

shay Agnon's
WORLD OF
MYSTERY and Allegory:

AN ANALYSIS OF
"Iddo and Aynam"

by

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PART ONE

**A MESSIANIC
AND MYSTIC
EXCURSION**

I

“ 'Iddo and 'Aynam”: The Structure of the Story

AGNON HAS A PENCHANT for playing hide-and-peek with his readers. This is true to a much greater degree in reference to “ 'Iddo and 'Aynam.” One of Agnon’s weirdest stories, it is full of hints (*remazim*), allusions, wordplays, metaphors, and allegories, bordering on magic and witchcraft, as far as the superficial reader is concerned.

To be sure, there is no lack of distinguished Agnon interpreters, commentators, and critics, paramount among which rank Dov Sadan,¹ Baruch Kurzweil,² A. J. Band,³ and M’shulam Tochner.⁴ Yet, with all the considerable diligence these, as well as the rest of the distinguished interpreters and commentators, have shown toward unpuzzling the Agnon puzzle, they failed to unlock the mysteries, much less to provide the key to the unique Agnonian pattern, to his superb message.

This is even more surprising in the case of “ 'Iddo and 'Aynam.” Filled as it is to the brink with hints, leads, and outright clues, Agnon’s superb message has to this day remained a hidden treasure, sealed with seven seals, shrouded in deep mystery. In short Agnon still remains inaccessible to the multitude of his readers, whether in the original or in translation.

Unless otherwise noted, all page numbers cited in this text refer to *At Henah* by Shay Agnon (Schocken, Jerusalem, 1950).

The Title

As in most of Agnon's enigmatic stories, the first clue is supplied by the story's title, though the reader must be on guard not to be misled by Agnon's clever ambiguities.⁵ The title "'Iddo and 'Aynam" is a typical example of such ambiguity. All translators, with no exception, have transliterated the title as "Edo and Enam." Such misreading proves beyond any doubt that they have failed to follow the first given lead, and thus remained totally ignorant of the author's true intentions.⁶

The Language of 'Iddo

In his story, Agnon supplies us with further leads to the proper reading of the title. He equates "the forgotten language of 'Iddo" with the "invented language" (*lashon beduyah*):

I listened but I did not understand a word, until Gemulah revealed to me that it is an invented language which they have invented for entertainment [of their heart]. [pp. 364, 385]⁷

Thus we have it on good authority that "'Iddo" of the story's title and the "invented language"⁸ refer to one and the same thing. A closer look reveals that both 'Iddo and the "invented language" have their origins in the following talmudic passage:

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish says it is a language which the wise men have invented [*badu*]; likewise it is said "the month which he invented [*bada*] out of his own heart." [1 Kings 12:31]⁹

Because tradition has identified the prophet mentioned in the same context (1 Kings 13:1) as none other but 'Iddo, the Seer, it was reason enough for inventor Agnon to make 'Iddo symbolic for the "invented language."¹⁰ Hence the forgotten language of 'Iddo and the first half of our story's title.

'Iddo's Proximity to 'Aynam

From 'Iddo, Agnon moves to 'Aynam, the second half of the title. This term is to a lesser degree prompted by linguistic association, but rather the result of 'Iddo's textual proximity to 'Aynam.

First, 'Iddo was the father of Prophet Zechariah,¹¹ or his grandfather;¹² and it was Zechariah, the prophet, to whom the angel said: "This is 'Aynam throughout the land."¹³

Hence the natural twins, 'Iddo and 'Aynam.

Thus far, we are still dealing only with the upper layer, the surface, of "'Iddo and 'Aynam." Of course, there is a great deal more to it, or else Agnon would not be what we must know he is.

The Tale

Meanwhile, with the title's background firmly established, the entire tale of "'Iddo and 'Aynam" has also been placed in proper perspective. We can now feel privileged to watch with sheer delight and utter amazement how Agnon makes his giant leaps into the rarified atmosphere of the world of the apocalypse. For we know of no other description to fit Agnon's fantastic excursion into the esoteric world of this magic tale. But first, a synopsis of "'Iddo and 'Aynam."

The author—speaking in the first person—tells of an unusual experience in the home of his best friends, Gerhard and Gerda Greifenbach. That one of their "four rooms" is rented to a certain Dr. Ginat, a world-famous personality, comes as a surprise to the author. After all, is he not almost part of the family? Why has the presence of the famous Dr. Ginat thus far escaped the author's attention? It is only now, as the Greifenbachs prepare for a trip abroad and are about to entrust the author with the key to their house, that the secret of Dr. Ginat's occupation of their room is

being discussed in his presence in a roundabout way.

The author has known of Dr. Ginat's fame; yet he has never heard of anyone personally acquainted with this man or seen him face to face. And now he is amazed that he occupies a room in the house where the author is a frequent visitor.

Was not this Dr. Ginat famous for a great scholarly essay "The Ninety-nine Words of the Language of 'Iddo," followed by the book of grammar to the same "forgotten language" of 'Iddo together with his discovery of "'Aynamite hymns," in which historians have seen "the beginnings of all history"?¹⁴ Now he was to find himself in the very house, "the walls of which have seen Ginat."¹⁵

As his conversation with the departing Greifenbachs progresses, they volunteer a number of more mysterious facts about their famous boarder:

On those rare occasions when he is home, he has a girl visitor, the one he has "created for himself."¹⁶ They have never seen the girl, but they have heard her strange voice, conversing with Dr. Ginat in an obscure dialect, one they have never heard before.

One night, after the Greifenbachs leave and the author has moved in as temporary caretaker of the house, he is surprised by another visitor, Gabriel Gamzu. How his friend Gamzu has known of the author's presence here is a riddle to the author. Knowing that Gamzu is always a welcome guest to all of his friends and acquaintances, no questions are asked.

The author's suspicion that Gamzu came to collect the twelve Israeli pounds sterling (L.A.Y.—*lira arzi yisrael*) which Gamzu had once deposited with him, the very sum which some thieves had stolen some time ago, turns out to be unsubstantiated.

In the course of the conversation, we are told that Gamzu is married to a very strange woman, Gemulah, the daughter of Gevaryah ben Geuel. Gemulah is an ailing, moonstruck woman who, from the time he married her to this day, has seldom been out of her bed. Nevertheless, on nights of the full moon, she leaves her bed and visits with a man who, he suspects, is rooming in this house.

In the course of Gamzu's subsequent visit with the author, they both witness Gemulah's actual meeting with Dr. Ginat. It is their last encounter.

Gemulah is led home by her husband.

