

The Image and Meaning of Yom Kippur in the Works of S. Y. Agnon and K. E. Franzos

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The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) is the most sacred of Jewish Holidays and, not surprisingly, a recurring theme in modern Hebrew literature. Baruch Kurzweil, in his book on Agnon,¹ devotes a number of chapters to the significance of this theme in Hebrew letters, and particularly in Agnon's writings.

The modern Hebrew writer, being the son of a secular period, revolts against orthodox Judaism, and wrestles in a desperate struggle of divided loyalties against values sanctioned by age-old tradition. He questions its demands and challenges its authority. Thus he faces the crisis of a cultural split: the separation of his Jewish identity from the only tradition he has, which is a religious tradition. This is a painful process and one which serves as a dramatic theme in modern Hebrew literature.

Kurzweil suggests that the treatment of the Day of Atonement is the best reflector of a writer's attitude toward Judaism, and of the crisis of this inner split: "This day, which is a sublime materialization of the idea of Judaism, proves the power of its impact on those who have allegedly strayed from it. As long as there is a Jewish awareness in the heart of the writer, an evasion or indifference to this holy and awful day is impossible."²

This essay will focus on two writers, Franzos and Agnon, and their respective ways of treating the theme of *Yom Kippur*. Both Jewish and both natives of the same region, namely, Eastern Galicia, they are separated by four decades and each of them represents a different philosophy and, characteristically, uses a different language.

Karl Emil Franzos (1848-1904) is a product and a staunch champion of European enlightenment and humanistic universalism as expounded by Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller. Franzos was an advocate of Jewish assimilation into the German culture and acceptance of the Western values, norms and mores, while retaining the Jewish religious identity. He regarded the traditional life of Jews, its uniqueness and idiosyncracies, as a medieval anachronism, and conservative orthodoxy—the culture of the Jewish ghetto—as a bastion of superstition and regressive forces. All Franzos's writings are an indefatigable call to the Jews to break the shackles of the past, emancipate themselves from the peculiarities of their behavior, dress, language, and traditions, and join the ranks of enlightened Europe, particularly, in its German manifestation. Significantly, all Franzos's writings are in German.

Shmuel Josef Agnon (1888-1970) is the antithesis of Franzos. A son and a grandson of Jewish scholars and community leaders, Agnon personifies the religious consciousness of modern Hebrew letters. Agnon is also strongly nationalistic, and Zionism and its ideals are closely knit with his religious tenacity. Franzos's ghetto becomes in Agnon's hands a viable community, distinguished by its cultural uniqueness and moral excellence.

In spite of Agnon's profound admiration for the pietistic way of life, he is aware of the dissonances within it and of the forces of disintegration slowly but steadily washing away its foundations. In his writings, therefore, strains of nostalgia clash with visions of a nightmare; idyllic lyricism, which suffuses the evocations of the past, is countered by macabre surrealism when Agnon turns his attention to the realities of the present.

Agnon—who lived and died in Israel and wrote in Hebrew—opened many new chapters in modern Hebrew literature. He infused the theme of the Day of Atonement with a new meaning, and, as Kurzweil suggests, the understandings of this theme may serve as a key to the comprehension of all of Agnon's writings.

Yom Kippur serves Agnon as a setting for the portrayal of both the harmonious state of man at peace with God and his soul and for the state of chaos and disorientation when man has lost his way to God and to himself. The contrast between two such Days of Atonement is brought out in a story "Pi Shnayim,"³ told by the protagonist in the first person. His childhood memory of the Day reflects an ideal belief and a beautiful harmony; the experience of the present adulthood conveys loss of way in the Dantesque sense (*che la dirrita via era smarrita*) and a resulting chaos.

