1. Introduction: Mysticism and Dreams

Mysticism deals with the search for a direct contact of man and God or other spiritual entities\(^1\) either initiated by supernal beings in the form of inducing an unexpected feeling of a numinous presence, or the result of a human initiative to establish such a contact, those experiences of contact presuppose the transport of man on another level of experience, a change in his state of consciousness, a disclosure of spiritual realms of being which may have transforming effects\(^2\). Mysticism is therefore breathing in a type of religious mentality, where the channel between man and God was conceived of as still open, notwithstanding some eventual obstacle to materialize this contact. Such an open channel was conceived of as still available even in those circles in the Rabbinic culture which proclaimed that prophecy ceased\(^3\).

Dream was conceived of, explicitly, as such a channel. According to a statement in Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah, fol. 5b God promised that despite the fact that he has turned away, or hidden, his face from the people of Israel, he will nevertheless speak to them in a dream. Thus, even in a legalistic writing the assumption of the existence of an open channel is found, which presupposes the apparition of the divine in a dream. This is, to be sure, not the single case when a direct contact with God is conceived of as being possible, though the transformative aspects of this experience are less significant than they were in mystical literature\(^4\).

The topic of dreams in Hasidei Ashkenaz has been treated twice in modern scholarship; first by Monford Harris\(^5\) and then by Joseph Dan\(^6\). These two scholars have focused their discussion on the views of this matter especially as found in Sefer Hasidim, and in some of the discussions found in the literature of this group, like some of the discussions of Eleazar ben Yehudah of Worms (c. 1165–c. 1230). More recently Tamar Alexander-Frizer has dealt with the issue of še'elat halom as it appears in connection to the story of the pious sinner, which is the main topic of her treatment\(^7\). The purpose of the present lecture is to describe some aspects of a particular type of

---

\(^1\) See Plotinus, Enneads, 6.9.11. Insofar as Jewish mysticism is concerned, the term 'contact' as reflecting the manner of relationship between the mystic and God, has been used especially by G. Scholem, On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism, tr. Manheim, Schocken Books, New York 1969, p. 8 and his Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, Schocken Books, New York 1968, p. 4. See also M. Idel, Kabbalah: New Perspectives, Yale University Press, New Haven, London 1988, p. XVIII.

\(^2\) Unlike the more intimate and transformative nature of the mystical experiences, the encounters with spiritual beings in dream are more momentary. See below, note 76.


\(^4\) See A.J. Heschel, Prophetic Inspiration after the Prophets, Maimonides and Other Medieval Authorities, ed. M.M. Faierstein, Ktav Publishing House, Hoboken, NJ 1996. Heschel addressed the issue of dreams several times in his studies, some of them will be referred in the footnotes below.

\(^5\) See M. Harris, Dreams in Sefer Hasidim, PAAJR vol. XXXI (1963), pp. 73-74.


dreams, that induced by the technique designated as se'elat halom, aspects which were not discussed previously, and attempt to draw some conclusions from the mentioning of this device by the Aikzena Hasidism, including Yehudah ha-Ha-Said, for a certain aspect of the history of Jewish mysticism in general. However, before embarking the main topic of our discussion, let me point out that in this brand of medieval Jewish literature, a divine appearance in dream, reminiscent of the Talmudic statement mentioned above, is quite evident. In addition to the more corporeal explanation of dreams at the beginning of night, which were conceived of as devoid of revelatory contents, or those at the end of the night, which were conceived of as having much more intellectual content, as they were the result of external interventions, of angels or demons9, at least in one case dreams were described by Eleazar of Worms as coming from God:

"As in dream He tells future things, in order to announce that [both] the body and the thoughts are in His possession, and there is a divinity who is ruling over, and He is hidden from the eye but nothing is hidden from Him, and He is knowing everything, while being One" 10.

Like in the Talmudic statement mentioned above, God uses the medium of dream in connection to His ruling in the world; however, this manner of establishing the nature and identity of the Master of the World is not only a matter of leaving His traces in the world, and onto the human body11 as indeed it is the case in other discussions in Hasidei Aikzena, but also in penetrating one of the inmost domain of human consciousness, dream. Dream, like other realms of reality, are conceived of as
texts to be decoded, in order to find out the order imprinted by the divinity, and discover it within this order.