Thirty days later, the papers report the sudden death of Dr. Ginat. The author reads the news report in the morning papers. Though the name was spelled *Gilat*, the author knows that it is a misspelling of *Ginat*.

According to Amrami and his granddaughter, Ednah, Dr. Ginat met with his death in his rescue attempt of a moonstruck woman. Both he and the woman fell over the broken parapet.

Very few come to the funeral. Among those present are Gamzu, the author, Amrami, and his granddaughter, little Ednah, the only person not previously introduced and not identified any further. Her relationship to the story the author has left unexplained.

After Gamzu fully identifies the corpse as his former rival's, Dr. Ginat, Gamzu seems to be more grief-stricken over his passing than the rest of the mourners. Little is said of the passing of his own wife, Gemulah.

How involved this magic tale is needs no special emphasis. As a lead story,¹⁷ it has all the earmarks to distinguish it as typical of the Agnonian pattern. It consists of a group of stories. It is a story within a story, each story lined up beside the other, each carrying its own independent message in itself.¹⁸ Like a cluster of grapes, one heaped on top of the other, each one nourished and sustained by the very same stem, so are all these stories, and the stories within the stories, intertwined and interconnected, with the crowning message hovering over all. All of the stories are sublimely interrelated and linked with each other in a well-recognizable, distinctive chain of events. This cluster of stories is again inobtrusively interconnected with the title, like each stem connected by its branch to the tree, made to look quite natural. And for Agnon there could really be no other way.

II

The Crowning Message

WHEN ALL PERTINENT FACTS are presented, it will be clear that this magic tale, “ ’Iddo and ’Aynam,” constitutes one of Agnon’s most ambitious undertakings, a fantasy he pursued for almost a lifetime.¹ It was prompted by the attempt to produce evidence that Dr. Theodor Herzl was a messianic phenomenon so decreed and foretold by scriptural, talmudic and cabbalistic prophecy.

In other words, “ ’Iddo and ’Aynam” appears to be the product of a lifelong ambition of Agnon to identify Theodor Herzl within the framework of messianic redemption of some sorts.

Dimension of Weights and Measurements— The Symbol of Redemption

Returning to the title of our story, we can now watch our author spinning forth the exalted hypothesis that redemption is to be symptomatic of and correlative to the dimension of weights and measurements. Namely, wherever redemption is spoken of, it is correlated to the aspect of measurements. For this, the prophet Zechariah (’Iddo) serves the author as the leading source.

Zechariah, the prophet of restoration, in a number of visions has referred to such correlatedness of both dimensions.

To our author, not only the “Four Corners,”² the “Four Masters,”³ the “Four Chariots,”⁴ the “Scroll,”⁵ and the “Ephah,”⁶ point towards these dimensions. Contrary to the rendition of all other commentators, ’Aynam to Agnon also symbolizes such a concept of measurement.

This is not to say that the equation of the concept of redemption with the dimension of weights and measurements was by any means confined to the prophet Zechariah alone. Ezekiel before him pointed towards the same phenomenon when he perceived his messianic visions through the spectrum of measurements.⁷

Thus Agnon’s preference for the prophet Zechariah was not so much necessitated by his choice of the title “ ’Iddo and ’Aynam,” as, rather, by his need for the number four, in addition to several other related details mentioned in Zechariah which are more or less integral to ’Iddo and this story, as we shall see.

Measurements—The Cornerstone of the Story

To build up his case, Agnon spreads his wings and takes us to the cradle of the Messianic idea in the annals of Israel. His first stop is the home of the Greifenbachs, his best friends. Judging by the sound of the names *Gerda*, *Gerhard*, and *Greifenbach*, the reader is inclined to take them as of pure Germanic origin. Whereas, in truth they personify none other than Agnon’s most venerated couple,⁸ Deborah and Barak. And the name *Greifenbach* comes directly from the Song of Deborah:

The brook, Kishon, swept them away [*grafam*]
The ancient brook,
The brook, Kishon

Thus the name *Greifenbach* is half-Hebrew, half-German, compounded from *grafam* (swept away) and *Bach* (brook, *nahal*).

To Agnon, both parts of the compound are of paramount importance. To him, as to all other translators, *grafam* is from the Hebrew root *grf*, having here as its primary meaning the measurement of the handbreadth (*egrof* = *tefah*), whereas the other half, brook (*Bach* = *nahal*), thrice mentioned in the song, is to symbolize three of the “four rooms” that the Greifenbach home consisted of.

The Fourth Room

As to the fourth room (or fourth *nahal*) rented to Dr. Ginat, it is another natural tool of Agnon, the *talmid hakham* (expert, or smart, scholar) and associative mind. The “fourth room” and Ginat are the result of the magic words, conjured from the enchanted lovers’ dialogue of the Song of Songs:

Into the garden of walnuts [*ginat-egoz*]¹⁰ have I descended to watch
the green plants of the valley/brook [*nahal*].¹¹

Of course, this is by no means all there is to Dr. Ginat in connection with *nahal* (brook/valley). But it is the first link between the name Ginat and the term *brook (nahal)*, which in Agnonian fashion is taken to be symbolic of the fourth room belonging to the Greifenbachs, but occupied by Ginat.

In the meantime, by the term *garaf* (handbreadth), Agnon has also established the second connective link between the messianic phenomenon of the dimension of measurements.

As to *nahal* as a messianic dimension, it is distinctly referred to in the vision of Ezekiel¹² and the vision of Joel.¹³

Let it simply be understood once more that the term *nahal* (brook/valley) is prominently paralleled with the term *madod* (to measure) in Ezekiel as well as in several other places in the Scripture.¹⁴

Dr. Ginat and Dr. Herzl

Spinning his yarn of the “invented language” (*lashon beduyah*) in his quest to line up one piece of evidence after another for the scriptural background of his messianic thesis, Agnon right at the outset proceeds to drop hints about Dr. Ginat’s being none other than the personification of Dr. Herzl:

Room-lessors we are not and this one who was seeking a room in our house did not *take my heart*. [Italics mine]

But a little later we hear Greifenbach explain his reason for finally leasing the room to Dr. Ginat:

I realized that he is worthy to have the room leased to him. Not for his own reasons, but for the reason that *he has taken my heart*.¹⁵
[Italics mine]

In Hebrew, the phrase “taken a person’s heart” is a common expression for attachment to a person. But how would one explain Greifenbach’s reversal toward Dr. Ginat? First, Ginat “did not take his heart,” and Greifenbach was not willing to let him have the room. A few lines further—without modulation or some new line of reasoning—Greifenbach rents him the room because Ginat *did* take his heart—and not for Dr. Ginat’s reasons, mind you, but for Greifenbach’s own reasons.