Here is the ideal *Yom Kippur* as retrieved from the treasury of the childhood memories:

Big candles, countless as the praying congregation, were lit and standing, and a smell of wax and honey wafted in the synagogue, mingling with the smell of hay which covered the floor, and a new light was shining from the candles. Wrapped in his *tallit* stands my Father together with the rest of the praying folk, and a crown of silver is on his head and shines from the light of the crown in which the candles are glowing. Frightened and trembling I was standing and staring at Father because light shone from his forehead and doubled the radiance . . . The gates of heaven are thrown open and the Holy One, Blessed be He, seems to bend to hear the prayer of Israel. Really, He does not have to do that because He knows the heart of every man, only for the love of Israel he bends down, like a Father who brings his ear close to his little son. (*B.D.*, p. 131)

The lyrical evocation is imbued with muted tenderness and gently modulated strains of awe. The images and figures of speech are closely bound with the sense of smell and with visual pictures. It is the smells of hay, wax, and honey which lend the memory its earthly roots, but it is light that infuses it with a spiritual significance. The praying shawl (*tallit*) with its silver collar shining like a crown on the father's head, evokes an association with Moses, when he came down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments and rays of light shone from his head.⁴ The source of light is not in the burning candles but in the hallowed figure of the father which is interchangeable with that of Moses. It radiates the light which the candles only reflect. The spirit in its perfect purity emanates a sanctity which settles on the material world and illuminates it. This Day of Atonement shows man at peace with the Almighty, and the Almighty bound by loving kindness to His people.

In contrast to the idyll retained from childhood memories, the Day of Atonement experienced through the consciousness of the adult narrator is a demonic distortion of the dream, coming in fragmented episodes. First, there is a sinister occurrence in the synagogue on the eve of the solemn day:

“. . . it was the Eve of *Yom Kippur*. I went into one of the synagogues to pray *Minha* and to say *Kaddish*. I noticed that they were unrolling the *Torah* for the Day of Awe, and that they were unrolling it upside down, the written part down and the empty one up. I was grieved that the *Torah* was treated with such irreverence, but I kept silent because I was a guest” (*B.D.*, p. 132). This uncanny event is followed by an open outrage—people feasting on the day of fasting, the son of the rabbinical judge (*dayan*) among them:

In a half darkened room sat some of my acquaintances and ate and drank as if it was an ordinary day. Twice or thrice I asked myself how is it possible to eat and drink on this day, and it is the Day of Atonement. Particularly was I surprised about the son of the *dayan*. I always thought that he was of the faithful ones in Israel . . . and in the end he eats and drinks on *Yom Kippur* . . . The people present ate and drank until their foreheads shone . . . One of them, who had a round cap on his head, was sunk in his dish and his face shone like an orange. Now that his head was sunk in the dish, his shoulders protruded strangely . . . (*B.D.*, p. 134-5)

This gluttonous eating is described not only as a religious outrage but even more so as a repugnant spectacle of excess, its dehumanizing effects reminiscent of Pieter Bruegel’s “The Land of Cockayne.”⁵ This scene is followed by another, surrealistic and even macabre: “This hour was the hour of a Memorial Prayer and the synagogue was full with relatives of the dead . . . they stood and cried. While I went outside . . . my seat was taken by someone I did not know. I came near my seat but my praying shawl was gone. Someone must have wrapped himself in it. Perhaps the man who took my place . . . I was afraid to look at him, so I ducked him and went out” (*B.D.*, p. 137). The mysterious figure which takes the narrator’s place in the synagogue might have been death itself, or perhaps the narrator’s *alter ego*. But whatever its identity, there is no doubt about the impact of the entire image of *Yom Kippur* in this sequence. It is chaotic, confused, haunted by an unspecified fear and sinister fantasies—a far cry from the harmony and sanctity of the child’s memory of the Day. Man has lost his wholeness and his harmonious relationship with God.

