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The Doctrine of Transmigration in *Galya Raza*

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The doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, became widely recognized at the end of the sixteenth century¹ as Lurianic Kabbalah and the writings of Rabbi Hayyim Vital on reincarnation were circulated in various editions,² and the concept was associated with Safed. In fact, however, a generation before Lurianic Kabbalah, in the first half of the sixteenth century, this doctrine had already been discussed profoundly and developed with originality in *Galya Raza*, the work of an anonymous Kabbalist.³ Since the doctrine of metempsychosis is extensively discussed there, and because the work was mistakenly attributed to Rabbi Abraham, a disciple of the Ari (Isaac Luria),⁴ it was commonly assumed that the work was composed in Safed. However it does not seem that this hypothesis can be supported by the book itself,⁵ either directly or by implication. The book was written between 1543 and 1553⁶ in a place free from Christian censorship, by an author who knew some Arabic and Greek. There may be reason to assume that he wrote in Greece or Turkey,⁷ that is to say, prior to Lurianic Kabbalah and isolated from its influence.

Before discussing the doctrine of metempsychosis as taught by the author of *Galya Raza* and noting its distinctiveness, let us clarify the source of his inspiration and examine the character and circumstances of his writing. His doctrine is outstanding in its originality and daring. It

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drew to some degree on earlier Kabbalistic sources, but its authority was not grounded in this heritage, and its validity did not derive from a tradition transmitted by sacred writings or teachers. Rather, it was written under the inspiration of dreams, visions, and illuminations possessing the power of celestial revelation, by a writer who believed he possessed a superior degree of spiritual perception: "Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel, who revealed to me exalted secrets which were never before revealed to a human being in this generation, from the time that the Lamp of Brightness [i.e., R. Shimon Bar Yohai, the author of the Zohar] departed from this world until this very day."⁸

The name of the book also indicates its nature, and the meaning to which it alludes is clarified in the context of the words of the Zohar⁹ relating to dreams and their meaning: "For Gabriel is in charge of dreams, and his name is *Raza Galei* [Revealed Secret], which is the numerical value of "Gabriel," plus the number of the letters.¹⁰ Therefore I have called my book, "Revealed Secret," for by the power of dreams in my visions at night,¹¹ and sometimes when awake, I built all the structures which I have made."¹²

The author of *Galya Raza* adopted the attitude of the Zohar, according to which a dream is a revelation granted to the soul sojourning in the world of angels. Gabriel is responsible for those dreams granted to the souls of the righteous, which are described as visions approaching prophecy in their essence.¹³ In contrast to the tradition of most Kabbalists, who sought to preserve the esoteric nature of their work and refrained from speaking at length about their manner of conception, this Kabbalist, because of his special inspiration, was driven to write about himself at length and to describe his revelations:

And since I saw every day that innovations were revealed to me, as well as hidden and concealed secrets, I resolved to write them down.¹⁴ Moreover I have another interpretation in the manner of secrets that stir in my bowels, and I will not be quiet until I have revealed it, because it has been aroused in my heart by heaven.¹⁵

And all that I have written, my heart was aroused to write and publish, since I was inspired by heaven while I was in my bed, in visions at night, half asleep. It has been put in my mouth insistently to speak the expression of our lips, and in the morning after returning from synagogue I sat and wrote that which was summoned to place in my heart, and with my small understanding I wrote all that I comprehended, within the limitations of my mind.¹⁶

The author of *Galya Raza* saw himself as an emissary who felt compelled to proclaim what he had heard and seen, and disseminate what was revealed to him and placed in his mouth. The promulgation of his visions was strongly influenced by the criticism leveled against the esoteric doctrine of the Kabbalah in the area where he lived;¹⁷ the revelation of secrets from heaven was interpreted by the author as assisting in the struggle for the sanctity of the Zohar and the status of Kabbalah, which were controversial in his time and place. Here are his words on this subject:

Since I heard that certain men seem wise to themselves and mock those secrets of the Torah and precious stones which were expressed by the mouth of the Lamp of Brightness [R. Shimon Bar Yohai], . . . and I felt within myself that the merit of the elevated spheres helps me every time that I seclude myself with their words. Such awesome secrets are revealed as I have never heard and we have not seen . . . and seeing clearly that the help of heaven was with me, and I was granted understanding to know and comprehend things, and also the power to deduce one thing from another, I resolved to bring them forth from the potential to the actual and to write for everyone that which was revealed to me from heaven, so that these secrets might not be shut away and enclosed in thought, but that they should be revealed and written for everyone's eyes. Perhaps there would be people who desired them.¹⁸

The decision to commit his visions to writing derived to a large degree from his belief that the end of days was near, because of which the members of his generation merited the revelations of the Zohar. His words have a conspicuously apocalyptic tone:

How fortunate are we and how happy is our lot that we have merited the Book of the Zohar, which our forebears did not merit, the least of whom is thicker than our hips, such as Rabbi Hai Gaon, Rabbi Eliezer of Worms, Rabbi Sheshet Gaon, Nachmanides and the Rashba, and the Raavad, of blessed memory, who were wise in this wisdom. But they did not taste of the honey of Rabbi Shimon, the Lamp of Brightness, may he rest in peace, for in their time it was not revealed. Only now in the final generation, in which we are today, [is this wisdom revealed]. And in proof of this claim is a passage from *Tikkunei Zohar*, 'Elijah of blessed memory said to Rabbi Shimon, may he rest in peace, how privileged are you in that from this book of yours some elevated people will be sustained, until the book is revealed to those below in the end of days, and because of it each man shall return to his dwelling and every man shall return to his family' (Lev. 25), and therefore it is explained from here that by virtue of those who study the Zohar, our redeemer shall come quickly and in our time.¹⁹

These words, written in 1552, regarding the discovery of the Zohar in his generation, are surprising. In fact, they are copied without any indication of their source from the writing of Rabbi Judah Chayat, the author of *Minhat Yehudah*.²⁰ The conclusion which he drew from *Tikkunei Ha-Zohar* regarding permission to reveal secrets, and the obligation to publicize them because of the impending end of days, was one he shared with other Kabbalists.²¹ The importance of the quotation from the *Tikkunim*, its influence on the spread of Kabbalah during the sixteenth century, and its place in the controversy over the printing of the Zohar has already been studied.²² Here is additional testimony of the influence of this promise on the belief that by virtue of historical circumstances the time had come for revealing the secrets of the Zohar, secrets that had been hidden during the period of exile. Thus, promulgation of visions and dreams anchored in interpretations of the Zohar received legitimation and came to be regarded as another way of bringing redemption nearer.²³ The combination of intimations of the end of days,²⁴ enormous admiration for the Book of the Zohar and defense of its study, along with an original kabbalistic outlook based on the authority of dreams, revelations, and visions, led the author of *Galya Raza* to propose a new historiosophical interpretation of the meaning of the end of days. This interpretation entailed two interconnected angles of vision: the doctrine of evil and the doctrine of metempsychosis.

