

Brenner

1. All citations are taken from the Shtybel Edition, Kol kitvei Y. H. Brenner, Vol. 1, Warsaw, 1924
2. "See Gershon Shaked, Lelo motsa [Dead End], (Tel Aviv, 1973), p. 81.
3. For the circumstances surrounding the writing and publication of In Winter, see Yitzhak Bakon, Brenner hatsa'ir [The Young Brenner], Nott, pp. 1:92-120
4. M. L. Lilienbloom, Ketavim otobiografiyyim [Autobiographical Writings], ed. Sholomo Braiman, (Jerusalem, 1970), 95-96.
5. On the question of the degree of fragmentariness or coherence in 9W, see Shaked, p. 86, and the contemporary reaction of M. Y. Berdichevsky in Yosef Haim Brenner: mikhar ma'amanim al yetsirato hasifuti [Yosef Haim Brenner: a Selection of Critical Essays], (Tel Aviv, 1972), p. 44.
6. Lilienbloom, p. 95.
7. The ^{Hebrew} reading audience for such works as Brenner was, in fact, extremely limited and undergone attrition at the end of the century. See Dan Miron
8. Shaked, p. 79. Despite Brenner's rejection of the term, reference to In Winter as a novel is justified, and unavoidable, by virtue of the subsequent development of the modernist novel.
9. See Lilienbloom, p. 94.

11. For a very useful clarification of when it is proper to speak of fiction as being autobiographical, see Menachem Brinker, "On the Question of the Autobiographicalness of Brenner's Fiction" [Hebrew], pp. 145-72, in Mahbarot Brenner [Brenner Studies], ^{vols.} 3+4 (T.A., 1984). Brinker's strictures are a good corrective by which to read Bakon's biographical study, which devotes over a hundred pages to In Winter. Bakon's historical research into Brenner's early movements ^{is} of great value, while the interpretive criticism based on these facts often betrays a tendency to confuse the distinctions between events and their representations.
12. On the shaping of events in Lilienblum see Chapter 2 and Ben-Ami, Feingold, "Autobiography as Literature: A Study of ^{Lilienblum's} Sins of Youth" [Hebrew] in Melkerei Yerushalayim Lisfunt ivrit, 4: 86-111.
13. Interestingly, it is these opening pages that Budichevsky found the most appealing in the book. See Bakon, ed., Mikhar ma'amazin, pp. 43-44.
14. It is important to point out that the negative portrayal of the father in In Winter is at odds w/ the autobiographical father figure in two short stories Shama and Pa'amazin ^{published at about the same time} in Lu'ach hi'asaf (September, 1905). In these sketches the mother is absorbed, is distant and the father more companionably and affectionately related to the narrator. The divergence in these contemporary texts is an admonition against taking readings for autobiographical veracity in Brenner's fictions. The purpose of these first-person forms, Brinker reminds us, is to

create the illusion of autobiographical truth.

- 13 The narrator of SW would surely be disinclined to accept Bruno Kurzweil's assertion that "the essence of suffering in Brenner's fiction is specifically Jewish," Bein hazon levetu ha'absurdi [Between Vision and the Absurd] (Tel Aviv, 1973), p. 276.
- 14 Some aspects of scenic discourse are taken up by Yosef Eizen in Omanut hasippur shel Y. H. Brenner [Y. H. Brenner's Craft of Fiction] (Jerusalem, 1977), ch. 4. As ^{is} the case with much of this ~~to~~ New Critical study, the observations about ~~the~~ formal techniques fail to become connected to the profound ^{compare} ~~thematics~~ of Brenner's work. See also Ada Zemach, Tenu'ah benehudah: Brenner vesippurat [Motion in Place: Brenner and his Fiction] (Tel Aviv, 1984), p. 104.

The different mode of perceiving and telling conveyed by the term ~~to~~ zikharon and yedi'ah in
- 15 Compare Bakhtin's treatment of the Yan Tar scene in Brenner hatsa'ir, p. 278 ff.
- 16 Azami, compare Zemach, p. 104
- 17 Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 84a.
- 18 For the best sustained discussion of the narrator's self-judgment, see Shaked, pp. 87-90.
- 19 Zemach's argument ^(pp. 110-16) that this childhood joy is rooted in the struggle drawn from the commandments, is convincing.
- 20 ~~See~~ See chapter three.
- 21 Theory of the Novel (Cambridge, MA: MIT,) p.
- 22 See the helpful presentation of this issue in H. Y. Katznelson's 1904 Russian article, translated in Bakhtin, Mivhor ma'amarim, pp. 49, 51-2.

and nuanced
insightful study of Brenner

(Her thesis is presented
on pp. 99-101.)

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23 In her Tenu'ah benehuda'ah, Ada Zernach argues that the act of writing is the central source of meaning in In White. Life as a source of vitality & has been shut off from the hero, and the only outlet left to him is writing. Zernach therefore relies heavily on the description of Yirmiah's early experiments w/ poetry writing as a ~~key~~ ^{hook} to the narrator's later identity. While there may be some merit to this line of interpretation in ^{the} later novels, I think the point is exaggerated as regards IW. What is remarkable about the childhood experiences w/ writing is that they do not ~~turn out~~ open up some path ^{a way} toward identity or toward some means of self-transcendence. IW does not turn into A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Writing fails to become a redemptive moment. Of course writing is important to Brenner's narrators; that is a commonplace. But writing remains communication -- disclosure to oneself, disclosure to others -- not self-transcendence. Writing and speech are the vehicles for expressing existential modes of being. In this connection, compare Jeffrey Hoch's emphasis on ~~the~~ ^{the} narration as action in

24 Bakan notes that Brenner himself left home three years earlier and did not live w/ his parents between the ages of 10 and 13. Brenner hatsa'ir, p. 300.

Shaped out the issue in proper ^{balance} ~~context~~ by stressing the fact that the entire novel exists within the ^{subjective} ~~consciousness~~ of the narrator in contrast to Hacholah narratives in which reality is described "objectively."

25 See Baruch Kurgweil interesting excursion on the word davar as sexual experience (see ahead Ch. 7, p. 000) in ~~Between the~~ Bein hazon levin ha'absurdi [Bet. Vision and the Absurd], (Jerusalem, 1973), p. 294. Kurgweil's is the most penetrating discussion of the connection bet. love of faith and eros, and we shall return to it in Ch. 7.