We are to understand that the phrase “taken my heart” is one of the most fascinating first clues Agnon gives the reader for the identification of Dr. Ginat (Herzl). To make sure the reader gets the hint, he uses the phrase one time after another in ostentatiously contradictory terms (that none of his commentators have caught on is in itself a riddle).

In providing his clues, Agnon has now revealed himself. While in the name Greifenbach he employed German words of Hebrew origin, he now substitutes Hebrew words for those of German origin. For *libbi*—my heart—has no other meaning in this con-

notation but as a reference to Dr. Herzl. *Lev*—heart—being the equivalent of the German *herz*, how could anyone fail to catch the sound of the name Herzl?

*The Key*¹⁶

Should anyone still be inclined to underestimate the significance of the mentioned clue for Dr. Herzl on the grounds that it is merely accidental, and therefore of little relevance to our subject, let him instantly be reminded of the key to the Greifenbach home entrusted to the author. This key is intended to point to the Greifenbach residence (the passage of Deborah and Barak) as the key to his entire story.

We shall now see whether any such clue to Dr. Herzl is to be found anywhere in that area.

*“My Heart to the Governors of Israel”*¹⁷

We do not have to look too far to find it in the same area where we have previously found the name of the Greifenbachs. Three times in the Song of Deborah do we find *heart* as a very significant parallel to our story. The most important one is, not surprisingly, in the exact form as we have it in our story: “My heart [*libbi*] belongs to the governors [*l’hok’ke*] of Israel.”

Similarly, the two others each have the noun *heart (lev)* appended to the term *hakov, hakor*.¹⁸

Amazingly, these three passages from the Song of Deborah correspond to a passage in the beginning of our own story, where the author refers to his own heart three times in the sequence of one single sentence:

I held the cup in my hand while my heart [*libbi*] trembled [in face of the Greifenbach’s disclosures] and in the course of my heart’s [*halev*] trepidation I heard some sort of an echo ascending from the midst of my heart [*libbi*].¹⁹

Because *hakov, hakor* have apparently been taken by Agnon to be significant for the art of penmanship, it resulted that later in the story Dr. Ginat is referred to as an ethnographer,²⁰ a fitting reference, no doubt, to Dr. Herzl, the author of the *Judenstaat*, much of which deals with ethnology (or ethnography), *i.e.*, the characteristics of nations and their relationship to the people of Israel.²¹

Predictably, an author of Agnon’s caliber, whose marvelous works testify to his mastery of the technique of hiding behind his own “invented language,” should simultaneously be granted cleverness enough for planting his clues in such a manner that will make his message distinct enough as to be identifiable.

After all, the quest of every author is to communicate. And Agnon is no exception.

So let us continue to watch how ingeniously Agnon gradually lifts the veil from this mysterious character he refers to as Dr. Ginat, the one we have identified as Dr. Herzl.

The “Third Faust”—The Third Jewish Commonwealth

Says Gerda Greifenbach:

What he [Dr. Ginat] did [in his room], whether he was drawing the Pyramids according to their scale or was writing a third Faust I really don’t know. . . . When he returned, I’m sure he did one of the things I mentioned to you. Which one he did I wasn’t pressed into finding out. . . .²²

Though this small passage contains no fewer than four additional clues, Agnon’s generosity should not surprise us. As a writer so gifted with an overabundance of ingenuity, he can well afford to show generosity where it suits him.

Namely, in mentioning Faust, he is further articulating his linking the Greifenbachs (*garaf-egrof-fist = tefah*) to the element of measurements (*tefah = handbreadth*). Secondly, by mentioning Faust, the reader’s attention is to be drawn to its author,

Goethe, whose middle name was Wolfgang, a clue to Herzl's middle name, Wolf (*z'ev* in Hebrew).

For good measure, on the next page Agnon again refers to Goethe, this time by name.²³ And, to balance things out, he later refers twice to the German grammarian Gesenius.²⁴ Such reference to Gesenius is not in the least made because of Agnon's need for all the initials, as many have believed, but mainly because of Gesenius' first name, *Wilhelm*, again alluding to the Jewish equivalent of *Z'ev* (wolf), Herzl's middle name.

It is also here that Agnon for the first time clearly refers to measurements (*midatan*) in relation to the scale of the pyramids. This in itself is a tremendous clue, with which we shall deal later on.

Meanwhile, Agnon's reference to a "third Faust" (not the third "part" of Faust, as some translators have mistaken it) in the "invented language" parlance is an allusion to Herzl's composition of his *Judenstaat* and *Altneuland*, the blueprint for the subsequent emergence of the modern state of Israel—the Third Jewish Commonwealth.

III

The Pyramids

Theo—Theodor—Theodolite

Correctly analyzed, part of Agnon's "invented language," or his allegorical style, revolves around the technique of deliberately understating points of greater import while overemphasizing matters of secondary concern. In fact, in " 'Iddo" he touches only in passing on centralities, yet exhibits a more talkative mood in discussing peripherals. For example, he extends himself over an entire page on the subject of the tribe of Gad'—*Gad*, in this context, being an obvious play on *Theo* (*Gad*, *God*), the first part of the name *Theodor*. He balances this off by another full page of narration with reference to the "children of Benjamin,"² this, again, being a play on Herzl's Hebrew first name, *Benyamin*. In both cases, allusion is made to Herzl's followers, the early Zionists. For the sake of more diffuseness, both passages are lined up one alongside the other.

To cite another example, the city of Vienna, significant as the permanent residence of Dr. Herzl, is only indirectly touched on,³ and only in connection with Gamzu's and Gemulah's temporary visit there.⁴

Similarly, to the dimension of measurements which is the story's center of gravity, Agnon has assigned not more than three scant

words: "The Pyramids according to their measurements" (*hapiramidot l'fi midatan*).

For the sake of greater confusion, Agnon assigns to the Pyramids a concept of mere alternating status.⁵ It is Faust versus the Pyramids: "I'm sure he did one of the things I mentioned to you. Which one he did, I wasn't pressed into finding out. . . ."

We know by now that Agnon means both Faust and Pyramid and that they are of equal status, both extremely relevant to this mystic experience. (Note the ostentatious play on the word *pyramid*—*pyra-midot*—according to the measure, *midatan*, which could be a misleading clue.) As we have shown previously, Agnon's main subject of this story, the very cornerstone of this messianic excursion, consists of building up his case in relationship to the element of measurement—*midot*.

