Sacred Space and Mental Iconography: *Imago Templi* and Contemplation in Rhineland Jewish Pietism

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Temple as the Site of Contemplation

Historians of religion have long noted that a central component in the phenomenological constitution of religious belief is the notion of sacred space.[1] Together with sacred time, the idea of sacred space orients *homo*

Author's note: I offer this study on the role of sacred space in a later phase of Jewish spirituality as a token of admiration and friendship for my esteemed colleague with whom I share a deep and abiding interest in exploring the phenomenological texture of religious experience.

1. See G. van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1938) 393–402. The role of sacred space in the phenomenology of comparative religion has been featured prominently in the work of Mircea Eliade. In particular, Eliade has focused on the notion of sacred space as the *omphalos* or *umbilicus terrae*, the navel of the earth, which is the *axis mundi*, the cosmic center that connects heaven and earth. I here mention a representative sampling of Eliade's writings on this subject: *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958) 367–87; *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1959) 20–65; *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1961) 27–56; *A History of Religious Ideas* (3 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) 1.42–43; *Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts* (ed. D. Apostolos-Cappadona; New York: Crossroad, 1985) 105–29. For a relatively brief study of sacred space in Jewish sources, discussed from the particular vantage point of the mythology of exile and the homeland, see J. Z. Smith, "Earth and Gods," *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1978) 104–28. For a more extensive discussion of the notion of sacred space, particularly as it relates to ritual, see idem, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Also noteworthy are the studies on the transformation of the biblical notion of a sacred center in early rabbinic Judaism by J. Neusner, "Map Is without Territory: Mishnah's System of Sacrifice and Sanctuary," *HR* 19 (1979) 103–27, and B. M. Bokser, "Approaching Sacred Space," *HTR* 78 (1985) 279–99.

religiosus in the world both vertically and horizontally. This orienting tendency plays an especially significant role in terms of cultic activity, manifest primarily in the sacrificial rite or liturgical order, for the particular time and place of worship inform the mentality of the religious person and shape his or her lived experience of the sensible plane.[2] The life-world of the practioner is conditioned by the phenomenal structures of sacred space and sacred time; indeed, the convergence of these two categories is characteristic of religious intentionality, for the space that is perceived as sacred is so perceived on account of the designated times wherein that space is inhabited and consecrated, and, conversely, the designated times are perceived as sacred inasmuch as during those times one inhabits the particular space that is considered sacred.[3] It goes without saying that time and space can function independently, but from the perspective of ritual behavior the one is dependent on the other. A space can be deemed sacred even at times that are not designated as official moments of religious practice or devotion, just as the gravity of time may be sensed outside the boundaries of an accepted place. Nevertheless, the sacrality of space and time is derived from the coincidence of the two phenomenal structures in the lived experience of holiness that is central to religious consciousness. As Ernst Cassirer put it,

2. The significance of sacred space in ancient Israelite religion has been an ongoing concern in the scholarly work of Baruch Levine, to whom this collection of studies is dedicated. In this context I will mention only some of the more salient examples from Baruch Levine's *ouevre*: "On the Presence of God in Biblical Religion," in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough* (ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1970) 71–87; *In the Presence of the Lord: A Study of Cult and Some Cultic Terms in Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1974); "Biblical Temple," *Encyclopedia of Religion* (ed. M. Eliade; New York, 1986) 2.202–17; "An Essay on Prophetic Attitudes toward Temple and Cult in Biblical Israel," in *Minḥah le-Naḥum: Biblical and Other Studies Presented to Nahum M. Sarna in Honour of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. M. Brettler and M. Fishbane; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) 202–25; "*Lpny* YHWH: Phenomenology of the Open-Air Altar in Biblical Israel," *Biblical Archaeology Today* 2 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994) 196–205; "'The Lord Your God Accept You' (2 Samuel 24.13): The Altar Erected by David on the Threshing Floor of Araunah," *ErIsr* 24 (1994) 122–29 [Heb.]; "The Next Phase in Jewish Religion: The Land of Israel as Sacred Space," in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg* (ed. M. Cogan, B. L. Eichler, and J. H. Tigay; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 245–57; and "Mythic and Ritual Projections of Sacred Space in Biblical Literature," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 (1997) 59–70.

3. See D. M. Knipe, "The Temple in Image and Reality," in *Temple in Society* (ed. M. V. Fox; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1988) 105–38, esp. 107–8, 112–17. Knipe correctly notes that the intersection of sacred space and sacred time is a prominent feature of Eliade's work (see references above in n. 1). See also S. Cucchiari, "The Lords of the Culto: Transcending Time through Place in Sicilian Pentecostal Ritual," *JRelS* 4 (1990) 1–14; and M. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991) 58–65.

> the expression of temporal relations develops only through that of spatial relations. . . . All orientation in time presupposes orientation in space, and only as the latter develops and creates definite means of expression are temporal specifications distinguishable to feeling and consciousness.[4]

Basing himself on the philological insight of Hermann Usener, Cassirer goes on to say that the intersection of space and time is disclosed especially in the symbol of the temple, for the word *templum* is derived from *tempus*, which connotes a section of space or a section of time that is marked off.

In this study I will explore the motif of sacred space in the mystical theosophy of the Rhineland Jewish Pietists of the 12th and 13th centuries as it relates specifically to their discussions of the proper liturgical intention.[5] A number of scholars have discussed the mystical nature of the Pietistic treatment of prayer, noting in particular the relationship to parallel discussions in the emerging theosophy of kabbalistic literature.[6] I myself have addressed

4. E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (3 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955) 2.107.

5. I have discussed the German Pietists' attitude on prayer and the visualization of the glory in *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 188–269, esp. 195–214. The impetus to study anew the German Pietists' religious orientation from the perspective of sacred space came from a question addressed to me by Geoffrey Hartman when I delivered a lecture entitled "Worshiping Mental Icons: The Impact of Christian Culture on the Rhineland Jewish Pietists" at the Yale University Seminar on Jewish Studies on March 2, 1994. On that occasion I summarized my discussion of the mental iconization of God in German Pietistic sources, and I elaborated on possible links connecting Ḥaside Ashkenaz and Byzantine Christian theologians (discussed briefly in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 199 n. 43). Hartman expressed interest in the restriction of the contemplative exercise to a particular place as it emerged from some of the Pietistic texts that I had distributed on that occasion. His remarks prompted me to explore in more detail this dimension of the mental iconography in the relevant material.

6. See I. Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1993) 288–90; H. G. Enelow, "Kawwana: The Struggle for Inwardness in Judaism," in *Studies in Jewish Literature Issued in Honor of Professor Kaufmann Kohler on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. D. Philipson, D. Neumark, and J. Morgenstern; Berlin: Reimer, 1913) 97–100; G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken, 1956) 100–103, 116; idem, "The Concept of Kavvanah in the Early Kabbalah," in *Studies in Jewish Thought: An Anthology of German Jewish Scholarship* (ed. A. Jospe; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981) 163–64; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 195–96; G. Vajda, *L'Amour de Dieu dans la théologie juive du moyen age* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1957) 154–55; J. Dan, *The Esoteric Theology of Ashkenazi Ḥasidism* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1968) 140–41, 182–83 [Heb.]; idem, "The Emergence of Mystical Prayer," in *Studies in Jewish Mysticism* (ed. J. Dan and F. Talmage; Cambridge, Mass.: Association for Jewish Studies, 1982) 85–120; idem, "The Intention of Prayer from the Tradition of R. Judah the Pious," *Daʿat* 10 (1983) 47–56 [Heb.]; idem,

this topic as part of my treatment of the role of visionary experience in the Pietists' theological treatises.[7] The present study builds upon and further elaborates some points that I only discussed tangentially in my previous work. In particular, I will focus on the role of sacred space in the imaginative visualization of the enthroned glory that figures as a prominent feature of the Pietistic ideal of intention in prayer. Moreover, as I shall argue, the visionary praxis cultivated by the Pietists is predicated on the *imago templi*, the imaginal symbol of the transcendental reality (the celestial Temple) experienced concretely in the heart of the worshiper.[8]

Prayer (in the classical form inherited by medieval poets, mystics, and rabbis) necessitates conjuring an image of the glory sitting upon the throne in the heavenly abode, but the locus of that image is in the human imagination. From that vantage point there is an indisputable connection between the process of contemplation and the image of the Temple. Here it is in order to recall that the Latin *contemplari* is etymologically derived from the word *templum* (Greek τέμενος from the root τεμ 'to cut'), the space in heaven marked off for augural observation.[9] The Temple, therefore, is the

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"Pesaq ha-Yirah veha-Emunah and the Intention of Prayer in Ashkenazi Hasidic Esotericism," *Frankfurter judaistische Beiträge* 19 (1991–92) 185–215; idem, "Prayer as Text and Prayer as Mystical Experience," in *Torah and Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Arthur Hyman* (ed. R. Link-Salinger; New York: Shengold, 1992) 33–47; I. G. Marcus, *Piety and Society: The Jewish Pietists of Medieval Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 1981) 98–100, 117–18; idem, "The Devotional Ideals of Ashkenazic Pietism," in *Jewish Spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages* (ed. A. Green; New York: Crossroad, 1986) 356–66, esp. 360–64; idem, "Prayer Gestures in German Hasidism," in *Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism: International Symposium Held in Frankfurt a.M. 1991* (ed. K. E. Grözinger and J. Dan; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995) 44–59; A. Farber, *The Concept of the Merkabah in Thirteenth-Century Jewish Esotericism: 'Sod ha-'Egoz' and Its Development* (Ph.D. dissertation, Hebrew University, 1986) 237–44 [Heb.]; M. Idel, "Intention in Prayer in the Beginning of Kabbalah: Between Germany and Provence," in *Ben Porat Yosef: Studies Presented to Rabbi Dr. Joseph Safran* (ed. B. Safran and E. Safran; Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1992) 5–14 [Heb.]; idem, "Prayer in the Provençal Kabbalah," *Tarbiz* 62 (1993) 265–86, esp. 270–72 [Heb.]; D. Abrams, "'The Secret of Secrets': The Concept of the Divine Glory and the Intention of Prayer in the Writings of R. Eleazar of Worms," *Da'at* 34 (1995) 61–81 [Heb.]. See also G. D. Cohen, "The Hebrew Crusade Chronicles and the Ashkenazic Tradition," in *Minḥah le-Naḥum: Biblical and Other Studies Presented to Nahum M. Sarna in Honour of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. M. Brettler and M. Fishbane; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) 36–53.

7. See my study *Through a Speculum That Shines*.

8. My use of the term *imago templi* and the description of its phenomenological content are indebted to the discussion in H. Corbin, "The *Imago Templi* in Confrontation with Secular Norms," *Temple and Contemplation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986) 263–390.

9. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 2.99–102.

sacred precinct consecrated to a divine being. In Jewish sources as well there is an inextricable nexus between visual contemplation of the enthroned glory and the Temple. With the gradual decline of the earthly Temple and the ascendancy of the celestial Temple, the focus of that contemplative vision changes accordingly. To contemplate is to set one's sight on the Temple in heaven, the place that determines the field of one's spiritual vision. The heavenly Temple, however, is visible only through the mirror of the imagination. Hence, one may speak of the human imagination (typically located in the heart) as the sacred site of vision, as the consecrated space of contemplation. God and human are united and mutually transformed through the symbol of the *imago templi*, for the divine is rendered accessible to human imagination in anthropomorphic form and the human imagination is sacralized as the prism through which the divine is manifest. In the *imago templi*, therefore, the divine becomes human and the human divine.

The imaginal representation of God in the *imago templi* embraces the realm of myth, which I relate to a symbolic form that overcomes the epistemic binaries reified by rational discourse, real versus imagined, somatic versus psychic, external versus internal, experienced versus interpreted.[10]

10. My understanding of myth and symbol as a unitary consciousness that overcomes the dualism between inside and outside, subjective and objective, reflects the thought of Cassirer. See *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 1.178; 2.20, 23, 99. Following Cassirer, moreover, I use the word "symbol" to refer to a "structural form" that articulates the experience of mythical consciousness in terms of distinctive cultural configurations. In my view, therefore, it is incorrect to set up a dichotomy between myth and symbol. On the contrary, the symbol, which is an imaginative construct, is the linguistic expression of that which is experienced ontically as myth. In contrast to the Romantic notion of symbol, to which Scholem was indebted, I do not posit an unbridgeable chasm separating the symbol and that which is symbolized, for the latter can be experienced and expressed only through the former, even if the symbolic characterization of the one reality is multivalent. See my discussion in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, pp. 61–67. For a recent attempt to distinguish myth and symbol in kabbalistic literature, see Y. Liebes, "Myth vs. Symbol in the Zohar and in Lurianic Kabbalah," in *Essential Papers on Kabbalah* (ed. L. Fine; New York: New York University Press, 1995) 212–42. Liebes's distinction between *symbolic* and *mythic* is rooted in a misconception about the symbol as distinct from the *real*. In his view, the *mythic* signifies an actual event, something ontically real, whereas the *symbolic* is a formal representation of that reality. In his effort to respond to the dominance of the use of symbol to characterize kabbalistic hermeneutics, Liebes has dichotomized symbol and myth in a way that, I believe, is inappropriate. The examples he adduces of what he calls the *symbolic* (as opposed to the *mythic*) also embrace an ontic reality, actualized in the imagination, that would justify the use of the term *mythic*. The inherent nexus of myth and symbol has also been affirmed by Paul Ricoeur, who has influenced my own thinking. See P. Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon, 1967) 18; idem, *The Conflict of Interpretations* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974) 28; R. Kearney, "Paul Ricoeur and the Hermeneutic Imagination," in *The Narrative*

With respect to the particular case that I am discussing here, liturgical worship in a theistic context is impossible without an image of God, but God has no image. To pass from the theological presumption of an imageless God to the phenomenological configuration of an imagined God, it is necessary to posit the symbol of the *imago templi*. That is, within the imaginary edifice of the celestial Temple, which conforms to the structure of the imagination, the incorporeal God assumes the shape of the imaginal body. The imaging of the celestial Temple, however, occurs only in the spatial delimitation of the synagogue. The visualization of God as the glory enthroned in the heavenly realm takes place in the sacred space woven by the words of prayer.

Intentionality in Prayer and the Visual Imaging of Šekhinah

The symbolic notion of *imago templi* that evolved in the theosophy of the Rhineland Jewish Pietists is in great measure presaged in rabbinic statements on the nature of intention (*kawwanah*) in prayer. Inasmuch as my theoretical assumption is that the gap separating the rabbinic and the medieval mystical conceptions of *kawwanah* should be substantially narrowed, it is in order to begin with a very brief review of the analysis of the relevant rabbinic materials that I have given in great detail elsewhere.[11] To cast my own view in bold relief, let me note that various scholars, most notably Joshua Abelson, have previously argued that the medieval kabbalistic notion of *kawwanah* made explicit what was implied in the classical rabbinic sources. More specifically, according to Abelson, the common element in the rabbinic and the kabbalistic discussions on *kawwanah* is the presumption that the latter entails the "abandonment . . . of all mundane thoughts and of all physical necessities, in the unalloyed consciousness of a union with God."[12] While I,

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Path: The Later Works of Paul Ricoeur (ed. T. P. Kemp and D. Rasmussen; Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1989) 1–31; R. A. Champagne, *The Structuralists on Myth: An Introduction* (New York: Garland, 1992) 13, 46–47, 75; E. Deutsch, "Truth and Mythology," in *Myths and Fictions* (ed. S. Biderman and B.-A. Scharfstein; Leiden: Brill, 1993) 46–47.

