GERSHON SHAKED

Portrait of the Immigrant as a Young Neurotic

Shelter me beneath your wing
And be for me a mother and a sister.
— H.N. Bialik

ON FIRST READING, *Betrothed* (*Shevu'at emunim*, 1943), one of Agnon's later novellas, appears to be a neoromantic work similar to those common in Europe, especially in Scandinavia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The romantic element of the novella is conveyed through the atmosphere of the setting and through the plot. Jaffa, in which the story is set in the early days of this century, is presented as an exotic international city, whose landscape has mythic dimensions. This is not a Zionist Jaffa, quite the contrary. Its inhabitants have betrayed the pioneering ideal and become regular city dwellers. Mediterranean exoticism is combined with an enchanted provinciality that recalls the villages in Norway in which are set Knut Hamsun's provincial novellas *Victoria*, *Pan*, and *Mysteries*. The difference between Hamsun's villages and Agnon's Jaffa of the late Ottoman period is smaller than one might expect. The provinciality of the setting in both authors, moreover, is emphasized by the premise of the plot: the arrival of an interesting, marrigeable stranger into the narrow circle of village society.

Agnon's Jacob Rechnitz, a botanist who studies ocean flora and supports himself by teaching Latin, is such an exotic figure, a helpless

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Don Juan who is unable to endure the company of women for fear of the "particular force" which binds the sexes. The tranquility of the province is further shattered by the arrival of two more strangers: a father and daughter, Austrians who have come to Jaffa from Africa. The daughter Susan, who suffers from an unexplained sleeping sickness, had once been Rechnitz's betrothed, and the father, Herr Ehrlich, apparently wants his daughter to marry the man who had frequented their home as a boy and was a sort of adopted son.

A number of thematic and formal oppositions make *Betrothed* something more than a provincial love story. On the one hand, the novella includes extraliterary references to such figures as Lilienblum, Ahad Ha'Am, and Ussishkin (who appear under their own names) and provides a description of Jaffa which closely corresponds to documentary sources. On the other hand, legendary and mythic materials abound in *Betrothed.* The tale of Sleeping Beauty is an important armature for the story, as is another familiar folklore motif, the betrothal. The story ends with a strange and legendary foot race in which a floating, dream-like figure beats out the concrete characters.

Another conspicuous contrast hinges on the protagonist's two sets of parents. Jacob Rechnitz's natural parents are of low social standing and hardly appear in the story at all, whereas his neighbors, the Ehrlichs, Susan's father and mother, virtually become his adoptive parents, helping him advance in life and paying for his education. They are far better remembered by him as an adult than his biological parents. The duality in the status of his parents recalls the Oedipus story: abandoned by his natural parents, Oedipus was adopted and raised by foster parents; it was his return to his biological parents which proved to be his undoing. In *Betrothed* the questions that arise are a variation of this theme. What will be the relationship between the adopted son and his adoptive parents? What will be the relationship between him and his adoptive sister, his intended bride? Is she truly meant to be his wife? What is the meaning of the connection between the hero and his adoptive parents? What role does the adoptive father play in his life, and what role does Susan play? These questions, for which there are no simple answers in the story, constitute the interpretive puzzle the reader is challenged to try to solve. A starting point is the many thematic and formal contrasts in the story.

The opposition between natural and adoptive parents is one. Others include: the contrast between the hero's international status as a scientific expert in seaweed and his local status as a teacher in Palestine; the contrast between his apparent success as a Don Juan pursued by many women and his failure in actual love life, for he is unable to form a real bond with any woman except the one afflicted with sleeping sickness, who is unable, and perhaps unwilling, to