EVIL AND THE DOCTRINE OF METEMPSYCHOSIS

These two doctrines were bound up with each other ever since the beginning of Kabbalah. Both of them are based on the verse, "How they were withered before their time, and their foundation poured out like a river" (Job 22:16), which was interpreted as referring both to souls and to the element of evil, as well as to destruction in the various dimensions of time. In Talmudic commentary on this verse, it is said, "How they were withered before their time. . . ." This is the 974 generations which were withered in order to be created before the world was created, but were not created. The Holy One, blessed be He, stood and planted them in every single generation, and they are the impudent members of the generation."²⁵

The Talmudic number of 974 generations derives from interpretation of the verse, "The promise He gave for a thousand generations" (Psalms

105:8), according to which the "promise" is the Torah itself, which was commanded a thousand generations before the creation of the world. However, according to the biblical chronology, only twenty-six generations passed from the time of creation to the giving of the Torah. Hence 974 generations are lacking to complete the thousand. These generations acted evilly, and therefore they were 'withered' and not created.²⁶

The conception of the generations withered in untimely fashion is connected in kabbalistic exegesis to a well-known Midrash from *Beres-bit Rabba*: "The Holy One, blessed be He, was creating worlds and destroying them."²⁷ At the very beginning of Kabbalah, when Rabbi Isaac Ha-Cohen²⁸ interpreted the Midrash about creating and destroying worlds as referring to the doctrine of evil and the emanation of the *qelipot* [the evil forces of impurity], he based his words on an alternative reading of the verse, "How they were withered before their time," and he presented the names of the three worlds that were eradicated in the arcana of creating and destroying worlds—Kamtiel, Bliel, and Etiel, names that were inferred from the Hebrew words of this verse. The Zohar, too, derived the doctrine of the destruction of the worlds known as the "death of the kings" from this Midrash, for they were the source of evil in the worlds that were destroyed or withered.²⁹ However, even before that, once the twelfth-century *Sefer Ha-Bahir* had related its doctrine of metempsychosis to the verse, "The promise He gave for a thousand generations," with the Midrashic interpretation of the 974 generations, the connection was forged between existence prior to the Creation, which is interpreted as the source of evil, and the doctrine of the pre-existence and post-existence of the soul.³⁰ The concept of "a thousand generations"—either prior to the Creation as a source of the existence of *evil*, or else as following Creation and determining the fate of the *souls* and the timing of their reincarnations—was connected with the doctrines of metempsychosis and evil throughout kabbalistic literature.³¹

The implied connection between the conception of evil and the notion of metempsychosis became, in the thought of the author of *Galya Raza*, a detailed doctrine that sought to clarify the nature of evil, to explain its rule over the fate of Israel, and to establish its relationship to the destiny of the soul and its reincarnations. In order to illuminate the interconnections between all of these from a broad historical perspective, the author presents a dualistic worldview.

The doctrine of evil that is delineated in this book is based on the assumption that the nature of evil dictates the character of history to a decisive degree, and that penetrating investigation of this topic will shed new light on the meaning of the destiny of the Jewish people. The ontological status of evil in the world, both in its celestial and terrestrial aspects, may be compared to the status of the firstborn, preferred for its essential priority. Evil preceded good just as darkness preceded light and absence preceded existence: " 'And these are the kings who reigned in the Land of Edom before the reign of the king of the Israelites' (Gen. 36:31). It should be known that absence is prior to being in the act of Creation. Absence is the darkness and being is the light, and the light which is the brain had its dwelling within darkness like the meat of a nut within its four shells [*qelipot*]." ³²

The general origin of existences, then, was within darkness, in the *Sitra Ahra*, which ruled alone before the Creation. The light was hidden within the darkness, "like water in a sponge," and henceforth this primal state of affairs determined the connection between sanctity and impurity. The connection between evil and good is the dialectical basis of reality, because all of existence comes from the *Sitra de-Smola* [the Sinister Side]. Existences that belong essentially to sanctity cannot exist without the "arousal" of darkness and the sinister, on the one hand, while the *Sitra de-Smola* has no existence without the light of sanctity, on the other hand:

'And darkness was upon the abyss' (Gen. 1)—here you have it that the light and the darkness were a single entity, 'and God said, Let there be light,' meaning let the light be visible—and He did not say, 'Let it be created'. Hence we see that the light and the darkness were as though with the one God, and the light was buried and hidden within the darkness like water within a sponge, and it was not visible. And when the light, which had been scattered within the darkness, was gathered together in a single place, the Holy One, blessed be He, separated it from the darkness, as it is written, 'And God divided between the light and the darkness' (Genesis 1,4)—and then the light was visible. . . . And darkness remained on the *Sitra de-Smola*. . . . The *Sitra de-Smola* is Judgment, and it cannot exist without the help of the Right Side. . . . You must know that the world is founded upon the Side of the Feminine and that heaven is revealed on the Side of Darkness, and the lower firmament, and its descendants, and the earth and its external descendants, which is to say, its material ones. . . . And they are ruled by that side which has no shame, which does not fear Sabbath . . . and that is the prince of Esau, and therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, established this world on the Side of the Female. . . . And you should know that in order for things to have existence and success and blessing within them, arousal must

come from the Side of the Feminine, and this is the *Sitra de-Smola*. . . . And the reason is that the light was hidden within the darkness, and before the world was created the darkness reigned. As it is written, 'And the earth was confusion and darkness was over the abyss' (Gen. 1:2). The spirits of all the polluted Sides, both the spiritual and the material, came from the Sides of Darkness, and from the Side of the Light which was hidden within the darkness came all of the Side of Purity and Sanctity. ³³

The distinction between the sides of darkness and light has a mythical-dualistic character, and the history of this idea, accompanied by a high degree of personification, receives extensive interpretation in the book; this interpretation is intended to decipher the secret of existence. According to this view, the priority of evil in relationship to good left its mark upon all of existence, the meaning of which required clarification from the standpoint of divine intention. The author, influenced by the *Zohar*, ³⁴ describes in a precise way the primordial partnership between evil and good, stating that evil is like the outer shell (*qelipa*) of good: "The evil was the *qelipa* of the Side of Purity before the world was created . . . [and also] the light [emerged from] the darkness and all of the *qelipin* were enlarged with its marrow [from within] and the *qelipa* has no virtue except for the marrow within it which is enlarged with the *qelipa*." ³⁵

The relationship between impurity and purity, then, is like the relation between a shell and the nut. Just as the shell precedes the nut, so, too, evil precedes good. The reign of evil in the world is also based on this principle; evil rules over everything that is external or is a shell. The *Sitra Ahra* (the 'Other Side' or 'Evil One') strove to maintain this situation, both because sanctity is the source of its own being, and also because of its dominion over sanctity. However, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not take a favorable view of this connection between the *Sitra Ahra* and the *Sitra de-Kedusha*, ³⁶ and so He separated them:

Therefore He parted and separated the Side of Darkness from the Side of Light, and 'One opposite the other did God make' (Eccl. 7:14)—and He placed names and epithets upon them, comparing them to the Side of Holiness, to flatter them, like "another god," "other gods," so that they would not be resentful of the Side of Purity, and He placed hostility between the Polluted Side and the Side of Purity to prevent a mating between them. ³⁷

However, the effort to separate holiness from impurity was unsuccessful because of the sin of the first man. The latter upset the equilibrium between good and evil, succumbed to the *Sitra Ahra* and increased

to a significant degree the dominion of evil over good.³⁸ Nor was the *Sitra Ahra* reconciled with the decree of separation, and has sought since then to restore the original state of affairs, both by accusation against the *Sitra de-Kedusha*, with the intention of punishing it and thus restoring the *Sitra de-Kedusha* to the dominion of the *Sitra Ahra*, and also by efforts to transfer the Side of Sanctity to its own control, by means of ruses as well as by accepting its portion of the commandments:

Therefore the *Sitra Ahra*, because he knows that all of the honor which he has in the upper realms is granted to him because of the purity which was removed from his Side, pursues the Side of Purity like an ape after human beings . . . and the *Sitra Ahra* has more desire for the [commandment concerning the] scapegoat, offered by the seed of Jacob on Yom Kippur, than for all the crowns and all the sacrifices which all the powers of Edom and Ishmael offer to him. And he derives more enjoyment from the [obligation of] "final washing" of the Children of Jacob [the ritual ablution before grace after meals] than from all the water in the world.³⁹

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

The main arena of struggle between impurity and sanctity is the history of the Jewish people. The entire discussion is set within the framework of a historiosophical-mythical interpretation of the Bible, which turns the whole biblical narrative into the story of the close affinity between sanctity and impurity, on the one hand, and the myth of the ongoing struggle between the forces of impurity and those of sanctity, on the other. The guiding principle is "just as is done below in the nether regions, so too is it done above in the upper regions."⁴⁰ The war of Abraham against the four kings, the battle of the Red Sea, and the wars of Moses against the Midianites are all interpreted as wars of sanctity against impurity: "You should know that as war was aroused in the netherland of corporeality by the four kings against the five, likewise it was aroused between the *qelipot* of the Polluted Side and . . . the Side of Holiness and Purity, which are higher spheres, and this is hinted in the verse, as it is written, 'And these kings who ruled in the Land of Edom before the kingship of the king of the Israelites' (Gen. 36:31). . . . Here you clearly have before you that all of these wars were so that the Right Side (i.e. Side of Holiness) might rule over the *Sitra de-Smola* and over the Polluted Side."⁴¹

The author presented a dialectical system founded upon the tension between the two tendencies in the relations between good and evil—the initial divine decree to separate good and evil, which brought about the creation of a powerful dualism; and second, the strong attraction between the *Sitra Ahra* and the *Sitra de-Kedusha*, which led to the union of sanctity and impurity.

