



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

"FROM MY FLESH SHALL I SEE GOD"
THE EMPIRICAL METHOD IN LURIANIC KABBALAH

Michael Samuel

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Religion

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

October 1990

(c) Michael Samuel, 1990



**National Library
of Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

**Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4**

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-64672-1

ABSTRACT

"FROM MY FLESH SHALL I SEE GOD:" THE EMPIRICAL METHOD IN LURIANIC KABBALAH.

Michael Samuel

Isaac Luria (1534-1572) created the most sophisticated and influential theosophical system in the history of Jewish mysticism ("Kabbalah"). However, his work has not received adequate scholarly analysis, largely due to the complex and voluminous nature of the material. In my thesis, I demonstrate that a correct understanding of Luria's methodology must precede any serious treatment of his system. I therefore address the basic question: what tools did Luria use to make his esoteric discoveries?

I conclude that the views of modern scholarship on this issue are contradicted by the evidence of the corpus itself. Rather than resulting from "mystical inspiration", it turns out that Luria relied heavily on the empirical observation of nature to discover the structure and mechanisms of the divine ("sefirotic") realm. My view is confirmed by the way it explains many differences between Luria's system and that of his most important predecessor, Moses Cordovero (1522-1570).

This thesis is dedicated to
Professor Ira Robinson
of the Department of Religion,
Concordia University:

You have done more for me
than you can possibly know.

"FROM MY FLESH SHALL I SEE GOD"

**A Study of the Empirical Method
in Lurianic Kabbalah.**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION:

The present state of Lurianic studies.
The question of Luria's methods. p. 1

CHAPTER ONE:

Empiricism in Judaism.
Its three functions. p. 11

CHAPTER TWO:

Sefirot and the sefirotic realm.
The empirical study of sefirot in the
Zohar and Cordoveran kabbalah. p. 18

CHAPTER THREE:

Empiricism in Lurianic Kabbalah. p. 33

CONCLUSION:

The Rivalry between Lurianic and Cordoveran
Kabbalah. Authority vs. anarchy. p. 48

NOTES..... p. 52

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... p. 63

APPENDIX:

Empiricism in Islam..... p. 65

INTRODUCTION: The present state of Lurianic studies.
The question of Luria's methods.

Kabbalah, or Jewish mysticism, has produced a rich and variegated literature over the past eight centuries. The two great milestones of this literature are undoubtedly the Zoharic and Lurianic corpora (13th and 16th century respectively). Both received canonical status (1) and exerted a tremendous influence on Jewish thought and practice, both among Ashkenazim and Sepharadim.

The Lurianic system eventually became the universe of discourse in which all later mystical thought developed. Scores of kabbalists devoted themselves to unravelling the tangle of insights preserved in this vast and intricate corpus. The work continues among orthodox kabbalists and modern scholars to this day.

Modern Lurianic studies has advanced thanks to the work of many scholars. Scholem has contributed much to our understanding of the historical context and development of Lurianism. He has also elucidated many of its fundamental concepts: its cosmology, anthropology, eschatology, etc. (2).

Tishby has produced the most systematic exposition of a Lurianic doctrine that has been written to date. His work involves a careful distinction between two major versions of Luria's doctrine of evil. The first is that of his most famous disciple, Hayyim Vital, who locates the source of evil in one of the lower stages in the emanative process (Nikudim), at a "safe distance" from the Supreme Being himself. This is the kabbalistic equivalent of the theological postulate that God's essence is free from even the slightest trace of any kind of imperfection whatsoever. The second is that of a less known, though by no means less important disciple, Yosef Ibn Tabul. He traces the source of evil to the essence of the deity itself, and therefore sees the entire cosmogony as a "cathartic process."

In the introduction to the 1942 edition of his book, Tishby assesses the state of Lurianic studies in these words:

"Lurianic Kabbalah, the most intricate and the most influential system in the history of Kabbalah, has not yet received a serious and exhaustive analysis. My own analysis, as indicated by its title, is only a modest beginning in this direction. I have limited myself to the elucidation of one of the foundations in the great edifice of Lurianic Kabbalah."

Writing in 1984, he remarks that there are still serious gaps in our understanding of this epochal system:

"In the decades that have passed since 1942, many studies have been published in the field of Lurianic kabbalah, most of them dealing with its branches and its influence, and a few of them with its fundamental doctrines. However, no further monographic analysis has been made, seeking to present and elucidate Lurianic kabbalah as a comprehensive system" (3).

One of the branches that has received special attention recently is Lurianic spirituality. Lawrence Fine has published several articles on the psychical doctrines and practices of Luria, such as "The Contemplative Practice of Yihudim in Lurianic Kabbalah", "Maggidic Revelation in the Teachings of Isaac Luria", and "The Art of Metoposcopy: A Study in Isaac Luria's Charismatic Knowledge" (4).

Clearly, it is time to expand the scope of Tishby's analysis to the corpus as a whole. However, we must first obtain a clear and precise understanding of Luria's methodology. We must first know exactly what kind of tools Luria used to make his discoveries. This is a central issue, and one which has not yet received adequate attention. Furthermore, the little that has been said on the subject is contradicted by the evidence of the corpus itself, as I will show.

Leading scholars in the field appear to follow the traditional view, viz. that Luria's knowledge was of the "inspired" type. Scholem has shown how Luria developed some of his predecessors' ideas (5). However, he leaves us under the impression that, to a large extent, Luria's kabbalah resulted from "mystical inspiration" (6) and "visionary thinking" (7).

Werblowsky appears to concur with this view. He has analyzed many techniques of mystical contemplation prevalent in sixteenth century Safed and he believes that for kabbalists, mystical experience often produced discursive knowledge. His discussion of what he calls "automatic thinking" is relevant here:

"One method of inducing inspirations... is a peculiar technique of spontaneously producing discursive, intellectual, even highly specialized theoretical and speculative material without any conscious effort or thought. It may perhaps be described as induced intuition or 'automatic thinking'. As a waking alternative to indoctrination in dreams, it is reminiscent of the technique of 'active imagination' cultivated in Jungian analytical psychology as a supplement to or substitute for dreams. The underlying theory obviously assumes that whatever suddenly 'falls' into consciousness is of supernatural origin. ... The practical problem was how to achieve that vacuity of mind in which alone unobstructed intuition became possible."

"It is a tribute to the effectiveness of rabbinic mental discipline and to its power to penetrate the more unconscious levels of psychical activity that these kabbalist rabbis always produced from their subconscious perfectly coherent, intelligible, and scholarly disquisitions" (8).

According to Fine, it was "not his (Luria's) intellectual acumen that served as the basis for his authority as a teacher, but his intuitive and contemplative acumen" (9). Elsewhere he expands on this theme:

"In Luria's case appeal was not made to the inherent meaning of existing texts which could be discovered through rational inquiry, but to some heavenly source. Knowledge, as we have seen, was regarded as deriving directly from on high, rather than from an individual's own intellectual power to determine God's will. ...

As we have already seen, there were earlier kabbalists whom kabbalistic tradition regarded as having gained their knowledge in this way. But it was not until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that we encounter the proliferation of this type of activity on a large scale. ... When Isaac Luria arrived in Safed from Egypt in the year 1570, then, he found himself in cultural surroundings which were highly supportive of men who sought knowledge of Torah from on high, and who were successful in those efforts. Luria was not, however, merely another example of a general tendency. Rather, in Luria we see a rich and full realization of this tendency" (10).

Thus the general consensus about Luria's methodology comprises two points. Firstly, Luria possessed psychic gifts to a very high degree. Secondly, he used these gifts not only to diagnose and treat the spiritual ailments of his contemporaries, but more importantly, to produce his highly original kabbalistic system.

However, the major objective of this thesis is to demonstrate that Luria's psychic abilities did not play a major role in his kabbalistic speculation. I assert that many important Lurianic ideas resulted from a far more "down to earth" approach. The internal evidence of the corpus shows that empirical observation of natural phenomena in general and human anatomy in particular was a major source of Luria's innovations. He turned even the most banal details and functions of our bodies into repositories of esoteric wisdom.

Briefly then, I argue that this kabbalah is not so much the product of "mystical inspiration", "visionary thinking", "charismatic knowledge", or "automatic thinking" as of empirical observation. Understanding the empirical foundation of Lurianism should greatly facilitate the systematic study of the corpus as a whole.

At this point, I should say something about the nature of this "corpus." Luria himself wrote practically nothing. As Scholem says, "he seems to have lacked the literary faculty altogether" (11). Some of his authentic writings have been preserved, but these amount to nothing more than fragments. The bulk of this vast literature is the product of his disciples and followers.

Luria's chief disciple was Hayyim Vital (1543 - 1620). After Luria's death in 1572, Vital devoted the rest of his life to recording and editing his master's ideas. Much of Vital's writings were re-edited by two other men, his son, Shmuel Vital, and Meir Poppers. The former produced the "Eight Gates", eight volumes dealing with meditation, reincarnation, mystical exegesis, etc. The latter produced the "Etz Hayyim" (The Tree of Life), which is a comprehensive presentation of Lurianic cosmogony. Other "Lurianic" works are also extant, for example, Sefer Ha-Likutim, Olat Tamid, etc.

Vital re-edited his own notes several times over a long period. Afterwards, Shmuel Vital and Meir Poppers rearranged the material in ways they thought were more suitable (12). We may wonder about the degree to which the Lurianic corpus represents the original views of Isaac Luria himself.

In general, we may assert that the corpus is an accurate reflection of Luria's original views (13). Vital claims to have scrupulously recorded his master's words. He says, "I do not want to add or subtract a single jot from all that I heard from my teacher" (14). This claim is supported by Vital's numerous admissions of having forgotten something (15) or being in doubt about

something (16). Also, Vital informs us if a specific detail has not been received from his teacher, but is his own personal view (17).

