SHAMANIC
TRANCE *in* MODERN
KABBALAH

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JONATHAN GARB

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For Dan,
for all the trances

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This book was originally conceived of as a monograph on the manuscripts of the sixteenth-century kabbalist R. Yosef Ibn Sayyah of Jerusalem, whose mystical practice I discussed in several articles in the 1990s. A portion of chapter 3 is a reworking of my "Trance Techniques in the Kabbalah of Jerusalem," *Pe'amim* 70 (1997): 47–67 [Hebrew], published by Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Jerusalem (also, a minor part of chapter 1 reworks part of my "The Modernization of Kabbalah: A Case Study," *Modern Judaism: A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience* 30/1 (2010): 1–22, published by Oxford University Press). Having received two successive grants from the Authority for Research and Development at the Hebrew University, I then realized that this study had expanded in a very natural manner into a wider study of shamanic trance, which I subsequently decided to focus on modern developments. Bridging my early work on sixteenth-century Kabbalah and my recent work on later developments, this work offers the fruits of over fifteen years of reflection on the shamanic dimensions of the modern Jewish world. The conjunction of intensive exploration of manuscripts and printed works, with theoretical analysis drawn from fields such as comparative religion, anthropology, and hypnotherapy, epitomizes my scholarly path. I hope to show that such combinations are vital for the continuing flourishing of Jewish studies in the contemporary world.

Large portions of the book were written and crafted during my enjoyable year at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, in 2008–2009. Philip Wexler, who shared with me the leadership of the research group on the sociology of contemporary Jewish mysticism in comparative perspective, generously offered daily companionship, support, and stimulation. Yoram Bilu, Moshe Idel, David Loy, William Parsons, and Elliot Wolfson read various sections of the manuscript during their stay at the institute. Our friendly and

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Last but far from least, my deepest love to my wife Ronna and children, Evyatar David and Ariel, for ever enriching my everyday experience of all forms of consciousness.

Theory of Shamanism, Trance, and Modern Kabbalah

This introductory chapter presents the book's main categories as reflected in the title. In its widest context, the book is part of a strong direction in religious studies that accords a central place to the shamanic mode of experience and practice. The most prominent scholar within this stream was of course Mircea Eliade. However, his singular and often personal approach, which was in turn part of a wider comparative orientation to the history and nature of religion, is by no means the only possible one to take. My own approach is far closer to that of Lawrence Sullivan, who chose to address the shamanic within a specific cultural context—the study of South American religion—and to enlist a deeper understanding of the figure of the shaman in order to further our appreciation of the diverse modalities of this chosen context. As he put it, through orienting itself toward South American realities, his book enabled reappraising "the meaning of religious experience and of symbolic life in general" (though for the purposes of this book I would substitute consciousness for symbolic meaning). Likewise, Pieter Craffert has written that the shamanic pattern is "reshaped or remade in each and every specific cultural setting."[1]

Throughout, the book is informed by complementary approaches extant in the social sciences, such as psychology and anthropology. Indeed, I hope that it will contribute to the burgeoning field of psychology of religion. The varied approaches that are currently developing include cognitive theories and cultural-constructivist approaches, as well as methods allied with neuroscience. However, psychoanalytic modes of interpretation still hold a place of pride. Although at times I shall utilize such tools, such as those derived from Winnicottian and post-Jungian work, later in this chapter I contend that hypnosis, rather than psychoanalysis, is the best available lens for the analysis of mystical texts.

Besides these general pursuits, the book seeks to further the phenomenological investigation of Jewish mysticism in the form initiated primarily by Moshe Idel. As Daniel Abrams has pointed out, Idel's use of the term "phenomenology" is rather loose, and not strongly connected to the classical philosophical tradition of phenomenological investigation.[2] For our purposes, I shall define Idel's phenomenological method as choosing a general religious form or type, such as prophecy or ecstasy, assembling related Kabbalistic texts on techniques and experiences and then formulating the resultant assortment of practices and outcomes within wider discursive frameworks, or models. My method is also similar to Idel's in that the historical narrative is subordinated to the thematic investigation. However, my approach at times differs from that of Idel and especially from some of the more specific applications extant among some of his students. Having provided this initial context, I now wish to introduce the three categories of this book and thereby show how it continues existing trajectories in Kabbalah scholarship and how it seeks to renew them.

Shamanism: Theoretical Issues

The resurgence of mysticism and magic in the last decades of the twentieth century was accompanied by an extensive popularization of the term "shamanism," made famous by writers such as Eliade and Joseph Campbell in the earlier part of the century. The transformation of the shaman as warrior or healer into a cultural hero was evinced in numerous works of fiction, such as Philip Pullman's best-selling *His Dark Materials*. As we shall see in chapter 2, New Age discourse on shamanism has at times attempted to locate shamanic elements within the Jewish tradition.[3] It is interesting that a Buddhist teacher who played an important role in the creation of the new mystical culture in the West, Chögyam Trungpa, wrote that "Christianity came out of Judaism and its shamanistic traditions, and Buddhism came out of Hinduism and its shamanistic traditions."[4]

This popular process has been reflected not only in religious studies but also in Kabbalah scholarship. Comments on the place of "shamanism" in the Jewish world have ranged from inflation of the term so as to include almost any mystical phenomenon to its restriction to specific contexts, such as Hasidism. However, there has been no sustained attempt to relate this term to the extensive discussions found in religious studies or anthropology, or to examine it in relationship to other central terms in the study of mysticism, starting with the term "mysticism" itself. Nonetheless, Haviva Pedaya has made some extremely valuable comments, in which she uses

the term as part of a binary typology of mystical experience, to be addressed at various points in this book. Pedaya assigns phenomena that are often regarded as shamanic, such as shaking and mystical madness to what she terms the extroverted pole, while other trance-related phenomena, such as fainting and mystical death, are assigned to the introverted pole. Pedaya follows some manifestations of this modality in certain points in the history of Jewish mysticism, especially Heikhalot literature and Hasidism. As we shall see, I differ from her in preferring integrative models to binary typologies.[5]

In order to further the discussion, I have made two main moves: one is to offer a broad, yet focused, definition of shamanism, which integrates recent theoretical discussions. I present this definition fully in chapter 2 and then continue to refine it throughout the book. At this point it is necessary only to emphasize that my definition combines the mystical and the social elements of the activity of the shaman. On the first level, the shaman transcends consensual perception through movement in internal space—a process that is often manifested in trance. On a social level, this transcendence challenges societal structures only in order to revitalize them. My second move is to restrict my investigation to a broad yet defined historical and geographical context—that of European modern Kabbalah and especially Hasidism.[6] This historical framing is helpful in avoiding the excessive loosening of my investigation as well as the accompanying danger of essentialism.

The question of shamanism is indeed tagged by the very quandary that divides scholars of mysticism: are we speaking of a universal category or rather of a scholarly construction that brings together cultural and social contexts, which are more properly separated. One must not opt sharply for either pole.[7] To take the first stance would rob shamanic phenomena in modern Kabbalah from any cultural and historical specificity, so that describing them as shamanic would not be a move essentially different from those made in the unscholarly New Age discourse. However, avoiding the use of the term, as in the case of mysticism, would effect an unnecessary atomization of contexts while depriving us of a useful bridge to wider scholarly domains. In other words, abstaining from general scholarly categories exacerbates the existing gap between much of Kabbalah scholarship and the broader intellectual arena, of which I shall have more to say soon.

I believe that this dilemma is largely resolved by the moves demonstrated here. I have given shamanism a flexible, yet clearly formulated definition as movement beyond habitual frames of reference, as a transformative process, culminating in return to these frames in pursuit of revitalization and empowerment. I have also restricted the discussion to phenomena that share not only a general cultural context—that of Judaism or Kabbalah (terms no

less general than mysticism or shamanism)—but also that of European modernity. By doing so, I have striven to maintain a useful balance of generality and specificity. This is part of a wider move from discussing mysticism in generic terms towards examining specific issues within specific cultural and historical contexts. In this sense, shamanism can be seen as a branch of the wider family of mysticism, rather than as opposed in any way to this more prevalent term. This Wittgensteinian idea of family resemblance has been used, not without opposition, in the study of religion in general, as well as of mysticism, shamanism, and magic.[8]

From this vantage point, I am not in any way claiming that Kabbalistic or Hasidic phenomena are very similar to Tibetan or Amazonian shamanic experiences. Rather, the use of the term "shamanic," in the sense elected here, is primarily designed to better appreciate the connections between sets of phenomena inside the modern Jewish world, such as rites of descent to the underworld and somatic transformations. My claim is that the term "Jewish mysticism," used famously by Gershom Scholem but adopted by his staunchest critics, served a similar function. While not joining those who eschew this term, I also do not accord it any dominant position. At times, following the direction indicated by the texts themselves, there is greater interpretative advantage in describing phenomena as mystical, or magical, or mystico-magical and at other times it is best to use an alternative category, such as shamanism or incarnation.[9]

This terminological flexibility creates a certain hermeneutical circle. If employing a term enables more penetrating readings of a cluster of texts, the insights drawn from this reading can then be used to further refine and specify the use of the original term.[10] In this way, the main thrust of scholarship remains embedded in the deeper understanding of texts and is not diverted to questions of nomenclature. However, delving into texts must remain open to wide cultural and intellectual horizons. Conjointly using etic terms, either drawn from Christian religious language (mysticism, *imitatio dei*, incarnation) or derived from archaic cultures, overcomes the artificial wall that scholars such as Eliade have erected between archaic and scriptural religion, while safeguarding from parochial attitudes within Jewish studies.[11]

Shamanism, Mysticism, and Israeli Kabbalah Scholarship

I would like to expand on the scholarly and cultural implications of the last move and place them within the context of the present state of Kabbalah scholarship in Israel. In his programmatic *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, Idel noted that the choice of the founding father of modern Kabbalah scholar-

ship, Gershom Scholem, to largely avoid comparative study and instead to develop the philological-historical mode, was entirely understandable in the initial phases of the development of the field. However, as Idel sharply noted, in the subsequent generation, this avoidance was solidified into an ideology of textology, which in turn led to repetition of Scholem's positions. In order to break out from this impasse, Idel proposed his alternative phenomenological method for the study of Jewish mysticism, which I am largely following here. This method draws on insights from comparative religious studies, while maintaining vigilance as to the need for textual foundation of any claims based on such cross-fertilization. He suggested that this realignment with the broader structure of religious studies, reinforced by tools taken from other branches of humanistic studies, especially psychology, would offset the conceptual aridity characterizing Kabbalah scholarship at that time.[12]

Idel himself took major steps towards realizing this program, and he was rapidly joined by central scholars such as Elliot Wolfson, Charles Mopsik, and later Pedaya. As a result, more than twenty years later, Kabbalah scholarship is in a very different place than that prevailing when Idel made his clarion call. However, recalling these achievements should by no means give the impression that the conceptual aridity and ideology of textology have evaporated. Idel refrained from fully diagnosing one of the deep structures underlying Scholem's strategies—the Zionist ideology that dominated and to a large extent still dominates Jewish studies in Israel.[13] It is this ideology that has led to the containment of the study of Jewish mysticism in Israel within Jewish studies—a practice that goes far beyond custom or administrative organization.

Thus, for example, Yehuda Liebes, a very central figure in Israeli Kabbalah scholarship, drew numerous comparisons between Kabbalah and Hellenistic, Christian, and Islamic texts in face of some local opposition. However, he eschewed comparison to religions that did not have clear historical contact with the Jewish world. Furthermore, he almost entirely abstained from integrating contemporary theory, including that of myth, perhaps the central theme in his writing. Liebes' conscious choice to almost entirely abstain from publication in languages other than Hebrew is a paradoxical mirror to his virtuosic mastery of several classical (as well as modern) languages, which has a profound presence in his research.[14] This containment has much value, as it led scholars, including this author (as shown in chapter 6), to insist on the rather organic connection, in both discourse and practice, between Kabbalah and other Jewish worlds, such as Halakha, Midrash, Piyyut (liturgical poetry), and Minhag (custom). However,

it could have had an arresting effect in terms of comparative and theoretical study of Kabbalah in Israeli universities.

Kabbalah scholarship in Israel enjoys many advantages, such as several strong libraries of texts and manuscripts, as well as a reservoir of students who not only read Kabbalistic texts in their native language but often have an advanced training in institutions specializing in the study of Jewish texts (in recent years including Kabbalah and Hasidism). However, it is my opinion that it is also weakened by the effect of the intense identity politics of an increasingly fragmented society, which has reinforced particularistic tendencies among those same students. The strongly local color of Kabbalah studies in Israel has led to a growing and distressing distance from the centers in North America and Europe, where Kabbalah studies is often situated within broader frameworks, such as religious studies. I am especially saddened by the fact that the seminal theoretical and comparative English-language contributions of Elliot Wolfson have at times been ignored or downplayed by certain scholars and advanced students in Israel.[15]

Here, as elsewhere, I strive to distance myself from this unfortunate practice.[16] My discussion of ethics and the nomian shall engage the recent work of Wolfson on these issues. My very choice to add the term "shamanism" to the terminological repertoire of Kabbalah scholarship, as well as my suggestion that Pauline experience can be seen as one of the early stages of Jewish shamanism, join the major move initiated by Wolfson in his extensive use of the term "incarnation." I regard these moves as cultural interventions, which undermine the nationalistic approaches currently gaining ground in some Jewish studies circles in Israel. I thus also share with Wolfson the underlying motivation of preserving the vitality of the study of Jewish texts through learned engagement with issues of current import, as in his critique of misogynic and ethnocentric views in the Kabbalistic literature itself. The latter increasingly carry over into scholarly positions, as the gap between contemporary Kabbalistic discourse and scholarship constantly narrows.[17]

The main terms mentioned hitherto—shamanism and mysticism—are indeed but two of an entire set of terms that one should constantly combine and recombine in order to fluidly read Kabbalistic texts. J. B. Hollenback's term "empowerment," which I have often used in the past, is no less useful. In other contexts, one might organize numerous texts using the category of esotericism, as Wolfson and others have done; at yet other times the term myth, privileged by Liebes and others, is more pertinent. Just as here I have attempted to dissolve rigid boundaries between Kabbalah and magical material, similar moves would reassemble clusters of texts together with

Halakhic, ethical, or philosophical sources.[18] While scholarly writing often evokes the image of the grid, or even that of boxes, I hope that this book shall arouse associations of webs or chains of connection between texts.

I would like to bring one example of such a textual chain. Idel has organized a wide array of texts from different periods under the rubric of ascent. There is no doubt that this is a central form of movement in internal space. I also believe that ascent can be seen as a foundational moment for certain religious traditions, such as those of Jesus, Paul, Muhammad, and the Besht (Ba'al Shem Tov), whose conversion of disciples can be said to resemble the foundation of a new religious culture.[19] Nonetheless, it is but one of several such moves, so that dissolving this organization within a more general term such as shamanic trance, together with constraining the range of periods covered, can yield different, though not necessarily contradictory, insights.

If one opts to create yet a larger web of connections, then mystical experiences of ascent, magical techniques of descent of power, theosophical ascents and descents of divine powers (such as the divine crown or the Shekhina) can be read together as the Kabbalistic "poetics of space," to use Gaston Bachelard's felicitous phrase. Yet again, ascent and descent can be explored within the phenomenology of verticality, as recently proposed by Anthony Steinbock, but the entire vertical dimension can also be framed within a wider set of movements in inner space and imaginal geography, which include moves inwards, or in the dimension of depth.[20] In a similar vein, I shall propose to minimize the impact of the common binary distinction between possession and other forms of trance, as they are but two of several possible distinctions, some of which shall be offered here.[21] This openness does not imply that I find all terms useful. In the course of the book, I shall call for jettisoning the vague term "occult." In general, it will be readily apparent that I do not believe that scholarship is greatly advanced by timidity, which is often the underlying motivation of the proponents of the ideology of textology and other narrow frames of study. My favorite "root metaphor" (to use Owen Barfield's term) for scholarship is that of exploration, which precludes shore hugging.

Trance, Kabbalah, and Psychology

Though by no means the only method used for shamanic movement through inner space and the resultant transformation, trance is probably the internal state most closely associated with shamanism. As George Luck has written, the study of trance properly combines psychology and anthropology, two of the social sciences whose contributions I shall draw on heavily.[22]

Luck also adds research into psychic phenomena, which Hollenback has also used to construct a compelling theory of mysticism, but which I shall not be utilizing here unless the texts call for it, despite the recent revival of scholarly interest in this area of research.[23] As mentioned above, in seeking to contribute to the field of psychology of religion, I shall especially apply the ideas and methods of hypnotherapy, which has displayed increasing interest in shamanism. Despite various sporadic attempts to describe Jewish mystical experiences as autohypnosis or trance and the somewhat more sustained discussions of Pedaya (which are engaged throughout this book), this is the first time in which hypnosis is significantly enlisted in the study of Jewish mysticism. Therefore, this is also the first occasion in which a Kabbalah scholar has presented an array of definitions of trance, a seemingly obvious prerequisite to an informed use of the term. This state of affairs demonstrates one of the main claims of this chapter, namely the need for a far greater integration of social science in the study of Kabbalah, as proposed by Yoram Bilu and Philip Wexler.

One reason for this neglect of hypnosis is the fascination with psychoanalytic approaches within contemporary Kabbalah scholarship. It is possible that the Scholemian focus on the symbolic aspects of Kabbalistic discourse has contributed to the formation of a substantial body of interpretations of Kabbalah based on Freudian and especially Jungian ideas of symbolism.[24] I shall largely depart here from this tendency, while not refraining from psychoanalytic interpretation when the texts call for it (being particularly attentive to more independent thinkers, such as Winnicott). Here I am attuned to cutting-edge social theorists, such as Lisa Blackman, who display an interest in the hypnotic phenomena, which were in the forefront of European social science before the advent of Freud. In terms of clinical practice itself, hypnotic methods are now increasingly coming to the fore, in alliance with art therapy, body-centered therapies, cognitive methods, family systems therapy, positive psychology, and short-term therapy.[25] As opposed to the almost entirely individualistic focus of psychoanalytic theory, I shall demonstrate that an investigation informed by hypnotic theory can lead to a greater appreciation of social, and particularly interactional and performative, aspects of mystical and especially shamanic experience. Thus, I hope that "hypnosis, which has been resistant to disciplinary divisions, will turn out to be an organizing focus for . . . transdisciplinary practices," as Léon Chertok and Isabelle Strengers have put it.[26]

The extensive literature on psychoanalysis and Jewish mysticism, including Hasidism, has contributed to translating the difficult structures and

terms of this lore into terms more conducive to the Western academic mind-set.[27] As such, this move can be regarded as one of many possible herme-neutical tools. However, besides the very mixed quality of this writing, there is an intrinsic reason for ascribing a more limited utility to this direction of investigation. It is true that the Freudian hermeneutic, which sees through surface phenomena to underlying unconscious structures, can be fruitfully compared with esoteric mystical interpretations of texts. In particular, the creative applications and adaptations of the Freudian method to literary theory invite similar moves in textual interpretation.[28] However, one should still question the applicability of classical psychoanalysis to mystical experi-ences. Freud himself expressed his general inability to comprehend mystical states such as the oceanic feeling.[29] I believe that his difficulty can be attrib-uted to his decision to move away from the hypnotic technique he received from Charcot to work on the conscious verbal level, possibly as a result of his failure to properly comprehend the hypnotic state. Freud's move to the "talking cure" (even if retaining a very mild trance state through the technique of free association on the couch) was also a move away from more somatic levels of experience, which were traditionally accessed in Western hypnosis, as in Franz Anton Mesmer's methods.

In other words, while hypnosis is a natural tool for the study of mysti-cism, as it deliberately seeks to access trance states, this is less true of psycho-analysis, which generally avoids these states.[30] Though this is not our topic, I believe that Freud's avoidance of mysticism and hypnosis may be related to other foundational positions of his, such as his resistance to Otto Rank's sug-gestions regarding prenatal experience. Of course, exceptions exist within the later offshoots of the movement. One example is Jung, who also explicitly relinquished hypnosis, but made a rather clumsy attempt to cultivate trance states through "active imagination" as part of his partial attempt to inte-grate mystical elements within his analytical psychology. Another exception might be W. B. Bion, who expressed a strong interest in mystical systems, and whose discussion of "alpha elements" might have some affinity with hypnotic phenomena. In a similar vein, there have been attempts to compare the work of Donald Winnicott with various mystical theories.[31] Of course one should also mention the subbranch of hypnoanalysis, which seeks to merge Freudian theory and hypnotic practice.[32] Although hypnotic theory and practice do not offer detailed theories of the psyche and cannot match psychoanalysis in interpretation of symbols, they are especially attuned to those dimensions of psychic life that manifest themselves in mystical and especially shamanic worlds.

I do not share, then, the sentiment that our choice of tools should be determined by the contingent historical event of the avoidance of hypnosis by the founder of the psychoanalytic discourse—unless one's modernistic impulses are so strong as to accord Freud's doctrine the status of universal, transhistorical, and scientific truth. Once one accepts that psychoanalysis does not relate to the states of consciousness described in shamanic and mystical testimonies, while hypnosis does so to a far greater extent, the choice of method for the current investigation is clear. This is especially true for the Ericksonian variants of hypnotic theory and practice, which I shall foreground here.[33] However, when reconsidering the scope of the utility of Freud for the study of modern Jewish mysticism, there is another factor to consider: the historical possibility that Freud, or at least one of his associates, affected Habad (or Lubavitch) Hasidism, as discussed in the appendix.

To conclude this discussion of trance as a key category of the book, I briefly describe the main processes, variants, and levels of trance, as distilled from hypnotherapeutic literature and as understood by practitioners with whom I have engaged in discussion. In doing so, I shall focus on the groundbreaking work of the American hypnotist Milton Erickson (1901–80), founding president of the American Society for Clinical Hypnosis. However, one must caution that Erickson's vast array of case studies, while upheld as an exemplar of clinical effectiveness, has generated manifold interpretations, reactions, and subsequent developments. This divergence may be traced to Erickson's disinclination to engage in excessive theoretical discourse. From this viewpoint, intuitive and outcome-oriented approaches are closer to his original understanding than any attempts to rigidly systemize his work.[34]

These debates notwithstanding, one can certainly discern an Ericksonian style, as it were, which is shared by second- and third-generation students, with the exception of the "heretical" outlook of Stephen Wolinsky, who reverses Erickson in claiming that symptomatic and pathological states are forms of trance, while cure consists of transcending trance and attaining a no-trance state best described by Eastern mysticism.[35] When attempting to summarize the Ericksonian view of trance, one should perforce set aside dimensions of Erickson's work not directly related to trance (such as the use of metaphor, or interventions related to family dynamics), as well as important work on deep trance pioneered by other senior Western practitioners such as Dave Elman and Gil Boyne.[36]

Virtually all branches insist that trance (like the dream state) is a natural state, which can be easily accessed, as in a seemingly ordinary conversa-

tion, without necessarily resorting to any ritualized hypnotic procedure. Therefore, trance is not the result of suggestion on the part of the therapist. Rather, it is "a special style of communication."[37] In other words, trance, as a natural state, is implicit in the "unconscious mind" of the client, and is evoked through communication from the therapist on many levels, especially the unconscious ones. As we shall see in chapter 5, this model resembles certain Hasidic accounts of transmission of consciousness in trance. An alternative phraseology, to be found in formulations consciously influenced by the neoshamanic writer Carlos Castaneda, is that the "personal power" of the therapist calls out the hidden resources of the client.[38]

From this viewpoint, hypnotic practice is not so much a matter of inducing trance as of releasing the habitual structures, put in place through various forms of socialization and familial conditioning, which occlude and deny access to the natural unconscious presence of trance states.[39] Erickson did not attribute much importance to exploring the roots of each individual's patterns, as in psychoanalysis and other psychodynamic therapies, but rather to shaking loose the hold of the surface layers of consciousness in order to enable communication on deeper levels. It is within this theoretical framework that we should understand the dramatic techniques, such as the "handshake induction," that Erickson and his disciples developed in order to disrupt habitual patterns of communication, thus confusing and even shocking the conscious mind and instantaneously enabling the state of trance.

This basic Ericksonian model can be fleshed out into a general, yet comprehensive theory of trance: It should be stressed at the outset that we are not speaking of a static state, but rather of a fluid process, which can develop in numerous fashions. It usually commences with a noticeable shift away from everyday perception and habituated patterns of mental activity. This shift can be sudden or gradual, induced by techniques or spontaneous. However, in the latter case, it is frequently the result of the accumulation of subtle triggers, which create "posthypnotic anchors" that are reevoked in suitable circumstances.

The next phase in the process is that of deepening, which again is often facilitated by a set of techniques. A common image used for this stage is that of spatial movement in inner space. The very sense of movement underscores the cardinality of fluidity for the hypnotic process. At this point, one can observe a vast variety of levels of dislocation (often described in terms of depth, although this dimension is but one of several possible forms of spatial movement) as well as substantial divergence in the somatic effects of these inner states, such as immobility versus intense movement.

Having established oneself in the desired level or inner location and stabilized the shift into an altered form of awareness and perception, numerous further possibilities unfold, determined by the choice of technique, previous dispositions, or unexpected factors. In more religious contexts, as well as in contemporary "spiritual" circles, the latter are usually attributed to the appearance and intervention of inner mentors, "allies," or "spirit guides." The assumption is that one needs to reach a certain degree of dislocation or depth, and stabilize in a suitable inner dimension, in order to seek out these figures or welcome their appearance in more passive modes. These meetings may also take possessive forms, which are but some of the many possible alterations of identity that occur within more advanced progressions into trance.

The process is usually concluded with some form of exit rite and procedures designed to facilitate repetition of the desired states, transfer of learning, and insight into everyday life (often through overcoming the amnesia that may accompany profound forms of trance) and a safe return to consensual reality. It should be reiterated that this brief introduction cannot replace the more detailed tracing of a staggering variety of techniques, experiences, and distinctions based on the texts explored throughout, especially in chapters 3 and 5. However, it should also be apparent that even this general overview reveals the limitations inherent in using one general term, or at best binary distinctions, to cover a rich and volatile world of practice, discourse, and experience.[40]

Modern Kabbalah: The State of Research

The seemingly paradoxical choice of the modern period for an investigation of shamanism is partly designed to refute the assumption that the latter is necessarily an archaic phenomenon that was then largely superseded by the more mature or refined one of mysticism. Modern Kabbalah certainly had a panoramic view of earlier sources, as Idel suggested in the Hasidic context. Thus it incorporated archaic shamanic traditions, such as those contained in the Heikhalot material, or practices derived from Ashkenazi Hasidism.[41] However, the continuing presence of these earlier strata in no way rules out the strong possibility that the development of shamanic trance in modern circles, such as that of R. Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto, or in self-consciously innovative movements such as Sabbateanism and Hasidism, also reflects the modernization of Kabbalah. Thus, the periodization chosen here is not merely the consequence of an attempt to define a specific arena of investiga-

tion, but also part of a wider project of describing the response of Kabbalah to modernization.[42]

This project was not at all part of the agenda of classical Kabbalah scholarship, whose concern with origins led to a focus on medieval developments, and at most on the sixteenth century. This predilection is clearly apparent in the foundational work of Scholem. As Huss has noted, Scholem's grand narrative was of progress from the sixteenth-century Lurianic world through Sabbateanism, which absorbed much of his scholarly energy, up to Hasidism, which he described as the last phase.[43] Entire mystical worlds, such as the circle of Luzzatto, the center in Prague, Lithuanian Kabbalah, the Oriental school of R. Shalom Shar'abi, not to mention many schools of nineteenth-century Hasidism and twentieth-century Kabbalah, are absent in this scheme, which was dogmatically upheld by many of his students.[44]

In addition, the modern Kabbalistic Mussar corpus was cordoned off as a largely separate zone of inquiry. Indeed, early modern classics such as R. Eliyahu Itamari's *Shevet Mussar* and the anonymous *Hemdat Ha-Yamim* were examined only with regard to their possible connection to Sabbateanism. A similar fate befell other European classics such as R. Ya'aqov Qopel Lipshitz's *Sha'arei Gan Eden* or the works of R. Nathan Net'a Shapira. The revolution in Kabbalah scholarship in the generation after Scholem did not greatly change this picture. Idel did write of the modern move from esotericism to exotericism in *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*; however, his focus there was more on the connection between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages and with the influence of ecstatic Kabbalah. As a result, Idel did not especially address the above mentioned schools and works in his other voluminous writings.[45]

This state of affairs changed somewhat in the course of the 1990s. Despite Liebes' triunine focus on Late Antiquity, the Zoharic literature, and the Sabbatean movement, he devoted important studies to central modern figures as R. Naftali Bakhrakh, R. Shimshon of Ostropolye, R. Naftali Katz, and the Vilna Gaon. Mopsik included various modern texts throughout his extensive overview of Kabbalisitic theurgy, suitably entitled *Les grands textes de la cabale*. Besides his studies of Sabbateanism, Wolfson devoted an article to gender and messianism in Luzzatto, discussed the sources of R. Yesha'ya Horowitz of Prague, and also analyzed the hermeneutics of R. Eliyahu, the Gaon of Vilna, using contemporary theories of writing.[46] As a result, at the turn of the century there was an increasing number of studies devoted to some of the schools mentioned above, including book-length treatments of R. Shabbetai Sheftel Horowitz of Prague, Luzzatto, Lithuanian Kabbalah,

the school of Shar'abi, and twentieth-century Kabbalah, including Habad Hasidism.[47] Notably, Shaul Magid has analyzed the beginnings of modern Kabbalah with the tools offered by the school of new historicism.[48] Finally, Pedaya likewise made many important theoretical comments on the modernization of Kabbalah in a series of articles, many of which I shall engage throughout the book.[49]

At the same time, we are far from a comprehensive picture of modern Kabbalah, even on the basic textual level. One need but consult Scholem's encyclopedic survey of this period, which is itself far from exhaustive, in order to observe how many key texts and figures, including such luminaries as R. Emanuel Hai Ricci, have hardly been discussed.[50] It is interesting to compare the state of textual scholarship here with the awakening of interest in early modern Kabbalah in the Kabbalistic circles in Jerusalem, which has led, to cite but three instances, to the publication of numerous earlier and contemporary commentaries on Ricci's *Mishnat Hasidim*, editions of several works from the Kloiz fellowship in Brody and an integrative discussion of the works of Shar'abi's circle.[51]

More significantly, we do not yet have a full integrative account of the unique nature of modern Kabbalah, its response to broader cultural and historical developments and the various stages of its development in various cultural contexts, both European and Oriental. Such an account would in turn require a far more advanced state of research into other areas of Jewish religiosity, such as custom, liturgy, Halakha, Talmudic methodology, and Mussar, which have likewise suffered from the premodern focus of classical Jewish studies. At the same time, one should draw hope from recent and soon forthcoming work by scholars such as Sharon Flatto, Ze'ev Gries, Maoz Kahana, David Sorotzkin, and Roni Weinstein, which provide useful tools and insights for a new understanding of modern Jewish religiosity.[52]

The picture emerging from the cutting edge of scholarship is that modern Kabbalah, while of course reworking and preserving earlier traditions, should be regarded as a semi-independent domain of study that should be increasingly positioned within the general context of modern religion. This move is especially called for if one but considers the effect of printing technology, the demographic explosion within the European Jewish world, and the increased role of Kabbalah within Jewish public life and popular custom. When doing so, one should take care to differentiate the separate historical contexts of Europe and the Near East and the resultant divergence of development of Kabbalistic discourse, as most sharply exemplified in the Hasidic movement. Such a reorganization of scholarly taxonomy should replace the

present near-independence of the study of Hasidism, which dislocates it from the wider historical frame of modernity. Naturally, modern Kabbalah is a construct, which one should beware of reifying, yet as we have seen throughout this chapter, this holds for any other scholarly formulation.

Shamanic Trance in Modern Kabbalah

At the present state of scholarship, it is not my intention to provide here an overall account of the modernization of Kabbalah.[53] Rather, this is the first of a projected series of book-length studies of the development of several aspects of Kabbalistic life, mostly in Europe, between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. At this point, I shall restrict myself to several comments on the place of shamanic trance in the wider economy of modern religiosity. The most apparent connection, already noted by Matt Goldish and Pedaya, is that of the proliferation of sects, which included public manifestations of trance in their communal practice from the seventeenth century onwards. These include the Shakers, as well as less-noticed Russian groups such as the People of God. These sects should be viewed in a yet wider context of the rise of groups and movements devoted to intensive mystical practice in modern Europe, as well as parallel developments in the Sufi world.[54] This development can be said to parallel the flourishing of Kabbalistic fellowships, from sixteenth-century Safed through the circles of Shar'abi and Luzzatto and peaking in the full-fledged social movement of Hasidism.[55]

The sociological dimension of modern Kabbalah is not divorced from its political dimensions, such as the increase of nationalistic, historiosophic, and political discourse, as noted by Raphael Shuchat and myself. This discourse was especially pronounced in twentieth-century Kabbalah, when small fellowships expanded into full social movements. However, it cannot be reduced to the issue of messianism, as Shuchat and some scholars writing on twentieth-century developments, such as the thought of Rav Kook, have done to some extent.[56] This broad context demands a more socially oriented understanding of mystical experience, such as that offered by the shamanic mode, as defined here. Here I propose to enlist social psychology in order to appreciate the role of group trance experiences among modern Kabbalistic groups and especially the Hasidim.[57]

At the same time, one should also bear in mind the increasing role played by individual psychology in modern religious discourse, which has been described in terms of the "religion of the heart" or "the conquest of the soul."[58] The increasingly psychological nature of modern Jewish mysticism

has been noted by Idel and others (especially Lawrence Fine) in the Safedian and Hasidic contexts and by myself when speaking of later developments, yet is largely overlooked in other contexts. These include Kabbalistic Mussar writing, the intensive discourse on the soul in the writings of R. Menahem 'Azariah of Fano and the circle of Luzzatto, and works such as R. Aharon Shmu'el of Kraemnitz's *Nishmat Adam*, which is devoted to this topic, as well as the unique development of the theory of the soul within the vast corpus of Shar'abi and his students. Such historical and textual observations reinforce the need for psychological, though not necessarily psychoanalytic, investigation.

Psychological analyses of trance experiences—or shamanic experiences of soul retrieval—are indeed a necessary balance for the above-described emphasis on the sociological and political modes in modern Kabbalah. In fact, we are as yet far from an appreciation of the more personal elements in the experience of such kabbalists as Luzzatto. For all that we need to regard such thinkers as drawing on a reservoir of textual tradition we must recall that as moderns they had a keen sense of their own individual destiny and uniqueness. I believe that a deeper understanding of the role of trance in the modernization of Kabbalistic psychology can afford insight into alternative developments of the modern self to those traced by Charles Taylor and others. Andreas Buss has already made such a move in the Russian Orthodox context, which enables us to relativize descriptions based entirely on Western Europe. One can postulate that multiple modernities, to use the phrase made famous by Shmuel Eisenstadt, offered alternative organizations of attention, perception, and self-awareness.[59]

The psychology of modern Kabbalah cannot be understood merely through the discourse on the soul, central as it is. The modernization of Kabbalah also included an entire array of views of the body and somatic practices. Our focus on somatic transformations, which often accompany shamanic trance, shall support the investigation of the history of the body in modern Kabbalah. Hitherto, Kabbalah scholars have focused mostly on the history of sexuality, not always with an eye to the discursive shifts, which occurred in the various phases of modernization.[60] However, Weinstein has placed the Kabbalistic discourses on the body, as well as somatic practices, in a wide context of early modern European religiosity.[61] Besides the psychological dimension, the new somatic configurations contained a political element, which can be profitably compared to Foucault's theme of the biopolitics of modernity. The modernization of Kabbalah included a process of the construction of the national body, or somaticization of the imagined national community.[62]

Although such observations explicitly take into account questions of influence from without, the main focus of the present discussion is on continuous developments as well as discursive shifts within the Jewish mystical world. In my view, the suggestions of borrowing from extra-Jewish forms of mystical life in specific historical moments, or the more diffuse effect of general cultural contexts mentioned here and elsewhere in the book, should be seen as the more speculative basis for future investigation, such as that which I have recently commenced with regard to the circle of Luzzatto.[63] In the present state of research into modern Jewish life, the main resource for scholarly investigation still remains within the vast treasury of texts penned within the Jewish world in the last few centuries.[64] Again, this focus on the unique internal trajectory of the modernization of Kabbalah by no means implies an espousal of a parochial approach, as the tools of investigating these texts are drawn from general disciplines. Furthermore, it should be reiterated that my main focus is on individual psychology, micro-interaction in small groups, or at best social movements of revitalization, rather than on a macro-scale analysis of historical or cultural trends, as offered by Weinstein.

I conclude this discussion of the role of historical narrative in this book with an important methodological clarification that shall further assist in positioning my approach within the range of possible scholarly approaches: Throughout the book I refer to studies that exemplify two main approaches to weighing textual testimonies on extreme mystical states, such as shamanic trance. The maximalist approach, which would tally well with the Ericksonian views described above, assumes that these reflect universal human potentials, which may point towards the objective existence of extraordinary powers or even alternate dimensions of reality.[65] The minimalist approach assumes that these descriptions reflect the hyperbolic products of imagination (which then becomes a mode of literary expression to be requoted in subsequent generations) or, alternatively, the political expression of struggles over symbolic capital. My own stance, which is primarily phenomenological yet takes historical context into account, is somewhat median, while more distant from the minimalist pole. I consider accounts of intense transformation as accurately reflecting both subjective individual experience and the ambience of mystical groups and movements, while avoiding any metaphysical or ontological assertions, positive or negative. The latter are often secular ideological positions masquerading in the worn garb of positivism.

One may best exemplify this position with the question of exceptional experience as opposed to wider prevalence: most scholars would accept that

mystical diaries or autobiographical letters, such as those of Vital, Luzzatto, or R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin, indeed represent genuine personal experiences. However, many researchers explicitly or implicitly assume that these represent the virtuosic attainments of exceptional figures, which are best reworked in more theoretical and propagandistic statements. This line subtly reinforces the cordoning of the mystical in a separate domain of inquiry and its removal from "serious" historical study.

In this book, I choose to place the more explicit and extreme formulations within a spectrum that includes numerous variations on recurring themes, which may reflect various levels of depth of experience or proficiency with technique. There are undoubtedly formulations that, despite their similarity to explicit personal narratives, are purely propagandistic or literary in nature. However, there is no objective reason to cast the burden of proof on those who take mystical experience seriously.[66]

To choose but one instance from the numerous clusters analyzed in chapters 4, 5, and 6: numerous hagiographies recount the visionary trances and magical powers of the nineteenth-century Hasidic master known as the Seer of Lublin; however, these themes are not evident in anything approaching full force in his own theoretical writing. The same is true, to a lesser extent, of his close disciple, R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein of Ziditchov. However, these same themes feature prominently in the propagandistic writing of another major student, R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein, who at times records direct witnessing and at other times writes generally of the experience of the Tzaddiqim. They are also echoed in the theoretical writing of another student, R. Meir Ha-Levi Rotenberg of Apta. The mystical discourse of this school peaks in the famous mystical diaries of Eichenstein's own student, R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin, while evoking a moderating response from another disciple of Eichenstein, R. Tzevi Elimelekh Shapira. While some would argue that all but Safrin represent either propaganda or wonder tales, and that Shapira's approach most accurately represents the course of Hasidic history, I myself assume that we are speaking of an ongoing transmission of mystical experience in a school, which takes various literary forms and diverges in intensity and in areas of expertise. The outermost layer of this discourse is its diffusion in popular common knowledge, which can either modulate or enhance certain aspects.

The historical time frame of the book is evident in its structure: I continue with four chapters on shamanic phenomena in general and trance in particular, with two chapters each for early modern and Hasidic developments. Then I shall move to an integrative chapter, mostly based on Hasidic material, on the relationship between shamanic trance and nomian prac-

tice.[67] The later discussion is intimately related to issues of modernization and response to secularization (including the strong secularizing impulses behind scholarly positions on the role of the nomian and other questions discussed in this book).[68] Throughout, I shall reach towards a fresh understanding of modern Kabbalah, which is based on the new theoretical framework presented here as well as numerous texts that have not been previously discussed in scholarship, from each of the periods covered here.

The Shamanic Process: Descent and Fiery Transformations

Shamanism: Towards a Comparative Definition

We have inherited a certain number of very vague terms, which can be applied to anything, or even, to nothing . . . the most dangerous of these vague terms is *Shamanism.*

—Arnold Von Gennep

The survival of shamanic imagery and perhaps also experiences in the remnants of shamanic religions, in Yoga, and in eighteenth-century Hasidism invites new reflections on the history of religion in general.

—Moshe Idel

In chapter 1, I briefly discussed some of the thorny methodological issues involved in the use of the term "shamanism" in describing a discrete set of phenomena within the mythical and mystical worlds. In general, there are two uses of the term "shamanic" in scholarship. One refers to a set of practices originating in archaic societies in Siberia, which then diffused into Asia and even into Europe.[1] The other refers to a universal phenomenological cluster of themes, which can appear in Australia or South America as well as in areas proximate to Siberia.[2] The present study is within the second scholarly tradition, which seeks to isolate several core elements of the shamanic complex, while avoiding an overly broad use of the term, which would rob it of any practical use in examining a specific context. I am not at all averse to Jane Atkinson's proposal to speak of shamanisms rather than shamanism, so that the use of the term in this book can be taken to refer to a specific mode, which resonates well with modern Kabbalistic texts, rather than as an overreaching universal term.[3] I wish to stress again that the specific textual

context examined, in this case modern Kabbalistic sources, is more signifi-cant than any general term, which is merely a tool used to isolate certain groups of texts and facilitate their analysis.

As reflected in an important study by David Holmberg, power and trans-formation are two of the core components of the shamanic world.[4] Fol-lowing this proposal, as well as the foregrounding of empowerment in Hollenback's definition of mysticism, I shall initially define shamanism as a term capturing diverse forms of transformative empowerment.[5] Indeed, many of the texts to be surveyed in the following chapters will include one or both of these two elements. While empowerment will certainly feature in this chapter, its main focus shall be transformation. Likewise, while chapter 3 will include many texts describing transformation, its central focus will be empowerment through trance.

The nature of shamanic transformation can be succinctly captured through Geoffrey Samuel's study of Tibetan shamans. Samuel describes them as moving beyond the "normal experience of the world taken for granted within their social and cultural context," precisely in order to view these very contexts from the outside, operate on them, and rebalance them.[6] In a similar vein, Holmberg has described the role of the shaman as decon-struction followed by regeneration. These models are more sophisticated developments of the classical theory of separation, transition, and reincor-poration, as formulated by Arnold Van Gennep and developed by Victor Turner.[7] They also recall a more general theory of religion, that of Maurice Bloch, who writes of two forms of violence: one that deconstructs societal patterns, in order to contact the transcendent, and another that can be de-scribed as the returning invasion of the transcendent, one example of which is possession.[8] These two phases roughly overlap with models of ascent and descent found in the texts that are analyzed in the following chapters. They also correspond to some extent to the differentiation between active and passive phases, with the latter at times including an element of possession.

This assortment of insights from anthropology and theory of religion can readily be translated into hypnotic terms, so as to advance the inves-tigation of the nexus between shamanism and trance. The unsettling of established social constructions of reality in order to enable the induction of hypnotic trance can be described, following the Ericksonian theory outlined in chapter 1, as dehabituating or depotentiating customary frames of refer-ence.[9] Trance can be described as the deconstruction of ordinary perception as well as the habitus of quotidian interactional patterns and customary organization of time, all in order to empower the subject to experience the accustomed life-world in a more vital manner. In more political terms,

which are usually absent from professional hypnotic literature yet present in some anthropological work, the ordinary frames of reference can be read as semihypnotic interpolation of social beliefs.

In other words, we are speaking of a kind of power struggle between two forms of trance contesting the field of individual consciousness.[10] Yet again, from the microsociological point of view of interaction theory, as in the subfield of ethnomethodology, trance can be seen as disruption of interaction ritual, as in the famous Ericksonian handshake induction and its counterparts, where the surprise avoidance of automatic social behavior is used to facilitate a rapid move to trance.[11] In sum, merging the horizons of religious theory, anthropology, hypnotic theory, and microsociology can provide a flexible yet clear working definition of shamanic experience: movement beyond habitual frames of reference, as a transformative process, culminating in return to these frames in pursuit of revitalization. As I shall now briefly show, this formulation can then be usefully applied to more specific theoretical problems.

Following Bruce Kapferer's notion of intentionality and Holmberg's own ideas of outward directionality or projection of force can further assist us in appreciating the play of activity and passivity in this process.[12] The mystic often goes through a passive phase when withdrawing inwards from habitual social interaction and then goes on to draw on the power granted in this first phase in order to direct and transfer this power outwards towards others and revitalize them.[13] I believe that this two-phased model (as an alternative to the more ideologically loaded phrase "dialectical," or binary oppositions between introverted and extroverted modes) is extremely useful for understanding the social impact of shamanic practices.

Appreciating this fluid process can also help us decipher magical aspects of shamanic phenomena, as evidenced in Holmberg's analysis of exorcism as reestablishment of agency in the therapeutic process.[14] From the point of view of symbolic anthropology, demonic possession can be seen as an experience of disempowerment. However, it is precisely the ability to be voluntarily possessed by spirits, which enables control over them and eventually the ability to free others of their power. Thus, we shall see that benevolent, rather than demonic possession, is quite prevalent in Jewish mysticism in general and Hasidism in particular. However, one should also bear in mind recent critiques of the classic understanding of possession, which shall lead us towards further refinements of this concept in Chapter 3. In a similar manner, shamans absorb the illnesses of their clients in order to heal them, thus embodying as well as internalizing conflict in order to resolve it. As Amanda Porterfield has put it, the shaman transforms social reality by

embodying conflicts only in order to resolve them.[15] I believe that this integrative approach to exorcism and other forms of healing is preferable to the typically binary model offered by Claude Levi-Strauss, in which the patient is all passivity and the sorcerer is activity.[16]

Following these basic formulations, our textual analysis has three main parts. First, I shall review forms of movement from ordinary reality to altered reality, which are mythically described in terms of motion within imaginal geography. The second part of the chapter will discuss the shamanic transformation itself, which is often mythically imagined in terms related to fire. Finally, I shall take up the returning phase, and examine the ramifications of the return into social reality. These three phenomenological investigations roughly overlap the three main historical periods investigated in this book: from Safedian Kabbalah through the eighteenth-century circle of Luzzatto and ending with Hasidism. In other words, the model is not purely thematic, but can also be rendered into a historical narrative. However, before moving on to the historical and textual material, I shall critique existing uses of the term "shamanism" in the study of Jewish mysticism, as some of these suffer from the vagueness already diagnosed by Van Gennep. It is this vagueness that has even led to the dismissal of the term by leading anthropological theoreticians such as Clifford Geertz.[17] In contradistinction, a sharper, yet still flexible, use of the term together with the exemplification of this usage in a specific historical context can conceivably advance the study of shamanism, as an important subfield of religious studies.

Previous Scholarship on Judaism and Shamanism

As part of the popularization or, less delicately put, commercialization of shamanism in popular culture, Gershon Winkler has attempted to locate shamanic elements in Jewish religiosity.[18] Besides his extremely forceful translations of texts, the main problem with this book is that Winkler appears to have included numerous phenomena under the rubric of shamanism: positive attitudes towards animals and nature, magic, and healing, etc. Winkler's popular book is the second of two book-length attempts to use the broad scholarly term "shamanism" to interpret Jewish texts. The previous work, also quite recent, is James Davila's *Descenders to the Chariot: The People behind the Hekhalot Literature*. Here we have a scholarly work, published by a prestigious press (Brill). Furthermore, it is more promising, as it focuses on a specific bounded historical and textual domain: the Heikhalot literature of Late Antiquity. Nonetheless, it suffers from a similar

problem, namely an overly wide definition of shamanism.[19] Texts dealing with generic Jewish phenomena, such as Torah study and observance of the mitzvot, are described as shamanic without a sustained consideration of the relationship between the latter form of religious experience and more nomian and thus mainstream forms of Jewish religiosity, such as what I offer in chapter 6.[20]

Likewise, entirely generic mystical or magical phenomena such as otherworldly journeys or contact with spirits and demonic forces are easily subsumed under this category. Some themes and practices captured by this term, such as the idea of the axis-mundi, seven heavens or realms, isolation, and asceticism, are not even especially unique to mysticism.[21] A significant methodological error lies in the comparison of general themes in the Heikhalot texts, such as danger, to specific shamanic experiences, such as dismemberment.[22] Davila does offer a certain model of shamanic practice—derived from the work of Michael Winkelman (which has been well critiqued in a recent study by Peter Jones), and then goes on to say that the texts he examines fit "within the total range of possibilities" of this model.[23] The question is whether there are many mystical or even religious texts which do not do so!

I will not burden the reader with further examples, which are amply available. Suffice it to say that, in the case of Davila's suggestion, one can indeed agree with Michael Ripinsky-Naxon, that "those who perceive shamanistic beliefs in every old religion are prompted to exercise caution." Specifically, one should adopt Naomi Janowitz's caution that comparisons of the Heikhalot journeys with shamanic phenomena obscure historical analysis.[24] However, I will argue that Davila's joining of the magical element of control of spirits and the mystical element of otherworldly journeys, though not necessarily shamanic, is a useful synthesis of the mystical and the magical.[25]

A far more sophisticated discussion of the utility of the term "shamanism" for the study of the Heikhalot material (or of Merkava mysticism) is found in Alan Segal's comparison of the ascent experiences in this tradition with Daoist material.[26] Though Segal's definition of the shamanic process as ascent, transformation, and subsequently return with "boons" is somewhat leaner than the one suggested here, and privileges the mode of ascent, it is incomparably more rigorous than that of Davila. While I am less inclined to draw on neurological studies in deciphering trance experience, Segal's attempt to incorporate a form of psychological discourse certainly tallies with my use of hypnotic theory.

The modern Hasidic world is a far more likely candidate for comparison with shamanism. Idel, in what is perhaps the most extensive phenomenological study of Hasidism, went so far as to say that without considering its primal, magical, and shamanic elements, scholarship can only offer a "somewhat distorted" picture of this world.[27] Idel's comparison focuses on the magical or paranormal aspects of Hasidism, which for him should certainly be compared to "extraordinary attainments of the Shamans."[28] Beyond this more phenomenological parallel, Idel has also raised the historical possibility of influence of shamanic practices prevalent in the Carpathian area, on the Besht. This suggestion, which takes into account the activity of nomadic groups of Eurasian origin, would be acceptable even to the diffusionist interpretation of shamanism.[29]

Likewise, Pedaya situates the mystical experience of the founder of Hasidism, the Besht, within the context of a shamanic type, which according to her can be traced back to Heikhalot literature, which influenced the founder of the modern movement.[30] In light of the comments of Idel mentioned just now, it is hard to accept Pedaya's claim that this category is absent in earlier studies of Jewish mysticism, though I entirely agree that it is indeed relatively rare, and may well be absent in the specific terms suggested by her.[31] Pedaya also suggests that later Hasidic generations transmuted the radical ecstatic practice of the Besht, as manifested in experiences of "extroverted" trance, into forms of mystical practice and discourse which are related more to adherence (devequt) and *unio mystica*. This move is part of Pedaya's wider differentiation between "extroverted" and "introverted" forms of mysticism, which draws on Jungian theory. Though it is certainly thought-provoking, I myself do not employ this binary model. Without entering at this point into the wider debate on the development of Hasidism, I believe that the evidence of strong shamanic experiences in later Hasidic schools, as demonstrated in chapters 4 and 5, requires further discussion of this issue.[32]

However, I do heartily adopt Pedaya's wider historical suggestion regarding the outbreak of Jewish shamanism in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, a claim that is somewhat buttressed by Idel's specific thesis regarding the Carpathian area.[33] Therefore, I intend to focus my analysis on Lurianic Kabbalah (correctly singled out by Pedaya in this regard) as well as Hasidism and some median developments. Again, I shall extend this periodization to include nineteenth- and even twentieth-century Hasidic phenomena. While maintaining this extended time frame, I shall discuss phenomena predating the sixteenth century only insofar as they assist me in clarifying the period chosen here, especially since I am not impressed by

the major existing attempt to locate a full-fledged shamanic complex in the Heikhalot literature of Late Antiquity.

Finally, I am in profound agreement with Pedaya's suggestion that this shamanic activity should be seen as part of the wider context of Jewish religiosity, rather than detached from it.[34] Again, chapter 6 argues at length that shamanic trance often appears in contexts of a markedly nomian nature. To conclude this discussion, there has not yet been a sustained examination of the various aspects of Jewish mystical practice that may fall under the category of shamanism and of the attendant methodological issues belonging to the field of religious studies, as well as the social sciences. Again, the best way to commence such a project is to examine a wide yet bounded period while isolating several selected themes.

Movements in Inner Space

Imaginal Geography

Holmberg has described shamanic practice in terms of moving beyond known geographic space to secret territories and dreamlike consciousness.[35] One can thus elaborate on the deconstructive aspect of shamanism and posit that moving beyond existing social frameworks entails a move into an imaginal geography (to paraphrase Henry Corbin), or heterotopia (to use Foucault's phrase). In other words, the inner space that is traveled in trance or in the "dreamtime" (which could just as well be termed "dreamspace") reflects the transcendence of the known social cosmos.[36] However, the shaman is bound to return into mundane space in order to pursue his regenerative task.

This formulation offers a refined understanding of the notion of imaginaire extant in the history of mentalities. Rather than thinking only of the popular construction of imagination, one can also consider the conscious construction of imaginary realms by the mystical elite in order to regalvanize the existing symbolic order.[37] At this point one should differentiate this spatial aspect of shamanic practice and experience from the parallel, yet discrete, theme of the shaman's magically drawing power from designated locations in ordinary space or projecting his soul, once it exits the body, onto such sites.[38] It is also crucial to stress the dynamic nature of the shamanic process, which entails a translation of more static maps of the mythical realm into a far more fluid sense of movement in inner space.[39]

Idel has differentiated between mythical movement in imaginal geography and more mystically oriented ascents of the soul. In a similar vein,

Guy Stroumsa traced the move from shamanic trance experiences of descent in Greek culture that, as he shows, have parallels in the Heikhalot literature, and the more mystical orientation towards ascent of the soul, or alternatively towards interiorization, after the fourth century.[40] I accept this differentiation in principle; however, from a structural point of view the shamanic model incorporates both modes, as long as we are dealing with a movement beyond habitual cognitive patterns. This movement can be described either in mythical-mystical terms, as in the Heikhalot literature, or in mystical-psychological terms, as in Hasidism. To be sure, the latter difference is not merely one of terminology, but rather reflects a divergence in worldview. To a certain extent, the Hasidic discourse can be read as a deconstruction of the Heikhalot worldview. Thus, as Netanel Lederberg has shown, the Besht's famous parable on the illusory nature of the structures (walls, towers, and gates) that divide and hide God from the seeker should be read as a opposition between an elaborate construction of the upper world as a divine kingdom as opposed to a direct, personal, son-like approach to God.[41]

One should historicize Lederberg's argument by positing that the Besht is in fact critiquing not only the Heikhalot tradition but also its elaboration in medieval texts that he perused, such as the fourteenth-century anonymous *Brit Menuha*.[42] An alternative and later deconstruction is that of the nineteenth-century master R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin, perhaps the most central single figure in this book. Safrin reworks the Beshtian parable by saying that the walls—rendered as psychic suffering—are fearsome only for those who have not reached self-nullification (*bitul*), but for those who reach true bitul, the walls are few. Elsewhere, Safrin embellishes the Beshtian parable by writing that between the walls there are nobles distributing riches, or revelation of souls and magical abilities (*moftim*), whose pursuit can equally distract the seeker from reaching the king. In this elaboration, the sure route to the king is to be in a child-like state of yearning for the hidden father, which Safrin describes as a high form of bitul.[43] Here the Hasidim seem to be joining a prevalent move of demythologization, which characterized numerous modern kabbalists, such as Luzzatto. For all of these reasons, the Hasidic rereading should be understood in terms of an internal debate within the same core structure, namely that of movement in inner space.

I believe that the architectural model, whose premodern manifestations I have explored elsewhere, offers a useful bridge between the mythical and the mystical.[44] On the one hand, this structure, which is rooted in the Heikhalot literature, describes an imaginal geography.[45] However, this is not merely a mythical or archaic map or the basis for more abstract

theosophical speculation (as in the classic of medieval Kabbalah, R. Joseph Gikatilla's *Gates of Light*) but rather often serves as a guide to ascents of an entirely mystical nature. One example of such a reading can be found in the *Zohar*. In an obvious reworking of the simile of the palace in the *Guide of the Perplexed* by Maimonides, this classic of mystical writing differentiates between Hasidim, or saints, who remain in the courtyard, those who enter the house, and those who have a place in the inner rooms, which are pervaded with light.[46] This Zoharic "poetics of space" can be read as a merging of mythical, mystical, and even social elements.[47] The underlying rationale of this entire hierarchy of space is the experience of illumination. As Wolfson has felicitously put it, the visionary experience in Kabbalah is "realized through the imaginary transport to the imaginal realm."[48]

Soul Retrieval

As Holmberg has briefly shown in the case of Tibetan shamanism, soul retrieval is one of the major goals of travel into secret space.[49] Traveling to rescue souls from imprisonment or decline in demonic space is a recurring theme in shamanic descriptions of psychological healing, which often takes place in trance. In the modern Kabbalistic context, this function often accompanies ascent or descent. One can postulate that together with more national redemptive moves, as in the case of the famous ascent of the Besht, retrieval of individual souls is one aspect of the regenerative shamanic function accomplished through ascent. As indicated above, I somewhat differ from Idel, who focuses mainly on ascent, and propose instead a more multi-axial view of imaginal geography.[50] Thus, the following section shall include an extensive discussion of soul retrieval through descent.[51] However, at this point I am concerned less with the ability to move through inner space and more with the empowerment of the mind to perceive the state of souls and then to amend them, a capacity that is sometimes described in terms of full retrieval of the soul.

Let us then follow our three historical periods: in sixteenth-century Safed, R. Yitzhaq Luria was renowned for his ability to decipher the state of one's soul and to rectify it.[52] In terms of the social context of his activity, it is significant that he refused to teach students if he perceived a blemish in their soul through his ruah ha-qodesh, or at least until he rectified it.[53] Here one may say that shamanic elements intrude on what might otherwise be considered to be merely mystical or even scholastic instruction. The roles of teacher and healer are intertwined in the image of Luria, which had a vast impact on the self-modeling of later kabbalists. Furthermore, the issue of

attainment of prophetic levels, such as ruah ha-qodesh, translates immediately into forms of shamanic empowerment.

Our second case is that of R. Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto. Perhaps the most important and influential modern European kabbalist, he was largely ignored by Gershom Scholem, and the only biography that we have is outdated (and regarded Kabbalah as "worthless stuff").[54] An epistle penned by a close student of his, R. Yequtiel Gordon (who was later instrumental in spreading Luzzatto's teaching in Eastern Europe), describes his teacher's abilities as follows: "He knows all the incarnations and rectifications of all men . . . he told me of my soul and my rectification . . . and if his honor [the recipient of the letter] desires to know certain matters relating to his soul and its rectification . . . I will reveal all to him."[55] In Luzzatto's letters to his own teachers, we see that he delivered on this promise, and informed them of the source of their soul and of their rectification. The more senior of these teachers, R. Benjamin Kohen, gratefully accepted his "diagnosis" and even requested further information. These abilities are joined by Gordon with other powers, summarized by the claim made in his circle that Luzzatto "knows all things under the sun."[56] It is possible that besides his explicit debt to Lurianic sources, Luzzatto was influenced, as in other matters, by the controversial seventeenth-century Ashkenazi kabbalist, R. Naftali Bakhrakh, who may have been concerned with soul retrieval.[57]

Our final examples pertain to the Hasidic world, to which the greater part of this book is devoted: the Besht was renowned for his rectification of the souls of the departed and most famously attempted to retrieve the soul of Shabbetai Tzevi.[58] As Pedaya has shown, the method adopted—of connection of the three parts of the soul of the rescuer to those of the archetypal sinner—is modeled on the Safedian technique of connection to the souls of the departed saints, which is also not without danger, as I have shown elsewhere.[59] Pedaya has commented that establishing a close connection between the two souls evoked a sense of danger of the soul of the Besht being endangered and even seduced into conversion to Christianity, just as Shabbetai Tzevi converted to Islam.[60] Nonetheless, the founder of Hasidism was willing to engage in these extremely dangerous shamanic practices as part of the construction of his self-image as a major Tzaddiq, as specified in Lurianic texts.[61] It is extremely interesting that the procedure of connection and its dangers are similar, whether the object is to adhere to a saint or rectify a sinner. In other words, the ideas and techniques surrounding the issue of soul retrieval form part of a much wider sense of fluid contacts between a network of souls, which transcends ordinary historical periodization.[62] This is a psychological theory that appears alien when viewed through the lens

of contemporary post-Freudian discourse, yet it is in some ways close to a tradition found in Renaissance Italy and recently revived in the extensive oeuvre of James Hillman.[63]

In the nineteenth century, we have several testimonies of the mission of the Besht's great-grandson, R. Nahman of Bratzlav, who worked on rectifying the souls of the living, in addition to his work with the souls of the departed. In my view, R. Nahman's extensive theoretical elaborations on uplifting of souls should be read in tandem with these biographical testimonies.[64] These three cases are by no means the last instances of soul retrieval in modern Jewish mysticism, as evidenced by the extensive activity of R. Yehuda Petaya in early twentieth-century Baghdad, which included the rectification of Tzevi's prophet, R. Nathan of Gaza; however, at this point I think that they suffice in order to establish the ongoing preoccupation of modern kabbalists with soul retrieval, which I focus on.[65]

Descent and Retrieval—Nefilat Appayim

I shall now turn to an especially rich practice that involves soul retrieval through what can be quite accurately described as descent to the underworld. Here and in chapter 4, I shall follow the modern reverberations of this ritual and experiential complex. At this point, an investigation of the earlier roots of this mythical complex is essential. One of the striking performative elements of Jewish nomian liturgy is *nefilat appayim*, or falling on the face after the main standing silent prayer.[66] As Uri Ehrlich has pointed out, the main biblical prayer posture was prostration. Erlich has carefully followed the transition from prostration to the more moderate gesture of bowing in postbiblical Judaism, which stands out against the continued resilience of the practice of prostration in Christianity and especially in Islam (not to mention Far Eastern religions).[67] Gerald Blidstein has explained this move in terms of the need to differentiate between the Temple ritual and the forms of worship that developed outside of the Temple, especially after its destruction. In other words, there is a close connection between the various possible forms of this practice and the issue of sacred space.[68]

Indeed, if one examines the Tannaitic imaginative reconstruction of the Temple rite, one finds that a major instance of prostration was as a response to the pronouncement of the ineffable name by the High Priest on Yom Kippur. Prostration was also imagined by the editors of the Mishna as a public response to numinous events such as the blowing of the shofar on Rosh Ha-Shana.[69] This being the case, one may deepen Blidstein's insight and posit that prostration was viewed by the Sages as a rather extreme practice,

reserved for powerful occasions. Erlich has indeed noted the residual presence of rites of prostration in the High Holy Days and on fast days. This phenomenology of prostration can be fleshed out by the analysis of Thomas Csordas, who has highlighted the significance of falling as "the most striking departure of the body from the vertical."[70]

This sense of full prostration as the appropriate response to the numinous persists in Amoraic literature, as in the saying of R. Yehoshuaʿ ben Levi that one should fall on one's face in response to seeing the rainbow. However, this sensibility was not without its critics, and the Talmud subsequently informs us that the practice in Palestine was to curse those who followed this custom.[71] The Talmud also records that R. Eliʿezer ben Hyrcanus, representative par excellence of the displaced ancient Halakha, would fall on his face daily. Following his excommunication by his fellow rabbis—after he enlisted trees, walls, water, and a heavenly voice (*bat qol*) in support of his minority opinion to no avail, as it failed to convince his colleagues—his wife prevented him from doing so. The wisdom of this move became apparent when she inadvertently enabled him to do so one day, resulting in the magical death of her brother, the *nassi* (or leader of the rabbinic community), Rabban Gamliʾel, who had presided over R. Eliʿezer's excommunication.[72] The Talmud records the fear that R. Eliʿezer might be able to destroy the entire world, so that this manifestation of destructive magic was rather minor. In this narrative, falling on the face is linked to the magical knowledge of women (a common theme in Talmudic culture), as well as that of archaic and marginalized figures.[73] In other words, falling on the face is seen not only as a carefully regulated response to numinous sites and events but also as a deeper move away from the social order into magical and dangerous realms. It is significant that many readings of Talmudic culture have ignored this narrative and focused only on the background of the excommunication, which in their reading teaches us of the rule of the majority, the human source of Halakhic authority, and other liberal ideas.[74]

It is not surprising, then, that in the post-Talmudic era this rite was sublimated by the early medieval Geonim into the posture of sitting with the head resting on the arm. Even this diminished stance was still used at times as a form of ecstatic posture designed to induce trance.[75] This development should be seen as part of a larger cultural move, admirably traced by Ehrlich, from prayer as a practice centered on strong physical responses to a verbal performance accompanied, at best, by moderate physical gestures. In this light, the attempt on the part of R. Avraham Maimuni, son of Maimonides, to emulate the Islamic practice and restore prostration as a central aspect

of Jewish prayer is remarkable and should be tied with his own practice of trance techniques.[76]

In the Middle Ages, one can point to at least two strongly mystical interpretations of *nefilat appayim*. Both refer to the verses in which Moses and Aaron are described as falling on their faces when God manifested his wrath against the faction of Korah.[77] Twelfth-century exegete R. Avraham Ibn Ezra, whose writings contain strong magical elements, brings two interpretations on the first occurrence, in which Moses alone fell on his face: "voluntarily and some say in the manner of prophets." On the second verse, in which both Moses and Aaron and call out to "the lord of spirits," Ibn Ezra merely adds: "to pray."[78] The Zohar offers a far more mythical commentary on the second verse: "Come and see: Moses and Aaron offered themselves up for death, how? As it says 'they fell on their faces and spoke to the god of spirits'(Lev. 9:22). *Ruht* is written without a *vav* [instead of the usual *ruhot* for spirits] and thus it denotes the Tree of Death and everywhere falling on the face alludes to this place . . . the place of the treasure of souls above, from which the souls derive and to which they return."[79]

In other words, the act of Moses and Aaron was not a singular response, but rather an example of the practice of *nefilat appayim* as an act of mystical death, imagined as the return of the soul to its source, the "Tree of Death." Elsewhere the Zohar elaborates: "Then a person should regard himself, after he completes the Shemoneh 'Esreh [standing prayer] as if he has departed this world, and has separated himself from the Tree of Life, and departed [literally: drawn up his feet] near the Tree of Death . . . now he must be gathered near the Tree of Death and fall saying: 'Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul' (Ps. 25, 1) . . . a person should regard himself as if he has departed this world, that his soul has been given over to this place of death."[80] One may read this text as reminiscent of numerous shamanic motifs: the Zohar describes a journey in an imaginal geography—between two trees. In any case, we have here an example of an organic model of the supernal world and one's interaction with it.[81]

This somewhat isolated medieval return of the repressed shamanic dimension of the rite greatly accelerated in the modern period. Wolfson, Michael Fishbane, and Lawrence Fine have largely covered the Lurianic embellishment of *nefilat appayim*, as imagined death, designed, inter alia, to rescue souls trapped in hell. Fine has noted that this practice is "strikingly reminiscent of shamanic voyages to the underworld for the purpose of gathering sick souls and bringing them back to the land of the living."[82] In other words, it can be considered to be a practice of descent aimed at soul

retrieval.[83] I especially wish to stress the discussion of the levels granted to the practitioner of this rite, as quoted by Luria's main student, R. Hayyim Vital, in the name of other members of this circle: "He becomes a new creature, as if one has died . . . he is granted strength and power to combat the Evil Impulse."[84] In other words, mystical death leads through transformative rebirth to empowerment.

I myself propose to see some Kabbalistic understandings of falling on the face, and again perhaps even the original rite itself, as a trance technique. It is possible that the practitioner actually does fall down—a common phenomenon in deep trance—and at the very least imagines throwing himself from "the top of the roof down to the ground," in order to facilitate internal descent to the underworld.[85] Based on a post-Lurianic text cited in Wolfson's above-mentioned discussion, which describes the practitioner "considering as if he were really dead," we may postulate that mystical death here is reminiscent of the "as-if" mode, which is part of the phenomenology of trance states (as I show in chapter 3).[86] A more dramatic embellishment of this imaginal practice, in terms of dismemberment, is again quoted by Vital in the name of other members of the fellowship: "to present oneself as one dead and one who has no hands or feet." This sense of self-abandonment is a radical expression of the shamanic exiting of the regular social order and the accompanying state of consciousness.

Vital himself, interpreting a manuscript of Luria's, offers the following instruction: "One should give oneself over to death, as if one has exited the world, and one's soul shall adhere above."[87] As we shall see, this terminology clearly recalls that used by Vital to describe trance techniques, in his own book *Sha'arei Qedusha*. It also establishes a clear connection between the mythical descent and the wider mystical theme of the ascent of the soul (*'aliyat ha-neshama*). In an interesting Hasidic development of this theme, *nefilat appayim* itself is paradoxically described as an ascent of the soul![88] The close relationship between ascent and descent in Lurianic practice may be further appreciated by considering that proper performance of the *nefilat appayim* rite during the day is deemed to be an essential condition for the ascent of the soul at night.[89] In other words, the nomian rite, accompanied by mystical intent, is a necessary prelude for the nocturnal anomian practice.

