

# Zionism & Russia

8 Forum Lectures



**By Valdas Anelauskas**  
**Lecture 2**

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## **8 Pacifica Forum Lectures**

**By**

### **Valdas Anelauskas**

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As we can see from this quote (see lecture one), Russia, of course, did not escape the attention of the Zionists. The Russian dimension of Zionism cannot be overestimated. It is perhaps impossible to describe all the activities of the Zionists in Russia. We shall only dwell on some of them.

#### **FIRST, HOW ZIONISM PENETRATED INTO RUSSIA?**

Well, historical homeland of ancestors of most today's Jews is actually in Russia.

The original Jews (those Hebrews of the Bible) were what we today would call Sephardics, Sephardic Jews out of the Middle East, who later went to Spain and Portugal when the Moors occupied the Iberian Peninsula. However, almost all Jews today are Ashkenazi which means that they are not descendants of the Sephardics (Hebrews), but originate from a band of ruthless tribe called the Khazars. The Sephardics, in search of army for their revolutions, chose the Khazars. The Khazars were converted to Judaism, and today they make up 95% of the world's Jewish population.

The kingdom of the Khazars vanished from the map of the world many centuries ago. Today many people have never even heard of it, yet in its day the Khazar kingdom [Khazaria] was a very major power, indeed holding sway over a large empire of subjugated peoples. It had to be reckoned with by the two neighbouring superpowers of that day. To the

south and west of Khazaria the Byzantine Empire was in full flower with its Eastern Orthodox Christian civilisation. To the south-east, the Khazar kingdom bordered on the expanding Moslem Empire of the Arab Caliphs. The Khazar's influenced the histories of both of these empires but, far more importantly, the Khazar kingdom occupied what was later to become a southern portion of Russia between the Black and Caspian Seas. As a result, the historical destinies of the Russians and the Khazars became intertwined in ways which have persisted down to the present day.

In case you have never heard of the Khazars, I think that first of all I should mention where you can look to learn more about them. In 1976 a book about the Khazars was published by the British writer [a Jew] Arthur Koestler. The book is titled, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage*. The American publisher was Random House.

History records that the Khazars were derived from a mixture of Mongols, Turks and Fins. According to some records, they descend from Togarmah through his son Khozar. As early as the 3rd Century AD, they were identifiable in constant warfare in the areas of Persia and Armenia. The first mentioning of Khazars refers to the 5th century, at that time they were known as akatsirs, inhabiting the steppes of the northern Caucasus. Their language refers to the Bulgarian group of turkic languages. But no written texts have been found.

In the 5th Century, the Khazars were among the devastating hordes of Attila, the Hun. The death of Attila, however, precipitated the collapse of the Hunnic empire and left an Eastern European power-vacuum which the Khazars eventually filled. They then proceeded to subjugate all other surrounding tribes to the extent that, shortly after their defeat, those tribes went virtually unmentioned in subsequent historical accounts. The Khazars had just swallowed them up, historically speaking.

Around 550 AD, the nomadic Khazars began settling themselves in the area around the northern Caucasus between the Black and Caspian Seas. The Khazar's capital of Itil was established at the mouth of the Volga River where it emptied into the Caspian Sea, in order to control the river traffic. The Khazars then exacted a toll of 10% on any and all cargo which passed Itil on the river. Those who refused were attacked and slaughtered.

In the middle of the 7th century they had already their own state which was called Khazar Kaganat. With the kingdom finally established in the Caucasus, the Khazars gradually began to create an empire of subjugated peoples. More and more Slavonic tribes, who were peaceful compared with the Khazars, were attacked and conquered. They became part of the Khazar Empire, required to pay tribute continually to the Khazar Kagan. And so the Khazar Empire expanded northward to Kiev which is today the capital of Ukraine, on the Dnieper River. Then, the Khazarian Empire extended its territory from the Dniepr River in the west to the Aral Sea in the east, controlling most of the shores of the Caspian Sea, so that it is still called “Khazar Sea” in Turkish, Persian, Arabic and other languages. Eventually, it occupied an immense land area of over a million square miles extending in the west from what is today Hungary/Austria eastward to the Aral Sea, north to the Upper Volga, and its southern region extending to the Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. It was at that time literally the largest country on earth. This Kingdom of the Khazars is clearly revealed in a vast body of historical evidence, much of which has come to light only in the last three to five decades.

So powerful, socially and militarily, were the Khazars that, as Kevin Alan Brook relates in his work *The Jews of Khazaria*, “emperor of the Byzantines [Roman Empire], Constantine Porphyrogenitus, sent correspondence to the Khazars marked with a gold seal worth 3 solidi — more than the 2 solidi that always accompanied letters to the Pope of Rome, the Prince of the Rus, and the Prince of the Hungarians.” [Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria*] At the peak of their empire it is believed that the Khazars had a permanent standing army that could have numbered as many as one hundred thousand and controlled or exacted tribute, astonishingly, from thirty different nations and tribes inhabiting the vast territories between the Caucasus, the Aral Sea, the Ural Mountains and the Ukrainian steppes. Russian archaeologist Mikhail Artamonov states that, for a century and a half, the Khazars were the supreme masters of the southern half of Eastern Europe and presented a virtually impenetrable bulwark, blocking the Ural-Caspian gateway from Asia into Europe.

The Khazar’s original (indigenous) pagan religion was some wild form of Shamanism, consisting of a pantheon of nebulous gods, and they sacrificed not only various animals in their ritual ceremonies (preferably

horses), but humans, usually the very cleverest and smartest among their captives.

Then, in about 740 AD, a stunning event took place. The Khazars converted to Judaism!

In his famous book, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, the Jewish author Arthur Koestler relates in considerable detail that following this bizarre series of events: "... in 732 — after a resounding Khazar victory over the Arabs — the future [Byzantine Catholic] Emperor Constantine V married a Khazar princess [baptized Eirene]. In due time their son became the Emperor Leo IV, known as Leo the Khazar. A few years later, probably AD 740, the [Khazar] King [Bulan], his court and the military ruling class embraced the Jewish faith, and Judaism became the state religion of the Khazars..." [The Thirteenth Tribe, p. 14]

Now, this odd mass-conversion of the wild and woolly Khazar Kingdom, we learn, was but "a cunning political maneuver", since this bothersome tribe was then surrounded on all sides by hostile tribes. The Khazars had been under continual pressure from their Byzantine and Moslem neighbours to adopt Christianity or Islam. So, in the year 740 AD, King Bulan, the King of Khazaria, decided to adopt some monotheistic religion. According to legend, he was responding to dreams or visions. But, of course, it's more probable that the realities of power politics played a large part in this decision. Bulan's Empire was adjacent to the Byzantine and Muslim Empires. I presume that there must have come a time, in the midst of all the bloodshed, when he began to wonder just what it was that made the Arabs and Christians such furious proselytizers. So he began to study religion.