In forging a dualistic worldview, which sees existence as divided into two realms that are at war with each other, the author of *Galya Raza* was greatly influenced by the Zohar's conception of evil. The author of the Zohar viewed evil as a system of very powerful forces, precisely parallel to that of the forces of sanctity, and active both in the upper and nether realms.⁴² The author of *Galya Raza* added a historical interpretation to the Zohar's conception. For example, he introduced the idea of "the Upper Tribunal," before which the powers of impurity and sanctity are judged, a concept intended to emphasize the subjection of evil to the divine dominion; it thus served to qualify the absolutely independent action of evil by creating an authority before which the conflict of the two adversaries for the fate of the Jewish people is decided.⁴³

The dualistic conception that had crystallized in the Zohar became a central idea in *Galya Raza*, around which the author's historiosophical interpretation was built. However, unlike the Zohar, the crucial struggle does not take place in the world of the *Sefirot*, but rather on the stage of history. The struggle is between the Jewish people, who are called upon to separate good from evil, and the *Sitra Ahra*, which strives with all its might to return matters to their original state and to envelop sanctity within impurity: "And its desire and wish is always to bring itself near to the Side of Purity."⁴⁴

The division is not unequivocal, nor can the tendencies be separated clearly, because man's sin has brought about the joining of impurity and sanctity and caused the *Sitra Ahra* to gain control over humanity, implicating himself in all of human affairs: "You should know that the sin of the first man caused all of this, that the serpent ruled over him and over all flesh."⁴⁵ Since then the dominion of evil has been expressed in prohibited union between Jewish men and foreign women, which is reflected in biblical narrative and in the chain of reincarnation, as I shall explain below.

THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVIL AND HOLINESS

According to the view of the author of *Galya Raza*, the *qelipa* (evil shell) and *Kedusha* (sanctity) cling to one another throughout existence, from the foreskin that clings to the covenant of circumcision to the names of the impure animals that are found among the heavenly creatures in the heavenly chariot, or *Merkabah*. This close bond, which derives primarily from the need to preserve an equilibrium between the two forces in order to maintain the existence of the world, bears significant metaphysical meaning, for it expresses God's hidden intention: "And another clear proof that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to give a place for the grip of the Evil Side and the Outer Ones, as it is said, 'And you shall see proof in the foreskin', which comes clinging to the covenant of circumcision that hints at the organ that is circumcised, known as the foundation."⁴⁶ The combination of impurity and sanctity is presented by the author of *Galya Raza* from two standpoints: that of the *qelipa*, which views an approach to the realm of sanctity as a *return* of existence to its correct state; and that of God, which explains the cleaving together of sanctity and impurity from a broad perspective, seeing in the various stages of history the possibility of contending against the *qelipa* by means of its own powers,⁴⁷ that is, with holy subterfuge.

The ethos demanded of individuals in view of this conception of the nature of evil and its affinity with sanctity is twofold—to assist in the struggle of sanctity to expunge impurity, on the one hand, and to appease and placate the *Sitra Ahra* and flatter it, on the other. The struggle is a subtle one, hinted at in the verse (Isaiah 49:17), "Your destroyers and they that made you waste will come out of you," which is applied to the *Sitra Ahra*. That is to say, victory over the *qelipa* and the overthrow of the *Sitra Ahra* is achieved by means of ruses and cunning and the use of their own forces against themselves: "And we find that the impure *qelipa* is annulled by its very own forces, and so must it be that truly its own forces will kick their master and nullify it and its impurity."⁴⁸ As part of the second aspect of the ethos of the battle against the *Sitra Ahra*, an individual is commanded to be scrupulous of its honor, for evil cannot possibly be altogether overcome before the redemption, "and also one must be cautious not to be contemptuous of the *qelipot* and their powers, for we have found that the Holy One, blessed be He, ordered Moses and Aaron to honor Pharaoh [the earthly symbol of the

qelipa],"⁴⁹ and also to pretend and flatter and conceal man's intention of fighting against the *Sitra Ahra*: "And for this reason one must give some flattery to the *Sitra Ahra*, so that it does not see that we wish its nullification."⁵⁰

The value of flattering, appeasing, and placating the *Sitra Ahra*, deriving from recognition of its might, and granting it some part of the worship of God in order to bribe it and silence it, was already known in kabbalistic thought.⁵¹ The author of the *Zohar*, following Nachmanides,⁵² interpreted the practice of certain commandments as a bribe to the *Sitra Ahra*, although the *Zohar's* justification of such appeasement arises from an argument opposite to that of our author. According to the *Zohar*, the dominion of the *Sitra Ahra* came from sanctity, and because its dominion is in accordance with the will of God, it too is entitled to its share of sanctity.⁵³

The author of *Galya Raza* expanded the scope of the struggle between sanctity and the forces of evil and combined the tradition of the *Zohar* with his own original interpretation of it, thereby opening the way for mythical aspects of the conception of the commandments, as he proclaimed: "On this matter the entire Torah is founded"!

And the world [i.e., people] honors the *qelipa* for the fruit that dwells within it, as one honors a dog because of its master, and likewise the Torah commanded that honor and flattery be given to the *Sitra Ahra*, because of the purity which was hidden within it before the world was created.⁵⁴

. . . Also, when He gives them the name of "god like other gods," "another god," and the like, all of this flatters the *Sitra Ahra* so that it will not accuse the children of Jacob. . . . Therefore it is proper to flatter them, and hence we see the reason why the Holy One, blessed be He, placed names of animals and beasts and fowl on His *Merkabah*⁵⁵ and a man to ride upon it, to show that all of them were created for man and to serve him; and just as we see that the Holy One, blessed be He, ordered us in the Torah regarding Azazel and the slaughter of sacrifices in the north, and the portions offered on the altar, and the fat which is burnt all night,⁵⁶ in order to flatter them, so it is all the more necessary that we be cautious not to do anything to divulge that we wish to nullify this power, as it is written, 'Thou shalt not muzzle an ox in its threshing' (Deut. 25:4). Therefore our Sages of blessed memory ordained in the blessing of thanksgiving that we bow down as we say "we thank" to show that we do not wish to vanquish them. . . . And in this way they will not accuse us, and blessed is He who gave us the Torah of truth and warned us to keep separate from them and from the shells of their shells and to purify ourselves and our foods and our clothing and our houses with the prohibition against mixing linen and wool and with the

mezusa, so that no reason will be found for our impurity, and they will not rule over us. And on this matter the entire Torah, with its laws and judgments, is based.⁵⁷

The author of *Galya Raza* did not confine himself to an exegetical generalization, but rather proposed a systematic explanation of the reasons for the commandments, which stated that for the most part they were given in order to flatter the *Sitra Ahra*. This flattery is meant to separate the forces of evil from holiness: "For the secrets of the sacrifices and the secret of meat and milk and the secret of impurity and purity and most of the negative and positive commandments fit into this order to flatter it to its own harm, and a word to the wise is sufficient;"⁵⁸ "and if you observe precisely you will find that in all of the commandments the Holy One, blessed be He, left a small corner portion to flatter him so that he shall not accuse the sons of Jacob."⁵⁹

Galya Raza reveals a marked tendency to personify the forces of evil. Elsewhere in kabbalistic literature it would be difficult to find long dialogues in the first person between Samael and God concerning the struggle between the forces of evil and sanctity, such as those found in this work.⁶⁰ Intimations of a line of thought interpreting the biblical narrative as a war between the forces of good and evil can be found earlier in kabbalistic literature, and the clear tendency in the Zohar, under the influence of the circle of Rabbi Jacob Ha-Cohen and Rabbi Isaac Ha-Cohen, to personify the forces of evil and to interpret the biblical story as hinting at the battles between evil forces and sanctity, doubtless had a decisive influence on the author.⁶¹ Nevertheless, it does not appear that this tendency had previously been accorded primary significance as part of a comprehensive interpretation intended to explain both the meaning of the commandments as well as the fundamental meaning of Jewish history.