Therefore I feel that most, if not all the empirical proofs in the corpus can be attributed to Luria himself. This seems even more likely when we will consider Vital's personal reluctance to admit that his master used intellectual tools of any kind. The fact that empirical proofs are a common feature of the corpus indicates that they originate with the master himself.

My exposition of the empirical foundation of Lurianism will also shed some light on the history of this kabbalah. Once I establish Luria's reliance on the empirical method, I will have to explain why his followers flatly contradicted this fact. On the one hand, his main disciple, Hayyim Vital, preserved his master's thoughts in such a way as to make their empirical basis readily apparent. This supports Vital's claim to have done his utmost to preserve the exact language and flavour of Luria's teachings (18). But on the other hand, in his polemic with the rival school of Luria's illustrious predecessor, Moses Cordovero (1522 - 1570), Vital emphatically denied that his master used

empiricism or any other intellectual method to develop his ideas (19).

Thus, for example, Vital assures his readers that Lurianic kabbalah is entirely the product of "divine vitality":

"The secrets of the Torah and her mysteries are not revealed to human beings by the power of their intellects, but only by means of divine vitality which flows from on high, through God's messengers and angels, or through Elijah the prophet, may his memory be a blessing. ... there is no doubt that these matters (i.e. esoteric knowledge) cannot be apprehended by means of human intellect, but only through Kabbalah, from one individual [directly] to another, directly from Elijah, may his memory be a blessing, or directly from those souls which reveal themselves in each and every generation to those who are qualified to receive them" (20).

And again:

"the human mind [by itself] could not attain such deep and wondrous matters without the power of the Holy Spirit, mediated through Elijah, may his memory be a blessing" (21).

And yet, empiricism has deep roots in Jewish religious thought. It is found in Biblical, Talmudic, and medieval sources (ch. 1). It is also a common feature of pre-Lurianic kabbalah (ch. 2). Its prominence in the Lurianic system should occasion no surprise whatsoever. Nevertheless, until now, this simple fact

seems to have been denied or overlooked. I therefore propose to firstly, demonstrate Luria's use of this tool (ch. 3), and secondly, explain why this was so difficult for Lurianists to accept (Conclusion).

Chapter One: Empiricism in Judaism

Its three functions.

Empiricism has deep roots in Judaism. This is only natural for such a world-accepting, world-affirming religion. The physical world is the direct creation of God (1). It is not the product of an evil demiurge, nor of one or more supramundane beings inferior to God, as in many Gnostic systems (2). Therefore, creation is intrinsically good. It was made by God for man's benefit.

But if nature is the work of God, then it must be infused with His infinite wisdom. The universe and all its contents must be able to teach man the greatest lessons, if only he has the eyes to see and the ears to hear. We may refer to three specific lessons found in the sources: religious sentiments, ethical conduct, and theosophical knowledge.

Religious Sentiments.

First, there are the "religious sentiments", i.e., fear, love, gratitude, humility etc. Nature reflects the greatness and the goodness of the Creator. By observing

the grandeur of nature and also its "concern" for man, the desired devotional attitude should result. This is a common motif of biblical thought:

"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth" (Isaiah 40.26).

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalms 8.4-5).

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works..." (Psalms 139.14).

A Talmudic sage saw the "raison d'etre" of the entire universe in this light:

"Rav Yehuda said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, created his world for the sole purpose that (mankind) should fear him, as it states, 'and God doeth it, that men should fear before him' (Eccles. 3.14)" (T.B. Shabbat 31b).

Bahya Ibn Pakuda (11th cen.) went so far as to consider systematic empirical observation of nature and especially of man to be an obligatory stage in the service of God. The second gate of his "Hovot Ha-Levavot" is devoted entirely to this subject. By studying nature closely, we become aware of God's love for

mankind. This awareness creates the sense of gratitude that is the true prerequisite for divine worship (3).

Maimonides, in his code of Jewish law, also makes empiricism a religious duty. Nature is designed to instil in man the love and fear of God:

"This God, honoured and revealed, it is our duty to love and fear; as it is said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God' (Dt. 6.5), and it is further said, 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God' (Dt. 6.13).

And what is the way that will lead to the love of Him and the fear of Him? When a person contemplates His great and wondrous works and creatures and from them obtains a glimpse of His wisdom which is incomparable and infinite, he will straightway love Him, praise Him, glorify Him, and long with an exceeding longing to know His great Name... And when he ponders these matters, he will recoil affrighted, and realize that he is a small creature, lowly and obscure, endowed with slight and slender intelligence, standing in the presence of Him who is perfect in knowledge... In harmony with these sentiments, I shall explain some large, general aspects of the works of the Sovereign of the Universe, that they may serve the intelligent individual as a door to the love of God, even as our sages have remarked in connection with the theme of the love of God, 'Observe the universe and hence, you will realize Him who spake and the world was'" (4).

Ethical Conduct.

Secondly, there is the practical lesson of proper ethico-religious conduct. All living species exemplify some specific virtue, which man should learn and apply in his own life:

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Which having no magistrate, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Prov. 6.6-8).

In this respect, the study of nature could even replace the study of Torah:

"What is meant by the Scriptural text, 'Who teacheth us by the beasts of the earth and maketh us wise by the fowls of the heaven' (Job 35.11)? 'Who teacheth us by the beasts' refers to the mule which kneels when it makes water. 'And maketh us wise by the fowls of the heaven' refers to the cock which first coaxes and then mates.

Rabbi Johanan observed: If the Torah had not been given we could have learnt modesty from the cat, honesty from the ant, chastity from the dove, and good manners from the cock who first coaxes and then mates" (T.B. Erubin 100b, Soncino translation.)

Theosophical Knowledge.

Thirdly, nature can yield a rich intellectual harvest for those who know how to study it. Untold theological and theosophical truths lie waiting to be discovered beneath the surface of all natural phenomena.

Ibn Pakuda makes this clear:

"We must look closely at the beginning of man's formation (in the womb), and how he is born, and how his limbs fit together, and (to understand and appreciate) what benefit he obtains from each limb... And when we apprehend all these details that we have mentioned concerning man, much of the secret of the universe will be made apparent to us, because man resembles it (the universe). And one of the wise men has said that the

main point of philosophy is that man should come to know himself... in order that he know the Creator from the divine wisdom that appears in him (man's body), as Scripture states, 'and from my flesh shall I see God' (Job 19.26)" (Hovot Ha-Levavot, Shaar Ha-Behina, ch. 5).

Ibn Ezra (12th cen.), in his commentary to the Pentateuch (Ex. 26.40), writes in a similar vein:

"He who knows the secret of his soul and the composition of his body, can know (thereby) the matters of the supernal world (ha-olam ha-elyon). Because man is a micro-cosmos (ha-adam ke-demut olam katan)."

Joseph Gikatilla, a Spanish kabbalist of the thirteenth century, explains the mystical side of astronomical knowledge:

"God created the angels in the ultimate (possible) degree of perfection. (And) even though we cannot see with the physical eye the hidden forms, (nevertheless) we observe the forms of the stars (in order) to understand from them the hidden (mysteries) of the (supernal) forms. And the sun and the moon are both manifest witnesses (that) teach us (about) the supernal mysteries... and from the sense objects we can understand and know those secrets and mysteries, and this is the mystical meaning of the verse: 'Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things' (Isaiah 40.26)" (5).

By the sixteenth century, the esoteric significance of nature had become a commonplace. The kabbalist Judah Hayyat was merely reiterating a widely held view when he wrote:

"Scripture states 'and from my flesh shall I see God' (Job 19.26) and also 'He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered' (Psalms 111.4), because by means of natural objects we apprehend the supernal objects...etc." (6).

A concrete example of the empirical approach to theological matters is given by Maimonides in his Guide (1/53). He maintains the absolute unity and simplicity of the divine essence. But how can a perfectly uniform, indivisible and unchanging being cause such diverse and opposite effects? The answer is based on the analogy to fire, which both melts and solidifies, cooks and burns. Despite all this, fire is basically one single, unchanging essence. Thus we learn that diverse and opposite effects do not imply multiplicity of any kind in the cause.

Finally, a famous example of the prominence of empiricism in Jewish thought is the legend of Abraham's empirical conversion. Raised among idolators, he discovered God by observing the motions of the heavenly bodies (7).

This brief survey of the sources shows that empiricism has deep roots in Jewish religious thought. Nothing could be more natural than for it to find an honoured place in the world of the kabbalists. The theosophists among them found empiricism to be eminently suited to their task, as we shall see. In the spirit of

world-acceptance that permeates the Bible and the Talmud, a kabbalist need not shut out sense perception through trance or other means to gain insight into ultimate reality. Rather, it is with both eyes open to this world that he strove to "see God" (Job 19.26).

CHAPTER TWO: Sefirot and the sefirotic realm.

The empirical study of sefirot in the Zohar and Cordoveran kabbalah.

Kabbalah postulates three distinct realms that are linked together into a "great chain of being." First there is "Ein Sof", the infinite and unknowable being. Next follows the ten sefirot, i.e. the divine spheres and attributes. Finally, there appears the material universe.

