

ARABS AS PORTRAYED IN THE ISRAELI HEBREW LITERATURE
SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Introduction

The romantic - nostalgic approach prevalent in the Israeli Hebrew literature in the years of the Twenties and Thirties.

Review

Modern Hebrew literary critics draw the line between two distinct periods dealing with the topic. The first - the years 1920-1930; the second - the outbreak of the Second World War, the years since 1940. Both differ radically in their approach to the topic. Writers of the first period see the Arabs romantically, like a myth of bygone days. The writers of the later period see the Arabs as a problem, and their portrayal is more realistic.

The writers, who arrived in Eretz Israel with the second and third aliyah (immigration wave) in the years 1904-1914, and then after the First World War in the years 1919-1923, hailed from Eastern Europe. They were familiar with the landscape of Eastern Europe; they found the scenery of Eretz Israel strange and exotic. The Negev, the Galil, the Arab villages, the Bedouin and their tents, the camels, the citrus groves, the palm trees, the cypresses, the eucalyptus trees (introduced to Eretz Israeli soil from Australia as a means of eliminating the swamps) with their white stems and willowy drooping branches, all made a deep impression upon the young Chalutzim and caught their imagination.

Nurtured by the early Zionist movement, 'Friends of Zion', these writers had the sensational feeling that the ancient Eretz Israel, so vividly reflected in the Bible, had come alive again and they instinctively imagined the Arabs to be the people of the Bible. It was like a dream fulfilled. During the second aliyah the opinion prevailed that the fellahin, the Arab peasants, were none other than Jewish farmers who had been forcibly compelled to abandon their

religion - their Jewish faith - during persecutions and evil decrees on Jews in Europe (according to Israel Balkind, author of the book, Eretz Israel of our Times). The Arab fellahin were, in fact, the descendants of the Jewish people, who were the inhabitants of Eretz Israel before the present era.

The literature of the Twenties was like a direct continuation of the literature of the Biblical Epoch bemoaning the weeping of Hagar and the outcry of Esau.

The writers, Moshe Smilansky, Yehuda Burla, Moshe Stavy (Stavsky), Pesach Bar Adon, and Yakob Churgin, described the Arabs and their way of life in an exact forthright way, but the majority of Hebrew writers mentioned the Arabs indirectly while describing the Jewish Settlers, their problems and struggles. In all the literary efforts of the Israeli Hebrew writers, the Arabs appeared inseparable from Jewish reality in Eretz Israel.

The Hebrew writers who described the Arabs of this period differ greatly in their approach to the subject.

Moshe Smilansky, who introduced this topic in the Hebrew literature and wrote the first novel on the Arab way of life, was himself a great friend of the Arabs and greatly respected by them. His style was that of a sentimentalist, charmed by their romanticism and simplicity, which were characteristic of the Arabs and their mode of life at that period.

A similar line was adopted by all the writers who came to Israel with the second and third aliyah. They carried high the ideals of the early Chalutzim, to get to know the Arabs intimately, to work with them to drain the swamps, to combat malaria, and to cultivate the land.

On the other hand, the writers Jehuda Burla, Yitzchak-Shamai, Yakob Churgin, Moshe Stavy and Nahum Yerushalmi were born and bred in the land of Eretz Israel. They featured the Arabs in a genuine and true portrayal.

This study is broadly concerned with the Arabs, the various Bedouin tribes, and the Druze, starting with the Turkish rule in Palestine and with particular stress on our present era, specifically from the beginning of the Second World War. It deals with Arabs in the South of Palestine, at the foot of the Hermon and the mountains of the Lebanon, Arabs living at the border of Syria, Transjordan, and the Arabian Peninsula, and Arabs of the countries of Arabia itself, all of whom have been reflected in Hebrew literature.

CHAPTER 1

The spirit of romanticism of the Chalutzim and their efforts to identify themselves with the primitive life style of the Arabs

1.1 Stories of the sentries - legendary reading

The Jewish sentries - the Chalutzim who set out to guard the Jewish settlements and the Jewish honour - knew that they had to be alert against their neighbours, the Arabs and Bedouin. Thus they learned their customs, languages, reactions, and moods, while endeavouring to maintain a relationship of mutual respect. They were desperate in their efforts to keep up a peaceful co-existence with their neighbours, as they were only a handful of men compared with the vast numbers of Arabs and Bedouin. The sentries were instrumental and helpful in acquiring new land for the Jewish colonists. The History of Zionism is closely linked with the Jewish sentries (The Book of the Sentries).

The Arabs used to call the Jewish sentries by Arabic names, perhaps out of respect and admiration, but also possibly out of fear and awe. Abraham Shapiro, Head of the sentries in Petach Tikvah was known as Sheikh Ibraim Mikhah, as was told in Stories of the Heroic Exploits of Sheikh Ibraim Mikhah, (edited by David Tidhar and Yehuda Edelstein).

Meir Chazanov (Chazanowitz) and Ichezkel Nisenbaum, who guarded the Galil (in the North) adopted the Arab style of dress. Meirke (as he was commonly called) Chazanov had a gun which fired fifty bullets and the Arabs were terrified of him (see The Herd was Returned by A Kantorowitch). In those early days Arab and Bedouin alike attacked the Jewish settlers in the Galil and the land was 'soaked in blood' becoming known as 'The Wild West' of Palestine (Ichezkel Nisenbaum, by Israel Giladi; The Death of Trumpeldor and Dreamers and Fighters by Yaakov Poliskin). The sentries, however, continued to imitate the Bedouin in every way. They spoke their language and followed their life pattern, sleeping in caves and withdrawing into hills and valleys; studying each path, each crevice of the rocks, every grove, wood, and village.

Detailed evidence of this trend was given in the novella, The Wanderings of Amishai the Sentry, by Yaakov Rabinowitz. Amishai - a Sabra (native of the land), a son of an early colonist, was a descendant of the Cabbalists, the mystics. He was born in a night of terror when his father risked his life to bypass attacking Bedouins in order to fetch a midwife. He grew up to be a guardsman, defending his fellow men; he was a product of nature itself, as if the Galil took care of him and brought him up. 'The mountains straightened his back, lengthened his feet'. He knew well how to alter his appearance and disguise himself as a Bedouin. He was strong and alert. He was a binding force between Jews and Arabs, a legendary figure for all.

He was inconsistent in his ways. He would be doing sentry duty on a Jewish settlement and would suddenly leave his post and join wandering Bedouins in the desert. He was also involved in the exchange of horses amongst the fellahin in the villages. A constant struggle went on in his heart; he was a Jew by birth yet he was fond of the primitive life style of the Bedouin, imagining himself one of them. He was furthermore readily accepted by all Bedouin tribesmen. He inherited from his forefathers, the mystics, a fertile imagination full of dreams and fantasies. He wanted to live the carefree nomadic life of his ideals, advocating a Bedouin Hebrew tribe, lacking among the Jews: 'Jewish Bedouins are essential; without them full redemption will not come. We are at the Border of the Desert where hidden treasures may be found; we may even trace the lost tribes of Israel'.

Quite a number of Hebrew writers dealt with the same subject: Chemda Ben Yehuda (wife of Eliezer Ben Yehuda) in the story The Farm of Bnei Reichav, and Yehuda Burla in his story Without a Star. A Yemenite Jew, Aba Yichje, lost his entire family in the massacres by the Muslims and went out into the desert to search for his brothers 'The Heroic Jews of Chiber'.

Meir Wilkansky in his story, Change of Values, says: 'We wish to live like the Bedouins; we are brave; we will rove about in the breadth of our land and her deserts; we will dwell in tents and we will enlarge our borders. We will be like Bedouins, we will support

ourselves like them, we will dress ourselves like them, we will restore our ancient life style and return to nature. From these deserts will arise a new generation of prophets, the prophets of redemption Therefore, we are fascinated by this romantic aura, we yearn for our ancient prophets' (Ichezkel Chenkin and Yitzchak Ben Zwi also dreamt of a Jewish tribe, strong and courageous, in the deserts of Arabia.)

The romanticism of the Orient - the desire of the 'Lovers of Zion' to be friendly and become brothers with the Arabs, the search for Jewish Bedouins in the desert, the remnants of the ten lost tribes - was like a legendary solution to the precarious situation of the Jewish minority in the land of the Arabs.

The stories of the sentries were interwoven with legends of the desert. In one story, The Orphan, by Moshe Stavy, Benjamin the sentry relates the following incident: 'An old Sheikh of an ancient Bedouin tribe dwelt in tents behind the hills of Damascus. Enemies of the Sheikh encircled the camp ready to attack. The Sheikh went out with a peace proposal. Although wounded in the chest he put his sword in its sheath; his rifle he placed on the saddle. As a result everyone followed suit. The Jewish sentry from Chadeira acquired his horse from that Sheikh and so the horse, nicknamed 'The Orphan', came into Jewish possession.'

Of special significance are the narrations of the Chalutzim as shepherds and tillers of the ground. The desire to be shepherds, and thus conquer the mountains and the deserts for Jewish pasture, was very strong among the sentries. Israel Giladi, one of the first sentries in the north, was the founder of the Moshav Chemra (also known as the Village of Giladi). Among the villagers there was a strong yearning to return to the life of the shepherds as known from the Bible; a longing to identify themselves with nature, with the soil, and with everything around them. This inspired the Chalutzim in the colonies and the various settlements to learn the skill of pasturage from the natives of the land - the Arabs. Such is the theme of the story, Among the Dogs and the Shepherds, by Yehuda Yaeri. The main character

in the story is Absolom, a shepherd who worked with Zwi, the supervisor of the farmstead. These two went out to the Steppe of the Jordan to buy a herd from the Bedouins. They entered the tent of the Sheikh Chasan. According to the unwritten laws of hospitality offered by the Sheikh and enjoyed by them, they had to tell stories. Absolom knew many imaginative stories and delighted Chasan and his people, narrating them in his fine Northern Arabic. When the herd was finally acquired Absolom headed for the pastures accompanied by his beloved Yehudith. His heart was full of desire and excitement, and he conversed with the herd, using the language of the Arab shepherds. It often happened that the shepherd, like the sentry, had to defend Jewish possessions. Two Arabs, who spent the night in a cave with Absolom, were thieves. At night they stole the herd from him but he pursued them and reclaimed the herd, using a gun to do so.

We find similar incidents in other stories of the sentries. The story, The Herd was Returned, by an anonymous writer, tells of an attack by Arab robbers led by a so-called 'Sheikh' on the colony of Yavniel. They attacked the colony and took with them the herd of cattle. Mierke the sentry (Meir Chazanov) was wounded in the attack but courageously pursued the raiders, fired at them with his gun of fifty bullets, reclaimed the herd from the Arabs and brought it back to the colony.

Jewish shepherds, as is the case with Jewish sentries, are called by Arabic names. Pesach Bar-Adon tells, in his series of stories, In the Tents of the Desert, of Jewish shepherds among Bedouins. He himself was a shepherd and nicknamed by the Bedouins 'Abad El Aziz' or 'Aziz Ofendi'.

The racial interaction between Jews and Arabs was significant. There was, especially at the period of the early settlers, mutual respect as a result of the daily contact and similarity of interests; they shared the same hardships and were almost inseparable. In the story, The First Swallow, by Yehuda Burla, he relates the incident of an Arab woman from Iraq, a daughter of a well-founded and honourable family, who abandoned her nation, deserted her country, and went to live on a kibbutz.

The two stories by Moshe Smilansky, Avner and Yehuda, are good examples of the romantic sentiments of the first Jewish settlers in Eretz Israel.

Avner, the hero of the story by that name, wanted very much to see a Druze. He had heard that the Druze, particularly those who dwelt at the mountains of Lebanon and at the foot of Mount Hermon, were very strong, that they were good riflemen, that their anger in battle was terrible, and that they were pitiless; they punished wrongdoing mercilessly. One day Avner happened to come face to face with three Druze riders. Two of them tried to attack him but he was very courageous and struck at one of them with a whip. One of the riders, Abad Allah, seized Avner but Chemdan, the other rider, rescued him and carried him to the mountains of the Lebanon, after blindfolding him in accordance with Druzian custom. Although Avner was later released and returned to the colony he was unable to settle down to his plough and his herd. He longed for the mountains and for Chemdan who had befriended him, disappearing from the colony for days at a time in order to visit Chemdan.

In the story Yehuda two members of the Moshav, Yehuda and David, encountered Machamed, the leader of a gang. Machamed offered to guide them and their wagon safely through the mountains. He was true to his promise and demonstrated that even the leader of the terrorists could be gallant.

In Chavaga Naser, by Eliezer Smali, the story is told of Leizer, a beautiful, young, strong, giant-like Jew. On the way to the moshav he was attacked by two Arabs, the brothers Ibrahim and Mohamed. They intended robbing him but Leizer overpowered and bound them, taking them with him to the moshav. Ibrahim and Mohamed were astonished at the strength of Leizer and gave him the nickname 'Chavaga Nazer'. He in turn forgave them and made a peace treaty with them. Leizer loved nature, especially the river Jordan, where he finally met his death.

The hero of another story by Eliezer Smali, Change of Values, is Meir Wilkansky, a man brave in battle. He and two of the other Chalutzim repulsed an attacking Arab gang. Afterwards Wilkansky

shouted out, 'From people like myself and my two friends the country will be rebuilt'.

1.2 Stories relating to contact with Arabs

A number of tales describe vividly the impact on the Cholutzim when they came to the Land of the Bible and met the children of the Orient - the Arabs.

The author of Fever, Hebrew writer Joseph Loidor (who met with a tragic death in the disturbances in Yafah in 1921), exclaimed therein, 'Sun of my land, scorch me! blacken my skin like the skin of a child born and bred in the Orient!'.

In To the Galil, the author Moshe Smilansky describes his journey to the Galil. An Arab peasant told him: 'On Tisha Beav (the day when the first and the second Temples were destroyed, the first in 586 BCE by the Babylonians and the second in 70 CE by the Romans - both on the ninth day of the Hebrew month Av) a voice called from a cave in Galil, lamenting the destruction of the Temples'.

Smilansky, the romanticist, viewed the Arab tiller of the ground, the common Arab peasant, with respect and saw in him a worthy survivor from biblical times. He also felt that their blood was flowing in his own veins.

In the short, but charming, story Paths of the Upper Gallilee, by Yosef Aricha, an Arab shepherd is thus described: 'sitting on a rock, his gaze far away; a flute in his hand', forming an integral part of the Galilee and its exotic landscape. The shepherd whispers and utters, 'Chug'a', so enchantingly when he sees the writer approaching.

In the eyes of the Arabs the Jews are a foreign element, aliens who evoke curiosity, strangers exciting attention. It is very different with the Hebrew writers who see the Arabs as part and parcel of the land, and who endeavour to become better acquainted with them. They do

not yet see it as a face-to-face encounter with the sons of the Orient but as a casual meeting - by the way, accidental - the observation of such a meeting is sometimes in the nature of a casual brush or skirmish.

The travel stories in and around Israel are rich and describe often unexpected encounters with Arabs. In Among the Tribes of Arabia - impressions of a journey by Yehuda Burla, the journey to Transjordan where he was exiled - the author describes the city of Kark (the ancient biblical city of Keer in Moab). Life there is extraordinary and unique; he describes the exceptional moments of his stay in that city where life goes back to the biblical times of Amon and Moab.

At the time of the writer's sojourn the city was in mourning over the death of the 'Sheikh of Sheikhs', Kadar. Kadar did not yield to the Turks and so was held in awe and admiration by his fellow men. He was summoned to Damascus, where he was murdered. His people mourned and bewailed the death of their beloved hero: 'Young women stood in groups lamenting, one of the women uttered a rhyme which the others repeated after her many times'. The writer passed the mourners in public places and he felt, especially with the moon shedding its dim light upon them, that he witnessed a scene from ancient times, a ritual from times long past. The writer planned his escape from Kark where he had been exiled by the Turks. He had been befriended by an Arab, a man honoured in the city. They used to indulge in long conversations, especially about the relationship between Jews and Muslims, about the Bible and the Koran. Taking the advice of his Arab friend's wife, the writer disguised himself as a Bedouin, 'and his face was as black as soot'. His guides and protectors on the escape route were Bedouins of the Tribe of Kish (according to Arab tradition the tribe hails from King Saul, the son of Kish). The Arab host warned them that, if evil befell the writer, they would pay with their lives.

In the course of the journey they encountered robbers, and in the wilderness around the Dead Sea they met King Abdallah's kinsmen, dwellers of the Desert. The writer's fantasies are expressed: 'from a distance, high on the mountain tops, are visible

camels, so picturesque, so tall in their stature, creatures from another world, trotting so slowly, as if bordering our universe and the world beyond it'.

As the journey progressed they came across dark and gloomy tents, dwellings of the sinners and the cursed, kept in seclusion and isolation. 'They sat in a circle around a bonfire and looked from afar, as in a lair of desert animals.'

The party reached Hebron and, from there, Jerusalem. The scenery changed, the harsh desert giving way to shepherds and peasants.

To the Galilee, by Meir Wilkansky, is a short story in which the author describes the adventure of a group of young boys and girls marching from Petach Tikvah to the Galilee. Their attire is colourful, they wear decorated bonnets, and their spirits are high. They encounter Arabs who try to provoke a fight but all ends peacefully and they proceed happily to their destination - the Galilee. Near Hedeira they meet an Arab busy collecting melons in a field. He contrives to rob them. From Zichron Yaakov they proceed to Laum-al-Gamal (daughter of Solomon) and on into the Mountains of Ephraim, passing on their way Arab and Druze villages. We are introduced to village-dwellers who have 'such glorified faces, but so sombre, so hard like the surrounding rocks, and as gloomy and obscure as the majestic desert itself. Their eyes express frustration, sorrow, secrecy, and mistrust; their eyebrows conceal a great deal; they stare at us and laugh with a most frightening laughter; they poke fun at us, and everything is so terrifying in a surrounding of this desert and rocky wilderness'. Later they pass Arab railway workers and the writer is mentally critical and asks: 'What do savages have in common with railway lines?'

At night they camp near a small village opposite Tabor and are touched by the tender sight they see. 'Arab womenfolk are drawing water from a well, how proud and erect they are, how dignified and beautiful in the centre of a world of their own. Legendary princesses! A mysterious palace, or is it just a kingdom of robbers?'. They are

about to escape into a dream, into a fantasy, and then they set eyes upon a fearful looking Arab displaying a large knife. They flee hastily and find themselves in a Bedouin camp where elderly people sit around in a semi-circle, apparently a gathering, and the conversation flows freely. The climax of their journey is reached when they arrive at Beit Shaan whose inhabitants, according to legend, descend from the Philistines, from the lineage of Goliath. They are told that the village dwellers of Pekyin are Jewish fellahin, although Arabic in appearance and customs.

We learn a great deal about Arab society, Arab thinking, their aspirations, faults, and virtues, and the fabric of Arab life, from the travel stories.

Yardeni, in his story Bedouins, describes his visit to Mount Hermon, known to the Bedouin as 'Gebel Schich'. Yardeni describes an isolated grave in the shadow of a terebinth tree, which, according to legend, is the grave of Hosha, the Son of Allah. The Bedouin receive the writer warmly, showing him round their tents and pointing out to him the wide and special tent which serves as a school.

With masterly skill he describes a Bedouin wedding ceremony. The bride wears big earrings and rides on a white horse; she is buoyant and fearless as befits the bride of a Bedouin.

The common destiny of two nations - the Jews and the Arabs - who come face to face in a motherland held dear by both, is vividly described by two eminent Israeli Hebrew writers, Yakob Steinberg and Yosef Brenner. Their basic theme is the human situation of strangers, of rivals, claiming the same motherland. There is tension and mistrust in their apparent acceptance of each other. For long centuries the Arabs were connected with the land and for long centuries the Jews offered daily prayers not to be disconnected from the land of Zion. It is a painful situation, an agony emphasised by Yakob Steinberg in his poem, An Arab Song.

Yosef Brenner dramatises an evening stroll in Arab vineyards in his story, The Paths of the Vineyard. He feels very lonely while

strolling alone in Arab vineyards. The Arabs appear to threaten him; when he greets the Effendis (the Arab masters) they do not acknowledge his greeting and look at him angrily. But there is no other way - he has to pass them even if he feels insecure and ill at ease. His native homeland in Eastern Europe comes to his mind, awakening unpleasant memories, and he calls out, 'What is the difference between the hateful Lithuanians and Poles, and the devilish sons of the Orient? I'd rather associate myself with the first.' He later finds solace in a heart-to-heart talk with a more human type, an Arab labourer, and the dialogue between them gives the story direction. The Arab labourer, a mere youth of fourteen, reveals his real world to us. He works in a vineyard belonging to an Arab Effendi. His life is tragic. He is a young orphan left to fend for himself. His earnings, a meagre eight Grush a day, are shared with his younger sisters. While speaking with the youth the writer forgets the distinction between them, 'This is no politics'. He feels that there is harmony between them, a challenge to those who harbour intentions of enmity and jealousy. There are no machinations, just brotherly friendship and a touching alliance between an Israeli Hebrew writer and a pure-hearted, plain-spoken, good-natured Arab youth.

The story, Ahmed, by Yakob Steinberg, introduces Ahmed, an Arab youth about fifteen years of age, who is a hireling in a Jewish vineyard. He is a plain-spoken youth of Bedouin parents. The writer is sympathetic towards the youth and befriends him.

Another story by Yakob Steinberg, Hachag Mechefis BA, relates a meeting with an old Arab guard at the village Chefis, situated near Hedeira. The story is dominated by the masterly descriptions of the exotic scenery of the ancient city of Samaria, bringing to life the Biblical past.

The old Chag' (a title Chag' was conferred upon one who paid a visit to the Holy Muslim places, mainly the city of Mecca) is hostile to the writer, whom he regards as an intruder. He feels annoyed when the stranger touches the drinking well and, in fury, curses him. He is bitter and resentful towards the Jewish Chalutzim. Until their

coming he had felt firmly rooted in the land despite the fact that rulers had changed. He had not abandoned the land, even in crucial times. This is his home, but now he feels an attempt is being made to uproot him; his tranquility is being disturbed and he feels restless and uncertain because of interference from strangers. In contrast the young chalutz feels gay, almost intoxicated with joy. He has returned to the long-abandoned Motherland and was present at the birth of a new homeland, the land of Israel.

Nearly all the stories by Israeli Hebrew writers portraying Arabs and their likeness, capturing the most revealing aspects of their lives, habits, customs, and feelings, are hinged around the encounters of the chalutz, the Westerner, with the primitive dwellers of the land, so strange in their naturalness, so exotic and magical in their appearance and ways. At the same time, an attempt is made to bridge the two extremes of the West and the East.

Moshe Smilansky, the writer, is aware of the brighter side of the Arabs and describes them masterfully, with love and understanding. He came to know the Arabs intimately, working together with them in the colonies of Rishon Letsion, Hedeira, and Rehobot. The Arabs adored him and affectionately called him, 'Chavag'a Moosa'. He in turn sympathised with them, with their unfortunates and unprivileged, with their poor, wretched, homeless, oppressed and unwanted, and with their ill-treated wives. He describes the agony of a beautiful young girl, sold as a wife to an elderly selfish and cruel Arab, who treats her brutally and destroys her beauty, dignity, and youth.

In his first captivating story entitled, A Sketch from Arab Life, and subsequently called, Latifa, Smilansky relates to us the sequence of two meetings with Latifa, the young and beautiful daughter of an Arab Sheikh. This nostalgic story opens with the writer's admiration for Latifa's beauty and he exclaims, 'The one who has not seen the eyes of Latifa has not ever seen such beautiful eyes!'. Latifa, aged fourteen, erect, graceful, agile, vivid, so strikingly beautiful, made a strong impression on the youthful writer, Chavag'a Moosa.

He suggests to Latifa that, should she be converted to Judaism, he would marry her. This, to Latifa, is an inconceivable idea! It is unthinkable! 'My father would kill both of us!' she retorts.

The second part of the story consists of the subsequent tragic meeting of the writer and Latifa: Latifa, so haggard, wasted and shrunken in appearance, almost beyond recognition; she looks at the wife of Chavag'a Moosa and envies her. Tears appear in her eyes

The title of yet another story by Smilansky is Mohamed. A famine prevails in the south of the land. Prayers for rain are not answered. The Bedouin of the South have no other choice than to wander North with their tents and their meagre possessions. They are not welcomed by the inhabitants of the North who are fearful of robbery and violence. However, the Jews of the Moshavot show compassion towards the starving Bedouins. Mohamed, a youthful Bedouin, becomes a vineyard hand and Chavag'a Moosa is very friendly towards him. In a warm and sincere manner Mohamed tells Chavag'a Moosa about the sufferings and deprivations of the destitute Bedouins during their stay in the South while the famine was raging. The mighty Bedouin can conquer almost anything, but they cannot dominate nature!

Another impressive story by Smilansky is Mavruch. Mavruch, a Bedouin negro, is the hero of the story. He started life as a slave and, upon being released from bondage, marries a maid servant, a negress like himself. Mavruch pitches his tent on a hillock next to a Jewish settlement. He earns a poor livelihood from the sale of dung, selling it as fertiliser to the vineyard proprietors.

Smilansky, who is always ready to open his heart to the poor, becomes friendly with Mavruch. As the story continues a new protagonist enters, an orphan peasant girl. Defying her guardian she flees, and the writer finds her hidden in his vineyard. Her sad story unfolds. Being compelled to live with her guardian-redeemer, she was subjected to his whims. Her young lover had been imprisoned to prevent him from communicating with her. Bewildered and confused by the chain of events, she escapes. The writer, in a predicament how to solve the unfortunate

situation, turns to his friend, Mavruch. Mavruch agrees to shelter the girl until the storm subsides and her lover is freed. Gradually, Mavruch himself develops a passion for the girl, and when her beloved claims her Mavruch firmly refuses to let her go. Chavag'a Moosa intervenes and Mavruch unwillingly obeys, but the mutual friendship between the writer, Smilansky, alias Chavag'a Moosa, and Mavruch is ended. After this painful incident Mavruch and his family abandon the North, never to return. By a twist of fate, thirty years later, the writer meets Mavruch's eldest son, whose father has advised him not to trust Chavag'a Moosa!

Nearly all the other Israeli Hebrew writers, although desiring to understand the Arab mind and Arab problems, were suspicious of them.

The Lamentations of the Jewish Daughters of Chatzavia is a short story by Eliezer Smoly, which relates the experience of the writer who, while hiking, gets caught in torrential rain. He finds shelter with a Druze family and, although he is welcomed with extreme hospitality, cannot overcome his feelings of dread and apprehension. His host suggests that the visitor spends the night in their tent. 'You will sleep here tonight and tomorrow you'll return to the Kibbutz; do not be afraid, we will not kill you; Druzes do not eat human flesh.'

1.3 Customs of the Arabs

Many of the customs of the Arabs, especially those of the nomadic Bedouin, have remained unchanged for centuries. Desire and lust, violence and robbery, the frustrations of the womenfolk, love, jealousy, blood redemption, captivity, victimizations, deception, injustice, and the fascinating oriental life itself, constitute the backbone and dominant features of the various short stories of Israeli Hebrew writers. They are a reflection of two different cultures, the West and the East, and depict the doubts, perplexities, and tensions which cannot be ignored or shaken off. The portrayal itself is real in depth and scope, leaving nothing to imaginative interpretation. All stories indicate skill and mastery, deep knowledge and understanding of the customs, traditions, and life-style of the Arabs.

The short story, The Fig Seller, by Chemda Ben Yehuda, centres around the tragic Chazan, skinny from hardship and deprivation, who had lost both an eye and an arm. He travels daily with his merchandise, a large basket of ripe figs, from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. The Jewish children of the city's suburb, Machanei Yehuda, eagerly await his arrival and, surrounding him, bargain and barter over the price of his figs. Chazan pours out his heart to them, bewailing his bitter existence. Fate has been cruel to him. Disaster has followed disaster. His troubles started when his wife Fatima died. His eldest son Mohamed was taken to the army and was never heard from again. His other son, Ebraim, once known in the whole neighbourhood for his heroic exploits and great courage, was struck by blindness and had to be led from village to village begging for alms. Chazan's only comfort in life is Nehiva, his young daughter aged five. She helps him to gather the figs and waits each day for his return. For a few days Chazan fails to bring his figs to Jerusalem. The Jewish children, his regular customers, are puzzled. When he appears again he looks most tragic. He is grieved beyond consolation and cries a lot. His last hope, his beloved daughter Nehiva, was accidentally killed while helping her father to collect figs. The children share his grief and try to cheer him up. Nehiva is buried in a cave near the grave of the Biblical Rachel.

The story, An Incident with Two Camels, by Aharon Reuveni, concerns Ahmed and his two camels. The one is strong and big and can carry heavy loads with ease. The other, by contrast, is lean and small, and not much use to Ahmed, who transports oranges from Rehobot to Jerusalem. Leizer, his Jewish friend, owns an orange-grove. Before the Second World War all was well and peaceful and Ahmed was happy with his lot in life. Then the war breaks out and everything changes radically, and Ahmed and his camels are soon caught up in the war machine. Three times in succession Ahmed escapes from the army and is imprisoned for desertion in the Yaffau Prison. He even manages to run away from prison. He is pursued and his precious big camel taken from him. His compensation, a handful of paper money, is soon swallowed by the pathetic looking small camel, and so circumstances become more and more aggravated.

Another touching story by Moshe Smilansky, Abu-Al'Kalev, centres around an orphan youth, an Ethiopian, whose father had been sold as a slave in Egypt. When Effendi, his master, released him from bondage he became a shepherd and so settled in an Arab village, where he had no friends and was constantly humiliated and ridiculed because of his black skin. He used to conduct a mute conversation with his only friend, a white mongrel dog. When he could endure it no longer he left the village and joined wandering Bedouins, who did not mind his physiognomy and accepted him as one of themselves, as they were all 'Sons of the Desert'.

Moshe Smilansky also wrote Chutan, in which the main character is an extremely ugly Arab. He is so ugly that he is likened to a camel, but, unlike the camel, he has a beautiful nature. He is unfailingly magnanimous and compassionate, patient, kind, and forgiving, a remarkably good man who was unlucky enough to choose the wrong wife. At the age of thirty-five he buys himself a wife. He pays a thousand franks for her. Soon he begins to experience sorrow instead of happiness. His wife is selfish and cruel. She doesn't love her husband but humiliates, scorns, and despises him. In spite of the humiliation and although inwardly shattered and disillusioned, Chutan submits silently to his bitter lot. His marriage ends when his wife leaves him with their only daughter Halima.

The story, The Black Ahmed, by Yakob Churgin, is thoroughly tragic. Ahmed is hideous in appearance, being full of scars and tattoos, and rather apelike. He lives in the street, both summer and winter. Everyone ignores him, turning their backs on him and avoiding his gaze. Some consider him to be a devil, a sorcerer, others that he is a scoundrel and thief. They pelt him with stones until they learn to accept him as one accepts a street dog. But Ahmed is not a thief or an adventurer; on the contrary, he is kind, brimming over with goodness and love. He sits alone on the banks of the river or on a hillock and, although very hungry, croons and sings, accompanying himself on an old harp. He knows such wonderful melodies, sentimental and romantic, all beautiful folk songs. In his day-dreams he runs away from the bitter reality of his gloomy existence. In his visions

he sees the mountain as an old Sheikh, sitting down to rest after a tiring journey. He sees riders galloping by rapidly, swinging their swords and singing war songs. Instead of a palm tree he sees a young lady, 'so erect and proud'. He evades people because he is afraid of them but the children appreciate him and demonstrate their concern for him. A Jewish orphan, aged seven, becomes very attached to Ahmed and they become firm friends until Ahmed, in his confusion, seizes the boy and runs away with him. Furious civilians and policemen chase and catch Ahmed, but on his way to jail he is stoned to death.