The story “Pi Shnayim” is part of *The Book of Deeds*, a collection of some of Agnon’s most concentrated attempt to translate into modern idiom the peculiarly Jewish consciousness of the contemporary universal malaise. What Kafka did in German, Joyce and Beckett in English, and the existentialists and avant-garde writers in French, Agnon did in modern Hebrew. The haunting fear, the sense of sin and guilt which pursue modern man’s consciousness, and the lingering feeling of a gradual dissolution of the whole web of familiar culture, typify the stories of *The Book of Deeds*.

Agnon drew on the wealth of popular themes and motifs in Jewish legend and religious thought thus creating a literary medium with which he evokes an atmosphere of alienation and bewilderment. The macabre touches of death, shrouds, spectres and grotesque desecration, are part of the popular *aggadah* inherited from the strange messianism of the Lurianic *Kabbalah*.⁶ This demonology of the *beit-hamidrash* (house of prayer and study) is artistically manoeuvred by Agnon to bring out the modern feeling of spiritual rootlessness. Thus he expresses the plight of secularized Jewish awareness in authentic Jewish concepts. The dislocation of faith experienced in the sanctuary of religion reveals particularly vividly the anguish of the disinherited mind.

Agnon's great achievement is to have forged a vehicle for conveying this plight in a fictional form. Motifs charged with a significance peculiar to a distinct culture have been recharged by him with new vitality and made into symbols of universal human value. The modern preoccupation with nihilism and with the absurd has found a means of expression in those archetypal forms.

Agnon's style in *The Book of Deeds* is Kafkaesque. Dream and reality merge and mingle, "until the things of dream were like the things of wakefulness" (*B.D.*, p. 134). Particular objects and experiences lose their distinctiveness and fade off into a mass of disjointed memories and shreds of impressions. Time plays mischievous tricks on the protagonist and creates a surrealistic mood. The Days of Atonement, which serve as a pivot for the Jewish consciousness and a reliable starting point for measuring the cyclic rhythm of time, merge and collapse one upon the other: "And again I found myself standing on the Eve of *Yom Kippur* in the synagogue. And again come and surround me the thoughts which I have thought on the Eve of *Yom Kippur* in my childhood. There are times in the year which are determined *a priori* for the doing of the same deeds year after year . . . Like a chain of holiness the Days of Atonement unwound one after the other, like a Day of Atonement which is revealed to a man in his dream . . ." (*B.D.*, p. 132). The image of the perfect *Yom Kippur*, again conveyed as a harmonious memory from childhood, is described in Agnon's Introduction to a new edition of *The Days of Awe*. Though, fundamentally, it reiterates the picture of the Day as recollected by the narrator of "Pi Shnayim," there are some additional touches here that justify a specific mention. Here is how the recollection from childhood is depicted in this instance: ". . . and the House of Prayer was full of people wrapped in their praying shawls, and crowns of silver were on their heads, and they were clad in white and in their hands were books, and there were many candles stuck in long boxes of sand, and a wondrous light with a good scent comes out of the candles . . . and so I stand and look at the house and the people who are standing there and I do not distinguish between one man and another, as all together, with the house and all, seem to me as one . . ." As in "Pi Shnayim," this scene is an apotheosis of an ideal as seen through a child's eyes. But there is an additional element in this picture: for the child all the people are one. The child discovers a concrete manifestation of the idea of a true community of spirit on this solemn occasion. The sanctity of the House of Prayer and the intensity of the moment reveal to the child an ideal which he conceives as absolute and eternal. As Kurzweil notes, the infinite and the immortal seem to be included in this vision which has neither a beginning nor an end: "It did not occur to me that one can stop it."⁸ The assurance of continuity which the scene conveys to the child is the longed-for mode of existence of the adult. God Himself participates in this holy celebration, as Agnon comments in another context: "The Holy One, Blessed be He, wrapped Himself in that white praying shawl which whitens Israel, and in which He wrapped Himself when He created the world, about which it is said 'thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment' (Psalm 104), and the light shone from one end of the world to the other, and all received the grace of blessing and the munificence of holiness."