The actual mechanics of the Khazarian kingdom's turn to Judaism was, most historians agree, rather well thought out rather than random and capricious as some have believed. According to George Vernadski, in his book *A History of Russia*, in AD 860 a delegation of Khazars were sent to Constantinople, which was then what remained of the ancient capital of the old Roman Empire turned Christian under the Emperor Constantine. Their message was:

We have known God the Lord of everything [referring here to Tengri] from time immemorial ... and now the Jews are urging us to accept their religion and customs, and the Arabs, on their part, draw us to their faith, promising us peace and many gifts. [George Vernadsky, *A History of Russia*, Vol. 1 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 346.] This appeal, in all its implications, was obviously made for the purpose of drawing the Christian Roman Empire into the debate with an eye perhaps toward a balanced argument amongst the major monotheistic religions. Kevin Brook makes the observation that “this statement reveals that the Jews were actively seeking converts in Khazaria in 860.” He also adds that “in the year 860, [Christian] Saints Cyril and Methodius were sent as missionaries to the Khazars by the Byzantine emperor Michael III .... since the Khazars had requested that a Christian scholar come to Khazaria to debate with the Jews and Muslims.” [Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria*] Inasmuch as the world has seldom (or perhaps never) witnessed any culture of people more adept at the art of religious debate than rabbinical Jews, the Khazar’s conversion to Talmudic Judaism is not a surprising outcome, given that such a forum was to be the determining factor in their choice, rather than purely spiritual perceptions.

The legend states that Bulan invited representatives of the three faiths (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) to visit him in Itil, his capital city on the mouth of the Volga River near the shores of the Caspian Sea (which was, as I just said, called the “Khazar Sea” in those days). Each representative gave a powerful argument for his respective faith. King Bulan was unable to choose. So he sent the three representatives out, and called back the Christian by himself. He asked him which of the other two faiths he should choose, should he decide to reject Christianity. The Christian, without hesitation, began railing against the Muslim religion, and strongly advocated Judaism. Likewise, the Muslim railed against Christianity, and advocated Judaism. So Bulan took their advice. He rejected both Christianity and Islam, and he became a Jew. The king then concluded that Judaism, being the foundation upon which both of the other monotheistic religions were built, would be that which he and his subjects should embrace.

According to Benjamin Freedman the Khazars’ conversion to Judaism was also first precipitated by their monarch’s abhorrence of the moral

climate into which his kingdom had descended. Freedman has claimed, and other historians confirmed, that the pagan Khazars engaged in extremely immoral forms of religious practices, among them phallic worship.

Yet, Koestler's position was that the king's conversion was essentially a political decision. "At the beginning of the eighth century," he writes, "the world was polarized between the two super-powers representing Christianity and Islam. Their ideological doctrines were welded to power-politics pursued by the classical methods of propaganda, subversion and military conquest." "The Khazar Empire represented a Third Force," Koestler continues, "which had proved equal to either of them, both as an adversary and an ally. But it could only maintain its independence by accepting neither Christianity nor Islam — for either choice would have automatically subordinated it to the authority of the Roman Emperor or the Caliph of Baghdad." [Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, p. 58.] It was clear that the Khazars were determined to preserve their supremacy as a "Third Force" in the world, and undisputed leader of the countries and tribal nations of the Transcaucasus.

They saw that the adoption of one of the monotheistic religions would confer upon their monarch the benefit of both prelate and judicial authority that their system of shamanism could not, and that the rulers of the other two powers clearly enjoyed. Cambridge historian John Bury concurs: "There can be no question," he says, "that the ruler was actuated by political motives in adopting Judaism. To embrace Mohammadanism would have made him the spiritual dependent of the Caliphs, who attempted to press their faith on the Khazars, and in Christianity lay the danger of his becoming an ecclesiastical vassal of the Roman Empire. Judaism was a reputable religion with sacred books which both Christian and Mohammadan respected; it elevated him above the heathen barbarians, and secured him against the interference of Caliph or Emperor." [Bury, *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire*, p. 406.]

According to an ancient document entitled *King Joseph's Reply to Hasdai ibn Shaprut*, Joseph (a later Khazarian king) stated that, "From that time on the Almighty God helped him [King Bulan] and strengthened him. He and his slaves circumcised themselves and he sent for and brought wise

men of Israel who interpreted the Torah for him and arranged the precepts in order.” [Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria*, p. 126.]

Well, there appears to be as many historical accounts as to how King Bulan was converted to Judaism as there are historians and mystics to present them. Many of them involve visions of angels, such as the tale by a Sephardic Jewish philosopher detailing a dream in which an angel told the king that his “intentions are desirable to the Creator” but the continued observance of shamanism was not. [Yehuda HaLevi, *The Kuzari* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1998), p. 1.] In the aforementioned document, *King Joseph’s Reply*, its author claims that in that same dream God promised King Bulan that if he would abandon his pagan religion and worship the only true God that He would “bless and multiply Bulan’s offspring, and deliver his enemies into his hands, and make his kingdom last to the end of the world.” It is believed by scholars that the dream was designed to simulate the Covenant in Genesis and meant to imply “that the Khazars too claimed the status of a Chosen Race, who made their own Covenant with the Lord, even though they were not descended from Abraham’s seed,” says Koestler. [Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, p. 66.]

Overnight an entirely new group of people, the warlike Khazars, suddenly proclaimed themselves Jews — adoptive Jews. The Khazar kingdom began to be described as the “Kingdom of the Jews” by historians of the day. Succeeding Khazar rulers took Jewish names, and during the late 9th Century the Khazar kingdom became a haven for Jews of other lands. Significantly, as speculated upon by the noted Russian archaeologist Mikhail Artamonov, author of *History of the Khazars* (the book which, unfortunately, is available only in Russian), the sudden and unprecedented Khazar acceptance of Judaism as their new religion was actually the result of a carefully-planned Jewish coup d’etat, which at the same time not only reduced the Kagan to a mere figurehead but turned over all the real power to a new co-ruler called the Bek! As Koestler writes, all “the affairs of state including leadership of the army, were managed by the Bek (sometimes also called the Kagan Bek), who wielded all effective power.” Thus, the ancient Khazar system of government became a ‘double kingship’, the Kagan representing divine, the Bek secular power.” [Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, p. 54.] Shortly thereafter, the Jews now having consolidated their power, they had the Khazars adopt the 22 letter

Hebrew alphabet as well as their language, and even convinced them to submit to circumcision!

The Jews themselves fully understand their Khazarian heritage, as the third edition of the Jewish Encyclopedia for 1925 records: “Chazars: a people of Turkish origin whose life and history are interwoven with the very beginnings of the history of the Jews of Russia.”