In the equally sad story by the writer Y Churgin, The Mosque Keeper, we read of the sufferings of Hilmy, the caretaker of the sacred Mosque, who had such a miserable life that death comes as a relief. The first blow to strike him is total blindness. Although shattered by the tragedy, he endures his misfortune stoically; Allah is manifesting his power over him! The women of the neighbourhood are convinced that the blind Hilmy can clearly see Allah. In spite of his blindness, Hilmy continues to summon worshippers to prayer, but more misfortunes are in store for the unfortunate man. His marriage to his wife, Zaharah, is wrecked. When Hilmy becomes blind she begins plotting to kill him at night, but disappears when Hilmy discovers her conspiracy, taking their only child, a beloved son Chemed, with her. It is very painful for Hilmy to be separated from his treasured Chemed but, although tormented and bewildered he accepts his cruel fate, regarding his latest misfortune as the express will of Allah. Hilmy never asks for pity, neither complaining nor seeking sympathy, but remains stable in his trust in Allah. The fatal crisis hits Hilmy when he loses his voice and can no longer perform his duty of calling worshippers for prayers in the sacred Mosque. He is no longer needed and, feeling entirely forlorn, loses the will to live. For days he lies in a dark corner of the Mosque without moving, refusing to touch the food that the benevolent women bring for him. He begins to see visions; his beloved Chemed returns to him. The child touches his eyes and his sight is restored; he can speak when the child touches his throat. A few days later Hilmy is found dead in the sacred Mosque.

A most interesting series is the so-called Shepherd Narratives, in

which the heroes are simple-minded shepherds. The story, The House of the Uncle, by Moshe Smilansky, features Mahamed the Shepherd who, after losing a hand in a skirmish, tends to his flock whilst holding a staff in his remaining hand, resembling in his grandeur a Biblical shepherd of yore. J Shamai's narrative, Guma the Stupid, is full of depth and mystery in a world of echoing mountains. Guma suffers deeply when he loses his father and since then he knows only hunger and cold. He grows up weak and feeble both physically and mentally, unfit for any work and people ridicule him. He leaves his village and becomes a shepherd where, among the cattle and sheep, he is happy, feeling that life has a meaning. New strength grows in him and he is no longer lonely as Nature consoles him. The rocks become his confidants and he acquires a mystic power to cure sick animals. Sheikhs from the neighbourhood, hearing of his skill, bring their camels and donkeys to him to be cured of their diseases, but an untamed donkey kicks poor Guma and he dies from his injuries.

Then we have the story, Mantsur the Shepherd, by Pesach Bar Adoni. Mantsur, a lad, barefooted, dishevelled, hair unkempt and his clothes in tatters, has no grievances and does not complain. He is happy with his lot in life, and maintains that nothing is ever permanent; Good and evil - all goes by, so why worry and why be bitter?.

Surely it is not all that pleasant not to have a roof over your head and to be forced to sleep in the street on rainy, wintery nights, when your hands and feet become numb from cold. Mantsur however is not angry or despondent as his comfort is not all that important to him. After the winter the spring follows, then the summer. His spirits are always high and never fail him in spite of all the discomfort he has to endure in life and he is never envious; life for him is meaningful. And there goes the chieftain out hunting, well protected against the chill and drizzle. Servants are behind him, carrying the hunting kit. He lives a life of luxury and extravagance, but his many commitments and worries rob his soul of peace and his body of rest. 'In the name of Allah! I will not change with the Chieftain', Mantsur declared. He would not change his hard life, which he has accepted happily, for a life of ease and pleasure. He has no ambitions for great things in

life, his only ambition being to find for himself a good wife who will be kind to him.

Mantsur cannot read or write and he doesn't know how to pray; his way of talking is simple in the extreme and his vocabulary is as limited as his thoughts. Yet he is endowed with natural talents. He knows how to play on a flute most masterfully and his singing is enchanting. His fellow shepherds feel an admiration for his musical qualities. Lying alone next to his flock he pours out his heart in thin, delicate, and tender melodies.

The third cycle consists of stories about the villagers; in the fields and at home, their loves, hates, religious beliefs and superstitions, as well as their reaction to legal matters, to the accepted legal system - the divine judgement for disobedience and Allah's blessing for faithful observance of the Koran.

The story, The South, by Moshe Stavy, describes vividly the official task-masters and revenue collectors arriving at the village to collect taxes from the impoverished fellahin. Other stories about the villagers consist of legends, folk sayings, proverbs, allegories, while some are spoken by the animals who take on human qualities. Through them the wisdom of the Arab Nation is apparent.

Amongst other stories by Moshe Stavy we have the story, The Sheikh Hasan, who grows choice watermelons on a tract of a field not very far from the old city of Yaffah. He sells his merchandise in Yaffah and becomes very prosperous. This makes him overconfident and he forgets God and begins mocking at people, ridiculing them if they are not successful in their enterprises. Allah punishes him for his arrogance and every night some golden watermelons disappear. Hasan, determined to catch the thief, digs trenches around his field and the thief, a fox, is caught. The fox speaks in a human voice and pleads for mercy. Hasan is so impressed with his pleadings that he sets him free and after that, according to legend, all the foxes flee from the country and disappear for ever.

In a similar context is the story, The Two Donkeys of Eli, by Shlomo Tsemach. Eli possesses two donkeys and he uses them for transporting foods to villages in Syria and Israel. The main feature in the story is the clever discussion between the donkeys adopting human language - an imaginary story with a human moral.

The emphasis in reflecting Arab life by the Israeli Hebrew Literature is on inter-relationships between men and women, husbands and wives, children and parents, brothers and relatives, hatred and love, fidelity and infidelity. The following two stories afford us a fine example, as well as a portrait of Arab family life.

In the story, Sohila, Yakob Churgin describes the great love that Amin, son of Cheled, has for Sohila, a beautiful shepherdess. Sohila has no mother and although she loves her father, Abdu, is at loggerheads with her stepmother, Lotafia. The two women often quarrel and wrangle and even exchange blows. Sohila, however, does not return Amin's love, and in desperation he seizes Sohila by force so that she is obliged to marry him. Early in their marriage Chalil, one of the sons of Chusein-Abu Tsalah happens to visit the village. He arrives from America with a sizeable fortune and dressed in an elegant outfit. Sohila takes a liking to Chalil and they soon start to meet secretly. Amin discovers his wife's deception and hits her mercilessly, calling out in anger, 'For the sake of a handkerchief you sell your body to a traitor'. Faced with death, Sohila begs for mercy and forgiveness, but carries on meeting her lover.

In another story by Yakob Churgin, The Adventures of Chalil, Ahmed Abu Chalil lives in a village with his wife Omna and son Chalil. When he is old he decides to acquire a new wife. In one of the nearby villages he buys himself a second wife, a young girl Zarifa. Naturally, Omna, his first wife, is disturbed and worried lest Zarifa becomes the chief wife and is entrusted with the key to the food storeroom, a symbol of status and recognition. Her fears are unnecessary. Ahmed devises a scheme whereby Omna remains in her unique position as the first wife, and Zarifa is to look after the cattle, draw water, collect thorns and dry branches for the fire in the kitchen, and also to sell vegetables and chickens in the nearby city.

The wise and fair distribution of duties by Ahmed does not, however, lessen the hatred of Omna for Zarifa, and to add to Zarifa's misery, Chalil the son of Omna, mistreats his young stepmother. Zarifa is very sad and lonely. She longs for her home in the village, for her parents and the boyfriend she left behind.

Chalil is in love with a girl from the city but her father objects to the marriage as Chalil is neither rich nor knowledgeable. Meanwhile Chalil's hatred for Zarifa changes to infatuation for her. Zarifa encourages his love and they soon engage in illicit love-making. Soon Ahmed's suspicions are aroused and he decides to buy a wife for Chalil. He chooses the daughter of Cheled Abu-Latif but Chalil rejects her and persuades Zarifa to elope with him. Zarifa, however, is sorry and, changing her mind, decides to return to the village. Chalil pursues her and, upon catching her, is about to strangle her when Ahmed and the other villagers catch up with them. Chalil escapes into the mountains and is never seen again.

All the short stories by the Israeli Hebrew Writers describing their Semitic cousins, the Arabs, contain many legends but also firmly rooted traditions, forming a colourful picture and presentation of their mode of life. As already mentioned Moshe Smilansky is the foremost writer in that field, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Most of these fascinating stories stem from the last years of the Turkish rule in Palestine and the first years of Jewish immigration when the foundation was laid for a future Jewish State. The desert was almost an independent State within the Ottoman Empire and had its own primitive order. The gun and the horse were dominant factors in deciding what was right or wrong. The sword was to judge thieves and robbers. The desert was known as 'The Wild West' of the near orient, where violence and permissiveness prevailed.

It seems as if Smilansky needed this theme, this epic of Arab life, in order to capture the spirit of the land and its Biblical aroma. He sees the Arabs as the living link with the early culture of the orient and its historic events. They remind him of the earliest times in Jewish history, of the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Midianites, and

the Amalekites, their rituals and customs. The Bedouins, proud and stiff-necked, remind him of the tribal pride of the ancient Hebrews, the Arab love songs, of the Biblical 'Song of Songs': 'How beautiful you are, my dearest, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are like doves, your hair like a flock of goats streaming down Mount Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of ewes just shorn, which have come up fresh from the dipping; your neck is like David's Tower, which is built with winding courses'. The Arab woman, although regarded as a possession, as a property, is nevertheless a symbol of great love and adoration.

In the story, Ragiv, Smilansky describes a young Bedouin, a son of Mustafa the Sheikh. Ragiv is entrusted with the sale of corn in the city of Yaffa. The naive, unsophisticated Ragiv is impressed by all that he sees in the big city: ships that sail in the sea, the train that pulls, and pulls harder than all his father's camels; the women who walk in the streets, with no veil on their faces and who converse with men as their equals. Ragiv is very romantic and sentimental and is deeply in love with a Sheikh's daughter from a nearby village. His father, Mustafa, opposes the girl as she is not a Bedouin like himself and his son but 'a cursed Egyptian' despised and hated by the Bedouins. Ragiv does not defy his father, but remains sad and heartbroken, and being overcome by sorrow he dies young.

Another story by Moshe Smilansky is entitled Aysa. When Aysa was six or seven years old the folk in the village used to say: 'The devil himself sits in that girl'. And truly Aysa was indeed some sort of a devil in a human form. She challenged boys to a fight, and when she commanded, all obeyed. Aysa's father is a sick man, ailing, infirm, and poor. Aysa does not remember her mother. Aysa supervises the little hut and does whatever her heart desires. From the tender age of ten Aysa has been the breadwinner. During the harvest season she helps the reapers in the fields and also works in the Jewish vineyards. She has a happy disposition and often laughs out loud. The Village Elders frown upon her gaiety and remark: 'The devil laughs from her throat'. Aysa grows up exceedingly beautiful. At the age of fifteen she is given by her father in marriage to Abdallah, the son

of the village Sheikh. Abdallah is young, handsome and powerful, but base and wicked, treating people with contempt. The villagers curse him, calling upon Allah to punish him. A punishment is soon sent by fate; one misfortune following another. He is sent to serve in the army for a period of three years, leaving Aysa and his other wife, who he had subsequently taken for himself, in dire poverty. Aysa's rival goes to her brother but Aysa has nowhere to go as her father is old, poor, and has no home of his own. She begins working as a farmhand. Once she works in the fields of a very rich Sheikh, where the Sheikh's son sees her and falls in love with her, eventually enticing her from her husband. The villagers regard it as the penalty which Abdallah must pay for being haughty, roguish, and wicked, although they are deeply shocked by Aysa's betrayal.

Then we have the story, The Kiss of Death. Many years ago there lived a rich Sheikh whose name was Chalil. The divine wrath of Allah lay heavily upon his male descendants. When his sons came to the age of thirteen they were struck dead with the first kiss that they gave to a woman. This fate befell his eldest son, so brave and valiant, his second son, so wise and so noble, and also his third son. When his fourth son is born Chalil seeks the advice of a Darwish (Darwishim, Moslem Monks, who live a life of abstinence and self-denial). He advises Chalil to send away all the women from his tent, and pitch it far from the camp of the tribe but, alas, all is in vain. The boy grows and meets a woman in the field, he is captivated by her. He follows her, declares his love for her, and kisses her. The wrath of Allah claims his young life.

In yet another story by Moshe Smilansky, The Sheikh's Daughter, the style and plot are a reconstruction of the love story, Romeo and Juliet, in an Arabic version. Two families quarrel over the distribution of a track of land; they became arch enemies; Fatima, the daughter of the one family, is the fairest maiden in the district. Ibraim, the youngest son of the adversary, loves Fatima. When the women members of her family discover that Fatima is pregnant they know who her seducer is and, in anger, attack her with their pitchers until she dies.

Yehuda Burla is another Israeli Hebrew writer who understood the Arabs, describing them with compassion and respect. In the story, Without a Star, Abad tells the writer his rather sad life story, how he had been seized by a rival tribe, amid confusion, at the age of three. Abad grew up not being aware of his identity and origin. When a war broke out between the two hostile tribes Abad was fighting his own brothers and, by cruel coincidence, killed his own father. When he learned that tragic truth he felt like Oedipus. (Oedipus - son of Laius and Jocasta, King and Queen of Thebes who, because of an oracle foretelling that he would kill his father, was given at birth to a herdsman to be left to die of exposure. His life was spared and eventually he was adopted by the King of Corinth. When grown he left Corinth, the oracle having warned him that he would kill his father and marry his mother, and he believed the King of Corinth was his father. This prophecy was fulfilled.)

Arabs and their adoration for guns and horses

Yitzchak Shamai's story The Desert Sands, is concerned with the bravado of the tribesmen who are bordering the vast Desert, and with their horses, their proud possessions. They have their own national spirit and code of honour. The Mare of Mantsur is the pride of the whole tribe and the envy of the surrounding neighbourhood. Mantsur resists categorically and definitely the persistent offers of the Holy Sheikh of Mecca who wants to buy the mare; the Sheikh then arranges for the mare to be stolen.

In a similar context we have the story, Abdul Hadi, by Moshe Smilansky. Abdul Hadi possesses a wonder gun that never misses its target. A single shot has slain the large powerful bear that had held the villagers in fear and terror of their lives for many years. The wealthy Sheikh, who hears about this wonder gun, offers Abdul Hadi a large sum of money in order to become the gun's owner. Abdul Hadi refuses, even when he is threatened that his only son will be sent to the army. This threat is carried out. When the son returns from the army bringing with him a new modern gun, far superior to the wonder gun of his father, Abdul Hadi goes out at night and smashes his gun in anger.

The next few stories deal with the theme of vengeance and revenge. A life for a life, 'Gum' or 'Kum' is one of the basic customs among Arabs, whereby the family of a murdered member is to seek out the murderer and kill him. Nothing could ever erase the stain upon the honour of the family if the murderer is not dealt with accordingly. This is not just a deterrent against violence and crime, but an ancient and deep-rooted tribal practice. In the story, Redemption of Spilt Blood, by Pesach Bar Adon, Abu Kasam is still a child when his uncle is murdered by a member of his own tribe because of a feud. The murderer flees and can not be traced. They search for clues to his whereabouts, but in vain. Twenty years go by and the vengeance on the murderer is still not fulfilled. At last Abu Kasam finds the murderer and the rite of vengeance is carried out. When Abu Kasam rides over to Transjordan to take for himself a second wife, he encounters Osev, his uncle's murderer. Abu Kasam kills him instantly and so performs the act of revenge, delayed for twenty years. Amid great rejoicing Abu Kasam is acclaimed by his delighted family who make a feast for the occasion. To the feast come members of the slain murderer and eternal peace is restored between the two rival families.

The Blood Redeemer, a story by Moshe Smilansky, describes the incident when Sheikh Ibraim sees a bad omen in Heaven - a human hand, and from its fingers blood is dripping. The Sheikh prays to the side of the prophet's grave of Mecca, that he shall be delivered from the evil sign. After a while his son is about to marry the daughter of another chief. The bride is in love with her young uncle, but the wedding ceremony proceeds. During the gay wedding feast the bridegroom is accidentally killed by Chalil, the young uncle of the bride. All the guests are struck with panic, shouting, 'Gum' - Revenge! Among the guests is the Holy Sheikh Abu Rashid, revered by all. He suggests a compromise. A trial shall decide the fate of Chalil. Abu Rashid commands respect and a trial is arranged. It is decided that Chalil shall flee to Transjordan and remain there for ten years. The widowed bride shall go to the house of her in-laws to be to them a daughter in place of their slain son. The judgement seems acceptable to all and momentarily sweeps away most of the enmity of the bereaved family. A sacrificial feast follows attended by both

families. The verdict is carried out. It does not take long and Chalil goes back to the house of Sheikh Ibraim in disguise, to beg his forgiveness. Ibraim is prepared to pardon him and give him his daughter-in-law, Rasha, for a wife, but suddenly the image of the hand dripping blood from its fingers appears before his eyes. In a frenzy Ibraim kills Chalil and so fulfills the act of blood revenge.

In The Revenge of the Fathers, a story by Itchak Shamai, Nemar Abu Alshuarn of Shechem (Nablus or Neapolis in Northern Palestine) undertakes a pilgrimage with his men, alongside men from Jerusalem and Hebron, to the tomb of the prophet. There has been enmity between the leaders of the Arab communities of Shechem and Hebron - between Abu Alshuarn and Abu Faris. When Abu Faris is about to outwit his rival and enter the Mosque first, as he is seated on his horse with a flag in his hand, a terrifying disaster befalls him. Abu Alshuarn stops him, tears his flag and drives his sword into his heart. Abu Faris falls off his horse, dead. The murderer escapes into the desert, eventually reaching Cairo. It had been a brutal murder and the murderer ~~feels~~ feels remorse and that his whole life is destroyed. His conscience troubles him and he is afraid that the blood revengers will find him. Like a gnawing pain his sense of guilt torments him. He lives in a state of constant dread; he becomes confused. The sense of guilt worsens every day and he feels that he is doomed for ever. He longs for Shechem, his city, and his family. He yearns for a world which was now hopelessly lost, and out of despair starts to use hashish. This undermines his health and he lies about in a dream most of the time. During his hallucinations he sees the forefathers of his adversary from Hebron, whose flag he has ripped apart. At last he can suffer the agonies no longer; he buys a new flag and takes it to Hebron to offer it to the elders of the city, asking them to accept it as his guilt-offering. Fate, however, has overtaken him and before the brother of the murdered Abu Faris can reach him, Abu Alshuarn suffers a stroke and dies at the entrance of the Holy Mosque. And so, the forefathers of the slain Abu Faris take their revenge on him.

The writer Yitzchak Shamai was born and grew up amidst Arabs. He was fascinated by the exotic and mysterious manifestations of their

primitiveness. His skill in describing and portraying the Arabs is as masterly as that of Moshe Smilansky, but his approach is totally different to that of the latter. Smilansky's trend is to describe certain episodes of Arab life in conjunction with Jewish settlers, while Shamai represents Arab life independently.

The topic of blood revenge among Arabs appears in the dramatic presentation Allah Karim, by Levy Arieih Orioli (Orlof) also. Abdallah, the father of Ali, was murdered by some Bedouins in the mountains some ten years ago and his blood has not, as yet, been revenged. Ali has fallen in love with Naomi the Jewess. His whole life revolves around her, and he reveals all his secrets to her. He is saving money in order to buy the best weapon and revenge his father's murder. Naomi dissuades him from spilling blood and he is prepared to listen to her. He is, however, urged by his uncle, the saintly Abu Huadi, and he seeks out the murderer and revenges his father.

1.4 Arabs and Jews Vis-a-Vis Each Other

In most of the stories touching on Arab life, what comes to the fore is the strong wish to maintain peace and a state of friendly co-existence between one nation and another - between Jew and Arab. This motive of desired friendship is dominant in short stories by various Israeli Hebrew writers, for example, Smilansky, Yehuda Yaeri, Yehuda Burla, and others. Moshe Smilansky has been for years closely associated with the movement fostering Jewish-Arab friendship in Palestine. Apart from his numerous short stories he published many articles advocating close ties with the Arab neighbours. Yehuda Yaeri was an active member of a kibbutz and was very much taken up with the Messianic ideal of amity among nations.

Irrespective of the difference in their approach, all three writers had pursued the one goal, to foster good neighbourly relations between Jew and Arab. The story by Yehuda Burla, In Holiness, narrates the eagerness of Jews and Arabs in Jerusalem to live in harmony, to preserve peace, and even to take part in each others festivals.

In On the Threshold, by Moshe Smilansky, we read how a Jewish youth, an illegal immigrant to Palestine, is saved by the bold and courageous Abu-Ali, an Arab.

Yehuda Yaeri narrates in his story, The Nest of a Bird, how a young Jewish pioneer Mishka, 'The Pious', becomes firm friends with an Arab, Saad-Ibn-Salim, whom he met when they were both engaged as masons. Saad, the Arab, was an expert craftsman teaching the Jews of the Moshava the trade of masonry. When the time comes for him to leave the Moshava and return to his village he lingers on. His vitality, his skill of singing and dancing Arab national dances, endears him to all on the Moshava. His friendship with Mishka strengthens they become inseparable. Saad, tall and erect, Mishka, short and slightly bent, go everywhere together. When the First of May, The Worker's Day, arrived Saad asks Mishka, his friend, 'I do not understand, what kind of festival is the First of May? It is not a Jewish festival and not a Muslim festival; did anyone die on the First of May?'. Mishka explained that this is a workers' festival with no religious connection. That day Mishka and Saad undertake to blow up a rock with dynamite. Mishka is mortally wounded. Upon lifting up his friend from the ground Saad notices that Mishka had wanted to save a bird's nest that had been in the rock, and by trying to do so he has met his tragic death. Saad grieves over the death of his Jewish friend, exclaiming, 'He was a saint, a godly person!' The following year, when the workers ask Saad the meaning of the First of May, Saad replies sadly, 'The First of May is the day Mishka died!'

Another motif is the infrequent sexual love between Jews and Arabs. The authors, Judah Burla, Isaac Shami, and Nachum Yerushalmi, described the Jewish-Arab existence in the land of Israel towards the beginning of the century as one founded on good-neighbourliness and cooperation. Judah Burla, while dealing with such rare points of contact between the male oriental Jew and the Arab female, describes with visible affection the splendid qualities of the Moslem woman's ardent soul that knows love and suffering, as when he writes of the women of the Tribe of Ezra. In his portrayal of the Arab woman, Shafiqua, the beloved of Rachamo, in his story, The Struggles of Man, one senses something of the charm and compassion of Ruth, the Moabitess.

Markado, the Ass Driver, by Nachum Yerushalmi, is a story of the life of the Sephardic Jews in Hebron during the last years of the Turkish rule. The Jewish minority in Hebron lives undisturbed in a 'ghetto' surrounded by Arabs, guarding its religious autonomy and the customs of Israel, while at the same time maintaining good relations with the Arab inhabitants of Hebron. Gemel Effendi is the son of the Sheikh 'Abd al Hafiz, who was one of the chief watchmen and overseers of the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron. By means of this activity, which Abd al Hafiz had inherited by virtue of 'ancestral acquisition', he acquires, in the course of time, great honour and much wealth. In the environs of Hebron the Sheikh owns whole villages which are regarded as his private property. Almost every year the villagers bring him, as a gift from one of the villages, a beautiful young virgin as a wife. And each year the Sheikh marries anew and observes seven days of joyous festivity and feasting in the market place in Hebron, to which he invites a multitude of fellahin from all his villages. At night the guests dance the wild 'debka'. The unruly shouts of the dancers penetrate the walls of the sleeping Ghetto, awakening the Jews in alarm from their sleep. However, on hearing the sounds of the debka they are pacified, saying to themselves, 'It appears that the Sheikh 'Abd al Hafiz is marrying again.'

The Sheikh has many sons and daughters and thus the number of his grandchildren grows until their old grandfather can no longer distinguish between them, or even know them by name. At the time of his old age all the sons born to him by his young wives begin to die one after the other. On the advice of one of the old dervishes, who once chanced to come to the Cave of Machpelah, the Sheikh decides to circumcise, by means of a Jewish circumcision and in accordance with Jewish custom, the next son to be born to him. The remedy is effective and the child, Gemel, circumcised on the Sheikh's request by the sage Shabbtai, remains alive. From then on friendly relations prevail between the house of the Sheikh and the house of the sage Shabbtai. Every Passover Eve the sage sends unleavened bread to the house of the Sheikh and, in return, the Sheikh reciprocates by sending to the sage's house at the termination of the festival, loaves of bread and slices of Hebron cheese, the highest quality in all the land. In addition, El-Regina, the daughter of the

sage, Shabbtai, on the day of Purim, sends to the house of the Sheikh, gifts of sweetmeats made by herself, and receives in return produce of the vineyards, raisins, pressed figs, and nuts. During the remainder of the festivals, at appointed times of the Jews and Moslems, the sage and the Sheikh visit one another and bless one another with the blessing, 'Let there be peace each year!'. Most of the errands to the house of the sage are carried out by the boy, Gemel, the child born in the Sheikh's old age and whom he loves very much, sending him to Jerusalem to complete his studies. Gemel's growth in the capital city influences his manners and customs greatly, and as well as using the French language, the Sheikh's son adopts the European way of dress.

The Sheikh acquires for his son an eleven year old wife, from among the girls of the city, as well as a big house in the centre of the city. But Gemel Effendi inwardly despises the little, empty-headed peasant girl that was given to him against his will and secretly dreams of having a passionate Egyptian woman as a bride. From the moment that he sees El-Regina and hears her singing to her beloved Markado, an Arab mo'el song filled with lyricism and the yearning of love, he begins to visit the house of the sage very frequently. Whenever Gemel Effendi enters the narrow ghetto all the girls of the ghetto are aware of him because of the strong scent of perfume that emanates from the well-groomed son of the Sheikh. El-Regina is aware of the impudent desire of Gemel Effendi for her, and eludes him. The son of the Sheikh arranges a loan for the sage Shabbtai, who is in financial distress. One night, when the sage and his daughter are accompanying Gemel Effendi, their guest, through the narrow alleys of the ghetto, the son of the Sheikh attempts to seize El-Regina by force and to kiss her. But a chance happening saves the situation. At that moment Markado, the ass driver, passes by them with his animal, without noticing them, and El-Regina is able to free herself from the arms of the Arab and run home. The son of the Sheikh composes an Arab couplet: 'Even if the foal will flee, yet will she surely return to her crib', for indeed the sage Shabbtai has signed a promissory note, mortgaging his house to Gemel Effendi.

Yitzchak Shami, born in Hebron and steeped in Oriental culture, was well acquainted with the Levantine people: beggars and mendicants, dervishes and sheikhs, men enslaved by their lusts and passions, dulled and befogged by hashish and card and dice games, who at times and without reason break into a dance designed to invoke delusion and fearsome fantasy. Among these a Jewish soul can sometimes be led astray and the clash between them can be shocking in its tragic consequences. In his story, A Father and his Daughters, about the life of the Jews in Damascus, Yitzchak Shami emphasizes the passive attachment of the Oriental Jews, and particularly their daughters, to the sensual, unenlightened Arab environment.

The story opens with a description of the relations of the sage Zvi with the Arab Sheikh. The sage Zvi leaves his home for seven years in order to collect a dowry for his daughters, Jemila, Tira, and Rosa, but when he returns home he finds them immersed in the mire of urban Arab prostitution. 'Tira was sitting on a silken carpet surrounded by cushions in a posture of licentiousness, plucking a harp, while watching Jemila perform an undulating dance to the rhythm of the muted tappings of the drum in the hands of Abu Salim. Her apple-like breasts protruded from under her red silken gown while the spectators burst out in a wild shout and tarbushim were thrown to the ceiling and the floor. Chavajim and Effendim tore out their purses and threw them at the feet of the dancer.' When the sage Zvi, sees what is happening in the house of recreation he falls upon Jemila, his daughter, hitting her angrily and trampling her underfoot.

In the drama, Allah Karim, by Levi A Arieli, Jews meet Arabs in a dramatic confrontation of alienation and animosity, which ends with the murder of the Jewish watchman. The author of the play points out that 'the play was produced in one of the coastal towns in the land in 1905'. The romantic plot of the drama is centred around the love-games of a member of the 'commune', Naomi Shatz, a Jewish girl who has immigrated from Russia, with a young Arab pedlar, Ali, 'with the pride and strength of a wild ass and of a distinguished birth'. The traditional obligation imposed upon Ali, to implement the custom of the blood-feud against the murderers of his father, Abdullah, who had

been murdered ten years earlier by the Bedouins in the mountains of Nablus, becomes the central element of the love game at a time when Naomi holds up to ridicule this hallowed custom. Abu Huadi, Ali's uncle and one-time chief of the dervishes, is compelled to open a confectionery shop and to profane the worship of Allah and the observance of the precepts of the Koran through despicable business dealings. He remembers by gone days when the dervishes would go about in the villages, being honoured in the homes of the Sheikhs, and relating miracle stories about the 'holy Haj', Abu Halil 'who by word of mouth would transform a lump of salt into a piece of sugar', and if a Jew came to parley with the Sheikh in matters of business, the dervishes would thrash the Sheikh's flesh with the briars of the field, 'and the polluted one would know what it means to profane the holiness of the moment'. Now times are changed. The gates are closed to those who seek after the word of the prophet. The Sheikhs withhold the best of their flocks for the Jewish merchants. Ali wishes to draw near to the Jews and can even speak haltingly in their language.

At the first meeting between Naomi and Ali in the residence of the 'commune' of the pioneers, the Jewish girl from Russia experiences a feeling of romantic excitement in the presence of the exotic, oriental charm which pervades the character of the beautiful Arab lad, and she addresses Ali as 'Allah Karim' (after the Arab pedlar's call in the street). But after that Naomi commences the love game, and requests Ali to take her to the hills so that she can be present at the implementation of the blood feud. Ali refuses and then Naomi asks him to bring her the vertebrae of the Bedouin, for 'she knows how to make beautiful games with them'. Eventually Ali is caught in the love game and, at their second meeting, he suggests to Naomi that she go with him to the hills. She continues with the game and demands that he give her 'a horse and sword, and a bridle of gold', but Ali is only ready to give her 'a bridle of iron'. Naomi gives vent to her wild imagination: 'and the horses will carry me above the villages and hills, above the clouds....'. Ali is more realistic, he will ride with her 'on the ground', and when she proposes as a condition by which he might prove his love for her, that he cancel his journey to the mountains of Nablus, that he forgive his father's murderers, then Ali

is insulted and flees from her. After a while he again appears in the residence of the 'commune' to snatch Naomi away forcibly. Naomi can protect herself, however, and even threatens him with a loaded revolver which is hidden nearby. She continues to pretend and invites Ali to stroll with her by the seashore. Ali, who understands that she is deriding his love, draws his sword and is about to kill her when she again draws out her revolver and says to him: 'Your revenge you wished to sell for the price of love. But I will not give my love to a man from whose garments the smell of the grave emanates and whose lips always jabber only the names of the dead'.

She wounds him with his own sword and after that wipes off his blood, and all this only to convince him that he should not regard her as an Arab woman, whose face is covered by a veil, and whose status in the eyes of the men is as the status of a maidservant.

