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New Directions in the Study of Agnon

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The article points to three marginalized directions in research that should be made the focus of attention: *A. A study of the contemporary reality in Agnon's work; B. Agnon in the memoirs of members of his generation; C. Agnon in his letters.*

The basic assumption is that literature cannot be understood or studied in a vacuum, but rather must be seen in its broader contexts: historical, biographical, social, poetic, including the linguistic and ideological. If the resulting knowledge is sufficiently deep, the reader, the student, and the scholar will gain better, more precise interpretive tools to heighten their sensitivity to the work. The article illustrates what has already been done in each of these areas, adds new examples for each, and calls for the completion of what still remains to be done.

It concludes with a personal comment, in which the writer describes Agnon's letters as a *personal experience* for her in the home of her father, the writer Israel Cohen, a friend of Agnon who corresponded with him over an extended period of time.