiosyncratic substitution of the tetragrammaton itself as equivalent of an Elijah experience, itself only in the footsteps of the advent of the messianic age, and thus creating a shift. The apparent deferral of redemption imbedded in the footsteps of the messiah is now shifted, for it already exists as the process of *being* that is *becoming*, the unfolding from the origin of all *being*, namely, the tetragrammaton. The Toshi- rebbe is suggesting that being in the footsteps of the advent of the messianic age is a process that the heart-mind already occupies when focused in non-dual consciousness of prayer. To be in the footsteps of the advent of the messianic age is to be aligned in the proper contemplative messianic mind-state already hidden in plain sight.

Turning from the harbinger of the Messiah as Elijah to the more general ruminations on the footsteps of the advent of the messianic age, there are key passages to reflect on in the commentary of the Toshi- rebbe. Consider the following comment by Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy. He writes that the classic messianic symbolism of the:

“...two archetypes of the messiah, Joseph and Judah, [that] have exerted influence of sacred energy, which will allow us to overcome trials in this generation in the footsteps of the messiah, in order to prepare our inner drives through this for the future redemption. Insofar as the redemption is contingent upon guarding two covenants (*Tiqqunai Zohar*, *Tiqqun*78a). Thus one should not grow despondent in confronting difficult and bitter trials by guarding the covenant of the tongue [*brit lashon*] and the covenant of the phallus [*brit ma'or*]...”<sup>53</sup>

By distilling the spiritual preparations necessary for overcoming “the trials in this generation in the footsteps of the messiah” as a tension between the messianic archetypes of Joseph – covenant of the phallus [*brit ma'or*] – and Judah – covenant of the tongue [*brit lashon*] – there emerges quite an austere focus of contemplation. Albeit unsurprising for a case of Third Solitude, this messianism engenders a contemplative austerity that reinforces the insularity and isolation of Kiryas Tosh from its Bois-briand environment.<sup>54</sup> This post-messianic process is nurtured by the nationalism that emerged from the Quiet Revolution, especially through the general decrease of Catholic religious practice and spirituality that followed in its wake.<sup>55</sup> I argue that the Quebec nationalism, which had as its principal vector the French language, aligns with the concern for preserving the “the covenant of the tongue” [*brit lashon*], while the external threat of a drastically decreased Catholic religious practice aligns with

the reactionary concern for internally preserving “the covenant of the phallus” [*brit ma’or*]. The counter-intuitive flourishing of Tosher hasidism in Kiryas Tosh, in Boisbriand, emerges through reactionary concerns for ultra-religious self-preservation all the while, drawing on the external secular-messianic context to deepen an internal religious-messianic one.

This concern for guarding “the covenant of the phallus” [*brit ma’or*] within such a now-non-religious context of Quebec leads to a further concern for cultivating of “the power of conviction” [*‘emunah*]:

“...in this generation in the footsteps of the messiah, the only spiritual counsel in overcoming trials is through the power of conviction [*‘emunah*]...”<sup>56</sup>

Coupled with cultivating this deeper conviction is the link to shared hasidic ancestry, specifically the founder of hasidism, referred to explicitly as the Ba'al Shem Tov or allusively as Moses, our teacher.<sup>57</sup> By reiterating the founder’s connection to the foundational ethos of hasidism, the chaos of “this generation in the footsteps of the messiah” should not derail the adept’s spiritual elevation into depression and despondency, for:

“...in this generation in the footsteps of the messiah, one should not become depressed and one’s heart should not fall into despondency, for there are many gates and palaces through which one can encounter the divine...”<sup>58</sup>

While highly suggestive, it remains ambiguous as to precisely what gates and palaces the Tosher rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy refers to here, especially in light of his earlier limitation to the gates of language and sexual morality.

Finally, hasidic ancestry that transcends the time-space continuum of Boisbriand is invoked as a way of transcending and including the current religio-cultural Boisbriand, Quebec landscape of this religious community seeking to cultivate illumination through intensive devotion:

“...all of the *tzaddikim* prepared the path for this generation the footsteps of the messiah, that we too shall be able apperceive the divine light...”<sup>59</sup>

Such a storehouse of merit points to a concern with residue from the ancestry of “all of the *tzaddikim* [that] prepared the path”, which is symbolized most fully in the transcendent, residual light of creation itself:

“...the residual light of the first nights of Passover hover on the last night, which is a time of discerning and downloading the residue to ensure an ability to overcome trials. The trials one experiences are part of the collective archetypal experience as those who “descended into the sea” [*Yordai ha’Yam*] and those who “ascended from the sea” [*Olai ha’Yam*]. It is interpreted here as a descent for the sake of ascent.<sup>60</sup>

What I have been arguing is that Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal–Loewy’s ritual reading of Passover through the *haggadah*, *‘Avodat haLevi*, one is immediately brought to the heart of the messianic impulse throughout the *seder*.<sup>61</sup> The Tosher Rebbe focuses on just how much the wholeness of the devotional life and yearning depends on the willingness to begin each step by confronting the spiritual downtroddenness of the messiah. In doing so, a deeper joy and jubilation within that brokenness is revealed through the messianic process of writing and singing ourselves into the ritual itself. In analyzing the Tosher Rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal–Loewy’s *haggadah* as compared with Rabbi Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin’s *Megillat Setarim*, what I have argued for here is the need for a greater awareness and openness to the variegated spiritual landscape of Canadian Jewish mysticism. From the devotion of Tosher hasidism, a messianic impulse as communal ritual process emerges in Boisbriand. Following the aforementioned revisionary currents within post–messianic mysticism, there remains a need to bring new eyes to see the messianic impulse within the Komarno–Zidichov hasidic lineage as manifest in Tosher hasidism that transcends and includes markers of a uniquely Canadian Jewish mysticism.

1

Leonard Cohen, “Anthem,” *The Future* (New York: Sony Music, 1992).

2

See full references in Aubrey L. Glazer, “Leonard Cohen and the Tosher Rebbe: On Exile as Redemption in Canadian Jewish Mysticism”, *CJS*, Volume 20, 2012, esp. 178 n6.

3

Pew recently found that 70 percent of Jews claim to have participated in a Passover *seder* in the past year. See “A Portrait of American Jews,” Pew Study, Nov 1, 2015, <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/> (accessed April 9, 2015).

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For Jewish eating habits, see David C. Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*. (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 1-8; Rachel Gross, “‘Draydel Salad’: The Serious Business of Jewish Food and Fun in the 1950s,” in *The Way of Food: Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*, ed. Benjamin E. Zeller (2014): 91-113. On the Jewish mystical import of eating, see Joel Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals: Eating and Embod-*

*iment in Medieval Kabbalah*. Wayne State University Press, 2005. More generally, see Margaret Visser, *Much Depends on Dinner: The Extraordinary History and Mythology, Allure and Obsessions, Perils and Taboos of an Ordinary Meal*. Grove/Atlantic, Inc., 2010. For Passover, see Emma Morris, “Haggadot on View at the University of Chicago,” *Jewcy*, April 5, 2012, (<http://jewcy.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/haggadot-on-view-at-the-university-of-chicago>) (accessed April 5, 2012).

5

Aubrey L. Glazer, “Leonard Cohen and the Tosher Rebbe: On Exile as Redemption in Canadian Jewish Mysticism”, *CJS*, Volume 20, 2012, pp. 151-156.

6

Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995). Compare with Michael Löwy, Gershom Scholem, and Michael Richardson. “Messianism in the early work of Gershom Scholem.” *New German Critique* 83 (2001): 177-191; David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and counter-history* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Jacob Taubes, “The price of messianism.” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33.1-2 (1982):

595-600; David Ohana, "JL Talmon, Gershom Scholem and the price of Messianism." *History of European Ideas* 34.2 (2008): 169-188; Joseph Dan, "Gershom Scholem and Jewish Messianism." *Gershom Scholem: The Man and His Work*, ed. P. Mendes-Flohr (Albany, NY, 1994): 73-86.

**7**

Moshe Idel, *Messianic Mystics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); compare more recently with Elliot R. Wolfson, *Open Secret: Postmessianic Messianism and the Mystical Revision of Menahem Mendel Schneerson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); Shaul Magid, *Hasidism Incarnate: Hasidism, Christianity, and the Construction of Modern Judaism*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015).

**8**

Samuel C. Heilman, and Menachem Friedman. *The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

**9**

David Eliezrie, *The Secret of Chabad: Inside the World's Most Successful Jewish Movement* (New Millford: Toby Press, 2015).

**10**

David Berger, *The Rebbe, the Messiah, and the Scandal of Orthodox Indifference* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008).