11. See my "Iconic Visualization and the Imaginal Body of God: The Role of Intention in the Rabbinic Conception of Prayer," *Modern Theology* 12 (1996) 137–62. The reader interested in the fuller philological and textual support of my argument presented very briefly here should consult this study.

12. J. Abelson, *The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1912) 327–28. Enelow ("Kawwana," 87) suggests that the rabbinic comments regarding the practice of lingering on the word *ʾeḥad* in the *Šemaʿ* (*y. Ber.* 2.1, 4a; *b. Ber.* 13b) "offers a glimpse of another aspect of the idea of kawwana and of a later stage of its evolution: intense pondering of the words of prayer and of their mystic content." See also D. Hedegård, *Seder R. Amram Gaon: Hebrew Text with Critical Apparatus, Translation with Notes and Introduction* (Lund: Lindstedts Universitetsbokhandel, 1951) xxxix–xl.

too, assume that the rabbinic and the kabbalistic conceptions of *kawwanah* reflect a continuity of tradition,[13] the shared element in my opinion is not union with God but the iconic visualization of the immediate or direct presence of God.[14] With respect to this issue I posit a phenomenological affinity between the writings of the German Pietists, the theosophic kabbalists, and the prophetic kabbalists.[15] I am not denying that unitive experiences were

13. My approach should be contrasted with that of Scholem, who assumed that the kabbalistic notion of *kawwanah* was an innovation imposed upon the rabbinic texts. See Scholem, "Concept of Kavvanah," 163; idem, *Major Trends*, 34; idem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken, 1965) 126, 133; idem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974) 176. For a critique of the Scholemian position, see also I. Gruenwald, "Writing, Script, and the Explicit Name: Magic, Spirituality, and Mysticism," in *Massu'ot: Studies in Kabbalistic Literature and Jewish Philosophy in Memory of Prof. Ephraim Gottlieb* (ed. M. Oron and A. Goldreich; Jerusalem: Bialik, 1994) 75–98 [Heb.].

14. M. Kadushin (*The Rabbinic Mind* [New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1952] 208–9 and 226–27) remarks that the statements in rabbinic literature that correlate the presence of God and the recitation of prayer are indicative of a "normal mysticism," which is defined by Kadushin as the "experience of God's nearness." See idem, *Worship and Ethics* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964). For a critique of Kadushin's position, see E. Schweid, *Judaism and Mysticism according to Gershom Scholem: A Critical Analysis and Programmatic Discussion* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) 101. Schweid concedes that the prayer regulated by early rabbinic sages contained the experience of the presence of God, but he rejects labeling this mysticism. See, by contrast, A. Goldberg, "Service of the Heart: Liturgical Aspects of Synagogue Worship," in *Standing before God: Studies on Prayer in Scriptures and in Tradition with Essays in Honor of John M. Oesterreicher* (ed. A. Finkel and L. Frizzell; New York: Ktav, 1981) 195–211, esp. 201–4. Although Goldberg argues that the synagogue did not replace the Temple as the "visible sacred center" of God's presence (p. 201), he does acknowledge that worshipers "prepare a throne for God in their midst" and that prayer inculcates the "reality of faith in, or the mystical experience of, God's presence" (p. 203). In another passage, however, Goldberg differentiates the face-to-face encounter presupposed by liturgy and the mystical withdrawal entailed by internalization (p. 209). My own analysis agrees with Goldberg's former characterization, but I have attributed a more significant role to iconic visualization in the encountering of the divine presence.

15. On the visualization of the divine form in the German Pietistic literature, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 195–214. On the theosophic kabbalah, see ibid., pp. 288–306, 317–25. In the ecstatic kabbalah as well, the meditative path leads to a visualization of God in anthropomorphic form. Two striking examples of this phenomenon from the writings of Abraham Abulafia may be found in *Ḥayye ha-ʿOlam ha-Ba'*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1582, fol. 52a, and *Sefer ha-Ḥesheq*, MS New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America Mic. 1801, fol. 9a. In the ecstatic treatise by Judah Albotini (*Sullam ha-ʿAliyyah* [ed. J. E. Parush: Jerusalem: Shaare Ziv, 1989] 73), the disembodied soul is instructed to imagine sitting in heaven before God's splendor and to imagine God sitting before it in the image of an enthroned king. Mention

cultivated by medieval Jewish mystics. My point is, rather, that the experiences of union served the ultimate aim of facilitating the visual apprehension of God as an imaginal body.[16] The mindfulness achieved by the meditative practices affirmed in pietistic and kabbalistic texts is not a state of abstract emptiness, a peeling away of all material form from consciousness to attain the illumination of formless absorption.[17] It is quite the opposite: contemplation eventuates in the polishing of the mind so that reflected in the mirror of the imagination is the concrete image of the divine anthropos.[18]

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should also be made of Ḥayyim Vital, *Shaʿare Qedushah*, IV.2 (*Ketavim Ḥadashim le-Rabbenu Ḥayyim Vital* [Jerusalem: Ahavat Shalom, 1988] 12), which reflects a synthesis of the ecstatic and the theosophic traditions. After Vital characterizes *hitbodedut* as the radical stripping away of all things corporeal, he cites a passage from the anonymous kabbalistic treatise, *Maʿarekhet ha-ʾElohut*, which deals with the esoteric gnosis of the *Šiʿur Qomah*. The ultimate secret of the prophetic experience, therefore, is the imaginative representation of the divine as an anthropos. On the role of the anthropomorphic image in the visual technique of the ecstatic kabbalah, see M. Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988) 95–100.

16. My understanding contrasts sharply with Scholem's characterization of meditation as it appears in kabbalistic literature from the middle of the 13th century as "contemplation by the intellect, whose objects are neither images nor visions, but non-sensual matters such as words, names, or thoughts" (*Kabbalah*, 369). See also Scholem's characterization in *Major Trends*, 276–78; *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 243–44, 414–19; and *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York: Schocken, 1971) 217–18.

17. Compare the description of Buddhist meditation in S. W. Laycock, *Mind as Mirror and the Mirroring of Mind: Buddhist Reflections on Western Phenomenology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) 76–78. For an approach to Jewish mystical texts more congenial to the model that I am rejecting, see D. C. Matt, "Ayin: The Concept of Nothingness in Jewish Mysticism," in *The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy* (ed. R. K. C. Forman; New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 121–59. I, of course, recognize that there are apophatic statements in Jewish mystical literature, but I would argue that the encounter with the divine nothing is an experience of God's presence as absence rather than an experience of the absence of God's presence. See my "Negative Theology and Positive Assertion in the Early Kabbalah," *Daʿat* 32–33 (1994) v–xxii. A similar argument has been made by Bernard McGinn for the apophatic mystics in the history of Western Christianity; see following note.

18. My orientation to the history of Jewish mysticism bears a close resemblance to Bernard McGinn's approach to the history of Western Christian mysticism, which he has aptly called *The Presence of God*. Contrary to a widely held view, McGinn argues that "union with God" is not the most central category for understanding mysticism. The mystical element in Christianity relates to the "belief and practices that concerns the preparation for, the consciousness of, and the reaction to what can be described as the immediate or direct presence of God." See *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (New York: Crossroad, 1991) xvii and xix; idem, *The*

In my study of the rabbinic idea of *kawwanah*, I have argued that the intention implied by this technical term in several key passages involves the formation of an iconic image of God within the mind (or heart). The term *kawwanah*, therefore, can refer to an internal state of consciousness by means of which the worshiper creates a mental icon of God, the function of which is to locate the divine presence in space. The rabbinic ideal is captured in the dictum of Simeon the Pious reported by Ḥana ben Bizna:

> The one who prays must see himself as if the *Šekhinah* were opposite him, as it says, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8).[19]

Even though the term *kawwanah* is not used in this dictum, it is reasonable to conclude that the process described by Simeon the Pious is related to the intention required by one who prays. This conjecture is borne out by an examination of the medieval codes of Jewish law and ritual, which demonstrate that various rabbinic commentators interpreted the term *kawwanah* (when applied to prayer) in light of the teaching of Simeon the Pious. Thus, for example, in the halakhic code of Isaac Alfasi and in the *Sefer ha-'Eshkol* of Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne, the dictum that the worshiper must direct his heart to heaven[20] is followed by the dictum that the worshiper must see himself as if the *Šekhinah* were facing him.[21] The juxtaposition of these two dicta implies that the one illumines the other, i.e., the directing of the heart to God entails the conjuring of an anthropomorphic image of the *Šekhinah*. Further evidence for this is found in the paraphrase of the words of Simeon the Pious by Rashi, who explains the opinion attributed to Rava that at the conclusion of the *'amidah* one must bow first to his left. Since the worshiper is standing opposite the divine Presence, his left side is the right side of God. Rashi comments:

> He who prays must see himself as if the *Šekhinah* were facing him, as it says, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8).[22]

Interestingly enough, even Maimonides, the philosopher who unequivocally and repeatedly denied the morphic nature of God, defined *kawwanah* in part on the basis of the dictum of Simeon the Pious:

> A person should empty his heart from all thoughts and look upon himself as if he were standing before the *Šekhinah*.[23]

Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great through the 12th Century (New York: Crossroad, 1994) x–xi.

19. *B. Sanh.* 22a.

20. *B. Ber.* 31a.

21. *Hilkhot Rav Alfasi*, printed in standard editions of the Babylonian Talmud, *Ber.* 22b; *Sefer ha-'Eshkol* (ed. S. Albeck and C. Albeck; 2d ed.; Jerusalem: n.p., 1984) 33.

22. Rashi's commentary to *b. Yoma* 53b, s.v. *la-śemo'l didakh.*

23. *Mishneh Torah*, Hilkhot Tefillah 4.16. Cf. ibid. 5.4, where Maimonides paraphrases the teaching attributed to R. Yose in *b. Yebam.* 105b in the following words: "When a person rises to pray . . . he should cast his eyes below as if he were looking at

Elaborating this line of interpretation, Jacob ben Asher codified the requirement to pray with proper intention in the following way:

> It has been taught, "he who prays should direct his heart, as it says, 'You will make their hearts firm, You will incline Your ear' (Ps 10:17)." The explanation of this is that he should concentrate on the meaning of the words that he brings out with his lips, and he should contemplate as if the *Šekhinah* were facing him, as it says, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8). He should arouse the intention and remove all the thoughts that burden him until the point that his mind and his intention are pure in his worship. . . . Thus the pietists and men of action would concentrate and intend in their prayer until they attained the stripping away of corporeality and the augmentation of the rational spirit, thereby proximating the level of prophecy.[24]

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the ground and his heart should be turned above as if he were standing in heaven." Maimonides' acquiescence to the psychological necessity of iconic representation in theistic worship is implied in his remark in the *Guide of the Perplexed* III:32, that the demand to abolish the cult of sacrifices entirely in the time of Moses would be equivalent to the appearance of a prophet in his own time who would call upon the Jewish people to worship God solely in meditation. Such silent meditation is, of course, the ideal of intellectual worship that Maimonides sets forth in *Guide* III:51. He describes such worship in a mystical-pietistic vein as emptying the mind of everything but the contemplation of the intellectual bond that connects the human soul and God. (Cf. Maimonides' description of the prophet in *Mishneh Torah*, Hilkhot Yesode Torah 7.1 and 4.) Although Maimonides characterizes this state of intellectual apprehension, which is best attained in seclusion, as an intense and passionate love (*'ishq*), and he utilizes the erotic language of the kiss (derived from Cant 1:2) to describe it, he is clear that this language is merely figurative and does not relate in any way to the body or the senses. See S. Rawidowicz, *Studies in Jewish Thought* (ed. N. N. Glatzer; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974) 295–96; R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1977) 57 n. 1; D. R. Blumenthal, "Maimonides: Prayer, Worship, and Mysticism," in *Approaches to Judaism in Medieval Times* (ed. D. R. Blumenthal; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 3.1–16. The lofty philosophical notion of contemplation may be a truly aniconic form of worship, but normative theistic worship is decidedly iconic inasmuch as it is predicated on forming an anthropomorphic image of God. See M. Fox, *Interpreting Maimonides: Studies in Methodology, Metaphysics, and Moral Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 297–321; G. J. Blidstein, *Prayer in Maimonidean Halakha* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1994) 77–86 [Heb.]; and I. Twersky, "'And One Should Regard Oneself as if Facing the Lord': Intention in Prayer according to Maimonides," in *Knesset Ezra: Literature and Life in the Synagogue: Studies Presented to Ezra Fleischer* (ed. S. Elizur et al.; Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1994) 47–67 [Heb.].

24. *Ṭur*, *'Oraḥ Ḥayyim* §98; cf. *Shulḥan 'Arukh*, *'Oraḥ Ḥayyim*, §98.1; Israel ibn al-Nakawa, *Menorat ha-Ma'or* (ed. H. G. Enelow; New York: Bloch, 1930) 2.116–17. Al-Nakawa emphasizes the semantic aspect of *kawwanah*, that is, the need to concentrate on the meaning of the words that one utters, and he refers to this intentionality as the 'foundation of faith' *yesod ha-'emunah*. On the need to focus on the meaning of

In the above passage, Jacob ben Asher translates the implications of the earlier discussions on *kawwanah* in talmudic literature into the idiom of medieval spirituality, reflecting a synthesis of scriptural and philosophical pietism. Thus the traditional idea of *kawwanah* is linked with the technical term *hitbodedut*, which connotes both physical seclusion and mental concentration.[25] Moreover, the placing of the obligation to concentrate on the meaning of the words that one utters right next to the need to contemplate the visual presence of the *Šekhinah* suggests that the former involves a technical praxis that results in the latter. According to this reading, the citation of Ps 16:8 takes on new significance: *šiwwiti yhwh lenegddi tamid* means that one should concentrate on the letters of the Tetragrammaton, and this contemplation causes the formation of an anthropomorphic image of the *Šekhinah* before one's eyes.[26] Support for my interpretation may be gathered from another comment of Jacob ben Asher:

> One should intend in one's blessings the meaning of the words that he brings out from his mouth. When he mentions the [divine] name he should concentrate on the meaning of its pronunciation with *'alef dalet* [i.e., Adonai], from

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words as part of the proper *kawwanah* in prayer, cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. J. Wistinetzki; Frankfurt a.M.: Mekize Nirdamim, 1924) §1590. The importance of comprehension to intentionality is underscored by the position affirmed by the author of *Sefer Ḥasidim* that it is preferrable for one who does not comprehend Hebrew to say the *Šema'* and its blessings in a language that he comprehends. For a similar position, see ibid., 11 (this passage is from *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*, the section of *Sefer Ḥasidim* assumed to have been written by Samuel the Pious). The value of intentionality is emphasized time and again in the Pietistic writings, and it is the moral of the well-known exemplum concerning the nontraditional prayer of the herdsman (*ro'eh behemot*) in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §§5–6 (again part of *Sefer ha-Yir'ah*). For a detailed analysis of this tale, see T. Alexander-Frizer, *The Pious Sinner: Ethics amd Aesthetics in the Medieval Hasidic Narrative* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 58–86.