The ground where he builds up his word-pyramids is one of the most fantastic sites, one of the most fascinating literary-linguistic experiences.

Since measurements is the basic idea of his thesis, Agnon—through some mystic stroke of genius—has found that the name Theodor itself harbors allusions to the very summit of the dimension of measurements. Such an idea is contained in the measuring instrument called a theodolite, which is a surveyor's instrument for measuring angles.

And this is the place where Agnon's hint of the Pyramids and Faust (measure) enter into the picture. Since the Egyptian builders had accurately oriented the Great Pyramid with respect to the true meridian, it is believed that the theodolite's origin was in ancient Egypt, dating back as far as 2800 B.C.⁶

Ginat—Gunter—Theodor—Theodolite

From here, Agnon proceeds to the task of linking Dr. Ginat and Theodor Herzl in a genial hookup of mystic frequency. He searches and finds Dr. Edmund Gunter, famous for the Gunter scale, or

Gunter's chain, another very famous surveyor's form of measure.

After he drops the *r* of *Theodor* and transforms the name into *Theodolite*, he takes the *r* from *Theodor* and attaches it to Dr. Ginat's name to make the name *Gunter* (in the Hebrew original *Ginat* is spelled *Gint* and *Gunter* is spelled *Gintr*).

To make sure that his ingenious combination is not lost in space, Agnon drops two hints about a certain Ginter (or Gunter).⁷

For good measure, as is Agnon's habit, he also drops another hint about a "train arriving at Garmish."⁸ This isolated incident is by its very nature a very important clue, spiriting our frame of reference towards the famous mathematician's place of residence, Gresham College, in London. Thus, Garmish and Gresham (*grmish* = *grishm*) are one and the same, as Gunter and Ginat are one and the same.

Dreyfus Affair—The Base of Agnon's Pyramid

Considering all the fantastic word associations and their relationship to this breathtaking mystic experience, the reader may be inclined to feel by now that the author must have exhausted all his ingenious resources. This is not true with Agnon. His storehouse is full of surprises. There is no end to his genial, poetic-mystic-linguistic resources.

The pyramid is a case in point. We thought he had reached the summit with *Theodor-theodolite*, *Ginat-Gunter*; yet here is another one. To complete the circle with regard to the dimension of measurements relative to the idea of redemption, our attention is turned towards the Dreyfus Affair, Herzl's first shocking confrontation with the Judenfrage, an experience which he witnessed as the celebrated correspondent for the prestigious *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna. It was precisely this traumatic experience that completely changed Herzl's world outlook as a Jew. It was in this sense that "Herzl could say later that the Dreyfus Affair had made him a Zionist."⁹

Turning to Agnon's experience, Dreyfus is now transformed into a tripod, which is the base of a theodolite or any other surveyor's instrument, just as the affair of Captain Dreyfus is taken to have been the basis for Dr. Herzl's change of course. Thus, Agnon's pyramid looks now as follows:

Tripod	Dreyfus
Theodolite	Theodor
Gunter	Ginat
Gresham	Garmish
Faust ¹⁰	Greifenbach

IV

Faust—Agnon's Chain of Messianic Measurements

EXCITING AS IT WAS to watch Agnon match with majestic precision the perfect angles of his magic word-pyramid, he is even more marvelous in linking up the mystic chain of his Faust-redemption magic formula.

In true biblical-prophetic fashion, Agnon attaches much greater importance to words in respect to their latent, mystic association than to their manifest, ordinary meanings and submeanings.

Earlier we pointed out that "'Iddo and 'Aynam" was the product of a fantasy our author pursued for almost a lifetime. It is our thesis that the first nucleus of this work is to be seen in one of his earlier short stories entitled "Mitpahat" ("The Kerchief"). Charmingly unassuming as the kerchief motif appears within the messianic framework of that short story, the choice of the title "Mitpahat" to underscore the messianic element can only now be fully appreciated.¹

Petah—Aynayim—An Eye-Opener

Retracing our steps many generations beyond the Greifenbachs (*garaf-egrof, tefah*) in order to find the fledgling roots of the

Messiah-measuring concept—matching the branches with their roots, and these in turn with their first seedlings—we land at the home of Judah and Tamar, the place where stood the first cradle of the Davidic-messianic line of descendance.

When the desperate widow, Tamar, tricked her father-in-law, Judah, into having intercourse with her so as to consummate the rights and duties of the *levir*, the Bible designates the locale as Petah-Aynayim.²

Petah-Tefah, Aynayim-'Aynam

Among the various renditions of the mentioned obscure locale Petah-Aynayim, Agnon follows the one of Rabbi Hanin,³ who identifies it with the place called Tapuah and Aynam.⁴

That our assumption is correct is clearly evidenced by Agnon's choice of the title "'Aynam" from the prophet Zechariah. For it is none other than the prophet Zechariah who in his messianic vision has linked the Tamar and Judah locale with redemptive imageries. It was he, Zechariah, the prophet of restoration, who, playing on the words *Petah-Aynayim*, has been able to predict:

For this is the stone [basis] which I have set before Joshua; upon one stone seven eyes [*aynayim*]: I shall reveal her revelation [*m'fateah pituhah*], says the Lord Zebaoth.⁵

Here we have the first linkup of *Petah* with *Aynayim*, followed by the vision of measurements which are prefaced by *Zot Aynam*,⁶ to wit: "This is 'Aynam, the mystic dimension of messianic measurements."⁷

Petah—Tephah—Mitpahat

Following Agnon's chain of messianic measurements, we next stop at the threshing floor of Boaz in Bethlehem. That night, most

fateful for the Messianic line of descendance, we are told that Ruth was to have spread out her kerchief (*mitpahat*) so as to receive from Boaz a gift of a "handful of barley,"⁸ token of his pledge to consummate the duties of the *levir*.

For all intents and purposes, this symbolic transaction between Boaz and Ruth, while both were holding on to the *mitpahat*, we believe to be one of the most meaningful mystic performances among the messianic imageries.

To Agnon, the *mitpahat* not only symbolized the essence of the messianic visions; it is more basic to the esoteric link between measurement-dimensions and messianism. For Agnon sees in the term *mitpahat* primarily the root *tephah* (handbreadth), which on one hand extends to the Greifenbachs and some further implications of the "Song of the Bird Grofit" (fist-size). On the other hand, in *tephah*, or *fist* (Faust), Agnon recognizes the symbolic concept of force (royal or otherwise), linking it with the passage of the B'nai Benyamin,⁹ who by custom had to "catch and carry off their wives by force."¹⁰ In talmudic terminology, *egrof* is noted for the "men of power" (*ba'ale-egrofin*), likewise epitomizing the Davidic dynasty.¹¹

This done, the Agnon mystic chain of measurements has established its most valuable linkup with Herzl's secular first name, *Theodor*, as well as his Hebrew first name, *Benyamin*. This is to linguistically qualify Herzl as the contemporary contender to the messianic line of tradition.

