

Introduction: Anti-Semitism as Deicide

And the serpent said . . . , “You shall be as God . . . ”
 Genesis 3:4–5

If there were gods, how could I bear not being a god?
 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

Democritus of Thrace (ca. 460–370 BCE), known for his claim that all of matter is composed of atoms, was a rationalist and materialist philosopher who believed that everything happens according to the ineluctable laws of nature. He is also known for his *Maxims*, a volume of deft bits of wisdom for living a virtuous life.¹ And he is known as the first anti-Semite to invoke a blood libel, alleging that “every seven years the Jews captured a stranger, brought him to the temple in Jerusalem, and sacrificed him, cutting his flesh into bits.”²

The noted Roman historian Tacitus (55–117) is a major source of information on the emperors Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero. He is also a source for some of the earliest diatribes against the Jews.³ He attacked Jewish institutions as “sinister and shameful”⁴ and complained that the

¹ Democritus, *Maxims*, trans. Jonathan Barnes, in Jonathan Barnes, ed., *Early Greek Philosophy* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 252–253.

² Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Antisemitism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1983), 126.

³ See, e.g., Tacitus, *The Histories*, in *The Annals and the Histories*, ed. Moses Hadas, trans. Alfred Church and William Brodribb (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 564–565.

⁴ Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Anti-Semitism* (Stroud, U.K.: The History Press, 2002), 17.

Jews “regard it as a crime to kill any newborn infant.”⁵ Yes, *complained*: he had an issue with the *absolute* prohibition against murder. There lay his anti-Semitism.

With the advent of Christianity as the official religion of Rome, Saint John Chrysostom of Antioch (347–407), famous for his eloquence and his moral teachings, declared that the Jews are the descendants not of Abraham but of the murderer Cain.⁶ Indeed, in his *Homilies* the Church Father proclaimed that the Jews are “inveterate murderers, destroyers, men possessed by the devil” (1:4); hence for the Jews there is “no expiation possible, no indulgence, no pardon” (6:2).⁷ Which means: if the Jews are *essentially* murderers, then the Jews are *necessarily* damned.

A millennium later an Augustinian monk broke away from the Church born of the doctrines of the Catholic Fathers. But he did not break away from the Jew hatred that many of them espoused. In his infamous diatribe *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and their lies, 1542) Martin Luther (1483–1546) declared that the Jews are “murderers of all Christendom... , often burned to death upon the accusation that they had poisoned water and wells, stolen children, and torn and hacked them apart.”⁸ The Nazis would be able to quote Luther without editing to serve their exterminationist ends.

With the eighteenth century came the Enlightenment, the age of reason and tolerance; among its leading exponents was the great German Idealist Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), the author of the Categorical Imperative, from which reason may deduce all morality: always act in such a way that, in accordance with your rational will, a universal maxim can be derived from your action.⁹ He is also the author of the assertion that “the euthanasia of Judaism is the pure moral religion.”¹⁰ Why? Because the Jews, who derive their actions from

⁵ Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin, *Why the Jews? The Reason for Antisemitism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 71.

⁶ See Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 134.

⁷ Quoted in Edward H. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-three Centuries of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 48.

⁸ Quoted in Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), 9.

⁹ See Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1981), 30–32.

¹⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (New York: Abaris, 1979), 95.

divine commandment, and not logical deduction, pose a fundamental threat to the self-legislating autonomy of a free rational being.

Among the self-legislating, autonomous thinkers to emerge from the Enlightenment was Karl Marx (1818–1883), grandson of Rabbi Meir Halevi Marx of Trier and the inspiration for such mass murderers as Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong. The primary author of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), “throughout his life, Marx identified Jews and Judaism with all that he hated in capitalism.”¹¹ Thus he asked and answered: “What is the profane basis of Judaism? *Practical need, self-interest*. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly god? *Money*.”¹² What, then, is to be done with the Jew?