25. See M. Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988) 103–69; idem, "*Hitbodedut* as Concentration in Jewish Philosophy," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 7 (1988) 39–60 [Heb.]; P. Fenton, "La 'Hitbodedut' chez les premiers Qabbalists en Orient et chez les Soufis," in *Prière, mystique et Judaïsme* (ed. R. Goetschel; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1987) 133–57. On the ecstatic element implicit in the passage from Jacob ben Asher and its important influence on subsequent Jewish mysticism, including Beshtian Hasidism, see G. Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts of the Kabbalah* (New York: Schocken, 1991) 291 n. 91; Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 163 n. 136; idem, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) 64 and 281–82 n. 109.

26. A similar application of Ps 16:8 is well attested in kabbalistic literature. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 199 n. 42. Needless to say, the number of textual examples that illustrate the point could have been greatly multiplied. I hope to elaborate on this point in a monograph on incarnation and the imaginal body in Jewish sources, which will be an expanded version of my study referred to above, n. 11.

> the expression *ʾadnut* ('lordship'), for He is the lord of everything (*ʾadon ha-kol*), and he should also concentrate on how it is written with *yod heʾ* [i.e., YHWH], from the expression *hawwayah*, for He is, was, and will be. And when he mentions [the name] *ʾelohim* he should intend that He is powerfully strong for He has power in the upper and the lower realms. The expression *ʾel* has the meaning of power and strength as [in the verse] 'he carried away the nobles of the land' *we-ʾet ʾele ha-ʾāreṣ lāqaḥ* (Ezek 17:13).[27]

The likelihood that Jacob ben Asher is drawing upon a mystical praxis, based on the notion that proper concentration is linked to the different names of God, is enhanced by a comment in Abraham ben Nathan of Lunel:

> I have found in the esoteric books (*sefarim penimiyyim*) that when one blesses the Lord he should concentrate in his heart on the present, past, and future, just as it says,[28] 'the Lord reigns, the Lord reigned, and the Lord will reign forever' *yhwh melekh yhwh malakh yhwh yimlokh leʿolam waʿed*. Through the [letter technique of] *aʺt baʺsh*[29] [the three occurrences of the Tetragrammaton] are *mṣpʺṣ mṣpʺṣ mṣpʺṣ*, but the matter is only transmitted to the humble.[30]

Further evidence for such an understanding of the concept of *kawwanah* may be gathered from the writings of the Rhineland Jewish Pietists. One passage in particular from the classical work of pietistic ethics and religious devotion, *Sefer Ḥasidim*, is worthy of note. Reflecting on why there are three divine names mentioned in the *Šĕmaʿ*, *yhwh ʾĕlohênû yhwh*, preceded by one name in the introductory remark *ʾel melek neʾeman*,[31] Judah the Pious comments:

> There are four names because when people sit in the four corners of the synagogue each one must intend as if the face of the *Šekhinah* were facing him, so that a person will not say since it is facing me and I am in the east and it is in the west, how can it face every side in one moment? It is written, "I will look upon you" (Lev 26:9), each and every person must direct his heart as if the

27. *Ṭur*, ʿOraḥ Ḥayyim, §5.

28. This liturgical expression (cf. *Maḥzor la-Yamim Noraʾim* [2 vols.; ed. D. S. Goldschmidt; Jerusalem: Koren, 1970] 1.77–78 and 199–202) is based on different biblical verses. Cf. Ps 10:16 (*yhwh melek*); Ps 93:1 (*yhwh mālāk*; cf. 1 Chr 16:31); and Exod 15:18 (*yhwh yimlōk lĕʿōlām wāʿed*; cf. Ps 146:10).

29. This is an ancient hermeneutical technique of letter substitution, which became especially popular in medieval pietistic and mystical groups. The first letter, *ʾalep*, corresponds to the last letter, *taw*, and so on. According to this technique, the letters of the Tetragrammaton, *yhwh*, correspond to *mṣpʺṣ*.

30. *Sefer ha-Manhig* (2 vols.; ed. Y. Raphael; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1978) 1.85. Cf. Aaron ha-Kohen of Lunel, *ʾOrḥot Ḥayyim* (2 vols.; Florence, 1750) 1.4d; *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ* (ed. M. Hershler and Y. A. Hershler; Jerusalem: Machon ha-Rav Hershler, 1992) 131.

31. On the historical development of the saying of this expression as an introduction to the *Šemaʿ*, see I. Ta-Shema, *Early Franco-German Ritual and Custom* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992) 285–98 [Heb.].

> *Šekhinah* were facing him, and with respect to the *Šekhinah* it is not appropriate to say, how is it possible for it to turn to four directions at once?[32]

At work in this passage is a central idea that informs the mystical theosophy of the Pietists: utterance of the divine names results in the visual manifestation of the divine glory.[33] In this particular context, this praxis is related more specifically to the *kawwanah* that the worshiper must have in the synagogue. This *kawwanah* brings about the optical representation of the *Šekhinah*.[34] Every worshiper must imagine that the *Šekhinah* is facing him within the sacred space of the synagogue when he stands to pray, a central motif in the writings of Ḥaside Ashkenaz to which I shall return.

I surmise that Jacob ben Asher, like Abraham ben Nathan, derived his understanding of *kawwanah* related to the divine names from esoteric works such as those transmitted and/or composed by the German Pietists.[35] Whatever the direct source, it may be concluded that, according to Jacob ben Asher, the meditational praxis of *kawwanah* involves concentration on the names of God that results in a state of disembodiment and the concomitant intensification of the rational spirit, which proximates the experience of prophecy. Jacob ben Asher astutely understood the morphological nature of *kawwanah* implied by the dictum of Simeon the Pious. The ultimate goal of contemplation may be the separation of the intellect from the body, but the consciousness fostered by intention in prayer is predicated on the iconic visualization of the divine Presence in bodily terms. The ascetic negation of the physical body allows for the ocular apprehension of God's imaginal body.[36]

32. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §512. For a slightly different version of the text, cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. R. Margaliot; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1957) §808. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 362: "The face of the *Šekhinah* is in all four directions of the world at one time."

33. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 234–54. The divine names are identified as the visions of the glory in Eleazar of Worms, *Sode Razayya* (ed. I. Kamelhar; Bilgoraj, 1936) 35. Cf. ibid., 60:

> Everything is sealed with His name. Therefore the beginning [of the words] *yiśmĕḥû haššāmayim wĕ-tāgēl hā-'āreṣ* (Ps 96:11) [spells] the name [*yhwh*], for the [name of the] Creator is written *yhwh*, His name is present in everything and He manifests His glory as it seems appropriate before Him, "It is I, the Lord, who made everything" (Isa 44:24).

34. In other passages the ideal of *kawwanah* is upheld, but there is no specific indication that the term implies a visualization of the *Šekhinah*. Cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §§441–43, 445–46, 451, 456, 466, 475–76, 481, 1577, 1587.

35. On the development of this technique in early theosophic kabbalah, see M. Idel, "On the Intention of the Eighteen Benedictions according to R. Isaac the Blind," in *Massu'ot*, 25–52 [Heb.]. Idel mentions the passage from *Sefer ha-Manhig* on p. 32, and in n. 50 he lists various scholars who have considered the mystical element in Abraham ben Nathan.

36. A similar argument can be made for the history of Christianity: the theological doctrine of incarnation provided the psychological impetus for the divinization of

Iconic Visualization of the Imageless Creator in Ḥaside Ashkenaz

The Kalonymide Pietists developed an intriguing and rather sophisticated phenomenology of liturgical worship based on the idea that the imageless and formless Creator takes shape through the image that is placed by the divine will in the human imagination. The imagination is thus comparable to a mirror that reflects in its ideal transparency the form that manifests itself. The radiance of the glory can shine only within the pure heart in the same manner that the face of a person will be clear only in a mirror that is luminously bright.[37] Given the identification of the imagination as the heart, the Pietists assign esoteric significance to the rabbinic idiom for prayer, *ʿavodah she-ba-lev*, that is, worship through the heart is worship by means of the imagination. The point is underscored in the following observation of Eleazar of Worms:

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the human body, for just as the divine miracuously became human, the human could become divine, particularly through renunciation of the physical or the transfiguration of the carnal body into a psychic or spiritual body. Ascetism, therefore, sanctifies the coarse body, transforming it into a temple of God or a limb of Christ's body. Subjugation of the human body allowed for the symbolic retrieval of the body to characterize spiritual realities. See J. Gager, "Body-Symbols and Social Reality: Resurrection, Incarnation, and Asceticism in Early Christianity," *Religion* 12 (1982) 345–64; P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) 31, 174–77, 235–37; A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 68–69; C. Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 31–69; idem, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone, 1991) 119–50; idem, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995) 59–114; D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). On sexual asceticism and erotic spirituality in theosophic kabbalistic literature, see Scholem, *Major Trends*, 235; G. Vajda, "Continence, mariage et vie mystique selon la doctrine du judaïsme," *Mystique et continence: Travaux scientifiques du VII^e Congrès International d'Avon* (Bruges: Desclee, 1952) 82–92; Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, 38–83, 113–18, 133–39, 149–52, 161–65; M. Pachter, "The Concept of *Devekut* in the Homiletical Ethical Writings of 16th Century Safed," *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature* (2 vols.; ed. I. Twersky; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984) 2.200–210; L. Fine, "Purifying the Body in the Name of the Soul: The Problem of the Body in Sixteenth-Century Kabbalah," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective* (ed. H. Eilberg-Schwartz; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992) 117–42; D. Biale, *Eros and the Jews: From Biblical Israel to Contemporary America* (New York: Basic Books, 1992) 113–18. Regarding asceticism in the ecstatic kabbalah, see Idel, *Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 143–44.

37. The analogy is used explicitly in *Sefer ha-Kavod*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1566, fol. 30a. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 713.

> One must concentrate on prayer with a complete heart, as it is written, "[loving the Lord your God] and serving Him with all your heart" (Deut 11:13), this refers to prayer, as it is written in Daniel, "[Your God] whom you serve so regularly" (6:17). This is to inform you that for this everything was created, for the sake of this every man has been created, for the eyes of the worshiper are on earth and his heart is toward heaven.[38]

The conclusion of this statement is a paraphrase of the saying attributed to R. Yose, "the one who prays should cast his eyes below and his heart above."[39] I shall return to the use of this talmudic dictum in the Pietistic sources at a later stage of my analysis, but at this juncture it is important to note that, phenomenologically, the Pietists discerned that a theistic conception of prayer necessitated endowing the formless God with form. Prayer is, after all, dwelling in the presence of the divine glory.[40] Thus, in the opening section of his commentary on the liturgy, Eleazar reflects on the change in tense in the traditional formula of a blessing from the second to the third person:

> It is necessary to explain that at the beginning of the prayer of every person the Holy One, blessed be He, is found, as it says, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8), and another verse says, "in every place where I cause My name to be mentioned I will come to you and bless you" (Exod 20:21). . . . It

38. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 483.

39. *B. Yebam.* 105b. I would like to take this opportunity to correct two errors that I made with respect to this talmudic passage in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 202 n. 53. First, I inadvertently cited the source as *b. Yebam.* 108b instead of 105b. Second, I mistakenly attributed the dictum to Abba instead of R. Yose. The latter is indeed referred to as *ʾabbaʾ* in that context, for Ishmael ben Yose is the one who transmits the dictum in the name of his father.

40. It is precisely this phenomenological aspect of prayer that underlies Gerson Cohen's attempt to view the Hebrew Crusade chronicles as part of the genre of Ashkenazic liturgical commentary. That is, the chronicles reflect this literary genre because their authors wished to convey the idea that the martyrs occupied a place in the inner sanctum of the divine glory. See Cohen, "The Hebrew Crusade Chronicles and the Ashkenazic Tradition," 36–53. Cf. the passages translated in R. Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 281–82 and 286. On the coronation of Jewish martyrs, which I assume implies a form of angelification, cf. the description in the addition of Eleazar of Worms to the dirge composed by Qalonymous ben Judah of Mainz, *mî yittēn rōʾšî mayim*, *Seder ha-Qinnot ha-Meforash le-Tishʿah be-ʾAv* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 1988) 230: *kelule keter ʿal roʾšam leʿaṭṭerah we-ʿal ʾaddire qehal maggenṣaʾ ha-hadurah*. The additional part is published with the title *qehillot ha-qodesh* in *Shirat ha-Rokeaḥ: The Poems of Rabbi Eleazar ben Yehudah of Worms* (ed. I. Meiseles; Jerusalem, 1993) 268–70 [Heb.]; the afore-cited passage occurs on p. 269. On the relationship between the behavioral patterns exemplified by Jewish martyrs in 1096 and the attitudes toward the divine will expressed by Ḥaside Ashkenaz, see Chazan, *European Jewry*, 214–16. Regarding the impact of the First Crusade on Ḥaside Ashkenaz, see also the discussion in ibid., 143–47, and references to the studies of Dan and Marcus cited on pp. 325–26 n. 14.

> is appropriate that the *Šekhinah* will be seen by a person in the beginning but more than that would be a disgrace for the *Šekhinah*.[41]

Similarly, in *Sod Maʿaseh Bereʾshit*, Eleazar writes:

> When a person makes a blessing he should intend with his heart, as it written, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8). Therefore, they established [the liturgical formula] "blessed are You, O Lord," in the manner of someone talking to his friend.[42]

Eleazar repeats this theme in slightly different terms in *Shaʿare ha-Sod ha-Yiḥud we-ha-ʾEmunah*:

> When you rise to pray, know before whom you stand, and your thoughts should only be about the Creator of the world who is standing opposite you. . . . When you say, "blessed are You," do not think about the glory but only about the Creator, blessed be He;[43] you will come to see, and to discern Him and to attest to Him through His glorious name . . . through His name you will know His unity, His actions, and the desire of His will, and then you will know how to worship Him.[44]

The grammatical syntax of the blessing reveals a more general secret about liturgy: worship is predicated on the very possibility of standing visually in the presence of God, if only for a limited duration. From that vantage point idolatry—the attribution of visible form to the divine—is an inevitable consequence of theistic worship.[45] Significantly, according to the conclusion of

41. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 2. Similar language is used by Eleazar in a liturgical commentary extant in MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fol. 2a.

