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THE ARAB IN HEBREW LITERATURE SINCE 1948

Paul Citrin

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

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Digest

"The Arab in Hebrew Literature Since 1948" is an analysis of attitudes toward and images of the Arab in Hebrew fiction of the past twenty-five years. While this thesis is primarily a literary study, the underlying assumption in the work is that literature both reflects and helps to mould society. Israeli society in its entirety has had to confront the Arab as adversary, displaced person, and citizen for over a generation. The concern of this thesis is to examine the approach of contemporary Hebrew literature as it deals with the Israeli-Arab confrontation.

This thesis seeks to answer the following questions: How do Israeli authors present Arab characters, and what are the authors' viewpoints about the Arab figures? How do other characters in the literature relate to the Arab? What literary techniques are used to present Arab characters? The analysis which deals with these questions is composed of four elements of study: 1) setting, description, and other background details; 2) the behavior of the Arab character; 3) the attitudes of the narrator and the characters toward the Arab; 4) the viewpoint of the author.

Five chapters comprise this thesis. The first chapter is an introduction which traces the history of the Arab in Hebrew literature before 1948, and which presents the salient

features of the Arab in Israeli fiction since the State's establishment. The following four chapters are detailed analyses of these works: Amos Oz' Micha'el Sheli, S. Yizhar's "Chirbet Chiz'eh", A. B. Yehoshua's "Mul Haye'arot", and Binyamin Tamuz' Hapardes.

The analyses lead to these conclusions about the treatment of the Arab in Hebrew literature since 1948:

1) Arab characters throughout the literature share many common qualities which have become paradigms. The Arab is portrayed as a primitive who is close to nature. He is often a cunning, sexually potent figure. Although he is either innocent victim or treacherous enemy, the Arab's defeat brings a promise of revenge. These features are stereotypic so that an Arab character often represents "the Arab".

2) Jewish feelings toward the Arab are ambivalent vacillating between guilt and hatred.

3) Israeli authors are sensitive to the ethical and social problems of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and they employ their craft, in part, to arouse their readers to moral concern.

CONTENTS

Preface

The pattern of analysis of the Arab in Hebrew literature since 1948 divides into four parts in each chapter of this thesis. The parts consist of an examination of the setting and other background details, of the Arab character's words and behavior, of the attitudes of the narrator and other characters toward the Arab, and of the viewpoint of the author.* The first chapter deals with the Arab in Oz' Micha'el Sheli, and the following three chapters are arranged in chronological order according to their publication dates. I have begun with Micha'el Sheli because its Arab characters are closely connected to a fantasy realm. The image of the Arabs in Oz' novel stands apart from the other works which present the Arabs in the real world.

All translations of excerpts from the pieces studied and from critical Hebrew articles are my own except where otherwise indicated. I have rendered Hebrew words into English spelling according to "The General Purpose Romanization (Style I)" compiled by Dr. Werner Weinberg. The form footnotes, bibliography, and quotations is based on Kate L. Turbian's A Manual for Writers (Chicago, 1972) and on

*When referring to an author of a work, some literary analysts and critics employ the term "implied author". (For one definition of the term see note 6 on p. 115). I have chosen, for clarity's sake, to refer to the writers simply as authors.

suggestions made by the thesis referees, Dr. William Cutter and Dr. Warren Bargad.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Mordechai Rotem for kindly providing translations to Arabic phrases which occasionally appear in the four works. To my wife, my appreciation for love and patient encouragement.

Introduction

The ship which carried Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav to the Land of Israel arrived at Jaffa port on a late summer morning in 1798. At about the same time that Rabbi Nachman's schooner reached Jaffa, the warship of Napoleon's navy were preparing to bombard the Palestinian coast. The Turkish authorities in Jaffa were suspicious of foreigners in those days when the French armada approached the underbelly of the Ottoman empire at the shores of Palestine. It was no great wonder, then, that the Turks refused to permit Rabbi Nachman's ship to disembark at Jaffa. The long journey from the west had been dangerous and wearisome, but the vessel which bore Rabbi Nachman was forced to sail on to Haifa to find its berth.

The detour did not mar Rabbi Nachman's joy when his feet finally touched the holy soil in Haifa. He proceeded from the port to an inn where he lodged until the days of Elul surrendered themselves to Rosh Hashannah. At the inn, a young Arab came and sat down with Rabbi Nachman, and spoke to the Tsadik in animated and gutteral tones. As long as Rabbi Nachman stayed at the inn, the young Arab would take his meals with him there talking to the master all the while. The Rabbi could comprehend none of the strange speech, but he sensed that the Arab was

full of affection and goodwill toward him.

The love between the Rabbi and the Arab grew until the language barrier and, perhaps, a bit of capriciousness threatened their friendship.

One morning the Arab rushed into the inn with a sword buckled on his belt. He ran up to Rabbi Nachman shouting and waving his arms wildly, and then hurried away. A woman who claimed to understand Arabic warned Rabbi Nachman to flee for his life because the Arab wanted to cross swords with him in a duel. It is probable that the Arab only wished to warn the Rabbi of some approaching danger, but the Bratslaver tsadik was misled by the woman's advice, and he fled the inn.

In a short while, the Arab returned to the inn seeking Rabbi Nachman. His heart nearly broke when he heard that the Rabbi had fled in fear of him. The Arab begged all who were present to inform the Rabbi how much he loved him, and that the tsadik had nothing to fear on his account. As a sign of his good faith, the Arab pledged his horse and his donkeys for the use of Rabbi Nachman in his journey around the Holy Land. The news of the Arab's words was dispatched to the Rabbi, and he quickly returned to the inn from his place of refuge. The Arab was delighted with Rabbi Nachman's return. He sat with the tsadik as before, laughing occasionally, with his regained friend. Rabbi Nachman later admitted to his disciples that his pangs of love for the young Arab far outweighed his passing hatred and fear of him.

Rabbi Nachman's encounter with the Arab was only a small part of his adventures in the Holy Land. His other experiences are recorded in "The Account of the Journey of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav to the Land of Israel". What is significant about the part of "The Account" which I have retold is that it is one of the earliest works in modern Hebrew literature in which one finds an Arab character.[1] In the decades since "The Account" was written, and especially in this century, the presence of the Arab in Hebrew literature has become increasingly more frequent, and his role as a character has broadened. Interest in the Arab has grown to the extent that many authors of Hebrew fiction either have created a story about the Arab or have employed him as a secondary character. The phenomenon of the widespread appearance of the Arab in modern Hebrew fiction may be explained in part by the rise in Jewish immigration to

1. See "Seder Hanesiya shel Rabbi Nachman Mibratslav Le'eretz Yisra'el" in Hanovella Hachasidit, compiled and prefaced by Yosef Dan, (Jerusalem, 1966). "The Account" was originally published in a work called Shivchei Haran (Rabbenu Nissim) in Lvov, 1864. While "The Account" is based on Rabbi Nachman's actual journey to Palestine in the eighteenth century, it does not belong to the realm of the medieval non-fiction reports of pilgrims to the Land of Israel. The tale of Rabbi Nachman's journey was told orally by his disciples for sixty-six years during which time it probably was embellished. When the story was committed to print, it assumed a particular form and style characteristic of Chassidic Hebrew literature, and rightfully is part of the scope of modern Hebrew literature. It should be pointed out that I accept Halkin's view that modern Hebrew literature had its beginnings in the eighteenth century, and as Rabinovich shows, reached a renaissance in the middle of the nineteenth century. See Simon Halkin, Modern Hebrew Literature, (New York, 1970), chapter one; Isaiah Rabinovich, Major Trends in Modern Hebrew Fiction, (Chicago, 1968), chapter one.

to the Land of Israel since 1882. The European immigrant found that the land of his forefathers was inhabited by tens of thousands of Arabs native to its soil.

Hebrew authors in the early part of this century who were immigrants or children of immigrants to Palestine reflected in their presentations of the Arab the outlook of Mordechai Ze'ev Feierberg. In 1899, as the days of the First Aliyah merged into those of the Second, "Le'an?" (Whither?) was published. This last story by the young Feierberg concludes with a speech by the protagonist, Nachman Hameshuga. Nachman urges those in his village who are about to leave for Palestine to adopt the following attitude:

> "And you, O my brothers, when you go east now, you must always remember that you are, by birth, of the East. . . . I believe that the Hebrew people shall live and shall stand on its own feet; I believe that this great people. . . will give life to civilization again; but that civilization will be Eastern. The great East shall awake from its sleep and will begin to live a normal life; then this cursed people will stand at the head of the nations, at the head of the living East. Therefore, my brothers, when you

> travel to the East, do not go as enemies of the East, but as its lovers and faithful sons."[2]

Feierberg viewed western civilization as exhausted with nothing left to offer the world. As the possibility of aliyah developed, he wanted to warn Jews not to import the decadence of the West to the Land's Asian shores. Feierberg's plea did not go wholly unheeded. A number of those who went to the Land of Israel saw themselves as returning children of the East.

The Hebrew authors in the first decades of this century displayed in their work an admiration for the oriental aspects of Palestinian life, and fascination with its chief representatives, the Arabs. In Agnon's "Tachat Ha'ets", (Under the Tree, 1911) the Arab is a noble figure in his flowing robes. His life has been one of adventure which has tempered him with an almost prophetic wisdom. Moshe Smilansky, who wrote under the Arabic pseudonym of Chawaja Musa, and Yehuda Burla, a native Palestinian, presented earthy, realistic images of Arabs. Smilansky's collection of short stories, Benei Arav (The Arabs, 1920), are vignettes which show various aspects of the Arab peasant's way of life. In his tales, one finds the Arab as warrior and lover, simpleton and coward, parent and child. Burla, in "Beit Shivtei Arav" (Among Arab Tribes, 1926), recounts

2. Mordechai Ze'ev Feierberg, "Le'an?", in Y.Z. Feierberg, Ketavim, (Tel Aviv, 1965), p. 152.

his personal experience of Arab friendship and loyalty, treachery and violence.

There is much in common between the treatment of the Arab in Smilansky and Burla. Both approach the Arabs with intimate knowledge of them as neighbors and as the dominant group in the Palestinian population of those days. Smilansky and Burla both spoke Arabic which made it possible for them to grasp Arab mentality and custom. Their stories are full of Arabic phrases and expressions which heighten the ethnicity of the characters. Both authors dwell on the Palestinian landscape, and their Arab characters are integral to the natural environment. In places and situations where the Jewish newcomer to the East would feel quite strange, the Arab is comfortably at home. There are indications in Burla's "Bein Shivtei Arav" and in Smilansky's Benei Arav that the two writers view the Arab as the prototype for a new Jewish image in the land. Hence, the Arab tends to assume mythic qualities in their works. The romanticized aspects of the Arab's image, however, do not prevent Smilansky and Burla from empathizing with the fellahin (Arab peasants). Even when an Arab figure stands in the most base or pathetic light, one senses that the author has understanding and respect for him.

A major shortcoming in some of the work of both Burla and Smilansky vis à vis their Arab stories is lack of in-depth development of the characters. The brevity of their stories tends to create flat images, and a truncated view

of Arab life. Yitschak Shami, a less prolific contemporary of Burla and Smilansky, presents a wider, more detailed image of the Arab. In "Nikmat Avot" (Revenge of the Fathers, 1936), Shami pulls the reader into the fulness of Arab ceremonial and religious life, generations of tribal rivalry, and human emotion. As the Arab protagonist moves from pride and lofty position, to murder and flight, and finally, to self-abasement and repentance, a complete personality emerges. The strength of Shami's portrayal of the Arab has been discussed by Gershon Shaked:

> In spite of their low or intermediate social position, there is a quality of nobility in them which gives down-fall a tragic dimension. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The plot and various ways of characterization emphasize unique and human characters. The stories of Shami are not, therefore, merely stories of local color, but very human stories against a specific time-place background.[3]

One feels the love of these three authors for the East manifested by interest in the Arab and his lifestyle.

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3. Gershon Shaked, "Yetsirato shel Yitschak Shami" Ha'asef, Spring, 1970, p. 203.

The Arab's pastoral existence, his bond with the Palestinian surroundings, and his heartiness impressed these authors, and seem to have drawn them to their subject.

The numerous appearances of the Arab in modern Hebrew literature since 1948 compared to his less frequent presence in the earlier fiction supports the idea that "before the War of Independence and before the encounter with the Arab population was saturated with blood, the previous encounters hardly attained artistic formulation".[4] While no individual author has dealt with the Arab as widely as did Shami, Burla, and Smilansky, the Arab has flourished in Hebrew fiction over the past twenty-five years. The authors of the State of Israel period reflect the work of their predecessors in that they also tend to present the Arab as a flat, somewhat romanticized character. Yet, the modern writers modify the Arab's romantic image through literary styles tempered by varying degrees of realism. They emphasize vis à vis the Arab social and political concerns wrought by the events of those turbulent years since Israel's creation.

When the third independent Jewish state in Palestine was established in 1948, Jews, both inside and outside the Land, found light and gladness. Political sovereignty and the realization of national rebirth in Israel brought pride and a sense of security to world Jewry. The fusion of the Land and the People of Israel seemed to provide a

4. A. Zahavi, "Hamifgash Hayehudi-Aravi Besifrutenu", Ha'uma, September 18, 1966, p. 217.

mold in which the dreams for lofty moral, spiritual, and cultural achievements could jell. Yet, while Israel's future appeared brightly on the horizon, a shadow was cast upon the face of the Jewish national renaissance, and the dimness hovers over the State to this day.

The source of the shadow is the same as the source of the light: national aspirations. The Jewish pioneers did not immediately comprehend the Palestinian Arab's attachment and love for the Land. Jewish awareness of the Arab's resentment of their settlement was aroused especially by the Arab reaction to the Balfour declaration and the intermittent attacks on Jews during the Mandate period. When it became apparent that the British would not prevent the fate of Palestine to be decided by the two rival peoples, both Arab and Jew abhorred the idea of defeat at the hand of the other. While the Jews saw their victory in 1948 as imperative for survival, the denial of Arab aspirations raised painful questions of morality and self-image in the minds of sensitive Israelis. The passage of time and the ongoing struggle have not lessened the anguish.

The questions which face Israeli Jews are of both a practical and theoretical nature. In the realm of the theoretical: Does one people have the right to effect its national goals at the expense of another people's hope for national independence? Can a people which has viewed itself historically as eschewing the concept that might makes right maintain its self-image and moral char-

acter when it must rely on the gun to insure survival? It is ironic that with all the justice of Israel's claims and though war is forced upon the State, victory calls for appraisal by the Israeli of his attitudes and feelings toward the Arabs. The theoretical questions are not isolated issues stemming from some sort of Jewish masochism. They flow into the practical concerns of present day relations with Arabs in and around Israel. Israeli attitude towards her Arab citizens and the neighboring states will determine the nature of Israeli society as well as her position as a Middle Eastern nation in years to come.

Hebrew authors of both fiction and non-fiction have grappled with questions surrounding the Israeli-Arab conflict since 1948. Moshe Shamir, among the contemporary authors, has struggled with the painful nature of the Jewish-Arab encounter in his semi-autobiographical Chayai Im Yishma'el (My Life with Ishmael, 1968). Shamir is pained by the decades of strife between the two peoples, and he recognizes what the presence of the Arab in Palestine has meant to the Jew:

> The Arab lives in the Jew's consciousness as a symbol of naturalness and rootedness. . . . Under no circumstances were we able ever to cast doubt upon the strength of his presence around us or in our midst. Our

> reconciliation with the neighboring proximity of the Arab needed no intellectual operation. It was self-understood as was our reconciliation with the climate of the land and its hills.[5]

In spite of this acknowledgement, the outcome of Shamir's struggle in Chayai Im Yishma'el ultimately places the onus on the Arab. He writes at length on what the Arab must realize and accept to make peace with Israel possible. While much of Shamir's factual material cannot be denied, his book lacks the crucial ingredient of self-criticism and scrutiny of Israeli behavior and attitudes toward the Arab.

The void in Shamir's Chayai Im Yishma'el contrasts with the approach of most Israeli fiction to the Arab-Israeli entanglement. The contemporary authors of fiction have not hesitated to confront the problems of the Arab-Jewish relationship. Aharon Meged's "Hamatmon" (The Treasure, 1949) portrays the agony of a dispossessed Arab peasant in all his misery. Through a stream of consciousness technique, Meged shows the Arab longing to return to his home which has been occupied by an Israeli family. Fantasies of revenge weave themselves between the destitute Arab's hopes for a little generosity from the Israeli masters.

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5. Moshe Shamir, Chayai Im Yishma'el, (Tel Aviv, 1969), p. 194.

In "Avak Derachim" (Dust of the Roads, 1956), Natan Shacham presents the communication failure between Arab and Jew. The story is set in the days of the Second Aliyah, and the newly settled immigrant realizes from his misunderstanding with some Arab villagers that they are on their own turf while he is the stranger.

Yitschak Orpaz and Moshe Shamir have written short stories which raise some crucial questions about the nature of the Arab-Jewish encounter. Many Israelis are so busy trying to justify Israel's right to exist that they ignore Jewish sins against the Arab. Shamir, in "Nechushchash Hamar" (The Bitter Citrus, 1958), faces the tragedy of Jewish exploitation of the Arab. On the eve of the War of Independence, a wealthy Jewish farmer expels the Arab family which has tended his orchard on the grounds that he fears for their safety in case Arab marauders attack. For years, the landlord has given the Arab family a meager wage for their back-breaking labors. He has regularly forced the Arab's eldest daughter to sleep with him whenever the mood struck. With all this, the landlord views the Arab family as parasites, and he sends them away with little compensation for their loyalty. Frustrated and vengeful, the Arab shoots and kills his callous employer.

Yitschak Orpaz, in "Al Chudo shel Kadur" (On the Point of a Bullet, 1959), deals with the problem of learning to view the Arab as an individual with feelings and aspirations.

The story takes place during the final days of the 1956 Sinai Campaign. A soldier who is among the Israeli occupation forces in Gaza finds an Arab hiding in a cave and takes him prisoner. On the way back to the camp, the Arab tells the soldier of his family, of the girl he loves, and about his village. The soldier's fear of the Arab gives way to empathy. He believes that if the Arab could be educated and given hope he would fulfill his human potential. The empathy of the soldier is bolstered by trust and friendship when the Arab saves him from a poisonous snake. At the base, while the Arab is being interrogated, the soldier convinces his commander to release the Arab. The Arab does not know this, and his fear of the Israelis leads him to attempt an escape. He is cut down by an Israeli bullet minutes before he is about to be released. Orpaz' story not only points out the irrational, self-perpetuating momentum of war, but he indicates that understanding between Arab and Jew depends upon the later accepting the Arab as an equal.

Hebrew literature since 1948 abounds with many other stories which either focus on the Arab or which employ him as a secondary character.[6] I have chosen for detailed analysis four works which are representative of the way the Arab is treated in Hebrew literature since the estab-

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6. For a broadly representative, but by no means exhaustive, presentation of Arab stories in Hebrew literature see Sipurim Ivriim Michayei Ha'aravim, Yosef Aricha, editor, (Tel Aviv, 1963).

lishment of the State. Two of the pieces are short stories, "Chirbet Chiz'eh" (The Ruins of Chiz'eh, 1949) by S. Yizhar, and "Mul Haye'arot" (Facing the Forests, 1970) by A. B. Yehoshua. The other two works, one a novella and one of a novel's length, are Hapardes (The Orchard, 1971) by Binyamin Tamuz, and Micha'el Sheli (My Michael, 1968) by Amos Oz. The underlying motivation for this thesis is my concern for the direction that the Arab-Jewish encounter has taken during the past twenty-five years. I turn to literature with the hope of finding fresh insights and approaches to the Israeli-Arab relationship which political rhetoric and sociological and historical studies do not include. The Russian author, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, has written: "Literature that is not the air of its contemporary society, that dares not pass on to society its pains and fears, that does not warn in time against threatening moral and social dangers, such literature does not deserve the name of literature."[7] I believe that the four authors mentioned above are sensitive and sympathetic to Solzhenitsyn's view. While this view is not unique to Solzhenitsyn, his quote is an eloquent expression of a concept of literature's social obligation.

In spite of the moral and social concerns which are implicit in the following pages, this thesis is primarily

7. Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to the Fourth National Congress of Soviet Writers", May 1967. The "Letter is found in the publisher's note to One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, p. vi.

a literary study. Working on Solzhenitsyn's assumption that literature mirrors society, I attempt to discern the images of the Arab and the attitudes toward him in Israeli literature. The analysis investigates modes of characterization, presentations of landscape and environment, and the uses of metaphor and fantasy. An important consideration throughout this study is the discovery of the points of view of the authors, narrators, and other characters toward the Arab, and to assess the reliability of those views. These elements of analysis reveal several themes which are common to all four works although the details differ.

An ambivalence exists in attitudes toward the Arab which his image reflects. The ambivalence is expressed either as mixed emotions within a single individual or as feelings which are divided between two generations with opposing views. The ambivalence consists of the feeling that, on the one hand, the Arab is a challenger of and threat to the aspirations of Zionism. In this sense, he is the treacherous enemy who must be overcome at all costs. This view is bolstered by presenting the Arab as a crafty, disloyal, lying individual whose ultimate aim is to perpetrate violence against the Yishuv (Jewish settlements in Palestine). The image of the Arab as a plotting enemy is supplemented with a picture of him as adulterer or rapist. In contrast, the positive countervailing feeling is that the Arab is a neighbor, even a brother. With

Israel's victory, he is often seen not only as a pathetic victim of war, but also of murder. Yet, whether the Arab is viewed as either friend or foe, he is portrayed as a simple pastoral figure with an animal-like instinct for survival. He is given the status of an equal only rarely.

A second theme, which is connected to the ambivalence, is the perception by the Jew of the Arab's bond with the Land. The Jew senses that he himself is relatively a newcomer to Palestine while the Arab has dwelled there for a millennium. The Arab knows the Land intimately, and is part of its landscape. When the Jew is confronted with the Arab's presence, shadows of doubt about his own right to the Land enter his mind. The Arab perceives through his contact with the Yishuv that his own defeat, fight though he will, is insured by the organization, knowledge, and cleverness of the Jews. For the Arab there is a sense of inevitability that he will not be victorious. After the Arab is defeated, killed or driven out, there are Jews who feel a deep sense of loss and emptiness. Underlying these perceptions is the sense that the free choice of individuals is being overshadowed by the force of events.

In all four works, Arab revenge is a certainty. The Jew in these stories either knows it will come and fears it; or he welcomes it as a source of expiation for his guilt over the destruction of much of Palestinian Arab life. Some of the guilt toward victims is expressed by Jewish nostalgia for things Arab. Memories, foods, land-

scapes, place-names which were connected to the Arabs are maintained after he himself is no longer. The Arab's presence continues to hover and haunt. All of these aspects of the images of and attitudes toward the Arab in Hebrew literature suggest a certain amount of stereotyping. Yet, it is often in the stereotypic that the authors "pass on to society its pains and fears" as powerfully as they are able.

I

Micha'el Sheli

The Arab characters in Micha'el Sheli have no independent existence in the external world. While the image of the Arab shares some common points with the presentations in the following chapters, the Arabs in Micha'el Sheli live only in the memory and imagination of Channah Greenbaum Gonen, the narrator. They are a part of her consciousness, and their presence expresses certain aspects of Channah's inner life. Since it is my concern here to describe the image of Channah's Arabs, it is necessary to review Channah's life and her reactions to its course. The image of the Arab perforce will reveal a great deal about the protagonist.