V

Classic Messianism vs. Contemporary Interim Messianism

OUR STORY UNFOLDS in a steadily mounting, tension-filled atmosphere, all taking place within the Greifenbach residence, all of it condensed into the stealthiness of two chimerically ensconced nightmares. As the story progresses, the tensions increase with fantastic vehemence.

The tension is caused by the challenging confrontation between the spirit of the traditional suffering-servant, end-of-days Messiah, and the contemporary-secular-interim Messiah.

The emotion-packed friction between these two poles, the author has set into the scene of a lovers' triangle, the partners of which are Gabriel Gamzu; his ailing wife, Gemulah; and the intruder and world traveler, Dr. Ginat.

The spirit of the classical Messiah is personified by Gabriel Gamzu,¹ the "lawfully espoused husband"² of Gemulah, representing the community of Israel in exile. She was the only daughter of Gevayah ben Geuel.³ The lover-intruder, world traveler

stranger, Dr. Ginat, who happened to be the temporary occupant of the fourth room belonging to the Greifenbachs, we have shown represents the personality of Dr. Herzl.

The Magic Number Four

Of the many affinities between Gemulah and the Greifenbachs, the magic number four is the most conspicuous. Each has four rooms of his or her own. The Greifenbachs call their rooms Nahal (brook/valley) while Gemulah's four rooms are called by her own name, Gemul, or some variation of the name. Both are, in fact, neighbors, within "reading" distance. While the Greifenbachs are located in the Book of Judges,⁴ Gemulah's residence is to be easily traced to the Book of Samuel.⁵

To make certain the reader will not miss his direction, the Greifenbachs employed a competent "guide," Gracia; "Ozeret" Agnon calls her.⁶ *Gracia* is none other than a translation for *Hannah* (hen-grace), the prophet Samuel's mother. As to the four rooms, they are now to be seen clearly as part of Gracia-Hannah's dialogue with her husband, Elkanah [in 1 Samuel 1:22-24]:

"... until the boy will be weaned. . . [*yigamel*]"

"... until you will wean him . . . [*gomlekh*]"

"... until she weaned him . . . [*gomlah*]"

"... as she had weaned him . . . [*gemalathu*]"

Hence, Gemulah (weaned)⁷ personifies Israel, like a woman separated from her husband, Gamzu, in our case the suffering Messiah. (For *Gemulah* as metaphoric for the community of Israel, see Jonathan to Isaiah [28:9].)

Moreover, *Gemulah*, like *Nahal*, is highly charged with chords of redemptive imageries. To Agnon it is a messianic term, seen as part of Joel's prophetic vision on the future redemption of Israel: "Are you to render me retribution . . . [*gemul*]?"⁸

"And if you render me retribution . . . [*gomelim*]"

"Soon I shall return your retribution . . . [*gemulkhem*]"

“I shall return your retribution . . . [*gemulkhem*]”

Judged by the mystic ties of the magic number four, it alone should make it sufficiently natural for Gemulah and Ginat (the tenant of the Greifenbachs) to be drawn to each other in their thirst for unrequited love. Agnon, however, needs further proof. And he finds it in another magic number.

The Mysterious Number Twelve

“She was one of the twelve constellations of the zodiac, and she is the one called Virgo [*bethulah*].”¹⁰

“Gemulah was *about twelve years old* [italics mine] at the time, and her gracefulness and her voice were more beautiful than anything in the world.”¹¹

And now to the perfect match!

Herzl-Ginat relates:

When I was *about twelve years old* [italics mine] I was visited by the following dream: “The King-Messiah came, a glorious and majestic old man, took me in his arms, and swept off with me on the wings of the wind. On one of the iridescent clouds we encountered the figure of Moses.¹² The features were those familiar to me out of my childhood in the statue by Michelangelo. The Messiah called to Moses: ‘It is for this child that I have prayed.’¹³ But to me he said: ‘Go, declare to the Jews that I shall come soon and perform great wonders and great deeds for my people and for the whole world.’”

These two matching mystical numbers Agnon is yet to top with an even more startling mystical number, twelve. Gamzu-Mashiah had deposited with the author twelve Israeli pounds sterling (L.A.Y.), a “sum” Gamzu had saved up for ailing Gemulah’s “sanatorial care.” Unfortunately, on a certain day while the author was on an excursion to the Yam Hamelah, the Dead Sea, his home together with the money was “stolen” by thieves.¹⁴

By pinpointing his whereabouts at the time the mentioned loss occurred, Agnon provides us with everything we need to know

about the incident. First, *home (house)* in this context refers to spiritual possessions,¹⁵ i.e., his faith and trust in his traditional heritage. All these, including the twelfth principle of faith, the belief in messianic redemption, Agnon had “lost” (stolen) at one time or another. Instead, he was temporarily following alien ideologies (idols). That, and only that, was he suggesting by the “sum” which Gamzu-Mashiah had “deposited” with him to be used as “medical expenses” for the ailing Gemulah, namely, the ultimate redemption of Keneset Yisrael, the community of Israel, from its contemporary miseries. “Twelve L.A.Y.,” he repeatedly emphasizes. L.A.Y. is nothing less than the initials of the Hebrew text of the twelfth principle of faith—*Lo Ahakeh Yomam*, “I am awaiting him daily” (referring to the Messiah).

That old faith lost in Mashiah-Gamzu he has now recovered; Gamzu’s visits at the home of the Greifenbachs are a symbolic indication of former faith-friendship restored.

Why the Dead Sea?

The Dead Sea, or Salt Sea, is highly suggestive of idols (alien beliefs and ideologies). According to the law, the destruction of idols is done by depositing them into the Yam Hamelah, the Dead Sea. Hence, to Agnon, the Dead Sea is symbolic of alien gods, and synonymous with old faith lost. According to Yitzhak Kummer in *T’Mol Shilshom* (pp. 263-264), with whom Agnon seems to identify, he confesses at great length about his early backsliding, as well as in many other places.¹⁶

The Historic Triangle

Because our triangle is of such an extraordinary nature, we are touched by the impact of its tensions to an even greater degree.