2. Induced Dreams with Visual Revelations.

However, before addressing the views of the Aikzena authors on dream question let me address the view expressed more two centuries beforehand, in a responsum of Hai ben Serira Goon (930–1038), an important halakic authority in the East, and one highly respected by the Aikzena Hasidism11;

"Likewise a dream question: there were several elders and pious men who lived with us who knew them12 and fasted for several days, neither eating meat nor drinking wine, (staying) in a pure place and praying and reciting great and well-known verses and [their] letters by numbers, and they went to sleep and saw wondrous dreams similar to a prophetic vision"13.

The attainment of the dream experience was conceived of as a very high one, described as "a prophetic vision". In preparation for it, the aspirant is requested to fast, to be in a pure place and then pray and recite some verses. The precise nature of these verses, and that of the "letters by numbers" has not been specified. One proposal, offered by a very important scholar was that these verses and letters are connected by means of gematria, without entering in any details of this technique.14 In a discussion of this passage, I have conjecture that the verses and the letters mentioned here are no other than the three verses in Exodus 14:19-21, which consist, each of them, of seventy-two consonants. From these verses numerous Jewish authors in the Middle Ages have claimed that the divine name of the seventy-two letters emerges15. However, one of the earliest among them, Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra mentions in the two versions of his commentary on these verses in Exodus that he found in an old book, named Sefer ha-Razim or Sefer Raziel that se'elat halom is achieved by means of the name of seventy-two letters, which he relates to the first verse of the first chapter of the book of Ezekiel.16 Thus, this book, dealing with magic, and apparently predating the elders mentioned by Hai Goon, presupposes, in addition to the corporeal preparations, also the recitations of the name of seventy-two letters, and there is good reason to interpret the Goan's description as referring to this divine name17.

Though Abraham ibn Ezra made his remarks on the dream question and the seventy-two letters while dealing with the Exodus verses, he did not specify - in the above-mentioned context - that his view differs from that of the magical book he is quoting, and which deals with another verse, that from Ezekiel. Thus, we may infer from his discussion mentioned above that he indeed has seen a nexus between this question technique and the name of seventy-two letters, it is not quite obvious that we may infer from his discussion, or that of Hai, that they had in mind also the Exodus verses in this context. However, in his Sefer ha-Sem ch. 5 he mentions exactly the Exodus verses as the source of the seventy-two names that is related to the dream question. In one of his poems, he indeed refers to the oneirogenetic role of this name:

"And the secret of seventy-two over all name I shall enhance. Their initials are Wa'a He Wa'au and their finals are Mem Wawu Mem. And the reading of the three verses in the Torah of God, will answer him" 18.

In my opinion, against the background of other discussions of Ibn Ezra in the nexus between this name and the dream question, which means in fact answering in dream to question posed prior, we should understand the last verb ya'aneu as referring to an answer offered in dream, provoked by the prior reading of the Exodus verses. Moreover, in a magical recipe dealing with inducing an answer in dream, found in two manuscripts of the Aikzena Hasidism in connection to the name of seventy-two letters, it is said:

"Behold, the divine name of seventy-two letters written in this order etc., and it is written when the body was impure19. If you will keep it in an appropriate manner, you will be happy in this world and in the world to come. And this is its [magical] use: if you will write it on the skin of a fish or an tablet of pure silver, and you will put it under the

SUNY Press, Albany 1987, p. 105. More on this author who is to be identified, in my opinion with Meleham ha-Tzedeq, see M. Verma, The Book of Contemplation, Medieval Jewish Mystical Sources, SUNY Press, Albany 1992, pp. 204-210. According to some formulations, found also in one of Eleazar's writings and quoted in his name the very gematria of 72= ha-irim wa-ha-Tumman is sem ben fe'im u-sheteray; see E. R. Aikenazi, ibid., p. 158 note 45 and Eleazar's Commentary on the Pentateuch, ed. J. Klijcman, Benaj Berag 1980, II, pp. 152-153.


11 See also another tradition, adduced in the name of Meshullam ha-Tzarfati, who quotes Sefer Raziel as a book dealing with the name of seventy-two letters and with Urim we-Tunniin, which is another divinatory praxis. See M. Itoz, The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia, tr. J. Chipman, pp. 5 note 2.

12 See on these explanations see Dan, Le-Torat ha-Halam, cit.

13 Hakhan ha-Ne'ef, Benei Berag 1987, p. 113. Compare also to Eleazar's Sefer ha-Ra'ehoq, Jerusalem 1960, p. 20, where a verse dealing with God's speaking in dream is adduced.