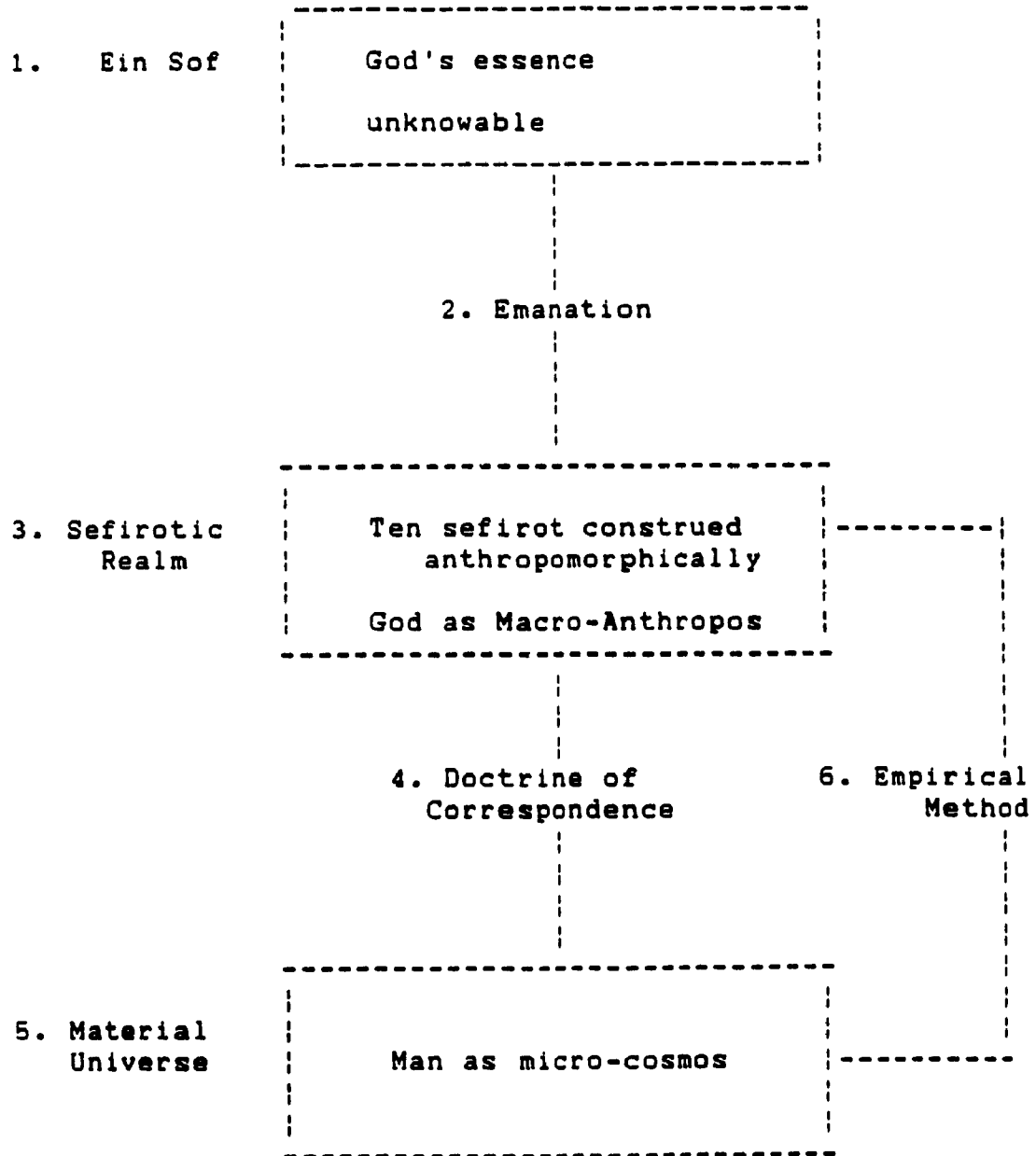
Ein Sof begins the cosmogonic process by emanating the sefirot. Being devoid of attributes, Ein Sof does not directly create or rule the universe. The sefirotic realm therefore serves as the link between Ein Sof and the world of man.

Infused by the power of Ein Sof, the sefirot are the ontological and providential foundations of our world. By progressively reducing the intensity of the divine light, they allow for the appearance of matter. Also, each sefirah reflects the divine light contained in it in a different way. This produces the various divine attributes required to govern the world (eg. mercy, justice, etc.).

The sefirotic realm is knowable, at least in comparison to Ein Sof. It is therefore the true object of theosophical speculation. It is, to a certain extent at least, accesible to the human intellect (1). And among the various intellectual tools available to study the sefirot is empiricism.

A basic principle in the Zohar's cosmogony is the "doctrine of correspondence." This doctrine is also the rationale and justification for the empirical study of the sefirotic realm. It is therefore important at this point to examine more closely the Zohar's conception of the three realms mentioned above in order to see exactly how empiricism fits into its scheme of things.

The three realms can be portrayed schematically as follows:



For the sake of clarity, it might be useful to add here a point by point commentary of this chart:

1. Ein Sof: God's unknowable essence:

The unknowability of Ein Sof is a recurring theme in the Zohar. A typical example would be:

"Ein Sof cannot be known, nor how it makes beginning or end, just as the zero number produces beginning and end. ... This is a Supreme Will, mysterious above all mysteries. It is Zero (Ein)" (Zohar 2/239b).

2. Emanation of the ten sefirot:

The emanation of the ten sefirot occurred "chronologically" as follows:

SEFIRAH		ATTRIBUTE
1. Keter	-- Crown	-- love, absolute, even if undeserved
2. Chokhmah	-- Wisdom	-- love, absolute, but less intense
3. Binah	-- Understanding	-- idem, roots of judgement here
4. Hesed	-- Love	-- love, only according to merit
5. Gevurah	-- Strength	-- judgement of the wicked
6. Tiferet	-- Beauty	-- mediation between #4 and #5

7. Netzach	-- Victory	-- love tempered by judgement
8. Hod	-- Splendor	-- judgement tempered by love
9. Yesod	-- Foundation	-- mediation between #7 and #8
10. Malkhut	-- Kingship	-- divine providence: concrete manifestation of #1 to #9.

This simple vertical progression can be replaced by a three-fold classification of the sefirot, based on their intrinsic affinities with each other:

LEFT COLUMN	MIDDLE COLUMN	RIGHT COLUMN
	Keter	
Binah		Chokhmah
Gevurah		Hesed
	Tiferet	
Hod		Netzach
	Yesod	
	Malkhut	

Thus the sefirot of the left column tend towards judgement, those of the right tend toward love, and the middle column strikes a balance between these two extremes.

3. The sefirot: God as macro-anthropos:

This division of the ten sefirot into three columns allows for their portrayal as a macro-anthropos. Thus we find that:

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Keter | = | skull |
| 2. Chokhmah | = | right brain |
| 3. Binah | = | left brain |
| 4. Hesed | = | right arm |
| 5. Gevurah | = | left arm |
| 6. Tiferet | = | torso |
| 7. Netzach | = | right leg |
| 8. Hod | = | left leg |
| 9. Yesod | = | penis |
| 10. Malkhut | = | female, the passive, receptive principle. |

Tishby elaborates on this point:

"There are some extraordinary descriptions of the figure of Man. It is portrayed as a most perfect and exalted image, which from several points of view constitutes the overall symbolic framework of the sefirotic system. The God who reveals Himself in the world of emanation is 'the supernal man' or 'primordial man' (Adam Kadmon), and it was only after the construction of the image of man had been finally determined that perfection was achieved in the Godhead. ... Man below is created in both body and soul in the image of man above, but his likeness is only a pale imitation of the divine model. 'The image [of man below] that seems in its characteristics to be like this image [of man above] is not this image, but something like this image.' The true, original man is within the Godhead, and corporeal man reflects him in the way he is constructed" (2).

4. The Doctrine of Correspondence.

The physical universe emerges from the creative action of the sefirot. However, the relationship between these two realms is not that of the artisan to his handiwork. Rather the sefirot reflect their own image in the world of matter, and especially in man. Thus kabbalists understood the verse, "And God said, Let us make man in our image": God (i.e. the sefirotic realm) made man in its own image.

The "doctrine of correspondence" appears in the Zohar in various forms. Two examples are:

R. Judah said: 'That which God has made on earth corresponds to that which He made in heaven, and all things below are symbols of that which is above.'" (3).

"When God created the world, He created the lower world (the material universe) after the pattern of the upper world (the sefirotic realm), and made the two the counterparts of each other, so that His glory is both on high and below" (4).

5. Man as micro-cosmos:

A Rabbinic source states that man is "olam katan", (a micro-cosmos) i.e., a miniature replica of the universe (5). With the advent of Kabbalah, the model of the universe increased enormously in size and complexity. Man had to keep pace with the "expanding universe." This growth in stature is expressed by the Zohar in terms such as:

"The form of man includes all forms, all (divine) names, all worlds (i.e. all levels of the spiritual and material universes) all secrets" (6).

Thus man is the ideal subject of empirical observation. All facets of physical and spiritual reality are reflected in his body and its functions. Human anatomy and physiology are therefore esoteric sciences par excellence.

6. The empirical method:

I have already referred to the ontological function of the sefirot. Everything in this world is a materialization of a spiritual archetype in the sefirotic realm. There is a strict causal relationship between the two realms, the lower being a reflection of the upper (7). What then could be more natural than to study the sefirot by observing their material manifestations?

"R. Akiba said: 'Indeed, everything that the Holy One has made can teach us deep lessons, as it says, "The Lord hath made all things (to teach us wisdom) concerning himself" (Prov. 16.4).' R. Eleazar remarked: 'Rather quote the following verse: "And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." The "very" suggests that we should learn the higher supernal wisdom from all that He made.' R. Judah said: 'That which God has made on earth corresponds to that which He made in heaven, and all things below are symbols of that which is above.'" (8).

The empirical method thus received a wholehearted endorsement by the author of the Zohar. It follows necessarily from the doctrine of correspondence, which is both its rationale and the sanction for its use as an esoteric tool. A kabbalist would be fully justified in discovering "that which is above" by observing "all things below" (9)

By now, the foundation of the empirical approach to the sefirotic realm is clear. However, before ending this chapter, I must emphasize that empiricism is not the only approach available. In fact, other methods were favoured by most kabbalists prior to Luria.

Two standard methods especially deserve mention. They are exemplified by the Zohar (13th cen.) and Moses Cordovero (1522-1570): the mystical exegesis of scripture, and logical reasoning.