This mode of thought reached its peak with the formation of the doctrine of metempsychosis in *Galya Raza*, which was influenced to some extent by earlier kabbalistic sources, but which based its essential contentions on visionary revelations, dreams, and illuminations, as described earlier.

Metempsychosis is presented here as a general axiom applying to all existence. But with respect to the Jewish people it is a law interpreted as a *temporary punishment* imposed for the sake of eternal grace. This punishment was imposed by the celestial tribunal and is carried out by

the *Sitra Ahra*, while each of the two contending sides perceive a different aspect of it. In the war between the *Sitra Ahra*, represented by Samael, and the *Sitra de-Kedushah*, represented by the Jewish people, the two parties adopt various tactics: Samael attempts to compel Sanctity to approach it, and to that end he tries to entice the children of Jacob to sin so that he can punish them by reincarnating the sinners as animals subject to his dominion. At the end of the process they will be sacrificed, so that he will be able to enjoy their flesh.

The Side of Holiness, by contrast, wages a war of holy subterfuge and artifice, deceiving Samael by means of the union and marriage of great Jews with foreign women, the transposing of the souls of the reincarnated, and the allocation of portions of the commandments to appease and distract the accuser of Israel. The powers in struggle are not evenly matched, because after Adam's sin, Samael received dispensation from the heavenly tribunal to participate in the marital unions of the Side of Holiness, and so he received part of all its progeny on the feminine side, as the female element of existence derives from the *Sitra Ahra*.

The division into masculine and feminine elements is explained by the dualistic conception presented in the book. Existence is divided into right and left, which are parallel to male and female, light and darkness, *Hesed* and *Din*. The light is further divisible into inner and external light. On the left side, the side of the harsh mode of *Din* (Judgment), the female world stands within darkness, which is also divided into inner darkness and outer darkness. From the outer darkness were created the factions of impurity, vermin, crawling things, and evil spirits. From the inner darkness were created the nations of the world. In contrast, from the outer light were created the sons of Jacob, in cooperation with "*Sitra denukba dehoshekh penimi*" (the Female Side of Inner Darkness), "for He who decrees, the Holy One, blessed be He, has decreed that the inner darkness, which is the aspect of harsh Judgment, will enter a union with the aspect of mercy in the entire act of creating man."⁶²

SITRA AHRA AND THE QUESTION OF PROHIBITED MARRIAGES

As against the tendency of sanctity to separate itself from impurity, the forces of the *Sitra Ahra*, as noted above, strive to unite with sanctity and pollute it by marital unions and progeny, which will tempt the Children of Israel to abandon their God. This line of thought is meant to explain

why many of the heroes of the Bible illicitly married foreign women and became "sons-in-law of the *Sitra Abra*."⁶³

The verse, "For Cain shall be raised seven-fold" (Gen. 4:24), is interpreted by the author of *Galya Raza* as "seven drops of impurity from the females of Samael,"⁶⁴ who are the seven daughters of Satan who were reincarnated as foreign women, and married to the Children of Israel to make them deviate from the right path. These include Rebecca, Laban's sister, who married Isaac; "Tamar who came to confound the kingdom of Judah by incest;" Zipporah the Midianite who married Moses; Ruth the Moabite who married Boaz; the Philistine women who married Samson; the two sisters, Laban's daughters, who married Jacob; the daughter of Putiel who married Elazar; the wife of Potiphar who wanted to seduce Joseph; and Rahab, who was matched with Joshua."⁶⁵

Samael's intentions to make the Jewish leaders deviate from their God by means of marriages with his daughters, to subject the realm of holiness to his dominion, are frequently described in emotional language in the book:

And now I must reveal and proclaim the evil of Samael and the thoughts he thought to accuse Jacob of his doings, but the Holy One, blessed be He, repudiated his advice and in the cauldron where he planned to cook, there he was cooked. Samael thought that by the daughters of Laban, who belonged to his Side, he would vanquish Jacob. Samael thought that the daughters of Laban would seduce Jacob to follow the gods of their father, but they rebelled against their father and his gods. . . . And they and their children came to be needless thorns in his eyes, and if you look very carefully you will find that all the evil counsel which Samael took to accuse Jacob, everything worked out badly for him . . . and you shall see that what happened in Shechem and in Egypt ultimately did him no good, because the Lord watches over Israel.⁶⁶

However, in actual fact, the *true* meaning of these marriages, which were exceedingly decisive for the fate of the Jewish people, was entirely different. The *secret* meaning of these forbidden marriages is inherent in the assumption that, for the sake of the battle against the powerful *Sitra Abra*, one must *cooperate* with it to weaken its power from within by redirecting its own forces. Thus Satan's plan was his own undoing; the marriages that he planned in order to make the heroes of Israel change their faith became a weapon in the war against him precisely because he alone could unknowingly make the preparations for his downfall, according to the verse, "Your destroyers and they that made you waste

will come out of you" (Isaiah 49:17): "Here you see why these marriages were made, to become thorns in the eyes of the *Sitra Abra*, to use against him the verse, 'Your destroyers and they that made you waste will come out of you'—thus permission was given to him so that he himself could make the preparations for his own ill."⁶⁷

On the historical level, the war against the *Sitra Abra* and its minions, the nations of the world, necessitates finding an element of impurity in the warrior on the Side of Sanctity, to allow him to mediate between *Hesed* and *Din*, because everyone who battles against evil must have some affiliation with evil itself. Only thus can one vanquish Satan with his own arms:

For the Holy One, blessed be He, desired that when some king or hero arises to take revenge upon the nations, [that there should be] some bond or connection between the nations of the world and the king, who must be of the seed of Israel, in order to fulfill, "Your destroyers and they that made you waste will come out of you"—and you may see some proof in Joshua, who took Rahab the harlot as his wife, in order to overthrow the power of the thirty-one kings, and also Samson, who married foreign wives so as to overthrow the many Philistines, and also David, who is descended from Ruth the Moabite in order to overthrow the nations. And it is known to those who possess wisdom that everyone who was created to overthrow the adversaries of Israel must have some attachment to the *Sitra de-Smola*.⁶⁸

The author of *Galya Raza* was not interested in the antinomian conclusions that could be drawn from this direction of thought, but rather in the mythical interpretation of the war between good and evil and in its historiosophical conclusions. In opposition to Samael's intention of uniting his own daughters with the sons of Israel, God transposed their souls, without the knowledge of the *Sitra Abra*, and rather than the "seven spirits of pollution" he placed within those seven foreign women "seven pure souls to help their husbands [contend] against the Side of Pollution."⁶⁹ This substitution of souls took place by means of the reincarnation of sparks of the soul,⁷⁰ and it served as a weapon against Samael, because "the whole matter of the substitution of souls was not known to Samael, these are the secrets of metempsychosis . . . the secret of reincarnation was not known to Samael."⁷¹

The "holy subterfuge" was carried out by the exchange of souls, and therefore each one of the seven daughters of the *Sitra Abra* was reincarnated in "other righteous women." Thus, by deceiving his forces

from within and by foiling his plots by means of his own emissaries, the condition of "your destroyers and they that made you waste will come out of you" was fulfilled.

THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF REINCARNATION

The crux of the war of sanctity against impurity centers around metempsychosis. The author of *Galya Raza* forged a new view regarding the meaning and purpose of reincarnation. He based his arguments on the assumption that reincarnation is not an individual punishment, but rather symbolic of the situation of the entire Jewish people, and that reincarnation is administered by the *Sitra Abra*,⁷² although, ironically, the secret of incarnation is not known to it.⁷³

According to *Galya Raza*, metempsychosis applies to all existence, but regarding the Jewish people it is a means of repentance and of entry into the Garden of Eden. From an eschatological viewpoint it contains the dual aspect of *Hesed* and *Din*: "The Holy One, blessed be He, is merciful upon all things, and He effected the matter of reincarnation so that even against their wish they must repent, and so He did and does and shall do. . . . And by means of reincarnation they are refined and purified until they are cleansed of that taint, and thus merit life of the world to come."⁷⁴

However, reincarnation has many aspects, and it varies according to its object. By decree of the *Sitra Abra*'s tribunal, evildoers are reincarnated only three times, and if they have not become righteous, they will be returned to dust after severe punishments.⁷⁵ Those whose evil is not great, by contrast, may be reincarnated as many as a thousand times, until they repent for their sins by "refinement," "purification," and "distillation," and they complete their allotment of the six hundred and thirteen commandments,⁷⁶ which permits them to enter the Garden of Eden. With every reincarnation they rise from level to level, that is, the soul becomes elevated with Torah, good deeds, and the purging of sin:

You should know that the utter evil-doers have an allocation of reincarnations, which is only three times for a man (Job 33:29-30) and on the fourth time Israel shall not bring him back (Amos 1:3), it has no more allotment. But moderate sinners have an allotment of up to a thousand decrees of metempsychosis, as it is written, 'Punishing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those that hate me' (Ex. 20:5)—these are the utter evil-

doers. 'And showing mercy to thousands of generations of those that love me and keep my commandments' (Ex. 20:6). But of the utter evil-doers it has been said, 'And there shall fall a thousand by your side' (Ps. 91:7), the quota of a thousand does not help them, meaning that the utter evil-doers are not worthy enough that the Holy One, Blessed be He, should take pains for them for up to a thousand generations, like the moderate ones, who rise in degree from reincarnation to reincarnation.⁷⁷

This opinion, that reincarnation up to a thousand times is a general rule, is mentioned for the first time in the Kabbalah in *Sefer Ha-Bahir*, but it did not receive wide recognition or a central place in kabbalistic literature⁷⁸ until it was taken up by the author of *Galya Raza*. He added to this idea reincarnation into animals, as well as the transition from one seven-thousand-year cycle to another, making it into a system of purification by means of a multistaged punishment whose duration and rate are predetermined.

The reincarnation of souls in animals was already known in kabbalistic literature, but it was a doctrine that was received with reservations and presented allusively.⁷⁹ The author of *Galya Raza* was probably influenced by the daring doctrines of Rabbi Joseph of Shushan's *Sefer Taamei Ha-Mitsvot*,⁸⁰ either directly or by means of a summary of his ideas presented in Menachem Recanati's commentary on the Torah, or some other intermediary source.

Reincarnation in animals, which was taken by *Galya Raza* to a greater extreme with the inclusion of vermin and crawling things, is viewed as a dual process. On the one hand, it is a descent from the human level of existence to bestiality and a relative punishment for human transgressions, carried out both directly and indirectly by the *Sitra Abra* following the decision of a "celestial tribunal." On the other hand, in the punishment of graded reincarnation there is a purification and gradual rise in degree from the world of animals to that of humans.

METEMPSYCHOSIS AND REDEMPTION

The historical issue of principle concern to the author of *Galya Raza* was that of exile. In an effort to clarify the true nature of exile and its underlying laws, he developed the question of metempsychosis, transforming the concept from individual punishment to the critical path for the redemption of the entire Jewish people. This entailed interpreting it

as the exile of souls⁸¹ and as a transition from history to metahistory. The author presented a comprehensive interpretation, perceiving exile as the purifying ritual bath of Jewish souls;⁸² for they must be purified of the pollution of the *Sitra Ahra*, which is engraved upon their very existence. This purification takes place by means of purgative reincarnation, which is the secret of the spiritual and historical meaning of exile:

And know that the exile of Egypt and all the incidents and travails experienced by Israel, and those which they will undergo in the future, all of them are alluded to in our holy Torah. . . . The Holy One, blessed be He, told all of these secrets to Abraham when he divided the sacrificed animals (Gen. 15:10 ff.), and therefore Abraham was silent and did not make a prayer for the exile into Egypt. Nor did he say enough, for he knew that this exile was for the benefit of Israel and to save their soul from the *Sitra Ahra*, for they were delivered into its hand from time immemorial.

For all the souls that were born of Jacob until they stood at Mount Sinai were all former souls from the 974 generations that were withered in untimely fashion, and had to undergo reincarnation, and return to their original source. And thus they wandered for forty years in the desert until all of those who were born in Egypt perished, and those who went up to the Land of Israel, who were twenty years old, had the privilege of going up because they were new souls. And since the Holy One, blessed be He, did not want a single soul of Israel to be lost, it being the seed of our father Abraham, before all of these things, He wanted those who had been withered in untimely fashion to be purified and expunged of their sin, so that they would return to their origin. Thus their children would go up and inherit the land. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, separated the children of Israel from the nations, to be His chosen nation, and he ordered that their foreskin be circumcised.⁸³

Exile was thus viewed as a complex and multiphased way to rescue the Jewish people from imprisonment by the *Sitra Ahra*, a notion based on the assumption that the Jewish people originated in the 974 generations that were seized by the *Sitra Ahra* at the dawn of time: the metahistorical transmigration of souls became a historical exile that was intended to extricate the Jewish people from the captivity of the *Sitra Ahra*.

The author of *Galya Raza* entirely condemned the common view that the 974 generations which were withered in untimely fashion, "were the souls of the wicked, and the thought occurred to the Holy One, blessed be He, to create them, and He saw that they were not worthy of being created, and they were withered in that they were wicked."⁸⁴ Instead he presented a concept based on the doctrine of the seven-thousand year

cycle,⁸⁵ viewing the 974 generations as the souls of the Jewish people who passed from one seven-thousand-year cycle to another by means of reincarnation, because they had not yet managed to complete their extrication from the powers of evil.

On the basis of earlier kabbalistic ideas that regard metempsychosis as an individual punishment and explain the connection between reincarnation and levirate marriage, as well as the link between reincarnation and the fulfillment of the "garment of righteousness" of 248 commandments, the author of *Galya Raza* proposed a new interpretation of the doctrine of the seven-thousand-year cycle and the meaning of the 974 generations. In doing so he sought to invest metempsychosis with historical-national meaning, and, as we have seen, to interpret exile as a process of purification.

This original historiosophical point of view interpreted the struggle waged between the Jewish people and their oppressors as the rescue of the souls of the 974 generations from the dominion of the *Sitra Ahra*. It infused the experience of exile with new meaning by elevating all the trials and tribulations of exile from the status of arbitrary historical circumstances to a process invested with both religious and eschatological meaning. Exile was transformed into a stage in the struggle between the *Sitra Ahra* and the *Sitra de-Kedushah*.

Galya Raza was not content, however, with a historiosophical explanation of the biblical narrative as the story of the purification and reincarnation of the Jewish people in the past; he also pondered the realm of metahistory. He stated emphatically that "the Holy One, blessed be He, acted in this manner during every single seven-thousand-year cycle to benefit the Jews," meaning that the Jewish people experience reincarnation from one seven-thousand-year cycle to another. Metempsychosis is God's "weapon" to rescue the people from the hands of the *Sitra Ahra* and to bring them into the world to come upon the completion of their purification. Thus, the transmigration of souls is a transition from exile to eternity.