Channah Greenbaum was born during Sukkot in 1930. Her family lived in Kiryat Shmuel on the edge of Katamon. Channah's father owned an electrical supplies store, and she loved him deeply. He died in 1943, and Channah's mother and brother moved to Kibbutz Nof Harim on the Lebanese border.[1] At the time which Channah records her

1. Moshe Giora suggests that Channah, upon her father's death, was sent to an orphanage until she reached eighteen. While Channah does not mention such an experience, Giora claims that her silence about the years 1943-1950, and her reactions to the Schneller Barracks, a former orphanage, hint that she was abandoned by her mother. Moshe Giora, "Channah Havehudiah Vehate'omim Ha'arviim", Ha'arets, (May 3, 1968), p. 14.

thoughts and memories, she says of herself:

> I am writing this because people I loved have died. I am writing this because when I was young I was full of the power of loving, and now that power of loving is dying. I do not want to die.
>
> I am thirty years of age and a married woman. My husband is Dr. Micha'el Gonen, a geologist, a good natured man. I loved him. We met in Terra Sancta College ten years ago. I was a first-year student at the Hebrew University, in the days when lectures were still given in Terra Sancta College.[2] (3)

With the exception of her childhood reminiscences, Channah's story deals mainly with her life as Micha'el's wife. One senses from her opening words that she feels compelled to tell about her life.

Channah's life with Micha'el is a continuing descent into despair and discontent. She marries Micha'el in 1950 not out of deep passion or strong love, but because she seems to feel that at her age it is time to get married.

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2. All passages in this chapter are taken from Nicholas de Lange's translation of Micha'el Sheli, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1972).

During the first week of her marriage she questions whether she and Micha'el are fulfilling each other. She worries about whether her husband finds her to be a "good woman". (55) In 1951, their son, Ya'ir is born. Ya'ir and his father grow very close, and Channah resents their relationship. The child is undemonstrative, and she is embittered when he rebuffs her motherly affections. Channah tries to drown her feelings of emptiness as she allows herself to succumb to her delusions of grandeur. She purchases dresses beyond her means, and grows tired of them in a few weeks. She presses on Micha'el her dreams for a telephone, a car, a villa, a trip to Europe as she seeks salvation from unfulfillment and routine. Five years after her marriage, she wonders what life would have been like had another man prevented her from falling on the stairs at Terra Sancta. As the years pass, she senses an increasing distance from Micha'el. By the end of her narrative in 1960, she feels completely alienated from her husband, and she seems on the verge of breakdown.[3]

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3. Channah's dissatisfaction with her husband, with life's routine, and her sexual fantasies and extravagant material desires bear a similarity to Flaubert's Emma Bovary. Yet, we are hard pressed to find the source of Channah's misery. Moshe Giora attributes her behavior to a desire for revenge for being made an orphan, for being separated from her beloved Arab playmates, for Micha'el's rational, intellectual responses to her emotional needs. (see Giora, "Channah Hayehudiah. . ."). Giora's view rests on his assumptions that Channah indeed did spend five years in an orphanage and did have sexual relations with her Arab friends. While there are some extremely veiled hints about the nature of Channah's life between 1943-1948, they are too vague and few to regard Giora's theory as solid. Even

Channah cannot find any release from the life which oppresses her in the surroundings of Mekor Baruch or on her husband's limited salary. Her refuge from unhappiness and from the pressures of the adult world are her memories and fantasies. She has "fond memories" (20) of being ill with diphtheria as a child because the fever so easily swept her into dreams. As a grown woman, Channah loves to sleep and dream:

> One of the reasons why I enjoy being asleep is that I hate making decisions. Awkward things sometimes happen in dreams, but some force always operates which makes decisions for you, and you are free to be like the boat in the song, with all the crew asleep, drifting wherever the dream carries you. (22)

Channah's dreams are often of a sexual and violent nature. When she dreams, it is as though the sweet girl from Kiryat Shmuel is releasing the subterranean volcanoes of her soul. That is why she feels an "inner tension" (16) whenever Micha'el talks of geological processes. His words are

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if one might say that the evidence is small because Channah is repressing the memory of those years, the link between her teen years and her adult behavior is uncertain. This seems to be the weakness of Oz' characterization of Channah. I am inclined to agree with Shulamit Carmi who says, "Since the author did not succeed in setting a proper proportion. . . between the events and the inner reactions of the woman, the reader finds himself looking at a very literary burden. . ." Shulamit Carmi, "Al Hayecholet Lirok Labe'er Sheshotim Mimenna", Al Hamishmar, (June 21, 1968), pp. 10-11.

"like a message transmitted in code" (16) for her though she cannot decipher the reason for her fright at his geological explanations.

We can understand Channah's fantasies in the light of the repressed attitudes toward sex which are still with her when she marries. Channah's father, whom she remembers fondly, seems to have contributed to the repression:

> A few months before his death my father called me into his room and locked the door behind us. . . . He looked not at me but at the rug on the floor in front of him, as if he were reading off the rug words he was about to utter. Father told me about wicked men who seduce women with sweet words and then abandon them to their fate. I was thirteen at the time. Everything he told me I had already heard from giggling girls and spotty-faced boys. But my father uttered the words not as a joke but on a note of quiet sadness. He formulated his remarks as if the existence of two distinct sexes was a disorder whose results people must do everything in their power to mitigate. He concluded by saying that if I thought of him in moments of difficulty I might prevent myself from taking a wrong decision. (44-45)

It seems as though this lecture made an impression of sorts upon Channah. As a young woman, she finds the burly Palmachniks who come out of the Negev (12) overwhelming and repulsive. She even expresses some fear of her own gentle Micha'el as they walk along a country road on a dark, rainy night. (32)

The thoughts of wild, rough sexual encounters which repulse Channah in her waking hours fill her dreams. She fantasizes sexual moments of pain and pleasure:

> There are some rich nights when I discover a secret way through the watery depths and the darkness among green and clammy sea-creatures until I beat at the door of the warm cavern. That is my home. There a shadowy captain waits for me surrounded by books and pipes and charts. His beard is black, his eyes hold a hungry gleam. Like a savage he seizes me, and I soothe his raging hatred. Tiny fish swim through us, as if we were both made of water. As they pass through they impart minute flickers of searing pleasure. (22)

In several other passages throughout the book, Channah dreams of adventure and sexual encounters with characters

from Jules Verne's fiction and with people she has met. Yet, the predominantly reoccuring object of her fantasies are the two Arabs, Chalil and Aziz. Her dreams about them seem to be the most sensual and violent of all. Their appearance in her dreams leads us to ask what function they have in the novel. Are Chalil and Aziz simply devices to display Channah's rebellion against the seeming dullness of her life, or do the twins have a special significance in respect to the social and political environment of Channah's world?

There is a basis in reality for Channah's dreams about Chalil and Aziz. The Arab twins were her childhood playmates who lived near a vacant lot in Katamon across from her home. Channah fondly cherishes her escapades with the Arab boys, and keeps them in her memory:

> I was a princess and they were my bodyguard, I was a conqueror and they my officers, I was an explorer and they my native bearers, a captain and they my crew, a master spy and they my henchmen. Together we would explore distant streets, prowl through the woods, hungry, panting, teasing Orthodox [Jewish] children, stealing into the woods around St. Simeon's Convent, calling the British policemen names. Giving chase and running away, hiding and

> suddenly dashing out. I ruled over
> the twins. It was a cold pleasure,
> so remote. (9)

The passage is a description of a childhood girl-boy relationship. In the following passage, however, one finds elements of description which begin to form an image of the Arab:

> Later on, when I was twelve, I was in
> love with both of them. I called them
> Chalziz--Chalil and Aziz. They were
> beautiful boys. A pair of strong,
> obedient seamen from Captain Nemo's
> crew. They hardly ever spoke. They
> either kept quiet, or else emitted
> gutteral sounds. They didn't like
> words. A pair of gray-brown wolves.
> Alert and white-fanged. Wild and dark.
> Pirates. (28)

There is little doubt that the twins are real for Channah. Yet, her fond memories of them are transformed in her fantasies into images of raging and ravaging creatures.

All of the descriptions of the Arab twins employ a wolf-metaphor. In the paragraph above they are called "a pair of gray-brown wolves. Alert and white-fanged. Wild and dark." However, as Channah recollects the twins in their childhood days, we sense they they are more the

wolf cubs than the prowling parent. The wolf-metaphor is mitigated[4] because they are not described as a sinister gray or black. The twins do not appear menacing or threatening since Channah recalls that "they were beautiful boys". There is a gentleness about them. If she wishes, she may transform them into "obedient seamen" or "pirates".

In spite of the softening adjectives, the wolf-metaphor in her recollections is the foundation for the twins' image in her fantasies. As wild and dark children in her memories, they bear the seeds of the predatory beings they become in her dreams. If we look at excerpted phrases of description which are woven throughout Channah's dreams, we find numerous expressions which refer back to the original wolf-metaphor: "He sank down on all fours" (47), "I can hear the padding of their bare feet" (119), "They both grunt hoarsely like a trussed animal's groaning" (201), "At dusk they will crouch on the ground. . ." (285) "Nostrils flared and sniffing." (287)

The two "wolves", Chalil and Aziz, creep into Channah's dreams both individually and in unison. She is the object of their mad lust; she is torn between fear and her own

4. "There are indefinitely many contexts where the meaning of a metaphorical expression has to be reconstructed from the speaker's intentions because the broad rules of standard usage are too general to supply the information needed." Max Black, "Metaphor", Halashon Hafigurativit Besifrut: Mikr'a Ubibliografya, part II, (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 191ff.

burning desires. The latter prevails in Channah's dream that they have kidnapped her in Jericho:

> I was afraid of the twins. They made fun of me. Their teeth were very white. They were dark and lithe. A pair of strong gray wolves. "Micha'el, Micha'el," I screamed, but my voice was taken from me. I was dumb. A darkness washed over me only at the end of the pain and the pleasure. If the twins remembered our childhood days, they gave no sign of it. Except their laughter. They leaped up and down on the floor of the cellar as if they were freezing cold. But the air was not cold. They leaped and bounced with seething energy. They effervesced. I couldn't contain my nervous, ugly laughter. Aziz was a little taller than his brother and slightly darker. He ran past me and opened a door I had not noticed. He pointed to the door and bowed a waiter's bow. I was free. I could leave. It was an awful moment. I could have left but I didn't. Then Chalil uttered a low, trembling groan and closed and bolted the door. Aziz drew out of the folds of his robe a long, glinting knife. There was a

> gleam in his eyes. He sank down on all fours. His eyes were blazing. The whites of his eyes were dirty and bloodshot. I retreated and pressed my back against the cellar wall. The wall was filthy. A sticky, putrid moisture soaked through my clothes and touched my skin. With my last strength I screamed. (47)

The image of the Arabs is built upon a raw sexual power which the twins exude in this dream. Their image conveys a sense of "machismo", and a feeling of sexual prowess often attributed to the darkly exotic foreigner.

There is a strong element of the demonic in Chalil and Aziz. The wolf-metaphor, as Northrop Frye has pointed out, is one of the chief animal images employed in literature to convey the demonic.[5] This sense of the demonic vis à vis the twins is heightened by the long, glinting knife which Aziz pulls out from under his flowing robes. The knife underscores Channah's view of the sexual power in the twins; it is the long weapon-penis which inflicts pain and pleasure. The knife is the sacrificial instrument by which Chalil and Aziz will divide and consume Channah. The scene becomes all the more grotesque as Aziz opens the

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5. See Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, (New Jersey, 1957), p. 149.

cellar door or pulls out his knife. These are two physical acts which belong to the human realm of capability. The twins, then, are not merely wolves, they are wolf-men, who are able to fulfill their lusts.

We have seen above that the existence of the twins in Channah's dreams stems from her childhood friendship with them. They were real people, but does the sexual aspect of their role in her dreams reflect some incident of Channah's girlhood? Giora[6] suggests that there are hints that she actually had sexual relations with them as a young teenager, but that she blocks the conscious memory of them. He claims that her use of the word "pain" with regard to sexual fantasies with the twins and in the description of her "rape" of Micha'el on the beach (187) is a key word which suggests that she submitted to the twins as a young girl. He supports this by recalling Channah's hesitancy to tell Micha'el about the twins.

Giora's view may be refuted on two grounds. First, Channah's use of the words "pain and pleasure" with regards to sex do not necessarily make her fantasies about the twins reflect any specific reality. Rather, the Arabs are sexual symbols for Channah. Secondly, her failure or unwillingness to discuss them with Micha'el does not have to be a cover for past shames. It is likely that Channah recognizes that her husband's unemotional, intel-

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6. Giora, "Channah Hayehudia. . .".

lectual nature would lead him to chide her for dwelling on childhood memories. For Channah it would be more desirable to conceal her memories than to risk scorn of them. Hence, we can attribute her persistent fantasies to either an expanded childhood fantasy about the boys or to an expression of rebellion against her ingrained sexual inhibitions. If her fantasies about wild sexual release with the Arab twins recur and grow stronger, it is because she is denied their fulfillment. In the dream passage above and in a similar scene (200-201), Channah is awakened before the deed. In her relations with Micha'el, fulfillment is rare. Channah's disappointment both awake and asleep can only heighten her craving.

Channah's fantasies about Chalil and Aziz are not limited to images of sexual strength and violence. She also envisions them taking violent political action against Israel. It will be remembered that the scene of her fantasized kidnapping was Jericho. While Channah does not actually know what became of her childhood friends after 1948, she imagines they are probably in a refugee camp. Jericho was the sight of a major camp. Channah pictures the twins as Palestinian commandoes who practice for the ultimate assault:

> Dreams.
>
> Hard thing plot against me every night. The twins practice throwing

> hand grenades before dawn among the ravines of the Judean desert south-east of Jericho. Their twin bodies move in unison. Submachine guns on their shoulders. Worn commando uniforms stained with grease. A blue vein stands out on Chalil's forehead. Aziz crouches, hurls his body forward. Chalil drops his head. Aziz uncurls and throws. The dry, shimmer of the explosion. The hills echo and re-echo, the Dead Sea glows pale behind them like a lake of burning oil. (105)

Throughout Channah's tale, the twins run through their commando exercises until her final dream at the close. The twins succeed in taking vengeance against a Jewish settlement. In this final passage, Channah herself is not the object of their desire. Yet we find sexual overtones in her description of their movements. Also, the wolf-metaphor is present:

> At dusk they will crouch on the ground to prepare their equipment. Faded army rucksacks. A box of explosives. Detonators. Fuses. Ammunition. Hand grenades. Glistening

knives. In the ruined hut a thick darkness reigns. Chalil and Aziz the beautiful pair whom I called by the name of Chalziz. They will have no words. Gutteral sounds will emerge. Their movements controlled. Their fingers supple and strong. They form one body. It rises firm and gentle like a palm. . . .

. . . . . .

The huge water tower rests heavily on its concrete legs. Its angles soften in the darkness, curving into shadow. Four lithe arms reach out. Matching as in a gay dance. As in love. As if all four spring from a single body. Cable. Timing device. Fuse. Detonator. Igniter. Bodies surge down hill and away, softly padding. And on the slope below the skyline a stealthy run, a long caress. . . . Then suddenly, not suddenly, the dim thunder of the blast. A flash of light capers on the western skyline. . . .

. . . . . .

I sent them. To me towards dawn they will return. Come battered and warm.

Exuding a smell of sweat and foam.

(285, 286, 287)

The demolition of the water tower has its parallel in Hapardes, where it also seems to be symbolic of Jewish settlement. The Arab attempt to destroy the water tower is the effort to destroy the life's blood of Israel. The revenge of Arab refugees is a motif in all of the works considered in this thesis. In "Mul Haye'arot" the Arab caretaker ignites the precious JNF forest. The narrator in "Chirbet Chiz'eh" imagines that the children of the expelled inhabitants will rise up against their conquerors some day.

Channah, too, envisions ongoing terroritst activity. She know that fedayeen action was one of the factors leading up to the 1956 Sinai campaign. There will be more fedayeen action, and Chalil and Aziz will not rest until they achieve their goal.

There is an aspect to Channah's relationship with her Arab twins which supercedes her own emotional problems and fantasies. Erich Auerbach has said, "The serious realism of modern times cannot represent man otherwise than as embedded in a total reality, political, social, and economic, which is concrete and constantly evolving. . . ."[7]

7. Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, (New York, 1957), p. 408.

The Arab twins as Palestinian commandoes reflect the reality of the political situation in and around Israel. Channah herself seems to symbolize Jerusalem in her person. In her view, "Jerusalem is a remote city." (92) It is full of heavy gates and iron shutters which close out its own inhabitants and makes them feel like strangers. Channah senses that against Jerusalem, "sinister things are plotting by the light of dawn". (93) In Jerusalem she feels hemmed in by hostile forces which make the life of the city tenuous:

> Villages and suburbs surround Jerusalem in a close circle, like curious bystanders surrounding a wounded woman lying in the road: Nebi Samwil, Sha'afat, Sheikh Jarrah, Issawiyeh, Augusta Victoria, Wadi Joz, Silwan, Sur Baher, Beit Safafa. If they clenched their fists the city would be crushed. (111)

Even as Jerusalem is surrounded by hostility and hidden foes, Channah says, "Hard things plot against me every night." (105) She is as cold and remote from Micha'el as the city seems to her. In a fantasy of a death struggle between Aziz and a young Jew, it is as though Channah herself had become Jerusalem:

> The dazzling flash of daggers. A spurting laugh. Wordless. Like Aziz

> and Yehudah Gottlieb from Ussishkin
> Street fighting on the empty building
> site. I am the umpire. I am the prize.
> Both their faces are contorted. Their
> eyes flood with stagnant hatred. . . .
> On a spiky coil of rusty barbed wire the
> two of them roll interlocked grinding
> their teeth. Scratching one another.
> Bleeding. Reaching out to grab at throats
> or privates. Cursing from between pressed
> lips. As one man they both suddenly collapse
> exhausted. . . . Peaceful and quiet. But
> both are crying without a sound. Crying in
> unison. Their cheeks are wet. I am the
> umpire and I am the prize. (212)

It is not unusual for a city to express a woman-motif. Both in Hebrew and English we refer to cities with a feminine pronoun. If we view Channah as partially symbolic of Jerusalem, the sexual imagery of the twins would represent Arab love for the city and the country. The Arab lovers were wrenched away from the city by force. They will return and will penetrate Jerusalem by force. And though Jerusalem may have a new husband and master, she has not lost her love and excitement for those who once were her lovers. Perhaps it was they who understood her best.

The Arab twins in Micha'el Sheli are primarily symbolic,

They express Channah's unbalanced emotional state and are the objects of her sexual fantasies. While there are unique aspects in the presentation of the twins, Oz also adheres to some of the more conventional motifs which appear in other works. The twins share the image of Arab sexual prowess with Tamuz' Ovadiah. They are described in animal terms, as is the Arab caretaker in "Mul Haye'arot", with the wolf metaphor giving them a sinister and demonic image. The image of the Arab which one does not see here is that of the meek, helpless pastoral Arab. Chalil and Aziz cannot be held up to scorn for they convey an awesome sense of boldness and unbridled physical strength.

Chalil and Aziz also symbolize the political environment which surrounds Channah and her fellow Israelis. The twins are refugees who lust for vengeance and work for the destruction of Israel. It is not hatred for Jews alone which drives them on, but a passionate love for the Land from which they have been displaced. Parallels to the twins' love for the Land and to their deeds of revenge exist in the writings of Yehoshua, Tamuz, and Yizhar. Chalil and Aziz differ, however, from their counterparts in other works in that they do not exist independently from Channah's mind, and are remote from any external reality.

Occasionally, in Micha'el Sheli, we get a glimpse of the attitudes of other characters toward Arabs. For example, the Gonen's son Ya'ir, is extremely interested to hear about

the riots of 1936 and about the War of Independence. Ya'ir is anxious to be a soldier: "I'm going to be a big strong soldier. I'm stronger than lots of the bigger boys in the playground. It's no good to be weak." (242) Mr. Kadishman, the Gonen's Cherutnik friend, is enthusiastic to defeat the Arabs in the impending 1956 war. He is ardent for a complete Land of Israel:

> "There is going to be a war. This time we shall conquer Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Nablus. The Almighty has wrought justly, in that, while He has denied our so-called leaders common sense, He has confounded the wits out of our enemies. What He takes away with one hand, as it were, He restores with the other. The folly of the Arabs will bring about what the wisdom of the Jews has failed to achieve." (190-191)

These views tend to reflect the real world as they represent some common Israeli attitudes. While the expression of such views are infrequent in Micha'el Sheli, Yizhar's "Chirbet Chiz'eh" deals with some of the realities of the Arab-Israeli encounter.

II

"Chirbet Chiz'eh"

Chalutsiut (pioneering spirit) characterized life in the Palestinian Yishuv (settlement) during its formative, pre-State decades. Chalutsiut entailed not only the physical hardships of building a country, but it also demanded personal sacrifice and subordination to the group and its values. Individual fulfillment was believed to rest in one's adherence to the ideals of collectivity and unity in the pursuit of the shared vision of national renaissance. The Dor Ba'arets period[1] in modern Hebrew literature reflects these values of chalutsiut. Gershon Shaked describes the theme of the Dor Ba'arets era as "acceptance of rigorous social rules combined with limited revolt. The ultimate value is togetherness--courageous and beautiful friendships."[2]

1. Ezra Spicehandler, in the Encyclopaedia Judaica, refers to the Dor Ba'arets period as the Mandate period bounded by 1917 and 1948. The period referred to as Dor Hamedinah, the State of Israel period, extends from 1948 to the present. Spicehandler points out that the 1948 cut-off date serves as a convenience for periodization although characteristics of the Dor Hamedinah period arise in the literature earlier than 1948. See Ezra Spicehandler, "Hebrew Literature, Modern", Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971, viii, 175-214.

2. Gershon Shaked, "Through Many Windows and Many Back Doors", Tarbut, Winter 1971, p. 7. See Gershon Shaked, Gal Chadash Besifrut Ha'ivrit, (Tel Aviv, 1971).

A growing rebellion against the values of chalutsiut and a drive toward the assertion of self over against group ideals marks the Dor Hamedinah period in both Israeli life and literature. The individual confronts the long-cherished Zionist values and goals, measures them against his personal moral and spiritual sensitivities, and struggles, though not always successfully, to get out from under the weight of those societal demands which lead to conformity. If the parents of the Dor Hamedinah compensated for the feelings of marginality in their diaspora experiences through forming a tightly woven Jewish society in Palestine, children among the Dor Hamedinah flee to society's fringes in search of themselves.

The writings of S. Yizhar, some of which precede 1948, express the striving to establish the predominance and independence of the individual which characterize Dor Hamedinah. According to M. Dorman, this is the theme of Yizhar's work: "what is the place of the individual within society, what are the 'rights', if we wish to put it thus, of the individual, his conscience and his desires, over against the demands of the objective world and its huge, blind compulsion."[3] We may add that Yizhar is not only concerned with the individual's rights vis à vis society at large, but he also examines the painful process of inner struggle of those who wish to live by their consciences in

3. M. Dorman, "Al S. Yizhar", Mibifnim, Summer, 1951, p. 526.

spite of contrary social demands. "Chirbet Chiz'eh" depicts an individual's attempt and failure to find personal integrity in a group whose outlook and activities are repugnant to him.

The plot of "Chirbet Chiz'eh" may be summarized briefly since the focus of action of the story takes place less in the external world than in the mind of the narrator. Chirbet Chiz'eh (a fictional place name which means "the ruins of Chiz'eh") is an Arab village somewhere in Palestine. The time is 1948 during the latter part of the War of Indepedence. The Israeli soldiers are war-weary after months of battle, but they must carry out an order to attack Chirbet Chiz'eh, round up its inhabitants, demolish the houses, and ship the villagers beyond Israeli lines. The soldiers, who have never heard of Chirbet Chiz'eh, comply with the orders. They easily seize the village whose only remaining inhabitants are women, children, and the elderly. During the course of the day, the troops search the village and destroy it; by sunset all the inhabitants are loaded into army trucks on their way to exile.