The Zohar is a mystical exegesis of the Bible. Its basic premise is that each biblical word, in addition to its literal meaning (peshat), also has a mystical meaning (sod). Therefore, every word reveals some information concerning the sefirotic realm. The following quotation makes this clear:

"Rabbi Shimon said: Woe to the man that says that the Torah comes to tell stories in their literal sense... Rather, all the words of the Torah are supernal things and supernal secrets. ... When the Torah descended to this world, if it had not clothed itself in these garments (i.e. the biblical narratives), the world could not have borne (its splendour). And therefore, this narrative of the Torah is the garment of the Torah. Whoever thinks that that garment is Torah itself and that it does not contain anything else, "tipach rucho", and he will have no share in the world to come. ... Woe to the wicked that say that the Torah is no more than (the) narrative alone, and they look at the garment alone. Happy are the righteous who look at the Torah correctly. Wine exists only in a jug, so the Torah exists only in this garment. And therefore one must look only at what there is beneath the garment" (10).

Cordovero's belief in the power of reason to reveal knowledge of the sefirot is at the foundation of his work. He never claims to have received his knowledge from an unbroken chain of tradition. Only rarely does he refer to his teacher and attribute an idea to him (11). Nor does he attribute the fundamentals of his system to his mystical experiences (12). Rather, he states that only the "intellectual hammer" can help us break down the walls between us and the truth (13).

A typical example of Cordovero's rationalism concerns two conflicting accounts of the "birth of souls." According to one source, all souls already existed from the first moments of creation. The second account asserts that new souls are born every day, through the union of the sefirot Tifereth and Malkhut.

One might think that the solution cannot be found by mere intellect, which has no direct experience of the "birth of souls" in the sefirotic realm. Yet Cordovero treats this esoteric question in exactly the same way that a Talmudist treats a legal question. He uses the same dialectical tools he would use to determine the halakha. Hence, the solution is simply a matter of limiting each account to a specific context, in which it is true and does not impinge upon the other. In this

way, Cordovero "proves" that precisely six hundred thousand souls existed from the moment of creation. This is the minimum number of souls in each generation. However, all additional souls are produced through the union of Tifereth and Malkhut (14).

Thus a variety of tools were available to Luria. He did not rely on empiricism to the exclusion of other methods. However, I contend that by using empiricism in a more consistent and systematic way than his predecessors, he made many important theoretical innovations. Before proceeding to study Luria's use of empiricism, it may be useful to examine some specific examples of its use in the Zohar and the works of Cordovero.

As we know, the Zohar is basically a mystical midrash of the Bible. Nevertheless, examples of the empirical method are not lacking:

"When Rabbi Abba once saw a bird flying away from its nest in a tree, he wept, saying: 'If men only knew what this means, they would rend their garments for the knowledge which has perished from them. For as Rabbi Jose says, 'The trees which give mystic indications, like the carob and date tree, can all be grafted on one another. All that bear fruit have one secret nature, save the apple; all that do not bear fruit, save the willows of the brook, suck from one source; and all lowly shrubs, save the hyssop, are from one mother. Every kind of herb has its counterpart above" (15).

By observing a candle flame, the mystic can learn "the highest mysteries of wisdom":

"He who desires to penetrate to the mystery of the holy unity should contemplate the flame which rises from a burning coal or candle... Above the white light and surrounding it is still another light scarcely perceptible symbolical of the supreme essence. Thus the ascending flame symbolises the highest mysteries of wisdom" (16).

To repeat, the Zohar relies above all on exegesis to support its views. However, this does not impugn any esoteric discoveries made empirically.

We now turn to Cordovero. He also considered empiricism to be a valuable approach to the sefirotic realm. This is clear from his interpretation of a passage in the Tikkune Zohar:

"'To make Yourself known through them': ... because from the lower (beings) we know the supernal (beings), as it states, 'and from my flesh shall I see God' (Job 19.26). And through them (the created things), man knows the divine things (adam makir ba-elohut)..." (17).

Elsewhere, he expands on this theme:

"We will not abstain from inferring (mi-lishpot) the form (of the supernal things) from the form of the lower things... And therefore, from our flesh we will apprehend the upper levels. And regarding this (i.e. the sanction of empirical observation, M.S.), Scripture hints when saying, 'and from my flesh shall I see God.' This is comparable to the artisan who took a sheet of gold, a sheet of silver, a sheet of lead, a sheet of wax, and sheet of clay (and placed the sheets in that order on top of each other). He then took a sapphire seal (signet)

and stamped all the sheets together at one time. Thus they are all stamped with the same seal. And the stamp differs (from one sheet to the next, only) according to the difference in the materials. ...

... I discovered a method (inyan na-eh). Let a man isolate himself (to study) the divine wisdom. When he observes (yaskil be-) the created beings, and he observes the nature of their parts (he finds that) some have five senses, and some have only one, and some have two... Some have many limbs, all legs, like the centipede etc. Some have elongated bodies, some rectangular, some wide, some narrow etc... And he should observe plant life... some have elongated leaves, some round leaves... And he will apprehend (yaskil) in this way the secret of the creation and its parts..." (18).

However, despite the enthusiastic tone, there are very few examples of the empirical approach in Pardes Rimonim. (This is no doubt because Cordovero's true talent was as a logical and systematic thinker). Still, it is worthwhile looking at them closely, for they probably served as a model for Luria's own empirical speculations.

One example involves an extremely touchy theological problem viz., the generation of evil (kelippah) in the divine realm (Atzilut). All created things are said to originate in this "world of emanation." But how can evil be produced by the sefirot if they themselves are free from all traces of evil?

Cordovero has recourse to the doctrine of correspondence, and from his flesh, he sees God (i.e., the sefirotic realm). Two physiological processes are said to accurately reflect ("reveal") the emanative process: the digestion of food and the production of semen. The descent of the "pure grain" and the seminal drop always create as a "side-effect" some waste material. Similarly, the descent of pure light down the sefirotic chain necessarily produces some waste material, which is also the substance of evil (19).

Another example involves the functions of the ninth sefirah, Yesod. Cordovero supports the view of Ibn Parchi regarding the two channels (tzinorot) inside Yesod by invoking Job 19.26. Simple observation proves that the penis has two separate "channels" (one for semen and another for urine). We may therefore, with full assurance, assert that Yesod has the same structure, for "from my flesh shall I see God" (20).

Clearly then, the Zohar and Cordovero consider empiricism to be a valuable esoteric tool. The passages cited above, and others like them, no doubt influenced Luria, who was intimately acquainted with both the Zohar and the kabbalah of Cordovero (21).

CHAPTER THREE: Empiricism in Lurianic Kabbala.

To reconstruct the spiritual biography of great men is an extremely risky enterprise. It is even more difficult in cases like Luria's, because we have so little solid evidence regarding his development. Still, I think that a simple tripartite pattern (discipleship, disillusionment and groping, enlightenment) will meet our present needs.

Luria started out as did many kabbalists of his age, as a follower of Cordovero. However, he eventually realized that some of his master's views were most unsatisfactory. We are extremely fortunate in possessing one of Luria's authentic fragments written during this period of disenchantment. In it, Luria explains the function of the union between the sefirot Chokhma and Binah. He begins by quoting the view of Cordovero, whom he calls "our teacher and master," but rejects it as "worthless" ("ve-ain zeh ha-terutz k'lum"). Luria then presents his own view, beginning with the words, "In our opinion" (ve-ha-nir'eh ailainu). I only need emphasize that he presents his view as his own opinion, not as received or inspired knowledge. He supports it by proofs from the Zohar and uses the same discursive style as Cordovero (1).

Here we see that Luria has reached the point where he can reject Cordovero's views in the strongest of terms, yet he is still working in Cordovero's universe. He does not yet have a more powerful model than that of his master, but he is no doubt searching for one.

How then did Luria finally discover his new model? I believe that it was to a large extent due to the weight he gave to empiricism as an esoteric tool. He used empiricism in a far more rigorous way than his former master. Cordovero was concerned to show how the Zohar contained the answers to all the questions debated by previous kabbalists and thereby to establish it as the ultimate authority in kabbalah. In this, he was clearly successful. However, he was not a systematic empiricist. He relied primarily on rational or exegetical methods, even when they produced results that were empirically unsound.

Thus, one of the fundamental disputes between these two kabbalists was a methodological one. For example, if an issue could be approached with either the exegetical or the empirical method, which was to be preferred? A

specific example will help to illustrate this. The question of "sefirotic sleep" was interpreted by "Cordovero the exegete" in one way, and by "Luria the empiricist" in a very different way.

The anthropomorphism of the Bible posed a problem for medieval philosophers, who were concerned to purify God from all conceivable limitations. However, biblical anthropomorphism turned out to be a powerful stimulus for kabbalistic thought. Each time the Bible ascribed some human form or function to God, the kabbalist accepted it as another precious insight into the structure and mechanisms of the sefirotic realm.

A typical example of biblical anthropomorphism is found in Psalms 44.24-25:

"Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?"

The Lord sleeps. For philosophers this is mere metaphor. For kabbalists this refers to an actual sefirotic condition that corresponds to sleep.

Cordovero begins by quoting the verse and taking it in its context. Scripture sees sleep as a condition that prevents the flow of divine providence to this world.

Hence sleep in the sefirot is something negative, it occurs only as a means to divine retribution. Furthermore, sleep in the sefirot does not occur regularly at fixed times, but only when man chooses to sin (2).

Luria's objection to Cordovero's account is not made explicitly. But it is obviously unacceptable to an empiricist. Simple observation tells him that sleep in man is something positive, it refreshes both mind and body. Secondly, it occurs regularly at fixed times. These characteristics of human sleep must apply to sefirotic sleep (doctrine of correspondence).