maintain interpersonal relations. On the formal level, the story suggests many allegorical possibilities through symbolic names, yet the allegorical hints do not fit the fictional reality: they virtually contradict their actualization. The Hebrew names of the two main protagonists, Ya'akov and Shoshana, have allegorical overtones because they are linked in the familiar Purim song, *"Shoshanat Ya'akov, tsahala vesameḥa"* (Jacob's lily [the Jewish people], rejoicing and joyous). Another source of allegorical overtones is the formulaic number seven—six women versus the seventh, the lone man and the six women surrounding him, etc. Allegorical elements are also implicit in the work because of the tradition which creates a bond between the secular love story, the Song of Songs, and the mystical interpretations which have been given to it. Sentences taken from the Song of Songs such as, "I am asleep, and my heart is awake," the mystical connection between the beloved woman and the Divine Presence, the status of the formulaic number seven in the tradition and in folklore—all these open the door to allegorical interpretations. Finally, there is the contrast between the idyllic and epic course of the story on the one hand, which is usually given a credible realistic explanation, and, on the other, the figure of Susan, as well as the conclusion of the novella, which breaks through the barrier of realism and forces the reader to reread the text from a different point of view.

These contrasts have given rise to diverse interpretations of the text. A common view of *Betrothed* holds that the novella is mainly concerned with the figure of a man surrounded by six maidens who prefers his ideal childhood love over all the women whom he chances to meet along the way. Various allegorical interpretations of the love story have followed in the wake. The hero's relations to the six women versus his relations to Susan have been seen as symbolizing the relation of the Jewish people towards the six working days versus their relation to the Sabbath (thence *Shoshanat Ya'akov,* see Kariv, Penueli[1]). These interpretations emphasized Susan's "Jewishness" versus the "secularity" of the girls of Palestine. What is astonishing about those interpretations, however, is the fact that Consul Ehrlich and his daughter are no closer to Judaism than the local residents. On the contrary, the Consul and his family are quite assimilated. There exists, then, an acute contrast between the explicit level of the story and the purported allegory. These "Jewish" interpretations obscure much of the material of the novella by forcing it into the structure of an allegorical thesis.

That interpretation has even been extended by linking it intertextually with midrashic and mystical materials (see Stern, Nagid[2]). Other interpretations connected the world of the sea and seaweed with the Homeric Greek world, as opposed to that of Ehrlich, which is a

Jewish world (Sadan[3]). In general one finds a tendency to identify one group of characters and symbols with the Jewish world and another group with the non-Jewish world. Band's interpretation emphasizes the deep psychological link between the hero and the world of his childhood, a link which is dissolved in the last scene.[4] Naomi Tamir proposed a many-sided interpretation, starting with a highly significant interpretation of the hero's interest in seaweed and concluding with the suggestion that the hero's love is an idealized childish love, which is impossible to fulfill with any woman in general or with the actual Susan (as opposed to the ideal figure) in particular. Stressed by Tamir as well are the class aspects of the relations between the lowborn hero and the privileged daughter.[5]

The interpretation I would like to propose is based on a psychological reading of the novella. *Betrothed*, I would argue, is mainly concerned with the ambivalent relations between a passive young man and his mother. Since the mother is no longer alive, he forms a bond with an adoptive surrogate mother; the relationship also encompasses her daughter, who comes to stand for the mother. The bond with the adoptive mother is extremely positive. The hero is dependent upon his surrogate mother and admires her, and because of his ties to her, he is incapable of any other erotic connection. He sees many women in order to avoid the risk of forming relations with any one woman and to avoid betraying the mother of his choice and destiny.

To support this thesis let us begin with an examination of several passages and then move outward to the general significance of the work.[6]

> At the sound of the waves, at the sight of the limitless expanse of the sea, Rechnitz closed his eyes. And now he saw his mother kneeling down before him. He was a small boy; she was threading a new tie round his collar, for it was the day Susan was born and he was invited to the Consul's house. But surely, thought Jacob to himself, she can't be my mother, and it goes without saying that she isn't Susan's mother either, because one is far from here and the other is dead; if I open my eyes I shall see that this is nothing but an optical illusion. The illusion went so far as to present him at once with his own mother and with Susan's; and since one object could not be two, it followed of necessity that here was neither his own mother nor Susan's. But if so, who was she? Susan herself, perhaps? Of course not, for Susan was ill in bed. (p. 136)

Several other passages also point towards that problem as revealed in the work:

> They talk about themselves and the world outside, which is no more than a small part of their own. At times the gods deal well with mortals, allowing them to see eternity in an hour. Let us then ask the gods to prolong this hour without end or limit.