42. *Sefer Raziʾel* (Amsterdam, 1701) 8b. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 143: "'I will extol You' (Ps 145:1), as if he were speaking to Him, for he is facing Him, 'I have set the Lord always before me' (Ps 16:8)." Ibid., 156–57: "Therefore they established [the liturgical formulas as] 'blessed are You, O Lord,' as if he were speaking to Him mouth to mouth, 'I have set the Lord always before me' (Ps 16:8)." Cf. ibid., 157, 195, 315, 401.

43. This is a theme repeated many times in Eleazar's writings and in the works of other Pietists. Cf. *Sefer ha-Roqeaḥ* (Jerusalem, 1961) 9. See Scholem, *Major Trends*, 107; Dan, *Esoteric Theology*, 167, 182–83. I have translated and discussed some of the relevant sources in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 201–4.

44. J. Dan (ed.), "*Sefer Shaʿare ha-Sod ha-Yiḥud we-ha-ʾEmunah*," in *Temirin: Texts and Studies in Kabbala and Hasidism* (2 vols.; ed. I. Weinstock; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1972–81) 1.153.

45. Several recent studies have reconsidered the significance of idolatry, related specifically to anthropomorphism and iconic representation, to the monotheistic faith of Judaism. See, for example, R. M. Adams, "Idolatry and the Invisibility of God," in *Interpretation in Religion* (ed. S. Biderman and B. Scharfstein; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 39–52; M. Halbertal and A. Margalit, *Idolatry* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); E. N. Dorff, "In Defense of Images," *Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy* (ed. D. Novak and N. M. Samuelson; Lanham: University Press of America,

the first passage cited above, the imaginative visualization of the *Šekhinah* is limited by the moralistic demand that overexposure would be a disgrace for the divine presence, *hayah genai li-šekhinah*. This remark, I surmise, is related to a larger motif (to be discussed more fully below) regarding the gender of the *Šekhinah* and the consequent nexus between eros and vision.

On the other hand, the Pietists were, of course, committed to the philosophical claim that the Creator is incorporeal and thus beyond imaginative representation. From that vantage point it is strictly forbidden to conjure an image of God. As may be deduced from a passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, living in a Christian environment sensitized Ḥaside Ashkenaz to this issue, and they thus prohibited the presence of any image of living beings in the synagogue. Even though there were cherubim and images of cattle and lions in the Temple, no image was allowed in the synagogue, especially before the Ark that contained the Torah scrolls, lest the Christians say that the Jews believe in and bow down to icons (*demuyot*).[46] The clash of the aniconic and the iconic tendencies is evident already in the following passage from *Shir ha-Kavod*, a liturgical composition most probably stemming from an early stage of Rhineland Pietism:[47]

> I will speak of Your glory,
> but I have not seen You,
> I will image and name You,
> but I have not known You;
> Through Your prophets, the counsel of Your servants,
> You made the splendor of the glory of Your majesty appear.
> Your greatness and Your power they named
> according to the strength of Your actions,
> They imagined You,
> but not as You are,

1992) 129–54; A. L. Ivry, "The Inevitability of Idolatry," also in *Proceedings*, ibid., 195–211. For a different assessment, one more congenial to the medieval philosophical orientation, see the essays in the same volume by B. S. Kogan, "Judaism and the Varieties of Idolatrous Experience," 169–93; and S. S. Schwarzschild, "De Idololatria," 213–42.

46. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1625. From §1626 it may be deduced that pictorial images for decorative purposes were allowed on the inside and the outside of the synagogue. On decorating the Ark in order to honor the Torah, cf. §648.

47. The poem, which is the concluding part of the *Shir ha-Yiḥud*, was attributed in the 13th century by Moses Taku to R. Bezalel and R. Samuel, the latter perhaps referring to Samuel ben Qalonymous. In some editions the composition is ascribed to Judah ben Samuel the Pious. For a review of the problem of authorship, see A. M. Haberman, *Shire ha-Yiḥud we-ha-Kavod* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1948) 11; see also J. Dan's introduction to *Shir ha-Yiḥud: The Hymn of Divine Unity with the Kabbalistic Commentary of R. Yom Tov Lipmann Muelhausen, Thiengen 1560* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1981) 7–15 [Heb.].

they compared You according to Your actions.
They configured You in many forms,
but You are one in all the images.[48]

One might be tempted to resolve the tension between the philosophical conception of the invisible deity and the anthropomorphic conception by noting that the latter applies to the glory and not to the Creator. The glory, it may be further assumed, is ontologically inferior to the Creator, and thus anthropomorphic characterizations of the glory do not impinge on rationalist theology.[49] Upon closer reflection, however, it becomes apparent that in this text the glorious form is not depicted as ontically distinct from God. On the contrary, as the above stanza concludes, "They configured You in many forms, but You are one in all the images," that is, it is the invisible Creator who is imaged by the prophets in a multiplicity of anthropomorphic forms, many of which are mentioned explicitly in the continuation of the poem. The statement 'Through Your prophets and the counsel of Your servants, You made the splendor of the glory of Your majesty appear' *be-yad nebi'eka be-sod ʿabadeka dimita hadar kebod hodeka* is particularly significant, for the first part is a conflation of two biblical verses: 'and through the prophets I was imaged' *û-wĕ-yad hā-nĕbî'îm 'ădammeh* (Hos 12:11) and 'He revealed His design to His servants the prophets' *gālah sōdô 'el ʿăbādāyw hā-nĕbî'îm* (Amos 3:7).[50] Clearly, the author of *Shir ha-Kavod* is referring to ancient times when he claims that the prophets, who are the servants of God, merited an epiphany of the divine splendor. I surmise, however, that the servants here may also re-

48. I have translated from the Hebrew text as it appears in Haberman, *Shire ha-Yiḥud we-ha-Kavod*, 47–48.

49. This is the position articulated by J. Petuchowski, *Theology and Poetry: Studies in Medieval Piyyut* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978) 37. Petuchowski, basing himself largely on the scholarship of Scholem and Dan, acknowledges that the works of the German Pietists represent a "rather unusual mixture of mysticim and rationalism," the concomitant denial and affirmation of anthropomorphism. He argues, however, that there is no contradiction because the mythological and anthropomorphic images are not attributed to the Creator, or the "philosophical God-concept," but to the glory, or the "God of religious experience." The situation, in my opinion, is more complex insofar as the anthropomorphic characteristics are on some occasions related directly to the Creator. Moreover, I am reluctant to view Pietistic theology as radically dualistic. Although there is clearly a distinction between the hidden God and the revealed glory, the two aspects are interrelated and it is not adequate to differentiate in such stark terms between the Creator and the God of religion. The complex interrelationship between the two can be seen in the particular case of visionary experience, for it is the hidden God who takes shape through the visible glory. On the role of anthropomorphism in the German Pietists, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 192–95.

50. In *Sode Razayya*, 46, Eleazar cites these two verses together in an attempt to characterize the nature of prophetic experience. Regarding the Pietists' application of Amos 3:7 to themselves, see the comments of Marcus, *Piety and Society*, 70.

fer to the Pietists themselves who are capable of having visionary experience on a par with prophecy, and the object of that experience is the majestic and splendid image assumed by the imageless Creator.[51]

What is expressed poetically in the *Shir ha-Kavod* is reiterated in a more speculative and discursive tone in a Pietistic commentary on *ʿAleynu* attributed to Judah the Pious. According to that text, the Creator places an image in the heart of the prophet, which he governs, so that the prophet can bow down to it and thereby worship God.[52] The view articulated here stands in marked contrast to, indeed is a polemical rejection of, two theological positions articulated in other Pietistic works to explain the ontic status of the glory and the nature of visionary experience. The first position is the Saadianic doctrine of the created glory and the second the idea, ultimately traceable to Hai Gaon,[53] that the image of the glory is a mental construct, akin to magical delusion (*ʾaḥizat ʿeinayim*), which has no objective correlate in the sensible world.[54] The paradox generated by the Pietistic theology is well captured in a statement from this composition, which appears with slight variations in a number of other esoteric Ashkenazi sources, including works

51. The nexus between prayer and prophecy is established in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §425. In that context the worshiper is described as being rapt in the love of God in a way comparable to the prophet whose soul is bound in love to God. On the erotic and all-consuming quality of a pietist's love for God, cf. ibid., §815, and parallel in Eleazar's *Sod Maʿaseh Bereʾšit*, in *Sefer Raziʾel*, 9a. Cf. the erotic description of the relationship of the righteous and the Šekhinah in *Sode Razayya*, 6. In that context Eleazar uses the expression *šaʿašuʿa le-ṣaddiqim* '(sexual) delight for the righteous'. The word *yešaʿašeʿa* is used to connote sexual activity between a man and his wife in one of the responsa attributed to Judah the Pious, MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fol. 18b. The word also connotes vision; cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 671. The love of God in the writings of the German Pietists has been discussed by a number of scholars. See Scholem, *Major Trends*, 95–96, 226; Vajda, *L'Amour de dieu*, 149–62; Marcus, *Piety and Society*, 36; J. Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Jewish Ethics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986) 74–75; idem, "A Re-evaluation of the 'Ashkenazi Kabbalah,'" *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 6/3–4 (1987) 136–37 [Heb.]. On the love between man and woman, see M. Harris, "The Concept of Love in Sepher Hassidim," *JQR* 50 (1959) 13–44.

52. The text is published by J. Dan, *Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature* (Ramat-Gan: Massada, 1975) 82–84 [Heb.]. The relevant passage occurs on 83; for partial translation and discussion, see *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 197–98.

53. An early attestation of the influence of Geonic doceticism in an Ashkenazic text is found in the citation of Ḥananel ben Ḥushiel's explanation of the talmudic aggadah that God wears phylacteries (*b. Ber.* 6a) in Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz, *Sefer Raban* (ed. S. Albeck; Warsaw, 1904) §127, 50a–b. Ḥananel, following the lead of Hai, explains this passage by saying that God is seen by a 'vision of the heart' (*reʾiyat lev*) and not a 'physical vision' (*reʾiyat ʿayin*).

54. See Dan, *Esoteric Theology*, 165–66. For discussion of the various opinions on the nature of the glory found in Pietistic sources, see ibid., 129–43.

of Eleazar of Worms, that the "Creator is within the image and outside it."[55] Insofar as the Creator is imageless, he is obviously outside the visible image of the glory; yet, to the degree that the image represents the will of the Creator, he is within the image in the manner that a face is reflected in a mirror. As Eleazar expressed it, "in the glory is manifest the will of the Creator, blessed be He, as in a speculum, and this is [the meaning of] 'the glorious majesty of Your splendor' (Ps 145:5)."[56] The glorious image is the configuration of God's thoughts or decrees, which are identified as the archetypal forms or angels.[57] To cite one of many texts that articulate this idea:

> The prophet sees in a vision all the decrees. . . . "When I spoke concerning the prophets" (Hos 12:11), it does not say 'to the prophets' (*'el ha-nevi'im*) but 'concerning the prophets' (*'al ha-nevi'im*). I spoke to the angels so that they will show you everything and they will speak of everything. "For I granted many visions" (Hos 12:11). . . . Initially the glory speaks to the prophets and afterwards they see visions in order that they will know everything. . . . And this is [the import of] "Words of him who hears God's speech . . . and beholds visions [from the Almighty]" (Num 24:16). By means of this "he obtains knowledge from the Most High" (ibid.), for the Creator manifests and images His thoughts that He wills to accomplish. . . . And this is [the meaning of] "When I spoke concerning the prophets" and afterward "I granted many visions," for he knows by means of the visions the supernal mind, and afterward "and through the prophets I was imaged." . . . All that which He shows to the prophets is assimilated by their minds and He shows to their minds His will

55. Dan, *Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature*, 83. Cf. Eleazar of Worms, *Sefer ha-Shem*, MS London, British Museum 737, fol. 320b: "The Creator is outside the images and within them." And idem, *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh* (Bene-Beraq, 1987) 90: "The Creator is outside the images and within them." These three sources have been previously cited in my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 198 and 200.

56. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 146.

57. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 205–6. Underlying the identification of the angels as the divine thoughts is the idea that the angels are constituted by the Hebrew letters. I have cited some illustrations of this motif in the writings of Ḥaside Ashkenaz and Abraham Abulafia, in ibid., 245 n. 235. This idea is also attested in medieval magical sources, as may be gathered from the Genizah fragments published by J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1993) 196 (translation on p. 202) and 239 (translation on p. 240). In both contexts the "holy letters," which refer to the magical signs, are identified as angels. Consider also the linkage of angels and magical symbols of a linguistic nature called *karaqtirim* or *kalaqtirim* (from the Greek χαρακτήρες) in *Sefer ha-Razim: A Newly Recovered Book of Magic from the Talmudic Period* (ed. M. Margaliot; Tel-Aviv: Yediot Achronot, 1966) 84 and 87; for further discussion, see ibid., 4, 83 n. 40, and 94 n. 35; and *Sepher ha-Razim: The Book of Mysteries* (trans. M. A. Morgan; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983) 46 n. 14. This correlation later developed into the idea of the angelic alphabets. See, e.g., I. Weinstock, "The Alphabet of Meṭaṭron and Its Commentary," in *Temirin: Texts and Studies in Kabbala and Hasidism* (2 vols.; ed. I. Weinstock; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1972–81) 2.51–76 [Heb.].

> through speech, in a vision, and by means of an angel. . . . He manifests to the prophets the matter of the purpose that He wills to accomplish, "He revealed His design to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).[58]

Sacred Space and the Imago Templi

The mental iconization of the divine must occur, according to the Pietistic sources, within the confines of a specific place chosen by the will of God. In classical Jewish sources, the notion of sacred space, *maqom qadosh*, entailed the sense of liminality, demarcation, and separation. Within the community of Ḥaside Ashkenaz this traditional sense of holiness, linked to a ritual site of exclusivity, was most probably enhanced by socioeconomic and political factors that led to their spatial confinement.[59] More specifically, in terms of the synagogue, the Pietists accepted and elaborated the halakhic regulations regarding the appropriate place wherein one might pray and the precautions one must take to preserve the sanctity of that place.[60] The sacred space of the synagogue is even further restricted by the fact that in the idealized world of the Pietists, especially as expressed by Judah the Pious, proper boundaries must be set between Pietist and non-Pietist, whether Jew or Christian.[61] Indeed, if the space of the believer is invaded by the non-Pietist, it is desecrated. The point is epitomized in the following passage:

> When he who fears God prays, he should not stand or sit near a wicked person, for when in worship he stands near a wicked person he will think bad thoughts and the *Šekhinah* will be distanced from him.[62]

So strong is the potential of the non-Pietist to defile the space of the Pietist that it is related in another passage that a particular sage (*ḥakham*) refused to sit on the chair or even to use the ink and pen of a wicked scribe who pretended to be righteous.[63]

In light of this obsession with determining social and religious boundaries to foster segregation and isolation, one could well understand that the notion of sacred space occupied a prominent place in the theological ruminations

58. MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1566, fols. 45a–b.

59. See K. R. Stow, "Sanctity and the Construction of Space: The Roman Ghetto as Sacred Space," in *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation: Past Traditions, Current Issues and Future Prospects* (ed. M. Mor; Lanham: University Press of America, 1992) 54–76, esp. 54–58.

60. Cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §§419–21, 432, 440, 442, 1606–8, 1612–13, 1627.

61. See H. Soloveitchik, "Three Themes in the *Sefer Ḥasidim*," *AJS Review* 1 (1976) 330–35; Marcus, *Piety and Society*, 99–100; idem, "Hierarchies, Religious Boundaries and Jewish Spirituality in Medieval Germany," *Jewish History* 1 (1986) 7–25.

62. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §403.

63. Ibid., §404. In §405, it is related that a prayer book written by a wicked person is ineffectual even when used by righteous people. A similar point is made in §1621.

of Ḥaside Ashkenaz. One particular aspect of this phenomenon involves the function of sacred space in the contemplative visualization of the glory through prayer. In the Pietistic commentary on *ʿAleynu*, to which I referred above, the author raises an obvious philosophical question: if the object of one's worship is the mental image, and God is within that image to the degree that no prophet could distinguish between the image and God, then it is conceivable that one could worship in any place that one wants provided that in that place one conjures the mental image of God. The response to this question makes it clear that God places the image in the mind of the worshiper only in the place that God deems to be worthy:

> He desires to be in the place of His glory and to fulfill the will of the worshiper. . . . And, in the place in which He was made visible to David, there the Temple had to be built, for there He was occupied with hearing prayers, and this is [the import of] "My eyes and My heart shall ever be there" (1 Kgs 9:3); there He is occupied with fulfilling the needs of the worshipers . . . but in other places it is not known what is His occupation. Therefore, it is necessary to pray in the place wherein He is occupied with fulfilling the will of the worshiper.[64]

The mental visualization of God can occur only within the place that God selects, for in that place He desires to fulfill the will of the worshiper. What once applied to the Temple was transferred to the synagogue in the time since the Temple was destroyed. Indeed, the sacredness of the synagogue is related to the Temple, which is described as the place that God selected in which to heed prayer.[65] What is implied in this text is spelled out in more detail in one of the compositions of Eleazar of Worms in which he raises the apparent textual discrepancies between the verses that emphasize God's omnipresence on earth and those that stress that one direct one's prayers to heaven. Moreover, the claim to God's omnipresence seemingly challenges the rabbinic notion that one must have a set place for prayer in

64. Dan, *Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature*, 83–84.

65. The function of the Temple as the place where God receives the prayers of Israel is emphasized in the Pietistic composition *Sefer ha-Neʿelam*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1566, fol. 163a. Cf. *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh*, 92, cited in my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 203 n. 54. On the description of the Jerusalem Temple as the place where God will cause the splendor of His presence to dwell, *yaškken šam hod šekhinato*, see the *ʾofan* attributed to Judah the Pious, *ʾelohekhem yašiv be-šalem sukko u-meʿonato*, in *Seder ʿAvodat Yisraʾel* (ed. S. Baer; Roedelheim, 1868) 243. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 191, 548, 646, 655–56. The description of the Temple in Jerusalem as the locus of God's appearance or the place to which prayers are directed recurs in many of Eleazar's poems. Cf. *Shirat ha-Rokeaḥ*, 87, 95, 98, 170, 249, 251, 256. It is also relevant to note that Ḥaside Ashkenaz, elaborating on a point emphasized in rabbinic texts, view the land of Israel as the most appropriate place for the epiphany of the divine glory to the prophets. Cf. *Sode Razayya*, 33. The opinion expressed by Eleazar closely resembles the mystical orientation of Judah Halevi and Naḥmanides.

the synagogue; on the contrary, one should be able to pray wherever one desires, since the divine glory fills the whole earth:

> When the Temple stood He would show the place of His glory in His holy palace corresponding to the Temple . . . there is the assembly of angels who ascend and descend within it. And this is the gate of heaven. Thus the cherubim spread their wings above . . . facing the eyes of the king, for there He shows His glory to the angels. Similarly, the Temple in a state of our destruction is built to hold weapons and prayers.[66] "My eyes and My heart shall ever be there" (1 Kgs 9:3), for the angels who are appointed need a holy place, for according to them He decrees what is to be done. In the place that He discloses His glory, there He desires the will of the worshiper to be. Therefore, one must fix a place for one's prayer. When a person bows down in the place where His glory is, the Creator is in His glory and He governs it according to His will to instruct the prophet about the will of the Creator. . . . Within the image is the Creator who governs it. . . . In the place where David knew that He was occupied with hearing prayers, he said that the Temple should be built.[67]

Prayer is restricted to the synagogue because only within that place can the person conjure a mental image from which God's presence is, paradoxically, both absent and present. The iconographic function endows the space of the synagogue with a sacredness that was characteristic of the Temple. Indeed, the role of the latter in this process is still much in evidence even after it has been physically destroyed. Ḥaside Ashkenaz follow the talmudic injunction that prayers must be directed to the Temple in Jerusalem, and in that regard it remains the locus of visionary experience.[68] In the absence of the Temple, however, the focus shifts from the physical locality of the earthly Temple to the imaginal space of the heavenly Temple.[69] But, just as

66. The Hebrew reads *banuy le-talpiyyot u-li-tefillot*, based on Cant 4:4. Eleazar's rendering of this verse reflects the rabbinic reading attested in a number of sources. Cf. *y. Ber.* 4.5, 8c; *b. Ber.* 30a; *Pesiqta Rabbati* (ed. M. Friedmann; Vienna: Selbstverlag des Herausgebers, 1880) 33, 149b; *Canticles Rabbah* (ed. S. Dunansky; Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1980) 4:11, 110.

67. "*Sefer Shaʿare ha-Sod*," 154–55. This passage of Eleazar's parallels the text attributed to Judah the Pious published in Dan, *Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature*, 83. On the notion of the sacred place in the heavenly realm, connected to the throne, and in the earthly Temple, cf. MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1566, fols. 89b–90a.

68. I have discussed many of the relevant rabbinic passages in "Iconic Visualization and the Imaginal Body of God."

69. Cf. *Perush Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 289. Cf. commentary on the 42-letter name of God in Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1568, fol. 3a: "[The name] *qrʿ* is numerically equal to *šakhan* [i.e., both words equal 370] for He caused His presence to dwell (*šikken šekhinato*) in the Temple, and when it was destroyed He departed (*qaraʿ*) and ascended." With respect to this issue one should mention the fact that in the Hebrew crusade chronicles the martyrs are depicted as standing in the celestial Temple. They are symbolized, alternatively, as sacrifical animals and as the priests who officiate before the glory. In the latter instance there is

in the time that the Temple stood there was a parallelism between the earthly and the heavenly chambers, so at present there is a parallelism between the synagogue and the supernal Temple. By bowing down to the anthropomorphic image of the glory in the synagogue, one triggers a reaction on the part of God, which Eleazar boldly characterizes as 'the Creator is in His glory' *ha-bore' bi-khevodo*. Given the presumed ontological parallelism, the act of the worshiper triggers a corresponding event above, and thus the focal point of the imaginative visualization is the celestial throne of glory. As Eleazar writes,

> Since He created all the [archetypal] images (*temunot*) above, He created the throne so that it would be known toward what one should bow down. The presence of His glory is above, and He places His presence below in the Temple, which corresponds to that which is above [as it says], "The place You made to dwell in, O Lord, the sanctuary [O Lord, which Your hands established]" (Exod 15:17). And, similarly, the phylacteries correspond to the soul in the head.[70]

The presence of the glory in the earthly Temple corresponds to the enthroned glory above, which is the real abode of the divine.[71] At the end of the passage the reader is provided with a hint regarding the mystical significance of the phylacteries: just as the throne is the seat upon which the *Šekhinah* dwells, so the phylacteries, which correspond the soul in the head (that is, the rational faculty[72]), are like a throne upon which the *Šekhinah* dwells. The phylacteries of the head, therefore, assume the symbolic function of the glorious throne.[73] Accordingly, in a number of places in the writings of

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obviously a transformation of the human into an angel. See Cohen, "Hebrew Crusade Chronicles," 40–41; and I. G. Marcus, "From Politics to Martyrdom: Shifting Paradigms in the Hebrew Narratives of the 1096 Crusade Riots," *Prooftexts* 2 (1982) 40–52.

70. Eleazar, *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh*, 70.

71. The parallelism between the heavenly throne and the Jerusalem Temple is emphasized recurringly in the Pietistic writings, based on earlier biblical and rabbinic texts. See, for example, the *'ofan* attributed to Judah the Pious, *'elohekhem šikhno śam kes 'elamo*, in *Seder 'Avodat Yisra'el*, 244, which ends with the words, *qero' lirušalayim kisse' meqomo*. Cf. *Shirat ha-Rokeaḥ*, 105, 217; *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 55–56, 68, 134–35, 197, 200, 221, 346, 680.

72. In the Pietistic sources, the soul (referred to by the technical term *nešamah*) is said to be located in either the head, the brain, or the heart. Cf. *Sode Razayya*, 31; *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh*, 17, 96, 116, 144; *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 6, 98, 377–78, 711.

73. The identification of the head phylacteries (which correspond symbolically to the crown) as the throne is a motif found in the German Pietistic and theosophic kabbalistic literature, already attested in *Sefer ha-Bahir*. For references, see my *Along the Path: Studies in Kabbalistic Myth, Symbolism, and Hermeneutics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) 158–59 n. 234, 166 n. 279, 221 n. 167. To the sources mentioned in those contexts, one might add *Sode Razayya*, 17; *Perushe Siddur*

Ḥaside Ashkenaz, the phylacteries (or the letter *šin* on the head phylacteries, which stands for the name of God[74]) are identified as the object of visual meditation on a par with the throne of glory.[75] The symbolic valence accorded the phylacteries displaces both the earthly and the heavenly Temples as the locus of intentionality, for by donning the phylacteries one can visualize the divine glory that rests between the eyes, which are therefore compared to the cherubim.[76] To cite one textual example from Eleazar's commentary on the prayers in which all the relevant themes are mentioned:

> Why did He command the phylacteries [to be worn] over the heart and between the eyes? This is a reminder of the ark, which is in the middle like the heart, and of the cherubim between whom [speaks] the voice [of God].[77] The phylacteries between the eyes, the countenance of the human,[78] and this is [the import of] "the Lord's name is proclaimed over you" (Deut 28:10).[79] Every

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ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ, 547. The convergence of the symbols of the crown and of the throne underlies another motif that appears frequently in the Pietistic literature: the mutual elevation and augmentation of the crown and the throne. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 245:

> The praise of the glory (*pe'er*) is the praise of Israel, His glorious diadem is glorified in the effulgent splendor, the illumination of the face. . . . When the crown is glorified, the throne of glory is elevated . . . with the elevation of His throne the majesty of His kingship is glorified.

For other sources, see *Along the Path*, 170–71 n. 307.

74. That is, the letter *šin* has the numerical value of 300, which is also the value of the letters *mṣp"ṣ*, the *a"t ba"š* of *yhwh*. Hence, the *šin* stands for the Tetragrammaton.

75. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 229 n. 166; idem, *Along the Path*, 37–39, 159 n. 234.

76. See ibid., 39 and 162 n. 247.

77. Num 7:89; cf. Exod 25:22.

78. In Hebrew, *parṣuf 'adam*. The meaning of Eleazar's remark may be gathered from a parallel to this passage in *Sode Razayya* (ed. S. Weiss; Jerusalem: Shaarey Ziv Institute, 1991) 167:

> When Israel are righteous and they have phylacteries on their heads, the name is upon them, and thus the explicit name is on the forehead of the cherubim. . . . Thus, the phylacteries are placed opposite the hand and in between the eyes for in them is the countenance of the cherubim, and the cherubim have the face of a human.

Hence, what Eleazar intends by speaking of the human countenance in conjunction with the eyes is that the latter correspond to the cherubim, which have a human visage. On the relationship of the face of the cherub and the face of a human in the esoteric thought of Ḥaside Ashkenaz, see my *Along the Path*, 9–10, 121 n. 66. On the tradition of the divine names inscribed upon the forehead of the cherubim, see ibid., 39, 45–46, 49–50, and relevant notes.

79. This part of the biblical verse was interpreted as a reference to the phylacteries in targumic and rabbinic sources. Cf. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text*

> person upon whose head are the phylacteries should consider it as if the *Šekhinah* were upon his head, for just as it is written by the phylacteries, "the Lord's name is proclaimed over you," it is written, "[the ark of God] to which the name was attached, the name Lord of Hosts enthroned on the cherubim" (2 Sam 6:2). Therefore, the phylacteries are on the head for "such a one shall dwell in the lofty heights"[80] (Isa 33:16).[81]

For Ḥaside Ashkenaz, Jerusalem and the Temple are transformed into symbols of the phylacteries that are placed on the head of God through the theurgical efficacy of Israel's prayer.[82] The mystical interpretation of the ritual of putting on the phylacteries as a means to facilitate the indwelling of the *Šekhinah* atop the head of the worshiper reflects the theosophic symbolization of the phylacteries on God's head (which are interchangeable with

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and Concordance (ed. E. G. Clarke; Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1984) 241 (ad Deut 28:10); *b. Ber.* 6a, *b. Menaḥ.* 35b. In the Ashkenazi sources, the first letters of the expression *šem yhwh niqra'* spell *šin*, which is associated with the *šin* of the phylacteries and the name *mṣp"ṣ*, the *a"t ba"š* permutation of *yhwh*. See my *Along the Path*, 39, 161–62 n. 246. To the sources mentioned there one could add Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg, *Ṭa'ame Mesoret ha-Miqra'*, cited in *Torat Ḥayyim: Ḥamishah Ḥumshe Torah* (5 vols; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1986–93) 5.233.

80. The verse reads *hû' měrōmîm yiškōn*, but Eleazar cites it as *hû' bĕ-rō'š měrōmîm yiškōn*, to underscore the significance of the head on which the phylacteries are placed.

81. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 287. My translation reflects a slight modification of the text according to MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale héb. 772, fol. 67b. Cf. the passage from Eleazar's *Perush ha-Merkavah*, MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale héb. 850, fol. 74b, translated in my *Along the Path*, 39, and the passage from *Sefer Ṣiyyoni* cited on 162–63 n. 248. See also *Sode Razayya* (ed. Weiss), 91. It is of interest to note in this connection that in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1669, the straps of the phylacteries are linked exegetically to the description of the hair of the beloved in Cant 4:1 and the curls of the lover in Cant 5:11. The exegesis may presuppose some mythical notion of the phylacteries as the hypostasis of the divine glory. The ritual of the fringe garment (*ṣiṣit*) is treated in a similar way by Eleazar. Cf. *Sefer ha-Shem*, MS London, British Museum 737, fols. 261b–262a:

> Concerning he who is careful with respect to the *ṣiṣit*, the *Šekhinah* is upon him just as [it is] upon the celestial creatures. This is [the import of the verse] *'ōṭeh 'ôr kaśśalmâ* (Ps 104:2) [the words *'ôr kaśśalmâ*] are numerically equivalent to *be-ṣiṣit* [that is, both equal 602]. Therefore the ancient elders (*zeqenim ha-ri'šonim*) in the morning would look at their fringes and would say, "O Lord, my God, You are very great, You are clothed in glory and majesty, wrapped in a robe of light; You spread the heavens like a tent of cloth" (Ps 104:1–2).