A secondary motif of the plot of the play is the serious clash between Shmaryahu Fogel, a watchman of the orchards and member of the 'commune', and the Arabs. One night he slaps an old fellah on the cheek and strips the abbayahs (Arab cloaks) from some Arab shepherds and, taking their herd captive, demands that they pay a ransom to the owner of the orchard into which they have broken. He is of the opinion that 'the Arabs are the most potential element in the world for the realization of anarchism'. When Abu Huadi and Mustaph enter the residence of the 'commune' to ask for water, Fogel attacks them angrily and with hatred, and speaks insolently towards them: 'All you Arabs are hypocrites, sycophants, from the Sheikh down to the last of the hooligans, you are all thieves and robbers'. He threatens to kill the Arab thieves should he come across them in the orchard. To Abu Huadi he says: 'Five armed savages from your suburb attacked a poor and downtrodden wayfarer on the crossroads - didn't such a thing happen two weeks ago? - and they stripped him of his clothes and robbed him of his money. This is all your Arab heroism amounts to! You are only fit to do a deed such as this'. And Abu Huadi answers him: 'In bygone days the sons of my people knew well how to pay their debts to impudent and arrogant speakers such as yourself'. At a meeting of the dervishes it is related that the son of Abu Ibrahim, one of the

dervishes, has been wounded by the Jewish watchman (referring to Fogel) and this deed arouses the dervishes against the Jews. They threaten with their fists and are furious. One dervish reminds his friend: 'Apparently you have forgotten, Haj Joseph, that they too have famous heroes in all the vicinity'. Mustaphah adds oil to the fire; he relates how the Jewish watchman vilified the venerated and holy Sheikh Abu Huadi. The hatred of the dervishes towards the Jews grows stronger: 'Whether it be a business enterprise in the city or a fertile parcel of land - you can already hear the sound of the ringing of their money - they came and oppress our Moslem brethren by making them work with rigour'. But one of the dervishes admits: 'In consequence the Jews are diligent and wise in every work and enterprise'.

The wounded shepherd, son of Abu Ibrahim, who was Ali's cousin, dies of his wounds. The dervishes remind Ali of the blood feud. Ali attacks Fogel and strikes the watchman on the back of the neck with his sword and kills him.

CHAPTER 2

The sober attitude towards the Arab threat

2.1 Introduction

The Arab problem or the Arab question, is a topic which occupied the minds of only an isolated number of Hebrew authors during the Twenties and Thirties, such as Y H Brenner, Jacob Rabinowitz, Jacob Shternberg, L A Ariyali, A Z Rabinowitz, M Smilansky, and Nathan Agmon (Bistrizki) and, here too, only to a limited extent. Here and there in their writings there emerge passages which raise questions and doubts regarding the future of the Arab-Jewish partnership in the land. This followed the awakening of the Arab national consciousness and was to arouse the Jews in the land from their romantic illusions. There was also a natural tendency of withdrawal on the part of the Arabs in the presence of the changes which the Jews had brought about in material and spiritual matters, and which created conflicts and constituted a kind of undermining threat to their existence. During the days of the Second Aliyah such problems as the conquest of the land for the Jew and the conquest of labour for the Jewish workers arose. In the veteran settlements there were Jewish farmers who preferred Arab labourers as a cheap, effective, and exploitable work-force, at the expense of the 'intelligent' Jews (bookmen and graduates of Universities and Seminaries) who were not accustomed to the work of the land and whose pioneering fervour far outweighed their strength and ability.

Problems such as ownership of land, competition between Arab and Jewish labourers, and the alienation of the Jewish farmers from their Jewish worker brethren (and thus the pleas for the proximity of the Jewish farmers to the Arab fellahin as a remnant of the ancient Biblical way of life) - all created complex relations and enflamed hostile passions between the two peoples. The viewpoint held by Hebrew writers regarding these problems gave rise, of itself, to a more critical and realistic approach in relation to the Arabs - the first signs of a so-called problematic approach (which characterizes the later Israeli literature in relation to the subject). The existence of the Arabs in itself is not fundamental, but secondary in relation to the problems and struggles of the Jewish Yishuv. A description

of the Arabs is provided only indirectly, in an episodic manner. The Arabs appear as a factor against which the Jewish Yishuv pits itself, a rival and competing factor, like a part of the strange and hostile landscape, as a fount of envy of the Jews and, at times, as a cause for their feelings of remorse and guilt towards it, as an expression of detachment and strangeness of the Jews in the land and, finally, as a threatening physical factor against the existence of the Jewish minority in the Land of Israel.

2.2 The Arab Question in the Settlement Stories

Joseph Klausner, one of the most prominent scholars in modern Hebrew Literature, in his article 'Evidence for the Romantic Influence of the Arab character on the literature of Eretz Yisrael' (published in *HiSyiloah*), was opposed to the romantic approach of those authors of Eretz Yisrael who published graphic pictures of Arab life in the journals, (*HaOmer* and *HaShiloah*), as well as to the vast number of Arab words which these writers employ when they come to depict the life of the inhabitants of the settlements: 'If some Jew in some way resembles a Bedouin, if he can ride a horse and shoots a rifle, and wears an *Abbayah*, this alone can invoke in writers of Israel a supreme admiration. If a Jew shows a wild spirit of heroism through which he implants in the hearts of the Arabs a feeling of respect towards him, our writers cannot praise him sufficiently when coming to describe him. And with what strange pleasure they depict every Jew of Eretz Israel who speaks Arabic and resembles an Arab'.

Joseph Haim Brenner, who was gloomy and pessimistic in his attitude to the Arabs, and who almost did not believe relations of brotherhood and peace between the two peoples were possible, derided the romantic and optimistic stories of Moshe Smilansky who, on the other hand, believed in a political solution to the Arab question through peace and understanding. And indeed Smilansky did see the Arab reality through a veil of romanticism, unlike his stories about the life of the Jewish settlement, which are most realistic.

In his novel, Hadassah, which encompasses the social-national

problems of the Jewish Yishuv during the days of the Second Aliyah, Smilansky tells of the return of Kaplan from Jaffa to the settlement, 'Givah' (Rehoboth). On his way he is suddenly confronted by a Bedouin riding on a horse and wrapped in a black abayah, who demands money. The Bedouin lashes Kaplan, with a whip, across his face, neck, and head. Kaplan thereupon attacks the rider, bites his leg, and is again struck. Smilansky's reaction regarding the character of Kaplan is mainly sentimental, but a feeling of sobriety is not lacking: 'To strike him here, in his land, a few steps from his settlement? A sound of bitter weeping burst forth from his mouth.' The Jewish farmers provide work for Jews knowing full well that these will not leave the settlement should there be an attack by their Arab neighbours. And indeed the Arabs attack the settlement; the Arab workers flee, whereas the Jewish workers remain. And here Smilansky touches on the moral problem regarding the Arabs. In the heart of Luria, one of the labourers, are awakened feelings of remorse and guilt towards the Arabs: 'My soul moans for them, their faces were so pained when they turned to go from us - it seemed to me as if something precious and holy was stolen away from them - is it impossible not to touch their land? - cruel is this struggle for survival - it turns out that we, the Hebrew labourers, are coming more and more to supplant those who have already been supplanted by our brethren the farmers. Jewish wealth has removed the Bedouin far from their land, and Jewish labour must drive them from their work. There is much cruelty in that which we have done today'. Brodesky, the revolutionary from Russia, who left the settlement for Jaffa, states definitely that the farmers incited the Arabs against the workers. The men in the settlement jest: 'Does Brodesky propose to set up a barricade against both the Arabs and Bourgeoisie, or with the cooperation of the Arabs against the bourgeoisie, who will not defend themselves from the Arabs?'. Amnon, son of the farmer, is of the opinion that the root of the animosity lies in the fact that 'in the big settlements they are accustomed to beat the Arabs without cause or justice - and the Arab hates an unjust beating - although it is correct that the Arab despises one who is beaten - and understands only the language of force'. Kaplan, who was wounded in an attack, is the most sober: 'the custom practised by many of the settlers to relate to the Arab as if he were a half-person, is a bad and ugly custom, and is bound

to bring harm to the settlements - but this is not the reason for the hatred of the Arabs - the reason is much deeper. The Arabs hate us in the same way that every nation hates any other nation that comes to occupy a place in its midst - even if the new nation brings blessing to the old, this in no way weakens the hatred of the latter'.

A similar topic is to be found in the story, The Decree is Annulled, by Alexander Ziskind Rabinowitz (AZ"R) which describes a colony 'Beth Yoel' which has been 'purged' of Jewish workmen. The farmer, R' Kalman, has no liking for Jewish workmen and only employs Arabs: 'He went out in the morning and Ahmad and Mohammed were waiting for him, paying him great respect and calling him 'hawaja', from all of which he derived a strange pleasure, much like the pleasure of a squire before whom his servants stand with bended heads'.

Also in the story, Ben Azzai the Yemenite, by Levi Ariyali, this topic is repeated: 'the cattle-sheds of the settlement were full of Arabs, their wives and children and all their rags - those children of nature'. The Arab welcomes his Jewish master with a good-morning blessing with a laying of the hand on heart and brow, outwardly permeated with servility, and with disrespect and conceit from within'.

The 'colonialist' masters (the Jewish farmers) sensed this, nor was the fact hidden from them that these Arab labourers were in league with the thieves and robbers who attacked their flocks and plundered their granaries and orchards from time to time. 'Vulgar creatures - a nation that resembles an ass - animals in the image of man - will they ever learn good manners?' On the one hand a disrespectful attitude to the Arabs, on the other - the Jewish farmers prefer the Arabs to their Yemenite brethren.

In one of the chapters of the story there is an attempt to understand the Arabs whose land has been usurped by the Jews. It concerns one, Mustafa Berdani, left for dead on the battlefield and who returns to his village. During the years after the war he wandered from village to village in the lands of the Balkans, lonely and forlorn, without possessing even the money required to send a letter

to make his condition known to the inhabitants of his village. He knows that his 'hushah' will be empty and uninhabited, and therefore intends to go straight to his kinsman, the Sheikh Abu Abdallah to refresh himself. While shortening his journey so that he might pass by the corner of his parcel of land, he finds new buildings, built by Jews, on the place where his 'hushah' had once stood. Something surprising, strange and inexpressible can be felt to have occurred between the Jewish labourers and the Arab villagers. The wealthy Arab, Abu Mohammed, no longer comes to procure two thousand eucalyptus saplings which he had ordered from the Jews. The old inhabitant of the village, Abu-Amer, who had always halted his ass in the settlement area to request a cigarette of the Jewish youths, now passes on his way to work without even saying Shalom, and the glance which he throws at the 'Yahud' is so strange. The Sheikh Abu-Abdullah encourages Mustafa Berdani and other 'shavav' (men of valour) from his village to attack the Jews and to drive them away from his land with a mighty hand. Ben Azzai, the Yemenite, is the first to spot the 'Ishmaelite' standing at the entrance to the settlement. Not until dawn are the Arabs driven back with several losses.

The story, Between Waters and Waters, by Joseph H Brenner, tells about the 'usual conflicts' with the Arabs who, having complaints against the Jews, attack from time to time. The watchman Aharon, while standing guard over the settlement, is wounded and killed by the Arabs.

The approach of the Hebrew authors to the question of the relationship with the Arabs is similarly primarily romantic.

Among the factors leading to the composition of the novel, The Wanderings of Amishai the Watchman, by Jacob Rabinowitz, was a fear, the source of which lay in the relationship of the Jews with their Arab neighbours. These relationships became sharper during the Twenties of this century until they reached the pogroms of 1905. With J Rabinowitz this fear finds its expression in Oriental romanticism - the kinship of the Lovers of Zion towards their Arab brethren and the search for Jewish Bedouin in the desert.

Moshe Smilansky, in the story, Abner, and Jacob Steinberg in the story, The Haj' from Heftzi-bah, both claim the right of the Jews to the land of their birth. With Smilansky one senses the tendentious approach at a time when he puts this claim regarding rights into the mouth of the Druse Hamdam (and here one is reminded of the words of Kaplan after being struck by the Bedouin rider in the novel Hadassah). In the story, In the Paths of the Vineyards, by Joseph H Brenner, the author comes to find work as a labourer in the orange-groves, all of which belong to 'the children of the land, the Arabs'. Here there is a feeling of envy of the indigenous Arabs.

In the story, From the Beginning, by Brenner, about the isolation of the Jewish settlement as an island in a sea of thousands of Arabs, Yael, a girl living there, relates: 'From all the numerous Arab villages in the vicinity come troops of Arabs going to work, - in their hundreds, thousands, - powerful, strong - fellahin - not one Jew among them'. In the story, Toil, Brenner compares the Jewish village settlement (Petach Tikvah or Ein-Ganim) to 'trees whose trunks have sprouted branches but who have no roots,', whereas the essential milieu are the old Arab villages that have struck root. The selfsame feeling of envy also appears in the story, Ahmad, by Jacob Steinberg.

By the term 'ghetto' we mean the condition of isolation and alienation in which the Jews were immersed in the cities of the land, surrounded as they were on every side by Arabs. In the play, Allah Karim, by Levi A Ariyali, and in the two stories of Joseph H Brenner, Between Waters and Waters, and From Here and From There, about the life of an urban Jewish settlement, the feeling of envy is all that is left of the romantic adoration of the Orient. Ahuda Gamzu (Between Waters and Waters) sees in the street through the window of her house, a caravan of three camels. On the hump of one of them rides an Arab lad. A young Arab village girl passes by, with ungainly steps and upright bearing, carrying a heavy load on her head, while asses led by Arab youths run behind her. We discern there the envy of the author towards the permanence of the Arab 'natives of the land'. In the story From Here and From There, the process and extent of Jewish permanence in the land, in accordance with their desire to resemble the Arab

fellahin, is identified: 'In the Galilee ... there are true Hebrew farmers ... really Arabs ... in their dress and in their habits'.

Brenner was not at all enthusiastic about describing in depth the ways of the Arabs. Here and there he used a few Arabic words like 'Yahud', 'Min Hada', always to emphasize the linguistic peculiarity, the estrangement, the lack of communication, and the abyss which separates the two peoples; and in this connection one recalls also the words of Amishai the watchman, the hero of Jacob Rabinowitz: 'I have witnessed the chasm which exists between us and them'.

In the story, In the Paths of the Orange-Groves, Brenner states categorically: 'If the supposition is true that the inhabitants of the land are of our racial stock and that the blood of the remnant of Israel may be found in the fellahin of the land of Israel - we want no part of them'.

In the novel, Bereavement and Failure, Brenner's attitude to the Arabs is one of Diaspora alienation mixed with envy and fear and a Jewish sense of superiority to the 'savage, ignorant' gentile. In contrast to a group of Bedouin who are digging sand on the shore of the Kinneret and washing themselves in it, Chaim Hafetz (brother of Ezekiel) identifies the strong and robust Arab with the gentile, with the 'Unclean creature' of Eastern Europe. The nightmare of Ezekiel Hafetz, who awakens to find an Arab woman searching for her brother in the settlement at a time when the Passover festival is drawing near, is tied up, in his sick imagination, with the blood libel in Russia.

The feeling of the existence of a Jewish 'ghetto' in the very midst of Eretz Yisrael, the Jewish detachedness, continues even in the land of the Patriarchs, and particularly when confronting the rootedness of the Arab 'natives of the land'. Envy gives way to a growing despair in the face of a dark and cruel reality.

The roots of this despair lie in the landscape of Eretz Yisrael with its scorching sun and murderous climate, its dust and Arabs: 'Outside the nearby coffee house sat the natives of the land, sitting and

doing nothing in accordance with their life-long custom, and in the shade abjectly sat their black, Oriental, half-blind wives, gnawing orange peels with their teeth' (Between Waters and Waters).

The severest and most cruel aspect of the landscape - the Hamsin (the Sharav, Sirrocco) is to be identified with inward rage.

The natural landscape of the Jew is still in the Diaspora. But the Arab threat is above all else, the feelings of agitation and vengeance which the Arabs demonstrate towards the Jewish settlement. In the story, From Here and From There, one reads how, during an attack, an Arab horseman easily overcomes two Jews, stabbing one of them, the hunchback teacher, son of Aryeh Lapidoth, to death. One recalls here also the episode of the murder of the watchman, Shmarya Fogel, in the play, Allah Karim, by L A Ariyali.

In his story, Between waters and waters, Brenner mocks those who try to understand the 'psychology of the Arabs'. The Arab rabble is described as a 'volcano' which is about to erupt. The author prophetically foresaw the pogroms that broke out in Jaffa in 1921, in which he himself was murdered together with his contemporaries Tzvi Shatz and Joseph Loyder. The selfsame pogrom is mentioned in the story, The Day of Blood in Jaffa, by Nathan Agmon (Bistritski). 'A short while ago, only a moment ago, that snub-nosed Arab walked about here on the streets, hawking his bananas, with his squinting, bastardly-ugly eyes, and now he is no more ... One group was beaten up by tens of Orientals, wielding sticks ... During the day an Arab was brought in among the wounded'. In this story the rent in the soul of the afflicted generation of resurrection is laid bare, a generation which searches longingly in the face of cold, cruel reality to find its sublimation upon the clods of its birthplace, Eretz Yisrael.

CHAPTER 3

Traces of romanticism

In the literature of the Land of Israel from the Forties until the beginning of the War of Liberation, the romantic approach towards the Arabs continued, particularly among veteran writers who still tried hard to digest the new social reality but found difficulty in comprehending its existence. In consequence their romantic portrayal of village existence and the Arab or Bedouin way of life was reminiscent of the life of the ancient Hebrews in Biblical times.

Together with this, a definite development began to evolve among those writers born in the land, whose childhood, the Settlement, the Kibbutz, the Arab neighbourhood, the orchard lanes - the essentially romantic landscape, all occupied a central place in their work. But their attitude to the Arabs as part of this landscape took on an ambivalent form; namely, on the one hand, the presence of the Arab, the military preparations (the training and defence) towards a confrontation with him, the recoiling and revulsion felt in the presence of the filth of his settlements and in his primitiveness; and on the other, a readiness to live close by him in peace (particularly in the village settlements) and the envy felt towards him because of his attachment to the ways of the land, to its climate and its landscapes.

This ambivalent attitude accompanied our writers until the appearance of 'the Young Guard' in the Israeli literature of the Sixties.

1.1 The return to 'Halutzic' romanticism

The figure of the Hebrew watchman in whom Jewish heroism was embodied during the halcyon days of the new settlement in the land, the stories about him, his deeds of heroism and his relations with the Arabs, is a theme which serves as an unflinching source for a better understanding of the way of life and customs of the Arabs and Bedouin.

Among the Arabs, the custom of winding round the Agel (or Akel)

the black, circular head-dress made from coarse wool, which fastens the keffiyah to the head of the Arab, has a double significance. When it crowns the head it is a symbol of manly pride, but when tied around the neck, it is a reproach which signifies that here is a man in the hands of his enemy, to do with as he pleases, either to beat him or to show him kindness.

The story, The Agel on the Neck, by G Sharoni, tells about a watchman from Rosh Pinah, Menachem Garbowsky, designated Abu-Musa by the Arabs, and the contacts between himself and the surrounding Bedouin tribes. The Hiv tribe that dwells eastwards of the settlement of Rosh Pinah, lives solely on plunder, work being regarded by it as something shameful. Whenever the Sheikh, Muhammad El-Ali - or Abu-Hussein as he is called, goes out with his tribesmen to rob or steal, he prays, 'Bring us not, I beseech thee, O Allah, into a situation in which we be compelled to wind the akel around our necks'. In his ninetieth year the Sheikh covets some horses of noble breed. One day, while the youth of the tribe are reclining with him in the 'divan', the old man turns to them and said: 'Whomsoever will bring me the mare of the Jew Abu-Musa, to him will I give Havassa my daughter in marriage'. The daughter of the Sheikh is a beautiful girl and many of the men of valour desire her.

Menachem Garbowsky preceded the men of 'Hashomer' (the Watchmen) by twenty-five years. He would go out on his travels into the plain of the Jordan, into Chorán and Jebel-Druz, carrying his 'Aba Hamsa' (rifle) and revolver, and a 'horej' prayer shawl and phylacteries, and he would say: 'Should I kill, then they will know I am a Jew!'. He had a noble, reddish mare named 'Saada'. It was during the season when the almond yards in Rosh Pinah were being guarded.

A young Bedouin of the tribe of Hiv conspires to steal the mare, but fails. The following day the old Sheikh comes to intercede for the life of the tribesman and finds him lying bound hand and foot in the hut of Abu-Musa, with the Agel wound around his neck. The Jewish watchman had been well trained in the customs of the Orient and its manners and was most meticulous in respect of its traditions of chivalry.

When the training farm of Migdal was established in the plain of Ginnosar, Garbowsky was chosen to be the watchman, because he knew the Arabs and their ways. He was successful in subduing the arrogant tribes of the 'Awwir', either through chivalry and honeyed words or by a show of strength. The contentious tribesmen would bring their law-suits before him, he having gained a reputation as an honest and impartial judge. Garbowsky's friend, Shimon Kaler from Rosh Pina, who at that period worked in Migdal as an apprentice watchman with him, related how, one night, they had pursued on horseback, three Bedouin who had stolen sheaves of corn and hidden them in a sack and in two keffiyas. They opened fire but the Bedouin disappeared among the olive trees of Wadi Hams. Three Arabs from the village Mijdal who were friends of Menachem hastened to the aid of the two watchmen. During the incident Menachem recognized a youth of the tribe of Awwir, Abdul Ruhman, who was an old friend of his, as being one of the three thieves. The following day they approached the Sheikh of the tribe in order to bring before him a charge of theft. Abdul Ruhman came out of his tent with his agel tied around his neck, and fell at the feet of Abu Musa's mare, and asked him to enter his tent. When Menachem entered the Bedouin picked up his two-year old child and laid him on Garbowsky's bosom. According to the Bedouin custom this was as if he had sacrificed the child in order to atone for his sin. Menachem forgave Abdul Ruhman and the case was dismissed.

The stories about the watchmen were sometimes embroidered with Arab talk and legends of the desert. In the story, Like Streams in the Negev, the watchman found his way impeded by the raging wadi. He was not able to bypass it and so turned aside to the tent of his friend, the Sheikh Mesallem Abu Refiah, of the sons of the Suarki, the Bedouin who dwelt below Jibrat. The author of this story, Yermiahu Ravina proceeds to describe the Arab custom of hospitality. 'The sound of the beating of the pestle in the mortar echoed rhythmically, making it known that there were guests in the tent of the Sheikh. The finjan began circulating from hand to hand, and the coffee gave off its aroma.' The Sheikh told the watchman a story he had heard from his fathers about a similar incident (The Pride of the Waters of the Wadi) which had occurred in bygone days during 'the period when the authority and

the power were in the hands of the children of Arabia'. It is a story of two cousins who, in accordance with the Arabian custom, had each taken the other's sister for a wife. The one, Amer, dwelt as his fathers had done in the Plains of Arish; the second, Arar, was known among his brethren as a daring and heroic man who often wandered to the distant region of Aza, pitching his tent in the ravines of the streams. Arar did not listen to the warnings of the wise old man who had advised him to remove his tent far from the wadi. Soon a flood of water swept his tent away and took the life of his wife. His baby son, who had been saved from the catastrophe, was later trampled by a camel. Only then did Arar take his horse and leave the place. The Sheikh continued to tell about Arar and his second wife.

In the story, The Watchman in the Cucumber Field, by Joseph Aricha, the relationship between the watchman Ze'ev and the black Sudani who guarded the cucumber field of the Effendi is described. In comparison with one of the workers from Lithuania, to whom everything was new, exotic and full of interest, and who looked upon the Bedouin women as 'strange creatures', the watchman Ze'ev was an expert on the Arab way of life. He explains to the Lithuanian worker: 'Bedouin women are introvert and kept out of the sight of the stranger. But in their tents they loosen their tongues and are not at all reticent'.

Ze'ev, the watchman, reminds one of the character Amishai, the watchman, the hero of Y Rabinowitz, who was born in an agricultural settlement in the south and was thus acquainted with the fellahin of the Negev and the Bedouin tribes with whom the settlers came into contact. The Arab language and the stories about the lives of the Bedouin and their leaders were likewise well known to him, as were 'their limitless cunning and wiles'.

One of Aricha's stories tells how Ze'ev and his female companion, Varda, would go at times to visit the black student watchman in the cucumber field where Ze'ev would speak to him about the farm, women and horses. The description of the landscape, the night and the meeting between the Sudani and his guests is represented here in a typically romantic-exotic manner: 'The burning fire crackled quietly

and intermittently a light beating could be heard coming from the ground ... At times a sound from afar reached them ... of a caravan of camels ... on its way to Jaffa, and then again quietness prevailed until the howl of a jackal suddenly broke the silence, a mournful wail that cried out against hunger and evil-hearted watchmen who go about the vineyards and cucumber fields, their rifles in their hands ... the silence gave witness to the great strangeness which divided them, to the hidden enmity, and to the cold, insipid courtesy which bound them together with a flimsy, ephemeral bond, a deceptive bond'. The Sudani carried a strong hatred in his heart for 'those complacent and proud whites', despite the fact that Ze'ev did not see himself in the role of a Havaja, but only a watchman like himself. The Sudani related how he came to the Land of Israel on the heels of a white woman whom he loved. He heard that 'in Palestine women are acquired cheaply. Here white women are very expensive'. When he reached the land he quickly saw how mistaken he had been. They even stole his money and he was compelled to remain in the land. At the end of the story the Sudani is exposed as a thief. He pilfered pipes and screws from the settlement shed. When he heard of this Ze'ev remembered the words the Sudani had spoken about a certain thief in Jaffa: 'There are places in Arabia where they cut off the arm of a thief'.

Y Aricha makes use here of the technique of 'a story within a story'. A similar construction is to be found in The Wanderings of Amichai the Watchman, by Y Rabinowitz, and in Like streams in the Negev, by Y Ravina. It is possible that at the end of the story the pungency (the yearnings of the Sudani for a white woman) disappears as a result of a double-entendre.

The early pioneers have likewise been adorned with a halo of romanticism and mythology. The same identification with the primitive Arab way of life, the same striving to return to living the lives of 'Jewish Bedouin' in the desert may still be found in the story, And the sun rises and the sun sets, by Judah Yaari. The hero of the story, Shlomo Cohen, is about to leave the settlement of which he is a member, to go down to the Bedouin in the desert in order 'to live a natural,

free life, a life in which there is no pain and suffering', to be like one of the Bedouin. 'He will grow his hair long like them, dress like them, and tend their sheep', for Shlomo has a special love for the Arabs. The Sheikh Hassan ibn-Hamdan of the Bedouin who dwell at the foot of the mountain, calls Solomon 'Hawwajah Suleiman'. The Sheikh Hassan had already come to know the Jews during the period of the road building when he would carry stones on the donkeys of his father from the mountain for the Jewish road-makers in the valley. At that time he learned to speak Hebrew and told the Jews stories about the life of the Bedouin. Now he too wishes to leave his tribe because of Zahara, 'who was blind in one eye and ugly like a donkey', whom his father had specified for him as a wife, so that he would need to pay no money for her. Hassan wishes to join a kibbutz to be a shepherd and to share his experiences as a shepherd with the Jews. In the story a mutual influence between the Jewish settlement and the Arabs is to be seen. The Bedouin Hassan strives for a kind of life from which Shlomo Cohen wishes to flee. As in the story, A First Swallow, by Burla, and in the early story of Y Yaari, A Bird's Nest, so here the Arab is the vanguard of the social change which the Jews bring about in the land.

This motif of the freedom of the Arab from the chains of tradition and the flight from his primitive life, and the striving for change and social progress, is to be found in many stories as constituting a social dilemma.

In the play, Days of Gold, by Shlomo Shaba, the character of Michael Halperin, a romantic pioneer who became a legend in his own time, and an enthusiastic 'dreamer of the redemption' is recalled. He reminds us of the character Hawwajah Nazir, the strong, inspired visionary, the 'beautiful Jew' of M Smilansky. The play takes place in Jaffa during the first years of the second decade of this century. To Jaffa come farmers from Judah and fellahin from the Galil. On the sea there sails a small boat of Arab fishermen who are singing 'Baladi Ya-baladi'. An Arab sailor, feeling the alienation of the Jews who had come to the land, makes fun of them: 'A million Jews have come today, bringing with them many bundles, many thick blankets. That's good for a hamsin'. The sands of Jaffa 'extend to the distant river

Uja, the Garden of Eden of the wild jemoosim'. The second hero of the play is Abu Ressay, the famous Arab robber of Jaffa, an important man in the city and friend of the Turkish pasha, of the 'moder' and of all the dignitaries. The Jew Friedberg nicknames Abu Ressay 'Ali Baba' (the robber character in the story 'A Thousand and One Nights').

Michael Halperin is the 'best and most beloved' friend of Abu Ressay. They knew one another from the day of the declaration of the 'Constitution' in Jaffa by the Turkish government. At that time Halperin gave a speech together with all the dignitaries and 'blessed Allah and the Turks and the Arabs and the Jews'. At the end of his speech he announced the public sale of his boots, having distributed everything that he owned to the masses in honour of the day of liberation. The two rivals, Abu Ressay and Hassan Sewari, then competed over the price of Halperin's boots and Abu Ressay won. The play opens with the imprisonment of Abu Ressay who then goes into exile by order of the Turkish ruler, after a quarrel with Hassan Sewari and his soldiers. Abu Ressay says of himself: 'My heart is pure, only before Allah will I account for my deeds'. He now takes an interest in all that is happening in the world and feels a certain sympathy in his heart for the Revolutionists of Russia.

In that part of the story which describes the act which brought about his imprisonment, Abu Ressay is portrayed as a type of 'Robin Hood' in an Arabic version - a romantic hero in the guise of a good-hearted robber who protects the poor who are oppressed by the rich and who fights for what is right. 'I rode on my mare in the mountains of Jerusalem. I entered the village of Weloja and suddenly saw a fellah and his wife and children crying and shouting while Hassan Sewari and two soldiers were chasing him with the intention of taking away his lamb as a tithe. The fellah fell on his knees, pleading, there was no crop this year ..., and Hasan Sewari replied: "I have bought the rights to the taxes of the whole village. Everyone will pay!". My heart was boiling. "Hasan Sewari", I said, "you are a famous person, you will not have mercy on a wretched fellah? Take your soldier and flee - and if not, I will show you the strength of my hand." Sewari gave a sign to his soldiers and they fell upon me, threw me to the ground.'

Halperin does not believe that it is possible to throw someone like Abu Ressas to the ground, in the same way that he does not believe that it is possible to overcome Michael Halperin. The young Arab, Ali, accompanies him on all his wanderings in the land. Once robbers attack them on the way to Jenin. They are armed with rifles and demand money. Michael Halperin hits one in the face with his fist, the second receives a kick in his stomach, while the third runs away. Abu Ressas calls Michael 'Jeddah Havaja Halperin' - Jeddah means 'hero'.