In one of Agnon's major novels, *A Guest for the Night*, the narrator is the guest who comes back to his native town to reestablish his old ties with it and with the tradition for which it stands. But it is a belated return. The town is in ruins, the tradition in shambles, and the narrator, instead of drawing on the old sources to invigorate his own spirit, finds that the roles have to be reversed, and that it is he who must rekindle the dying embers of

life. His arrival coincides with the eve of the Day of Atonement. This is the picture which Agnon draws of the old synagogue, and these are the impressions and associations which form in his mind:

In my childhood I thought that there was no bigger building in the world than the Great Synagogue, but now its area had dwindled and its height shrunk . . . The radiance that is wont to shine on the heads of the sacred congregation on the Eve of Atonement did not shine on their heads, and their prayer shawls shed no light. In the past, when everyone would come to pray and each would bring a candle, in addition to those that burned in the candelabra, the synagogue was brightly lit, but now that the candelabra had been plundered in the war and not all came to pray, the candles were few and the light was scanty. In the past, when the prayer shawls were adorned with collars of silver, the light used to gleam but now that the adornments had been carried off the light was diminished.¹⁰

The image of light dominates the scene: not actual light, but a light of memory, a light which is missing in the present and which haunts the narrator's imagination. The Day of Atonement is identified with radiance, and the dreariness of the present augments by contrast the radiance of the past. The contrast between the present and the past is further emphasized by scenes connected with the river Stripa. In his memories the river acquires a sanctity which emanates from the holy day:

I walked to the river and stood there on the bridge, just as my father, of blessed memory, used to do on Atonement Eves . . . for as this water, which now meets your eye, was not here before this moment and will not be here afterwards, so this day, which was given us to repent of our sins, was not yet in the world before and will never be in the world again . . . The water comes and the water goes; as it comes, so it goes, and an odor of purity rises from it. It seems as if nothing has changed since the day I stood here with Father, of blessed memory, and nothing will change here until the end of all the generations. (*G.N.*, p. 6)

The narrator tries to recapture a mode of feeling by going through the motions which he knows by heart. The reminiscences in which the father figure is the focus, and the setting which connects the present with the past—the bridge, the flowing water—all blend into the holiness of the day and are raised into a picture of sanctity and Divine Grace. The passage is a poetical evocation of an elegiac mood. The repetition of “comes” and “goes,” the never ending renewal of the flow of water, elevate the river to a symbol of continuity and accentuate the narrator's yearning for the past. A melancholy nostalgia for what was and is no more is exquisitely presented in this nocturnal scene.

With the nostalgia goes a feeling of trust in the absoluteness of the old values. To convey this conviction Agnon uses a subtle technique. When he writes “The water comes and the water goes; as it comes, so it goes,” he introduces the cadence of *Ecclesiastes* (“The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down,” “. . . unto the place from where the rivers come, thither they return again”; Eccl. 1:5 and 7). But whereas in the biblical text the cadence is used to emphasize “vanity of vanities,” the futility of it all, Agnon for once is not ironic, but sees in this rhythm cosmic stability and absolute values.

But just as the narrator catches the absolute in the flow of water and flow of memories, he is cruelly jolted out of these serene meditations by the harsh reality of corruptibility, which serves as an ironic retort that indeed, after all, there are some things with which time does play havoc, and change scores an infamous victory: "Along came a group of boys and girls with cigarettes in their mouths. No doubt they had come from the feast they had held that night . . . to show that they are not in awe of the Day of Atonement" (*G.N.*, p. 6).

The juxtaposition of the innocence and purity of childhood memories with the crass realities of the present turns the narrator's disillusion into a living insult. Indeed, Agnon refrains from defining the youths' transgression in moral terms. Rather, their sin is an aesthetic one: their brazen iconoclasm destroys the beauty of the cosmic and religious order, and it is this which makes it so painful to bear. The subsequent image of the stars which "were fixed in the firmament and . . . gleamed on the river" seems to reaffirm permanence as against the fickle transience of "the lights of the cigarettes [which] moved among them" (*G.N.*, p. 6).