A similar custom is attributed to the 'older generations' *dorot ha-ri'šonim*, in *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 272. For other relevant references to this ritual reflecting the Pietistic interpretation, see my *Along the Path*, 183 n. 358; and cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1668. On the importance of wearing a *tallit qaṭan*, cf. the responsum attributed to Judah the Pious, MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fol. 23a.

82. See my *Along the Path*, 37, 118 n. 40, 158 n. 234.

the image of the crown) as the hypostatic manifestation of the *Šekhinah*.[83] This complex of symbols is implicit already in *Shir ha-Kavod*:[84]

> Abode of righteousness,[85]
> house of His splendor,[86]
> shall He raise above His joyous head.[87]
> His treasured possession[88] shall be a crown in His hand,
> a royal diadem,[89] glorious beauty.[90]
> He uplifted the ones who have been supported,[91]
> He bound them with a crown.[92]

83. See ibid., 40–43, and relevant notes wherein I have referred to other scholars, notably Farber and Idel, who have also noted this symbolic nexus.

84. Haberman, *Shir ha-Yiḥud we-ha-Kavod*, 49.

85. That is, Jerusalem or the Temple Mount; cf. Jer 31:22.

86. That is, the Temple; cf. Isa 60:7.

87. Based on Ps 137:6. In the biblical context, *ʾim lōʾ ʾaʿāleh ʾet yĕrûšālayim ʿal rōʾš śimḥātî* means 'If I shall not elevate Jerusalem above my chief delight'. I have translated the expression in *Shir ha-Yiḥud* based on these words, *yaʿaleh nāʾ ʿal rōʾš śimḥatô*, in a hyperliteral way, 'shall He raise above His joyous head', to convey the sense of the poem. It seems to me that the issue here is the elevation of the hypostatic Jerusalem (or the Temple) to the head of the divine, which may very well be a symbolic displacement for the phallus. Regarding this symbolic usage, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 43, 103, idem, *Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) 154 n. 91. A similar suggestion regarding the preoccupation with the image of the head in *Shir ha-Kavod* has been made independently by Arthur Green, *Keter: The Crown of God in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). I thank the author for providing me with a copy of his manuscript prior to its publication. I note, parenthetically, that the main biblical verses in which are found the image of the head that influenced the author of *Shir ha-Kavod* are cited by Eleazar, *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 362. Marcus ("Prayer Gestures," 58–59) also notes the special emphasis on the head, but he does not opt for a sexual interpretation. On the contrary, on p. 53 n. 55, he suggests (interpreting the parable of the giant in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1585) the possibility that looking at the trunk of the body, as opposed to the head, may have the sexual connotation of looking at the male organ. (I would add that it is not impossible that the word *gup* in that context refers primarily to the penis.) The phallic interpretation of the head actually supports Marcus's reading, for gazing at the head symbolically displaces looking at the trunk. On the association of joy, the land of Israel, and the head, see *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 564: "Thus we say [in the *musaf* prayer on Sabbath] 'may He take us up in joy to our land,' as it is written, 'everlasting joy is upon their heads' (Isa 35:10)." Cf. ibid., 632–33, 650.

88. That is, the people of Israel, based on Ps 135:4; cf. Exod 19:5; Deut 7:6, 14:2, and 26:18.

89. Cf. Isa 62:3.

90. Isa 28:1, 4.

91. That is, Israel, based on Isa 46:3.

92. Cf. Job 31:36.

> Because they were precious in His eyes,[93]
> He honored them.
> His glory is upon me and my glory is upon Him,
> and He is near me when I call to Him.[94]

In this web of skillfully crafted biblical images, the author of *Shir ha-Kavod* has alluded to one of the basic mythic ideas later expressed in the more fully developed theosophic treatises composed by Ḥaside Ashkenaz, namely, the reciprocal coronation of God and the Jewish people: God is crowned by Israel's prayers and Israel is crowned by the divine efflugence.[95] The crown on God's head is identified further as Jerusalem (the 'abode of righteousness' *neweh haṣedeq*), the Temple (the 'house of His splendor' *bet tip'arto*), and the people of Israel ('His treasured possession' *segullato*). It is reasonable to conclude, moreover, that the crowns may refer to the phylacteries worn by God and man. This is implied in the statement *pe'ero ʿalay u-pe'eri ʿalayw* 'His glory is upon me and my glory is upon Him', for the word *pe'er* is interpreted in rabbinic sources as a reference to the phylacteries, sometimes connected exegetically with the verse *pe'erkha ḥavosh ʿaleka* 'put on your turban' (Ezek 24:17).[96] The donning of the phylacteries serves as a catalyst for the mutual crowning of God by Israel and Israel by God, which results in the visionary encounter.

In another composition, *Sod ha-Merkavah*, Eleazar elaborates on the idea that *kawwanah* in prayer essentially involves an imaginary representation of God upon the throne of glory:

> "The throne of His glory is in heaven above."[97] Therefore, we direct our hearts to our Father in heaven. If the world had not been created, the throne would

93. Cf. Isa 43:4.

94. Cf. Ps 145:18.

95. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 264–65. This point is also emphasized in the monograph of Green referred to above in n. 87. The image of God's crown being woven from the words of Israel's prayer is repeated on many occasions in the Pietistic compositions. See Farber, "Concept of the Merkavah," 231–42; M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) 193–96; and my *Along the Path*, 37, 118 n. 40, 158 n. 234.

96. *B. Ber.* 11a, 16b; *b. Sukk.* 25a, 25b; *b. Taʿan.* 16a; *b. Ketub.* 6b; *b. B. Bat.* 60b; *Midr. Pss.* 137:6; Targum to Ezek 24:17. Cf. the text of Eleazar of Worms (translated in my *Along the Path*, 37; and see the other references cited on p. 161 n. 240). It is likely that the head phylacteries of God are referred to in another passage in *Shir ha-Kavod*, derived from Isa 59:17, *ḥabuš kobaʿ yešuʿa bero'šo*, in Haberman, *Shir ha-Yiḥud we-ha-Kavod*, 48. Regarding this image, see the commentary on the 42-letter name in Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1568, fol. 4a. Cf. *Shir ha-Yiḥud we-ha-Kavod*, 50: *qešer tefillin her'ah le-ʿanaw temunat yhwh leneged ʿenaw*, which reflects a combination of the aggadic reading of Exod 33:23 in *b. Ber.* 7a and Num 12:8. The composition of the divine crown from prayer is affirmed as well in another passage from *Shir ha-Kavod*: *tehillati tehi le-ro'šeka ʿaṭeret*.

97. This sentence is taken from the *ʿAleynu* prayer. A similar explanation of this text is found in *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 658. For a slightly different version

> not have been possible nor would the presence of His strength in the exalted heights have been possible. Without human beings there would be no throne, for the throne of glory has a circumference and boundary, but the Creator, blessed be He, has no boundary or limit, and the throne has a surrounding limit. Since He desired to create human beings, it was necessary to create the world, and since it was necessary to create the world, the heaven was necessary and upon it was His throne of glory, that is, so that they would bow down toward heaven. The Creator is in one place just as He is another, He is below just as He is above. . . . If this is so, then why should one direct one's heart to heaven? In order to show His creatures to which place their hearts should be directed, when He created the world it was necessary to set up a throne in heaven.[98]

The imaging of God that occurs in conjunction with prayer is thus connected to the heavenly throne.[99] Yet the latter can only be visualized within the human imagination. The point is underscored in two passages in Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Shem*.

> If the heart begins to contemplate,[100] he should rush and quickly place his heart as if the throne of glory above were facing him and the supernal God sitting on it, and he should bow down to Him, and he will remember the One.[101]

The realization of divine oneness is here connected to the enthronement of God, which is actualized only through the imaginative visualization, since the One is not a body that occupies a throne. Similarly, in a second passage from this work, Eleazar comments:

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version from MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1204, cf. G. Hasidah, "Some Supplements to the Commentary on the Prayers by the Author of the *Roqeaḥ*," *Tzfunot* 19 (1994) 7 [Heb.].

98. *Sode Razzaya*, 19. Cf. p. 58:

> Know that the Creator has no need for a throne for He has no limit, but the glory is seen opposite the throne and the throne is limited, as it is written, "The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool" (Isa 66:1).

Cf. also *Ḥokhmat ha-Nefesh*, 91. It is of interest to note that Moses Taku, as part of his polemic against an overly rationalist interpretation of Jewish sources, emphasizes that passages describing the throne must be taken in a literal fashion. Cf. *Ketav Tamim*, ed. R. Kirchheim, *Ozar Nechmad* 3 (1860) 85–86.

99. Cf. *Sode Razzaya*, 31: "the Holy One, blessed be He, sits in the innermost chambers in the exalted heights of His glory, and all of Israel concentrate on their Father in heaven." Cf. the poem *'elohekhem tif'arto mi-ma'al we-'ein bil'ado*, in *Shirat ha-Rokeaḥ*, 72; and *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 114, 128, 130, 326, 540, 547.

100. Eleazar's comment is an interpretation of *Sefer Yeṣirah* 1:8.

101. Eleazar, *Sefer ha-Shem*, MS London, British Museum 737, fol. 280a. Cf. *Perush ha-Rav 'Ele'azar Mi-Germaiza' 'al Sefer Yeṣirah* (Przemysl, 1883) 2c: "Remove that thought [about God] from your heart and close your mouth from speaking, and if your heart runs to that thought remove it from your heart and return to the unity of God, to worship Him and to fear Him." And ibid., 3a: "If your heart entices you into thinking about all these things, immediately remove all thought from your heart and bow down to the Holy One, blessed be He."

> The One has no limit for He is everything, and if not for the fact that "through the prophets [God] was imaged" (Hos 12:11) as a king sitting upon a throne, they would not have known to whom to pray. . . . This is what is said in *Sefer Yeṣirah* (1:4), "and set the Creator on His place."[102]

According to these passages, the object of intentionality in worship is the Creator and not the glory, a point emphasized on a number of occasions in the writings of Eleazar and other Pietists.[103] Thus we read in one of the earlier speculative works written by Judah the Pious or one of his disciples:

> The heart of the worshiper: With regard to everything his heart must think about the One who is supernal to all, and he should not think or imagine any vision in his heart. It is written, "I will extol You, my God and king" (Ps 145:1), and the Creator is above, as it is written, "His glory is above the heavens" (Ps 113:4), so that the contemplation of the heart will be [directed] towards what is above.[104]

On the surface it would appear that this position is contradicted by other texts that explicitly state that the object visualized through worship is the glory and not the Creator. In one context, for instance, Eleazar remarks,

> Therefore, the name of the Creator is YHWH and to Him they pray. Thus the rabbis, blessed be their memory, said in Yevamot [105b] the eyes of a person should be below during his prayer but his heart should be above, for the essence of the glory is seen above, and an unfathomable, resplendent fire is above opposite the throne of glory and in it is seen the glory according to the will of the Creator, sometimes as an elder and sometimes as a youth.[105]

Similarly, Eleazar comments in another passage:

> The Creator is close to you in actuality, that is, He fills everything and there is nothing hidden from Him, and regarding what is written, "For God is in heaven" (Qoh 5:1), for He manifests the essence of His glory above. . . . There-

102. Eleazar, *Sefer ha-Shem*, MS London, British Museum 737, fol. 288b. A parallel to this passage is found in *Sode Razayya*, 32, cited by Scholem, *Major Trends*, 116. I have previously cited the two passages from *Sefer ha-Shem* in *Along the Path*, 180–81 n. 352. See also the version of Eleazar's *Hilkhot ha-Kavod* published in Abrams, "The Secret of the Secrets," 79.

103. See above, n. 43.

104. Dan, *Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature*, 171. My translation reflects some slight corrections to the Hebrew text made on the basis of MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1566, fol. 9b. In another passage from this same work (*Studies in Ashkenazi-Hasidic Literature*, 169), the point is made in the following way: "Therefore the heart of a man in worship turns above as one who stands and speaks to his friend face to face."

105. *Sode Razayya*, 31. Cf. ibid., 41: "Regarding the changes that we have found in the Šekhinah, sometimes as a youth and sometimes as an elder: Know that the reason is that the glory appears to the prophets in accordance with the need of the hour. . . . The glory appears to the heart." Cf. ibid., 57–58, and *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 401.

> fore, the sages said in Yevamot, "the worshiper should cast his eyes below and his heart above," for the Creator is near him but His glory is opposite the high and exalted throne above.[106]

The contradiction is merely apparent, however, for the worshiper must direct his intention in prayer to the Creator, but the latter is phenomenally accessible only through the image of the glory that is conjured in the imagination. Moreover, as I have already emphasized, even though the object of imaginary visualization is the glorious and luminous form upon the celestial throne, that visualization can occur only within the sacred space of the synagogue.[107] The point is expressed in the following passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, which may be viewed as a synthesis of the dictum of Simeon the Pious, the "one who prays must see himself as if the *Šekhinah* were opposite him," and that of R. Yose, the "one who prays should cast his eyes below and his heart above":

> When a person prays the *Šekhinah* is opposite him, as it says, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8). Even though it is written that the Lord is opposite him, he should not direct [his intention] except above to heaven. Since he does not know where the Temple is, he should think in his heart that through his prayer it is, as if, the glory were opposite him within four cubits, and its height extends above to heaven . . . even though the Creator is in everything, [the worshiper] must fulfill [the obligation by turning] toward His face, as it says, "Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord" (Lam 2:19), for the creatures below must lift their souls and their hearts to heaven. Therefore, the heart of the worshiper faces above.[108]

The one who prays must, simultaneously, imagine that the *Šekhinah* is opposite him in the synagogue and sitting above on the celestial throne. This is achieved by imagining that the form of the *Šekhinah* extends from his space of four cubits in the synagogue to heaven. We clearly have here an innovative application of the older *Shiʿur Qomah* speculation, for attributed to the *Šekhinah* is an enormous stature spanning the whole universe.[109] The intention in prayer is fulfilled when the worshiper looks at God's face, *keneged panaw*. This is realized by an imaginal flight to the celestial abode. One directs the imaginary gaze above to the heavenly throne and thereby faces

106. *Sode Razayya*, 37.