The erotic aspects of this rite are also apparent in the Lurianic texts, as well as in other Safedian sources.[90] This connection between mystical death and sexuality reinforces Louise Child's insights regarding the relationship between shamanic death and ecstatic sexuality, which I would describe as two manifestations of intense somatic transformation. Fine's description of the "orgasmic release that results in utter exhaustion and a depletion of en-

ergy akin to death" is interesting, as it would seem to match a basic model of the relationship between trance technique and experience found in anthropological literature: extreme exertion or inducement of pain which leads to deep relaxation.[91] In any case this rite of surrender is a clear instance of a passive mode. The shamanic reading of this rite must also include the motif of danger, as stressed by Fine in his analysis of the Lurianic texts: there is a distinct possibility of being trapped by the forces of evil and even of receiving a corrupt soul as a result. This motif is greatly stressed and developed in *Sha'ar Ha-Kavvanot*. I shall quote the succinct paraphrase by the seventeenth-century Palestinian and Moroccan kabbalist, R. Avraham Azulai:

> We drop ourselves . . . until the *'assiyah* [lowest world] like a man who falls from a roof, and then intend to descend to the place of death, to the *qelipot* [husks], which are the place of death itself . . . however, know that there is none who can do this except for the perfected Tzaddiq, for one needs merit and the power of many good deeds, and at the very least one needs to intend very well in all of that particular prayer, for of one does not do so, then, God forbid, when descending to the qelipot to rectify (*lebarer*), if one is a Tzaddiq yet not possessed of such great power, one can uplift one's own soul alone and nothing else. But if one is wicked then even the person himself remains there, for then the *qelipot* hold on to his soul and it does not exit from there, and he is given another impure soul in its place, heaven forbid, and therefore one must be very careful in *nefilat appayim*.[92]

Several of the themes found here, such as the danger of demonic possession by an impure spirit and the subsequent restriction of the technique to a powerful saint or Tzaddiq, echo similar concerns voiced in the Lurianic discourse on prostration on graves in order to connect to the souls of the departed saints.[93] These texts show that the underworld is fraught with danger, for all but the greatest of mystico-magical specialists (such as Vital himself).[94] The theme of danger encountered in soul retrieval is of course a commonplace in writing on shamanism.[95] It is for this reason that notwithstanding the parallel between *nefilat appayim* and nightly practice, numerous Kabbalistic authorities forbade its performance at night, so as to avoid reinforcing the powers of darkness, or as a related text put it, strengthening the kingdom of the Angel of Death.[96] The popularity of *nefilat appayim*, though subsequently enhanced by the increased concern with both ritual and death in early modern Kabbalah, was somewhat tarnished by its use by prominent Sabbateans, as evidenced in the Luzzatto controversy (to be discussed in chapter 3). However, as we shall see in chapter 4, in the Hasidic world there

was some revival of the practice of prostration, albeit not without some opposition.

Fiery Transformations

His word was like a raging fire in my heart, shut up in my bones, I could not hold it in, I was helpless.

—Jeremiah 20:9

Within the movement through internal space into altered states of being, deep transformations of identity and even of somatic form are essential ingredients of the shamanic experience. In many sources, these changes are described as shape shifting and acquiring alien forms, such as transformation into an animal. In yet other sources, this profound disruption of accustomed patterns manifests as madness and can even lead to mystical death, as in the case of falling.[97] Here, I wish to focus on the experience of transformation into fire or light, which frequently accompanies trance experience.[98] Here I would differentiate experiences of illumination, which have been foregrounded in numerous theoreticizations of both mystical and shamanic experience, from those relating to fire. The latter are more concrete, somatic, and energetic.[99] More generally, my focus on transformation follows the awakening of interest in this theme in the study of mysticism, shamanism, and Kabbalah in particular during the first decade of this century, which as in some other cases mostly lags behind developments inside the contemporary nonacademic mystical discourse, as well as in other scholarly fields, including the study of Hinduism, sociology, anthropology, and psychology of religion, religion in Late Antiquity, and psychotherapy.[100] At the same time, my stress on the somatic dimension follows Jeffrey Kripal's suggestion that we regard the body as "the living site and the source of the mystical" or the similar formulation of Csordas: "the locus of the sacred is the body."[101]

As in the case of descent into the underworld, an examination of modern manifestations of this experience requires a brief investigation of its earlier sources. Descriptions of transformation into fire or fiery substances abound in the Heikhalot literature and other mystical and magical texts of Late Antiquity, where apparently fire was conceived of as the basic substance of the supernal world.[102] According to certain Heikhalot texts as well as parallels in Greek theurgical literature, this transformation granted the ability to progress through this element in the course of movement through imaginal geography.[103] In other words, the practice of fire walking, which is

still extant, is part of a complex of beliefs and techniques directed towards transformation into a form more congenial to travel in other realities. As Bachelard has put it in his compelling reflection on fire, "all that changes quickly is explained by fire."[104]

This complex seems to have impacted on more nomian and scholastic Jewish writing in Late Antiquity, as evidenced in the following description of the Talmudic scholars: "all their body is fire."[105] It is possible that fiery transformation is a more mythical form of the experience of theosis through somatic transformation into a body of light or a star, which is alluded to in the New Testament and was quite prevalent in Late Antiquity.[106] Segal has persuasively argued that this theme is found in Pauline sources, which he regards as the earliest form of Jewish mysticism (or one might say shamanism).[107] In this context, one should also note the important comments of Dalia Hosen on the role of fire as a symbol of union with the immanent aspect of divinity in Talmudic-Midrashic literature.[108]

A truly "panoramic" view of the sixteenth century can show that forms of experience that can be found in very early texts were revived or enhanced in the very transition to modernity. Such a view is preferable to a "proximist" approach, which could lead us to connect modern and medieval structures that are actually quite distinct or alternatively to neglect sources in Antiquity.[109] The theme of the body of light in the sixteenth century will be discussed in forthcoming studies by other scholars, so here I shall content myself with a few exemplary texts. One is found in R. Joseph Karo's diary, *Maggid Mesharim*, where his inner guide is recorded as saying: "Be before me always without any separation at all, and your body and limbs will be purified like Hanokh [Enoch], whose flesh became torches and balls of fire."[110] Here, apotheosis is described in terms of fiery self-refinement, though one may conceivably argue that the full force of transformation is reserved for the ancient figure of Enoch. Elsewhere in this book, Moses is described as transmitting the light shining from his face while teaching Torah to the people. The simile employed, of the transference of light from one candle to another, is more common in theosophical discourse and is utilized here to convey a sense of fiery transmission.[111] Another sixteenth-century kabbalist who greatly stressed the fiery transformation of the body was R. Avraham ben Eliʿezer Ha-Levi, a truly Mediterranean thinker who represents centers ranging from Spain to Jerusalem. Ha-Levi writes:

> If a person merits aligning all his limbs [with the supernal world] and purifying and sanctifying them, and making every joint of his limbs a chair and dwelling place for the joints of the supreme Chariot, he will draw the light

from the joints of the supernal Chariot to the lower Chariot and the human
body will be a holy Temple . . . as the holy Forefathers did and the teacher of
the prophets [Moses] for his face shone from the light of the face of the King
that was connected to his face . . . and in the future we shall all attain this
level and become sapphiric (*safiri*) . . . for the person becomes sapphiric as his
organs, internal, and external, are a chair and dwelling place for the supernal
entities . . . and then the influx and lights will descend and he will move in
them . . . such a person is called a holy man of God.[112]

Ha-Levi describes the transformation of the human body into a sapphire-
like body, through a process of isomorphic attunement between the lower
and the supernal, which in turn enables the drawing-down of light. The
context of this description is his eschatological vision, which focuses on the
extension of this state from select individuals to the entire nation. Based on
parallels in his writing, one can assume that the transformed state is angelic
in nature: Ha-Levi describes a meditation on an angel with a fiery Tetra-
grammaton on his forehead, and more generally recommends visualizing
angels with fiery bodies and faces.[113] One should take care to differentiate
these somatic and often personal experiences from the more abstract men-
tal contemplation of light in and around the body, which may be found
in some texts from medieval Kabbalah.[114] I would now like to discuss two
issues branching off from this central theme: the relationship of fire and air,
and the experience of fiery transformation during Torah study.

Fire and Air

I am fire and air.

—William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*

The discourse on fire in Jewish mysticism is sometimes, but by no means
universally, part of a wider discourse on the natural elements and forces.
As I have shown elsewhere, two themes, which often accompany this dis-
course are the "organic model," which uses tree imagery, and the "hydraulic
model," which employs water imagery.[115] Certain early Kabbalistic texts,
such as the Zohar, employed the classical Hellenistic structure of four el-
ements, which also reverberated in Jewish philosophical discourse. From
the sixteenth century on, up to and including the twentieth century, this
structure, which can also be described as an elemental model, became a
rather central organizing category for correspondences between the cosmic,

theosophical, and psychological realms.[116] Here I focus on the relationship of two elements—fire and air—and its place in Jewish shamanic discourse.

Pedaya has related the entry of an influx of ruah ha-qodesh or some other form of pneumatic inspiration into a prophet or mystic to shamanic views or models, as well as to trance experiences. Pedaya also proposed that forms of training and experience centered on visions of light and those focused on spirit can be conceptualized as parallel and complementary structures, which are often historically discrete, yet are also merged in early texts. Following Hollenback, one can generalize and say that experiences of transformation into light are just as much part of the shamanic "family" as experiences of inspiration by the spirit. Thus, as Pedaya has summarized her discussion of shamanic and mystical dimensions of images of spirit, water and fire, "beyond any possible specific distinctions, the complete religious personality may experience ruah ha-qodesh through these three faces together and not only in isolation; and this is then the task of the investigator, the scholar or researcher, to characterize the internal relationships between the diverse elements of the specific phenomenon that he is examining."[117] I cite this due to its proximity to my own approach, which seeks to use differentiation into models and patterns only as a means of recovering and casting into relief various facets of profound phenomena, which to some extent elude scholarly articulation.

The relationship between light and air can be well appreciated by comparing the Jewish pneumatic structure described by Pedaya to the Native American discourse on the holiness of air, which is poetically evoked by David Abram in his beautiful book on phenomenology and shamanism (winner of the Lannon Literary Award).[118] As Abram has written, "Only recently have anthropologists . . . been able to break out of the interpretive blinders imposed by the Christian worldview in order to recognize that the powers attributed by Western culture to a purely internal soul or mind are experienced by the Navajo as attributes of the enveloping Wind or Atmosphere as a whole. The 'Wind within one' is in no way autonomous, for it is in a continual process of interchange with the various winds that surround one, and indeed is entirely a part of the Holy Wind itself."[119]

In this light, so to speak, we should also consider the close connection between spirit and sound. Abram has shown that among the Navajo, "it is through the ritual power of speech and song" that they are "enabled to most powerfully" affect and alter events in the cosmos; "by transforming the air through song, the singer is able to affect and subtly influence the activity of the great natural powers" and especially the air itself. Abram concludes from this that the Navajo practitioner is both passive and active. While Pedaya

stressed the passive, or even possession-like, dimensions of the experience of the entry of the spirit, following Abram, one can regard seemingly passive pneumatic experiences as but one phase of a cycle or process that then moves towards an active pole, which includes operation of ritual power, which can also be described as "theurgical." Again, one is dealing here with differentiation of facets rather than with rigid boundaries and binary oppositions.

Abram himself has attempted a comparison between Navajo views of sound, wind, and breath and Jewish mystical concepts.[120] Though in my opinion this attempt does not stand up to detailed textual scrutiny and thus should not detain us here, it is not only of contemporary cultural significance but also contains a profound intuition as to the shamanic aspect of the Kabbalistic phenomenon of pneumatic interpretation. As we have just seen, this essential intuition was shared by a scholar vastly more conversant with Jewish texts. Furthermore, Abram's discussion contains yet another profound intuition, which can easily be fleshed out by more comprehensive textual evidence. Like Idel, Abram has pointed at the pneumatic dimension of textual study and interpretation in the Jewish tradition, which (according to his rather ahistorical assertion) stems from the absence of written vowels in Hebrew. As he writes, "The Hebrew texts and letters were not sufficient unto themselves, in order to be read, they had to be added to, enspirited by the reader's breath."[121] Abram relates the dependence of reading on breath, embedded in the very structure of Hebrew writing, to the indeterminacy of the text in Jewish, and especially Kabbalistic, hermeneutical theory.

In a text adduced and partly discussed by Idel (in support of his theory of the multiple significance of the Torah), an Eastern European follower of R. Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto wrote as follows in the short treatise *Derekh 'Etz Hayyim*:

> And this is the word of the sage: "and Torah is light"—literally[122] light, and not wisdom alone, and not an imaginary simile of light, but literal light, for this is the reality of the Torah above, and when the Torah enters the soul it fills it with light, like the sun entering a house. And furthermore, the image of fire was carefully and exactly chosen, for you will observe the coal that has not been lit, and its flame remains hidden and contained, and yet when it is blown on the flame rises up and spreads and grows. And apparent in the flame are several colors that were not seen at first in the coal, yet all come out of the coal itself.
>
> So is it with the Torah that is before us, for all its letters and words are like coals, which left to themselves do not manifest but as dull coals, but when one makes an effort to study it, then from each letter rises a great flame, full of

several colors—these being the forms of knowledge contained in that letter. And this is no metaphor, but the matter itself, simply and literally.

But the soul of one who gazes at the letters does not attain anything but one obscure light, like the coal, but when one makes an effort to understand and reads and rereads, and strengthens himself to contemplate the text, then these lights take flame, and come out like the flame from the coal within the soul . . . and there is another matter, that the Torah has several faces, and the earlier ones have received that all the roots of the souls of Israel are in the Torah, so that they are six-hundred-thousand interpretations of the Torah, which are apportioned to the six-hundred-thousand souls of Israel. And this is what is meant by the Torah exploding into several sparks . . . and the intellect of man is constructed correspondingly, that it has great power of apprehension, but only when it lights up through the power of contemplation.

And on this it is said: "God gives wisdom from his mouth, knowledge and insight" (Prov. 2:6). For all beings were made from the speech of God . . . we find that this mouth is the root of all created things, and this itself sustains them. And the vapor (*hevel*) that comes out of this mouth, the influence that extends to all things from the source . . . and the wisdom is already given from God in the hearts of all men, but in order to become powerful the mouth sustaining it needs to blow with force, and then it also becomes like the fire, which takes fire when blown on; thus when this influence descends from the mouth like the breath of blowing, the wisdom takes fire and the knowledge and insight that are already contained in it will be seen . . .

And all these will not act except by means of the power of the blowing of the supernal mouth . . . and this is what Elihu said: "indeed it is a spirit in man, and the soul of the Lord of Hosts will give them understanding" (Job 32:8). The term "soul" is . . . in the sense of breath (*neshima*) and not in the sense of soul, that is the breath of the mouth, for it is this, not days or years, that gives understanding.[123]

I have discussed this text, its origins, and implications, at great length in a study cited above. However, I have quoted it here at length not merely because it supports Abram's basic intuition as to the dependence of the text on the breath of the reader, and the intrinsic connection between this dependency and the vast plurality of meanings of the Torah. What is truly remarkable here is the very close connection between passive images of light and breath entering from above and an active sense of the fiery power of the reader's soul, which supports the suggestions raised above as to the interrelationship of light and breath, as well as on the relationship between passive and active forms of empowerment.[124]

At the same time, the author has attenuated the more magical dimensions of reading through the power of breath and instead chose to focus on the hermeneutical dimension of the dependence of the text on the power of the reader. To mention but one example of this move, when he reaches the issue of breath he only mentions the divine breath, and not the human act of breathing. For all of his repeated assurances as to the literal nature of the process he describes, when it comes to human action he only refers to intellectual effort.[125] Thus, this text cannot be seen as truly exemplifying a personal or shamanic model of power. Rather, it would seem to exemplify a merger of a shamanic passive model of power and an activist intellectual theory of reading and meaning.

This scholastic move is modulated in a Hasidic text written by the late nineteenth-century R. Yehuda Aryeh Leib Alter of Ger. Alter explains the Talmudic dictum that "even the mundane speech of scholars requires study"[126] as follows: even after the scholars conclude their study, the breath produced by their "Torah" remains in their mouths, and thus permeates even their mundane discourse. This text represents a move from scholastic dimensions of study to a far more concrete notion of a form of energy produced by the effort of study, which then extends into the mundane. The focus here is not so much on the more nomian dimension text and its explication but rather on the personal power of the scholar, which can also be realized in anomian contexts.[127] An interesting parallel to this notion of the power of breath produced in study can be found in a comparison of the revelation on Sinai to the sacrificial rite in the Temple in a text by R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein, who like Alter hailed from the school of the Seer of Lublin. In this lengthy discussion, empowerment is explicitly cast in terms of fiery transformation:

> "The mountain was all smoking for God descended on it in fire" (Ex. 19:18). . . . When a person awakens himself in prayer and study we can literally observe that the vapor emitted by his mouth is like smoke, which ascends . . . and now . . . prayer is like sacrifice when the public join together and pray and awaken themselves in great passion they send up the female waters [the Lurianic term for awakening from below] through the vapor that emits from their mouth and as we said above that we may observe that the vapor produces a cloud or smoke . . . and Mount Sinai was all smoking, that is to say that through their awakening . . . with great desire they sent up the female waters in the vapor of their mouth which ascended like smoke . . . and the Almighty descended on Mount Sinai . . . when the sacrifice is offered on the

altar . . . whoever [the sacrificer] the fire of repentance burns in him so much that due to the great heat in him, the power of fire increases . . . and the smoke . . . ascends to the Throne . . . and awakens the fire above to descend upon the altar . . . and now prayer replaces sacrifice, and so if a person prays with great enthusiasm and great passion and the flashes of the flame of God burn in him, the power of fire increases in him and burns his gristle and blood . . . and the vapor emitted by him is literally like smoke, and this vapor ascends to the Throne and contains all the thoughts of love and fear of the prayer . . . and when Israel [at Sinai] produced smoke from their vapor . . . it ascended to the Throne and aroused the awakening from above and God revealed himself by descending in fire to grant them the Torah.[128]

This text merges theoretical and concrete, or more experiential elements. It is striking that it renders the mythical elements of the revelation and the sacrificial rite in terms of the creation of heated breath through individual study as well as collective worship. This breath is then able to awaken the supernal fire. Idel's concept of pneumatic interpretation can now be understood in a far more literal sense. This reading can be ascertained by examining an interesting parallel to the texts discussed here in a rich passage by the Hasidic interpretative genius R. Nahman of Bratzlav, which Idel adduces in this context, but without fully bringing out its radical flavor.[129] Nahman discusses the revitalization of meaning of the text in the most literal sense, as he raises the possibility that the soul, the source of interpretations of Torah, may not only become cold, but also die, leading to a state in which no meaning can be found in the Torah. Nahman prescribes that in this state of soul death, which he clearly perceived to be the modern predicament, the interpreter must "begin by drawing unto himself words as hot as burning coals." While in the text by Luzzatto's followers the interpreter's soul has to breathe on the coals in order to animate the text, and set it on fire, as it were, with the power of his soul, in the Hasidic text the commentator must draw down hot and active coals, from the "upper heart," in order to bring the text back to life (in a manner similar to Epstein's model of drawing down the supernal fire through breath).

However, both modern writers address a similar challenge—the need to revitalize a dull and lifeless text—and both use similar imagery in expounding a pneumatic form of interpretation, which is also fiery. This image of fiery revitalization is in turn a psychological rendering of the Talmudic mythic image of the descent of fire through mystical study of the Torah.[130] One should compare this move to Samuel's description of Tibetan shamans

as effecting "re-alignment" (which I regard as a form of revitalization) by new readings of traditions based on mystical experiences such as discoveries of new texts (*terma*) in inner space.[131]

I wish to stress that here the route to revitalization is the recovery of a more archaic consciousness, which is closely related to the elements, such as air and fire. The seemingly intellectual activity of interpretation is regarded as lifeless and futile without more primal energies. The conjoining of fire and air in study as a means to revitalization of the soul is also a recurrent theme in R. Aharon Perlow of Apta's '*Oneg Shabbat*. He uses the oral image of feeding the soul with the air and light created by study and pronouncement of blessings. Aharon's writing reflects a luminous pneumatic model, which contains both theory and practice. In his cosmological account, the nature of the supernal worlds is that air is light. Thus, on the level of technique, the light can be drawn into the body by breathing, and one should also visualize light spreading in the air.[132]

I shall discuss fiery transformation in the Hasidic world, and especially in the writing of Aharon, at greater length in chapter 4, while concluding the present discussion with a Hasidic story that describes the formative encounter between the Besht and his heir, the Maggid Dov Baer of Mezeritch, both of whom profoundly influenced Aharon:

> I saw the Ba'al Shem Tov clothed in an inverted wolf's skin . . . He asked me whether I had studied Kabbalah. I answered that I had. A book was lying in front of him on the table and he instructed me to read aloud from the book . . . I recited a page or half a page . . . The Ba'al Shem Tov said to me: "it is not correct; I will read it to you." He began to read, and while he read he trembled . . . He stood up and continued to read. As he was talking he lay [*sic*] me down in the shape of a circle on the bed. I was not able to see him any more. I only heard voices and saw frightening flashes and torches.[133]

Here too, a merely scholastic and thus lifeless reading is contrasted with a much more engaged form of study, which manifests the reader's personal power.[134] The Besht seems to have placed the Maggid in some form of embryonic posture. In the trance that he subsequently experienced, the Besht's physical form was transformed into "flashes and torches," or some fiery substance. As with Nahman, transformative and powerful readings, such as those that initiated the Maggid into the path of the Besht, are essentially fiery. Finally, I believe that the description of the Besht in wolf's clothing is another very strong indicator of the presence of shamanic shape-changing in this narrative.[135]

This chapter focused on two moments in the shamanic process, as it is found in various Jewish texts. It is interesting that descent into the underworld and fiery transformation hold some sway over the contemporary popular imagination, as reflected in major works of fantasy by J. R. R. Tolkien, Ursula Le Guin, and Philip Pullman.[136] Within the world of Jewish shamanism, these themes form two discrete clusters, and although I regard them as part of a wider process, I have not so far located many texts (especially prior to the Hasidic literature) that speak of "subterranean fire," to use Walt Whitman's powerful locution, or a moment of fiery transformation that takes place within the descent to the underworld.[137] However, a sophisticated methodology should not require all phases or moments of a process to be concentrated in the same description.

Empowerment through Trance

Trances of thought and Mountings of the Mind
Come fast upon me: It is shaken off,
That burthen of my own unnatural self.

—William Wordsworth, "The Prelude"

Trance in Studies of Jewish Mysticism

The term "trance," which is currently in vogue, is frequently associated with shamanic experience in general, and with ascent and descent in particular.[1] Indeed, the extensive scholarly literature on ascent in early Jewish mysticism and in Late Antiquity in general, includes several references to trance. It appears that most of the scholars who utilize this term, whether they deny that there is a connection between trance and ascent or uphold it—do not have a very clear sense of the nature of trance.[2] This usually stems from lack of familiarity with literature on either shamanic or hypnotic trance. Thus, there seems to be no clear methodological thinking on the use of this terms and the distinction between it and alternative terms such as ecstasy. As Csordas has put it, trance is often seen to be a unitary variable or "black box" (whose mere invocation is seemingly sufficient). My alternative imagining of trance is that of a fluid process with numerous stages, gradations, shades, and nuances, whose evocation and enhancement is an art form, as it were. From this point of view, I heartily adopt Csordas' proposal to regard trance as an end in itself, rather than a means for other cultural operations, as many scholars do.[3]

Luck has already noted that there is a certain overlap between prevalent definitions of trance and ecstasy. While I would not go so far as Fredrick

Smith, who wrote that the term (especially as formulated by I. M. Lewis) is unproductive and misleading, I do believe that with its multiple definitions, it is less useful for our purpose than more scientific terms, such as trance, which are supported by both clinical practice and anthropological observations.[4] Likewise, the term "pneumatic," often used in earlier studies (and discussed in chapter 2), should not be generalized beyond the specific context of the influx of the spirit in trance.[5] It is also important to warn that the term "trance" (just like the term "shaman") is not indigenous to Kabbalistic discourse, although it has quite a long history in the general Western European context.[6]

A related problem is the conflation of trance with meditative concentration, terms that, though not indigenous to Jewish discourse, are universally employed in scholarship on Kabbalah.[7] From a phenomenological point of view, there is some overlap between deep meditation and trance; however, testimonies from practitioners as well as theoretical discussions found in mystical literature point at the substantial differences between the two.[8] Generally speaking, trance is a more free-floating and loose state of mind than concentrative mediation. Although concentration can lapse into trance, hypnotic states are usually not regarded as the goal of most forms of meditation. Thus, conflating these two domains is more trouble than it is worth, methodologically speaking. Instead, trance and meditation should be seen as alternate forms of transformative empowerment. The lack of clarity on the nature of trance at times leads to unnecessary distinctions that join the unnecessary conflations noted above: there is much discussion of the difference between possessive and nonpossessive trance.[9] Though this division is useful when highlighted in a specific text (such as the classic formulation of the Gerona kabbalists, who speak of being "captured by the speech"),[10] one should beware of generalizing from these instances, and I prefer the wider and more neutral terms "passive" and "active," which shall be quite important for our discussion. This move away from the prevalent use of the category of possession, which will inform our discussion in several places in the chapter, also rests on Foucault's incisive analysis of its construction as a discursive formation by modern and Christian mechanisms of control of somatic individuality. As he put it, "The appearance, development, and supporting mechanisms of possession form part of the political history of the body."[11]

At this point, building on the discussion in chapter 2, one should postulate that trance creates a neutral potential space in which habitual patterns of perception fall away, as in the poetic quote opening this chapter. Within

this space, various transformations are enabled, which can effect empowerment either through diminishing individuality, as in possession, or by enhancing it. These modalities are far less significant than the very process of transformation and empowerment that are enabled by the removal of constructed, and thus constricting, forms of selfhood and experience. Ralph Waldo Emerson's famous description of power as residing in "the moment of transition from a past to a new state" can be seen as an apt description capturing the empowerment effected through the very act of transition, which is embedded in the etymology of trance.

The numerous subtle gradations of trance, as well as the varied methods and strategies for entering and exiting different depths of trance, are not easily accessible to Jewish studies scholars who are not conversant with hypnotic or anthropological research (as opposed to psychologist-anthropologist Yoram Bilu, whose observations on trance phenomena in the Jewish world shall be engaged here). This accounts for the vagueness of definition and analysis of altered states in the otherwise valuable studies of writers whose training is restricted to the perusal of mystical texts. Furthermore, as Luck has noted, while in Antiquity even an ordinary person could separate false trance from an authentic altered state, so that one could in some sense refer to common knowledge, modern material culture has damaged this sensitivity.[12] One notable exception to this rule is Haviva Pedaya, who though not evidently conversant with current hypnotic or anthropological literature, nonetheless frequently analyzes Jewish mystical testimonies in terms of shamanic trance, and offers incisive and profound definitions of various forms of trance and ecstasy.[13] Her writing, which is openly related to her personal experience, is partly a response to my Hebrew articles on the subject (which to some extent responded to preliminary formulations in her earlier studies), and in turn I shall respond throughout to her important observations.[14]

One of the most widespread and established theories of trance in hypnotic literature may be found in the school of the twentieth-century American clinician, Milton Erickson (which has been described briefly in the first chapter). As one of the core assumptions of Erickson's approach is that trance is a natural phenomenon, innate to human experience, his model is conducive to comparison with more archaic methods.[15] Indeed, according to Erickson's own testimony, anthropologists observing his methods were surprised to learn that he had not visited certain South American shamans, as his vocal tone and rhythm were identical to theirs.[16] Thus, it is not surprising that some post-Ericksonian hypnotists have combined Western

hypnosis with techniques and approaches culled from a variety of mystical traditions, authentic or invented.[17] Despite the obvious parallels between hypnotic and shamanic trance, the vast literature on Western hypnosis has not often been utilized in scholarly discussions of shamanic phenomena.[18]

However, one must note that although there is an extremely close relationship between trance and other shamanic phenomena, the two cannot be entirely conflated. In the Western hypnotic framework, trance is usually not related to shamanism, while there can be shamanic experiences that do not require trance states. Again generally speaking, trance is a more psychological state than the more somatic transformations of many shamanic processes. Also, the shamanic ascent experiences of the Heikhalot circles or the far later, and partly derivative, ascents of the Besht rely heavily on a mythical geography, which is by no means a necessary component of trance states. This being said, I do believe that my understanding of trance in terms of processes rather than static states is conducive for a comparison with the shamanic process, as defined here. Thus, the preliminary definition of trance offered in chapter 2 was an integral part of my working model of the shamanic experience.

General Periodization

As already indicated, the study of trance in early Jewish mysticism is only in its first stages.[19] This is not the situation in the modern period, as Pedaya has already opened a preliminary discussion of the flourishing of trance experiences between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries (as well as a consideration of the relationship between changes in the nature of trance experience in the Jewish world and the various stages of modernity). I propose to extend her insight and offer close and extensive readings of three rich clusters of descriptions of trance techniques and experiences: sixteenth-century Safed and Jerusalem, eighteenth-century Italy (the circle of Luzzatto), and Hasidism. Regarding Hasidism, I shall challenge Pedaya's claim about a decline in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by marshalling texts from both the Hasidic and Lithuanian worlds, which in my view show that even if such a decline occurred, it was not as sharp as Pedaya suggests.[20] However, I warmly adopt her suggestion that prior to late modernity one can indeed find a richer set of body-mind relationships, which should be appreciated as the backdrop for the prevalence of trance experiences. Thus, my discussion shall focus on various modes of interaction of body and consciousness, with especial attention to the difference between kinesthetic and visual-auditory "strategies" of entry into and exit from trance.

Sixteenth-Century Trance Techniques and Experiences

I commence our examination of sixteenth-century trance techniques and experiences with a perusal of three main clusters of texts on ascent and visualization penned in Jerusalem and Safed during this period.

Hayyim Vital's Trance Techniques

The work *Sha'arei Qedusha* (Gates of Holiness) by R. Hayyim Vital is explicitly presented as a manual for attaining ruah ha-qodesh and even prophecy.[21] This goal betrays its affinity with the Abulafian stream of prophetic Kabbalah, and therefore also its divergence from the teachings penned by Vital qua the close student of R. Yitzhaq Luria. Numerous Abulafian elements appear in the fourth "part" of the book—which was openly censored in its many printings and was published only in recent decades, as part of a collection of Lurianic material.[22] Paradoxically, this act of censorship enabled the proliferation of the work in numerous editions and its incorporation in the popular Mussar, or so-called ethical literature.[23] This later development owes much to Vital's discussions of ethical and nomian perfection as a prior condition for any kind of mystical attainment, a stress that underlines the close link between ethics and mysticism in many traditions.[24] From the point of view of reception history, it is logical to commence with texts found in the more prevalent editions of the work.

In the third part of the book (Gate Five), which is devoted to the theory of prophecy, Vital elaborates on the meaning of the term "divestment of corporeality" (*hitpashtut ha-gashmiut*), a term that appears widely in philosophical, mystical, and Halakhic sources.[25] Vital begins by differentiating divestment from dream-states, and then goes on to define this phenomenon in detail: "The meaning of divestment is that he remove all his thoughts . . . and the imaginative power . . . will cease to imagine and think of any of the matters of the world, as if his soul has departed him, and then the imaginary power transforms his thought, so as to imagine and visualize as if he ascends to the supernal worlds—in the roots of his soul that are located there, from one [root] to another, until the image of his imagination reaches his higher source."[26]

This opening paragraph describes ascent in terms of mystical death, a common topos in Lurianic writing (see chapter 2). However, this is but the prelude to a process of the ascent of the soul, described here in Neo-Platonic terms of return to the source.[27] However, the psychological theory of ascent is less pertinent for our purposes than the technique described

here—the emptying of thought—until it is transformed and yields to the imagination. The latter is conceptualized here as an image-producing and visualizing power. One could well describe this method by using the Jungian phrase "active imagination."[28] The emptying of thought, which is frequently presented as the summit of meditative practice, is here but the necessary turning of consciousness inwards, as a necessary prelude for transformation and empowerment, which enables the internal movement towards the altered reality of the supernal worlds. This distinction reinforces the need to differentiate trance from concentrative meditation: while the latter often perceives the imaginative faculty as an obstacle, in trance it is frequently seen as an ally, as it were. I believe that the continuation of the text further reinforces my reading, which foregrounds transformative empowerment as well as visual technique:

> And the shape of all the lights should be engraved in his thought—as if he pictures and sees them. And then he should think and intend to receive light from the ten *Sefirot*, from the same point where the root of his soul adheres. And he should intend to uplift the ten *Sefirot* one to another until the Infinite (*Ein Sof*) and draw to them light from there downwards . . . and he should intend to bring down by means of descent . . . until the light and influx (*shef'a*) arrive to his intellectual soul in his body and from there to the vital soul and the imaginative faculty, and there the matters will be pictured in a material image in the imaginative power, and then he will understand them as if he literally sees them. And sometimes this descending light will be pictured in the imaginative power in the form of an angel who speaks to him, and he will see him or hear his voice or something similar in one of the known psychic senses in the imaginative power.[29]

I believe that this part of the text describes two discrete phases—in the first, active phase, there is an effort of thought and intention to engrave the images in a state of nonthought, as if one sees them. This is in order to enable the second, more passive phase, in which the light is drawn from the source to the root of the soul and from there down to the soul itself, until it rearrives at the intellect and imagination. At this point, the effort to visualize is replaced by the more effortless reception of concrete images in the imagination. As Elliot Wolfson has noted, it is precisely the divestment of corporeality in the first part of the process that facilitates the process of "spiritual entities assuming corporeal form within the imagination."[30]

This individuation of the image can take the form reminiscent of the *maggid* or angelic mentor, which could manifest in an auditory as well as

visual manner.[31] However, this possibility is far from central in this text (as well as being overemphasized in studies of Safedian mysticism).[32] It should not distract us from the more pertinent observation that Vital's discussion, which speaks of visualization, images, and lights, belongs to a visual model of theurgy and mystical practice.[33] Whichever the "representational system" or "reference system" employed for the culmination of the process, the move is towards a greater concretization of what was previously merely constructed by the imagination.[34] It is this element of concretization that draws Vital's description away from the more medieval and philosophically oriented world of mere mental visualization and closer to the realm of shamanic trance.[35]

A similar process can be located in Vital's more elaborate discussion of the above-mentioned phenomenon of the maggid.[36] According to this text, the angelic mentor is constructed by the intention of the practitioner rather than being an objectively existing entity. This sequence can be readily captured by the comparative model developed by Hollenback, who writes, "The subject constructs the environment that he sees and experiences out of his own thoughts and desires that instantaneously embody themselves."[37] This form of active concretization can be further explored by examining the conclusion of Vital's discussion of divestment. After the light descends into the internal five senses in the imagination, it then proceeds to permeate the physical senses: "And from there they will shift to their external aspect in the five external senses which are from the animal soul as is known. And then he will see and hear and smell and speak with his senses in a literally physical manner, as it is written: 'God spoke in me and his word on my tongue' (2 Sam. 23:2). For the light will be materialized and formed (*yitztayyer*) in the physical senses."[38]

Before elaborating on this text, I wish to compare it to an extremely important statement penned by Vital qua student of Luria, found in the manual of mystical techniques published as *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh* (The Gate of the Holy Spirit):

> One should intend and consider oneself as if one is a dwelling place and throne for the holy emanation [*atzilut*] . . . and one should intend that one's ear is the sixty-three letter permutation of the ineffable name except for the last letter Heh and through this intention maybe one can merit hearing some holiness from above in one's prayer, and intend in one's nose to the sixty-three letter permutation . . . and maybe one will merit to smell a holy smell. And in one's mouth to the sixty-three letter permutation and to the twenty-two letters . . . and maybe one will merit what David, of blessed memory said: 'God

spoke in me and his word on my tongue' (2 Sam, 23: 2), in one's prayer . . .
and there is no doubt that if one regularly practices all of these intentions,
then he will be like one of the angels serving in heaven, and attain knowledge
of everything he wants.[39]

Using the biblical prooftext cited in the previous excerpt, this instruction,
as in the previous text, elaborates on a set of transformations of the senses,
which add up to a mild form of apotheosis, which leads in turn to empow-
erment of the mind and even to a form of omniscience (of the kind Luria
himself was credited with in his hagiographies).[40] There is a mild element
of *unio mystica* here, in that the descent of light leads to a possession-like
experience, in which the mystic's body is permeated by divine presence and
he experiences some form of automatic speech.[41] At the same time, I do
not propose to read it as a full transformation of identity or of being. These
descriptions may be fruitfully compared to the Sufi hadith—"When I love
him, I am the eye with which he sees, the hearing with which he hears, the
tongue with which he speaks and the hand with which he grasps"; or to
the parallel formulation in the Judeo-Sufi *Duties of the Heart*: "He will see
without physical eyes, hear without physical ears, speak without the tongue,
sense things without their special organs."[42]

The main text from *Sha'arei Qedusha* that we have followed until now is
significantly enriched by yet another parallel found further towards the end
of Gate Three of this book, where Vital adds:

He should shut his eyes and divest his thought from all matters of the world
as if his soul has departed like a dead person who feels nothing, and then
make an effort and be strengthened with a strong desire to contemplate the
supernal world and to adhere there to the roots of his soul and the higher
lights, and imagine himself as if his soul has departed and ascended above,
and picture the higher worlds as if he is standing in them. And if he performs
a yihud—he should contemplate it, to draw light and influx with it in all the
worlds and he should intend to receive his own portion last. And he should
concentrate mentally (*yitboded be-mahshava*), as though the spirit had rested
on him, until he awakens somewhat and if he does not feel anything it would
seem that he is not worthy and ready as yet, and thus he should increase his
strength more from thence onwards in worship and holiness and after a few
days he should return to concentrate in this fashion, until he merits having
the spirit reside on him . . . and know that at first the spirit will reside on him
randomly and infrequently, and also it will entail lowly words and not deep

ones, and also the words will be few, and the more he advances the more he increases his strength.[43]

This elaboration adds two elements: one is the closing of the eyes, which functions as a concentrative device, and thus overlaps with meditative technique.[44] The other is more complex, and entails imagining oneself not merely observing the imaginal geography from without (in a "disassociated" mode, to employ technical hypnotic terminology) but "as if he is standing in them" (in an "associated" manner).[45] Finally, Vital accords a legitimate, but limited role to magical personal gain. He then appends a point of technical advice—the need to provide for sufficient time between the necessary repetitions of the technique, in order to enable gradual empowerment.[46] In this not overly Lurianic context, one should not overemphasize the significance of the mention of the Lurianic yihud technique. As Vital himself notes, this is but an option and in a parallel text, from the censored fourth part of *Sha'arei Qedusha*, he offers an alternative in the form of another popular sixteenth-century technique—repeated Mishna recitation.[47]

It could be fruitful to compare the emphasis on associated visualization with the distinction offered by Benny Shanon in his phenomenology of the trance experience facilitated by ingestion of the Ayahuasca brew in South America and elsewhere.[48] Shanon differentiates between the following modes of vision: seeing from without, "simple immersion" without interaction, and various forms of passive and active interaction. As Vital suggests a form of activity, one should read his text as describing active interaction within a scene, or Shanon's "full immersion." However, there seems to be an important point of difference: while in the shamanic experience induced by the psychotropic substance, the associated mode is activated by the plants ingested while here it is constructed by an act of effort and intention. Thus, it is not truly a virtual reality, which is as powerful as one's everyday experience, as in Shanon's full immersion. One should also recall that in a previous text we have seen that the effort of construction is followed by a more passive mode, in which the image appears of itself, effortlessly.[49]

In any case, the mention of gradual waking in the last text from Vital shows that, as in the testimonies discussed by Shanon, we are dealing with a form of trance.[50] This reading is borne out by a text from the fourth section of *Sha'arei Qedusha*, which proposes the following technique for beginners: "You shall become tired from the intense speed of your mouth, and become silent unintentionally, and doze in a state of sleep/no-sleep (*nim lo nim*) and in this sleep you will see the answer to your question."[51] The term *nim*

lo nim seems to be a clear parallel to the Western word trance, no less than *hitbodedut* parallels concentration, as we have seen above. The practical procedure is very similar to certain Ericksonian techniques, which utilize acceleration and the resultant fatigue to induce involuntary loss of control over the faculty of speech, which enables beginners to slip into trance.[52]

Vital's Visions in Trance

I now wish to compare these theoretical discussions to a lengthy autobiographical description of trance found in his mystical diary, known as *Sefer Ha-Hezyonot*, as translated in Morris Faierstein's edition:

I recited the *kiddush*, and sat down at the table to eat. I was shedding copious tears. . . . I lay on my bed face down crying, face down, until I dozed off from the many tears and I had a wondrous dream.

I saw myself . . . reciting the *minha* prayers. . . . After the prayers an old man stood before me. . . . He called me by my name and said to me: Rabbi Hayyim, do you want to go out to the fields now with me to accompany the Sabbath Queen as she departs, as you are accustomed to do when she arrives, and I will show you wondrous things there? I said to him: I am here. We went out to the wall of the old tower, which is on the western side of Safed . . . , a place where there had previously been a gateway in the wall.

I looked up and saw a very tall mountain, the top of which was in the heavens. Come to the mountain with me and I will tell you why I was sent to you. In the blink of an eye I saw him ascend to the top of the mountain and I remained at the bottom, unable to ascend . . . I said to him: I am amazed. I am a young man and cannot ascend at all and you are old, yet you ascended it in the blink of an eye. He said to me: Hayyim, you do not know that every day I ascend and descend this mountain a thousand times to fulfill the missions of God. How can you be amazed at me? When I saw that earlier he had earlier called me Rabbi Hayyim and now called [me] Hayyim. . . , and also when I heard his terrifying words, I knew that he was certainly Elijah z"l [of blessed memory]. . . . I broke down and began to cry from great fear. . . . he said to me: Do not fear, this is why I was sent to you. He grasped my arms and brought me to the top of the mountain with him in a blink of an eye. I looked up and saw a ladder, the bottom of which was standing on the top of the mountain and its top reached the heavens. . . . He said to me: I have been given permission to accompany you only until here. From here and further, see what you can do. He disappeared and I cried with great anguish.[53]

Vital describes nomian activity (the recitation of the Qiddush) leading to the anomian activity of weeping, which may possibly have served as a technique to incubate a vision in a dream or sleep-like trance. The vision included the manifestation of an inner guide, similar to the archetype of the Wise Old Man.[54] The guide invited Vital to join him in the semi-nomian activity of escorting Sabbath when it goes out, which parallels the nomian practice of welcoming the Sabbath on Friday night, which was especially developed in Safed. Here, the move outdoors developed into an imaginary movement in normal space, which already incorporates the themes of towers and gates, which will then recur in inner space. We should note the element of time distortion, as Vital was asked to escort the Sabbath on its departure soon after welcoming it on Friday night. The vision then developed into a tour of mythical geography: the initial impasse reflected in the inability to ascend should be seen as a transformative moment in the dream: the guide shifts from an identity that recalls the waking world to a truly internal and archetypal one, just as his attitude towards the dreamer changes from invitation to admonishment. At this point Vital experiences an experience of weeping and helplessness that parallels the depression and weeping that incubated the trance, again showing how the waking experience sets the stage for dream-like experience and is then transformed by it. The resolution of this initial crisis involves a complex combination of assistance and then forced individuation and independence, which led to a new crisis, which is now described:

> A distinguished woman, beautiful as the sun, approached the top of the ladder. I thought in my heart that it was my mother. She said: My son, Hayyim, why are you crying? I have heard your tears and have come to help you. She stretched out her right hand and raised me to the top of the ladder. I saw there a large round window and a large flame coming out of it, back and forth, like a bolt of lightning and it burned everything found there. I knew in my soul that it was the flame of the whirling sword that is at the entrance to the Garden of Eden [Gen. 3:24]. I called to the woman with great grief and said to her: My mother, my mother, help me that the sword should not burn me. [She said] Nobody can help you with this flame; you are on your own. But I will advise you on what to do. . . . Then the woman disappeared.
>
> Elijah z"l [of blessed memory] again appeared as earlier, grasped my right hand, and said to me: Come to me to the place where I had originally been sent to bring you. He brought me to an immensely large courtyard with large rivers flowing through it to water the garden. . . . the trees were very tall, and

their branches bent downward almost touching the ground. Their ends looked like a *sukkah*. There were innumerable birds in the garden, which looked like white geese, traversing the length and breadth of the garden, reciting *mishnahs* of tractate *Shabbat*. It was then the night of the Sabbath at the beginning of the dream. In the course of their wandering they would recite a *mishnah* or a chapter, raise their necks, and afterwards drink from the rivers. This was their constant activity. It had been made known to me that these were the souls of *zaddiqim*, Masters of the *Mishnah*. However, I did not know why they had the form of geese and birds and not the form of people.[55]

Although there are Zoharic allusions here, I wish to focus on the meaning of this vision or dream in terms of Vital's inner world. The resolution of the second crisis was manifested in the form of a luminous figure, whom the dreamer (in a rather Freudian manner) interpreted as a mother-imago, while a Jungian interpretation would cast her as an Anima figure. The solar luminosity of her beauty sets the stage for the next task or challenge, which predictably is that of a fiery barrier.[56] Again, the dreamer gives this barrier an interpretation, which is closer to his waking world and its mythic concepts. Here again, the guide forces independence on Vital, whose tendency to dependence may reflect his constant search for charismatic external teachers, which culminated with his encounter with Luria five years after this vision.

The return of the masculine guide is accompanied by a declaration that the dreamer will be taken to the original destination of the dream, a move echoed in the return to the original time of the eve of the Sabbath. The inner space of the vision, on the other hand, opens into an architectonic locale, which has Edenic overtones, thus reinforcing the earlier interpretation of the barrier as the fiery sword guarding the entrance to Paradise. In terms of the four elements (a structure which preoccupied Vital, as we have seen in chapter 2), the vision switches from fire to water. A deeper shift is expressed in the move from human figures to a more shamanic manifestation of souls in animal form. However, these are engaged in the nomian rite of studying the Mishna of Shabbat, a common custom in both mystical and nonmystical circles. It is interesting to note the difficulty that the dreamer encountered, despite his ready interpretation, when fitting this appearance into his cultural system. I therefore regard this point in the vision as an interesting interplay of elements, which could be seen as more universal with those, which are clearly culturally specific. The vision then moves to its heart or center, where predictably the true ascent, that which is unassisted, occurs:

He led me further into the center of the garden until I saw a large and tall attic, as if it was on top of a great height, but there was no house under it . . . . its door was in the west and there was a ladder of three stone steps from the ground to the door of the attic. Elijah z"l [of blessed memory] disappeared. I ascended the ladder alone and entered the door of the attic. I saw God, Blessed be He, sitting on the chair in the middle of the southern wall. He looked like the Ancient of Days, with a beard white as snow, in infinite splendor. *Zaddiqim* sat before him on the ground, on beautiful carpets and couches, learning Torah from Him. I knew in my Soul that they were the *zaddiqim* called *bnei aliyah* [sons of ascent]. They have human features, continually see the Divine Presence and learn Torah directly from Him. This was not the level of Masters of the *Mishnah*. They had the form of birds and geese . . . They stand in the courtyard and in the garden, but do not see the Divine Presence regularly. . . .

When I entered and saw his face, I became confused and was seized with fear. I fell to the ground before his feet and could not summon any strength. He stretched out his hand and grasped my right hand and said to me: Hayyim my son, stand up, why did you fall on your face. Do not be afraid. . . . Strengthen and fortify yourself, stand up and sit at my right in this empty place, near me. I said to him: How can I sit at your right in this place, for it has been prepared for Rabbi Joseph Karo. He said to me: I thought so at first, but afterwards I gave him another place and this has been prepared for you.[57]

The independent ascent enabled a deeper shift in mythical space, into the divine world, where the Wise Old Man further transforms into the Ancient of Days, or the archetypal and mythical image of the highest levels of the divine world. Here, as Vital stresses, the souls are likewise transformed from animal to human form, and this move enables him to satisfactorily resolve his earlier quandary, in terms of access to vision of the divine, which he himself now participates in, thus becoming a son of ascent himself. At this climactic point, Vital's ongoing experience of fear broke out into a vivid experience of falling and loss of strength. The psychological resolution, in which God lifted Vital up, is echoed in the social move of displacing his rival R. Joseph Karo. As Karo, due to his favorite technique of Mishna recitation, was perhaps closer to the lower level, populated by those who are not granted direct access to God (as the text goes on to elaborate), Vital's ascent has enabled him to replace his rival.[58] The text concludes with a return to the lower world, which is accompanied by a posthypnotic suggestion, which took the form of an oath. The progression described here matches

with Benny Shanon's observations on entry into "visionary realms," as he puts it, in stages in which one goes through a series of gates and doors and thus progressively perceives ordinary reality as more distant.[59] It is significant that it is only after such distancing that Vital could reach a therapeutic resolution, which was obviously not accessible in ordinary consciousness.

I have dwelt on this extremely rich text at some length (without exhausting it by any means), as I believe that analyzing it in terms of trance experience is more fruitful than choosing to read it just as a dream and thus perhaps subjecting it to Freudian analysis, which would focus on the impotence and seminal emissions mentioned in the background to the dream. The texts cited from the works of Vital show a strong connection between ascent and trance, accompanied by subtle yet clear differentiation between various triggers, stages, and manifestations of the trance experience.[60] This elaboration is not characteristic of the more sparse descriptions of early Kabbalah and medieval Judaism in general, although the latter certainly influenced Vital's conceptualization. Thus, accompanied by a far greater concern with the individual, as exemplified in Vital's self-preoccupation in the vision, which we have just seen, it is part of the general shift to modernity ushered in by Safedian Kabbalah. I now wish to place the oft-studied Safedian and Lurianic world in the wider context of sixteenth-century Kabbalah by turning to less-studied clusters of texts, by R. Yehuda Albotini and R. Yosef Ibn Sayyah.[61]

Yehuda Albotini's Trance Techniques

Again, the techniques suggested above and the worldviews that informed them were culled from several sources in early Kabbalah.[62] However, I wish to focus now on Vital's indebtedness to a more immediate source—two sixteenth-century kabbalists from the center, which operated in Jerusalem somewhat earlier to the flourishing of Safedian Kabbalah. Both of these earlier writers were in fact quoted by Vital.[63] Until recently, the Jerusalem center has been overshadowed by the somewhat later Safedian center in the study of sixteenth-century Palestinian Kabbalah. My scholarly career began with the perusal of these texts, many of which are found only in manuscript form, as an essential first step in the study of the origins of modern Kabbalistic trance experience.

Idel has already compared Vital's discussion to the tenth chapter of R. Yehuda Albotini's *Sulam Ha-'Aliya* (Ladder of Ascent), which like Vital, describes divestment of materiality as preparation for some form of prophetic inspiration ("a ladder to the levels of prophecy").[64] Following Wolfson, Idel

has especially focused on the shared "as-if" mode of imaginary ascent, in which the practitioner visualizes himself as present in the supernal worlds.[65] In his discussion, Wolfson cited a text by sixteenth-century R. Abraham ben Eliʿezer Ha-Levi, likewise of Jerusalem, who writes of this "as if he was seeing them with his actual eye." I would but add that Albotini's visualization is somewhat more elaborate than that of Vital, who simplified this technique in order to combine it with other methods drawn from various earlier sources. Albotini's description of ascent clearly contains a rich variety of trance techniques and phenomena.[66]

In terms of technique, Albotini does not merely mention eye closure, but advises closing the eyes tightly, as well as closing the hands tightly, breathing deeply, and shaking the entire body.[67] Likewise, when describing an auditory alternative to visualization (involving recitation of divine names combined with "long breath, the longest possible"), he writes that all these movements should be performed with a "swift and powerful movement," which "warms the thought and increases desire and joy." This is followed by deep relaxation: "until all his body parts, external and internal, will almost weaken." This may be similar to the hypnotic technique of eye closure and fist closure followed by relaxation, as part of the overall method of inducing relaxation through intensity.

The specific manifestation of intense shaking, in which "his knees should knock against each other," often accompanies trance, whether as an induction or as an effect of release of conscious control, the best known examples being of course the eighteenth-century Shakers.[68] This relaxation is described not only as withdrawal of the senses, as in Vital, but as a "corpse-like" state, in which the practitioner "falls to the ground, almost like a dead person and lies down and sleeps."[69] As we have seen in the case of Vital, Albotini clearly intends hypnotic sleep, rather than ordinary sleep, as immediately prior, and following this text, he speaks of receiving a response to a question (as in dream incubation, or *sheʾelat halom*), while waking.[70]

The image of near-death is not the only indication that Albotini seems to be describing a deeper state of trance than that described by Vital. First, the experience is not only either auditory or visual, as quoted by Vital, but also involves an almost erotic somatic feeling of being bathed in oil.[71] As we have seen, not only the experience but also the technique itself are strongly somatic and can thus aptly be described as characteristically shamanic forms of trance. The experience described here is not merely one of adherence to the root of the soul, as in Vital's Neo-Platonic scheme, but of actual unitary transformation, as in the phrase "For without doubt he exits the human domain and enters the divine domain."[72] Here we indeed find transformation

of being, rather than transformation of the senses. This sense of radical transformation through removal into an entirely different realm explains Albotini's emphasis on the profoundly unconscious and unexpected source of the powers obtained through these practices: "If he is answered,[73] he should know for certain that he is desired . . . and can perform great things that he never thought of, and that never crossed his mind ('*alu 'al-libo*)."[74] Thus, it is not surprising that Albotini dwells on the need for exit procedures, a necessity reinforced by the near-death state of total relaxation:[75]

> And it has occurred that one's soul may be detached during this divestment, totally and entirely, and he will remain dead, and this is an excellent death, close to the "kiss of death," and in this manner the soul of Ben 'Azzai departed from him . . . and already some of the masters of wisdom who enter in these activities said, that whoever does not wish his soul to depart from him, then during the preceding vision, near that activity [the entry into *unio mystica*] should bind his soul with an oath, or with the great and awesome name, that while he is in the vision and beholding when he is not in his own domain, his soul should not detach and go to adhere to its source, but rather return to its sheath and to its body as before. And thus it shall do, for it shall not go back on its oath. And then return to the matters of the body and rise up, and eat some morsel and drink a bit and smell a pleasant odor and return your spirit to her sheaf, and rejoice.[76]

This exit strategy moves from the auditory (internal dialogue with the soul) to a series of kinesthetic and olfactory procedures designed for slowly emerging from the trance back into one's habitual state.[77] Albotini also feels a need to reassure the would-be practitioner that repeated practice will remove the fear attendant on these states, and goes on to say, "When you are expert in choosing this life, and repeat this many times until you succeed strongly and firmly, know that the more you persist in this matter, it will be easier for you to accomplish, and you shall acquire a great preparation to see the things that you desire to see without many fears as in the beginning."[78]

If one recalls our basic model of shamanic practice, return to the normal state of consciousness logically follows the radical disruption of habitual identities and perceptions, which is part and parcel of the profound transformation affected by trance. As this trajectory is repeated, it becomes, as it were, a mystical habituation, which replaces the initially rigid frameworks whose disruption requires so many techniques. To return to our comparison, Albotini's text is more radical than that of Vital because it is closer to

being an Abulafian, ecstatic text.[79] Vital seems to have combined the Abu-lafian procedures and descriptions that he found in *Sulam Ha-'Aliyah* with Lurianic theurgy, thus crafting a formulation that was more easily digestible by kabbalists with a theurgical, rather than ecstatic, orientation, as well as Kabbalistic Mussar literature. However, it should be stressed that both Al-botini and Vital regard ethical perfection as a prior condition for prophecy.[80] Therefore, Vital's text does not differ from that of his predecessor in being ethical, but merely in being less intensely mystical and more theurgical.[81] However, one can indeed see the reworking of Albotini's set of practices in Vital's treatise as corroboration for Idel's proposal that "the extreme mysti-cism of the ecstatics was domesticated in the ethical literature."[82] I return to this relationship of the ethical and the mystical in chapter 6, while turning now to another less-known, yet rich, cluster of texts.

R. Yosef Ibn Sayyah's Trance Techniques

The main source material for this book in terms of unprinted manuscripts is found in the extensive writings of sixteenth-century R. Yosef Ibn Sayyah, which have so far escaped the current wave of publication of Kabbalistic texts, despite some interest evinced by contemporary kabbalists, partly in response to academic research. Ibn Sayyah was born in Jerusalem, were he was active during most of his life.[83] Among other sources, Ibn Sayyah was heavily influenced by the Mandlala-like visualizations found in the works of fourteenth-century R. David ben Yehudah He-Hasid, and wrote a supercom-mentary on the latter's commentary on the prayers.[84] In a terse description, befitting an essentially esoteric writer, Ibn Sayyah writes of trance tech-niques and experiences in a manner that is both similar to that of Albotini and rather unique.[85] Ibn Sayyah writes of the "wise men of the Kabbalah who ascend in the excellent pathway (*mesila*), which rises above, and enter the flaming fire of the Deed of the Chariot, in a short and wide path, digni-fied and good, in the secret of the Pardes, which is known to them, which is to concentrate (*lehitboded*) on certain matters that are known to us in this wisdom, and to bow his head like a servant between his knees,[86] until his sensory perceptions (*murgashav*) are abolished, as his senses are absent."[87] Once the practitioner reaches a state of sensory withdrawal, he can then obtain a clear and stable vision: "And then he will behold the higher sights (*mar'ot*), constantly and not in riddles."[88] Although Ibn Sayyah tends to stress the visual representational system, the basic structure is that found in Albotini's text: sensory withdrawal, ascent, concentration, and stabilization of visionary experience.[89]

However, when it comes to the entry technique, Ibn Sayyah adds an important kinesthetic component that differs significantly from that offered by Albotini—placing one's head between his knees. This is the classical Elijah posture, which induces a state of sensory withdrawal, and may be found in both Jewish (especially Heikhalot texts) and Sufi sources. Scholem has described this posture as "favorable for the induction of pre-hypnotic autosuggestion," while adducing parallels from Chinese shamanism.[90] Therefore, while Albotini suggests the shamanic mode of intense bodily movement to reach full relaxation, Ibn Sayyah opts for the restriction of motility in a fixed posture, which facilitates a more classical and internal trance state.[91]

Furthermore, when discussing the exit strategy, Ibn Sayyah adds the stipulation that "his teacher needs to stand over him on the first time, so that his hands may be firm, so that he should not be one who glances and is damaged as we find that it happened to some of the early sages."[92] Similar requirements for avoiding danger may be found in prescriptions for shamanic trance. However, Ibn Sayyah and Albotini agree that only beginners are in real danger.[93] While Albotini's recommendation, as we have seen, is to practice adjuring the soul to return to its place, Ibn Sayyah suggests the employment of a more senior supervisor.[94] This method can be compared to similar suggestions found in discussions of trance in the theurgical literature of Late Antiquity, as examined by Dodds and Luck.[95] More generally, the danger of nonreturn may be related to the depth of the state described by Ibn Sayyah: elsewhere, he writes of "cleaning thought of all obstacles" and "purifying it" as the "path" leading to entering "the chambers of the supernal king."[96] In other words, as with Vital and Albotini, emptying the mind is a prelude to entering a supernal reality, described here in architectonic terms. Therefore, a specific procedure is mandated in order to restore normal identity.

Elsewhere I have suggested that the two Jerusalemite kabbalists, Ibn Sayyah and Albotini, can be seen as part of a mini-circle in Jerusalem, as it were, as suggested by the similarities in their writings, the adjacent time frame, and their shared interests and influences.[97] It is not necessary to assume that Vital was influenced by Ibn Sayyah in matters of trance, as strongly as by Albotini, and there is no evidence of Ibn Sayyah's unique practices in *Sha'arei Qedusha* or other writings of Vital.[98] However, Vital does quote a magical technique of Ibn Sayyah's in an unpublished manuscript of his, cited above, and I have suggested elsewhere that Ibn Sayyah possibly influenced theories of cosmogony and evil found in Vital's published work. This flow of ideas was part of the general influence of the members of the

center in Jerusalem on their Safedian successors, in matters of both Halakha and Kabbalah.[99]

Ibn Sayyah's works are still extant only in manuscript, Albotini's *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya* was only printed in 1990, and the fourth part of Vital's *Shaʿarei Qedusha* suffered a similar fate. However, this is by no means an esoteric discourse. The influence of the trance techniques developed in Kabbalah of Jerusalem on the widely disseminated published sections of *Shaʿarei Qedusha* facilitated the popularization of trance, up to and including the Hasidim. Thus, it is not surprising that Hasidic trance experts quoted the very passages from Vital discussed here at length.[100] If it is correct that Vital moderated the descriptions of a deeper state of trance that he found in Albotini (and possibly Ibn Sayyah as well), then this move further facilitated the reception of a discourse on trance in wider circles. Finally, when considering the place of shamanic trance in sixteenth-century Jerusalem, one should again recall R. Avraham ben Eliʿezer Ha-Levi. Although, as I have shown elsewhere, this Spanish-born kabbalist had a different spiritual profile from Albotini and certainly from Ibn Sayyah, and thus does not offer a real discussion of trance, nonetheless we have already seen his shamanic descriptions of fiery transformation in chapter 2, as well as their context in his discussions of visualization.[101]

Trance in the Sixteenth Century: An Overview

I conclude this discussion by comparing the shared assumption of the three writers surveyed here, namely that prophetic trance experience is reached by withdrawal from the senses and divestment of materiality, to an alternative Safedian position.[102] R. Moshe Cordovero, who may have known of all three of these writers, wrote the following on prophecy in his commentary *Or Yakar* on the Zohar:

> Many say that prophecy is the result of the prophet concentrating (*yitboded*) and attaining the spiritual matters . . . yet although this is true it is not true of every prophet and every prophecy. But the truth is that there are two forms of prophecy: one is that the prophet will prepare himself appropriately for prophecy and sometimes he will attain and sometimes he will not . . . however, there can be prophecy for one worthy of it even if he does not prepare himself for it . . . and the reason for this matter is according to the need of the hour, for when the hour is pressing and there is need for prophecy . . . it will precede preparation . . . and this clearly points at the two forms of prophecy

as I explained: one is that the prophet will annul his powers and seem as a madman in his matters, and then attain prophecy after divestment of materiality. The other is that he maintains the reality of his reason in the goodness of his intent and prophecy comes to him . . . and it seems to me to interpret as follows: prophecy is attained in two manners: either the prophet ascends to the *heikhal* of prophecy and attains it there, or the prophecy descends to him from the *heikhal* through the levels that the prophet would ascend in until it reaches the prophet below, and there is much between them if we say that the prophet ascends, then he must divest himself from materiality and ascend these levels in his soul and mind in divestment of materiality, until he enters the *heikhal* . . . according to the place of his prophecy, and there they will give him an influx of prophecy as much as he can bear, and that prophecy will be divested from matter, and thus will not be audible . . . or in a visible form . . . and if we say that the prophecy descends below, then the spirituality (*ruhaniut*) and *heikhalot* need to be enclothed, garment after garment, all the levels that the prophet would have ascended to, and then the prophecy will be revealed to the prophet enclothed in imagination and . . . material matters and he will perceive the *hayyot* and Seraphs not in their subtlety above, but only in the reality of their enclothement below, and this enclothed prophecy will come to the prophet without any preparation at all, as long as he is virtuous and worthy of prophecy.[103]

According to Cordovero the basic model we have surveyed describes but one form of prophecy, in which effort is required in order to ascend to the Heikhalot and also requires sensory deprivation, which is described here as a form of controlled madness.[104] However, in the rarer cases, where prophecy descends more passively as result of a pressing need, no such process is necessary.[105] The process of concretization, which is contained within the Vitalian model we have seen above, is parsed by Cordovero and assigned to this descending model.

To some degree, his basic distinction resembles that drawn by thirteenth-century Sufi mystic Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi, according to whom the prophetic experience is initiated by God, but the saint relies on his own training.[106] This discussion can also be contrasted to that presented by Sullivan, in his masterly survey of South American shamanism. Sullivan differentiates between the more common case, in which the shaman is "called" in a vision or dream, and the less prevalent, in which the shaman is trained by a mentor. Although Sullivan stresses that in both cases initiation and a period of apprenticeship are necessary, it appears that in the first path a greater role is accorded to the initiative of the supernatural world.[107] As we have seen,

in Vital's model there are two distinct phases in a unified set of techniques and experiences: active ascent and passive descent. Cordovero, in contrast, posits two discrete types: one includes the entire process of ascent and then removal of sensory perception, while the other is entirely passive.

The three main sources that we have examined in the first part of this chapter merge concepts and procedures found in several main bodies of texts, in an inter-corporal manner.[108] These include the ascent tradition of the Heikhalot literature, Neo-Platonic concepts, the mystical practices of the prophetic Kabbalah, and the notion of divestment of materiality that also entered Halakhic discourse on prayer. One should also add the possibility of various Arabic and especially Sufi influences on the three writers.[109] This complex shared background is very evident when compared with the rather different model offered by the Safedian Cordovero, or to the much more passive experience of R. Joseph Karo, which partly reflects the Byzantine world, and has been extensively dealt with by other scholars.[110] Should one extend this comparison to contemporaneous centers that did not cultivate trance techniques, such as Italy or even the more magically oriented North African center, then this cluster of texts will stand out even more prominently.

At the same time, each of our authors maintains his own unique mix of techniques, concepts, and experiences. Most of the texts discussed here incorporate core aspects of the shamanic model described in chapter 2, such as empowerment, somatic transformation, and movement in imaginal geography. The divinization of the senses, or journey to the divine domain, exhibit certain structural affinities to the shamanic procedure of shape changing, which is usually described in archaic terms of taking on the senses of form of a power animal.[111] Eliade, followed by Couliano, has described these transformations in symbolic terms as representation of the animal.[112] However, I argue that we are in fact dealing with an embodied experience of transformation. In a similar fashion, one may generalize and suggest that experiences of being swallowed by an animal may be compared to possessive or passive experiences of being swallowed or drowned in God, while experiences of entering an animal may parallel the entry into the divine realm in an associated state.[113]

Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto

In chapter 2, I discussed both scholastic and practical elements of the shamanic discourse of R. Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto, perhaps the most influential modern kabbalist. Although various aspects of his thought have been

analyzed in existing research, we are still far from a more general picture of this extremely complex, prolific, and influential writer.[114] A deeper understanding of the experiential basis of his self-consciously innovative discourse is a prerequisite for attaining such a picture. Luzzatto's autobiographic writing can be seen as a rich resource for the history and phenomenology of Kabbalistic trance, which has not yet been sufficiently mined. In fact, Luzzatto can be seen as a prime example of the prevalence of possessive trance in Jewish mystical experience. This prevalence has been noted, inter alia, by Zvi Mark, who discussed testimonies that record obvious trance phenomena, such as posthypnotic amnesia or bodily seizures.[115] One of the more obvious of these testimonies is that recorded by Luzzatto himself. According to an epistle penned by him during the Hanukka festival of 1731, a concentrative technique led to a sleep-like hypnotic state followed by a passive, possession-like experience, initially accompanied by bodily seizures: "As I was performing one yihud, I fell asleep, and when I awakened I heard a voice saying: 'I have descended to reveal the secrets of the holy king,' and I almost stood up shaking, and then gathered strength." Although the passive nature of the revelation is not specified here, it is clearly brought out in Luzzatto's subsequent description: "And I do not see him [the maggid], but hear his voice speaking from inside me."[116]

This auditory manifestation was closely followed by a more visual phenomenon: the revelation of the maggid was followed by the manifestation of souls, which Luzzatto saw in human form "as in a dream, literally."[117] In other words, while the initial experience is described as a waking state following a sleep-like trance, the later, visual experience is described as a kind of waking dream. In general, as we have seen, there is some overlap between trance and dream states (as suggested by the very etymology of the word "hypnosis"), though many texts can be found to differentiate quite carefully between them.[118] It is important to emphasize that in this text Luzzatto does not explicitly describe the possessing entity as a maggid, and one should be reluctant to assume that any possessing power is maggidic; however, this characterization appears explicitly in other epistles. At any rate it is clear that this revelation included the manifestation of several souls and angelic forces, and not just a single entity (as is often assumed in a facile manner). These included the prophet Elijah, as well as other important souls.[119]

The plurality of the possessing entities, as well as the close similarity between works that Luzzatto composed when receiving dictation from them and those written on his own accord, show that although I have defined his experience as positive possession, it is not certain that this term, in the usual sense, does justice to the complexity of his experience. Perhaps Smith

and Samuel's sophisticated rereading of positive possession in the Tantric context in terms of reshaping of one's internal reality through incorporation of other entities, as opposed to the simplistic notion of being taken over, is more pertinent for this particular series of experiences.[120]

Luzzatto's experience may be fruitfully compared to a much earlier (and thus rare) description of possessive trance found in *Shaʿarei Tzedeq*, the thirteenth-century mystical autobiography penned by R. Nathan Ben Saʿadyah Harʾar: "The letters [that he was engaged in permuting] appeared as great mountains . . . . A great trembling overpowered me and I felt no strength and my hair stood straight, and it was as if I was not in the world at all, I fell down straightaway for I felt no strength in any of my limbs, and behold a kind of speech came from my heart to my lips and forced them to move."[121] As in the case of Luzzatto, automatic speech was preceded by shaking as well as complete muscular relaxation. The latter is described here, in more detail, as culminating in falling down. Saʿadyah's description is also richer in details of sensory distortion and the total removal of the senses.[122]

To return to Luzzatto's testimony in the first person, it should be compared to that of one of his supporters, R. Raphael Yisraʾel Qimhi, the messenger on behalf of the Safedian community in northern Italy: "With my own eyes I saw the yihudim that he performed while falling on his face, resting it on his hands on the table, for around half a hour, and then he stood up, pen in hand, and swiftly wrote . . . and thus he did several times."[123] Here, Luzzatto's practice is described as the performance of yihud, during the shamanic trance of *nefilat appayim*, followed by automatic writing, as a form of passive possession.[124]

Indeed, the well-known dangers attendant on the practice of *nefilat appayim* exacerbated the already rather strong doubts of one of Luzzatto's teachers, R. Isaiah Bassan, as to the veracity and wholesomeness of Luzzato's experience. Against the background of a growing and famous controversy, Bassan wrote as follows: "And my heart is fearful due to what you wrote that all that you do is while falling on your face, that this is one of the things that give rise to the doubt that perhaps God forbid, during the *nefilat appayim* another force joins you." Bassan alluded here to the case of R. Nathan of Gaza, who received his alleged prophecy as to the messianic mission of Shabbetai Tzevi during a trance state while performing the rite of *nefilat appayim*. As he put it in a later letter: "During the time of the Tzevi there were, in the land of the East, many . . . on whom the spirit rested when they fell on their faces . . . chief of these was R. Nathan."[125] As part of his attempt to mitigate the fierce polemic aroused by Luzzatto's claims, his teacher wrote that his student's revelation was neither prophecy nor

ruah ha-qodesh. However, his sworn opponents, such as R. Moshe Hagiz, the known persecutor of heretics, hinted at Luzzatto being equivalent to a false prophet.[126]

Luzzatto's defense was that "all the prophets would fall to the ground." According to his further defensive argument, the Lurianic discourse on the danger of *nefilat appayim* refers to the practice of prostration as part of a symbolic death but is not relevant to his practice, which was merely that of "standing with head bowed and face hidden, so as not to stand erect due to the power of inspiration." Here too it is interesting that Luzzatto begins with a comparison to the practice of the prophets.[127] On the other hand, Luzzatto appears to be demythologizing the practice and ascribing it to the phenomenology of empowerment. It is possible that this moderating move bears the mark of the controversy, and like his denial of prophetic status, to be discussed just now, should be read with a Straussian eye, as part of the "art of writing" under persecution.