The narrator does not assume the role of a judge. Nevertheless, his presence is a silent reproach: "At the same time my shadow fell on the bridge and lay flat before the young people. Sometimes it mingled with their shadows and sometimes it was alone, quivering all the time as if it felt the trampling feet of the passers-by" (*G.N.*, p. 6). The narrator escapes from the degraded reality to the world of lore and wonderland: "I turned my eyes away and looked up at the sky, to see if that hand appeared of which the children tell: they say that on Atonement Eve a little cloud, like a hand, rises in the firmament, for at that time the Almighty stretches out his hand to receive the repentant" (*G.N.*, p. 6).

On this Day of Awe, when God judges his creatures, decreeing life or death, forgiveness or damnation, Agnon sees fit to judge the Judge. Agnon's criticism is implicit. He does not directly point an accusing finger at the Almighty. He does not even turn his attention to the most obvious injustice—the suffering of his people. Instead, he dwells on the flaws in the religious service which, of course, are due to the deprivations and suffering of the people, which, in turn, are implied to be the Almighty's responsibility. Here is a case in point: "After the memorial prayer, some of the congregation sat down to rest. I sat among them and asked why they were praying without the tallit. 'We have not managed to buy new ones,' said one with a sigh. 'And where are the old ones?' I asked. 'Where are they? D'you think I know? Either gone up to heaven in flames or made into sheets for whores.' 'Some have been stolen and some burned,' added another . . . 'in the last pogrom'" (*G.N.*, p. 10). In the same vein Agnon points to the scrolls of the Torah, the *sanctum sanctorum* of the synagogue, which are despoiled of their customary embellishment: "Neither the Scroll the cantor was holding nor the Scroll from which the final portion was to be read was adorned with crown or other embellishment, for the precious sacred ornaments, the glory of the Torah, made of pure silver by skilled craftsmen, had been taken by the government during the war to buy guns and ammunition, and the Torah was left without its ornaments. The trees of life, the staves on which the Scroll is rolled, protruded sadly, their faded color wringing one's heart" (*G.N.*, p. 8). "Government," "guns," "ammunition," and "war" clash with "trees of life," "pure silver," and "skilled craftsmen": the forces of light and darkness, of good and evil, of life and death collide.

The Day of Atonement serves as a means for Agnon to criticise God and express his anguish about the disintegration of the *stetl*. As befits the solemn occasion of *Yom Kippur*, the narrator ostensibly pays tribute to the Almighty, but in truth it is a mock tribute: "See how humble is the King who is the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who said, 'Mine is the silver and mine is the gold,' but has not left Himself even an ounce of silver to adorn his Torah" (*G.N.*, p. 8). The sarcasm is doubly blasphemous, because the words which are used for expressing a pious reverence are here twisted into a parody of God's insufficiency; and because the occasion, which normally calls for contrition and self-effacement, is turned into a denunciation of the Judge."¹¹

Nonetheless, the accusation of God, the doubts of His omnipotence, or benevolence, are not meant to express a total despair of God or unequivocal rejection of belief. Agnon's sardonic tone remains within the bounds of religion. For, ultimately, Agnon does not want to reject God. He clings to Him, for he wants to escape modern man's loneliness and the existential fear of cosmic indifference. It is the fundamental clinging to God that explains Agnon's argument with Him, as is the case with Agnon's biblical precursor, Job.