The obverse of the enigma of exile concerns the end of days and its timing within the context of metempsychosis, a subject with which *Galya Raza* dealt extensively. In order to clarify this issue, he delved deeply into the metaphysical meaning of the measurements, proportions, and numbers associated with the *mikveh*, or ritual bath. He concluded that all the earthly, physical quantities actually refer to *celestial* dimensions. Thus, for example, the 960 logs or measures of water needed for

a ritual bath become the 960 limbs of *Shiur Koma*, the measurements of the Divine Structure according to ancient esoteric traditions. (The Hebrew word *mikveh* is composed of the same letters as *Koma*.) The extent of the process of reincarnation is deduced from the measurements of the ritual bath because metempsychosis is spiritual purification in the ritual bath of history, as a counterpart of physical purification in an earthly ritual bath.

From the measurements of the ritual bath the author of *Galya Raza* also derives a picture of the end of days based on the transition from history to metahistory. At the end of the process of metempsychosis, in the year 5760, after the fulfillment of six cycles of 960 years, 240 years before the end of the present six-thousand-year cycle, the order of creation will change. The world will be covered with water, and only the Land of Israel will remain, which will float upon the water and pass the seventh thousand years through the River Fire known as *Nahar Dinur*. The righteous individuals who have completed their "garment" of good deeds will rise to the rank of "Men" and enter the Garden of Eden, while those who have not managed to complete their celestial garments will continue to undergo the process of reincarnation and purification.

The end of the process of metempsychosis and the transformation of the purified into the people of Israel on high, who are called the hosts of the *Shekhina*, angels, or "Men," represent the end of history and the completion of the victory of holiness over the *Sitra Abra*. This victory is expressed in the rescue of the Jewish people from the dominion of the *qelipa* and its transition from exile to eternity, or from the seven-thousand-year cycle of *Din* (Judgment) to that of *Hesed* (Mercy).

NOTES

1. See G. Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," in *Pirkei Yesod Be-Havanat Ha-Kabbala U-Semaleha* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1976), pp. 337-349 (henceforth: Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul"); see also idem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1941), pp. 278-284.
2. Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," p. 339; idem, "Shtar Ha-Hitkashrut Shel Talmidei Ha-Ari," *Zion* 5 (Hebrew, 1940), pp. 134-140.
3. On *Sefer Galya Raza* and its author, see G. Scholem, "Ha-Mekubal R. Avraham Ben Eliezer Ha-Levi," *Kiryat Sefer* II (Hebrew, 1935), pp. 119-124; idem, *Shabbetai Zvi* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1957), pp. 47-49; idem, *Kabbala* (Jerusalem, 1975), pp. 73-74; idem, "Divrei Mavo Le-Maamar

Mishra Kitrin le-R. Avraham Ben Eliezer Ha-Levi" (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1978, re-edited by M. Beit-Arieh), p. 19; I. Tishby, "Ha-Pulmus Al Sefer Ha-Zohar Ba-Meah Ha-Shesh-Esreh Be-Italia," *Perakim*, I, Yearbook of the Schocken Institute (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1957-58), pp. 156-157; Rachel Elior, *Galya Raza*, critical edition, Research Projects of the Institute of Jewish Studies of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Publications Series I (Jerusalem, 1981). Henceforth Elior, *Galya Raza*.

4. See M. Steinschneider, "Maamar Al R. Avraham Ha-Levi," *Ozar Nehmad*, II (Hebrew, 1857), pp. 153-156; G. Scholem, *Maamar Mishra Kitrin*, p. 19; the introduction by R. Hayim Turar of Maahalov to *Galya Raza* (Mahalov, 1812).
5. Ten manuscripts of *Galya Raza* are known to us. The most complete of these is the Oxford MS, Bodleian, Oppenheim 104 (Neubauer Catalogue 1820), henceforth MS I. It contains 344 folios, and fols. 90-174 have no parallel in any other of the manuscripts. The other manuscripts are: Oxford, Bodleian, Oppenheim 526 (Neubauer Catalogue 1753, 6) (henceforth MS II); Oppenheim 551 (Neubauer Catalogue 1742, 2); Oxford Bodleian, Oppenheim 416 (Neubauer Catalogue 1819, 1); Oxford, Bodleian, Mich. 165 (Neubauer Catalogue 1792, 2); Jerusalem 8^o2135; Amsterdam—Rosenthaliana Hs. Ros 5 (186, 2) (AI 1808), Fuks-Mansfeld Catalogue, par. 215; London Jews College 199, 4 (Neubauer Catalogue, Jews College, p. 34); Uppsala Heb. 28 (Zitterstein Catalogue 28); Zurich, National Library 180 (Heidrich Catalogue 92). The work called *Galya Raza* in the Paris manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, Heb. 869/1 (Zuttenberg Catalogue 869) is not the *Galya Raza* under discussion here. That work is Lurianic in character, and Scholem's remarks in *Kiryat Sefer*, II (1925-1926), p. 121, n. 1, must be corrected, for they are based on an error made by Zuttenberg.

There are significant differences in the comprehensiveness of the various manuscripts and in their editing because the book was written and circulated in fascicles, as the author states. See MS I, fols. 142a, 152a. Compilers copied the fascicles in varying order, leading to the differences among the manuscripts. For a detailed discussion of the manuscripts of *Galya Raza*, see Elior, *Galya Raza*, Introduction, pp. 17-20.

6. In MS I the dates of the writing of the book are mentioned often. See, for example, fols. 113a, 118b, 140b, 146r, 149b, 166b.
7. Elior, *Galya Raza*, Introduction, pp. vii-xiv.
8. MS II, fol. 7b.
9. Zohar, I, fols. 183a-184a.
10. The numerical value of the Hebrew letters in "Galya Raza" comes to 252, and that of "Gabriel" comes to 246. When one adds to this sum the number of Hebrew letters in Gabriel's name, six, one reaches 252. The correct name of the book is *Galya Raza*, which fits that number. All of the other variants, such as *Galei Razaya* are the errors of copyists and printers.
11. Regarding dreams, visions, and Gabriel, cf. Zohar I, fols. 183a-184a. See I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar*, II (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1961), p. 128.

12. MS II, fol. 64b. Cf. the printed version, Mahalov, 1812, fol. 21a; MS I, fol. 52a.
13. For examples of his dreams see MS I, fol. 150a-b; MS II, fol. 110a.
14. MS II, fol. 102b.
15. MS I, fol. 141b; cf. MS II, fol. 104b.
16. MS I, fol. 146b; cf. *ibid.*, fol. 44a.
17. See Rachel Elior, "Ha-Vikuah al Maamad Ha-Kabbala Ba-Meah Ha-16," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* I (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1981), pp. 177-190.
18. MS I, fols. 111a-112a.
19. *Ibid.*, fol. 16a; regarding the messianic tone, cf. MS II, fol. 104b.
20. See the introduction of *Minhat Yehuda* by Judah Hayat, *Maarekhet Ha-Elohut*, Ferrara, 1558 (the introduction is not paginated), and the Mantua edition of 1558, 2b. There are significant differences between the two editions of the introduction of *Minhat Yehuda*. The Ferrara edition is the complete one, while the hand of a censor, either Jewish or Christian, is evident in the Mantua edition. See I. Tishby, "Ha-Pulmus Al Sefer Ha-Zohar" (above, n. 3), p. 156. Quotations from *Maarekhet Ha-Elohut* will be presented according to the Mantua edition of 1558, unless the Ferrara edition is explicitly mentioned.
21. Cf. the introduction of R. Abraham Azulay to *Or Ha-Hama*, Jerusalem, 1876: "And from the year 5300 [= 1540] of the creation it is the most select commandment, that both elderly and young should deal with it publicly, and by virtue [of the study of Kabbalah] the messianic king shall come, and by no other virtue."
22. See Tishby, "Ha-Pulmus al Sefer Ha-Zohar" (above, n. 3), pp. 154-158.
23. "And now that we have had the privilege of seeing the books of the great *Buzina De-Nehora*, Rabbi Shimon, may he rest in peace, its secrets have been revealed, for so said Elijah of blessed memory to Rabbi Shimon, may he rest in peace, in the end of days words and elevated secrets will be revealed to you . . . and thus I made my face as bold as flint and wrote what my limited intelligence has grasped, and I became a gossip and revealer of secrets," MS I, fol. 104b.
24. The work is replete with complex and detailed calculations of the end of days. The year 1560 was to be the year of redemption, but in addition the author of *Galya Raza* stipulated many dates dealing with the revival of the dead, the advent of the messiah, the war of Gog and Magog, and various processes connected with redemption. See MS I, fols. 123a, 140b, 144b, 145a, 146a, 113a, 114a-b, 117a, 151a-b, 155b, 118b, 165b-166a, 171b, et passim.
25. Hagiga 13a-14b.
26. See *Breshit Raba*, Theodor-Albeck, eds. (Jerusalem, 1965), sec. 28, p. 263; *Seder Eliahu Rabba*, M. Ish-Shalom, ed. (Vienna, 1904), p. 9, and see the editor's comments, pp. 61, 130; *Avot De-Rabi Nathan*, Sh. Z. Shachter, ed. (New York, 1945), chap. 31, fol. 46a.