Joelle Hansel has profitably discussed the parallels between Luzzatto's maggidic experience and the Maimonidean theory of prophecy.[128] However, it seems to me that the key point here is that Luzzatto's own description of prophecy in his later work *Derekh Ha-Shem* is quite autobiographical: "There is practice in the matter [of prophecy] . . . The practitioners (*mitlamdim*) of prophecy practice known matters which draw on them the supernal influx . . . and the revelation of the divine light . . . and generally these are kavvanot, and the recital of holy names . . . and combinations of names in the ways of combination . . . and according to the merit of their deeds, they gradually refine themselves by these matters . . . and the influx begins to flow on them, and they receive attainments after attainments, until they reach prophecy."[129] Similarly, like Vital's *Sha'arei Qedusha*, Luzzatto's ethical treatise, *Mesilat Yesharim*, is structured so as to lead towards the attainment of ruah ha-qodesh.[130] It is doubtful that this detailed practical guidebook contained purely theoretical discussions, unsupported by personal experience. There, the level of holiness, which for Luzzatto immediately precedes the attainment of the ruah ha-qodesh, is described as a passive state or "gift" that descends on the mystic without effort.[131]

One can infer from these texts, written towards the end of Luzzatto's career, that his earlier maggidic revelation was but the first step in an ascending series of manifestations, which ultimately culminated in prophecy. More generally, if one joins two oft-repeated assertions of Luzzatto—the main focus and innovation of his Kabbalistic doctrine is God's guidance of the world and that this is the content of prophecy—one cannot rule out the possibility that he ascribed a prophetic source to this doctrine.[132] Further-

more, it is fascinating that Luzzatto reiterates countless times in his works that God's guidance is directed towards the revelation of unity (yihud)—the very term that also refers to the technique that he employed to attain revelation. Clearly, technique, experience, and doctrine closely correspond here as elsewhere.[133] Again, during the controversy itself, Luzzatto himself claimed that he was no prophet, and stressed that there are some forty-five levels between maggidism and prophecy. However, it is instructive that in this very letter, he compares his ability to attain revelation at a youthful age to the biographies of prophets Samuel and Jeremiah.[134]

Luzzatto's opponents, in turn, based their condemnation of him on an earlier tradition dealing with the phenomenon of false maggidic revelation. This discourse should be compared to the Christian *discretio spirituum* (discernment of spirits), which is somewhat rarer in the Jewish context, although it appeared in the medieval text from *Sha'arei Tzedeq*, which was excerpted above.[135] This demonic possibility is mentioned by Vital in his *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, as briefly discussed above.[136] Vital's theory of maggidism is entirely nomian: the maggid is created by one's study and performance of Torah and mitzvot, so that if there is falseness in one's deeds then some of the maggid's words may be a lie. Likewise, in his discussion of the prophetic mode of automatic speech in *Sha'arei Qedusha*, Vital writes: "And when the spirit rests upon him he should examine if perhaps he is not yet pure and clean, and the spirit is from the Other Side, or at least a mixture of good and evil, as in the case of Ben 'Azzai and Ben Zoma in the Pardes, and this will be tested by what is revealed to him, if all his words are truth, or a mixture of truth and falsehood or if they include idle matters or matters which are not according to the Torah . . . and he needs to become stronger and stronger in his worship until all his words will be trustworthy and with awe of heaven."[137] The phrase "not according to the Torah" is especially noteworthy, as it submits one's trance experience to a nomian test. A similar notion is propounded in the eighteenth-century *Mishnat Hasidim*, by R. Emanuel Hai Ricci, also of Italy, who ironically was also suspected of Sabbatean leanings. The latter wrote that the maggid can indeed grant special powers, such as knowledge of the future, but only if one's deeds and speech are pure.[138] It is instructive to compare these cautious formulations to the views of Luzzatto, whose experience was brought about partly through anomian techniques.

Again, the suspicions leveled at Luzzatto should be placed in the broader context of the prevalence of maggidic, prophetic, and trance-like phenomena in the seventeenth-century antinomian Sabbatean movement, which had been very influential in Italy, including among Luzzatto's associates.[139]

Rabbis such as Hagiz were not entirely mistaken in tracing quasi-Sabbatean themes in the thought and activity of the highly messianic Luzzatto. However, later figures, especially R. Eliyahu, the Gaon of Vilna, effected a remarkable rehabilitation of Luzzatto's experience. Although R. Eliyahu himself refused to accept maggidim and also suspected that the revelations of the Hasidic masters had an impure source, he had an extremely high opinion of Luzzatto, and perhaps referred to him when stating that the maggid is a direct revelation of the soul.[140] As a result, later figures influenced by R. Eliyahu, such as Rabbi Avraham Yitzhaq Kook, hinted at receiving maggidic revelations.[141] Others, such as the followers of the Mussar movement (founded in mid-nineteenth century Lithuania), did not themselves pursue such experiences, but valorized those of Luzzatto, as well as clearly perceiving the Kabbalistic dimension in his *Mesilat Yesharim*, which they turned into the most central Mussar workbook.[142] In addition to his positive reception from the opponents of Hasidism, Luzzatto's eighteenth-century texts can be seen as mediating between the Safedian literature discussed above and the Hasidic material that I shall turn to in the following chapters. This is all the more plausible in light of Luzzatto's considerable influence on some parts of the Hasidic movement.[143]

A full consideration of the thought and practice of Luzzatto requires an analysis of the place of trance and shamanism in the works of the members of his circle, and especially Moshe David Valle (Ramdav), who was described by some as his closest associate and even at times as his teacher. Isaiah Tishby, in a project that he did not conclude during his lifetime, has already pointed out the centrality of this figure. Although there is room to reexamine his understanding of Valle's exact role in Luzzatto's circle, Tishby's preliminary historical observations are in essence correct. Furthermore, he briefly documented his ascents and descents, visions, experiences of illumination and empowerment, as well as prophetic self-consciousness accompanied by automatic speech. Finally, he noted parallels between his ideas and Hasidic theories.[144]

However, one must describe Tishby's work mainly as compilation of an inventory of significant mystical moments and enumeration of basic stages in his internal development, rather than sustained phenomenological analysis of Valle's mystical experience. Since then, despite the publication of twenty-four volumes of Valle's works over the last two decades, Tishby's unfinished suggestions and ideas for further research have not been developed to any marked extent. Though this investigation forms part of a wider project of mine, and thus cannot be detailed here, it is crucial to point to several further themes in Valle's mystical practice.[145]

One should commence with a more thorough analysis of the mystical experiences found in the texts cited by Tishby, whose main concern was with messianism and especially with the historical issue of Sabbatean influences, and who was also strongly opposed to the phenomenological turn initiated by Idel's work. One example is the experience of being somatically contained in holiness, which would seem to point to an experience of being swallowed by the divine realm. A related somatic experience, familiar from Albotini and other kabbalists with an Abulafian orientation, is that of being anointed with the "oil of joy" that was "poured from on high."[146]

Again the immediate scholarly task before us is the perusal of the numerous volumes of Valle's writings published since the 1990s (based almost entirely on manuscripts found in the British Library collection, while numerous other manuscripts in Hebrew and Italian found in two other collections have not yet been published). Here one can find explicit statements, which place the messianic consciousness of Luzzatto's school within the context of trance experience. Drawing on an early messianic typology, Valle distinguishes between the auditory experience of the Messiah, son of Joseph, whose revelations are mainly mediated by a maggid, and the more direct visionary experience of the Messiah, son of David, upon whom the divine presence actually resides. This residing is elsewhere described as the key to visions and prophecy.[147] Valle goes on to write that the lower Messiah will eventually attain the visionary level, while the Messiah, son of David, will go on to attain prophecy.

It appears that Valle holds that Luzzatto represents the lower messianic level, to which he attributes his essentially angelic and auditory revelations, while he himself represents the higher messianic level, characterized by near-prophetic vision. According to Valle, his superior revelation enables him to help Luzzatto overcome periods of "mystic's block" and also to assist him in the dangerous near-death experiences involved in his practice of descent, presumably related to *nefilat appayim*.[148] This prophetic self-consciousness is also quite apparent in Valle's exegesis on the biblical prophetic writings, which does not seem to be purely theoretical.

This framing of the relationship between the two leaders of Luzzatto's circle needs to be compared to Luzzatto's own self-awareness. It forms part of a much wider discourse on the various stages of the mutual empowerment and complementary development of the two messianic figures. Naturally, Valle's discussions also reflect tensions between these figures, as well as his own perspective on the Luzzatto controversy and thus their careful study is a prerequisite for any serious biographical treatment of the great modern kabbalist. However, a fuller exploration of the fascinating texts that

Valle penned on this issue cannot be essayed here.[149] This experiential reading does not of course rule out other possible readings of this corpus, such as analysis of Valle's treatment of gender and sexuality, his unique hermeneutical approach to the biblical text, his responses to various cultural and scientific aspects of modernity, or the political reading that I offered elsewhere.[150] However, I do believe that trance experiences play an important role in the inner life of this prolific and understudied modern writer.

Shamanic Hasidism

Shamanism and Research on Hasidism

The shamanic aspect of Hasidism has already been remarked on by several scholars (as noted in chapter 2) and especially the social function of the Hasidic leader, the Tzaddiq, has been compared with that of the shaman by Idel.[1] Indeed, Smith's powerful suggestion that "the shaman's very presence, the empowering perception of his or her extraordinary gifts, is the most essential component of the shamanic process," perfectly fits the role of the Tzaddiq.[2] However, Idel himself noted that his study, comprehensive though it may be, focused on more theoretical aspects of Hasidic lore, or what I would term "theory of practice," while questions of social practice "await special study."[3] It is the purpose of the following two chapters to further such an investigation. Idel has observed that the dual, mystico-magical role of the Tzaddiqim, which I have united in a single category of shamanism, facilitates social renewal and balance, as the Tzaddiq both transcends given social limits and then returns to distribute new vitality to his followers.[4] This model has been greatly developed by Philip Wexler.[5] More generally, one can posit that the altered forms of perception recorded in Hasidic accounts of trance, which I shall elaborate on in chapter 5, served the Hasidic effort to provide an alternative vision of social reality.[6]

In these terms, the need for return from ascent and other shamanic departures from consensual reality is thus not dictated merely by a sense of danger but by an acutely sensed social responsibility. Indeed, R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin of Komarno writes in the name of his teachers that real perfection, or "the level of the Messiah" is not attained by residing in the paradisiacal mythical space but rather through cultivating the ability to be above and below simultaneously.[7] Indeed, the ability of return is itself, paradoxically, the result of ascetic cultivation, as in the account by the second rebbe

of Habad (or Lubavitch), R. Dov Baer, according to which the Besht fasted and prayed so as to be able to respond to social communication while performing his ascent. In this particular version of this famous tale, the social imperative of return is anchored in the nomian context in which these ascents occurred, namely the communal prayer welcoming the Sabbath.[8]

As we have also seen in chapter 2, the other major locus of scholarly recognition of the parallels between Jewish and shamanic phenomena is the Heikhalot corpus. Farber-Ginat's important study of this literature has pointed at a model that is markedly similar to the Hasidic one described just now: the adepts described in this literature ascend beyond the world, yet are still committed to it. According to Farber-Ginat the image of the ladder, found in quite a number of early texts, exemplifies the connection of mysticism and magic, of the lower and higher world.[9] This particular image, together with other architectonic structures, is embellished in the Hasidic context, as the ladder is the vehicle of both exit and return. Again utilizing the terms developed by Maurice Bloch, the mystical phase of exiting the social order can be seen as an act of violence, which explains the courting of mild antinomianism in certain Hasidic circles as well as the opposition hence aroused.[10] Numerous Hasidic texts indeed point at the violent psychological effect of the encounter with the mystical power of the Tzaddiq. A more macro-historical approach, which I shall not attempt here, might point at the frequency of cycles of disruption of the prevailing norms followed by revitalizing reabsorption (as in the case of the eventual acceptance of Luzzatto) or failed or partial digestion where the normative boundaries within which the mystical community usually operates were breached in an overly traumatic manner (as in the case of Sabbateanism and R. Kook's school).

A final set of general, and somewhat more speculative, observations concerns the essentially rural nature of Hasidic life, as noted already by Idel.[11] The vast and largely sophisticated literary product of the Hasidic world would seem to clash with historical attributions of Jewish creativity and erudition, both modern and medieval, to the predilection for urban culture.[12] Idel has differentiated between the elite aspect of Hasidism, roughly corresponding to the mystical dimension, and the rural, popular, "preaxial" aspect.[13] As I do not espouse such a neat division when speaking of an extremely diverse and multifaceted world, I might suggest a supplementary, dialectical account, in which the Hasidic synthesis of shamanism and traditional learning was actually a response to the decline of Jewish identity and cohesion among rural masses, as evidenced by the concern of Hasidic masters

with the phenomenon of conversion, which often accompanied Jewish ruralization. In other words, the Hasidic synthesis enabled the revitalization and reinforcement of Jewish rural society. The shamanic ingredient of the Hasidic world can be better appreciated in this historical context.[14]

A thorough examination of the role of shamanism and trance in the Hasidic world requires extensive use of the hagiographical (*shevahim*) literature, which often expresses a very rural atmosphere. As is well known, earlier scholars, especially Martin Buber and Scholem, have debated the authenticity of the Hasidic tales and their usefulness for understanding the Hasidic world, as opposed to writings of a more theoretical nature.[15] I do not wish to enter this issue in depth, except in saying that I follow Gries in observing that the use of the Hasidic theoretical discourses (*torot*), often Hebrew summaries of talks given on Sabbath in Yiddish, is not without its own problems.[16] I also commend the approach of Ron Margolin, who writes that a phenomenological investigation is less beholden to the historical issues surrounding the relationship between tales and discourses and can freely utilize the resource found in both genres.[17] This is all the more so in the many cases where hagiographical accounts have parallels in theoretical works or are even completely blended with theoretical discussions (as in the introductions to the massive exegetical works compiled by the Komarno rebbes). Of course, one should recall that besides hagiographies we also have available some autobiographic material, such as diaries or letters.

One could also claim that tales in and of themselves are part of the Hasidic trance technique, as in the Ericksonian use of hypnotic stories.[18] Working from this starting point, one can point at the unity of tale and discourse within a broader social life-world, at least in the contexts investigated here. Here I am very much in sympathy with Pedaya's call for scholarly efforts to be directed towards recovering a sense of Hasidic life, as well as her connections between Hasidic hagiography and the wider frame of the development of the modern self, which transcend the theoretical horizons of most scholarly work on this particular genre.[19]

The popular nature of the tales, rather than being some kind of drawback, thus actually points towards the wide social domain within which the more elitist theoretical discourse was embedded. I believe that to fully appreciate the more shamanic aspects of Hasidism, one should consult the tales to a greater extent than has been done in the past, in a manner similar to Carlo Ginzburg's reconstruction of Eastern European shamanism through utilization of folkloric sources.[20] The richness and variety of models found in such texts, often related to specific rituals, settings, and concepts,

refutes the attempt to regard these descriptions through a lens constructed by an artificial division between popular and unreliable hagiography and abstract theory. Though there is no precise formula for differentiating between formulaic hagiographical accounts and reflections of actual experiences and practices, I believe that the method proposed here can lead to a more thorough utilization of this vast textual reservoir. Similarly, though discussions of mystical experience found in the *torot* can sometimes be regarded merely as reflecting the utilization of standard tropes or theoretical constructs, in many other cases it can be shown that they directly reflect personal experience.

A final general comment relates to the geographical and historical scope of material covered in these chapters, as opposed to many existing studies of Hasidism. As in the case of Kabbalah scholarship, which is still characterized by an exaggerated concern with origins, researchers tend to focus on the earlier generations, and especially the Besht, decreasingly addressing later developments. Until very recently, the current interest in late twentieth-century developments was the only major exception to this state of affairs. This can easily be seen in the case of Habad, where only the first two rebbes and the last rebbe have been researched to any significant extent.[21] Second, the Polish schools branching off from R. Elimelekh Weisblum of Lyzansk and R. Yisra'el Hopstein of Kozienice have been under-studied despite the fact that it was precisely these schools that transformed Hasidism into a true social movement.[22] As a result, works which are central for understanding the social practice of Hasidism, such as R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein's *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, have seldom been discussed in academic attempts to capture the basic ideas of Hasidism, as opposed to their centrality in the world of Hasidic learning to this day.[23]

Overall, I believe that the strongly social nature of Hasidic shamanism belies Ripinsky-Naxon's characterization of shamanism as an individualized experience for a select few.[24] These literary and historical facts have been repeatedly noted by some scholars, and it is my intention, here and elsewhere, to contribute to a fuller picture of the Hasidic world, drawing on numerous texts not previously discussed in academia (including texts written in Yiddish).[25] From a textual point of view, I shall especially focus on writings composed in the schools branching off from the court of the Seer of Lublin, whose shamanic trance states are described in frequent hagiographies. On the thematic level, I shall concentrate on the two central issues of falling and fire that were discussed in chapter 2, as well as the question of magic, which is often an inseparable component of the Hasidic shamanic complex.

Shamanic Falling: *Nefilat Appayim* in the Hasidic World

The Hasidic world inherited the ambivalence prevalent in Jewish culture regarding the rite of *nefilat appayim*. It is no coincidence that the extremely influential Rashkov prayer book composed at the bequest of the Besht himself omits the kavvanot of this practice, due to the danger involved.[26] Perhaps this decision can be related to the Besht's discourse on the danger of nonreturn from intense mystical states, which Wolfson has already related to discussions of *nefilat appayim*.[27] At the same time, the keen Hasidic concern with soul retrieval led many masters to nonetheless engage in *nefilat appayim* and bestow it with the psychological and social values of their innovative discourse. The shamanic descent to the underworld was associated with the wider Hasidic development of the theme of the descent of the Tzaddiq, which has been discussed at some length in existing scholarship.[28] The restriction of the practice of falling to the Tzaddiq is clearly expressed in R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin's *Shulhan Ha-Tahor*. He writes that the practice of descent to the world of death in *nefilat appayim* and the concomitant rescue of sparks draws down a great illumination "literally from the light of the Shekhina" on the practitioner, who receives "exceedingly great and incomparable light." However, it is only the "perfected Tzaddiq" who may perform this risky practice and reap its benefits, for it requires not only merit and power, but also good kavvana throughout the entire prayer that precedes this ritual.[29]

However, this restriction having been suggested, Safrin was able to radicalize the practice: elsewhere, he records a tradition received from the Tzaddiqim, according to which one should fully prostrate oneself as on the High Holy Days, while practicing the Lurianic rite of *tiqqun hatzot* (midnight rectification). He described this somewhat antinomian procedure in quasi-magical terms as a *segula*, or magical cure, for the three main internal vices (pride, anger, and pursuit of honor).[30] In other words, the move of restricting intense mystical or shamanic practices to the Tzaddiqim is not a sign of the decline of mysticism in the Hasidic world of the nineteenth century (as suggested by Benjamin Brown).[31] Rather, it often facilitated enhancement of radical elements once those are safely assigned to specialists. Besides these structured forms of prostration, one should also mention the spontaneous acts of full prostration, in response to strong religious emotions, which were afforded a large degree of legitimacy in the Hasidic world, as an influential contemporary writer puts it: "intend and contemplate . . . that . . . if you only could you would prostrate yourself and extend your arms and legs . . . so think that you are now extending your arms and legs, and your mouth

bites dust, and you cannot control yourself due to the great annihilation before God."[32]

I focus my analysis of the role of *nefilat appayim* in Hasidic practice on a school that is usually regarded as contemplative rather than engaging in somatic practice: Habad. Although these texts have mostly been discussed already by Rachel Elior and Michael Fishbane, who emphasized the issue of transformation in his close reading, I believe that it would be beneficial to return to them from the distinct perspective developed here.[33] The first Habad rebbe, R. Shneur Zalman, commences his discussion of this rite with the strong statement that it is superior to the standing prayer. In other words, its liturgical positioning after the *'amidah* should not be seen as in indication that it is part of a graduated descent from a mystical peak, as some commentaries on the kavvanot have it, but rather it is the true mystical moment of *unio mystica*. The standing prayer, on the other hand, only performs the preparatory theurgical function of creating a vessel in order to receive influx.[34]

Shneur Zalman differentiates between the moment of mystical death in the Shema' that is not "in actuality and literally" and the more intense moment in *nefilat appayim*, which occurs fully in the imaginal realm, if not in external reality. Thus, the "giving up of the soul" in the seemingly central Shema' prayer is only potential, as it focuses on contemplation rather than imagination, which is seen as possessing a greater capacity for concretization. When moving to the climax of this debate and describing *nefilat appayim* as the true devequt, where both body and soul are "totally included in the unity of God, and become literally one [with the divinity]," Shneur Zalman uses terms of fiery transformation: "there is no evil thing that can separate [the worshipper from God] as the body is also devoured in fire." Here we see that the theme of falling into the underworld and that of fiery transformation are intimately linked, as two extreme states in which the imagination effects somatic transformation.[35]

Having established the centrality of *nefilat appayim* in the Habad school, I shall now turn to the fascinating discussion of *nefilat appayim* by the second rebbe of Habad, R. Dov Baer, whose theory of *nefilat appayim* was also discussed by Fishbane.[36] This master significantly expands on the formulations of his father by opening with a strong statement on the superiority of *nefilat appayim* to self-annihilation in the Shema' prayer. Dov Baer explains the difference as follows: while in the Shema' it is standard for mystics to imagine their death for the sake of God, in *nefilat appayim* one does not merely imagine, but "really" enters a corpse-like state. As he explains, in imagined

self-annihilation, the natural vitality of the "natural soul" persists together with the activity of the senses, even if there is some enthusiasm on its part. However, in the higher, nonimaginary state of *nefilat appayim*, although of course no actual death is involved, nonetheless materiality is so divested that only a trace of vitality remains. In other words, there is a move from a merely imaginal process to a somatic shift.

The model that he draws on is that of the Besht and other "great Tzaddiqim of the generation," who "literally fainted" during the divestment of materiality and due to the power of their "complete slumber" (*takhlit ha-tardema*) entered a state of anesthesia. Dov Baer then makes another strong statement, namely that this level is above that of prophecy, as it represents the achievement of the "future," or messianic era.[37] Here, the virtually explicit descriptions of trance as fainting, anesthesia, corpse-like states, and sleep are clustered under the rubric of mystical death in *nefilat appayim* as the supreme mystical perfection. This move is echoed in a later Habad text, by the fifth rebbe, R. Shalom Dov Baer. In a discussion of levels of devequt, he writes of attaining the essence of divinity through total self-annihilation—the ultimate achievement for the Habad mystics. He then relates this state to that of "fainting," sensory withdrawal, and annulment of the natural "powers" of the soul.[38]

These Hasidic discussions may be indebted to a seventeenth-century text on *nefilat appayim* by R. Naftali Bakhrakh, whose concern with soul retrieval was discussed in chapter 2. Bakhrakh wrote as follows in his *Emeq Ha-Melekh*, which was well known in Eastern Europe: "The 'leader and great one of the generation' . . . would view the Chariot and all his filth would depart from him when he fell into sleep before the Creator in heaven and then God would revive him . . . and then the holiness would very much adhere (*yidabeq*) to him and the supernal waters that make all who see them wise and immediately they would attain ruah ha-qodesh."[39] This text is replete with classical Heikhalot and Pardes imagery; however, it speaks of the possibility of the leader of the generation teaching this method in the present, through a semi-magical process (*hashba'a*) designed to locate the soul "spark" that he needs to amend. Bakhrakh clearly relates transformation and prophetic states to falling into the mystical death of *nefilat appayim*. These textual comparisons demonstrate that the close connection between trance and *nefilat appayim*, rather than being a Hasidic innovation, was an ongoing theme in the writings of modern European kabbalists, as we have also seen in the case of Luzzatto, who was influenced by Bakhrakh on several matters.[40]

Hasidic Experiences of Transformation

To be alive is to be burning.

—Norman Brown

Light denotes the exaltation of holiness, for fire is above all material things.

—R. Yehuda Leib Eiger

As a revitalization movement, Hasidism especially stressed the transformative process, which is often described as somatic change effected by fire.[41] From the time of the circle of the Besht, who were described as being surrounded by fire, images of luminosity, and especially of flames, are prominent in Hasidic language.[42] Even a term such as *hitlahavut*, usually translated as "enthusiasm," can be rendered "being ablaze" (as in the Yiddish *bren*). It is rather apt that one popular account of Hasidism is entitled *Souls on Fire*.[43] The centrality of these images is apparent in the following text by R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein of Ziditchov, one of the prominent trance experts in the Hasidic world: "My brother, know that the way of the worshipper of God whose heart is enthusiastic in him with the blazing fire of the flame of God . . . [is] to serve in the great blazing flame that burns in him through the great passionate love . . . which is known to those who serve God in truth, giving up the soul to God in the annihilation of the soul . . . reaching the literal annihilation of reality."[44] The intense rhetorical repetition, in and of itself, conveys the power of fiery image in Hasidic language. However, I wish to show that fiery transformation, as in previous centuries examined above, was an actual experience related to specific contexts and practices, rather than merely a literary turn of phrase.

The capacity for radical transformation that extends into the somatic realm was seen as a trademark of the Hasidic mystics, who often manifested the shape-changing capacities of the shaman. This somatic consciousness is well reflected in a saying attributed to the nineteenth-century R. Moshe Pallier of Kobrin on the miracle of the burning bush not being consumed: "It is a great wonder, that the burning bush, that is the body, is not consumed by the awe of God's majesty."[45] In some texts, the goal of divestment of materiality is described in terms of nullifying ordinary being in order to assume the fluidity that enables the adept to divest one form and assume another. Other Hasidic texts on self-nullification, even when not referring explicitly to this capacity, can possibly be read in a similar manner.[46] One telling example is the following description of self-nullificatory illumination by R. Yitzhaq

Yehiel Safrin: "The work of the Tzaddiqim [is] to become nullified in the reality of His light and the yihudim, to be literally, literally nothing like a small creeping creature . . . and this is the level of *Malkhut* [the lowest Sefira] in the future . . . whose light will be greater than the sun through the work of the Tzaddiqim in bitul [nullification] of reality, literally as nothing . . . built by the Tzaddiqim who are . . . dust and ashes . . . their heart as a burning blaze of fire."[47] This text can be seen as a more detailed exposition of earlier statements, such as the tradition that R. Aharon of Zhitomir transmits from a chain of teachers going back to the Besht and the Besht's own inner guide, the biblical prophet Ahiya Ha-Shiloni, on divestment as a state of being out of the world while suddenly and spontaneously burning with the fire of the blaze with "very great might and power."[48] This more detailed analysis of fiery transformation joins Brill's interesting comments on the Hasidic goal of creating a body of light, which he compares to Eastern Orthodox Hesychastic texts.[49]

Just as luminosity of the face, sometimes described as multicolored, is an oft-repeated sign for recognizing the Tzaddiq, being aflame is used as a sign in order determine and assert the quality of the worship of the Tzaddiq, which has mostly nomian as well as some anomian aspects.[50] The clearest statement to this effect is that of R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein, a prominent student of the Seer of Lublin (based in turn upon a tradition going back to R. Elimelekh Weisblum), according to which the Tzaddiq is chosen based on two criteria: his lack of leniency in both biblical and rabbinic laws, and "the fire of yihudim" burning in his heart.[51] Elsewhere, Epstein creates a typology of kinds of Tzaddiqim and goes on to say that the supreme Tzaddiq is one who can connect and rectify all the souls of Israel. This super-Tzaddiq is like a flame and his task is to "enflame the hearts of those connected to him to be always yearn to connect to the Creator, blessed be He, and they shall be enflamed (*yitlahavu*) as a flaming fire to his worship." In other words, the fire of the supreme Tzaddiq is described, at least in theoretical terms, as a connective force, which horizontally connects souls and vertically connects these souls to God.[52] However, there seems to be some divergence of opinion within the school of the Seer as to whether this quality of the Tzaddiq is apparent to all or only to those possessing the requisite sensitivity (or "subtle of vision"), as in the following text by R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin: "Some Tzaddiqim, when the Shekhina hovers on them, their faces burn like torches, and the subtle of vision can discern that they have a holy body [of *hashmal*, or holy fire], when the light of the Shekhina shines on them and on their face." Elsewhere, Safrin positions this experience in the context of a detailed discussion of levels of prophecy, divestment and

ascent, and in an autobiographical account, he writes vividly of divestment of materiality as a fiery experience leading to a kind of mystical death caused by the letters of the yihudim becoming fiery spears and arrows.[53]

The experience of the light or fire of the Tzaddiq was apparently one of the tremendum: Safrin fell back when he beheld the light on the face of R. Tzevi Hirsch of Ziditchov, and according to another description, he had to be held so as to not fall, entranced, when he saw his master's fiery visage. Here again, some of these experiences occurred in a nomian context: the New Year prayers.[54] This account can be better appreciated when juxtapositioned with similar responses to illumination: Safrin experienced a state close to death due to his great fear merely upon hearing the footsteps of his teacher R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein, although he "always liked me very much, and was never cross with me, and several times hugged and kissed me." The Holy Jew of Psischa is reported to have shaken when his teacher, the Seer of Lublin, removed his tallit and cast his powerful gaze on him. These fears seem to have been based on tales of severe physical damage caused by unsolicited exposure to the luminosity of the Tzaddiq, as in the case of a student of the Seer of Lublin who was blinded and as with R. Avraham Borenstein, of a later branch of the school of the Holy Jew, whose assistant needed several days in bed to recover once exposed to him while studying Kabbalah surrounded by fire.[55]

Staying awhile in the nomian contexts, numerous works relate fiery experiences to the ritual recital of sacral texts. For example, R. Barukh of Medzibuz, the grandson of the Besht, was described as being surrounded by fire when reciting the Song of Songs. The specific anchor of this text was given a theoretical psychological explanation: R. Barukh was seen as a reincarnation of Solomon, to whom the Song is traditionally attributed. We should not be misled by presence of similar descriptions in earlier sources, such as the Zohar, into making the facile assumption that this is merely a literary topos:[56] R. Barukh and his observers, such as Eichenstein, who reported this tale, were said to have approached mystical death in this state. Furthermore, R. Tzevi used the memory of this event as an "anchored resource," to use hypnotic terms, every time he fell into "smallness of consciousness."[57] Thus we are speaking of a social event, which deeply affected those present and its recollection continued to shape their practice as well as psychological states.[58]

A similar account is that recorded by R. Yitzhaq Eisic Epstein of Homil, who was converted to following the first rebbe of Habad, R. Shneur Zalman, when he saw him permeated by the light of the Torah he studied. As we have seen, experiences of fire are anchored in temporal, as well as ritual con-

texts (one should recall that the Hasidim upheld the custom of reciting the Song of Songs during the transition between Friday and Sabbath). The third rebbe of Habad, R. Menahem Mendel is reported as desiring to experience the core of the fire that accompanied the reception of the Torah at Sinai during the Shavu'ot festival, which, according to numerous Hasidic discourses, reenacts this foundational event.[59] Numerous other tales of Tzaddiqim being ablaze in specific ritual, scholastic, or liturgical moments can readily be adduced, and yet more shall be discussed in chapter 6.[60]

Fire also plays a central role in the Hasidic experience of language, whose more theoretical counterparts have been much discussed by scholars.[61] Numerous tales describe the speech of the Tzaddiqim as an emission of fire: the successor of the Besht, R. Dov Baer of Mezeritch, was said to emit letters of fire from his mouth when chanting the Grace after Meals, and R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein is described as emitting flame from his mouth with every utterance of the divine names.[62] This ability was at times connected to ascetic practice: according to one formulation, withdrawal from the pleasures of the world leads to the closely related phenomenon of emitting fire from one's mouth and the blazing of the face. One can again read this connection as part of the overall discourse on somatic transformation, in addition to the existing debate on the attitude to asceticism in the Hasidic world, and note, en passant, that such descriptions have interesting parallels in Tantric literature.[63] On another level of analysis, one can relate these descriptions of the mouth of the Tzaddiq, together with others cited in chapter 5, to the essentially oral mode of Hasidic mystical culture, which is also expressed in the focus on communal meals.[64]

Hasidic Theories of Transformation

These more hagiographical texts have numerous parallels in the Hasidic theoretical literature, where we encounter several models organizing the mystical and magical uses of fire. One such model is cathartic. The founder of the Habad school, R. Shneur Zalman, writes of the need to increase the body's fire in prayer, in order to perform *birur*, or the process of purifying the material world by separating and uplifting the sparks of holiness:

> And this is the matter of prayer in the human body in this world . . . all of the intention of the soul is to raise the body from dust and it needs to be refined like silver in the forge, and the more admixture there is, the more it needs to be refined and heated in a greater flame, so one needs to purify (*lebarer*) the body from the Evil Impulse and bring it to its source . . . and the more admixture

of evil there is, the more it needs to be separated by a greater and stronger fire in enthusiasm to adhere to one's Maker, and thus at the time of the First Temple, when there was not much evil, then there was no need for enthusiastic prayer . . . but in the Second Temple they began to regulate prayer, which was short, according to the need of fire and admixture of evil in their time, and we need to pray more and more with great enthusiasm and thus every descending generation needs to pray with greater enthusiasm, not because of the merit of the generation, but conversely, because of the great evil that has increased and been mixed in every generation, it needs to be separated with a strong fire in prayer.[65]

Here the Lurianic cosmological and theurgical concept of "sparks" is fleshed out into a stronger theory of fiery somatic transformation, which provides a historiosophical explanation for the Hasidic stress on prayer. This discussion of fiery prayer is paralleled in a discourse in which R. Shneur Zalman writes of those in whom the element of divine fire in their heart is like dull coals, with only one spark, so that "the advice is to blow strongly on it so that it then flares up and burns and spreads . . . and this is the entire order of prayer until the Shema', in which one contemplates the greatness of God . . . which is all the aspect of the blowing . . . and in the verse "with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 6:5) in the Shema', the spark of the element of divine fire is revealed in the heart openly, as it blazes and burns with passion."[66] Though I cannot go into this issue at length here, such texts show that the contemplative path of the Habad school incorporates strong somatic elements.

In another somatic context, a similar formulation from the Komarno school requires purification by "holy fire" during the sexual act, so as to burn out the fire of lust, thus fighting fire with fire, so to speak.[67] Another general model is social: transformative empowerments through fire are social in nature not only because they are observed and recalled in public settings, but also because they are mediums of transmission. It is in this context that we should understand classical statements such as that of R. Elimelekh Weisblum, who writes of the Tzaddiq as "seeding the holy light in people," or his nineteenth-century admirer R. Shlomo of Radomsk, who writes of the Tzaddiqim as sending a cloud of light to their generation.[68]

A related, if slightly more metaphorical formulation by R. Aharon of Zhitomir uses the following connective image: "Israel are called trees . . . and they are like trees catching fire from one another when close by; thus if Israel stand to pray in one place with devequt to each other and one of them draws down the supernal fire and begins to be ablaze to God, then they are

all ablaze and the fire is greatly increased. And this comes from adherence to the words of the prayer through giving up the soul (*mesirut nefesh*). And each word has ten thousand times tens of thousands of lights, so that he is close to the lights and from there the blaze (*hitlahavut*) comes."[69]

Besides these statements dealing with a wider social domain, we have several assertions as to the role of luminosity in more intimate transmissions: Eichenstein is reported to have said that he will not leave this world without filling Safrin with enough light. The latter was described as being totally transformed, or "becoming a new person" as a result. This transmission, during which Safrin was granted the magical ability to give blessings, is designated with the traditional term *smikha*, or laying of hands, and is indeed accompanied by a tale of transmission by this means.[70] The restriction of fiery transformation to an intimate context, which we have encountered in several texts from this school, is made explicit elsewhere, as Safrin writes: "with many students one cannot really deal with private yihudim and wonderful devequt, for this we found only with [the Talmudic figures] R. Eli'ezer and R. Yehoshua', who had fire blazing around them when studying together . . . but when studying with larger groups, this level was annulled from them, for one needs to relate to each student, and go into the plain sense of the text (*pshat*) and connect to their level."[71] In other words, experiences of drawing down fire in the nomian context of study are only feasible in small groups or dyadic settings, where they can be reinforced by the transmission of private yihudim.

In addition to these numerous isolated statements, which need to be synthesized in order to form theoretical models, there is an entire work devoted to the theory of fiery transformation and guidelines as to its cultivation through trance and meditation. This is *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, the commentary on the Pentateuch by R. Aharon Perlow of Apta, a late eighteenth-century disciple of R. Moshe of Sassov. In the most recent edition this work is suitably accompanied by the treatise '*Oneg Shabbat*, which fleshes out the themes found in the larger work. It is possible that the title itself indicates that R. Aharon believed that he is uncovering the light that was hidden for the Tzaddiqim, according to a famous Beshtian working of the Midrash. On the theoretical level, R. Aharon constructs an architectural-illuminatory model, which is conjoined with a linguistic-illuminatory structure. Thus, the numerous techniques found in the book are based on a sophisticated theosophical and cosmological construction. On this level, one should stress two specific ideas: one is that of the light of God shining throughout the worlds, yet mediated by an array of windows and partitions. Here, R. Aharon adds the practical caution of closing the windows of

mystical attainment (*hasaga*) at times, in order to avoid excessive contact with the source of light. The second, more theurgical idea is that of speech as illuminating the letters.[72]

R. Aharon constantly translates theory into instruction on technique: one should connect every movement and sensation to light, thus construct-ing a pan-luminous consciousness.[73] This more pervasive awareness peaks in more intense, trance-like states that are accessed through visualization: the central technique is that of divestment through visualizing sitting inside an intense and blazing light or being surrounded in flame.[74] This technique goes beyond the classical meditation on light not merely in its explicit move from light to fire but also in the intensity of its dangerous effects—Aharon writes of this inflammation as leading to near-death states as well as to annulment that is so concrete that one cannot see oneself in the light, as well as producing more common effects such as shaking.[75] In light of our previous discussions, it is far from surprising that Aharon writes in detail of both empowerment through divestment as well as fiery transformation, or becoming fire. More generally, he often writes of "becoming another kind of creature."[76] Although this author certainly reworks much earlier mate-rial, nonetheless the stress on fiery luminosity, the manifold connections between this theme and other models, and the precise descriptions of tech-niques and experiences render his works a major resource for the study of Hasidic shamanic trance.

I believe that the numerous sources on the centrality of experiences of light and other visionary modes in Hasidic trance call for some reevaluation of Idel's stress on the auditory and sonorous aspects of Hasidic life, as well as his claim that that light is a Hasidic metaphor for language rather than part of the numinous, dangerous, and elevated mode of existence. Such reconsideration, joined with our observations in chapter 3 on the central-ity of the visual mode for R. Moshe David Valle, would establish a greater continuity between modern Kabbalah and the discourse on visualization from Late Antiquity through the sixteenth century, as shown at length by Wolfson.[77] While Idel's assessments may hold true for certain figures and schools, they should not by any means be taken as a general description of the balance between representational systems in the Hasidic world, as Idel himself has noted at times.[78] Alternatively, while Idel has focused on the naturally sonorous nature of the social dimension of Hasidic life, more private states experienced by elite mystics may lead more often to visions.

This caution is reinforced by a text by Safrin, which relates the attainment of the paradisiacal and fiery body to silence, rather than sound.[79] This being said, I conclude this discussion with a rich text on total somatic and emo-

tional transformation through illumination, penned by Safrin: "When the gnosis [*da'at*] vitalizes the person with the divine light, which no taste and pleasure compares with, he literally, literally, tastes the taste of the World To Come in it. And then his face shines and he does not feel anything of the senses, and sorrow . . . and becomes a new creature."[80]

Shamanism, Trance, and Magic

Virtually all models of shamanism, including that presented in this book, include a magical element. I shall not address here exciting developments in the study of Jewish magic, but rather utilize the increasing openness to incorporating magical elements in the history of Kabbalah in order to specify their place in Hasidism.[81] Idel has described Hasidism as a later crystallization of a magico-mystical model, or as he put it "between ecstasy and magic." Elliot Wolfson goes even further by suggesting that magic should be not be seen as an independent model, but rather organically contained within the mystical framework. In the terms developed here, one could similarly say that magic and mysticism are two of the facets of the shamanic phenomenon.[82] For the shaman, the unity of mysticism and magic is implicit in the process of moving beyond normal consciousness and returning with healing vitality. Thus we are not speaking only of a combination of models but rather of a single fluid movement. Here, I join Louise Child, who has written of the need to frame magic within the general structure of transformation and social revitalization.[83] Furthermore, the heightened state of consciousness accessed in shamanic trance is often described as facilitating the development of special powers. Some of these are described as mystical, such as those we shall examine in chapter 5, while others fall into the magical category, which is often cordoned off by scholars, not always with textual justification.

Already in some sixteenth-century works, one finds a strong connection between trance and magic: this is especially true of Ibn Sayyah, who uses the literature on astral magic as a source for constructing the architectonic inner space through which the adept travels in trance.[84] However, throughout his writings, Ibn Sayyah opposes the licit use of magical practices when conjoined to trance techniques to the "external" and forbidden resort to mere magic. Ibn Sayyah opposes magic, the gentile world, and the demonic astral powers to trance mysticism, the Jewish world, and the Sefirot.[85] However, one should not err by assuming that this is an example of mere opposition to magic: this binary opposition, as is often the case, betrays a dialectical complementary scheme; just as the Sefirot operate through astral

powers, mystical practice requires magical knowledge and thus Jewish doctrine must absorb Arabic influence. The anxiety of influence evoked by this intercultural borrowing is reflected in Ibn Sayyah's reticence in discussing the details of magical practice, which stands out even against the general background of his complex belief in esotericism.[86] However, in spite of this, he does provide us with rather extensive discussions of magical technique.

Indeed, even within Lurianic Kabbalah, which is often regarded as a major source for opposition to magic, a close examination reveals several different approaches, which may possibly reflect the ambivalence of the main transmitter of this tradition, Vital, who himself maintained a keen interest in magical sources of information. One tradition ascribed to Luria prohibits magical practice on nomian grounds: the state of ritual impurity that later generations are situated in due to lack of access to the purifying ash of the red heifer.[87] According to this rationale, earlier generations could indeed resort to "awesome names" or linguistic magic in order to bring about "the opening of the heart" or to enhance their memory. This relegation to earlier periods should not be taken at face value, as Luria ascribes similar outcomes, such as annulling forgetfulness, to a fascinating theurgical practice (that of expelling the "smallness of mind" from the configuration of Ze'ir Anpin) briefly discussed by Mordechai Pachter (and to be addressed at greater length in a study of mine in preparation).[88] According to one formulation, even today, one who is so far removed from sin as to be befriended even by the Angel of Death may fearlessly engage in practical Kabbalah, or magic.[89] In a similar vein, the expert Lurianic practitioner is described as being one of those Tzaddiqim whose decrees are obeyed above, a formulation with rabbinic roots, but in many ways presaging the Hasidic concept of the magical power of the Tzaddiq.[90] Furthermore, we can find that core Lurianic trance techniques, such as yihudim, were utilized for purposes that can quite comfortably be described as "magical," such as incubating the spirits of the departed or exorcism.[91] These sources show that the attribution of opposition to magic to Luria may be the result of the anti-magical bias that is shared by some mystics and certain scholars and has obstructed the study of some forms of empowerment.[92]

In light of this more complex picture, it is not so surprising that among the Hasidim, Luria was sometimes seen as the predecessor of the Besht in magical healing, as in the following description by Safrin: "And all the wonders and miracles performed by the Ari, son of Sarah, and R. Israel Ba'al Shem Tov, who healed the dying sick, restored sight to the blind, opened wells, enabled old barren women to have children . . . all through yihudim and prayer."[93] In terms that are less panoramic and more proximistic, we

have seen that the activity of the Besht has been situated within the Central and Eastern European tradition of Baʿalei Shem, or wonderworkers, who have indeed been described as shamans. However, it must be stressed that in the Hasidic world the recourse to magic was not merely a matter of combination of earlier models, but also an inherent expression of the shamanic process.

Magical Healing

> It is as though the personality of Israel Baal Shem had been created solely for the purpose of confusing the modern theorists of mysticism.
>
> —Gershom Scholem

The most vital expression of Hasidic magic, already in the days of its founder, was the classical shamanic function of healing. Magical healing was part of the practice of most of the figures discussed here.[94] From the point of view of cultural history, one should note that these healing abilities functioned as a transcultural resource, as Hasidic masters also healed non-Jews at times.[95] Hasidic writing discloses a nuanced theoreticization of the healing function. Epstein writes as follows: "There are several levels of Tzaddiqim: some draw healing on the ill person through their deeds; that is to say that they literally bless them with their hands and heal them. And some draw the healing by the Tzaddiq gazing at the sick person, and above this is the level of the Tzaddiq that the ill person is healed immediately by gazing on him. And this is because God resides on the Tzaddiq so that when the ill person sees the Tzaddiq, thoughts of repentance are awakened in his heart and he enslaves his heart to God."[96] The text distinguishes between two models of charismatic healing: one is the classic method of "laying on of hands," or healing through contagion and contact. The second is that of the gaze.[97] Here the model bifurcates into two further variants, one describing the effect of the gaze of the Tzaddiq, the other the effect of gazing on the very visage of the Tzaddiq, which is empowered through embodying the divinity. The reason for the latter variant being upheld as the highest level of healing is that it effects a transformation of the heart and an ethical and nomian shift as well as mere physical healing.

The transformative effect of gazing on the face of the Tzaddiq appears in a less nuanced form already in sixteenth-century Kabbalah, where we find texts on attaining "reincarnation during life," or deep transformation through gazing on the teacher; however, it is in the Hasidic world that it matures into a full-fledged theory of transformation through the personal

power of the Tzaddiq-shaman.[98] This theory is strongly put in the Bratzlav corpus, in both theoretical and hagiographical writings. In *Liqqutei Moharan*, R. Nahman responds to a prevailing questioning of the need for travel in order to obtain physical contact with the Tzaddiq as opposed to reading discourses. This question can be said to go the heart of Hasidic oral transmission as well as the Hasidic sense of the need for movement on the most literal level. R. Nahman answers that through gazing at the Tzaddiq's face, the Hasid will see his own face as if in a mirror, and thus refines his face.

In an elaboration that closely parallels Epstein's description, Nahman writes that this mirroring will effect repentance without the need for any words of Mussar.[99] Elsewhere, Nahman writes as follows: "There are three aspects in drawing closer to the Tzaddiqim . . . the first aspect is when he sees the Tzaddiq [followed by giving money and confession] . . . and this aspect cancels the negative *middot* that are drawn from the elements of the inanimate and the vegetative, that is sadness and its derivatives and evil passions." One must add, parenthetically, that sadness is the main foe of Bratzlav emotional work.[100] Nahman goes on to say: "For the Tzaddiq of the generation is called a mother, due to his breastfeeding Israel with the light of his Torah, and the Torah is called milk . . . and this we see concretely, that when the baby is sad and desultory, he rouses himself with great alertness as soon as he sees his mother, who is his source. And we also see concretely, that when the baby is occupied with his frivolous concerns, even though he has great desire for them, when he sees his mother he casts all his passions over his shoulder and is drawn to his mother."[101] In this description, the Hasid is awakened and quickened out of his sadness by seeing the Tzaddiq, just as a baby is by seeing his mother. R. Nahman's explicit description of the mothering function of the Tzaddiq justifies my use of Winnicott's technical term mirroring, which captures the process of the infant being mirrored, and thus affirmed, in a nonverbal manner through the facial expression and loving gaze of the mother.[102]

Thus, the Tzaddiq of the generation, a recurrent hero of Nahman's discourses, acts as a mother who breastfeeds the Hasid. If one is to again draw on psychoanalytic attachment theory, the Tzaddiq acts as a good mother, or "good breast," who not only mirrors the Hasid-as-baby, but also nurtures him through this visual connection, in what some hypnotists would term a visual-kinesthetic process. This text should be seen against the background of numerous descriptions of relationships, between the Tzaddiq and God or the Hasid and the Tzaddiq, as similar to processes in lactation or very early childhood.[103] I believe that these similarities to twentieth-century psychology can be explained through the shared background of modernity and

the cultural invention of childhood, as famously claimed by Philip Ariès. Anyone who reads the extremely infantile descriptions of the relationship to God and to Nahman himself in contemporary Bratzlav writing will be able to observe the logical outcome of this focus on very early forms of attachment.[104]

We have here a description of nonverbal transmission and transformation by a process of "mirroring," which recalls certain developments in psychoanalysis. This description is echoed in Epstein's notion of transmitting healing through the hands as well as in various texts by Nahman, who writes of filling the hands with the illumination of the leaders, or Tzaddiqim, of the generation. Elsewhere, Nahman writes that the main blessing is transmitted through the hands, and that one must consciously direct one's intention (*yekhaven*) to this goal.[105] It is true that these Bratzlavian texts do not refer explicitly to healing, as does Epstein. However, elsewhere, in a discussion that explicitly compares healing to prophecy, Nahman writes in an autobiographical manner of the Tzaddiq of the generation performing the shamanic procedure of absorbing the sins of the people, and perhaps, as the text indicates, the entire world, in order to heal them: "The Tzaddiq must take suffering on himself for Israel, and only the world is saved from suffering, but not the Tzaddiq . . . for he takes the suffering upon himself."[106] It is this context we should read not only his critique of the recourse to modern medicine, but also his detailed discussions of pulse diagnosis, the psychophysical role of the internal organs, and other quasi-medical matters.[107]

However, looking towards our discussion in chapter 6, it is important to recall that most Hasidic masters framed the moftim or displays of the magical powers of the Tzaddiqim within an entirely mystical and often nomian structure. R. Aharon of Zhitomir writes as follows:

> There is a person who always contemplates the greatness of God and makes himself at all times into a chariot for God . . . and there is a person who does not possess such intellect, only God sends influx and clarity to the world out of his great grace, and this person has an awakening from above. Such a person cannot bring down influx into the lower world, but the first type, who has an awakening from below, can bring influx and great good to the world, as God has pleasure in him. There is another aspect of a person who is a great *Tzaddiq* and ascends the higher levels and due to the great clarity he is annulled (*batel*) and has no power to pray for the material things which are needed for this world, only that due to the great pleasure God receives from him the lower is amended by itself . . . but whoever is not at this level needs to pray for everything that is needed by the lower world in particular.

So that there are two levels, one which needs to come before God, that is having an awakening from below . . . and the other who brings the influx of all that is needed for the lower world. But the great *Tzaddiq* has only one level, that of coming before God to the supernal worlds and there his reality is annihilated.[108]

For R. Aharon, the attainment of the great Tzaddiq, undoubtedly a person like his teacher R. Levi Yitzhaq of Berditchev, is beyond the binary distinction between various avenues of magical effectiveness. For this adept, material influx is but an automatic or passive byproduct of his ascent and self-annihilation. Similarly, Epstein opposes the religiously meaningless activity of magicians to that of the Tzaddiq, whose wonders enhance the connection of his followers to God. In other words, magical power reinforces the role of the Tzaddiq in facilitating devequt or mystical adherence.[109] In a striking passage from the same school, Safrin assigns various magical abilities, such as assisting childbirth or rainmaking with the effect of meticulously performing specific commandments, which in turn create angels with powers relevant to those magical goals.[110] This text clearly subordinates magical activity to nomian practice.

These statements resonate with the view of a major anthropologist of religion, Csordas, who writes that "if the experiences of the disease and of the holy raise some of the same existential questions . . . there may well be a religious dimension in all forms of healing."[111] The following description of the magical activity of an ancient Jewish figure is rather pertinent here: "Jesus was much more than a wonder-maker . . . his supernatural deeds were only a part of his complex personality: they were an aspect of his ministry and he did not see them as autonomous and self-sufficient . . . for him, his unusual gifts were not as significant as were their moral effect and their religious meaning."[112]

In this context, one should of course mention the critique of magical practice within the Hasidic world. Though the early nineteenth century is often described as a time in which the magical element in Hasidism increased, R. Menahem Mendel of Rimonov was critical of R. Naftali of Ropshitz's cultivation of paranormal powers.[113] The Habad school was especially known for a certain disdain for magical performances (moftim).[114] In some later Hasidic texts one may find a narrative of decline, leading from the purer practice of the "early Tzaddiqim," which formed part of their mystical path, to the commercialized magical activity of the present.[115] However, it should borne in mind that in some cases, the Hasidic opposition was less to the magical activity itself but to revealing these powers openly, and indeed

restraint in revealing extraordinary abilities was part of the conscious regimen of such figures as the Seer of Lublin.[116] This position was sharpened by his student, Epstein, who not only writes that one should not focus on moftim, but in line with his general view of magic castigates miracle makers who are not proven to be on a high level of spiritual worship, as this false form of leadership is a form of idolatry.[117]

In a similar vein, R. Meir Ha-Levi Rotenberg of Apta, another prominent student of the Seer, writes of those who have levels and can see the future, but have not ascended to their source, so that their power may come from the Other Side.[118] A similar caution may be found in a strong autobiographical statement on personal empowerment by Safrin, which is a fitting conclusion of our discussion of Hasidic magic: "Know, my brother, that the true Tzaddiq . . . becomes a chair for the Shekhina, and certainly has an hour in which the whole world was created for him . . . for there is no Tzaddiq like the other . . . and he has an hour when his soul feels that the entire world was created for him, and the holy *mohin* [intelligences] expand in him, and he can bestow the entire world with all good things and cancel all evil decrees. And all these are exalted levels that cannot be grasped by the foolish of the world and no one should be foolish to set out on this path, for pride is literally idolatry."[119]

Just as opposition to magic can be found within the Hasidic world, incorporation of magic may be found among the Mitnagdim, thus dismantling convenient scholarly categories.[120] In R. Hayyim of Volozhin's *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*, we find the following protective use of Torah study: "And according to the value of the commitment with which he accepts the yoke of the Torah truly and with all his power, according to this value all the cares of this world will be removed and taken away from him, and the supreme protection hovers over him."[121] The magical power of Torah is echoed in a story of healing told in the same author's commentary on Tractate Avot, *Ruah Ha-Hayyim*: A woman whose son was close to death asked the author of a leading commentary on the code of law to heal him. His response was: "Do I replace God?" She then explained that she was addressing himself to his accumulated Torah knowledge. He then promised to dedicate the study that he was currently engaged him to her son, and he was healed.[122] A third, oracular use of magic can be found in another text cited in his name: "Taking advice from the Torah, that is to study passionately, and study Torah for its own sake and then direct one's thoughts to the matter at hand, if to do it or not. According to the choice that falls in one's mind, one will do thus and succeed."[123] As Shuchat has noted, this magical element recalls the famous "Oracle of the Vilna Gaon" (which was in fact used in 1948 in an attempt to

identify the remains of Israeli soldiers). These applications, emerging from a circle, which is often regarded as anti-mystical or at least anti-magical, can be seen as a clear example of nomian or scholastic magic in the nineteenth century. This approach, which I shall expand on in chapter 6, is strikingly similar to Hasidic traditions on the healing power of Torah.[124] It should thus be regarded as yet another instance of shared beliefs or, as Idel has put it, a common heritage, in the nineteenth-century Eastern European Jewish world.[125]

I wish to conclude our discussion of magic with a rather later example—the striking biography of R. Ya'aqov Wazana, which was so vividly portrayed by Yoram Bilu. Here we have an example of a nineteenth-century kabbalist who was not only willing to ally himself with the demonic realm, but also crossed the national boundaries established by practitioners such as Ibn Sayyah, and adopted some elements of Islamic practice in order to immerse himself in Arabic magical lore. As I have suggested elsewhere, there is room for emphasizing the shamanic aspects of Wazana's career as a magical healer, such as shape changing and absorbing illnesses.[126] However, one would err in considering this famous life story as reflecting a calm acceptance of magicians, as Wazana's tragic death at the hands of demons is utilized as a cautionary tale against dabbling in magic, much like the story of R. Joseph della Reina, which was frequently cited by sixteenth-century Palestinian kabbalists. As the present study is focused on the Ashkenazi world, it does not include an examination of the shamanic dimension of the activity of other later Oriental kabbalists, such as that of R. Yehuda Petaya (whose engagement in soul retrieval was alluded to in chapter 2). However, anyone at all conversant with the world of contemporary Sephardic Kabbalah is aware of the central role of magical healing in this community, which is still active and vibrant in contemporary Israel.[127]

Concluding Remarks

The examples of shamanic techniques and experiences adduced here and in chapter 5 are mainly drawn from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as an attempt to move beyond the focus of existing scholarship on earlier generations. Thus, they belie the argument made by Piekarz and other researchers, according to which Hasidism retreated from mystical concerns in its later centuries.[128] This claim may possibly hold for specific figures or schools, yet the findings of this chapter as well as chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate that one cannot deduce from these to the Hasidic movement, which greatly proliferated and even fragmented during this period. While some of

these researchers emphasize the turn of Hasidic discourse to the political realm in this period, the social dimension explored here is far more mystical in nature, while not devoid of internal political struggles. Though in some cases the mass urbanization of Central and Eastern European Jewry at the turn of the nineteenth century and concomitant social changes may have mitigated shamanic phenomena, which often tend to thrive more in rural settings, I do not believe that any generalization is viable.[129] The emic view is quite different from scholarly common wisdom, as numerous Hasidic texts state that it is precisely the later generations that possess greater mystical power.[130]

I illustrate this final point with a tale of R. Yitzhaq Eisic of Homil, who said that his first teacher, R. Shneur Zalman, possessed ruah ha-qodesh at all times, his second teacher, R. Dov Baer, could access this state whenever he wished and his successor, R. Menahem Mendel, could attain this state two or three times a day. When asked by another major student of the first Habad rebbes, R. Hillel of Patritsch, if he himself possessed ruah ha-qodesh to some degree, so as to be able to identify this state so precisely in others, he responded, "No, but I understand these matters."[131] Here we see that within the Hasidic social world there was a sense that despite some decline in frequency, not only the rebbes but also their close disciples, who were not always few in number, perceived trance and other altered states in a precise, almost quantifiable manner, rather than as either theory or hyperbole.[132]

Hasidic Trance

Trance and Ascent in Hasidism

When perusing Hasidic literature, one requires a certain hermeneutical adroitness to explicate tales of trance, which sometimes appear as accounts of sleep or fainting. Obviously, one cannot expect texts written in Eastern Europe before the late nineteenth century to explicitly use hypnotic terms. To demonstrate that the Hasidic world was cognizant of the salience of trance phenomena, I begin this chapter with a quote from an influential contemporary writer, R. Yitzhaq Moshe Erlanger: "And the deeds of the Tzaddiqim are known, that this is how they prayed: in divestment of corporeality they fell on the ground with limbs outstretched, and some cried out in strange voices, and others made strange motions out of devequt, and others wept terribly from the intensity of the fire of the flame of the love of God and devequt."[1] In other words, a variety of phenomena exhibited by the Hasidic masters, which can readily be described as forms of shamanic trance, are regarded as common knowledge in the Hasidic world.

This chapter will show that this contemporary Hasidic self-perception is quite accurate, rather than being an anachronism, as some scholars accustomed to employing an extreme hermeneutics of suspicion might argue. Throughout the chapter, I contend that Child's assessment that "the tantric Buddhist engagement with dreams, visions and trance states is not a peripheral activity within the tradition, but one which illuminates a number of its core tensions and concerns" is equally valid for Hasidism.[2] In fact, the vital role played by shamanic trance experiences, as well as the discourse surrounding these experiences, can be counted among the differentiating and identifying characteristics of this movement.

Idel has discussed at length the role of mystical ascent in the foundational experiences of the Besht, and from the Heikhalot literature onwards,

ascent frequently occurs in a state of trance.[3] Hence, numerous Hasidic texts, both hagiographic and theoretical, relate ascent to trance, and thus there is room for a more detailed exploration of several modalities of this relation. One such modality is the role of trance in facilitating ascents directed towards gaining knowledge of the nature and concomitantly the destiny of the spiritual leader, as in the Besht's famous Epistle on Ascent (*Iggeret ʿAliyyat Neshama*). For example, according to a hagiography of R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein, this expert practitioner "dozed" and remembered his previous ascents to the Heikhalot world when he was the high priest, R. Yishmaʿel, hero of the Heikhalot literature.[4] Here ascent in a hypnotic state enabled a later figure to recapture a sense of continuity with an earlier mystical world.

It should be noted that although Hasidism did not greatly develop the complex Lurianic theory of reincarnation, nonetheless there is a substantial hagiographical discourse on the various incarnations of the Hasidic masters. On the more sociopolitical level, this served to buttress their claims to authority, as in the case of Eichenstein, who displaced more senior claimants to spiritual succession in the name of his mystical expertise.[5] However, from the point of view of the practitioner's own spiritual self-awareness, knowledge of the origin of his soul was part of the construction of a sense of destiny and mission. Eichenstein also reportedly ascended to the *heikhal* of the Messiah in a sleep-like state, thus establishing a clear connection with the Besht's epistle.[6]

This hagiographical account shall further serve us for locating a more social model, that of intergenerational transmission during ascent in trance. According to our text, Eichenstein would perform these ascents only while his teachers were living and also with his hand on the shoulder of his student, R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin (in a manner reminiscent of the recommendation of Ibn Sayyah). After his teachers passed away, he actually feared to continue his ascents.[7] Here we see that trance ascent is not seen as a private state, despite the somewhat misleading references to sleep, but rather requires physical connection. Thus, it partakes in the Hasidic chain of transmission, which is one of the most central themes of the discourse of this movement. The nexus of transmission and trance is also echoed by a further ascent account, according to which Eichenstein encountered the famous R. Yisraʾel Hopstein, the departed master then just being on his way down to rectify souls. R. Tzevi then continued on his way, and checked in on his colleague's soul when returning from the *heikhal* of the Messiah.[8] The pathways of the world of the Heikhalot are thus imagined as a kind of thoroughfare

of rebbes.[9] It is interesting that Eichenstein identified Hopstein by the light he emitted, which once again relates trance to luminosity.[10]

The interpersonal dimension of ascent is well evident in the famous ladder image, in which the ascending master relies on the chain of connection to his disciples, imagined as the ladder that he steps on.[11] As Rivka Goldberg-Dvir has pointed out in her discussion of this image, it should not be seen as a mere metaphor, as it is found both in theoretical texts, such as those penned by R. Ya'aqov Yosef of Polonoy, as well as hagiographies. In fact, specific mystical practices, such as kavvana and yihudim, are mentioned in the context of this image in one of the texts that Goldberg-Dvir adduced, but did not fully analyze.[12]

This discourse on ascent in trance is part of a wider imaginaire of inner space and sacred geography, which can be easily located in several classic Hasidic works, such as R. Elimelekh Weisblum's *Noam Elimelekh*.[13] However, notwithstanding the importance of the vertical axis in the Hasidic mystical experience, one should remember to balance it with the stress on various horizontal movements, such as walking, wandering, traveling to the rebbe, and so on, as discussed in an important study by Wolfson.[14] Finally, besides the importance of movement, one should recall that as a somewhat quietistic movement, Hasidism often stressed residing or dwelling in the supernal realm.[15] Thus, Weisblum wrote that the main place of residence of the Tzaddiq is in the higher worlds, where his luminosity shines even when he is physically present in the lower world. This is also his explanation of the magical activity of the Tzaddiq: as he is in great proximity to the higher world, he can easily draw influx from them. Hopstein, whose doctrine of the Tzaddiq resembles that of Weisblum, writes in a similar vein of the Tzaddiq as God's neighbor (this level being one explanation for his ability to see afar).[16] This theme is developed in the context of trance by R. Aharon Perlow of Apta, who writes of the level of prophecy attained during divestment, which enables the practitioner to see far things from close up as in a dream. He then goes on to say that a person can be "standing here" in prayer and actually be before the divine Throne.[17]

Group Trance in Hasidism

Previous discussions of trance and of mystical experience in general have tended to emphasize individual experience, despite the social nature of Jewish mysticism, which is embedded in a religion that greatly emphasized national and social dimensions. Indeed, in the sixteenth century mystical

fraternities existed in both Jerusalem and Safed, the descriptions of trance that we have seen so far were limited to internal and solitary states. Albotini's text spoke explicitly of seclusion and solitude, while Ibn Sayyah's text at best mentions a dyadic connection with a teacher. Another example is that of the famous relationship between R. Hayyim Vital and Luria, which retained its dyadic focus even within the setting of a loosely organized fraternity.[18] This even seems to be partly true of Luzzatto's fraternity, which revolved mainly around the interchange between three strong figures, Luzzatto, R. Moshe David Valle, and R. Yequtiel Gordon. This structure somewhat resembles the dyadic psychotherapeutic situation, which most forms of hypnotherapy share with other forms of Western psychotherapy. It has been claimed that "Erickson has redefined hypnotic trance to apply not to the state of one person but to a special type of interchange between people"; however, again this extension usually applies only to a dyadic frame.[19] Generally speaking, there is not much joining of group therapy and hypnotherapy, despite recent advances by certain practitioners. Thus, discovering a more social trance setting can provide a significant resource for therapeutic theory and practice. The findings adduced here can then be merged with the rather scarce ethnographic material on group trance in shamanic settings in other cultures, as well as my comments on the social dimensions of the Hasidic shamanic models.[20]

I believe that such a social setting can be readily located in the Hasidic world. Several scholars have claimed that the main Hasidic innovation is the move from theosophy to psychology, and apart from Wexler, scholars almost always understand this shift in individual terms, as part of the relative absence of social theory in Jewish studies. One notable exception among Kabbalah scholars is Pedaya, who has briefly suggested that the Hasidim responded to modernity by attempting to create new forms of mystical community, so that individual constructions of selfhood and social forms are indivisible.[21] I contend that the social focus in Hasidic trance practice sets it apart from the general development of trance in modern Kabbalah. However, the cultivation of group practice in the Hasidic world did not obviate earlier patterns, including individual and even solitary trance or dyadic experiences. Collective experience often fed back into personal empowerment.