> Susan had laid her fine, delicate hands before her on the table. Jacob gazed at them, as he used to gaze at her mother's hands when she would place them on the table and his lips would long to touch them. (pp. 89–90)

And, a final example:

> At this same time, Jacob in Jaffa was picturing himself as a child again with Susan. In her short frock, she chased butterflies, picked flowers and made a crown of them for her head. Actually the Consul's house now stood desolate and untenanted and Rechnitz's parents had long since moved out of that neighborhood. But whenever his father's home came to his mind, he saw it still as standing next to the Consul's. (p. 113)

From these three passages it is clear that the hero has forged a link among the three women of his childhood. Unconsciously and on the threshold of his consciousness they meld into a single figure. Susan's mother becomes an adoptive mother, and he relates to her as to an actual mother, becoming attached to her by a deep, Oedipal bond. She is the true woman in his life, a substitute for his mother, or his true, beloved mother, and Susan is merely a surrogate for her. In fact his relation with Susan is both dual and forbidden. On the one hand, she is his adoptive sister, so that any sexual bond with her is a violation of the incest taboo, and, in a kind of transformation, she is also a surrogate for the mother and in that regard she also comes under the same severe prohibition.

These forbidden connections to the world of the mother fascinate the hero, even though, as will be seen later, they bring him closer to the realm of death than to that of life. This unconscious level, then, suggests the opposite of a number of commonly held interpretations in which Susan is viewed as the ideal beloved and the six girls as figures who attempt to turn the hero away from his ideal. Our interpretation suggests that Susan is an expression of the bond which *prevents* the hero from forming a true erotic connection with any woman and makes him regress to a pre-erotic or presexual stage. Susan is a mother/sister figure, and his relations with her resemble the fulfillment of the wish expressed by the speaker of Bialik's poem when he implores, "Shelter me beneath your wing/And be for me a mother and a sister." Susan's appearance in Palestine prevents Jacob from truly becoming part of the life of the country and forming an erotic connection to it. By bringing him back to his childhood, she not only makes it impossible for him to continue keeping company with the women of Jaffa (whom he had originally been unable to leave because he was bound to all of them at once), but she also takes away his other occupation: he becomes incapable of continuing his scientific research, which had served as a substitute for interpersonal relations as well as a sublimated expression of his relations with his past. He is unable and unwilling to form any

true bond with a wife, mother, or sister. The Oedipal bond with the mother and the sister (who is a substitute for the mother) paralyzes his emotional existence.

The figure of Susan, moreover, is connected with death, and in the subconscious of the narrator and the hero a tie to her brings a man closer to death. The most traumatic scene in the story is that of the death of Frau Ehrlich:

> Never had he been so grieved as on that night, in his awareness of her death. That Susan's mother was dead, that she was an orphan, did not evoke in him any feeling of pity; it was rather like a new motion of the soul, when the soul attaches itself at once to one who is absent and another who is present, and is taken up into both as one. (p. 17)

And below: "Susan wore black, with a black veil over her face, her arm in her father's arm. Both walked as if set apart from this world" (p. 19).