107. On occasion the Pietist authors also recommend the specific gesture of looking at the Ark that contains the Torah scrolls in order to visualize the glory. Underlying this gesture is the presumption that the Ark in the synagogue corresponds to the throne in heaven. I have translated and analyzed some of the relevant sources in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 248–52.

108. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1585. Cf. §1605.

109. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 144. On the role of *Šiʿur Qomah* speculation in the theosophy of the German Pietists, see my "Meṭaṭron and Shiʿur Qomah in the Writings of Ḥaside Ashkenaz," *Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism*, 60–92, and reference in 62–63 n. 10 to other scholars who have dealt with this issue. My discussion is reworked in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 214–34.

God. Although the locus of the visionary encounter is the imaginative faculty, the vision is restricted to the synagogue, for only within the physical boundaries of the synagogue can the heart imagine the *imago templi*.[110] As Eleazar puts it:

> The prophet sees the glory created so that he may envision the will of the Creator, for the Creator is in everything. . . . But [He does not appear] to the heart of the worshiper in a place that is not honorable, and according to the contemplation of the heart he must raise his heart toward heaven. It is written, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8), but he should direct his heart above to that which is exalted over everything.[111]

It is mandatory that the worshiper have an image of God opposite him constantly, but that image appears in the heart of the worshiper only in the 'honorable place' (*maqom nikhbad*) of the synagogue; within that space the heart must be directed to heaven, for the image of God that one has is of the glorious form seated upon the throne.

Unveiling the Veil: Eros and the Vision of the Glory

This shift from physical to imaginal space is linked frequently by Pietistic authors to the teaching of R. Yose, which has been mentioned several times in this study. The utilization of this statement in the Pietistic sources has been noted by various scholars, but its eidetic function in the meditational practice has not been adequately addressed. To appreciate the meaning of this dictum in the world view of the Pietists, it is necessary to bear in mind that the "heart," which is contrasted with the "eyes," designates the imaginative faculty. The casting of the eyes below signifies that the Creator is not physically visible, whereas the directing of the heart above indicates that within the imagination the glory is visualized as an anthropomorphic form

110. The orientation of Ḥaside Ashkenaz is attested in the following words from the poem "*ʾorot me-ʾofel hizriaḥ me-hodo*," by Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg, published in *Seder ʿAvodat Yisraʾel*, 686:

> *pinniti ha-bayit le-ḥešeq nešeq tešeq tešuqatekha we-ʾani be-rov ḥasddekha ʾavoʾ vetekha reʾut ʿayin loʾnirʾatah li-veriyyotekha ṣefiyyat lev be-miqṣat himšalta. . . . šiwwitikha lenegddi hineni ʿomed lefanekha leromamekha . . . ʾeštaḥaweh ʾel hekhal qodšekha we-ʾodeh ʾet šemekha.*

111. *Sode Razayya*, 49. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 157:

> Therefore it is said in every blessing, "blessed are You, O Lord," as if the *Šekhinah* were opposite him, as it is written, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8). Therefore our rabbis said [*b. Yebam.* 105b], "the one who prays must cast his eyes below and his heart above" with intention, and this is [the meaning of "The Lord is near to all who call Him] to all who call Him with sincerity" (Ps 145:18).

Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 164: "He manifests His kingship (*malkhuto*) above and below."

enthroned in the heavenly chamber. Bearing this in mind, we can understand the comment in *Sefer Ḥasidim* that "when a person prays he does not have to shut his eyes because his eyes are below and his heart is above."[112] On the most basic level, the shutting of the eyes enhances mental concentration by blocking out external stimuli.[113] Thus, in another passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim* the gesture of covering the face during the supplication prayer (*taḥanun*) is explained as an effort to focus the intention of the heart.[114] If the eyes are cast below, however, they do not have to be shut in order to increase the concentration. It is thus recommended that during the morning prayers one can place the prayer shawl over one's eyes in order to avoid distracting objects in one's visual field, whereas at night, when one is not normally wearing the prayer shawl, it is necessary to cast one's eyes downward or to shut one's eyes tightly.[115]

Viewed from a more esoteric vantage point, the gestures of shutting the eyes or casting the eyes downward are not principally concerned with intensifying concentration; they are external acts that express the appropriate response to seeing the *Šekhinah*. Indeed, obstructing the vision dialectically represents the highest form of seeing.[116] Precisely such a viewpoint is conveyed in another passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, in which it is reported that when the priests uttered their blessing they would

> close their eyes on account of the fact that, when the Temple stood, they would mention the explicit name.[117] . . . and the *Šekhinah* was upon their

112. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1583.

113. Cf. ibid., §1582: "Whoever prays in a synagogue should close his eyes so that he will not see those who exit and those who enter, and he will not disturb his intention." In the continuation of this passage, it is recommended that one open one's eyes and look heavenward when the blessings *yoṣer ʾor* and *maʿariv ʿaravim* are recited, since both deal with the celestial luminaries. The instruction to cast the eyes toward heaven is upheld even though the talmudic dictum emphasized that the worshiper's eyes should be below and his heart above.

114. Ibid., §455. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 412.

115. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1584.

116. One finds a similar motif in both theosophic and ecstatic kabbalah. Regarding the former, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 339–40, and regarding the latter, idem, "Mystical Rationalization of the Commandments in the Prophetic Kabbalah of Abraham Abulafia," n. 121, to be published in the proceedings of the conference in memory of Alexander Altmann held at University College, London, June 1994.

117. On the various traditions regarding the pronounciation of the divine name in the Temple, see G. Alon, *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World: Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977) 241–43. On the evolution of the progressive restriction on the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Second Temple period, see E. J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988) 263–66.

> eyes[118] and thus they closed them. As it is written, "This shall be My name forever" (Exod 3:15), [the word *le-ʿolam*] is written *leʿalem*,[119] to hide the eyes from [seeing] Him when the priests place His name upon Israel, as it is written, "Thus they shall place My name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them" (Num 6:27), and it is written, "And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you" (Isa 1:15), and the essence of the blessing is to direct one's heart to heaven.[120]

The closing of the eyes on the part of the priests is due to the fact that the *Šekhinah* rests upon their eyes when they mention the divine name. That the author of *Sefer Ḥasidim* considered this particular example instructive of blessing in general is evident from the concluding remark, "the essence of the blessing is to direct one's heart to heaven." Also relevant to this discussion is another passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, in which mention again is made of the gesture of covering the face, which I relate to the shutting of the eyes. This section concerns the 'ancient elders' (*ha-zeqenim ha-riʾšonim*)[121] who "would sit and cover their faces" after having returned from reading the Torah. The reason given for this gesture is that the "one who hears [the Torah] from the one who reads is like the one who heard it from Moses."[122] Underlying this comment is the assumption that the one who reads from the Torah scroll is illuminated from the light of its letters, which represent the material concretization of the divine glory.[123] As may be deduced from the first prooftext that is cited, Exod 34:34–35, the covering of the face is a ritualistic emulation of Moses who covered his face with a veil so that the Israelites could hear the command of God that he had received. Similarly, the one who reads the Torah must cover his face so that others will not be harmed by the radiance that issues from his countenance. There are, however, two additional prooftexts, one regarding Moses' hiding his face in order not to gaze upon God (Exod 3:6) and the other concerning Elijah's covering his face after hav-

118. According to a passage in *b. Ḥag.* 16a, it was recommended that one not look at the priests when they blessed the people of Israel and uttered the explicit name. In his commentary on the passage, Rashi remarks that "the *Šekhinah* dwelt in the joints of their fingers." A similar approach is elaborated in kabbalistic literature. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 336–39. Compare the Ashkenazi text in *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (ed. P. Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr, 1981) §982.

119. Cf. *b. Pesaḥ.* 50a; *b. Qidd.* 71a.

120. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §1588.

121. Cf. the passage from Eleazar cited above, n. 81, and *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 312.

122. Ibid., §1597. In *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 251–52, I discussed a passage from Isaac ben Judah ha-Levi's *Paʿaneaḥ Raza* that makes a similar point regarding the gesture of covering the face after hearing the Torah. Unfortunately, I neglected to note the relevant passage from *Sefer Ḥasidim* in that context.

123. See my "Mystical Significance of Torah Study in German Pietism," *JQR* 84 (1993) 43–78, esp. 62ff.

ing experienced the theophany on the mountain (1 Kgs 19:13). These verses add another dimension to the ritual of covering the face: it is not only an act of altruism to protect others from potential harm; it is an expression of humility that is appropriate to one who has visually encountered the divine.[124] The downward casting of the eyes, I submit, fulfills the same function.[125]

This leads me to the final point. The directing of the heart above fosters the imaginative visualization of the divine enthronement, for what is chiefly seen in the heart of the worshiper is an anthropomorphic form seated upon the throne of glory. As I have discussed elsewhere, the moment of enthronement in the German Pietistic sources, based on much older esoteric texts, is treated as a sacred union between the upper and the lower glories, or the glory and the cherub, which is identified as the throne upon which the glory sits.[126] I suggest that this dimension of Ashkenazi esotericism is essential for

124. Relevant to this discussion is the passage from the 13th-century anonymous collection, *Sefer Minhag Ṭov*, cited by Marcus, "Prayer Gestures," 51. According to that text, since the *Šekhinah* is above the cantor's head when he recites *barekhu*, the custom is not to raise one's eyes at that point of the service. The gesture thus reflects an appropriate pietistic response to the visible presence of God. The nexus between humility and visionary experience is evident in Eleazar's remark in *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 95: "The one who lowers himself like a bent *yod* merits prophecy." Cf. ibid., 153, 188, 239, 526–27. The virtue of submissiveness is emphasized as an essential component of *kawwanah* in the responsa attributed to Judah the Pious, MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fols. 21b and 24a; cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 88. Finally, it is important to note the description of the angels who serve before the throne given by Eleazar, ibid., 206: "All the heavenly hosts that stand before Him are bent over, and they are all garbed in white fire, and they bow down to Him and cover their faces." Cf. commentary on the 42-letter name in Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1568, fol. 6b. The notion that the angels before the throne cover their faces in order not to see the image of the glory is expressed in earlier mystical literature. Cf. *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (ed. Schäfer) §§183, 793, 813; and see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 102–3.

125. A similar explanation can be found in kabbalistic texts. For example, cf. *Maʿarekhet ha-ʾElohut* (Mantua, 1558), chap. 9, 132a–b:

> We have already mentioned above that the worshiper must cast his eyes below and place his heart above for it is as if the worshiper were standing before the *Šekhinah* and it is necessary that his eyes not be nourished from that place. . . . We also mentioned the matter of one who looks at the rainbow and the matter of one who sees his genitals.

Cf. ibid., 113b–114a. In this text the erotic element of the visual encounter is made explicit. Hence, the rabbinic recommendation of casting the eyes below is associated with the taboo of looking at the genitals, also symbolized by the rainbow. Regarding the use of this symbolism in kabbalistic literature, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 334 n. 30 and 340–41 n. 48. Cf. MS Moscow, Günzberg 1302, fol. 17a: "The worshiper must cast his eyes below in [the emanation that is called] *ʿAṭarah*."

126. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 246; idem, *Along the Path*, 54–56, 180–81 n. 352.

a proper understanding of the Pietists' use of R. Yose's dictum. In order to pray it is necessary for the worshiper to conjure a visual image of the *Šekhinah* opposite him in the synagogue. At the same time, however, the worshiper is obligated to cast his eyes below so that he does not gaze directly upon the *Šekhinah*. The visual aspect is retrieved by the heart that is cast above so that it may imagine the *hieros gamos* between the glory and the throne in the *imago templi*. One of the most important liturgical settings in which this erotic drama unfolds is the *qedushah*, for, according to a highly influential passage from *Hekhalot Rabbati*, when Israel utter the *qedushah* below, the glory bows down to caress, embrace, and kiss the icon of Jacob engraved on the throne.[127] The Ashkenazi custom, followed by the Pietists, is to cast the eyes above when the *qedushah* is recited.[128] Through the ocular gaze, the worshiper is witness to sexual play in the divine realm, a motif that assumes a central role in the esoteric teaching of Ḥaside Ashkenaz, especially Eleazar.[129] I surmise that the recommendation to cast the eyes below and to direct the heart above is also related to the erotic drama unfolding in heaven, even though on the surface there is a blatant contradiction between the two gestures of looking down and looking up.

It is critical to emphasize, however, that Ḥaside Ashkenaz understood prayer in general, and not specifically the recitation of the *qedushah*, in light of the aforementioned text from *Hekhalot Rabbati*. That is, the purpose of prayer is to promote the sacred union in the divine realm, which is depicted mythically in terms of the image of God erotically embracing the icon of Jacob.[130] Thus, we find the following remark in some of the manuscript versions of Eleazar's commentary on the prayers:

127. *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (ed. Schäfer)§164. The passage is translated and analyzed in my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 101–2; and idem, *Along the Path*, 25–26.

128. See the concluding part of *ʾofan* that begins *kevodo ʾot* by Meir ben Isaac Sheliaḥ Ṣibbur in *Seder ʾOṣar ha-Tefillot* (2 vols; New York: Otzar ha-Sefarim, 1966) 2.35 (section on *yoṣerot*); Jacob ben Asher, *Ṭur*, ʾOraḥ Ḥayyim §125, and the comment of Jacob Karo in the *Bet Yosef*, ad loc.; Ṣedekiah ben Abraham ha-Rofe, *Shibbole ha-Leqeṭ ha-Shalem* (ed. S. Mirsky; Jerusalem: Sura, 1966) §20; Abraham bar Azriel, *ʿArugat ha-Bosem* (4 vols., ed. E. E. Urbach; Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1939) 1.214. Some of these sources have been noted by E. Zimmer, "Poses and Postures during Prayer," *Sidra* 5 (1989) 89–95 [Heb.]; and Marcus, "Prayer Gestures," 52.

129. See my *Along the Path*, 56–59, and references to Eleazar's citation or paraphrase of the key passage from *Hekhalot Rabbati*, on pp. 111 nn. 2–3, and 186 n. 366. Needless to say, many more textual examples could have been added. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 235, and references in the following note.

130. The sacred union is also expressed through images of enthronement, coronation, and robing. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 239–40: "'Blessed are You, O Lord.' . . . When they bless the Holy One and they praise Him, He appears as one who is elevated and exalted." The very purpose of prayer is to elevate and to exalt God upon the throne. This is also expressed in terms of the biblical motif of God's

> "Israel, as His treasured possession" (Ps 135:4): When Israel pray before the Holy One, blessed be He, He embraces Jacob, our patriarch, who is engraved on the throne of glory, like a man who kisses and loves his wife.[131]

Note how the homoerotic relationship between God and the engraved image of Jacob is transmuted into the heterosexual terms of a man's physical embrace of his wife. Further support for my contention may be found in the juxtaposition of two comments in another one of Eleazar's liturgical commentaries:

> Thus the poet said, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps 16:8), for the *Šekhinah* fills everything, and those who fear His name know the essence of the matter, but "the secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him" (ibid. 25:14), (and only) "a base fellow gives away secrets" (Prov 11:13), (so) I will place my hand on my mouth.[132] In the Trisagion (Isa 6:3) are nine words corresponding to the nine theophanic forms (*mar'ot*) before the great glory[133] . . . for the throne is engraved with the image of Jacob, but this whole matter cannot be explained except orally to the one who fears his Creator at all times.[134]

The appearance of the *Šekhinah* below parallels the manifestation of the enthroned glory above. Moreover, there is an element of concealment that pertains to the lower and the upper manifestations of the divine glory, an element that is related in both cases to the erotic nature of the visual object.