During the incident in the village of Willujah, Abu Ressas draws his 'shivriyah', compelling Hasan Sewari and his soldiers to flee directly to Mutztarif the Turk, in order to complain. In vain does Halperin seek to save his friend who is sentenced to exile. Akim Tarif, the mediator between Jews and Arabs in land-dealings, and a well known pedlar in Jaffa, has a different version of what happened in Walajah and of Abu Ressas' part in the incident: 'A great righteous man! Do you think he was in a hurry to save a fellah? Abu Ressas came to Wallujah and himself wanted to purchase the rights to the tax. Hasan Sewari anticipated him and so the quarrel broke out'. Elsewhere Akim Tarif says to Hawaja Kahana, who buys ground from the Arabs: 'Abu Ressas says that he does not now need to sell ground through Sum'ah. Other Jews will come, the price will go up'. Akim Tarif's version of the truth is indeed confirmed by Abu Ressas himself who, after his return from exile to Jaffa, tells Halperin how Hasan Sewari had come to him and begged him to buy from him the tax of Walajah for half the price, but he, Abu Ressas, bought it for a quarter; and all this because Abu Ressas' family in Nablus, Kodem, Jenin, Jericho, and Al-Halil had caused Hasan Sewardi such troubles that he was obliged to sell him the tax.

Michael Halperin is a very pathetic hero, steeped in an oriental romanticism, similar to that of the watchman, Amishai, of Y Rabinowitz. He says to a young pioneer who has come up to the land: 'Strength, strength! ... That's what we need. He is a robber! But we must learn something from him. Strength! ... We will have Jewish Bedouin who go out to the remote deserts, with their flocks and herds. We will have Jewish Arabs who will settle the land - from the wilderness

to the great Sea! ... tens of thousands of watchmen! tens of thousands of horses and rifles ... a nation of Jewish heroes, the sons of the Maccabees. They will return to conquer all of Eretz Yisrael from Horan until the brook of Gaza!. And the youth, Ali, asks Halperin: 'When will we have a horse? ... you said ... we would ride from beyond the Jordan to the distant wilderness, to the Bedouin'. The Messianic idea which Halperin carries within himself has its roots in his own origins - 'he is the grandson of the "Malbim", an offspring of the House of David'. He does not sleep nights because 'the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps'. At night he guards the site of the Gymnasium building 'Hertzlia' with a 'Nabut' in his hand.

Michael Halperin's concept of a military solution to the redemption of the Jewish nation in its land, anticipated that of the group of 'Canaanites' by almost fifty years.

When Abu Ressay returned from exile he was appointed Inspector of Police in Jaffa. When Halperin introduced him to his family who had just immigrated to the land, Abu Ressay expressed the desire to buy Halperin's daughter. 'He will buy her a chariot with ten noble horses straight from Najad.' Halperin then brought him a white horse as he had promised him in the past.

3.2 The Meeting and Acquaintance with Arabs

In the travel diaries of writers who have journeyed throughout the length and breadth of the land, there is still a groping and a search for the Ten Lost Tribes, for Bedouin of Jewish origin who were absorbed, as it were, into the tribes of Arabia, as well as an attempt to get to know intimately, the Arabs, the offspring of our cousin Ishmael.

The record of Rachel Yannait ben Zvi, From Wandering in the Land, bears an ethnographic character. The couple, Rachel and Isaac ben Zvi, arrange a visit to Wadi Musa, in the vicinity of which, the historical place-names from the days of Israel's passage through the wilderness are still preserved by the Arabs. Two tribes of Jewish origin dwell in Wadi Musa; the Bedul and the Liyatana. A Bedouin of the Bedul

tribe is thus described: 'His face was thin, his sparse hair came down over his ears and his neck'. And he reminds us of 'our brethren, the Yemenites; there is a kinship, a feeling of race'. He has nothing of the desert characteristics of the Bedouin. The Ben Zvi couple see in them 'our separated, banished brethren - Bedouin of the Diaspora'. The 'Bedul' is testimony to the fact that they are set apart from the Arab tribes.

The scholar Jean Wilson met with the Sheikh of the Bedul tribe in Petra (Wadi Musa) in the 19th century and asked him whether his followers saw themselves as a unique Arab tribe. The Sheikh answered in Arabic: 'We are the children of Israel'. The scholar Famer is of the opinion that the tribesmen of Bedul are the remnants of a Jewish Bedouin tribe, the tribe Kav that had left Hiber after Islam had gained the upper hand there. He described them as terribly poor, but found among them hundreds who carried arms and who gave him the impression of being courageous. The Turkish ruler, Fik Paha, related that the Bedul was a barbarous tribe, persecuted by the Arab tribes because of its Jewish origin.

A chalutzic fervour, aimed at the return to the birthplace of the Patriarchs, encompasses the story of David Simeoni (Symonowitz), To the Graves of the Mighty, written against the background of his visit to Modi'in, the birthplace of the Hasmoneans. The Arab milieu is perceived as a natural landscape which has continued to exist since the period of the Maccabees: 'A young shepherd wrapped in sheep-skin ... looks on curiously'. A blind Arab girl gives him to drink from a jug of water and asks him for bread. In the story, In the lower Golan, by Joseph Weitz, which describes the journey of a government official through the holdings of the Turkish governor as well as the Sheikh's custom of hospitality, the landscape blends in with the Arabs: 'Suddenly a wind rose up as if from the depths of the crater, howling and wailing. We hurried to descend and when we reached the plateau a cloud covered the brink of the crater, and in your imagination you beheld the Arab with his yoke of oxen ploughing among the clouds'.

But into these travel-stories there is an undertone which

introduces a feeling of the exotic strangeness and the contrast which exists between the two peoples.

In the story BeShukrah, Haim Shorrer describes the journey of a group of soldiers from the Galilee to the wilderness where they must undergo 'Shukra' (i.e., forced labour which the Turks imposed on the inhabitants of the land for military purposes). Near Beersheba a band of Bedouin robbers conspire against them. 'An isolated Bedouin passed by us and looked at us as if we were some strange animals who had descended from another world to his wilderness.' The self-same Bedouin then explained to them that the mountains before them, which were called Jebel Hiyel (the mountain of the commandments) was, according to Arabic tradition, none other than the Mountain of Sinai. They reached El-Arish, a city of the inhabitants of the desert: 'These wonders of nature which we witnessed in the desert passed like fairy-tales of enchantment before our eyes.' During the continuation of the journey the mourning custom in one of the villages is witnessed: 'Women danced, all of them dressed in black, their hair unkempt, their arms and breasts laid bare ... we all stood stunned before this wild dance, which seemed so like an enchanting witch-dance'.

The son of the Sheikh of the village was killed in the army and the village was mourning for him for three days. Each day they slaughtered an ox in his memory. In the story, Hebron, by Yitzhak Dov Berkowitz, the visit of the author to Arab Hebron is described: 'Arabs, like that of an ancient tribe dwelling alone in its fortified nest in the heights of the rocks, looking from there at the world with an angry and suspicious eye'. The first impression when he entered Hebron is a little bit like that impression which our forefathers, the spies whom Moses, our Teacher, sent to spy out the land, must have received on arriving here.

'If one cannot compare these Arabs themselves to the ancient Nephilim ... there is in the appearance of their cultivated vineyards something that calls to mind the heavy cluster of grapes which the spies carried from here on a pole ... the grapes of Hebron are to this day distinguished by their size and taste ... a clear reminder of bygone days, the days of Hagar and Ishmael.'

Almost the entire story is devoted to the comparison of the Arab way of life with that of the Hebrews' during the Biblical period. The ancient city of Hebron is distinguished for its measure of hospitality, which is a tradition that has come down to its inhabitants from their first chieftain, the father of Ishmael (the Patriarch Abraham). Here stood his home, the doors of which were always open in every direction. Therefore do the Arabs of Hebron boast about their measure of hospitality.

As if in complete opposition to this feeling of the author, a stone was thrown from one of the courtyards which struck the car in which he was travelling. The driver cursed the Arabs: 'May an evil spirit enter the wide trousers of the grand-children of uncle Ishmael!'. The Arab Effendi, whose son had thrown the stone, first lied that he was childless, but eventually became alarmed and, fearing police action, sought to make atonement by offering the driver an ornament. The driver was relentless and the Effendi's son was flogged in the police station.

The Cave of Machpelah of our Patriarchs is seen by the author as a Mohammedan mosque. The Arab escort is ready to take the tourists inside with the permission of the Sheikh (because entering the Cave is forbidden to Jews) if he receives a bribe. Also the caretaker of the Cave of Machpelah wishes to receive Bakshish from the visitors. The Jewish author asks a rhetorical question which is filled with pain: 'Do our Patriarchs rest their eternal rest under the suppressive supervision of foreign land tenants?'.

In the story, Pencil-sketches of the Land of the Negev, by Judah Ga'ash, the journey of the narrator and his friend Yosh in the south of the land is described. In the expanses of the Negev in which Bedouin shepherds roam, only two settlements are to be found under Jewish control: Be'er Tuvyah (Kastina in Arabic) and Rechama (Jemama in Arabic). Also in Gaza there is a family which 'keeps the ember aglow', and in Beersheba there is one isolated Jew among the idolators 'in order that the Covenant between the pieces will not be forgotten'.

The two heroes of the story have the appearance of Arabs and wear Keffiyas on their heads. Yosh, who speaks Arabic, has a pre-arranged plan: When they meet the Ishmaelites he will bless them in peace and receive their blessings in return but the author Judah Ga'ash will have the appearance of one who is deaf and dumb ('atras' in Arabic). They meet a caravan of camels and an Arab riding on a donkey enters into a conversation with Yosh. They reach Be'er Tuvia which lies not far from an Arab village where the escort Abu-Isma'iyn leads them to the Has-Al-Yahud, to the house of Abu-Yusuf who is a Jew.

There is little of the Romantic in his description of the Arab village: 'Alleys filled with houses of clay and dwarfish huts ... filth and dirt everywhere. Children, with inflated stomachs and bare buttocks, burrowing in the rubbish-heaps, that can be found next to every hut. Women, like monstrous figures, lowering their veils in fright at the approach of a stranger'. Yosh makes a joke at the expense of Arab superstition and continues his plan. He tells the author that, having appeared as an 'atras', a miracle would now occur in the camp, and his power of speech would return to him. 'Then the omniscient Allah will restore your tongue to you and the prophecy of the Dervish will be fulfilled in its entirety ... Abu-Isma'iyn will give wings to his imagination and to that of those who are sitting around the coffee pot with him at eventide next to the campfire. The rumour will spread quickly among the tents and huts of the Bedouin in the district and then your position will be steadfast and secure because you will have been delivered by the hands of the Holy One, and will thus become an Ibn Hillel, that is to say, one whom Allah has helped. Through your merit will I too be regarded as worthy for I too have a share in the holiness and in the miracle.'

Abu Yussuf, the host, is a friend of Abu Isma'iyn, and his family is a remnant of those fugitives from the pogroms who suffered displacement from their places of settlement and a severance of family ties. A ship of exiles delivered them up onto the shores of Jaffa. They chose for themselves a place upon which immigrants to the shores of the land had not yet trodden. But here too they suffered and their share of fate was loneliness, for they were isolated among the Ishmaelites.

In a hostile environment, in the face of waves of malice, they endured, believing strongly that they would be the first to bring redemption to the place.

The story by Z Brachot, A Hunter of Deer, is part of the writings of a Jewish hunter. The author and his Arab escort, Abu Mahmoud, go down to the valley Tel 'al Fadah, to rest after a day of wandering in the desolate mountains near the Dead Sea, in which they were searching for deer. Here they meet an Arab, Muhmad Sa'id, who is armed with a rifle and who shows them a spring to which deer come to drink. Abu Mahmoud is acquainted with Muhmad Sa'id and his uncle, the Sheikh Abdullar Abu-Div. The two Arabs then speak about 'kiniz' (the treasure) that was hidden in the mountains, and the Jewish hunter feels isolated in their company. He goes down to be alone on the shore of the Dead Sea, despite Abu Mahmoud's warning against the sons of Jash (Bedouin inhabitants of the Negev), robbers who roam about in the area. At this point the story takes on an elegiacal colouring, as the hunter becomes one with the Biblical past, on looking upon Uzduim (the mountain of Sodom). 'The land of Moab ... generations of people have passed through as well as lived here in the past, they have fought and poured out their blood ... Tel el Fadah ... they say that King Solomon had silver mines here, now everything is neglected, desolate, dead ... '. In the legend which has circulated among the Arab people, an ancient Hebrew myth is preserved. During the meal-time 'a strange sound, like coarse laughter mingled with a stifled cry, is heard from the mountains'. Abu Mahmoud explains, 'so barks the dog of Lot's wife', and he tells the story of the episode about Nabi Lot, how the righteous man 'the Sheikh Lot' and members of his household were saved from the overthrow of Sodom. In this place Khirhat el Yahud, the wife of Lot, looked back and turned into a pillar of salt; and that righteous man's dog, who had been running after her, on realizing that his mistress had stopped, looked at her and was overtaken by the same fate. Every night, so the legend continues, Lot's wife wakes up and wanders in the plain, looking for her husband and her daughters, and the dog walks after her barking and wailing, and woe unto him whom this dog encounters. With the dawn, Muhmad Sa'id, the mountain man, departs to his secret places.

In the story, The Haj from Hephzibah, by Y Steinberg, the meeting between an Arab and a Jew becomes the focus of the fatal conflict which exists between the two peoples and a justification for the Jewish demand for settlement rights in the homeland.

Also in the autobiographical novel of M Smilansky, In the Plain, an experience which has a decisive influence on Judah, the hero of the story, is related. One Shabbat he goes out for a walk by himself in the environs of Hadera. From the middle of the sand dunes a savage Bedouin springs up towards him, his unruly forelocks bursting out from every side of his keffiyah, his black abbayah billowing in the wind, and his wild mare wildly galloping. This meeting, partaking at first of a romantic attraction, ends on a solemn note. Yehuda stands and enjoys what he sees. 'At that moment he loved the savage that was before him.' But the rider who passes by him at a run, turns back and insults him. 'Get up, Jew, stand up, I command you! Go! Go from here! Do you intend to take possession also of this place?' When Judah answers him bravely, 'Go, go, we are on our own land', the Arab lashes his head with a stick and gallops on. From the day that Judah grew up he had never been beaten by a man, and here, on his own land, he was hit for the first time. He ran with a blind anger after the rider until he fell to the ground, on his face, 'and a bitter cry, like a child's cry burst from his mouth'. (It will be recalled that this same image appears in the novel, Hadassah, by M Smilansky.)

In the story The Emek Train to Infinity, the narrator, Isaac Ben-Ner, describes a train journey he had once taken during which two Bedouin who sat beside him talking in their simple way, and in accordance with their primitive understanding about civilized matters, suddenly became aware of the 'stranger' in their midst and immediately moved to another coach. The writer confesses: 'We were strangers there and we sensed it. Differing in stature, in our Hebrew articulation, in the colour of our clothes, and in the way we talked'.

The modern writers' awareness of the Arabs' existence is more shallow than that of the first founders of the settlements, their tendency being to see the sons of Ishmael through the spectacles of politics.

Yitzchak Shinhar, in his story On the Border, describes his meeting with the Arab, Ahmad, in the frontier settlement hotel, 'The Snow of the Hermon'. Ahmad shows no interest whatsoever in what he refers to as 'Politika', yet alludes to certain political events which have occurred in the land, saying in a disrespectful manner, 'This is the type of independence the Frangists give ... the only real independence is that which is rooted in the blood and the soul, like that of the Bedouin ... '. And he illustrates his statement by relating the incident of Abu-Salim and his shoes. 'An Englishman had once met Abu-Salim and observed that his shoes were worn out from much use, but Abu-Salim replied: "Shoes such as these my ancestors wore". Some time later Abu-Salim, after leaving the bath-house, mistakenly put on the shoes of the English governor, leaving his worn shoes behind and was thereupon brought to judgement and imprisoned. On being released he went to his friend the Englishman, and gave him his shoes for free, he himself choosing to walk barefoot.' The moral lesson of the story was clear. It alluded to the distribution of the land, a large part of which the Jews were also claiming as their own. The author also reacted to the parable of the Jew and the Pharisee, which points to the fact that the English will leave the land, whereas the Jews will remain as an established fact.

In the story, A Man in the Sand, by Aaron Amir, there is also more political talk than recognition of the Arab character. Amnon, one of the labourers, meets with an Arab night-watchman, Sa'id, in a military camp. They converse in a desultory fashion about the war which has befallen the world. Sa'id was working for the Jews in the hope of earning sufficient money to enable him to return to the village in the North where he used to work in the orchards. He sees no blessing in the Jewish labour among the sand dunes, indeed, this very work in the sand of the desert expresses the lack of Jewish rootedness in the land. 'And this they do not understand ... the Jews pitch their tents in the sand, they bring machinery and engines and intend building roads and railway lines, and who knows, they may even build houses and factories on the sand dunes for the army ... for the war effort ... but only let the war end ... and all this will exist no more ... the sand will swallow everything up ... the desert will cover all, this sand is

stronger than them all.' The embittered Amnon, whom Sa'id despises, only confirms his words. 'You speak with sense. You speak like a Sheikh, ya Sa'id.' In his village Sa'id is regarded as a fool. He married a woman who was the daughter of his uncle, and her brother in turn took Sa'id's sister as a wife. The marriages were thus in the nature of an exchange without any monetary cost involved. The fourteen year old wife died after bearing him a child, as did the child. Had he been wise he would long ago have had sufficient money to buy another wife. His brother, Yusaf, in contrast, has a store in the village and four children. He goes about in the military camps earning well and without having to tire himself out with hard work. Sa'id envies Jewish society. 'You have it good, ... you love a woman ... you take her and finished. No money, no relatives, and no pledges!'

In The Artist and the Shepherd, by Joseph Aricha, the artist, Aloni, meets with an Arab shepherd, 'erect and powerful - on his head the keffiya which had turned yellow from the sun, a faded abbayah covers his back, and his black bare feet tread with a desert wildness'. Aloni feels fear in the presence of the shepherd: 'In those days the echoes of the bloody pogroms still reverberated'. The shepherd says to him, 'You are peculiar and your deeds are astonishing'. He relates a legend which goes back to his childhood in the village, to the time of the war between the English and the Turks, about the elder Sa'id Abu-Hamad, who was ordered by the necromancer of the village to go to the cave in the side of the mountain, the will of Allah being to do Sa'id a good turn. The elder did so and, digging inside the cave unearthed a jug filled with gold dinars: 'And the village was in an uproar, cries of wonder, "wal wal wal" broke out from every mouth'. The matter occurred right next to where Aloni had been sitting painting landscapes, causing the artist to feel a certain dread towards that mysterious cave. At the conclusion of the meeting the shepherd says to him: 'I will not be surprised, Hawaja, if after I leave I find on returning tomorrow a settlement of yours ensconced in this place'.

A meeting between two worlds takes place next to the cave described in this story. Once this was a legendary world, a world of the necromancer, Sa'id, of camel-riders armed with rifles, and even of

'the Englishman' Lawrence, the friend of the Arabs. And now a new world arises here, a world of tractors that plough the ground, and of Jewish pioneers who build a settlement.

In the story, Like Grapes in the Wilderness, by Yitzchak Shinhar, we are presented with 'a story within a story' (a characteristic literary construction of Shinhar's, as, for example, in his The Tarabint Tree). The meeting between the author and the Bedouin girl, Aziza, in the railway station in the desert serves as a framework for two other stories. One is about Yusuf Effendi, the Arab station-master, and the second is the fanciful dream-story which the author himself embroiders in relation to Aziza. The romantic character of the whole story (which, in general, is fundamentally realistic) derives from the special attitude of the author to the exotic magic of the desert. A young man, from his parental home in Susnowitz, 'a small town in the northern country', discovers vestiges of the desert in his heart, 'like a kind of ancient well which the Philistines had blocked up and the waters of which had remained fresh'. The narrator serves as an official in a remote station on the railway line that traverses the desert, his position being subordinate to that of Yussuf Effendi, the station-master. The sense of exoticism experienced by the author extends also to Yusuf Effendi, whom he asks: 'And what do you dream about ... about vulgar houses of pleasure in which veiled dancers loiter ... or perhaps only about a good piece of pasture-land flourishing in the wilderness, in which palm trees lift up their green heads and fountains send forth streams of water?'. Once, at a time when the Effendi is kneeling in prayer, the author is careful not to pass in front of him, lest he sever the invisible thread which binds him to Mecca. The deeds of the Holy One and the Khalif, with which Yussuf Effendi regales him each evening, are like a story out of the 'Thousand and One Nights'. 'The Holy One and the Khalif sat before the fire with the roast lamb in front of them. The Holy One poured water into a dish and said to the Khalif: "Close your eyes and dip your face into these waters". The Khalif did as he said, and behold, he was being carried in the sea. At night he was thrown onto the shore and he lay there unconscious for many hours. With the morning light he saw a beautiful woman coming out to meet him from among the trees ... the Khalif married the woman and he begot sons

and daughters. Many days passed and he was blessed with a third and fourth generation. When his time came to depart from the world he heard a knock on the door, and a poor traveller entered and said to him: "Son of Man, open your eyes". The Khalif opened his eyes and saw, and behold the Holy One was sitting before him smiling, and the hot steam was still issuing from the bucket.' The story of Yusuf Effendi which has been interwoven into the narrative at this point continues to make its appearance in a number of chapters throughout the whole book.

The Effendi also has reservations about the progress and the change which the Jews have brought about in the land. 'You the Yahud, come here from all corners of the world ... you build cities and establish settlements - and what will you do when you reach the desert?' To the narrator the telephone that rings in the desert is 'the Voice of the Yishuv', but to the Effendi 'it is a cursed bell which makes my flesh creep'. The action of the story begins with the arrival of the Bedouin who pitch their tents not far from the station; a conglomeration of women, camels, babies, and men, who gallop around on their horses. Four Bedouin come to the station to ask for water, but the Effendi refuses to give it because the water is the property of the Government. The next day the author meets Aziza, the Bedouin girl, who comes from the camp with a jug in her hand. Her request not having been granted she then goes down to the side of the tracks, sits next to the water basin and waits stubbornly, whereupon the author, having compassion on the Bedouin girl, secretly pours water into her jug. That a train should bring water to the desert is an unknown concept for the Bedouin girl.

Following this meeting the narrator creates in his imagination an exotic dream-story about Bedouin life which reminds us of the stories of The Sons of Arabia of M Smilansky. In his fantasy he sees the father of Aziza welcoming the old Sheikh into his tent. They sit on skin carpets, and Aziza's two brothers stand by to serve them, while outside Aziza is heating the coals for the nargeela. The Sheikh is very powerful and rich, and having divorced one of his two wives, now wishes to take a younger woman than she as a wife. He speaks about

camels and horses, and deeds of heroism, but Aziza knows that evil will soon befall her. Her father is already secretly calculating the dowry figure. 'The Sheikh goes out from the tent, carrying his days as a yoke ... he mounts his black horse. The horse goes off at a gallop, and billows of sand rise up after her, and the corners of the black abayah flutter like the tails of Satan. And Aziza trembles, and with her eyes filled with tears she flees to the bosom of her wrinkled mother in the women's tent.' Aziza loves a young man from another tribe. 'At night a lonely horseman rides swiftly through the remote places of the wilderness. He is Ahmad, or to call him by his more pleasant sounding name, Halil, a member of another tribe that thirsts for battle and knows not fear ... whose hearts are bound up in the bonds of love. They had only just become betrothed and a blood feud split the two tribes like the waters of the Seven Days of Creation. Yet many waters could not quench their love nor high mountains separate them, and Halil risked his life and flew towards the tents of his enemies in the black of night, his spear pointing heavenwards like a great finger of rebellion ... ' At this point the narrator identifies himself with the figure of the Bedouin rider, the lover of Aziza: 'O Halil from the city of Sosnowitz, how gracefully do you tread among the tents of Kedar! The beating of your horse's hooves cannot be heard in the sand, but Aziza hears it in her heart ... and behold she is clasped in the arms of the horseman who whispers fragrant words in her ears.' Aziza's father strikes her because of her disobedience towards him. Now she has to give Halil a timely warning of the ambush which her brothers have set for him. The author envisages the bitter fate of Aziza. 'She will be consoled and will marry the Sheikh and will be a source of pleasure to him for several months, after which the old lady will rise up against her ... and embitter her life ... and it will not be long before the differences between Aziza and her rival-wife will become blurred, and the curtain will descend on both of them.' The author continues to weave his story: 'And behold, Halil is struck down in the heart of the desert, a spear stuck in his chest ... ' Aziza's two brothers have killed him. Aziza 'slips away from the camp and painfully traverses the pathways of the desert until she finds Halil's body', for whom she cries bitterly. Aziza's tragic solution to her problem brings the story to a close. She escapes from her tent and

steals away to the railway station where she ties herself to the railway tracks. At this point the narrator breaks off his dream-story. 'And tomorrow at day-break I will pursue another dream that will occupy my thoughts during my long hours.'

The narrator's dream comes true and the true story also has a tragic ending. Almost every day Aziza comes to fetch water from him until finally they are caught red-handed by Yusuf Effendi. The station master takes away the key to the water-tank, thus ending the series of meetings between Aziza and the narrator. When the train arrives with water to fill the empty tank, Aziza steals away and bends down under one of the coaches to fill her jug. Suddenly the train moves: 'The sound of her cry was swallowed up by the whistle of the engine and the clatter of the wheels'.

The story, In the Sirrocco, by Isaac Shinhar, also bears its stamp of exoticism. The narrator allows his hero to tell the story of his life. He meets with Ahmad, who is known throughout the district as a beggar and a wandering imbecile, at the grave of the Holy One, and when Ahmed is asked by him where he is going, he answers that he is going to 'Bab Allah', that is to say, to the 'great nowhere'. These wonderful words remind the author of 'the twilight of childhood when he drank thirstily from such travelogues and fairy-tales as Harun-el-Rashid and Ali Baba ... '.

Ahmad had left his village when he learned that the wealthy Hasan-Ali was conspiring against him. Ahmad had wished to marry a young girl, but Hasan-Ali, with the consent of her parents, had taken her for himself, thus stealing her from Ahmad. On the day of the marriage Ahmad wishes to leave the city but Hasan-Ali had acted cunningly against him and he was compelled to remain. During the 'Fantazia' Hasan-Ali made the wretched Ahmad stand in the square between two trees and placed a pomegranate on his head. He then shot at, and hit, both the pomegranate and Ahmad's head, leaving a scar. From then on Ahmad was transformed into a 'wretched imbecile'. 'Since then I have summer in my head and my lips drop water.'

The story, An Act of Kindness, by Moses Satwi, tells about the narrator's acquaintance with Mera'd, an Egyptian Arab. The small Jewish settlement had a magnetic power upon the inhabitants of the Arab villages in the district, and, in a year of drought, upon the Bedouin of the Negev too. In the story, a Bedouin Sheikh comes with his men to the settlement to cement relations with their new neighbours, the settlers, and to bless them. He reveals to them the reason for his joy: 'Until now they were forced to bring their bread with them from afar, and for every act of theft against them, whether great or small, they had to trudge needlessly to Dor'ah (Rehovoth), Iyon (Rishon leZion) and Melbes (Petach Tikvah) for redress. But now Allah had brought abundance and sustenance to the entrance of their very homes.' In the author's house the virtue of hospitality towards the Arab neighbours is established as are the customs of the land, and Moshe Satwi (like Moshe Smilansky) is designated 'Hawaja Musa' by the inhabitants of the Arab villages in the vicinity. He meets with Mera'd, an Egyptian immigrant who is without property or inheritance and who lives 'from hand to mouth' on petty peddling and by working during the harvest period in the Jewish settlements. Mera'd has 'a pale face, and a sparse beard similar to that of a Bedouin's encircles his face'. In the army of the Sharif Feisal he reached the level of 'Shawish'. His wife, refusing the chair which has been extended to her, prefers to sit, her legs folded beneath her, on the floor, near to the door, in veneration of the intimate companion of her youth, who himself sits at ease on the chair before the table. When the family of Mera'd journeys forth to the villages, 'first steps the ass who knows the way, and after it the father, the son and the wife, like a procession from ancient days'. The author and Mera'd conduct friendly conversations between themselves and enjoy neighbourly relations. 'I knew how to gauge his nature and his character and I learned how to discern and pick out every grain of truth from the garbage heap of falsehood.' When the author goes to live in Tel Aviv and to work in a private dairy farm, he endeavours to preserve proper relations with the friends he had acquired with such great effort during the period of his stay in the neighbourhood of the Arab village. Frequently his Arab friends visit his home in the city, enjoying his protection and hospitality. Mera'd becomes the author's agent, directing his affairs in the village. The author lends Mera'd

money for business purposes which he promises to return at the appointed time, 'by placing his hand on his head and his eyes (there is nothing more dear to the fellahin than the eyes)'. Mera'd is, however, exposed as an unappreciative swindler when he refuses to return the debt. He thus becomes estranged from the author, having 'lowered his honour to the dust'. Hawaja Musa, demanding justice and righteousness, then turns to his friend, the Sheikh Ahmad the Dervish, for help. The latter intervenes on behalf of the author by turning to Kamil Effendi, the Kurd, the Chief of Police in Migdal Gad. The disappointed author then forms new business ties, this time with Hana Sa'ir from Jaffa, a member of a Christian Arab family.

The autobiographical aspect that plays so prominent a part in the stories that deal with the meeting and acquaintanceship with Arabs, likewise makes its appearance in the novel, The First Year, by Solomon Zemach, who describes his relations with the Arab woman worker, Fatima, with whom he became friendly during his period of labour in the fields of the settlement Rishon leZion. The young author from Russia is enchanted by this physically and spiritually vibrant Oriental woman. When the time comes to leave the settlement wine-press, he takes leave of Fatima, who is at the time working in the kitchen of the farmer, Mr Ben Ze'ev, departing with the ass, sack of provisions, and Arab escort, which she had managed to procure for him.

In his story, Arabs, Asher Barash describes various Arab types whom he knew from his days of exile in Haifa (where he was sent with his family by Jemel-Paha) at a time when the Arabs 'were not yet a nation and they did not yet hate the Jews as competitors'. Such a type is an Arab writer who preaches incessantly about brotherhood between the two peoples, as are Hawaja Ibrahim, a green-grocer who once went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Mecca (hence the appellation, 'Hawaja'), and Shafiya, a Christian Arab woman and a dear and sympathetic friend of the author's wife who, being very quick-tempered, once attacked her brother with a water-melon knife with the intention of murdering him because he had insulted her. Mahmud, a deserter from the Turkish army, who hides himself in a back-yard, having paid bakshish to the local police, is a further type. He has relations with a childless woman

whose husband is away beyond the Jordan, and she looks after Mahmud and helps him. During a meeting with the story-teller, Mahmud says: 'People say that after the war Palestine will belong to you, the Yahud'. Mahmud eventually goes insane. When the English enter the city he dances about in the street, his small dog at his feet.

3.3 The relations between Arabs and Jews

Within the complex of themes which go to make up the structural relationship between Arabs and Jews, one can discern two central pivotal motifs: the first, revolving around the ideal of Arab-Jewish brotherhood, and the second, standing in complete contrast, around the enmity, envy, racial alienation, and suspicion which are manifest in such phenomena as riots and bloody pogroms.

Within the former circle one must assign a special place to the work of Judah Burla, in whose last literary collection, To the Sound of Marching, two stories entitled, Meetings, and The Vision of Botros, are pervaded with a nostalgia for the early relations of friendship and brotherhood which had existed between Arabs and Jews who had struck roots in the land for centuries. As such these stories are crowned with a halo of radiance and joyous hopes for a shared future between the two peoples.

In the story, Meetings, Burla describes the encounter of a Jewish youth Shimeon Yifrach with an Arab youth, Usman Dejeni, both being inhabitants of Old Jerusalem. They meet on several occasions during their life-times, the first time during their childhood and intermittently thereafter, until they have reached maturity and a time when their thoughts and ideas have been crystallized into national manifestoes and ideals.