If not for the fact that at least 95% of the world’s Jews are probably descendants of Khazar converts, this event would merit little further discussion. But since most Jews hail from Eastern Europe and Russia, we are in no position whatsoever to ignore this extraordinary conversion. Therefore, it is extremely important to look into the Khazars in some detail. Of the ferocity and warlike tendencies of the Khazars there is little doubt and much historical evidence, all of it pointing to a group of people so violent in their dealings with their fellow men that they were feared and abhorred above all peoples in that region of the world. Legends and stories abound that center around Alexander the Great and his attempt to enclose the Khazars and quarantine them, due to their violent and barbaric nature, from the rest of the civilized world. This endeavor apparently failed. Some legends even claim they were cannibals. [Those were mentioned in Andrew Collin Gow’s book, *The Red Jews* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 40-41.] After the kingdom’s conversion to Judaism, the term “Red Jews” came into usage out of the superstition of medieval Germans, who equated their red hair and beards and their violent nature with deceit and dishonesty. And, as I said, it is also well documented that they heavily taxed those passing through their lands, for none dared refuse them.

It is not difficult to determine some of the motivating factors behind the legendary Khazar ferocity in war. “When the bek [the Khazar head of the military and second in command only to the Kagan himself] sends out a body of troops, they do not in any circumstances retreat. If they are defeated, every one who returns to him is killed. ... Sometimes he cuts every one of them in two and crucifies them and sometimes he hangs them by the neck from trees.” [Douglas M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, p. 113.]

Tribute by conquered peoples has always been a feature of empires, of course, but not in the fashion of the Khazars. The so-called great empires of the world always gave something in return for the taxes they extracted. Rome, for example, made citizens of those they conquered; and in return for the taxes they levied, they brought civilisation, order and protection against attack from would-be invaders. But not so in the Khazar Empire. The people who were subject to the Khazars received only one thing in return for their payments of tribute, and that was a shaky promise — the Khazars would refrain from further attacks and pillage so long as the tributes were paid. Therefore, the subjects of the Khazar Empire were nothing more than the victims of the giant protection racket. The Khazar overlords were therefore resented universally and bitterly throughout their domain, but they were also feared because of the merciless way in which they dealt with anyone who stood up to them.

The Khazarian kingdom reached its peak of power and world influence in the latter half of the eighth century. But then a new factor appeared on the scene.

The death knell of their empire was eventually seen in the dragon-headed ships of the Vikings who were to cross and navigate all the major waterways in their onslaughts.

In the midst of the rise of Khazars, a new Nordic power entered the fray — the Norsemen. As early as the 6th Century, these tall blond Germanic tribesmen, emerging from Scandinavia, had started to establish settlements along the Baltic Sea and had sent expeditions into central Russia up the western Dvina River. Attack by the Khazars upon the Slavic tribes led the latter to call upon their Nordic Scandinavian cousins for help. By the end of the 8th Century the Norsemen had built fortified settlements at Novgorod and Kiev and had set up smaller trading posts further down south, into Khazar territory.

The Norsemen, who called themselves Varangians, mixed with the Indo-European remnants in western Russia, the Alans and parts of the original Slavs. The Alans had originally called themselves the As, and a leading clan amongst them was known as the Rukhs-As (the “shining” or “leading” Alans). This tribe was the very last Indo-European tribe who

emerged from the Caucasus region just before it was overrun and destroyed by the Mongols. From the Rukhs-As developed a tribal name, the Rus. After a while the Norsemen also began taking on the customs of these original Indo-Europeans, eventually calling themselves the Rus. It is from this time that the word Russia originated.

Like other Vikings, the Rus were bold adventurers and fierce fighters, but when they tangled with the Khazars, the Rus often ended up paying tribute like everyone else. The Khazars attacked the Rus without warning.

Initially taken aback by the ferocity of the Khazar attack, the Rus called for re-enforcements from Scandinavia. The call was answered by Rurik, ruler of southern Jutland and Friesland in Denmark, who set off for the steppes of Russia with an army, arriving in 856 AD. It is from this date that the Russians formally count the history of their country as having started. In 862 Rurik founded the city of Novgorod, and the Russian nation was born.

With two other Vikings, Dir and Askold, Rurik gained the kingship of the city of Kiev and successfully organized the defense of the territories belonging to these two city states. The Rus Vikings settled also among the Slavonic tribes under Khazar domination, and the struggle between Vikings and Khazars changed in character. It became a struggle by the emerging nation of Russia for independence from Khazar oppression.

Rurik had already established a reputation as a warrior — in the West he would have been called a Viking (as indeed many of his compatriots who went west on their forays, were called). Rurik had in the interim become king of the city Novgorod, and led the emerging Rus successfully until his death in 879 AD.

His successor was the Norwegian born Oleg (Old Norse name Helgi, Khazarian form: Helgu). He was a relative (likely brother-in-law) of Rurik. Oleg (or the Varangian Helgi) was entrusted by Rurik to take care of both his kingdom and his young son Ingvar, or Igor, until he grew up. Rurik, before his death, asked Oleg to rule the country and take care of Igor

Oleg fulfilled Ruric's will. Oleg gradually united the principalities of Novgorod and Kiev and then started expanding the territory under the control of the Rus. Kiev (previously held by two other Varangians, Askold and Dir) was incorporated into a new united state in 882 AD. Prince Oleg moved the capital of Rus from Novgorod to Kiev.

The new capital was a convenient place to launch a raid against Constantinople. He gathered a sufficient army by 907 AD and had a successful campaign against Byzantium. The campaign resulted in an exceptionally advantageous trade treaty, signed a little bit later, in the year 911. Oleg also subdued and incorporated many neighboring tribes, launching raids into the Khazar held territory in the south.

To protect his vast possessions, Oleg started developing towns in the southeastern frontier. The Khazars had used to raid Russia from there, but Oleg defeated them several times and for some period of time Russia was out of danger. Oleg has gone down in history as one of the best Kievan princes.

A legend is connected with the death of Oleg, which became the basis of Pushkin's Song of Oleg. According to a legend recorded by Pushkin in his celebrated ballad, setting out for a campaign against the Khazars, Oleg met a soothsayer in the forest who, in Pushkin's version of the legend, told him: "The death-wound shall come from thy good battle steed." It was prophesied by this pagan priests that Oleg would take death from his horse. Though he loved the horse very much, Oleg ordered it be taken away and kept it far away from him. Several years passed and Oleg found out that the horse had died. He came to the place where the dead horse was left, of which only bones remained. He was sad over the horse and at the same time glad that he had escaped the prophecy. But while he was standing deep in thoughts over the bones, a venomous snake emerged from the horse's skull and bit Oleg. Says Pushkin:

"From the skull of the charger a snake, with a hiss Crept forth as the hero was speaking:

Round his legs, like a ribbon, it twined its black ring; And the Prince shrieked aloud as he felt the keen sting."