The dramatic action of the story occurs within the mind of the narrator, and is placed before the reader through a modified stream of consciousness technique. He tells the story as a reminiscence of the events in which he personally participated and to which he reacted. "Chirbet Chiz'eh" is a report of his impressions and feelings about the military operation. As we shall see in detail later,

the narrator views the attack on Chirbet Chiz'eh as a senseless, immoral action against a harmless Arab community. He is repulsed by his comrades-at-arms, some of whom take greedy delight in the conquest and others of whom are totally indifferent to everything but the execution of their orders. The narrator finds that his moral sensibilities and feelings of human decency are challenged by the group action. He wishes to speak out against the operation, to challenge the other soldiers, and to cajole them out of their insensitivity. Instead, he is silenced by his fear of seeming to be the eccentric outsider by confronting the values of the military which his buddies accept. The narrator is caught between his struggle to assert his independence and his hesitancy to cast off the bonds of the society in which he grew up.

One may understand from the summary above that "Chirbet Chiz'eh" has two foci. The narrator's existential battle for survival is one focal point. The second is the group dynamics of the platoon in reaction to the village it must conquer, to the Arab inhabitants, and to dissenters within its own ranks. The concern of this chapter, however, is to describe the image of the Arab in "Chirbet Chiz'eh", and to present attitudes toward the Arab contained in the story. Since there are no principle Arab characters in "Chirbet Chiz'eh", and because their role in events is essentially passive, the description of the Arab image is limited. Yizhar does raise crucial ethical and social

questions about Israeli attitudes toward the Arab, the war, and the refugee problem. The explication of the Arab's image and of attitudes toward him necessitates a dual focus within this study. The chapter will concentrate on descriptive passages of the Arab, his environment, and his behavior. It will also deal with the narrator's struggle and the dynamics of the platoon insofar as they shed light on the image of and attitudes toward the Arab. Often the foci will stand side by side within the framework of study which, as I stated in the Introduction, consists of examination of general background and description, and of the viewpoints of the narrator, the characters, and the author.

Yizhar's great literary strength lies in his power of description of landscapes and other background details. His descriptions not only create moods, but are often powerful enough to modify views which dialogue or action alone may arouse in the reader. For example, the orders of the day call for attack, destruction of the village, and the removal of the population. The orders also warn of the danger of running into hostile Arab forces in or around Chirbet Chiz'eh. Yet, in spite of the apparent risks and the seeming seriousness of the business at hand, this is how our narrator describes the day and the morale of the troops:

And thus it was when we set out on

that clear and splendid winter's morning, happy gods of the road--washed, sated, and well-dressed; and so in this spirit we descended some place near village-X which was not yet in sight, and our platoon was sent to outflank while some of the others would secure the rear and others would enter that village. As usual, there is nothing better than being part of the flanking platoon. It [the platoon] would move through an unknown area, setting out into the washed and purified existence of the fields, through clear, smooth air, through plantations partly plowed (from before the storm) and partly sprouting grass (since the storm) -- and it was good to tread the muddy paths slippery with still water and fresh mire, until your youth (even if it is no longer so much of a youth) bursts forth vigorously. Even carrying the ammunition box, which cuts into the palm of the hand, was different, seeming as though it were only some thing belonging to a group-walk, a walk, shall we say, to work, or even by comparison, to a group of chirping baby

> sparrows. We were tramping, strolling and talking, joking and singing, not noisily but good-naturedly, and it was clear: for us there would be no war today, and if it were allotted to someone to fear something--he wouldn't be one of us, God be with him. For us it was an outing. (44-45)

The description of the day conveys serenity and a pristine cleanliness. It is an invigorating day which would tantalize any young boy to run up and down hillsides. The crisp freshness of the day boosts the soldiers' morale so that they feel that they have regained boyhood, and precisely this boyishness on the eve of a combat mission startles. War is no longer taken seriously; it has become a game in which the ammunition box seems to be merely a picnic basket. Joyful anticipation reigns in the outflanking platoon because its job is to shoot at Arab residents who try to escape their besieged village. The reader gains the impression that no one is plagued by any pangs of conscience although the soldiers are about to disrupt the lives of an entire community. The unsighted "village-X" seems so impersonal, just a spot on the map. Even if anyone could harbor a qualm about the task ahead, the orders have been given, and they would not be disobeyed or questioned any more than chirping sparrows hesitate to follow mother's

lead. The soldiers' exuberance about the task ahead renders them as wild intruders into the midst of nature's calm harmony.

The narrator sees the Arabs as part of the harmony of the natural environment. Their symetrically-plowed, richly-planted fields enhance the beauty of the natural landscape. The Arab himself is part of the Palestinian scenery, and he is at peace with his surroundings.[4] As the troops sit in ambush on a hill above Chirbet Chiz'eh, the author describes the fields of Chiz'eh:

> And down below, divided by hedges into wide and narrow squares, and accented with splashes of dark green, and rounded here and there by the spheres of the tree-tops, and with hills on which a jaundice was cast by a blaze of yellow-weed, and with fields plowed

4. Yizhar's view that the Arab is an integral part of the Palestinian scene, that he is primitive and innocent, manifests itself in "Hashavui" also: "We sat down on the rocks to rest a bit and to cool our dripping sweat in the sunlight. Everything hummed of summer, like a golden beehive. A whirlpool of gleaming mountain fields, olive hills, and a sky ablaze with an intense silence blinded us for moments and so beguiled our hearts that one longed for a word of redeeming joy. And yet in the midst of distant fields shepherds were calmly leading their flocks with the tranquil grace of fields and mountains and a kind of easy unconcern--the unconcern of good days when there was yet no evil in the world." Translated by V.C. Rycus in Israeli Short Stories, Joel Blocker, editor, (New York, 1971), p. 152. See S. Yizhar, Arba'ah Sipurim, (Tel Aviv, 1971), p. 115.

> here and there--the plain stretched
> out peacefully, affronting no one;
> and no man was seen on the land, only
> the choice produce of fruitful areas,
> whispering in blue and yellow and
> brown and green and in every shade
> among them. . . . (54)

The description of Arab villages contrasts starkly with the picture of naturally beautiful though man-made farm lands:

> There was a time, when we only had
> begun to enter the conquered villages,
> that there was yet something fastidious
> in you. It was better to stand or to
> walk all day so as not to sit on this
> ground, which was not the soil of fields
> but a plot of dust stinking and sick
> because of refuse which they spew upon
> it for generations, on which they cast
> their piss and shit and the dung of
> their cattle and camels--those parcels
> of dirt at the sides of the hut contami-
> nated with stinking ooze, the residue of
> crowed, wretched human habitation. Every-
> thing was filthy; it was repulsive to
> touch anything--and already in the afternoon

> hours of that day, all of us were stretched out to full height on that same sick, loathesome and urine-soaked dust--lying in comfort, insolent toward everything, laughing a laugh sometimes to dimness of sight. (46-47)

This description does not refer to Chirbet Chiz'eh specifically, but represents Arab villages in general. The accretion of filth and human waste underscores both the primitive aspect of Arab life and the longevity of Arab inhabitation of Palestine. Generations of dirt and refuse attest to their centuries of occupation on the Land. We also find an ironic touch in the description. The soldiers at first are loathe to touch anything in the villages they conquer. Yet they overcome their squeamishness through their stronger gut-feeling which is the desire to possess what they have taken. The soldiers' fastidiousness and refinement quickly give way to wallowing in the "shit-piss" delight of conquest. The contrast between the simple Arab village and the Israeli soldier makes the latter appear as base and perverted.

The narrator's sensitivity to the Chirbet Chiz'eh action far exceeds and differs from what his comrades feel. After the platoon has taken Chirbet Chiz'eh, the soldiers inspect the houses prior to demolition. The narrator describes the inside of an Arab hut:

> On the walls knick-knacks hung, remains of momentoes which just now had fallen to the ground; and traces of the wisdom of female housekeeping which takes heed of numerous details whose time ran out just now; an order which was clear to someone, a disorder in which someone comfortably navigated; remnants of utensils which had been collected according to need or by chance, bound up very privately with joy and sorrow which no stranger could understand; rags which made sense to the one who was used to them, modes of life which became meaningless, diligence which came to its undoing; and a very great muteness rested on the love and tumult, and on the trouble and the hopes, and on the good and bad times--corpses that would not be laid to rest. (65)

For the narrator, the abandoned hut with all its objects does not represent an opportunity for looting. Rather, his description personalizes the Arabs, and gives them concrete human qualities which he perceives in the remains of the hut. The hut reflects the simple life-style of inhabitants trying to make the most of the little they

have. The narrator can empathize with the human life which existed in the hut, but so many of the objects he sees are strange and meaningless to him. We feel in his description that he realizes that he is an intruding outsider.

The inspection of the houses concludes with their demolition by the Israelis. A wail goes up from the captured population sitting in the field:

> Afterwards, another mighty explosion rang out, and immediately following it the howling began. At first it seemed as though these screams fell silent quickly and were calmed as soon as they saw that no one was doing any killing, but the howling, a sharp cry, high and repudiating, rebellious, creepy, was growing louder, and you couldn't escape its sound, you couldn't divert your attention; impatiently you shrug your shoulders and look at your companions, you want to keep moving on; now this was no longer like the scream of a seized and frightened hen--but like the shriek of a leopardess infuriated with her pain, but whose force is abating; like the shriek of a condemned man who hates and resists his executioners; a

> scream which is a defensive-weapon,
> a scream of I shall not move, I shall
> not relinquish, I shall die but you
> shall keep hands off, until the stones
> also begin shouting with it--a terrible
> shriek was growing stronger with short
> interruptions of quick breaths, and it
> was possible afterwards even to distin-
> guish words although they were incompre-
> hensible.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> It became for us suddenly like some kind
> of an attack, sudden evil, was happening to
> us, strange walls bleeding on us; we were
> compassed by an evil-heartedness, silent
> and angry; we suddenly seemed disconnected
> and salvationless, not knowing from where
> the sudden blow would fall--though it be
> none other than us here, in our image and
> likeness. (74,75)

The spirit of Arab resistance and the sense of impending revenge permeate the narrator's description of the howling. The comparison of the people's shriek to that of a wounded leopardess conveys the picture of a once proud, vigorous community that is doomed to perish, but which is enraged at its fate. The effect of the two personifications, the

stones screaming and the walls bleeding, enliven the inanimate houses. It is as though the abandoned village has acquired a human soul. The shouting stones themselves are affronted by their rape at the hands of the Israelis. The bleeding walls stain the soldiers with the innocent blood of their exiled inhabitants marking the Israelis with guilt. The personification of the village hints that the spirit of its former Arab inhabitants will haunt the spot in accusation and demand long after Chiz'eh becomes Jewish. We will see a similar theme of the hovering, vengeful Arab presence in Hapardes. Just as Ovadiah's spirit torments Daniel in the orchard, so this description implies that the sensitive Jew may not be able to take up residence in places seized forcefully from the Arabs.

The demolition of Chirbet Chiz'eh is accompanied simultaneously by the round-up of the villagers. The captured Arabs sit under a tree waiting for army trucks to transport them to unknown places. The narrator and several of his comrades take the jeep to meet the expected trucks:

> We climbed the slope of the hill
> which never even dreamt of something
> traveling over it; with dizzying
> impudence, as the slope gave way under
> the wheels as they continually were
> caught up in its skittering pebbles,
> with a sucking of energy in a flash,

> raging in the fullness of its power, with a merry desire to match itself against its own strength, the jeep quickly reached the plateau on the top. There we found a spot and we kept watch over the terrain across from us.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Then we saw in the distance, on one of the hills through which a dirt road cut, several trucks emerging, lumbering along, crawling like blind beetles, struggling with the pitted road. . . . (96, 97)

A parallel seems to exist between the description of the jeep and the earlier description of the soldiers on their way to Chirbet Chiz'eh. The jeep bounds up the hill trying to conquer it with the same merriment that the soldiers feel in their march to capture Chiz'eh. Just as the hill is really no match for the jeep, Chiz'eh is not a serious challenge to the soldiers. The hill and the village give them both the chance merely to flex their muscles. The jeep's "impudence" is no less than that of the soldiers. By this description, the jeep is not only a mechanical extension of the soldiers. It is also a metaphorical extension of their attitudes and personalities.

The hopelessness and despair of the Arab villagers' situation is expressed in the description of the trucks. These "blind beetles" move instinctively ahead to their task. They do not question, feel or think about the ramifications of their work. They move with deliberate certainty: not even pitted roads will dissuade them. With the approach of the trucks we know that the Arab fate is sealed with a logical efficiency that does not allow for sympathy or mercy.

We have seen from the descriptive passages above that "Chirbet Chiz'eh" is a first person narrative. It is clear that the narrator is neither objective nor omniscient. By the descriptions alone the lines of the narrator's outlook are known. He is highly sympathetic to the Arab; he is scornful of his comrades' behavior. The narrator bears a sense of guilt over the Chiz'eh action which is absent in the other soldiers. Having seen the broad outline, we now examine details to answer the following questions: how do the Arabs react to the invasion and exile, how do the soldiers view the Arabs; in what terms does the narrator view the Chiz'eh action, and how does he respond to it?

The soldiers' attitudes toward the Arab are similar to other war situations in which the enemy is seen with distorted vision. The enemy lacks human qualities; he is believed to be ruthless and cruel. The estimation of the enemy may not approach reality, but it serves as an excuse for the vicious behavior of one's own side against them.

Since war has its irrational aspects, it is unlikely that the participants will stop to think logically about the human attributes of the men across the field. Hence it is not surprising that in spite of the peaceful beauty of Chirbet Chiz'eh, the troops unquestioningly accept the commanding officer's view of the reason for the mission:

> Afterwards we came to one hill, we huddled under a cactus hedge, and we would have been ready to have a snack had not the man gathered us, a certain Moishe, the company commander, and explained matters, the environs and the mission. According to him it became clear that the few houses seen on the low spots of another hill were a place called Chirbet Chiz'eh, and that all these surrounding plantations and fields belonged to that village, and that during its long existence, its good soil and quality produce became almost as renowned as its inhabitants who are, they say, scoundrels, aiding the enemy, prepared for any evil if the opportunity only presented itself to them; for example if Jews only disturbed them you may be sure that they would make an end to them with flaming fury--such was the

> likes and nature of them. But when
> we looked carefully at those few
> houses across the recesses of that
> low hill, and the fields separating
> us and them, the well attended gardens,
> and wells of water here and there, we
> realized that the entirety of Chirbet
> Chiz'eh was no problem. . . . (45-46)

Moishe's explanation represents "the military line", for the orders of the day themselves warn of "infiltrators" and "agents on enemy missions" (44) in and around Chirbet Chiz'eh. The troops are quite willing to accept headquarters' view of Chiz'eh though what their eyes behold conflicts with the army's evaluation. It becomes apparent at the end of the above passage that the soldiers are ready to accept the army view because their own feelings of covetousness are aroused by the village in the fruitful valley. Chiz'eh's land would be a nice addition to the Jewish State.

We see the soldiers' covetousness explicitly as well as its resulting attitudes toward the Arab in the following conversation:

> -- "How many dunams is this here?", Gabi asked.
>
> -- "A few thousand good ones", they answered him.

> Immediately we began generously contributing estimates of its measurements, and we were quarreling with easy expertise about thousands of dunams and about tens of thousands. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> -- "The devil take them!", Gabi said, "What beautiful places they have".
>
> -- "They had", replied the radioman, "it's already ours".
>
> -- "If a place like this were ours", Gabi said, "we would fight like I dunno what, but these run; they don't even try to fight!"
>
> -- "What! These Arbushim[5]--not human", replied the radioman". (54,55)

The soldiers justify their desire for the land on the grounds that the Arab is not human. Other statements of the soldiers convey the same attitude: "There's no blood at all in the veins of these Arbushim!" (78) When one soldier asks his buddy how many prisoners he has taken, he asks, "How many pieces do you have?" (80)

The soldiers' inability to see the Arabs as people and to feel sympathy is most telling when the troops come upon two old Arab women abandoned on the road side. The

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5. The term "Arbush" for Arab is derisive. While it has no exact English translation, we may compare it to the use of the expression "A-rab".

narrator describes his and his comrades' reaction:

> We saw a bit farther on, at the edge of the wide road, on which it seems that those who fled has passed, . . . sitting by a ditch two images of sorts, like two owls on a branch, black, shrunken, of one piece, one body and head.
>
> We jumped over to them one-two-three, and immediately recoiled at what our eyes beheld: two extremely old women, in blue frocks and black veils, crouching shapelessly, horribly withered monsters from whom rose the stench of excavated graves, something not human, sickeningly abominable, and their bluish-nacreous eyes in the midst of the blight of a mouldy face stared blindly in front of them, either out of paralyzing fear or an impenetrable stupor. It seems they were dragged to this point by their relatives, among cushions, baskets, and things; and here, out of sudden fear or panic, they were set down or pushed off and abandoned exposed to the sun, like moles at noon, as an evil blemish which they always hid inside the house but which suddenly is

exposed in all its horror--and now they were here before us. And what could you do with them except spit in disgust, slip away, not look, and get out of there--horror!

-- "Nu, nu, I say to you!", Shmulik said and grimaced with revulsion.

-- "They'll die", said a certain Shlomo.

-- "The devil take them", Aryeh said.

-- "Horror!", Shlomo said.

-- "For their own good I'd give 'em a bullet and be done", Aryeh said.

-- "They'll die, you'll see; they're not able to live", Shlomo repeated.

So without turning around, we continued up the road to the left. (72-73)

One would expect such apparently elderly, helpless women to arouse pity in the men. The helplessness of these old cast-off women is not sufficient to override the soldiers' concept of the Arab's inhumanity. Instead these horrid looking women seem to personify the very belief of the soldiers that the Arabs are "monsters", inhuman, lonely "moles". Just as their relatives abandoned these women as worn-out "things", the soldiers view the women as

repulsive objects.[6]

The path from indifference and disrespect for the Arabs as people to utter cruelty toward the Arabs is a short one. For Moishe, the commanding officer, seizing the village and expelling the inhabitants is not sufficient:

-- "Generally I would set things up differently", Moishe said, and he sat up, took the first blade of grass he found, and with it pointed all around: "I would set mines for them". No one objected. Moishe, the platoon commander, was excited:

-- "This would come out beautifully. Look: if the village is there, and they wouldn't be able to flee to it, where could they flee to? First, everyone over there. Good. There we set up shrapnel mines. One Arbush goes up and ten are sprawled out. Soon the others will change their direction and will run this way, toward us, straight in front of this machine gun, and they

6. Although we are concerned here with the soldiers' reaction to these women, it is possible that the author is expressing through them an image of Chirbet Chiz'eh itself. The women convey the aged decay and utter harmlessness of the village and its people. The fact that the able-bodied left the women behind tends to justify, in part, the soldiers' view that Arabs are cowards.

are finished off like nothing".

-- "That's right!", the dozing one also sat up, "Nu, why not?"

-- "Do I know! They decided to be vegetarians; to take them out to the hills and that's all. Tomorrow they'll be back again. The day after, they'll be expelled again. Finally we'll make an agreement: Three days they're here, and three days they're in the hills, and it depends on who will get sick of the game first." (52-53)

Moishe's opinion contrasts with the narrator's view. Both are cynical about the mission, but the narrator's cynicism stems from his feeling that the whole action is unnecessary and inhuman. Moishe sees his superiors as "vegetarians" because they do not allow a full-scale massacre of Chirbet Chiz'eh.

Moishe and his platoon express their cruelty more subtly than by mass bloodshed. They are harsh and unmerciful toward an old man who comes back to the village to retrieve his camel. In spite of the old man's pleading, the soldiers present him with a choice of "your life or the camel and be glad that we just don't kill you." (69) During the process of removal of the prisoners, the soldiers park the trucks in front of a puddle through which the Arabs must walk as they board. They shove the

captives onto the trucks with derisive comments "noting how fat this one is, and that that one is certainly very ugly". (101)

The mean capriciousness of the platoon's conduct is exemplified starkly when the soldiers find an Arab wandering in the village. The troops do all they can to terrorize this Arab, but when he reacts in mortal fear, they attribute his behavior to deceptive treachery. They mock his fear and his humanity:

> -- "Stay there, dog!" Gabi shouted to him and fired a round over his head. He leaped and prostrated himself behind a rock near the wall, and pressed his head down as tightly as the ground would allow.
>
> -- "Get up", Gabi shouted to him, "get up, I say". He didn't refuse, and got up immediately. He was terribly frightened. Gabi carefully aimed his machine gun at him and said to us, "this one makes a filthy impression!" Then he pressed the trigger and released a single shot which, with wicked intention, passed above his head by a hair's breadth. The man spun around and spread out his hands, and froze, his neck hunched between his shoulders.
>
> -- "Ta'el Ji", Gabi said to him, come here. He tried to move, but it was obvious

that there was no connection between his legs and his body. The former finally moved by themselves, but the body was paralyzed. His face was drained of blood not to paleness, but to a disgraceful yellow-green. Finally he swallowed his spittle, and again spread his arms trying to smile submissively, a smile of a wretched mask, or to say something, but he couldn't salvage a sound or a whimper.

. . . . . .

-- "This one makes a filthy impression", Gabi repeated, pointing to him with his thumb. . . .

. . . . . .

-- "What's he hanging around here for? From ones like this who hang around unnoticed there are always troubles".

-- "He just didn't succeed fleeing", Shlomo said, looking around him and searching for something in discomfort.

-- "So why didn't he flee? No, no. There's something different here. I know this type. Everything he's doing for you is phoney, a con-artist!" (75-76)

In the passage above, we see the slightest beginning of revulsion at the cruelty from someone besides the narrator. Shlomo recognizes that the Arab is helpless, and that his behavior is not suspicious since he reacts out of fear. Shlomo is by no means the Arab's champion here. He merely broaches the idea that the Arab is on the level. Gabi easily submerges Shlomo's suggestion. This incident is part of Yizhar's theme of the individual being swallowed by social pressure. In comparison to the narrator who is not only repulsed by the mission but is also sensitive to his own responses, Shlomo is just vaguely uncomfortable. However, Shlomo's ill feelings about the operation grow slowly. He moves closer to the narrator's viewpoint. Referring to the round-up, he says: "I don't like it. . . . It was like the beginning, like the first time when I saw the dead and the wounded, and blood." (89) During the loading of the prisoners, an Arab woman grabs Shlomo's sleeve pleadingly: "Shlomo shook his hand away from her and turned here and there seeking counsel, or perhaps, permission to behave mercifully toward her." (103)

In contrast to Shlomo and the narrator, one sees that the troops harbor racial feelings about the Arabs. The soldiers view and treat the Arabs as less than human. They use disparaging terms for Arabs, and scorn their way of life. The troops tell one another, "these Arbushim don't have any blood in their veins". While these racial

feelings exist, neither the narrator nor the soldiers seem to recognize them in a conscious way.

The soldiers claim that their anger and hatred toward the Arabs was roused because the Arabs instigated the war. It was their wish to prevent the creation of a Jewish state. Hence, there is no choice but to defeat them soundly. The soldiers fail to discriminate between civilian village Arabs and actual combatants, and they justify themselves by pointing to Arab sins. Yehudah makes this point clear when he rebukes Shlomo for his doubts about the morality of the mission:

> "What are we doing to them? Are we killing them? We're transferring them to their side. And it's very nice on our part. No place else would anyone treat them this way. Besides, no one asked them to start this business. . . . What will happen to them there? Let them ask their darling leaders. What will they eat and drink? About this they should've thought before they began.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Such saints. More than enough of our blood has been spilled on their account. These zeroes! Let them eat what they have cooked for themselves!" (105, 106)

There is irony in Yehudah's "what are we doing to them?". He obviously does not see the operation as cruel although it is the view of the author and his narrator that the Chirbet Chiz'eh action is a travesty.