These two perplexing passages bear a great deal of significance for understanding the story. The first emphasizes the identification of the survivor with the deceased and with her surviving daughter, and the second passage emphasizes Susan's status, as she is often referred to in the text as a being who is "set apart from this world." In the "combined speech" of the passage, the figure of the mother has come to include the figure of the daughter/sister. Henceforth the connection between Jacob and his mother/sister will no longer be a connection with the mother who has disappeared but with the mother who has passed on to another world. He will assume the role of an orphan who is unable to become engaged in life because he is bound to the world of death with every filament of his soul. His return to the mother is a return to death; the bond with the mother and the sister is a bond with the world which stands in opposition to the world of life. The bond with the mother and with Susan partakes, then, more of thanatos than of eros. Susan is an emissary from the land of the dead to the world of the living, and her sleeping sickness is far more than a "sixtieth part of death" (as the Rabbis phrased it). Susan's "embassy of death" (the phrase is Wilson Knight's) and the ambivalent relation with Jacob is expressed in various forms and in many passages. It is in the Muslim cemetery that the two lovers renew their oath of betrothal (p. 57). As they talk of Susan's mother, a parrot is heard screaching *Verflucht,* German for "cursed." Jacob thinks about a taxidermist named Arzaf (rendered as "Ilyushin" in English for the play on words—Susan thinks his name is "Illusion"). After their conversation about Ilyushin they order Egyptian cigarettes, and they both see the connection between taxidermy and Egyptian mummies.

Susan summarizes their conversation:

> forgetting all about the cigarettes, Susan went on, "Our days on earth are like a shadow, and the time of our affliction is the length of our days. How

> fortunate are those mummies, laid in the ground and freed from all trouble and toil. If I could only be like one of them!" Susan opened her eyes and looked up as if longing for release from the afflictions of the world.
>
> "From the day of your mother's funeral, I have not seen you," Jacob said. "And even on that day I didn't really see you. You seemed so distant from this world, Susan."
>
> "No Jacob, I felt as if the world were distant from me. And now, here I am, still not part of the world." (pp. 91–92)

Susan prefers the world of the dead to that of the living. Since the death of her mother she has been removed from the world—and the world from her.

Afflicted with sleeping sickness and removed from the world, she resembles a mummy from the ancient Egyptian culture that so fascinates her (Cf. also pp. 50–51).

It is not surprising, then, that the hero repeats his oath in the Muslim cemetery, and that Susan is close to such mythic figures as the "mermaid" (p. 104) or to Sleeping Beauty. Both of those figures are symbols of the eternal virgin, pre- or post-erotic. For Jung it is a symbol of the anima; for others it is a symbol of the unconscious itself, which awaits activation by conscious forces.[7] It seems to me that far from being a figure which expects to be awakened from its slumber, it is a figure which tries to draw the hero (like the Sirens) into the world of the sea. It is after his encounter with Susan in the guise of a mermaid that the hero devotes his life to the study of sea vegetation. The world of the sea tempts the hero to flee from life rather than embrace it. That motif is further developed in the dream which Susan recounts to Jacob:

> "Once," said Susan, "I dreamed that I was dead. I wasn't happy, I wasn't sad, but my body felt such rest as no one knows in the land of the living. And this was the best of it, that I wanted nothing, I asked for nothing, it just felt as if I were disappearing into blue distances that would never end. Next morning I opened a book and read in it that nobody dreams of himself as dead. If that's so, perhaps it was not a dream but wide-awake reality. But then, how can I be alive after my death? It's a puzzle to me, Jacob. Do you believe in the resurrection of the dead?"
>
> "No, certainly not," Jacob said.
>
> "Don't say certainly.' These certainties of yours bring me to tears." As she spoke, she closed her eyes. (pp. 94–95)

Not only is Susan an emissary of death, she also enjoys the experience of death, dreams about it, sees it as a positive goal of existence and rescue from life's vale of tears. She identifies with the figure of her mother, and the hero, grieving for the mother figure and unable to detach himself from his mourning, sees her as an extension of the vanished mother, who also draws him into the infinite sea, once again

returning to the bosom, that is, the grave, the eternal sleep before birth.

Susan arouses a very ambivalent reaction in the hero because she is fundamentally ambiguous. As a mother and sister she is forbidden to him, but she is also the wife to whom the hero is betrothed, and only with her is he permitted to form any kind of bond. On the one hand, she is an object of incestuous desire, fascinating and seducing him, although (and because) she is forbidden; on the other hand, as an ideal figure like a mother but not a mother, it might be said that she is permitted to him. She sees herself, however, as part of the sleeping world of mothers who have no erotic interest in this world, and, in the cemetery, she makes him swear to be faithful to her in the next world, i.e., to forgo eros in this world in return for the protection of thanatos leading to the next world.