The prophet was right. Oleg died, thus fulfilling the prophecy. In Scandinavian traditions, this legend lived on in the saga of Orvar-Odd. Two funerary barrows have been known as Oleg's graves, one in Ladoga and another in Kiev. "And Oleg became known as prophetic," — with these words the author of the Primary Chronicle ends his narration about him.

Oleg's successor, prince Igor, ruled Kievan Russia from 913 until his death in 945. Our knowledge of him comes from Greek and Latin, in addition to Russian, sources. Igor had to fight the Drevliane as well as to maintain and spread Kievan authority in other East Slavic lands.

Igor's sudden death left his widow Olga in charge of the Kievan state, for their son Sviatoslav was still a boy. Olga used the opportunity to become the first woman in to rule in Russian history. In 957 she made a journey to Constantinople, where she was warmly received by the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus and where she was baptized as a Christian. However Olga's conversion did not mean a conversion of her people or her son Sviatoslav.

In 962 AD, Olga abdicated in favor of her son, Svyatoslav, the first prince of the house of Rurik to have a Slavic name. The ten years of Sviatoslav's rule of Kievan Russia, 962 to 972 AD, have been called "the great adventure". Sviatoslav stands out in history as a classic warrior-prince: simple, severe, brave, sharing with his men uncounted hardships as well as continuous battles.

A fierce warrior who adhered strictly to his Scandinavian upbringing — even refusing to become a Christian after his mother had converted — Svyatoslav set as his first task the destruction of the Jewish Khazar empire in the south. In 965, the Rus army under Svyatoslav, crashed through the Khazar borders and utterly defeated the Jewish slave trading empire forever. The Russian Chronicle recorded the conquest of one major Khazar city, Sarkel, as follows:

"Svyatoslav went to the Oka and the Volga [rivers], and on coming into contact with the Vyatichians [a Slavic tribe] he asked them to whom they paid tribute. They answered that they paid a silver piece per plowshare to

the Khazars. When they [the Khazars] heard of his approach, they went out to meet him with their prince, the kagan, and the armies came to blows. When the battle thus took place, Svyatoslav defeated the Khazars and took their city of Byelaya Vyezha.”

On having defeated the Khazars, Svyatoslav completed the unification of the East Slavs around Kiev. Also he brought under Russian control the great Volga-Caspian trade route, which had always been of peculiar importance. Svyatoslav even challenged the Byzantine Empire. The new emperor, the famous military leader John the Tzimisces, had become fully aware of the new danger. On having overwhelmed a rebellion in Asia, he shifted his main effort to the Balkans and finally defeated the Russians. Sviatoslav was forced to sign a peace treaty on the conditions that he abandons the Balkans and promise not to challenge the Byzantine Empire again in the future. On his way home, with a small retinue, he was attacked and killed by Byzantium forces. According to the Primary Chronicle, the Pecheneg khan headman that killed Sviatoslav had a drinking cup made out of Sviatoslav’s skull. The great adventure had come to its end.

A remarkable Russian historian Karamzin wrote: “Svyatoslav deserves the admiration of a poet and also the reproach of a historian.”

Upon Svyatoslav’s death, his kingdom passed to his youngest son, Vladimir. Over a century after the founding of Russia’s first city, another momentous event took place. Russia’s leader, Prince Vladimir of Kiev, accepted baptism and became a Christian in the year 989 AD. Vladimir also made his newly-acquired Christian faith the state religion of Russia replacing the pagan worship formerly practiced in Russia since it was founded in 820 A.D. He actively promoted Christianity in Russia, and his memory is revered by Russians today as “Saint Vladimir”; and so a thousand years ago Russia’s tradition as a Christian nation began. Vladimir’s conversion also brought Russia into alliance with Byzantium. During Vladimir’s reign (980-1015) Kievan Russia reached it’s height in many realms and became one of the strongest and culturally most developed countries in Europe.

## THE DECLINE OF THE KHAZARS AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE ASHKENAZIM:

The swan song of the Khazar kingdom was actually not a precipitous decline in a climactic or decisive series of battles, but rather a gradual, evolutionary succumbing to superior forces over a protracted period of time. The Khazar kingdom was shattered, and the kingdom of the Khazars fell into decline. Like the Semitic Jews some 1000 years earlier, the Khazar Jews became dispersed. The kingdom of the Khazars was no more.

In the historical documents, after the destruction of the Khazar Empire, individual Jews are mentioned only in Kiev (about 1160) and Chernigov (1181). The Zionists (yes, I will call them Zionists) remained unpacified and, in 1175, organized a conspiracy which included the killing of Prince Andrey Bogolyubskiy. Many Jews were slaughtered in response to this and the Russian princes, meeting at an assembly, resolved no longer to admit Jews to Russia. There were no more Zionists (or any Jews, for that matter) in Russia until the time of Catherine the Great.

Eventually most of the Khazar Jews migrated to other areas. Many of them wound up in eastern Europe.

The American People's Encyclopaedia for 1964 at 15-292 records the following reference to Khazars:

“In the year 740 A.D. the Khazars were officially converted to Judaism. A century later they were cursed by the in-coming Slavic-speaking people and were scattered over central Europe **WHERE THEY WERE KNOWN AS JEWS**. It is from this grouping that most German and Polish Jews are descended, and they likewise make up a considerable part of that population now found in America. The term Ashkenazim is now applied to this ... division.”

Students of Khazar history have long been interested in the fate of the Khazars after the collapse of their empire in the 10th century. This is a difficult topic to research. Not unexpectedly, this topic is highly charged, since a primary Khazar origin for the Ashkenazic Jews would invalidate

the Zionist thesis that the contemporary Jews are largely of Palestinian Semitic origin and are more deserving of Palestine than the indigenous Palestinian Arab population.

As I said in the beginning, the Khazar-Jews are also known by the name “Ashkenazim.” Under the heading “ASHKENAZI, ASHKENAZIM,” The New Standard Jewish Encyclopedia provides population statistics for the Ashkenazim:

ASHKENAZI, ASHKENAZIM: ... constituted before 1933 some nine-tenths of the Jewish people (about 15,000,000 out of 16,500,000) [as of 1968 it is believed by some Jewish authorities to be closer to 100%].

Again, Arthur Koestler’s book was the first to blow the lid off this suppressed fact. Koestler notes that “In the 1960’s, the number of the Sephardim was estimated at 500,000. The Ashkenazim, at the same period, numbered about eleven million. Thus in common parlance, Jew is synonymous with Ashkenazi Jew.” [Thirteenth Tribe, p. 181]

“About 92 percent of all Jews or approximately 14,500,000 are Ashkenazim.” [The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia] And, today even Encyclopedia Americana admits that “The Khazars are believed to be the ancestors of most Russian and Eastern European Jews.” [Encyclopedia Americana (1985)]

These quotes clearly illustrates the Jews’ position regarding their ancestry. The Jews recognize that their genetic lineage is primarily from the Turkish-Mongolian Khazars rather than from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Khazars adopted the religion of Judaism between the seventh and ninth centuries; this conversion gave rise to their false claim of being Judahites when in fact they have no historical or racial basis for doing so. The Khazars’ and their modern-day descendants’ claim to being Jews is strictly religious.