The following testimony from a wealthy Hasid is found in a collection of tales preserved in the Slonim school: "Once I came to our teacher from Ruzhin [R. Yisra'el Friedman of Ruzhin], and wished to enter, and I saw that in his room were the holy Rabbi of Kobrin and other Tzaddiqim, and our teacher from Ruzhin sat and spoke to them, then the other Tzaddiqim

fell asleep on the table, and one of them fainted, and the holy Rabbi of Kobrin sat and his face was ablaze and his eyes protruded, and when our teacher finished speaking he said, 'This is verily the Deed of the Chariot (*maʿase merkava*).'"[22] Here we find an example of a combination between the fiery transformation of one listener and a sleep-like group trance of the others. The reference to fainting (or *khalushes*, which is in turn a Yiddish adaptation of a Hebrew term) should not be taken literally, nor should the mention of sleep: in some Hasidic texts fainting is followed by awakening, thus establishing an overlap between this state and sleep, in others fainting is described as a lighter form of trance than sleep, in others it is associated with much deeper states, such as mystical death, and in yet others it is related to shaking and other forms of nonvoluntary movement.[23] However, one should take care to distinguish between accounts of observers who may mistake trance for sleep or fainting and accounts that consciously employed these terms in lieu of the Western term "trance." In such deciphering, one should recall that mystical language can be intentionally ambiguous.[24]

Another striking example of group trance can be found in a tale of the early "hidden Tzaddiq" R. Yehiel Michel. Although I have reason to suspect later interpolations in the particular collection to which this text belongs, it is important, at the very least, on the level of reception. The background of the tale is a scholastic contest, in which each of R. Yehiel's brothers vied for supremacy in learning, in order to justify their father's economic backing. While each of the non-Hasidic sons excelled in public discourse, he focused on performing yihudim while eating and refused to expound on Torah matters. Upon being severely rebuked by his father, he requested that the contest be repeated on the next day:

> On the following day, the father summoned the worthies of the town to a second festive meal, and as before he asked the eldest son to address the public. All were eager to hear the wondrous discourse of the great scholar. He stood up with an expression of self-importance, and with a smile on his lips commenced a profound discourse . . . as he was expounding, his brother [R. Yehiel Michel] stood up, walked over to him and passed his palm over his face. This astounded all present, and here a very curious event took place: as R. Yehiel's palm passed the speaker's face, his mind was totally cast into confusion. The words of Torah totally ceased, and instead, in a weak voice, he began to confess various sins that he had committed in the course of his life.[25]

Needless to say, the same technique was repeated with the other brothers. This account contains obvious folkloristic aspects, which I shall not discuss

here. What is pertinent for our purpose is a kind of Ericksonian confusion technique designed for bringing out unconscious content and removing a conscious persona. The technique was performed in a public situation, on three people, using a form of mesmeric pass.[26] These cases of what I have termed group trance appear to contradict the general rule posited by Bilu, according to which nonpossessive trance is usually a cognitive and thus a private event.[27] A theoretical yet explicit statement favoring group trance over individual states is in fact found in *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, where Epstein opposes the sensory withdrawal reached in isolation with group practice, which is essential for attaining the supreme holiness.[28]

Elsewhere, Epstein describes, albeit in metaphorical terms, the synergetic advantages of group practice in fiery terms: "when the assembly of the 'holy sheep' come together to the Tzaddiq of the generation, then the candles increase, for a single candle is not like many candles together, which increase the light of holiness . . . and as a result each one of them can draw holiness on himself, and know afterwards how and what advice to give to himself . . . to practice the Torah and commandments in the flame of fire that comes from the unity of the Holy One, blessed be He and the Shekhina."[29] Such texts should give more thrust to the astute statements somewhat randomly scattered in previous studies, such as that of Piekarz, who wrote on the hypnotic effect of the Hasidic gathering around the Tzaddiq as a focus of luminosity in his discussion of an important text on collective melting of the heart.[30] One can conclude these discussions of group trance by saying that they demonstrate that in the generations after the Besht, the Hasidim cultivated trance states that were not only not introverted in nature, as Pedaya appears to have claimed, but are actually entirely public and social in nature.[31]

On a more theoretical level, the enactment of trance states in a public arena can be seen as part of the performative role of the Hasidic leader, whose claims to sacral expertise need to be reaffirmed visibly. Despite significant advances in theoretical formulation of the relationship between ritual and performance, as well as more specific studies of the theatrical dimension of shamanic trance, there has not been a sustained examination of the dramaturgic aspects of group mystical activity, and certainly not in the Jewish context.[32] Such an examination, which would draw on performance theory, would enable us to regard ritual mystical events such as the *tisch* or festive meal at the table of the Tzaddiq as more than social conventions. Rather they should be seen as devices for the social circulation of emotional energy through group trance.[33] The comment of Weiss, who somewhat flamboyantly wrote of the gathering around the Tzaddiq during the nomian

event concluding meal of Sabbath as the birthplace of all Hasidic teaching and literature, is extremely important in this context.[34]

To an extent, the practices of the Hasidic fellowship can be seen as developments of the rituals of earlier groups, such as that of Luzzatto, where the dramaturgic crafting of group practice, as formalized in the group's regulations, could be said to create a trance-like ambiance. I believe that Ervin Goffman and his successors have provided a firm foundation for such a move in their discussions of "socialized trance" whose model is *unio mystica*, as well as their development of the Durkheimian theory of "collective effervescence" attained through the drama of collective ritual, which effects "entrainment" and "rhythmic coordination."[35]

Passive Trance Experience

Trance frequently accompanies experiences of profound passivity, as famously in the case of maggidism. As already noted by several scholars, such passive states were especially cultivated by the Hasidim.[36] One should add that as such cultivation was critiqued by the Mitnagdim, it can be seen, *grosso modo*, as a differentiating characteristic of Hasidic spirituality, as well as the construction of selfhood in that social world. Such experiences can take various forms, depending on the wider context of ideas or practices in which they were embedded. One such form is the sense of inability to act on one's own accord, which is sometimes related to the need for frequent prayer. This pair of passive experience and intense prayer, which has echoes in Orthodox Christian mysticism, is found especially among Bratzlav Hasidism, but is by no means confined to this school.[37]

A deeper form of passive trance results in a state of profound self-annihilation, in which one's bodily being ceases as it were and the senses thus cease to function.[38] A good example of the later experience is the radical dislocation described by Safrin, who writes of a state of self-annihilation in which one no longer knows if it is light or dark, day or night, a perceptual dislocation that is associated with deep trance in hypnotic practice.[39] This experience is often manifested in states of catalepsy and other forms of immobility, which are in turn common hypnotic phenomena. The following account of R. Nahman of Bratzlav strikingly illustrates such states: "Once our teacher, of blessed memory, asked one of his followers if he is accustomed to groan and sigh, what is called *krechtzen*, in his solitary prayer [the prime Bratzlav practice]. He said yes. And he asked him further, if he groans and sighs from the depth of his heart. Our teacher said to him: When I groan and sigh, then if I place my hand on the table, when sighing I cannot

remove it or lift it and have to wait for around an hour till my strength returns."[40]

In yet deeper states, as described by R. Hayyim Tyrer of Czernovitz in his oft-quoted *Be'er Mayyim Hayyim*, one totally loses motor control, and is unable even to perform the commandments—a statement with an antinomian flavor.[41] Even when one does perform a commandment, such total absorption could lead to behavior such as shaking an etrog all day. This extreme experience is a profound possibility within the dialectical activity of the Tzaddiq, who, as several scholars have noted, oscillates between mystical removal from ordinary reality and more communal or world-directed activity. Thus, as part of his classical discussions of the Tzaddiqate, Weisblum writes that when the Tzaddiq is "out of this world," he cannot "draw down" influx for his followers. I certainly do not accept Piekarz's qualification that this is mere hyperbole.[42] In general, the absence of awareness of hypnotic literature on the part of some scholars may have well led to the under-reading of many texts. Thus, descriptions of disassociative trance have been taken for abstract discussions of the nullification of earthly existence. As Idel has already noted, one should likewise read the numerous descriptions of anesthesia in Hasidic texts as descriptions of trance—and, I would add, passive and deep trance.[43]

Disassociative experiences of loss of sense of self in prayer, perhaps the most central Hasidic practice, properly belong to the same cluster of phenomena.[44] A very common passive model—that of automatic speech that occurs as result of loss of the ability to speak of one's own accord—is often found in the context of prayer.[45] A interesting variant on this theme is attributed to the early master R. Pinhas of Koritz: the sign of prayer being accepted is that one's hands go up by themselves. In technical hypnotic terms this is the well-known phenomenon of arm levitation, which occurs when trance is deepened somewhat.[46] It is worth recalling that the passive state of being unable to pray of one's own accord was not found only in the Hasidic world and indeed appears in the Mitnagdic classic *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim* by R. Hayyim of Volozhin, in the context of a form of sensory withdrawal: "And after he is practiced and his prayer is ordered in the connection of the three levels . . . of the totality of his soul . . . he can grow stronger in the purity of his thought and intention . . . and when he adheres to this level, then he can be considered as if he is not in this world at all, and as a result he will be annulled (*yitbatel*) in his own eyes completely . . . for he who attains this level in prayer, then from this connection of thought, his body can be as an immobile stone, and he cannot open his mouth like a mute, only that God will open his lips to speak the words of the prayer before him."[47]

Automatic speech is often related to the more public role of the Tzad-diq when "saying Torah," itself a key event in the Hasidic lifestyle. Thus the Tzaddiq is often described as saying only what God puts in his mouth in such moments, as "the Shekhina speaks from his throat."[48] For this rea-son, Epstein writes in a valuable personal testimony, that the great Tzad-diqim, when seen in a state of divestment, "Their mouths spoke prophecies and predictions . . . the did not know afterwards what they had said for they are adhering to the supernal worlds, and the *Shekhina* speaks from their throats," just as in hypnotic amnesia. Other Tzaddiqim are tellingly described as deliberately neglecting to prepare their talk so as to preserve its spontaneous nature. An even more profound variation is found in R. Safrin's claim that some masters do not even hear their own voice while speaking, as it emits entirely of its own accord.[49]

The Tzaddiq's oft-described telepathic ability to direct a seemingly gen-eral discourse to the need of each and every listener is explained in these terms: God places in his mouth a discourse that answers to the needs of his followers. A strong formulation of this model is found in R. Yehoshuaʿ He-schel of Apta's claim that the Tzaddiqim are actually forced to "say Torah."[50] Such possession-like experiences probably account to some extent for the famous and sometimes critiqued (not only by opponents of Hasidism) phenomenon of spontaneous and uncontrollable bodily movement.[51] An intriguing text by R. Shmu'el, the son of R. Avraham Borenstein, and the author of *Shem Mi-Shmuʾel*, suggests a psychophysical typology to account for the different approaches to this matter: the heart is warm and creates movement and sound, and the brain is still, silent, and cold. Therefore the greatest Tzaddiqim, like the teacher of his father, the famous and austere R. Menahem Mendel of Kotzk (or R. Menahem's own teacher R. Simha Bunim of Psischa) are of the "brain" type and do not move in prayer (though their faces burned, in the manner described in chapter 4). Likewise, R. Moshe Teitelbaum, a disciple of the Seer of Lublin, wrote that Tzaddiqim who are "hidden rooms," like the biblical prototypes Moses or Aaron, do not exhibit outer movement or overt enthusiasm.[52]

The numerous statements on the Tzaddiq as divine, or possessing divine powers, which have aroused the ire of certain scholars, both academic and traditional, as when voiced in the late twentieth century by R. Menahem Mendel Shneurson, should be understood along these lines. They refer to a certain state in which rather than passivity neutralizing the ability to per-form magic, being overtaken by the divine actually facilitates transforma-tive empowerment. It is in these empowered states that the followers also experience trance states, as follows from the close connection between the

Hasidim and Tzaddiq. These include erotic pleasure in the connection to the Tzaddiq, which is compared to the divine *hieros gamos*, and especially "seeing-as" experiences of seeing God in the face of the Tzaddiq, which has not really been discussed in existing research, despite its importance for the phenomenology of Hasidic trance.[53]

Shanon has admirably covered similar transformations of perception in his study of certain forms of South American shamanism, and I believe that there is room for similar work on more mystical settings, such as Tantra and Shingon.[54] One should thus conclude this discussion by noting that experiences of seeing-as appear to have been especially cultivated by the Hasidim, as exemplified in accounts of seeing only the spiritual essence of the outside world during divestment, seeing only divine vitality, seeing letters instead of people, seeing the entire world as letters, etc.[55] R. Aharon Perlow of Apta in fact suggested a series of techniques designated to cultivate this ability, such as purifying one's eyes so as to transform physical vision into a chariot for the vision of the soul, seeing holiness in a tangible manner through divestment, and seeing the divine light in material objects.[56] He also describes the related capacity to "hear-as," as in hearing fire as voices. Seeing-as should not be regarded purely as transformation of perception, as it involves somatic transformation.[57]

In this vein, R. Yitzhaq Eisic of Homil spoke of the transformation of the body through sweat of study and tears of prayer until the flesh becomes purified enough to enable seeing God. Tellingly, R. Yitzhaq describes this level as the beginning of the "ladder of ascent."[58] Based on such descriptions, the acosmic view of Habad should not be regarded as a merely theoretical theosophical doctrine, but also as the result of radical transformation of perception. This holds true for other schools: R. Hayyim Halberstam of Tzanz, in an elaborate discourse on God being the sole reality, goes on to say that the Tzaddiq "sees and hears only the glory of God."[59] In a similar vein, strongly deterministic statements, as in the Izbicha school, can be seen as reflections of experiences of profound passivity rather than as abstract discussions of the question of free will.

Telepathic Transmission

According to several Hasidic texts, one of the more intense forms of communication between Tzaddiq and Hasid is that of thought transfer. Telepathic communication was perceived as a device for the direct transmission of trance states and other mystical levels.[60] In other words, the Hasidim appeared to have had a sense of continuum between the intense attune-

ment required for interpersonal trance and the actual transfer of internal states. While I am not adopting any specific stance on the objective veracity of mystical accounts of such abilities, we should avoid dismissing these out of hand and instead attempt to understand the subjective perceptions that they represent. Since the groundbreaking work of Hollenback, scholars at least have the option of seriously addressing accounts of empowered states of consciousness and the abilities that they confer.[61] Such an open consideration can be found in the work of Child, who reads Turner and Durkheim as describing *communitas* as a level of communication that is beyond language and "to some degree unconscious and almost telepathic in nature."[62] An exploration of this issue will blend well with recent developments in social theory, where one can identify a reawakening of interest in hypnotic phenomena as part of a broader attempt to understand the phenomena of transmission of affect.[63] In addition, one should mention explorations of transference and countertransference in psychoanalytic theory since the 1990s, which are groping towards explanations of nonverbal transmissions of affect.[64]

Although telepathic communication played an important role in the construction of the uniquely Hasidic forms of communication between masters and disciples, its roots go back to earlier periods. Direct mind-to-mind communication between teacher and student plays a major role in the mystical biographies and hagiographies composed in Safed, as I have shown elsewhere.[65] The sense of continuity between the Safedian fellowships and their own is reiterated in numerous Hasidic hagiographies, as well as theoretical works.[66] The practice of yihudim, developed largely in Lurianic Kabbalah and seen as especially congenial for master-student telepathy, was extremely important for the daily practice of many Hasidic masters, and especially that of Safrin, who described himself to his son as the world expert on the practice of yihudim.[67] One of the practices that Safrin mentions is that of constantly visualizing the presence of Luria together with that of the Besht.[68] Here, the continuity with Safed is not merely a matter of historical consciousness but rather a key to establishing a mystical form of intergenerational transmission.

Thus, Safrin's son, R. Eliʿezer Tzevi, writes as follows, in a passage expressing the unique familial sense of destiny within the Safrin dynasty, as well as the exoteric imperative of this school, which presaged similar developments in the twentieth century:

Through the merit of the saintly departed admor [rebbe] of Ziditchov [Eichenstein] we were able to attain a little of the secrets of the Torah, and as it is written

of the divine Rabbi R. Hayyim Vital . . . that the divine Ari [Luria] came to
the world only to teach the secrets of the Torah to R. Hayyim Vital . . . thus
we may say that our teacher of Ziditchov came to the world only to lift the
power of the Torah for all of our generations and families. For the other Tzad-
diqim of the generation hide the secrets of the Torah and we . . . revealed the
secrets of our hearts in all our days as we received from my father and teacher
of blessed memory and our teacher of Ziditchov . . . and God . . . placed my
soul in this family who are allowed to reveal the hidden secrets of the Holy
Torah.[69]

In one of his exegetical works, Y. Y. Safrin writes of the sensitivity of those
granted telepathic abilities to the performance of yihudim: his teacher,
Eichenstein, could sense when Safrin performed this practice.[70] Here, as
in Safed, telepathy was regarded as playing a major role in master-disciple
communication on technique. The summit of telepathic ability was de-
scribed as the ability to go beyond mere reading of thoughts and to attain
knowledge of events taking place in the entire world.[71] This power, which is
mentioned already in earlier Hasidic texts, was often seen as the essence of
ruah ha-qodesh that is so frequently mentioned in this literature. This spa-
tial extension was complemented by the temporal ability of precognition.
However, it is interesting that Safrin relates the latter ability to the spatial
vision of the Heikhalot and Merkava.[72]

At the same time, the discourse on these abilities reflects much ambiva-
lence. According to the same rich discussion by Safrin, some saints do not
need them, and others even asked that they be removed.[73] Safrin's read-
ing of one such story asserts that the important levels are adherence, love,
and fear and not the psychic powers, which are the "true level of hearing
and seeing." Here, he takes a middle course between rejection of shamanic
abilities and pursuing them: it is a path that is relevant for some, but not
for others, and in any case is described by him as somewhat dangerous.[74]
However, his autobiographical testimonies make it evident which category
he himself belongs to.

One should by no means think that the Ziditchov-Komarno school,
which we have focused on up to here, is in any way unique in this orienta-
tion towards telepathic abilities and similar attainments. While there has
been some research on the radical ideas and hermeneutics of the Izbicha-
Radzin school, the magical and shamanic aspects of its practice and recep-
tion have been hardly touched upon. However, hagiographical accounts,
such as *Dor Le-Yesharim*, are replete with these elements. R. Mordekhai Yosef
Leiner, author of *Mei Ha-Shiloah* and the founder of this school, is described

as possessing powers such as precognition, telepathy, and knowledge of distant events. He is also described as employing his magical powers against the opponents of Hasidism. In light of our previous discussion, it is interesting to note that one of the magical techniques he employed was none other than *nefilat appayim*, combined with weeping.[75] His son, R. Ya'aqov Leiner, is likewise described as directing his empowered and concentrated thought for shamanic-magical goals, including knowledge of distant events, precognition, rectification of the souls of the departed, and magical healing using oil, as well as the standard Hasidic technique of providing magical assistance through reading petition notes. However, he displayed his telepathic powers only when he was in a good mood.[76]

Similar powers were attributed to R. Mordekhai Yosef's grandson, R. Gershon Henikh, who practiced the following hypnotic calibration technique with his Hasidim: "Once when he was in a jolly mood he told the people standing before him to each raise one finger upwards, and then cover all the fingers with a cloth, and when he would feel a finger through the cloth he would say whose it was, and he did so without error."[77] These hagiographies show that at very least in the popular imagination, successive generations practiced such techniques. As in the case of Komarno, Lurianic technique is in the forefront of shamanic practice: R. Gershon Henikh cites the Lurianic *Gate of Yihudim* as a source for his exorcism techniques.[78] In other words, the shamanic dimension of Lurianic technique may have informed Hasidic practice well into the twentieth century.

I do not think that these accounts can be easily detached from the "worldview" of these spiritual leaders. To cite but one example: one of the amulets given by R. Gershon Henikh for magical healing contained the verse "you have seen that God is the Lord and there is none other beside Him" (Deuteronomy 4:34), a verse frequently cited in Hasidic pantheistic or acosmic discourse. From a more theoretical subsequent discussion, we can deduce that we have here a pragmatic application of this seemingly theological position—one can circumvent the usual course of nature by appealing to the dimension in which all is divinity.[79] Another theoreticization of telepathy, from the Karlin school, places this ability within the realm of cosmic unity, which is cast in noetic terms: "When one reaches the world of thought then one can know what the other person is thinking, as the world of thought is one and extends in all of the worlds and in all people."[80]

The centrality of telepathy having being demonstrated, we can now expand on some of the devices utilized to reach this level.[81] Some masters would use methods also extant in Lurianic Kabbalah. The Seer of Lublin, the hero of numerous tales of telepathy, would know the secrets of a person

through a form of palm reading.[82] R. Yehiel Danziger, the rebbe of Alexander, would read sexual secrets in the pulse while breathing deeply, while R. Elimelekh Weisblum would gaze at the person's face.[83] R. Nahman of Bratzlav's favored method seems to have been physical contact.[84] Similarly, Safrin claimed that "in this *tzelem* all the thoughts of a person are written, and all of the thoughts that a person had in his lifetime are apparent to the subtle of vision." The *tzelem* was usually understood in terms of the energetic body surrounding the physical body.[85] A very important method was that of ritual purification in the miqve. As we shall also see in chapter 6, telepathy was but one of a large number of mystical states attributed to this core Hasidic practice.[86] Another extremely popular route was the reading of the *pitke*, or note of supplication given by the Hasidism. This apparently was a specialty of Safrin, who would know details about people from reading their names.[87] A similar variant is knowledge of the affairs of others through inspired reading of biblical verses, Psalms, or Zoharic passages, an ability attributed to the Besht himself. These close variants are sometimes joined, as in the technique of reading a verse connected to the name of the supplicant while reading his petition.[88]

Due to the textual element, some of these techniques are rather nomian in nature, and in fact, telepathy was even used by the Seer of Lublin to decide Halakhic queries.[89] Thus, we are not dealing with occult phenomena, as they are termed by some, but rather with what was seen as part of the regular fabric of Jewish life.[90] At the same time, one can find the claim that there is no need for any specific state or device to "read the heart," as long as there is a soul-connection between the two persons involved.[91] In other words, the state of connection was regarded as far more significant than any specific technique designed to evoke it. This variety of methods and approaches reinforces the sense that more nuanced readings of texts can be reached by a phenomenological bracketing that enables one to take these accounts seriously, rather than opting for the facile, dismissive option of blurring these specific modes through vague terms such as occult.

Transmissions of Trance

Our discussion of telepathic transmission shows that at least for some Hasidic masters, shamanic attainments were to be transmitted onwards rather than maintained as a private preserve. Therefore, an essential ingredient of their cultivation of trance states was that the transmission of these states to others.[92] This connection tallies well with current theoretical discussions on the social role of hypnotic states in the transmission of affect.

As is well known from hypnotic literature, trance is often considered to be a form of fluid medium or energy that is contagious, as it were. From this perspective, the notion of the rebbe as transmitting his trance states can be seen as blending well with the famous general concept of the power of the Tzaddiq as one who is granted the ability to draw down or transmit influx.

Child has written in the Tantric context, "The ability, through contact, to transmit constellations of energy . . . constitutes the guru's charisma." However, in our analysis the concept of charisma can be widened to include not only transmission of energy, but also of states of perception. In this way, the Weberian concept of charisma can be greatly deepened through fresh insights from the comparative study of religion.[93] Although current research recognizes the centrality of the psychological realm in Hasidism, a more hypnotically oriented approach can more fully open our understanding of this movement to the possibilities inherent in the recent "affective turn" in the social sciences.[94]

A powerful trance experience frequently served as an initiation, through a profoundly transformative experience, into a relationship of transmission between Hasid and rebbe. Thus, R. Yitzhaq Eisic of Homil wrote in a famous letter that after meeting his teacher, the first rebbe of Habad, and experiencing the acosmic truth of the sole existence of God, he reached such a state of hypnotic disorientation that he did not know if it was day or night. The first rebbe himself wrote, in a seemingly theoretical vein, of the unconscious effect of witnessing the exalted states of the Tzaddiq, as manifested in the latter's "giving up his soul" in prayer.[95] In a similar manner, R. Yehuda Horowitz of Dzikov was told to adhere to R. Hayyim of Tzanz, in the course of a dream, which was "almost waking," or in other words a form of trance. Therefore, although in his own school of Ropshitz they didn't make much of dreams, he perforce followed this message.[96] An extremely interesting description of initiation through trance is found in the Bratzlav hagiography *Kokhvei Or*: R. Nahman cast fear on a disciple, rendered him immobile through this shock and then asked him to confess, as was customary in this school. In a parallel tale, this request led to the hypnotic phenomenon of age-regression to early childhood, which, as we have seen, played an important role in this world.[97]

Transmission in trance is related to the classical theme of divestment of corporeality and more generally to the transformation of physical being.[98] Thus, R. Nahman of Bratzlav transmitted his level of divestment to his famous student R. Nathan, merely by means of referring to it. A similar account describes the Seer of Lublin as being able to transmit the divestment of corporeality to others when he himself removed his sensory perception.[99]

These hagiographical accounts are echoed by theoretical statements in the profuse literature on the Tzaddiq: for example, in *Ma'or Va-Shemesh* we find that "R. Shimeon Bar Yohai and his friends, and also after him, at the end of days, when the light of our teacher Yitzhaq Luria appeared, and after him when the spark of the Besht sparkled, and also the other Tzaddiqim of the generations, from then till now, their goal was to tie the souls of Israel to their root, and remove the separating barriers from them . . . and the quality of the connection of their souls was through their divestment of materiality, and total exiting of their physicality, in order to tie their souls to the blessed Ein Sof, and through this they also drew the souls of Israel to connect to their root."[100]

It is in this context that one can understand the discourses of the Tzaddiq, which are regarded not merely as social or educational events but rather as arenas of transmission.[101] In a telling statement on this theme, R. Aharon Perlow of Apta writes that one can uplift others and cause them to experience walking among the angels.[102] Similar, though more theoretical descriptions of the Tzaddiqim as transmitting their ability of self-annihilation to those who are physically connected to them may also be found in the school of the Seer of Lublin.[103] Such statements show that bitul was not conceptualized as a merely individual attainment but rather as a social state. Therefore, we can find several texts on bitul towards a fellow Hasid or, of course the rebbe, as a prerequisite for self-abnegation before God.[104] In other words, it is through interpersonal relationships that the Hasid models self-annulment. Conversely, it was the depth of bitul that was perceived as enabling the work of uplifting souls, as in Safrin's fascinating and enigmatic description of the recipient of ruah ha-qodesh becoming "as a little worm literally, literally nothing" and then imagining himself "in the eyes of the mind, as a small plant growing on the earth, and by doing so uplifting all of the souls that are in the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human, and one cannot explain this even from mouth to ear, for it is trusted to the heart of the pure."[105]

These descriptions more than amply support the apt formulation of Pedaya, according to which the role of the spiritual teacher in Hasidism is to effect transformation through contact. The concept of *smikha*, or literally laying on of hands, was reinterpreted in this vein in Hasidic writing as transmission of authority through empowering contact.[106] Furthermore, this notion of contagion often entails a passive dimension, which at times borders on possession. An interesting example of this variation is the claim of R. Yitzhaq of Radvil that the soul that he inherited from his father, R. Yehiel Michel of Zlotchov, speaks through him.[107] A more shamanic mode

of transmission of trance states involved "power objects," which are seen as absorbing the energy of the rebbe.[108]

Finally, we have the very common notion of the Tzaddiq as waiting for his replacement before dying, so as to be able to pass on his abilities. These were often split, as in the famous account of R. Elimelekh Weisblum passing on "the soul in his brain" to R. Menahem Mendel of Riminov, and other abilities, such as his paranormal vision or the power of his heart, to various other students.[109] A related motif is found in the tale of R. Hayyim of Tzanz blessing a disciple with the ability to see him whenever he wishes, including after his death.[110] This theme ties in to the general notion of the intergenerational transmission of power through a chain of Tzaddiqim.[111] In light of our discussion in chapter 4, the nexus of luminosity and dynastic transmission is significant, as in the text adduced by Piekarz, to the effect that the light drawn down by the Tzaddiq remains for his children.[112]

The notion of deathbed transmission as a telepathic process is well developed in R. Nahman of Bratzlav's description of the flow of influx and spirit from the Tzaddiq to his students at the hour of his death, which is far greater than that conveyed during his life. It is very telling that Nahman integrates this description into a discussion of various levels of organic connection ("literally like branches to a tree") between various students and the Tzaddiq. Nahman adds that some attain the ability to sense in themselves their mentor's inner movement, his rises and falls, even without physical contact: "whoever is very connected to the Tzaddiq, literally like branches to a tree, feels in himself all of the rises and falls of the Tzaddiq, even if he is not with him. For the disciple should sense in himself all of the rises and falls of the Tzaddiq, if he is really correctly connected, like branches to the tree."[113] This description shows that the idea of transmission through *histalkut* or removal is not confined to the final stage of dying but can also occur during the lifetime of the Tzaddiq.[114] The theory of transmission by removal is explained in a parallel text, where Nahman writes that through transmission, the master remains embodied even after his death, not merely because the disciple is like his son, but because the transmission of light through speech "is as if literally he makes," or totally transforms, the body of the disciple.[115]

Twentieth-Century Trance and the Influence of Western Hypnosis

When comparing Hasidic trance with Western hypnosis, one should bear in mind that the latter influenced Hasidism in the course of the twentieth

century far more than psychoanalysis (despite the case discussed in the appendix): this is certainly true for the figures that I have discussed in an earlier work on Jewish mysticism during the previous century.[116] In such cases, influence occurred in an explicit and easily traceable manner, rather than through osmosis. An obvious example is R. Qalonymus Qalman Shapira of Piasecszna, whose mystical practice has been the object of some recent scholarly interest.[117] In the posthumous collection *Derekh Ha-Melekh*, the following teaching of his is recorded.

> When the person sleeps and his mind and thoughts are quiet, precisely then, as he does not have his own mind (*daʿat*) then divine inspiration can rest on him . . . so thus the main thing is to arrive deliberately in a waking state to a state of sleep, that this by quieting his endless flow of thoughts and volitions . . . and he [R. Qalman] gave practical advice on quieting ones thoughts. He said that one should start with observing one's thoughts for a short time for some moments and then slowly feel that his head is emptying and that his thoughts have stopped their customary flow, and then start to recite one verse . . . so as to connect his head which is now empty of all other thoughts, to one thought of holiness.

The text then moves from this more meditative discussion of "empty mind" to a description of hypnotic suggestion, which can include Yiddish "affirmations" of God's presence throughout reality. Shapira subsequently introduces the hypnotic principle of adhering to positive reinforcement only: "And he said then that this quieting can serve for the rectification of all negative traits but not in a negative and solely in a positive manner, emphasizing the opposite of the negative trait . . . and he explained this, that we observe that if an infant cries and we tell him not to cry the more one speaks to him the more he cries." We then encounter an obvious sign of the influence of contemporary hypnotic technique: "One can also use the method of looking at the small hand of a clock that hardly moves for the quieting, for this also quiets one's thoughts and volitions, and after this quieting, which should lead to some kind of inspiration, he ordered us to recite the verse 'Show me God your ways' (Psalms 86:11) in his special tune."[118] The end of this quote reinforces the connection between trance and music (which I shall return to in chapter 6).

This is not an isolated discussion; Shapira's works, and especially his manual for a projected mystical fraternity, *Bnei Mahshava Tova*, are replete with detailed descriptions of trance states, such as fainting when voicing the acosmic declaration that "there is none besides God."[119] These descriptions

are part of an overall concern with transformation, primarily transformation of the senses, which leads to "new senses" as well as the ability to visualize oneself in the supernal worlds, à la Albotini and Vital, or alternatively to see the heavenly host filling the room when the lights are dimmed during the concluding meal of Sabbath.[120] However, these cases of "seeing-as" are not final goals, but should rather give way to transformation of thought, which entails a pure, formless consciousness of the divine.[121] This formulation resembles that of his ancestor and namesake, R. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein, who writes that one needs to go beyond visual, olfactory, and auditory revelations, unlike certain groups who are distracted by these sensory modes.[122]

A second example of this influence during the first part of the twentieth century is that of R. Menahem Eckstein (1880–1943) of Romania. As Daniel Reiser is preparing a detailed study of this interesting Hasidic writer, this is not the place to discuss his work on guided imagination. However, it is clear that there are several similarities to R. Qalman in his writing. His treatments of hypnotic guided imagination are part of an extremely rich psychological discourse on cognition and life stages. Due to his desire to reach wider audiences in his time, which of course preceded the late twentieth-century proliferation of Kabbalah, his terminology is not overtly Kabbalistic. The book contains exercises in various forms of what he himself terms "guided imagination," which were probably influenced by autogenic training as developed by Joseph Schultz in the 1930s.[123] His awareness of contemporary parallels is evident in his claim that contemporary knowledge about the power of suggestion, i.e., hypnosis, is but a "drop in a sea" compared to Hasidic knowledge of these phenomena.

The main goal of these techniques is to develop flexibility of mind through association and disassociation, i.e., seeing the earth from outside and subsequently from an embodied perspective, from ground level as it were. The ultimate aim of such techniques is psychological and reminiscent of hypnotic applications for disassociating from worries and narrow concerns.[124] This ability is described explicitly in terms of self-empowerment: "When the mental force grows . . . then it will be among the passing events and the activities that affect our psyche, like an armed warrior among small and weak children."[125] However, there are also hints at more mystical goals, such as purification of thought, and a sense of being surrounded by divine light.[126]

Finally, one should note the prevalence of trance techniques drawn from the schools of Erickson and Boyne in Haredi circles in Israel, as well as rich development of Kabbalistic and Hasidic trance techniques in more traditional

circles, which I have discussed elsewhere.[127] This ongoing interest in trance states in the Haredi world, with which we opened the chapter, reflects not merely the growing dialogue between hypnotic and mystical practitioners, but also the essential continuity between classical and contemporary concerns in Jewish mystical life in spite of the massive changes that have taken place in the Kabbalistic world during the last century.[128] Against this background, the late twentieth-century disruption of the focus on the nomian, to be discussed in chapter 6, is all the more striking.

Trance and the Nomian

The [mystical] success will be completed and arrived at through the deeds of the Torah.

—Pseudo-Maimonides, *Peraqim Be-Hatzlaha*

Trance and the Nomian

Scholars such as Moshe Idel claim that Jewish mystical techniques and experiences are often anomian, or consist of activities not mandated by the Halakha. This claim in turn refines Gershom Scholem's emphasis on the antinomian or transgressive aspects of various trends in Jewish mysticism.[1] In the domain of trance, in which habitual frames of reference are challenged, it might be natural to expect an enhancement of anomian features. In this sense, trance should seemingly be close to dream or sleep states, where there is naturally a certain degree of anomian suspension of ritual obligations. The shamanic move of disruption of accepted social patterns indeed translates at times into antinomian ventures.[2] However, I show here that trance experiences as well as other shamanic states, such as fiery transformation, often occur in strictly nomian contexts. It is far from trivial that one of the most radical of these experiences—the descent in trance to the netherworld—occurred mainly in a moment that is both liturgical and dramaturgical, situated at a key moment in the daily prayer: *nefilat appayim*.

By establishing a close connection between the shamanic and the nomian, I join a substantial body of theoretical writing on the interrelationship between mysticism and ritual, as well as the role of ritual in overriding, displacing, and radically transforming "understandings, habits, and even elements of personality," as Roy Rapoport has put it.[3] In other words, ritual

practice should not be seen merely as a conservative reinforcement of existing patterns, but rather—allied with trance—as a means for their disruption. However, according to the model developed here, this process usually leads to reorganization and reintegration in a manner that usually affirms and enthuses the social order while profoundly transforming it. This is not to say that ritual studies are the optimal framework for understanding Jewish practice (as some Jewish studies scholars seem to believe), which is one reason why I opt for the more modest term "nomian."[4]

The Hasidic movement can be seen as a prime example of the intimate connection between trance experience and nomian practice. The centrality of group settings for trance experiences in this social movement created a strong link not merely to the social world but also to the normative structures that constructed much of Jewish social life in modern Eastern Europe. To cite one prominent example, R. Yitzhaq Yehiel Safrin's diary often relates trance experiences to key points in the temporal cycle of Jewish ritual practice.[5] Furthermore, the content of these experiences, as in the case of shamanic experiences of fire, is often related not merely to the exegesis of canonical texts but also to ritual objects, such as tefillin, Sabbath candles, matzot, and the tallit.[6] These objects were sometimes regarded as the means to transformative revitalization and illumination, as in this quote from R. Aharon Perlow of Apta: "Intend that the new and infinite light that is enclothed in the vessels that the mitzvot are performed with, such as tallit, tefillin, and tzitzit, shall be revealed to you."[7]

In other words, shamanic empowerment of objects was drawn on in order to revitalize the ritual framework. A similar, if less personally phrased, view of the tefillin can be found in *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, where Epstein writes that every male Jew receives "attainment and great holiness" once he begins putting on tefillin; however, usually one falls from this exalted state, and it is the great Tzaddiqim with "holy and very exalted souls" who preserve this state of attainment and great holiness, which is also described by him in terms of fiery enthusiasm. Thus, the tefillin represent the potential mystical state characteristic of such "souls on fire."[8]

From the hypnotic point of view, it was precisely the utilization of these objects in routine nomian practice that enables their use as anchors or triggers for daily trance practice. From a more sociological point of view, one should recall that social life revolves not only around interaction with other people, but also with objects that are charged with status or meaning. This stress on the role of sacral objects can assist us in reassessing the role of the nomian in later Hasidism and critiquing prevalent positions, which have often ignored its centrality. For example, the school founded by R. Mordekhai

Yosef Leiner of Izbicha is often described by scholars as antinomian to varying degrees. However, as Aviezer Cohen has persuasively shown, there is good cause to question this assumption.[9] For example, Leiner's grandson, R. Gershon Henikh Leiner, who has been described by Magid as a soft antinomian, devoted immense effort to the controversial restoration of the long-lost *tkhelet*, or blue ritual fringes.[10] This should be properly described as mystical hypernomianism, following Wolfson's use of the term, as it expresses a yearning for nomian fulfillment, which exceeds the possibilities of normal Halakha. This move is patently related to mystical experience, as a Talmudic passage (which is possibly influenced by the Heikhalot literature) describes the *tkhelet* as a means of ascending in one's imagination to a vision of the divine Throne.[11]

The centrality of the nomian for Hasidic social life is evident in an important text by Safrin, which both defines Hasidic identity as well as framing the practice of transmission from teacher to disciple in nomian terms: "And whoever performs the commandments with tremendous joy and light and vitality . . . through humility and a lowly and broken heart and refines his material being is called a Hasid. And all who adhere to him with fierce love and truth and support him are called Hasidim, for all who are connected to the pure become pure like him."[12] The stress on the refinement of character, as well as the mention of purity, will be fleshed out in the ensuing discussion, but the text speaks for itself as a strong statement on illumination within nomian activity as the centerpiece of Hasidic transmission. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Hasidic revitalization expressed itself, inter alia, in the creation of new ritual forms, which were part of the process of shaping Hasidic identity, just as modern Kabbalah, from Safed onwards, formed its unique identity through ritual innovation, bearing in mind the differential effects of the move to a mass social movement in the former case.[13]

An interesting theory of ritual innovation is presented by R. Tzevi Elimelekh Shapira of Dinov, who is often viewed as a merely conservative figure, due to his stress on Halakhic stringency. In the most mystical of several well-quoted discussions of this theme, Shapira writes in his commentary on the tractate Berakhot that mere performance of the commandments leads to the "inner light" shining on the head, while observance of various stringencies and additional ritual observance beyond the letter of the law breaks out of the head and accesses the infinite "surrounding light," as there is no limit to the stringencies (*humrot*) and deeds beyond the law (*milei de-hasiduta*) that each Jew can add. This formulation clearly shows that for this thinker ritual innovation is not a merely nomian position, but rather can be described as

mystical hypernomianism, in which the motivation is that of excess that produces a form of illumination.[14]

The most striking general example of the primacy of the nomian in trance experience is that of R. Aharon Perlow of Apta. In his 'Oneg Shabbat, a commentary on the Mishnaic tractate Shabbat, which is commonly recited in Hasidic circles on this day, he explains a great number of the Sabbath laws, as well as mundane activities that take place in this day, through his unique system of visualization of light and internal space. This volume is accompanied by his *Ner Mitzva*, which anchors his system in the common structure of the 613 commandments. Furthermore, part of his cultivation of transformed perception, or "seeing-as," is recalling the 613 command-ments in every action and connecting them to every material object (e.g., thinking of the mezuza when looking at a house). As he puts it, one's main sight when gazing at the world should be that of the four-letter name of God present in material objects. Thus, as part of a radical shift in visual perception, constant awareness of the commandments forms a continuum with meditation in the midst of mundane activity, rather than there being any tension between these two paths, as in some scholarly positions to be critiqued below. R. Aharon makes this point explicitly in characteristically illuminatory terms when he writes that meditative awareness throughout the course of the day keeps the coal or candle ablaze and thus obviates the need to relight it.[15]

These preliminary instances suffice to demonstrate the need for a pro-found reexamination of the relationship between nomian and radical mys-tical states, which this chapter attempts by examining several select themes. However, this is not to say that the wide range of opinions found within the Hasidic world did not include statements on the opposition between intense mystical states and routine nomian activity, and thus attempts to weaken one of these poles. However, more often than not they were seen as complementary phases in a single process.[16] Wexler's sociological under-standing of Hasidism as revitalization can assist us in understanding that a certain deconstruction of existing social and ritual orders is often a neces-sary step towards revitalization.[17]

Trance and Mussar

Besides the nomian setting of the trance experiences themselves, the path to trance is often preceded and thus shaped by nomian practices accompa-nied by preparatory refinement of character traits (*middot*). The latter pre-paratory moves usually followed the classical requirements of the rather

under-studied Mussar literature, whose roots lie in the rabbinic as well as the philosophical world and whose strong alliance with Kabbalah probably began in twelfth-century Provence and peaked in the sixteenth century.[18] The preparatory role of Mussar is nowhere more apparent than in Eichenstein's *Sur Me-Ra' Va-'Ase Tov*, which is in turn a commentary on the prerequisites for the study of Kabbalah posed by R. Hayyim Vital (in his introduction to the Lurianic classic '*Etz Hayyim*).[19] Here one of the great trance masters of the Hasidic world continuously critiques mystical experience that is not preceded by meticulous ritual and psychological preparation. At the same time he challenges engagement with Kabbalah that is oriented towards mystical attainment (*hasaga*) such as prophecy, rather than the worship of God. It is not surprising that this text was chosen for a supercommentary by his student R. Tzevi Elimelekh Shapira of Dinov, as the overall effort in his voluminous works was to bring mystical phenomena into line with more traditional concepts and practices.[20]

However, it is an error to describe this master as reflecting the alleged decline of later Hasidism into moving from mysticism to conservative positions. David Sorotzkin's alternative description of Shapira as reflecting the emergence of radical orthodoxy is far more appropriate, as evidenced by the latter's description of stagnant normative practice (aimed at merely fulfilling a quota as it were) as idolatry. As Tsippi Kauffman has shown, this text is echoed in another passage, where Shapira comes close to the doctrine of "sinning for the sake of heaven"—hardly a compelling example of a conservative retreat from religious radicalism.[21] Nonetheless, the overall direction of Shapira's writing is indeed nomian, and this inclination should not be seen as divergent from mystical consciousness.

Safrin, a far more shamanically oriented student of Eichenstein, stresses the dependence of trance on rectification of the *middot*, as in the claim that the main yihud is this very rectification.[22] There is also a complementary effect of trance experience on the *middot*: Safrin writes of the use of the forty-two-letter name of God, a classical tool for mystical ascent, in order to rectify the seven *middot*, a project that is described as the main work of any person.[23] This subordination of theurgic and mystical practice to psychological self-work can be profitably compared to R. Aharon Perlow of Apta's earlier statement on the need to annul one's negative *middot* in order to have the light of the Shekhina shine on the mystic and then theurgically extend it to all of the worlds.[24]

To return to the original text by Vital commented on by Eichenstein, it is echoed in his non-Lurianic Mussar treatise *Sha'arei Qedusha*, where the full performance of all the details of the commandments and the refinement of

character traits are presented as the first and vital steps on the path that leads
to the trance experiences described in the later parts of the work.[25] Further-
more, clearing one's moral slate, on both ritual-Halakhic and psychological
levels, is described as a prerequisite for attaining the focus necessary for
performing any kind of meditative technique, as well as fending off demonic
assault: "One who sets out to concentrate (*lehitboded*) must first repent for
all his sins and then be careful to remove the negative traits embedded in
him, such as anger, sadness, irritability, idle talk, etc. Once he has emended
the ills of his soul, sins as well as traits, then there is no power in the spirit
of impurity to interrupt his adherence to the supernal worlds."[26] One can
postulate, based on this text, that according to Vital, ascent and similar prac-
tices effect a continuum with the supernal worlds, while moral or ritual
failings break this continuum and create a "counter-empowerment" by
strengthening negative potencies.[27] One can also go further and claim that
psychological transformation of the *middot* is seen as a natural prerequisite
for the more profound transformations effected by trance experience, as
described throughout Vital's book.

The placement of trance within a graduated path explains the prevalence
of the rabbinic ladder of ethical and nomian progression (attributed to the
R. Pinhas Ben Yair, of the "Early Hasidim") in Kabbalistic texts on trance.
These include *Sha'arei Qedusha* itself as well as Albotini's *Sulam Ha-'Aliya*,
a work whose very title shows that ascent trance is a step in a path rather
than an isolated experience or mere set of techniques.[28] This historical back-
ground is also essential for appreciating the role of this rabbinic text in the
thought of Luzzatto, who devoted his classic *Mesilat Yesharim* to it. The very
choice to foreground a rabbinic text in this manner underscores the tradi-
tionalistic orientation of these trance experts.[29] The notion of a continuum
leading from perfection of the *middot* through trance to empowerment is
clearly found in a personal testimony by Epstein. He opens his discussion
by saying that cultivating humility "slightly" divests materiality, as it in-
volves self-nullification. The intensification of this process enables cleaving
to the supernal worlds and eventually reaching the level of the great Tzad-
diqim, which is described on the basis of Epstein's own observation: "It is
known and I have seen that the great Tzaddiqim, when they cleave to the
supernal worlds and divest themselves of the material trappings, the Shek-
hina resides on them and speaks from their throats and their mouths speak
prophecy and of the future and these Tzaddiqim do not know later what
they themselves said."[30] In this account, divestment begins with rectification
of the *middot* and leads to a passive and prophetic experience accompanied
by precognition.

Our discussion of the place of Mussar in Jewish shamanic life requires some general comments on the partial utilization of this rich corpus in scholarship. Wolfson's critique of the term "ethical" for the Mussar literature is valid, and indeed I suggest that this term is best left untranslated as it confuses a specific Jewish term with extraneous Western connotations.[31] Mussar should thus be discussed in the internal terms established by this literature; the term "ethical" is intrinsically no more useful for the study of Kabbalah and Hasidism than "shamanism," especially once the latter term is used in a rigorous manner. Indeed, there is some value in comparing the subordination of mystical experiences to changes in what can loosely be termed moral comportment to similar moves in other shamanic worlds.[32]

The relation between Kabbalistic ethical literature and more obviously mystical forms of writing should be addressed first and foremost at the level of genre analysis. At times, the same author wrote of more concentrated mystical experiences and coupled these descriptions with a treatise on more "normal" forms of mysticism, to paraphrase John Wright Buckham (or Max Kadushin in the Jewish context). Thus, R. Moshe Cordovero kept a diary of experiences of automatic speech (itself but the prelude to exegetical achievement)—*Sefer Gerushin*—as well as his ethical *Tomer Devorah*, which deliberately shapes a more graduated path, woven into the ritual and liturgical calendar, which leaves room for more intense mystical moments, as in prayer or the Sabbath. In the latter work, Cordovero places the *middot* within the Sefirotic theosophical structure. Thus, the "vision quest" technique of wandering in nature that is recorded in *Sefer Gerushin* is described in *Tomer Devorah* as but one part of requirements related to the lowest Sefira of *Malkhut*, while the more nomian moments of prayer and Sabbath are actually linked to the much higher potency of *Keter*.[33] In other words, "peak experiences" such as automatic speech, which require moving out of regular cultural frames, are regarded as somewhat inferior to the more relaxed mindset of *Keter*, which is fully integrated in communal practice.

Ritual Purity and Trance

In Vital's extremely influential introduction to ʿ*Etz Hayyim*, immersion in a ritual bath (*miqve*) "at all times" is cited as a condition for the study of Kabbalah. This imperative is conjoined with the claim that there is nothing as effective as immersion and purification for the attainment of mystical wisdom.[34] This text points at a subtle distinction between the requirement of immersion for the rectification of sexual impurity, which is a moot point in Halakha, and the positive requirement of purity for mystical attainment

irrespective of sexual emissions, which can be traced back to Pauline and other mystical literature in Late Antiquity.[35] As we have seen—in the case of R. Avraham Ha-Levi and as can be readily seen in the diary of Karo—purity, as well as holiness, was widely seen as a necessary ingredient in mystical transformation in the sixteenth century, a theme that has not been addressed much in existing scholarship.[36] One important aspect of this question that cannot be discussed here is the theurgical model of purification of the worlds and of souls.

In his supercommentary on Vital's text, Eichenstein has the following to say on this matter: "And the water is the secret of giving up one's soul for death as in *nefilat appayim*."[37] In other words, the ritual act of purification is seen as similar to the technique of mystical death during *nefilat appayim*. As we have seen, there was some reticence regarding the latter technique in the Hasidic world, so that one may speculate that the stress on ritual immersion was partly intended to replace it, while making it available to wider audiences. Eichenstein concludes this discussion by tying his views to earlier Hasidic traditions: "Thus I have received from my teachers." The tradition that Eichenstein transmits is paralleled by a saying in the name of the Besht, according to which during immersion one should give oneself up to death for the sanctification of the name and thus defeat the powers of evil.[38] The mystical efficacy of the miqve in Eichenstein's practice can be gauged from his autobiographical account that R. Joseph Karo's maggid wished to reveal itself to the Hasidic master due to his purification (just as it revealed itself to Karo himself due to his nomian study of the Mishna).[39] Strikingly, Eichenstein rejected this offer, stating—just like the great opponent of Hasidism, R. Eliyahu of Vilna—that he wished to reach his attainment through his own intellectual effort. However, in his presentation of the intention of the miqve, Eichenstein described it as "what we have been taught from heaven," thus weakening his own rejection of heavenly input.[40]

These texts on purification reflect one of the core components of Hasidism as a daily mystical path.[41] According to one tradition, the Besht ascribed all of his mystical levels and illumination (*he'ara*) to his frequent purifications, which were accompanied by a famous kavvana that he developed.[42] Another tradition asserts that the founder of Hasidism received heavenly affirmation of the cardinal importance of this practice, together with trademarks of Hasidic identity, relating to slaughter and the Sabbath.[43] Here again we can discern the close connection between purification and revelation. Indeed, R. Aharon of Karlin reportedly stated that it is possible to reach prophecy even outside of the Land of Israel while in the miqve and that it also enables the telepathic ability of connecting the mind (*da'at*) of

another person to one's own.[44] Traditions from his school also compare immersion to the miqve to immersion in the four-letter name of God, and to the acosmic state that preceded the creation.[45]

According to yet other traditions, the Besht regarded immersion as potent for annulling distracting or "strange" thoughts in prayer—an issue not unrelated to trance in the thought of the school of the founder of Hasidism, as shown in texts discussed by Idel.[46] It should be clear by now that I am less concerned with the authenticity of these attributions to the Besht, or with their place in his mystical development, and more with the ongoing need to relate a central facet of Hasidic mystical-nomian practice to this foundational figure. Based on these texts, one can speculate that the miqve, like the ritual objects discussed above, serve as hypnotic "anchors" that are associated with states of trance and thus trigger them. On the more social level, one should point at the importance of purification for mystical transmission: an early master, R. Pinhas of Koritz, writes to his correspondent that he can divulge details of practice to him only after he has refined himself through immersion.[47]

As with many other issues there are divergences within the Hasidic world as to the importance ascribed to immersion. However, as we have seen, it is especially stressed within the trance-oriented offshoots of the Seer of Lublin's school—especially by Eichenstein and Safrin, who wrote in his Halakhic work, *Shulhan Ha-Tahor*: "It is a commandment and an obligation from the words of the Ari . . . to immerse in a river or miqve every Friday, and one must immerse before the morning prayer on Sabbath according to our master the Ari and whoever transgresses against his words . . . can be called a criminal, for all of his words, even the smallest, are what he heard not from an angel or Seraph but from the Almighty himself."[48] It is interesting that in this matter, the divine nature of the revelation of Luria is enlisted; one should recall that many of the writings of Safrin and his teacher take the form of commentaries on Lurianic texts. One should compare this position to his strong decision—again following the "hidden light" revealed by Luria—on the need to wear the additional set of tefillin (according to the medieval opinion of Rabbenu Tam), which he likewise describes as essential for devequt and the practice of yihudim.[49] Elsewhere this master describes immersion as the "root" of mystical attainment (*hasaga*), and an absolute precondition for practicing yihudim, as part of a mystical state that permeates the entire day and leads up to attaining ruah ha-qodesh (again reinforcing the connection with semiprophetic revelation). Safrin closely links the mystical and the nomian by adding that scholars who fail to practice immersion produce incorrect Halakhic rulings, especially in matters of

ritual purity. Thus, immersion is seen as part of an ongoing mystical path, which is embedded in nomian frameworks in a reciprocal manner rather than being an isolated technique.[50]

To conclude, the nomian practice of immersion, which was the subject of numerous Halakhic and semi-Halakhic discussions in the Hasidic world and also aroused disputes with the Mitnagdim, should be seen as a crucial aspect of the daily mystical regimen of the central Hasidic figures discussed in this book, as well as that of other kabbalists, such as the Sephardic masters.[51] It is in this light that one should read the following statement by Epstein: "And if one studies books of Kabbalah in impurity one could God forbid come to heresy . . . and the sect of Shabbetai Tzevi, may their name be erased . . . became heretics from this, as they studied works of Kabbalah in bodily impurity . . . and the world was desolate until the appearance of the two great lights in the world, the holy Ba'al Shem Tov and our teacher Rabbi Elimelekh [Weisblum]. . . . And they opened a gate to God for the righteous to enter[52] that no man should think any thought of Torah before purifying himself of nocturnal emissions."[53]

In other words, it is immersion that differentiates the identity of the Hasidic path from antinomian mystical deviations such as Sabbateanism. Hasidism is described as rectifying the Sabbatean deviation through insisting on ritual purity. In concluding, it is worth noting Epstein's subtle extension of the Halakhic rule on abstaining from Torah thoughts before ritual hand washing (*netilat yadayyim*) to a similar abstention prior to immersion. In this context it is also worth noting that the classic of Hasidic Halakha, *Shulhan 'Arukh Ha-Rav* by R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, strongly describes the purpose of purification of the hands as partaking in God's holiness.[54] Like *Shulhan Ha-Tahor*, the work and its relevance to the interrelationship of Kabbalah and Halakha have not been discussed in academic writing (though it has been dealt with in rabbinic circles, especially in the Habad movement itself), despite its profound impact on the history of modern Halakha.[55] Generally speaking, the attempt by Hasidic mystical practitioners to provide an alternative and more mystically oriented Halakha epitomizes the process described above—challenge to established norms leading up to nomian reintegration rather than any anomian escapism.

Study and Experience in Hasidism

In his widely influential discussion of the laws of Torah study in *Shulhan 'Arukh Ha-Rav*, R. Shneur Zalman writes that attaining all that the soul can in terms of knowledge of the Torah, in all its parts, is the only way that the

soul can be rectified and purified in its divine source. This is a very strong formulation of an idea echoed in his mystical writings, such as the classic *Liqqutei Amarim* (*Tanya*), namely that the ultimate unitive experience is that of study.[56] The importance of this Halakhic move, which renders the mystical scholastic and the scholastic mystical, can be compared to the inclusion of philosophical ideas in the very definition of Torah study in the code of Maimonides. Earlier we discussed testimonies on initiation into the Hasidic path through a trance experience, which in turn transforms the student's mode of studying texts. Idel has read these stories as reflecting a cultural shift from a speculative approach to the text, which characterized classical Kabbalah, to a new experiential approach, in which the nature of the text and its content become less important. To be sure, Idel takes care to stress that the "study of the Halakhic corpus was not rejected or underestimated, but approached from another angle."[57]

Although statements such as Shneur Zalman's offer a somewhat different picture, Idel's summary may be largely true of the formative phase of Hasidism, where the need to initiate scholars into a more mystical state while studying led to a certain diminution of scholastic achievement. This approach is evident in the account of the revelation of the soul of the Besht, which informed him that his mystical achievement was not due to the study of Talmud and legal codes but rather to his prayer and devotion.[58] In a similar vein, Joseph Weiss and, in a less balanced manner, Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer have written of the contradiction between devequt and study.[59] This shift in values sharpened the distinction between the Hasidim and their more nomian (but not necessarily less mystical) opponents, who regarded mystical achievement as ensuing almost exclusively from scholastic attainments. In the world of these Mitnagdim, Gries' observation that the mystical hero often absorbed the rabbinic figure of the *talmid hakham*, or super-scholar, is very pertinent.[60]

These developments in the Hasidic approach to study should be placed within the wider historical context of the Hasidic revolution, which can in turn be appreciated through categories developed in the study of shamanism. The opposition between text-based forms of empowerment as found among the Mitnagdim and the transformative or experiential model prevalent in early Hasidism may be fruitfully compared to the opposition between the power of the Lama and the power of the shaman in certain Tibetan societies, as elucidated by Samuels and Holmberg. The Lamas, according to Holmberg, activate the power of texts, while the shamans, or Bombos, draw on nontextual sources of power. One should also consider the role of the Lambus, or ritual specialists, who are closer to the Lamas, and are to some

extent similar in their mode of operation to the ritual strictness (or even hypernomianism) of the Mitnagdim. Holmberg stresses that the intervention of the Bombo occurs precisely in crisis situations where the ritual/textual order fails. Here too, one can reflect on the role of the Hasidim not only as addressing a social crisis, but like the Bombos, also serving as healers on an individual and thus more hypnotherapeutic level.

The more antinomian aspects of the Hasidic revolution can be better understood in terms of Holmberg's proposal that unsettling authoritative productions of social and cosmic reality enables the regeneration of the afflicted, leading them towards a sense of agency.[61] In wider terms, one can actually merge the accounts of Hasidism as a social revolt prevalent in the early scholarly literature with more mystical or ideational portrayals. In other words, the transformative empowerment of the shaman-Tzaddiq, upon his return to society, served to supply his follower, the Hasid, with a sense of agency by according meaning to his religious activity, and imbuing it with vitality.[62] Conversely, the opinion of scholars such as R. Eliyahu, the Gaon of Vilna, who rejected mystical attainments that are unsupported by study, can be seen as the attempt to shore up more traditional forms of authority against the Hasidic break, but should by no means understood as anti-mystical. Rather we are simply dealing with a more scholastically oriented form of mysticism.[63]

Shamanic Study in Later Generations

Once again we should not be hampered by the focus of existing scholarship on the first generations of Hasidism, which has led to no less than four books devoted to the founder of Hasidism in recent years. Should we give fuller attention to subsequent generations, in which the Hasidim and their opponents significantly moderated their differences, a rather different picture would emerge.[64] It will be obvious from previous chapters that that I do not regard this process as a decline or stagnation of the Hasidic world and certainly not as neutralization of mysticism. Rather it should be seen as a return to classical modes of Jewish mystical life, which absorbed, rather than negated, the Hasidic innovation.[65]

Perhaps the greatest shamanic figure of the fourth generation, the Seer of Lublin, was described as drawing his paranormal abilities from his thorough study.[66] This close alliance between the shamanic and the scholastic continued to evolve in subsequent generations of this school. Among the members of the Komarno branch, who were also renowned for their Tal-

mudic achievements, we found descriptions of trance induced by intense study, as well as an account of healing by transferring the spiritual power amassed by Talmudic innovations—a striking parallel to the Mitnagdic tale cited in chapter 4.[67] In this context, one should note Safrin's description of transforming the Evil Impulse into the heat of the holy fire through the joy of Talmudic study.[68] A specific temporalization of study as a markedly mystical path may be found in his discussion of study after midnight, of which he writes, "There is nothing in the world greater than the study of Torah at night, specifically after midnight, and it shines the soul and draws the Shekhina on the one who studies, and he attains true ruah ha-qodesh from the inner aspect and other innumerable good levels." On the one hand, this rite is presented as a universal practice that "almost all the aspects of Judaism depend on," and on the other hand it is described as leading to the true mystical attainment.[69]

The leaders of the branch originating in the Holy Jew and continuing through the rebbes of Psischa, Kotzk, and Sochatshov were renowned for their scholarly abilities, which are sometimes seen as opposed to mystical pursuits. However, the hagiographies of this school stress that the former often "concealed" the latter.[70] The most striking example is R. Avraham Borenstein: he is described as pausing in the midst of composing a Halakhic response because the "lights known to him" were not shining enough.[71] Here, the professional activity of the halakhist is intimately bound up with illuminatory experience.[72] In another testimony, his study is described as a form of scholastic magic, which obviates the need to engage in external wonder working: he is quoted as saying that if the world knew what he does for them in learning, no one would step on his doorstep (to trouble him for magical assistance).[73] At least according to these internal Hasidic accounts, the difference between this and more overtly mystical-magical branches is one of strategy and not of essence.

In other words, the historical development of Hasidism can also be viewed as mirroring the process of reabsorption in social structure, which follows the initial moment of disruption, all as an unfolding of the shamanic process described throughout the book. Contra wise, regarding this successful reconciliation with traditional Jewish values as merely a reflection of decline or degeneration largely reflect the ideological assumptions of certain scholars, for whom innovatory and vital experience must invariably clash with nomian structures.[74] We have reached a phase in the development of scholarship in which we can be franker about such ideological overlays of academic writing.

Temporal Rhythms

The cyclical construction of sacred time through the yearly festivals and their accompanying mystical-liturgical order of kavvanot can be seen as a nomian system that facilitates trance states. In hypnotic terms, the nomian cyclical rhythm and the ambience evoked by the liturgical order work together to modulate the intensity of the ongoing and daily mystical path described above. Thus, Jewish holy time, which can be described with the Durkheimian term "cycle of feasts," was used by modern mystics, particularly in the Hasidic world, to reach peak experiences.[75] In fact, the genre of Hasidic discourses organized around the holidays should not be seen merely as a reflection of the gathering around the Tzaddiq on these days—itself often a form of group trance—but as reflection of the cardinality of the festivals in the collective Hasidic psychic rhythm. The connection between temporality and the Hasidic cult of the saints is also apparent in the descriptions of the *yahrzeit* (death anniversary) of the Tzaddiqim as empowered days, which were frequently accompanied by gatherings in which the songs of those Tzaddiqim were sung.[76]

I believe that there is room for investigating these differing psychic rhythms in light of recent advances in understanding the role of waves and "circadian rhythms" in the transformative effects of trance and related therapeutic contexts, as well as discussions of rhythm and tempo in ritual theory. One should at least briefly mention the role played by melodies (*nigunim*) and dance in the creation of the ambience of Hasidic gatherings and the resultant collective trance experience. One may extend the recent conceptualizations of music as communication and posit that music served to transmit trance states.[77] One might say that just as the shamanic mode is predicated on movement through inner space, trance is first and foremost a movement through inner time, which at times overlaps with ritual time. In these terms, the very progression of hypnotic technique can be seen as creating the "timeline" for this movement.[78]

The vast material on mystical states attained during the Sabbath and festivals deserves a separate study. Certainly the Sabbath was the epicenter of Hasidic life, and as a result numerous accounts of transformation refer to the rituals and experiences of this day. As Epstein put it, on the Sabbath the Tzaddiq has great attainments (*hasagot*) and this is why it is the time of gathering of the Hasidim.[79] This social idea is echoed in less prominent texts, which speak of the "pleasure of Sabbath" as causing the Hasidim to desire to be included in each other.[80] These descriptions obviously point to a form of *communitas* evoked by the heightened states created by the Sab-

bath ritual and its related ambient, which includes the musical element. A full study of these states would require going beyond the textual focus of this book and conducting ethnographic studies of the festive ambiance of Hasidic courts, coupled with reexamination of historical accounts, in order to note the points of innovation and continuity in contemporary Hasidic life. At this point I should say that the correlation of mystical activity and festive ambiance is borne out by my own limited ethnographic observation of Hasidic groups in Jerusalem.[81] However, it is important to warn that one cannot reduce Hasidic life, whether contemporary or earlier, to atmosphere and even folklore, which could become a means of denying its strongly mystical nature.

An account of R. Yissakhar Baer of Radoshitz (the Sabba Qadisha, or Holy Grandfather), describes his face changing every moment during the singing of one of the hymns of the Sabbath meal.[82] Similarly, R. Yitzhaq Eisic of Homil is recorded as having said that R. Yisra'el of Ruzhin transformed on the Sabbath to such an extent that he could not believe that he was seeing the same person.[83] The physical nature of Sabbath transformation is also at times related to the recurrent theme of fiery transformation. R. Avraham Borenstein would close his eyes and go into deep trance in the Sabbath meal, until he was not only totally unaware of his surroundings, but also his entire body would blaze. It is also reported that only a loud noise would take him out of such absorption, and that when he opened his eyes, he looked as if he returned from another universe.[84]

Finally, the depth of the Sabbath transformation, as well as its sometimes passive nature, can be gauged through a statement found in a oft-quoted hagiography of the Seer of Lublin, according to which seeing that his discourses were only responses to the descent of supernal influx, he was unable to record his Sabbath talks during the week, as they belonged to an entirely different level.[85] One should note in passing that such statements should cause us to give pause when considering the "authenticity" of written compilations of the oral discourses that could not be written on Sabbath and then could frequently not be recaptured fully during the week. At the same time, one should recall that on a broad social level, Hasidic learning was focused on the study of the teachings delivered on the Sabbath, which are also organized round the weekly Torah portion, which is publicly read in the Sabbath prayers.

The yearly rhythm of the festivals is closely connected to the weekly cycle, and it has its own unique spiritual portrait as well. I shall focus here only on the most concentrated cycle, from Rosh Ha-Shana until after Shmini 'Atzeret festival.[86] We are speaking here of a compacted series of festivals

ranging over almost one month, especially if one includes the week-long nightly *slihot* liturgy that precedes the New Year in the Ashkenazi world.[87] In some Hasidic circles, though by no means universally, one can even include the entire preceding month of Ellul as a period of heightened inner work.[88] In the first generations of the Karlin school, the process of *teshuva*, or repentance as return, facilitated by this month was described as becoming new beings or new souls, or radical transformation. A related description of the mystical process enabled in this period is that of attaining the hidden light of creation through the special commandments and prayers mandated in this period.[89]

Many of the powerful trance experiences of Safrin occurred during Rosh Ha-Shana: his practice on this day included magical activities "on behalf of the community of Israel in Russia," progressions of dreams, and praying "in a pure light."[90] The somatic intensity of mystical practice on the High Holy Days can be gauged by the description of R. Moshe Pallier of Kobrin's body developing bleeding sores due to his awe on those days, his being unable to stand due to his shaking when conducting the prayers, and of him and those surrounding him fainting when hearing his meditative prayer.[91] These more intense experiences are accompanied by more moderate and widespread formulations on heights of passivity, self-annulment, and transformation reached in these two days of concentrated mystical activity, which was often accompanied by protracted weeping. Where some scholars would use these, or even more tame and standard, locutions as a basis of a nonmystical reading to the more obviously shamanic texts, I opt for the opposite move, which regards the latter as a more concentrated form of the more diffuse aspirations.[92] When appreciating the centrality of Rosh Ha-Shana, which R. Nahman of Bratzlav, described as his "entire matter," it is important to recall the significance attributed to the ritual of the blowing of the shofar in Hasidic writing.[93] In his discussion of breaking down the illusory walls in order to attain a perception of the sole reality of God, Safrin draws on classical Kabbalistic accounts of the power of the shofar to break down the obstacles obscuring the divine realm.[94]

R. Elimelekh Weisblum set the tone for this appreciation of the ten days between Rosh Ha-Shana and Yom Kippur, which can be seen as maintaining a steady state of mystical intensity between two peaks, when he wrote that greater power of inspiration (*hasra'a*) of holiness is available on those days.[95] The peak of intensity reached in Yom Kippur was not the subject of many special discourses, probably because the day of fasting and intense prayer and soul-searching among all Jewish communities needed no reinforcement on the part of this movement. One can regard the following

festival of the ritual huts of Sukkot as providing a spatial-temporal holding space in order to capture and maintain this intensity in a slightly more diffuse manner. R. Moshe Pallier of Kobrin is described as seeing the very material components of the sukka, whose details are painstakingly elaborated in Halakha, as holy names, and R. Aharon Perlow of Apta's prescribed rendering the supernal worlds into one's home through dwelling in the sukka.[96]

From a psychological point of view, the sukka should be seen not merely as the construction of a ritual object or space but as a "transitional space," to use the parlance of Winnicottian psychoanalysis, which can evoke an ambience conducive for trance and accompanying fiery transformations. Just as in the transitional space the mother is present yet not impinging, the sukka holds the intensity of the Holy Day of Yom Kippur in a manner that is less total, and thus may be extended to an entire week.[97] This understanding of the sukka can assist us in conceptualizing seemingly contradictory approaches found in Hasidism: R. Shlomo of Karlin's practice of not exiting the sukka for the entire festival should be opposed to the following hypernomian claim by R. Hayyim of Tzanz, according to which its potency extends even if one is not physically present in the sukka: "Even if one does not perform [the commandment of] the sukka in actuality, as in when one is exempt, in any case one sits in the shade of the holiness of the sukka . . . the sukka and the shadow of holiness resides upon us, even when one is not actually under the sukka, it is still named one's sukka . . . for the obligation is not to actually sit, and if one is distressed, he is exempt yet he is as one who sits in the sukka."[98] Finally, one should consider the mystical role of the concluding festival of the cycle, Shmini 'Atzeret. Epstein describes it as a time in which the Tzaddiqim are able to uplift the souls of those who assemble in their presence in the holiday in a passive and easy manner, thus reflecting the cumulative effect of the entire month as well as the need to move back to a less intense mode.[99]

The Nomian in Research on Kabbalah and Mysticism

Sacral objects, Mussar, purity, study, and temporal rhythm are some ways of framing mystical experience within wider forms of Jewish religiosity, yet many others are possible. Further lines of investigation could include an understanding of the link between trance and messianism, which has been touched on at many points, as yet another way of grounding altered states in shared cultural settings. The utopian element in messianic discourse can be read as a projection of trance as a utopian state, which transcends normal

social limitations. Such a reading would of course run counter to the not uncommon tendency to divorce messianic thinking from magical or mystical dimensions as well as the equally prevalent assumption that messianic thought is antinomian or otherwise disruptive of classic forms of Jewish religiosity.[100]

The observations suggested in this chapter have wider implications for the study of Kabbalah: for all their profound differences, both Scholem and Idel assumed differing degrees of distance between mystical experiences and concepts and the broader framework of Jewish religiosity. In terms of the cultural history of scholarship itself, these positions can be framed within the ultimately secular mode of Jewish studies in Israel, which attempts to carve a space for forms of Jewish identity that are not entirely bound up with ritual observance.[101] Scholem's disproportional focus on Sabbateanism, which has skewed much of the study of modern Kabbalah, must be viewed in this light, as well as Idel's foregrounding of a universalist and possibly anomian figure such as R. Abraham Abulafia, as part of his binary distinction between theosophical-theurgical and ecstatic Kabbalah, along with his emphasis on anomian aspects of Hasidic life.[102]

Although Idel rejected Scholem's postulation of a gap between rabbinic and mystical Judaism, some of his students subtly retain some core assumptions what one might describe as the Zionist reading of Kabbalah. In this context one should recall the growing closeness between scholarly and popular readings of Kabbalah in contemporary Israel, as the latter, especially when influenced by Zionism, often take anomian or even antinomian forms. Yet this very closeness should serve as a caveat to forestall projection of contemporary Kabbalistic views on earlier generations, as the growing distance from the nomian world is precisely a marker of the disjunction between twentieth-century Kabbalah and the pre-Zionist era.[103] This discussion of the Israeli context of scholarly attitudes to the nomian does not of course preclude yet broader contexts, which include the influence of Protestant attitudes in the general study of mysticism, as well as the growing influence of New Age spirituality, which is usually characterized by a move away from nomian structures.