To begin with, Gamzu does not act like an irate husband. He hardly shows any signs of jealousy. To the contrary, he is all too eager to find out all he can about his strange rival, Ginat. Though he is fully aware of Gemulah's frequent visits with the stranger, he has not even once scolded her or even brought up the subject in front of his "sidestepping" wife. Gamzu acts rather like a husband cognizant of his inefficiencies as a lover, one hitherto incapable of consummating his nuptials. He is sorry for himself rather than angry with his rival.

Who, like Gamzu, knows that Dr. Ginat is by no means the first of Gemulah's lover-messiahs? There were many before him. All of them at one time or another were occupants of the Greifenbach room, the same room now "leased" to Dr. Ginat. The furnished roster is to underscore interim-messianism's role through history.

The author refers to each one of them in his own chronological order.

To begin with, there was Bar Kokhba. According to talmudic sources, the first of the Messiahs was pictured as blind in the right eye (Gittin 58a). So is Gabriel Gamzu blind in one eye. Of course, in Agnonian fashion, the author does not always know whether Gamzu is blind in the right or left eye.

The two movements immediately preceding Zionism are Sabbatianism and Hasidism. These are alluded to by the "rich man from Gallipuli, Señor Gamliel Giron," and the sect of "Gemeinschaft der Gerechten."¹⁷ Gallipuli, the place where Shabbetai Zevi was imprisoned, stands for Sabbatianism as a movement, and the title *señor* is to underscore leadership of the movement.¹⁸ Gamliel and Giron are also intended to underscore Sabbatianism. The first is a representation of Moshe David Podhaitzer. It is a play on the name Gamliel ben Pedahzur,¹⁹ while Giron is another Agnonian talmudic pointer. By Giron, Agnon refers to "*Giro b'ene d'Satan*," i.e., Sabbatianism's theory of conquering evil by submitting to it.

As to Hasidism, the sect of the Gemeinschaft der Gerechten is an obvious translation of the Hebrew *K'hal Hasidim*, with *Tzadikim*

substituted for *Hasidim*. Obviously, Agnon agreed with Gershom Sholem that Hasidism was a direct or indirect offshoot of Sabbatianism.

VI

Gamzu and Ginat's Last Confrontation

Gamzu's Kerchief (Mitpahat)

If not for the author's account, we would not know about any one of Gemulah's flirtations prior to her present love affair with Dr. Ginat. Her husband, Gamzu, had never attached too much importance to any of them. Though he overextends himself in his recounting all the metamorphoses of his own existence, including the detailed personal and family background of his wife Gemulah, he not even once drops any hint about Ginat's predecessors. He does not consider them worth mentioning. Compared to Dr. Ginat's lovesickness for his wife, her affairs with the others were just fly-by-night episodes, mere fleeting flirtations.

Because of the lack of any of the usual intimacies between Gemulah and her present lover and the selflessness of their love for each other, untainted by any feint of ulterior motives, Dr. Ginat was to pose a positive threat to Gamzu's authority as a husband. To counter that threat, Gamzu dons his shield and armor.

Right on his first visit with the author at the Greifenbach home, he waves the document of his authority—the *mitpahat'* (kerchief): he pulls out a *mitpahat*, wipes his eyes, and says, "May it be so."

During his second visit, when in the middle of the recital of his fabulous experiences Gamzu feels interrupted by a suspicious noise coming from the adjoining room, Gamzu again produces his *carte d'identite*, the *mitpahat*. §

This time the *mitpahat* is not used for any other purpose but as a demonstration of authority:

He began to search his pockets and pulled out tobacco and laid it down, and pulled out a *mitpahat* and laid it down. . . .³

In view of the boundless love between Dr. Ginat and Gemulah, Gamzu until now was hesitant in making up his mind whether it was useful to challenge Dr. Ginat's overtures to his wife, Gemulah, or whether such fight was doomed to futility. From between the lines, any of the alternatives may have occupied Gamzu's mind. Were it not for the dramatic turn of events, for all we know, Gamzu might have relinquished his mandate on his ailing wife, freed to be united with Ginat, the choice of her heart.

The Song of the Bird Grofit

The dramatic event that changed Ginat's impending prospects has taken an instant turn in his disfavor, when he encouraged Gemulah to sing the Swan Song, to Agnon—the Song of the Bird Grofit:

"If you let me stay with you I will sing to you the Song of the Bird Grofit, the one she sings only once in her life." Says the young man, "Sing." Said Gemulah, "I will sing the Song of Grofit and we shall die. Gabriel, when I and Hakham Gideon will die you shall dig for us two graves, one at the side of the other. Are you promising me that you will do so?" Gamzu laid his hand upon her mouth and held it with all his strength. She tried to tear herself from his arms. He held on to her and shouted towards Ginat. "You know what you are; you are a *poshe-a Yisrael*" [apostate, literally a sinner of Israel]. [For the term's relevancy, see also footnote 6.]

The term *Grofit* is steeped in both Germanic folklore and also in midrashic terminology. As a Germanic term, *Grofit* stands for *Faustchen* (little fist). As such, *Faustchen* is antithetical to *Faust* (*garaf, egrof*). While *Faust* is suggestive of the quest for ever-higher yearnings and achievements in disregard of all odds and setbacks, *Faustchen* stands for resignation, giving-up, denial of higher values and succumbing to external threats. In short, the Song of the Bird *Grofit* stands for the spiritual suicide of the Jewish people. In midrashic terminology, *Grofit* has a similar connotation. There, it is metaphorically used for “lack of merits, worthlessness.”⁵

Thus, the Song of the Bird *Grofit* is starkly reminiscent of Dr. Herzl's earlier plan to solve the Jewish problem by voluntary submission to baptism en masse.⁶ (The song “Yiddal” will be dealt with as part of the Third Stratum of 'Iddo.) From Gamzu's standpoint, such intent disqualified him as the successful contender for the office of the traditional Messiah.⁷

Ninety-Nine Words of the Language of 'Iddo

More than anything else in this mysterious demonic tale did the ninety-nine words of 'Iddo mystify all Agnon readers. It was not meant to be that way. In fact, next to the title, Agnon here deposited one of his greatest clues. Here it is.

Dr. Ginat-Herzl is pictured as one who struck great fame by discovering the lost language of 'Iddo, its dictionary, its grammar, and the 'Aynamite hymns. Since we know that Ginat and Herzl are identical, it does not take great imagination to unpuzzle Herzl's discovery. For this we are only to take a short glimpse of his era, Herzl's generation. From the Jewish point of view, Herzl and his generation were a completely assimilated group, bare of any spiritual ties of substance with Judaism. Down to the covenant of Abraham, the rite of circumcision, this last vestige of historical ties with Judaism, had likewise been discarded; circumcision had gradually fallen into disuse.