In the early Middle Ages there were no significant numbers of Jews and no Jews in leading positions in Europe, except perhaps Muslim Spain. There may have already been a small population of what Koestler calls “real Jews” living in Europe, but there can be little doubt that the majority

of modern Jewry originated in the migratory waves of Khazars who play such a dominant part in early history of Russia.

Abraham N. Poliak, Tel Aviv University's Professor of Mediaeval Jewish History, wondered at "how far we can go in regarding this [Khazar] Jewry as the nucleus of the large Jewish settlement in Eastern Europe. The descendants of this settlement," Poliak declares, "those who stayed where they were, those who emigrated to the United States and to other countries, and those who went to Israel — constitute now the large majority of world Jewry. [A. N. Poliak, *Khazaria — The History of a Jewish Kingdom in Europe* (Mossad Bialik, Tel Aviv, 1951).] Some historians, such as Austrian orientalist Hugo Kutschera, assert that Eastern European Jewry was not part, but entirely of Khazarian origin. [Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, p. 169.] "The strangest fact is that the name of the Ashkenazim, the bulk whom I see as the descendents of the Khazars," writes Hugo Kutschera, "points towards the old grounds of the Khazars around the Caucasus. ... According to the explanation by the Talmud, Ashkenaz thus means a country near the Black Sea between Ararat and the Caucasus, within the original region of the Khazar empire. The name with which the Sefardim indicate their co-religionists from Poland already gives the explanation for the real descent, from the countries in the Caucasus." [Hugo Freiherr von Kutschera, *Die Chasaren: Historische Studie* (Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1910).] This, again, is precisely the geographic locality of the Khazarian empire.

The Ashkenazim spread northwards into Russia, and then westwards into the rest of Europe. This gradual dispersion of the Khazar (or Ashkenazim) Jews up into central Russia and across into the rest of Europe and eventually beyond is described by Michael Rice in his book, *False Inheritance*, in these words:

In time, the Khazars disappeared as a distinct entity, but by that time Judaism was firmly planted amongst a large number of peasants, smallholders and modest townfolk living in southern Russia. Gradually some of their surplus populations drifted westwards, settling in most of the eastern European cities, though the original communities had tended always to be strongly peasant in character. They came to represent an

important stratum in the lineage of the Ashkenazi Jews, having migrated into Poland, Lithuania and Hungary.

In an article “The Jewish Kings of Russia” from the Jewish magazine Shabbat Shalom, Robert C. Quillan elaborated upon the Khazar Jews: “the Jews of Poland and eastern Europe are of largely Khazar Jewish, rather than Semitic Jewish origin,” and “Because many American Jews trace their lineage to these countries,” many scholars have concluded that this “disturbs the concept of a chosen people [from today’s Jews] extending back to Abraham.” H. G. Wells, in his Outline of History, reached the same conclusion: “The main part of Jewry never was in Judea and had never come out of Judea.” On September 10, 1985 in an address to the Cornell Club of Washington, D.C., Jewish author Dr. Alfred M. Lilienthal revealed that the Khazar-Jewish connection has been verified by many prominent anthropologists:

Many [modern-day Jews] of whom have clamored to go back [to Palestine] never had antecedents [physical ancestors] in that part of the world....

The overwhelming majority of Jews are descendants from the converts of Khazaria and elsewhere who adopted Judaism.... This view of the non-ethnicity of the largest portion of Jewry is sustained by such prominent anthropologists as Ripley, Weissenberg, Hertz, Boas, Pittard, Fishberg, Mead and others.

Arriving at the obvious conclusion that the Ashkenazi Jews were not Semitic, Dr. Lilienthal wrote: “These ‘Ashkenazim [Khazar] Jews’ (the Jews of Eastern Europe), ... have little or no trace of Semitic blood.”

And as I said, all of the previous quotations are documented as true and historically accurate in the remarkable book The Thirteenth Tribe by the well-known Jewish author, Arthur Koestler. Following is one of the many admissions made by Mr. Koestler about the true ancestry of today’s Jewish people: ... genetically they [today’s Jews] are more closely related to the Hun, Uigur and Magyar tribes than to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Should this turn out to be the case, then the term “anti-Semitism” would become void of meaning. Random House advertised Koestler’s

book quite extensively; they began some of their ads with the headline: “WHAT IF MOST JEWS AREN’T REALLY SEMITES AT ALL?”

The Jews admit that they are not the descendants of the Ancient Israelites in their writings. Under the heading “A Brief History of the Terms for Jew,” in the 1980 Jewish Almanac, is the following: “Strictly speaking it is incorrect to call an ancient Israelite a “Jew” or to call a contemporary Jew an “Israelite” or a “Hebrew.” [1980 Jewish Almanac, p.3] This is a remarkable admission. Read it again and let it really sink in!

As the Khazars moved and lived amongst other people, the Khazar Jews passed on a distinct heritage from generation to generation. One element of the Khazar (or Ashkenazi) Jew heritage is a militant form of ZIONISM. “It was among Ashkenazi Jews,” says the Encyclopedia Americana, “that the idea of political Zionism emerged, leading ultimately to the establishment of the state of Israel. ... In the view of Khazar Jews, the land occupied by ancient Israel is to be retaken — not by miracle but by armed force. This is what is meant by Zionism today, and this is the force that created the nation which calls itself Israel today.

The other major ingredient of the Khazar Jew heritage is hatred for the Russian people. Russia is viewed as the force which caused the ancient so-called empire of the Jews, the Khazar empire, to collapse. Having once dominated much of what is present-day Russia, the Khazar Jews still want to reestablish that domination — and for a millennium they have been trying continually to do just that.

So they moved to Poland. Under Boleslaw III Krzywousty (1102-1139), the Jews, encouraged by the tolerant régime of this ruler, settled throughout Poland, including over the border into Lithuanian territory. According to Koestler’s estimation about half million Khazars moved to Poland-Lithuania, which amount would about correspond the estimated size of the Jewish population in the area. “The first Jews to settle in Lithuania in the 11th century came from the land of the Khazars. When the Khazars were overrun by the Mongols and Russians, the Jews settled in Lithuania, whose rulers, at that time, were extremely tolerant.” [Sidney L. Markowitz, What You Should Know About Jewish Religion, History,

Ethics and Culture (New York, NY: Citadel Press, 1955).] The Prince of Cracow, Mieczyslaw (Mieszko) III (1173-1202), in his endeavor to establish law and order in his domains, prohibited all violence against the Jews, particularly attacks upon them by unruly students (żacy). Boys guilty of such attacks, or their parents, were made to pay fines as heavy as those imposed for sacrilegious acts.