Thus Luria approaches the question of sefirotic sleep empirically. He does not refer to the specific verse adduced by Cordovero. Indeed, he cannot. Because in that verse, sleep is clearly something negative. But an empiricist must interpret sleep in a positive light. Therefore, Luria simply ("authoritatively") states that Ze'ir Anpin (an anthropomorphic configuration corresponding to six of the lower sefirot) sleeps "naturally" each and every night, not as result of man's sins. In addition, his sleep is beneficial, since it refreshes ("renews") him (3).

Another example of this methodological dispute between Luria and Cordovero is the issue of the "life-cycle" of sefirot. Luria, as a systematic empiricist, sought to locate the origins of man's life-cycle in the sefirot. He knew that coitus, impregnation, embryogeny, birth, infancy, puberty, adolescence, maturity, and even death and resurrection, must all occur in the sefirotic realm (doctrine of correspondence). Thus Luria carefully worked out how these stages occur in the configuration of Ze'ir Anpin (4). In sharp contrast, Cordovero's sefirot do not experience anything resembling these empirical realities.

We now proceed to more examples of the empirical method in Lurianic kabbalah. But I should first say something about my method of selection. I have given preference to those ideas that are explicitly attributed to empirical observation. Usually they are accompanied by the phrase, "by sense observation we find that... as Scripture states, 'from my flesh I see God' (Job 19.26)" (5). I wish to emphasize thereby that Luria's disciples, in preserving his ideas in writing, were quite clear about their empirical foundation. This is very significant in view of the rhetoric that came out of the

Lurianic camp which flatly denied their master's use of the empirical method. This discrepancy will be discussed in my conclusion.

As most of the examples assume a familiarity with the details of Lurianic cosmogony, it may be well to quote Scholem by way of introduction. The following is an excerpt from his chapter entitled, "The Doctrine of Creation in Lurianic Kabbalah":

"The starting point of this theory is the idea that the very essence of Ein-Sof (the Infinite Being) leaves no space whatsoever for creation, for it is impossible to imagine an area which is not already God, since this would constitute a limitation of His infinity. (This problem was not a source of concern to either the Zohar or Cordovero). Consequently, an act of creation is possible only through 'the entry of God into Himself,' that is, through an act of tzimtzum, whereby He contracts Himself and so makes it possible for something which is not Ein-Sof to exist. Some part of the Godhead therefore withdraws and leaves room, so to speak, for the creative processes to come into play. Such a retreat must precede any emanation."

"The first form that emanation assumes after the tzimtzum is that of Adam Kadmon ('primordial man'), which in the Lurianic system stands for a realm above the four worlds of atzilut, beri'ah, yetzira, and assiyah with which pre-Lurianic Kabbalah began. Isaac Luria did, it is true, seek to support this belief with a number of citations from the Zohar and the Tikkunim, but in fact it represented a completely new departure. ... The promotion of the Adam Kadmon to the rank of the first being to emerge after the tzimtzum accounts for the strong anthropomorphic coloring that accompanies all descriptions of the process of emanation in the Lurianic system. The Adam Kadmon serves as a kind of intermediary link between Ein-Sof, the light of whose substance continues to be active in him, and the hierarchy of worlds still to come."

"From the head of the Adam Kadmon tremendous lights shone forth and aligned themselves in rich and complex patterns. ... This primordial world described by linguistic symbols was precipitated from the lights of Adam Kadmon's forehead... The lights issuing from the Adam Kadmon's ears, nose, and mouth ... expanded linearly only, nor did their Sefirot have special vessels, since they were at first joined together in a common vessel in accord with the 'collectivity' that was their structural nature. Vital called this sphere 'olam ha-akudim', meaning a world where the Sefirot were not yet differentiated (lit. were bound together). ... The lights of the eyes, on the other hand, were differentiated into single Sefirot. In theory these lights should have issued from the navel, but the place of their appearance was deflected by a medium acting within the Adam Kadmon and referred to as parsa (apparently a reference to the diaphragm). This displacement is described as the result of another tzimtzum within the lights themselves. Having changed their path, these lights issued from the eyes both linearly and circularly, and each of their Sefirot commanded a vessel of its own. Vital calls these separated lights 'the world of dots' (olam ha-nikkudim),..." (6).

We now have a general idea of Adam Kadmon's place in the emanative process. He is the primary anthropomorphic configuration that fills the void created by the act of tzimtzum. We may now ask the question: to what extent is Luria's knowledge of Adam Kadmon based on empirical observation?

#1: Cranial orifices emit three classes of light.

Scholem mentioned the lights that issue from the cranial orifices of Adam Kadmon, the ears, nostrils, and mouth. Luria says these lights differ qualitatively, the light of the ears being superior to that of the nostrils, and that of the nostrils being superior to that of the mouth.

To prove that light does indeed emanate from the ears, Luria made a simple experiment. If we block our ears with our fingers we hear a faint "echo." This echo is caused by the air that is trapped within. This means that the ears exhale exactly like the nose and mouth. Now this exhalation is obviously very "fine", i.e. less tangible and more spiritual than that of the other orifices. The breath from the nose is more tangible, hence less spiritual, while that of the mouth is the most tangible and least spiritual of all.

The existence of three distinct classes of breath proves (given the "doctrine of correspondence") that there are three distinct classes of light emanating from these orifices in the head of Adam Kadmon. The light of his ears is "neshamah," that of his nose is "ruach" and that of his mouth is "nefesh" (7).

#2: "Inner" and "outer" light.

Luria also discovered that the light of each orifice is itself divided qualitatively into two parts. The light closest to the orifice is "inner" (penimi) and superior to the light that is further away, which is "outer" (chitzon). In Vital's words:

"Know that the nature of the breath that comes out of the mouth and nose etc., is to be drawn straight out with force. And after it streams out it then deflects to the sides as is known by observation (ka-noda be-chush ha-re'ut). And clearly, even though it is all one breath, there is still a difference between the small amount of breath that is close to the mouth itself... and the remainder of the breath that is deflected to the sides... Thus the breath that is closest to the mouth and nose is called "inner" and the breath that is further away is called "outer." Thus this first (inner) breath is actually the essence of the light of Ein Sof which is drawn out. And even the breath that is deflected to the sides, which is called "outer", is also from the exhalation itself. But it is not identical (aino domeh) to the first (part of the breath), which is more "inner", although it is all one breath" (eh 1/36a-b).

Vital's hesitation here is perfectly understandable: he is crossing a theological minefield. Theology demands that the divine essence be immutable and totally unaltered by cosmogonic processes. But Luria boldly taught that change indeed occurs to the "essence of the light of Ein Sof." A full discussion of this fascinating topic is beyond the scope of this paper. What must be emphasized here is that this mysterious process of change is proven and described by the empirical method (8).

#3: The origin of the vessels.

The number and position of cranial orifices also explain the origin of vessels in the emanation process. The two ears are furthest apart. The two nostrils are closer together. But there is only one mouth. This simple observation actually explains the emanation of vessels (the ten sefirot of "or makif" from right orifices and the ten sefirot of "or penimi" from left orifices do not clash to produce vessels until they come out of one single orifice, i.e., the mouth of Adam Kadmon) (9).

#4: The navel and the second tzimtzum.

The world of "Akudim" emanates from the mouth of Adam Kadmon. The next world, called "Nikudim," should therefore emanate from his navel. However, we observe that the navel is not really an orifice (it's sealed). Obviously then, Nikudim cannot emanate from there. To refer to Scholem again:

"In theory these lights should have issued from the navel, but the place of their appearance was deflected by a medium acting within the Adam Kadmon and referred to as *parsa* (apparently a reference to the diaphragm). This displacement is described as the result of another *tzimtzum* within the lights themselves. Having changed their path, these lights issued from the eyes both linearly and circularly, and each of their Sefirot commanded a vessel of its own. Vital calls these separated lights 'the world of dots' (*olam ha-nikkudim*),..." (Kabbalah, 137-8).

Thus the innovation of a "second tzimtzum" begins with the observation that the navel is not an orifice (10).

#5: Emanation from the eyes.

The question is raised: how could Nikudim emanate from the eyes, since they are not orifices? The solution is again empirical: "we observe" ("matzinu") that the ostrich warms her eggs simply by gazing at them. This proves that the eyes do indeed emanate energy of some kind (11).

#6: Linear and circular sefirot.

The orifices (ears, nostrils, mouth) produce sefirot only linearly. On the other hand, the eyes produce sefirot both linearly and circularly. How did Luria make this discovery? The first of several proofs offered is empirical: we observe that man is able to look straight ahead, hence the linear sefirot. But he can also "roll his eyes" in a circular fashion, hence the circular sefirot. However, he is unable to "roll" his ears, nose and mouth. Therefore these orifices cannot yield circular sefirot (12).

#7: The contours of the body and the forces of evil.

Zeir Anpin and Nukba are two distinct anthropomorphic configurations. Therefore, each should have its own "back." However, by performing a simple experiment, we can prove that this is not so. When we place two people back to back, we observe that no matter how tightly they are pressed together, there always remain some spaces or cracks between them. This is due to the natural contours of the human body. But if this situation obtained in the world of emanation, the forces of evil (chitzonim) would manage to squeeze in between these cracks and draw sustenance from Zeir and Nukba (only the back's are vulnerable to attack). In this way Luria discovered that Zeir and Nukba are not separated by two backs (partitions). Rather, they share one single back-partition between them (kotel echad) (13).