14 See on this issue see J. Dan, The Esoteric Theology of Hasidei Ashkenaz, Mosad Bialik, Jerusalem 1968, pp. 84-104 [Hebrew].
Again, the dream question is connected to the same divine name, with a pure place and with prayer, in a manner reminiscent of Hai Gaon’s description of the practices in his generation. I do not claim, by any means, that the last quote is preserving the precise practice of Hai’s acquaintances, but we should nevertheless be open to the possibility that similar forms of magic were transmitted in different versions over from the East to Europe, and those similar traditions are the reason for the affinities between the 11th century description and that found in the above Aïkenazi Siddur. Two traditions differ, however, on the transformation of the achievement of aspirants: Hai speaks of experiences which are closer to mystical ones, while the Aïkenazi formula deals with achieving better intellectual capacities. The nexus between an induced dream and a prophetic attainment involves a new understanding of prophecy as dealing not with a message coming from above because of divine initiative alone, but also as an experience induced by man’s sorting to a certain attainment, which may be induced deliberately. This rapprochement between dream and prophecy is not totally new: already in the Talmud, dream was conceived of as a sixty part of prophecy. However, there the divinatory aspect of prophecy not the mystical one, like in the later cases, is informing the Rabbi’s discourse. Let us address another mentioning of se’elat halom in an Aïkenazi writing: Eleazar of Worms mentions the Talmudic discussion of Shimeon bar Yohai that he has seen those who are the sons of the ‘al’iyah, who are few, and if they are two, it is he and his sons who are found there on high.26 Commenting on this statement, Eleazar writes: He has seen either by [means of] halom or, as Nehuniyah ben ha-Qanah [did].27 Therefore, the vision of someone’s status in the world-to-come may be achieved at means of a dream question, though the aspirant has an alternative, to resort to practices like those of Nehuniyah ha-Qanah, namely the technique found in the Heikalot literature.28 In other words, the two techniques, that of obtaining the dream question and that of the Heikalot descendant, different as they may be, may achieve the same goal. Eleazar’s view on Shimeon bar Yohai’s seeing his special status in the next world, namely his being ben ‘al’iyah by means of an activity similar to the dream question is reminiscent of the famous passage in Sefer Hasidim dealing with the pious sinner. According to the beginning of this passage ‘It happened that a Hasid has done a dream question as to who would sit next to him in paradise. They showed him a young man who lived far away’.29 In both cases knowledge of the status of the questioner in the next world is dealt with, and in both cases the partner is a young man.

However, what is important is the very fact that the activist attitude to dream is shared by another of the most important sources of Aïkenazi Hasidism. This form of awareness is conceived of as both reliable and attainable by human initiative, when informed by the appropriate technique. In another instance a disciple asked his dead master to appear to him in a dream in order to show him the place of the master in the world-to-come.30 Though the phrase se’elat halom does not occur in this context, the disciple is nevertheless described as stretching himself out on the grave of his master, apparently as part of an attempt to provoke the apparition of the master in dream. The master is telling him that his place in Eden is found within a great light, that the disciple, yet having to attain more religious merits, cannot see it. It should be mentioned that the dream question was a technique quite popular in the period as we learn from Jacob of Marvege’s Sefer te’ielos min ha-Samayim as well as a statement of Eleazar of Worms Commentary on the Pentateuch of which this technique is mentioned as available to everyone.

‘When someone sleeps, let everyone be careful not to touch the thigh-vein with his hands, because the “masters of dreams” will terrify him, because there is the middle of the body; or when someone performs a dream question, let he be careful not to touch the thigh-vein’.32

We do not have too many details about the different technique for inducing dreams among the Hasside Aïkenaz; we may assume that the name of seventy-two letters served for this purpose, as in the earlier discussions, found in Hai Gaon and Abraham ibn Ezra, and this assumption is corroborated by the recipe discussed above, which was preserved in an Aïkenazi Siddur. We may also assume, though there is no conclusive evidence for this effect, that also the text of Sefer Raziel, or Sefer ha-Razim, that was in the front of ibn Ezra’s eyes, has been known by Eleazar, who seems to be the first author in Europe to mention this book.33 In any case, as Margaliot has shown, Ms. Oxford 1345, where a text closely related to Sefer ha-Razim has been known by Eleazar, is found; It is worthwhile of discussing some of the details of this recipe in our context:

“And these are the words of the book and its ways and mercies in order to approach God in a pure manner, so that someone will be successful and do if something wished to do something, and to know and discern the true thing. He should figure out the seven days before the beginning of the month; during those days he should not eat anything impure neither something from which blood emerges neither a doves, as he should avoid a sexual intercourse and wash every day before the rise of sun. He should bring two doves or two white sons of doves, and slaughter them with a knife and he should be dressed in a white dress and he stands and walks barefoot and he recites the names of the angels mentioned below, that are appointed over the month in which you would like to ask your question regarding your needs. You should do during three days: then, in the third day you should bring all the sit ashes of sacrificers that you have produced during the three days. He should prepare the house alone and he should spread all the ashes on the earth in the house and recite the names of the mighty, great, powerful and holy angels, ruling over that month and then sleep without saying anything to anyone. And they will come during the...”