Actually, as early as the 10th century the Jews were already quite influential in Poland, and by the 12th century they were well enough entrenched to even monopolize the coinage of Poland's money. Says the Jewish Encyclopedia: "Coins unearthed in 1812 in the Great Polish village of Glenbok show conclusively that in the reigns of Mieszko, Casimir, and Leshek, the Jews were, as stated above, in charge of the coinage of Great and Little Poland." [Funk & Wagnall's Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. 10, page 56] It is interesting to note that these coins bore Hebraic as well as Polish inscriptions.

From the various sources it is evident that at this time the Jews enjoyed undisturbed peace and prosperity in the many principalities into which the country was then divided. In the interests of commerce the reigning princes extended protection and special privileges to the Jewish settlers. In 1334, Casimir III the Great (1303-1370) amplified and expanded Boleslaw's old charter with the Wislicki Statute. Casimir was especially friendly to the Jews, and his reign is regarded as an era of great prosperity for Polish Jewry. His improved charter was even more favorable to the Jews than was Boleslaw's, insofar as it safeguarded some of their civil rights in addition to their commercial privileges. He regarded the Jews not simply as an association of money-lenders, but as a part of the nation, into which they were to be incorporated for the formation of a homogeneous body politic. For his attempts to uplift the Jews, Casimir was surnamed by his contemporaries "King of the Jews."

Now, I should at least briefly mention also Lithuania which is from where I am myself. Lithuania was first mentioned in 1009 AD, formed a state in 1183 AD, and developed into a powerful empire in the 14th century. It expanded beyond the boundaries of the initial area of Lithuanian settlement, acquiring large parts of former Kievan Rus. It covered the

territory of present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Transnistria and parts of Poland and Russia during the period of its greatest extent in the 15th century. It survived and gained power in the constant fight with the Teutonic Knights who were supported by almost the whole of Catholic Europe. I'm very proud to say that Lithuanians were the last among Europeans to become Christians.

Vytautas was one of the most famous rulers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Grand Duke from 1401-1430. He was the cousin of Jogaila, who became King of Poland as Władysław II. In Lithuania, Vytautas is revered, and is a national hero. Vytautas is still one of the most popular first names for boys. Vytautas Magnus University was named after him. As a result of the marriage of Lithuanian duke Jogaila (Jagiello in Polish) to Jadwiga, daughter of Louis I of Hungary, Lithuania was united with the kingdom of Poland. Jogaila became King Wladislaus II. He was christened and then converted Lithuania to Christianity one year later. This laid the foundation for the future Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. Jogaila's successors went on to successfully expand their political influence all throughout the 15th Century. Under the Lublin Union in 1569, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania federated into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In this federation, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had a separate government, laws, army, and treasury. So, now, rights were extended to Lithuanian Jews as well...

Here, by the way, I should mention a very peculiar people called the Crimean Karaites that are also known as Karaims and Qarays. They are a community of ethnic Turkic adherents of Karaite Judaism. Originally centered in Crimea, Karaims were established in Lithuania and also in a few places elsewhere in Europe from medieval times. Their origin is a matter of great controversy. Some regard them as descendants of Khazars (unlikely) or Kipchak (more likely) converts to Karaite Judaism. Modern Karaims seek to distance themselves from being identified as Jews, emphasizing what they view as their Turkic heritage and claiming that they are Turkic practitioners of a "Mosaic religion" separate and distinct from Judaism. Whatever their origin, from the time of the Golden Horde onward, they were present in many towns and villages throughout Crimea and around the Black Sea. In 1392 Grand Duke Vytautas of Grand Duchy of Lithuania relocated one branch the Crimean Karaites to Lithuania where

they continued to speak their own language. The Lithuanian Karaites settled primarily in Vilnius and Trakai. The Karaims in Lithuanian territory were granted a measure of autonomy. Today, the Statistics Department of Lithuania carried out an ethno-statistic research “Karaims in Lithuania” in 1997. It was decided to question all adult Karaims and mixed families, where one of the members is a Karaim. During the survey, i.e beginning 1997 there were 257 Karaim nationality people, 32 among them were children under 16.

The most prosperous period for Polish Jews began following this new influx of Jews with the reign of Zygmunt I (1506–1548), who protected the Jews in his realm. His son, Zygmunt II August (1548–1572), mainly followed in the tolerant policy of his father and also granted autonomy to the Jews in the matter of communal administration and laid the foundation for the power of the Kahal, or autonomous Jewish community. This period led to the creation of a proverb about Poland being a “heaven for the Jews”... Under the rule of King Stephen Bathory (1575–86) Jews were granted a Parliament of their own, which met twice a year and had the power to levy taxes.

Thus, the Khazar Jews, far from being destroyed by the devastating invasions of their Russian homeland, had instead entered into a new and prosperous chapter in their history — in Poland.

It was during this period that the Jews developed their new language: Yiddish. It sounds like German, but that’s not because the Polish Jews came from Germany. No, it’s because German Christians came from Germany, actively recruited by the King of Poland to immigrate to Poland, bringing their relatively advanced culture with them. And, immigrate they did — in large numbers, having been given tremendous incentives to do so. Most of the important business transactions in Poland during this time were conducted by German Christians or Khazar Jews, and everyone who wanted to prosper had to have some ability to understand German, Hebrew, and Slavic. These were the key elements which went into the formation of the Yiddish language; truly a language of expedience during that period.

Poland was the home for more Jews than any other place in the world. After being expelled from other areas of Europe in the mid-1300's, Jews were allowed by the ruling nobles to immigrate to feudal Poland. There, despite modern Jewish itemization of alleged Polish persecutions over the centuries, the Jewish community flourished. (Just before World War II, "84% of all the Jews in the world either lived in historically Polish territory, or came from families that had lived there." [Sherwin, p. 157]) The history of Poland for the next three centuries revolves around the struggle for supremacy between the native Polish people and the Jews. During the greater part of that time Poland was more or less dominated by the Jews — a situation most beneficial to all, according to Jewish history books. But when, as occasionally happened, there was a lapse in Jewish fortunes, these same histories are replete with accounts of gentile cruelty to the "chosen people of God". And because these laments have been repeated often enough and loudly enough there is a widely held belief that Poland has been a land of oppression for Jewry... In my opinion, that's is a nonsense. It has been the unhappy fate of Poland to be saddled for the greater part of its history with a large proportion of the world's Jewish population. This, more than anything else, accounts for the tragic disunity which has kept Poland from taking its place among the great nations of the earth.

The Jews in sixteenth-century Poland were made estate agents, sent out to the outlying properties of the nobility to govern the serfs and produce revenue for the lords. This the Jews prospered so well that when the Polish and Lithuanian crowns were joined, the Jews moved into Lithuania, followed up with their "services." The Jews reached their zenith of wealth and social importance when around 1600 the Polish nobility opened up the frontier region of the Ukraine. With Polish expansion into the Ukrainian frontiers, Jews leased land there too from the aristocracy, and ruled over the population of serf-slaves.