Turning to Franzos, one would expect a totally different image of the Day of Atonement from that of Agnon. While the difference is profound, as will be shown, it is noteworthy that Franzos does not remain unaffected by the solemnity of the Day and its mystical appeal. Some forgotten or half apprehended emotions seem to be stirred in him: "Far and wide have I traveled and many a curious impression have I absorbed in my life, but the Eve of the Day of Atonement which I have experienced in Sadagora long years ago will stay in my mind for ever. To this very day the curious, uncomfortable feeling from then overwhelms me. Imagine hundreds of houses, all, all glowing in a day-like brightness from innumerable tallow candles, and in each house the same picture: praying figures, pale, with black locks and in shrouds. And from every house rings the same melody, the moving, heartrending, shattering tune of 'Kol Nidra!'"¹² While there is an undercurrent of empathy and genuine emotion in this description there is also an unmistakable endeavour on the author's part to disengage himself from the overwhelming impression of the scene. He is disturbed by the monolithic impact of the occasion, and the praying crowd in its shrouds. The countless candles, far from symbolizing divine grace (as do images of light in Agnon), produce an uncomfortable feeling in Franzos's work. The rationalistic disapproval of the scene is explicitly stated in the next paragraph, where the narrator dissociates himself from what he has seen: "But I was not induced by it into a devout mood. And I was even less so disposed the next day, when the pale light of the gloomy autumn day sent its sobering and cold light on the whole scene."¹³ Yet, in the very affirmation of his rationalism Franzos reveals the ambiguity of his attitude: having asserted that he was not religiously inspired by the scene, he adds that he was even less inspired on the next day—which casts doubt on the original statement. Evidently, the rationalist needs the sobering effect of the daylight in order to think coolly and to free himself from the spell of the night before!

The rationalistic, detached attempt to view the solemnity of the Day of Awe is easily understandable in the light of Franzos's biography. In the preface to his *Die Juden von Barnow* he refers to the ghetto life as a "strange life": "I . . . am aware of having depicted this strange life as it appeared to me."¹⁴ And in his introduction to *Der Pojaz* he writes: "Though the poetic quality of many of its [Judaism's] forms did not escape me, they can fully exercise their

magic only on a person for whom they comprise a part of childhood memories. Such was not my case."¹⁵ Franzos can look upon one of the most intense manifestations of Jewish religious culture only as an outsider. Myth, legend, and the ceremony of a ritual can be impressed on human consciousness and assimilated into his sense of identity only through the impressionable genius of a child. They retain their magic only as a memory sanctioned by communal experience. Without it, the ritual remains an odd custom, a mumbo jumbo which, though intriguing to the observer, does not affect him deeply. Moreover, Franzos is not only a detached observer; he is a believer in enlightenment and the rule of reason. Consequently, the ceremonial trappings which adorn the ritual of worship—white clothes, candles, liturgical melodies—have a disturbing effect on him. To the Western rationalist the Day of Atonement, with its macabre touches, seems outlandish and strange, even uncongenial. He is not insensitive to the poetry of the occasion, but he attributes its fascination to the sinister powers of superstition ("And it was superstition that moved those lips").¹⁶

Franzos's ambivalence to Judaism is even more clearly revealed in his story "Zwei Retter." Here fascination seems to outweigh rejection, and empathy silences reason. In the story a converted Jew, who serves as an overseer of the Polish Lord of the manor, attempts to force the Jewish community into surrendering a deserter from the Russian army. It is the Eve of *Yom Kippur*, and Wollman, the overseer, walks together with the community into the synagogue determined at the end of the service to find the deserter and to inflict some terrible punishment on the entire community. In a highly dramatic atmosphere the cantor starts the customary *Kol Nidra*:

Little-Mendele trembled in all his limbs. Then he straightened himself out and began to intone the notes of "Kol-Nidra," that ancient, simple melody which once heard can never be forgotten . . . As he sang he was not anymore a little trilling man but a mighty priest who raised his voice to God for his people. He was thinking of the ancient glory and then of the many centuries of insult and persecution, and it rang in his voice how we had been hunted restlessly over the earth, the poorest among the poor, the most unfortunate among the unfortunate . . . All our suffering rang in his voice, our inutterable suffering, our countless tears. But also something else rang there, our pride, our trust, our belief in God.¹⁷