**11**

Elliot R. Wolfson, *Open Secret: Postmessianic Messianism and the Mystical Revision of Menahem Mendel Schneerson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); *Ibid.*, "Immanuel Frommann's Commentary on Luke and the Christianizing of Kabbalah: Some Sabbatean and Hasidic Affinities"; *Holy Dissent: Jewish and Christian Mystics in Eastern Europe*, ed. Glenn Dynner (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2011), 71-222.

**12**

Wolfson, "Immanuel Frommann's Commentary on Luke and the Christianizing of Kabbalah", 190.

**13**

*Ibid.*, 191.

**14**

*Ibid.*, 191.

**15**

*Ibid.*, 195.

**16**

There are a number of recent studies which examine the Americanization of the Chabad project of populist mysticism externally and internally. For the former, see David Eliezrie, *The Secret of Chabad: Inside the World's Most Successful Jewish Movement* (New Millford: Toby Press, 2015); Sue Fishkoff, *The Rebbe's Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch* (New York: Schocken Books, 2013); Samuel C. Heilman and Menachem Friedman, *The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2012); for the latter, see Shaul S. Deutsch, *Larger Than Life: The Life and Times of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (New York: Chasidic Historical Productions, 1995); Chaim Miller, *Turning Judaism Outward: A Biography of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson the Seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe* (Brooklyn, NY: Kol Menachem, 2014); Avrum M. Ehrlich, *The Messiah of Brooklyn: Understanding Lubavitch Hasidism Past and Present* (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV, 2004); Shaul Magid, *American Post-Judaism: Identity and Renewal in a Postethnic Society* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), esp. ch. 7.

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Theodor W. Adorno, *Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (Place of publication not identified: Routledge, 2015).

**18**

*Ibid.*, 197.

**19**

Wolfson, "Immanuel Frommann's Commentary on Luke and the Christianizing of Kabbalah", 197.

**20**

Aubrey L. Glazer, "Leonard Cohen and The Tosher Rebbe: On Exile as Redemption in Canadian Jewish Mysticism," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 20 (2012): 149-190.

**21**

R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin, *Megillat Setarim*, ed. Naftali ben-Menachem (Mossah haRav Kook: Jerusalem, 2007).

**22**

Raya Haran, "Zhidachov-Komarno Hasidic Dynasty," <http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/>



article.aspx/Zhidachov-Komarno\_Hasidic\_Dynasty (accessed Feb 20, 2017); Hayim Yehudah Berle, *R. Yitzhak Ayzik mi-Komarno* (Jerusalem, 1964-1965); Raya Haran, "Olam hafukh: Tefisat ha-'olam ha-radikalit ba-hagut shel R. Tsevi Hirsh mi-Ziditshov," *Tarbits* 71.3-4 (2002): 537-564; Raphael Mahler, *Hasidism and the Jewish Enlightenment*, trans. Eugene Orenstein, Aaron Klein, and Jenny Machlowitz Klein (Philadelphia, 1985); Israel Oppenheim, "Li-Demutah shel ha-hanhagah ha-hasidit be-Galitsyah: Sugyot be-mishnato ha-hevratit uve-fo'alo shel R. Tsevi Hirsh mi-Ziditshov, 1763-1831," *Gal-Ed* 12 (1991): 45-50; Isaac Judah Jehiel Safrin (Yizhak Isaac Safrin of Komarno), *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies: Book of Visions and Book of Secrets*, trans. Morris M. Faierstein (New York, 1999), 267-306, 332-336; Dov Schwarz, "R. Tsevi Hirsh mi-Ziditshov: Ben kabalah le-hasidut," *Sinai* 102 (1988): 241-251; Tsevi Hirsh mi-Ziditshov (Zevi Hirsch Eichenstein), *Turn Aside from Evil and Do Good*, trans. Louis Jacobs (London and Washington, D.C., 1995); Abraham Segal, "The Relation between Lurianic Kabbalah and Hasidism in the Thought of R. Yischaq of Komarno," (Hebrew) *Kabbalah: A Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 15 (2006): 305-334.

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Kiryas Tosh, Canada – Tosher Rebbe Passes Away at Age 95,

<http://www.vosizneias.com/212086/2015/08/12/kiryas-tosh-canada-tosher-rebbe-passes-away-at-age-95/> (accessed July 16, 2017).