There is a kind of dybbuk motif at work in the relations between two families who have vowed to marry their minor children to each other and have thus become a single family, until the point when the two children are unable to reach each other because they are like brother and sister. Yet they cannot part from each other, because the families have joined them by an indissoluable bond. The result is that they do not reach each other, but neither can they achieve any other real connection.[8] This structure of relations produces the ambivalent attitude of the earthly hero who goes back and reenters his childhood life. In fact the hero never succeeded in getting clear of his childhood. All his professional concerns, his affinity with the sea and with seaweed, depend upon the basic traumatic experience which linked him to the world of the "daughter of the seas," and her mother's yawning grave, which draws him near. On the other hand, being near to her entails obligations: he must abandon the women who evoke any sort of erotic response from him. The appearance of the Consul and his daughter, stricken with sleeping sickness, throws his life into confusion and he would prefer that the two of them let him be.

> Stripped of all cheer, he walked away from the hotel. He said to himself: Since they are here, I will do everything I can. But if they go, let them go. I will have a clear mind again. (p. 30)

> With the Consul's arrival reason resumed its proper place for Rechnitz, but at the cost of his tranquility, which was only restored when he returned to his work. (p. 121)

The hero is in an oddly ambivalent situation: on the one hand he is infinitely drawn to the strange deathlike figure of the mother and sister, to whom he has been bound since childhood; she in fact is his childhood. That figure symbolizes return to the mother's bosom, to the beckoning grave, to the infinite sea, the return to the beginning and the

end, to the source (birth) and to death (the womb). But on the other hand, he also seeks to be rid of her. In vain he begs the emissary from the land of death to leave him alone so he can return to his unconscious rest and resume his state of repression, thus avoiding the problems of the mature man who refuses to accept the responsibility of his manhood.

The main protagonist has failed to pass through an important stage in his life. He has transferred the Oedipal bond from the mother to the daughter, who is a kind of transformation of the mother. Erlich, the father, is still living, whether as a father or as a father-husband-widower travelling through the world with his wife-daughter-orphan.

The entire structure of relations surrounding the hero is distorted. He perverts his environment because his own life is warped. It is he who caused the formation of the group of women, all of whom seek deliverance, and it is he who has also perverted their personal lives because he prefers all of them together to any single one. The connections among these women gradually become lesbian relationships, because the man whom they surround is unable to give them what they want. Something essential has gone wrong in the town's sexual life because of the stranger-hero's dreadful ambivalence. The girls of the town want him to marry one of them, and, for them, this is the meaning of the race that concludes the novella.

As a result, the girls' lives become perverted:

> Leah hugged her, exclaiming, "You are a good little girl, Rachel!"
>
> "Aren't I? Taking the flowers that Raya's cousin brings her and sending them to that fine lady by means of Dr. Rechnitz! It would be still better if they were Mira's flowers originally, which *she* had given first to the cousin!—Forgive me, Dr. Rechnitz, I really don't mean any harm. Shake hands and let's make up.—Aren't you feeling cold, Leah?" Rachel slipped an arm around her friend's shoulder and kissed her on the neck. "Your neck tastes salty, Leah."
>
> In return Leah embraced Rachel, kissed her warmly [Hebrew: gave her a long kiss] and said, "I don't know what's the matter with me. I can't say that I am happy, but I can say that things feel good."
>
> "If they feel good, they *are* good," said Rachel. "For my part, I really don't know what's good and what isn't."
>
> With her eyes on the ground, Leah pondered what her friend had said. (pp. 43–44)

Relations among the girls are erotic and physical. The kiss on the neck and the long kiss are far more than girlish pranks. These pseudolesbian relations are a substitute for real relations between man and woman. The hero also encounters hints of homosexuality when he gets into the streetcar after visiting Susan: "Two young fellows got in

and one sat on the other's knees. He heard them talking to one another about Otto Weininger and his book *Sex and Character.* The journey continued for an hour" (p. 69).