Idel himself did much to establish the importance of the performance of the commandments in Kabbalistic life. However, his restriction of such statements and experiences to the theosophical-theurgical stream, though possibly correct, may lead certain scholars to underrate the centrality of the nomian in Jewish mystical life.[104] The views of Hasidism generated by some of Idel's students move us even further from an appreciation of the nexus

between mysticism and the nomian, as a result of very strong, and in my view unwarranted, interpretative moves. For example, Margolin's account of interiorization has admirably highlighted an important theme of Hasidic discourse. Yet at the same time it somewhat obscures the centrality of the social dimension including external and normative activity in this movement, although Margolin does critique the excessive stress that some scholars placed on anomian aspects of Hasidism.[105] Yet more broadly put, Margolin's attempt to create a strong continuity between pre-Hasidic and Hasidic forms of "interiorization," some of which go back to very early sources, runs the risk of detaching the Hasidic movement from its social, as well as historical, context through overemphasis on this theme. Though the present book shows that I am by no means averse to following the longue durée at times, I feel that I have balanced such speculations with a focus on the discontinuity between Hasidism and earlier developments, as well as the larger connection to modernity discussed below.

The clearest instance of the de-nomianizing tendency can be found in the studies of Kauffman, which represent the most updated and wide-ranging study of Hasidic anomian and antinomian attitudes at present and thus should be discussed at some length. Kauffman has shown that in some Hasidic texts, worship of God in mundane activity, a form of anomian mysticism, is accorded an status equal to the performance of the commandments; however, she did not sufficiently stress that the former is an extension of the latter, rather than supplanting it, as Margolin has correctly pointed out.[106] Kauffman went a step further in citing a second-generation text that appears to accord a superior role to the "hidden" worship within mundane activity over the "revealed" worship within the performance of the commandments.[107] However, here her analysis is unconvincing. First, this advantage extends to a certain erotic aspect—the superiority of "hidden love" over "open love"—and is not presented as a blanket statement. Second, the version of this text that she herself describes as clearer, speaks explicitly of revealed and hidden commandments, thus supporting the reading of worship in mundane activity as an extension of nomian activity. And finally, the examples cited in the text to support the latter claim are all drawn from tefillin and other ritual frames.

In any case, Kauffman herself describes these statements as few and far between. Her claims that fear of their radical implications led to this circumspection and that one can generalize from such rare pronouncements to the "totality" of the discourse of the masters who made them are speculative at best. Indeed, the models of mundane activity as facilitating ritual activity, as

constantly connected to one of the mitzvot, or even as uplifted by the commandments (and thus dependent on them for spiritual value) are prevalent in far more texts that Kauffman cites. In my mind, it is these statements that are representative of Hasidic discourse, to the extent that one may generalize about this multifaceted movement.[108] I believe that the following text by Epstein can be seen as at least representing the position of the school of the Seer: "The main thing is to exert oneself in the worship of God, day and night, in Torah and prayer . . . and afterwards when he does so in truth and in faith, then he reaches the level in which all of his material deeds, such as eating and drinking and other things are also a great worship so as to extract the holy sparks . . . but not every person attains this, only after great effort and after long periods of worship of God, then he receives from heaven this gift that his material occupations are also a great worship and he performs great yihudim in them."[109] This model is close to that of Luzzatto: worship in mundane activity is a passive product of nomian exertion.

Another example is Kauffman's antinomian reading of the teachings of the Seer of Lublin: she cites his reinterpretation of the antinomian Talmudic adage, "A sin performed for its own sake is superior to a mitzva performed for extraneous reasons," as referring to willingness to risk the appearance of a possibility of sin. This move, which actually minimizes the antinomian implications of the original statement, is seen by her as advocating the overstepping of normative boundaries. She gives a similar interpretation to a parallel text that calls on the lover of God to reject the obstruction of the Evil Impulse—which tempts the worshipper to recall moments of sin—and instead let go of such self-accusatory recollection. In both cases, the Seer's deliberate effort to stop short of the boundaries of the law is read in a transgressive mode (albeit restricted to the Tzaddiq, and rare in earlier generations of Hasidism, as Kauffman herself points out), which is actually absent from the texts.[110] This is not to say that there are no mildly antinomian elements in the doctrine of the Seer, as in the willingness to overstep the regular prayer times, which became a trademark of his renegade student, the Holy Jew; however, on careful analysis they do not warrant describing this theme as a "key issue" in his writing, or seeing anomian activity as a further extension of an antinomian mode, as Kauffman speculates.[111]

In opposing such readings, this chapter supports the claims of Elliot Wolfson that "an element shared by the diverse range of kabbalists is the nomian framework in which the mystical impulse takes shape," and that "it is valid to view the eidetic form of . . . meditational exercises and the consequent paranormal states of consciousness that ensue therefrom as essentially nomian in character."[112] Besides the specific Jewish import of the ideas

raised here, there are also broader implications for the study of mysticism. The nomian, ritual, textual, and other cultural determinations of trance experience point towards trance being a step in a graduated path, which is in turn embedded in the general religious life of the practitioner.

Here I am also close to the position of William Parsons, who showed how understanding mysticism as an ongoing process shifts the emphasis of research from experience to the broad context of a mystical life or path.[113] This approach differs markedly from Idel's customary description of mystical experience as being the more or less direct consequence of the employment of techniques.[114] Indeed, in Idel's reading, these techniques may either be taken in isolation or interrelate as part of a graduated procedure, but they do not seem to blend into a more continuous experience of the day, week, or year as an ongoing mystical process, which may peak or wane, as it is determined by rhythmic oscillations. Although Idel did much to move Kabbalah scholarship away from the Scholemian perception of this lore as theosophy or "mystical theology," and called for a closer integration of the study of Kabbalah and Halakha, his phenomenology still falls short of an integration of mystical Judaism within the "lifeworld" of everyday religiosity.[115]

The Nomian in Modern Kabbalah

Concluding with the specific historical frame of modern Kabbalah, one must say that while Idel's account may hold for medieval developments, such as the ecstatic Kabbalah, it does not seem to fit well into the picture of modern Kabbalah that I have painted here, as well as in other studies. Pedaya has already discussed the close connection between processes of ritualization and the transformation of Jewish mystical experience with the passage to modernity. I would add that the greater emphasis on the everyday was certainly a key facet in the proliferation of Kabbalistic practice from the sixteenth and seventieth centuries.[116] While Scholem stressed the impact of Kabbalistic ideas and theologies, the history of printing and other forms of empirical data collected in the foundational studies of Gries show that it was Mussar literature, the conduct literature or regimen vitae (*hanhagot*), mystical wills, and other genres pertaining to ritual and everyday practice that effected the move of Kabbalah as a literature to the front of Jewish reading, as well as facilitating the spread of Hasidism.[117] To this one should add recent studies on the major impact of modern Kabbalistic customs and practices on ritual life.[118] The move of Kabbalisitic discourse from discussions of the supernal worlds to greater involvement with everyday practice tallied well with the sacralization of the mundane and detailed religious

critiques of the transformations of everyday life in modernity, as described brilliantly by Sorotzkin.[119]

The difference between the more theosophical and visionary involvement of Luria, who still retained some of the valence of medieval Kabbalah and the well-known concern of the Hasidim with the mundane is clearly put in the following text. It is cited as written in the name of the first rebbe of Habad, R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, that three figures "had a sense of this world": Adam, Moses, and the Besht. Three others "have a sense in divesting the world"—the hero of the Zohar, Rabbi Shime'on Bar Yohai, Luria, as he mainly spoke of the supernal worlds, and Shneur Zalman's teacher, the Maggid of Mezeritch. The text focuses on the experience of the Maggid, who is described as follows: "When he would speak he would be very much in divestment and the senior students would feel his hand when he was expounding the Torah and it would seem to them as if he had no body, so powerful was his divestment when saying Torah." R. Shneur Zalman concluded this discourse by observing that he not only has a sense of the world but belongs to it.[120] According to this highly self-conscious typology, Lurianic Kabbalah still belongs to "otherworldly" mysticism, which also affected certain strains in Hasidism, while the Besht's innovative path was "inner-worldly," to use Weberian language.[121]

While Kabbalistic practice, such as the external or internal solitude foregrounded by Idel, does entail a move away from social structure, we have seen that this is often but the first step in a sequence leading to greater social involvement. This is to say nothing of trance experiences whose very genesis was social, as we have seen for Hasidism. The revitalization attempted by Luzzatto's circle and effected by Hasidism through trance experiences can be read as responding to modernity precisely through greater consideration of history and social life. Here I follow one of the foremost theoreticians of the quotidian, Michel de Certeau, who made this connection in various fashions in his study of early modern mysticism.[122] The close connection between mystical revitalization and modernization is also found in Hasidic responses to the weakening of traditional observance. One example is that of Safrin, who writes of the collapse of Jewish observance in Germany and Central Europe. He regards this process as the end result of the external study of the Torah, which he opposes to the illuminatory study of Torah, as espoused by the Hasidim, and as discussed in this chapter.[123]

Though the textual interpretations offered in this book are situated within the frame of Kabbalistic modernity, its methodological implications are throughout directed towards the field of religious studies. The present chapter is no exception: the cultural determination of trance and other sha-

manic moments in mystical life reinforces the "contextual" school in the understanding of mystical experience, without negating the value of comparative study.[124] I hope my recourse to the seemingly universal term "shamanism" is justified by its wider contribution to the evolution of the study of mysticism once it is allied with a strongly contextual analysis.

Epilogue

The mystics are moderns.

—Matthieu Marais

In the Jewish world, the transition from the Middle Ages to modernity was marked by the decline of philosophical discourse. In the Middle Ages, Kabbalah perforce retained a strong connection to Neo-Aristotelean or Neo-Platonic philosophy and indeed was in many ways inseparable from these discourses, as recently demonstrated in Afterman's masterly study of devequt and Sandra Valabregue-Perry's equally authoritative study of infinity.[1] However, central modern mystical figures, such as Maharal of Prague, R. Eliyahu the Gaon of Vilna, and R. Nahman of Bratzlav, established various degrees of distance from the philosophical world. From this point of view, it is problematic to view modern Kabbalah in a proximist manner as an elaboration of medieval Jewish mysticism. It is true that many modern kabbalists, starting with the Safedian luminaries, saw themselves first and foremost as commentators on the Zohar. However, especially in the case of R. Yitzhaq Luria, they were what Harold Bloom has termed "strong readers" and even misreaders of this canonical text. The Kabbalistic tradition itself speaks of *kabbalat ha-rishonim* or the early Kabbalah versus *kabbalat ha-aharonim*, or post-Lurianic Kabbalah. This consciousness of discontinuity is echoed in the famous legend of Luria arriving in Safed and beholding the pillar of fire that marked the departure of R. Moshe Cordovero. This fiery vision embodies the sense of rupture between the medieval world synthesized in the writings of the earlier Safedian master and the new era presaged by Luria.

As we have seen, a truly panoramic view requires observation of the adoption of earlier strata, including Talmudic-Midrashic material or the world of

the Heikhalot, by modern figures such as the Besht. From a viewpoint that is free of modernistic assumptions, modernization is not tantamount to secularization or to alleged responses to secularization—views Sorotzkin has so aptly critiqued. Nor is it identical to Weberian disenchantment or rationalization. On the contrary, the imperative of revitalization led charismatic figures to draw on more archaic modes, a process captured by R. Nahman of Bratzlav when he spoke of Hasidism as simultaneously very old and very new. From this perspective, the current resurgence of magical and shamanic modes in psychological practice or popular culture is not so much a postmodern response to the weakening of modern grand narratives as a further unfolding of the process of mystical modernization.

The evidence for the persistence of intense and somatic experiences of somatic transformation was drawn from a broad array of texts, including material in manuscript and numerous works that have barely been remarked on in current research, such as the writings of Valle or the Hasidic writing of R. Hayyim Halberstam. Although I have focused to some extent on exceptional figures, such as Safrin, I have taken care to join their more obviously experiential testimonies with clear parallels in seemingly theoretical works. Once one casts loose from the assumption of the alleged decline of mystical experience in late modernity, then these connections can unfold and be evident to the attentive reader.

While the underscoring of the shamanic elements in Jewish mystical culture certainly brings the study of modern Kabbalah closer to the general scholastic enterprise of religious studies, it should not be seen as a move that removes the body of texts studied here from its anchoring in the broader Jewish tradition. On the contrary, our reiteration of the centrality of the nomian and scholastic modes of Jewish shamanism prevents the relegation of modern Kabbalistic writing to the realm of the occult and the marginal, a move that was paradoxically reinforced by the Scholemian stress on the centrality of Sabbateanism in his narrative of the modern development of Kabbalah. In future works, I hope to deepen this reaffirmation of the bond between intense mystical experience and the rhythms and patterns of Jewish life, which are far deeper than allowed for in descriptions focusing on mere technique. By doing so, I aspire to exhibit the continued relevance of the revitalizing forces of Jewish modernity to the broader question of the meaning of traditional Jewish practice in modern global culture.

Psychoanalysis and Hasidism

Stanley Schneider and Joseph Berke have collected internal documentation within the Habad historical record that claims that in the winter of 1903, R. Shalom Dov Baer, the fifth rebbe of the movement, traveled from Russia to Vienna to for several consultations with Sigmund Freud, accompanied by his son, R. Yosef Yitzhaq. As the authors note, the cause for the consultation was the rebbe's sense of lack of accomplishment and direction. They add that the psychoanalyst recommended that the rebbe change his venue, that the Hasidim should exalt his spirit by delving more deeply into his writings, and that the rebbe teach more.

Schneider and Berke proceed to analyze the writings of the rebbe dating from 1903–4, and detected several possible traces of this encounter, especially in terms of clarity and organization. According to an alternative and somewhat more convincing suggestion made by Maya Balakirsky Katz, the meetings were actually held with Freud's associate, Wilhelm Stekel (1868–1940). Balakirsky Katz also offers a nuanced discussion of the possible effect of these sessions on R. Shalom Dov Baer's treatise *U-Maʿayan Mi-Beit Hashem* (1904).[1] The transition in the thinking and activity of R. Shalom Dov Baer following this meeting may possibly be matched by an internal account by his Baer's son and successor, R. Yosef Yitzhaq, who wrote as follows:

> In the year 1900 . . . my father published his first missive to the students of the Tomkhei Tmimim Yeshiva, titled *Quntres Ha-Tefilla*, which answers questions on how to pray correctly . . . it should be recalled that by the year 1900 the special and substantial results brought by my father's extensive talk on Simhat Torah and the famous "Hihaltzu" essay were already felt in the Hasidic world . . . the talk on Simhat Torah of 5659 [fall of 1898] . . . and following that the

essay . . . were distributed in the Hasidic world during that year and led to great results . . . *Quntres Ha-Tefilla* is a practical sign of the spiritual state of the students of the yeshiva and the state of Hasidic work at that time. From this time a new period in the expansion of Hasidic doctrine began . . . in the year 1901 the number of students in the yeshiva was at the desirable level, and they had a marked influence on the Hasidic community as a whole . . . the essays delivered by my father in 1902–5 . . . all indicate the state of the Hasidim and that of the students of Tomkhei Tmimim at the time. Anyone, according to their understanding of the essays delivered by my father in the years 1894–1905, can observe the great change that occurred over time in terms of expansion of the movement and the work of the Hasidim. Those years enabled the growth of a generation of knowledge who study Hasidism in depth and take deep pleasure in inner work. The essay "Yom Tov of Rosh Ha-Shana," which my father began to deliver on Rosh Ha-Shana of 5666 [1905] . . . is concrete evidence for the expansion of Hasidic doctrine and the state of the students of Hasidism at that time. Those who know the Hasidic matters discussed clearly and at length in the essays of the years 1906–12 can see that after 1905–6 there was a new period in the expansion of Hasidic doctrine. The six years 1906–12 enriched the Hasidic lore with talented students and masters of [inner] work . . . Hasidim turned written Hasidism into live Hasidism. During the eighteen years between 1894–1912 the matter of Hasidism, the study of Hasidism, and the work of Hasidim were placed on the correct and appropriate level. All that I have said here in brief, on the unfolding of the expansion of Hasidism and Hasidic work and the students of the yeshiva until 1912 comes to thoroughly understand my father's saying that . . . he hoped that once he moved to Menton he would have the time to consider a new organization of Hasidism. . . . In one of his letters from Menton, my father wrote that he is—praise to God— satisfied, and that God fulfilled his desire and hope. . . . Needless to say, I had a strong yearning to know about the new Hasidic direction that my father was involved in, but on the other hand I thought that one really doesn't need to know such things. When I came to Menton, I found him in an exalted mood and full of satisfaction. I felt that the exalted mood and satisfaction came from Hasidic work, which gave him great pleasure.[2]

When analyzing this text, it is well to recall that the trajectory of the rebbe's inner development, at least in the Habad historiography, is subsumed within a series of changes in mood, direction, and clarity, all leading to a greater emphasis on quantitative expansion coupled with internalization and integration of the abstract and complex Habad doctrine.[3] A key moment in this multistep process was in the fall of 1898, a year that inciden-

tally is often considered as marking the end of Freud's early period. The Simhat Torah festival of 1898 and the foundational talk "Hihaltzu," which accompanied the establishment of Tomkhei Tmimim, the first yeshiva that foregrounded the study of Hasidism in its curriculum, is described elsewhere (in a Yiddish appendix to the essays delivered in 1898–99): R. Yosef Yitzhaq records there that R. Shalom Dov Baer described the aim of the yeshiva in terms of understanding Hasidism like the revealed portions of the Torah. The emotional tone of the event is captured by the descriptions of the singing, dancing, and "great joy" that accompanied it. In his foundational talk, R. Shalom Dov Baer described the Torah taught in the yeshiva "restoring the soul."[4]

However, it is clear from the text cited above that the Hebrew year 5666 (1905–6), just as Freud published essays on the history of sexuality (which he considered his most important writing since *Interpretation of Dreams*), was truly the beginning of the new period, which also followed the meetings with Freud. As in the latter's prescription, the physical relocation of the rebbe effected not only a mood change but also a reorganization of the movement. The vast essay "Yom Tov of Rosh Ha-Shana," which is the textual embodiment of this change, has not been systematically analyzed in existing scholarship.[5] I believe that a well-founded decision on the impact of Freud's methods on Habad depends on such an analysis. However, the additional biographical material adduced here does somewhat flesh out the fascinating hypothesis raised in recent scholarship.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1: THEORY OF SHAMANISM, TRANCE, AND MODERN KABBALAH

1. Lawrence Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum: An Orientation to Meaning in South American Religions* (New York: MacMillan, 1988), 16; Pieter F. Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman: Jesus of Nazareth in Anthropological-Historical Perspective* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2008); Victor Crapanzano, *The Hamdasha: A Study in Morroccan Ethnopsychiatry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 164.

2. Daniel Abrams, "Phenomenology of Jewish Mysticism: Moshe Idel's Methodology in Perspective," *Kabbalah* 20 (2009): 7–146, especially 16–17, 21, 25–30. See also the assessment and critique of Idel's approach in Elliot Wolfson, "Structure, Innovation, and Diremptive Temporality: The Use of Models to Study Continuity and Discontinuity in Kabbalistic Tradition," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 18 (2007): 143–67, as well as in Ron Margolin, "Moshe Idel's Phenomenology and Its Sources," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 18 (2007): 41–51.

3. See Jonathan Garb, *Manifestations of Power in Jewish Mysticism: From Rabbinic Literature to Safedian Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2004), 22–25; Garb, *The Chosen Will Become Herds: Studies in Twentieth Century Kabbalah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 73–74, 80, 159 n 87, 175 n 86. An extreme example is the description of Hitler as a shaman. Eric A. Wolf, *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 231. For further discussions of New Age "neo-shamanism," see Merete Demant Jakobsen, *Shamanism: Traditional and Contemporary Approaches to the Mastery of Spirits and Healing* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), 147–207; Peter Johnson, "Shamanism from Ecuador to Chicago: A Case Study in New Age Ritual Appropriation," in *Shamanism: A Reader*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Routledge, 2003), 334–54; Gordon MacLellan, "Dancing on the Edge: Shamanism in Modern Britain," in *Shamanism: A Reader*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Routledge, 2003), 365–74; Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 368–69.

4. Chögyam Trungpa, *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa*, vol. 3, ed. Carolyn R. Gimian (Boulder: Shambala, 2003), 571.

5. See especially Haviva Pedaya, *Vision and Speech: Models of Revelatory Experience in Jewish Mysticism* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2002), 73, 80–81, 206 as well as her more general comments on the archaic in Judaism (18, 70, 251–52); Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience in Hasidism," *Da'at* 55 (2005): 79–81, and her discussions

of Hasidism cited in chapter 4. For a critique of the typological method, see James Hillman, *Egalitarian Typologies versus the Perception of the Unique* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1980).

6. Although on occasion I mention Sephardic or Oriental texts, as explained below, my main focus is on the Ashkenazi-European world, which was influenced earlier, and more obviously, by modernization.

7. For my position in the debate on mysticism, see Jonathan Garb, "Mystics' Critique of Mystical Experience," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 21 (2004): 296–99. Cf. Elliot Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 399 n 9; Pinchas Giller, *Shalom Shar'abi and the Kabbalists of Beit El* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 118, 129–30, as well as Boaz Huss, "The Mystification of Kabbalah and the Modern Construction of Jewish Mysticism," *BGU Review* 2 (2008). For an application of this debate to the context of trance experiences, see Dan Merkur, *Mystical Moments and Unitive Thinking* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 23–24.

8. See Garb, "Mystics' Critiques"; Yuval Harari, *Ancient Jewish Magic: Theory, Method, Sources* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 2010), 122–29; Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman*, 156; and cf. Huss, "The Mystification of Kabbalah," 5–6, and the studies cited there.

9. For uses of the latter term, see especially Elliot Wolfson, "Judaism and Incarnation: The Imaginal Body of God," in *Christianity in Jewish Terms*, ed. Tikva Frymer-Kensky, David Novak, Peter Ochs, and Michael Signer (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 239–54; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 40–41, 191–97, 242–60; Wolfson, "Revisioning the Body Apophatically: Incarnation and the Acosmic Naturalism of Habad Hasidism," in *Apophatic Bodies: Infinity, Ethics, and Incarnation*, ed. Catherine Keller and Christopher Boesel (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), as well as the development of this direction in Shaul Magid, "Ethics Disentangled from the Law: Incarnation, the Universal, and Hasidic Ethics," *Kabbalah* 15 (2006): 31–75; Magid, *From Metaphysics to Midrash: Myth, History, and the Interpretation of Scripture in Lurianic Kabbalah* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 201–21. See, however, Moshe Idel, *Ben: Sonship and Jewish Mysticism* (London: Continuum, 2008), 99–101 and n 180, 588. On shamanism as at once mystical and magical, see Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, trans. Willard L. Trask (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964), xix. For a strong valorization of the term "mysticism," see Anthony Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism: The Verticality of Religious Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

10. Cf. Moshe Idel, *Ascensions on High in Jewish Mysticism: Pillars, Lines, Ladders* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), 1–13.

11. Cf. Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman*, 137–38.

12. Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 22–25. For a summary of Idel's method within the context of religious studies, see Jonathan Garb, "Moshe Idel's Contribution to the Study of Religion," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 18 (2007): 116–29.

13. For such a diagnosis see Boaz Huss, "Ask No Questions: Gershom Scholem and the Study of Contemporary Jewish Mysticism," *Modern Judaism* 25/2 (2005): 141–58, and the additional studies cited there.

14. See Yehuda Liebes, *God's Story: Collected Essays on the Jewish Myth* (Jerusalem: Carmel Press, 2008), 331–34. For an assessment of Liebes' position from the perspective of religious studies, see Garb, "Moshe Idel's Contribution," 17–18.

15. See also Pinchas Giller, "Elliot Wolfson and the Study of Kabbalah in the Wake of Scholem," *Religious Studies Review* 25 (1999): 27; Abrams, "Phenomenology of Jewish Mysticism," 23–24.

16. See Garb, "Mystics' Critiques"; Garb, "Gender and Power in Kabbalah: A Theoretical Investigation," *Kabbalah* 13 (2005): 79–107; Garb, "Powers of Language in Kabbalah: Comparative Reflections," in *The Poetics of Grammar and the Metaphysics of Sound and Sign*, ed. Sergio de La Porta and David Shulman (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 230–69; Garb, "The Political Model in Modern Kabbalah: A Study of Ramhal and His Intellectual Surroundings," in *Avi Be-'Ezri*, ed. Benjamin Brown et al. (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Historical Study and Israel Democracy Institute, forthcoming).

17. See Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 85–87 (and cf. 116); Yoram Bilu, *Without Bounds: The Life and Death of Rabbi Ya'aqov Wazana*, trans. Ruth Freedman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000), 153–67; Garb, *The Chosen*, 4–5; Boaz Huss, "The Formation of Jewish Mysticism and Its Impact on the Reception of Rabbi Abraham Abulafia in Contemporary Kabbalah," in *Religion and Its Other*, ed. Heike Bock, Jörg Feuchter, and Michi Knechts (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2008), 142–62.

18. For such a move, see Moshe Halbertal, *Concealment and Revelation: Esotericism in Jewish Thought and Its Philosophical Implications*, trans. Jackie Feldman (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), which demonstrates that employing esotericism as an organizing category can afford different results from those prevalent in Kabbalah scholarship.

19. On Muhammad as a shaman, see Michael Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism: Substance and Function of a Religious Metaphor* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), 87–88. On ecstatic and transformative conversion in Paul, see Alan Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 35, 69. On the Besht and conversion, see also Haviva Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh: Towards A Critique of the Textual Version and an Exploration of the Convergence of the World Picture: Messianism, Revelation, Ecstasy, and the Sabbatean Background," *Zion* 70 (2005): 26.

20. See Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 212; Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism*.

21. See E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 295–96, for a fruitful differentiation between two models of theurgy: animation of an image by a descending power and possession trance. See also George Luck, *Ancient Pathways and Hidden Pursuits: Religion, Morals, and Magic in the Ancient World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 119, 121, 123. This insight, which introduces trance into the study of classical theurgy, has ramifications beyond this specific context. Similar revisionist moves can be suggested with regard to the term ecstasy, which was famously advocated by Ioan M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession* (New York: Routledge, 2003), as a term preferable to shamanism and also plays a central role in Idel's writings on Kabbalah (see my further discussion in chapter 3).

22. Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 152.

23. See Jeffrey J. Kripal, "The Rise of the Imaginal: Psychical Research on the Horizon of Theory [Again]," *Religious Studies Review* 33 (2007): 179–91, and chapter 5.

24. On Scholem and Jung, see Steven Wasserstrom, *Religion after Religion: Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin at Eranos* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999).

25. One should especially note the return of models of disassociation as a response to trauma (as in multiple personality disorder), which represents the triumph of the ideas of Pierre Janet and William James (see Robert D. Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2006), 268–75), which were based on hypnosis to a significant extent, over those of Freud. As I will show in a study in preparation, this development is especially interesting for investigators of Kabbalistic models of the psyche (especially after Luria), which assume plurality, as well as invasion, or possession which may create profound fissures in the unity of the psyche; see also Andrew Samuels, *The Plural Psyche: Personality, Morality, and the Father* (London: Routledge, 1996). For a discussion of Janet's theory in the context of religious healing, see Thomas Csordas, *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 149–51.

26. Léon Chertok and Isabelle Stengers. *A Critique of Psychoanalytic Reason: Hypnosis as a Scientific Problem from Lavoisier to Lacan*, trans. M. N. Evans (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), xvii. For a general history of hypnosis, see Alan Gauld, *A History of Hypnotism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

27. See especially David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1958); Mortimer Ostow (ed.), *Ultimate Intimacy: The Psychodynamics of Jewish Mysticism* (London: Karnac Books, 1995); Joseph Berke and Stanley Schneider, "Repairing Worlds: An Exploration of the Psychoanalytic and Kabbalistic Concepts of Reparation and Tikkun," *Psychoanalytic Review* 90/5 (2003): 723–49; Berke and Schneider, *Centers of Power: The Convergence of Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah* (Lanham, Maryland: Jason Aronson, 2008); Devorah Bat-David Gamlieli, *Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah: The Masculine and Feminine in Lurianic Kabbalah* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2006); Avivah Gottlieb-Zornberg, *The Murmuring Deep: Reflections on the Biblical Unconscious* (New York: Schocken Books, 2009), which contains important discussions of Hasidism; Karen Starr, *Repair of the Soul: Metaphors of Transformation in Jewish Mysticism and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 2008), besides more popular works, such as the writings of Edward Hoffman, Mikha Anqori, and Ohad Ezrahi. For the related psychobiographical move, see Arthur Green, *Tormented Master: A Life of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1979); Avraham Elqayam, "To Know Messiah: The Dialectics of the Sexual Discourse in the Messianic Thought of Nathan of Gaza," *Tarbiz* 65 (1995–96): 637–70. Psychoanalytic moves are also present in Yoram Bilu's psychological-anthropological analysis of Jewish mystical phenomena, as in his *Without Bounds*; see also Bilu, "Sigmund Freud and Rabbi Yehudah: On a Jewish Mystical Tradition of 'Psychoanalytic' Dream Interpretation," *Journal of Psychological Anthropology* 2 (1979): 443–63. There is also some overlap with the gender-oriented work of Wolfson, Abrams, and Nathaniel Deutsch, who utilize feminist psychoanalytic theory. I hope to review and critique this literature at greater length in the above-mentioned study in preparation.

28. See Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. 1, trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 8–9; Elliot Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 66; Daniel Abrams, *The Female Body of God in Kabbalistic Literature* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2004); Philip Wexler, *Mystical Interactions: Sociology, Jewish Mysticism, and Education* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2007), 51–57. For a further defense of the legitimacy of

psychoanalytic interpretation of Kabbalistic texts against the charge of anachronism, see Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 306.

29. See the lengthy discussion in William Parsons, *The Enigma of the Oceanic Feeling: Revisioning the Psychoanalytic Theory of Mysticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), and especially Freud's description of mysticism as being a "closed book" for him (Parsons, 45), as well as the extensive overview of psychoanalytic approaches to mysticism (120–39). (It is interesting that Freud writes the same of music, in view of the rhythmic aspects of mystical experience; 175.) Cf. Stanley Schneider and Joseph Berke, "The Oceanic Feeling, Mysticism, and Kabbalah: Freud's Historical Roots," *Psychoanalytic Review* 95/1 (2008): 131–56. See also the strong statements on the secularity of psychoanalysis collected in David L. Miller, "Attack upon Christendom: The Anti-Christianism of Depth Psychology," in *Jung's Challenge to Contemporary Religion*, ed. Murray Stein and Robert L. Moore (Wilmette, Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1987), 27–40, especially 32 (for Lacan).

30. On psychoanalysis and shamanism, cf. Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 101–2.

31. On Freud and hypnosis see, e.g., Milton Kline, *Freud and Hypnosis: The Interaction of Psychodynamics and Hypnosis* (New York: Julian Press, 1958); Eulivo Marone, "Suggestions from the Unconscious: Freud, Hypnosis, and the Mind-Body Problem," in *The Pre-psychoanalytic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, ed. Gertrudis Van de Vijver and Filip Geerardyn (London: Karnac Books, 2002), 226–32. On Freud, Jung, and other psychodynamic theorists, see Ernest L. Rossi, *Mind-Body Therapy: Methods of Ideodynamic Healing in Hypnosis* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1994), 9–14, 49. For Bion and meditative states, see Esther Pelled, *Psychoanalysis and Buddhism: About the Capacity to Know* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2005), 115–212; see also Richard Webb and Michael Sells, "Lacan and Bion: Psychoanalysis and the Mystical Language of 'Unsaying,'" *Theory and Psychology* 5/2 (1995): 195–215. For Winnicott, see Franklyn Sills, *Being and Becoming: Psychodynamics, Buddhism, and the Origins of Selfhood* (Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2009); Parsons, *The Enigma*, 156–57, as well as chapter 6 here. For general surveys on hypnosis and psychoanalysis, see Robin Waterfield, *Hidden Depths: The Story of Hypnosis* (London: Trans-Atlantic Publications, 2002), 279–303; Chertok and Stengers, *A Critique of Psychoanalytic Reason*.

32. See, e.g., Lewis Wolberg, *Hypnoanalysis* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1945); Jerome M. Schneck, *The Principles and Practice of Hypnoanalysis* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1965); Daniel P. Brown and Erika Fromm, *Hypnoanalysis and Hypnotherapy* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1986).

33. See Jeffery Zeig and Michael Munion, *Milton H. Erickson* (London: Sage Publications, 1999). Resources for appreciating his work can also be accessed through the Milton H. Erickson Foundation, http://www.erickson-foundation.org.

34. Especially the various branches of the NLP (neurolinguistic programming) school, whose founders' "modeling" was affirmed to some extent by Erickson, and the attempts of Ernest L. Rossi, the editor of Erickson's collected works, to provide his theory with scientific foundation. One should note, however, the New Code developed by some NLP practitioners in an attempt to return to a more intuitive communication from and with the unconscious.

35. Stephen Wolinsky, *Trances People Live: Healing Approaches to Quantum Psychology* (Las Vegas: Bramble Books, 2007), especially 39–49. Current attempts to relate hypnotherapy to mystical traditions are discussed further in chapter 3. However, here it

should be noted that Erickson himself deliberately positioned himself outside any official belief system, spiritual or otherwise.

36. See especially Gill Boyne, *Transforming Therapy: A New Approach to Hypnotherapy* (Glendale, California: Westwood Publishing Co., 1989), which at times resorts to spiritual language. For a representative example of more conventional approaches to hypnotic trance, see Herbert and David Spiegel, *Trance and Treatment: Clinical Uses of Hypnosis* (Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Association, 2004).

37. Jay Haley, *Uncommon Therapy: The Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson* (New York: Norton, 1993), 19.

38. See John Grinder and Richard Bandler, *Trance-Formations: Neuro-Linguistic Programming and the Structure of Hypnosis* (Moab, Utah: Real People Press, 1981), 84–85. For a later work from this school that resorts to Castaneda and other shamanic sources in greater detail, see Judith DeLozier and John Grinder, *Turtles All The Way Down: Prerequisites to Personal Genius* (Scotts Valley, California: Grinder and Associates, 1987).

39. This understanding of hypnotic technique as depotentiating everyday conscious formations shall be further discussed from a more anthropological outlook in chapter 2.

40. See also David Lewis-Williams, *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 134–35.

41. The shamanic elements in writings from this stream that include accounts of shape changing are similar to those described in Carlo Ginzburg's groundbreaking *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1992); a critical edition of the central text for such an investigation, *Sefer Hasidim*, is still in preparation by an international team led by Alfred Haverkamp, Peter Schäfer, and Israel Yuval. For an important study of *Sefer Hasidim*, see Talia Fishman, "The Penitential System of Hasidei Ashkenaz and the Problem of Cultural Boundaries," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 8 (1999): 201–29, and especially her intriguing suggestion as to the influence of Celtic Christianity, which certainly contains substantial shamanic elements. For mystical-magical empowerment and angelic transformation in medieval Ashkenazi Kabbalah, see Heidi Laura, "The Ashkenazi Kabbalah of R. Menaham Ziyyoni" (Ph.D. diss., University of Copenhagen, 2005), 175–80, 137–49.

42. See Jonathan Garb, "Rabbi Kook and His Sources: From Kabbalistic Historiosophy to National Mysticism," in *Studies in Modern Religions, Religious Movements, and the Babi-Bahai Faiths*, ed. Moshe Sharon (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 77–96; Garb, "On the Kabbalists of Prague," *Kabbalah* 14 (2006): 347–83; Garb, "The Political Model"; Garb, "The Modernization of Kabbalah: A Case Study," *Modern Judaism: A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience* 30/1 (2010): 1–22.

43. Huss, "Ask No Questions."

44. There were a few notable exceptions, such as Isaiah Tishby's important but unfinished work on the circle of Luzzatto—to be discussed in chapter 3—a historically oriented study of R. Menahem 'Azariah of Fano. See Robert Bonfil, "Halakhah, Kabbalah, and Society: Some Insights into Rabbi Menahem Azariah da Fano's Inner World," in *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Isadore Twersky and Bernard Septimus (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), 39–61; and Rachel Elior's article, published in English as "R. Nathan Adler and the Controversy Surrounding Him," in *Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism*, ed. Karl E. Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 223–42.

45. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 256–60. In general, Idel shows a proclivity for the period and category of the Renaissance rather than that of modernity: see his "On European Cultural Renaissances."

46. Yehuda Liebes, "Towards a Study of the Author of Emek Ha-Melekh: His Personality, Writings, and Kabbalah," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 11 (1993): 101–37; Liebes, "Mysticism and Reality: Towards a Portrait of the Martyr and Kabbalist R. Samson Ostropoler," *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Isadore Twersky and Bernard Septimus (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), 221–55; Liebes, "A Profile of R. Naphtali Katz of Frankfort and His Attitude towards Sabbateanism," in *Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism*, ed. Karl E. Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 208–22; Liebes, "The Vilner Gaon School, Sabbateanism, and dos Pintele Yid," *Da'at* 50–51 (2003): 255–90; Charles Mopsik, *Les grands textes de la cabale: Le rites qui font Dieu* (Paris: Verdier, 2002); Elliot Wolfson, "Tiqqun Ha-Shekhinah: Redemption and the Overcoming of Gender Diomorphism in the Messianic Kabbalah of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto," *History of Religions* 36/4 (1997): 289–332; Wolfson, "The Influence of Luria on the Shelah," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 10 (1992): 423–48; Wolfson, "From Sealed Book to Open Text: Time, Memory, and Narrativity in Kabbalistic Hermeneutics," in *Interpreting Judaism in a Postmodern Age*, ed. Steven Kepnes (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 145–78.

47. Bracha Sack, *Shomer Ha-Pardes: The Kabbalist Rabbi Shabbetai Sheftel Horowitz of Prague* (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2002); Joelle Hansel, *Moïse Hayyim Luzzatto (1707–1746): Kabbale et Philosophie* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2004); Raphael Shuchat, *A World Hidden in the Dimensions of Time: The Theory of Redemption in the Writings of the Vilna Gaon: Its Sources and Influence on Later Generations* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2008); Giller, *Shalom Shar'abi*; Garb, *The Chosen*; Elliot Wolfson, *Open Secret: A Postmodern Reading of Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

48. Magid, *From Metaphysics to Midrash*.

49. See especially Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 94–95. Boaz Huss, "'Altruistic Communism': The Modernist Kabbalah of R. Yehuda Ashlag," *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* 16 (2006): 109–30, has used the term modernistic Kabbalah to describe a far later and thus more restricted period.

50. Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), 74–86. For an extensive textual overview of post-Lurianic Kabbalah, see Yosef Avivi, *Kabbala Luriana*, vols. 1–2 (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 2008).

51. See Michael Borenstein, *Beit Sha'ar* (Jerusalem, 2008); Ya'aqov M. Hillel, *Ahavat Shalom* (Jerusalem, 2002).

52. See Sharon Flatto, *The Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau and His Contemporaries* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010); Ze'ev Gries, *The Book as an Agent of Culture, 1700–1900* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad, 2002); Maoz Kahana, "The Chatam Sofer: A Decisor in His Own Eyes," *Tarbiz* 76 (2007): 519–56; David Sorotzkin, "The Super-Temporal Community in an Age of Change: The Emergence of Conceptions of Time and the Collective as the Basis for the Development of Jewish Orthodoxy in Early and Late Modern Europe" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007; this work is forthcoming from Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad); Roni Weinstein, *Juvenile Sexuality, Kabbalah, and Catholic Religiosity among Jewish Italian Communities: "Glory of Youth" by Pinhas Baruch b. Pelatya Monselice (Ferrara, XVII Century)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

53. I believe that this issue shall also be addressed in studies in preparation by Pedaya.

54. See Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 97, 99–100, as well as Gershon Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 176–79, and the discussion of Goldish's findings in chapter 3 of the present volume. Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism: Quietistic Elements in Eighteenth Century Hasidic Thought*, trans. Jonathan Chipman (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993), 16, 74, suggested that quietistic tendencies and consciousness may be found in Hasidism, without defining her terms or giving any clear historical contextualization. It is interesting that the parallels between Pietism, the Shakers, and Jewish developments such as Lurianic Kabbalah and Hasidism were noted by a contemporary Mussar teacher, R. Shlomo Wolbe, in his '*Olam Ha-Yedidut* (Jerusalem, 1994), 123–24. For wider literature on these phenomena see Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2000); Clarke Garret, *Spirit Possession and Popular Religion from the Camisards to the Shakers* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); Michael Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable: The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995); Bernd Radtke, "Sufism in the Eighteenth Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal," *Die Welt des Islam* 36/3 (1996): 326–64; Andreas Buss, *The Russian-Orthodox Tradition and Modernity* (Leiden: Brill, 2004). See also the valuable material collected in Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (Since 1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 118–73.

55. Avriel Bar-Levav, "R. Aharon Berakhya of Modena and R. Naftali Hakohen Katz: The First Writers of Books of the Ill and the Dead," *Assufot* 9 (1995): 197, 205–6, on early modern kabbalists and the more general phenomenon of religious fellowships.

56. See Shuchat, *A World Hidden*; Garb, "Rabbi Kook and His Sources"; Garb, *The Chosen*, 37–51. Though Elliot Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond: Law and Morality in Kabbalistic Mysticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), did much to establish the salience of the nationalistic discourse in Kabbalah as a whole, including discussions of modern and even contemporary figures (see 116–28), he was true to his focus on the continuity between medieval and modern Kabbalah, and thus did not foreground the particular intensification of nationalistic statements in modern Kabbalah. On the political dimension of the formation of mystical groups in modernity, see de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 153–54.

57. Thus, for example, Jacob Barnai, *Sabbateanism: Social Aspects* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2000), contains useful historical material but no social or psychological analysis.

58. See Wietse de Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul: Confession, Discipline, and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Leiden: Brill, 2001). Though this study deals with a specific historical and geographical context, its essentially Foucauldian analysis can be readily extended to other contexts.

59. See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989); Dror Wahrman , *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). Cf. Buss, *The Russian Orthodox Tradition and Modernity*, 162–63; Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

60. See, however, Elliot Wolfson, "Woman: The Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah: Some Philosophical Observations on the Divine Androgyne," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and Identity*, ed. Lawrence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 177; Garb, "Gender and Power," 87–100. For an example of the need to anchor studies of modern Jewish sexuality in a wider historical context, see Shilo Pachter, "Shemirat Habrit: The History of the Prohibition of Wasting Seed" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006), especially 242–43, 320–21. Pachter convincingly demonstrates the shift in attitudes to masturbation in the wake of Safedian Kabbalah, without placing this development in a wider historical frame. He introduces the concept of modernity at a very late point, that of the late eighteenth century. See, e.g., 276, 307–15. Cf., however, his accurate critique of Thomas Laquer's contextualization, which errs in the opposite direction of ascribing the discourse on masturbation solely to modernity, in 169–70.

61. Roni Weinstein, "The Rise of the Body in Early Modern Jewish Society: An Italian Case Study," in *Jewish Body: Corporeality, Society, and Identity in the Renaissance and Early Modern Period*, ed. Giuseppe Veltri and Maria Diemling (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 15–56; as well as Weinstein, *Kabbalah and Jewish Modernity* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, forthcoming). See also Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 107. On the body as the focus of modern mysticism, see de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 80.

62. See Garb, "On the Kabbalists of Prague," 353–55, as well as R. Moshe David Valle's commentary on Genesis, *Sefer Or 'Olam*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph Spinner (Jerusalem, 2001), 363, which describes the relationship between the Jewish and Christian worlds in terms of the hierarchy of the internal organs. This internalizing move can be compared to Michel Foucault's description of the move from the visible to the hidden in modern medicine in *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archeology of Medical Perception*, trans. Alan M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Random House, 1975), especially 90–91, 127–30, 135–37, 149–73. It can also be compared to the discussion of the role of the body in modern Catholic mysticism in Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974–1975*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2003), 201–4, 211. Ron Margolin, *The Human Temple: Religious Interiorization and the Structuring of Inner Life in Early Hasidism* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2005), did not include somatic internalization in his otherwise useful typology of internalizing moves, as he did not demarcate the specific nature of modern internalization, despite his focus on later developments such as Safedian Kabbalah and Hasidism. To give another example of the possible outcomes of shifting one's focus to questions of somaticization: the focus on immanence in the study of Hasidism has not been sufficiently related to the associated theme of embodiment.

63. See Garb, "The Modernization of Kabbalah"; Garb, "The Political Model"; Garb, "The Circle of Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto in Eighteenth Century Context," *Eighteenth Century Studies* (forthcoming); as well as, more generally, David B. Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010).

64. Cf. the interesting suggestions on the influence of Sufism on possessive experiences in Spanish Kabbalah in Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 171–200.

65. See also Hans Peter Duerr, *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization*, trans. Felicitas Goodman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), and Ioan P. Couliano, *The Tree of Gnosis: Gnostic Mythology from Early Christianity to Modern Nihilism*, trans. H. S. Wiesner and Ioan P. Couliano (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990).

66. See Wendy Doniger-O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 304.

67. Though I partly accept Pedaya's differentiation (see especially "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 342–43) between the early modern and modern periods of Kabbalah, I also uphold the reservations within the study of Jewish and general history as to this periodization. See Yosef Kaplan, "Jacob Katz's Approach to the Early Modern Period," in *Historiography Reappraised: New Views of Jacob Katz's Oeuvre*, ed. Israel Bartal and Shmu'el Feiner (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2008), 19–35. See also Bjorn Wittrock, "Early Modernities: Varieties and Transitions," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 127 (1998): 19–40. As a result I stress the essential continuity within the various phases of modern Kabbalah as part of my general avoidance of excessive atomization.

68. Cf. the witty comment of Fredrick Smith, *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 66, who opposes scholars who combat the dismissal of indigenous notions of possession and similar phenomena to those scholars who are "possessed by modernity"; see also Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 225–27.

CHAPTER 2: THE SHAMANIC PROCESS: DESCENT AND FIERY TRANSFORMATIONS

1. For general discussions, see the studies assembled in Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 823 n 17, 824 n 41. For a recent survey, see Graham Harvey, "General Introduction," in *Shamanism: A Reader*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Routledge, 2003), 1–23. For an incisive critique, see Peter Jones, "Shamanism: An Inquiry into the History of the Scholarly Use of the Term in English-Speaking North America," *Anthropology of Consciousness* 17/1 (2006): 4–32.

2. For the first hypothesis, see Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 135–78, and especially 161 n 32; Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*; cf. Eliade, *Shamanism*, 64, 430 n 6; Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 20. See Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 149–50, for an application of this hypothesis to Jewish material. For the second hypothesis, see Ioan P. Couliano, *Out of This World: Otherworldly Journeys from Gilgamesh to Albert Einstein* (Boston: Shambala, 1991), 38 (see also 42–46); cf. Eliade, *Shamanism*, 93 n 84, 323 (for a critique of broader uses of the term, see 3); Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), 100. Sullivan's extensive use of the term in his study of South American religion would also seem to point to a nondiffusionist approach. For further methodological discussion of this issue, see Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 17–23, 213–15, 260, 265–66. See also Lewis-Williams, *The Mind in the Cave*; David Lewis-Williams and David Pearce, *Inside the Neolithic Mind: Consciousness, Cosmos, and the Realm of the Gods* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), for speculative, yet well-received suggestions as to the earliest origins of shamanism.

3. See Jane Atkinson, "Shamanisms Today," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21 (1992): 307–40.

4. David Holmberg, "Transcendence, Power, and Regeneration in Tamang Shamanic Practice," *Critique of Anthropology* 26/1 (2006): 87–101. For power, cf. Jesse B. Hollenback, *Mysticism: Experience, Response, and Empowerment* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 343–44, 356–73; Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 291. For a summary of research on transformation and shamanism, see Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 105–12. For a comprehensive, if popular, survey of Tibetan shamanistic technique, see Tenzin Wangyal, *Healing with Form, En-*

ergy, and Light: The Five Elements in Tibetan Shamanism, Tantra and Dzogchen (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2002).

5. On shamanism and power, see E. Jean Matteson Langdon and Gerhard Baer (eds.), *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992).

6. Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 1993), especially 8, 238.

7. Cf. the observations of Avraham Elqayam, "'The Horizon of Reason': The Divine Madness of Sabbatai Sevi," *Kabbalah* 9 (2003): 11.

8. Maurice Bloch, *Prey into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), especially 21 on transformation and 35 on trance. In terms of archetypal psychology, the shaman archetype overlaps with that of the warrior. See also Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 62–63, 93. For an archetypal reading of shamanism, see James Hillman, *Insearch: Psychology and Religion* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1987), 105; see also David Noel, *The Soul of Shamanism: Western Fantasies, Imaginal Realities* (New York: Continuum, 1999). For a different psychoanalytic reading, see Sudhir Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics, and Doctors: A Psychological Inquiry into India and Its Healing Traditions* (Boston: Beacon, 1982). See also the important discussion of self-regulation and reorganization within ritual systems in Roy A. Rapoport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 411–27.

9. Milton H. Erickson, *The Collected Papers of Milton H. Erickson on Hypnosis*, vol. 1, ed. Ernest L. Rossi (New York: Irvington, 1980), 448; Ernest L. Rossi, *The Psychobiology of Mind-Body Healing: New Concepts of Therapeutic Hypnosis* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1993) 53, 98. Cf. Stanley Krippner's description of hypnosis as liminal and deconstructive, which is influenced by the comparison to shamanism, in his lecture "Trance and the Trickster: Hypnosis as a Liminal Phenomenon," delivered at the APA convention in 2004, and available online at http://stanleykrippner.weebly.com/--articles.html.

10. For interesting political readings of South American shamanism, see Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Michael F. Brown, "Shamanism and Its Discontents," *Medical Anthropological Quarterly* 2/2 (1988): 102–20. See also the political reading of Tibetan shamanism in Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, especially 572–73. Cf. the innovative clinical model developed by Wolinsky, *Trances People Live*, who inverts the Ericksonian reading of trance as disruption of everyday frames and describes the fixed patterns of patients as forms of trance, and hypnotic therapy as enabling release from these often negative trances. Wolinsky is informed by Buddhist and Hindu philosophies.

11. In general, ethnomethodologists have not focused on the creative applications of disruption of interaction rituals. However, Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), has marked potential for microsociology of trance. See, e.g., 24, 48, on interactional frames as means of mutual focusing of attention. Trance is often described in terms of such focus, and also in terms of rapport, which is similar to Collins' concept of "rhythmical entrainment" as well as similar theoretical frameworks in Rapoport, *Ritual and Religion*, 221, 227, who writes of "tightening coordination" and "tighter synchronization."

12. Bruce Kapferer, *The Feast of the Sorcerer: Practices of Consciousness and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 264; Holmberg, "Transcendence," 94.

13. This is roughly the model of kavvana (intention) developed by the central sixteenth-century kabbalist R. Moshe Cordovero. See Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 224, 266; see also195, 235, 273, on intention and the "active model" in Kabbalah.

14. Holmberg, "Transcendence," 93–95.

15. Amanda Porterfield, "Shamanism: A Psychosocial Definition," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 55/4 (1987): 726.

16. Cf. the critique of Levi-Strauss in Michael F. Brown, "Shamanism and Its Discontents."

17. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 122.

18. Gershon Winkler, *Magic of the Ordinary: Recovering the Shamanic in Judaism* (Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2003). A close parallel is Bradford P. Keeney, *Shamanic Christianity: The Direct Experience of Mystical Communion* (Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books, 2006). Compare also to Leonora Leet, *The Kabbalah of the Soul: The Transformative Psychology and Practices of Jewish Mysticism* (Rochester, New York: Inner Traditions International, 2003). The opposite pole to such attempts is Eliade's famous opposition between Jewish and archaic religiosity, which for Eliade was epitomized by shamanism. For a critique of this ideological position, see Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 216–24.

19. This is especially problematic in light of the fact that the second limb of the equation—the Heikhalot literature—is also an extremely diverse assembly of numerous texts from different periods (including the Middle Ages), all anonymous or pseudepigraphic. Cf. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 90, which contains a far more cautious comparison to shamanism, and Idel, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 104, where he stipulates that the Heikhalot literature is not part of the "mystico-magical" model.

20. See, e.g., James Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot: The People behind the Hekhalot Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 67–68, 109, 270, 277, 289. A far more accurate categorization of the later cluster as scholastic magic is found in Michael D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996). Even the "exit rites" found in Heikhalot experiences, which can be compared to certain trance phenomena (see chapter 3), are of a decidedly nomian nature (see the texts cited in Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot*, 171, 180).

21. Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot*, 93–115, 169–95, 204–11. Davila himself remarks (189) that a very common shamanic theme (to be explored in the present chapter), that of the descent to the underworld, is almost absent in Heikhalot literature. For a critique of the various suggestions as to a practice of descent in the Heikhalot literature, see Elliot Wolfson, "Yeridah la-Merkavah: Typology of Ecstasy and Enthronement in Ancient Jewish Mysticism," in *Mystics of the Book: Themes, Topics, and Typologies*, ed. R. A. Herrera (New York: P. Lang, 1993), 13–44.

22. Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot*, 136. Only one text (cited on 144) would perhaps warrant such a comparison.

23. Jones, "Shamanism," 307.

24. Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 67; Naomi Janowitz, *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 66.

25. The theme of songs and words of power in Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot*, 115–24, offers a slightly more convincing basis for comparison, as does his preliminary discussion (292–302) of the social dimension.

26. Alan Segal, "Comparative Transformations: Daoist Ascent and Merkabah Mysticism," in *Wisdom in China and the West*, ed. Vincent Shen and Willard Oxtoby (Washington, D.C.: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2004), 35–55.

27. Idel, *Hasidism*, 225, and see 214, 218. For a more recent study that foregrounds shamanic ascent in Hasidism, see Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 148–50, 153–54, 159, 164 n 40, 208.

28. Idel, *Hasidism*, 218, 225.

29. This suggestion, found in Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 148–50, will be expanded in Idel's study in preparation on the Besht, parts of which have been presented in various public lectures (which included an address on hypnotic technique in the practice of the Besht). For shamanic activity in the areas in which Hasidism originated, see Mircea Eliade, *Zalmoxis: The Vanishing God : Comparative Studies in the Religions and Folklore of Dacia and Eastern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 186, 194, 213.

30. Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 81; Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 341–43; Pedaya, "Review of Immanuel Etkes: The Besht," *Zion* 70 (2005): 263. On the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Heikhalot literature, see Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov, R. Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye, and the Maggid of Mezirech: Outlines for a Religious Typology," *Da'at* 45 (2000): 41–45, 54–55, 63–64, and see specific discussions of trance in her "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 328, 341. Idel has also compared the element of ascent found in the Heikhalot literature and Hasidism (*Hasidism*, 79; cf. 11–12).

31. Haviva Pedaya, "Review of Moshe Rosman: The Founder of Hasidism," *Zion* 69 (2004): 520. For a specific categorization of the Besht as a shaman, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 75; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 158. Pedaya praises Rosman for including this category, though he uses the rather timid term "shamanesque"; see his *Founder of Hasidism: A Quest for the Historical Ba'al Shem Tov* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 13–14.

32. Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 345. See also Moshe Idel, "The Besht as a Prophet and as a Talismanic Magician," in *Studies in Jewish Narrative (Ma'aseh Sippur) Presented to Yoav Elstein*, ed. Avidov Lipsker and Rella Kushelevsky (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2006), 121–45; Moshe Idel, "On Prophecy and Early Hasidism," in *Studies in Modern Religions, Religious Movements and the Babi-Baha'i Faiths*, ed. Moshe Sharon (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 70–72. An opposite thesis has been suggested by Ron Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 421, who contends that in terms of the self-perception of the early Hasidic masters it would be best not to describe them in magical-shamanic terms. He sharply differentiates the earlier generations from the later generations, thus disputing both Idel, who found shamanic elements in early Hasidism, and Martin Buber, who denied the magical element in later Hasidism (for Idel's own critique of Buber, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 289 n 187). See also the critique of Margolin's position in Zvi Mark, "Review of Ron Margolin, The Human Temple," *Zion* 72 (2007): 246–49.

33. Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 520–21. In this context one should note the phenomenon of Ba'alei Shem in pre-Hasidic Eastern Europe. For their characterization as shamans, see Rosman, "Innovative Tradition: Jewish Culture in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Schocken, 2002), 550. Cf. the extremely forced distinction between mysticism, as exemplified in sixteenth-century Safed and shamanism, as exemplified in Beshtian Hasidism, in Alan Brill, "The Spiritual World of a Master of Awe: Divine Vitality,

Theosis, and Healing in the Degel Mahane Ephraim," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 8/1 (2001): 33–34.

34. See also Pedaya's important comment ("Review of Etkes," 263) on the Baʿal Shem Tov being both a shaman and a man of Torah and thus enabling the success of Hasidism as a social movement.

35. Holmberg, "Transcendence," 91. See also Eliade, *Shamanism*, 200–214.

36. For a spatial description of the dreamworld, see Hillman, *The Dream and the Underworld* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1979). See also Wolfgang Kempf and Elfriede Hermann, "Dreamscapes: Transcending the Local in Initiation Rites among the Ngaing of Papua New Guinea," in *Dream Travelers: Sleep Experiences and Culture in the Western Pacific*, ed. Roger I. Lohmann (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 61–85.

37. See chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of scholarly positions on the imaginal.

38. See the discussion of trance in this context in Caroline Humphrey, "Chiefly and Shamanist Landscapes in Mongolia," in *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*, ed. Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 135–36.

39. Cf. Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, 53–54.

40. See Idel, *Hasidism*, 104–5; Guy Stroumsa, "Mystical Descents," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Otherworldly Journeys*, ed. John J. Collins and Michael Fishbane (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 239–54. Cf. Hans Jonas, "Myth and Mysticism: A Study of Objectification and Interiorization in Religious Thought," *Journal of Religion* 49 (1969): 315–29. On interiorization, see Margolin, *The Human Temple*. Though Margolin has traced a significant ongoing theme, the move inwards, in the dimension of depth as it were, is one of several possible trajectories in inner space.

41. See Pedaya, "The Baʿal Shem Tov," 60–61; Netanel Lederberg, *Sod Ha-Daʿat: Rabbi Israel Baʿal Shem Tov, His Spiritual Character and Social Leadership* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 2007), 27–36; Moshe Idel, "The Parable of the Son of the King and the Imaginary Walls in Early Hasidism," in *Judaism, Topics, Fragments, Faces, Identities: Jubilee Volume in Honor of Rivka Horwitz*, ed. Haviva Pedaya and Efraim Meir (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2007), 87–117; Iris Brown, "The Parable of the Walls: Three Transformations," *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* 23 (2010): 99–132, as well as the earlier studies cited in these recent discussions. For wall imagery in the Heikhalot literature, see Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, *A Transparent Illusion: The Dangerous Vision of Water in Hekhalot Mysticism: A Source-Critical and Tradition-Historical Inquiry* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 31. In this context, it is well worth mentioning the opinion of Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Four Entered Paradise Revisited," *Harvard Theological Review* 88 (1995): 104–5, 113, who claims that the failure of most of the ascenders described in the Pardes narrative stemmed from their gazing at the orchard instead of focusing their interest on God himself. If he is correct, then we have here a very early critique of concern with imaginal geography instead of a more direct approach to the divine. However, I believe that there is a strong possibility that Goshen-Gottstein is anachronistically reading too much into the text, just as the interpretation that he critiques (that of Morray-Jones) may also be reading too much of Paul into it. See Christopher Rowland and Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 421–89. I do not claim that I possess a superior reading, but am merely pointing at the manner in which among scholars as well as kabbalists, a foundational text serves as a site for numerous intellectual and spiritual investments.

42. On the Besht's indebtedness to the architectural imagery found in this work, see Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 36–39, 67; cf. Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 104, 109. See also Liebes, *God's Story*, 163–75. Idel's comments (*Ascensions on High*, 157) on the Hasidic predilection for social concerns rather than architectural structures are also relevant.

43. Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha* (Jerusalem, 1983), 58; Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai* (Jerusalem, 2006), vol. 1, fol. 60a (see also fol. 86a); Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed on Avot* (Jerusalem, 2006), 129 (which includes a description of falling at the stage of yearning); cf. Meir Ha-Levi Rotenberg of Apta, *Or La-Shamayyim* (Lvov, 1860), 177, and my discussions of childlike states and of critiques of magic in chapter 4. For a preliminary discussion of Safrin's mystical practice, see Abraham Segal, "The Relation between Lurianic Kabbalah and Hasidism in the Thought of R. Yishaq Isaac of Komarno," *Kabbalah* 15 (2007): 305–33.

44. See Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 148–52, 176–79, 211–12, and see especially the discussions of *Brit Menuha*. See also the important comments of Menachem Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer in Lurianic Kabbalah" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2002), 185–88.

45. Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 254–55 and the sources cited there, as well as Morray-Jones, *A Transparent Illusion*, 18–20, 29. Morray-Jones' suggestion that the Pardes ascent narrative should be read in architectonic rather than "organic" terms is interesting and may be supported by the Midrash Shir ha-Shirim Rabba 1:1, where the prooftext for the ascent is the verse "Draw me after you . . . the King brought me to his chambers" (Song of Songs 1:4), which is interpreted as "the chambers of the Chariot."

46. See Zohar I:130a.

47. See Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

48. Elliot Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 263.

49. Holmberg, "Transcendence," 92, 94. See also Eliade, *Shamanism*, 215–25, 308; Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 450–51. For Buddhist descents to the underworld, see Robert Mayer, "The Importance of the Underworlds: Asuras' Caves in Buddhism, and Some Other Themes in Early Buddhist Tantras Reminiscent of the Later Padmasambhava Legends," *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 3 (2007).

50. See Idel, *Hasidism*, 104: "The mystico-magical model is anabatic by its very nature"; cf. Idel, *Ben*, 3, on the anabatic-katabatic model as on of the most important ones in the history of religion, as well as Stroumsa, "Mystical Descents," 142, on the neglect of the katabatic model. One should also compare this position to an important, but somewhat neglected study (which is cited, however, by Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 164 n 41)—Alan Segal, "Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity, and Their Environment," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der Neueren Forschung*, vol. 23 (2), ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), 1354, where he associates shamanism with ascent rather than with a journey to the underworld. However, on 1374–75, he himself cites a full cycle of descent-ascent combined in single figure in early Christianity (cf. Janowitz, *Icons*, 118). One should also mention the hypothesis of Asi Farber-Ginat, "Studies in Shi'ur Qomah," in *Massu'ot: Studies in Kabbalistic Literature and Jewish Philosophy in Memory of Prof. Ephraim Gottlieb*, ed. Michal Oron and Amos Goldreich (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), 389 n 158, according

to which one of the Heikhalot circles saw ascent as the requisite of a fallen state, as in the ideal state the divine is immanent and accessible to all (there is a certain phenomenological parallel here with Hasidic views). Compare also to Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 168; Annelies Kuyt, *The Descent to the Chariot: Towards a Description of the Terminology, Place, Function, and Nature of the Yeridah in Hekhalot Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 370–74.

51. On soul retrieval through descent in the Orphic tradition, see Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 147.

52. See at length in Lawrence Fine, *Physician of the Soul, Healer of the Cosmos: Isaac Luria and His Kabbalistic Fellowship* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), 94–95, 150–67. See also Hayyim Vital, *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh* (Jerusalem, 1999), vol. 1, 66. On uplifting the souls of the wicked through the central Lurianic technique of yihudim as the mission of Luria's main student, R. Hayyim Vital, see Yehuda Liebes, "'Two Young Roes of a Doe': The Secret Sermon of Isaac Luria before His Death," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 10 (1992): 120.

53. See Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 152–53, as well as Vital's Lurianic composition '*Olat Tamid*, ed. Ya'aqov Ben Hayyim Tzemah (Jerusalem, 1907), fol. 46b. According to a contemporary kabbalist (Hillel, *Ahavat Shalom*, 288), this text was intended to be an introduction to Vital's *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*. From the Foucauldian point of view suggested in chapter 1, the comparison found in the text between Luria's activity and that of a physician is significant, as it places his work within the context of the rise of the modern medical model.

54. See Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York and Jerusalem: Schocken, 1941), 17; Simon Ginsburg, *The Life and Works of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, Founder of Modern Hebrew Literature* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1931), 77. For an evaluation of Tishby's studies of Luzzatto, see chapter 3.

55. Mordekhai Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal and His Generation* (Jerusalem: Makhon Ramhal, 2001), letter 7, 22–23.

56. Ibid., letter 7a, 25; letter 20, 59–60; letter 22, 61; letter 30, 86. Although we do not have many examples of Luzzatto's diagnostic techniques, perhaps they can be reconstructed through the extensive discussions of diagnosis and healing in the works of his close disciple and colleague, R. Moshe David Valle.

57. Cf. Mendel Piekarz, *The Beginning of Hasidism: Ideological Trends in Derush and Mussar Literature* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1978), 283–84. For soul retrieval in eighteenth-century Kabbalah, see Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania*, 129.

58. For nuanced discussions, see Zvi Mark, "Dybbuk and Devekut in the Shivhe ha-Besht: Toward a Phenomenology of Madness in Early Hasidism," in *Spirit Possession in Judaism: Cases and Contexts from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Matt Goldish (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003), 257–301, especially 301 n 108; Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 49–50. I believe that the tradition of attempting to rectify famous sinners and schismatics is very early. See the censored text in b Gittin 57a, on summoning Jesus from the dead (as well Harari, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 321–22). Cf. a radical text by Luzzatto on the need to avert the danger of Messiah, son of Joseph, transferring power to Jesus by his falling to the underworld, where Jesus is found: Isaiah Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism: Moses Hayyim Luzzatto and the Padua School*, trans. Morris Hoffman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 242. I imagine that these traditions were inspired by Jesus' own *descendum ad infernos*: cf. Moshe Idel, *Messianic Mystics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 118–20.

59. Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 348–49; Jonathan Garb, "The Cult of the Saints in Lurianic Kabbalah," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 98/2 (2008): 216–23. Cf. Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, *Me'or 'Enayyim* (Jerusalem, 1975), Shemot, 83.

60. On the Besht being in danger of conversion, see the hints by Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 115, 118, as well as his discussion of the Besht as being sent to the world to amend phenomena like Sabbateanism in Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 113b. The Bratzlav traditions on this danger will be discussed by Zvi Mark in a study in preparation. See also Idel, *Hasidism*, 106.

61. For a further discussion of the relationship between Lurianic and Hasidic doctrines of the Tzaddiq, see Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 223–28.

62. See Charles Mopsik, *Chemins de la cabale: Vingt-Cinq études sur la mystique juive* (Paris: Éditions de l'éclat, 2004), 147–59. I will discuss this point in much greater length in my book on Kabbalistic psychology.

63. See James Hillman, *The Soul's Code* (New York: Random House, 1996); for Kabbalah, see especially 43–44, 47. See also his *Re-visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 199, for Machiavelli's contacts with departed illustrious figures. I believe that Machiavelli's repeated admonitions (as in *The Prince*) to learn deeply from such figures should be read, inter alia, in this mystical context. On Machiavelli and Kabbalah, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 274–75.

64. See, e.g., the extremely interesting discussion of uplifting souls through pleasure in *Liqqutei Moharan* vol. 2, par. 5. On Nahman's rectification of souls, see Yaakov Travis, "Adorning the Souls of the Dead: Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav and Tikkun Ha-Neshamot," in *God's Voice from the Void: Old and New Studies in Bratslav Hasidism*, ed. Shaul Magid (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 155–92, and for more general, yet nontheoretical, discussions of soul retrieval in Hasidism, see Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 345, 348, 350. For a methodological discussion of Hasidic biographies, see chapter 4.

65. Petaya describes his rectification of the soul of Nathan, which in turn followed a series of dreams, as harmful and dangerous. See Avraham Yaari, *Talumat Sefer: Hemdat Yamim, Its Author and Influence* (Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 1954), 151–52. For the sense of danger that pervaded this kabbalist's activity, see Petaya's introduction to his commentary on Luria, *Beit Lehem Yehuda* (Jerusalem, 1936). See also Lederberg, *Sod Ha-Da'at*, 70–80; Yehuda Liebes, *On Sabbateaism and Its Kabbalah: Collected Essays* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1995), 248–53. For testimonies on the abilities of the famous early twentieth-century mystic R. Avraham Yitzhaq Kook in this realm, see Garb, *The Chosen*, 57.

66. It was in order to preserve the nomian nature of this practice that various modern Kabbalistic interpretations of this rite have stressed the Halakhic dictum that one cannot perform it if a Torah scroll is not present; see, e.g., Nathan Shapira of Cracow, *Megaleh Amuqot* (Lemberg, 1882), fol. 34b. Luria in fact suggested that a similar intention (kavvana) be performed in other parts of the liturgy, thus somewhat diminishing the focus on a specific posture and rather anchoring it in the general liturgical frame. See Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 244.

67. Uri Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language of Prayer: A New Approach to Jewish Liturgy*, trans. D. Ordan (Jerusalem and Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 12, 42–45. As Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 241, has noted, some kabbalists did propose a return to prostration.

68. Gerald Blidstein, "Prostration and Mosaics in Jewish Law," *Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 2 (1974): 19–39. For early sources for the ritual of prostration, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 67.

69. M Yoma 6:2; m Tamid 7:3. In Leviticus 9:24, falling on the face is the response to the manifestation of the numinous divinity as fire, a connection developed by Dalia Hosen, "The Fire Symbol in Talmudic-Aggadic Exegesis" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 1989), 56; Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 63–65 (cf. 56–61, 87). See also Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*,, 68, 79, on falling into a fainting-like state in the book of Daniel, and the explicit description of this state as trance in Alan Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in the Religions of the West* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 323–24, 331–33; cf. the trance-like description of falling asleep on the face in response to a revelation from an angel in Daniel 8:18.