In the story, The Vision of Botros, Burla introduces us to a 'messenger' who teaches a doctrine of salvation and brings a religious-social, national-Zionist message. He is a Christian Arab, the son of a French father. Like that of Petros (Peter), after whom he is called Batros, his doctrine flourishes in the mountains nearby Nazareth where

he lives in an Arab village. The main part of his vision touches on social problems, but in the political field also Botros, in relating his vision of Arab-Jewish friendship, stands out as a very positive figure when he points to the fact that neither his voice nor that of any other Moslem against the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis has ever been harkened to.

This coupling of the theme of the Holocaust with the problem of the relations between Arabs and Jews was to make its appearance again as a motif in the works of a number of young writers born in the land.

The political viewpoint of Botros Mihon is that the Jews should live in their own state. It is only the Christian Arabs whom he sees as allies of the Jewish inhabitants of the country in the future. Botros believes (and is allowed by the author to express this belief with much rhetoric) that the key to the solution of the problems of the Jewish future is in his hand. It is against this background that the friendship between Botros and the watch-maker, Michah Ezri, a member of the neighbouring Kibbutz, who believes in the brotherhood of nations, is formed. Botros is then murdered by nationalistic Arabs because of his visit to the Kibbutz, and the 'messenger' thus gives his life for his mission. The action of the novel is set during the days immediately preceding the establishment of the State.

The author enwraps his ideas with a mantle of symbolism. At times his words slip into mere 'reportage' and at times a too obvious tendentiousness is evident. His intention is however obvious: to present the Zionist ideal within a framework which treats of Arab-Jewish relations both before and after the establishment of the State.

In the story, The Way of a Man, Burla tells about the friendship which grew up between the Arab, Ahmad El Haj, a grocer, and his Jewish employee, Jacob Magen.

In the concluding part of the story, The E'gal Around the Neck, by G Sharoni, the memoirs of the sage Rabbenu Abulafia concerning the plague of cholera which broke out in Tiberias at the beginning of the

century are included, as is the mention of the rescue of the Rabbi and tens of Jewish families by the Sheikh Said El-Sheikh from the village Naser-el-Din, in whose house they found refuge. In the the story the Sheikh provides for his guests, among whom is the Zaida family, during the full forty days of the plague. Said-el-Sheikh has a noble mare which is a source of pride to him and which has a beautiful foal. One day Zaida's mule kicks the foal and breaks its leg, an unfortunate occurrence since the foal cannot be cured. Zaida thereupon takes the Egal from his head, binds it round his neck and enters the tent of the Sheikh. Yet when the Sheikh hears about the incident, he says: 'Allah has given and Allah has taken away, may the name of Allah be blessed'.

In his story, On the Threshold, Moses Smilansky tells about a Jewish child who came to the land in a foreign ship and who was rescued by an Arab official Abu-Ali, who hid the child from the eyes of the British.

Beni Maytiv, in his story, The Pilgrimage, tells about Bedouin who rejoice at the coming of new settlers who are to establish settlements in the Negev: 'Now the Negev will certainly flourish to the benefit of its Jewish and Arab inhabitants'. During a period of drought the Sheikh and the heads of the Bedouin families decide to go up to the grave of Nabi Nor to beseech him to intercede on their behalf. The Jewish settlers decide to join the caravan of the pilgrims to demonstrate their identification with the Bedouin, but the Sheikh Salman el Orjani is not enthusiastic. In the meantime, however, the rain begins to fall again.

In the story, Alone, which goes back to the days of the pogroms in the land, Moses Smilansky describes the faithfulness of the Arab Mahmud to his Jewish employer, the farmer Jacob. The story opens with the attack by a gang of bandits on the farmer's plantation. Mahmud is alone in the yard of the plantation, and although he carries a rifle and bullets on his shoulder, he knows that he cannot hold back the four armed men who call to him, 'Open up, you dog of the Jews!'. They penetrate into the courtyard, tie up Mahmud and take him back with them to their camp. In Mahmud's eyes these men appear strange and alien. 'Their faces are not like those of Arabs'. His captors interrogate him, 'Dog, why do you serve the Jews?' and Mahmud answers that from childhood

he had become accustomed to eat from the bread of his master, his father Abu Mahmud having been a farm-hand who served the father of his master. His captors mock: 'They put gravel in your mouth and you call it bread! They pour poison down your throat and you call it water ... Tomorrow they will bring you to judgement and hang you on a tree as one hangs a villain'. The men of the gang know that relations between his master, the farmer, and the members of the Jewish settlement have been strained. They dislike Jacob because he is good to the Arab and because he did not side with the whole settlement in their fight with the Arabs. Mahmud argues with the bandits: 'My master loves his land and his farm'. And they in turn argue: 'A Jew does not love land, a Jew loves money'. The gang then make a condition that Mahmud return to his master and tell him that he should help them (did not his Jewish brethren hate him?), that he should open his house to them at night and give them money and spy for them in the settlement and in the city. Then, when the land fell into their hands they would repay him by making him an officer and prince over his brethren. But if he did not agree to the conditions they would burn his farm, kill him, his wife and children, and they would hang Mahmud on the sycamore in the court-yard. When Mahmud brings the message from the gang, his master, Jacob, commits suicide.

In the story, The Angry Sheikh, by Israel Zarchi, which deals with the life of the Yemenite Jews who inhabited the village of Ha-Shiloah we are presented with a picture of what occurred in the land during the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the pogroms, when the calamity that was to befall the Jews hung heavily in the air of the village. The Jews go up to the house of the old Sheikh who had been their friend for years and who remembered their fathers from his childhood, in order to seek refuge. When the Sheikh hears the words of the emissaries he takes a rifle out of his room and calls out, 'As long as I'm alive and this hand can still hold a rifle - not a hair of your heads will be harmed'.

During the pogroms the old Sheikh comes to the village on horseback and asks to meet with the Jews. A painful hush descends as he shows them a kerchief with which Ishmaelite women in the mountains cover their heads. The Sheikh's eyes grow sad and he says, almost indifferently:

'The men of Hebron sent me this as a gift indicating thereby that I should exchange my turban for a woman's kerchief ...'. So was the honour of the Sheikh lowered among his Arab brethren, because of his intention to protect the Jews and save them. When the Jews return to the village of Shiloah after the pogroms they bring a token of conciliation to the old Sheikh, together with a letter of greetings from Isaac ben Zevi of the National Council, written in a flowery and wonderful Arabic in which, in the name of all the Jews of the land of Israel, he gives thanks for the custom of good-neighbourliness which prevails among the people of Kfar Ha-Shiloah, and which so well reflects the wonderful tradition of their ancestors of bygone generations. The Sheikh welcomes the emissaries with mixed feelings. He does not wish to accept the token of conciliation under any circumstances, but he takes only the letter of greeting, saying sadly: 'This might possibly benefit my son'. This statement might be interpreted as an expression of hope, that a new generation would rise up after him that would continue the patriarchal tradition and honour the custom of neighbourliness.

The novel, The Men of Peki'in, by Rebecca Alter, written against the backdrop of these self-same pogroms, describes the life of the Oriental Jewish congregation in Peki'in, a village in which Jews had lived continuously throughout the generations, not having gone out into the Diaspora after the destruction of the Second Temple. These are the self-same Jewish fellahin 'who are assimilated among the Arabs, yet who never ceased to keep the ember of the Torah of Israel and the ancestral traditions alive'. These Oriental Jews dress like Muslims and speak the Arabic language. The most well-known among them are the members of the Zinati family, the head of which, Abu-Yusaf Zinati, is regarded by the men of the village as being of great importance. This fact occasions the English commissioner during his visit to Peki'in, to remark: 'Truly, to me he resembles Abraham the Patriarch', and motivates him to ask Abu-Yusaf to bless him in accordance with the Israelite custom (the Patriarchal Blessing). In the village of Peki'in live various communities; the Christian Arabs, the Muslims, the Druzes and the Jews, all in a state of brotherhood; each respecting the religion and customs of the other. In one of the chapters of the book a facet of the way of

life of the Christian Arab community is presented, when the departure of a bride from her parental home to that of her husband in another village, and her welcome there, is described. After a night of torment following the wedding the bride discovers that she has been deceived - she has been married to a mere child, his married brother having consummated the marriage on his behalf. She runs back to her father's house.

During the pogroms of 5689 (the year 1929) the Arabs of the village Sukmata, already known for their cruelty, seek a pretext to prove their heroism, as did the heroes of Hebron and Tzefat who had organized the slaughter of their own Jewish neighbours. But the Druze Muktar of Peki'in, the Sheikh Abdullah Zelah Abu-Hussein says: 'Such a thing will not occur in Peki'in'. He receives threatening letters, directed at his Arab-nationalistic conscience, reminding him of his obligation to deliver the Jews of Peki'in. Yet the Sheikh remains firm: 'I will protect you, and together with you will fight them!'. He goes around from Jewish house to house, his Muktar's staff in one hand, his weapon in the other, and gives them courage. For security reasons Jews move their dwelling places to the homes of their Druze friends. On Sabbath, at a time when all the Jews are assembled in the Synagogue, the Muktar stands guard at the gate: 'Over my dead body will they have to pass and in my blood will they first have to dip their legs'. It is indeed he who saves the Jewish community in Peki'in from plunder and slaughter.

According to the story of Na'if Zerifi of Peki'in, the men of Sukmata had decided to attack the village and murder the Muktar. Only then would the local Arabs, out of fear, deliver the Jews into their hands. Already on the way they had begun to divide the Jewish property of Peki'in among themselves, an act which led to much strife, so that by the time they reached the grave of R Oshaiah they were already on the point of beating one another to death. Beaten up and filled with shame they had returned to their village. According to another version they had only just reached the grave of R Oshaiah when a miracle occurred and their legs began to move backwards. They thereupon understood that the saint had taken a hand in the matter and that, by his merit, the Jews had thus been protected.

During the pogroms of 5696 - 5699 agitators to Peki'in from Sukmata and Tershiha, now work together with the Shavav of Peki'in, at the head of which stands Kamel Effendi the Muslim, Tzelah the head of the council, who is responsible for the district, and Salman E'devel the Miktar of the Druzes. They agree to rise up against the Jews at midnight and to liquidate them. When the Druzit Nurah Yosef Hir hears about this she can find no rest: 'It is an abomination! The Almighty will not forgive', and she warns all the Jews through the Jewess Mazal Cohen Tuma of the impending calamity, offering to hide them. To her Arab friends Nurah says: 'Whether a Muslim, Christian, Druzit, or Jewess, let them cry out to the Lord in their sorrow'. At midnight the wicked scheme is put into effect. They break into the Jewish houses but find them empty. Only two Jews are captured, Joseph Zinati and his cousin Obadiah, and Mahunah Sharif, who had concealed them in his house, is beaten up. The men of the gangs then decide to burn the two Jews at the stake. When Mahunah Sharif sees what is in store for his fellow-villagers, although wounded from the blows he has received, he runs to the Muktar Kamil Effendi E'adi and calls out: 'Will the murder of Joseph and Obadiah Zinati destroy the whole Jewish people? ... You will bear the responsibility for this murder and they will bring you to the gallows. If not the British, then the men of the Haganah will take revenge on you and chop off your head'. The Muktar goes out in alarm to the men of the gangs (who are in fact his own nephews and cousins from Tershiha and Sukmata) and demands that they set free their victims. In this novel the author's hint about the possibility of the existence of harmony and peace between the two neighbouring peoples, albeit in one corner of the land, is clear.

The narrator of the story, Banim LaMakom, by Isaac Shinhar, is an Oriental Jew who wishes to immigrate to the land of Israel but is forbidden by the authorities to leave the land of his exile. He remains, bereft of everything and persecuted by the Arab rabble. An Arab official accuses him: 'The Jews want to go to Palestine, to rob the Arabs of their land and rape their wives and daughters'. The persecuted Jew then finds himself by chance in the abode of Abu Nega'm a terrorist leader feared by the people and the government, whose

followers occupy the hill-country, and who is in possession of wagons and horses, as well as a fortified city and many arms. Abu Nega'm takes the Jew under his protection and even promises to help him emigrate to the Holy Land. He does not do this for monetary reasons, but asks the Jew only that he will visit the graves of Nabi Abraham, Nabi Isaac, and Nabi Jacob, when he arrives in the land, and that he pray on his behalf that the plan to bring about a revolution in the country meets with success. He then orders his aide, Ahmad, to take the Jew and his family across the border and thereafter to bring back to him, Abu Nega'm, a sealed letter written by the Jew as an indication that the order had indeed been carried out. On arriving in the land the Jew prays for Abu Naga'm in the Holy places. Meanwhile a rumour circulates that Abu Naga'm has rebelled against the government and has gained power in the country. As ruler he forgets the Jew and the prayer which he offered on his behalf. Afterwards a counter-revolution takes place in which Abu Naga'm is captured alive and beheaded in the market square.

In the novel, A Perplexed Man, by Mila Ohel, which revolves around a Libyan Jew, the action moves to Tripolitania and to the town of Mesilato of 5705 (1945), when the local Arabs plan a pogrom against the Jews, killing the old Rabbi, one of the revered members of the community. The Shachir family hide with the Arab Yahlif ibn Amer who, taking advantage of the vulnerability of his tenants, fills his pockets with their last pennies through acts of cunning, and then moves off to the land of opulence. The novel opens with Yahlif sitting in a tavern and relating what had occurred from the time of the arrival of the great Merabat from Trebles-el-Arav (Western Tripoli) until the Jews were slaughtered and destroyed in Mesilta. The pogroms had broken out against a background of religious hatred and Islamic wars, Yahlif himself having been among those who had incited the mob against the Jews. He boasts that all the property of his Jewish neighbour Shachir had fallen to him as a legacy by the help of Allah and Mohammed the Prophet.

Yahlif is a business-man whose basic characteristic is cunning. His total aspiration is to become wealthy and to be a merchant in the city and be called 'YaSidi' - 'Seniora'. Yahlif tells the Sheikh

Mustafa (a friend of Benjamin Shachir) how the fanatics burst into the home of Misoud Shachir and murdered him, and how he, Yahlif, managed to save his tenants who were still alive by virtue of his having concealed them in a cave. In the presence of a Jew, Yahlif curses the murderers of Benjamin Shachir, in order that he might extract from him a sum of money that would take him to Jebel where he might earn a respectable living. Among the Muslims, however, he instigates against the 'infidel' Jews.

In the story, The Wise Man Gershon from the Inheritance of Simon, by Jonah Cohen, the relationship between the family of a sage (Rabbi) and Arab notables in Jerusalem before the year 5708 (1945) is described.

Yehuda Burla, in his description of Arabs and Jews, and the relationship of brotherhood and love which exists between them, does not refrain from consistently viewing these relations against their background of depressing reality. In his novel, A Master among his People, as well as in his stories, Encounters, and, The Vision of Botros, this love and the brotherhood which stems from it, is of a variegated nature. At times the love comes through holiness and at times through desecration, but it is always a force and one which can bring about wonders in the desert, in the camp, in the village, or in the city.

The story Encounters tells about a Jewish youth who, suckled by an Arab woman as a baby, grows up and falls in love with the sister of his 'wet-nurse'. It describes too the first blossom of love between a Jewish boy, a product of the Jewish school and the Yeshiva, and an Arab girl, as well as about the visit of the boy to the Mosque of Omar under the protection of the girl's brother.

Burla, who was of a Sephardi family that had lived in Eretz Yisrael for almost 300 years, wrote one of the most beautiful novels in the literature of Eretz Yisrael, A Master among his People, which deals with the love of a Jew and an Arab girl. This romantic approach which has its beginnings in the stories of M Smilansky, perhaps reaches its peak with Burla's novel. Gideon Pinchas, the hero of the novel, is the only son of Shlomo Pinchas, head of the grave-diggers of Jerusalem, and

who comes from an old Sephardic family which has been living for generations in the Old City. One of the Patriarchs of the family, Ovad Pinchas, had already demonstrated his courage to the Arabs at a time when it was forbidden for Jews to bury their dead without the permission of the Mufti.

Gideon's soul yearns for the wide open spaces, for the mountains, and for the life of the shepherds. 'Hamdon Mustafa and Khaled, why do I envy them? Because my soul goes out to the distant places, to the plain, to the wilderness. I want so to be a hero.' He has the obsessive desire to be like the Arab shepherds, wearing a shepherd's cloak, a keffiyah and an agel on his head, and a bullet-belt and hunter's rifle on his shoulder. He acquires for himself a flock of three hundred prime sheep and goats, and hires two Arab helpers, Talel of the village of Silwan (Shiloah) and Aves of Anta (Anatoth), and they set about pasturing the flock in the environs of the villages of Anta, Azrayah, Abu-Deis, and Sur-Behar. Now Gideon is called Jedeon by the Arabs, a word derived from the Arabic Je'da (a soldier). By chance he meets the beautiful and intelligent Hamdah, the sister of Telal: 'like the daughter of Allah, wonderful and enchanting, who sits before him at ease, while drawing his heart as with strong, sturdy arms ...'. As for Hamdah, she has been in love with the handsome Gideon for some time. When Gideon chases girls he arouses Hamdah's jealousy. Yet when Gideon admits his love for her, Hamdah asks: 'Can you truly marry me, you being a Jew and I a Muslim?'. Gideon sees himself and Hamdah standing opposite one another with a sea of angry waves separating them, while their arms stretch out to one another. 'If the Lord implants love in the heart of a man he will also implant courage and strength in him to leap forward between the stormy waves.' And Gideon demands of himself, 'You will be the first to remove this obstacle from the way of a great love, to break the chains of tradition, the hindrances and false prohibitions; you will set an example and not pay heed to what people say nor to their clamour'. He preserves his love for Hamdah amidst hard and bitter struggles against those who surround him and who look with a hostile eye upon this relationship. The forbidden love continues in secret for three months. At that time Talel, the brother of Hamdah, journeys to Damascus, and his young brother, Murad

Hasan, takes his place. Hamdah is prepared to become a Jewess out of her love for Gideon, so that he might marry her according to the Law of Israel. She even agrees that Gideon should marry a Jewess who will be the mistress of the house while she, Hamdah, will be satisfied with being his second wife. When the matter becomes known to him, Gideon's uncle, Elazar, arranges a marriage between Gideon and Lelah Rakiv, the daughter of Kewaja Salim Rakiv. He objects to Gideon's marriage to a Muslim peasant-girl, warning him against the anger and vengeance of her brother Talel: 'Don't we know how Arab brothers protect the honour of their sisters?'. When the matter of their love is revealed to Talel he says to Gideon: 'You have polluted the purity of our seas ... you have have rent asunder the ties of our heart ... Enmity shall not rise up between you and I ... I will not repay you with evil ... I will not forget the good and the kindness, as I will not forget the shame which you have brought upon us'. When Hamdah makes known to him that she belongs to Gideon, Talel curses her, 'Daughter of degradation! Had it not been Gideon I would have stuck my knife into your heart'. He thereupon sends Hamdah away to a place that is far from the village.

On the eve of Passover they marry Gideon off to Sharina, a young girl from a Sephardic-Jewish family living in Jerusalem, but in the secret places of his heart his love for Hamdah is not extinguished. During the First World War Talel is killed on the Baghdad front. Jerusalem is captured by the English, and Hamdah returns to her village. She sends a note through one of her younger brothers to 'The beloved of my heart, light of my eye, Gideon'. They meet secretly and Hamdah offers to become Gideon's maid-servant. She raises his children and lives with Gideon.

A certain Samara, whose aim it is to aggravate Sharina, the wife of Gideon, secretly arouses suspicions in her against Gideon's concubine. Gideon decides to reveal his forbidden love to his wife as well as his desire to marry Hamdah. Sharina is overcome by a terrible anger and Gideon's family life is destroyed. Hamdah disappears too on the day when the matter becomes known to Sharina, her reason being that Solomon, the oldest son of Gideon, is in love with her and has demonstrated his desire by sending her a secret love letter. Now Hamdah knows that her

dream to love Gideon openly will not be realized.

Here their love story ends, severe and bitter indeed, having been the struggle and the toil between their loving hearts and their feeling of race and the dictates of religion. Hamdah the Arab, as such, embodies in herself the eternal woman, the loved one of Gideon, and Solomon his son.

The action of the above novel takes place against the background of the Arab way of life with its beliefs and festivals, such as the festival of Habi Musa (the pilgrimage), and the preparation of the Hijav (the amulet) on the initiative of Hamdah, by the Sheikh Aref for the sick Gideon. Woven into the romantic plot are also the concrete events which took place in the land at the time when the whole Jewish settlement was shaken by the horrors of the murders which the Arabs of Jaffa perpetrated, particularly when it became known that a worthy author (Brenner) had been murdered in his home, together with a number of his friends. One of Gideon's sons says: 'Because they are Arabs ... they are very bad, always killing ... One must kill them'. Hamdah replies: 'Not all the Arabs are bad. There are some bad Arabs. They ought to be punished ... The police will put them in prison and it will be bad for them there'. After the 1929 pogroms Hamdah helps Gideon to smuggle arms for 'the Haganah'. Dressed as an Arab cleaner-woman she enters the depot in 'Kishlah' and packs rifles into straw baskets, while Gideon makes the necessary monetary arrangements with the Arab Officer Rashid Effendi, who is in charge of the depot.

Gideon's conversations with Rashid touch on the whole range of opinions and view-points affecting the triangular relationship between the veteran Sephardic Jews of Jerusalem, their Arab neighbours, and the foreign immigrants who (in the words of Rashid) 'came almost daily from the countries of the world - if permitted to do so - they will gain control of the land'. The Arabs' fear and horror in the face of Jewish immigration is a frequent motif in almost all of the stories that touch upon the relations between Arabs and Jews.

Gideon holds tenaciously to the optimistic Zionist standpoint.

'If many Jews come will they not enrich and make the land flourish, strengthening agriculture, commerce, industry ... all for the good of the two peoples living within it? And should such a pact of brotherhood be established between Arabs and Jews how great will the goodness and justice inherent in such a pact be!'

In this novel there is also a hint of the social problem of the Arabs. Hamdah rebels openly against the patriarchal traditions of the Muslim family in which the right of the brother (Talel) to govern his sister (Hamdah) prevails. Through the strength of her love for Gideon she also strives for social change and progress. During the years she becomes as one of Gideon's family, and comes to resemble them in her opinions and education. At one time she even offers to live on a kibbutz with Gideon and bear him children there. Eventually she realizes her ambition. After some years, when Gideon meets her in the street, she tells him that she has converted to Judaism and is now called Hemdah. She is a member of the kibbutz and also has a boy-friend there (this motif, it will be recalled, also appears in the story, The First Swallow, by Burla).

In the novel, Girl of the Wilderness, by Abraham Pelen-Meklev, a Bedouin girl likewise strives for social change, against the background of her romantic love for a Jewish man, a member of the kibbutz. In this novel a veritable tapestry of life is presented, within which both the strands of legend and reality are woven with great literary skill. The distant and imaginary land of Israel, at first garbed in exotic festival attire, gradually takes on the dress of modernity. The author, a grandson of one of the founders of the mother of the settlements, Petach Tikvah, describes the meeting of the members of the settlement with the Bedouin nomads, who, as a social phenomenon, stand in complete contrast to the present Israeli settlers, causing a wall of strangeness to stand between them. The appearance of the Jewish women members of the kibbutz, whose social status equals that of the men, shocks the Bedouin. 'The expression of disgust and anger which could be seen in their faces and in their eyes, that were now directed towards the girl that stood at my right side, a weapon in her hand ... before them stood a creature of low standing, a woman who could be bought for

money, whose place was in the cattle tent ... '. The Jews could also discern among the Bedouin, another figure, that of a 'young Bedouin girl wearing a black robe, her head covered with coloured ribbons ... a dark brown girl, blooming and radiating charm. She looked on with large eyes, the whites of which were as pure as snow ... Even through her Oriental dress and her desert servility ... one could still detect in her conduct and in her look that a trace of urban Western culture inadvertently clung to her'.

Her name is Hasnah and she shepherds the herds of the people of Kfar-Ha-Holoth from whom she has learned Hebrew. Hasnah is the second wife of the old Haj Ahmad. The writer feels a strong desire for the Oriental woman: 'In her eyes was a flame fed by a rising sensuality, a kind of beckoning, an entreaty, "take me! snatch me away! Please!" ' At this point in the story a strong romantic emotion is given expression. Hasnah has come to know the Jews and has the inclination to enter into close relations with them. She is acquainted with the manager of the farm, the father of Shosh, who had come with the author to the Bedouin tent, and, like Shosh, dreams of being free too. 'You the white, happy people, come to see us in our wanderings! How I hate living in a cattle tent, and the beatings which this old man metes out to me.' And in order to give concrete form to her longing to be free she does an extemporaneous dance: 'She grew more excited by the minute ... for the relief and freedom of the bodily instincts which had been suppressed until this moment'. The sensuous dance of the girl, filled with Oriental fire, reaches the point of ecstasy. She undresses herself and dances naked. The novel continues with the stormy episode of love between Hasnah and the Jew Ahiezer who, having lost his way, enters the boundary of the Bedouin camp. Hasnah says to the young man: 'I love you!'. She slips away from the camp and steals quietly into Ahiezer's room. Hasnah wishes to leave the Bedouin and be born anew in the arms of the young Jew. She says to him: 'I can steal horses and cows, I will support you. In years of drought, when the sheep die and the water-wells dry up, we will try our hand at stealing!'. But the Bedouin way of life shocks Ahiezer, who prefers to remain within the Western culture. He is also betrothed to Shosh, the daughter of the manager of the farm, and is about to marry her.

In the collection of stories by Aryeh Lipschitz, Far From the Day Yet Near, the action takes place against the backdrop of the life and landscape of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The Jews, Christians, and Muslims seen here against the tragic background of conflict between fathers and sons, experience a fatal confrontation in their efforts to bring about a state of cooperation amongst themselves.

On the one hand, one senses the Jewish desire to become acquainted with the Arab way of life, to learn it and, in so doing, to draw near to it. One feels too the estrangement which is brought about as a result of the encounter with cruel hostility.

In the story, Jumea and Jemila, Aryeh Lipschitz describes the close friendship which forms between a Jew and an Arab brother and sister, in the heart of the desert. Alexander Neri, a specialist builder sent to the desert in connection with the erection of a British army camp there, meets Jumea, son of a Bedouin tribe from across the Jordan. He learns the customs of the Arabs and is even invited to visit the home of Jumea in a remote desert town. The author skilfully describes the gloomy Bedouin house: 'Its walls were of clay bricks mixed with straw and from the ceiling poles projected in criss-cross fashion upon which similar bricks were joined with a thick layer of clay. The floor was covered with a mat ... '.

Jumea offers his sister, Jemila, to his Jewish friend in marriage, but the Jewish worker, though in love with Jemila, remains nevertheless anchored in Western culture and, for this reason, can never live among the Arabs. The story thus reflects a failure in Arab-Jewish relations. The Bedouin falls upon the Jewish labourer, Isaac Grundman, and wounds him severely.

In Lipschitz's other story, With Knife and Revolver, this self-same hidden hatred of the Arabs finds expression in a brutal outburst which leads to the murder of the assistant of the work-manager, Etzion.

The story, The Miller's Daughter, by Joshua Bar-Joseph, tells about a Jewish girl, the daughter of a devout family, who leaves the home of

her father and follows her Arab fiance to live among his people. The story is at its most moving at the point when the loss of a soul from Israel becomes a reality.

A young Arab, Abdul Aziz, from the village Ein-Zaytim is accepted as a labourer in the mill-house of Zeidel the Miller, in Safed. He is a strong young man, tall and good-looking, who comes to work in order to earn money for a dowry. 'What a healthy rural simplicity emanated from his whole being.' During the year-and-a-half that he works in the mill-house a love-affair develops between himself and the miller's beautiful daughter, Chana. She visits him regularly at the mill, he being the first man to whom she had ever devoted herself. 'The very act of being caught up in the embrace of the Arab filled her with fear and confusion. If something of this matter became known in public!' Chana continues to make love to Abdul Aziz secretly for two months, until her father catches them. The miller dismisses the Arab from his work and also Chana receives her punishment: 'He had never so much as rebuked her, nor lifted a finger against her, now he caught her by her plaits and threw her to the floor, tramping on her with his feet, howling like a wounded animal. And she remained silent, accepting her judgement with a bent head'. (This term reminds one of the conclusion of the story, A Father and his Daughters, by Isaac Shemi.)

Zeidel did not, however, truly know what took place between his daughter and the Arab (he saw Chana at a time when she was but caressing the hair of Abdul Aziz). 'Had he known the truth he would have killed his daughter on the spot.' A Jewish labourer Zusha comes to work in the mill-house in Abdul Aziz's place. The father hints to his daughter that Zusha is most acceptable in his eyes, and that he would look most favourably upon any relationship she might have with him. 'This young man is able to take charge of the mill-house, and she will gain a fitting and devout husband.' Chana had indeed tried to approach Zusha. 'But deep down there burned hidden yearnings only for the arms of Aziz, and any other young man was a miserable alternative for that which had been forcibly taken away from her.' Zusha, a strong man, would shyly push Chana away. He was timid, whereas the Arab Aziz had enchanted the miller's daughter with a sensuous, wild and unrestrained love: 'If only

he would succeed in at least wrapping his strong hands around her hips and pressing her to him until it hurt, she could possibly forget completely the radiant hours she had spent with Aziz ... '

In the story, the Arab appears as a lover who, in the eyes of the young Jewish girl has a manly superiority over his Jewish counterpart. 'He (Zusha) appeared comical and miserable in her eyes, in contrast to his rival who was powerful in spirit and did as his heart desired.'

Neither does Abdul Aziz forget his love for the miller's daughter. He appears in the black of night and calls to Chana. He tells her of his strong yearnings for her, about his desire to take her as his wife, about his family's approval, and the house he has set up for her in his village. After great struggles with herself she arrives at a decision: 'For six weeks that dangerous game in the dark went on until it became clear to her that she had become pregnant by Aziz. Now it only remained for her either to throw herself into a pit, or to go after her lover.' She surrenders to her stormy love: 'She went after Aziz on the path leading to Ein-ha-Zaytim, only once turning her head backwards to look at the lonely lights of the Jewish Safed'.

On the other side of the barricade, in the Jewish camp, a breach was thus uncovered: Chana had rebelled against the religious tradition and against the conventions of society in Israel, having left her people and passed over to the other camp.

3.4 A description of the Arab way of life

The Hebrew story-tellers who came to describe the way of life of the Arabs, drew profusely from the classical Arabic literature and the richly variegated Arab folk-lore: the Koran, the stories of A Thousand and One nights, the Oriental legends and popular epics concerning Arab heroes, the proverbs and traditions, all of which have been handed down orally from generation to generation. A few writers, such as Moses Smilansky, utilized these sources with their peculiar style and language only for the purpose of producing their own original literary creations. Others, such as Asher Barash and Tuvya Ashkenaz, collected, translated, and worked over the sources, preserving their form of expression.

The way of life of the Arabs in all its various aspects, in both the religious and secular field, is faithfully described in these works.

Moshe Satwi knew the way of life of the Fellahin and the Arab village intimately. Having been both a watchman and a labourer in various settlements in the land, he had worked together with the fellahin in the tilling of the fields and, together with them, had suffered from the cold and rains of winter, and from the blazing sun of summer with its Sharav (sirocco). As such he lovingly describes the life of the fellahin, not as they really were but by introducing something of the lyrical into his stories, by forgiving them their ignorance and obstinacy, allowing his love for them and the desire of his heart to gain control, and allowing their attachment to the soil and hard labour to negate any shortcomings they might have.