One of capitalism’s most successful devotees was Henry Ford (1863–1947), who at the age of twenty walked four miles every Sunday from his family’s farm outside Detroit to attend their Episcopal church.¹³ By the time he was fifty he was the chief executive and owner of the Ford Motor Company. When he reached the age of fifty-seven his book *The International Jew* came out, along with a series of articles in his newspaper *The Dearborn Independent* featuring selections from the infamous anti-Semitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

An avid believer in the lies of the *Protocols*, German-born Irma Grese (1923–1945) served the Third Reich in Ravensbrück, Auschwitz, and Bergen-Belsen. The Jews knew her as the Hyena of Auschwitz and the Beautiful Beast. The actions that earned her those titles led her to be among the accused at the Belsen war crimes trial. She was found guilty, and on 13 December 1945 she became the youngest of the female Nazis to be executed for crimes against humanity.

Among the Jihadist ideologues who were influenced by the Nazis is Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966), the Egyptian who was executed on 29 August 1966 under Gamal Abdel Nasser’s regime. The author of *Our Struggle with the Jews* (1950), Qutb remains the most influential ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood. He spread the Jihadist doctrine that “the Jews have confronted Islam with enmity from the moment that the Islamic state was established.” Because the “Jews as Jews were by

¹¹ Prager and Telushkin, *Why the Jews?*, 125.

¹² Karl Marx, “On Bruno Bauer’s *The Jewish Question*,” in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 34.

¹³ Harold Evans, *They Made America* (New York: Little, Brown, 2004), 237.

nature determined to fight Allah's Truth,"¹⁴ they are "the eternal enemy of Islam."¹⁵ The Jews, therefore, are the embodiment of evil and must be annihilated.

Contrary to Jihadists who deny that the Holocaust took place, Qutb extolled Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) as the instrument of Allah sent to exterminate the Jews.¹⁶ Another ardent admirer of Hitler was Stokely Carmichael (1941–1998), who once declared that, although he had no love for white people, "the greatest of them, to my mind, was Hitler."¹⁷ A former leader of the civil rights movement's Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Carmichael worked with the Black Panthers, on whose behalf he "denounced 'kosher fascism' and 'white' Israel's oppression of the 'colored' Palestinians."¹⁸

And so we ask: What does Stokely Carmichael have in common with Democritus? Or Henry Ford with Karl Marx? Or Immanuel Kant with John Chrysostom? Or Irma Grese with Tacitus? Do they all need the Jews in order to have a scapegoat for society's misfortunes? Are they all xenophobes or racists? Do they all resent Jewish elitism? Are they all envious of the financial success of the Jews? The short answer is: No. Even if they have some of these things in common, why do they scapegoat the *Jews*? Of all "others," why are they afraid of the otherness of the *Jews*? Why do they resent the elitism or envy the success of the *Jews*? These anti-Semites have this in common: they all hate the *Jews*. They have one other thing in common: they each have a human soul.

In this book we shall see that the origins of anti-Semitism have little to do with racism, xenophobia, economic envy, Jewish elitism, scapegoating, psychological disorders, social structures, Manichean divisions of the world into We and They, and the like; such ontological contingencies simply provide the various occasions for an already dormant Jew hatred to surface. Nor does anti-Semitism arise from certain theological, philosophical, or ideological positions; rather, certain theological, philosophical, or ideological positions arise from anti-Semitism. Although he seeks

¹⁴ Quoted in Ronald L. Nettle, *Past Trials and Present Tribulations: A Muslim Fundamentalist's View of the Jews* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1987), 35; emphasis added.

¹⁵ Sayyid Qutb, "Our Struggle with the Jews," trans. Ronald L. Nettle, in Nettle, *Past Trials and Present Tribulations*, 81.

¹⁶ Matthias Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11*, trans. Colin Meade (New York: Telos Press, 2007), 84.

¹⁷ Prager and Telushkin, *Why the Jews?*, 134.