### 24

For more on the Komarno-Zidichov lineage, see Yitzhak Alfasi, *Torat ha'Hasidut*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Mossad haRav Kook, 2009), 267-321. The current Tosher Rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy great-grandfather was a disciple of R. Yitzhak Ayzik Yehudah Yehiel of Komarno (1806-1874). R. Yitzhak Ayzik's disciple was R. Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, father of Elimelekh Segal-Loewy, father of Mordechai Segal-Loewy of Demescer, father of the current Tosher Rebbe. R. Yitzhak Ayzik was a disciple of R. Tzvi Hirsh of Zidichov (1763-1831), tracing lineage back as a disciple to the Seer of Lublin (1745-1815). The Seer was a disciple of Rebbe Elimelech Lipman of Lizensk (1717-1787), who was a disciple of Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezeritch (1704-1772), the primary disciple of the Ba'al Shem Tov (1698-1760). On the prevalence of

Komarno-Zidichov customs integrated into contemporary Tosher spiritual practice, see R. Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, "Minhagai ha'Sabah Kadisha," in *Zemiroth 'Avodat haLevi* (Boisbriand: Kiryas Tosh, 2010), 770-774, wherein a sampling of customs allocates prominence to Komarno-Zidichov at a ratio of 8:5. On 'hypernomian': Rather than using terms like "non-normative" or "antinomian," it is more accurate to use the term "hypernomian," which denotes a devotional mode of fulfilling the law by overflowing its traditional form as shown in the extensive work of Elliot R. Wolfson, "Beyond Good and Evil: Hypernomianism, Transmorality, and Kabbalistic ethics," in *Crossing Boundaries: Essays on the Ethical Status of Mysticism*, eds. G. W. Barnard and J. J. Kripal (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), 103-156.

### 25

Ira Robinson, "The Bouchard-Taylor Commission and the Jewish Community of Quebec in Historical Perspective," in *Religion, Culture and the State: Reflections on the Bouchard-Taylor Report*, eds. Howard Adelman and Pierre Anctil (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 61.

### 26

Simon-Pierre Lacasse, *L'orthodoxie juive à la rencontre de la modernité: le groupe hassidique des Tasher face au Québec de la Révolution tranquille (1951-1967)*. Diss. University of Ottawa, Department of History, 2016.

### 27

Also spelled as 'Tash,' adapted from the Hebrew/Yiddish: טשאש

### 28

Yitzhak Alfasi, *Torat ha'Hasidut*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Mossad haRav Kook, 2009), 456, 488.

### 29

Lacasse, *L'orthodoxie juive à la rencontre de la modernité*, 105.

### 30

*Ibid.*, 11-12.

### 31

Consistently higher levels of antisemitism have been documented in Quebec than elsewhere in Canada. See Paul M. Sniderman, David A. Northrup, Joseph F. Fletcher, Peter H. Russell, et al., "Psychological and Cultural Foundations of Prejudice: The Case of Anti-Semitism in Quebec," *Canadian Review*

of *Sociology and Anthropology* 30.2 (1993): 242-270. For a comparison to antisemitism as experienced by American Jews from Afro-Americans in Borough Park as opposed to the rest of New York, see Arnold Eisen, "Limits and Virtues of Dialogue," *Society* 31.6 (September-October 1994): 17-22. See also Saul Brenner, "Patterns of Jewish-Catholic Democratic Voting and the 1960 Presidential Vote," *Jewish Social Studies* 26.3 (1964): 169-178.

**32**

Robinson, "The Bouchard-Taylor Commission and the Jewish Community of Quebec in Historical Perspective," 65-66.

**33**

Aubrey L. Glazer, "Leonard Cohen and The Tosher Rebbe: On Exile as Redemption in Canadian Jewish Mysticism," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 20 (2012), 149-190.

**34**

See Justin Lewis and William Shaffir, "Tosh, Between Earth and Moon: A Hasidic Rebbe's Followers and his Teachings," in *From Antiquity to the Post-Modern World: Contemporary Jewish Studies in Canada*, eds. Daniel Maoz and Andrea Gondos (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 149.

**35**

See Jonathan Garb "Contemporary Kabbalah and Classical Kabbalah: Breaks and Continuities," in *After Spirituality: Studies in Mystical Traditions*, vol. 1, eds. Phillip Wexler and Jonathan Garb (Peter Lang: New York, 2012), 19-46, as quoted and discussed relative to Canadian Jewish mysticism in Glazer, "Leonard Cohen and the Tosher Rebbe: On Exile as Redemption in Canadian Jewish Mysticism," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 20 (2012), 151 n15.