In his book, The Arab Village, he displays a wide ethnographic knowledge. As a chronicle and faithful testament to the lives of the Arab fellahin who inhabit the land of Israel, this work constitutes a rich source of lifelike imagery, portraying as it does the Arab way of life in the home, the yard, the field, the pasture, the threshing floor, and the garden, as well as being a repository of folk-sayings and proverbs. The pioneering rusticity of the early Jewish farmers is tinged in Satwi's work with a distinct Asiatic hue, their way of life being more rooted in tradition than that of their ancestors of the Biblical and Talmudic period, but also more primitive and strange. From the point of view of content this book parallels Satwi's earlier collection of stories, The Morning Light.

All the rustic tales of Satwi have been assembled anew in his book, Those Who Sow in Tears, in which he points to the invisible thread which linked together the Arab Fellahin and the Jewish farmers of the settlements creating ties of good-neighbourliness and partnership. In the story, We Have Sown in Tears, Satwi describes what occurred during a particular sowing season when, 'A heavy cloud extended over the settlement and the surrounding Arab villages ... they held prayers in the small synagogue so that the rains might cease ... in the Arab

villages they participated in mourning processions, they ground with empty hand-mills in the streets of the village - an allusion to the famine - they plucked feathers from live birds, lifting up their voices to arouse mercy - Allah stop the rain! Allah chase away the clouds!'. In the story Arab words taken from the village way of life and farming activities are frequently employed, such as Hashagag (a furrow); Kantar (a measure of weight); Matianah (a plastered cistern) and Kastah (the breaking of the ground for the summer produce).

The story, One Night of Betrothal, by Menahem Kapelyak, tells about a villager, Ajaj Al-Hassan, and his two wives, the second and younger of whom he acquired for seventy coins in hard cash, because the first had ceased to bear him children. 'The old lady is slow and solemn and her eyes emit sadness ... at the sight of her younger and much loved rival wife who is about to take over her place in the heart of her husband.' The bank-note which Ajaj throws into the hands of his second and younger wife whom he loves, is handed on to the old lady. 'Because it is a statute and a law among the Arabs that the privilege of being the mistress of the house and being in possession of the keys to the food and other supplies belongs to the first wife.' (It will be recalled that a portrayal of this way of life appears too in the story The Tale of a Flute, by Jacob Horin.)

Ajaj is busy repairing his winter house. 'And a feeling of satisfaction passes through his body.' How warm it will be in the house when outside the rains will pour and the winds will howl and he will lie on his floor covering of pillows, cushions, and carpets, both big and small, and his two wives will be eager to serve him, each trying to outdo the other in their efforts to provide him with pleasure and comfort.

In the ballad, The Figs in the Threshing-Floor, which is based on a passage from an Arab folk-tale, the village way of existence is described, with its peaceful, idyllic atmosphere which envelopes the life of the family of the Village Muktar. His tranquility is disturbed only by his children who arouse him from sleep while searching for figs that have been placed in the threshing floor.

The role of superstition in the lives of the village fellahin and the tent-dwelling Bedouin is considerable.

In the story, Hejav-Amulet, by Moshe Satwi, a fellah whose field had been smitten during a drought, asks the author if there is anyone among the Jews who knows how to make a good hej'av (an amulet) which will help him to acquire a woman whom he desires but who rejects him. The woman is his niece and she has a lover who is a thief and a scoundrel. 'Who is the man who knows how to turn the heart of the sweet girl, Halima, daughter of Halad, towards her cousin Ahmad ibn Gandil ibn Fatamah ibn Mustafa,' asks the fellah. Finally he turns for assistance to a Mograbi sorcerer, 'Sater', who makes an incantation over sand and burns various herbs over coals, putting a red burdock on his head as the dervishes do.

The Brothers, also by Satwi, is about two brothers, Sheikh Nimer and Sheikh Pares, one of whom is a petty trader, the other a fellah. In order to earn a living they come into contact with the Jewish settlers in the neighbourhood. They are the least important and the poorest in the village but have a rich experience of life. Sheikh Nimer wears a black cloak which he uses to cover his legs during prayer, and which he removes on occasions of excitement when, for example, he performs the 'Ziyker' (the dance of the Dervishes). Sheikh Pares wears an old and worn 'indiyah' (kaftan) from which he has torn off a strip in which to wrap his amulets and charms, prepared for the people. Dervish 'brethren' and sectarians come to their house to talk about religious, legendary, and traditional matters, some to seek treatment by means of amulets and charms.

The plot of the story, A Secret, by Moses Smilansky, centres around the work of the Satan who incites the rich and powerful Fellah Hasnin, who lives in one of the villages in the Judean lowlands, to covet the young brides of his sons. His wife is old and haggard and he has not taken an additional wife. Whenever one of his sons travels to the town-market he goes stealthily to the son's wife and lies with her, and the wife, fearing her father-in-law, resentfully keeps the terrible secret to herself. Thus he lies with his three daughters-in-law without any of them knowing about the others. And then a daughter is

born to one of them by him. The child screams terribly in the night and everyone supposes that the Satan has possessed it. They ask the old village witch to deal with the matter, but she refuses the request and only laughs bitterly. Hasnin despises the witch and travels to distant places where magicians and witches, hajim and dervishes, are to be found, and from whom he might ask advice. Nor does he spare his money in doing so. One magician puts an amulet on the child's neck. A dervish makes incisions in the flesh of the child with a white-hot nail, and smears fresh horse-dung on the wounds. None of the charms are of avail and the child continues to scream in the night as if overcome by madness. Then the village witch sends a messenger to Hasnin saying: 'I warn you; the unclean spirit has found a dwelling-place in your nest and if you do not purify yourself your end will be bitter'. Hasnin stops visiting his daughters-in-law. Then one of them reveals the secret to her friends. When the transgression becomes known to the sons they rise up against their father in the field and kill him.

After the stories, Latifa, and, From Baruch, Smilansky wrote another story which describes an Arab woman called 'Hedyah', whom the author first met when she was fourteen years old and who resembled a wild animal more than a person. She was collecting dung and bringing it to the orchard of Hawaja Musa: 'She was beautiful. Black eyes that continually emitted fiery sparks'. The author tests the girl and suggests that he finds her beautiful. He brings her a mirror, allowing her full facial features to be revealed to her. 'Her face was afraid, contorted, as if from pain, a cry of fear broke out from her mouth, she jumped, carrying her thin legs ... as if flying away from the orchard in the direction of the field.'

The memory of the young wild child-girl who had never before seen a mirror, and who had apparently taken the reflection of her face for that of the Satan, was soon forgotten by the narrator. About five years later he meets her again. An Arab from Hebron had related that Hedyah was a member of an almost primitive Bedouin tribe that had come from the distant desert. During the early days of the war her parents had fled from the desert because of an act of Gom (blood-vengeance) and had settled in Hen-Yonat. Now the family lived among the Bedouin on

the seashore. Hedyah was serving in the house of the Arab from Hebron who owned an orchard.

When the author asks the orchard-owner if Hedyah's hair still resembles that of a lamb, the Arab answers with an angry voice: 'The sons of Arabia do not look upon the hair of their women. The hair of a woman is - lewdness'. It later becomes known to the narrator that the Arab orchard-owner 'had compassion' on the poor Hedyah, paid her father the dowry money, took her as his second wife and returned to Hebron.

In the story, The Horn, by Beni Meytiv, the Bedouin, Armedin, from Wadi Shenk asks Hawajah Buni (the author) to meet him in 'Medafah' (an inn for wayfarers). He requests the author to act as a mediator between himself and the well-known doctor in the region, Hakim Israel, so that his son might be cured and the horn that had grown mysteriously from his head removed. The doctor, on visiting the tents of the Bedouin, soon sees that there is little of the miraculous involved. It is a well-known custom among the Bedouin to cut off the side-burns from their heads, shaving around them and leaving only a lock of hair in the centre of the forehead. It appears that the boy had tried to encourage the growth of the lock of hair by smearing it with burned tractor-oil mixed with camel urine and ass-dung, this being a recognized charm for preserving the hair. This 'Brilliantine', together with the Negev sand, became dry and hard, turning into a horn-like substance.

In the collection, From the Conversations of Arabia, by Asher Barash, we find a legend of a peasant woman whose baby turned into a monkey.

Legendary elements are also to be found in stories which describe the Muslim way of life and its religious customs.

The story, In the Shadow of Izalim, by Beni Metiv, tells about the Bedouin in the Negev who pray five times daily, reciting the verse from the Koran: 'There is no Allah but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet', and who fast during the month of Ramadan from sunrise to sunset, and

give charity to the poor. To them the most important of the commandments is the pilgrimage to the Ka'aba in Mecca, an endeavour which depends wholly upon the financial status of the Muslim, whose heart's desire it is to go up at least once during his lifetime to the grave of the prophet in Mecca, to pray there, touch the Ka'aba stone and drink from the holy waters of the 'Zamzam' spring. The Muslim sees in this pilgrimage the crowning achievement of his life and, on achieving this goal, merits the title 'Haj' which is one of the Holy titles of Islam.

Ali Saliman Ewed Albekitiy, an elder of the Terabiyn tribe who live in the western Negev, gains the privilege of journeying to Mecca. The story describes in great detail the mysterious road to Mecca with all its stopping places along the way. A legend tells that all along the way which Ali Saliman traversed, trees grew, the shade of which was very great. These were the 'Tzalim' in the title of the story.

In the story, The Plain, by Moses Smilansky, which tells of the Muslim Holy Man from Gaza, legend is interwoven with fact. The story opens with a description of the famine in the south of the land, which made the Bedouin gather up their tents and wander northwards (the picture reminds us of the story, Muhmad, by the same author).

In bye-gone days there lived in Gaza a Holy Man called Men. He was a faithful servant of Allah, going up each year to Mecca to prostrate himself on the grave of the prophet and pray for the lives of the workers of the land. When the Holy One returned from his distant journey all the people would come to behold his holy radiant countenance: 'The Sheikhs riding their mares, the elders of the people on camels and asses, and all the common folk walking on foot, sometimes over a distance of three days'. All the people would pray with the Holy One. If they saw 'a light sown in his eyes' they then knew that Heaven had compassion on mankind and that, during that year, the rains would fall. With happiness and joy, songs and dances, they would return to their homes. But if indeed the Holy One finished his prayer and 'a cloud of sorrow would settle on his brow', then the worshippers knew that the heavens had hardened their hearts towards man because of his sins. During the last pilgrimage of the Holy One to Mecca, he passed away at the

grave of the prophet and the ministering angels brought him to Heaven before Allah. The Holy One asked to be buried in his city Gaza, and his request was granted for he was laid to rest at the top of the hill on the south-east entrance to Gaza where Samson and Delilah had been buried. From then on, the mountain was called Men-Ter, after the Holy One.

In the story, Pen Sketches from the South, by Judah Goash, there is a description of the fantaziya which took place during the Muslim festival of Al-Menter (the festival of the circumcized). 'A thronging noisy crowd of people coming down, both riding and on foot, from the slopes of the mountain, their mouths filled with words of blessing and praise of the omnipotent Allah who benefits those who believe in Him, as well as to the prophet Muhmad, Allah's messenger, to the Sheikh Al-Menter, by whose merit they had been given this marvellous fantaziya, to the princes, and to parents of the circumcized, who had taken the trouble to provide so generously the food and drink for the 'Ealem', the men of the neighbourhood of El-Tufah, and the other guests.'

The religious myth of Nebi Musa (the Prophet Moses) is found in the legend, The Grave of Moses, in the collection, The Conversations of Arabia, by Asher Barash, and in the ballad, The Olive Tree, by Erelah Or.

In the Jewish writers' description of the way of life of the Arabs one may distinguish three central elements, viz., those of vengeance, sexual lust, and treachery. The collection by Jacov Chorgin, With an Ancient Flame, consists of a series of stories which are grounded in realism, presenting as they do existing manners and customs and delineating the personalities and characters of real people. Yet the atmosphere which envelopes them is inflammatory, pungent, sensual, colourfully exotic, an atmosphere of strong passions, of sexual lust and the demons of love, of innocence and deceit, kindness and joy, dread and pain, hostility and revenge, suffering and bitterness, a mingling of oriental elementariness with European outwardness. Strange and distant indeed is the world of the Arab Orient described by Chorgin.

In the book are three stories which describe the Arab way of life: Monira, Among the Cliffs of Jaffa, and Among the Mountains of Ephraim. Jealousy between women is the reason for an act of vengeance in Monira, a story which accurately portrays the Arab during his moments of leisure when he indulges in amusement and entertainment. The action takes place in the coffee house of Abu Anton in which setting is presented the essential element of the story, viz., the desire for revenge which overcomes the aging, faded, dancer, Retika, towards the young and blossoming Monira, the rising star. The manly brother of Retika, who comes to avenge his sister's honour, is caught in Monira's web of love.

In the story, Among the Cliffs of Jaffa, vengeance makes its appearance against a background of jealousy between men. Here we have an accurate portrayal of the life of sailors and fishermen in the sea of Jaffa. Sa'ad is the chief sailor employed by Ali Jumeah, to whom most of the boats in the harbour belong. Ali Jumeah brings an Egyptian sailor Lutfi to sail his new ship which he bought in Egypt. Lutfi, a joker and chatterer by nature, tells stories which he spices with anecdotes about the life of the Chashashin in Alexandria. Envy towards Lutfi is soon added to the hatred in Sa'ad's heart when the Egyptian endangers Sa'ad's position as assistant and confidante to the boat owner, Ali Jumeah, as well as frustrating his efforts to be the captain of a new motor-boat. Nahada, the Turkish dancer in the coffee house, who had until now been drawn to Sa'ad alone, now sits with the Egyptian. This makes Sa'ad jealous and leads to open conflict between him and Lutfi and, subsequently, a row which ends in blows. Ali Jumeah rebukes Sa'ad and nearly dismisses him from his work. Finally Sa'ad takes his revenge by setting on fire Ali Jumeah's new boat, which the Egyptian was to sail as captain.

Isaac Shinhar, in his story, Hashel, gives an account of the conflict between the Fellah and the Effendi which might well have served in itself as the subject of an independent story. The peasant, Muhmad, a terribly poor man, is dying from hunger in one of the remote villages. He is finally uprooted from his place and comes in desperation to Muhmad Effendi who lives in a small village at the foot of Mount Gerizim, and who allows Muhmad to become a tenant-farmer in a desolate part of

his land. The Fellah tries to transform the rocky ground into a blossoming field from which he is duty-bound to give the land-owner his share of the produce each year. During years of drought and famine he asks the Effendi for loans and, through the years, his debts mount up until the representatives of the Jewish society, 'Geulah', repay his debts for him and give him sufficient money so that he might leave the plot of land. The Fellah later hears that the Effendi is about to sell his estate and deposits his money with the land-owner as a down-payment. But Muhmad Effendi does not keep his side of the bargain and cheats the Fellah who is then forced to turn to an advocate. The law-suit never takes place, however, and in the meantime the Fellah loses the remainder of his money. Then he sends his wife to the house of her father and himself departs to the mountains where embittered men like himself, as well as men of the desert, join up with him, forming a gang of robbers which supports itself by plunder. Muhmad, the Fellah, becomes the leader of the gang and as Muhmad, the man of the hills, he terrorises the surrounding district. He wishes to take his own personal revenge on the Effendi Muhmad who oppressed and cheated him, and does in fact fulfil this ambition with the help of the gang.

The Plain, by Moses Smilansky, resembles a typical story out of the Thousand and One Nights, Ali Baba and his band of thieves being here represented by the woman bandit-leader, Fatima. The main part of the story concerns a moral command, the will of fate, or that of Allah, to remove 'sin from the face of the earth' by separating the two lovers, the Ethiopian and Fatima who are blood relations.

In the vicinity of Gaza a wealthy, but honest, Ethiopian makes his appearance, acting generously to all who are in need. He takes a vow never to marry and preserves his anonymity without revealing his identity to a soul. On the road between Gaza and Jaffa, and between the villages, there operates a band of audacious robbers who terrorise the surrounding district. The poor do not fear them for they have already been stripped of all they had by usurers and tax-collectors. At the head of the gang stands the beautiful and charming Fatima who pours her wrath particularly on the 'Effendis, Sheikhs, government officials, tax-collectors, and rich merchants'. She insists that her followers do no harm to the poor

among the people, not even the poor pedlars, nor to harm even one hair of the heads of women and children'. Most surprising is the fact that she never harms Ethiopians, even though they may be rich merchants, or government officials, police or soldiers. Indeed, most of Fatima's gang are Ethiopians. If one of the gang transgresses Fatima's orders and strips bare one of the masses, or insults a woman, he is severely punished and sometimes does not even escape the death penalty. The fellahin in the villages, the herdsman, the farmhands, and the night-watchmen of the fields, all the poor of the people, know where the gang lives and bring them food. The government searches in vain for them because 'the wretched ones in the villages loved the bandit Fatimah who avenged their wrongs'.

A path which stealthily emerges from the hills to the north of the Hebron road, and twists tortuously southwards, known as the 'path of the thieves', is the sole thoroughfare of Fatima's followers. She herself lives in a cave in which she guards her few possessions, for she takes nothing of the stolen property for herself, giving it all to the needy and the poor. For this reason the valley is known by all, to this day, as 'the Valley of Fatima'.

'Mon-Ter' and 'The Valley of Fatima' are places of popular Muslim worship. In the story before us Smilansky gives an etiological explanation for the names of these two places by representing in legend what now exists in reality.

The reason for Fatima taking revenge on the rich and the powerful and of her hatred for the Effendim and the Sheikhs has its source in the sad and forbidden episode of love between her and her Ethiopian relation.

Muhammad, the man of the hills (in the story Hashel, by Isaac Shinhar), Abu Resas (in the play Days of Gold, by Solomon Sheva), and Fatima embody the Romantic figure of the robber-hero who avenges the wrong done by the rich to the poor (a motif which is to be found, as is known, in the romantic literature of many peoples, in such works as Robin Hood, or the play Robbers, by Friedrich Schiller).

In the story, Revenge of the Fella, by Asher Barash, the motive for vengeance lies in the tyranny of the powerful rich and their assistants. It concerns the watchman of the village, Hasan, who is hired by Ishmael Bak, the owner of the farm Ein-Siniyan. All the villagers fear the Haj Hasan. Once, the watchman detects the dung of cattle that have been grazing within his domain and he sets an ambush for the errant shepherd. Eventually he confiscates the cattle and impounds them in the yard of Ishmael Bak, his master. The fellah who owns them later redeems them, for half a Mejidi, but continues to graze his cattle in Ishmael Bak's land. In the village there is a man called Abu Yasin who slanders against the fellah in the presence of Haj Hasan. The fellah thereupon takes his revenge upon the slanderer.

The story, A Secret, by Moses Smilansky, tells about a certain Hasnin and his three sons: 'And the fear of the four men was upon the whole village' because of their violence and lawlessness. Whenever the biennial measurement and distribution of the land of the Mushah for summer and winter sowing took place, Hasnin would always be allotted the plots in Keren ben Shemen which were noted for their fertility. His barns were full of grain, 'and a vicious dog stood guard at the door to his yard by night, casting dread upon thieves who would quickly pass by it, although it was filled with all good things, preferring to go instead to the court-yards of the poor of the village where they would steal the "poor man's lamb".' In the part of the story which deals with the sin of Hasnin with his three daughters-in-law, and the consequences of that sin which resulted in an evil spirit entering the child born of Hasnin, one can possibly detect the vengeance of fate or the punishment that was decreed upon Hasnin by a vengeful Allah.

The desecration of the honour of a daughter of the tribe is a terrible and unforgiveable affront which leaves its mark upon the entire tribe. As such the vengeance of the tribe against such a dishonour is almost as cruel as that of the blood feud itself.

Isaac Sheloh's poem, The Death of the Mare Domit-Alem, is a lamentation over a noble horse which a Bedouin reared for the purpose of avenging the shame of his sister: 'to remove the head of the rapist

Sheikh Je'halin'. After the revenge is taken the mare dies.

The murder of a tribesman gives rise to a blood feud, or a vendetta, a hallowed tribal custom among the Arabs which can continue for decades after the murder, until the revenge is carried out. This custom, it will be recalled, served as a theme in the long story of Isaac Shemi, The Revenge of the Fathers, in which the narrator searches the innermost conscience of the hero and produces a realistic and authentic picture of life despite the exotic basis of the story. This is not the case with the authors who, after Shemi, attempted to portray this custom. Missing is that dimension of depth and that stage by stage description which is peculiar to Isaac Shemi. Their approach to the subject is more superficial and simplistic, and as a result the heroes of their stories appear as stereotypes.

Asher Barash, in his story The Blood Avenger, is closer to the approach of Moses Smilansky (The Blood Avenger, in the collection, Sons of Arabia) and to that of Pesach Bar-Adon (In the Tents of the Wilderness) who, while dealing with the topic, took popular legend and ancient Arab tradition as their point of departure rather than the concrete and contemporaneous Arab way of life.

It is related in the story of Barash how, after the death of the Amir, the ruler of all the Arab Bedouin, a quarrel breaks out between the brothers of the Amir and his son, concerning the inheritance of the rulership. Mahmed, the son of the Amir, removes his tent to a desolate and barren land. A strange guest who is invited to his tent kills Mahmed, profanes the honour of his wife, and snatches her away. But the woman succeeds in escaping with her child, the son of Mahmed. When the son grows up he begs his mother to reveal the identity of the murderer of his father to him. When the mother names the murderer the son journeys to the tents of the Bedouin, to the tribe of the murderer, who is in fact the brother of the Amir, and avenges the spilled blood of his father.

In the ballad, Zarnoka, by Erelah Or, it is said of the young woman of Ahmed - 'the young bride who was murdered at the cross-

roads'. Zarnoka is the name of the place where the girl was buried and, until her murderer was found and judged, her blood cried out from the face of the earth.

A wedding day, or a night of nuptials, serve as opportune moments for settling inter-tribal accounts, and such acts of retribution as murder (mostly against the background of jealousy, lust or treachery) and blood vengeance (following the murder), are frequent occurrences, particularly on such occasions, when the redeemers of the blood and the murderer confront each other at the same wedding.

The story by Menachem Kapleyak, One Wedding Night, adds a new element to the custom of the blood feud and describes a change of attitude which takes place towards this custom, hallowed among the Arabs themselves. On the face of it we have here a description of a marriage in an Arab village, to which members of the Jewish kibbutz are also invited. But, in the main, the story deals with the anxiety occasioned by a blood feud which follows an incident which had occurred in the fields of the kibbutz when, one night, a band of robbers had entered the field of Hadurah. As a result of the shots fired by the members of the kibbutz, one of the bandits, a member of one of the big tribes from the land of Bashan was killed. As is customary among the Arabs, a blood feud is declared and the two sides, the members of the kibbutz and the members of the family of the slain person are careful not to meet together. And then the 'Mukhtar' of the kibbutz receives a letter from Zeidan Abd Al-Kadar, an old friend from the neighbouring village, inviting the members of the kibbutz to attend the wedding of his son to the daughter of Ahmed Mustafah. The letter, written in Arabic, is deciphered with the help of the local teacher, the Oriental Obadiah.

'The season of in-gathering is also the season for marriages in the habitations of the Arab neighbours.' And since the members of the kibbutz live in amity with those round about them, there is not a week in which they are not invited to a wedding party. Not to share such a joyful occasion with an old friend is seen as a break-down in relations. According to custom the members of the kibbutz send as

a wedding present to Zeidan Abd Al-Kadar, a lamb which they had bought in the neighbouring village from Ajaj El-Hasan. In the story, the Mukhtar, the teacher Obadiah, the watchman of the kibbutz, and the author, arrive at the wedding. The news reaches Obadiah's ears that the brother of the self-same Bedouin who had been shot and several of his friends are present at the wedding. There are those who say that they are waiting for the members of the 'Kombanyah' (kibbutz) and that they intend to ambush them on their way back home in an attempt to avenge the blood of their brother and friend. The shots that are fired from afar are an indication of their intention. Obadiah is more worried than all of them. Himself an Oriental, he knows the Oriental mind intimately. 'And a smile of belittlement mixed with exasperation was seen reflected in the eyes of the Mukhtar towards this person who was graced with an Eastern temperament.' Obadiah's suggestion that their host be asked to provide them with escorts is strongly rejected by the Mukhtar and the kibbutz watchman.

The negotiations between the members of the kibbutz and the family of the slain person concerning the matter of the blood redemption (Hagom) had not yet begun because the great prince of the tribe whose task it was to determine the amount of the 'Dayah' (the ransom for the slain one) was now occupied in politics in the capital city of a neighbouring country.

A more sober and critical approach to the custom of the blood feud is presented in the story with the appearance of the intermediary, the brother of Zeidan Abd Al-Kadar, who reveals to the Mukhtar that the brother of the slain person is prepared to accept a sum of money from the members of the kibbutz. Now 'the friendship has been severed' when it becomes known that the invitation of the members of the kibbutz to the wedding was on the initiative of those who intended to bring about a meeting between them and the blood-avengers. It is clear to the Mukhtar that, to a greater extent than the brother (who had a legal right to receive a ransom) the intermediators feel that 'in the most hallowed patriarchal tradition' the tradition of the blood feud money is always more preferable than revenge, particularly in a locality near the border where much 'can be gained from the purchase of smuggled goods'.

On analysing this approach to the subject one discerns a point of contact between this story and the play Allah Karim, by Levi A Arieli, where love is preferable to blood revenge and Ali, in his tempestuous love for Naomi, allows himself to forget the commandment of the patriarchs to avenge the blood of his father Abdullah.

The Mukhtar warns the brother of the slain man through the fellah mediator that he will not play 'an evil game the end of which will be bitter', nor will he (the brother) be worthy of receiving any of the ransom money until the members of the kibbutz have negotiated with the prince of the tribe in connection with the 'Dayah'. On their way back to the kibbutz the Mukhtar says to the teacher Obadiah: 'You are deeply implicated in the matter and it blurs your vision. You accept ancient conventions without establishing the extent of their truth and without paying heed to the fact that there exists in the world a law of obsolescence and change ... even in our conservative East'. Obadiah still fears the imminent danger at the hands of the blood avengers and, for safety, quickly distances himself from his friends. The Mukhtar justifies this action and apologises for him. 'And yet ... he could be otherwise ... and exactly as our Obadiah foresaw in his imagination, for his instinct is more sure and solid here in this world than our cold and sober consciousness.'

Desire and treachery are the central pivots upon which stories of the East revolve in the style of A Thousand and One Nights. Sexual desire is identified with oriental passion and with stormy oriental love, and is particularly conspicuous as a major factor in the suffering of the hero, for his torment, mental and sensual derangement, and hardness of heart, which expresses itself at times in acts of cruelty and crime.

In her poem, Scheherezade, Shulamith Gingold describes the tempestuous dance of the Princess Scheherezade (the heroine of A Thousand and One Nights), thus prominently depicting the characteristics and nature of the oriental woman, viz., her lust, capriciousness, and treachery.

Jacob Horgin tells the story of Monira, in which an erotic madness gains control over the spectators who are watching Monira's dancing. (One recalls the same picture in the story A Father and his Daughters, by Isaac Shemi.) The boy-waiter, Ahuel, personifies all the oriental passion which the love of a woman evokes. He is led astray by visions of love, becomes embroiled in the crime of theft, is disappointed, and fails. Realistic as the story is, the boy who becomes a 'criminal' out of his strong love for Monira is but a stereotype for all such oriental love stories.

In the legend, The Adulteress, by Asher Barash, an Amir (head of a Bedouin tribe) takes his wife and goes for an excursion into the mountains of Shechem, together with his servant, Mahmad. The Amir orders his servant to guard his wife, the Amira, while he himself goes to the town to drink and eat. The servant falls asleep, however, and an Ethiopian abducts his mistress. The Amir then searches for his wife and finds her in the Ethiopian's tent. The woman refuses to leave the tent, whereupon the Amir takes her out by force. The woman says to her husband: 'Abu Ali, be careful, the Ethiopian will catch up with you!'. Later she helps the Ethiopian to tie up her husband then lies with the Ethiopian in his sight. The Ethiopian, who drinks milk which has been poisoned by a snake, dies. The Amira intends killing her husband with a sword but only cuts the rope around his neck. The Amir takes his wife and returns to his Bedouin brethren, and at a gathering of the elders it is decided to burn the adulteress at the stake.

In his story, The Evil Inclination of a Woman Thief, Asher Barash tells about two thieves who operate together. One of the thieves suspects his wife and his partner of acting treacherously against him.

In the story, The Plain, Moshes Smilansky dovetails a number of traditional oriental legends. The plot of the story which is gradually built up through the device of a 'story within a story', centres mainly around three figures, Fatimah, the Ethiopian, and the Bedouin Sheikh Hamad Abu Asel, the latter being spoken of as having received the governor of Shechem in his palace as well as emissaries

of the governor from Jerusalem and Acco. He had great wealth, having inherited a huge fortune of tens of thousands of golden dinars from his father. His father was among those who accompanied the caravan which brought the gift from Damascus to the grave of the prophet, and it was he who would conceal the treasure in a hiding place. Every three years the Sheikh would take a new wife, because of his lust for women. His children numbered forty, and the Sheikh knew only the eldest among them, the rest he did not know at all. He initiated a custom for which he became famous. It enabled a young man, who could not afford to pay the bridal price which the father of the bride had fixed, to flee with his beloved to the house of the Sheikh in Shechem, where they would be assured of a safe 'place of refuge'. In the house of one of the Effendis a girl, named Fatimah, was born to the daughter of an Arab prince from Damascus. Fatimah had 'an almost manly wisdom, which Allah had given her on the day of her birth ... and she was good-hearted ...'. The Effendi loved Fatimah more than all his children, and only about one thing did he secretly rage, that Allah had given this beautiful and precious soul in the form of a woman. He was punished for this grievance against heaven. In his house an orphan was raised, an Ethiopian boy who was truly a child prodigy. An evil rumour passed among the servants of the Effendi, that the Ethiopian was a child of a prostitute, that one of the Effendi's Ethiopian maid-servants had given birth to the child. Later a forbidden love developed between Fatimah and the Ethiopian, and, when the Effendi became aware of what was happening, he drove the Ethiopian from his house.

Once a pair of lovers wished to take refuge in the house of the Sheikh Hamad Abu Asel of Shechem. When the Sheikh saw them he was certain that they were an Ethiopian slave and the daughter of his master who had run away together. The Effendi did indeed come to the house of the Sheikh to seek his daughter, but the Sheikh had hidden the couple from him, doing this not out of the goodness of his heart, but from malevolent intentions and lust for the beautiful girl whom he planned to take as his fourth wife after killing the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian was, however, saved from death by his kinsmen. The Sheikh Hamad had a secret camp of smugglers who took hashish to Egypt and brought back

gold dinars. It is to Egypt that Fatimah is eventually taken, deceitfully being led to believe that there she will meet her beloved Ethiopian. Instead the Sheikh appears in her tent and rapes her. Fatimah thereupon becomes his concubine. Before long she succeeds in murdering him in his sleep with a hammer and tent peg (as in the Biblical story of Jael and Sisera), after which she puts on the Sheikh's garments and disappears. She then becomes a robber and takes revenge upon all such Sheikhs and Effendis.

In his poem, Zinat Has Acted Treacherously, Isaac Shelo presents the words of a lover whose dear one has dealt treacherously with him. A feeling of revenge nestles in his heart as he curses his beloved.