¹⁸ Robert Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (New York: Random House, 2010), 588.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-04074-8 - Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins

David Patterson

Excerpt

[More information](#)

the origins of anti-Semitism in an “ancient clash of civilizations,” Robert Wistrich notes the difference between anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred of others by saying, “The sacral, quasi-metaphysical quality of anti-Semitism is singularly absent in other cases.”¹⁹ It is more than “quasi.” Anti-Semitism has metaphysical origins that transcend its ontological manifestations. Because it arises from the depths of human subjectivity, beyond all ontological categories and contingencies, probing the depths of anti-Semitism entails probing the depths of the human soul – of one’s own soul. That is why such disparate figures as Saint John Chrysostom and Karl Marx, Martin Luther and Sayyid Qutb, Henry Ford and Stokely Carmichael have Jew hatred in common: all of them are children of Adam with a human soul. There lies the metaphysical origin of anti-Semitism.

My thesis, of course, rests on a certain understanding – a Jewish understanding – of the soul as an emanation from the Holy One that transcends the coordinates of ontological, space-time reality. My method, then, is to turn to the object of the anti-Semite’s hatred – Jews, Judaism, and Jewish teaching – in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of this primordial phenomenon.

THE SOUL OF THE CHILD OF ADAM

Elie Wiesel (b. 1928) has said that at Auschwitz not only was man murdered, but the very idea of man, of the human being, was obliterated.²⁰ Designed to exterminate the Jews, to be more precise, Auschwitz was designed to obliterate a Jewish idea of the human being. The term for “human being” in Hebrew is *ben adam*, which literally means “a child of Adam.” Most fundamental to a Jewish understanding of the soul is the view that every human soul has a single origin in the Holy One and that, through its connection to the origin, every soul is tied to every other soul. Like a beam of light connected to the sun – and, through the sun, to every other beam of light – the soul is linked to its source and, through its source, to every other soul. In his commentary on Genesis 46:4 Chayim

¹⁹ Ibid., 80. What Wistrich has in mind seems to be akin to Ernst Bloch’s notion of “metaphysical anti-Semitism.” Bloch uses the term in his analysis of Marcion, who wanted to eliminate the Hebrew Scriptures from the Christian canon, maintaining that the revealed truth of Christianity far transcends anything in Judaism: Christianity is the advent not only of a new covenant but new first principles. See Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, trans. Anthony Nassar (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 30.

²⁰ See Elie Wiesel, *Legends of Our Time* (New York: Avon, 1968), 230.

ben Attar (1696–1743), the Or HaChayim, affirms that souls are “parts of God’s ‘light’ emanating from God’s throne of glory.” In addition to this primary metaphysical origin, every human soul has a physical origin in the first human being. Why did God begin with one, and not two? In the Tosefta, a collection of Jewish teachings from the third century, the sages explain: “So that in this world the righteous could not say, ‘Our children are righteous, and yours are evil’” (*Tosefta Sanhedrin* 8:4). So that no one could say to another, “My side of the family is better than your side of the family.” There is only one side of the family. The relationship to the Creator, therefore, is tied to the relationship to the other human being, and each needs the other in order to be what it is: the physical needs the metaphysical in order to have meaning, and the metaphysical needs the physical in order to be manifest.

According to this Jewish tradition, the wholeness of who we are lies in the oneness of our concrete, flesh-and-blood relation to other human beings and our transcendent, spiritual relation to the Creator. As the origin of the soul, the Creator is a persona and not a concept, a Who and not a What, one to whom we can say, “You.” Likewise, the other human being is one to whom we can say, “You,” so that who we are lies in both a vertical and a horizontal relation. That is why we find the phrase “I am the Lord” attached to the commandment “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (*Veahavta lereakha k’mokha*, Leviticus 19:18): in that commanded relation to the other human being we encounter the One who commands. According to Chasidism’s founder, the Baal Shem Tov (1700–1760), this commandment – this connection – is the basis of the entire Torah (see *Toledot Yaakov Yosef, Korach* 2).²¹ If we examine the Hebrew word *k’mokha*, “as yourself,” as well the *le-* in *lereakha*, “your neighbor,” a better translation would be: “You shall show love *toward* your neighbor, for that loving relation *is* who you are”: the life of the soul lies in the loving treatment of the neighbor, with hands ready to *give* to the neighbor. For the root of the verb to “love,” *veahavta*, is *hav*, which means to “give.” Whatever meaning a life might have lies in the divinely commanded love for the other human being manifest in the concrete act of giving; such love is the light that we are commanded to emanate into