"Jews," writes Witold Rymanowski, "in contrast to the millions of serfs and the impoverished townspeople who were oppressed by the nobility, constituted a privileged group which ... effectively represented the only class in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to concentrate finance and liquid assets in its hands." [Polonsky, Antony, Ed. From Shtetl to Socialism: Studies from Polin. The Litman Library for Jewish Civilization,

London, Washington, 1993, p. 156] An old Latin proverb proclaimed that the Polish Commonwealth was “heaven for the nobles, purgatory for the townsfolk, hell for the peasants, and paradise for the Jews.” [William W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 13]

Wealthy Jews established themselves securely throughout the Polish economy and farmed out work and management opportunities to relatives and co-religionists. “During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” says Jewish historian Salo Baron, “domestic commerce (in Poland and Lithuania) as well as export (timber, grain, furs) and import (cloth, wine, luxuries) were for the most part in Jewish hands.” [Salo W. Baron, in *Economic History of the Jews*, edited by Nahum Gross (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 227] In fact, another Jewish historian, Heinrich Graetz, states that “circumstances were such at the time that the Jews of Poland could form a state within a state.” [Heinrich Graetz, *Popular History of the Jews* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1949), vol. 5, p. 10.]

For their part, the peasants were in a despicable state. In Poland the aristocracy’s complete control over commoner lives was legalized with statutes in 1496, 1518, 1532, and 1543, whereby the poor were formally rendered as human chattel living “under conditions of virtual slavery as cheap labourers for the noble’s farmstead economy.” [Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 25, p. 949]

“The Jewish arendator [lessee of land, mills, inns, breweries, tax farming, etc.],” writes Norman Davies, “became the master of life and death over the population of entire districts and, having nothing but a short-term and purely financial interest in the relationship, was faced with the irresistible temptation to pare his temporary subjects to the bone. On the noble estates, he tended to put all his relatives and co-religionists in charge of the flour mill, the brewery, and in particular the Lords’ tavern, where by custom the peasants were obliged to drink. On the church estates, he became the collector of all ecclesiastical dues, standing by the church door for his payment from tithe-payers ... the baptized infant, newly-weds, and mourners ... The Jewish community became the symbol of social and

economic exploitation.” [Norman Davies, *God’s Playground: A History of Poland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 444]

“The Jewish steward,” adds seminal Jewish historian, Heinrich Graetz, “strove to draw as much as possible from the manors and to exploit the peasants as much as possible.” [Graetz quoted in Abram Leon, *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), p. 192] “Jews,” notes historian Hillel Levine, “sometimes even managed whole villages and oversaw the economic development and exploitation of forests, mines, mints, custom houses, toll roads, and breweries on the gentry’s estates, using serf labor ... Jews were motivated ... to squeeze profits out of the margins. These included more rigorous supervision of the serfs and more efficient collection of rents and taxes, adding to the harshness of the serfs’ lives and by no means making the Jewish arendator [lessee of a business enterprise from the lords] beloved.” [Hillel Levine, “To Shame a Vision,” in Jack Nusan Porter and Peter Dreier, eds., *Jewish Radicalism: A Selected Anthology* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1973), p. 63] Jewish scholar Chaim Bermant notes:

“In Poland, the Jews became so numerous, prosperous and entrenched, that they began to lose something of their caution. Their whole economy was based mainly on the arenda system under which they became tax farmers and collectors for the crown, or lessees of the forests, estates, mills and salt mines of the nobility. Some operated on a large scale, many on a small scale, leasing a few acres of land, or operating a small distillery or tavern, but their utility to their superiors rested in their powers of extraction. The peasantry, the work force, the cattle, the land, were all regarded in much the same light and were pressed for their maximum yield, and if the nobility were thus the ultimate exploiters, the Jews were the visible ones and aroused the most immediate hostility. Rabbis warned that Jews were sowing a terrible harvest of hatred, but while the revenues rolled in the warnings were ignored. Moreover, the rabbis themselves were beneficiaries of the system.” [Chaim Bermant, *The Jews* (Times Books, 1977), p. 26]

The Jews were rewarded in various ways, but one benefit stands out. The Jews were given a monopoly on the on alcohol distribution throughout most of Poland, including the Ukraine. Only they had a license from the

nobility for retail liquor sales, and they held long-term leases on the taverns in the peasant villages. Whenever a Polish or Ukrainian peasant wanted his shot of vodka, he had to buy it from the Jewish tavern owner, whose markup in this monopoly situation was lucrative. The Jews sang, in their Yiddish language, “Shicker is a goy ... trinker muss er.” (The Gentile is a drunkard; he has to drink.) [Norman F. Cantor, *The Sacred Chain: The History of the Jews* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), p. 183] This meant that the person who regularly demanded tax payments from such peasant “slaves,” the person who managed the land and made decisions upon which the impoverished peasants were exploited, the person who dragged the peasant’s child away, the man who drove the peasant into deeper debt, and the man who sold the peasants booze to drink away their misery, all had a Jewish face. In the mid-eighteenth century, in rural areas of parts of Eastern Europe, up to 85% of the Jewish population “was involved in some aspect of manufacturing, wholesaling, or retailing of beer, mead, wine, and grain-based intoxicants, like vodka.” [Hillel Levine, “To Shame a Vision,” in Jack Nusan Porter and Peter Dreier, eds., *Jewish Radicalism: A Selected Anthology* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1973), p. 9]

Jews were visibly distinct from the rest of the population, especially by dress. They usually wore black and the men were distinguished by side locks over their ears. They also “stood out by specific mannerisms,” says Polish historian Janusz Tazbir, “their nervous gestures, continually emphasizing the spoken word, and their characteristic feverish haste.” The Jew was to a Christian “an economic rival, an onerous creditor, accused of arrogance and impudence ... and willing to suffer any humiliation for even a small gain.” They were widely perceived as cowards and swindlers who held “occupations that did not deserve to be called ‘work.’” [Tazbir, *Janusz. Images of the Jew in the Polish Commonwealth.* (in Polonsky, FR. SHT), p. 27-31]

The Polish landowners in Ukraine sold to the Jews the right to make use of their lands with all that they contained by way of humans and animals. The lessees of the land, by paying the landowner the sum laid down in the agreement, extorted from the Ukrainians a considerably larger amount — for themselves. The extent of the oppression was truly incredible. “The Ukrainians had a right to resent the Jews, if not to kill them. The Jews

were the immediate instrument of the Ukrainians' subjection and degradation," admits Jewish historian Norman Cantor [Norman F. Cantor, *The Sacred Chain: The History of the Jews* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), p. 184]

The Polish and Ukrainian Jews first felt large scale retribution for their self-aggrandizing policies on the backs of the Ukrainian poor in 1648. It is a particularly accursed year in both Jewish and Polish history, but is considered a heroic one of rebellion in Ukraine. It is also the date of the beginning of an event sometimes referred to in Jewish history as their "Third Great Catastrophe." Tens of thousands of Ukrainian Cossacks, led by Bogdan Khmielnitsky, rose up against Polish noble domination and engaged in a vindictive orgy of vengeance and murder throughout the Ukraine and Poland. During the uprising of Bogdan Khmel'nitskiy, many Jews, along with the Poles and Polish Christian priests, were slaughtered in the cruelest fashion. Well, the ordinary Jewish people suffered for the sins of their Zionists.