70. Thomas Csordas, *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 228–29.

71. B Berakhot 59a. For the mythic and mystical symbolism of the rainbow, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 334 n 30; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 377–84; Yair Lorberbaum, "The Rainbow in the Cloud: An Anger-Management Device," *Journal of Religion* 89/4 (2009): 498–540. For further rabbinic critiques of prostration in response to divine revelation, see Midrash Tana'im on Deut. 43:10.

72. B Baba Mezi'a 59b. On R. Eli'ezer's position in the rabbinic world, see Yitzhak Gilat, *The Teachings of R. Eliezer Ben Hyracanus* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1968), especially 320–29. On the threat posed by R. Eli'ezer, see also the comments of Dinah Stein, *Maxims, Magic, Myth: A Folkloristic Perspective of Pirkei de Rabbi Eliezer* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2004), 163. I regard the attempt of the later Talmudic editors (*stam'aim*) to explain the wife's magical knowledge and the deed itself on the basis of the power of the injured party (rather than as a manifestation of personal power reinforced by a potent rite) as a later rationalization. Cf. the explanation given to the rainmaking activity of Honi of the Circle (*ha-ma'agel*) in m Ta'anit 3:8 (discussed in Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 39), as well as to the attribution of the practice of a Hasid who slept in a graveyard and audited a conversation between two spirits to a domestic quarrel. B Berakhot 18b; cf. b Hagigah 3b, where this practice is described as designed as a method for inducing possession by an impure spirit. In general, the Hasidic strand in Talmudic literature described by Samuel Safrai, "Jesus and the Hasidim," *Jerusalem Perspective* 42–44 (1994): 3–22, and Gad Ben-Ami Zarfati, "Pious Men, Men of Deeds, and the Early Prophets," *Tarbiz* 26 (1957): 126–53, can be loosely termed shamanic. For the theme of fire, to be discussed soon, in this world, see Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," 283–85, and for the phenomenological parallel between these circles and eighteenth-century Hasidism, see Itamar Gruenwald, "What Can One Learn from the Typology of the Hasidic Movements in Israel about Those Movements and about the Jewish Religion in General," in *Studies in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature in Memory of Tirzah Lifshitz*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher, Arieh Edrei, Yehoshua' Levinson, and Brachiahu Lifshitz (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2005), 113–26. As a result of reinterpretation by the mainstream, such Hasidic approaches were able to survive in a residual manner even in rabbinic circles (see, e.g., b Mo'ed Katan 28a, on rainmaking).

73. See, e.g., b Sota 22a on the practice of *nefilat appayim* by a young woman. More generally, see Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language*, 62, on the Halakhic sensibility that relegated *nefilat appayim* to private prayer, as it was deemed inappropriate for public worship. Cf. the famous Tosefta Berakhot 3:5, on private ecstatic prayer as opposed

to moderate public prayer (it is of course no coincidence that the ecstatic worshipper described there is the Rabbi Akiva, who led the Heikhalot-like shamanic journey into the Pardes). See also Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language*, 31, 213–14, on private prayer as a vestige, so to speak, of the Biblical forms of prayer that were pushed aside by the standardized and moderate ritual forms created by the rabbis.

74. For another critique of these readings, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 46, and cf. the purely literary reading in Jeffery L. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 45–46. See also the comment of seventeenth-century R. Shmu'el Edels on the passage in b Baba Mezi'a, according to which the entire episode occurred in a dream. The contemporary liberal interpretations mentioned can thus be seen as part of an ongoing cultural activity of repression of the archaic that can be located among the editors of the Talmud as well as later commentaries and cannot be ascribed merely to contemporary sensibilities. Conversely, the present project can be seen as a restoration of overlooked cultural possibilities.

75. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 90; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 32–35; Idel, "From Italy to Ashkenaz and Back: The Circulation of Jewish Mystical Traditions," *Kabbalah* 14 (2006): 50; Farber-Ginat, "Studies," 374 n 70. See also Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 423 n 61. One Hasidic source (*Tif'eret Shlomo*, 79) relates the physical posture adopted today for this practice to the head-between-knees posture of R. Eli'ezer ben Dordaya (described in b 'Avodah Zarah 17a), which according to his interpretation resulted in a kind of mystical death, which led to ascent to the world of souls. On the campaign of R. Hai Gaon, who mentions this posture, against magical beliefs, see Harari, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 258–61; see also chapter 3 for a further discussion of the posture. From a phenomenological point of view, it may be fruitful to compare the suppression of shamanic liturgical elements by the Geonim to a somewhat earlier event in the Christian world: the suppression of Celtic Christianity in Britain after the Whitby synod. See Ian C. Bradley, *Celtic Christianity: Making Myths and Chasing Dreams* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 24, 28, 201, 206, 221.

76. See R. Avraham Maimuni, *Ha-Maspik Le-'Ovdei Hashem* (Jerusalem, 1984), *Sha'ar Ha-Hitbodedut*, 178, for a description of sleep-like trance. For prostration, see Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language*, 57–58, and the sources cited there; Paul Fenton, *Introduction to The Treatise of the Pool (Al-Maqāla al-Hawdiyya) of Obadyāh b. Abraham b. Moses Maimonides* (London: Octagon Press, 1981), 12–13. On the ecstatic and illuminatory experiences of this figure, see also Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 173, 182–83, 201.

77. Numbers 16:4, 22.

78. Commentary of Ibn Ezra at the given verses. For another, more symbolic medieval interpretation, see Michael Fishbane, *The Kiss of God: Spiritual and Mystical Death in Judaism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 105–7.

79. Zohar III:176b.

80. Zohar III:120b–121a; cf. the explicitly esoteric internal traditions of the Zoharic fraternity in Zohar III:129a and II:200b. For further sources, see Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 107–9; Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 240.

81. See Eliade, *Shamanism*, 269–74; Elliot Wolfson, *Along the Path: Studies in Kabbalistic Myth, Symbolism, and Hermeneutics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 63–88; Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 282–83.

82. Elliot Wolfson, "Weeping, Death, and Spiritual Ascent in Sixteenth Century Jewish Mysticism," in *Death, Ecstasy and Otherworldly Journeys*, ed. John J. Collins and

Michael Fishbane (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 230–31; Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 240, 242–43, 247. On the parallel between yihudim and shamanic techniques, see 269. Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 110–16, also includes Cordoverian material, and uses the term "shamanic descent." On the need to compare Lurianic technique with shamanism, see Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 140, 379 (On the centrality of the mystical martyrdom of *nefilat appayim* for the Lurianic system see 259–63). See also Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 104–20, for a discussion of Zoharic, Safedian, and Hasidic sources on *nefilat appayim* from the perspective of mystical death. On death experiences and shamanism, see Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 164 n 40, and the studies adduced there.

83. This is the modern Kabbalistic rationale for the positioning of this rite after the main standing prayer which is conceptualized as an ascent. For this explanation see R. Hayyim of Volozhin's *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim* (Jerusalem, 1973), pt. 2, 18; cf. the commentary of his teacher, R. Eliyahu of Vilna (on Esther 8:3), who writes that even though the rite is positioned after the standing prayer, its intention is in fact rooted in the blessings preceding the Shema' prayer.

84. Hayyim Vital, *Pri 'Etz Hayyim* (Jerusalem, 1983), *Sha'ar Nefilat Appayim*, chap. 8, fol. 71b.

85. Hayyim Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Kavvanot* (Jerusalem, 1985), *Drush Nefilat Appayim*, pt. 2, fol. 47a; cf. *Drushei Ha-Layila*, pt. 5, fol. 55a. See also Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 241.

86. See also Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 109.

87. Vital *Pri 'Etz Hayyim*, *Sha'ar Nefilat Appayim*, chaps. 2 and 4, fol. 70b. On mystical death and consumption by fire, which shall be discussed in the second part of the chapter, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 87.

88. For the Hasidic paradox of descending ascent, see R. Nathan of Nemirov, *Liqqutei Halakhot*, *Tefilla*, pt. 4, 25. He also explains this idea in *Nesi'at Kappayim*, pt. 2, chapter 2, as follows: "The very moment of descent and falling is one of ascent," according to the classic Bratzlav claim that the moments of descent possess the greatest potential of repentance and spiritual advancement. For the paradox of ascent and descent in Heikhalot literature, see Wolfson, "Yeridah La-Merkavah," 31 n 17. For a further psychological reading of the descent, as designed to redeem joy from the "husks" of evil, see *Liqqutei Halakhot*, *Nefilat Appayim*, pt. 4, chapter 2. This psychologization moves the practice away from a shamanic descent in mythic geography towards an internal emotional process—a move common in Hasidic discourse. It is interesting that an opponent of Hasidism, R. Hayyim of Volozhin, likewise describes *nefilat appayim* in psychological terms as an act of self-effacement (*Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*, chapter 2, par. 18 in the gloss). This discussion is situated within a description of prayer as an entirely passive state. As we shall also see in other instances, these statements, surprisingly similar to Hasidic discourse, preclude a description of this thinker, which minimizes the mystical dimension. See Shaul Magid, "Deconstructing the Mystical: The Anti-Mystical Kabbalism in Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin's Nefesh ha-Hayyim," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 9/1 (2000): 21–67, which does not cite this discussion, as it largely bypasses R. Hayyim's discussion of prayer.

89. Vital, *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol. 1, 55. This principle also appears in later workings of the Lurianic prayer technique (such as *Hesed le-Avraham*, pt. 7, par. 26). However, *nefilat appayim* itself is never performed at night. The parallels between *nefilat appayim* and the surrender of the soul at night have been briefly noted by Wolfson, "Weeping, Death," 231; Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 261 n 361. On nocturnal mystical

practice see more generally Moshe Idel, *Les kabbalistes de la nuit* (Paris: Allia, 2003), as well as the statement by the famous medieval Sufi Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi, according to which all prophetic ascents occur at night. See Stephen Hirtenstein, *The Unlimited Mercifier: The Spiritual Life and Thought of Ibn 'Arabi* (Oxford: Anqa Publishing, 1999), 116.

90. See Bracha Sack, *The Kabbalah of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero* (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 1995), 236–37.

91. See Louise Child, *Tantric Buddhism and Altered States of Consciousness: Durkheim, Emotional Energy, and Visions of the Consort* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2007), 90, 100; Raymond Prince, "Shamans and Endorphins: Hypotheses for a Synthesis," *Ethos* 10/4 (1982): 409–23; Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 241, 244. On imagination of various forms of torture during this rite, see also 245. This theme, as well as the classical one of danger, is clearly related to the violence involved in rites of separation from the social order, as discussed by Bloch as well as by earlier religious studies theoreticians such as Georges Bataille and René Girard.

92. Avraham Azulai, *Kenaf Renanim* (Jerusalem, 2002), 74–75; cf. Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Kavvanot*, fol. 47a, as well as to the need for esotericism due to the dangerous nature of the technique (ibid., fol. 47b).

93. The parallels between the two practices are noted in several Lurianic texts. See Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 262 n 361.

94. See also Gershom Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Schocken, 1969), 133. In general Fine tends to write of Lurianic Kabbalah as a whole, rather than as a complex collection of discrete traditions. Cf. Ronit Meroz, "The Teachings of Redemption in Lurianic Kabbalah" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1988), and see especially 255, 263, on *nefilat appayim*, and Avivi, *Kabbala Luriana*, who have attempted—in different ways—to locate numerous layers in the tradition. Fine of course cites Meroz's study and an earlier version of Avivi's work and recognizes their importance (see *Physician of the Soul*, 17, 393 n 5); however, further examination of this question was not part of his project. For critiques of the layered approach, see Yehuda Liebes, "An Appendix: Early Lurianic Writings," in *Massu'ot*, ed. Michal Oron and Amos Goldreich (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), 339–42; Jonathan Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," *Kabbalah* 4 (1999): 307; Kallus, "Theurgy of Prayer," 56, 224, 228–29; Daniel Abrams, "The Invention of the Zohar as a Book: On the Assumptions and Expectations of Modern Kabbalists," *Kabbalah* 19 (2009): 128.

95. See Eliade, *Shamanism*, 218. For a fine literary treatment of the danger of demonic possession during soul retrieval, see Ursula Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea* (New York: Bantam Books, 1977), 79–83.

96. See Moshe Hallamish, *Kabbalah in Liturgy, Halakhah, and Customs* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2000), 210, 476–79.

97. Cf. Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 29, on "deep transformation" as a usual accompaniment to ascent. For an illustrative text on the ascent of the soul on an eagle, see Segal, "Heavenly Ascent," 1348–49. I believe that this source demonstrates that mythical and psychological discourses can coexist within a shamanic structure. On transformation and movement in internal space, see also Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 74. On madness and shamanic transformation, see Eliade, *Shamanism*, 23–32; Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, 518–24. On burning and mystical death, see the illuminating discussion of the midrashic treatment of the death of the sons of Aaron in Exodus 10, in Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," 54–72. For a general discussion of the midrashic theme

of transformation by fire, see Avivah Gottlieb-Zornberg, *The Particulars of Rapture: Reflections on Exodus* (New York: Doubleday/Random House, 2001), 484–85.

98. See, e.g., Hollenback, *Mysticism*, 56–75, as well as the text adduced in Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 36, from the thirteenth-century work *Shibbolei Ha-Leqet*, describing the earlier liturgical poet, R. El'azar Ha-Qalir, as sorrounded by fire while composing. On this theme in shamanic practice, especially in Tibet, see Eliade, *Shamanism*, 335, 372–73, 412, 437–38, 472–77. For a popular but extensive description of the "Yoga of inner fire" in Tibetan shamanism, see Thubten Yeshe, *The Bliss of Inner Fire: Heart Practice of the Six Yogas of Naropa* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1998). See also Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 126–27, and Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 85, as well as the interesting generalizations in Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 279–80.

99. Cf. Hollenback, *Mysticism*, especially 56–74; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 270; Segal, *Life after Death*, 470. On illumination and shamanic transformation, see Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 14, 39.

100. See Child, *Tantric Buddhism*; Starr, *Repair of the Soul*; Adam Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction with God: The Concept of 'Dvekut' in the Early Kabbalah (Provence and Catalonia)" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2008). For earlier brief comments, see Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 316 n 70, 351 n 348; Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 63–68; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 84 n 46; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 246–53, 537–38 n 352; Dan Merkur, *The Ecstatic Imagination: Psychedelic Experiences and the Psychoanalysis of Self-Actualization* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 83–84 (who appears to use the category of conversion in this sense). On Wolfson's recent treatment of somatic transformation in Habad Hasidism, see chapter 4. For very sophisticated nonacademic discussions, see Hubert Benoit, *Zen and the Psychology of Transformation* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1990); Gottlieb-Zornberg, *The Particulars of Rapture*, especially 295–99; see also Richard Foster, *Life with God: Reading the Bible for Spiritual Transformation* (New York: Harper One, 2008). For the study of Hinduism, see Doniger-O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities*, especially 3–4, 79. For sociology and anthropology of religion, see the classical texts in Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995), 220, 425, as well as Thomas Csordas, *Body/Meaning/Healing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 34–38, 154–60; Janet K. Ruffing, *Mysticism and Social Transformation* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001); Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman*, 234–36. For psychology of religion, see Parsons, *The Enigma*, 128–39. For Antiquity, Jan Assmann and Guy Stroumsa (eds.), *Transformation of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); David Shulman and Guy Stroumsa (eds.), *Self and Self-transformation in the History of Religions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Segal, *Life after Death*, 416–38. For psychoanalysis, see Herbert Fingarette, *The Self in Transformation, Psychoanalysis, Philosophy, and the Life of the Spirit* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); Nathan Schwartz-Salant, *Narcissism and Character Transformation: The Psychology of Narcissistic Character Disorders* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1982); Christopher Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 13–29.

101. Jeffrey J. Kripal, "Debating the Mystical as Ethical: An Indological Map," in *Crossing Boundaries: Essays on the Ethical Status of Mysticism*, ed. William Barnard and Jeffrey J. Kripal (London: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), 53; Csordas, *Body/Meaning/Healing*, 87.

102. See Ira Chernus, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism: Studies in the History of Midrash* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 108–25; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 121–22 (on visions of the divine as fire accompanied by falling, see 30–32); Kuyt, *The Descent to the Chariot*, 357–58; Morray-Jones, *A Transparent Illusion*, 123 and the sources cited there. See also b Hagigah 14b, and Yehuda Liebes, *The Sin of Elisha: The Four Who Entered the Pardes and the Nature of Talmudic Mysticism* (Jerusalem: Academon, 1990), 107–9. See especially the important comments of Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 87, on ascent and burning (as well as 78, 206).

103. See Peter Schäfer (ed.), *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 348–52; Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 120–21 (cf. 119–20, 125); Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 297. See also Idel, "From Italy to Ashkenaz," 59 n 40.

104. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 7. On firewalking see Loris Danforth, *Firewalking and Religious Healing: The Anastenaria of Greece and the American Firewalking Movement* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989). On luminosity and transformation, see also Moshe Idel, *Enchanted Chains: Techniques and Rituals in Jewish Mysticism* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2005), 127.

105. b Hagigah 27a. As the prooftext is "my words are as fire said the Lord" (Jer. 23:29), it seems that the claim is that connection to Torah study effects some form of theosis through the medium of fire. Cf. Pesikta Rabbati 11, for an eschatological vision of the transformation of the Jews into fire like God. See, however, Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction," 22–25, for a less radical interpretation of this text. On walking inside "vapor of fire" (*betokh hevel esh*), see Cordovero, *Or Yakar on Tiqqunei Zohar* (Jerusalem, 1972), vol. 1, 134.

106. See Matthew 6:22, as well as Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur*, 287–88, and Janowitz, *Icons of Power*, 79–80, 82.

107. Alan Segal, "Paul and the Beginning of Jewish Mysticism," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Otherworldly Journeys*, ed. John J. Collins and Michael Fishbane (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 97–98, 1047; Segal, *Life after Death*, 339. See, however, Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman*, as well as the studies on the question of Biblical shamanism that he cites in 204–5 n 5.

108. Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," 211–14.

109. For the few texts dealing with fiery transformation in medieval Kabbalah (in the context of the Metatron myth), see Aya Tseelon, "Metatron in the Zohar" (M.A. thesis, Tel Aviv University, 1996), 103–5, 118–19, and the studies cited there.

110. Cited in Mordechai Pachter, "Joseph Karo's Magid Mesharim as a Book of Ethics," *Da'at* 21 (1988): 66. For Cordovero's use of a Biblical verse on fire as a concentrative device, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 194–95. On visualizing fiery letters as the primary device for concentrating on the Tetragrammaton, see Vital, *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol. 1, 38. For an interesting seventeenth-century discussion on transformation of the body of flesh to a body of light (albeit after death), by R. Yesha'ya Horowitz of Prague, see Jacob Elbaum, *Repentance and Self-Flagellation in the Writings of the Sages of Germany and Poland, 1348–1648* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), 182–85. On transformation in central European mystical thought at end of the sixteenth century, see Robert J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History, 1576–1612* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 201. The forthcoming doctoral dissertation of Yehudit Weiss will discuss the body of light in the sixteenth century.

111. Joseph Karo, *Maggid Mesharim* (Vilna, 1880), fol. 24b.

112. "*Ma'amar Ha-Yihud*," in Amnon Gross (ed.), *Nevu'at Ha-Yeled* (Tel Aviv, 2005), 162. Cf. the epistle on the secret of redemption (ibid., 86–87), on prophetic figures descending to the Chariot and moving in structures of fire. On chariot imagery in the writing of Ha-Levi, see Wolfson, "Yeridah La-Merkavah," 35 n 45, and see also 21 for the use of the terms "chair" and "dwelling place" (which are central in this text), in Heikhalot literature. Cf. Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 43–44, as well as James Tabor, *Things Unutterable: Paul's Ascent to Paradise in Its Greco-Roman, Judaic, and Early Christian Contexts* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1986), 73–76. It is interesting that Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 101, writes that many Tzaddiqim in the period of Luria shone "as sapphires."

113. "*Masoret Ha-Hokhma*," in Gross, *Nevu'at Ha-Yeled*, 180. On the angelology of Ha-Levi see the detailed discussion of Yoed Qadari, "The Dispute on Prayer to the Angels: R. Abraham Ha-Levi and the Kabbalists of Jerusalem" (M.A. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2008). On angelic transformation in early Jewish mysticism, see Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 43–44, 46–50; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 84–85 (see also 318); Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," 251.

114. See, e.g., Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 271, 283–84, 301–3; Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 197, 251–52, as well as Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 79–82 and the further sources cited there.

115. See Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 73–77, 82–85, 90–96, 100–5, 132–36, 218–20, 282–83.

116. A few examples of the persistence of this structure include Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha Ha-Shalem*, ed. Amnon Gross (Tel Aviv, 2005), especially 1:1–2, the eighteenth-century discussions by R. Moshe David Valle (some of which will be cited below), the foundational discussion in the Hasidic classic *Liqqutei Amarim (Tanya)* by R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady (especially pt. 1, chapters 1, 3, 8, 9, 19, 25), the discussions of the four elements as the source of spiritual illusions in Yisra'el of Bohupol, '*Ateret Yisra'el*, fol. 36b, the discourse on rectifying the four elements as a key to ascent in Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 62, the interesting psychological discussions in *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 2, par. 67, and R. Aharon of Zhitomir's *Toldot Aharon* (Beit Shemesh, Israel, 2008), 319, the nineteenth-century merger of scientific and Kabbalistic models in R. Pinchas Eliyahu's *Sefer Ha-Brit*, the very extensive and complex discussion in R. Ya'aqov Abuhatzeira's *Bigdei Srad* (Nahariya, Israel, 2001), 183–206, and the more contemporary psychological discourse in R. Shlomo Wolbe's twentieth-century Mussar work '*Alei Shur* (Be'er Ya'aqov, 1978), vol. 1, 146–47, 171–84.

117. See Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 59, 67, 73, 102–3, 161, 200, 206. On fire and air in the astral body, see Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 541 n 400.

118. Following Pedaya, the present discussion conflates spirit and air to some extent. Cf. James Hillman, "The Imagination of Air and the Collapse of Alchemy," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 50 (1981): 330, who argues for separating these concepts as part of his general opposition to the idea of "spirit."

119. David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World* (New York: Random House, 1996), 231.

120. See ibid., 236, 239–50; Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 41, 205.

121. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 234–49; Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 242–43.

122. As the author states explicitly, the recurrence of the phrase "literally" (*mamash*) in this text precludes reading it metaphorically. Rather, the stress is on the substantive and concrete nature of the entities and processes created by study.

123. *Derekh ʿEtz Hayyim*, printed as an introduction to numerous editions of *Mesilat Yesharim* and *Klach Pithei Hokhma*, and see Moshe Idel, *Absorbing Perfections: Kabbalah and Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 96–98; Garb, "Powers of Language in Kabbalah: Comparative Reflections," in *The Poetics of Grammar and the Metaphysics of Sound and Sign*, ed. Sergio de La Porta and David Shulman (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 244–54. On the question of the identity of the author, see Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 408 n 10. Suffice it to say here that in my view there is some historical, stylistic, and intertextual evidence to show that this multilayered text was not composed by Luzzatto himself. As the sentence structure suggests a writer thinking in Yiddish, it is plausible that it was composed by a member of the Eastern European circle of Luzzatto's student R. Yequtiel Gordon. On the tradition on souls and the Torah mentioned in the text, see Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 64–65; Moshe Idel, "Non-linguistic Infinities and Interpretation in Later Jewish Mysticism," *Jerusalem Review* (1997–98): 209–31.

124. The author is using the common pun that soul (*neshama*) equals breath (*neshima*).

125. This qualification also holds for the discussion of the fiery power of intellectual effort by Luzzatto's associate, R. Moshe David Valle, *Liqqutim*, ed. Joseph Spinner (Jerusalem, 1998), vol. 1, 14; on the soul and fire, see 98; on the psychic significance of air, see 102; and on the contagious effect of the spirit, which accounts for the transmission of prophecy to those proximate to the prophet, see his *Mamlekhet Kohanim*, ed. Joseph Spinner (Jerusalem, 2008), 23. For an autobiographical discussion of fire, see *Liqqutim*, vol. 2, 511–12. The key to interpreting these texts is that Valle refers to himself in these texts as the "winnower" (see Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 205 n 77) as well as by the rather shamanic image of the lion, which he associates with fire (see also Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 218, 242).

126. B ʿAvodah Zarah 19b.

127. Yehuda Aryeh Leib Alter, *Sefat Emet* (Shapira Center, Israel, 2000), vol. 5, 3, 4. On this figure, see the introduction to Arthur Green, *The Language of Truth: The Torah Commentary of the Sefat Emet, R. Yehudah Leib Alter of Ger* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1998). On nomian dimensions of the pneumatic experience, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 138.

128. Qalonymus Qalman Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh* (Jerusalem, 1992), vol. 1, 222–24; see also Moshe Idel, "Die Laut Gelesene Torah: Stimmengemeinschaft in der Jüdischen Mystik," in *Zwischen Rauschen und Offenbarung: Zur Kultur und Mediengeschichte der Stimme*, ed. Friedrich Kittler, Thomas Macho, and Sigrid Weigel (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 19–53; Garb, "Powers of Language," 242–43, 253–54 (where a parallel passage from *Maʾor Va-Shemesh* is discussed). The themes of heat, fire, and smoke are discussed in another branch of the school of the Seer of Lublin in a similar manner in the context of performance of yihudim. See Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fols. 134b–135a, where this experience is also related to self-annihilation (see also vol. 1, fol. 75a, and the discussion of receiving light and air from the Shekhina in fol. 90b).

129. *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 20. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 242–43; Idel, *Hasidism*, 188; Green, *Tormented Master*, 200–201. On Luzzatto's influence on Hasidism, see chapter 3. I do not know of a specific study on the possible influence of his circle on R. Nahman. It is significant that several of the texts that Idel employs to establish this hermeneutical approach are derived from the Ziditchov-Komarno school, which has a marked propensity towards shamanic experience. One such text

cited by him relates interpretation to the divestment of corporeality—a practice often related to ascent and trance.

130. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 318 n 99; cf. Eliezer Shore, "Letters of Desire: Language, Mysticism, and Sexuality in the Writings of Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2005), 263. See also Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," especially 52. For a tale of supernal fire descending in order to affirm that the sixteenth-century classic *Reshit Hokhma* was based on personal experience of the author, see Aryeh M. Rabinovitch, *Zekhuta De-Avraham* (Jerusalem, 1999), 29. Here we may find a model of interpretation as exposing the vitality of the text through investment of personal power by the reader. See also the texts cited in Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 208, 215–16, 219.

131. See Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, especially 21, as well as the discussion of treasure hermeneutics in Andreas Doctor, "The Tibetan Treasury Literature: A Study of the Revelations of the Visionary Master Mchog Gyur Bde Chen Glingpa (1829–1870)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Calgary, 2003). See also the popular but informative Tulku Thondup, *Hidden Teachings of Tibet: An Explanation of the Terma Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism* (Somerville, Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 1997).

132. Aharon Perlow of Apta, "'Oneg Shabbat," in *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim* (Jerusalem, 2008), 297, 299, 243, 227–28, 232, respectively. See also Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 162, on drawing in sweet divine light with each breath, and cf. Ron Wacks, *The Secret of Unity: Unifications in the Kabbalistic and Hasidic Thought of R. Hayyim ben Solomon Tyrer of Czernowitz* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2006), 48. On transformation into a pneumatic body in Paul, see Segal, *Life after Death*, 411.

133. Dan Ben-Amos and Jerome Mintz (eds. and trans) *In Praise of the Ba'al Shem Tov* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 83 (for the theme of trembling, which shall also be developed in chapter 5, cf. 51). On this tale, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 172, 363 n 3, as well as Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 41; Yoav Elstein, "The Mythical Element in the Hasidic Story as Establishing an Ecstatic Consciousness," *Eshel Beer Sheva* 4 (1996): 235–38.

134. See the parallel account cited by Idel, *Hasidism*, 173, which uses the term "lacking a soul" to describe the Maggid's reading.

135. Cf. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 182–204. See Abraham Segal, "According to the Way of Worship: 'Ateret Tzevi by R. Tzevi Hirsch of Ziditchov: A Hasidic-Lurianic Commentary on the Zohar" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2008), 148, for a Beshtian tradition on the need for divestment of materiality, which is often associated with trance, in order to reach the correct interpretation of the text.

136. On descent to the underworld in fantasy literature, see David Loy and Linda Goodhew, *The Dharma of Dragons and Daemons: Buddhist Themes in Modern Fantasy* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004), 101–44.

137. See, however, chapter 4, as well as Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 125, where one may find a general connection between *nefilat appayim* and the face burning (as can be perceived by the subtle of vision).

CHAPTER 3: EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TRANCE

1. On trance in New Age "channeling," see Smith, *The Self Possessed*, 95–109, who emphasizes the passive elements of trance in the contemporary West, as he compares it to spirit possession in South Asia. Cf. Garb, *The Chosen*, 111.

2. See, e.g., Peter Schäfer, *The Hidden and the Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism*, trans. Aubrey Pomerance (Albany: State University of New York

Press, 1992), 154, who establishes a contradiction between trance and actual out-of-body travel. Likewise, Janowitz, *Icons*, 66 (especially n 25), finds little evidence for trance in Jewish magical texts of Late Antiquity, as her discussion is based on a somewhat artificial distinction between internal trance states and actions possessing external efficacy. Compare also to David Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 384, who distinguishes between trance journeys and incantations on the basis of the notion that the purpose of the former is intelligible and that of the latter is not. See also Rowland and Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God*, 235, on repetitive chanting in Heikhalot literature as a "magical, apparently autohypnotic method of inducing trance." Such succinct statements cannot replace a sustained and technically informed discussion of trance.

3. Csordas, *Body/Meaning/Healing*, 81, 246, 253.

4. See Smith, *The Self Possessed*, 62, as well as Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 121. See also Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 49, 56–57 (cf. 79 on trance and fainting; see also 69, 92), as well as Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 523, who writes of the Besht's "fainting ecstasy"—a somewhat convoluted locution.

5. On "ecstatic trance," see Gershom Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1960), 18. For an updated discussion of the varied definitions of the term "ecstasy," see Moshe Idel, "On the Language of Ecstatic Experience in Jewish Mysticism," in *Religions: The Religious Experience*, ed. Matthias Riedel and Tilo Schabert (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2007), 43–84. Joseph Weiss, *Studies in Eastern European Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), especially 27–42, seems to have used the term "pneumatic" to describe phenomena that could much more profitably have been understood by using the term "trance."

6. See an early appearance of the term "ecstasies and transis" in a clearly European context in Ginsburg, *Ecstasies*, 100. This text shows that the conflation of ecstasy and trance also has antecedents. It is striking that the seventeenth-century description of Sabbatean mass prophecy penned by Paul Rycaut, the English consul to Izmir, describes falling into trance; see Matt Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), 107. Cf. Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999).

7. See, e.g., Hollenback, *Mysticism*; Paul Fenton, "The Head between the Knees," *Da'at* 32–33 (1994): 19. For a more accurate discussion, see Marjorie Schuman, "A Psychophysiological Model of Meditation and Altered States of Consciousness: A Critical Review," in *The Psychobiology of Consciousness*, ed. Julian M. Davidson and Richard J. Davidson (New York: Plenum Press, 1980), 371–78. See also the nuanced comments of Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 74.

8. See Jonathan Garb, "Trance Techniques in the Kabbalah of Jerusalem," *Pe'amim* 70 (1997): 55 n 38 and the sources cited there.

9. See Eliade, *Shamanism*, 6; Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 249; Gilbert Rouget, *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations between Music and Possession*, trans. Brunhilde Biebuyck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), especially 17–25, 288–91. This distinction is often repeated by scholars of the phenomenology and anthropology of Jewish mysticism, such as Pedaya (see, e.g., *Vision and Speech*, 74, 80, 147–51, 176), and in a more critical fashion, as a heuristic device, by Yoram Bilu, "Dybbuk and Maggid: Two Cultural Patterns of Altered Consciousness in Judaism," *AJS Review* 21/2 (1996):

341–66. See also Jeffrey H. Chajes, *Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Exorcists, and Early Modern Judaism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

10. For an extensive discussion of this text and its scholarly reverberations, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 74–79.

11. On the passive model of power see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 66–71, 224, 228, 259). Compare also to Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 39–41, 58, 73, 144, and see also the classic treatment of William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: New American Library, 1958), 362–63. On possession and modernity, see Foucault, *Abnormal*, 204–27 (the quote is from 214).

12. Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 115, 149. This is most evident in the ease with which many New Age mediums and "channellers" can put across their so-called trance states that are then accepted at face value by some researchers of the New Age, while an experienced observer can easily detect that these are often artificial and superficial, and similarly that alleged recollections of earlier incarnations are clear instances of false memory syndrome (unconscious or contrived).

13. See especially Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 45–46, 70, on ascent and trance. See also David Fox, "Mind-Body, Brain-Soul: Halakhic Explorations of Hypnotic Trance Phenomena," *Journal of Psychology and Judaism* 16/2 (1992): 97–107, who addresses the Halakhic context.

14. On Pedaya's mystical experiences, see the interview with her in *Hadarim* 15 (2003–2004), 169–70.

15. See Stephen Gilligan, *Therapeutic Trances: The Co-operation Principle in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy* (New York: Brunner Mazel, 1987), 40–46; Etzel Cardena, "'Just Floating in the Sky': A Comparison of Shamanic and Hypnotic Phenomenology," in *Sechstes Jahrbuch für Transkulturelle Medizin und Psychotherapie*, ed. Renaud van Quekelberghe and Dagmar Eigner (Berlin: VWB Verlag, 1996), 367–80.

16. See Erickson, *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, 360. For the use of voice in Ericksonian hypnosis, see especially Stanley Rosen, *My Voice Will Go with You: The Teaching Tales of Milton H. Erickson* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1982).

17. See, e.g., Julie Silverthorn and John Overdurf, *Dreaming Realities: A Spiritual System to Create Inner Alignment through Dreams* (Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing, 2000); Tad James and David Shepard, *Presenting Magically: Transforming Your Stage Presence with NLP* (Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing, 2001). Cf. Arnold Mindell, *Working with the Dreaming Body* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), and Wolinsky, *Trances People Live*, as well as the articles on hypnosis in pastoral work found in http://www.durbinhypnosis.com/hypnosisreligion.htm.

18. Thus, in the short discussion of shamanism and psychology in E. Jean Matteson Langdon, "Introduction: Shamanism and Anthropology," in *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America*, ed. E. Jean Matteson Langdon and Gerhard Baer (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992), 5–7, hypnotherapy is not mentioned at all.

19. See, however, the important comments of Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 53–54.

20. See also my discussion of Pedaya's positions in chapter 1.

21. See in the introduction and also 3:3 and 3:7, as well as the text adduced in Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 240. On the difference between these two states, see the canonic manual on Lurianic mystical technique edited by Hayyim Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Yihudim* (Jerusalem, 1970), chapter 2, fol. 2a.

22. See Ya'aqov M. Hillel (ed.), *New Writings of Hayyim Vital*. The editor, dean of the Ahavat Shalom Yeshiva and one of the major contemporary kabbalists, explains in his introduction that as this is an esoteric collection, he is not negating the decision

to censor Vital's work. In any case he writes that the fourth part is merely an anthological work, and that in practical terms, Vital only intended the first three parts as a manual. The full edition was published in 2005—Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha Ha-Shalem*, ed. Amnon Gross (Tel Aviv, 2005). On the Abulafian elements, see Moshe Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 132–33, 167, as well as Natan ben Sa'adyah Har'ar, *Le Porte della Giustizia: Sa'are Sedeq*, ed. Moshe Idel, trans. Maurizio Mottolese (Milan: Adelphi, 2001), 39, 338–39, 344. (In the latter book, Idel focused on the influence on Vital of Abulafia's student R. Nathan ben Sa'adyah Har'ar.)

23. As Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), shows at length, censorship often accompanies the proliferation of texts, rather than being merely a repressive force.

24. See at length in Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:3, where sins and negative traits are described as creating a barrier between the "intellectual soul" and the "source" of the ruah ha-qodesh. The procedure for removing this barrier is described in 3:4. See also chapter 6.

25. See Har'ar, *Le Porte Della Giustizia*, 287–307 (and especially 302–5 on Vital); Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 120–21. See also the early philosophical text by R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol cited but not analyzed in these terms in Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction," 53, which seems to contain an element of trance (and cf. 57). Moshe Idel, "'Adonay Sefatay Tiftah': Models of Understanding Prayer in Early Hasidism," *Kabbalah* 18 (2008): 16, also quotes a central and influential Halakhic source on divestment as ascent, found in the commentary of R. Yonah Gerondi on Alfasi, b Berakhot 25b, rendered here in a slightly different translation: "[when praying] one should think in one's heart that it is as if one is standing in heaven and remove from one's heart all of the delights of the world and pleasures of the body, as the ancients said: divest your body from your soul." Idel also noted a similar statement in a canonic fourteenth-century Halakhic code *Sefer Ha-Turim*, by R. Jacob Ben Asher (*Orah Hayyim*, par. 98), on divestment and prophecy (the latter text and its reverberations are briefly discussed from a different angle in Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 218). As the entire discussion here shows that divestment is closely linked to vision, in a mystical model that merges passive and active dimensions, I cannot agree with Pedaya's distinction between passive experiences of divestment and active experiences leading to vision ("Review of Rosman," 521). If this proposal is restricted to its immediate context—her attempt to separate the mysticism of the Besht from that of the Maggid of Mezeritch—that is one matter; however, as a general analysis it is questionable.

26. Hayyim Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:5. Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 51–52, offers a slightly different translation of parts of the two texts from the third section cited here; see also Raphael J. Z. Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1977), 69–71; Werblowsky, "The Safed Revival and Its Aftermath," in *Jewish Spirituality*, vol. 2, ed. Arthur Green (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 25–26; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 320–24. Cf. Vital's Lurianic work *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol. 2, 472, where divestment is described as an essential condition for performing yihudim without succumbing to danger (the context is that of *nefilat appayim*). On structured progression in trance experience, as indicated in our text by the term "from one root to another," see the important comments of Benny Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind: Charting the Phenomenology of the Ayahuasca Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 106.

27. Cf. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 42–44 (on ascent and Vital, see 93–94). One should note, en passant, that the text adduced by Idel seems to contain an interesting description of a trance inside a dream. On the prevalence of experiences of ascent of the soul in the sixteenth century, see Wolfson, "Weeping, Death."

28. On visualization in *Sha'arei Qedusha*, see Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 110. For a Jungian reading of sixteenth-century alchemical texts as containing techniques of active imagination, see Marie-Louise von Franz, *Alchemical Active Imagination* (Boston: Shambala, 1997). On imagination in Lurianic Kabbalah, see Ronit Meroz, "Aspects of the Lurianic Theory of Prophecy" (M.A. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1980), 15–16. See also Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 62 n 45.

29. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:6. On the place of the Ein Sof in Lurianic theurgy, see Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 60 n 112, 161–97.

30. Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 120–22.

31. For the clear parallel between of the theory of individuation of the image found here and the Sufi models discussed so vividly by Henry Corbin, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 62–63, 108; see also Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 239, as well as Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 53–54. I interpret the imaginal realm as a construction effected by the state of consciousness affected by trance, which moves the practitioner beyond the abstract/concrete differentiation characteristic of normal consciousness. Cf. Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 265–68.

32. For this critique, see Moshe Idel, *R. Joseph Karo* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, forthcoming).

33. For the earlier history of the model, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 166–73, and cf. Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 122, for a specific discussion of Vital, as well as Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 266. See, however, Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 98, who maintains that in the experience of Yitzhaq Luria himself, there is no clear preference for visual or auditory experience, nor is there a clear distinction between them.

34. Here I am using technical hypnotic terminology; see John Grinder and Richard Bandler, *The Structure of Magic* (Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, 1976), vol. 2, 6–26; Grinder and Bandler, *Trance-Formations*, 44–49. See also Robert Dilts and Judith DeLozier (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Systemic Neuro-linguistic Programming and NLP New Coding* (Scotts Valley, California: NLP University Press, 2000), s.v. "reference system." In general, this literature distinguishes between the system used for the entry strategy employed in the process itself and the exit strategy at its end. Thus, in the texts discussed here, the entry is usually through the kinesthetic system (fist or eye closure, body posture, etc.), but once one goes beyond this system and into a state of sensory withdrawal, the core experience is visual and sometimes auditory or kinesthetic. As we shall see, the exit strategy also varies.

35. Cf. Wolfson, "Kenotic Overflow," 147, on concretization in Abulafia's writings.

36. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:7. See also Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, 77–79, as well as the interesting discussion of Harold Bloom, *Omens of the Millennium: The Gnosis of Angles, Dreams, and Resurrection* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), 86–90.

37. Hollenback, *Mysticism*, 246. However, as I have noted elsewhere (Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 291), Hollenback tends to exclusively focus on visual experiences, and the texts surveyed here point at a more varied set of experiential options.

38. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:5; cf. Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Yihudim*, chapter 2, fols. 2a–b.

39. This text is copied in several of Vital's works: see, e.g., *Shaʿar Ha-Yihudim*, fol. 15b. and *Pri ʿEtz Hayyim*, fol. 83b. It is discussed in Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 198–99 (on becoming a throne, see 175, as well as the discussion by the senior contemporary Sephardic kabbalist, R. Yaʿaqov M. Hillel, in *Ahavat Shalom*, 284, 286). For a discussion of the Sephardic reception of this text, see Giller, *Shalom Sharʿabi*, 43–45. For the linguistic techniques found here, see Lawrence Fine, "The Contemplative Practice of Yihudim in Lurianic Kabbalah," in *Jewish Spirituality*, vol. 2, ed. Arthur Green (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 83–85. For a rather similar imaginal transformation of the body into a chariot in the circle of Luzzatto, see Valle, *Mamlekhet Kohanim*, 358. For another discussion of becoming a dwelling place and chair for the chariot, see the text by R. Avraham Ha-Levi, of sixteenth-century Jerusalem, discussed in chapter 2.

40. For a text by a prominent contemporary kabbalist in Jerusalem that foregrounds the transformation of the senses, see Yitzhaq Meʾir Morgenstern, *Yam Ha-Hokhma* (Jerusalem, 2006), 265–66. Thus, the themes found in these texts are far from archival, and continue to reverberate in current Kabbalistic practice.

41. A yihud designed for this purpose is described in Vital, *Shaʿar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol. 2, 500, and see vol. 1, 3–5, for similar formulations found in Vital's theory of prophecy. On possessive experiences in Lurianic Kabbalah, see Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 275 n 382, and Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 223–25 and the additional sources cited there. For the purpose of our discussion in chapter 6, it is worth noting that this experience is supposed to occur during prayer.

42. Bahya Ibn Paquda, *The Duties of the Heart*, trans. M. Hyamson (Jerusalem and New York: Feldheim Publishers, 1978), vol. 2, 217. On the Sufi text, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 43, 133, 144, 277.

43. Vital, *Shaʿarei Qedusha*, 3:8. The reference to words emanating from the spirit towards the end of the text parallels the discussions of the descent of the spirit as a form of automatic speech, as adduced above. The possibility of a revelation containing lowly words is part of the issue of discernment of spirits, which shall be discussed below. Methodologically speaking, such mentions of the term spirit somewhat justify the use of the term pneumatic.

44. See Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 134–36. On concentration as an emphasis of Safedian Kabbalah, see 126–40. On eye closure and trance, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 79. On the centrality of concentration in mystical technique and experience, see Hollenback, *Mysticism*; see, however, Jonathan Garb, "Paths of Power," *Journal of Religion* 78 (1998): 598.

45. See Lawrence Fine, "Recitation of Mishnah as a Vehicle for Mystical Inspiration: A Contemplative Technique Taught by Hayyim Vital," *Revue des études juives* 141 (1982): 183–99. For the hypnotic terms, see Dilts and DeLozier, *Encyclopedia of Systemic NLP*, s. v. "disassociation." For disassociation in shamanic healing in Morocco, see Crapanzano, *The Hamdasha,* 221. See also the important comment of Farber-Ginat, "Studies in Shiʿur Qomah," 370 n 47, according to which even in the "out of body experiences" recorded in the Heikhalot literature, there are bodily sensations and perceptions, so that in his own experience the mystic is physically present (in an "associated" manner) with all his senses, in the higher world. This is her interpretation of II Corinthians 12:4. On Paul and the Heikhalot literature, see Rowland and Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God*, 379–498; Segal, "Paul and the Beginning of

Jewish Mysticism"; and Tabor, *Things Unutterable*, especially 117–23. On Paul's falling into a trance, see Acts 22:17, and cf. 10:10 and 11:5.

46. For the role of repetition in Western hypnosis, see Erickson, *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, 183.

47. This parallel text is adduced in Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 46.

48. Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 92–94, 99–104. As this chapter of Shanon's book opens with a quote from Abulafia, the parallel with Kabbalistic texts has obviously already occurred to Shanon.

49. In order not to confuse my terminology with Shanon's, I wish to stress that "passive" here is in the sense of effort rather than that of movement and interaction.

50. On out-of-body travel (especially ascent) and trance, see Couliano, *Out of This World*, 44, 132; Rowland and Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God*, 411–14; and Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 81, as well as the statement by Safrin cited in Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 152. Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 317 n 110, writes that the states described in Lurianic texts on practice are not autohypnotic; however, he does not consider the term "trance," which is more relevant than the entirely Western term "hypnosis," and this choice somewhat confuses the issue. Cf. Moshe Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, trans. Jonathan Chipman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 39–40.

51. Vital, *Sh'arei Qedusha Ha-Shalem*, 4, 2. See also Meroz, "Aspects of the Lurianic Theory," 57–61.

52. See, e.g., Grinder and Bandler, *Trance-Formations*, 80–83. It is important to note that Morris Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies: Book of Visions and Book of Secrets* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 87–88, has translated *Sefer Ha-Hezyonot* 2, 11, as follows: "I fell into a trance." On the use of acceleration and speed in shamanic trance, see Rouget, *Music and Trance*, 128; Jonathan D. Hill, "A Musical Aesthetic of Ritual Curing," in *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America*, ed. E. Jean Matteson Langdon and Gerhard Baer (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992), 175–210.

53. Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 78–79.

54. See also idid., 123.

55. Ibid., 79–80.

56. Cf. the similar vision of Safrin's recorded in ibid., 285. For visions of animal forms, see 289. For Vital's visions of fire in a state of sensory withdrawal, albeit induced by an illness, see 50–51.

57. Ibid., 80–81.

58. Vital may have compensated for this rivalry by preparing medications for Karo in another dream, whose meaning he himself did not understand (ibid., 104).

59. Shanon, *The Antipodes of the Mind*, 223.

60. Idel's idea of the short trigger for mystical experiences, which he formulated in the Hasidic context ("Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 76) can be better understood in terms of hypnotic triggers, or anchors as they are sometimes termed in the professional literature.

61. For an updated overview of sixteenth-century Kabbalah, see Jonathan Garb, "Sixteenth Century," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kabbalah*, ed. Elliot R. Wolfson (forthcoming). Daniel Abrams, *Lurianic Kabbalah: Collected Studies by Gershom Scholem* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2008), is a valuable resource for the history of scholarship.

62. Among these is the text from the kabbalists of Gerona mentioned above, which circulated quite widely in the sixteenth century. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 295–97,

has emphasized the role of the visualizing imagination in this text. For the influence of *Sha'arei Tzedeq*, from the school of Abulafia, in the sixteenth century, see Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 127; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 54. More generally speaking, Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction," provides excellent resources for the study of the theory of mystical states in medieval Judaism. On medieval philosophical treatments of trance, see Garb, "Trance Techniques," 61, and the studies cited there.

63. For Ibn Sayyah, see Gerrit Bos, "'Hayyim Vital's Practical Kabbalah': A 17th Century Book of Secrets," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 4/1 (1995): 67; cf. Ibn Sayyah's supercommentary on the prayerbook, MS. Jerusalem 1446, fol. 66b. For Albotini, see Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 95; Har'ar, *Le Porte della Giustizia*, 306, where the common sources in the Abulafian school are discussed. On Albotini and Vital, see also Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 477 n 62.

64. Yehuda Albotini, *Sulam Ha-'Aliyah* (Jerusalem, 1989), 75 (cf. 71). Like the fourth part of *Sha'arei Qedusha*, this work was only published recently, although the texts discussed here were printed already by Gershom Scholem, *Kitvei Yad Be-Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1930). For a later text by seventeenth-century R. Avraham Azulai, which appears to synthesize the terminology of these two writers (including the use of the term *sulam*), see the introduction to *Kenaf Renanim*, 3. On Lurianic prophetic discourse in the context of ascent, see Wolfson, "Weeping, Death," 237 n 23.

65. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 62, 317 (cf. 65); Wolfson, "Weeping, Death," 231–33; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 52, 70 n 104; Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction," 259; see also Wolfson, "Suffering Eros and Textual Incarnation: A Kristevan Reading of Kabbalistic Poetics," in *Towards a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline*, ed. Virginia Burrus and Catherine Keller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 355. It is surprising that none of these studies mentions Hans Vaihinger's *Die Philosophie des Als Ob* (The Philosophy of "As if"'), which centers on this mode. One should note that Vaihinger's work has inspired some practitioners of hypnosis, as in the NLP school. For an extensive discussion of the phenomenology and semiotics of the visionary imagination, see Csordas, *The Sacred Self*, 85–106, 147–48.

66. See also Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 74 n 92. From a philological standpoint, it should be noted that this text seems to comprise two overlapping, but distinct layers: Most of *Sulam Ha-'Aliyah*, 73, describes a process of ascent culminating with entry into the divine realm. On 73–74, Albotini describes a similar process, designed for obtaining a response to a question in a waking state. This second itinerary largely overlaps with the first, and concludes with the same state, with the addition of the exit procedure. On incubation and shamanism, see Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 110–15.

67. Albotini, *Sulam Ha-'Aliya*, 73. See also Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 522, on this technique; cf. Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 83, 88–89, and especially 83 on the context of trance.

68. For a comparison between these Christian phenomena and Sabbatean prophetic experiences, see Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 111. For a general discussion of this phenomenon, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 81. See also Foucault, *Abnormal*, 213–27, on the political history of the "convulsive flesh"; cf. Robert Kreiser, *Convulsions, Miracles, and Ecclesiastical Politics in Early Eighteenth-century Paris* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978). The latter discussions represent an

important move in the direction of placing these phenomena in the context of modernization. More broadly, this phenomenon can be compared to some applications of the Japanese method of "Sotai," developed by Keizo Hashimoto (1897–1993), and the Javanese "Subud" method, developed by Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo (1901–87). Extensive literature belonging to this movement is available on-line at http://www.subud.net/booksonline.shtml).

69. Albotini, *Sulam Ha-'Aliya*, 74; cf. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:8. The corpse-like state is captured by the Yogic term *savasana*. Cf. Couliano, *Out of This World*, 43; Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 91; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 36. It should be noted that Midrash Bereshit Rabba, 44:19, uses the term "sleep of prophecy."

70. Cf. Ibn Sayyah, *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fols. 167a, 175b. Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 341 n 116, proposes that Safedian kabbalists usually performed ascent in dreams, while those of Jerusalem opted for waking ascents. In our case, Albotini's waking ascent clearly influenced a similar procedure in the practice of the Safedian kabbalist Vital, who takes care to distinguish it from a dream state, although at one point he does note that there is some overlap between the two states (*Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:6; cf. 4, 1). Although Pedaya's distinction may be valid for some texts, her separation between Jerusalem and Safed seems overly sharp, and indeed Wolfson ("Weeping, Death") has emphasized the overlap of sleeping and waking ascents (see also Bilu, "Dybbuk and Maggid," 358: "the dreaming and waking states are so often confounded in mystical experiences"). In *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fol. 175b, Ibn Sayyah also writes of "dreams and visions" in an equivalent manner (see also Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 182 n 52; 192). A prominent sixteenth-century kabbalist, R. Shlomo Molkho, in his *Hayat Qanah* (Jerusalem, 1984), 6–7, also differentiates between visions in a state of *tardema* or waking trance, and dream visions. So does another central figure from this period, R. Meir Ibn Gabbai (*'Avodat Ha-Qodesh*, 4, 27), who describes reflection (*hirhur*) and concentration (*hitbodedut*) on questions, followed by prophetic dreams that supply answers to these questions. The preparatory concentration is described in terms of ascent of the soul and divestment of corporeality.

71. For the Abulafian sources for this description, see Idel, *The Mystical Experience*, 76–77. The term desire (*heshek*) that Albotini mentions in the context of the kinesthetic entry procedure also has an erotic connotation. For a "trance-like state" in Abulafia, see Elliot Wolfson, "Kenotic Overflow and Temporal Transcendence, Angelic Embodiment, and the Alterity of Time in Abraham Abulafia," *Kabbalah* 18 (2008): 168. On "blending of senses" in shamanic trance in Nepal, see William Stabelein, "Mahakala the Neo-Shaman: Master of the Ritual," in *Spirit Possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, ed. John T. Hitchcock and Rex L. Jones (Warminster: Aris Phillips, 1976), 365.

72. Albotini, *Sulam Ha-'Aliyah*, 74; cf. 73. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 306 n 62 and Idel, *The Mystical Experience*, 129. This description can be profitably compared to the hypnotic term "deep trance identification" (DTI). See Grinder and Bandler, *Trance-Formations*, 185–89; Julie Silverthorn and John Overdurf, *Training Trances: Multi-level Communication in Therapy and Training* (Portland, Oregon: Metamorphous Press, 1995), 118–22. For identity change as psychic reorganization in Moroccan trance, see Crapanzano, *The Hamdasha*, 219–22.

73. In his request to explicitly mention the Ineffable Name, an Abulafian practice (see Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 185–86) frowned on by Ibn Sayyah (see Garb, "Trance Techniques," 64–65).

74. Albotini, *Sulam Ha-ʿAliyah*, 75. On power in *Sulam Ha-ʿAliyah*, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 199.

75. On the danger of nonreturn in shamanic trance, see Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 242; Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 139; Marjorie Balzer, "The Poetry of Shamanism," in *Shamanism: A Reader*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Routledge, 2003), 317.

76. Albotini, *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya*, 74. For the option of mystical death mentioned here, see b Hagigah 14b; Idel, *The Mystical Experience*, 180–84; Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, especially 34–38, 41–43, and see 44 for a comparison to Vital's text. For comments more specifically pertinent to the issue of trance, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 87. For a discussion of oaths as an exit strategy in shamanic trance, from the Heikhalot literature to Hasidism, see Pedaya, "The Baʿal Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 328–29. See also the Hasidic source adduced in Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 154. For an overview of entry rites and exit rites in Hasidism, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 127–33, as well as Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 20 and the additional studies cited there. For a phenomenological parallel between a Hasidic text and our own, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 131.

77. For parallels in hypnotic literature, cf. Silverthorn and Overdurf, *Training Trances*, 118, 122, on post-trance reintegration, which is especially necessary in cases of deep trance identification. See also Dilts and DeLozier, *The Encyclopedia of Systemic NLP*, s.v. "T.O.T.E. model." For an interesting phenomenological-sociological discussion of entry into and exit from trance and in an interactive mode, see Zali Gurevitch, "The Possibility of Conversation," *Sociological Quarterly* 36/1 (1995): 97–110. In Albotini's description, pleasant smells are also used to create an atmosphere conducive to trance prior to commencing the process. The olfactory element in Jewish mystical discourse, which is often linked to discussions of the power of the Messiah, has not been studied. It appears to be particularly developed in the Hasidic world. See, e.g., Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 346, who writes that he whom God been granted understanding and knowledge and whose eyes have been opened can smell the scent of paradise and all kinds of spices when visiting the Tzaddiqim of the generation, while even those who cannot do so are unconsciously affected and the root of their soul smells the worship of the Tzaddiq.

78. Cf. Vital's emphasis on repetition, as cited above, which has a more nomian and less technical flavor.

79. The Abulafian tradition was mediated for Albotini by writers such as R. Nathan Ben Saʿadyah Harʾar (see Harʾar, *Le Porte Della Giustizia*, 37) and R. Issac of Acre (Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 96, 122–23).

80. See Albotini, *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya*, 71–72. On Albotini and Vital's incorporation of nomian-Halakhic elements in their reworking of Abulafian traditions, see Harʾar, *Le Porte Della Giustizia*, 151–53, 163. One should note in this context that Ibn Sayyah, who was a known Halakhic authority, writes of ethical preconditions, such as purity and humility, for the reception of showing and visions (*mareh ve-hezyonot*; *Even ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fol. 175b). Even the term "exiting from a domain," employed by Albotini, betrays his immersion in Halakhic terminology (in this case the Sabbath laws). As I have suggested elsewhere (Garb, "Trance Techniques," 56), the extensive preparations described by Albotini prior to the description of the techniques themselves (*Sulam Ha-ʿAliya*, 71–73) are not merely of an "ethical" nature (as claimed by Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 310), but also involve establishing repeatable conditions and environment that then serve as an anchor to induce trance: i.e., each time the practitioner returns to these conditions, trance will be

reinduced, a method especially useful for repeated induction, as explicitly stated by Albotini.

81. In addition, both our writers incorporate a mild magical element: Albotini writes of one's will being fulfilled once one enters the divine domain (see m Avot 2:4 and Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 38), although he stresses (*Sulam Ha-ʿAliya*, 75) that the "question" should be of a spiritual nature, rather than pertaining to bodily concerns. He also wrote earlier on 70 that even previous (and thus sacrosanct) generations, who had greater freedom in choosing magical applications (see also 75), reserved them for dire necessity. See, however, Idel, *Hasidism*, 99, who gives greater scope to the magical element in *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya* (see also Harʾar, *Le Porte Della Giustizia*, 112). As we have seen, Vital legitimates receiving one's personal portion as a side-effect of the process. However, he also stresses (*Shaʿarei Qedusha*, 3:5), that one can draw down influx only from an aspect that one has theurgically rectified (cf. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 57). For various positions on this issue in sixteenth-century Kabbalah, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 217, 236–37, 247.

82. Idel, *Hasidism*, 225.

83. He was also in Damascus for a short period. For a summary of sources and scholarship on his life and activity, see Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 261–66, as well as various discussions in Qadari, "The Dispute on Prayer to the Angels."

84. On R. David (and mandalas), see Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 104–11. For Ibn Sayyah's influence on sixteenth-century Kabbalah, see Moshe Idel, "Kabbalistic Prayer and Colors," in *Approaches to Judaism in Medieval Times*, ed. David Blumenthal, vol. 3 (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988), 19. For a general discussion of Ibn Sayyah's numerous sources, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 190. On Sayyah and R. David, see 188 n 31 as well as Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 295–96. The latter connection will be greatly developed in the forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation of my student Ms. Sachi Ogimoto.

85. At the end of Ibn Sayyah's discussion of techniques, he promises to divulge further details orally to his correspondent and sponsor, R. Avraham Castro (on this relationship see Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 261 and the sources adduced there). In other words, the written and exoteric communication is but part of a more extensive discourse. In the text itself, Ibn Sayyah clearly places the procedures that he describes within the framework of classical Talmudic esotericism by alluding to both the Deed of the Chariot and the Pardes. These locations in praise of esotericism and orality join numerous similar pronouncements in Ibn Sayyah's corpus (see *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fols. 17b, 28b, 33b, 42b, 121b, 140b; *Zror Ha-Hayyim*, London-Montefiore MS. 318, fols. 2a–3a; *Zror Ha-Hayyim*, New York-Lehman MS. 131, fols. 7a, 13a, 131a; *Sheʾerit Yosef*, Warsaw-Zydowski Instytut MS. 229, fols. 140b, 158b, 161b). Albotini's discourse is also not devoid of esotericism and orality, although these seem to be less crucial for him than for Ibn Sayyah— see *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya*, 75–76. For a more extensive discussion of this issue, see Garb, "Trance Techniques," 58–60.

86. It is interesting that this phrase appears in a negative context in Isaiah 58:5.

87. Ibn Sayyah, *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fols. 1a–2a. For a more detailed discussion, see Garb, "Trance Techniques." The term path (which is also found in the discussion of ascent in *Even Ha-Soham*, fols. 177a–178a) appears to be a *terminus technicus* in Ibn Sayyah's writings, and is in turn part of his imaginal geography. See, e.g., *Even Ha-Soham*, fol. 45a, on "the secret of the paths," as well as fol. 26a;

She'erit Yosef, Warsaw-Zydowski Instytut MS. 229, fols. 44b, 57b; *Commentary on the Prayers*, Jerusalem MS. 1446, fol. 53b.

88. The later phrase hints to the description of the prophecy of Moses in Numbers 12:8. The term *mar'ot* likewise serves as a pun, hinting at the Talmudic distinction (b Yevamot 49b; cf. b Sanhedrin 97b) between the prophecy of Moses, through a shining glass, and that of other prophets. Needless to say, this is a very exalted pedigree.

89. For ascent, cf. *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fols. 177a–178a, as well as *She'erit Yosef*, Warsaw-Zydowski Instytut MS 229, fol. 168a. See the discussion of this text in Aryeh Kaplan, *Meditation and the Bible* (York Beach, Maine: S. Weiser, 1988), 72. Kaplan's analysis is an example of the widespread conflation of trance and meditation.

90. In b Sukka 26a, this posture is mentioned as facilitating a state of semi-sleep. For Heikhalot literature, see Scholem, *Major Trends*, 49–50. See also Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, 155, who writes that the Heikhalot practitioner employing this posture "at most falls into a trance," as well as Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 54, and Idel, *Ben*, 153 and the sources adduced there. On Ibn Sayyah's architectural model, which may be derived from the Heikhalot literature among other sources, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 189–90. For medieval Islamic and Jewish parallels, see Fenton, "Head between the Knees," 19; Gitit Holzman, "A Theory of the Intellect and Soul in the Thought of Rabbi Moshe Narboni Based on His Commentaries on the Writings of Ibn Rushd, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Bajja, and Al-Ghazali" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1996), 312–13. On induction of trance through postures, see the pioneering empirical research of Felicitas Goodman, *Where the Spirits Ride the Winds: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); Goodman, *Ecstasy, Ritual, and Alternate Reality: Religion in a Pluralistic World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), as well as the work of her student, Belinda Gore, *Ecstatic Body Postures: An Alternate Reality Workbook* (Santa Fe: Bear & Company, 1995). For postures resembling the one described by Ibn Sayyah, see 69, 248. What is interesting in this research is the claim that diverse subjects, of different backgrounds, experience similar visions or trance states when assuming a certain posture.

91. Cf. the discussions of trance and postures in Heikhalot literature and Hasidism in Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 73–74; Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 87–88.

92. The phrase "his hands may be firm" (*yadav emunah*) hints to Exodus 12:2, and again to Moses. The early sages are the heroes of the Pardes narrative in b Hagigah 14b; cf. Albotini's reference to the case of Ben 'Azzai.

93. See Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 825 n 62; see also Jonathan Garb, "Fear and Power in Renaissance Mediterranean Kabbalah," in *Fear and Its Representations: Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Anne Scott and Cynthia Kosso (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 146–48.

94. For traditions that Ibn Sayyah quotes in the name of his own teacher, see Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Yosef Ibn Sayyah," 263, 285 n 188; Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 188, as well as *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fol. 86b.

95. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 297, Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 145.

96. *Zror Ha-Hayyim*, London-Montefiore MS. 318, fol. 55a, and see the more extensive discussion in Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 273–74.

97. Garb, "Trance Techniques"; cf. Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 195 n 77, 199, for further parallels between the two kabbalists. One can also add that in his *Commentary on the Prayers* (Jerusalem MS. 1446, fol. 62a), Ibn Sayyah discusses the cleaving

(devequt) of thought, in a manner similar to Albotini's discussion in the chapter of *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya* analyzed here (cf. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 46–49, which may point at shared early sources). However, in Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 264–65, I significantly qualified the claim that these two figures, in and of themselves, can be described as part of a circle in light of Ibn Sayyah's greater mobility and the substantial differences between them.

98. This being said, Vital is closer to Ibn Sayyah in requiring close guidance of a teacher, as exhibited throughout his writings, and especially in the autobiographical *Sefer Ha-Hezyonot*. Yet while for Ibn Sayyah the teacher may be dispensed with quite rapidly, Vital's mystical practice established a far more profound dependence (see Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 285, 288, 347). If indeed Vital was influenced by Ibn Sayyah's writings, then one could say that while Ibn Sayyah radicalized the meditative practice of R. David ben Yehudah He-Hasid by introducing more magical and shamanic elements, Vital reversed this process both by opposing magical applications, at least in his published works and by emphasizing ethical theurgy rather than the shamanic ecstasy of Ibn Sayyah.

99. Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 261, 266–67, 304–6. As Moshe Idel, *Golem: Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 151–53 has shown, Ibn Sayyah's theories obviously influenced another important student of R. Yitzhaq Luria, R. Yisra'el Sarug. For Ibn Sayyah's possible influence on R. Moshe Cordovero in matters of concentrative technique, utilizing meditation on a verse on fire, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 194–97. For Ibn Sayyah's influence on Halakhic-Kabbalistic formulations of R. Joseph Karo, a central Safedian figure who recorded possessive trance experiences, see ibid., 198.

100. See, e.g., R. Y. Y. Safrin, *Ketem Ophir*, on Esther 4:13 (unpaginated commentary printed after *Heikhal Ha-Brakha* [Lemberg, 1866], vol. 2). The "Shaʿar Ha-Qedusha" referred to in this text is obviously a corrupt rendition of Vital's *Shaʿarei Qedusha*.

101. See Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 263, and Qadari, "The Dispute on Prayer to the Angels," 118–30.

102. As we have seen, Vital's entire context is that of the attainment of prophecy. Albotini's introduction to his *Sulam Ha-ʿAliya* (19) defines the summit of the ladder as "ruah ha-qodesh and the levels of prophecy." Ibn Sayyah is typically more reticent on this point, but the hints alluding to Moses give him away somewhat.

103. Moshe Cordovero, *Or Yakar*, vol. 4, 158–59. Here and throughout, Cordovero seems to rely heavily a discussion by his teacher-colleague R. Shlomo Alqabetz. For the latter's views on prophecy, see Bracha Sack, "The Mystical Theology of Solomon Alkabez" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1977), 122–33. For the possibility of prophecy without preparation, see ibid., 127. Sack has extensively discussed Alqabetz's earlier sources.

104. On madness in Jewish mysticism, see Zvi Mark, *Mysticism and Madness: The Religious Thought of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav*, trans Y. D. Shulman (London: Continuum, 2009), and Jonathan Garb, "Review of Zvi Mark: Divine Madness," *Eretz Acheret* 34 (2006): 84–86, which emphasizes the shamanic connection; Elqayam, "The Horizon of Reason." For a more general discussion of madness and modern mysticism see de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 32, 39–43.

105. On ascent and descent in Cordovero's theory, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 68–71, 87, 160, 165, 216 ; Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 208–9, 215–17. I have shown there (209)

that for Cordovero the Heikhalot architectonic structure is relevant for descent as well as ascent. See also Ibn Gabbai's *'Avodat Ha-Qodesh* (4:27) for a distinction between the passive descent of prophecy in dreams and the active ascent to the Heikhalot in visions.

106. B. O. Vuckovic, *Heavenly Journeys, Earthly Concerns: The Legacy of the Mir'aj in the Formation of Islam* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 127.

107. Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 392–93.

108. See Idel, *Absorbing Perfections*, 251–52, 416.

109. On Albotini and the Heikhalot literature, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 74 n 92. On Sufism and Albotini, see Scholem, *Kitvei Yad*, 226 n 2. For Sufism and Ibn Sayyah see the comments of Scholem in "A Note on a Kabbalistical Treatise on Contemplation," in *Mélanges offerts à Henri Corbin*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University), 667; Fenton, "Head between the Knees," 27 n 29. For Vital and Sufism, see Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 51–52; Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 210, as well as my comment above. On Safed generally, see Paul Fenton, "Sufi Influences on Safedian Kabbalah," *Mahanayim* 6 (1994): 170–79.

110. See Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*; Rachel Elior, "Joseph Karo and R. Israel Ba'al Shem Tov: Mystical Metamorphosis, Kabbalistic Inspiration, Spiritual Internalization," *Studies in Spirituality* 17 (2007): 267–319; Mor Altshuler, "Prophecy and Maggidism in the Life and Writings of R. Joseph Karo," *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 33 (2006): 81–110; Idel, *R. Joseph Karo*. See also the comments in this chapter on other figures who reflect Byzantine views, such as Molkho and Ibn Gabbai.

111. For the cultural and geographical scope of these experiences, see Zofia Ameisenowa, "Animal-Headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints, and Righteous Men," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 12 (1949): 21–45; Couliano, *Out of This World*, 65, 129–31; Terrence Duquence, *Jackal at the Shaman's Gate: A Study of Anubis Lord of Re-Setawe, with the Conjuration to Cthonic Deities* (London: Darengo, 1991). See also Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 100, 139, for numerous descriptions of leaving the body in trance in animal form in European shamanism.

112. Mircea Eliade and Ian Couliano, *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), vol. 1, 291; Couliano, *Out of This World*, 65. See also Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 20, which also betrays a certain inclination towards symbolic analysis (cf. 441, 542, on transforming into an animal as union or identification). It is instructive to compare these readings to Scholem's symbolic reading of numerous Kabbalistic texts (see Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 209, for a recent critique). On Scholem and Eliade, see Wasserstrom, *Religion after Religion*, especially 60, 163–64. For a theoretical position similar to my own, see James Hillman, "The Animal Kingdom in the Human Dream," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 51 (1982): 290, 314, 321. See also Joan Halifax, *Shamanic Voices: A Survey of Visionary Narratives* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980), 16.

113. Compare Eliade, *Shamanism*, 64, 94, and Goodman, *Where the Spirits Ride the Winds*, 135, 140, to Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 70–73, 227–29, and Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 108.

114. The most theoretically sophisticated discussion devoted to Luzzatto is Wolfson, "Tiqqun ha-Shekhinah," which focuses on the issue of gender. See also the innovative analysis of various texts written by this kabbalist, inspired by the gender-oriented method initiated by Wolfson, in Abrams, *The Female Body of God*, 52–53, 120–21.