²¹ The *Toledot Yaakov Yosef* is a collection of teachings from the Baal Shem Tov gathered by his disciple Yaakov Yosef of Polnoe; the Baal Shem himself did not write anything. The reference to Korach is a reference to a weekly portion from the Torah (Numbers 16:1–18:32), as the *Toledot* is divided into sections in accordance with the weekly Torah portions.

the world. Indeed, says the sage Joseph Albo (ca. 1380–1444), with the divine summons of “Let there be light” (Genesis 1:3), the human soul and its meaning are born (*Sefer HaIkkarim* 4:30).

The metaphor of light is fundamental to a Jewish understanding of the soul. Two verses from the Book of Proverbs underscore this point: “The commandment is the candle and the Torah the light” (6:23), and “The soul of the human being is the candle of the Lord” (20:27). Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), the first Lubavitcher Rebbe,²² comments: “The soul is referred to as a *ner* [candle], and the commandment is called a *ner*. [In the metaphor] where the commandment is the candle, the soul is the wick and the commandment is the oil, producing two aspects of light, as it is written *Veahavta* (‘and you shall love’ [Deuteronomy 6:5]), which is twice the numerical value of *or* (‘light’).”²³ As the candle of God, the soul’s task is to transform the darkness of the ego’s isolation into the light that shines in the loving relation to another. The soul, in other words, derives its life from the divinely *commanded* loving relation to the other human being. To be sure, the root of the word *mitzvah*, or “commandment” is *tzavta*, which means “connection,” suggesting that in the commandment lies our connection to the soul’s origin and to our fellow human being. Thus, according to the Midrash, the commandment is called a candle because when we perform a commandment, or *mitzvah*, it is as if we had kindled a light before God to “revive our soul” (*Shemot Rabbah* 36:3) by entering more profoundly into the relationship.²⁴ If knowing God means knowing what must be done, as Emmanuel

²² In Chasidism, a rebbe is a wise and holy person whom God has supposedly sent to lead and to serve His flock. Each of the various Chasidic groups (with the exception of the Breslover Chasidim and now the Lubavitcher Chasidim) has its leader or its rebbe. The Lubavitcher Chasidim, also known as Chabad, formed around Schneur Zalman of Liadi, a town also known as Lubavitch. The term *Chabad* is an acronym for *chokhmah*, *binah*, and *daat* – “wisdom,” “understanding,” and “knowledge” – as the Lubavitcher Chasidim are known to place their emphasis on these qualities, rather than on the emotional aspect of religious life that other Chasidic groups underscore.

²³ Quoted in Adin Steinsaltz and Josy Eisenberg, *The Seven Lights: On the Major Jewish Festivals* (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 2000), 355.

²⁴ *Shemot Rabbah* is the midrashic commentary on the Book of Exodus that is included in the ten-volume *Midrash Rabbah*, or *The Great Midrash*. The term *midrash* refers to a vast body of narrative and homiletic commentaries that stem from the Jewish oral tradition and that were gradually committed to writing after the destruction of the Second Temple in the year 70 CE; the *Midrash Rabbah* was compiled over about eight centuries. According to the religious tradition, its teachings go back to Mount Sinai; *Shemot Rabbah* was likely compiled in the tenth century. For a detailed discussion, see Barry W. Holtz, *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 177–212.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-04074-8 - Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins

David Patterson

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Lévinas (1906–1995) has argued,²⁵ then knowing what must be done is the key to knowing who we are: the human being's *who* lies in the human being's commanded mission. And that mission is given to us in the first pronouncement of creation: "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3).²⁶