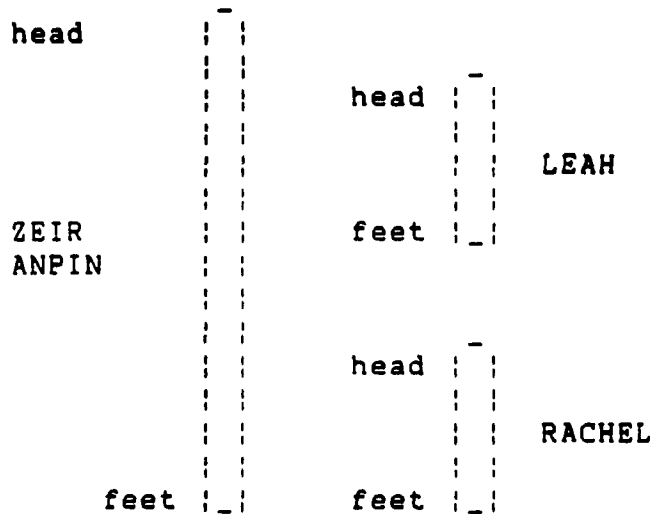
#8: How configurations change position.

The anthropomorphic configurations that inhabit the world of emanation (Atzilut) can assume all the positions that humans can (doctrine of correspondence). In general, they stand at attention (tzelem adam yashar baal koma zekufa, E.H. 1/23a). However, for specific

purposes, such as the distribution of "mohin" (supernal energy) to the right and left columns only of Zeir Anpin, configurations can change position. The problem is how to establish a direct link between the arms (hesed and gevura) and the legs (netzach and hod), while bypassing completely the trunk of the body (tiferet). We observe that this is possible for us by simply placing our hands on our hips. We therefore infer that Zeir similarly "puts his hands on his hips" for this purpose. At other times, Zeir will "put his hands on his shoulders" in order to prevent the evil forces (kelipot) from drawing too much sustenance from his finger tips (14).

#9: Locating the various configurations using anatomy.

There are five major anthropomorphic configurations in the world of emanation. In addition to these, there are several minor configurations. Zeir Anpin (corresponding to patriarch Israel, formerly Jacob) and Rachel (corresponding to the matriarch of that name) are major configurations. Their position vis-a-vis the minor configuration, Leah (corresponding to that matriarch), is given in the chart:



Leah occupies the space next to Zeir's upper body, his two arms and part of his trunk. Rachel begins from the chest area of Zeir and extends downward. Leah and Rachel are said to be totally distinct, neither invading the space of the other.

At this point the objection is raised:

"But by sense (observation) we see that when a man extends his arms and his hands straight (down) his body, the first joint (the elbow) reaches the end of the trunk and the rest (his arm and hand) reaches the thighs... (Bu⁺) if this is so, Leah, which is built from (all) three joints of the arms, enters the space of Rachel very very much."

Put simply, if Leah is adjacent to the arms and Rachel to the legs, then obviously there must be some overlapping between them. They are therefore not totally distinct.

Luria's solution is somewhat complex and not directly relevant to my thesis. I only wish to highlight the role played by sense observation in his kabbalah (15).

#10: Observation of nature.

Before ending this chapter, I should point out that observation of other natural phenomena is also used to support Luria's views. The mining and smelting of precious metals (16), the physics of a waterfall (17), the hierarchy of plant and animal species (18) etc., are all valid sources of esoteric knowledge.

CONCLUSION.

We know that the Zohar encourages the use of empiricism as a hermeneutic tool. We have seen specific examples of its use in the Zohar and in Cordovero. Finally, examples of Luria's use of this tool have been examined.

My conclusion therefore is that empirical observation was a major factor in the development of Lurianic kabbalah. We cannot attribute his system simply to "mystical inspiration", "visionary thinking" etc. With Luria, as with Cordovero, mystical experience complemented but did not produce the theoretical framework of his kabbalah.

To clarify my viewpoint, I will refer again to example #1 in the preceding chapter. How did Luria discover that three distinct classes of light are emitted by the cranial orifices of Adam Kadmon? Certainly not by "mystical inspiration", nor by the intervention of Elijah. Luria simply observed that, in humans, these orifices exhale more or less tangibly. Given the doctrine of correspondence, this human phenomenon accurately reflects the emission of lights from Adam

Kadmon. This is all Luria needed to advance this novel doctrine ("Orot Acha'f").

As I mentioned in the introduction, Vital claimed that all of Luria's ideas were taught to him by Elijah and the souls of the righteous who revealed themselves to him. He denied emphatically that his master used anything resembling the traditional intellectual methods of kabbalah. It is possible that he didn't recognize the empirical basis of his master's knowledge (1). However, it is more likely that he deliberately obscured the empirical foundation of his kabbalah for two important reasons (2). Firstly, because of the rivalry with Cordoveran kabbalah. And secondly, because of the threat of anarchy in kabbalah.

In the struggle to supplant Cordoveran kabbalah, a variety of techniques were used. When Cordovero's name was explicitly mentioned, he was credited only with a limited, inferior degree of truth (3). More deadly was the general distinction between "true" and "false" kabbalah. True (Lurianic) kabbalah is entirely the result of inspiration, while false (Cordoveran) kabbalah is the product of human intellect:

"(An) introduction (to the study of Kabbalah) that I (Hayyim Vital) received from my teacher and master... Isaac Luria Ashkenazi who studied with Elijah. ... And regarding the kabbalistic works that are found (i.e. available), my teacher said, that the chain of tradition (is): Rabad (Abraham ben David of Posquieres, d. 1198), from him and from his son and from his disciples until Nahmanides, the disciple of his disciples, they are all true kabbalah, and it is from the mouth of Elijah who revealed himself to them. ... And the other kabbalistic works (written) after Nahmanides, do not touch them, because they are founded on the human intellect, and are not received (directly) either from the early authorities or from heavenly beings (elyonim)" (4).

In view of this offensive, Vital could not acknowledge that Luria had used the same kind of tools as Cordovero. He could not admit that Luria applied the doctrine of correspondence to analogically develop his system. To do so would be to put his master's kabbalah on the same footing as that of Cordovero, who made no secret of his heavy reliance on "the power of his intellect." Then the main claim to supremacy would have been lost. In other words, Luria could not defeat Cordovero on Cordoveran turf. It was inevitable that his disciples should seize upon their master's fame as a "psychic" and invoke his psychic powers as the only source of his kabbalah.

The second reason involves the threat of anarchy in kabbalah. If it became widely understood as an empirical science, then almost anyone could innovate on the basis of observation (5). There would be no end to the number of innovations and systems. All authority in kabbalah would be undermined, precisely when the Lurianists were striving to establish their own authority among kabbalists. Here again, Luria's fame as a "psychic" was found to be very useful. The holy spirit (ruach ha-kodesh) was invoked as the one and only source of Luria's esoteric doctrines. This meant that later kabbalists would have to claim the same gifts as Luria in order to dispute his views. And as it turned out, it was an excellent stratagem indeed. Later kabbalah, however original, has always been "Lurianic."

Finally, we must put the struggle for supremacy in context. I do not believe that these kabbalists were motivated simply by the desire for self-aggrandizement. They believed that Luria's kabbalah was the last in a series of such "revelations" that would ultimately lead to the final redemption. To guarantee the spread and supremacy of Lurianic kabbalah meant for them to hasten the coming of the messiah (6).

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION:

(1) i.e. their authority derives directly from the Biblical canon, because they claim to be the authentic expositions of its esoteric depth. As they are the product of divine inspiration, it is strictly forbidden to alter the text in any way whatsoever. Hence they are "closed" (EH 1/9a-b). Finally, canonical status means that all contradictions in the corpora are prima facie only.

(2) for Scholem's treatment of these topics see his "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism" (MTJM), chap. 7, "Kabbalah", chap. 3, and "Sabbatai Sevi", chap. 1;

(3) Tishby, The Doctrine of Evil, intro. to 1984 edition;

(4) see bibliography for details of these publications;

(5) eg., MTJM, pp. 259-260; p.410, n.41, n.42; p.412, n.78;

(6) MTJM, p. 258;

(7) MTJM, p. 255; cf. ibid, p. 207;

(8) Werblowsky, p.50, 54-5;

(9) Fine, The Contemplative Practice of Yihudim, p. 93, in Jewish Spirituality, ed. Arthur Green;

(10) Fine, The Art of Metoposcopy, p. 96-8;

(11) MTJM p.253;

(12) see the introductions of these two men to their respective works;

(13) certain important exceptions notwithstanding: eg. Tishby re: source of evil in Ein Sof, Torat Ha-Ra, p.27-8;

(14) E.H. 2/100a;

(15) for example, v. Shaar Ha-Kavanot, p. 21c. s.v. ve-achar-kakh;

(16) for example, v. Shaar Ha-Kavanot, p. 23d, s.v. Yisrael; ibid. s.v. ve-da; Mevo Shaarim 34a-b, 39a-b;

(17) eg. Shaar Ha-Kavanot, p. 31a;

(18) Etz Hayyim 2/100a;

(19) Tishby discusses this polemic in some detail in his "Chikrai Kabbalah u-Shluchoteha, pp. 177-267;

(20) Sefer Ha-Gilgulim, p. 25a, 25b, in Fine, The Art of Metoposcopy, p. 94;

(21) Sefer HaGilgulim, p. 27a, in Fine, The Art of Metoposcopy, p. 96;

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE:

(1) Gen. ch.1; Psalms 33.6; etc.;

(2) v. H.A. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, vol. 1, p. 495ff;

(3) Hovot Ha-Levavot, 2.6;

(4) Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, hil. Yesodai Ha-Torah, 2/1-2;

(5) quoted by Elijah Vidas in Reshith Chockmah, Shaar Ha-Ahava, ch. 5, p. 65b;

(6) in his commentary to Maarekhet ha-Elohut (ch. 11, p. 161b). date: 1558, v. Scholem, Kabbalah, p.67;

(7) Maimonides, hil. Avodat Kokhavim 1/3; cf. T.B. Nedarim 32a; cf. Quran 6.77-80;

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO:

(1) However, the role of the intellect has always been problematic. We must recall that Kabbalah developed partly in opposition to the "excessive" rationalism of the philosophers. "Kabbalah" literally means "received tradition." Preference is given to direct transmission: either from master to disciple, or by inspiration (dreams, the revelations of Elijah the prophet or the souls of departed saints, etc.). Thus Kabbalists might have restricted themselves to "received knowledge" in the narrow sense. Yet kabbalah developed and established itself precisely because it quickly recognized other, more practical sources of esoteric knowledge: mystical exegesis, logical reasoning, and empirical observation.