21 Apparently the left hand.
22 Yelveh potah.
23 Petah ‘otaḥ. May be that this is a type error for Petah ‘otam, an expression found in similar contexts.
24 Siddur Rabbeno Selahom of Germaizo, ed. M. Herszkner, Jerusalem 1972, p. 99. On another instance of using the name of seventy-two letters, according to an anonymous Aïkenazi author, for magical aims, namely for creating a Golem, or for therapeutic aims see M. Inex, Golem: Jewish Magico-
In all the above cases, the induced dream is the locus of an apparition of some sort; either the vision of Shimeon according to Eleazar, or the vision of the place of the pious in the Garden of Eden, or of the place of the ascetic pious in the other case, or the vision of the angels the last instance. The induced dream is therefore a place where seeing of a sublime picture is possible. Dream therefore is conceived in some cases as a momentary foretaste of the paradisial state, attained in a special state of consciousness. Such a reading of the role of the dream question brings some of the experiences induced by these techniques closer to mysticism, which has been described as a ‘nostalgia for the Paradise’.

I would like to emphasize that not all the effects of a dream question should be conceived of in terms of mystical experiences, but only those in which a vision of someone’s status in the world to come, which is in fact a attempt to verify someone’s religious status while alive in this world. In many other cases, and I assume and in most of them, the goals of a dream question is much more magical than mystical; nevertheless, this important magical aspect of the dream question does not invalidate the mystical overtones of those instances when the aim of the dream is to achieve a vision of the other world. Let me remind that, as mentioned above, both Hai Gaon and Eleazar had compared the religious attainment of the dream question with what has been conceived by them to be elevated forms of religious experiences.

3. Oral Revelations

With these observations in mind let me address now a dream question that has been attributed in several manuscripts to Yehudah ha-Hasid:

Se’elat halom from the mouth of the Hasid the Rabbi Yehudah: He should fast for one day, in the manner of Yom Kippur, let him have a [ritual] bath and purify himself from any impurity, and in the evening when he will go to bed, he should dress himself with white clothes and write the following names on the palm of his left hand: Apna, Mashpehalah, Yail, Papkat Tire. and he should not cease them till they will pass away by themselves. Then he should say: I so and so, invoke you, the angels of the dreams, Apna, Mashpehalah, Yail, Papkat Tire, that you will tell me what he wants; and he should not touch a woman three days before doing it. And this is tested and experimented.

Here we have the technique of a dream question, with some more details than in the earlier cases, but on the other hand, the nature of the aims is specified in some of the above cases, when a more mystical attainment has been mentioned. This text is a carte blanche. Let therefore attempt to analyze the details of this technique: the purification requirements are quite dominant and they are reminiscent of some important moments in Jewish religion: the Sinaitic revelation and the Yom Kippur preparations. The former topic is not explicitly mentioned, but the occurrence of the three days refrain from sexual relationship is a plausible indication in this direction. The Yom Kippur is mentioned explicitly. Thus, the aspirant is preparing himself for an encounter with the angels of dream. However, unlike the Sinaitic revelation and the Yom Kippur experience, here we have an anomalous experience, namely a form of encounter with the numinous that is not part of the regular religious behavior but it is initiated by the ‘dreamer’ which uses techniques that are not part of the halakhic requirements, in order to profit or benefit from his resort to these techniques. However, unlike the earlier attainments depending upon the dream messages which were visual, in the recipe attributed to Yehudah ha-Hasid there is a message that is explicitly auditory. Angels come not in order to reveal themselves, namely their morphé or splendor for example, but mostly in order to deliver a message. From this point of view, the last recipe is much more in line with the medieval type. But it seems that a different principle underlies this recipe, which deal with disclosure of answers to various quandaries, most of them explained in a vocal manner, often by referring to a biblical verse as the clue for the answer. As a literary genre, se’elat halom followed the oral, rather than the visual path. This oral aspect has been also well represented among Hasidic Kabbalah.