Just as the darkness of Egypt was such that no man could see the face of his neighbor (see Exodus 10:23), the light of the soul that illuminates the human relation reveals the face of the neighbor. To be sure, the darkness of Egypt is precisely the darkness of the ego that would eclipse the light of the divine commandment by making itself into its own god and its own ground. Blind to the face of the neighbor, the ego is the autonomous, self-legislating self, which is the opposite of the soul, the self that languishes in its narcissism, oblivious to the relation that is the source of its very life. The great sage of the Talmud,²⁷ Rabbi Akiva, maintained that the humanity and the dignity of the human being are revealed in the face: the face is a revelation of the soul and of its connection to every other soul.²⁸ According to Jewish tradition, then, the Hebrew word for "face," *panim*, is plural because each of us has two faces: the face of Adam, who came from the hand and mouth of God, and our own individual face. Just as each of us bears a trace of Adam's face, so each of us harbors a trace of Adam's soul. What distinguishes both the face and the soul is the word. Just as the light of the soul is a manifestation of divine speech, so is human speech an emanation of the light of the soul. The soul, as Saadia Gaon (882–942) states, "attains luminosity as a result of the light which it receives from God. . . . That is how it came to be endowed with the power of speech" (*Sefer Emunot Vedeot* 6:3). The light that the soul receives from God is precisely the word that God breathes into it.

The soul, therefore, is more an action than an object: it is a *speech act* of the Holy One. Our adherence to the commandments entails joining our

²⁵ Emmanuel Lévinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, trans. Sean Hand (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 17.

²⁶ See Menachem M. Schneerson, *Torah Studies*, adapted by Jonathan Sacks, 2nd ed. (London: Lubavitch Foundation, 1986), 3–4.

²⁷ The Talmud was compiled in Babylon between the second and the sixth centuries of the Common Era. Its core text is the Mishnah, which is the recorded oral tradition of laws and commentaries. It also includes the Gemara, a text that explains and elaborates on the Mishnah; over the centuries remarks from later commentators were added. When scholars refer to "the Talmud," they have in mind the Babylonian Talmud or *Talmud Bauli*; there is also a Jerusalem Talmud compiled in Palestine, known as the *Talmud Yerushalmi*.

²⁸ See Louis Finkelstein, *Akiba: Scholar, Saint and Martyr* (New York: Atheneum, 1981), 103.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-04074-8 - Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins

David Patterson

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Anti-Semitism as Deicide*

9

actions with the divine speech act, which is Torah. There lies our task in life, as Lévinas has suggested: “Being has meaning. The meaning of being, the meaning of creation, is to realize the Torah. The world is here so that the ethical order has the possibility of being fulfilled. The act by which the Israelites accept the Torah is the act which gives meaning to reality.”²⁹ In this statement Lévinas echoes a teaching from the thirteenth-century mystic Abraham Abulafia: “God’s intention in giving the Torah is that we reach this purpose, that our souls be alive in His Torah. For this is the reason for our existence and the intention for which we were created.”³⁰ To be alive in His Torah is to burn with a devotion to our fellow human being; to be alive in His Torah is to be a soul on fire.

In the Jewish tradition fire, too, is a powerful metaphor for the soul; after all, the light that issues from a candle issues from its fire. “When man cleaves to God,” says the Or HaChayim in his commentary on Genesis 23:2, “all his elements become transformed into the element fire, which forms the basis of the soul.” Thus the great mystic Solomon ibn Gabirol (1022–1070) wrote a poem – or a prayer – on the soul, saying:

Thou hast imparted to it the spirit of wisdom
And called it the Soul.
And of flames of intellectual fire hast Thou wrought its form,
And like a burning fire hast Thou wafted it
And sent it to the body to serve and guard it,
And it is as fire in the midst thereof yet doth not consume it,
For it is from the fire of the soul that the body hath been created,
And goeth from Nothingness to Being,
“Because the Lord descended on him in fire.” (Exodus 19:18)³¹

Just as the Torah is made of black fire on white fire (*Tanchuma Bereshit* 1; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Zohar* II, 226b),³² so does the soul originate

²⁹ Emmanuel Lévinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 41.