Jacob Horgin, in his story Among the Mountains of Ephraim, describes a real and contemporary Arab way of life, although the atmosphere that envelopes the story is an exotic one. The plot is essentially romantic and its components are erotic desire, fickleness, treachery, and revenge, all of which elements give the story its oriental flavour. The narrator himself becomes involved in the plot. He comes to the Arab village in order to search for an Arab girl named Adalah whom he knows. She is called 'Zin' (beauty) because of her beauty. He meets a Fellaah who whispers to him, 'I have good tidings for you, O man, I am Allah!' When he becomes aware that he has revealed his secret not to a Muslim but to a Jew the fellaah becomes angry. 'Go away from here ... flee before I slaughter you!' Afterwards he meets Zin: 'The more she revealed her primitiveness, the more her charm increased in my eyes'. She invites him to her house, but the narrator wishes to forego such a privilege because of 'oriental Arabic jealousy, the end of which is murder and blood'.

Heled the eunuch, who is as devoted to Zin as a dog, orders the narrator to beckon to her but, at the last minute, Zin's mother arrives and rebukes Heled. The canine-like devotion of the Eunuch for Zin has also created in him a sense of subjection and fear towards her mother. The mother and uncle of Zin punish the rebellious girl and compel her to kiss the feet of the Hawaja (the narrator) for the shame she has caused him and themselves. The uncle, Tzelach, is a wise man who knows many

proverbs and who speaks at length about the affinity which exists between the children of Israel and Ishmael. Heled, the eunuch, warns the narrator that he should not visit in the house of Josef Abu-Ibrahim, because this 'hamulah' (family) is hostile to the house of the uncle Tzelach. The members of that 'hamulah' are all thieves, robbers and murderers. Zin asks him to bring her sweets. Should he however, bring gifts to Zelacha, the daughter of Abu-Ibrahim, then Heled will lie in wait for him in the valley and kill him.

After a while the narrator meets up with two horsemen who 'sprang up from the secret place of a rock, the sudden springing up of robbers'. The first is Latif, the second his 50 year old cousin called Anter, 'from whose black and shining eyes there rose up ... some distant echo from the terrors of the caves and the clefts of the rocks in the valley of the thieves'. Latif gives the narrator a horse upon which to ride and invites him to a fellahin wedding. They ride together in the 'valley of the shadows', which branches out of the 'valley of the thieves'. 'Anter would disappear from sight from time to time, returning and appearing again as if emerging from a place of ambush. I got the impression that he was training himself in the tactics of robbery.' (This passage reminds one of the story, The Plain, by Moses Smilansky.)

Anter has an eye for women and 'makes love' in the villages, although in his poor home his wife waits, and sons and daughters languish in poverty and want. These love affairs involve him in strife and attempts upon his life. (A figure similar to Anter appears in Isaac Shilo's poem, Shachin, that of Said, who is a great womaniser as well as a robber and a thief.)

After the wedding the narrator is invited by Latif to pleasantly spend the evening in his uncle's cucumber fields. Anter, however, is openly hostile to the narrator and asks him: 'Do you know who I am? Go to 'Stanbul and there they will tell you who the black Anter is ... the whole world is afraid of me ... He drew a dagger from his belt and brought it close to his neck'. He then proceeds to tell horrific stories of plunder and murder. Latif attacks Anter and cruelly beats

him: 'You infidel! The guest is under the protection of Allah'. The custom of hospitality is one which is indeed hallowed by patriarchal tradition.

And so, inadvertently, the narrator finds himself within the family of Abu-Ibrahim. Latif loves Zin, but she is a member of a rival family. He knows that he has no hope whatsoever, and that he will only be a source of mockery and shame should he admit his secret. 'But the heart, Hawaja, is king, and there is no permitted and forbidden as far as it's concerned ... and the wound is dripping blood ... '. A situation similar to that found in the Shakespearean play Romeo and Juliet is present in this story. The narrator finds himself between two rival houses. Because of his ties with Zin, which are growing stronger, he becomes involved with Latif who warns him not to go near his beloved. But the narrator does not retract and continues his 'romance' with the beautiful Arab girl, once even attempting to contain her rebellious nature by hitting her as an Arab would. In so doing he arouses the anger of Latif, and only the Egyptian Hilmi saves the narrator. Latif whips the treacherous Zin cruelly, intending to kill her, and is apprehended by the police. Now both families are angry with the narrator, who is forced to flee from their vengeance.

In the description of the wedding in the nearby village one detects the critical Jewish eye, which examines and, at the same time, dissociates itself from the customs of the Arabs, who transform a wedding feast into either a joke or into a ceremony of mourning for the dead. The narrator clothes his description of such a wedding in derisive mocking humour: 'At the head of the procession stepped two mules ... carrying the bride's articles, the presents, and the dowry on their backs ... men and children of the family rode behind them on asses, singing in chorus verses in praise of the bride and her beauty ... after the asses came the bride in all her glory, riding alone on a horse decorated with beads ... she was shining all over with a blaze of colour ... she was a young girl of about twelve years ... behind her sat a woman advanced in days ... and she held the bride fast with both hands, so that she should not run away out of fear for her groom, (so Latif explained simply) ... the groom was a fellah in his middle

years ... a manly person ... who bit his finger nails nervously and showed impatience. Nearby him was the bridal couch, a camel-skin rug was laid out on the floor, scented ad nauseum and on which green leaves were scattered'. The men unceasingly beat out monotonous love-songs with their feet in the dance of the 'debka'. 'In the nuptial room there was a strange, almost gloomy silence, as if in a house of mourning.'

As in the story, One Night of Nuptials, by M Kapliyok, there is a similar plot. Two rival groups are invited to a wedding feast. Latif meets up with an old lame Fellow who he has hated for many years. The reason for this was in connection with a grove of olive trees, in which other fellahin in the district also had a share. A tree which grew on the border separated their two sections. Although war had broken out and the Turks had uprooted the whole grove, they still hated each other. Latif and the lame man quarrel with one another; the lame one says, 'It is better for him (Latif) not to quarrel in front of the stranger Hawaja - pride is hated by the Creator'. And Latif answers him: 'And stupidity He hates even more'. The lame one replies with a proverb: 'In vain does the louse on the head of the King pride itself that it carries the crown', and the narrator is compelled to stand between the two parties so as to prevent an argument that might lead to blood-shed.

The bride tries to flee from her virile groom and falls stretched out onto the ground. Women and men urge her to get up with shouts and kicks. Her father is afraid that at the last moment the wedding, which has brought him a goodly exchange in cash, will be cancelled. His threatening voice alone is all that is required to goad her into action. The girl gets up and is brought into the room of the groom. The father says to the narrator: 'There is no longer any good sense ... her husband will succeed in vanquishing her ...'.

The visitors and guests wait impatiently for the beginning of the meal: 'All their hearts went out to the banquet'. The teacher, whose patience is short, attempts to commence eating while yet forbidden to do so. One old woman becoming aware of this utters a shout as if

someone had tried to kill her. Finally, the bride succeeds in running away. 'The figure of a young girl came bursting out, barefoot, her hair wild, her dress torn, and she disappeared into the dark alleyway.' The groom immediately comes out after her, he too in a wild state, and calls: 'Let the harlot go!'. The mother of the bride curses her 'abandoned daughter' and the father, armed with a sharp stick, calls to the narrator: 'A wild ass, Hawaja! We will vanquish her at once!'. The humorous story ends on a serious note. The author identifies himself with the bride who has rebelled against the Patriarch's custom: 'A crescent moon appeared from the East, it looked insulted, sickly ... my heart went out to the little rebel who would soon be caught'.

We find the revulsion towards Arabic customs also in the story, 'During One Night of Nuptials', by Menachem Kapliyok.

The Arab fellah, Ajaĵ, knows his Jewish neighbours: 'They, in their haste, trample upon and completely degrade, the custom of hospitality'. The Mukhtar of the kibbutz admits, 'I am truly weary of marriage festivities ... I am already sick of the meat and the rice that are eaten together in company with the fingers from a plate and the "soda" (i.e., coffee without sugar). I've had enough of the competitions, of the "fantaziya" and all that happiness, joy and revelry ...'.

Kapliyok describes an Arab wedding with a tinge of mockery. At the entrance to the village the shouts of the 'Zygrid' are heard, shouts which the women usually utter, either at times of joy or mourning. The 'jokah', the orchestra, is made up of one who plucks on an 'od' (an ancient stringed instrument) and one who beats on a 'darbacha' (a kind of drum).

'And there is no wedding feast without shooting ... that's the essential and true orchestra on a day of an Arab's nuptials.' And no wedding is worthy of its name without 'Abu Nehas the clown who amuses the audience with his tricks'. In the 'maydan' (the riding square) the horsemen have their competitions. The Jewish watchman, a lover of horses, says sadly, 'They simply destroy precious horses during their fantaziya'.

The epics that describe the deeds of Arabian heroes and the wars of the Arabian tribes constitute another category of Oriental tales. The majority of the stories in the collection, The Bedouin Tell Stories, by Tuvya Ashkanazi, are concerned with the social background of a number of tribes that live in the north of the land of Israel, and their relationship with the Turkish regime. In the story, The Government of Ahmad El Jazar-Pedah, a hero, belonging to the tribe Arav-el-Hiv, succeeds in winning the friendship of the well-known tyrant Ahmad El Jazar-Pedah, the ruler of Akko, after having worked very hard for him. Many of the epic stories mention too the figure of the Sheikh Ahmad-Ali, the head of the tribe Arav-el-Hiv. The story, The Sheikh Abu-Ali, is basically the story of his life. His father hates Abu Ali and his mother, and they are compelled to live separately in a tent made of goatshair. Muhammad-Ali grows up and becomes a shepherd. His older brothers also hate him and influence their Bedouin neighbours to do likewise. The eldest brother, who becomes Sheikh of the tribe, demands that Muhammad-Ali give him his noble horse that has been brought from the Golan. Muhammad-Ali, in fear of his brother, flees to Akko, from there to Haifa, and finally to Jaffa, where he sells his mare to a Bedouin from Beer-sheba. He then returns to his tribe. Tribesmen who have quarrelled with his brothers and fled from their severe authority gather around him. Thereupon Muhammad-Ali purchases a rifle and steals a mare. In due course he usurps his brothers and becomes Sheikh of Arav-el-Hiv. In those days land was allotted to the tribesmen by the Turkish government.

Muhammad-Ali is also featured in the story, The Five Hundred Riders. He is imprisoned by the police on the command of the ruler of the district, who lives in Beirut. The charge against him is robbing and plundering the Effendis. He slyly pays the bribe-loving ruler a ransom. The acts of plunder, customs, and sayings of Muhammad-Ali are also mentioned in the story, The Ag'el Around the Neck, by G Sharoni. How Fatima was Killed, is about Fatima, the daughter of the Sheikh, Haj Muhammad-Ali. She is chosen as a wife for the son of her fallen brother, Zalah-Uglah-el-Far. A quarrel breaks out between Zalah and

and Hasan, Fatima's brother, and she is compelled by Hasan to leave her husband. Later, when Fatima sneaks into the tent of Zalah, her brother, who lies in wait for her, kills her with a rifle. She is then buried in the family graveyard of the Arav-el-Hiv Sheikhs. Hasan is also later laid to rest in this holy place.

A Bloody Battle is an Arabic version of the Trojan Wars which began with the beautiful Helen's abduction. The Arabic War was sparked off between the Bedouin tribes as a result of the kidnapping of a beautiful young Bedouin girl. The story reflects the manner in which the tribesmen of Arav-el-Hiv and the Jews from the settlement of Rosh Pinah cooperated with one another at the time.

The story, King Feisal in the Gates of Damascus, concerns a gathering of the chieftains of the tribes from the wilderness of Syria and Transjordan, which takes place in Damascus to welcome the Hashemite Feisal who will one day rule over Syria. Muhmad-Ali, now an old man, is there, as well as a certain Oda Abu Haya who had helped Lawrence conquer Etzion-geber.

The exploits of Hamdan ibn Hasan, a tribesman of Arav-el-Hiv, are related in The Deeds of Sened and Hamdan. Before the First World War he goes out alone against a band of robbers from the tribe of Ravlah and succeeds in killing the 'Akiyd' (head of the band). The rest of the band escapes. Later, the tribesmen of Ravlah, encountering Hamdan under a heap of stones, stone him and cause him, in turn, to flee to the tents of the Bedouin in the Golan. After a year Hamdan, who has gathered together a platoon of riders, fights against Sened Doaraj, the hero of the tribe of Ravlah, and beats him.

The Gom is another tale about the war which broke out between two tribes over a woman, in this case the tribes of Rovlah and Pedan.

The story of a young girl, wife of the Sheikh, who disappears from the tribe is told in The Lost Bedouin Girl. Her brothers search for her and, after some years, trace her. She has stamped the 'vasam' of her tribe (an engraved sign branded into the bodies of

the cattle) onto the livestock which she had received from her husband.

The Wars of the Kurds of Damascus, is the chronicle of another war which takes place between Agilah-Aga, head of the tribes of Arav-el-Hanada and those from the district of Tiberias, and Said-Fehah, head of the Kurds of Damascus, in which the Arab tribes win a resounding victory over the Kurds.

Traces of the most ancient hero-epics are to be found in the story One Night of Nuptials, by M Kopllyak. In his description of the orchestra at the wedding he tells how 'the one who plucked on the Od sang sweetly about the heroic deeds of Abu-Ziyd, about his war-travels and his acts of plunder, in praise of his war-horses in the day of battle, his courage and heroism, and his chivalry which was as wide as the expanses of sand in the land of his sojournings'. The horse-races (fantaziya) at the wedding take place to the shouts of encouragement of the crowd. 'Anat the Second, a real Abu-Ziyd.' These were the names of ancient Arab war-heroes.

The poet Anter, who brandishes his sword and sings songs of war, is mentioned in the story by Jacob Horgin, The Black Ahmad. J Ravina tells, in his story, Like Rivulets in the Negeb, of the history of Arer 'known among the encampments as a daring and valorous man, who wandered far until he came to the district of Gaza where he pitched his tent on the bed of a rivulet'.

Among the epic-stories concerning the heroes of Arabia one also finds love-stories. The structure of the story, A Voice in Tabor, by Judah Burla, reminds one of his first story, Without a Star. He journeys into the mountains of Tabor where, amidst the primitive landscape, the howling winds that sound like voices crying, the rocks and caves that are wrapped in ancient majesty, he meets an Arab of the desert named Ahmad. Ahmad tells him a story that goes back to ancient times about the tribe of Reday who dwelled in the north, in the direction of the wilderness of Damascus. There lived, a long time ago, in the midst of this tribe, a number of poets who had a wonderful understanding and command of the language. In those days

Abdul Latif-el-Reday, a great patriarch ruled over the tribe. The daughter of the Sheikh, Salhah, was known among the tribes as 'a luxuriant vine', endowed as she was by the Creator with both manly vigour and feminine beauty. She handled the sword and spear as might a swift, young, wonderfully built man. With her conquering sword and her horse-racing victories over even the most famous riding teachers, Salhah won the praise of the poets, 'and the hearts of the young men, stricken with love, fell before her'. Once, a young man of the sons of Hamdan named Ziyd Ibn Omer took part in the races: 'and he had strength and courage, and was also handsome in appearance and strong-hearted'. Both Salhah and Ziyd reached the finishing line together, and from that moment on the daughter of the Sheikh loved the young hero. Ziyd Ibn Omer belonged to a poor and simple tribe, and thus Salhah's father, the Sheikh Abdul Latif, opposed a match between his daughter and Ziyd, because of the differences in class which existed between them. Ziyd thereupon kidnapped Salhah from the house of her father and they ran away together. The Sheikh Abdul Latif and four of his sons chased after them and, on being overtaken, Ziyd was commanded to hand over his weapon and proceed on his way. Later, when it became known to the Sheikh that his daughter had lain with her lover, he became inflamed with anger and resolved to kill her. The Sheikh and his sons brought Salhah to Jebel A-Tur (the Mountain of Tabor) where they bound her with rope to the stump of a tree, abandoning her to her fate. For four days and nights Salhah was in the throes of death, and on the fifth day she breathed her last breath with a wail and a bitter cry. 'She cried bitterly, wailed, and mourned the death of love, and the winds answered her and also called out a lamentation over the destruction of beauty and courage - and the whole mountain trembled, and its innermost recesses shuddered, and the voices were carried upwards and were dispersed over the face of the whole mountain, and passed on into the distance, and the villages shook and the tents of the Arabs were dismayed and no man knew, nor found an explanation for the matter ... but these winds in Jebel A-Tur who know what happened responded each day and night with a cry of lamentation and the wail of mourning ...'.

Burla, having incorporated this epic about the heroic couple into his story, then goes on to tell how an Arab appears from the wilderness, looking for Ahmad, who had left the author shortly after having told his story. The Arab then tells of an unrequited love from which he had suffered in his youth (similar to that in the epic). And from then onwards he wanders in the wilderness as one whose heart has been imprisoned, listening for the voice of Salhah which is carried by the wind on this mountain.

CHAPTER 4

The Arabs and the Arab Problem as seen through a mirror of naievety

4.1 Introduction

The legends and folk-tales, travel and adventure stories which were written for the young reader were characterised in the main by their emphasis on the startling and adventurous, the humorous and amusing. Among these one detects too the didactic intention of their authors to impart moral wisdom. Another type of story for young people is that in which the author reminisces bygone days.

A common basic characteristic of these two categories is the innocent and, at times, naive and simplistic light in which the Arabs are seen by youth, a simplicity which flows from the 'upright' approach of the author who is made to appear as innocent as a child.

4.2 Legends and Folk-Tales

The humorous story and the anecdote are the most conspicuous features of this type of folk literature. Moses Satwi highly esteemed the folklore of the East, with its legends and talk, and published two volumes of Arab legends, The Son of the Fat One from Baghdad, and On the Way to the Land of Happiness.

In The Son of the Fat One from Baghdad, Satwi included a number of Oriental stories of the 'Thousand and One Nights' type, each filled with wonderful fantasy, each a repository of legend and folk proverbs which reflect the wisdom of life of the Arabs, all designed to attract the young reader with their spirit of adventure and surprise.

The book On the Way to the Land of Happiness consisting of Arab folk-tales for young and old alike, as Satwi himself indicates is written under the pseudonym of A Ibn-Neeman. It is saturated with an atmosphere of the village and the fields, and of the life of the labourer.

The collection, From the Conversations of Arabia, by Asher Barash is, on the evidence of the compiler, 'a selection ... from the treasury of folk-stories which has come down from generation to generation in the mouths of the Arab story-tellers from the inhabitants of the land ... they teach us the way of the spirit and the ways of self-expression of our neighbours, whom fate decreed should live in close proximity with us'. In this book there are legends, stories, parables, and such topics and motifs that are prevalent in the literature of every people and tongue, such as good and evil, retribution, wisdom and foolishness, innocence and cunning, wealth and poverty, etc.

There is a story about a wood-cutter named Jadeh, who finds some gold belonging to the Sultan and wishes to return it to the palace. His wife, who has hidden the gold in the house, puts stone in its place without his knowledge and when Jadeh presents the stone to the Sultan he is asked to explain the meaning of his action. The wood-cutter does not become flustered, explains that he has brought a defective weight which he wishes to exchange for another. The Sultan thereupon bursts out laughing, causing the abscess which was in his stomach to burst, and he immediately recovers from his illness. The Sultan then rewards Jadek handsomely. (A Story About a Wood-Cutter.)

The Amir, whose name is Ja'id, is a benevolent man who gives food and drink to every hungry man, until finally he has nothing left for himself. The Sultan and the Vizier clothe themselves in Dervish's clothes and roam about the land. They come to the house of the Amir, but he has nothing with which to honour his guests. He slaughters the last female camel, all that remains of his belongings. At that moment Allah gives the Amir his just reward. (The Pious Amir.)

In the collection, From the Conversations of Arabia, many parables are to be found. The characters in the parables are usually two brothers, one poor, one rich (There Is No Evening Without a Bird) or both poor, such as Mustafa Abu H'alil in the village (A Tale Which

Is Completely False). The parable Bar Minan opens with the saying, 'How much one tries to remove the fools from the world and yet they are not removed'. It is about a wood-cutter (who resembles Bar Minan) and who wishes to tell his brothers about his death. The Sheep and The Goat is a parable which Odah Abu Ziyd tells to his vilifier Abu Azet. A Guest Who Does Not Feel is a parable about a guest who comes to the house of the Fellah and who outstays his welcome, thus abusing the custom of hospitality.

Simon Blas, in his story Ashev from Baghdad, tells about the amusing deeds of Ashev, 'the loafer' from Baghdad, and his friend, Benan, who cheat the rich and the princely.

The book, My Journey to the Land of the Camels, by Benjamin Galah, is close to the animal parable type (reminding one of the story Razleh and Atarah by Solomon Zemach). Galah makes the camels speak, putting Latin verses into their mouths and presenting us with a dialogue which is saturated with humour. The author goes down to a fair in Beersheba and enters into the company of Bedouin. He describes the qualities of the camel, which has been given the nickname 'ship of the desert', its strength, hair, milk, wool, and skin. Particularly noteworthy is the story about Aziz-el-Dehini and his camel. In this book, which is in effect a poem about camels, and about the secret yearnings for the wide-open desert, Galah remains faithful to his geographical, folkloristic, and romantic style.

Stories and anecdotes, the central characters of which are Arabs, are based mostly on authentic incidents and represent the fruit of reportage. In his book The Orchards Relate, Isaac Rokah tells about a Sheikh Salim who is one of the greatest citriculturists in Jaffa, and also one of the biggest fools in the land. He gives the Turkish governor of Jerusalem a partnership in his grove and in exchange the avaricious governor appoints him mayor of Jaffa. Sheikh Dejeni, the mayor who has been dismissed thereupon decides to take revenge on his rival. He bribes the labourers who are digging a well in the orchard of Sheikh Salim, to throw a sack of sugar into it as soon as they reached water and to cry out: 'We have found sweet

water, we have found a sugar-mine!'. The Sheikh Salim hears this and immediately goes up to Jerusalem to inform his partner, the Turkish governor, that a sugar-mine has been found in their orchard. The governor hears what he has to say and understands that Sheikh Dejini has taken his revenge against the man who has replaced him. The story spreads through Jaffa, and the governor has no other choice but to dismiss his partner from his office, since it is not meet that a fool such as he should stand at the head of the city of Jaffa.

One of the greatest Arab citrus exporters, Faiyk Telmas, arranges a great feast at the close of the exporting season, in spite of having lost a great deal of money. When asked why he has spent a large sum on the feast, Telmas answers that had he earned a lot of money he certainly would not have squandered it, but since he has lost thousands of liras, a few hundred more for party expenses will make no difference.

At times the Arabs and the Arab way of life are reflected as an anachronism, particularly against the modern Israeli background of reality. In another anecdote the compiler, Isaac Rokah, recalls about a private business deal which he concluded with the Arab representatives who sat on the combined council for the marketing of citrus fruit, which the Jews and Arab orchard owners had set up during the Mandatory period (another example of sharing life together). One day the school, Mikvah-Israel, asks the council for 500 liras for the purpose of carrying out experiments in that institution for the improvement of irrigation in the orchards. The Arabs on the council argue that there is no need for such experiments and refuse to endorse the allocation. One of the Arab representatives then hands the author a note: 'I see that they raise turkeys in Mikveh-Israel. We will agree to the allocation on condition that you will ensure that each Arab member of the council receives one turkey and I receive two'. At that time turkeys were very hard to come by.

Gad Michnas, from Petach-Tikvah, concludes a business deal (in which the buying of land is involved) with the Arab Sheikh.

Michnas offers four liras per dunam and the Sheikh demands five. They meet in the 'Madefar' (a room in the village which is used for the welcoming of guests) and the Sheikh says: 'Ya, Hawajah Godlah (so was Gad Michna's nickname), have you ever considered that the price which I am asking for the land only just covers the expenses which you owe me, my father and grandfather for looking after it? ... We watched over it to ensure that the soil be not improved, that no trees be planted or swamps be drained, that thorns and wild bushes grow incessantly in it. Had we dealt with the land properly, you certainly would have had to pay five or ten times as much for every dunam'. Gad Machnis is convinced and pays the price that the Sheikh asks.

The story, With Appetite, by Benny Mativ, is about a Sheikh Ali, the Dervish who, out of great religious enthusiasm, vows that he will wear no clothes. He wanders among the people naked as the day on which he was born. The police pursue him unceasingly, but he always succeeds in evading them. In this story the Arab who clings to the old way of life is presented as a grotesque figure.

During the days preceding the establishment of the State of Israel the large majority of the Arabs had already been transformed into semi-nomads and the Bedouin way of life had begun to crumble.

In the story Atiyah Ibn Oda Ha-Saidi Goes to Market, by Benny Mativ, the narrator meets a Bedouin with a camel, going to market in Beer-sheba. The Arab is not concerned about the war, or about the fact that Arabs have fled from the city and the Jews have taken up settlement in it. According to him, the Jews too have a market.

The humorous story, Fatima and the Ford, by Judah Hanegbi is about a race which is arranged between the motor-car of a kibbutznik and a camel called Fatimah which belongs to a Bedouin, Hasan-el-Jidi. Significant here is the friendliness which exists between a kibbutz in the Negev and an Arab tribe.

Sometimes the motif dealing with the misfortunes of man is incorporated into the stories, particularly when they are concerned with one who suffers from bad luck or is stricken by destiny. In the illustrated stories of Nahman Gutman, for example, there appears the figure of a crippled Arab, orphaned and abandoned, who is known around the streets of Jaffa for his propensity to suffer misfortune. The cripple eventually succeeds in finding work putting up posters in the street.

The story Mahmud the Watchman of the Highway, by Eliezer Smoli, is an Arab tale filled with the deep and tragic feelings of man.

Hasan the Donkey, by Joseph Aricha, is about an Arab, 'bare-footed and dirty and dressed in sacks', who works in a packing house. The Jewish official who supervises the fruit picking gives him the nickname "Y'hamor" (donkey). The author invites the reader to participate in the mental anguish of Hasan, who retains his dignity and dares to curse those who humiliate him, among whom is the supervisor, his employer. The humiliation of a man, with whom the author sympathises, leads to a very funny incident. In the packing house Hasan encounters a telephone for the first time in his life. When Hasan takes hold of the telephone receiver he becomes completely confused and blurts out his nickname rather than his real name. 'It's me, Hawaja, Hasan the donkey.'

Abigdor Hameiri's story, Ahmad Ael Is Not a Murderer, is a tragicomic story about a young Egyptian, Ahmad, who is sent by a Muslim 'political emissary' to murder Jews in Palestine in exchange for a large sum of money. Ahmad wants the money so that he might win over the Egyptian dancer Iylah Kalin, with whom he is in love. After murdering a Jew Ahmad returns to Egypt, stands with the money before Iylah, and boasts of his deeds. Eventually it becomes clear that the slain person was none other than the uncle of Iylah who was on the point of bringing her to Palestine, and that Iylah is in fact a Jewess whose real name is Leah Kalinsky. Ahmad flees to his Jewish friend Judah and asks him to write a letter to the dancer in his name: 'To Iylah, Ahmad Ael is not a murderer. Ahmad Ael

will go to your uncle's grave and ask his forgiveness and deliver the money he has received to the Jews so that they might erect a tombstone over the grave of your uncle'. He hands himself over to the police in Egypt and they send him to Palestine. In Acco the tragedy ends. Ahmad, the man stricken by destiny, goes insane.

4.3 The Arab Problem in books for the young

In the stories written for the young, the didactic purpose of the authors in relation to the Arabs is immediately obvious. The characters of the stories are either Jewish or Arab children or youths and, if the 'Arab Problem' is dealt with at all, it is solved in the most naive and simplistic manner, through the presentation of the most romantic solutions. The problem thus loses its sting and ceases to be a problem.

The fostering of relationships of Jewish-Arab brotherhood and the ideal of peaceful co-existence is a tendentious topic, particularly in the stories of veteran authors such as Moses Smilansky, Moses Satwi, Eliezer Smali, Nathan Agmon, etc. This tendentiousness is mainly reflected in the stories dealing with shepherds and pioneers.

The story A Companion of the Bride (Melaveh Malkah) by M Smilansky, is about the shepherd, Mahmud, who at all times of the year is to be seen clad in only an Abbayah (cloak) with which he covers his nakedness, while in his hand he carries a pipe which he has fashioned from the reeds of a bulrush 'and on which he plays to his sheep and to his soul'. Mahmud is an orphan, who was found by women of the village while going down to draw water from the spring. They had taken the infant to the foot of the dunghill which lay at the edge of the village and handed him over to the shepherd of the flock, a Bedouin from the Hula valley. This shepherd was given 'an allowance' for the maintenance of the forsaken child. On becoming a man Mahmud is appointed by the villagers as their shepherd. In the story, Mahmad's Jewish Friend, Yankel,

sometimes listens to his pipe-playing, for his soul too yearns for music, and on one occasion Yankel invites his Arab friend to his house to share in the Sabbath meal.

A similar topic is to be found in the story, The Faithful Shepherd, by Eliezer Smali, which reflects the influence of the Arab environment on the children of the Jewish settlement.

It concerns a certain member of the kibbutz named Amos, who seems to have been destined to be a shepherd from birth. On reaching the age of eight he requests that a small abbaya and a kaffiya be purchased for himself so that he might dress in the manner of the Arabs. He has a friend, an Arab shepherd of his own age called Ahmad: 'And Ahmad would gather his sheep together and accompany his friend on the pipe'. Amos also speaks to the sheep in the language of the Arab shepherds.

The story In the Arab Village, by Nathan Agmon, describes the visit of members of a Jewish settlement to an Arab village, the inhabitants of which are Muslim and Christian Arabs. Their host is one, Said-sheik, the Muktar of the village, who 'shook each one's hand and asked about the welfare of the Muktar Hawajah Aaron ... He bent over towards Uri and extended to him a special welcome, laughing in a fatherly manner. He requested that Shoshana be taken into the women's residence in the yard'. Said-sheik has many friends among the Jews and makes no distinctions between them and Muslims and Christians. He invites the members of the kibbutz to a Fellahin wedding party and Uri is surprised at 'the likeness which exists between us and them', and says: 'Some are of the opinion that the Fellahin are of the race of the Hebrews that remained in the land after the Exile. In my opinion that is a reasonable supposition'.

In the story, The Rebellion of the Druzim, Yehoash Biber takes up the symbolic threads that bind the Jewish settlement of his days with the strange, yet courageous, Druze tribesmen. In this connection we are reminded of the story Abner by M Smilansky in which

a symbolic covenant is made between the Druze and the Jews, who are personified by the characters of Hamdan and Abner respectively. The undertone of present-day realism which pervades The Rebellion of the Druzim may be discerned through the striving and dreams of mutual help of the tribe in its struggle for freedom from the foreign yoke.

The Hulah, by A Salomon, explains how the Jews come to acquire land from a poor Bedouin tribe in the Hulah Valley. The old Sheikh of the tribe, in conversation with the Jews, expresses his hope for peaceful co-existence: 'We will be good neighbours. The land of the Hulah is big and wide and there is much room for both of us'.

The action of the story, Obadiah Goes Up to the Land of Israel, by Eliezer Smali, takes place in Yemen. Before her death a Jewish mother asks of her Arab neighbour that she hide her son Obadiah from the emissaries of the Eymam, and that she send him to Israel when he grows up. The Muslim woman faithfully carries out the request and when the boy reaches the age of twelve she tells him that he is a Jew. Obadiah thereupon emigrates to the land of Israel.