The narrator himself also does not seem to be fully aware that the cruelty displayed at Chirbet Chiz'eh stems from racial hatred. His view seems to be that war itself breeds cruelty. The narrator spends much of chapters one and two detailing the nature of the horrible waiting period and the troops' behavior before the attack. The waiting creates tension which, when released, is expressed in cruelty. Here is one example of cruelty coming from the anxiety and boredom of the wait:

> They would beat the camel which was turning the water-wheel. . . , and they would kick the old Arab. . . who was holding onto the camel's halter and went around together with it. . . . They would shoot tens of bullets into a frightened dog till he fell; they would enter with someone into a murderous argument, and then fall again into boredom and idleness. . . . (48)

The military situation also includes passivity and

the need to set values aside.[7] Since there is no choice but to defeat the Arabs, orders cannot be questioned even when they include the exiling of an entire village. Though a commanding officer exhibits cruel behavior who dares challenge his authority? The mission must be accomplished; passivity to cruelty is necessary: "We know--when thoughts begin, bad business and troubles begin; better not to start with thoughts."[8] (50) The cruel behavior toward the Arab, then, is attributed by the narrator to the tensions of war. Acquiescence to cruelty comes from war's demand to set values aside. It is only the author who faces the realization that the source of the cruel behavior at Chirbet Chiz'eh is a sadistic racial hatred.

I have noted above that the general background and description in "Chirbet Chiz'eh" present the Arab as a simple, primitive peasant. He is part of the Palestinian

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7. In a scathing review of "Chirbet Chiz'eh", Mordechai Shalev sees the source of the cruelty not in the setting aside of values, but in a lack of values in the characters: "He [Yizhar] is not able to grant them any real active values except for the abstract love of nature which cannot be recorded on an empty heart. . . . Yizhar does not solve this emptiness with anything. . . ." M. Shalev, "Mevucha Vesadism", S. Yizhar: Mivchar Ma'amarim al Yetsirato, Chavim Nagid, ed., (Tel Aviv, 1972), p. 50 (Shalev's review originally appeared in "Sulam" I:6, 1958). Shalev seems to miss the point in that the possession of values does not mean necessarily that an individual can live up to them in all circumstances. If Yizhar is saying that war destroys values, then Shalev's comment is off base.

8. The narrator's statement is ironic because it proves true in his own case. When he begins to think about and analyze the events at Chirbet Chiz'eh, he becomes caught up in a struggle to be true to himself and his moral sensibilities while, at the same time, he fears alienation from his group.

landscape which he has enhanced with the beauty of his produce. The Arabs' agricultural talents and nature's bounty work in harmony. In their situation as prisoners and victims of war, they react with fear and despair fitting the circumstances. Only the elderly, the women and children remain since all able bodied men have either fled or joined the ranks of Arab forces.

There is a stereotypic element to Yizhar's presentation of the Arab. The Arab reputation for great ceremoniousness and for deferential, submissive behavior toward the conqueror comes through in the following description:

> Then, in the second courtyard, on a stone by the side of the house, we found an old Arab who seemed as though he waited for our arrival: he arose to greet us and began to pester us with the whole ceremony of greetings and blessings, and he intended even to kiss the hand of our radioman (because of his strange instrument the Arab assumed he was most important), who quickly pulled it back in anger. . . . Then that old man, with a white turban and a yellow sash, comes over to us and lectures us on how there are only the elderly, women, and children here, on how he tried to persuade those who fled this morning not to flee

> since the Jews don't do evil because the Jews aren't like the English, may their fathers be cursed, nor like the Egyptian dogs, etc., etc. . . . . (79)

The Arab stereotype is perpetuated in the description of the captured group sitting under some trees. The Arab penchant to be fatalistic is represented:

> There were among them those who sat swaying back and forth as at the time of prayer. Others vaguely rolled in their hands a string of honey-colored amber beads, or just black beads. Others folded their rough large hands, farmers' hands, in their bosom, and others shredded straw and grass in order to have something to do, and the eyes of all of them roamed on us, fixed to our every movement, and they didn't say a word except for some occasional sigh, ah yah-rav.
>
> And among the women was a murmur of weeping, monotonous, as though it were unintentional. . . . Only sometimes did a cry burst forth. . . until one of the old men shouted words of restraint, and they slowly surpressed their crying. (86-87)

We notice that while the Arabs passively accept their fate, they also try to maintain a semblance of dignity. The old men hush the crying women so as not to appear disgraceful in the eyes of the Jewish enemy. They attempt to retain some pride in their behavior as a form of protest or resistance.

The Arab prisoners offer no real resistance to the troops, but some of them do exhibit varying degrees of defiance. The old Arab who comes seeking his camel displays both defiance and some bravery. After the soldiers have told him "the camel or your life", the Arab comes back to plead three times. There are also instances when Arab men come before the soldiers in an attempt to speak, plead, or bargain. (88, 102) However, it is the women who are most dignified and defiant. One Arab woman disregards all warnings and physical efforts to subdue her in order to run to the ruins of her dynamited home. (87-88) Another woman rebukes and scorns the soldiers by her behavior:

> Then one woman came to us, and in her bosom was a weak-looking infant, carried like an undesirable utensil. The infant had a grey complexion, thin, sickly, and stunted. And her mother waved her as she carried her and danced her in front of us as though

> she were saying to us something that wasn't scorn or abhorrence, or the cry of madness, but perhaps all these together. . . . "Here, take, give her bread; you take her!" (103)

Similarly, another Arab woman displays pride and bravery through her restraint and her refusal to acknowledge the soldiers:

> We saw one woman who passed by in a group of three-four others. She grasped the hand of a seven year old boy. . . . She seemed strong, self-restrained, stiff in her distress. Tears, that seemed as though they didn't belong to her, rolled down her cheeks. . . . We saw how she prided herself in not showing us the slightest bit of attention. We perceived that she was a lioness, and we saw that the creases of self-control and the desire to act bravely hardened the lines in her face, and how now that her world was lost she didn't want to break down before our eyes. . . . (106)

The Arabs' defiance is poignantly represented as they board the vans which are to carry them away. I pointed

out (p. 60) that the drivers deliberately park the trucks by a huge puddle which the Arabs cannot avoid as they climb onto the trucks. The Arabs turn this humiliating situation of wading through the puddle into an expression of their independent pride. For even when a path finally is cleared for them to go around the puddle, the Arabs continue straight ahead:

> But instead of passing through the breach, they continued straight through the puddle of water, and with their bare feet sloshed around in the water as they raised the hem of their clothes with their hands, as though there were nothing unusual about passing through a puddle. The others, thinking this was the route, followed them, splashing with their feet through the water. And there was someone who stooped with a sigh and took off his shoes from his feet to make his way through the water. (102-103)

To the narrator, this appears as sheep-like behavior, but the action seems to speak for itself as a display of dignity.

I have pointed out in the beginning of this chapter that the individual's struggle to find himself and to free himself from the values, demands, and compulsions

of the collectivist society is the major theme in much of Yizhar's work. Indeed, Yizhar himself must have undergone such a conflict and have prevailed, for he wrote "Chirbet Chiz'eh" and "Hashavui" in 1948-49. While his earlier works (e.g. "Ephraim Chozer La'aspeset", 1938) deal with the search for individual fulfillment, they were not as immediately challenging to the social status quo as the latter two written during and just after the War of Independence. In spite of the Palestinian Jewish community's internal problems, World War II, British colonial policy, and Arab terrorism, the very physical survival of the Yishuv was not threatened with ultimate extinction until 1948. The real triumph of the individual's values over those of society is expressed by the writing of "Chirbet Chiz'eh" and "Hashavui". At the time when solidarity with group values and obedience to national goals seemed imperative, Yizhar dared to question those values, goals, and the means for their achievement. The author himself revolts, and asserts his individuality by the views which he articulates in these two short stories.

In contrast to Yizhar's outspoken boldness, the narrator in "Chirbet Chiz'eh" cannot bring himself to express publicly personal values which he knows are contrary to those of his group. His feelings remain at the inchoate level, pent up by his own self-doubts and the fear of the group's rejection of him. The narrator is not able to verbalize a rationally convincing statement

against the orders of the day, and this arouses his own self-pity. The dichotomy between Yizhar's individualistic expression and the narrator's paralyzed, self-pitying condition might lead one to believe that the author is out of sympathy with his narrator. This is not the case.

The construction of the story shows that neither the author nor the narrator accept the latter's behavior at Chirbet Chiz'eh. Had the story been written in the present tense revealing the immediate contents of the narrator's consciousness, we could assume a distinction between the viewpoints of the author and his narrator. However, the story is a recollection, a presentation of consciousness past. The narrator himself judges his behavior in the light of retrospect, and he scorns it. The following paragraph, with which the narrator begins his story, shows that he rejects the kind of man he was at Chirbet Chiz'eh, and that he is searching for a means of atonement in the recounting of events:

> Even though all this occurred some time ago, yet it hasn't left me since then. I intended to submerge it in the rush of days, to lower its importance, and to blunt it with the flow of things. I even succeeded, at times, in arriving at a sober shrug of the shoulder, and in seeing that same incident was not, after all, so terrible;

> I took credit for my forebearance, which, as everyone knows, is the brother of true understanding. However, from time to time I would be stirred anew; it is surprising how easy it is to be misled, going about senseless with one's eyes open, and to join spontaneously with this large and common community of liars--which is composed of crudity, a useful indifference, and mere unabashed egotism--to exchange one great truth with a clever shrug of the shoulder of an experienced sinner. I have seen that there is no more room to waver, and even if I as yet haven't resolved where the way out[9] is, it seems to me that rather than keep silent, it is, on the face of it, better that I should open up and tell about it. (43)

If we keep the paragraph above in mind, we may assume that our narrator is reliable.[10] We may consider the narrator's

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9. The meaning of this phrase is vague. He may be referring to his guilt over his silent participation in the Chirbet Chiz'eh action for which he cannot forgive himself; he may also be referring to the individual's means of securing himself from group pressure.

10. "Hashavui", written several months before "Chirbet Chiz'eh", does not contain a similar paragraph or thought. Hence, the narrator does not share the author's view to the degree that the narrator in "Chirbet Chiz'eh" does. While the narration of "Hashavui" is also a recollection, there is no sense of reevaluation of the narrator's behavior toward his prisoner. The status of the narrator is reduced

view of the Arab and his moral assessments of the Chiz'eh action to be representative of those of the author.

The author presents the narrator's private moral anguish through a technique of stream of consciousness writing called soliloquy.[11] The narrator assumes that he has readers to whom he wishes to communicate his inner reactions to the Chiz'eh operation. He explicitly tells us his thoughts, and he represents the pangs of his rebellious conscience as though a second voice were speaking to him. Let us examine what attitudes the narrator holds toward the Arabs of Chirbet Chiz'eh as he sets them forth in his soliloquy.

The Israeli attack on Chirbet Chiz'eh comes in the early morning hours, and the helpless Arabs flee without any attempt to resist. The Jewish troops of the outflanking platoon direct machine gun fire at the escaping Arabs. The soldiers are frustrated because they have not hit a single Arab. Each member of the group excitedly spots clusters of running Arabs for the machine gunner in hopes of mowing down some of them. The battle-fever also

since we do not perceive any personal moral growth or increase in self-understanding, although he does indulge in a certain amount of self-judgement.

11. Robert Humphrey defines soliloquy as: "a technique of representing the psychic content and processes of a character directly to the reader without the presence of an author, but with an audience tacitly assumed." In comparison to indirect interior monologue, Humphrey says soliloquy "has greater coherence. . . since the purpose of it is to communicate emotions and ideas which are related to plot and action. . . ." Robert Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel, (Berkeley, 1965), p. 36.

seizes the narrator who joins the spotters, but, at the same moment, his conscience smites him for his participation:

> -- "Look, over there!", I roared and showed Gabi:
>
> "Twelve hundred meters to the right of that lone tree. You can get 'em good!" But at that instant I was startled by something, and while my hand was still extended with drunken enthusiasm towards the escapees whom I discovered, I felt that someone was shouting at me in a different manner, like a wounded bird, and while I was still amazed at these two voices, Gabi layed on several rounds, and Moishe said: "To hell with you! You don't know how to fire a machine gun at all!" To my great surprise I felt that I was relieved of something, possibly like this: "Don't hit them, brother, don't hit them!" I quickly looked around to see if someone caught me in what seemed to me to be my disgrace. (61)

The key features of the passage are surprise and shame. The narrator never had imagined that such a scene could upset him after so many months of war. The feeling

of a troubled conscience has become so unusual for him. The voice "like a wounded bird" which only he can hear is a source of shame to him; for to feel guilt or pity regarding the Arabs violates group norms. The narrator is not immediately in touch with his guilt feelings about the Chiz'eh action. His "second voice" comes and goes as a gnawing presence which he tries to stifle throughout the day of round-up and demolition:

> Immediately the undertones which were moaning in me all the time became detailed again, and a wave of mutiny swept into me. That same annoying someone who was inside of me was aware of how he was gritting his teeth and clenching his fists. (90)

The narrator's violated sense of right begins to overwhelm him. Yet his fear of group censure and alienation from the platoon prevent him from speaking out against the cruel treatment of the Arabs. Instead, his conscience manifests itself by a sick gut-feeling which almost rises to hysteria and self-hatred. He pities himself, and wishes someone else were in his position:

> My guts shrivelled for some reason, and I loathed food. I realized how I pitied myself and the trials appointed to me. . . .

. . . . . .

For if it is imperative to deal with
all this, let others take care of it.
If it is necessary to dirty oneself,
let others soil their hands--I can't. . . .
I was hostile toward my entire being. (91, 92)

The narrator's self-hatred grows out of the realization that he does not possess the inner strength of character necessary to bring him to reject the action of the group. He does not refuse to participate in the Chiz'eh action nor does he make a convincing attempt to dissuade his buddies from carrying out orders. When he does manage to voice some objections, they are feeble, lacking conviction, and have the tone of a whining child:

I hesitated, and argued with myself, and
I gathered my courage and said to Moishe:
-- "This, do we have to expel them? What
can they do any more: who can they harm?
Anyway, aren't the young men. . . what
reason? . . ."
-- "Ah!" Moishe said to me affectionately,
"that's the way it's written in the orders."
-- "But it's not right", I claimed, and
I didn't know any more which of the pleas
and speeches that were running around in
me to bring before him as a decisive

> argument; thus I only repeated: "It's not right!" (92-93)

Whatever eloquent and sensitive thoughts the narrator has, he fails to articulate them coherently to his comrades. His soul is pent up with guilt and sympathy for the Arab, but his need to belong to the group prevents him from making a convincing argument, and from separating himself from the platoon's action.

Moishe's gentle but firm rebuff shakes what little self-confidence the narrator has. Although the narrator stands alone within his own heart and mind, he is not strong enough to make his position clear before his comrades. He does not immediately reject the platoon's behavior, and he seeks to justify all their deeds. His "second self", however, dismisses all his weak rationalizations:

> I considered my own claim, and I thought to myself: But this is war! Is it war or not? And if it's war one conducts himself as one does in war (a second voice: a war? against whom? them?)--the first voice (continuing as though it heard nothing): Saints here they are certainly not (so where are there saints?) . . . and even if our wish were good and honest and sincere--it is impossible to enter the water without getting wet

(wonder of wonders!). To understand and agree that we must act--one, to get up and harden the heart and to do all kinds of things--but it's always otherwise. . . . furthermore who is it that needs to make an effort to harden his heart?--in any case it's hardened and most indifferent. A short break. Immediately, and in the heat of apology which becomes a counter-attack: And those villages which we took in the storm of battle, weren't they different? Or those who fled of their own accord pursued by the fear of shadows? Or those villages of bandits for whom a Sodom-like end would not be sufficient--they were not entirely different! But not this one, not this one. . . . something isn't clear yet. It's just a kind of bad feeling. As though you are forced into the midst of a nightmare, and they don't let you wake up first. You are already confused with several voices. You don't know what. Perhaps it's to get up, to get up and object? Perhaps it is, on the contrary, to see, to exist, to feel till one bleeds, so that. . .

> so that what? Time passes. Time passes. Son of man (anxious pause); you're such a weak character. (another pause). Look and you will burst. (good person, refined person, kind soul!). (93-94)

All of the narrator's justifications are unsatisfactory to him because they represent a grasping at straws. He cannot soothe himself over Chiz'eh's destruction on the grounds that "war is war". When he considers Chiz'eh in comparison to other villages which were hostile and which did resist, he is even more hard-put to justify the attack. The comparison leads him to wonder whether, in fact, the other villages were so very different from Chiz'eh. All this debate with himself leaves the narrator in a state of confused impotence. He seems to realize that his instinct about the Chiz'eh operation is correct, but he is too outwardly directed, group oriented, to allow his conscience to govern his behavior. The narrator is reduced to hoping that one of the captive Arabs might lead a rebellion and say, "we won't budge from here, O villagers; strengthen yourselves and be men!" (95)

The narrator's confusion and failure to act stand in contrast to the depth of his feeling that the Chiz'eh action is morally wrong. He frequently employs Biblical phrases to underscore his sense that an injustice is being perpetrated by his platoon. We have seen in the passage immediately above that the narrator addresses himself with

the book of Ezekiel's "Son of Man". He describes the shriek of the walls of the village as containing "a kind of spark of vengeance, of one calling to contend (Amos 7:4), O God of vengeance appear" (Psalms 94:1). (56) Regarding the conquest of Chirbet Chiz'eh, the narrator paraphrases Elijah's words to Ahab saying "we have expelled and also taken possession". (109) He points out that the troops were decent enough not to rob the Arabs of everything: "Their cloaks in which they would lie down were their only covering for their skin". (111 - see Exodus 22:25-26). The narrator closes his story with: "And when quiet closes in on everything so that no one will trespass the silence, then God will come down to the plain to walk about and to see if it is altogether according to the cry of it. . . ." (111 - see Genesis 18:20-21; here the phrase refers to the cry of the victims of Chirbet Chiz'eh).

The Biblical allusions, which are perhaps overdone, present the platoon's action against Chirbet Chiz'eh as more than a case of "we're following orders; there's no choice". The attack on the innocent village is a wanton affront to the divine demand for justice or to the cosmic moral scheme. The Prophetic expressions point to a sense of doom. Vengeance may be the Lord's, but the narrator realizes that Arab refugees may usurp the divine prerogative in the future.[12] Vengeance may have been wreaked

12. We have a hint of what the narrator has in mind when he says of a seven year old Arab refugee: "When he

against the soldiers already in that their cruelty has robbed them of a humanity which they may not be able to reclaim. The narrator is aware of all this, but he participates in the guilt by his failure to act.

What rouses the narrator's moral sensitivity is his empathy for the villagers of Chirbet Chiz'eh. He is able to feel what the villagers feel as a result of being a victim of a surprise Arab attack during his childhood:

> Without being aware of it, suddenly it flashed through my mind how it was with us at home, recently and yet so very long ago, and also across the threshold of faint childhood memories--when suddenly there were shots, shots from the border and from across the orchards, shots from distant hills, shots in the night or at dawn, rumors, blackouts, and something large and serious, threatening and distressing; running, consultation, tense listening, shadowy images going out with rifles. . . . And immediately, by that same association it seems, with accuracy and certainty it could be imagined how, in that house of bluish whitewash with green shutters, someone

grows up he can only be a poisonous viper." (107)

> is now frozen in his tracks with sudden horror, how in the mud house someone stopped eating, how someone in the group of houses on the right hushes whoever spoke in that instant: --"Shots!". . . How the silence of paralysis of surprise, of the well-known "perhaps not us O Lord!" becomes a reality; how for a moment, a prayer hangs in space, a long moment, ancient, mysterious, tottering before it falls. And in each and every heart together a primeval drum beats and shouts: danger, danger, danger! (58)

The childhood experience which brings the narrator to empathize with the villagers is not unique to him. His comrades probably have undergone Arab attacks as well. Yet the narrator's empathy is aroused because at the moment of attack his mind associates[13] with his childhood role as victim. This association allows him to view the Arabs in a personal and human light.

The play of free association in the narrator's mind leads him to view the exile of the Chiz'eh Arab in terms of the Babylonian exile. There is a build-up of metaphors, however sparse, which suggest the ancient exile of the

13. "The chief technique in controlling the movement of stream of consciousness in fiction has been an application of the principles of psychological free association." Humphrey, Stream, p. 43.

Jews.[14] The description of the prisoners gathered under a tree and "swaying back and forth as during prayer" (86) conjures the picture of Psalm 137. When an old man attempts to speak with his captors but is rebuffed, he proclaims with faith, "there is no God but Allah". (89) The narrator reflects: "And something ancient and Biblical returned for a moment and hovered in the air. . . ." (89)

The narrator's vague, somewhat preconscious association of the refugees with the exiles to Babylonia becomes a clear analogy for him when he witnesses the removal of the Arabs:

> Something became clear to me suddenly like a flash of lightening. . . . Exile. This is exile. This is the way exile is. This is the way exile looks.
>
> I wasn't able to remain standing. My spot wouldn't support me. I left and went around to the other side. There those blind men sat. I hurried to avoid them. I went out through the gap, I went

14. "Both image and symbol tend to express something of the quality of privacy in consciousness: the image by suggesting the private emotional values of what is perceived (either directly, through memory, or their imagination); the symbol by suggesting the truncated manner of perceiving and expanding meaning." Ibid., p. 78. The Babylonian exile metaphors seem to fall somewhere between image and symbol, and perhaps should be considered as a kind of extended analogy. The comparison of the Chiz'eh refugees to the exiles to Babylonia does expand the meaning of the incident into the realm of the timeless, continuing torment of the weak by the mighty. Unintentionally, perhaps, the analogy is a two-edged sword, for "it was because of our sins that we were exiled from our land." Yet it also holds out the promise of redemption at the conquerors expense.

> up onto a plot of ground surrounded by a cactus hedge. Things piled up inside me.
>
> I was never in the Golah--I said to myself--I've never known what it's like. . . but they spoke to me, told me, taught me, and repeated its every last detail. Our people has a complaint against the world: exile! And this was in me, it seems with my mother's milk. What, in fact, have we wrought here today? . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I sought a solution for the trembling running through me, and for the source of this echo, an echo of footsteps, ascending to my ears, an echo of footsteps of other exile, dim, distant, almost legendary, but wrathful, Anatothian, rolling like thunder, distant but threatening, bearing dark tidings. . . . (107-108)

The narrator's empathy for the villagers now has become rooted in a source deeper than personal experience. He participates in a Jewish consciousness of history which is characterized by a sense that the past lives in the present. His environment and education have made him feel as though he personally had been in exile. Thus, he

empathizes with the Arabs as a Jew who possesses a heritage of exile. Though he grew up in Palestine, the Jewish heritage of exile operates as a psychologically living factor in his consciousness.

It is the reality of the Jewish exile experience for the narrator which prevents him from being indifferent to the events at Chirbet Chiz'eh. He is shaken that he and his fellow Jews find themselves in the conqueror's role. He is repulsed by the ease and seemingly practiced familiarity with which his comrades play the part of oppressors:

> Colonialists, my insides screamed. A lie, my guts shouted. Chirbet Chiz'eh is not ours. The Spandau never bestowed any right of possession whatsoever. Ha-ha, my insides cried out. What didn't they tell us about the refugees. Everything for the sake of the refugees, their peace and their rescue. . . of course, our refugees. These whom we are expelling--that's an entirely different matter. The revelation: two thousand years of exile. What not. Killing Jews. Europe. Now we are the masters. (109)
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And how callous we are--as though we never were anything but conquerors--and we are shameless at the task. . . . (111)

E. M. Forster once wrote: "If human nature does alter it will be because individuals manage to look at themselves in a new way."[15] Yizhar directs his craftsmanship and artistry toward rousing the reader to a self-evaluation which hopefully would lead to a new self-image. He is calling for the Israeli to see himself primarily as an individual rather than as an obedient member of a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts. The new individual Yizhar asks for is one who is true to his values even when they conflict with society's demands. He also seeks to awaken the Israeli to a sensitivity for the Jewish diaspora experience of persecution and minority status which is necessary if the Jew is to empathize with the Arab's situation. As a writer in the crucial transition period between the Dor Ba'arets and Dor Hamedinah, Yizhar has made his point by taking a stand on a sensitive subject during a fateful year.

The conflict between individuality and assertion of self and one's subservience to the group came to a head during the 1948 war for Yizhar. The individual became part of a platoon and an army which was flushed with victory over the Arab enemy. That same individual had also grown in a background which professed a consciousness of human suffering based on historical experience. Both religious values and Zionist social philosophy imbued the individual

15. Ibid., p. 85. Pumphrey does not provide the source of this quotation.

with the ideas of the sanctity of life and human dignity. Yet, when the individual is surrounded by a group whose psychology and behavior is that of the conqueror, he may rationalize away his values as he allows himself to be swept along by the group.