27. *Breshit Raba*, sec. 9, p. 68, and see Albeck's comments there.
28. See G. Scholem, "Kabbalat R. Yaakov Ve-R. Yitzhak Bnei R. Yaakov Ha-Cohen," *Maddaei Ha-Yahadut*, II (Hebrew, 1927), pp. 183-195, 249-250.
29. Zohar I, 154b; 177a; 223b; II, 34a, 176b, 242b; III, 61a-b, 128a, 135a, et passim. On the connection found in the Zohar between the doctrine of *qelipot* and that of the worlds that were destroyed, see Scholem, *Kabbalat R. Yaakov* (above, n. 28), p. 195; I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar*, I (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1957), pp. 138, 150, 296. Generally speaking, the terms *qelipa* or *qelipot*, *Sitra Abra*, and *Sitra De-Smola* (the Sinister Side) are synonymous expressions for the forces of evil.
30. See *Sefer Ha-Bahir*, R. Margaliot, ed. (Jerusalem, 1978), paragraphs 57, 58, 195, which connect the doctrine of the soul and the matter of metempsychosis with the interpretation of the verse, "The promise He gave for a thousand generations," to the 974 generations, on the one hand, and to the idea of construction and destruction, on the other. See the interpretation of *Or Ha-Ganuz* ("The Hidden Light") to *Sefer Ha-Bahir* in paragraph 58, and see Scholem, *Pirkei Yesod*, pp. 311-312.
31. See *Maarekhet Ha-Elohut*, Mantua, 1558, fol. 89a-b: "And it is possible that when the thought of nobility, grace, and fear was raised, that is the worlds which He built and destroyed, that the generations which were to be and be created in them also rose up with them . . . and perhaps it was about these generations that they taught that they were withered in untimely fashion, these are the 974 generations." See also the exegesis of R. Yehuda Hayat, as well as *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, Lemberg, 1892, fol. 41a, in the words of the commentator and the comprehensive comments of R. Moses Ben Jacob of Kiev, *Shushan Sodot*, Koretz, 1784, fol. 57.
32. MS II, fol. 102b, and cf. *Minhat Yehuda*, *Maarekhet Ha-Elohut*, fol. 115b.
33. MS II, fols. 12b-13a, 16a-17a.
34. Zohar II, fol. 108b. Cf. I, 19b-20a; III, 227a-b, and see I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar*, I, pp. 292-293.
35. MS II, fol. 34b. The additions follow MS I, fol. 10b.
36. "Know that the Holy One, blessed be He, originally included the *Sitra Abra* with the *Sitra De-Tahara* as when He made the light with darkness and afterward He separated them into two domains," MS I, fol. 126b.
37. MS II, fol. 17b.
38. *Ibid.*, fol. 17b; and cf. *ibid.*, fol. 27a: "All the pollution that comes into the world is from the side of the primeval serpent and from its powers, and the beginning of its expansion was with Eve, for she is the mother of all life, and from her it spread to Adam and to Cain, and to all the generations until today, and the dominion of the serpent is only upon the physical garment, which is the shell (*qelipa*) of the spiritual, since it itself is the *qelipa* which was created from darkness which was the *qelipa* of the light, and because of that it was made to rule over the external *qelipot* . . . and from then on Adam's sin caused its pollution to expand upon the sons of Adam and to rule over them."

39. MS II, fol. 31a. On the matter of the scapegoat and the *Sitra Abra*, see *Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer*, chap. 46; Zohar I, 174b; III, 102a. Regarding the latter water and grace after meals, see Zohar II, 154b.
40. MS II, fol. 103a.
41. *Ibid.*, fol. 102b.
42. For a detailed examination of the conception of evil in the Zohar, see I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar*, I, pp. 287–307.
43. Perhaps the distinction among the three domains—good, evil, and the celestial tribunal that decides between them—was influenced indirectly by *Sefer Yetzira*, which proposed an equal hierarchical status for good and evil beneath the divinity, which decides between them. See *Sefer Yetzira*, I, Mishnah 6: “Depth of good, depth of evil . . . One Lord, God the Faithful King, rules over them all.” See also *ibid.* regarding the determination between opposing elements.
44. MS II, fol. 30b.
45. MS II, fol. 31b. The rule of the serpent over man is dual—it has hold over man’s body, which was created from dust, “which is the bread of the serpent,” and the sin of the first man caused the serpent to rule over him, because after the sin he wore “tunics of leather, which were from the serpent, which is the *qelipa*.” See MS II, fol. 27a.
46. MS II, fol. 35b.
47. *Ibid.*, fols. 35b–37b.
48. *Ibid.*, fol. 29b. On the attitude of the Zohar, see Y. Liebes, “Sefer Tzadik Yesod Olam—Mitos Shabbetai,” *Daat* 1 (Hebrew, 1978), p. 87, n. 88.
49. MS II, fol. 36a.
50. *Galya Raza*, Mahalov, 1812, fol. 12b; cf. MS II, fols. 35b–36a.
51. See Todros Abulafia, *Shaar Ha-Razim*, MS Munich 209, fol. 89a; *Otzar Ha-Kavod*, Warsaw, 1879, fol. 19b.; MS Munich 103 of *Otzar Ha-Kavod*, fol. 90b—on the abolition of sacrifices in the future: “The deficiency above is the small quantity of emanation which comes from the source of the upper justice, and atonement must be in order to mollify the Emanator and to fill the deficiency.” For a full expression of the matter, see G. Scholem, “Le-Heker Kabbalat R. Yitzhak Ben Yaakov Ha-Cohen,” *Tarbiz* II (1931), p. 278, n. 3; Zohar I, 113b–114a; II, 237a; and also I, 64b, 65a. And see I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar* I, pp. 290–292. Also see R. Joseph from Shushan, *Taamei Ha-Mitzvot*, MS Cambridge Dd 4.2/6, Mitzvah 21 of the negative commandments: “Know that the kid alludes to the sects of impurity when the primeval serpent came to cast pollution upon the celestial Eve, and several sects of angels of destruction were created, the chief of which is called ‘Kid,’ and against him the Jews sent one scapegoat to Azazel on Yom Kippur . . . and therefore the Torah said regarding the blessing of Jacob . . . that his mother said to him, take me two goat kids from there . . . to bribe the celestial kid and the terrestrial kid, as the reason for the sacrifices, which is bribery to the sects of pollution.” Cf. MS Paris, 850, 3, p. 190, the twenty-second of the negative commandments: MS Jerusalem 8°597, fol.