What emerges from these two events is that the hero projects his illness upon his surroundings, as it were. He is unable to achieve actual relations with any woman, because he is attracted to the mother and death, or, at best, to a substitute for the two in his devotion to the sea and seaweed. The girls around him are drawn to his ambivalent charm as an attractive and repellent figure, and, because of him, they are unable fully to achieve their desires as women.

The women, in the end, attempt to decide the issue, like the Greeks, by means of a race; the winner will receive the wreath from Rechnitz's hair. In that race too, however, the tables are turned, and the human condition appears perverted:

> Leah insisted, "The Greeks had the men run, not the girls."
>
> Asnat answered, "But since all those young men are dead and we are alive, let's do their running ourselves. Do you agree, Dr. Rechnitz? Yes or no?—Why don't you speak?"
>
> Rechnitz answered, "I agree," and his heart quaked all the more. (p. 133)

The race symbolically underscores the reversal which has taken place in the sexual life of the social group being described. The man is paralyzed and passive, because his life has been blocked by his bond with the mother and surrogate mother. The erotic initiative has therefore passed to the women. And it is this figure, afflicted with sleeping sickness, who suddenly appears from nowhere and beats the waking women in the race. Thanatos triumphs. The unmasculine man, who has become a woman, for whom manly women fight, cannot give himself over to them even as a "woman," because he has formed an alliance with death by giving himself over to the mother and mother-surrogate. The bond with the mother emerges as a process of emasculation, which directs the libido towards the world of its opposite. What remains to the hero besides the blue expanses of his sleeping beauty who will never awaken? He is left with his substitute activity, the study of aquatic plants which also symbolize the dreadful and silent, endless distance of the oceanic feeling which is closer to death than to life.[9]

Susan, whether interpreted as a concrete person or a dream-like figure, is no ideal figure. She is ideal only in the sense that a child's mother is an idealized figure, or that seeking shelter in the bosom of death can be idealized. She is more beautiful, gracious, and delicate than other women because angels have no evil impulse. She exists in the hero's world before entering the *sujet* of the book, and her appearance

explains the hero's inability to find his place and become involved. The allegorical level, then, presents the possibility of parody. The connection between Susan and Jacob (Shoshana and Ya'akov) is far from being a source of rejoicing and joy. On the contrary, faithfulness is paralytic, destructive, and inhibits the redeeming festival of fertility.

The cultural and social ramifications of this conflict may in the end be as important as the psychological.

One cannot ignore the fact that the mother and sister from the past belong to the diaspora, and the six women belong to the Land of Israel. The hero cannot become involved in Jaffa, "darling of the waters," because he is a foreigner, bound by his umbilical cord (with all the possible meanings of that term) to another country and another culture. His warped sexual life is also a symptom of spiritual and emotional perversion in this "portrait of the scholar as a young immigrant." Professionally, the hero comes from Germany and is headed for America. Emotionally, he has not left the realm of the great cultural and social mother who clutches him so close that he is unable to get free of her. The attachment is not only sexual but also cultural (the culture of Western Europe, of assimilated Jewry). He belongs to the assimilated culture of Ehrlich, just as he is part of the mummified and enclosed world of Susan, his sister and mother.

She is an emissary from the land of death, and he spreads the illness, which has also infected him. It is the illness of impotence, infertility, and the incapacity for masculine decisiveness, causing women to take the sexual initiative into their own hands, until they themselves become man-like in their pseudo-lesbian relations with each other. Agnon discovered a kind of basic neurosis in the young European-Jewish intellectual who immigrated to the Land of Israel but failed to free himself from his mother, never managing to strike erotic roots in the new land. In that sense, Jacob Rechnitz is no different from Alex Portnoy, who is also impotent in Israel, because there, as elsewhere (though the reaction is opposite), he is under the influence of the great mother.