The catalyst was when Chmielnicki came home one day to find his home confiscated by a Polish noble, one of his sons killed, and his fiancée kidnapped. From his personal rage Chmielnicki forged a unified revolt amongst his people against the suffocating aristocracy. And Jews, omnipresently exploitive appendages of aristocratic oppression as land managers, tax collectors, financial advisors, tavern owners and merchants were soon to bear the wrath and fury, full force, of Cossack revenge. "[The Cossacks] first attacked the soldiers of the Polish nobles and the Jewish communities settled on their estates, and which frequently served as their estate managers." [Revolt and the Peasant, p. 161] The Polish people at-large, however, may have borne up to ten times the Jewish number of casualties.

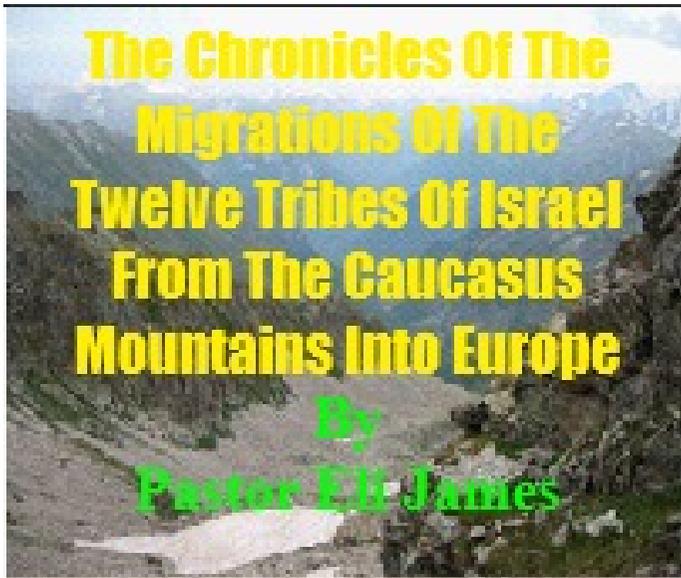
In this time of mysticism and overly formal rabbinism came the teachings of Israel ben Eliezer, also known under the title of the "Master of the Good Name" (the Ba'al Shem Tov, abbreviated as the Besht), (1698–1760), which had a profound effect on the Jews of Eastern Europe and Poland in particular. His disciples taught and encouraged the new fervent brand of Orthodox Judaism based on Kabbalah known as Hasidism.

Early on, a serious schism evolved between the Hasidic and non-Hasidic Jews. The Hasidim dubbed European Jews who rejected the Hasidic movement as Mitnagdim. The Vilna Gaon, the head of the Mitnagdim was the most famous opponent of Hasidism. At one point Hasidic Jews were put in cherem (a Jewish form of communal excommunication); after years of bitter acrimony, a rapprochement occurred between Hasidic Jews and those who would soon become known as Orthodox Jews. The reconciliation took place in response to the perceived even greater threat of the Haskala, or Jewish Enlightenment. Since then Orthodox Judaism, and particularly Haredi Judaism, has subsumed all the sects of Hasidic Judaism.

The rise of Hasidic Judaism within Poland's borders and beyond had a great influence on the rise of Haredi Judaism (or Jewish religious Zionism) all over the world, with a continuous influence that has been felt from the inception of the Hasidic movements and its dynasties by famous rebbes, including the Aleksander Hasidism, Bobov Hasidism, Ger Hasidism, Nadvorna Hasidism, and Sassov Hasidism, among others. More recent rebbes of Polish origin include Rabbi Schneersohn, the head of the Chabad Lubavitch Hasidic movement, who lived in moved Lubavitch movement from Poland to the United States.

## **End of Lecture Two**

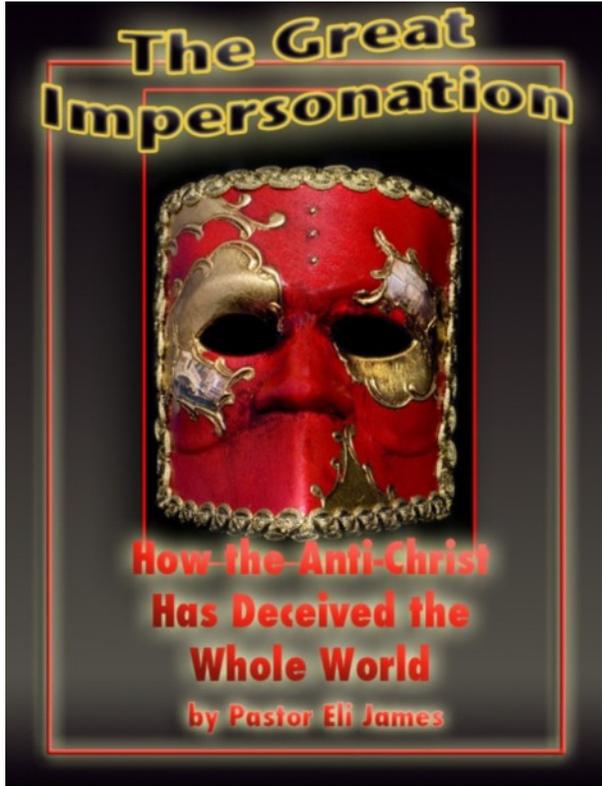




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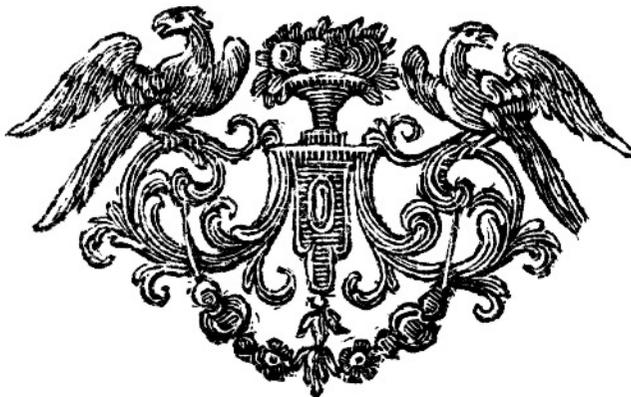
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