- 153a: positive commandment no. 44: “And the sheep is bribery to Samael and his hosts, so that he will not prosecute from the Holy One, blessed be He, to receive our offering.” *Ibid.*, commandment 47 (to make an additional sacrifice on the New Year): “And therefore we add a sacrifice in the commandment of our Father in heaven, as we were ordered, and to mollify powers in the world so that they do not come to intervene between Israel and their Father in heaven when the world is being judged, we add a sacrifice to mollify the powers in the world . . . and literally the Yom Kippur service is to mollify Samael and his hosts and powers in the world.” See below in this source and cf. also *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, Lemberg 1892, fol. 49a; and *Shushan Sodot*, Koretz, 1784, fol. 19b: “The secret of the prohibition against waiting three hours”; fols. 18b, 47a: “The spilling of blood during circumcision appeases them and silences their tumult . . . and when they see that they have a part in the commandment, the jaw of every evil clenches,” and see elsewhere in that work.
52. The idea that several commandments are to be seen as the struggle against demonic powers is found in the writings of Nachmanides. He proposes this explanation for the commandment of the scapegoat (Lev. 16:8), the red heifer (Num. 19:2), the broken-necked heifer (Deut. 21), and the purification of a leper (Lev. 16:53). See, for example, his commentary on the Torah, H. D. Shavel, ed. (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 84, 88–91, 95–96, 267, 439–440. Cf. the remarks of Todros Abulafia, MS Munich 209, fol. 89a, who terms the commandments of the red heifer, the scapegoat, the leper’s bird, and the broken-necked heifer “commandments whose worship is external.” See also *Otzar Ha-Kavod*, Warsaw, 1879, fol. 19b. See also Zohar I, 113b–114a, 190a–b; II, 184b–185a, 237a.
53. “For even though this side is only that of pollution, it glows around it, and a person does not have to expel it. What is the reason? Because it glows around it. It has the side of holiness of faith, and one does not need to treat it as an infamy. And therefore it must be given a part in the side of the holiness of faith.” Zohar II, 81b, quoted from the translation in I. Tishby, *Mishnat Ha-Zohar*, I, p. 301. Cf. Zohar II, 237b.
54. MS II, fol. 30b.
55. On the presence of the names of impure animals on the Merkabah, see question 16 of R. Judah Hayat and the answer of R. Joseph Alkashtil in G. Scholem, “Le-Yediat Ha-Kabbalah Bi-Sefarad Erev Ha-Gerush,” *Tarbiz* 24 (1956), pp. 177, 203–204.
56. Regarding the connection between the offering of sacrifices and bribery and reconciliation, whether of the *Sitra Abra* or of *Midat Ha-Din*, see Nachmanides’ commentary on the Torah, Lev. 16:8, 17:7; Nachmanides, *Torat Ha-Temima* in *Kitvei Ramban*, H. D. Shavel, ed. (Jerusalem, 1963), pp. 165–166; *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, fol. 65a, of the book, fol. 68b of the commentator’s remarks; Todros Abulafia, *Otzar Ha-Kavod*, Warsaw, 1879, Masekhet Shabbat, 19b; R. Joseph from Shushan, *Taamei Ha-Mitzvot*, MS Jerusalem 8°597, fol. 153a: Negative Commandments, no. 22 (Thou shalt

- not cook a kid in its mother's milk); Joseph Gikatilia, *Shaarei Ora*, Jerusalem, 1960, fol. 74b-75a; and see the commentary there by Matitya Delacarte on "the stuffing of the mouth of the prosecutors." See also R. Z. J. Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo* (Philadelphia, 1965), p. 254.
57. MS II, fol. 35b-36a, and cf. *Shushan Sodot*, fol. 19b.
58. MS I, fol. 128a.
59. MS II, fol. 31a. And compare the words of Joseph Karo, *Maggid Meisharim*, Vilna, 1879, fol. 34a: "The entire endeavor is to drive away the polluted side from the holy side, and this is the secret of all the commandments."
60. See, for example, MS II, fol. 92a-b; *ibid.*, fols. 17b-18a.
61. See G. Scholem, "Le-Heker Kabbalat R. Yitzhak Ben Yaakov Ha-Cohen," *Tarbiz* 2 (1931), p. 280.
62. *Ibid.*, fol. 67b.
63. MS II, fol. 92a. On this question, see G. Scholem, *Shabbetai Zvi* (Tel-Aviv, 1957), pp. 48-49.
64. MS II, fol. 144a.
65. On the seven daughters of Satan and their reincarnations, see also MS II, fols. 68a-b, 70a, 96b-97b, 144b. MS I, fols. 89a, 105b-106a, 111a-b.
66. MS II, fol. 128b.
67. *Ibid.*, fol. 68b.
68. *Ibid.*, fol. 70a, and cf. Liebes (above, n. 48), p. 76, n. 21.
69. MS II, fol. 68b.
70. On the doctrine of the sparks of the soul, see Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," p. 325.
71. MS II, fol. 68b; MS I, fol. 125b.
72. MS II, fol. 42b.
73. MS II, fol. 129b.
74. *Ibid.*, fol. 6a; and cf. MS I, 133b: "The lovers of God, for of them it is said, 'And he does righteously to the thousands of those who love Him,' and those who observe His commandments are reincarnated until the thousandth generation . . . and in each and every reincarnation, when they come, they increase Torah and good deeds," and cf. Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," p. 320. See *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, fol. 16a.
75. MS I, fol. 122b. Reincarnation just three times, based on the verse in Job 33:29-30, is viewed by most Kabbalists as a general reincarnation and not that of the wicked. See Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," p. 321. The author of *Galya Raza* argued, by contrast, that the number of possible reincarnations for mediocre people is not limited, because it was God's intention to benefit His creatures and bring them to the world to come, whereas the triple reincarnation, which offers no possibility of purification and entry into the Garden of Eden, is the lot of the wicked.
76. See, on the garment of the 613 commandments, G. Scholem, "Levush Ha-Neshamot Ve-Haluka De-Rabanan," *Tarbiz* 24 (1955), pp. 290-306.
77. MS I, fol. 122b, and cf. *ibid.*, 133b.
78. On the question of the application of reincarnation and its various durations, see Scholem, "Ha-Gilgul," pp. 320-321.

79. On reincarnation in animals, see R. Joseph from Shushan, *Taamei Ha-Mitzvot*, MS Cambridge, Dd. 4.2/6, Positive Commandment 40, fol. 307a; Commandment 51 (erroneously written 61), fol. 319b. Negative Commandment, Jerusalem MS 8°597, Commandment 16 (Not to muzzle an ox while it is threshing), fol. 145b; Commandment 17, fol. 146b; Commandment 19 (Not to eat with blood), fol. 149b; Commandment 37, fol. 173a, et passim. See also, *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, fol. 39a-b, in the work and the commentary; fol. 41a-b, in the commentary; fols. 44a, 66b; R. Menachem Rekanati, *Perush Ha-Torah Al Derekh Ha-Emet*, Venice 1523, Parshat Noah, s.v. "And God saw the pleasant odor"; *ibid.*, Parshat Shemini, s.v. "And some of the recent Kabbalists believe in the reincarnation of animals"; *Sefer Ha-Peliyah*, Koretz, 1784, fol. 21, col. 4, and in the Pshemishl edition of 1884, fol. 31b. On the reservations of the Kabbalists regarding this doctrine, see R. Judah Hayat, *Maarekhet Ha-Elohut*, Ferrara, 1558, fol. 204b.
80. See A. Altmann, "Le-Sheelat Baaluto Shel Sefer Taamei Ha-Mitzvot Ha-Meyuhas le-R. Yitzhak ibn Farhi," *Kiryat Sefer* 40 (1965), pp. 256-276, 405-412.
81. See *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, fols. 56b-57a.
82. Cf. *Sefer Ha-Temunah*, *ibid.*, and the words of the commentator: "And the exile was lengthened so that the souls would be purified and come purified before the Lord. . . . And the reincarnation of souls is to purify and cleanse them of all filth which comes from the side of the harsh measure from which comes some filth, and externality, and distance, which must be purified, and therefore the soul needs a purification that will purify it in pure water which comes from the side of eternity or in a ritual bath or in the river of fire. . . . And it must be immersed after its exile and reincarnation, because the soul needs great purity. And thus exile and immersions come to the souls, so that both body and soul will be purified, since the punishment and reincarnation are a purification for them."
83. MS II, fols. 60b-61b.
84. MS I, fol. 133a.
85. On *Torat Ha-Shemitot*, the seven-thousand-year cycles, see G. Scholem, *Reshit Ha-Kabbalah* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1948), chap. 7; G. Scholem, *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala* (Berlin, 1962), pp. 407-419.