³⁰ Quoted in Moshe Idel, *Language, Torah, and Hermeneutics in Abraham Abulafia* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 37.

³¹ Solomon ibn Gabirol, *Selected Religious Poems*, ed. Israel Davidson, trans. Israel Zangwill (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1952), 104–105.

³² The *Tanchuma Bereshit* is the commentary on the Book of Genesis from the *Midrash Tanchuma*, a commentary attributed to Rabbi Tanchuma bar Abba, a fourth-century sage who appears in the Talmud; it was likely compiled in the fifth century. *Devarim Rabbah* is the commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy from the *Midrash Rabbah*, probably compiled between the seventh and ninth centuries. The *Zohar* is the most prominent of the kabbalistic texts in Judaism; portions of the *Zohar*, in fact, can be found in the liturgy. Although it is attributed to Shimon bar Yochai of the

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-04074-8 - Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins

David Patterson

Excerpt

[More information](#)

“in fire, being an emanation from the Divine Throne” (*Zohar* II, 211b). Therefore, it is written in the Midrash, when the angel tried to frighten Jacob as they wrestled at Peniel by making fire shoot up from the ground, Jacob cried, “Do you think you can frighten me with fire? Why, I am made of that stuff!” (*Bereshit Rabbah* 77:2).³³ If, as Elie Wiesel has said of the Holocaust, “fire was the dominant image of the Event,”³⁴ it is because the event was a radical assault on the soul. Indeed, the anti-Semitism that has its origin in the soul manifests itself as an assault on the soul, which always entails an assault on the flesh-and-blood body of the other human being. Judaism does not subscribe to the body–soul duality found in Greek philosophy (a theme that runs through Plato’s *Phaedo*, for example). From a Jewish standpoint, the body does not have a soul; rather the soul has a body,³⁵ which is among the things that distinguish one soul from another. Such a distinction is essential to the relation, to the between space, from which the soul draws its breath.

In the Torah’s account of the creation of the first human being, one finds a motif of distinction: light is separated from darkness, day from night, land from water, male from female – and human from God. This difference is essential to the fundamental relationship that is necessary for meaning in creation. For to take on meaning, to have significance, is to become a sign of the depth and the dearness of another; I can no more signify my own sanctity than I can lift myself up by my own hair. To become such a sign is to realize and act on an infinite responsibility to and for another, a responsibility that demands a radical vulnerability, which is why we often avoid it. Because this responsibility to and for another is essential to meaning and sanctity in life, God asserts that “it is not good for the human being to be alone” (Genesis 2:18). “Woman,”

second century, most scholars believe that it was compiled in the thirteenth century by the Spanish mystic Moshe de Leon.

³³ *Bereshit Rabbah* is the commentary on the Book of Genesis in the *Midrash Rabbah*; it was composed between the fifth and seventh centuries.

³⁴ See Elie Wiesel, *Evil and Exile*, trans. Jon Rothschild (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 39.

³⁵ The thirteenth-century mystic Shem Tov ibn Falaquera, for example, maintains that the soul assumes its concrete form at the level of *nefesh*; usually translated as “soul,” it is the physical “form” of the soul in its union with the body, and its “appetites” are as much a part of the life of the soul as the ruminations of the mind (see *Sefer HaNefesh*, 3). Similarly, the great sage of the seventeenth century, Manasheh ben Yisrael, explains that, contrary to the Greek and Christian outlook, the soul permeates every part of the body, so that the body itself, precisely in its physical being, is holy (*Nishmat Chayim* 2:11). Thus “the soul and the body constitute a single agent,” as Saadia Gaon has said (*Sefer Emunot Vedeot* 6:5).