Yizhar is pained by what he believes is society's negative attitude toward Arabs although he does not deny that the Jewish state has the right to defend its existence. In his view, much of society's attitude toward the Arab is motivated by racist feelings. Given the Jewish experience in the twentieth century, few readers would be willing to acknowledge and deal with their racism. Yizhar seeks re-evaluation of the Israeli's attitude toward Arabs, and he attempts this through shock techniques. He portrays the soldiers as callous and cruel, and he allows them to verbalize their racist attitudes. All but the most narrow-minded reader must recognize the behavior and attitude for what it is. It seems that the reader is expected to be repulsed by the racism and will reject it.

Yizhar is asking the Israeli reader to view Arabs as human beings, and not as the faceless enemy or as inferior beasts. While he portrays the Arab characters in a human light, Yizhar does not deny the public its stereotypic views of the Arab. Among the stereotypes are images of the Arab closely tied to the soil and working in unison with nature, living in primitive and "unsanitary" villages, showing courtesy and submission to the conqueror in the

extreme. These stereotypes do not detract from the realism of Arab images since they do reflect truthfully certain aspects of Arab life and culture. The stereotypes and the lack of development of Arab characters lead one to conclude that Yizhar is presenting "the Arab". Yet, the varying reactions of individual Arabs to the Israeli conquerors enhance their human image. Some react with sick fear, some display a respect-winning dignity, others are scornful and defiant. Their behavior in the face of adversity and the narrator's ability to empathize underscore the Arab's humanity. Yizhar seems to suggest throught "Chirbet Chiz'eh" that the reader can maintain his own humanity only to the degree that he views the Arab as completely human.

III

"Mul Haye'arot"

The disillusionment of the younger generation with the values of the fathers, the sense of isolation from the society which perpetuates the hated values, and the sons' desire to rebel against the world of the fathers are nearly universal modes in western literature since the last century. The young Israeli writers of the current generation share the concern for the problem of man's alienation from society with their European counterparts. In the previous two chapters, variations of the alienation and rebellion themes appeared in the character Channah Gonen and the "Chirbet Chiz'eh" narrator. Channah's rebellion against the staid, rational, goal-oriented world of her husband expressed itself as she created a fantasy world through which she fled from the realities of her life with Micha'el. The "Chirbet Chiz'eh" narrator was caught up in a struggle to find expression for his alienation from group values. A. B. Yehoshua, in "Mul Haye'arot", ("Facing the Forests") also confronts the problem of alienation and rebellion.

Yehoshua's protagonist is a balding, bespectacled perennial student, about thirty years old, who has lumbered along toward his bachelor's degree. His friends have com-

pleted their degrees long ago, and are out in the world working at their professions. The student is unmotivated toward any pursuit except partying with undergraduates who are his juniors by several years. His older, settled friends still remember that he has academic potential, and they hate to see him lead his undisciplined existence. The student is prodded by his friends to take a job, but he always manages to excuse himself from their suggestions. One day, however, he is cornered by a friend who advises him to take a position as forest ranger in one of the Jewish National Fund forests. The job would offer him both the solitude to collect himself and the opportunity to write his overdue disseration. When the student takes the job, one has the impression that his nine months in the forest are as much a self-imposed exile as well as an attempt by his friends to get him out of their hair. The student can escape the pressure that his contemporaries (and society) apply to him among the trees on isolated Judean hills.

Yehoshua develops the themes of alienation and rebellion through the protagonist's relationship with an Arab who is the caretaker of the forest. The Arab has no name, and because his tongue has been cut out, he is incomprehensible when he speaks. The forest in which the Arab lives has been planted over the ruins of the village of his birth, and he revenges himself against the Zionists by igniting the hillsides. The Arab's lack of detailed personal features, the absence of his development as a character,

and the situation of his being displaced by a J.N.F. forest suggest that he represents the Arab of Palestine. It will be the concern of this chapter to investigate the image of this Arab, the attitudes of other characters toward him, and Yehoshua's view of the nature of the Arab-Jewish relationship. The chapter will also consider the role of the Arab as a literary device for the expression of the alienation theme.

A. B. Yehoshua's terse descriptions present us with several impressions of the Arab: he is primitive, close to nature, has sharp animal-like instincts, and is very much at home on the Palestinian landscape. Yehoshua indirectly underscores this view of the primitive Arab through a statement of the forestry supervisor. When the student applies for the job as forest ranger, the supervisor says:

> "Are you sure this is what you want? The loneliness is difficult in the forest observation post. Only primitive people are really able to bear it." (12)

Although the forestry supervisor's statement is not specifically directed at the Arab, one reflects on his statement after the Arab is introduced at a latter point in the story. Of course it is the Arab forest-hand and his daughter who live in the forest all year round. They are the primitive people. They are not constrained by the mores of neatness

which civilized living demands. Their room on the first floor of the watch tower is "dim, belongings strewn on the floor, and remains of food". (16) The description makes one think of a cave rather than a house.

Both the setting and further descriptions reinforce the view of the Arab as one who belongs in the Land as a native and as one who is close to the earth. The Arab was born in a village which the forest now covers. The Arab is literally at home in the forest. He lives on the first floor of the ranger station, not above the forest, but in the midst of it. Indeed, the Arab and his daughter spend most of their waking hours in the forest:

> The Arab and his daughter disappear among the trees, and he [the ranger] does not succeed finding them. In the evening they burst out from some unexpected direction as though the forest had given birth to them just now. (32)

> The Arab and his daughter burst out of the thicket of their hiding place, and with a lowering of the head hurry to the observation post. (27)

The forest is the womb and refuge of the Arab and his daughter who easily blend into its scenery. It is with bowed heads that they return to the semi-civilization of

the J.N.F. observation post which has been imposed on their domain.

The Arab and his daughter are as much creatures of the forest as are the animals who dwell in it. They are timid in the presence of the ranger, but not subservient. The description of the ranger's first encounter with the Arab and his daughter conveys the animal-like suspicion of a stranger:

> Arab and girl approach the house. He [ranger] hurries to get out of the chair. They perceive him, look up, and stop immediately--shocked by the sight of the scholarly, soft figure. He nods his head. They continue on their way, their steps suddenly becoming hesitant. (18)

It is notable that the Arab and his daughter "perceive" the ranger's presence before they see him much as an animal would sense its predator. We have a second, even stronger description of the Arab and the girl with the animal instinct for self-preservation. The description is heightened by the ranger's hunter-like behavior:

> The Arab is sitting beside his hoe on a pile of rocks. The girl is excitedly telling him something, narrating with lively descriptiveness. The ranger

> approaches them very quietly. . . .
> They sense him immediately, smell his
> alien being, and fall silent at once. (26)

And one additional example:

> Quietly they walk over the ground. So
> attentive. They turn to the side because
> of the animals, choosing roundabout paths.
> He smiles at the two of them but they
> recoil. (32)

These descriptions of the Arab allude to an animal nature, and create two impressions. One senses a certain innocence in the Arab much as one does when reading the narrator's description of the Arab shepherd in Yizhar's "Hashavui". Yet, one also wonders, suspiciously perhaps, what the Arab and his daughter do in the forest during the long days. We, the readers, are cut off from them just as the ranger is not a part of them. The ranger's sense of alienation, his foreignness is heightened by the descriptions of the Arab's wariness of him. The difference between the "soft" ranger and the animal-like Arab emphasizes the ranger's isolation in the forest. The intellectual, city-bred ranger seems to have small value in the rugged forest. The ranger is not familiar with the life of the forest as the Arab is, nor are the ranger's senses as sharp as the Arab's. The Arab is a creature of the forest, and it would seem that his presence alone would be sufficient protection.

The totality of the ranger's isolation and alienation are conveyed further by the inability of the Arab to speak and the Arab child's fear of this young Jew:

> It becomes clear that this Arab is old and mute. . . . In the dark room whose windows are kindled with the last light, the ranger presses the heavy hand; he bends to pat the girl who is shrinking with terror. The circle of isolation surrounds him completely. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The ranger wants to talk with him about something; perhaps about the view, or maybe about the paucity of the light. Several words still remain in his mouth from the city, but the Arab doesn't understand Hebrew. The ranger wearily smiles in thanks. Something in his boldness, in the flash of his glasses, casts fear upon the Arab. (18-19)

We remember that the student came to the forest to escape his life in Jerusalem where he felt alienated. He took the ranger job claiming that he was tired or words. Now, when he seeks words and human contact, his loneliness becomes even sharper as symbolized by the mute Arab who fears him.[1]

---

1. The telephone metaphor adds to the sense of the

The development of the Arab's function in "Mul Haye'arot" becomes clearer when we investigate both the Arab's behavior as well as the attitude of other characters toward him. Yehoshua presents a negative view of some "traditional" Israeli attitudes. The ranger-Arab relationship will be the focal point of our concern because it expresses Yehoshua's impression of an aspect of Arab-Jewish contact generally.

The ranger's father seems to represent a prejudiced, negative attitude toward the Arab. During the time that the father visits his son at the ranger station, he seeks a conversation with the Arab.

> In the evenings the father wants to become friendly with the Arab and his daughter. From his youth he knows several Arabic words which he hasn't lost, and at every opportunity he wants to use them. But the Arab doesn't understand his accent at all so he nods his head heavily. (23)

Apparently the father is not sincerely interested in cultivating a relationship with the Arab. Rather, he wishes

---

ranger's isolation. During his first day in the forest, the ranger picks up the fire-phone just to hear a human voice. The fireman abruptly tells him the phone is to be used only in emergencies. (17) The phone, an instrument of communication, becomes an expression of his isolation. The telephone metaphor is secondary to the Arab who, as a literary device, is the main symbol for the ranger's separation from his society. It is the Arab who eventually cuts the phone lines leaving the ranger marooned.

to practice his Arabic. When his attempted communication fails, the father's curiosity about the Arab grows along with his hostility:

> During the final days of his stay the father is preoccupied with the mute Arab. A multitude of questions fill his heart: Who is he? Where does he come from? Who cut out his tongue? Why? Look, he shows hatred in his eyes. A creature like this is yet liable to set the forest on fire one day. Why not? (23)

The father's suspicion of the Arab probably arises not only from some general prejudice, but also from his inability to communicate with the Arab. The Arab seems to conceal something in his muteness which makes him appear to the father as a threatening "creature" rather than as a human being. His effort to speak with the Arab makes the father seem more ridiculous than ever. If the old man cannot communicate successfully with his own son, how does he expect to do so with the Arab? The father's suspicion that the Arab might ignite the forest is a device which Yehoshua employs to foreshadow events to come just as the image of the Arab girl running through the forest in her red dress hints at the fire that will be. (21)

The forestry supervisor, like the ranger's father,

also anticipates that the Arab will commit arson. The supervisor expresses his suspicion in an off-hand way as though he does not wish to appear unreasonably prejudiced against the Arab:

> The old man is hurrying. The cars are already started. . . . He only wants to know, before he slips away, what the ranger's opinion is of the mute Arab. An idea is stuck in the head of the driver that he [the Arab] is amassing a stockpile of kerosine. . .
>
> "Kerosine?", the ranger lit up.
>
> "Of course it's a delusion of the wicked driver. Indeed this is a picture of tranquility here." (35-36)

There is no evidence within the story that the supervisor's driver ever suggested that the Arab is storing kerosine. The idea is very likely the supervisor's own hunch, and a verbalization of his own worst nightmare. The supervisor's fear of the Arab explains why he hired the "soft scholarly" student to be the ranger. He has no knowledge of forestry, and has always lived far removed from nature. The only value which the student has for the J.N.F. is that he will keep an eye on the Arab's activities.

The J.N.F. and the supervisor fear this particular Arab because they know that the ruins of the Arab's village are under the forest floor. The ranger accidently finds

out this information, and he gleefully uses it to bait the supervisor in their conversation:

> "It is amazingly quiet", the ranger enthusiastically replies. Then he takes a few steps around the old man and whispers warmly: "Isn't he [Arab] a native here?"
>
> "A native?"
>
> "Well, our forest covers, how shall we say, a ruined village. . . ."
>
> "Village?"
>
> "A small village."
>
> "A small village? Ah (he does remember something anyhow) yes, there was a kind of large farm here. But that belongs to the past."
>
> "Of course, to the past. Nothing else would occur to one. . . ." (36)

One may view the forestry supervisor as the guardian of the Zionist dream of a rebuilt Jewish homeland. The forest is the tangible symbol of the realization of the revitalized land. The forest symbolizes the Israeli establishment, cultivation, and settlement as much as it represents the primeval, natural world. The supervisor does not feel comfortable being reminded that his dream is built on the rubble of the Arab's defeat. That is why he is slow to remember the village but quick to point out that its existence belongs to the past. The presence of

the Arab in the forest is a haunting reminder to him that another people's dreams were dashed so that the Jewish vision might be realized.

The Arab and the ranger are bound together closely both by their physical proximity to one another and by points of identity which they share. The two of them live in the forestry station, and their world extends only to the edges of the five hills covered with green woods. In their isolated realm, ranger and Arab are alienated and removed from the Israeli society outside the forest. The Arab is an outcast in that he is a member of a defeated, backward minority group which dwells among the dominant Jewish, technology-oriented society. The ranger is also a marginal man who cannot meet the demands of Israeli society for self-discipline, conformity, and achievement. The alienated states of the ranger and the Arab are heightened by their incapacity to communicate. The Arab's tongue has been cut out during the war so that he speech is an incomprehensible babble. The ranger, who came to the forest because "words wearied him", is not able to write his dissertation. Expression on paper eludes him, and he cannot communicate anything beyond superficialities with his father or the forestry supervisor. These elements of parallel identity create a tension between the Arab and the ranger.

The relationship between the Arab and the ranger moves between the two poles of mutual distrust and mutual interest in the destruction of the forest. While the ranger apparently does not harbor any prejudiced opinions toward Arabs

in general, he feels he must make his presence known to the Arab caretaker. When he sees the Arab and his daughter approaching the ranger station on his first day, the ranger "hurries to get up from his chair". (18) The ranger intends to establish himself as the boss. He seeks the respect of the Arab, and wishes to project the image of a superior:

> If he were not afraid for his position, it is possible that he would sing to them a bit. Silence. He smiles absent-mindedly, his eyes wandering, and goes away slowly with as much dignity as possible. (26)

The ranger maintains this stance of dignity and aloofness until both he and Arab become aware that they share the same hopes for the destruction of the forest. The awareness of their mutual dream leads the ranger to relax his efforts to seem dignified. The barrier between them breaks down when the ranger takes his girlfriend's hat, places it on the Arab's head, and bows jestingly to the Arab. (43)

The ranger's interest in the Arab caretaker becomes serious only after the ranger hears that there is a ruined village under the forest floor. The possibility that the remains of a village exist intrigues him. He decides to test the rumor by mentioning the name of the village to the Arab:

> He goes down to the first floor groping

> in the dark to the Arab's bed which is covered with rags, and wakes him roughly. He whispers the name of the village to him. The Arab awakes. He doesn't understand a thing. His eyes are consumed with sleep. The accent of the fire-watcher is certainly incorrect. Thus he repeats the name many times and then the Arab hears and understands immediately. A thin expression of surprise, of amazement and explanation flows in his wrinkled face. He jumps out of bed, stands up in his hairy nakedness and stretches out a heavy arm to the window and points with enthusiasm and despair toward the forest. The watchman thanks him and slips away, leaving the heavy naked figure standing in the middle of the room. When the Arab awakes tomorrow he'll think it was a dream. (33)

The ranger's midnight visit to the Arab's room shows that he is urgently curious to verify the rumor about the village. The ranger, however, could have waited until morning to speak to the Arab. Perhaps the ranger fears that when the Arab is fully awake and alert he will not respond to questions about the village. The ranger may

also be wary of arousing the fear and hatred of the Arab by such a mention as we see in the following passage:

> He went down to look for the Arab and to say good morning to him. He had to demonstrate his alertness lest he [Arab] murder him one morning between naps. Since the ranger had mentioned to him the name of the village which had disappeared the Arab had become wary. . . . (38)

Mordechai Shalev views the ranger's midnight visit in prophetic terms. The ranger serves the function of awakening the Arab to his duty to restore the village to the light of day by burning the forest which smothers it.[2] To be sure, there is a visionary element to the midnight scene. Even the ranger thinks that the whole incident probably will seem like a dream to the Arab. One would agree with Shalev that the midnight visit does stir up the Arab and make him more susceptible to the idea of using

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2. Shalev writes: "Apparently this deed is for the sake of determining through the Arab if indeed there is a village there. But this is only the exoteric level which does not substantiate itself. Was it necessary for that reason [verification of the village's existence] to bother the Arab, whom he sees daily, while he was sleeping and in the middle of the night just to whisper the name of the village in his ears? In the sub-plot this is a prophetic ritual of charging with a mission by which the watchman awakens the slumbering Arab, who lacks the power to act, and inculcates into him his assignment to reestablish the village under the forest through an act of arson." Mordechai Shalev, "Ha'aravim Kefitaron Sifruti", Ha'arets, September 30, 1970, p. 51.

the kerosine which he has stored. (39) Yet, one may view the midnight scene as only a partial motivation for the Arab's "mission". It is only the first incident in a chain of events which prepare the Arab for his arson.

If we view the midnight scene in terms of prophetic imagery, a crucial question arises which we should consider. The prophet-ranger[3] gradually lays out the Arab's mission before him through suggestion and example. What motivates our prophet-ranger to set the Arab on his course of action? One may answer that the ranger feels that an injustice has been done to the Arab, his people, and his village by the Jewish Yishuv. We may say that the ranger wishes to encourage the Arab to avenge the murderous sin committed against him and his people. From such a perspective we would attribute the ranger's motives to a moral sense and a feeling of compassion for the Arab. We have only one piece of evidence that these are in fact the ranger's motivations.

The wife of one of the ranger's friends comes to visit him in the forest. She wishes to know whether he has come up with any new ideas since he has been studying the Crusades at his forest retreat. He replies: "A new idea? It's possible, but not like they think. . . not exactly scientific. . . more humanistic." (42) This vague answer

3. The word tzofeh means watchman or ranger in the context of the story. It is also an ancient word for prophet or seer. Shalev intimates that Yehoshua intended to include the second connotation as well as that of "ranger". He also points out similarities between the baldness of the ranger and the baldness of Elisha.

seems to be a hint that the ranger considers the destruction of the forest a project of righteousness. Yet, one wonders if this is only a cover or self-delusion for a stronger motivation for pushing the Arab toward arson.

The ranger's ulterior and deeper motive may be to wreak his own revenge on the society from which he is alienated. That society is represented both by the forestry supervisor and by the ranger's father. The ranger has pity, but not respect for his father. He is constantly baiting the supervisor and irritating his sore spots. When the student goes to apply for the ranger job, he offends the supervisor by asking whether Israel really has forests comparable to other places. (13) During their second meeting, in the forest, the ranger jokes about his disappointment that no fire has broken out. He brings up the painful subject of the Arab village. (36) Furthermore, the ranger regrets all the time he has spent guarding the Zionist forest. "Who will give me back all the empty hours?" (43) What better way could there be to destroy the supervisor than coaxing the Arab to arson?

The Arab serves as the tool by which violence can be done to the forest, the symbol of the society which has alienated the ranger. The ranger himself is impotent to express his rage. The extent of the ranger's own direct personal action against the forest is to toss a burning match or a lighted cigarett butt from the ranger station into the forest. (38) This feeble action is not sufficient

to create a fire. The ranger's only hope for expressing his rage in a violent act is through the Arab, and he explicitly shows the Arab what to do:

> The Arab looks at him and a flash of madness and hope are in his eyes. Quietly the ranger goes behind a pile of rocks to the wretched hiding place, takes a small can of clear liquid and empties its contents on the pile of leaves which are on the ground. He tosses a lighted match and jumps with the bursting flame, singed, but happy. . . . The ranger places his palms over the warm flame and the Arab follows his lead. With their bodies they press close to the fire which has already reached its peak. Possibly he should leave the flame and go immerse himself in the sea. What the will won't do time, which reigns among the trees, will do. He is pensive, absent-minded. Signs of feebleness can be seen in the fire. Slowly it perishes at his feet. The expression of the Arab's face turns to bitter disappointment. The fire withered. The last sparks were trampled thoroughly. This was just a lesson. (43-44)

In addition to this "lesson", the ranger encourages the Arab by leading him to the ruins of the village. This excites and angers the Arab:

> Here the Arab explains something with quick, confused gestures, muttering with his truncated tongue, shaking his head. He wants to say that this is his house and also that a village was here and here they simply hid everything, buried it in the midst of the large forest. The ranger watches the performance of the movements and his heart fills with happiness. (46)

The ranger seems to be exploiting the Arab's hatred and anger. He fans the Arab's frustration by "pretending that he doesn't understand" (46) when the Arab tries to express himself. The ranger realizes how important it is to the Arab to communicate his feelings about what was done to him and his village. By refusing to respond to the Arab, the ranger is subtly encouraging the arson.[4] The ranger's behavior leads one to the conclusion that his desire for

4. On a less conscious level, the ranger may fear the consequences if he instigates the Arab to set a fire. He would be trying to dampen the Arab's enthusiasm for the project by turning a deaf ear. Perhaps that is why, when the Arab does ignite the forest, "the seriousness with which the Arab is occupied in his work surprises the ranger". (48) It is not unlikely that the ranger is ambivalent, fearing the fire and longing for it.

a forest fire is not primarily "humanistic". The exploitation is complete when, after the forest is reduced to charred stumps, the ranger "breaks in the hands of the investigators like a soft twig, ready to suggest the Arab as a direction to a solution". (54) The ranger, however, is not completely without guilt. "If he can take care not to stumble on the Arab's burning eyes he'll be able to sleep peacefully on the nights to come." (53)

The Arab in "Mul Haye'arot" performs several important functions. His presence within the story helps to build a sense of the ranger's isolation and alienation. I have pointed out that the ranger seems all the more out of place in the forest in contrast to the Arab who is so at home there. The Arab's wariness of the scholar-ranger as well as the language barrier complete the ranger's self-isolation from society. At times, the ranger gives the impression that he has found more solitude than he wished. A parallel seems to exist between the Arab and the ranger in that they are both outcasts from the dominant Israeli society. While the Arab and his daughter may be at home in the forest, they are there because no place exists for them in the other world. They are part of an alienated, defeated minority. The ranger finds himself an outcast among outcasts.

The Arab serves as a life-line to the ranger, and the latter's existence in the forest depends on the Arab both physically and mentally. The Arab's importance to the ranger is suggested from the early part of the story. When the driver drops off the student below the ranger station

for the first time, we read:

> Regret siezes the one who is remaining behind [the student] . Despair. What is this? Wait a minute! He doesn't understand. He runs to the truck, pounds his fists on the metal, and whispers angrily at the surprised driver: "But the food. . . what about the food?" It becomes clear that the Arab takes care of everything. (16)

Indeed, the Arab does take care of everything. The Arab is responsible for keeping the forest as free of weeds as possible and to that end he always carries his hoe. The Arab takes care of the ranger, feeding him, helping him to stay awake during long nights. He takes care of keeping the memory of his buried village alive, storing kerosine and ultimately destroying the forest. Through his arson, the Arab takes care of the ranger's own wish to do violence to the society from which he is alienated.

The Arab, performing all these functions, seems to stand in the role of surrogate father[5] for the ranger. The ranger is like a child lost in the woods; and the Arab sustains his basic physical needs. The ranger's own father is a weak, overly emotional man: "Suddenly the little father's eyes clouded with tears." (23) The father's vision is poor;

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5. While the Arab serves as father for the ranger's child-like needs, he is not the father against whom the ranger rebels. The forestry supervisor, aging and symbolizing fatherly authority, is the target of the ranger's filial rebellion.