The impact of the prayer on Wollman is startling. He is visibly shattered and, reversing his original design, he actually helps the deserter to escape. Whether it is the "poetry" of the old song or its "magic" which wrought the change on Wollman is hard to say. Perhaps it was the childhood memory (it will be remembered that Wollman is a convert). Even more surprising than Wollman's response is the writer's sympathetic interpretation of a ceremony which elsewhere leaves him ambivalent, at best. What he diagnoses as a superstition in the previous story, here he elevates to a poetical expression of an oppressed people's soul. *Kol-Nidra* is still the melody which haunts him who has once heard it. However, it does not evoke a phantasmagoria of white shrouds, black locks and hundreds of burning candles; it becomes a symbol of communal cohesion and of historical consciousness. Words like "people," "glory," and "pride," which seldom convey honorific connotations in Franzos's writings when referred to the ghetto's cultural and historical self-determination, are here used with loving understanding and deeply felt solidarity.

Obviously, it is hard to ascertain to what an extent the writer identifies himself with the narrator of the story. Nevertheless, the enormous sympathy which he reveals in contriving the moving scene of communal distress, the inspiration of its prayer, and the subsequent redemption, indicate a deep reservoir of emotional attachment. The stress on pride is perhaps the key to Franzos's dilemma. The bespattered dignity of a proud people is the central theme of this scene. The impassioned prayer of *Kol-Nidra* seems to be as powerful an experience to Franzos as the memory of the Day of Atonement is to Agnon. The transformation of the ghetto into a community mourning its past glory gives it a tragic grandeur which is seldom found in Franzos's vision of the ossified anachronism which is Franzos's ghetto.

Baruch Kurzweil's thesis that a writer's attitude to the Day of Atonement reflects his basic attitude to Judaism yields particularly interesting results when applied to Franzos. Under the determination to serve reason and humanistic-universalistic enlightenment, there seems to linger an irrational attraction to the incomprehensible myth, and a romantic quest for the roots of authenticity.

NOTES

¹Baruch Kurzweil, *Masot al Sipurei S. Y. Agnon*, (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1962).

²B. Kurzweil, p. 269. My translation.

³"Pi Shnayim" (Twice as Much), in *The Book of Deeds*, Collected Writings, VI. (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1971). My translation. Subsequent quotations will be given in parenthesis after *B.D.*

⁴This suggestion is made by B. Kurzweil, p. 276.

⁵See Wolfgang Stechow, *Peter Bruegel the Elder* (Amsterdam: Collins, 1956), plate 26.

⁶See Isaiah Rabinovich, *Major Trends in Modern Hebrew Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 204.

⁷*Yamim Noraim* (Days of Awe), (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1968), p. 3. My translation.

⁸P. 3. Agnon's attribution of extraordinary, semi-visionary powers of perception to the innocent child is reminiscent of Wordsworth's view of the child. His "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" deals specifically with this theme.

⁹*Yamim Noraim*, p. 206. My translation.

¹⁰*A Guest for the Night*, trans. Misha Louvish (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 5. Subsequent quotations will be given in parenthesis after *G.N.*

¹¹This is an interesting theme, widely treated in modern literature. Wassermann, Camus, and Dürrenmatt are among the authors dealing with it. Obviously, the Book of Job provides the classical model for this theme.

¹²"Der Ahnherr des Messias," *Vom Don zur Donau* (Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1878), II, pp. 184-5. My translation.

¹³"Der Ahnherr des Messias," p. 185. My translation.

¹⁴*Die Juden von Barnow* (Berlin: Concordia Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1877), p. 10. My translation.

¹⁵*Der Pojaz* (Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1905), p. 8. My translation.

¹⁶"Der Ahnherr des Messias," p. 185. My translation.

¹⁷*Die Juden von Barnow*, pp. 110-11. My translation.