Herzl, through the affair of Dreyfus, has *rediscovered* his Jewish identity, and with it has given his generation new direction, a return to their ancient spiritual source.

Milah, Millim

A play on the words *milah* (circumcision) and *millim* (words) solves the puzzle of discovery of the ninety-nine words of the language of 'Iddo: “And Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he circumcised [*b'himolo*] the flesh of his foreskin. . . .”⁸ So much for ninety-nine as a number.

Late on, the Bible itself furnishes us with the wordplay between *milah* (circumcision) and *millel* (to speak):

And Abraham circumcised [*vayamo*] his son Isaac when he was eight days old.

. . . Who would have said [*mi-millel*] to Abraham that Sarah has nursed children?”

So much for Herzl's discovery. His Jewish identity, once reduced to the oldest Jewish ties, the covenant of Abraham, this bond for all eternity, made when he was ninety-nine years old, Herzl had rediscovered.

Justifiably, this covenant had, to Agnon, tremendous messianic overtones. To begin with, prior to the eve of the Exodus from Egypt—Israel's first redemption—all males were enjoined upon to be circumcised.¹⁰

Similarly, before entering the Holy Land, Joshua was commanded to have all males born after the Exodus circumcised, so as to be qualified for entering the Land of Promise.¹¹ Consequently, the Jewish people of the Herzl era had likewise experienced their renaissance, their own rediscovery through the return to the ancient Jewish rite of circumcision. Hence, the “discovery of the ninety-nine words [*millim*] of the language of 'Iddo” by Herzl.

The fantastic imagination and erudition of Agnon does by no means stop here. He saw in Isaac's birth and circumcision the

simultaneous emergence of the Jewish people, the symbol of its physical birth. Therefore, Agnon chose this passage for the phenomenon of the birth of *gemulah* as a redemptive term.

. . . And when the child grew up and he was weaned [*vayyigamal*] Abraham made a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned [*higamel*].¹²

Let it be emphasized that in addition to the multiplicities of all intricate contextual latencies implicit in the term *gemul*, Agnon has found one with explicit reference to Israel as a people. None other than David has set the stage for the equation *gemul* = Israel:

. . . as a weaned child [*k'gamul*] yearns for his mother, as a weaned child [*kagamul*] my soul within me; so Israel trusts in the Lord, now and forevermore.¹³

After the Davidic equation of *gamul* = Israel, Agnon was only to feminize *gamul* into *gemulah* in order to fit the description of his heroine, the *Betulat Yisrael* (Virgin of Israel).

In addition, Agnon must have had apocalyptic speculations regarding the previously mentioned mystic number four in connection with the term *gemul* on one side and *milah* and *millel* on the other.

As we shall soon show, to Agnon the tidings narrative on Isaac¹⁴ and the narrative of his subsequent birth are both pertinent to our story. As such, both are quintessentially an intricate consequence of Abraham's circumcision at the age of ninety-nine. Hence, each one has certain latent mystic ties with the other. No wonder Abraham's circumcision passage contains the mystic number four and so does the birth of Isaac narrative:

Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised [*b'himolo*]. . . And Yishmael, his son, was thirteen years old when he was circumcised [*b'himolo*]; the very same day circumcised [*nimol*] Abraham and Yishmael his son, also all members of his house . . . have circumcised [*nimolu*] with him.¹⁵

Amazingly, these four forms for *milah* follow each other. Conversely, in the birth narrative, the four forms elaborated on

earlier follow in nearly the same sequence. They are (1) circumcision (*vayamol*), (2) spoke (words, or *millel*), (3) weaned (*vayigamal*), (4) weaned (*higamel*).

No wonder Agnon has seen in *gemul* as well as in *milah* and *millim* the same mystic-redemptive imageries pointed out earlier in the term *nahal* (brook/valley). After all, the mystic number four as a redemptive signal has already been pointed out long ago as the linguistic herald of the impending redemption from Israel's first subjection in history.¹⁶

VII

Dr. Gilat, Little Ednah

WE ARE APPROACHING the climax to our story. Had we not exhausted the range of all our superlatives in the course of describing each of the mystic components of this fantastic drama, we could now say this part of the puzzle represented the summit of Agnon's literary genius. Of course, we were merely dealing with the second stratum of 'Iddo, the one pertaining to the message referring to Dr. Herzl and the Jewish renaissance. (On the third and most profound of the strata, some other time.)

The cognoscenti, no doubt, have guessed by now the origin of "little Ednah," deducing her point of origin from our elaboration on the promise and birth of the Isaac passages. Said Sarah: "After my old age shall I have rejuvenation [*ednah*]? Seeing that my lord is also old."¹

As a clue, Agnon refers to Abraham as a grandparent, in recognition of the synonymy of the expression *zaken* for both old age and grandparent. Ergo, this would make "little Ednah" a granddaughter. By a subtle switch of the letter *b* and *m*, the granddaughter of Abraham (*Abra[h]ami*) will turn into the granddaughter of Amrami. This, of course, is just the beginning.

Let us see how Agnon handles that part:

In the morning as I picked up the paper . . . I found written that Dr. Gilat died. Since I have not known a man by such name I did not

think about it. But my heart weakened and when a person's heart weakens unpleasant things enter his mind.²

Further on, Agnon says:

Let me start from the beginning. I circled the streets and my heart was contemplating, If Ginat, why is it written *Gilat*, and if *Gilat*, why is my heart grieved? Then old man Amrami found me as he was leaning on his little granddaughter and said to me, are you going to the funeral? . . . Again he said marvelous are the ways of the Name; who shall understand them. A man endangers himself in order to rescue a soul of Israel only to fall down and be killed. . . .³

These two paragraphs have a number of important hints. Let us unravel them one by one. In the first paragraph, Agnon makes two references to the heart, one immediately following the other. In the second paragraph, he again repeats *libbi* (my heart) in close proximity, exactly the way 'Iddo started out earlier. *Libbi* (my heart) again is to impress us with the true identity of Dr. Ginat-Herzl. Also he tells us that the death of Herzl is to be regarded as the beginning of his fantastic tale. This he alludes to by the phrase "Let us start from the beginning."

Moreover, Agnon is most impressive in his eagerness to let us in on the secret of how this tale had taken its course. For that reason, he now switches the *n* in *Ginat* for an *l* to make it read *Gilat*.⁴

Aside from *gilat* as a redemptive term of close textual proximity to *gemul*,⁵ Agnon's switch is to suggest that we also change the *n* in *Ednah* for an *l* to make it read *Edlah*.

