

ancient times that all animated beings contained living and unperishable particles, which passed from one body to another. This truth, which was adopted by a few philosophers, and afterwards generally received, could only retain its purity during the enlightened ages, and a revolution of darkness succeeding, nothing more of them was remembered but just enough to countenance the opinion, that the living principle of the animal was an unperishable whole, which separated from the body after death. To this visionary whole they gave the name of soul, which was soon supposed to exist in all animals; and they afterwards maintained, that after death, what they thus termed soul, perpetually transmigrated from one body to another. Man was not excepted from the tenets of this doctrine; and blending morals with metaphysics, they asserted that this surviving being retained in its transmigrations all its former sentiments, affections, and desires. Credulity trembled, and they contemplated with horror the idea that on quitting its present agreeable abode the soul would become the inhabitant of a noisome animal. Fear being the forerunner of superstition they began to entertain fresh alarms, and dreaded, lest in killing an animal, they should