4. Abraham Abulafia: Revelations and the Name of the Seventy-Two Letters

The importance of dreams for achieving vertical experiences stemming from spiritual entities in Hasidic Kabbalah, testifies for a type of technique, having also mystical aspects, that is not evident in the ascending descriptions of the corpus of the Heikalot literature. Though affinities between the attainments reached by se’elat halom and Heikalot techniques have been shed light on by Eleazar of Worms, and while similarities between the two modes of techniques may be detected it seems that the two forms of revelations stem from different sources: the descending mode, as represented

40 Num. 12:8.
41 41 Printed in Margaliot’s introduction to Sefer Ha-Razim, pp. 32-33 from Ms. Oxford 123. Margaliot, ibid., has pointed out in the notes to this text, stemming from a Book of Adam, important affinities between its details and Sefer Ha-Razim.
42 Like the Kabbalah from the circle of Sefer ha-Temunah for example, a circle that was active, in my opinion, in Byzantium during the second half of the 14th century
44 Perhaps this situation of mentioning the dust and the ashes has something to do with the ritual of creating a Golem according to some recipes found in the writings of Hasidei Aikzen, see ibid., Golem, pp. 60, 63, 69-70, where dust is spread on the ground.
46 The vocalizations of the consonants suggested here is quite tentative.
48 Bohun v-menuchah. This is a commonplace recurring in many magical recipes. See Ms. Cincinnati Add. 14, fols. 86b-87a; Ms. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library 476, fol. 53a; D. Abrams pointed out to me also Ms. Vienna 28, fol. 57a.
by Sar ha-Torah is much more similar to se’elat halom, while both differ from the ascending types of descriptions. Though found together in some medieval manuscripts, it is still plausible to assume that the two forms of technique represent, initially, different approaches: while most of the Hekalot literature presents a technique closer to the astral body ascent, the se’elat halom deals more with a technique of bringing down the angels, and therefore closer to Sar ha-Torah technique. Insofar as the technique for eliciting an answer in dream is concerned, most of the discussions mentioned above, rotate around the name of seventy-two letters, which is not testified in the Hekalot literature, but is related to at least one source that was apparently not entirely reflecting the trend of the Heikalot literature, namely Sefer Raziel or Sefer ha-Razim. In the late medieval versions of this text—which may well be different from the early medieval and late antiquity textual bearing the same title—there is a lengthy commentary on the name of seventy-two letters but this is a 14th century kabbalistic text, stemming from the school of Sefer ha-Temunah.58 There is good reason to assume that a version of Sefer Raziel was known to Abraham Abulafia, as we learn from an instance in one of his epistles, where he refers to a gematria which was found in this book.59 However, it is precisely the divine name of seventy-two letters that had an impressive impact on the further development of mystical techniques, as we witness from the most important handbook of ecstatic Kabbalah, where this divine name is one of the most dominant elements.60 There are good reasons to assume that material stemming from Hasidei Aikhenaz played an important role in transmitting the technical attitude to the Spanish kabbalists. Abraham Abulafia mentions explicitly books of Yehudah ha-Hasdai of Regensburg61 and by Eleazar of Worms62. On the other hand, he never mentions Hai Gaon or Abraham ibn Ezra, in this context. Let me adduce one example dealing with this mystical importance of the name of seventy-two letters. In his Hayyie ha-Olam ha-ba after describing, in the regular way, how this name emerges from the three verses from Exodus, Abulafia writes:

- Behold this sublime name, written in an explicit manner, combined in an appropriate way...and whoever knows how to permeate it in an adequate manner, the divine spirit will certainly envelop him or the efflux of wisdom will emanate upon him, and guides his intellect the essence of reality in a sudden manner...and all these names are combined here, in order to explain the secrets of these seventy-two letters, from which the life of the world-to-come is attained by those who prophesy, and this is the reason this book is called The Life of the World to Come.

