RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN of LIADY

The origins of chabad hasidism

IMMANUEL ETKES

Translated by JEFFREY M. GREEN

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY PRESS

Waltham, Massachusetts

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY PRESS An imprint of University Press of New England www.upne.com © 2015 Brandeis University All rights reserved Manufactured in the United States of America Designed by Richard Hendel Typeset in Espinosa Nova by Passumpsic Publishing

For permission to reproduce any of the material in this book, contact Permissions, University Press of New England, One Court Street, Suite 250, Lebanon NH 03766; or visit www.upne.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Etkes, I. Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady: the origins of Chabad Hasidism / Immanuel Etkes. pages cm.—(Tauber Institute series for the study of European Jewry) Summary: "The history of Hasidism and East European Jewry through the biography of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady"-Provided by publisher. ISBN 978-1-61168-677-7 (cloth: alk. paper)— ISBN 978-1-61168-679-1 (ebook) 1. Shneur Zalman, of Lyady, 1745-1813. 2. Rabbis-Belarus-Biography. 3. Hasidim—Belarus—Biography. 4. Habad-History. I. Title. BM755.8525E855 2014 296.8'332092-dc23 2014017838 [B]

54321

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments, ix

Introduction, 1

CHAPTER 1

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady's Rise to Leadership, 9

CHAPTER 2 A Leader of Hasidim, 22

CHAPTER 3 Between Center and Periphery, 64

CHAPTER 4 Sefer Shel Beinonim: The Book of Average Men, 93

CHAPTER 5

On the Front Line against the *Mitnagdim*: Excommunications and Prohibitions, 132

CHAPTER 6

At the Front versus the Mitnagdim: The First Imprisonment, 151

CHAPTER 7 At the Front against the *Mitnagdim*: The Second Arrest, 183

CHAPTER 8

Zaddikim as Human Beings: The Conflict with Rabbi Abraham of Kalisk, 208

CHAPTER 9

Between Napoleon and Alexander, 259

Conclusion, 281

Notes, 289

Bibliography, 323

Index, 335