"But the son well knows that the father does not see any forest, only a blurry spot." (23) "The father is behind and lost." (24) By contrast, the Arab is not lost in the forest, and his vision is good: "Nothing escapes the eyes of that one." (43) The Arab is not weak, and, when necessary, "he forcefully takes him (ranger) with his strong hands" (47) to show the ranger something.

The elements of dependency and exploitation in the Arab-ranger relationship are not one-sided. The Arab, for his own purposes, needs the ranger almost as much as the latter needs him. The Arab requires the ranger's presence in the forest, and relies on his tacit approval of the plan to destroy the forest. The fact that the Arab has never attempted to kindle the forest before this particular ranger's arrival suggests the importance of this ranger to the Arab. The ranger does not plant the idea of arson in the Arab's mind. The Arab himself had been storing kerosine before the ranger ever came to the forest. Yet, the ranger seems to be a catalyst toward the deed.

The Arab's failure to start the fire through most of the story is curious. The reader estimates that there must have been a twenty-four hour period when the forest was untended by any ranger. One surmises this because when the student arrives at the forest, his predecessor is not there, and the ranger station is empty. The hiatus between rangers would seem like the perfect time for the Arab to ignite the forest unobserved and unmolested. The

Arab waits instead of taking advantage of the opportunity. One may posit that the Arab waits either because he fears the consequence of such an act, or because he thinks nature or careless campers will do his work for him. Probably neither of these thoughts are the cause of the Arab's hesitancy to act. Rather, there is strong evidence that the Arab is waiting until his deed would be as meaningful as possible.

The arson against the forest can be meaningful for the Arab only if he can make the ranger understand fully the suffering that brings him to the deed. It is not sufficient that the act be understood as the work of a deranged being. Neither does the Arab wish his action to be seen as just another incident of sabotage in the Jewish-Arab conflict. The arson must be his own personal expression of hatred and despair. The ranger, who has the Arab's trust because of his own desire for the arson, serves the Arab as witness. The Arab relies on the ranger to understand the meaning of what he intends to do. That is why the Arab so agitatedly explains that "this was his house" and that in the village "his two wives were murdered". (46) It is for this self-expression that the Arab "stands him [ranger] on the edge of the look-out station and explains whatever he has to explain with his non-existent tongue". (47) The ranger's presence as witness is so crucial to the Arab that when the ranger is about to terminate his stay in the forest, "the old Arab is terrified". (46) The threat of the ranger

leaving finally drives the Arab to the deed. The ranger himself ultimately realizes that the fire is the zenith of the Arab's expression: "The Arab speaks to him with fire, he wants to say everything at once." (49)

The Arab's desire to communicate his feelings contributes to his human image. The presence of the young girl, the Arab's daughter, also builds up the human fatherly quality of the Arab. The girl, however, enhances the story only in a minor way. She seems to serve as a sign of the fire that will come about:

> At noon he is distracted from the books because something like a fire appears to him among the trees. For a long time he is tense, agitated, searching with the binoculars, his hand on the phone. Finally, around evening, he discovers it is only the red dress of the little Arab girl running among the trees. (21-22)

Again, the girl's presence symbolizes fire when the ranger stumbles on the Arab's cache of kerosine:

> Small cans full of kerosine. How wonderful! They had filled can after can with such diligence and covered them with the girl's old dress. (39)

The fire has a sexual overtone for the ranger which we see

in his description of the Arab girl:

> How much she had matured during his stay here. Now she is a noble philly with wonderful eyes. Her limbs surprisingly had ripened; her foulness had turned into a woman's scent. (45)

The narrator of "Mul Haye'arot" is undramatized, and his viewpoint may be said to represent that of the author.[6] We find two elements to Yehoshua's view of the Arab as expressed through the narrator. The first element is the appearance of the Arab as a simple, primitive being with animal-like characteristics. The Arab blends into the landscape; he is a native of the Palestinian environment. These facets of the Arab's image appear in the works of many authors before and since 1948 so that one may consider Yehoshua's presentation part of a paradigm in Hebrew literature. The second aspect to the author's view is that the Arab is a debilitated figure. The concrete image of his debility is his severed tongue which "suddenly arouses fear". (40) It was "during a war that they cut his tongue

6. "Even the novel in which no narrator is dramatized creates an implicit picture of an author who stands behind the scenes. . . . This implied author is always distinct from the 'real man' whatever we may take him to be--who creates a superior version of himself, a 'second self', as he creates his work. In so far as a novel does not refer directly to this author, there will be no distinction between him and the implied, undramatized narrator. . . ." Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, (Chicago, 1961), p. 151.

out; they or us, what's the difference?" (18-19) The Arab's physical handicap is only a sign for his crippled life situation. He lives the distorted life of the powerless. No matter who was responsible for maiming him, the Arab remains the victim of war which twists and ruins human life. He could neither defend his home successfully nor could he cry out against those who overpowered him. He is the pathetic figure of the weak, of the one who is in exile in his own land. The scene of the ranger's midnight visit conveys to the reader the depth of the Arab's impotency as he "stands naked, pointing toward his village in fervor and despair". (33) The Arab's situation is pathetic to the author and rouses sympathy in the reader.

The Arab's act of arson seems to restore him to a more healthy, manly status in the eyes of the author. He justifies the burning of the forest by portraying the supervisor as a dogmatic old fool. The Zionist establishment cares for trees more than it cares for human beings. Ideology and dreams for the future take precedence over an old village which "belongs to the past". The author sees the Arab's act of arson as the only escape from his state of powerlessness and exile. The fire takes on a redemptive quality for the author:

> He [ranger] lets his eyes roam the five smoking hills. He squints, and there, out of the midst of the smoke and the fog, the little village arises before him; it is reborn. . . . (51)

The Arab now appears to us through the view of the author as a whole, masculine being: "There is pleasure and a feeling of g'vurah[7] in his look." (54)

The author's view of the Arab and his deed contrasts with the ranger's attitudes toward the Arab. The contrast is presented by means of a narrative style with employs both indirect interior monologue and the more conventional style of an omniscient author. The narrator occasionally places before the reader fragments of the ranger's thoughts without interjecting authorial commentary. The reader becomes aware of the ranger's unsympathetic, exploitative attitudes toward the Arab through these glances at the ranger's consciousness. When the ranger's thoughts appear in the light of the information and commentary supplied by the omniscient narrator, the moral concern for Arab victims of the Israeli-Arab conflict is raised. The humanistic values which the Jewish state espouses are brought into question as long as its existence rests on the unresurrected ruins of the Arab defeat.

The moral question regarding the Israeli-Arab relationship is secondary to the author's concern with the dilemma of alienation. The Arab character in "Mul Haye'arot" is partly a vehicle to express the alienation of his people from Israeli society. He also reflects the isolation of the ranger in the forest. The Arab's deed of arson arouses

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7. g'vurah has several meanings all of which seem to apply to the Arab in this instance: heroism, strength, power courage.

pleasure and admiration in the ranger; it fulfills the ranger's wish for a decisive, masculine action which he himself would be impotent to accomplish. The Arab also seems to symbolize some of the values and wishes of the ranger. The Arab lives in close proximity to the natural environment; he is part of the forest. The ranger may view the Arab as the embodiment of man in a natural pristine state unsullied by urban life, hypocritical relationships, and society's pressure toward conformism.

IV

Hapardes

Tamuz' Hapardes (The Orchard) is a fictional memoir in which an aged agronomist reviews his life from his earliest days in Palestine. The agronomist commits his recollections to paper in the hope of solving the puzzles of his life:

> Now I am an old man, leading a solitary life. The years I will yet spend in the land of the living are numbered and few. Not much time remains for me to understand what has been or to conjecture what will be after me. I am determined with all my strength to review and to make pass before my mind's eye the events as they occured, but they stubbornly churn and storm, refusing to clarify themselves. Still, I won't be discouraged by them; perhaps I will manage to find some honesty. (123)

Whether the agronomist succeeds in discovering some meaning in his life is open to question, and is an important issue within the novel. Our concern, however, is to examine the

relationships of the agronomist and of the secondary characters (in the memoir) with the Arabs who also lived and worked at the orchard. As a prelude to the study of the relationships with and attitudes toward the Arabs, we must look at the background in which the agronomist's life takes place.

The passages of setting and description in Hapardes display a tension between the effort to ground the work in a particular place and time period, and to maintain a legendary or mystical-allegorical flavor in the work. The reader feels the aggadic character of Hapardes in the first sentence: "There was a Jewish man in the land of Russia several generations ago, and he had two sons." (7) The image of Luna, who has much in common with the mythical wood-nymph, adds to the surrealism of the book. Luna is silent, beautiful, ageless, and the object of sexual desire. The very title, Hapardes, conjures in the reader's mind the paradisical Eden and the convoluted paths in the garden of esoteric mystical studies. This mythic realm with its mystical overtones is not an unbound kingdom. The author encloses Hapardes within a specific historical period in Palestine. Thus it is surrealistic and realistic at the same time.

The agronomist's memoir begins from his early days in the Yishuv just prior to World War I. He gives us a glimpse of the end of the Turkish period and the war years. He recounts the days of the Arab riots, the second world war, and the War of Independence. The memoir concludes

with the Sinai Campaign of 1956. Apparently Tamuz has included the historical references in order to heighten the mimetic value of Hapardes. The legendary-mystical has the upper hand, and one might question whether Tamuz' effort to bridle it was successful or necessary. Yet, we should be aware that the tension between the mimetic and the non-realistic as a literary problem which Tamuz faced is reflected in the agronomist's attitudes toward the Arabs.

The agronomist harbors ambivalent feelings toward Arabs in general. He recognizes a dullness and crudity in the Arab fellahin which he detests. He describes the eyes of the Arab cooks as "stupid", and the language of the workers as "perverted". (63) As a man of education and as a transplanted European, the agronomist dislikes these qualities of the fellahin, but as a veteran of the Yishuv he seems to understand the Arab mentality. The agronomist knows how to deal with the Arabs on their own terms and in their own language:

> One night I heard voices under my window, and I went out to take a look. There was a band of Arabs there stealing tools and fruit, and loading their donkeys.
>
> "Who's there?", I called aloud from where I was standing on the steps.
>
> "Quiet, Jew", an insolent voice replied to me.
>
> "Your mother's nakedness", I said to him.

> "Take your bones out of here, you and the rest of the whore's children."
>
> They wouldn't understand any other language, and I was compelled to behave aggressively and to talk obscenely if I wanted to live. (89)

The agronomist also holds positive feelings toward the Arabs among whom he has lived for so long. He counts some Arabs as friends, and feels a certain amount of affection for them. During a hike through the land with Luna's son, the agronomist tells the boy:

> The very first of the Jewish pioneers who came to revive the wastes of our land, the Biluim, resided in the orchard of Salim Ayoub; this is to teach you ["lelamedcha"] that not all of the Arabs sinned against us, and there were days of harmony. (84)

This speech expresses the agronomist's ambivalence toward Arabs. On the face of it, it is a statement which contains nostalgia and friendship. Yet it is also a sermon to himself as well as to the boy. Perhaps he feels a need to recall the days of good relationships with Arabs to counteract the bitterness of his feelings toward the Arabs who spilled Jewish blood during the riots. We can see the agronomist struggling with feelings of bitterness and

friendship for the Arab in another passage:

> This time. . . . , the sailors from the port also joined the rioters, and many Jews were slaughtered and killed in cruel, ugly ways; childhood friends acted treacherously, and the Arabs who had commercial and social dealings with their Jewish neighbors supported the rioters and looted. They spilled blood with knives and guns. But there were also other incidents in which Arab neighbors came to the defense of Jews. (55-56)

In later years, at the time of the War of Independence and the destruction of the Jaffa community, the agronomist displays understanding and sympathy for the Arab plight. He tries to ease their pain as much as he can:

> The Arab community is a strange one; they're like small children who, when their parents aren't at home, huddle into a corner and cry.
>
> The wealthy, even though they used to work their laborers oppressively for a meager wage, were nevertheless like a father and mother to them at the time of their distress and in days of sickness.

> Now that they had fled, the remnants were like real orphans. . . . (108-109) I tried to do what they wished as much as I was able, and I would go to our military authorities, find some acquaintances there, and pester them with requests. . . . Didn't I spend all my life with these people, and didn't I see them during the days of their strength and power? But now my heart was broken from the force of their downfall. (109-110)

The agronomist's compassion for the Arabs seems sincere, but he does not trust the Arabs completely. As he runs around the port trying to help the remnants of the Arab community, he bears a doubt about whether the Arabs would have done the same for him. Luna's son meets the agronomist at the port and brings the man's uncertainty to the surface:

> "Oh you agronomist! If the Arabs would have defeated us, everyone of them would have done to you what my Arab uncle wanted to do to my Jewish father. If you doubt this, just ask them, and they'll tell you themselves." (110)

The agronomist does not simply respond. He might have said: "What you say my be true, but they are human beings

who are suffering and who need help." Rather, the agronomist does a startling thing. He takes a poll among his Arab acquaintances as to how they would have treated him had they been the victors. The bizarre poll-taking incident shows the questionable reliability of the agronomist narrator. The sincerity of his feelings for the Arab community loses its credibility.

The various feelings and attitudes which the agronomist displays in the foregoing passages make mimetic sense to the reader, even if the particulars are not realistic. One can understand that the agronomist's long years of contact with the Arabs arouses both affection and sympathy within him. It is clear that the harsh events of the Arab riots and the atmosphere of tension make him bitter toward the Arab. We can see the strands of ambivalence in his soul as the agronomist vacillates between the poles of his feelings. Hence, the agronomist's reactions toward Arabs in general tend to approach reality, and serve as an anchor for the mystical and mythical elements of the story.

In contrast to the agronomist's attitudes toward Arabs in general, Ovadiah stirs up only hatred, fear, and distrust in him. The main Arab character's Hebrew name was given to him by his Jewish father. Ovadiah's mother was an Arab woman, and he totally identifies himself as an Arab. He takes the name Abdullah, the Arabic equivalent for Ovadiah. The narrator always calls him Ovadiah after

he becomes aware that the Arab is half Jewish, and Ovadiah is referred to as Abdullah only when he is in Arab company. In both Arab and Jewish tradition, the two peoples regard themselves as sons of Abraham through the brothers Ishma'el and Isaac. It is probable that Tamuz has created a character who is half Arab and half Jewish to emphasize the close ties between the two peoples. Ovadiah is the main Arab character in Hapardes from the way in which he views himself, from his behavior, and from the attitudes of other characters toward him.

Ovadiah seems to be the embodiment of treachery, baseness, and lust to the agronomist, and may represent the demonic for our narrator. While the agronomist-Ovadiah relationship will be carefully examined in the second part of this chapter, let us look at an element of description which heightens the sense of the mystical and demonic.

The agronomist and Ovadiah are taking a walk together through the orchard. The agronomist gives the following description of the orchard:

> When we entered the orchard, it was as though the night in its darkness swallowed us. It was so thick I would not be exaggerating if I say that the spaces between the trees were not greater than two meters, and when one walks among them, he is scratched and must clear the trail as though in the midst of swamp flora.

> But the vegetation of the orchard,
> especially its undergrowth, was dry,
> entangled and thorny. Only a small,
> green part at the top did crown the
> trees enjoying the light of the sun. (17)

The orchard is dark, crowded with vegetation and dry brambles. It is reminiscent of a swamp. From this description we sense something sinister about the orchard as does the agronomist. Ovadiah, who has just been hired by Mechmet Effendi to be the caretaker, is the denizen of this twisted orchard. We may posit that in the agronomist's mind Ovadiah reflects or shares the dark, twisted nature of the orchard. Just as the orchard strikes the agronomist as sinister, he sees in Ovadiah's speech "something threatening, dark". (18) It is not unusual that an Arab figure should adopt the characteristics of his surroundings in the mind of another character. We have seen in "Mul Haye'arot" that the Arab caretaker who lives in the forest is described with animal-like qualities. He is silent, cunning, and alert as one imagines a forest-dweller would be.

The agronomist-narrator's opinion of Ovadiah is unsympathetic, often hateful, and usually unreliable.[1] The two

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1. "It is enough to say that a fact, when it has been given to us by the author or his unequivocal spokesman, is a very different thing from the same 'fact' when given to us by a fallible character in the story. . . . Whenever a fact, whenever a narrative summary, whenever a description must, or even might, serve as a clue to our interpretation of the character who provides it, it may well lose some of its standing as fact, summary, or description." Booth,

tragic events of Ovadiah's life were his forced separation from his mother and Daniel's marriage to Luna. The agronomist completely overlooks the force of these blows to Ovadiah. While Ovadiah may have suffered silently as a step-child in Russia, it is the agronomist's opinion that "the years Ovadiah spent with his father in Russia were beautiful ones". (10) Though Ovadiah and Luna were in love long before Daniel came on the scene, the agronomist cynically thinks that Ovadiah "never dreamed of Luna except to satisfy his momentary lust, the lust of a male for a female". (60) The agronomist's unwillingness or inability to empathize with Ovadiah undermines his reliability as a narrator. We will see later that the author holds a positive feeling for Ovadiah. Let us look at some additional examples of the prejudiced view of the agronomist.

The agronomist first meets Ovadiah when the latter is applying for the position of caretaker of Mechmet Effendi's orchard. The agronomist reacts negatively to the manner in which Ovadiah talks with his prospective boss:

Rhetoric, p. 175. The agronomist's descriptions and evaluations shed more light on the narrator and his problems than upon the Arab. Yet, the agronomist's self-conscious warning about his tendency to misread people and events restores some reliability to his views: "In those bad hours of madness and melancholy I found salvation for myself in a childish pursuit, an old habit I had during my school days: I would keep a diary. I am using those entries for this story. And since the diary was written during those bad hours, it is possible that complete foolishness clings to it. . . . For this reason, one may cast doubt upon the statement of opinion, but I hope that there is no reason to doubt the facts at least." (Hapardes, p. 58).

> His speech was monotonous, stronger than necessary, and I didn't cease to be astonished at the superior posture with which this worker spoke in the presence of his employer as though he were claiming a debt, or as though he would be his beneficiary someday. (15)

There is no evidence that the Effendi is disturbed by the tone or content of Ovadiah's words. The agronomist's indignant, threatened reaction to Ovadiah at this first meeting is entirely his own.

We have seen previously that the agronomist described the orchard of Mechmet Effendi as thickly planted and overgrown with foliage. In the agronomist's expert opinion, the fate of an orchard which has just two meters space between each tree is eventual death. He believes that Mechmet Effendi's orchard is doomed unless a number of trees are uprooted. The agronomist expresses his view to Ovadiah, and he apparently hopes that Ovadiah will transmit the message to the Effendi. Ovadiah does not suggest to the Effendi that trees should be uprooted, and the agronomist observes:

> He listens, understands, sees my own orchard--fifty trees per dunam--a flourishing delight to the eyes--and he doesn't take the trouble to suggest to his boss either uprooting or replanting. Just like

> a blind horse tied to a water-wheel,
> he would trample in the giant orchard,
> watering when he had to water, hoeing
> when he had to hoe--everything according
> to the calendar and according to the
> work--and he didn't notice that he was
> driving nails into the coffin. Of
> course it wasn't his own orchard. But
> when have you ever seen an intelligent
> person who would saw off the branch he's
> sitting on? (22)

The agronomist's comment on Ovadiah portrays him as lazy, careless, and technically unsophisticated. This clashes with the agronomist's early estimation of him: "From Ovadiah's questions I saw that I was dealing with a clever man. . . ." (18) Indeed throughout the course of the narrative, the agronomist's whole demeanor toward Ovadiah indicates that he does not view this Arab as stupid. If the agronomist did not see Ovadiah as clever and cunning, Ovadiah could never seem a threat to him. One may conclude that, in spite of the agronomist's description of a plodding Ovadiah, Ovadiah displays intelligence by not suggesting to the Effendi to uproot trees.

It would have been entirely out of place for Ovadiah to run to his master with such radical agricultural advice. Ovadiah himself admitted during his first interview with the Effendi that he had no previous experience in agriculture.

Had Ovadiah, who was still new to the job, come before the Effendi with the uprooting plan, it is likely that the old man would have viewed him as an upstart who was out to destroy the orchard. Ovadiah would lose his job. We may surmise that Ovadiah foresaw the wisdom of keeping silent, even if the silence was not determined by agricultural considerations.

The agronomist's hesitance to make his uprooting suggestion to the Effendi is strange. If anyone would be in a position to give such agricultural advice, it would be this trained, professional agronomist who is free of any personal interest in the Effendi's fortunes. Futhermore, the Effendi had sought the agronomist's help already by requesting that he train Ovadiah. The agronomist could have felt free to make his suggestion as a friend to the Effendi. His failure to speak personally to the Effendi leads one to believe that saving the orchard was not the agronomist's concern. Rather, the agronomist seems more interested in taking Ovadiah down a path which will lead to his own dismissal. Since the agronomist apparently feels personally threatened by Ovadiah's presence, such a plan to get rid of him is logical. The agronomist would hope that in the effort to please his new master Ovadiah would convey the uprooting suggestion to the Effendi with sore results for Ovadiah. Of course, this viewpoint sees the agronomist as completely treacherous and unreliable. It is possible that the passage quoted above **has** been

inserted by the author only to create a stereotypic view of the Arab. Yet, other evidence shows that the agronomist feels threatened by Ovadiah, and is hostile toward him.

In another passage the agronomist's hostility toward Ovadiah and his willingness to think the worst of this Arab stands out. The period of this scene is that of the Arab riots of 1929:

> No stranger broke into Daniel's orchard, and in the area of our home not a single hair on anyone's head was harmed. During that same summer, and even during the fall of that same year, Ovadiah almost never slept in his room in the orchard--not even a single night. If he had a hand in the deeds of the sailors, his friends, I don't know. But there is room to surmise that if he were in league with them, it is certain that he intervened with them on behalf of the orchard; and it is precisely because he was mixed up in their criminal deeds he was able to protect us and make it possible that we were not among the casualties.
>
> That same year Luna's son was four years old, and there is room to surmise that it was for his sake that Ovadiah protected us. I am of the opinion that

> Ovadiah believed in all his wickedness that the boy was his own son; the truth will never be known because it is impossible to know. (56)

The agronomist assumes and surmises a great deal in this passage. His opinion as to why Ovadiah protected the family and the orchard makes sense, but it is a vicious surmise. It is true that Luna's son might have been fathered by Ovadiah since the two of them maintained their sexual relationship even after Luna's marriage to Daniel. Yet there is a equal chance that the boy is Daniel's son. The agronomist does not consider the possibility that Ovadiah may have exerted his influence with the rioters out of some feelings of family loyalty or out of concern to protect his own interests in the orchard which he labored to build.

The agronomist's hatred of Ovadiah follows this Arab to his grave. Luna's son kills his uncle, Ovadiah, during the War of Independence. Although the young man kills his uncle for plotting to seize the orchard and to slay Daniel, Daniel harbors guilt feelings over his brother's murder. Daniel's guilt leads him to fear that Luna blames and hates him for Ovadiah's death. While the feelings he attributes to Luna are only figments of his own mind, he cannot bring himself to face Luna:

> "Now again I'm not sure that she is mine", Daniel said quietly, as though

he were reciting before me a decree
which they announced in another world.
"You are her husband, you are the
man who loves her more than anyone.
Ovadiah is dead and rightfully so." (113-114)

The agronomist's animosity for Ovadiah seems to outweigh any which Daniel may feel toward his brother's treachery. His fear and hatred of Ovadiah are clear to the reader throughout Hapardes. The question which we must consider now is why the agronomist is so negative toward Ovadiah when his feelings for other Arabs seem to be generally affectionate.