In the context of a quote from an earlier book, apparently lost one but belonging to ecstatic Kabbalah, as we learn from an instance in one of his epistles, where he refers to a gematria which was found in this book.63 However, it is precisely the divine name of seventy-two letters that had an impressive impact on the further development of mystical techniques, as we witness from the most important handbook of ecstatic Kabbalah, where this divine name is one of the most dominant elements.64 There are good reasons to assume that material stemming from Hasidei Aikhenaz played an important role in transmitting the technical attitude to the Spanish kabbalists. Abraham Abulafia mentions explicitly books of Yehudah ha-Hasdai of Regensburg and by Eleazar of Worms. On the other hand, he never mentions Hai Gaon or Abraham ibn Ezra, in this context. Let me adduce one example dealing with this mystical importance of the name of seventy-two letters. In his Hayyie ha-Olam ha-ba after describing, in the regular way, how this name emerges from the three verses from Exodus, Abulafia writes:

- Behold this sublime name, written in an explicit manner, combined in an appropriate way...and whoever knows how to permeate it in an adequate manner, the divine spirit will certainly envelop him or the efflux of wisdom will emanate upon him, and guides his intellect the essence of reality in a sudden manner...and all these names are combined here, in order to explain the secrets of these seventy-two letters, from which the life of the world-to-come is attained by those who prophesy, and this is the reason this book is called The Life of the World to Come.

The mystical is therefore receiving a message from the king, namely God, or one of his angels or servants, according to Abulafia a
separate intellect. This message has many forms: it is an enigma, a parable, a deep matter or a dream. Therefore, the dream, like the other possible forms of the intellectual efflux, is a coded message, obtained by using divine names, among them the name of seventy-two letters, and these names are imagined in a visual manner. These names are the source[s] of the dream. The nexus between the name of seventy-two letters and dream is even more conspicuous in a passage following the one quoted above; after recommending the recitation of this divine name, Abulafia claims that a revelation will take place, or a vision will be seen, stemming from the angel Gabriel— which stands here for Metatron—one of terms used by Abulafia in order to point to the agent intellect. Metatron, described in some earlier sources as a witness, is related by Abulafia to dream: edel—my witness—being numerically equal to halom, namely 84.74 Therefore, the dream is connected to an angel and, at the same time, to the effect of recitation of the divine names of seventy-two letters.

5. Concluding Remarks

If our short reconstruction of the history of one of the many roles played by the name of seventy-two letters in the development of Jewish mysticism is correct, then the Akenazi Hasidism should understood as an important, perhaps even crucial, link between the Eastern traditions, magical and mystical altogether, and those tradition which nourished some Kabbalistic techniques, in our case the anomian one. The structure of the standard version of Sefer Raziel which incorporates Hekhalot material, texts from Hasidei Akenaz, from ecstatic Kabbalah and from the kabbalistic literature from the circle of Sefer ha-Temunah as well as magical recipes including dream questions, is a fine example of the intersections, overlappings and interconnections between the various forms of Jewish mystical and magical literatures. The Akenazi Hasidim, with their taste for eclectic compilation and appropriation, exemplified by their treatment of Hekhalot literature, philosophy, magic and theosophical traditions, is a blueprint for many eclectic, and highly influential forms of writings in Jewish mysticism. As seen above, the first plausible evidence for the nexus between the praxis of se'elat halom and the name of seventy-two stems from Hai Gaon; it is interesting to notice that he is also the first author who resorted to the term Kabbalah in a context that is reminiscent of that of the Hasidei Akenaz and ecstatic Kabbalah, namely as an esoteric tradition dealing with the divine names.75 Is it a mere accident that the first recourse to the term Kabbalah as esotericism related to divine names occurs in the testimonies of an author that is aware of the use of one of those divine names as part of a mystical technique? Is it an accident that this use of the term Kabbalah recurs among the Akenazian Hasidim, who preserved also a view of the name of seventy-two letters in the context of revelatory experiences? Is it an accident that a version of Sefer ha-Razim and Sefer Raziel, which predate both Hai and the Akenazian Hasidism, relates this divine name and the se'elat halom? On the basis of the few quotes from this book found in Abraham ibn Ezra and Abraham Abulafia, it seems that there was in existence an additional version of this book, which included material dealing with the issues discussed above, and if so, the nexus between the name of seventy-two letters and

\[se'elat halom\] is earlier than Hai Gaon. Did the nexus between \[se'elat halom\] and the recitation of the divine names become an integral part of Kabbalah: the answer to this question is positive.76

SUMMARY

The article examines the relationship between the divine names and techniques of inducing dreams in Hasidei Akenaz, R. Yehudah ha-Hasid and Eleazar of Worms, as part of a divination process. Of remarkable importance was the so-called name of seventy-two letters; the study considers its occurrences in the first medieval sources. The article also explores the plausible sources of those masters in earlier speculations, in particular Abraham ibn Ezra, and the impact of these techniques on the development of the ecstatic Qabbalah of Abraham Abulafia.

KEYWORDS: Divine names; Dreams in Hasidei Akenaz; Ecstatic Kabbalah.

73 Ma, Oxford 1582, fol. 53ab.