In relation to his own work, Agnon wrought no innovation here. In fact, he extended a pattern and thematics already present in his first story, *Agunot*.[10] In both instances the heroes are unable to achieve fulfillment in their sexual lives, because their development has been halted by a sort of attachment to another woman from another world.

Here Agnon has penetrated to depths beyond a personal neurosis.[11] With great sensitivity he has homed in on a neurosis typical of an entire society: the Zionist society of young immigrants who both sought rebirth and thirsted for death. Commanded to set out for a new world, they still yearned to return to the bosom of the great mother. Agnon perceived that great conflict in this novella as in his novel *Only*

Yesterday and, to a degree far greater than one might imagine at first, he is close to Yosef Hayim Brenner in his understanding of the problematics of the immigrant as a young neurotic.

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NOTES

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1. Avraham Kariv, "*Betrothed*: Why and for Whom?" [Hebrew], *Molad*, n.s. 19-20 (1971): 102-9; Sh. Y. Penueli, *Yetsirato shel Sh. Y. Agnon* [The Works of S. Y. Agnon] (Tel Aviv, 1960), pp. 142-47. Penueli also attempted a psychoanalytic interpretation of *Bethrothed* as a story of failed sublimation of the libido. See p. 122.

2. D. Stern, *Habegidah velikḥah: meḥkar beShevu'at emunim* [The Betrayal and Its Consequences: A Study of *Betrothed*] (Tel Aviv, 1964); Hayyim Nagid, "The Vow, the Moon and the Crown: On Kabballistic Symbolism in *Betrothed*" [Hebrew], *Masa*, 13 Oct. 1967.

3. Dov Sadan, "The Legend of the Seven and Seven" [Hebrew], in *'Al Sh. Y. Agnon* [On S. Y. Agnon] (Tel Aviv, 1959), pp. 74-88.

4. Arnold Band, *Nostalgia and Nightmare: A Study in the Fiction of S. Y. Agnon* (Berkeley, CA, 1968), pp. 367-82.

5. Naomi Tamir, "*Betrothed*—Four that Are One" [Hebrew], *Hasifrut* 3 (1972): 479-506.

6. All citations are from *Two Tales by S. Y. Agnon: Bethrothed & Edo and Enam*, trans. Walter Lever (New York, 1966), pp. 3-139. For the Hebrew original, see *Kol sippurav shel S. Y. Agnon*, 2nd ed. (Tel Aviv, 1966), vol. 7, pp. 216-98.

7. "Sleeping Beauty" in J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols* (New York, 1962), p. 285. See also Jung's remarks on the concept of "Anima" in *Psychologische Typen* (Zurich, 1946), pp. 665-70. Freud brilliantly analyzed the problem of love, death and choice between women in his essay on "The Theme of the Three Caskets" (1913). He maintains there that Lear should have chosen the third daughter (symbolizing death) and that the real choice was a transposition of the death wish. See: S. Freud, "The Theme of the Three Caskets," in *Character and Culture*, ed. P. Rieff (NY, 1963), pp. 67-69.

8. A. Harel-Fish [Harold Fisch], "Notes on the Dybbuk in Modern Literature" [Hebrew], *Biqqoret ufarshanut* 1 (1970): 21-26.

9. Y. Ashael, "More on *Betrothed*" [Hebrew], *Hasifrut* 3 (1972): 507-17 on Rechnitz's experience of the sea as an oceanic experience in the Freudian sense.

10. Gershon Shaked, "Midrash and Narrative: Agnon's 'Agunot'," in *Midrash and Literature*, ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman & Sanford Budick (New Haven, 1985), pp. 285-303.

11. "To be sure, some neuroses may be more interesting than others, perhaps because they are fiercer or more inclusive; and no doubt the writer who makes a claim upon our interest is a man who by reason of the energy and significance of the forces in struggle within him provides us with the largest representation of the culture in which we, with him, are involved; his neurosis may thus be thought of as having a connection of concomitance with his literary powers." Lionel Trilling, "Art and Neurosis, in *The Liberal Imagination* (Garden City, NY, 1953), p. 176.