115. Mark, "Dybbuk and Devekut," 286–87. Cf. the different position of Bilu, "Dybbuk and Maggid," 354–64. See also Yoram Bilu, *The Saints Impresarios: Dreamers, Healers, and Holy Men in Israel's Urban Periphery* (Haifa: Haifa University Press, 2005), 268, who brings support for the prevalent cross-cultural finding that women tend to experience possessive trance, while men experience nonpossessive trance. Again, in the Jewish mystical tradition we find numerous cases of male possessive trance, such as those of Nathan Ben Sa'adyah, Luzzatto etc. See also Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 63, who describes Nathan of Gaza's experience in terms of positive possession. For an extremely clumsy and inaccurate attempt to explain Luzzatto's experience in terms of channeling and similar so-called paranormal parallels, see Yehudit Ronen, "Ramhal and Parapsychology," *Da'at* 40 (1998): 153–75. Based on very limited textual foundation, Ronen falls into the error of reading completely standard theoretical Kabbalistic texts as experiential (e.g., 166).

116. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter15, 50–51. Luzzatto maintained an intense state of concentration: in this letter, he writes that he merited the revelation by performing a yihud every fifteen minutes. I feel that such texts can justify the description of the yihud technique as a shamanistic rite in Pinchas Giller, *Reading the Zohar: The Sacred Text of the Kabbalah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 101. This might be simpler than describing this technique as Tishby did (*Messianic Mysticism*, 59) in terms that presage Idel's mystico-magical model, though of course one should not generalize to every use of this multifaceted technique. Apparently only Luzzatto, and not his students, could hear this voice (see Yequtiel Gordon's description in *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 6, 22). In other words this is an internal auditory phenomenon. The salience of the auditory dimension is reinforced by one of the names of the maggid—Shmui'el (hearing God). See, e.g., *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 30, 84. Cf. the twentieth-century discussion in David Kohen, *Qol Ha-Nevu'ah* (Jerusalem, 2002), 314, and see Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum*, 434, for a description of the shaman as a master of sound.

117. For a description of one of Luzzatto's revelations as occurring in a dream, see the testimony of one of his students recorded in a manuscript by the eighteenth-century Sephardic kabbalist R. Hayyim David Azulai, adduced in Mordekhai Chriqui, *Or Ha-Ganuz* (Jerusalem: Makhon Ramhal, 1998), 108. Cf. Bilu, "Dybbuk and Maggid," 359, who emphasized the salience of the auditory dimension in Luzzatto's experiences.

118. Already in midrashic sources, the dream state is related to the soul losing its chains, leaving the body during sleep and taking flight. In other words the dream is seen as a form of ascent of the soul (see Midrash Tehilim, 11; Midrash Bereshit Rabba, 14:9.) Cf. the sixteenth-century statement of R. Eliyahu De Vidas, who writes as an empirical observation, as it were, "as occurred in several cases in our times," that "according to one's spiritual level one can see the upper world and converse with the spirits of the dead." According to this text, the dream ascent is also imagined as travel to the world of the dead, here envisaged as an overworld rather than as an underworld (*Reshit Hokhma*, Gate of Love, chapter 6, and see also Zohar III:25a). For a vast compendium of Jewish sources on dreams, see Boaz Shalom, *Mishnat Ha-Halomot* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 2006). It is interesting that this Haredi work draws on parapsychological literature (see, e.g., 38, 517).

119. See Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 6, 22; letter 7a, 25; letter 14, 40; letter17, 55; letter18, 56; letter 32, 91; cf. letter 29, 83. The plurality of powers communicating with Luzzatto probably holds also for Karo, who in fact rarely uses the term *maggid* (see

Idel, *R. Joseph Karo*), as well as other figures, such as Nathan of Gaza (cf. Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 63). On the marginal place of the maggid in Vital's thought, see Meroz, "Aspects of the Lurianic Theory," 50.

120. Smith, *The Self Possessed*, especially 398–406, 593–602; Geoffrey Samuel, "Possession and Self-Possession: Spirit Healing, Tantric Meditation, and Aveśa," *Diskus* 9 (2008); cf. Couliano, *Out of This World*, 38–46.

121. My translation from the edition printed in Har'ar, *Le Porte Della Giustizia*, 479. Cf. Scholem, *Major Trends*, 151. On visions as causing loss of physical strength, as described here, cf. the discussion by Luzzatto's associate, Valle, *Mamlekhet Kohanim*, 27.

122. Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 308, noted that this is a trance experience, but unnecessarily differentiates between trance and fainting.

123. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 8, 28.

124. As per Luzzatto's own description at the end of his testimony in letter 15. On *nefilat appayim* as a mode of augmenting influx, see Luzzatto's *Derekh Ha-Shem*, 4:6. For *nefilat appayim* performed by the great ones of the generations in order to "receive much from the supernal inspiration" (described in pneumatic terms), see Moshe David Valle, *Moshi'a Hosim*, ed. Joseph Spinner (Jerusalem, 1998), 92. For a broad discussion of automatic writing, see Amos Goldreich, *Automatic Writing in Zoharic Literature and Modernism* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2010), on trance see especially 41 n 55, 48, 51 n 14, 131, 134 n 64, 180.

125. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 39, 118. Cf. the text cited by Gershom Scholem, *Studies and Texts Concerning the History of Sabbetianism and Its Metamorphoses* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1974), 236–37, which seems to describe a protracted trance experience obtained while engaged in the supplications after the standing prayer (presumably *nefilat appayim*) and which included intense shaking. This testimony supports Pedaya's observation as to the prevalence of trance experiences in Sabbatean prophecy (for Shabbetai Tzevi's own trance experiences, see Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov's Iggeret Ha-Kodesh," 340). See Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 57–67, on Nathan's various experiences, which seem to have included the rarer open-eyed trance; cf. 105, on mass occurrences of corpse-like trance followed by amnesia in the Sabbatean movement. See also Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 76, 226–27, 301 n 27; Pedaya, "Review of Etkes," 262. On Shabbetai Tzevi as a shaman, see Elqayam, "The Horizon of Reason," 13. See also Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 63, on Nathan's experiences as belonging to "that twilight of experience at the intersection of mysticism, shamanism, and magic"; cf. Pawel Maciejko, "The Literary Character and Doctrine of Jacob Frank's The Words of the Lord," *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 9 (2003): 200, on Jacob Frank as a shamanic figure.

126. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 26, 75; letter 35, 109. On Hagiz, see Elisheva Carlebach, *The Pursuit of Heresy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 195–255. For a reverse accusation of this nature leveled at Hagiz by Luzzatto's teacher, R. Isaiah Bassan, see *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 71, 224. See also Hagiz's letter (letter 10a, 40), which accuses Luzzatto of magical practices (and cf. letter 101, 293–94). Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 65 n 103, cites texts from the circle of Luzzatto, which describe magical practices. Moshe Idel, in a lecture in a conference in Jerusalem in 2007, also aired the possibility that the accusations of magical activity levied at Luzzatto were far from baseless. R. Joseph Spinner (the editor of Valle's published works) has noted in the appendix to Valle, *Megale 'Amuqot* (Jerusalem, 2009), 4 n 2, that at the age of fifteen Luzzatto wrote a few lines on "practical Kabbalah," or magic, in a manuscript of Valle's.

127. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 43, 128. On prophecy and trance in Late Antiquity, see Luck, *Ancient Pathways*, 123.

128. Hansel, *Moïse Hayyim Luzzatto*, 121–25.

129. Luzzatto, *Derekh Ha-Shem*, 2:3 (my translation, compare also to the translation by Aryeh Kaplan in his bilingual edition [Jerusalem, 1977]). Cf. the extensive discussion of false prophecy in this chapter, which may have been motivated by the accusations leveled at Luzzatto. Although the twentieth-century R. David Kohen, the disciple of Rabbi Kook (*Qol Ha-Nevu'ah*, 317–18) describes Luzzatto's thought and experience as foundational for the quest of his school for the revival of prophecy (see also Garb, *The Chosen*, 23–26, 40, 43, 84–88, 92–93, and the sources cited there), he does not go as far as to ascribe the attainment of prophecy to the former. In general, *Derekh Ha-Shem* can be read not merely as a theoretical work, but as a reflection on Luzzatto's life written in his later years: for example, the discussion of the suffering of the extraordinary saint and its redemptive potential (2:3) clearly reflects his interpretation of the persecution that he suffered (cf. *Da'at Tevunot*, par. 146, written in the same period, as well as Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 243–44, 302, 309, 313).

130. Much has been written recently on the Kabbalistic dimensions of this seemingly exoteric work: see, e.g., Yosef Avivi (ed.), *Mesilat Yesharim: Complete Edition* (Jerusalem, 2003), 341–86; Mordekhai Chriqui, *Sod le-Yesharim: Mesilat Yesharim in the Light of Ramhal's Writings* (Jerusalem: Makhon Ramhal, 2000); Jonathan Garb, "The Political Model."

131. See Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto, *The Complete Mesilat Yesharim*, edited by Abraham Shoshana (Cleveland: Ofeq Institute, 2007), 514–15, as well as Moshe Idel, "Ganz Andere: On Rudolph Otto and Concepts of Holiness in Jewish Mysticism," *Da'at* 57–59 (2006): xxxii.

132. See Luzzatto, *Da'at Tevunot*, par. 178. Indeed, this is the main theme of the latter work.

133. See Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 86. See also Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 205; Ronit Meroz, "An Anonymous Commentary on Idra Raba by a Member of the Sarug School," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 12 (1996): 333 n 113.

134. Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 10, 33; letter 18, 56. Cf. a discussion of the return of prophecy in Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 423, which tellingly uses the present tense.

135. See Garb, "Critiques of Mystical Experience," 313–17; Garb, "Fear and Power," 145–46. On the Christian literature, see Hollenback, *Mysticism*, 573–76; Bernard McGinn, "Visions and Critiques of Visions in Thirteenth-Century Mysticism," in *Rending the Veil: Concealment and Secrecy in the History of Religions*, ed. Elliot R. Wolfson (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 1999), 94, 108; Rosalind Voaden, *God's Words, Women's Voices: The Discernment of Spirits in the Writings of Late Medieval Women Visionaries* (Rochester: York Medieval Press, 1999), 41–72; Gabriella Zarri, "Living Saints: A Typology of Female Sanctity in the Early Sixteenth Century," in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Daniel Bornstein and Robert Rusconi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 234, 238, 244–45.

136. Vital, *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol. 1, 1–2. See also the suspicion towards revelations from angels voiced in Ibn Gabbai, *'Avodat Ha-Qodesh*, 4:28.

137. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 3:8. Note again the reference to the Pardes narrative.

138. See the discussion and sources in Kohen, *Qol Ha-Nevu'ah*, 312 n 462. See also Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, 79 n 7.

139. See Isaiah Tishby, *Paths of Faith and Heresy: Essays in Kabbalah and Sabbateanism* (Ramat Gan: Massada, 1964), 169–206; Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 165 and the sources cited there.

140. Commentary on *Rayah Mehemna*, cited in Shmuel Luria (ed.), *Even Shlema* (Warsaw, 1887), 1:9; 104. See the introduction of his close student, R. Hayyim of Volozhin, to R. Eliyahu's commentary on the Zoharic text *Sifra De-Tzeniʿuta*, printed in various editions of R. Hayyim *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*. This text includes a fascinating description of R. Eliyahu's mystical practice, which shows that it was mostly opposed to passive modes of attaining mystical insight (for an English translation see Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, 311–16). On R. Eliyahu's attitude towards Hasidic mystical phenomena, see Immanuel Etkes, *The Gaon of Vilna: The Man and His Image*, trans. Jeffrey M. Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 27–32, for a brief discussion to which one should add at the very least the following source: Hanokh Erzohn (ed.), *Keter Rosh* (Petrakov, 1905), *Maʾamarim* 13; 29. Cf. R. Eliyahu's ambivalent attitude towards Sabbateanism, as described by Yehuda Liebes in "The Letter Saddi and the Attitude of the Vilna Gaon and His Circle toward Sabbateanism," *Kabbalah* 9 (2003): 225–306.

141. See the testimony in the name of his son, R. Tzevi Yehuda Kook, recorded in Tzevi Yisraʾel Tau, *Tzaddiq Be-Emunato Yihye* (Beit Shemesh, 2004), 117. See also Smadar Cherlow, "Messianism and the Messiah in the Circle of Rav Kook," *Moreshet Israel* 2 (2005): 54.

142. See, e.g., Wolbe, ʿ*Alei Shur*, vol. 1, 56; Wolbe, *Maʾamarei Yemei Ha-Ratzon* (Jerusalem, 2005), 330–31.

143. See Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 428–527; Tishby, "Les traces de Rabbi Moshe Haim Luzzatto dans l'enseignement du Hasidism," in *Homage à Georges Vajda: Etudes d'histoire et de pensée juives*, ed. Gerard Nahon and Charles Touati (Louvain: Editions Peeters, 1980), 421–62.

144. For the relevant texts, see Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 297, 306, 310, 314, 320 n 70, 326–27 n 92, 333 n 109, 341 n 12, 345–47, 351, 352, 354, 358, 363, 365, 367, 398 n 481. See also what appears to be an experience of fire on 389 (see also chapter 2).

145. See for the time being Garb, "The Political Model"; Garb, "The Modernization of Kabbalah."

146. See Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 334 n 113, 346, 350. As in the case of Abulafia, this experience is of course related to messianic consciousness. For another interesting parallel with Abulafia's messianic project, see ibid., 362–63.

147. Moshe David Valle, *Biʾur Shir Ha-Shirim, Ruth, Qohelet, Esther*, ed. Joseph Spinner (Jerusalem, 2010), 408; Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 2, 736. This is Valle's internalizing interpretation of the dictum which restricts prophecy to the Land of Israel (which was quoted by Luzzatto's opponents).

148. Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 242–44, 246; Valle, *Biʾur Megillot*, 332. For what is probably a messianic explanation of Luzzatto's ascents, see Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 249–50. On the death-like descents and soul retrieval of Valle (as "the winnower"), see ibid., 227. For the directness of the revelation to the Messiah, see ibid., 375. For a semi-magical statement on *nefilat appayim*, see ibid., vol. 2, 495 (for more on *nefilat appayim*, see his *Mamlekhet Kohanim*, 68).

149. See at length in Jonathan Garb, "A Renewed Study of the Self-Image of R. Moshe David Valle, as Reflected in his Biblical Exegesis," *Tarhiz* (forthcoming), and Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 400, which is rather relevant to the issues discussed here. The analysis of Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 198–205, according to which Luzzatto is Moses rather than Messiah, son of Joseph, is most likely inaccurate in light of Valle's clear identification of Luzzatto with the later figure and of Moses with the prophetic level that he himself will attain as an enhancement of his existing level of Messiah, son

of David, and as one who is named both Moshe and David (for a hint at his Mosaic prophetic experience, see Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 2, 559).

150. On eroticism in his writings, see Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 365–66, 370, where again the main thrust is towards a messianic reading. On Luzzatto and modernity, see Israel Bartal, "On Periodization, Mysticism, and Enlightenment: The Case of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto," *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 6 (2007): 201–14.

CHAPTER FOUR: SHAMANIC HASIDISM

1. Idel, *Hasidism*, 214. Cf. Norman Lamm, *The Religious Thought of Hasidism: Text and Commentary* (New York: Michael Scharf Publication Trust of Yeshiva University Press, 1999), 287, whose description of Hasidic leaders as "spiritual supermen" occludes the social function of their mystical power.

2. Smith, *The Self Possessed*, 63.

3. Idel, *Hasidism*, 288–89 n 183. In the terms of the macro-history employed there (itself based on the famous theory developed especially by Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt), Idel focuses more on the "axial," elitist phenomena than on the "preaxial" social and often shamanic phenomena (see 225). In other words, Idel's focus is on theories of practice found in theoretical texts, rather than on social ambience and the life-world of Hasidism as an everyday path.

4. Ibid., 107, 221.

5. Philip Wexler, *Holy Sparks: Social Theory, Education, and Religion* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), 125–29; Wexler, *The Mystical Society: An Emerging Social Vision* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 35–39.

6. See the comments of Yoav Elstein, *The Ecstatic Story in Hasidic Literature* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1998), 158–69.

7. Y. Y. Safrin, *Heikhal Ha-Brakha* (Lemberg, 1866), vol. 3, fol. 1a.

8. Dov Baer Schneuri, *Torat Hayyim* (Warsaw, 1866), vol. 1 (*Vayehi*), fol. 105b. For other variants, See Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 91; Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 22.

9. Farber-Ginat, "Studies," 386–88. This simultaneous model is more sophisticated than the binary one offered by Rachel Elior, "Between 'yesh' and 'ayin': The Doctrine of the Zaddik in the Works of Jacob Isaac, the Seer of Lublin," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1996), 168–79.

10. Cf. Hundert's description (*Jews in Poland-Lithuania*, 210) of Hasidic social organization as being outside the reach of the state, which recalls Samuel's opposition between shamanic Buddhism and state power.

11. Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 221–22, 224, 228; Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 63, 87. From a phenomenological point of view, it may be fruitful to consider the existence of a connection between movement towards isolated rural settings among various Jewish mystics, such as R. Avraham Maimuni (cf. the ruling of his father Maimonides in *Hilkhot De'ot* 6:1–2), the circle of the Zohar, which may have existed in history as well as literature. See most recently Melila Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden: The Language of Mystical Experience in the Zohar*, trans. Nathan Wolski (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), especially 63, 129, 384 n19; see also R. Moshe Cordovero (as in his *Sefer Gerushin*, whose effect on the Hasidic world shall be mentioned in chapter 6); Luzzatto (see *The Complete Mesilat Yesharim*, 172); the Besht, R. Nahman of Bratzlav; and R. David Kohen (the "Nazarite") in the twentieth century. This "rural reaction" can be seen as a specific, shamanic mode within the more general call to solitude, which may be equally pursued in urban contexts. See Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*, 128, 133; Idel, "Hitbodedut: On Solitude in Jewish

Mysticism," in *Einsamkeit: Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation VI*, ed. Aleida and Jan Assmann (Munich: Fink, 2000), 189–212.

12. See, e.g., Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, "Jewish Occupational Selection: Education, Restriction or Minorities," *Journal of Economic History* 65 (2005): 922–48; Miriam Frenkel, *"The Compassionate and Benevolent": The Leading Elite in the Jewish Community of Alexandria in the Middle Ages* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 2006); see also the more speculative and far-ranging comments of Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), 4–12, 46–52. Botticini and Eckstein's dating of Jewish urbanization around the Geonic period is interesting in light of our discussion, in chapter 2, of the Geonic suppression of shamanic practices.

13. Idel, *Hasidism*, 154.

14. See Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, "From Farmers to Merchants: Conversions and Diaspora: Human Capital and Jewish History," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 5 (2007): 885–926. On early Hasidism as a charismatic revitalization movement, see Arthur Green, "Early Hasidism: Some Old/New Questions," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert, 441–46 (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1996), 443–44.

15. See the summary of this debate in Idel, *Hasidism*, 5–6. See also Yosef Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce ('the Ropshitser') as a Hasidic Leader," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1996), 321–22.

16. Ze'ev Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism: Genres, Authors, Scribes, Managing Editors, and Its Review by Their Contemporaries and Scholars* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad, 1992), 19, 36–37, 65–66; see also Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 41 n 104, 88.

17. Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 53–54. See also Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 92; Rivka Goldberg-Dvir, *The Zaddik: The Palace of Leviathan, a Study of Hasidic Tales told by Zaddikim* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad, 2003), 9–10; Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 98; Glenn Dynner, *Men of Silk: The Hasidic Conquest of Polish Jewish Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 198–99.

18. See the text quoted by Mendel Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership: Authority and Faith in Zadikim as Reflected in the Hasidic Literature* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1999), 45, according to which the Seer of Lublin saw light in a room, which was created by telling tales about the Tzaddiqim. This description seems to relate the power of narrative to the phenomena of luminosity, to be discussed at length anon. On the magical and theurgical power of stories in Hasidic theory, see ibid., 76, as well as Idel, *Hasidism*, 106; Goldberg, *The Tzaddiq*, 142–43. For an example of the many other primary texts on this matter, see Emanuel Horowitz (ed.), *Torat Ha-Maggid Mi-Zlotchov* (Jerusalem, 1999), 272, as well as the very Ericksonian method of encapsulating suggestions in a story, as described in the hagiographical section of Eliyahu H. Carlebach (ed.), *Yad Ma'or Va-Shemesh* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 1986), 277. On the power of narrative in Kabbalah, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 130 n 64. See also Porterfield, "Shamanism," 727, who writes that stories about shamans are the essential background of shamanic performance.

19. Haviva Pedaya, "The Development of the Social-Religious-Economic Model in Hasidism: The Pidyon, The Group and the Pilgrimage," in *Zaddik and Devotees: Historical and Sociological Aspects of Hasidism*, ed. David Assaf (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2001), 348, 359; Pedaya, "Review of Etkes," 259–60.

20. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*. As Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 96, has pointed out, we still lack basic research on the biographies and hagiographies of many of the Tzaddiqim.

21. This being said, Wolfson, *Open Secret*, though focused on the last rebbe, includes discussions of texts from all periods, and this is also true of a forthcoming book on Habad by Dov Schwartz.

22. On this question see Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 89 n 231.

23. See, however, Gedaliyah Nigal, "Hasidic Doctrine in Maor Va-Shemesh," *Sinai* 74 (1974): 144–68, which cannot at all be seen as a sophisticated theoreticization of this rich material.

24. Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 96.

25. See, e.g., Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 136, 141; Ze'ev Gries, "R. Israel Ben Shabbtai of Kuznitz and His Commentaries on Tractate Avot," in *Tzaddiqim Ve-Anshei Ma'ase: Studies in Polish Hasidism*, ed. Rachel Elior, Israel Bartal, and Chone Shmeruk (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), 127; David Assaf, "Polish Hasidism in the Nineteenth Century: State of Research and Bibliographical Survey," in *Tzaddiqim Ve-Anshei Ma'ase: Studies in Polish Hasidism*, ed. Israel Bartal, Rachel Elior, and Chone Shmeruk (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), 357; Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 26; Zvi Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy: Hasidism According to the Piaseczner *Rebbe*" (Ph. D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2007), 33–34.

26. See Don Seeman, "Martyrdom, Emotion and the Work of Ritual in R. Mordecai Joseph Leiner's Mei Ha-Shiloah," *AJS Review* 27/2 (2003): 271–72. For the controversy caused by the prostration of R. Nathan Adler, a proto-Hasidic Central European magician and mystic whom one can well regard as a shamanic figure, together with his famous student, R. Moshe Sofer, see Kahana, "The Chatam Sofer," 530 n 48. On this figure and the controversies surrounding him, see Rachel Elior, "R. Nathan Adler." On the Rashkov prayer book, see Menachem Kallus, "The Relation of the Baal Shem Tov to the Practice of Lurianic Kavvanot in Light of His Comments on the Siddur Rashkov," *Kabbalah* 2 (1997): 151–67.

27. For the danger of nonreturn from divestment see Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 591. On danger in *nefilat appayim*, see the text cited in Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 367; cf. Esther Liebes, "Lay Not Thy Hand Upon the Lad: The Highest Point of Abraham's Experience," in *Judaism: Topics, Fragments, Faces, Identities: Jubilee Volume in Honor of Rivka Horwitz*, ed. Haviva Pedaya and Efraim Meir (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2007), 445. Idel's statement (*Hasidism*, 106), on the Hasidim not being haunted by a sense of danger in extreme mystical states needs to be modified in light of such texts.

28. See, e.g., Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 147, 172; Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 118–20. For a collection of representative texts on the fall of the Tzaddiq to hell to rescue souls, see Yisra'el Dov of Valednik. *She'erit Yisra'el* (Monsey, 1998), 62–68.

29. Y. Y. Safrin, *Shulhan Ha-Tahor* (Jerusalem, 2006), par. 131:1 (in the *Zer Zahav* section). On *nefilat appayim* as a high point of drawing down the light of souls in prayer, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 69a.

30. Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 99; cf. 124. See chapter 6 for the centrality of correcting one's internal attributes in Safrin's thought. Cf. the attempt of the famous nineteenth-century kabbalist R. Ya'aqov Abuhatzeira to neutralize the magical element in *nefilat appayim* and cast it entirely in ethical terms; Abuhatzeira, *Sha'arei Teshuva* (Nahariya, 2001), 99–105; *Bigdei Srad*, 160. See, however, Abuhatzeira, *Abir Ya'aqov* (Nahariya, Israel, 2001), vol. 1, 207, and vol. 3, 111 (in the *Mahsof Ha-Lavan* section), which quote the Lurianic reading of this rite inter alia as rebirth.

31. See Benjamin Brown, *"As a Ship Listing at Sea": Karlin Hasidism in the Twentieth-Century: Immigration, Holocaust, and Recovery* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, forthcoming). My thanks to the author for kindly sending me this manuscript.

32. Yitzhaq Moshe Erlanger, *Quntresei Hasidut: ʿInyanei Hasidut* (Jerusalem, 2007), 246; cf. Rabinovitch, *Zekhuta De-Avraham*, 16. On structured and spontaneous prostration and trance states such as "resting in the spirit," see Csordas, *The Sacred Self*, 229–46.

33. Rachel Elior, *The Paradoxical Ascent to God: The Kabbalistic Theosophy of Habad Hasidism*, trans. Jeffrey M. Green (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 185–89; Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 117–20.

34. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Commentary on the Prayerbook* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1986), fol. 26a.

35. On the fire image in R. Shneur Zalman's discussions of mystical states, see Moshe Idel, "Universalization and Integration: Two Concepts of Mystical Union," in *Mystical Union and Monotheistic Faith: An Ecumenical Dialogue*, ed. Moshe Idel and Bernard McGinn (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 42, 44.

36. For a profound contemporary Hasidic analysis of these texts, see Yitzhaq Meʾir Morgenstern, *Yam Ha-Hokhma*, 608–11, who also noted the parallel to *Emeq Ha-Melekh*, which shall be addressed below. See also his *Sheʾerit Yaʿaqov* (Jerusalem, 2000), 302–4, which displays a lenient Halakhic approach towards various forms of prostration.

37. Dov Baer Shneuri, *Shaʿarei Teshuva* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1984), fol. 47a. See also the testimony in Yehoshuaʿ Mondshein (ed.), *Migdal ʿOz* (Kfar Habad, Israel, 1980), 174, on the first rebbe of Habad falling as a result of an intense mystical state,

38. See the Yiddish discourse in Shalom Dov Baer Shneurson, *Torat Shalom* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1983), 190–202 (and especially 200).

39. Naftali Bakhrakh, *Emeq Ha-Melekh* (Amsterdam, 1648), Gate of the Holy Beard, chapter 10, fols. 62b–63a.

40. See the critique of this influence in the epistle by R. Isaiah Bassan in Chriqui, *Letters of Ramhal*, letter 13, 39.

41. For an interesting comparison between Hasidic views of transformation and processes described in Mahayana Buddhism, see Joel Orent, "The Transcendent Person," *Judaism* 9 (1960): 251. For increasing fire as an image of renewal, see Yaʿakov Hisdai, "Eved Ha-Shem (Servant of the Lord) in Early Hasidism," *Zion* 47 (1982): 288.

42. See the text from Ben Amoz and Mintz, *In Praise of the Baʿal Shem Tov*, cited and discussed in Pedaya, "The Development of the Social-Religious-Economic Model," 390 (for the problems of the English edition of this classic, see Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 105). As Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania*, 146–49, has pointed out, magic control of fire was a specialty of the Baʿalei Shem who preceded the Besht, as well as their enemies, such as witches. On 142, Hundert describes such abilities as shamanic. Cf. the figure of R. Naftali Katz, a proto-Hasidic mystic and magician, who dangerously specialized in the use of fire; see Liebes, "A Profile," 293. For a similar tale, see Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 298. See also Pedaya, "The Religious-Economic Model," 363–65.

43. Elie Wiesel, *Souls on Fire: Portraits and Legends of Hasidic Masters* (New York: Random House, 1982). See also Gries, "R. Israel Ben Shabbtai of Kuznitz," 155. On reaching a state in which the various parts of the soul burn to God, see R. Aharon of Zhitomir's *Toldot Aharon*, 230. On the physical heat created by the pleasure of contemplating the divine, see Shneuri, *Torat Hayyim* (*Va-Yehi*), fol. 101a.

44. ʿAteret Tzevi, quoted in A. Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 210 and see also [no opposition] the tale of Eichenstein in Y. Y. Safrin, Notzer Hesed, 7. The rhetoric of the Eros of fire recalls the language of The Fire of Love, by the fourteenth-century English mystic Richard Rolle.

45. Shlomo Zaltzman (ed.), Imrot Moshe (Bnei Brak, Israel, 2006), 15; cf. ibid., 94, as well as the description in chapter 5 of this volume. For a description of his face burning in a wondrous manner in a temporal-nomian context, see ibid., 40. For a similar statement to the effect that the consumption of the body in the flame of worship is the more natural option, as it were, see Yisraʾel of Bohupol, ʿAteret Yisraʾel (Zhitomir, 1867), fol. 27b.

46. See the discussion of the early master R. Pinhas of Koritz in Margolin, The Human Temple, 280, and see also the text cited in Schatz-Uffenheimer, Hasidism as Mysticism, 69. On self-nullification and becoming a new creature, or self-transformation, see Aharon Perlow of Karlin, Beit Aharon (Petrakov, 1914), fol. 9b. On the body shining with light, see Rotenberg, Or La-Shamayyim, 219. Generally speaking, the theme of illumination, albeit in a less strongly shamanic vein, is central in the writing and practice of this important student of the Seer of Lublin. See Hayyim Halberstam of Tzanz, Divrei Hayyim (New York, 2004), vol. 2, 83, for a similar description in another branch of this school, and see also vol. 2, 210, on mystical death and transformative renewal.

47. Y. Y. Safrin, Notzer Hesed, 90.

48. See the new addendum to Aharon of Zhitomir, Toldot Aharon, 580.

49. Brill, "The Spiritual World," 50–51.

50. See, e.g., Zvi Yehuda Memleck (ed.), Abir Ha-Roʾim (Petrakov, 1935), pt. 1, 88 (cf. 7, 42); Halberstam, Divrei Hayyim, vol. 1, 38.

51. Epstein, Maʾor Va-Shemesh, vol. 2, 595. For fiery transformation in a nomian context, see the description of Eichenstein being ablaze while performing kavvana, in H. Y. Safrin (ed.), Imrei Qodesh: Komarno (Bnei Brak, Israel, 2005), 189. Cf. the interesting text on enfolding the kavvanot with light in Aharon of Apta Perlow, ʿOneg Sabbath, in Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim (Jerusalem, 2008), 240.

52. Epstein, Maʾor Va-Shemesh, vol. 1, 99–100. On these two lines of fiery connectivity, see the Yiddish additions to the Habad edition of Otzar Hasidism Foundation (ed.), Keter Shem Tov (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1987), 117, on the Besht expressing the pillar of light of constant awareness of God's presence and the pillar of fire of the love of Israel. On light and connection, see Idel, Enchanted Chains, 125–26.

53. See Y. Y. Safrin, Netiv Mitzvotekha, 124 (and see also 122); Y. Y. Safrin, Zohar Hai, vol. 1, fols. 61a, 114a; vol. 2, fols. 267a–269a; Y. Y. Safrin, Heikhal Ha-Brakha, vol. 3, fol. 155a; vol. 5, fol. 27b; Faierstein, Jewish Mystical Autobiographies, 285. A possible rabbinic source is Midrash Tehilim on Psalm 11, which uses seven forms of light imagery to describe the Tzaddiqim, one of which is that of torches. Safrin mentions the Midrashic account (see Midrash Va-Yiqra Rabba 21:12) on Pinhas' face burning like a torch when ruah ha-qodesh resided on him (see also Midrash Va-Yiqra Rabba 1:1. For the later Kabbalistic reverberations of the latter text, see Margolin, The Human Temple, 315. Cf. Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," 251, on the fiery face of Moses in Midrashic literature. Safrin's illuminatory experiences are further discussed in chapter 6. For a tale of R. Levi Yitzhaq of Berdichev's fainting and illumination in the nomian context of the eve of the festival of Shavuʿot see the tale recorded by Y. Y. Safrin in Netiv Mitzvotekha, 87.

54. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 2, fol. 265b; Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 6, 87. On the New Year, see also chapter 6.

55. See Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 142; Z. M. Rabinovitch, *The Holy Jew: His Time, Life, and Teaching* (Petrakov, 1932), 49; Moshe Menahem Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi* (Bnei Brak, Israel, undated), 59; Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 84 (cf. 67).

56. See, e.g., *Midrash Ha-Ne'elam* in Zohar I:98b.

57. Michael Breuer (ed.), *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq* (New York, 2006), 23–24. Cf. the Besht's disciple R. Ya'aqov Yosef of Polonoy's classic description of the opposite state of *gadlut*, or greatness of mind, as being "literally aflame," cited in Ada Rapoport-Albert, "Hasidism after 1772: Structural Continuity and Change," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1996), 86, and also the text cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 221. See Moshe Mordekhai Biderman of Lavov-Karlin, *Qedushat Mordekhai* (New York, 1987), 53, for an account of the listeners to R. Moshe Mordekhai's fiery recital of the Passover Haggada being taken out of the world.

58. The social aspect of Hasidic experiences of the light of the Tzaddiqim is rendered explicit in the work of the twentieth-century trance expert R. Menaham Eckstein, whom I shall discuss in Chapter 5. In his *Conditions of the Soul* (*Tna'ei Ha-Nefesh Le-Hasagat Ha-Hasidut*; Jerusalem, 2006), also published as *Visions of a Compassionate World*, ed. D. Zeller, trans. by J. Start (Urim: Jerusalem, 2001), 107–8, he presents a general psychological theory of subtle influences between people as a key point of Hasidic doctrine. As an example of this belief, he mentions the emanation of power and light from the Tzaddiqim, which can fill a place of prayer with lines of light. He thus explicitly writes of this phenomenon as a transformation of social space.

59. See Elijahu Yohanan Gur-Aryeh (ed.), *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1987), 134. Cf. the quote from "the Tzaddiqim" as to the pen of Moroccan kabbalist R. Hayyim Ben 'Attar (who captured the Hasidic imagination) emitting fire when he wrote of the reception of the Torah in his famous commentary *Or Ha-Hayyim* on the Torah, cited in Michael Zilber, "Va-Isu' Me-Refidim," in *Beit Mordekhai: A Collection of Torah Novellae* (Jerusalem, 2007), 16.

60. Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 29. See H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 202, on the face of Safrin burning when laying the tefillin mandated by Rabbenu Tam (on the place of this practice in his mystical regimen, see chapter 6). Cf. the autobiographical description of shining tefillin and tallit in this master's *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 168b; Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 8. On luminosity in the standing prayer, see R. Levi Yitzhaq of Berditchev's *Qedushat Levi* (Jerusalem, 2001), 172.

61. See Idel's formulation of the Hasidic approach to Torah study in terms of illumination: "The mental effort is secondary to the emotional one, and the divinity is less a mind or a will than it is a light dispersed in the sacred texts." Moshe Idel, "Remembering and Forgetting as Redemption and Exile in Early Hasidism," in *Arbeit am Gedächtnis*, eds. Michael C. Frank and Gabriele Rippl (Munich: Wilhem Fink Verlag, 2007), 119; cf. Idel, *Hasidism*, 177.

62. See Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 72; H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 361; Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 122; compare to Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, pt. 2, 69 (on the Kotzker rebbe), as well as Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 204.

63. H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 210 (cf. 205, 215). However, it is then stipulated (211) that explicit mortifications are necessary only until one has overcome one's inborn negative traits and then tasted the true pleasures of the world to come. On illumination as a concrete somatic process in Tantra, see Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 123.

64. On the mouth of the Tzaddiq, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 205; Wolfson, "The Cut That Binds: Time, Memory, and the Ascetic Impulse (Reflections on Bratslav Hasidism)," in *God's Voice from the Void: Old and New Studies in Bratslav Hasidism*, ed. Shaul Magid (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 114–16.

65. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Liqqutei Torah* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1984), pt. 2, fol. 62a; cf. the text cited by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 242. For an insightful discussion of the Habad discourse on sparks, see Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, 80. The historiosophical account of the increasing importance of prayer is probably based on *Sh'ar Ha-Kavvanot*, fol. 53b.

66. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Liqqutei Torah*, pt. 2, fol. 32b. The place of somatic transformation in the Habad contemplative path has been extensively discussed in Wolfson, *Open Secret* (especially 135, 139, 142–47, 155–60), and I hope to elsewhere engage his profound observations, which forgo the relative neglect of the body in the study of this stream.

67. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 158 (and see also 161); H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 218, and compare to 'Ateret Yisra'el (by the Maggid R. Israel of Bohupol of the Chernobyl dynasty), fol. 33a, on burning the fire of the Other Side with the holy fire of adherence, as well as Avraham Shmu'el Zilberstein (ed.), *Nifla'ot Tif'eret Shlomo* (Petrakov, 1923), 22, on warm miqve immersion designed to burn the "shell" (*qelipa*) of Noga before Sabbath (for further discussion of fire and immersion in sacral water, see chapter 6). See also Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 111, on the Tzaddiq burning the forces of judgment in his prayer (and see also 165, 168), and Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzotekha*, 122; Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 2, 105–106, 114, 118–119 (as well as 180 on drinking as putting out the negative fire).

68. Elimelekh Weisblum of Lyzansk, *Noam Elimelekh*, fol. 13a; Shlomo Ha-Kohen Rabinovitch of Radomsk, *Tif'eret Shlomo* (Petrakov, 1882), fol. 90b. For the common image of the Tzaddiq as the light of the world, see Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 213, 246.

69. Aharon of Zhitomir, *Toldot Aharon*, 58.

70. H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 187–89 (cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 178). See also *Imrei Qodesh*, 359, for a description of the effect of transmission as becoming a burning fire.

71. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 16. For fire and Torah in this school, see 6, on burning unwanted thoughts in the fire of Torah (see also 61, 148 and 82 on the burning prayer of the Tzaddiq). This text would seem to indicate that this school's controversial insistence of the uplifting of alien thoughts (see especially 72) is related to their fiery transformation. See also Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 224, on uplifting thoughts and becoming a new creature, or transformation.

72. Perlow, 'Oneg Shabbat, 276–77; Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 105–6 (cf. 131). Yet another, organic, model appears in 22 and needs to be examined further.

73. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 103. Cf. 98 on yihudim in every movement (for the Beshtian source, see Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 66). Generally speaking, movement is a recurrent theme in Aharon's discourse on transformation.

74. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 11, 15, 23, 28, 40, 90. Cf. 114 on meditating on the sunlight, as well as 150. Just as the visualization is that of light, the "strange thoughts" that it expels are described as darkness (see especially 81). See also Perlow, 'Oneg Shabbat, 238, on extending light over the entire body, and 239 on burning materiality through this meditation.

75. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 19–20, 93. Cf. the text by R. Hayyim Tyrer of Czernovitz on divestment, burning and the weakening of the forces of the body cited by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 158.

76. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 27, 58, 110, respectively, and see 145 on becoming a "new creature" through divestment, and 195 on empowerment through burning. It is interesting that Aharon writes (63, 169) of disappearing in the light like a fish in the sea, merging water, and light imagery. Cf. Moshe Idel, "Bibliographic Appendix," in *The Latest Phase: Essays on Hasidism by Gershom Scholem*, ed. David Assaf and Esther Liebes (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2008), 263–65, who also summarizes the existing scholarship on R. Aharon.

77. See especially Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*; Wolfson, "Phantasmagoria: The Image of the Image in Jewish Magic from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," *Review of Rabbinic Judaism: Ancient, Medieval, Modern* 4 (2001): 78–120. In the past (Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 167, 173), I posited a shift from visual to the auditory modes of empowerment in the sixteenth century; however, the evidence assembled here, as well as in my studies of R. Kook in the twentieth century (see, e.g., Garb, *The Chosen*, 86–89), requires some reconsideration of that hypothesis.

78. See Idel, "The Parable," 104; Idel, "Die Laut Gelesene Torah"; Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 63, 76–77, 93. Cf. Pedaya, "The Ba'al Shem Tov," 28. For a general evaluation of representational systems in the history of Kabbalah, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 8, and the studies cited there. On the centrality of the visual mode in shamanism, see Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 191.

79. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 12; cf. 52.

80. Y. Y. Safrin, *Heikhal Ha-Brakha*, vol. 4, fol. 56a.

81. See Moshe Idel, "On Judaism, Jewish Mysticism, and Magic," in *Envisioning Magic*, ed. Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 195–214 as well as Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Harari, *Ancient Jewish Magic*. Cf. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 76, 176, 277; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 259.

82. Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 518 n 98; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 198. Cf. Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania*, 167 n 26, on the "vague and cloudy cusp" between mysticism and magic.

83. See Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 115–16.

84. See Ibn Sayyah, *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fols. 133a–177b; Ibn Sayyah, *She'erit Yosef*, Warsaw-Zydowski Instytut MS. 229, fols. 21a–45b; Garb, "The Kabbalah of R. Joseph Ibn Sayyah," 292–99; see also Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 188–89.

85. Cf. the distinction drawn between sacred and nonsacred magic in Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 256.

86. See, e.g., Ibn Sayyah, *Even Ha-Soham*, Jerusalem MS. octavo 416, fol. 175a (cf. fols. 157a, 159a); Ibn Sayyah, *She'erit Yosef*, Warsaw-Zydowski Instytut MS. 229, fol. 54a.

87. Vital, *Sha'ar Ruah Ha-Qodesh*, vol 1, 111. This connection between various shamanic empowerments and nomian ritual elements such as purification will be discussed at greater length in chapter 6. An alternative explanation of the prohibition on magic is far more technical in nature (and thus it does not at all preclude the use of magical techniques in later periods): the information on amulets and powerful names in books extant today is erroneous, so that "if we would know the names truly and properly, we would also be allowed to use them."

88. See Vital, *Pri 'Etz Hayyim*, Gate Twenty-Two, chap. 3; Mordechai Pachter, *Roots of Faith and Devequt: Studies in the History of Kabbalistic Ideas* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2004), 224–26; cf. Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Kavvanot*, fol. 37b. On these outcomes, see Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 43–47.

89. For a similar stipulation with regard to the practice of conversing with the spirits of the dead at their gravesites, see Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 220–22.

90. Vital, *Sha'ar Ha-Kavvanot*, fol. 54b.

91. See, e.g., Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 73.

92. See Ya'aqov M. Hillel, *Tamim Tehiye* (Jerusalem, 1987), 89–97; cf. Hollenback, *Mysticism*, 276–80; Lloyd Pflevyer, "Person, Purity, and Power in the Yogasutra," in *Theory and Practice of Yoga: Essays in Honor of Gerald James Larson*, ed. Knut A. Jacobsen (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 55–56.

93. Y. Y. Safrin, *Heikhal Ha-Brakha*, vol. 4, fol. 82a (see also Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 181). The mention of the name of Luria's mother may suggest that its very mention is a form of magical invocation, as in the well-known Hasidic theory of the power of the names of the righteous.

94. See, e.g., Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 105a, on healing though fiery passion, Eichenstein on the Tzaddiq replacing doctors (cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 135; see also 230 on the greater power of the Tzaddiq in a statement attributed to R. Abraham Joshua Heschel of Apta, who was connected to this circle). Such claims, joined with the famous critique of modern medical discourse by R. Nahman of Bratzlav (which was presaged, among others, by Valle, *Liqqutim*, vol. 1, 473), can be seen as the resistance of folk medicine to its displacement by the modern medical regime. For a general statement on Hasidic healing, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 80.

95. See, e.g., Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 37.

96. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 42; cf. vol. 2, 447.

97. Cf. the Tantric texts adduced by Miranda Shaw, *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 79.

98. See Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 209–11; Bracha Sack, "A Study of the Teaching of the Seer of Lublin," in *Zaddik and Devotees: Historical and Sociological Aspects of Hasidism*, ed. David Assaf (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2001), 228–29. For the visual element in Jewish magic, see Wolfson, "Phantasmagoria."

99. *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 19 (see also vol. 1, par. 230 on the transformation of the student's face through gazing at the teacher's face). On the fall and "spoiling" of the face and the need to reseek it, see vol. 1, pars. 57, 60, 67. On the Tzaddiq gazing at the Hasid, see vol. 2, par. 72. On emending the *middot* through gazing at the face of the Tzaddiq, see Y. Y.Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 75. On the Face of God in Hasidism, see Idel, "The Parable," 102–5.

100. For the somatic effect of confession, see *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 4, and see also Ada Rapoport-Albert, "Confession in the Circle of R. Nahman," *Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 1 (1973–1975): 61–96.

101. *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 4. See also Green, *Tormented Master*, 156–57 (which generally offers a psychoanalytic interpretation of this master's experience), as well as Yehuda Liebes, *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism*, trans. Batya Stein (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 194–95 n 54.

102. For a succinct summary, see Adam Phillips, *Winnicott* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), 128–30. This term is also used in Lacanian theory and in post-Ericksonian hypnosis, which is of course closest to our concern here.

103. On R. Nahman as a nursing mother, see Nathaniel Deutsch, "Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav: The Zaddik as Androgyne," in *God's Voice from the Void: Old and New Studies in Bratslav Hasidism*, ed. Shaul Magid (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 197–200. For the image of the infant in Hasidism, see Idel, *Ben*, 543, 559–67, Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 64, and Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 346. Numerous

other developments of this theme can readily be found, especially in later Hasidism, which is relatively less discussed by Idel and Margolin. See, e.g., *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 2, par. 5; Naftali of Ropshitz. *Zera' Qodesh* (Lemberg, 1868), fol. 42b; Israel of Bohupol, 'Ateret Yisra'el, fols. 7a, 69a; Yehuda Leib Eiger of Lublin, *Torat Emet* (Lublin, 1899), fol. 19b; Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 224. It is surprising that Gamlieli, *Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah*, chose to analyze Lurianic Kabbalah through psychoanalytic theory, without producing substantial interpretative results, while the more promising resources for such a project are found in Hasidic writing. This error seems to stem from a lack of awareness of the historical context of psychoanalytic theory, which reflects a late modern context, and thus is far more comparable to nineteenth-century discourse than to sixteenth-century discourse. For a critique of Gamlieli, see Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 507 n 228.

104. Erez Moshe Doron (ed.), *You Are the Heart of the World* (Mevo Horon, Israel, 2007). Cf. the striking description of imagining oneself, especially on Rosh Ha-Shana, like a swaddled and immobile infant in the cot, unable to move, in Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir, *Or Ha-Me'ir* (Ashdod, 1995), 322.

105. *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 24.

106. Ibid., vol. 2, par. 8. Cf. Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, vol. 1, 232, on the Tzaddiq being acutely aware of the sins of the generation through their subtle effect on his thought. It seems clear to me, though not to those who describe Halberstam as a nonmystical figure (a claim that is itself precluded by his connection to such masters as Eichenstein), that this is an autobiographical description.

107. See the material collected in Avraham Greenbaum's popular work *The Wings of the Sun: Traditional Jewish Healing in Theory and Practice*, available online at http://www.azamra.org/wings.shtml.

108. Aharon of Zhitomir, *Toldot Aharon*, 289–90.

109. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 113–14 (cf. vol. 2, 697, on alchemical transmutation, as a form of *opus contra naturam*, as it were, through faith rather than any magical procedure); see also Elior, "Between 'yesh' and 'ayin,'" 177.

110. Y . Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 82.

111. Csordas, *Body/Meaning/Healing*, 57.

112. David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 550. On Jesus as a shaman, see Craffert, *The Life of a Galilean Shaman*. On Jesus and trance, see Stevan L. Davies, *Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance, and the Origins of Christianity* (New York: Continuum, 1995), as well as Jeffrey J. Kripal, *The Serpent's Gift: Gnostic Reflections on the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 35–39. On Jesus and Hasidism, see Idel, *Ben*, 531, 537, 545, 551, 552, 559, 577 n 86.

113. See, e.g., the testimony cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 72 as well as 244, and Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 334. See also Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 61, and Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein, *Sur Me-Ra' Va-'Ase Tov* (New York, 1985), 90, 99, on the possibility of paranormal powers such as precognitive vision and other prophetic manifestations emanating from the forces of evil; cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 165.

114. For R. Shneur Zalman's foundational position in *Liqqutei Amarim* (*Tanya*), 4:26, and the explication of this stance in a Yiddish/Hebrew talk by R. Shalom Dov Baer in *Torat Shalom*, 167–68. However, as in other issues, one can discern a change in the twentieth century in Habad's stance. See the fascinating discourse in R. Menahem Mendel Shneurson's *Toras Menahem: Hisva'aduyos 5715* (New York: Kehot

Publication Society, 1999), 99–101, which gives examples of moftim that occurred with specific Hasidim in the time of the sixth and seventh rebbes (cf. Garb, *The Chosen*, 48). The Habad theory of magic shall be discussed further in a forthcoming book by Schwartz; see also Reut Glassman, "The Magical Meaning of the Commandments" (M.A. thesis, Bar-Ilan University, 2009). For another anti-magical view in Lithuanian Hasidism, see Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 5b, on faith in Tzaddiqim that requires moftim belonging to the aspect of the breaking of the vessels. For the Psischa school's famous critique of moftim, see Aviezer Cohen, "Self-Consciousness in the Book Mei Hashiloach as the Nexus between God and Man" (Ph.D. diss., Ben Gurion University, 2006), 75, 82, 90 (however, cf. my comments on scholastic magic in this school in chapter 6, which may indicate that the customary assessment of the degree of difference between Lublin and Psischa is exaggerated).

115. See *Quntres Derekh Ha-Tefilla* (Jerusalem, 1993), 22–25, which is part of an interesting critique of the Hasidic world at the time of the author R. Hanokh Dov Meir (son-in-law of R. Shalom of Belz). At the same time, there are also texts that claim that it is precisely the disappearance of moftim that heralds the decline of the generations; see, e.g., E. T. Safrin, *Ben Beiti* (Jerusalem, 1968), 125.

116. See the regimen (*hanhagot*) printed at the beginning of Yitzhaq Ya'aqov Horowitz of Lublin, *Divrei Emet* (Zalkov, 1830). Cf. *She'erit Yisra'el*, 30, on opposition to R. Yisra'el of Valednik, of the Chernobyl school, on these grounds. See the statement in Shmu'el Ha-Levi Horowitz (ed.), *Kokhvei Or* (Jerusalem, 1999), 50–51, on R. Nahman of Bratzlav being largely unable to perform moftim, as this would have annulled free choice. Therefore, he asked God to cause those that he did perform to be forgotten, and the fact that his close student R. Nathan forgot them was itself a miracle. However, the editor of this hagiographical work opted to salvage the surviving Bratzlav tales of moftim and did record numerous such accounts.

117. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 583.

118. Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 61.

119. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 156. For the Hasidic experience of *mohin*, which requires much further study, see also chapters 5 and 6.

120. Cf. Idel, *Hasidism*, 196, on the "evaporation" of magical elements in the circle of the Vilna Gaon and R. Hayyim of Volozhin.

121. Hayyim of Volozhin, *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*, chapter 4, par. 16.

122. *Ruah Ha-Hayyim* (printed in *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*) on Avot 1:1, fol. 4b. For a similar Hasidic tale, see Carlebach, *Yad Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, 304. See also the illuminating discussion of Amira Liwer, "Oral Torah in the Writings of R. Zadok ha-Kohen of Lublin" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006), 323–27.

123. Cited in Shuchat, "Messianic and Mystical Elements Associated with the Study of Torah According to the Gaon and His Disciples," in *The Vilna Gaon and His Disciples*, ed. Moshe Hallamish, Joseph Rivlin, and Rafael Shuchat (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2003), 169.

124. See Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 31, and the tale of R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein of Ziditchov adduced in Abraham Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 67.

125. Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 54.

126. See Bilu, *Without Bounds*; Garb, "Review of Yoram Bilu: Without Bounds," *Anthropological Theory* 3/1 (2003): 127–28; Lital Avital-Lieberman, "Saint or Impure: The Image and Identity of R. Ya'aqov Wazana" (M.A. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007).

127. See Yuval Harari, "Jewish Magic Plates in the Modern Period: From the Islamic World to Israel," *Pe'amim* 110 (2007): 55–84. For miracle stories in non-Hasidic and even anti-Hasidic circles, see Michael Zalman Shorkin (ed.), *Meged Giv'ot 'Olam: 'Ovdot Ve-'Ezot Mi-Gdolei 'Olam* (Jerusalem, 1999). However, see there 98, for a Mitnagdic critique of asking rebbes for blessings.

128. See especially Mendel Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality: Humility, Ayin, Self Negation and Devekut in the Hasidic Thought* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1994), 142, 147, as well as Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 67; Mendel Piekarz, *Hasidism in Poland: Ideological Trends of Hasidism in Poland during the Interwar Period and the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1990), 50, 181, and the strong statement on "decay" concluding Scholem, *Major Trends*, 350. This issue will also be discussed in Brown, *"As a Ship Listing at Sea."* Surprisingly, Pedaya (in her "Review of Etkes," 263) likewise claims that there is no cultivation of trance after the time of the Besht, and asserts that there was also a decline in healing abilities, so that shamanic border-crossing was unique to the Besht. Cf. the opinion of Idel, *Hasidism*, 222, who writes that rather than speaking of a retreat from mysticism, we should instead think of the routinization and thus the greater penetration of previously innovative mystical ideas. Idel draws on the ecstatic activity of the Komarno rebbes, discussed here at some length, as an example of the continued vitality of Hasidism in later generations (see also Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 320 n 42).

129. See Jakobsen, *Shamanism*, 210–11, on changes in shamanic practice in urban settings. For a recent example of shamanic mystical activity (in the Orthodox church) in the Carpathian areas where Hasidism originated, see Père I. Balan, *Le Père Cléopas: Grand Spirituels Orthodoxes du XXe Siècle* (Lausanne: Editions L'Age D'Homme 2004).

130. See, e.g., Emanuel Horowitz (ed.), *Torat Ha-Maggid Mi-Zlotchov*, 260; Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 9.

131. Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 81.

132. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 58, speaks of four hundred disciples of the Seer of Lublin who attained ruah ha-qodesh.

CHAPTER FIVE: HASIDIC TRANCE

1. Yitzhaq Moshe Erlanger, *Quntresei Hasidut: Faith* (Jerusalem, 2007), 190.

2. Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 157.

3. Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 143–48. On the Besht's shamanic trance, see Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 81. On the Besht and trance, see Idel, *Hasidism*, 54. However, Idel subsumes trance under the more general category of ecstasy. On ascent and trance in the Heikhalot literature, see chapter 3.

4. Breuer, *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq*, 9. The editor's grandfather was a Hasid of R. Tzevi.

5. See Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi," 330; Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 57–59; and the Komarno tradition recorded in E. T. Safrin, *Ben Beiti*, 221. I follow here the observation of Goldberg-Dvir, *The Zaddik*, 39, that Hasidic stories serve to express social tensions and dilemmas that cannot be expressed more directly.

6. Breuer, *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq*, 26. On R. Barukh of Medzibuz's ascent to the Heikhalot in a sleep-like state, see Shmu'el Teich (ed.), *Qedushat Barukh: The Teachings of the Holy Barukh of Medzibush* (Jerusalem, 2004), 208.

7. Breuer, *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq*, 21. Cf. the interesting statement by his student Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 114, on the need for the positive aspects of the World of Chaos, which

all seekers by necessity move through on their path, in order to enable the drive towards "giving up one's soul in total divestment."

8. As I have shown elsewhere (Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 223–28), the Lurianic model of connection with the souls of the dead continued quite markedly within various Hasidic branches, including the so-called "rationalistic" Habad school (see also Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 105). See also the text cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 239, as well as the account of R. Moshe Hayyim Ephraim of Sudlikov giving a petition to the Besht in the upper world (cited on 165), suggesting a sense of easy availability of departed Tzaddiqim. On R. Avraham Borenstein's communication with R. Menahem Mendel of Kotzk after the latter's death, see Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 52.

9. This perception is shared by the closely allied Komarno school. See H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 357, on the availability of departed rebbes in the Heikhalot, who may be accessed through ascent. This availability in the supernal world was not always restricted to their colleagues: see the account in Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 109–10, of an ill person who fainted and saw R. Avraham Borenstein among the court in heaven deliberating whether he should be allowed to live. The rebbe then unwillingly confirmed this vision but ask that it be kept secret.

10. Breuer, *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq*, 39.

11. For images of this relationship as chains of connection, see Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 252. On the mutual empowerment of the Tzaddiq and Hasid, see 70, and see also the interesting testimony on Eichenstein and Y. Y. Safrin in *Notzer Hesed*, 157. On the Tzaddiq becoming a seer through his empowerment by his followers, see Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 18. Cf. the text by R. Yitzhaq Menahem of Kossov (cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 242), according to which those around the Tzaddiq help his ascent by becoming "as one body." In other words, the "horizontal" embodied collective is the basis for individual vertical movement. The comparison to Mount Sinai (see ibid., 243), a theme oft-repeated in Hasidism, gives this model an almost national dimension. See also Idel, *Enchanted Chains*, 252.

12. Goldberg-Dvir, *Leviathan*, 23, 27, 33 (cf. Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 194). See also Esther Liebes, "The Novelty in Hasidism according to R. Barukh of Kossow," *Da'at* 45 (2000): 127 n 34, as well as the important text cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 178.

13. On Weisblum's own ascents, see the hagiographical tradition recorded in Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 56.

14. Wolfson, *Along the Path*, 89–109. For a more general statement on this matter, see Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 72–73. On transformation through travel to the Tzaddiq, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 168.

15. See, e.g., Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 69, 83. For important general discussions of the role of movement in modern religion, see Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *Le Pelerin et le converti: la religion en movement* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999).

16. See Elimelekh Weisblum, *Noam Elimelekh*, fols. 8a, 8b (and see also fols. 12a, 21b); Gries, "R. Israel Ben Shabbtai of Kuznitz," 150–52. On the supernal world as the true home of the practitioner, see Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 2a.

17. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 55, and see also 154 on prophecy and illumination. For an important discussion of the phenomenology of nearness and distance in mystical experience, see Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, 107–8. On the relationship of spatial dislocation and identity transformation in the context of the Ayahuasca trance, see Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 217.

18. For trance-like transmission between these two central Safedian figures, see Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 208–11. See also Ronit Meroz, "Faithful Transmission versus Innovation: Luria and His Disciples," in *Gershom Scholem's Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism: 50 Years After*, ed. Joseph Dan and Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 257–76. In the case of Luzzatto, it is clear from the accounts that we cited that his own intense experiences occurred in solitude. However, see our comments below on the performative aspect of the rituals of his group.

19. Haley, *Uncommon Therapy*, 20. See also chapter 1 for the broader theoretical and clinical underpinnings of this statement.

20. On group trance in Morocco, see Crapanzano, *The Hamdasha*, 215.

21. See Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 150–53; Idel, *Hasidism*, 227–38; Liebes, "The Novelty in Hasidism"; Wexler, *Mystical Interactions*, 35, 39, 61; Haviva Pedaya, "Some Notes on 'The Latest Phase,'" in *The Latest Phase: Essays on Hasidism by Gershom Scholem*, ed. David Assaf and Esther Liebes (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2008), 25–27.

22. Avrekhei Hasidei Slonim (ed.), "Be-Ohalei Tzaddiqim," in *Rina Ve-Yeshu'a* (Jerusalem, 1997), 54. For descriptions of R. Moshe himself fainting in ecstasy and in a kind of mystical death, see Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 20, 66 (cf. 94). See chapter 4 for another description of his face blazing, and for this theme in general.

23. See, e.g., Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 285; *Shivhei Ha-Ari [Biography of R. Ya'aqov Aryeh of Tarisk]* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 1997), 23; Louis Jacobs, *Hasidic Prayer* (New York: Schocken, 1972), 95; Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 66. See also the interesting Bratzlav initiation tale in S. Horowitz, *Kokhvei Or*, 44, where a form of dream telepathy leads to shaking and *khalushes*. It is possible that the four modes of speaking, fiery transformation, sleep, and fainting refer to the four faces of the Chariot that are mentioned at the conclusion of the tale (my thanks to Benjamin Brown for this comment). For discussions of fainting and sleep-like states in the Hasidic world, see Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 86–88; Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 523; for Heikhalot literature, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 86, and also 77–79. An interesting account of a Hasidic woman fainting in response to a vision is found in the journal *Kovetz Beit Yitzhaq* 3 (2001), 29. My thanks to Daniel Reiser for calling my attention to this collection. In general, the visionary experience of Hasidic women needs to be studied further. For now, see Nathaniel Deutsch, *The Maiden of Ludmir: A Jewish Holy Woman and Her World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 101–4, 109–19; Avraham Yitzhaq Bromberg, *Beit Kuznitz* (Jerusalem, 1982), 84, on Perl, the famous daughter of R. Yisra'el of Kuznitz; cf. Carlebach, *Yad Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, 303 n 90.

24. See Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, *The Twilight Language: Explorations in Buddhist Meditation and Symbolism* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1995); cf. Michael Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsaying* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). See the very important comment of Childs, *Tantric Buddhism*, 94, on the relationship between Tantric twilight language and the shamanic secret language described by Eliade.

25. Or Ha-Hasidut Foundation (ed.), *Botzina Di-Nehora* (Jerusalem, 1991), 103–7.

26. On mesmerian technique, see, e.g., Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 139.

27. Bilu, *The Saints Impresarios*, 268.

28. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 363–64.

29. Ibid., vol. 2, 573.

30. Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 143. Cf. the important remarks of Pedaya, "The Economic Model," 377, 391–92, on Hasidic *communitas*. The Turnerian use of this phrase, as employed by Pedaya, contains some element of trance. See also Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 65.

31. See Pedaya, "Review of Etkes," 263. For a wider development of the binary distinction between introverted and extroverted forms of mysticism, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, especially 7, 40–41. This distinction may be useful at times but again my general inclination is not to adopt binary schemes.

32. See Rapoport, *Ritual and Religion*, 37–46; Cardena, "The Magical Flight: Shamanism and Theatre," in *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternate Modes of Healing*, ed. Ruth-Inge Heinze (San Rafael, California: Santa Sabina Center, 1986), 291–304; Porterfield, "Shamanism," 727–28. For a discussion of dramatic performance in medieval Kabbalah informed by theory of symbolic interaction, see Joel Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals: Eating and Embodiment in Medieval Kabbalah* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005), 130–41.

33. Tellingly, hypnosis is not mentioned in Barbara Boudewijnse, "Ritual and Psyche," in *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, ed. Jens Kreinath, Johannes A. M. Snoek, and Michael Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 123–41. For an overview of research on ritual and performance, see Ronald Grimes, "Performance," in *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, edited by Jens Kreinath, Johannes A. M. Snoek, and Michael Stausberg (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 379–94.

34. Weiss, *Studies*, 33. See also Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 99.

35. Ervin Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to Face Behavior* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967), 113; Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains*, 23–25, 65–87; Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 218–21, 424. These issues are also discussed in detail in Philip Wexler, "Toward a Social Psychology of Spirituality," lecture at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, 2008 (My thanks to the author for kindly providing me with a written version).

36. Weiss, *Studies*, 69–94; Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*; Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 364, 369. At the same time, some Hasidic masters, such as Eichenstein, opposed maggidism (see chapter 6); see also Idel, "Universalization and Integration," 56, who critiques the prevalent overemphasis on passive experiences.

37. Cf. the twentieth-century testimonies collected in Aharon Sorski (ed.), *Mi-Sod Siah Hasidim* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 2006), vol. 1, 241–49, 255.

38. On the resultant need for exit rites to restore one's physical being, which we have already encountered in chapter 2, see Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 55; Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 41. On the removal of senses in prayer, due to the annulment of ordinary reality, see ibid., vol. 2, 187, as well as Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 198. For earlier descriptions of this phenomenon, see Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 94.

39. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 168b.

40. See, e.g., Nathan of Nemirov (ed.), *Hayyei Moharan* (Jerusalem, 2000), 441 (379).

41. Cited in Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 122 (cf. Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 17). See also 123 for R. Hayyim's interesting comparison with total absorption in sin, as in the trance state that accompanies sexual activity. See also chapter 6 of the present volume on the question of the antinomian potential of extreme mystical states.

42. Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 150.

43. Moshe Idel, "Prayer, Ecstasy, and Alien Thoughts in the Besht's Religious Worldview," in *Let the Old Make Way for the New: Studies in the Social and Cultural His-*

tory of Eastern European Jewry Presented to Immanuel Etkes, ed. David Assaf and Ada Rapoport-Albert, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2009), 70–71 (and see also 61) has related these phenomena to the more rural phase in the development of Hasidism. See also Idel, "On Prophecy," 63; Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 78, 253; Liebes, "Lay Not Thy Hand," 444, as well as Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 364; Zaltzman, *Imrei Moshe*, 137; Mordekhai Shapira of Nashkhitz, *Rishfei Esh* (Warsaw, 1873), fol. 9b; cf. the description of prophecy in these terms in Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 5b.

44. See Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 245.

45. See Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 13, 55. For automatic speech, see Goldreich, *Automatic Writing*, especially 41 n 88, 51–2.

46. Cited in Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 370. As Margolin himself (371 n 107) cites a text attributing this phenomenon to the bypassing of the conscious mind by the innate bodily intelligence, it is not clear why he describes it as paranormal. Rather, it is an entirely normal development that occurs in standard testing for depth of hypnotic trance. As Roger I. Lohmann has put it, "Trance should be brought home from a status as 'altered' states of consciousness, which implies abnormality, and placed squarely within the normal and complex range of consciousness," a statement that dovetails with the naturalistic understanding of trance in Ericksonian hypnotherapy. Lohmann, "Supernatural Encounters of the Asabano in Two Traditions and Three States of Consciousness," in *Dream Travelers: Sleep Experiences and Culture in the Western Pacific*, ed. Roger Ivar Lohmann (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 207.

47. Hayyim of Volozhin, *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*, chapter 2, par. 18.

48. See Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 179–81, 309; Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 93–98; Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 171. Again, a reading informed by hypnotic literature, or indeed by general literature on mystical experience or social theory, would preclude Piekarz's minimalist interpretations of these texts. See the texts cited in Jacobs, *Hasidic Prayer*, 94, 98, 125, which clearly relate automatic speech to divestment of materiality as well as experiences of losing consciousness.

49. See respectively Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 127, as well as the discussion in Idel, "On Prophecy," 70–71; Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 31; Emanuel Horowitz (ed.), *Torat Ha-Maggid Mi-Zlotzov*, 276; Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 117. For more general accounts of hypnotic amnesia in Hasidic literature, see Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 345; Mark, *Mysticism and Madness*, 112.

50. See Pedaya, "The Development," 383; Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 220, 231; Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania*, 175–76; see also Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 7b. A parallel formulation is that the Torah is "handed" to the mouth of the Tzaddiq according to the "needs of the time" (see Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 108). In some cases, the direction of the discourse to the needs of the listeners was subtle, and not always apparent to the followers, who presumed that the Tzaddiq was speaking in general. See the citation and discussion in Gries, "R. Israel Ben Shabbtai of Kuznitz," 151–53. See also Naftali of Ropshitz, *Zera' Qodesh* (*Besalah*), fol. 51b, where R. Naftali of Ropshitz states that when the Tzaddiq seems to bless only in general terms, this is in order to conceal the specific blessing from demonic obstruction (cf. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 47–48; Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 127).

51. See Jacobs, *Hasidic Prayer*, 65, Pedaya, ""Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 89; Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 523. See also Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 32; Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 211; Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 7b. For a reading

of Hasidic passive mystical experience in terms of positive possession, see Mark, "Dybbuk and Devekut," 284–85.

52. Shmu'el Borenstein, *Shem Mi-Shmu'el* (Jerusalem, 1987), 35. See also Don Seeman, "Ritual Efficacy, Hasidic Mysticism and 'Useless Suffering' in the Warsaw Ghetto," *Harvard Theological Review* 101/ 3–4 (2008): 496 n 123; cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 148), and Moshe Teitelbaum, *Yismah Moshe* (New York, 1962), 17. These two types also diverge in their preference for spontaneous and nomian prayer. According to a parallel discourse (Borenstein, *Shem Mi-Shmu'el*, 43; Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, pt. 2, 30) the "higher Tzaddiq" can cancel decrees without even resorting to explicit prayer. See also *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, pt. 1, 44, on the silence and minimal movement that R. Avraham Borenstein required in order to cancel decrees, and see especially 103–4, where it is said that when he grew older, he reached the ability to perform wonders effortlessly, and had this not been the case he would not have distracted himself from his studies. For another parallel, see Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 33. On worship through movement and through stillness, see Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 154. See also Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 252; Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 21 n 41.

53. See Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 166, on the Tzaddiq transmitting the spirit to the disciple like a man to a woman; see also ibid., 178; Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 48, 221–26.

54. See Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 76–78.

55. See, e.g., Dov Baer of Mezeritch, *Maggid Devarav Le-Ya'aqov* (Jerusalem, 1962), 134–35; Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 129; Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 185; see also the text by R. Hayyim Tirer of Czernovitz cited by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 216. Cf. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 94, on the Seer of Lublin's ability to see only what he wished, a phenomenon with some resonance with clinical hypnotic experience.

56. See Perlow, '*Oneg Sabbath*, 248; Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 29, 38. The Hasidic discourse on purification and sanctification of the eyes needs to be studied in greater detail from a interpretative perspective that allows for visionary practice as well as mere sociosexual control. See Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 2b, on gaining holiness from gazing at people in devequt while abstaining from looking at those who are not (cf. Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 88), as well as Eiger, *Torat Emmet*, fols. 3a–b, on sanctification of the eyes and visionary "opening of the eyes" (see also fol. 24a).

57. See Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 184; Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 52, and Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, *Me'or 'Enayyim*, 86, on hearing only the divine speech; cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 130. The texts cited in Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 36, 40, and Seeman, "Ritual Efficacy," 499, can be interpreted in a similar manner. In some shamanic contexts, seeing-as is related to intense kinetic states such as shaking. See Marina Roseman, "Engaging the Spirits of Modernity: The Temiars," in *Healing Powers and Modernity: Traditional Medicine, Shamanism, and Science in Asian Societies*, ed. Linda Connor and Geoffrey Samuel (Westport, Connecticut, and London: Bergin and Garvey, 2001), 123–24.

58. Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 93–94. See ibid., 121–22, on seeing God inside physical objects, a common theme in Habad narratives; see also the sources collected in Ya'aqov Leib Altein (ed.), *Chassidus Mvueres: Mo'adim* (New York: Heichel Menachem, 2003), vol. 1, 168 n 11, and Ron Margolin, "On The Essence of Faith in Hasidism: A Historical-Ideational Perspective," in *On Faith: Studies in the Concept of Faith and Its History in the Jewish Tradition*, ed. Moshe Halbertal, David Kurzweil, and

Avi Sagi (Jerusalem: Keter, 2005), 342. In general, scholarship has focused on the rebbes, and there is a need to expand one's investigations to include senior students, who also reached substantial mystical attainments (rather than misreading texts on Hasidim with telepathic abilities as actually referring to Tzaddiqim, as does Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 17, writing on a text from R. Eli'ezer of Tarnogord's *Noam Meggadim*). See the text that Piekarz himself adduces (138; and see also 234, 237) by E. Eli'ezer, the son of R. Elimelekh Weisblum, according to which connection to the Tzaddiq raises the Hasid to the level of the Tzaddiq.

59. Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, vol. 1, 37. Cf. Elior, *The Paradoxical Ascent*, 49–59.

60. See Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 32–33, as well as 31 for the first Habad rebbe's telepathic ability and 50 for that of the third rebbe.

61. Hollenback, *Mysticism*, and see also Garb, "Paths of Power"; Shanon, *Antipodes of the Mind*, 256–57. This issue is explored at length in Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Authors of the Impossible: The Paranormal and the Sacred* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

62. Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 32.

63. See Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004); Lisa Blackman, "Affect, Relationality, and the Problem of Personality," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 25/1 (2008): 23–47, especially 32. Cf. the more empirical studies summarized in Edward Kelly, Emily Kelly, et al., *Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 218–32. This important work remedies the neglect of the role played by research on telepathic phenomena in the history of hypnosis (especially as in the under-recognized contributions of Frederick Myers).

64. See, e.g., Andrew Samuels, *The Political Psyche* (London: Routledge, 1993), 24; David Wallin, *Attachment in Psychotherapy* (New York: Guilford Press, 2007), 119–20, 296–97; cf. Csordas, *Body/Meaning/Healing*, 250–54.

65. See Garb, "The Cult of the Saints," 208–11, and especially the discussion of the role of the gaze. See also Sack, "A Study of the Teaching of the Seer," 228.

66. A common panegyric was to say of a Hasidic master that all of the praises of Luria (and the Besht) were true of them: see Reuven Hayyim Alexander of Radoshitz (ed.), *Nifla'ot Ha-Sabba Qadisha* (Jerusalem, 2003), 58, as well as the text cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 64.

67. See E. T. Safrin, *Ben Beiti*, 221.

68. Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 9. Visualization of the image of a departed Tzaddiq was often seen as a means of receiving his mystical or magical levels. See Israel of Bohupol, '*Ateret Yisra'el*, fol. 28a, on gazing at the living teacher so as to receive his light. For the parallel practice of the Tzaddiq gazing at the Hasidim during prayer so as to transmit blessing, see Yohai Asher (ed.), *Zikaron Yehuda* (Jerusalem, 2003) (sayings of R. Yehudah Horowitz of Dvikov, written by his student, the rebbe of *Toldot Abraham Isaac*), 126 (describing R. Israel Hager of Vizhnitz). See also Reuven Hayyim Alexander of Radoshitz, *Nifla'ot Ha-Sabba Qadisha*, 59, on visualizing the face of one's rebbe in order to obtain magical protection while performing the shamanic technique of taking away the illness of a patient (cf. 56, where this technique is elaborated on: the healer senses the illness of the patient and its spiritual root in his own body). See further on the relationship between the gaze and healing in chapter 4.

69. E. T. Safrin, *Ben Beiti*, 24; see also Garb, *The Chosen*, 21–33.

70. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 7a; cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 75.

71. This ability was also attributed to Sabbatean figures, such as Nathan of Gaza (see Goldish, *The Sabbatean Prophets*, 60). A median option is the ability to sense mental

states within a wide area, as is reported of R. Yisra'el of Ruzhin. *Avrekhei Hasidei Slonim*, *Be-Ohalei Tzaddiqim*, 51. The Seer of Lublin is said to have asked that his burdensome ability to sense the entire world be removed and replaced with the latter, more limited range. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 20. Cf. Asher, *Zikaron Yehuda*, 153, where Hager is quoted as saying that distance in both time and place is irrelevant where "true" connection with the Tzaddiq is concerned. Cf. also Brill, "The Spiritual World," 35.

72. See also the sources cited in Idel, "On Prophecy," 61–62. For a comparison of the Seer of Lublin's telepathic abilities to prophecy, see Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 50, 65. On the healing power of the Tzaddiq as the remnant of prophecy, see Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 113. For an interesting definition of ruah ha-qodesh as drawing the light of the infinite into thoughts that in turn enables precognition, see Rabinovitch, *Tif'eret Shlomo*, fol. 87b. See H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 195, on the ability of the Seer of Lublin to foresee the future; cf. Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 72; Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 337. For the comparison to the Heikhalot literature, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 100. See also 137 on the visionary power of the Tzaddiqim and sages, which is greater than that of the prophets. This appears to be his interpretation of the Talmudic adage "a sage is superior to a prophet" (b Baba Batra 12a). On telling the future even through the sound of footsteps, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 66, 170.

73. See also Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 215a, where the explanation given for a similar request was that the light produced was too powerful. A similar, but subtly different account (H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 196–97) asserts that Eichenstein himself took away some of Safrin's powers, the difference lying in the involuntary nature of this occurrence. For a critique of the pursuit of "levels" and visions, see Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 9, 19, 32, 106, 109, and cf. Garb, "Mystics' Critiques," 314–17, which needs to be revised somewhat in light of this and similar texts adduced here.

74. See Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 57, 100. On the danger attendant on the practice of yihudim, see 118 (according to this text, both Elisha ben Avuyah and Shabbetai Tzevi succumbed to this hazard). See 104, as well as Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 14, 32 for a pluralistic model of different paths in mystical practice. On a specific danger entailed in telepathy, namely the thoughts of the followers that can negatively effect the Tzaddiq and "bite like snakes," see 120, and cf. Elimelekh Weisblum, *Noam Elimelekh*, fol. 8b; Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 63, as well as Mordekhai Ha-Kohen H. Blum (ed.), *Be-Oro Shel Yitzhaq* (Jerusalem, 1999), 46. The latter collection of tales describes the twentieth-century *Toldot Aharon* circle. On the snake-like powers that endanger the mystical practice of the Tzaddiqim, see *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 116, 118.

75. Hayyim Simha Leiner, *Dor Le-Yesharim* (Jerusalem, 1999), 32, 34–35, 37, 39; cf. 64. Weeping as a spiritual practice has been discussed in general and Jewish contexts. See Kimberly C. Patton and John S. Hawley (eds.), *Holy Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 75–88 (which includes a discussion of Safrin); Wolfson, "Weeping, Death," especially 220, 228; Kallus, "The Theurgy of Prayer," 219–20. Nevertheless, I do not know of a study of weeping as part of the repertoire of Jewish magical or semi-magical techniques.

76. Leiner, *Dor Le-Yesharim*, 51–53, 55, 58; on his dream telepathy, see 56; cf. Ben-Amos and Mintz, *In Praise of the Ba'al Shem Tov*, 175. For a cross-cultural investigation of this phenomenon, see Doniger-O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities*,

75–77, as well as Montague Ullman, Stanley Krippner, and Alan Vaughan, *Dream Telepathy: Experiments in Nocturnal Extrasensory Perception* (Charlotesville, Virginia: Hampton Roads, 2001).

77. Leiner, *Dor Le-Yesharim*, 71. For gaining information for healing purposes through voice calibration, see ibid., 82. For similar procedures, see Grinder and Bandler, *Trance-Formations*, 201–12. For R. Gershon Henikh's telepathy, see *Dor Le-Yesharim*, 72, 78; for his great expertise in magical healing, see 73–74; on reading notes, see 75; on sensing "places of power," see 79; for knowledge of previous incarnations and exorcism, see 81; for precognition of his death, see 84. These elements should be added to the portrayal of this master as essayed in Shaul Magid, *Hasidism on the Margin: Reconciliation, Antinomianism, and Messianism in Izbica/Radzin Hasidism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

78. On the magical powers of R. Tzadoq Ha-Kohen of Lublin, a senior student of R. Mordekhai Leiner and an important thinker in his own right, see Hayyim Simha Leiner, *Zikaron Le-Rishonim*, in *Dor Le-Yesharim* (Jerusalem, 1999), 8. For his precognitive ability, see Shmuel Unger, *Hakohen: The Life and Works of R. Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin* (Lublin, 1924), 32. See, however, Alan Brill, *Thinking God: The Mysticism of Rabbi Zadok of Lublin* (New York: Michael Scharf Publication Trust of the Yeshiva University Press, 2002), 38, who scarcely addresses this topic, and merely writes, apparently on the strength of one tale, of R. Tzadoq's "principled refusal to perform folk and magical cures" and relegates the testimonies of magical power to "other tales." As Brill does not suggest how the diverse accounts (including the further evidence for magical activity that he cites in n 65, as well as 39 n 68) may be reconciled, one can but conclude that for his own reasons, he chooses to view the anti-magical tradition as more authentic. Thus, on p. 40, he writes that "when the cholera epidemic was severe, he overcame his usual reluctance and used incantations." Again, the "usual reluctance" needs to be better established before R. Tzadoq is described as overcoming it. Cf. the discussion of what should at least be termed semi-magical aspects of R. Tzadoq's worldview in Liwer, "Oral Torah," 347–66.

79. Leiner, *Dor Le-Yesharim*, 76–77.

80. Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fols. 20a–b.

81. For further Hasidic accounts of telepathy, see Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 28; Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 50, 91; S. Horowitz, *Kokhvei Or*, 18–19, 52–53; Aharon Perlow, *Bi-Qedushato Shel Aharon: Tales of R. Aharon of Belz* (Jerusalem, 2008), 148, 154, 157, 161–64; Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 125.

82. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 64; cf. 49. In general, as is evident in his title, the Seer specialized in visual transmission and reception, and was known as "foremost in the generation" in the power of his eyes (ibid., 42). This expression again shows that there was a clear sense of the different levels and powers of the Tzaddiqim. See also the typology of different types of Tzaddiqim in Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 64, according to which some specialize in drawing down intelligences or mohin, some in rebuking and correcting ethical traits, and some in granting blessings. The vast variety of Hasidic schools obviously contributed to the development of mystical and magical specialization. At the same time, according to at least one text (cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 248), it is actually possible to err in gauging one's station in the hierarchy of Tzaddiqim.

83. See Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 16, 70 (cf. 272–73); Gries, "R. Israel Ben Shabbtai of Kuznitz," 148; Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 98 (see also 103–4, 106). Cf. also Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 26.

84. Nathan of Nemirov (ed.), *Sihot Ha-Ran* (Jerusalem, 1985), par. 184.

85. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 59; see also 131.

86. See Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 145a; cf. Zilberstein, *Nifla'ot Tif'eret Shlomo*, 23.

87. On the usefulness of this ability for matchmaking, see H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 199–202. On precognition gained through reading such petitions, see Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 48. According to the latter account, the Seer of Lublin taught this ability to R. Shalom of Belz, thus describing this ability as a skill that can be transmitted onwards rather than an exceptional personal attainment.

88. See Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 115; Asher, *Zikaron Yehuda*, 121. For the Seer of Lublin, see Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 68, where this ability is compared to the biblical oracle of the Urim ve-Tumim, and Yisra'el Hopstein, *Avot Yisra'el* (Brooklyn, New York, 1999), 44, where it is compared to prophecy. Cf. also the tale of R. Avraham Borenstein's ability to gauge the level of an author by the vitality seen in the letters of his book (Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 94) and the account of his ability to read the thoughts of those gathered at the Sabbath table (ibid., 73–74). For a theoretical justification of the strict nomian route of obtaining knowledge of events throughout the world only through looking at the Torah (in order to prevent the wicked from obtaining this power), see Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, *Me'or 'Enayyim*, 89.

89. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 19. For some reason, Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, in her notes in her personal copy of this book (held in the Shalom Hartman Institute library) describes this tale as "strange."

90. In this context, one should note the tales of telepathy and similar phenomena surrounding an austere twentieth-century opponent of Hasidism, R. Shlomo Elyashiv. See Aryeh Levin, *The Life of the Holy Gaon, the Author of Leshem Shvo Ve-Ahlama* (Jerusalem, 1988).

91. R. Aharon of Zhitomir, quoted in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 237–38.

92. Cf. the discussion on transmission of power in Idel, *Hasidism*, 245–47 (however, the element of personal connection between master and student, though foregrounded in the text by Epstein discussed there, is not central in Idel's analysis) and see also Brill, "The Spiritual World," 34. On fainting and transmission, see Rabinovitch, *Zekhuta De-Avraham*, 16.

93. Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 136. I am indebted to Philip Wexler for this elaboration of Child's reformulation of the role of charisma in religious life.

94. See Patricia Clough and Jean Halley, *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007).

95. Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 176; Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Torah Or* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1987), fol. 34a. Cf. the description of "rebirth" after initiation by the Besht, cited in Pedaya, "The Development," 390. For a similar account of disorientation, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 126, who describes reaching a state of devequt in which one does not know if one is human, animal, or inanimate, or indeed what one is at all.

96. Asher, *Zikaron Yehuda*, 20. In a similar vein, the transmission from Eichenstein to Safrin was confirmed in a dream, together with the "root" of the latter's soul in the Torah (H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 201; see also 195). For similar functions of dreams in Hasidism, see Yisra'el Dov of Valednik, *She'erit Yisra'el*, 26 n 75; Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 63; Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 32–33, 54; Israel Berkmeister (ed.), *Sipurei Nifla'ot Mi-Gdolei Israel* (Jerusalem, 1933), 11; Mordekhai Miller (ed.), *Beit Mordekhai: Stories of Tzaddiqim* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 2005), 171–72; Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 165, 239, 245; Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 57; Segal, "According to

the Way of Worship," 94–97; Cohen, "Self-Consciousness," 64. On the ascent of the soul in sleep and revelatory dreams, see Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 186–88. For a theory of revelation in dreams as enabled by the resting of thought in sleep increasing one's spiritual power, see Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, vol. 1, 57. For a late Hasidic critique of Freud's approach to the dream, see Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 210.

97. S. Horowitz, *Kokhvei Or*, 38–39, 41–42; see also 61–62, on a disciple falling immobile, presumably into trance, when he heard the voices of myriads of people in Nahman's room—a clear case of "hearing-as." On shock and trance, see Dan Merkur, "Unitive Experiences and the State of Trance," in *Mystical Union and Monotheistic Faith: An Ecumenical Dialogue*, ed. Moshe Idel and Bernard McGinn (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 149.

98. This experience is explicitly connected to trance-like states in several hagiographical accounts. See, e.g., on the Holy Jew of Psischa fainting during his divestment in Rabinovitz, *The Holy Jew*, 11 (cf. 49); for the account of his teacher, the Seer of Lublin, fainting in a divestment-like experience after immersion in the miqve, see Walden, *Or Ha-Nifla'ot*, 11; for divestment described as total sensory withdrawal, see S. Horowitz, *Kokhvei Or*, 45, and Ya'aqov Tzevi Yules (ed.), *Liqqutei Ramal* (Chernovitz, 1884), 8. Cf. Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 93–94. The earlier antecedents of the Hasidic descriptions and conceptualizations of divestment are discussed in chapter 3, and one should add more modern parallels. For divestment in Luzzatto, see Tishby, *Messianic Mysticism*, 66. For later discussions of divestment among the nineteenth-century Lithuanian opponents of Hasidism, see Hayyim of Volozhin, *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim*, Gate Two, chapter 13; Yisra'el Lipkin of Salant, *Or Yisra'el* (Jerusalem, 2006), 286.

99. See S. Horowitz, *Kokhvei Or*, 29–30; Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 93 (see 61 on the Seer assuming the Elijah trance posture).

100. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 491.

101. For discussions of transmission in Kabbalah, see Moshe Idel, "Transmission in the Thirteenth-Century Kabbalah," in *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality, and Cultural Diffusion*, ed. Ya'akov Elman and Israel Gershoni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 138–64; Elliot Wolfson, "Beyond the Spoken Word: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Medieval Jewish Mysticism," in *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality, and Cultural Diffusion*, ed. Ya'akov Elman and Israel Gershoni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 166–224. On uniting with the soul of the person delivering a discourse, usually a rebbe, see Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 200.

102. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 151. This text, together with extensive discussions of imitation of angelic worship in the Habad theory of prayer (see, e.g., Shneur Zalman of Lyady's *Commentary on the Prayerbook*, fol. 273a) counterbalances the claim of Idel, *Ben*, 552–53, on the marginalization of the discourse on angelic transformation and similar themes in Hasidism. In general, there is a marked need for study of the theme of joining or imitating the angelic realm as a transformative process, not only in ancient Jewish mysticism, where it has indeed been discussed by some scholars (see chapter 2), but also as traceable in much later sources as diverse as the description of prophecy as transformation in Maimonides (*Hilkhot Yesodei Ha-Torah*, 7:1) up to the descriptions of Torah study in the allegedly nonmystical Lithuanian master R. Avraham Yesha'yahu Karelitz in the twentieth century; see *Hazon Ish: On Matters of Emunah, Bitahon etc*, ed. Shmu'el Greineman (Tel Aviv, 1979), chapter 1,

par. 9, 11–12. See Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 183, 186; Wolfson, *Abraham Abulafia, Kabbalist and Prophet: Hermeneutics, Theosophy, and Theurgy* (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2000), 208; Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being*, 248; Wolfson, "Kenotic Overflow," 144–45, 190, Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 38–39; Segal, *Life after Death*, 415, 551; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 54–56; my discussion of R. Abraham ben Eliʿezer Ha-Levi in chapter 2; Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction," 62, 66, 71, 90, 97, 100, 129, 137, 139, 158, 227. However, Afterman has not integrated his important comments and citations into a full-fledged analysis. See also Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 96.

103. See, e.g., Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 487–88.

104. See the texts cited in Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 92, 148; Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 253; Garb, *The Chosen*, 68, which describe the effacement of one's selfhood vis-à-vis the Tzaddiq; and cf. Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 515–17, on the profound transformation effected by such self-effacement. According to Epstein, even one who has abominable deeds is saved by this transmission, an idea echoed in Tantric Guru Yoga, which in general bears striking resemblance to Hasidic practice; see André Padoux, "The Tantric Guru," in *Tantra in Practice*, ed. David G. White (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 48–50. On illumination through bitul towards others, see Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 3a. On being devoured by the Tzaddiq and transformed into his essence, see *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 129. On yihud between the Hasid and the Tzaddiq, see Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 192–94 (however, here and elsewhere, Wacks did not distinguish sharply enough between yihud as a technique, as an experience, and as a concept). The discussions of bitul surrounding prostration on the Tzaddiq's grave, as in R. Dov Baer Shneuri's treatise on this practice, deserve a separate study. For the time being see Yechezkel Shraga Lichtenstein, *Consecrating the Profane: Rituals Performed and Prayers Recited at Cemeteries and Burial Sites of the Pious* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad, 2007), 379–82.

105. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 75. For the worm image, see also 67, 99, and the texts cited in chapter 4 of this volume. Here we have a case of an image of an animal, as part of a series of removals from the human imaging of the self, which is at the same time far removed from that of a totemic "power animal."

106. See Pedaya, "The Development," 386; Dynner, *Men of Silk*, 173, 192. For a Habad account of the Besht transmitting visions through physical contact, see Yosef Yitzhaq Shneurson, *Ha-Yom Yom* (Kfar Habad, Israel: Kehot Publication Society, 2008), 100. On *smikha* as transmission of power from the Tzaddiq of the generation to his student, see Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 114, and see also the texts cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 25, 214. For a similar discussion of *smikha* as transmission of the power to bless, see Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 575, and cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 177. On the intricate relationship of intimacy and power in laying on of hands in the Catholic Charismatic world, see Csordas, *The Sacred Self*, 51.

107. Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 239. This is a far more mystical reading of the later Hasidic theory of dynastic transmission than that of Piekarz and other scholars who tend to focus on the sociopolitical aspect. For this reading, see, most notably, David Assaf, *The Regal Way: The Life and Times of R. Israel of Ruzhin*, trans. David Louvish (Stanford: Stanford Studies in Jewish History, 2002), 47–65. See the balanced discussion of this issue in Rapoport-Albert, "Hasidism after 1772," 92–93. For a very important argument on the role given to Hasidic women in the succession, which also expressed theories of a more mystical nature, see Nehemia Polen, "Rebbetzins, Wonder-Children, and the Dynastic Principle in Hasidism," in *The Shtetl: New*

Evaluations, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 53–84. For assumption of leadership based on a heavenly proclamation, see Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 332.

108. For magical uses of the rebbe's power objects, such as the prayer belt (*gartel*), Qiddush goblet etc., see Reuven Hayyim Alexander of Radoshitz, *Nifla'ot Ha-Sabba Qadisha*, 83. For tefillin, see Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 333–34. For *Mezuzah*, see Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 106 (cf. chapter 6). On the signature of the Tzaddiq see Zilberberg, *Nifla'ot Tif'eret Shlomo*, 19. On the danger of being burned by eating the Matza of the Tzaddiq, see Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 37. See also the account on transmission through the mantle of the Besht, adduced in Rapoport-Albert, "Hasidism after 1772," 102 n 76, and cf. Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 332. See also Yehezkel Halberstam, *Divrei Yehezkel* (Ramat Gan, Israel, 1986), 31 for the well known theme of transmission through contact with the Tzaddiq's meal. For a theoretical discourse on the power of the Tzaddiq's objects, see Emanuel Horowitz (ed.), *Torat Ha-Maggid Mi-Zlotchov*, 262.

109. See Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi* (undated, Bnei Brak, Israel), 36; H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 335; Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 328, 334.

110. See Blum, *Be-Oro Shel Yitzhaq*, 23.

111. See Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi of Ropczyce," 327–28; Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 25, 140. See also the Yiddish discourse in Menahem Mendel Shneurson, *Liqqutei Sihot* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1993), vol. 4, 1137, on the first rebbe of Habad receiving the "interiority" and essence of the Besht.

112. Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 161 (from R. Eli'ezer, the son of R. Elimelekh).

113. For a similar organic model, see Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 72 n198; see also chapter 4, as well as Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 128, 282–83.

114. *Liqqutei Moharan*, vol. 1, par. 66. See also vol. 1, par. 60, on the Tzaddiq of the generation as the major source for the reception of spirit.

115. Ibid., vol. 2, par. 7, and see also Wolfson, "The Cut That Binds," 145. For an overview of the role of speech in R. Nahman's discourses, see Shore, "Letters of Desire."

116. Garb, *The Chosen*, 79. Cf. Pedaya, "Review of Rosman," 521, who writes of faint traces of trance in the twentieth century, and only in the Middle East. See also the description of sensory withdrawal by R. Ya'aqov Moshe Harlap, the close student of the famous twentieth-century mystic R. Kook, cited in Dov Schwartz, *Challenge and Crisis in Rabbi Kook's Circle* (Tel Aviv: 'Am 'Oved, 2001), 190–91.

117. See, e.g., Ron Wacks, "The Technique of Guided Imagination in the Thought of R. Kalonymus Kalman Shapira of Piasseczno," *Kabbalah* 17 (2008): 240–42; Wacks, "Emotion and Enthusiasm in the Educational Theory of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira of Piacezna," *Hagut: Jewish Educational Thought* 5–6 (2003–2004): 82–85; Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 222–39, on guided imagination in the works of this thinker (for a mention of hypnotic suggestion, see the text cited in 128 n 419). However, in my view Leshem is somewhat inaccurate in organizing these discussions under the more general category of meditation rather than trance.

118. Q. Q. Shapira, *Derekh Ha-Melekh*, ed. Elimelekh Shapira (Jerusalem, 1998), 450–51. Cf. Q. Q. Shapira, *Tzav Ve-Ziruz*, printed with *Hakhsarat Ha-Avrekhim* (Jerusalem, 2001), 360, on observing thoughts so as to become aware of ones' weak psychological points (see also Elimelekh Weisblum, *Noam Elimelekh*, fol. 8b). On music in his mystical practice, see Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 188–91, and see 247–53 on our text on quieting the mind (which was previously briefly discussed

in Garb, *The Chosen*, 79). For a mention of hypnotic practice by an early twentieth-century Mussar teacher, see Eliyahu Eli'ezer Dessler, *Miktav Me-Eliyahu: Elul and Rosh Ha-Shana* (Bnei Brak, Israel 2009), 34.

119. See Q. Q. Shapira, *Bnei Mahshava Tova*, 35. Cf. the description of the trance-like fainting of R. Dov Baer of Mezeritch when seeing the heavenly host while reciting the *Ein Ke-Elohenu* prayer in Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 51 (cf. 84).

120. Q. Q. Shapira, *Bnei Mahshava Tova*, 25, 29, 32, and cf. 57 on the place where the group practices becoming holy. According to this description, at such times the heavenly chariot goes through the soul (28). Compare also to his experience of God's light during this meal, found in Q. Q. Shapira, *Tzav Ve-Ziruz*, 342 (and see also 344–45). On the practice of this group, see Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 151–72.

121. Q. Q. Shapira, *Bnei Mahshava Tova* , 25–26, and cf. 31–32 on seeing the world as souls.

122. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 396–97. See also Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 91.

123. Cf. the influence of homeopathy on another early twentieth-century Hasidic figure, as described by Ira Robinson, "The Tauler Rebbe of Lodz and His Medical Practice: Towards a History of Hasidic Life in Pre–First World War Poland," *Polin* 11 (1998): 53–61. For an interesting comparison of homeopathy to early Hasidic ideas, see Brill, "The Spiritual World," 38 n 44. The controversial contemporary Hasidic teacher, R. Yitzchak Ginsburgh, devoted an extensive series of unpublished lectures to a Hasidic evaluation of homeopathy.

124. Eckstein, *Tna'ei Ha-Nefesh Le-Hasagat Ha-Hasidut*, 24, 42, 109–10. This work includes a psychological analysis of the Sefirot (54–57), but not by name.

125. Ibid., 44–45. See 46–47 on the danger of the detachment from life that can develop as result of this empowerment.

126. Ibid., 68, 105. For another discussion of guided imagination in the works of this writer, see Leshem, "Between Messianism and Prophecy," 239–46.

127. Efim Svirsky, *Connection: Emotional-Spiritual Growth through Experiencing God's Presence* (Jerusalem, 2004) (accompanied by a CD with exercises); Jonathan Garb, "Mystical and Spiritual Discourse in the Contemporary Ashkenazi Haredi Worlds," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 9/1 (2010): 29–48; Garb, "Towards the Study of the Spiritual-Mystical Renaissance in the Contemporary Ashkenazi Haredi World in Israel," in *Kabbalah and Contemporary Spiritual Revival*, ed. Boaz Huss (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, forthcoming). See also the numerous books by Zelig Pliskin, which draw freely on NLP methods.

128. See Garb, *The Chosen*; Boaz Huss, "The New Age of Kabbalah: Contemporary Kabbalah, the New Age, and Postmodern Spirituality," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 6/2 (2007): 107–25. For a contemporary account of trembling in what appears to be a state of trance, see Brill, "The Spiritual World," 45 n 73.

CHAPTER SIX: TRANCE AND THE NOMIAN

1. For a summary and consideration of research on Kabbalah and the nomian, see Jonathan Garb, "Circumventions of Halakha: A Preliminary Study of Anomian Trends in the Twentieth Century," *Akdamot: A Journal of Jewish Thought* 14 (2004): 117–30. For a recent nuanced discussion of antinomianism and mysticism, see Richard Woods, "Above the Law: Mysticism and Antinomianism in the High Middle Ages," in *Crossing Boundaries: Essays on the Ethical Status of Mysticism*, ed. G. William

Barnard and Jeffrey J. Kripal (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), 157–83. Elliot Wolfson's alternative organization of this question, using the category of the hypernomian, as the dialectics of moving beyond the law in order to fulfill the law, is discussed below.

2. One obvious example is Paul, whom, following Segal, we described earlier as one of the earliest instances of Jewish shamanism. Paul's move, through ascent, from the Temple below to the Temple above can be seen in this context as a displacement from shared ritual sacred space to inner geography.

3. See Rapoport's classical discussion (*Ritual and Religion*, 386–90) on the role of ritual in making unconscious levels of the mind accessible. See also 275 for the following formulation: "The most durable elements of liturgical orders . . . are usually those whose significata are spiritual." In other words, nomian patterns become stable precisely because of their alliance to mystical and other spiritual experiences. Cf. Wexler, *Mystical Interactions*, 90, as well Itamar Gruenwald, *Rituals and Ritual Theory in Ancient Israel* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2003), 207, on the transformative effect of ritual.

4. See the similar arguments in Buc, *Dangers of Ritual*.

5. As we have also seen in the case of Vital, many of the trance experiences recorded in Safrin's *Megillat Setarim* occurred on the Sabbath, as well as on the festivals (see, e.g., the translation in Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 285, 287, 290–91, 293). In some cases, as in the case of his model Vital, Safrin dreamt of or had visions of Sabbath or holiday prayers in ordinary nights (see 84–85, 105, 288, 290). He himself writes of a vision of his teacher, R. Naftali of Ropshitz, who told him that he sees souls when wide awake "from the reward of Sabbath and its light." He then went on to have a Sabbath "illumined with a wondrous light" (291). Cf. Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 101 n 225.

6. See also Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 317 n 82. On Safrin's father's face burning like a torch when he was studying clothed in tallit and tefillin, see Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 279 (cf. 288, 289, 290). On tefillin as "binding" to higher worlds in tales of R. Naftali of Ropshitz, see Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi," 333–34. For meditation on the light of the Sabbath candles (a technique that is also briefly presented in R. Shabbetai of Rashkov's Hasidic rendition of the Lurianic prayerbook), see Perlow, '*Oneg Sabbath*, in Or *Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 244, and cf. the texts by R. Hayyim Tyrer of Czernovitz discussed by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 53–62, and Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 59, on seeing the entire world in the candles. On matza as a power object, see chapter 5. For dreams of ascent while donning tefillin or being inside the shofar, see Brill, "The Spiritual World," 63. See also Asher, *Zikaron Yehuda*, 123, on trance during recitation of the benediction after meals.

7. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 76, and see 123 on imagining being kissed by the Infinite Light when kissing the tzitzit, 152 on visualizing being under the light of the tallit, and 157 on enclothing the soul in the light of the tallit. For becoming a new creature, or deep transformation of being, through the light of the tallit, see '*Oneg Sabbath* (printed in the same volume), 270.

8. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 209–10 (cf. 206, 214–15). On the normative effect of fire-related experience in midrashic literature, see Hosen, "The Fire Symbol," especially 214.

9. See Morris Faierstein, *All Is in the Hands of Heaven: The Teachings of Rabbi Mordecai Joseph Leiner of Izbica* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House, 1989); Rachel Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism*, trans. Shalom Carmy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 163–72; Magid, *Hasidism on the Margin*, 215–48 (as well as the earlier

studies cited in these discussions), as opposed to Cohen, "Self-Consciousness," especially 34–35, 60, 106, 228, 240–43, 350–58, 385–88. Brown, "*As a Ship Listing at Sea,*" will take a position similar to Cohen's.

10. See Shaul Magid, "A Thread of Blue: R. Gershon Henoch Leiner of Radzyn and His Search for Continuity in Response to Modernity," *Polin* 11 (1998): 31–52; Bezalel Naor, "Substituting Synthetic Dye for Hilazon: The Renewal of Techelet," *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* 24 (1992): 97–107. For an entirely nomian work that combines rather conservative Halakhic and Mussar precepts, see R. Hanokh Leiner's supercommentary on the medieval *Orhot Hayyim*.

11. B Hulin 89a; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 186–285; Wolfson, *Open Secret*, 55–56, 164–65, 180, on hypernomianism and Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 18–19, on the genre of the "throne vision."

12. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 34a. For a hint at antinomian tendencies prevalent in his time stemming from false prophecy, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Heikhal Ha-Brakha*, vol. 1, fol. 268b. Cf. Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 242, who stresses the antinomian elements in the thought of R. Yitzhaq of Radvil, while citing a text in which this master defines the Tzaddiq as one who meticulously performs the commandments!

13. See Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 344; Aharon Wertheim, *Law and Custom in Hasidism* (Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 2003), as well as the specific discussion of novel prayer forms in Jacobs, *Hasidic Prayer*, and the brief comment of Brill, "The Spiritual World," 54 n 121. Though we do not yet have a full-fledged analysis of Hasidic ritual innovation, Maoz Kahana is currently preparing such a study.

14. Tzevi Elimelekh Shapira of Dinov, *Ve-Heye Brakha* (Permishlan, 1875), 79–80; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*; cf. Piekarz, *Hasidic Leadership*, 346–52; Mendel Piekarz, "Why Did the Spanish Exile Perish: A Forewarning of the Dangers of the Enlightenment," *Da'at* 28 (1992): 87–115; Benjamin Brown, "Stringency: Five Modern-Era Types," *Diné Israel* 20–21 (2001): 183, 191–92.

15. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 90–91, 110–11.

16. See, e.g., Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 128, 134.

17. See Wexler, *Mystical Interactions*, 87–90, and the earlier studies adduced there.

18. See the comments of Haviva Pedaya, *Name and Sanctuary in the Teachings of R. Isaac the Blind: A Comparative Study in the Writings of the Earliest Kabbalists* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2001), 3–34, which are especially pertinent to the present discussion. Cf. the comments of Joseph Dan, "The Cultural and Social Background of the Emergence of Traditional Ethical Literature," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 7 (1988): 239–64, which need to be significantly reconsidered in light of Pedaya's insights. For an effort to discuss the relationship of Mussar literature and Kabbalah in more general terms, see Dan, *On Sanctity: Religion, Ethics, and Mysticism in Judaism and Other Religions* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997), 322–54. Wolfson's critique (*Venturing Beyond*, 196–97) of Isaiah Tishby's mistaken claim that there is little Mussar in the classic Zohar is now amply reinforced by the recent two-volume collection of David Turgeman (ed.), *Mussarei Ha-Zohar* (Safed, 2006), which collates the numerous Mussar texts found in the Zohar. See, however, Ronit Meroz, "And I Was Not There? The Complaints of R. Simeon Bar Yohai According to an Unknown Zoharic Story," *Tarbiz* 71 (2002): 163–93, which is part of a wider study that will present the hypothesis that the focus on Mussar represents the view of but one stream in the Zoharic world. See also the critique of the lack of scholarly attention to Mussar in Kallus, "The Theurgy," 292 n 384, which predated Wolfson's work. One possible direction

for further exploration is the presence of ethical prerequisites for ascent in Jewish literature in Antiquity. See Segal, "Heavenly Ascent," 1359.

19. Though I have used the Hebrew edition here, there is also an annotated English translation of Eichenstein's text (Louis Jacobs, *Turn Aside from Evil and Do Good: An Introduction and a Way to the Tree of Life/Zevi Hirsch Eichenstein* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1995). For a wider discussion of the continuing presence of Mussar in the Hasidic world, see Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 29–46.

20. Eichenstein, *Sur Me-Ra'*, 25. And see also the similar description of mystical levels as a mere by-product of accepting the yoke of divine service by his student Y. Y. Safrin in *Notzer Hesed*, 19 (and see also 62, 180). However, Eichenstein himself criticizes those who have come to regard Hasidism as tantamount with observing stringencies in ritual matters (*Sur Me-Ra'*, 35), and see above for his illuminatory understanding of such stringencies.

21. See Sorotzkin, "The Super-Temporal Community," 194–99; Tsippi Kauffman, "Alien Gods and Alien Worship in Hasidic Thought," *Akdamot* 19 (2007): 98–99; Yehoshua Mondshein, "The Fluidity of Categories in Hasidism: Averah Lishmah in the Teachings of R. Zevi Elimelekh of Dynow," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert, 301–20 (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1996).

22. Y. Y. Safrin, *Netiv Mitzvotekha*, 99. Cf. his fascinating statement (in 28 of the introduction) according to which Shabbetai Tzevi's main fault lay in the area of *middot*.

23. H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 142; cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 2. The Hasidic discourse rectifying the seven *middot*, as part of the overall translation of the Sefirotic structure into psychological terms, and especially in the nomian context of the rite of *Sefirat Ha-'Omer*, requires further study. See Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, especially vol. 2, 11, on becoming a vessel for drawing down influx through emending the seven *middot*, as well as Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl, *Me'or 'Enayyim*, 34 (who describes this task as "our main worship"); Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir, *Or Ha-Me'ir*, vol. 2, 319; Israel of Bohupol, *'Ateret Yisra'el*, fols. 11a, 64a (and see also fol. 21b on rebirth through amending the *middot*); Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 132.

24. Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 107.

25. See chapter 3. On Mussar and mysticism in Lurianic Kabbalah, see Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 88–93.

26. Vital, *Sha'arei Qedusha*, 4:5. . For the role of repentance as a crucial element of the wider transformation known as *teshuva*, especially in the Hasidic world, see Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 217 n 108.

27. Cf. Idel, *Enchanted Chains*, as well as Garb, "Moshe Idel's Contribution."

28. This fact has been addressed by Fishbane, *The Kiss of God*, 42–43. See also the text adduced and analyzed in Elliot Wolfson, "Megillat 'Emet we-'Emunah: Contemplative Visualization and Mystical Unknowing," *Kabbalah* 5 (2000): 55–110, which describes a ladder of ascent based on the *middot*.

29. The salience of rabbinic texts, including numerous Halakhic texts, in *Mesilat Yesharim* renders it difficult to understand the claim of Joseph Dan (*On Sanctity*, 331) that this book has no direct connection at all to Halakha, especially as a similar claim was made by him with regard to *Sha'arei Qedusha*, which as we have seen, describes meticulous performance of the law as an absolute prerequisite of mystical progress. Such statements have more to do with the secularistic ideological orientation of certain figures in the previous generations of Jewish Studies than with the texts themselves.

30. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 127.

31. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, especially 14–15. Cf. the different development of this discussion in Magid, "Ethics Disentangled," whose claim that the Hasidim subordinated ethics to mystical experience and also detached ethics from Halakha differs substantially from my own approach. I believe that Magid's ready application of the Western term "ethics" to Jewish texts and the comparative moves based on it are problematic, although the article is undoubtedly seminal and thought-provoking. I also do not wish to deny that the model that Magid presents can be found in some Hasidic texts, alongside with the model suggested here. This entire methodological issue shall be explored further in the Ph.D. dissertation of my student Patrick Koch.

32. See Ioan M. Lewis, "Possession and Public Morality II: Other Cosmological Systems," in *Shamanism: A Reader*, ed. Graham Harvey, 69–91 (New York: Routledge, 1993).

33. See Louis Jacobs (trans. and ed.), *The Palm Tree of Deborah* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1960), 115–16, 75. See also the important comments of Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 197–98, 312–13, 403–5; Eitan P. Fishbane, "A Chariot for the Shekhinah: Identity and the Ideal Life in Sixteenth Century Kabbalah," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37/3 (2009): 385–418. For a reverberation of the *gerushin* technique in Hasidism, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 91–92 and the autobiographical account on 173.

34. For the Lurianic requirement of immersion before and on the Sabbath, as well as the somatic transformations and visionary experiences that may be attained through this immersion, see Vital, *Pri ʿEtz Hayyim*, The Gate of the Sabbath, 3. For a parallel formulation in a post-Lurianic discussion of the Shabbat immersion, see Yaʿaqov Qopel Lipshitz, *Qol Yaʿaqov* (Lemberg, 1859), fol. 118a; cf. the esoteric discussion of immersion as a condition for mystical revelations in Bakhrakh, *Emeq Ha-Melekh* (The Gate of the Pleasure of the King, chapter 4), fol. 3a. See also Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 74; Wolfson, "Weeping, Death," 217.

35. See, e.g., the important comments of Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 134–38.

36. See Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 155–57, 162–66; Pachter, "Shemirat Habrit," 254, 256 n 61. In a recently published manuscript containing rules of conduct (*hanhagot*) by R. Nahum of Chernobyl, together with numerous other nomian precepts, it is recommended to set aside a weekly day for solitude (as found already in Safedian texts) and on this day to immerse oneself twice: once to remove the spirit of impurity and once to "draw down" purity and holiness; published in *Heikhal Ha-Baʿal Shem Tov*, 2 (2003), 9. The issue of purification will also be discussed in a forthcoming study by Ada Rapoport-Albert, parts of which have been presented in public lectures. For an important medieval text on internal and external purification and mystical vision, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 277. For contemporary Kabbalistic studies of this theme, see the sources cited in Jonatan Meir, "The Revealed and the Revealed within the Concealed: On the Opposition to the 'Followers' of Rabbi Yehudah Ashlag and the Dissemination of Esoteric Literature," *Kabbalah* 16 (2007): 242 n 526.

37. Eichenstein, *Sur Me-Raʿ*, 49; cf. *Pri Qodesh Hilulim* (super-commentary on the Lurianic *Pri ʿEtz Hayyim*), printed in the same edition, 54–55.

38. See Shimeʿon Menaham Mendel Shub (ed.), *Baʿal Shem Tov on the Torah* (Jerusalem, 1987), vol. 2, 41.

39. Breuer, *Tzevi Le-Tzaddiq*, 41–42, and see there on his secret kavvana for the miqve, which is passed down orally "to this day."

40. *Pri Qodesh Hilulim* (printed with Eichenstein, *Sur Me-Raʿ*), The Gate of the Sabbath, 50. Not surprisingly, I have not managed to find any kavvanot for women's immersion; however, Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 230, does bring a kavvana practiced

by the husband for his wife's immersion! On the need for immersion for women who had sexual dreams, see R. Eliʿezer Tzevi Safrin's introduction to *Or ʿEnayim*, 18 (printed in *Ben Beiti*).

41. See Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 93. For a nonacademic, but highly useful, collection of sources on this issue, see Hayyim Zuskind, "Immersion in the Mikve as Preparation for Prayer and as Purification in the Hasidic World," *Heikhal Ha-Baʿal Shem Tov* 14 (2006): 44–70.

42. This kavvana received numerous commentaries, and one should especially note that of R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady (who uses the pun *tevila-bitul* to emphasize the self-annulling effect of the purification, which he also relates to mystical death). See his *Commentary on the Prayerbook*, 156–60. See also Q. Q. Shapira, *Esh Qodesh* (Jerusalem, 1960), 172, on immersion as bitul through entering the divine domain. On states of self-annihilation in the performance of various commandments in Habad mysticism, see Wolfson, *Open Secret*, 69–70, 74, 144–46 (cf. 237–38). It is interesting that R. Tzevi Hirsch Eichenstein cites a "tradition from our teachers in the name of the Baʿal Shem Tov" regarding the intention of the immersion, and it is plausible that this is part of the tradition mentioned above.

43. *Birkat Abraham*, cited in Shub, *Baʿal Shem Tov on the Torah*, vol. 2, 43. On the social role of the miqve, see, e.g., Reuven Hayyim Alexander of Radoshitzm, *Niflaʾot Ha-Sabba Qadisha*, 46, on eating only with those who have immersed themselves, and Memleck, *Abir Ha-Roʾim*, 71, on R. Abraham Borenstein not touching those who had not gone to the miqve (cf. 267), and the text cited from *Degel Mahaneh Ephraim* by R. Moshe Hayyim Ephraim of Sudlikov in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 167, on the Tzaddiq as miqve.

44. Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 145a.

45. Ibid., fol. 14b. This state is in turn compared to the mystical death of the Shemaʿ (fol. 26a), which according to yet another text (fol. 27b), entails exiting the body so that on return it becomes holy (or divestment followed somatic transformation). On the miqve as return to the womb and rebirth, see Yisraʾel Hopstein, *ʿAvodat Yisraʾel* (Bnei Brak, Israel, 1996), 88. On bitul and transformative rebirth in the miqve, see Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 178.

46. See Idel, "Prayer, Ecstasy, and Alien Thoughts," 61. Cf. the description of the Besht seeing all the worlds upon entering the miqve in Ben-Amos and Mintz, *In Praise of the Baʿal Shem Tov*, 206.

47. Cited in Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 366.

48. Y. Y. Safrin, *Shulhan Ha-Tahor*, 260:7. For another statement on the need for purification for prayer from the school of the Seer, see Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 199.

49. Ibid., 34:1 (in the *Zer Zahav* section); Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 7a.

50. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 7b. Cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 162, on the Besht warming the miqve through the heat generated by yihudim—a description that is clearly related to our discussion of experiences of fiery transformation. Cf. the magical story in Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 294.

51. For useful summaries, see Wertheim, *Laws and Customs in Hasidism*, 66–68, 144–45; Moshe Hallamish, *Kabbalistic Customs of Shabbat* (Jerusalem: Orhot, 2006), 106–26; Gedalia Aberlander, "Holiness and Purity: Immersion on Sabbath among the Hasidim: Sources and Studies," *Heikhal Ha-Baʿal Shem Tov* 16 (2007): 48–66.

52. Based on Psalms 118:20.

53. Epstein, *Maʾor Va-Shemesh*, 370. Cf. a parallel tradition in the name of the Seer in Eichenstein, *Sur Me-Raʿ*, 98–99, where the lack of refinement of the Sabbateans is

mentioned, but not the question of immersion (and cf. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 73, as well as Cohen, "Self-Consciousness," 239–40).

54. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Shulhan ʿArukh Ha-Rav* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 2007), *Orah Hayyim*, "Laws of Hand Purification," 4:1. Cf. the texts cited by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 169–171.

55. For the rabbinic literature, see, e.g., Yehoshuaʿ Mondshein, *Torat Habad: Bibliographies of Habad Hasiduth Books* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1984), vol. 2.

56. Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Shulhan ʿArukh Ha-Rav*, *Yoreh Deʿah*, "Laws of Study," 1:4. On Torah study and *unio mystica*, see Elior, *The Theory of Divinity*, 354, as well as Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Liqqutei Amarim* (*Tanya*) 1:5; 1:23.

57. Idel, *Hasidism*, 172–75; see also Moshe Idel, "From the 'Hidden Light' to the 'Light within the Torah': A Chapter in the Phenomenology of Jewish Mysticism," *Migvan Deʿot Be-Yisraʾel* 11 (2002): 46–60.

58. See Idel, "On Prophecy," 59; Liwer, "Oral Torah," 321–22.

59. Weiss, *Studies*, 56–57; Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 310–25.

60. Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 100. This absorption has rather early antecedents: according to Goshen-Gottstein, "Four Entered Paradise Revisited," 101–2, R. Aqiva's successful ascent experience in the Pardes narrative was attributed to his balance of vision and intellectual study. At the same time, certain rabbinic circles critiqued ascent as such (see Segal, "Heavenly Ascent," 1386), so it is important to recall that "anti-mystical" rabbinic paths can also be found in Jewish history, though probably not markedly in the nineteenth century, as we have seen. For a comparison of the Hasidic/Mitnagdic debate to antecedents in rabbinic Judaism, see Idel, *Ben*, 531–32.

61. Holmberg, "Transcendence," 89–92. Holmberg strangely ignores Samuels' earlier, influential, and foundational differentiation between clerical and shamanic Buddhism. At the same time one should recall that these are Weberian ideal types, as Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 133, has stressed. On the shaman as an intellectual, see Ripinsky-Naxon, *The Nature of Shamanism*, 65.

62. This model, albeit in a binary and thus somewhat truncated form, may be found in Rachel Elior's important study of the school of the Seer of Lublin, "Between 'yesh' and 'ayin,'" which in turn appears to follow the suggestion of Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Hasidism as Mysticism*, 380. However, in a later study Elior unnecessarily disengages the social and spiritual aspects of this process. Rachel Elior, "Between 'Divestment of Corporeality' and 'Love of Corporeality,'" in *Studies in Jewish Culture in Honor of Chone Shmeruk*, ed. Israel Bartal, Ezra Mendelsohn, and Chava Turniansky (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1993), 209–41.

63. See Luria, *Even Shlema*, chapter 4, part 21. Alan Brill, "The Mystical Path of the Vilna Gaon," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 3/1 (1994): 151, has correctly pointed at the influence of this scholastic mode on nineteenth-century Hasidic figures such as R. Avraham Borenstein.

64. This is not to say that we cannot locate strong statements on the mystical role of Torah study in earlier generations; however, these positions were sharpened in later generations.

65. One should add that even within the antinomian Sabbatean world study was far from divorced from trance: Nathan of Gaza was reported to have achieved his second vision by reciting the lengthy tractate Ketubbot—no mean scholarly achievement (see Goldish, *Sabbatean Prophets*, 64).

66. Walden, *Niflaʾot Ha-Rabbi*, 95.

67. See Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 281; H. Y. Safrin, *Imrei Qodesh*, 194.

68. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 127b (and see also fol. 132b as well as fol. 152a). On this theme in his writings see also chapter 4.

69. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 41. On this rite in modern Kabbalah, including the Komarno school, see Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 308–20, and the studies cited there. The term Judaism (*yahadut*) here (and in 72, 74, 78) is relatively rare in premodern sources and appears mostly in discussions of the borders of identity, as in the laws of conversion. However, it became common in modern European Jewish discourse, especially in the form *yiddishkeit*, which Safrin is almost certainly translating here. The mystical-religious uses of the term should be contrasted with the secular renderings, from the Enlightenment through Zionist discourse, where it has been markedly reified in nationalistic terms.

70. See Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 64.

71. Ibid., 108 (cf. 109), which likewise relates his Halakhic ability to a "heavenly declaration." For similar accounts of the nineteenth-century Hungarian sage R. Moshe Sofer as well as the twentieth-century Lithuanian sage Avraham Yesha'yahu Karelitz, both of whom are often regarded as anti-mystical, see Kahana, "The Chatam Sofer." Sofer's mystical positions and experiences, which are eloquently described in Kahana's work, are not surprising if one recalls that he was the student of the German mystic R. Nathan Adler. On the latter's exalted status in the Hasidic world, see, e.g., Salmon, "R. Naphtali Zevi," 335.

72. Cf. Yehuda Tzevi of Radvil, *Da'at Qedoshim* (New York, 2000), 1, a text from the Ziditchov school that clearly states: "The devequt of study is the revelation of light." See Aharon Perlow of Karlin, *Beit Aharon*, fol. 18a, on burning the qelipot through Talmudic study. See also Aharon Perlow of Apta, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 13, for the ritual of saying "let there be light" when studying (and 115 on the light surrounding the Tzaddiqim when studying). See also the texts by R. Levi Yitzhaq of Berditchev and R. Ya'aqov Tzevi Yalish (of the school of the Seer), on studying Torah with divestment of materiality, cited in Piekarz, *Between Ideology and Reality*, 115, 145. The extensive evidence cited here as to the strong relationship of the divestment of materiality to trance and other extreme mystical states refutes Piekarz's nonmystical interpretation of such texts. On Luria's use of yihudim to solve scholastic questions, see Fine, *Physician of the Soul*, 287.

73. Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, part 2, 45. For "scholastic magic" operated by the Tzaddiq through the Torah, see the texts collected by Gedalyah Nigal in his introduction to the 1978 Jerusalem edition of *Noam Elimelekh*, 107–8.

74. Cf. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 235; Wolfson, "Structure, Innovation," 159 on the need to move beyond the customary opposition between conservative and innovatory modes in Jewish mysticism. See also Child, *Tantric Buddhism*, 167, on Tantra as a conservative and radical tradition.

75. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 353–54.

76. See, e.g., Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 39. On rhythm in Buber's reading of Hasidism, see Martina Urban, *The Aesthetics of Renewal: Martin Buber's Early Representation of Hasidism as Kulturkritik* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 127.

77. See Rossi, *The Psychobiology*, 72–78, 115–118; Franklyn Sills, *Craniosacral Biodynamics* (Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books, 2007), 37–39, 53–71; Sills, *Being and Becoming*, 148–62; Rapoport, *Ritual and Religion*, 220–30. On music and mysticism, see Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 242–45. The role of music and dance in Hasidic practice cannot be reduced to the desire to reach wider audiences, as in Dynner, *Men of Silk*,

221. On music as communication, see David Hargreaves, Raymond Macdonald, and Dorothy Miell, *Musical Communication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). On rhythm and shamanism, see de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, 297.

78. See Tad James and Wyatt Woodsmall, *Time Line Therapy and the Basis of Personality* (Capitola, California: Meta Publications, 1988).

79. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 285. On the Hasidic Sabbath, see Moshe Idel, "Sabbath: On Concepts of Time in Jewish Mysticism," in *Sabbath: Idea, History, Reality*, ed. Gerald J. Blidstein (Beer Sheva, Israel: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2004), 84–88.

80. See the text cited in Piekarz, *The Hasidic Leadership*, 243. The term *noam shabbat*, or pleasantness of Sabbath, is central in the lyrics of R. Aharon of Karlin's song "Yah Ekhsof," perhaps the favorite Sabbath melody among all Hasidic groups (for nearly falling in a fiery state while singing this melody, see Biderman, *Qedushat Mordekhai*, 51). On the magical effects of the connection between the Hasidim in the Sabbath meals and other festive meals, see Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 168, and see 189, on new lights and *mohin* that the Tzaddiq receives with each Sabbath guest.

81. Garb, "Mystical and Spiritual Discourse"; Garb, "Towards the Study of the Spiritual-Mystical Renaissance." See also Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 121, who warns against taking mere musical pleasure in the *nigun*.

82. Reuven Hayyim Alexander of Radoshitz, *Nifla'ot Ha-Sabba Qadisha*, 62.

83. Gur-Aryeh, *Toldot Itzhaq Eisic*, 115, as well as the texts cited by Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 37–38. For a similar accounts about twentieth-century Mussar teachers see Wolbe, '*Alei Shur*, vol. 2, 382; Wolbe, *Quntres Ha-Adam Biykar* (Jerusalem, 1999), 22. For a comparison of transformation on the Sabbath to that manifested by the face burning like a torch, see Alter, *Sefat Emet*, vol. 1, 250.

84. Memleck, *Abir Ha-Ro'im*, 66–67, 72.

85. Walden, *Nifla'ot Ha-Rabbi*, 53. Cf. 81, where it is stated that on Friday night his ruah ha-qodesh was apparent to all. See also Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 156, who writes that the worshipers of God can feel that when one speaks gossip the light of the Sabbath immediately departs.

86. On spontaneous states of *unio mystica* in the *Pessach* holiday, see the text cited by Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 286. On spontaneous kavvana in the writing of Eichenstein, see Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 182–84, and cf. the experience of sudden illumination described by his student Y. Y. Safrin in *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fol. 147b. For a general observation, see Barnard, "Debating the Mystical," 98 n 19, whose comment is a valuable corrective to over-emphasis on techniques, which can lead to a neglect of the study of spontaneous states in mystical worlds. For the role of this cycle in the inner states and social activity of the fifth rebbe of Habad, see the Appendix.

87. For a contemporary poetic overview of the Hasidic experience of this month that collects numerous earlier sources, see Yitzhaq Moshe Erlanger, *Quntresei Hasidut: Mo'adim*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 2007).

88. Though the topic of Ellul cannot be discussed here at length, one should note that the heightening of spiritual activity in this month is not an exclusive trademark of Hasidism, as evidenced by pre-Hasidic sources such Aharon ben Mordekhai of Vilk-atz, *Sha'ar Ha-Melekh* (Jerusalem, 1991), 2–48, from eighteenth-century Poland, or by the stress placed on this month by the Mitnagdic Mussar movement. However, it is not even an Eastern European development, as it is greatly stressed by the nineteenth-century Moroccan saint R. Ya'aqov Abuhatzeira (whose writings betray

striking similarities to Hasidic discourse that cannot be accounted for by the conjecture of historical influence). One should recall that in the Sephardic world the *selihot* are recited throughout Ellul. Rather, it should be seen as part of the general process of temporalization of Jewish spiritual life in modernity, a development that ultimately strengthened collective and nomian elements.

89. Perlow, *Beit Aharon*, fols. 17b, 21b.

90. See Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies*, 286, and cf. 293. On the new year and ascent experiences, see Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 144; Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 220, 246.

91. Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 43–44, 49–50; cf. 128.

92. On Rosh Ha-Shana as an emulation of mystical death, see Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 661–62. On the aspiration to annul free choice on Rosh Ha-Shana, see Alter, *Sefat Emet*, vol. 5, 146. On Rosh Ha-Shana as regenerative transformation, see Yissakhar Baer Rabinovitch of Radomsk, *Hesed Le-Avraham* (Petrakov, 1893), 18. On intense weeping on Rosh Ha-Shana, see Dov Baer Shneuri, *'Ateret Rosh* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 2003), fol. 20b; cf. the prescription of intense weeping on Yom Kippur in Aharon ben Mordekhai of Vilkatz, *Sha'ar Ha-Melekh* (220; cf. 476), which in general is a probable source for some of the Hasidic practices surrounding the holidays.

93. Nathan of Nemirov, *Hayyei Moharan*, par. 403. For a collection of sources related to R. Nahman's perception of the centrality of Rosh Ha-Shana for his inner work and social activity, see the semi-anonymous *Rosh Ha-Shana of the True Tzaddiq*, by David Q., published in Israel in 1998 (my thanks to Zvi Mark for calling my attention to this source). See also Idel, *Ben*, 546–47. On rebirth through the purification of the air by means of the kavvanot of the shofar, see Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, vol. 2, 25.

94. Y. Y. Safrin, *Zohar Hai*, vol. 1, fols. 60a–b; Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 127.

95. Elimelekh Weisblum, *Noam Elimelekh*, fol. 4a.

96. Zaltzman, *Imrot Moshe*, 50; Perlow, *Or Ha-Ganuz La-Tzaddiqim*, 207. On the encompassing (*maqif*) light that shines to all that dwell in the sukka, see Rotenberg, *Or La-Shamayyim*, 219. On imagining standing on the holy names on the floor of the sukka, see R. Ze'ev Wolf of Zhitomir's *Or Ha-Me'ir*, 309. For a contemporary visualization of the "surrounding light" in the sukka, see Erlanger, *Quntresei Hasidut: Mo'adim*, vol. 2, 407–8.

97. See Phillips, *Winnicott*, 28. For the exciting development of concepts related to transitional phenomena in art therapy, a field increasingly open to shamanic images, see, e.g., Joy Schaverien, *The Revealing Image: Analytical Art Psychotherapy in Theory and Practice* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1999), 35–36; cf. Mimi Farrelly-Hansen, *Spirituality and Art Therapy: Living the Connection* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001). On the Winnicottian concept of "holding," see Donald W. Winnicott, *Holding and Interpretation: Fragment of an Analysis* (New York: Grove Press, 1986), especially the evocative semihypnotic formulation: "Whenever we understand a patient in a deep way . . . we are in fact holding the patient" (192).

98. Ya'aqov Kleinbaum (ed.), *Shema' Shlomo* (Petrakov, 1928), 45; Halberstam, *Divrei Hayyim*, vol. 2, 41–42. The latter figure is usually described as conservative and antimystical, a categorization that should be questioned in view of this and other mystical statements cited here. See Iris Brown (Hoizman), "Rabbi Hayyim Halberstam of Sanz: His Halakhic Ruling in View of His Intellectual World and the Challenges of His Time" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2004), 395–97.

99. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 2, 725–28.

100. Cf. the observations of Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 151, 165, 171, 187, 213–17, 231–33, 245–46, 280, 283, 308–9; Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 187–88 as well as 217 n 108.

101. One striking example is that of Piekarz, who made an important contribution to understanding the roots of Hasidic antinomian statements in the pre-Hasidic world in his *The Beginning of Hasidism*, yet often decontextualizes Hasidic texts in his later writings. See the nonacademic yet interesting polemic of Pelled, *Shredded Identitiesvg* (Haifa: Pardes, 2007). Other sweeping generalizations on the history of "Jewish mysticism" (often tellingly avoiding the traditional term "Kabbalah"), which I do not wish to dwell upon here, only marginally touch on the actual forms of Jewish religious life and have thus admirably served various cultural interests and agendas. For a recent critique of antinomian readings of a central fourteenth-century Kabbalistic work, see Hagai Pely, "The Book of Kanah and the Book of Peliah: Literal and Esoteric Meaning of the Halakhah," *Tarbiz* 77 (2008): 271–93.

102. See, e.g., Idel, *Hasidism*, 55, 86–87, 119 (cf. 64, 120, 221), as well as Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, xvii, where the Hasidim are described as "also emphasizing" nomian techniques. See, however, the later formulations in Idel, "The Parable of the Son," 94, and Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 78, 86, which are closer to my own views. For a critical description of the effect of Idel's foregrounding of Abulafia on the contemporary reception of Kabbalah, see Huss, "The Formation of Jewish Mysticism." Cf. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 187–90, as well as Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 173; Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 90; Garb, *Manifestations of Power*, 271–72.

103. See Garb, *The Chosen*, 75–99.

104. For subtle tensions in Idel's writing on this subject, compare Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, xv–xvii to 74–75, 268. Cf. Wolfson, *Abraham Abulafia*, 185–228.

105. Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 338, does stipulate that interiorization does not imply denial of the external world, but this reservation is not overly expressed in his analysis.

106. Ibid., 339–40; cf. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 272. See also Yisra'el of Bohupol, '*Ateret Yisra'el*, fol. 26a, where the possibility of worship in the mundane is attributed to the expansion of the light of Torah in all things. Margolin also strives to counter the impression given by scholars such as Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer that deep inner experiences can be accessed only by antinomian mystics (see Margolin, *The Human Temple*, 319, and see also 377–78). See also the discussion of this issue in Wacks, *The Secret of Unity*, 217–21, which is not sufficiently analytical, yet cites important texts. For a critique of the general approach of Wacks, who like Kauffman, tends to privilege the anomian over the nomian, see Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 63.

107. Tsippi Kauffman, *In All Your Ways Know Him: The Concept of God and Avodah Be-Gashmiyut In the Early Stages of Hasidism* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2009), 343–44 (and more generally 250–392). Cf. Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 102–3.

108. I will bring one more example of a rather unconvincing proof for the superiority of worship in mundane activity. Tsippi Kauffman deduces from a statement of the Seer of Lublin on the superiority of drawing down material over spiritual influx that he thus privileges worship in mundane activity over the performance of the commandments. Kauffmann, "Corporeal Worship in the Writings of R. Jacob Isaac, the Seer of Lublin," *Kabbalah* 16 (2007): 281–82. Besides the possibility that this analogy is not necessary, the text under discussion does not seem to be saying that drawing down

material influx is superior on all counts but only that it draws the divine presence "further down." In any case, Kauffman herself writes correctly (284–85) that the Seer (like several other Hasidic masters) restricts worship of God within mundane activity to the Tzaddiq.

109. Epstein, *Ma'or Va-Shemesh*, vol. 1, 138.

110. See Kauffman, "Corporeal Worship," 267–69, 285–92. In some cases, Kauffman gives a transgressive reading to categories such as "a temporary injunction" (*hora'at sha'a*), which are firmly embedded within normative Halakhic discourse. See, e.g., Eliezer Berkovits, *Not in Heaven: The Nature and Function of Halakha* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1983). This reading essentially joins that of Rachel Elior, "The Innovation of Polish Hasidism," *Tarbiz* 62 (1993): 381–432 (for a shorter English version see Elior, *The Mystical Origins*, 155–60), who foregrounds the antinomian element in the thought of the school of the Seer and its offshoots (see, however, the more cautious comments of Cohen, "Self-Consciousness," 71–72). Elior's overly strong reading has already been correctly critiqued by Yehuda (Jerome) Gellman, "Hasidic Existentialism?" in *Hazon Nahum: Studies in Jewish Law, Thought, and History Presented to Dr. Norman Lamm on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Ya'akov Elman and Jeffery Gurock (New York: Michael Scharf Publication Trust of the Yeshiva University Press, 1997), 397–405. See also Nahum Rakover, *Ends That Justify the Means* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Justice, 2000), as well as Kauffman's comments on antinomianism in earlier generations, in her *In All Your Ways*, 523–71.

111. For balanced discussions of the Hasidic approach to prayer times, see Idel, "Adonay Sefatay Tiftah," 87; Cohen, "Self-Consciousness," 73–74, 79; see also Mondshein, "The Fluidity of Categories," 307.

112. Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond*, 186 and 187 respectively; cf. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 95, on the nomian construction of ascent in Heikhalot literature, as well as Gries, *The Book in Early Hasidism*, 86, 117 n 76; Pedaya, *Vision and Speech*, 27, 138, 173, 201; Pedaya, *Name and Sanctuary*, 42–55.

113. Parsons, *The Enigma*, 7.

114. See, e.g., Idel, "On the Language of Ecstatic Experience." See especially his description of Hasidism as searching for "short triggers" in his "Remembering and Forgetting," 128. For my earlier critique of such positions, see Jonathan Garb, "The Secrets of Faith in the Zohar," in *On Faith: Studies on the Concept of Faith and Its History in Jewish Thought*, ed. Moshe Halbertal, David Kurzweil, and Avi Sagi (Jerusalem: Keter, 2005), 645 n 97.

115. Cf. Liebes, *God's Story*, 334.

116. Pedaya, "Two Types of Ecstatic Experience," 94–98. Kauffman, *In All Your Ways*, 182–220, adduces several important early modern texts on worship in everyday activity, but they are scattered within an ahistorical framework.

117. See Ze'ev Gries, *Conduct Literature (Regimen Vitae): Its History and Place in the Life of Beshtian Hasidism* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1989); Gries, *The Book as an Agent of Culture*, 73–94 (as well as the comments of Scholem, *Major Trends*, 251; Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 260; Idel, *Messianic Mystics*, 164). At the same time, Gries appears to have occasionally joined the overenthusiastic search for antinomian elements in postulating an opposition between conduct literature and Halakha. The only substantial item of evidence that Gries, *Conduct Literature*, 23–28, cites, that of the medieval *Sefer Ha-Yashar*'s opposition to routine prayer, is rather weak, as this position is found in Talmudic sources, as Gries himself notes, as well as in later Halakhic sources (despite Gries' claim to the contrary).

118. Moshe Hallamish, *Kabbalah in Liturgy, Halakhah, and Customs* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2000); Hallamish, *Kabbalistic Customs*; Meir Qadosh, "Kabbalistic Jewish Laws in Responsa from the 13th Century to the Early Years of the 17th Century" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2004); Julien Darmon, "La Loi du secret: La kabbale comme source de halakha chez R. Joseph Caro et les décisionnaires séfarades ultérieurs" (Ph.D. diss., École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2007). These studies will shortly be joined by Weinstein, *Kabbalah and Jewish Modernity*.

119. Sorotzkin, "The Super-Temporal Community," 161–72.

120. Mondshein, *Migdal ʿOz*, 156. This tradition (authenticated to an extent by a parallel in Shneur Zalman of Lyady's *Liqqutei Torah* 18a) somewhat reinforces Pedaya's distinction between the Besht and his followers. One should note the effort on the part of the Maggid's students to somatically ascertain his internal state. Cf. our discussions of transmission in chapter 5. For a similar tale on the difference between Luria's otherworldly orientation and the immediacy conveyed by the Besht, see Segal, "According to the Way of Worship," 37.

121. See Wexler, *Mystical Society*, 8–9.

122. De Certeau, *The Mystical Fable*, 4, 7, 24–25, 88–89; cf. 109.

123. Y. Y. Safrin, *Notzer Hesed*, 78; see also 56, 85, as well as the critique of politics and possibly socialism in 60–61. On politics as the new lie, see the statement by his son Eliʿezer Tzevi, in *Ben Beiti*, 196.

124. The contextualist approach to mysticism and ethics, as offered here (as well as in Hollenback, *Mysticism*, 573–76) should be compared with the very interesting debate between Kripal, "Debating the Mystical," and William Barnard, "Debating the Mystical as Ethical: A Response," in *Crossing Boundaries: Essays on the Ethical Status of Mysticism*, ed. William Barnard and Jeffrey J. Kripal (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), 70–99. Their polemic is founded on the relationship of "ethics"—as a general, noncontextual term that is essentially derived from Western thought—and the equally noncontextual term "mysticism." Here, a significant landmark of academic discourse on one of the main themes of this chapter is actually predicated on a strong decontextualizing move.

EPILOGUE

1. Afterman, "Intimate Conjunction"; Sandra Valabregue-Perry, *Concealed and Revealed: 'Ein Sof' in Theosophic Kabbalah* (Los Angeles, Cherub Press, 2010).

APPENDIX: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND HASIDISM

1. Stanley Schneider and Joseph Berke, "Sigmund Freud and the Lubavitcher Rebbe," *Psychoanalytic Review* 87/1 (2000): 39–59. For their analysis of a trance state of R. Shalom Dov Baer that occurred prior to the encounter with Freud, see Joseph Berke and Stanley Schneider, "A Tale of Two Orphans: The Limits of Categorization," *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture* 4/1 (2001): 81–93; see also Maya Balakirsky Katz, "An Occupational Neurosis: A Psychoanalytic Case History of Rabbi," *AJS Review* 34/1 (2010):1–31. On Habad and Freud, see also Wexler, *Mystical Interactions*, 49, 57–59.

2. Yosef Yitzhaq Shneurson, *Liqqutei Dibburim* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1990), 392–95.

3. For a recent critique of Habad historiography, see David Assaf, *Untold Tales of the Hasidim: Crisis and Discontent in the History of Hasidism*, trans. Dena Ordan (Hanover, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2010), especially 3–4, 75–79, 93–94.

Though the materials collected by Assaf are interesting, he does not really integrate them into a wider understanding of the Hasidic world's doctrine and practice. I do not believe that the study of historiography can be divorced from the intellectual history of the circles that produced it. Cf. Ada Rapoport-Albert, "Hagiography with Footnotes: Edifying Tales and the Writing of History in Hasidism," *History and Theory* 27/4 (1988): 119–59.

4. Shalom Dov Baer Shneurson, *Sefer Ha-Ma'amarim 5659 (1899)* (New York: Kehot Publication Society, 1984), 223–24, 227–28.

5. See, however, the extensive discussions of Baer throughout Wolfson, *Open Secret*, and especially 169–70 on sacred madness in his teaching.

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