Ednah or Edlah = Edlach

By changing *Ednah* into *Edlah* ("marvelous are the ways of the Name"), we are a very short distance from the place where Herzl died, on the 20th Tamuz (July 3, 1904) at the age of forty-four. The place, as we all know, is called Edlach, on the Semmering, near Vienna. From between the lines we can almost hear Agnon telling us that 'Iddo received its impetus from Herzl's burial place,

Edlach, triggered by the tremendous shock over the early death of the beloved and venerated leader. It had taken Agnon about fifty years⁶ to process this traumatic experience and ultimately to find its release in “ ‘Iddo and ’Aynam.’ ”

For not only is Ednah = Edlach a very important part of this story, it is also the basis for the story’s title, if we consider both Aramaic translations. The Yerushalmi translates *Ednah* with *Idduy*, while Onkelos translates it with *Ulemu*. Concerning the identity of *Idduy* and *’Iddo* there can hardly be a mistake, especially in its Hebrew orthography. As to *Ulemu*, it no doubt has its roots in *Olam*,⁷ another form of *Aylam*, which again, by switching *n* for *l*, brings us back to *Aynam*. Hence Iddo and Aynam (the way Agnon tries to tell us).

As to *Ednah* in its biblical context, all are agreed that it is rooted in *Iddan*, derived from the root *ad*. Finally, as a term, *ad* itself is highly charged with the mysticism of redemptive imagery. To Ezekiel, *a.d.* seems to be the abbreviation of the redemptive metaphor for *et-dodim*.⁸ This metaphor Agnon had not failed to incorporate in our story in connection with Gemulah’s marriage to Gabriel Gamzu.⁹

“Marvelous Are the Ways of the Name”

With this allegoric enigma, Agnon astonishes us as with one of his subtlest and most formidable double-talk. “Name” in this context could refer to God, whose ways are marvelous, but also to the marvels of the name as a noun. Since the Hebrew knows of no capital letters, this awesome phrase could mystify the reader.

The truth of the matter is that Agnon may well have referred to both *Name* as a euphemism for God and *name* in reference to the name of Herzl’s burial place, Edlach. In both cases he marvels at the linguistic chain reaction, the like of which could occupy a place of honor beside any of the complex hermeneutic deductions employed by the Talmud, Midrash, or Cabbalah. Agnon himself is

awed at how from *Edlach* evolved *Ednah*, *milah*, *millim*, *gemul*, *gemulah*, and how from there her ways parted into the “four directions.” *Ednah*, then gives birth to *eden-gan*,¹⁰ directly leading to *pardes* (paradise), and *eden ginta*, the Aramaic equivalent of *eden-gan*. *Ginta* leads to *Ginta-Ginter (Gunter)*—fusing into *faust*, *egrof*, *mitpahat*, *grofit*, *garaf*, *grafam*, to land at the home of the Greifenbachs, where the Ozeret, Gracia-Hannah, shows us the way to Samuel (a name probably identified with the author), the permanent residence of our heroine, Gemulah. And all is so marvelously bound up with Herzl’s dream—“For this child have I prayed” (p. 22).

Mitpahat, Once More

More than anyone else was Gamzu distressed at the passing of Dr. Ginat. For the last time he produced the *mitpahat*, this time as a dramatic gesture towards the one who could well have come to be Messiah, the owner of this *mitpahat*. “With his finger he wiped his dead eye and pulled out a *mitpahat*, wiped off his finger, and whispered¹¹ and said, ‘It is the same one. He is the Hakham Yerushalmi, he is the same scholar to whom I have sold the treasures [*segulot*].’ ”¹²

Agnon also thinks of Ginat-Herzl as of a near-Messiah. With Ginat dead, “the works have no comforter.”¹³ The term *comforter* is no doubt messianic. In addition, the author quotes, almost verbatim, from Dr. Herzl’s *Literary Testament*, where he says among other things: “My name will grow after my death. . . .”¹⁴ So also thinks Agnon. He says in closing: “After he died, his soul increasingly illuminates [*the world*]. . . .”

What Happened to Gemulah?

Conspicuously, Gemulah's funeral receives little notice. All attention is now focused on Dr. Ginat-Herzl's funeral. There is good reason for this silent treatment of our heroine, and Agnon explains in his own language, the *lashon beduyah*:

Came a family of mourners and sat upon an opposite bench. Out came from their midst a woman and walked in front of them throwing her voice amidst mourning songs and elegies trembling her frail body in step with those melodies. She was grieved, very grieved, and so was her voice. Not one of her words did I understand. But her voice and her walk and the looks of her face made to cry the heart of all that looked upon her. From her bosom (house of her heart) she pulled out a picture of a young man, looked at it again, singing the songs of praise over his good looks and his grace and over all the years that were his to live had not the angel of death made haste. All the mourners cried out loud. And whoever heard them cry cried with them. Surely so must have Gemulah mourned over her father and thus must she have eulogized him.

The woman who walks in front of the mourners is none other than Gemulah herself. By describing her as "grieved" (*atzuvah*), Agnon wishes to identify her with the one Gerda Greifenbach earlier in our story had heard singing: "If we may judge by the voice, she must be a woman of embittered soul and grieved spirit" (*atzuvah-azuvah-galmudah = Gemulah*).¹⁵

Here we have, in addition to another reference to the heart, also a peculiar form for *bosom*—*beth halev* (house of the heart), allegoric for Herzl's place in the heart of his beloved people, for whom he gave his life: "Give them all my greetings, and tell them that I have given my heart's blood for my people. . . ." ¹⁶

The author compares Gemulah-Israel's mourning for Herzl to the shock that went through the hearts of the people at the time of the destruction of the Temple. For only such is the meaning of his euphemism "mourning over the loss of her father," reminiscent of what the author told us then.¹⁷ The "death" of Gemulah's father is another allusion to the destruction of the Temple, according to Jeremiah's paraphrase: "We have remained orphans, without a father."¹⁸

The editor tells us, too, that he did not understand one word. So he also told us many times in the story in reference to the language of allegory, the *lashon beduyah*. We believe that we have understood him very well. And what he was trying to tell us in the above-mentioned paragraph is this: Old Gemulah, the one for which Herzl gave his life, was no more. Not a single tear was shed for her. She was gone, but the new, reborn Israel-Gemulah, thanks to Herzl, got a new lease on a more glorious future. There the graceful, majestically imposing, beautiful figure of Herzl will remain enshrined forever.