The literary critic, Yosef Oren, has suggested a possible answer in an article on Hapardes. Oren first cautions us as to what the story is not: "The temptation to interpret the novella as an allegory for these actual events [the Arab-Jewish conflict] is great, but any careless exegetical step such as this is liable to destroy the story, and to twist it out of its real meaning."[2] We can agree that a mere allegorical interpretation of Hapardes would not explain the agronomist's especially negative behavior toward Ovadiah since his actions toward other Arabs are often kind. Oren's theory about the agronomist's life is as follows:

2. Yosef Oren, "Hapardes Shena'asah Achsaniat Meratschim", Yediot Acharonot, February 18, 1972, p. 12.

It is only natural that the agronomist, who has taken upon himself the role of narrator, gives his story a title taken from the realm of his profession. However, there is no doubt that Luna's name more properly could have been hoisted on the story's title page than the title Hapardes which the agronomist chose for it; for it was on account of her that he abandoned his profession, and, for her sake, buried himself for forty years in the depths of the orchard. . . .

. . . . . .

It is only now we suspect, through his commentary on Daniel,[3] that he is really baring his own madness which he continues to attribute to the locust which destroyed his orchard. But there is no refuge from his bond with this concealed, despairing love which he has for Luna. . . .

. . . . . .

Because of his enmity which bursts forth from the hidden places of the orchard to

3. "A man like me, in whose world are only earth and trees, possibly is prevented from understanding the power of love of a man for a woman. But I imagine that, as it seems, it is possible for a man to lose his sanity over a woman; in the final anyalysis, it is possible that Daniel and I, that we are not so different from one another as it seems at first glance." (82)

> anyone who wins Luna's love, he sustains a gloomy hatred which he inflames among those she loves. . . .[4]

Oren's concluding remarks places Hapardes within what he seems to consider a thematic genre of modern Hebrew literature:

> The entry into the thicket of Tamuz' orchard is not different essentially from the penetration into the darkness of A. B. Yehoshua's forest or from the peeping into the sea of Amos Oz' crosses. In each of these three novellas, each author raises up in his own special way the difficult vision of a world which is destroyed for lack of love. . . .[5]

There is much to recommend Oren's view as the reason for the agronomist's hatred of Ovadiah. Oren efficiently uses the text to support his opinion, and the reader himself can find other texts which substantiate Oren. Still, one must beware of accepting Oren's explanation as "the answer", for another factor contributes to the agronomist's animosity toward Ovadiah.

Upon his arrival at the orchard, it seems to the agronomist that Ovadiah shows potential to be a threat to

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4. Oren, "Achsaniat Meratchim", p. 12.
5. Ibid., p. 22. "Oz' Crosses" refers to Ad Mavet, a novella by Oz which appeared in 1971, and which is set in the period of the Crusades.

his position. The agronomist says of Ovadiah: "The man was intelligent and clever, and was able to study and understand the secrets of agriculture until he almost would reach my level." (13) The agronomist is the only agricultural expert in his neighborhood in Palestine. He is proud of his knowledge and skills, and he believes in his abilities:

> I would not be afraid to say that in all the Land of Israel, there was not a Jewish individual more worthy of praises than I, both from the agricultural standpoint and from the standpoint of stubborn perserverance, the perserverance of a farmer working his land faithfully. (23)

The agronomist's high opinion of himself crashes down upon him with the advent of the locusts. For all his expertise and perserverance, he cannot save his own orchard. Yet, the Effendi's orchard is preserved under Ovadiah's management. The agronomist goes mad over his own failure, and never returns to his orchard:

> Instead of getting hold of myself like a man and telling them of the situation which they were in, discouragement overpowered me--this is the discouragement which has subjugated within me the desire for activities all my days and from which I've never recovered--and so I went to

> Ovadiah and asked him to tell me what to do. From that time on Ovadiah would give me the daily work schedule and I carried it out as an apprentice for his master. (30)

Ovadiah is a threat to the agronomist because of his own ability to learn the agronomist's speciality. In spite of the agronomist's scientific training and his long years in Palestine, he cannot make the soil respond to him as easily and calmly as Ovadiah can. It is understandable that the agronomist, whose self-confidence waivers, should resent and hate Ovadiah's success. Perhaps the agronomist sees qualities in his Arab pupil that he wishes were his own. The agronomist's pride and jealousy are his own worst enemy, for Ovadiah himself has not plotted intentionally to destroy the agronomist.

Luna's son, the native-born Palestinian, does not share any of the agronomist's sympathetic views toward Arabs. The son sees all Arabs as dangerous men who threaten Jewish national aspirations in the Land. They must be defeated without consideration; the struggle holds life or death at stake. Hence, Luna's son cynically rejects the agronomist's lesson about the kindness of the Arabs toward the Biluim:

> "And what did the sailors in Jaffa do? Isn't most of their livelihood from

> the Jews, from the oranges that we send, and from the money they earn by disembarking Jewish passengers from the ships? Yet, in spite of this, they slaughtered thirty new immigrants at the port immigration office. Don't talk nonsense, agronomist!" (84)

The young man's opinion of the Arabs expresses itself in deeds as well as words:

> Any place in which there was an incident of murder, or a mining, or an explosion, there he would go and volunteer to join in an action. Like his mother, who would appear in all the corners of the orchard at one **and** the same time, so also the son--today he blows up bridges at Achziv with the Palmach; on the morrow he shoots, with members of the Irgun, at the car of the **high** commissioner at the entrance to Jerusalem; and two days later he kills the head of the secret police. (95)

During the War of Independence Luna's son fights with the troops who take Jaffa. After the war, he crosses borders to take revenge on Arab terrorists. The cruelty of Luna's son against the Arabs is unbridled, and he takes delight

in his works of retribution. Upon his return from a foray into Arab territory, he brings his mother a gift:

> She opened the bundle and burrowed into it with her fingers until its contents was known. They were two large silver earrings of the same type that Arab women wear, the handicraft of the smiths of Hejaz or Sa'ana.
>
> On the end of one of the earrings there hung an earlobe which was torn from a body.
>
> Daniel and I froze in our places, but Luna kissed her son, got up, and went to the bathroom. Very quickly she returned from there, and the earrings--washed and polished--hung in her ears, and her face smiled quietly.
>
> "Now you are very beautiful, mother", her son said. (122)

The young man's attitude toward his uncle, Ovadiah, parallels the agronomist's feelings. Luna's son distrusts Ovadiah, and considers him the enemy. It must be emphasized, however, that the source for the young man's hatred of Ovadiah is the Arab-Jewish struggle for national supremacy in Palestine. The agronomist's hostility toward Ovadiah may stem from jealousy or madness. Luna's son merely views

Ovadiah as part of the Arab threat to his future which happens to exist in his own backyard:

> Ovadiah was busy running between Tel Aviv and Jaffa and Ramla, and between Ramla and Jerusalem. We would never ask him about his activities. Also, had he been asked, he wouldn't have answered. Then one day when Luna's son came home to rest one night in his bed and to wash in the bathroom, he said to Daniel: "Tell my Arab uncle that if he wishes to stay alive it would be better for him to stop prowling around the country. His activities are known, and if he doesn't stop them, I will see to it that he ceases from all activities, in general and in particular." (96)

Ovadiah is as committed to the cause of the Arab dream of Palestine as is Luna's son to the creation of Israel. Ovadiah does not cease his activities in behalf of his Arab brothers. He is even bold enough to conduct terrorist meetings in the parlor of the main house at the orchard after Daniel and Luna have moved to Tel Aviv. The agronomist spies on these meetings, and reports to Luna's son. The young man does not allow family ties to interfere with the confrontation and punishment of his uncle Ovadiah:

> "Don't shoot him", Luna's son said to me.

"I didn't intend to shoot him", I said.

"Go downstairs", he said to Ovadiah.

When we returned to the parlor, Luna's son ordered me to take two hoes from among those with which we used to hoe the garden, and to removed the wooden poles from them. After I did what he ordered, he took one staff for himself and extended the second to Ovadiah, and said:

"We're going down to the yard and there we'll have a contest; and just as you struggled with my father, so you will fight with me now. . . .

. . . . . .

Then he turned to me and said: "Go back to the porch and look on from there, and applaud the winner. Go up, agronomist; go up and enjoy."

When I had done so, I saw from a distance how he signaled with his eyes to his uncle, and how they prepared for the battle.

A battle with staffs is not a pleasing sight, and I do not intend to tell what my eyes beheld. The two of us lifted Ovadiah's body, and both of us dug a grave for him near the fence of the orchard, and there we buried his corpse. (105-106)

Luna's son does not show any pity or remorse for the execution of Ovadiah. He wishes to kill Ovadiah not only for his latest treachery but also for all years of Arab violence against the Yishuv.

The young man's choice of staffs as the means of execution is a further example of his inclination to cruelty. It seems that the young man intends to inflict humiliation on Ovadiah as well as death. Yet, in addition to a bent toward cruelty, Luna's son may have had another motivation for opting for a battle with staffs. Perhaps he feels that he and his uncle are kindred spirits in that they both despise words. He may have recognized that, like himself, his uncle was willing to take action for what he believed. To allow Ovadiah to stand and fight, though the outcome is certain, rather than to be shot may be the young man's acknowledgement of Ovadiah's masculinity. There is a sense that Luna's son and Ovadiah have enough in common to allow for mutual respect. They are both aggressively masculine and sexually potent figures. They both are unwilling to sit back and let events take their course. Luna's son and Ovadiah are participators. Both of them hold Daniel in little esteem. These common features of Luna's son and Ovadiah may bind them together although they are unspoken or even pre-conscious.

The character Daniel stands in contrast to Luna's son and to Ovadiah. Daniel, Ovadiah's half-brother, is the immigrant Jew from Europe. He has not had any of the

agronomist's close contact with the Arabs of Palestine. All his dreams from afar of redeeming barren Zion were dreamt without the consideration that an entire people already was existing in the Land.[6] Tamuz reinforces the image of the Jews' lack of awareness of the Palestinian Arab through Daniel. Daniel, shortly after his arrival in Jaffa, goes with the agronomist to see about purchasing Mechmet Effendi's orchard. The agronomist tells us that upon their arrival at the orchard, Ovadiah is not present. Daniel's only impression would have been that the orchard was empty. It does not cross Daniel's mind that there may be others who also live and work in the orchard besides the Effendi's family. When Ovadiah suddenly appears, Daniel recognizes his brother, and realizes that he has been in the Land for some time.

Daniel's relationship to Ovadiah is a painful one which is marked by his own feelings of jealousy, empathy, and guilt. His jealousy centers around the affections of Luna. Some time after his marriage to Luna, Daniel finds out that she and Ovadiah had been lovers before he himself came to

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6. Tamuz' portrayal of Daniel's ignorance of the existence of a large Arab population in Palestine is intended to represent a state of mind which apparently was widespread among immigrants in the early days of the Second Aliyah. The publicist Ber Borochov was aware of Zionist ignorance or indifference to the Arab presence in Palestine. According to Mattityahu Mintz, in 1906 Borochov pointed out that those who were exploring the homeland for the Jewish people ignored the indigenous population and the possible partition of it between that population and the Jews. Mintz quotes Borochov: "Up to now very little attention has been paid to the fact that the Land of Israel is an international hostel." See Mattityahu Mintz, "Ha'aravim Befrognozot shel Borochov", Molad, February, 1972, pp. 476-477.

Palestine. He discovers that her relationship to Ovadiah has not changed since his marriage to her. One night, Daniel hears Luna and Ovadiah making love. He attempts to ignore what he knows is taking place until he hears the ostensibly deaf-mute Luna speaking to Ovadiah:

> One night Daniel came over and we were talking. The two of us knew that on the other side of the wall, in Ovadiah's room, Luna was making love to him. But we didn't say a word, not even half a word about it. At first we were talking about matters of the orchard, and afterwards Daniel told me things about the days of his youth in his father's house. Suddenly Daniel fell silent, and violently grabbed my arm and said: "Did you hear?"
>
> I listened but I didn't hear a voice or a whisper.
>
> "I don't hear anything", I replied.
>
> Daniel lay down next to me, lit a cigarett and was quiet. But at a minute's end he whispered again: "And now do you hear?"
>
> This time too I didn't hear anything. Really there was nothing to hear. Tonight it was as quiet as a grave around us.

> Then Daniel's lips mouthed some words, and I heard him say: "She's speaking to him. She's speaking."
>
> I tried to listen with all my might, and it was clear to me that no talking was coming from the other side of the wall. But again Daniel whispered: "She's talking to him. But to me she has never spoken."
>
> Then I saw tears flowing from his eyes, and I turned my face to the wall. (61)

Daniel's totally passive behavior in the midst of Luna's faithlessness is not a common conjugal reaction. His quiet acceptance of Luna's adultery stems from feelings of empathy for Ovadiah's lot. When the agronomist first informs Daniel of their furtive relationship, Daniel makes no move against Ovadiah and Luna. Instead, Daniel responds in this way:

> "If there is difficulty in this matter, and even if it is out of the ordinary and less than what is acceptable, it is impossible for me not to accept upon myself the judgement. She is my wife, and this is the nature of things between us, and I must accept it. And I'll tell you another thing: Had not my brother fled from father's house, would he not

> have received his portion of the inheritance? And had he come to the Land with money, would he not have been able to buy the orchard and Luna from Mechmet Effendi just as I did? Is it impossible that he too dreamed of all this, but that his prayer wasn't answered?" (59-60)

Although Daniel neither wronged Ovadiah in their childhood nor was responsible for Ovadiah's low station in Palestine, he is able to put himself in his brother's situation. Daniel's feeling is more than sympathy; he can experience emotionally what Ovadiah has undergone. Yet, Daniel's extreme display of empathy by sharing his wife has a disturbing effect not only on the agronomist, but also on the reader. We may suggest that the author allows Daniel passivity here with the aim of removing a certain amount of the reader's sympathy for Daniel. One may wish to suspend judgement of Daniel, and yet, his acceptance of the adultery is revolting. The reader comes to the view that Daniel's overly-empathetic, passive attitude toward Ovadiah is no more desirable than the agronomist's hateful attitude or than the cruel hostility of Luna's son.

The adultery to which Daniel is an auditory witness is more or less acceptable to him as long as he believes that Luna is mutely passive in Ovadiah's arms. What rouses jealousy and heartbreak in Daniel is his conviction that his deaf-mute wife speaks with Ovadiah. She communicates

with Ovadiah in a way that she never has with Daniel. Daniel realizes that Ovadiah and Luna have a complete relationship which he does not have with his wife. The effect of this knowledge kindles Daniel's jealousy, and makes Daniel feel that he himself is the intruder.

There is an allegorical thread running through Hapardes which centers around Luna and her relationship to the orchard. It would be helpful to examine the element of allegory for a broader understanding of Daniel and Ovadiah's relationship. The critic, Miriam Arad, has said of Luna: "If I must give a name to Luna, I would call her the spirit of the orchard, the spirit of this land."[7] Arad's interpretation seems sensible and cogent. Luna is a character with neither details nor development of personality. She supersedes the mundane for the agronomist and for Daniel. The agronomist believes that she is present in several places at the same time. Luna has an arousing siren-like quality for him which he describes as agelessness. Though Luna is always modestly dressed, the agronomist perceives that "there was always a nakedness about her". (19) To Daniel, Luna is more than a beautiful woman. She is his life-partner whom heaven promised him in a dream or vision. When Daniel first sees Luna, it is as though his vision has been realized. After he recovers from fainting upon seeing her for the first time, Daniel decides to marry her

7. Miriam Arad, "Two Brothers Struggle Over One Orchard", Jerusalem Post, weekend supplement, April 21, 1972, p. 12.

and fulfill his dream. Thus Luna transcends the figure of a flesh and blood woman who is sexually appealing. She has elusive and mystical qualities.[8]

It is always possible with an allegorical reading to render it concrete with a variety of interpretations. We may view Luna as an image of eroticism which drives men to madness. While I do not negate such an interpretation, Luna does suggest the image of the Land of Israel. She has had a long love relationship with the Arab before the Jew has appeared on the scene. The immigrant Jew has dreamed about her and believes she has always been his promised love. Luna makes no choices of her own. She is responsive to her masters: the Turkish step-father, the Arab and the Jew.

Once we see Luna as partially symbolic of the Land of Israel, we understand Daniel's reactions to her adultery with Ovadiah in a different light. Even as the immigrant Jews of Palestine had no choice but to be resigned to the Arab presence on the Land, so Daniel accepts Ovadiah's

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8. In mythology, Luna was "the Roman goddess of the moon, perhaps of Sabine origin. Her principal importance was in the figuring of the calendar; her worship was never important". Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend, Maria Leach, editor, (2 vols., New York, 1950), ii. 654. Luna in Hapardes has no parallel to any specific folk characters or mythological beings. "Many ancients saw the moon as the ultimate cause of the growth of vegetation." James G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, (12 vols., London, 1927), vol. 2, book 3, p. 139. The agronomist seems to think that Luna has some power over the orchard (see Hapardes, p. 28). In short, the agronomist's view, Luna's adultery with Ovadiah, her incestuous relationship with her son, and her apparition-like qualities all contribute to her mythological, allegorical image.

relationship with Luna. Although Jewish immigrants learned that the Arabs had lived in Palestine for a thousand years, they felt they had an especially close relationship to their ancestoral homeland. They believed that the People of Israel is the husband to the Land of Israel. Daniel is jealous because although he is Luna's legal husband, he is not as close to her as is Ovadiah. His illusions about a special, intimate bond with his wife are shattered by the realization that he is the outsider. It is the Arab fellah who understands and communes with the Land, and not the Jew who seeks refuge from European ghetto life. As Miriam Arad points out: "It is Ovadiah, the native, and not Daniel, the alien, to whom the spirit [of the Land] speaks."[9]

Daniel's jealousy and Ovadiah's resentment of his brother's intrusion lead them into conflict. Daniel, however, is guilt-ridden over Ovadiah's death at the hands of Luna's son. His guilt so consumes him that neither Ovadiah's relationship with Luna nor his involvements in the Arab riots can supersede Daniel's troubled conscience. In spite of all of Ovadiah's trespasses, Daniel tells Luna's son "that an uncle is always an uncle, and we don't drag the business of killing into the family". (96) Once Ovadiah's death is a reality, Daniel is tormented. The agronomist describes Daniel's state as follows:

> When the orchard had reached the peak

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9. Arad, "Two Brothers. . .", p. 12.

> of its fruition, to him it became populated with demons and spirits. He began to see Ovadiah's spirit prowling among the trees and he would chase after the spirit, running on clods of earth, begging forgiveness from him, until he would stumble and hurt himself. The workers would lift him in their arms and bring him to my room still alive. And the things he used to shout at that spirit--it was impossible to listen to them without shuddering. With what did Daniel not charge himself?--He said he was a murderer; he said he stole a woman from her husband's bosom; he said that he was ready to relinquish everything, even to return to the place from which he'd come. (129-130)

Daniel's wild, guilt-driven forays into the orchard in pursuit of Ovadiah's spirit result in Daniel's death. Apparently Daniel is killed in the orchard one night by a band of Arab terrorists. The agronomist thinks Daniel found atonement in his last moments: "By the expression on his face, I was able to guess that in his last moments he beheld a sight which calmed and appeased him." (130)

Hapardes is the agronomist's memoirs of his life and those with whom he lived. From his writing we know his opinions of and attitudes towards Ovadiah. His close

physical proximity and his friendship with Daniel and Luna's son gives him insights about their feelings toward Ovadiah. At the same time, the agronomist is not omniscient. He can only make guesses based on his own prejudices as to what is going on in Ovadiah's mind. The author also wishes to communicate to us certain views which tend to conflict with those of the narrator and the characters. These factors make it almost impossible to discern personality in Ovadiah. We know little of Ovadiah's thoughts, and we are forced to rely on his behavior as the indicator of his nature.

Ovadiah appears as a very masculine, sexually potent figure. He explains his ability to communicate with Luna in agricultural terms:

> "Oh, my teacher and master, was it not you who taught me to understand the language of the soil; if it is dry, one must water it? If it is moist, its time to be watered has not yet come. Was it not you who told me that trees do not speak, and that one must scrutinize them to know whether the time has come to trim the dry branch? Why, then, do you ask about Luna? She is like the trees. Only look at her, and you know what she needs." (31)

Throughout Hapardes Ovadiah fulfills Luna's needs frequently. Ovadiah's discussion of which Jewish women he will rape after

an Arab victory in 1948 reinforces the agronomist's opinion that he is animalistic and lustful. We have seen a similar image of the Arab in Micha'el Sheli.

Ovadiah is secretive in his relationship with Jews, and only hints at his feelings. When he an Daniel meet after years of separation, Ovadiah responds in reserved fashion toward his brother:

> At that same instant, footsteps were heard treading at the doorway. We turned to see who was coming, and there was Ovadiah standing on the threshold. . . .
>
> The guest arose from the couch and faced Ovadiah, and they were staring at one another. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He [Daniel] did not sit down, but opened his mouth and said:
>
> "Are you not my brother, Ovadiah?"
>
> "It is possible that I am your brother, Daniel." Daniel said: "And aren't you happy to see me?" Ovadiah replied: "It is possible that I am happy, and it is possible that I am not happy." (50)

Ovadiah's reply may be truthful to the degree that Daniel's arrival arouses both nostalgia and fear in him. Yet, the ambivalent answer is not the response of a loving brother.

It hints that generally Ovadiah is not thrilled about Daniel's arrival, and that he holds a wait and see attitude.

Ovadiah, in addition to his wariness, also displays cunning and an instinct for self-preservation. He is able to adapt himself to meet all situations in the most advantageous way so that when he moves to Tel Aviv with Daniel's family we are told:

> From the first day of their dwelling in Tel Aviv, Ovadiah took the fez off his head; but in Jaffa he was fastidious about putting it on. In Tel Aviv he spoke to people in Hebrew, and in Jaffa he again trilled in Arabic. (64)

Although Ovadiah is partly Arab and partly Jewish, his behavior is not a matter of "when in Rome". The move to Tel Aviv came in 1930, just several months after the Arab riots. He is careful to conceal his identity from the seething anger of Tel Aviv while in Arab Jaffa he may be himself.

I have pointed out that the agronomist believes that Ovadiah is treacherous. In two scenes which occur during the War of Independence one sees that the agronomist's view is not based solely on his own bias. One evening during the War, the agronomist eavesdrops on a conversation between Ovadiah and a member of his gang. The agronomist overhears them talking about which Jewish women they will rape when

victory comes. Though the agronomist has heard similar discussion previously, he is shocked by a turn in the conversation:

> On that night, Salama and Ovadiah remained by themselves, and the two of them were pounding their gums on the usual subject when suddenly Salama asked Ovadiah:
>
> "And what are you going to do with Daniel?"
>
> "What I should have done to him on the day he arrived but didn't do. Damned be the cursed one who hammered the first nail in the ship which brought him here." (100)

It is possible that Ovadiah is merely venting his resentment and that the agronomist errs in taking him at his word. Even the agronomist admitted previously that Ovadiah prevailed upon the Arab rioters in 1929 to stay away from the orchard. One may view Ovadiah's bold words here as a similar attempt to save Daniel by assuring his partner that he himself will deal with his brother. Yet, one has several reasons to suspect that, by this time, Ovadiah is speaking in earnest. We may suppose that his hatred of Daniel for his marriage to Luna has increased over the years. With Daniel's death, Luna would belong only to Ovadiah. He has labored for years in Daniel's orchard, but, in spite of his efforts, he has

not gained a partnership. An Arab victory and the elimination of Luna's son and Daniel would give Ovadiah the orchard. A piece of internal evidence also shows that Ovadiah would not hesitate to kill if he could. He did attempt to choke Daniel in a wrestling match some thirteen years earlier. (76)

Ovadiah, within the allegorical framework of Pardes, represents "the Arab". In addition to his Hebrew name, he bears a common Arab name, Abdullah, and he is close to the Land as symbolized by his relationship with Luna. He stands firmly with the Arab cause in Palestine, and is hostile toward the Jewish competitors. He fulfills Jewish expectations of treachery from the Arab in his own actions. However, Ovadiah is more than a vehicle to perpetuate a stereotype. He also serves to express some of the author's views about the Arab-Jewish conflict. It is to those views that we turn now.