(2) Tishby, Zohar, vol. 1, p. 295-6;

Tishby further writes:

"Adam Kadmon's shape is depicted schematically, and the most common way of doing this is to arrange the exterior parts of the human anatomy in such a way as to correspond with the lower sefirot from Hesed downward, and to portray the exterior or the interior parts of the head as representing the three upper sefirot. The second preface of the Tikkunei ha-Zohar gives this type of picture in its entirety:

'Hesed--right arm; Gevurah--left arm; Tiferet--torso; Nezah and Hod--two legs; Yesod--the completion of the body, the sign of the holy covenant; Malkhut--mouth. ... The brain is Hokhmah, the inner thought; Binah is the heart... The supernal Keter is the crown of royalty... '" (Tishby, Zohar, vol. 1, p. 295-6).

(3) Zohar, 2/15b;

(4) Zohar 1/205b; v. also: Zohar 1/38a; 2/48b; 3/65b (end);

Talmudic intimations of this correspondence between higher and lower realms are not lacking. See for eg., T.B. Berakhot 3a (mishmarot be-rakiya and mishmarot be-ar'ah); Berakhot 10a and Leviticus Rabbah 4.8 (comparison between God and the soul); Berakhot 58a (malkhuta de-rakiya and malkhuta de-ar'ah);

(5) Midrash Tanhuma, Pikudai, #3.

Man as micro-cosmos appears in numerous medieval sources, for example:

1. Hovot Ha-levavot, 2.4 (p.152)
2. Midrash Ha-Gadol, Exodus 26.30;
3. Guide to the Perplexed, 1/72;
4. Orhot Tzadikim, ch. 28, end;
5. v. also the Talmudic source quoted in Reshit Hokhmah (Elijah Vidas, Shaar Ha-Ahava, ch. 5, s.v. va-kayotze ba-zeh pirshu razal she-ha-haretz yesh la kol partzuf adam etc., p.65a);

(6) Zohar 3/135a; v. ibid. 3/139b;

(7) similarly, a kinship exists between Ein Sof and the sefirot, which were "hidden in Him" ("kemusot bo") prior to their emanation; cf. Pardes 4.9: "Ha-Ein Sof yesh lo midot...";

(8) Zohar 2/15b;

(9) Tishby writes:

"one of the basic principles of kabbalistic teaching, which recurs time and time again in the Zohar: the worlds, with all the beings they contain, and especially man, are constructed on the pattern of the sefirot, 'according to the form that is above.' The sefirot are the divine master-copy of non-divine existence, both in general and in particular. 'He made the lower world on the pattern of the upper world, and they complement each other, forming one whole, in a single unity' (Zohar 1/38a). 'He made this world to match the world above, and whatever exists above has its counterpart below.' 'The designs for all the worlds were sketched within the sefirot and served as patterns for the Creation.' Consequently, contemplation of the created world leads to the revelation of the divine model that is reflected there, and the locked gates of the world of emanation are opened for man to pass through." (Tishby, Zohar, vol. 1, p.273)

"The world and all that it contains is saturated with divine influence, and constructed on a celestial pattern, and is therefore a most appropriate symbolic mirror of the divine life. The hidden light is obscured

by a much thicker curtain in the real world than it is in the Torah, but, even so, 'those who have sharp eyes' have the special ability to penetrate this curtain, and see in every object, in every situation, in every event, a ray of the concealed splendor of God. The whole of nondivine existence is a great storehouse, as it were, full of symbols of the divine." (Tishby, Zohar, vol. 1, p.284).

(10) Zohar 3/152a; v. also i 3/149a, 3/202a, 3/265a: "In each and every word (of + Torah) there are supernal secrets (razin ila'in)."

cf. Midrash Shocheh Tov, Psalms 19 (in Otzar Ha-Aggadah, Shamayim ve-Aretz, #11), "By labouring in the wisdom of the Torah, he (Shmuel) learnt from it what is in the heavens."

Even grammatical anomalies have mystical significance. Thus the use of the feminine pronoun in the verse "And if thou (fem.) deal thus with me, kill me..." (Num. 11.15), reveals to us the sefirotic context of Moses' conversation with God. When speaking of death, Moses addresses the feminine sefirah Malkhut, otherwise known as "the tree of death" (in contrast to the male Tifereth, "the tree of life", Zohar 3/155b).

The most inconspicuous detail in a biblical narrative reveals some knowledge of the sefirot. A typical example is the account of Judah's birth. Judah is a reference to the tenth sefirah, Malkhut. The verse reveals Malkhut's function as the fourth leg of the divine throne.

"And she (Leah) conceived again, and bore a son: and she said, Now will I praise the Lord: therefore she called his name Judah; and she left off (va-ta'amod) bearing" (Gen. 29.35).

The verb "va-ta'amod" literally means "and she stood". The literal definition also reveals the esoteric meaning of the verse:

"What (is the meaning of) va-ta'amod? The throne (now) stood on its (four) legs" (Zohar 1/155a).

The Torah is an historical record, but this is merely its "garment." When the garment is removed by mystical exegesis, we behold directly the sefirotic realm.

(11) one such example is in Pardes Rimonim 25.1;

(12) Werblowsky has translated some of Cordovero's accounts of his mystical experience:

"... the opening words of Cordovero's record-book of these 'exile wanderings'...: 'On Friday, the 10 of Shebat in the year 1548 we went into the exile of the King and Queen as far as the ruins of the Beth ha-Midrash in Nabartin and there I hit upon the following novel kabbalistic idea: for I asked how it was possible, since [the sefiroth] Tif'ereth and Malkhuth draw their life from the sides of [the sefiroth] Hesed and Geburah...'

'Again we wandered on the 15th day of Shebat, my master and myself alone, and the words of Torah were shining in us and the words were spoken of themselves. ... on our return we discussed the verse [Micah 7.15] 'According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show him'. For my master asked... and replied... Thereupon I commented... and my master added to this by saying... enlarging very much on the subject because the words were shining forth of themselves.

So far the proceedings of that day. Thanks be to God that we were vouchsafed all this, for these things are all supernal, infused without reflection whatsoever; they are sweeter than honey, the gift of the Queen to them that wander with her in exile.

... On these occasions new ideas would come to us in a manner that cannot be believed unless one has seen or experienced it many times.'

--Werblowsky, pp. 50-55. v. also *ibid.* pp. 80-83.

(13) Pardes 21.1; i.e. the intellect, by a critical analysis of ancient texts, will definitely reveal the esoteric truth.

At one point he readily admits that a certain view is "based on kabbalah (received tradition) and (is) holy of holies." He then undauntedly proceeds to disprove it! (Pardes 10.2). This is not just some uncharacteristic aberration. After presenting his view of the "Fifty Gates of Understanding", he adds in the most nonchalant manner conceivable:

"Commentators have explained the 'Fifty Gates' with the inspiration of Elijah (be-ma'aneh Eliyahu). But because (their view) did not appear correct to us (she-ain mityashev etzlainu), we did not want to reproduce it (here)" (Pardes 13.7).

Remarks like "Blessed is the Merciful who helps us (to understand) (Pardes 13.7, end) and "as they have instructed us from heaven" (Pardes 15.5) may refer to inspiration. But it is also likely that Cordovero considers logic to be a divine tool, for God himself is a rational being (Shiur Komah #83, p. 160: "The Holy One, Blessed Be He, does nothing without a reason").

cf. Talmudic dicta such as: lama li kra, svara hi; lo be-shamayim hi; ayn mashgihin be-bat kol, v. Yeb. 14a, B.M. 59b & parallels and Tosafot ad loc.;

(14) Pardes 8.22; cf. ibid. 21.1: "al yedai haka-at patish ha-sekhel be-kushyot u-klipot she-al HA-HALAKHOT yetzai lanu or..."

The term "ha-halakhot" refers to the Zohar!

cf. Nahmanides' insistence on the legitimacy of scientific evidence re: 1) Noah's ark (Gen. 8.4)

2) the rainbow (Gen. 9.12)

in his commentary to the Pentateuch, ad loc;

(v. M. Fox in JJS, 1989, p.103)

(15) Zohar 2/15b, Soncino Press translation.

(16) Zohar 1/50b-51a. v. also: Zohar 1/38a, 145b, 156b, 2/20a.

v. Zohar 3/129b: We are told that the eyes of Atika have neither eyelids, nor eyebrows. This appears to flout the "doctrine of correspondence." Thus Rabbi Shimon feels compelled to find a "hint", i.e. a correspondence, between the eyes of Atika and the eyes of fish.

v. Zohar 1/32b: "Said R. Isaac: 'There is a membrane in the inside of the human body which separates the upper from the lower part of the trunk, and which imbibes from the upper part and distributes to the lower part; so is this firmament between the waters....'"

