

Contents

A Note on Interpretation and Transliteration — XI

Introduction: The Normative World of Hasidism as a Historical and Theoretical Question — 1

Part I: Hasidic Custom and Halakhah— Five Self-Perceptions

- 1 Introduction to Part I — 15
- 2 Hasidic Custom as a Hyper-Halakhic Voluntary Personal Norm: The Early R. Shneur Zalman of Lyadi and R. Ḥayim of Sanz — 22
- 3 Hasidic Custom as a Communal Norm: R. Moshe Teitelbaum of Uyel — 36
- 4 Hasidic Custom as a Full-Fledged Halakhic Norm: R. Yitzḥak Isaac of Komarno and R. Ya'akov of Keidan — 48
- 5 Hasidic Custom as Custom: R. Avraham Yitzḥak Sperling and R. Shalom of Koidanov — 65
- 6 Hasidic Custom As a Legitimate Deviation from Halakhah (*'Averah Lishmah*): The Seer of Lublin and R. Tzvi Hirsch of Liszka — 83
- 7 Hasidic Custom and Halakhah: Intermediate Summary — 95

Part II: *Kedushah*: The Sexual Abstinence of Married Men in Three Contemporary Hasidic Groups

Introduction to Part II — 103

- 8 *Kedushah* in Gur: The Ordinances of R. Yisrael Alter, the Beys Yisroel — 105
- 9 *Kedushah* in Slonim: A Morality of Aspiration — 109

- 10 *Kedushah* in Toldes Aaron: The Milder Version — 112
- 11 Halakhic and Ethical Background (1): The Duty of *‘Onah* — 115
- 12 Halakhic and Ethical Background (2): The Dos and Don’ts of Conjugal Relations — 120
- 13 Hasidic Background: Sources and Trends from Early Hasidism — 127
- 14 *Kedushah* in its Theological Context (1): The Beys Yisroel of Gur — 138
- 15 *Kedushah* in its Theological Context (2): The Nesives Sholem of Slonim — 143
- 16 *Kedushah* in its Theological Context (3): The Rebbe of Toldes Aaron — 150
- 17 The *Kedushah* Polemic — 155
- 18 *Kedushah* in its Historical Context: Why the 20th Century? — 177
- 19 *Kedushah* and Modern Hasidic Identity: Intermediate Summary and Conclusion — 186

Conclusion: Ethos, Custom-in-the-making, Custom, Halakhah-in-the-making, Halakhah: Normative Categories of Jewish Religiosity — 188

Appendices — 197

- Appendix I: A list of instructions for the first night, presumably written by R. Daniel Frisch — 197
- Appendix II: “The Wedding Day Letter” (*Mikhtav yom ha-ḥupa*) by R. Shalom Noah Berezovsky — 199
- Appendix III: “The Three Months Letter” (*Mikhtav gimel ḥodashim*) by R. Shalom Noah Berezovsky — 205

Bibliography — 212

Index — 224