**36**

Thus known by the name Safrin, whereas other members of the family were called Eichenstein.

**37**

Hayyim ben Joseph Vital, *Sefer haHezyonot*, Morris Michael Faienstein, trans. (Mekhon Ben Zevi: Jerusalem, 2005); Zvi Mark, and Naftali Moses, trans. *The Scroll of Secrets: The Hidden Messianic Vision of R. Nachman of Breslav* (Brighton, Mass.: Academic Studies Press, 2010).

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R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin, *Megillat Setarim*, ed. Naftali ben-Menachem, (Mossah haRav Kook: Jerusalem, 2007).

**39**

R. Yitzhak Yehudah Yehiel Safrin, *Megillat Setarim*, 7.

**40**

*Ibid.*, 11.

**41**

*Ibid.*, 12.

**42**

*Ibid.*, 23.

**43**

On the socio-historical adaptability of the Elijah figure and his garb as encountered in stories in different historical periods, see a biblical example in Tamis Rentería, Hoover, "The Elijah/Elisha stories: A socio-cultural analysis of prophets and people in ninth-century BCE Israel," *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective* (1992): 75-126. For a medieval example, see Julian Obermann, "Two Elijah Stories in Judeo-Arabic Transmission," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 23.1 (1950): 387-404.

**44**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *Haggadah shel Pesah: 'Avodat haLevi*, no. 3, 193b-194a.

**45**

*Ibid.*, no. 4, 194a.

**46**

Roland Barthes, *S/Z: [an Essay]* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 5.

**47**

Rabbi Segal-Loewy, *Haggadah shel Pesah: 'Avodat haLevi*, 123a.

**48**

*Ibid.*, no. 4, 194a-b.

**49**

Malachi 3, 24.

**50**

Rabbi Segal-Loewy, *Haggadah shel Pesah: 'Avodat haLevi*, no. 1, 273a.

**51**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *Haggadah shel Pesah: 'Avodat haLevi*, no. 2, 274a.

**52**

Elliot R. Wolfson, *Open Secret*, 188.

**53**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *'Avodat haAvodah*, vol. 1, s.v. *'Ikvata d'Meshikha*, *Parshat VaYigash*, 146.

**54**

For a sociological analysis of the case of Tosher hasidism in Boisbriand, see William Shaffir, "Hassidim confronting modernity," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 49.1 (2007). For a comparison with cultural analyses, see Karen EH Skinazi, "Kol Isha: Malka Zipora's Lekhaim as the Voice of the Hasidic Woman in Quebec," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 33.2 (2015): 1-26; Rebecca Margolis, "Culture in motion: Yiddish in Canadian Jewish life," *The Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 21.4 (2009): 6-6.

**55**

Daniel Latouche, "La vraie nature de... la Révolution tranquille," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 7.3 (1974): 525-536; Alain-Gustave Gagnon and Mary Beth Montcalm, *Québec: au-delà de la Révolution tranquille* (VLB, 1992); Paul-André Linteau, "Un débat historiographique: l'entrée du Québec dans la modernité et la signification de la Révolution tranquille," *Francofonie* 37 (1999): 73-87; and more recently, see David Leahy, "The Not So Quiet, Nor Short, Révolution Tranquille," *The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 403.

**56**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *'Avodat haAvodah*, vol. I, *Parshat Bo*, 185.

**57**

*Ibid.*, vol. II, *Parshat Shoftim*, 287: "...the Ba'al Shem Tov and his holy disciples purified the ether of the universe, and prepared the way for these days which are the footsteps of the messiah"; *Ibid.*, vol. II, *Parshat Ki Tezei*, 293: "...the principal of devotion of the Ba'al Shem Tov was to save this generation in the footsteps of the messiah"; *Ibid.*, vol. II, *Parshat Ve'Ethanah*, 257: "...Moses our teacher, worried how the Children of Israel would overcome the trials within the footsteps of the messiah."

**58**

*Ibid.*, *Parshat BeShallakh*, 198.

**59**

*Ibid.*, vol. II, *Parshat Shoftim* pp. 287; *Ibid.*, *Parshat Ki Tezei*, 297.

**60**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *Zemiort 'Avodat haLevi*, s.v. *Seder Ne'ilat haHag*, 123a-124b.

**61**

Rabbi Meshulam Feish Segal-Loewy, *'Avodat haLevi: Haggadah shel Pesah* (Boisbriand: *Kiryas Tosh*, 2005), 61a-62b.