The attitude of the author toward Ovadiah stands in contrast to the negatively biased, if ambiguous, feelings of the agronomist. The author balances the picture of Ovadiah by presenting him as the underdog in a sibling rivalry. He highlights the sibling rivalry element with allusions to the Biblical themes of the displaced brother, Ishma'el, and of the Jacob-Esau conflict. While the lives of Daniel and Ovadiah are not allegorical parallels to the Biblical brothers, the reader senses that their relationship reflects aspects of the Biblical narrative. This sense of connection between Daniel-Ovadiah and Jacob-Esau comes to

us both from the recounting of the childhood of the brothers and from reliable elements of the narrator's interpretation of their relationship.

The account of Ovadiah's parentage and birth are reminiscent, but not a duplication, of Ishma'el origins. Ovadiah's father had been a wealthy Russian Jew who went to live in Turkey for sever al years. In Turkey, this Russian Jew hired an Arab woman to keep his house. The agronomist tells us:

> The woman went and lay with him, as women of the lower class were accustomed to do; for if they serve in a man's kitchen, there's nothing to prevent them from serving in his bed. Thus was the parentage and birth of Ovadiah. (8)

As a result of the relations between this Jew and his Arab housekeeper, Ovadiah was neither legitimate nor Jewish. While Ishma'el was legitimate, he too was the son of a non-Jewish handmaid.

After his years of sojurn in Turkey, Ovadiah's father decided to take him and return to Russia. His plans did not include his Arab mistress, and he abandoned her in Constantinople. The cruel separation from his mother broke Ovadiah's heart, and he hated his father for leaving her in Turkey. In Russia, the father married a cultured Jewish

woman, and with her had his second son, Daniel. Ovadiah's hatred for his father led him to alienate himself from the entire family:

> But Ovadiah hated his brother and his father; he also alienated himself from his father's wife though she bore his faults patiently, and though she pitied him as one pities a bitter-hearted orphan. (10)

Ovadiah expressed his alienation by exiling himself to the barn, and he lived there for several years. His hatred for his father did not abate with time, and he identified totally with his Arab mother. The agronomist tells of his talks with Ovadiah:

> In all his stories he refrained from speaking about his father, and he spoke lovingly only about his mother, and about his being an Ishma'elite in every way, and that Abdullah was his name. (32)

The Jacob-Esau dichotomy between Daniel and Ovadiah was present in their childhood. Daniel, like Jacob, was the studious brother. Ovadiah only briefly tried his hand at studying, for "his time was spent hunting and fishing". (11) If the brothers had anything in common as children, it was their love of the poems of Zion (10), and it was to Palestine

that Ovadiah went when he ran away from his family.[10] His disappearance from his father's house made it possible for Daniel to become their father's sole beneficiary. Daniel, the younger brother, inherited the birthright by default, and went to Palestine with the money to start a new life.

Daniel and Ovadiah meet in Palestine after years of separation. Their meeting suggests the Jacob-Esau story once again. Ovadiah is introduced to Daniel, who has just concluded the purchase of Mechmet Effendi's orchard:

> "Oh, Abdullah", said Mechmet Effendi,
> "your new master stands before you.
> Speak to him respectfully because now
> he is the owner of the orchard." (50)[11]

The scene is reminiscent of the blessing with which Isaac blesses Jacob: Be Lord over thy brethren and let thy mother's son bow down to thee (Gen. 27:29). Yet, in spite of this blow to Ovadiah, their meeting also includes the emergence of some brotherly tenderness as did the meeting of Jacob and Esau:

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10. It is noteworthy that Ovadiah, who identifies himself as an Arab, is a lover of Zion. Perhaps Tamuz has in mind the reverse Zionism of the exiled Palestinian Arab who longs to return to his homeland.

11. In addition to hinting at the Jacob-Esau story in this scene, Tamuz is also employing history as above. (see p. 120-121). Turkish and Arab effendis often sold their land to Jews because the latter would pay a high price. The effendis did not consider the wishes of the Arab tenant farmers and workers who were on their lands. Arabs came to see that their homeland was being traded from one master to another without their consent. Hence, they reject the Jewish claim that Zionist established their rights to the Land by purchasing "dunam after dunam".

> They extended their hands to one another, and they fell on each other's neck standing in their embrace for a long time, burying their faces in one another's shoulder. (51)

Some years later, there is another occasion on which the two brothers fall upon each other's neck, but not out of love. Daniel and Ovadiah are locked in a wrestling match of the proportion of a death struggle. The narrator-agronomist, here representing the author, views the match as a ritualistic primordial struggle:

> And so they were like two men dancing a primitive dance, savage and crazed. . . .
> . . . . . .
> First the two of them would step back a little to catch their breaths. Then, again, they would approach each other, raining blows on one another, as though it were according to some order or sequence which was fixed in advance. (79,80)

The agronomist's impression that the wrestling match had a primeval nature about it applies to his view of the life-long conflict between Daniel and Ovadiah. We have only a small hint of the agronomist's feeling which he expresses when he is being nursed back to health by Luna after he was wounded by Arab marauders:

> I'd be surprised if it's possible to find another explanation for that passing familiarity which I merited from Luna, after I had been a sacrifice to the ancient feud that was between her two husbands. (92)

One senses that the agronomist is not referring only to the long-standing conflict between Daniel and Ovadiah. His use of the word "ancient" implies that he sees himself caught in the midst of a struggle that far transcends Daniel and Ovadiah's quarrel. As an inhabitant of a Palestine in turmoil, he is wedged between a battle of the people of Jacob and the people of Esau.

The author has not given us many instances in Daniel and Ovadiah's relationship which are parallel to the Jacob-Esau tale. Parallels more numerous and explicit are not necessary since the situation of a rivalry between Jewish and Arab brothers suggests the Biblical story in and of itself. Yet, the allusions to the Jacob-Esau narrative which are made have two effects on the presentation in Hapardes.

The Jacob-Esau references tend to generalize the quarrel of the Arab and Jewish brothers in our text, and stand in contrast to the novel's particularizing element of time-place setting.[12] We have seen that the descriptive

12. Ian Watt states: "The 'principle of individuation' accepted by Locke was that of existence at a particular locus

details in Hapardes make the people in the orchard live as real, distinct figures (with the possible exception of Luna). We know how each of the characters came to the orchard. We are aware that the orchard is only a short distance from Jaffa and Petach Tikvah. The narrative provides dates and events in the life of the Yishuv which make concrete the existence and conflicts of the characters. The introduction of allusions to Jacob and Esau, however, modifies the individualizing aspects of Hapardes.

Daniel and Ovadiah are no longer just two quarreling half-brothers. They transcend their own personal conflict as they become symbols for Jacob and Esau. Their rivalry assumes a timeless aspect which intimates that the struggle of Daniel and Ovadiah is the most recent link in the long chain of enmity between the descendants of Jacob and Esau. The author's view, which generalizes the particular and transfers the time-bound into the timeless, adds a note of pessimism to Hapardes. One senses that the author does not see a resolution to the Arab-Jewish conflict as long as the pattern of struggle, defeat, and revenge is an ongoing cycle.

The Jacob-Esau rivalry theme not only generalizes the particular; it also is a means by which to produce sympathy

in space and time: since, as he wrote, 'ideas become general by separating from them the circumstances of time and place', so they become particular only when both these circumstances are specified. In the same way the characters of the novel can only be individualized if they are set in a background of particularized time and place." Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, (London, 1957), p. 21.

in the reader for Ovadiah. Ovadiah gains the reader's sympathy because the details of his miserable childhood are given. Like Ishma'el, he is the outcast son. As an adult, he is the supplanted elder brother as was Esau. One can feel Ovadiah's bitterness over Daniel's marriage to Luna because we know that Ovadiah loves her. Without this background information, the reader would join the agronomist in viewing him as ungrateful, lustful, and treacherous. However, just as the Bible reader can feel sympathy for Esau as long as he does not encounter the rabbinic calumny of Esau, so the reader's sympathy falls to Ovadiah when he sets aside the agronomist's commentary. Ovadiah's behavior becomes understandable, and the reader is able to see his human characteristics.

The humanization of Ovadiah is crucial to Hapardes, since the Hebrew reader, especially the Israeli reader, probably brings his own set attitudes toward Arabs to the book. As a result of decades of Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine, we may assume that the feelings of the agronomist and of Luna's son toward Ovadiah reflect prejudices which Israeli readers might hold toward Arabs. It is not the author's intention to reinforce negative opinions about the Arabs. Therefore, in addition to using sympathy-winning devices, the author also relies on our confused agronomist-narrator to mold reader beliefs,[13] and to complicate reader

13. "A very different effect ensues when the narrator's bewilderment is used not simply to mystify about minor facts of the story but to break down the reader's convictions about

prejudices. I would submit that the question with which the author wishes the reader to grapple is as follows: Is the pattern of struggle, defeat, and revenge in the Arab-Jewish relationship inevitable as the Jacob-Esau allusions suggest, or can the cycle be broken to the benefit of both peoples?

The struggle with this question begins with a comment of the agronomist-narrator. We have seen that he is bewildered about the meaning of his own life, and is unreliable in his assessments of Ovadiah. The agronomist's confusion about the events and relationships of the orchard displays itself in a statement which he makes toward the conclusion of the book:

> He who pursues justice in the empty spaces of an orchard which is not his own--he is doomed to be swept away without doubt. It is not the victory of justice that will become white as snow, but the bones of the pursuer shall be like wool dispersed before the empty wind. (128)

truth itself, so that he may be ready to receive the truth when it is offered to him. If the reader is to desire the truth he must first be convinced that he does not already possess it. . . . Any work depending on this desire must raise an important question in a lively form if the reader is to care about reading on to find the answer, or to feel the importance of the answer when it comes. Whether the answer is itself unequivocal or, as in many modern novels, deliberately ambiguous is irrelevant to the basic form of such reading experiences. The claim that there is no answer is itself an answer, so far as literary effect is concerned." Booth, Rhetoric, pp. 285-286.

The agronomist says this while he is reflecting on Daniel's guilt over the murder of Ovadiah. The thought makes no sense; it is a muddled, unclear attempt to react to Daniel's search for justice. While the tone of these sentences is despair, the agronomist says nothing significant of a particular moral viewpoint.

The confusion seems to indicate that the author is not willing to make any judgments about which side in the Arab-Jewish conflict is just and moral. He has shown the reader positive and negative views of both Ovadiah and the Jewish characters in the story. The moral questions of the Arab-Jewish conflict are ambiguous, with justice and wrongs on both sides. The author seems to be suggesting through the agronomist's strange words and his failure to make a coherent statement that one should not search for morality among the conflicting sides. The struggle itself belies any claims to morality as the author points out through Daniel: "If we needed to kill Ovadiah to prove our rightness, is it possible that we are not right at all?"[14] (112)

Daniel and Luna's son represent two opposing answers to the question of how to break the Jacob-Esau cycle in the

14. The narrator in Tamuz' "Tacharut Sechiyah", a short story written in 1952, concludes with a view similar to Daniel's statement. Upon the death of the main Arab character at the hands of an Israeli soldier, the narrator muses: "Here in the yard I, we all, were defeated." See "Tacharut Sechiyah" in Sipurim Ivriim Michavei Ha'aravim, Yosef Aricha, editor, (Tel Aviv, 1963), p. 286. The expression of remorse over the Arab antagonist's death in both works tends to confirm Daniel's statement as the viewpoint of Tamuz himself. Daniel, as will be seen in the following paragraph, feels a remorse which is more extreme than what Tamuz would condone.

Arab-Jewish relationship. Daniel's approach to his relationship with Ovadiah is essentially passive. He is willing to share Luna's favors with Ovadiah while he stifles his own jealousy. With the exception of the wrestling match, Daniel does not wish a confrontation with his brother. He believes that all family quarrels "will be settled ultimately in peace and harmony". (96) Daniel's sympathy for Ovadiah and his wish for peace at all costs would lead him to betray his dreams of settling in Israel. He would return to Europe if it would prevent Ovadiah's destruction (130), and his guilt leads to his death as I have pointed out.

The author rejects Daniel's solution of passivity toward his Arab brother. He rejects Daniel's self-denial and guilt as emasculating. When the agronomist warns Daniel that his fear to go home to Luna will result in the loss of his masculinity, Daniel replies: "It is possible that it is already lost." (114) Even Ovadiah is well aware of a Jewish weakness toward compassion and leniency. He looks with scorn on the conqueror who shows mercy:

> "And the Jews aren't shooting at those [Arab refugees] from Jaffa who are leaving?", one Arab asked his companions.
>
> "They're not shooting", his companion confirmed. "They stand at the entrance to Mikve Yisrael with weapons, and look at the cars; but they aren't doing a thing."

"What's your opinion, Abdullah?",
the men asked.
"I'm staying", Abdullah said.
"The Jews will kill you", they replied.
"The Jews won't do anything to me",
he answered confidently. "I know them." (103)

The conclusion of the Jacob-Esau feud on Daniel's terms can mean only destruction for Jacob, and therefore, the author repudiates Daniel's approach.

The answer of Luna's son as to how to end the Jacob-Esau battle is the use of force. He begins from the position that all Arabs are enemies and not to be trusted. Luna's son is willing at attack whenever necessary, and to take cruel revenge for every Arab act of violence. He delights in adorning Israel with the spoils of her Arab neighbors. Unlike his father, Luna's son is self-confidently masculine and enthusiastic for action. The critic, Ehud Ben-Ezer, believes that the author supports the approach of Luna's son.[15]

I do not believe that evidence of the text supports Ben-Ezer's view. Perhaps if the author had to choose between the approaches of Daniel and Luna's son, he would side with the young man. Luna's son, speaking for the author, occasionally remarks disparagingly of his "Jewish" father. The

15. "If the future belongs to him who draws all conclusions from the cruel logic of reality, the example is Luna's son. . . . The Jew, who bears the ghetto heritage, is not fit, according to this outlook, to possess the Land. This the sons of Luna will do. . . ." Ehud Ben-Ezer, "Hapardes Kesipur Allegori", Al Hamishmar, March 24, 1972, pp. 6-7.

adjective "Jewish" alludes to what the boy views as a detestable ghetto mentality:

> "When do you hike with your mother?", I continued to examine him.
>
> "I told you: always."
>
> "In the orchard as well?", I didn't stop questioning him.
>
> "Why not? In the orchard as well."
>
> "And father?" I asked a foolish thing.
>
> "Father? . . . Father knows how to keep accounts in a ledger, and to read books, and to travel abroad."
>
> "Your father is a very smart man", I said firmly.
>
> "Of course he's smart. All Jews are smart."
>
> "All Jews? And aren't you a Jew?"
>
> "Of course I'm a Jew. I think so", he said laughing. (85)

In spite of the author's preference, however, for the aggressive approach of Luna's son, a native of the Land, he rejects the young man's solution. The cruelty of Luna's son is not designed to win the reader's sympathy or concurrence. Yizhar uses a similar technique to repel the reader. He presents crude, sadistic soldiers who view the Arab as less than human. We cannot identify with the pugnacious ardor of the soldiers. While the approach of Luna's son

may be necessary for immediate survival, it is not the long range solution to the Arab-Jewish conflict. For as the agronomist points out, even with victory and the death of the enemy, the presence of Ovadiah's spirit and influence permeates the Land:

> On Friday night I was invited to Daniel's house. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Since I was inclined to philosophizing on that night, I set my mind to the food that Luna was preparing for us. For the first time since I ate at their table, I saw something which I had never considered before: the dishes and condiments were a kind of mixture of Jewish cooking, as we knew in our parent's homes, with Arab cooking, as that to which I had become accustomed from the day that I tasted Arab food more than forty years ago. Thus, I said to myself, Ovadiah too still sits with us at the table in some indirect, symbolic way. . . . And if indeed such is the case, it is possible that Daniel's madness isn't madness at all. . . . (116,117)

The futility of Luna's son's viewpoint lies in Esau's

unwillingness to be defeated. The author carries Hapardes through 1956, and relies on the historical fact of a second Israeli-Arab war to make his point. The agronomist's concluding sentences, though they are meant in a broader sense, convey the hopelessness of armed conflict between Jacob and Esau:

> And in my mind's eye, I see renewal and destruction, renewal and destruction, and there is no end to the matter. Until he who solves riddles comes and also solves this riddle in the end of days. (132)

The author, while rejecting the approaches of Daniel and Luna's son to the Arab-Jewish conflict, does not presume to supply "the answer". At best, all one can discern is an ambiguous suggestion that perhaps the roots of a solution rest with the agronomist. We have a hint of the direction to which the author points in some thoughts of the agronomist. He reflects on why Luna views him favorably, and surmises:

> Whether she was the daughter of Jews or whether she was the daughter of Moslems, in her eyes I was both; for I was among the first members of the Yishuv, speaking the Arab tongue like one of them. And after so many years, my face became tanned and my skin became burnt so that

> I was like one of the Arab peasants, who are perhaps the remnants of those ancient Jews who never went into exile but were slowly absorbed among the Moslem settlers of the Land. It is possible that Luna considered me as the ancient link binding Ovadiah's race with Daniel's race. For indeed, if the truth be told; in her deaf-muteness she served both of them faithfully, apportioning her favors between them--if not equally, then according to the requirements and vigor of each of them, according to their changing temperments over the passing years. (92)

If there is an answer to the Jacob-Esau struggle, perhaps it lies not only in the rejection of warfare, but also in the shedding of aspects of Jewish identity which are alien to the Land. The European Jewish mentality will render the Jew an outsider in the Land and a threat to the life-style of the Arab inhabitants. Rapprochment and communication between the two peoples requires the Jew to adopt a Hebrew or Canaan-bound identity which is indigenous to the Land. While Luna's son approaches that ideal in his vigor and aggressive attachment to the Land, his hatred for the Arabs precludes understanding. The agronomist, however, bears all the qualities of a Canaanite identity as

well as holding a basic affection for the children of Esau. Possibly, the key to bridging the rift between Jacob and Esau rests in Jews of the agronomist's type. Yet, whether a new identity for the Jew in the Land is "the answer" is not entirely clear. For as the agronomist muses: "On the face of it, the thing is obvious, but really there is nothing which is obvious; in actuality we don't know anything." (128) The agronomist's ambiguity here and throughout the work is one reason why Hapardes is more literature than political tract.

The image of the Arab in Hapardes is more detailed than those in the other three works which have been examined. The broader development of the Arab's image in Hapardes may be attributed not only to the length of the story, but also to the Arab's pervasive presence throughout this novella. It may be argued that the Arab characters in the other works are somewhat peripheral to their plots and to the messages of their authors. In Micha'el Sheli, "Mul Haye'arot", and "Chirbet Chiz'eh", the Arab figures mainly serve to support the development of the themes of alienation and the search for individual identity and independence. One can conceive of Micha'el Sheli and "Mul Haye'arot" maintaining the integrity of plot and theme without their Arab characters. This is less the case with "Chirbet Chiz'eh". In Hapardes, however, the Arab's presence is integral since the story focuses on the Arab-Jewish relationship in Palestine within a framework of forty-five years of historical detail. All

other relationships and themes are secondary to the struggle between Arab and Jew over the Land. We cannot conceive of Pardes without Ovadiah.

Ovadiah's image shares much in common with other Arab characters in the post-1948 literature. Like his fellows, Ovadiah has close ties with the Land. He lives intimately with it among the trees, and he has an instinctive understanding of how to make the soil produce bountifully. He appears cunning and partially inscrutable to the Jews with whom he has contact. Ovadiah is aggressively masculine and sexually powerful. In the latter two features, Ovadiah resembles the Arab twins of Micha'el Sheli, while his connection to the earth reflects the images in "Chirbet Chiz'eh" and "Mul Ya've'arot". Ovadiah, as in all the other works, is "the" Arab victim of the aspirations of the Yishuv, and there is a promise of revenge in his downfall.

Ovadiah's image is formed in part by elements of the demonic in Pardes. Northrop Frye has pointed out some common features of demonic imagery in literature.[16] According to Frye, in the vegetable world, the thickly planted, overgrown garden is within the demonic category; so are adulterous liaisons, siren-like women, scapegoat figures, and cannabalism. Ovadiah's sinister image is established by his residence in the orchard and his knowledge of its secrets. His relationship with mysterious Luna ties him to the demonic. Ovadiah is the leader of a ruthless band

16. See Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, especially pages 148-149, 153, 155-157.

of Arab terrorists who wish to wreak havoc on the Yishuv. He is also the victim of the Yishuv which requires his death for its own survival and strength. It absorbs and "cannabalizes" aspects of Ovadiah's way of life. At the same time, one's ability to sympathize with Ovadiah is not erased by the demonic elements of his image and surroundings. The facts of his childhood win some compassion for him. Ovadiah's love for Luna softens his image, and removes some of the negative feelings about the adulterous nature of the relationship.

In spite of the broader development of the Arab's image in Hapardes, he does not project any depth of personality. All of the works examined share this void in their presentations of the Arab. One apparent reason for the lack of personality development is that the Arab characters are cast in secondary roles with differing emphasis. The image which is produced tends to become stereotypic, and is subservient to the authors' efforts to make a statement about the Arab-Jewish encounter. The end to which the Arab image is employed may be positive if it motivates Israelis to scrutinize their attitudes toward Arabs. Yet, it seems that the greater contribution toward understanding the Arab rests in the presentation of a main Arab character in modern Hebrew fiction. The creation of an Arab character with all the virtues and faults of a total human personality would be a more accurate representation of reality, would lend itself to wider interpretation, and would be a literary challenge.

Appendix

Biographical Sketches of the Authors*

Avraham B. Yehoshua - born in Jerusalem, 1936. Yehoshua was raised and educated in Jerusalem, and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the Hebrew University in Hebrew literature and philosophy. He spent four years in Paris before settling in Haifa. Yehoshua's first short story appeared in Massah in 1957. In 1963 the first collection of his stories was published under the title Mot Hazaken (The Death of the Old Man). The short story "Mul Haye'arot" is also the title of a second collection of short stories published by Yehoshua in 1970.

S. Yizhar (Yizhar Smilansky) - born in Rechovot, 1916. Yizhar was raised on a moshav, and he received a teaching credential from Bet Hamidrash Lemorim in Jerusalem. He has taught both in secondary schools and at the Hebrew University. Yizhar, whose father arrived in Israel during the early days of the Second Aliyah, was a member of the first Kenesset with the Mapai party and a member of the sixth Kenesset with Ben Gurion's Rafi. An example of literary creativity was set for Yizhar by his two uncles,

*The biographical information is based on G. Kressel, Leksikon Hasifrut Ha'ivrit Bedorot Ha'achronim, (Bat Yam, 1965), in two volumes.

Moshe and Me'ir-Siko Smilansky, who were among the Hebrew authors of the early twentieth century. It is said frequently that A. N. Gnessin had a large influence on Yizhar's style. Yizhar's writing is expecially known for panoramic descriptions of Palestinian scenery, and for introspective characters. He has been a prolific writer since his first story, "Ephraim Chozer La'aspeset", appeared in 1938. Yizhar's magnum opus, Yemei Tsiklag, was published in 1958. Generally, Yizhar has contributed abundantly to the "war genre" in modern Hebrew literature.

Amos Oz - born in Jerusalem, 1939. Oz was educated at Kibbutz Chulda, and became a member there in 1957. He received a teaching license from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and in 1969-1970 he was Visiting Fellow of St. Cross College, Oxford. Oz' first short stories appeared in Davar, Keshet, and Moznaim in 1962.

Binyamin Tamuz - born in the Ukraine in 1919. Tamuz' parents made aliyah in 1924, and he was raised in Tel Aviv and Rechovot. Tamuz attended high school at the Herzlia gymnasia, and studied at the Sorbonne in 1950. As a teenager he belonged to an Israeli communist youth movement, and from 1939-1950 he was a member of the Kena'anim, the Canaanite movement. Tamuz has been a member of the editorial staff of Ha'arets. Among his shorter works are "Cholot Hazahav" (Sands of Gold, 1950), and "Gan Na'ul" (A Locked Garden, 1958). Two of his longer works are Chayei Elyakum

(The Life of Elyakum, 1965), and Besof Ma'arav (At the End of the West, 1967.

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