- (17) Pardes Rimonim, 4.6;
- (18) Shiur Komah, ch. 95;
- (19) Pardes Rimonim, 25.1;
- (20) Pardes Rimonim, 7.4, pg. 34a-b;
- (21) Luria refers to Cordovero as "our teacher and master", v. Etz Chayyim 1/20a-b;

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE:

- (1) This fragment is preserved in EH 1/20a-b; The fragments scattered in Shaar Maamarai HaRashbi belong in general to the third period. They almost all use the typical authoritarian Lurianic tone, revealing facts, without feeling the need to provide proof, beginning by "Know that", rather than "In my opinion."
- (2) Shiur Komah, #43; N.B., there is some empiricism in Cordovero's account too, but it is not the basis of his view, v. ibid;
- (3) "Ze'ir Anpin be-'aloto be-sod MAN mitchadesh..." EH 2/42b-43a, i.e. by first providing "feminine waters" (mayin nukbin) for the configurations (partzufim) above him. v. Shaar HaKavanot 53d; Mevo Shaarim 44a (HaGuBi, ibid., 15);
- (4) Because Ze'ir Anpin, composed primarily of the six sefirot from Hesed to Yesod, corresponds to the six days of creation, and is therefore the direct ontological root of the material universe. Regarding its life-cycle, see for eg., Shaar Ha-Kavanot, inyan ha-Pesach, derush bet; Death and resurrection occur in the "breaking of the vessels" and the "Tikun";

(5) "be'hush ha're'ut anu ro'im..." (and variants): eg: E.H. 1/31a - 31b; 36a; 48b - 49a; 74b - 75a; 141b; 2/10a; 16a; etc., etc.; Shaar Ha-Kavanot, 28b; etc.;

(6) Kabbalah, pp. 129-138;

Scholem has pointed out that tzimtzum is not an original Lurianic idea (MTJM, p. 260, p. 410, n.41, n.42; v. also ibid. p. 269, and n. 78 on p. 412 re: the intimation of the five basic configurations (partzufim) in Cordovero; v. Kabbalah, p. 129). In Mevo Shaarim (p.2b), tzimtzum is founded on a rational argument; v. MTJM, p. 260-1.

The second step (the emanation of Adam Kadmon) clearly follows from the anthropocentric statements of the Zohar, such as in 3/139b: "man is 'diyukna de-kalil kola'", i.e. the form that includes all (forms). For Luria, this means the configuration of Adam Kadmon fills the void created by the tzimtzum.

(7) E.H. 1/34a-b; note esp. the expression "ve-ha-nisayon la-zeh" (the proof of this is...);

(8) EH 1/36a-b. cf. EH 1/43a-b;

Exhalation is also used to explain the enigmatic Zoharic concept of "mati ve-lo mati", in Zohar 1/16b, 65a, 2/268b;

Regarding Vital's hesitation to present Luria's thought clearly, v. Tishby, p. 28: "Due to theological concerns, Vital concealed and obscured an important principle in the doctrine of tzimtzum. The hesitation regarding the (origin of the) vessels points to a struggle between the mythological tendency and the theological requirement, a struggle whose marks are visible in all the branches of the system..."

(9) EH 1/48a; v. Otzrot Hayyim, Shaar Ha-Akudim, chap. 1;

(10) Mevo Shaarim, p. 6a;

(11) EH 1/67b; Mevo Shaarim, p. 4a-b; Elsewhere we are told that the emanation from the eyes is definitely weaker than that from the orifices (Shaar HaHakdamot, 28c; Mevo Shaarim 31b).

(12) EH 1/70a; Mevo Shaarim, 7a-b;

- (13) EH 1/49b, 77b;
- (14) EH 2/65 - 66;
- (15) EH 2/119-120;
- (16) Mevo Shaarim 92b;
- (17) Mevo Shaarim 36b-37a;
- (18) EH 2/177a-b;

NOTES TO CONCLUSION:

(1) According to one account, Luria, on his deathbed, stated that even Vital did not really understand his kabbalah, v. G. Scholem's article in Zion (5), 1940, p. 217, n.4;

(2) Vital is known to have obscured certain details of his master's kabbalah. v. Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 129; and Tishby, Torat HaRa: p. 28: "Due to theological concerns, Vital concealed and obscured an important principle in the doctrine of tzimtzum. The hesitation regarding the (origin of the) vessels points to a struggle between a mythological tendency and a theological postulate, a struggle whose marks are visible in all the branches of the system..."

Thus it is also necessary to emphasize the empirical tone of the original in certain cases. It often requires some effort to reveal the empirical foundation of certain ideas.

(3) "From the very beginning the Lurianists had adopted the most subtle and deadly method of dealing with rival schools; they did not oppose them but wholeheartedly endorsed their teaching as a lower and incomplete form of kabbalistic revelation. The full light of esoteric truth shone in Luria alone and the non-Lurianic kabbalists

comprehended it not. Lurianic legend is full of accounts in which kabbalists of Cordovero's school beg to be initiated, but are rejected because their soul is only fit to receive the lower, non-Lurianic mysteries. Vital, with disarming frankness, reports a dream, three months after the demise of his master, in which he saw Cordovero standing at the entrance of a Safed academy. To Vital's question which Kabbalah was taught in the 'world of spirits', Cordovero's or Luria's, Cordovero replied that both ways were equally true but that his own system was 'exoteric' in comparison with Luria's which was the 'inner and essential'; he himself now studied only according to the Lurianic system." (Werblowsky, p.16; v. ibid. p. 16-18; 140-5);

v. also Tishby Chikrai Kabbalah u-Shluchoteha, pp. 177 - 267; MTJM p. 265;

(4) fragment preserved as "Likutai Hakdamat HaKabbalah mi-Maharchu za'l", printed at the beginning of Otzrot Hayyim;

(5) v. Yefe Sha'a on EH 1/70a. This later kabbalist used empiricism to raise an objection but did not dare to innovate;

(6) v. eg., D. Tamar's article, "Luria and Vital as the Messiah ben Yosef" (Heb.), Sefunot 7 (1963); G. Scholem, Sabbatai Sevi (1973), p.19;

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fine, Lawrence, Maggidic Revelation in the Teachings of Isaac Luria (in Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians, ed. J. Reinharz and D. Swetschinski, Durham, N.C., 1982, pp. 141- 147);

The Art of Metoposcopy: A Study in Isaac Luria's Charismatic Knowledge (in AJS Review, 11, (1986), pp. 79-101;

The Contemplative Practice of Yihudim in Lurianic Kabbalah (in Jewish Spirituality, ed. A. Green, vol. 2, Crossroad, 1987);

Nasr, S.H., An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines, (1964);

Netton, I.R., Allah Transcendent, Routledge (1989);

Scholem, G., Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (MTJM), Schocken, 1961 (first published 1941);
Kabbalah, Meridian, 1974;
Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1975, Princeton University Press;

Tishby, I., "The Doctrine of Evil and the 'Kelippah' in Lurianic Kabbalism" Jerusalem, 1942, 1984 (The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University);

Chikrai Kabbalah u'Shluchoteha, Magnes, Jerusalem, 1982;

The Wisdom of the Zohar, Oxford University Press, 1989;

Werblowsky, R.J.Z., Joseph Karo, Lawyer and Mystic, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1977; (first published in 1962);

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Sefer Ha-Zohar, Hebrew edition of Mossad Ha-Rav Kook,
Jerusalem, 1984; English translation by Soncino
Press, 1984;

Cordovero, Moses, Pardes Rimonim, Cracow 1592; Munkacs
1906;
Shiur Komah, Warsaw 1883;

Vital, Hayyim, Etz Hayyim, Warsaw 1891;
Mevo Shaarim, Jerusalem 1904;
Shaar Ha-Kavanot, Jerusalem 1873;

Appendix: Empiricism in Islam.

I would like to raise the question of Islamic influence on medieval Jewish authors concerning the empirical method. It is true that they found examples of empiricism in their own sources (chap. 1). Nevertheless, it is very possible that Islamic thinkers provided a powerful impetus for the practical implementation of this method.

The Quran is replete with injunctions to recognize the one God by means of natural phenomena (1). The Ikhwan Al-Safa (Brethren of Purity, fl. ca. 10th to 11th cen.) capsulated this Quranic theme as follows:

"He made these His works manifest, to the end that the intelligent might contemplate them; and He brought into view all that was in His invisible world, that the observant might behold it and acknowledge His Skill and Peerlessness, and Omnipotence, and Soleness, and not stand in need of proof and demonstration. Further, these forms, which are perceived in the material world, are the similitudes of those which exist in the world of spirits save that the latter are composed of light and are subtle; whereas the former are dark and dense. And, as a picture corresponds in every limb with the animal it represents, so these forms, too, correspond with those which are found in the spiritual world" (2).

The Ikhwan believed strongly in the religious value of empirical observation. In addition, they provided their readers with a clear formulation of the "doctrine of correspondence" which is the basis of the empirical method in Kabbalah (chap. 2).

Nasr expands on this aspect of their thought:

"Often in their study of the universe the Ikhwan give analogies from the microcosm to illustrate an otherwise difficult concept concerning cosmology. For example, the relation of the Universal Soul to the Universe, described above, becomes concrete and vivid when compared to the human soul and body. Or the comparison of the death of the Universe to human death makes what appears as a far-away event a very 'real' one. But the Ikhwan also apply analogies in the reverse sense, explaining the constitution of the human being by correspondences drawn from the heavens and earth, again in order to make vivid and 'real' some aspect of man, and, what is more important perhaps, to demonstrate his cosmic qualities and significance" (3).

I.R. Netton describes the role of the "doctrine of correspondence" in an early Isma'ili cosmology. He writes:

"Finally, everything in the supernatural world has something that corresponds with it in the lower world, ... Thus the sun corresponds to, has a parallel with, or provides an indication of the Sabiq and a similar correspondence is discernable between the Moon and the Tali; ... " (4).

It goes without saying that these remarks are not intended to prove anything. I only wish to point out a line of further research that should be very fruitful.

NOTES TO APPENDIX:

(1) eg. 6.96-100; 13.2-5; 16.2-22; etc.

(2) Nasr, S.H., *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, (1964), p. 44-5;

(3) Nasr, *ibid.*, p. 68; v. *ibid.* pp. 96-104;

(4) Netton, p. 207;