The nexus between eros and vision, a motif well attested in older Jewish sources, is confirmed in a number of passages in the writings of Ḥaside Ashkenaz.[135] This nexus, for instance, underlies the connection between the

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mounting a cherub. Of the many texts that could have been cited in support of this idea, I here mention a passage from the Pietistic *Perush Haftarah*, MS Berlin Or. 942, fol. 155a:

> [The word] *keruv* [has the same] letters [as the word] *barukh* and also [as the word] *rokhev*, for when the Holy One, blessed be He, rides upon the cherub, they bless Him, and the seraphim and ophanim say, "Blessed is the name of the glory of His kingdom forever."

For other Pietistic sources in which the word *keruv* is related to *barukh* or *barekhu*, see my *Along the Path*, 156 n. 226.

131. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 108. Cf. ibid., 135.

132. Cf. Job 40:4.

133. Regarding this central motif in the German Pietistic theosophy, see my *Along the Path*, 153–55 n. 219.

134. MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fol. 7b.

135. Cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, §§59, 978, 979, 986; *Sefer ha-Roqeaḥ*, 26, 30. I have discussed these and some other relevant texts in "The Face of Jacob in the Moon: Mystical Transformations of an Aggadic Myth," in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: Challenge or Response?* (ed. S. Daniel Breslauer; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) 243–44, 264–66 nn. 51–52. To the sources mentioned there, one might add the statement in *Massekhet Kallah*, chap. 1, "he who gazes intentionally upon a woman it is as if he has [sexually] come upon her." The underlying assumption here is clearly that vision is ejaculatory, and thus looking at a woman is equivalent to having intercourse with her. In the same text, the voyeuristic act of gazing at a woman's

rite of circumcision and the vision of the glory that one finds in Pietistic literature, a theme expressed in midrashic texts and further developed in kabbalistic works.[136] Indeed, in a manner consonant with the kabbalists, Ḥaside Ashkenaz maintain that the aspect of the *Šekhinah* revealed in the theophanous moment is the crown, which, I contend, symbolically represents the corona of the *membrum virile*. It follows that what is visually apprehended by the prophet or the mystic is the most concealed element of God. An especially important passage in which the inherent hiddenness of the crown is affirmed is found in the pseudo-Hai commentary on the 42-letter name of God included in the introductory section of Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*:

> When the diadem is on the head of the Creator, the diadem is called Akatriel, and then the crown is concealed from all the holy angels, and it is hidden in 500 myriad parasangs. Then they ask one another, "where is the place of His glory?" Concerning it David said, "O you who dwell in the shelter of the Most High and abide in the protection of Shaddai" (Ps 91:1), [the word] *be-seter* has the numerical value of Akatriel.[137]

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vagina (euphemistically referred to as 'that place' *ʾoto maqom*) is offered as an explanation for blindness. This explanation is presented as part of an angelic revelation to R. Yoḥanan in which he learned the reasons for the physical defects of lameness, deafness, dumbness, and blindness. All four handicaps are related to sexual misconduct. Cf. *b. Ned.* 20a. I have noted some other examples of the eroticization of vision in rabbinic sources in *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 43 n. 130, 85–86 n. 50. In the Jewish mystical tradition, blindness is viewed primarily as punishment for masturbation rather than for the sexual trespass of voyeurism. Underlying this motif is the symbolic association of the eye and the male organ. See my "Weeping, Death, and Spiritual Ascent in Sixteenth-Century Jewish Mysticism," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys* (ed. J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) 220–22. On the linkage of blindness and sexual transgressions in ancient Greek mythology, see E. A. Bernidaki-Aldous, *Blindness in a Culture of Light: Especially the Case of Oedipus at Colonus of Sophocles* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990) 57–93.

136. On the correlation of circumcision and visionary experience in Ḥaside Ashkenaz, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 249 n. 251 and 343 n. 53; idem, *Along the Path*, 142 n. 183. Cf. *Perush ha-Roqeaḥ ʿal ha-Torah* (3 vols., ed. C. Konyevsky; Benei Berak: Yeshivat Ohel Yosef, 1986) 1.157, 3.101. On the dwelling of the *Šekhinah* and circumcision, cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 104. Regarding this motif in midrashic and kabbalistic sources, see my "Circumcision, Vision of God, and Textual Interpretation: From Midrashic Trope to Mystical Symbol," *HR* 27 (1987) 189–215; revised version in *Circle in the Square*, 29–48, and notes on pp. 140–55.

137. Cited in Dan, *Esoteric Theology*, 120. My translation is based on the version of the text extant in MSS Oxford, Bodleian 1568, fol. 5a and 1812, fol. 61a, which differs slightly from the version presented by Dan. A parallel to this passage is found in another part of the introduction to Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, MS Oxford, Bodleian 1568, fol. 23a, which in turn parallels the Ashkenazi source in MS New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America Mic. 1786, fol. 43a, cited by Idel, *Kabbalah:*

In the continuation of this passage, which has been commented on by a number of scholars, the hypostatic crown is identified further as the prayer that sits to the left of God like a bride near the bridegroom, the princess, the voice of revelation, the *Šekhinah*, the angel of the Lord, and the tenth kingship. For my purposes the description of the last image is critical:

> And she is the tenth kingship (*malkhut ʿasirit*) and she is the secret of all secrets (*sod kol ha-sodot*). Know that the hidden [letters] of [the word] *sod* are *mem*, *kaf*, *waw*, *lamed*, *taw*, the letters of *malkhut*.[138]

The hidden letters refer to the consonants that are necessary to spell the letters of a given word phonetically. In the particular case of the word *sod*, the hidden letters consist of *mem*, *kap*, *waw*, *lamed*, and *taw*, which spell *malkhut*. The concealed aspect of the 'secret', the *sod kol ha-sodot*, is the "kingship," which is the crown on the head of God. The secrecy ascribed to the crown is also expressed by the numerical equivalence of *be-seter* and Akatriel.[139] I note, parenthetically, that the citation of Ps 91:1 in this context reflects the influence of the targumic translation of the expression *yoshev be-seter ʿelyon* as *de-ʾashre shekhinteih be-razaʾ ʿilaʾah* 'He placed His presence in the supernal mystery'.[140] For the Ashkenazi author, this image is applied to the ascent of the *Šekhinah* as the crown on the head of God. Encoded here is a primary esoteric doctrine—or what may be called a ground concept—that has also informed the theosophic kabbalah: the head is a symbolic displacement of the phallus, and thus the crown on the head is the corona.[141] The change in

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New Perspectives, 195. For a different translation, see my *Along the Path*, 42. See also the passage from *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, printed in *Perush ha-Roqeaḥ ʿal ha-Torah*, 1.15–16. On the hiddenness of the crown when it sits on the head of the glory, cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 203.

138. Dan, *Esoteric Theology*, 120–21.

139. That is, both equal 662. For other examples of this numerology in Pietistic sources, see my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 262 n. 315. And cf. *Sefer ha-Ḥokhmah*, 25:

> [The first and last letters of] *bereʾšit* are the letters *baʺt*, and this refers to community of Israel, which is called *bat* . . . and, similarly, *bat qol*, for the voice of the prayers of the daughter of Israel (*qol tefillat bat yiśraʾel*) rises to the head of the Creator and sits next to him like the daughter (*bat*) that is called *Šekhinah*, and this is what is written, "O you who dwell in the shelter of the Most High" (Ps 91:1), [the word] *be-seter* [is made up of] the letters *bt sr* [which can be vocalized as *bat sar*], for He is the archon (*sar*) who receives the daughter (*bat*).

140. Cf. the exegesis on the targumic rendering of Ps 91:1 in *ʿArugat ha-Bośem*, 2.11.

141. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 342, 357–68. On the phallic constitution of maculinity and femininity in kabbalistic symbolism, see my "Woman—The Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah: Some Philosophical Observations on the Divine Androgyne," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity* (ed. L. J. Silberstein and R. L. Cohn; New York: New York

position of the *Šekhinah* from being the bride or the princess sitting alongside God to being the crown on the head of God signifies the gender transformation of the *Šekhinah* from an autonomous feminine into the feminine that is reintegrated into the masculine. In the transformed state, the *Šekhinah* is designated by the technical term *malkhut*, the inner dimension of *sod*.[142] In the final analysis, the mythic symbol of the elevation of the crown indicates that the *Šekhinah*, which is characterized in feminine terms, is ontically part of the phallus (*malkhut* within *sod*), indeed the disclosed part that must be concealed in the visionary encounter.

It will be recalled that in a passage from Eleazar cited above, the *Šekhinah* is said to be revealed only momentarily to the worshiper, for if it were displayed for a longer duration it would be a "disgrace for the *Šekhinah*." We can now propose an interpretation of Eleazar's comment: it is a disgrace for the *Šekhinah* to be revealed, for the aspect that is disclosed is related to the male organ, which by nature must be concealed. The visionary encounter, therefore, is marked by the appearance of that which conceals itself. Consequently, the exposure of the *Šekhinah* elicits disgrace on the part of the *Šekhinah* and shame on the part of the worshiper. A similar explanation can be applied to Eleazar's statement that when the glory spoke to the prophet it would surround him in a cloud, a matter that is not to be transmitted in writing but only orally.[143] The esoteric element in this case as well is linked to the erotic nature of the visible aspect of the *Šekhinah*.[144] Confirmation of my interpretation can be found in Eleazar's commentary to the passage in the *musaf* service for Rosh ha-Shanah, "You were revealed in the cloud of Your glory upon Your holy people to speak to them": "Thus He was revealed in the cloud surrounding the glory just as above 'dark thunderheads, dense clouds of the sky [were His pavilion round about Him]' (Ps 18:12). 'Upon Your holy people,' then Israel were holy . . . for they separated from their wives for three days and they were like ministering angels. Therefore, His glory was revealed 'to speak to them.'"[145] As a result of abstaining from sex-

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University Press, 1994) 166–204; idem, "Crossing Gender Boundaries in Kabbalistic Ritual and Myth," *Circle in the Square*, 79–121, and notes on 195–232.

142. The elevation of the crown functions in a similar way in kabbalistic sources. See my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 275 n. 14, 362 n. 123, 363; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 116–20, 231–32 n. 198. The gender transformation is also expressed in Pietistic sources in terms of the transition from Jacob, which is related to the heel that symbolizes the feminine, to Israel, which is the head that symbolizes the masculine. Cf. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 536, translated in my *Along the Path*, 58–59.

143. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 195. The text is translated in my *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 203. Consider also Eleazar's interpretation of Exod 33:22–23 cited in *ʿArugat ha-Bośem*, 1.198, which more or less parallels *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 388.

144. See my *Along the Path*, 182 n. 353.

145. *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 674. Cf. ibid., 712–13.

ual intercourse with their wives for three days,[146] the male Israelites were transformed into angels and they thus merited to see the glory of God who appeared from within the covering of the cloud. In the mystical theosophy of the Pietists, the disclosure of that which is concealed results in the concealment of that which is disclosed.

In light of the identification of the *Šekhinah* as the crown and the symbolic decoding of that image as the corona of the phallus, we can better understand the repeated prohibition (based on earlier rabbinic sources) in Pietistic literature of looking at women and the promise that one who shuts his eyes to avoid staring at women's physical beauty will be nourished by the visible splendor of the *Šekhinah*.[147] By withstanding sexual temptation, one is granted a vision of the *Šekhinah* in the form of the phallic crown. The link between the visual manifestation of the *Šekhinah* and the abrogation of sexual desire parallels the connection made in Pietistic sources between transmission of the divine name and sexual abstinence: just as only one who is sexually abstinent can receive the name, a reception that involes esoteric gnosis and mystical praxis, so only one who has mastered the sexual passions

146. Cf. Exod 19:15; *b. Šabb.* 86a and 87a.

147. Cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim* §59, 978–79; *Sefer ha-Roqeaḥ*, 26, 30. I have translated and discussed these passages in "Face of Jacob in the Moon," 243–44. See also the responsum on illicit sexual relations (*ʿarayot*) attributed to Judah the Pious in MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 232, fols. 10b–11a, and cf. ibid., fols. 16a and 29a; *Perushe Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 296, 725 (in that context Abraham's perfection is linked to his circumcision, which is connected to the aggadic motif that he did not gaze upon women). And cf. ibid., 151:

> Twenty-three matters correspond numerically to *û-bě-tôrātô yehggĕh* (Ps 1:2) [i.e., the word *yehggĕh* equals twenty-three]. . . . twenty-two letters and one below, which is the sexual desire (*taʿawat ʿerwah*), [to signify that there are] twenty-two forbidden sexual relations. Therefore a person must study (*yehggĕh*) the twenty-two letters [of the Torah] to remove from himself the twenty-two types of desire, and his desire should only be for his wife. Thus the Torah is compared to a woman.

According to this text, engagement in Torah serves as a substitute for the pursuit of sexual pleasure, which is related to the aggadic motif of the Torah as a feminine persona. On the application of this motif in German Pietistic sources, see my *Circle in the Square*, 133–34 n. 60. Finally, it is worth mentioning that preserved in the Genizah is a magical recipe attributed to Simeon ben Yoḥai and his disciples that includes the prohibition of looking at women. This is immediately followed by the liturgical expression "Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever" and the mishnah in *m. Ḥag.* 2:1 regarding the three subjects considered by the rabbis to be esoteric. The text and translation may be found in Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae*, 216–18. Sexual abstinence as a prerequisite for undertaking magical rites, usually connected with other forms of physical ascetism, is not an uncommon feature of Jewish magic. Cf. *Sefer ha-Razim*, 9, 83, 89, 90, 103; and see discussion in M. D. Swartz, "Ritual and Purity in Early Jewish Mysticism and Magic," *AJS Review* 19 (1994) 153–57.

is capable of visually contemplating the *Šekhinah* as the expanded crown[148] exposed on the head of God.[149] But even such a person cannot gaze with his eyes opened; the heart alone is the instrument of the visualization. The mental confronting of God's face in the imagination takes the place of facing the *Šekhinah* in the physical space of the synagogue.

148. On the motif of the expansion of the crown in the religious thought of Ḥaside Ashkenaz, see my *Along the Path*, 185 n. 363. To the sources mentioned there, one might add *ʿArugat ha-Bośem*, 3.481–82.

149. I have noted some of the relevant sources in *Along the Path*, 113–14 n. 20; see also my "Face of Jacob in the Moon," 265 n. 52.