The hero of the story, On the Threshold, by M Smilansky, is likewise a Jewish boy who comes up to Israel in a foreign ship. The Arab Abu-ali rescues the boy and conceals him from the British soldiers.

The majority of the stories written for youth are adventure or detective stories. Many are set in the period of The Watchman, the pogroms, and the War. The Arab in them is portrayed as being in a state of tension in his relations with the Jewish settlement.

In his uncompleted autobiographical story The Red Horse, Moses Satwi talks about the horse he rode at the time when he was a field watchman in Kastina (Beer-Tuviah), and of the way in which Arabs cooperated with him against other Arab thieves and robbers who conspired against Jewish property.

In the collection of stories by Baruch Oran, First Deeds, a number of portraits are presented illustrating the way of life of the watchmen of

the first settlements in the land. Men like Dawid Abu Jusuf or Sender Hadad of Petach Tikvah, whose names are enveloped in an oriental romanticism and who risked their lives to guard the life of the settlement against Arab attackers, at a time when their sole weapon consisted only of a simple stick.

The story, Outside the Camp, by Isaac Shinhar, is about the enmity which once prevailed between the Arab villagers and the 'Yahud' because of an incident which had occurred. Once the son of the Sheikh of the village was riding in the field when he came across the Hawaha Razal, who was the watchman Zevi. First they exchanged shots then said to one another, 'There is a debt between us, and each debt demands repayment. Let's rise up and fight'. They shot at one another until the bullets in their rifles were spent, whereupon they got down from their horses and made peace. When they met again some days later in the village the son of the Sheikh suggested that a competition be arranged. At this 'fantaziya' the watchman Zevi proved his ability in sling-shooting by knocking a jug from the head of an old Arab woman who was walking towards them.

The components which make up the story The Tall Teacher, by J Saluh are, inter alia, the way of life of the first settlement in the days of Judah and the Galilee, the stamping of the horses, the swamps, the kafiyah and the Ag'el, and the days of the beginnings of the 'watchmen' movement. In the centre of the story stands the legendary figure of one of the first Hebrew teachers in the land. The teacher takes under his protection a young boy who has been wandering among the Bedouin shepherds. The characteristically Israeli story, The Wild West, is likewise written against the background of the penetration of Jewish workers into the farms in place of the Arab tenant-farmers and the agreement of the Jewish farmers to accept the protection of their militant Arab neighbours, no other option being open to them. Characters such as Hamdi, the watchman-robber, the shepherd, Anter, Hawaja Cohen, the Muqrabi Sheikh who comes to the settlement to demand satisfaction for the insult to his wives who had collected more gleanings from the fields of the settlements than they should have, and who were, as a result, chased away by the Jewish workers; the

names of the weapons, i.e., nagan (revolver), 'Yonani rifle', 'Turkish Karadah' - all these are redolent of the romantic period of the days when 'might was right' and only the strong survived.

In the story Mordechai who is named Morad, by Oded Bezer, a sense of discomfort between Arabs and Jews is sometimes brought about as a result of the absence of a common language of communication between the two as well as by the lack of understanding of the customs peculiar to the Arabs. A veteran watchman explains to a new colleague after their encounter with the Arabs: 'You should have greeted them first, because among the Arabs the honoured one is first to greet his inferior. And one who rides on a horse is always considered as being more honoured than one who goes on foot. You have thus lowered yourself in their eyes and now they will think that you are afraid of them'.

Not less romantic were the days of the British Mandate with their tension and pogroms.

The story, A Landscape of Night, by J Aricha, which bears the character of a detective adventure story, tells about Aharon Giladi, who endangers his life by going alone into 'foreign fields' at a time when 'the roads were still disrupted by wild bands of robbers' and who subsequently is captured by an Arab gang that was making night raids in the district, possibly the same gang that had only the previous evening attacked Tel-Zak by his own home. One of the gang, a wild ass of a man, desires to hew the captive into pieces and expresses his hatred for 'the Yahud'. The head of the gang, Abu-Yusuf, is known to the ruling authorities as well as to the Jewish settlement as a daring robber whose fame has become widespread among his allies as a zealous fighter for freedom and as 'a man in whom nobility and cruelty dwell together'. An interrogation of Giladi reveals information that will decide his fate, for he is found to have been among the fighters and defenders of Tel-Zak who courageously repressed the gang's attack, slaying many of its men. Just as it appears as if Giladi will be sentenced to death, Abu-Yusuf reprieves him by surprise, setting him free to return home; it is not known though

whether he does so out of an appreciation for the fighting Jew or out of simple 'caprice'.

In the story Storming Horse-Men, by Y Biber, the romance of a soldier who fights in the Anglo-Arab frontier force against bands of robbers and Arab smugglers is described. In it one finds also the story of the rescue of a Jewish sergeant who has volunteered to fight in his ranks.

A difference exists between the description of the Arab as part of the group to which he belongs, and that of the Arab as an individual.

The story Fire in the Mountains, by Judah Seloh, describes the atmosphere of dread which prevails on the eve of the War of Liberation. The hatred is made all the more concrete with the words of the Arab fighters, 'Palestine - our land, the Jews - our dogs!'

In the story In the Mountains of Jerusalem, by Zvi Livneh (Lieberman), members of a gang are preparing for an attack on the Jews. They intend to rape Jewish women as a token of distinction in battle. However, there appears also an Arab who will not surrender to incitement. Similarly, the story Mazalah, by Pesah bar-Adon relates how a Sheikh, the owner of a mare called Mazalah, will not participate in the attack upon new Jewish settlers in the Emek, since he has come to know them as men of peace, who work by the sweat of their brows, bringing life where there is desolation, and blessing to all their neighbours.

An Arab woman named Amana, who had been a shepherdess in a Jewish village, is a character in the story The Tracks of the Missing Sheep, by Moses ben Shaul. At the time of her old age she admits to the author that she had once been incited to steal tins from her Jewish employers.

This more truthful description compels the author to dissociate himself from preconceived ideas concerning the Arabs as a group. One refers here to the folk-loristic-exotic description of the lives of the

Arabs, in particular the Bedouin, of their wedding customs, of their ways of preparing coffee, of the preparation of a meal in a Bedouin tribe, etc.

In the story A Valorous Ass, Pesach bar-Adon describes the commander of the gang: a moustache, a weapon, a kaffiyah, an abayah, and a concern for preserving a dignified appearance.

Zvi Zaviri describes a zealous Sheikh in his story Sheik Abdullah: 'His eyes burned continuously, a proud, intelligent smile'. This is the description of a powerful and cruel Arab with hatred burning in his eyes, proud and arrogant - a professional fighter.

In Spurs for Yigael, Israel Lerman describes the way of life of children seen against a background of the Mandatory rule with its predatory Arab gangs.

Even after the War of Liberation and the establishment of the State, the tension did not abate, the Arab infiltrators, 'the Fedayeen', having continued to attack both property and lives in Israel. This is the reality described by Eliezer Smali in his story A Flower-Pot in the Window, in which a child in the settlement becomes orphaned as a result of an Arab terrorist attack.

In the book The Bats of Acco, by Benjamin Gali, some Israeli youths shadow an Arab spy.

It is possible to call the stories written specifically for youth, that express the yearnings for peace between the two peoples, 'stories of peace'. In some of them the political aspect is almost absent. Of importance are the human relationships of mutual responsibility, neighbourliness, and peace.

In the story A Lost Tricycle, by Benjamin Halevi, a conversation takes place between a member of the kibbutz and an Arab infiltrator, who is caught while carrying out a mission of sabotage. The Arab is the son of a past friend of the members of the Kibbutz. The under-

standable emotional tie of the infiltrator with the city of his sojournings, which has now become a part of the Israeli State, is emphasized. The reaction of the Israeli reveals his guilt-feelings towards the Arabs: 'Joma remained silent and I, too, refrained from speaking. He was right and so were we. We did not chase them away, but they were banished ...'. And as if to justify the actions of the Jews, the motif of the Holocaust is introduced into the story. 'Should I tell him of our Holocaust, about the destruction of Diaspora Jewry?' (What could this Arab have heard or known about the Holocaust, as if the Jewish problem ever occupied him at all?) One can also detect guilt-feelings in the story by Josi Margalit, The Friend from Abu Chamas. He tells of the Arab who cast aspersions against the Jews: 'But you the Jews deride us. You regard us as wretched, dirty fools'.

In the story Fire in the Mountains, by Judah Salu (written against the background of the War of Liberation) a young Arab named Ali conceals a young Israeli who finds himself in the region of terrorist bands. Ali had become orphaned as a child. He had met a young Jewish man called Gershom who lived opposite the school of Shenler, and who taught him to read and write Hebrew. Other Arabs too would assemble in Gershom's room to hear him teach. Gershom taught Ali the correct way in life. 'Ali, I don't want you to be a Jew. I wish you to remain faithful to your people. But first of all be a man. The world is big and there is a place in it for everyone. Any man who works with honesty will be able to earn an honourable livelihood.' The Arab Ali, who is 'adopted' by a Jew and experiences the taste of culture, is ready to endanger his life if need be to save his benefactor.

An Adventure in the Negev, by Abraham Salmon, tells of a young Hebrew-speaking Bedouin who appears dressed in the old uniform of the Israeli Defence Force. He had served in the minority corps of the Zahal and had known the captain Musa, from Rehovoth. He speaks a language in which both Hebrew and Arabic dialects are intermingled.

Zevi Zaviri, in his story The Sheikh Abdullah, tells how members of the settlement capture the Sheikh who is responsible for the many attacks upon them. They say to him: 'We only desire peace and decent friendly relations. But we are also prepared for war'. The Sheikh Abdullah, afraid for his life, understandably agrees with them.

The story Hasan and the Watchmen of the Railway Line, by J Salu, tells about a border-guard, Moshe, who once saved the life of the Bedouin, Hasan, after a snake had bitten him, and even donated his blood to him. Hasan later endangers his own life to save Moshe from an accident resulting from a fault in the railway-line.

Zohar and Zakiya by Michael Desheh, is about the unrequited love of an Israeli youth for a Bedouin girl from a neighbouring tribe. During the Six Day War an Israeli captain named Zohar encounters an Arab woman Zakiya and her children. Zohar's son Yair falls in love with Zakiya's daughter. The story ends with Yair's declaration: 'The day will come when there will no longer be problems such as these but only the love which exists in the heart will determine the destiny of young people.'

In The Valley of the Narcissi, another story by M Desheh, the action takes place in a similarly romantic atmosphere with the Arab Ahmad rescuing the Jew Yochai during the War of Liberation and, in return, being rescued by Yochai during the 'Kadesh Campaign'. On the initiative of Yochai several captive Egyptian captains are brought to the 'Valley of the Narcissi' for a meeting with Israeli captains, the intention being the signing of a peace treaty.

Understandably, the initiators of moves towards peace, and those who strive for peace, are always the victorious Israelis, a typical approach in the stories dealing with this subject. The book, The Sowers in the Wilderness, was written out of the life-experience of Beni Mativ, one of the builders of the Hebrew settlement in the Negev. The establishment of the settlement in the Negev series as a point of departure for all the contacts, confrontations and variegated happenings which occur among people and among animals, and which take place in the

expanses of the Negev which are mostly inhabited by Bedouin. The 'fantastic' foundation of the book is close to reality, while at the same time the reality grows into something almost bordering on the legendary. In this book Beni Mativ also tells of the relations of good-neighbourliness with the Bedouin tribes and relates stories about Israeli and Arab children from both sides of the border.

The last episode in the book called Hawajah Boni (the Arab nickname of the author) describes how Mativ is called to serve as the governor of Rafiyah at the time of the Sinai Campaign. Eliezer Smali tells of Druze who are saved by neighbouring Jewish children in his story To the Mountain of the Druzim.

In the cheap adventure story the description reaches a low level as the core of the fantastic becomes all-important.

The story He Will Surely Prevail Against the Serpents of Pharaoh by Iydo Sacher, tells about Ramadan-af-Nesher, the leader of several Egyptian spies, who thinks perpetually and with pleasure about an attack by the Egyptian army on Israel, and about the beginning of the final slaughter of the Jews. The two stories of Tamar Bernstein, The Deeds of Suleiman in the Camp of the Egyptian Commandos, and The Deeds of Suleiman and Dani across the Border, are adventure stories written against the background of espionage and the retributive acts of Israel against Egypt.

4.4 Stories of Childhood and Youth

This category of stories constitutes an important landmark in Israeli literature in the transition to a problematical approach to the Arabs. The authors are native-born Israelis of the generation of the Palmach, who were fragrant with the scent of the land and spellbound by its landscape, who knew the Arabs as an unseparable part of the way of life of their childhood, and needed to speak about the encounter between Jews and Arabs, even if only to satisfy their yearning for the world of childish simplicity: the settlement, the kibbutz, the

neighbourliness of the Arabs, the paths of the groves, and the romantic landscape that belonged to a past that was no more. Only memories and yearnings remained of 'the good old days' before the establishment of the State.

A Story Without a Beginning, by S Yizhar, is a lamentation for the complete destruction of the Israeli myth which concerns the primal agricultural togetherness of the Arabs and the Jews in the oriental and pioneeristic old-new land. The other story by Yizhar, The Heap of Ashes, speaks repetitively about scenes of childhood in the settlement in the coastal plain of Judah, in the days when an orchard was an orchard, and when Bedouin from the Negev, with their camel caravans, would bring the dung to the manure-pit of the settlement. In the story A Swimming Competition, by B Tamuz, there are many such yearnings expressed for the world that once was, for the scents of the East, for the oriental architecture and the slow way of life that is no more. The narrator tells of a childhood experience when he travelled with his doctor mother to visit the house of the widow of an Arab Effendi in the environs of Jaffa. In the built-up courtyard of the house the child meets the grand-daughter of the widow, a girl of his own age called Nahiyda, and her young brother, the chauvinist Abdul-Karim.

The author describes in detail the appearance of the Arab building: 'In those days this yard was in good repair and humming with life. It was square shaped and surrounded on three sides by a two-story building ... on the second floor ... a pool ... and goldfish appeared next to the duct and splashed about amidst the air-bubbles that were caused by the water-spout. And a balcony of wood surrounded the long verandah ... and from the verandah they used to enter by a door made of coloured glass and come into the dining room ... from the wall portraits of men wearing turbans and girded with swords, looked down, all placed in gilded wooden frames'. The old widow says to the narrator's mother: 'You are new here, immigrants. But with the help of the Lord you will grow strong and build yourselves houses. You are diligent and your hands are blessed'. At one point the child narrator breaks into the conversation of the adults: 'But it's not true that we ousted the Arabs, we are for peace not war'.

Abdul-Karim asks him if he is a member of the 'Haganah'. The father of Nahiyda explains: 'Abdul-Karim learns in the college of the Mufti ... and every day he lives in fear of your Haganah'. The child listens to the monotonous tune that comes from the Arab gramophone: 'The sound of a Kemanji and a drum and cymbals was heard and immediately afterwards the sound of an Arab song, a sweet, hidden sound, floating on the air and sung coloratura'.

The young author spends a fortnight's vacation in the house of the Arab in Ein Kerem, a guest in the house of Abu-Nimar: 'And in the stillness one could detect the well-known smells of fried oil, mint leaves, black coffee, rose water and hal seeds'. Here the narrator still recalls the Arabs whom he knew in Jaffa: 'And I used to stand and listen and in my imagination I would receive into the courtyard Nahiyda and her grand-mother, and Abdul-Karim as guests'.

The story, Slaughter, by Esther Raav invokes memories of the author's childhood, and tells especially about Dabash, the dog of the Arab house, and of the Arab who used to bring fruit to the kitchen of her house.

Rachel Anber's story, A House in the Street of the Messiah, has its setting in a district in ancient Tiberias where the authoress spent her childhood, a place in which Chassidic Jewish families and the families of Muslim and Christian Arabs had dwelt together in close proximity for generations. It is a simple story, the authoress wishing to negate the years which now separate her from her childhood days, and to put on once again the garb of a young girl. This fact determines the legendary nature of the story and the fusion of reality and fantasy into an infantile whole. The idyllic atmosphere is strengthened by the relationship of brotherhood which exists towards the Arab neighbours who are regarded as members of the girl-narrator's family: Amana the maid, strongly attached to the Jewish home, Halil the shepherd, Amana's husband, who is loyal with all his heart to the master of the house and prepared to risk danger in order to help the Jews and Jemila, the Christian Arab woman, deserted by her husband, who warns the Jewish neighbours about the impending calamity which is to

befall them as a result of the work of Arab agitators. The root cause of the young girl's fears is Mahmud, the son of the neighbour Ali, who terrifies the Jewish children, conspires against the newly-married sister of the authoress, and threatens 'the day of the knives' on which he will come to destroy all the Jews. His threat is almost carried out when, during the feast of Ayd-el-Fiyter, an old Sheikh calls upon the Arabs in the mosque to destroy the Jews because they are rebuilding the destroyed wall-tower of the city. The priests of the religious sects, both Muslim and Christian, advise the Jews to leave the city since there would be no controlling the rioters. The father of the authoress and Rabbi Nahum the Holy One reject the advice, choosing rather to barricade themselves and stand firm.

They do so and eventually overcome the resistance. Iydala, the authoress's future brother-in-law, thereupon beats up the wicked Mahmud, the agitator. Particularly illuminating in this story about a little girl, is her attitude towards the problem of Jewish existence - the girl sees in the brotherly relations which exist between her father and Rabbi Nahum the Holy One, and between Amana, Halil, and Jemila, a strengthening of physical Jewish existence. At the same time she recoils from them, and is even revolted by them, for they are not of her people. The cross which hangs upon Jemilah's chest upsets her and she is also aggressive towards Amana, the compassionate maid-servant.

A similar story is The Third Mountain, by Hadah Bosem. Her childhood was spent in the Jewish settlement where her aunt taught the wide-eyed Arab woman Rifra, geography, and told her stories about lands that were 'even further away than Mecca'. The story is peopled with Arabs such as Ralya and Chadra, who speak about the first night of nuptials in the village, and the sterile Ahmad, the servant of Rifra's son. The parents of the young girl take her to an Arab wedding in the village and, despite the good-neighbourly relations which exist, it is impossible not to be shocked by the filthy state of the Arab settlement: 'The big copper plates which they used for washing in the courtyard, were filled with food ... my mother thanked them for the repast, and stood on a side not touching anything. She said the food was polluted.' On the borders of the Jewish settlement, on the third mountain, lived a tribe of Arab watchmen. The authoress's father had connections

with Amer and Jusaf, their leaders, and the young girl would dream of Amer, who was the most handsome of them all. 'And I saw him, and behold one day he came galloping up on his mare, and offered the bridal-piece to my father.' Also the maid Shifra serves as a subject for girlish day-dreams. 'And I saw her stepping along with the rest of the devoted ones, all dressed in white, on the sandy paths of the great desert, journeying to the black stone that shone brilliantly in the sun.'

At times these authors' memories take them back even fifty years earlier, to the distant days of their childhood, such as in the story R Hayyim the Jerusalemite, by Ezra HaMenachem. The nostalgic note is already sounded in the opening sentences of the story: 'Those days were different, not like the tempestuous and confused present ... then moderation and tranquility were one's portion in life ...'. The young boy, Haimke, journeys to Hebron to his uncle R Jacob Zalman, a man of wealth who deals solely with the Arabs. The uncle, whose physical appearance is like that of an Arab, waits for him in the 'Chan'. The next day they go out to visit Abadlatif, the old friend of the uncle, and take up lodgings in his vineyard: 'Yes, such is the custom among the children of Arabia. During the harvesting season they leave their crowded dwellings and go out into their distant vineyards where they dwell until the work is finished ...'. A big snake is seen crawling on the ceiling of the house and it arouses fear in the child. Abadlatif pacifies him: 'Don't be afraid, my little one, this snake is a friend of the family ... we human beings should protect these snakes for they are a magic charm to us, the secret of our success'. The description of the lodging in the vineyard is a romantic one. Abadlatif lies on the ground, wrapped in his cloak, his rifle at his side, his arm beneath his head ... and immediately he is asleep. The child is afraid to sleep under the open skies, but the tranquil exotic landscape makes him drowsy. 'From the tranquility of the lonely, forsaken valley there broke forth the occult sounds of a flute as a deep yearning engulfed the whole expanse. Then the sounds were accompanied by a clear distant singing ... the stars leaped, shone, fell.'

Very ingenious is the story by Joseph Chanani, Ahmud's Flute, in which he describes a meeting between himself, in the figure of Yisraelik, and an Arab youth named Ahmud. They both prepare a shared meal for the purpose of 'bringing their hearts together'. Ahmud gives Yisraelik his flute as a token of their friendship. Many years pass and the flute remains in the possession of the author: 'Its Arab tones still etched in my memory, as is the wondrous enchanting tune which he played for me on that day, in the shade of the eucalyptus trees ...'.

In the story Rose-water from Port Said, by Gideon Talpaz, the immigration of the child-narrator and her mother to the Land of Israel, and her experiences in the land are described. Her first encounter with the Bedouin in the desert disappoints the young child. 'Next to the railway lines stood Bedouin holding the halters of their camels while their pale women-folk adorned with necklaces made from coins, crouched on the burning sand.' Her early image of the Bedouin had been an unashamedly romantic one but 'These were not the brave desert-nomads about which I dreamed in Australia, after reading about them in novels ... Those were tall, insolent, dressed in abbayahs, with wild burning eyes, whose long kaffiyahs fluttered wondrously in the wind of the plain as they galloped on their noble mares, carrying on their beautiful stone-studded saddles the white, bound-up young women whom they had stolen away at the command of the cruel Sheikh. The Bedouin in the railway-station had dripping eyes, running noses and were enveloped by clouds of flies, miserable ones of the wasteland'.

The benefactor of the family from Port Said, Mr Antabi, sends the mother of the girl a gift - a black Sudanese slave called Ahmud. The mother wishes to send him back to Egypt but the child asks her to allow him to remain in their house, and to her friend, Hemdah, she describes Ahmud as 'a prince from Luxor'. And Hemdah adds 'Perhaps he is the son of the King upon whom a wicked magician placed a spell, turning him into a slave'. In a Mamillah street in Jerusalem where 'they have already stoned Jews and thrown sharp nails into the road, and rags dipped in tar onto their motor-cars', a gang of bare-foot urchins attack the girl, but suddenly Ahmud appears as a redeeming angel. Afterwards it becomes clear to the mother and

her child that Ahmud is a seller of Sukon (nuts) in his leisure time, in Mamillah street, and this is sufficient reason for the mother to dismiss the black slave and send him back to Egypt.

A similar atmosphere envelopes the book of memories of Rachel Maccabi entitled, My Egypt, in which she tells about her childhood and youth in Alexandria. The servants of the house are two black Sudanese 'on whose faces were the lacerations characteristic of Sudanese tribesmen'. Once a week they would go out to the coffee house of the Nubians 'where the gramophone would shriek out oriental tunes' and there they would play Sheshbesh. Also the cook in her house, Sayid, is a Sudanese from beneath whose hands 'the tastes of the Garden of Eden came forth'.

In a number of the stories dealing with childhood and youth, an attempt is made to touch upon the very real problems which existed in relation to the Arabs. For example, in the first chapter of the novel by Reuben Kritz, Years of Blue, the visit of kibbutz children to the Arab villager, Abu-Salim, is described.

'The dung-heap', a heap of rubbish from the kibbutz which lies on the slope above Abu-Shusha, serves as a focus of attention to the Arab children whose elders steal grass from the field or fruit from the plantation, and who themselves come periodically to scratch around in it. The children of the kibbutz set out to catch 'an Arabchik' and find an Arab child named Sohil. Their intention is, however, 'to make friends', and they take him around, showing him all there is to be seen in the court-yard and on the farm. Meanwhile, the entire Arab village has been alerted and a delegation of fellahin come to the kibbutz, stating that the youth has been abducted and beaten up by the youths of the kibbutz. After some deliberation they take Sohil and return to their village. The children of the kibbutz then come to visit their new friend and in the village they learn Arabic and the customs of the Arabs, so as not to insult them. The children are fascinated by the type of irrigation used in the garden of the village: 'The Arab-Jewish friendship began to take on a sympathetic colouration'. In place of Sohil who has travelled to Jaffa to work there, they find

in his house his uncle Abu-Salim the Muezzin, who sings at night and calls the villagers to prayer. He knows Hebrew which he learned while working at Zamrim (Zichron Yaakov) and has three sons, all of whom work in the oil-refinery in Haifa. The children ask him on whose side the Arabs stand in the war, on the side of the Germans-Turks or on the side of the English, and Abu-Salim answers with a grave proverb that his masters change, but that whoever rides upon him at the time, constrains him. Afterwards he asks them: 'And if an Arab should come and wish to live on the kibbutz - would you accept him?'. When the children answer him in the affirmative, that this would indeed be the case, on condition that the Arab learns Hebrew and works like everyone else, Abu-Salim nods his head with a sad and tolerant smile: 'No, you wouldn't accept, I know'. The conversation turns to the topic of women and marriage in the kibbutz. On their departure Abu-Salim says to them: 'You can come any time. During the summer I have much fruit in the garden ... In summer Sohil will also be coming from Jaffa'.

The story The Cry, by Haim Guri, consists of recollections of the author's youth. He describes an incident concerning an Arab who sells tomatoes and melons to the mistresses of a Jewish neighbourhood. Two Jewish youths subsequently prevent them from buying the Arab's produce with the purpose of encouraging the purchase of Jewish goods, thus boosting the Hebrew economy and labour. The neighbours split into two camps, one for the Arab, the other against him, and among the former camp is the mother of the author.

Love of the Bedouin, by Azriel Omer-Lemer, which also invokes memories of youth, touches upon the social problem of the Arabs. The author's father, an orchardeer, sells his fruit to an effendi from Jaffa, who then sends a Bedouin watchman to guard the orchard. The youth-narrator becomes acquainted with the Bedouin, whose name is Abdullah, and is invited to his tent. The Bedouin yearns for the wilderness and its mountains 'as they were in the days of our father's fathers - where the husband is still the master, who holds sway over his property and his wife. The mountains - the land of the ancient

olive, the land of true freedom'. It seems to the youth-narrator that the eyes of Abdullah's daughter are calling: 'Save me from everlasting bondage - from the man who enslaves me in the name of Allah'. To Abdullah a woman is like an ass or a camel. And the youth continues to ponder over the destiny of the Bedouin woman. 'The woman who in contrast to the Divinely Blessed man, is a sinner, fit only to be his footstool. And if Allah should close her womb and she bear not a male child - Woe unto her! With her own hands she is obliged to bring to his couch another woman to replace her. Then the new one becomes the mistress of the tent, while the old one only the maidservant.' The woman and the daughter eat from the scraps that are left over in the dish after the husband has finished eating. 'Driven by a curiosity for the exotic, my sister was drawn to the tent of the Bedouin. There was a strong desire in her to come to know the orient and its savagery.' There is no limit to Abdullah's astonishment. He cannot understand why the youth-narrator is still unmarried, nor why his seventeen-year-old sister is still without a husband. In his eyes 'the Jews are a strange people'. Malicha, Abdullah's wife, on meeting the youth-narrator, relates how Allah has punished her by closing her womb, thus preventing her from giving birth to a male child. She promises to give him her daughter Zahira as a wife if only he will give his sister to Abdullah, her husband. This shocking suggestion 'damages' the relationship between them and the Bedouin are eventually forced to uproot themselves from the place.

Sometimes such childhood memories leave the soul of the author in a state of anguish for many years. In the story Starlings, by Zerubabel Gilead, the narrator and his friend Obed come to a small wood on the way to the orchard. The starlings that appear in the wood invoke in Obed memories of his childhood days, and he recalls the Egyptian Arab, Fuad, who had a glass eye and who was the station-master of the district in which he lived. In his desire to make friends with the children Fuad would attract them with an assortment of sweets and would enchant them with his hunting rifle with which he would go out to the wood in the autumn. There he would stand hidden behind a eucalyptus by the brook and shoot starlings. He would also allow the children to participate in the hunt and, for every ten shot

starlings that they gathered for him he would let them keep one as a prize. The children liked this but Obed was repelled and despised the act of killing: 'I could not stand it ... looking into the eyes of the shot starlings ... there was revealed before me ... what a precious thing a starling was'. Once when Fuad gave Obed a dead starling as a prize he threw it into the wicked Egyptian's face: 'I burst out crying and ran until exhausted through the bushes that grew on the shore of the wadi'. In this story the author appears as an impartial observer. 'I saw ... how an innocent story about starlings, a happening out of the past, could still make my friend's soul rage. Fifteen, sixteen years had passed, and the starlings of Fuad still lay bleeding in his memory.'

In the story The Sand-Clock, by Gideon Talpaz, the author recalls his childhood in a settlement which once stood on the same land on which Tel-Aviv stands today. Already in the opening of the story we become aware of the feelings of nostalgia which take hold of the narrator. 'Where are the golden fields of wheat ... and the clay houses, and the thorn and cactus hedges, and the palm-trees and the carob trees and the Bedouin woman who weaved with a spindle, and the Bedouin men who sold the straw and dates, and dry figs, who led their camels through the streets of the settlement ... the sunset ... and the smell of the ovens of the Arabs who baked bread.' He goes back in time to the house of Sabba, who is one of the watchmen of the settlement and who rides on his mare in hot pursuit of thieves who steal settlement property, and he recalls the romantic-oriental world: the mills of Sheikh Abu Revah; Kevissah, the mare of grandfather Suleiman; Hamad and Ahsan, the Arab brothers who helped Sabba and called him 'Sheikh'; Fatimah, the maid, etc. In pursuit of two robbers who had stolen nine of the settlement's cows, one, a villager from Halhul is wounded by the watchmen's bullets, thus enraging the Arabs of that village and its surrounding districts. They prepare themselves to take revenge against the settlement by means of an armed attack: 'In the silence of the night the wind carried to our ears the sound of their savage songs ...'. The attack is eventually called off when it becomes known to the villagers that, on the day of the British King's birthday, the Bedouin prince Saker Abu Kisek has been reprieved and

released from prison. The Bedouin thereupon arrange a fantaziya to honour the day of their leader's liberation. On the day following the rejoicing, while yet in a peaceful mood, the servants of Abu Kisek return the herd taken from the settlement to the watchman, Sabba, and also arrange a feast in the settlement. Saker Abu Kisek himself, although known for his pride, came to kneel down before Sabba and to ask his forgiveness for the theft of the cows. Sabba says to him: 'You are my son Saker, because Muhmad your father, may he take refuge in the shade of Allah, was my bone and my flesh'.

Moshe Shamir, in his story Chapters about Ishmael, recalls his childhood, a large portion of which was spent under the threat of Arab attacks, thus constituting a nightmare of pogroms, fires and riots. He recalls too his youth in the 'Haganah', the kibbutz and the Palmach. In the third section of the book Conflict at Noon, Shamir tells about his youth in the kibbutz 'Mishmar Ha-emek': 'In the dining room the leaders spoke about the brotherhood of nations, yet not one of them knew a word of Arabic. They never spoke to an Arab, they had no friends among the felaheen of the district ...'. Afterwards there comes a description of an Arab youth who is tied hand and foot with ropes to a post and made to stand during the noon-day heat in the middle of the farm. No-one seems concerned, except the Mukhtar of the kibbutz who is responsible for what is taking place, as well as an Arab dignitary who beats up the boy. The Mukhtar-watchman is the only one who can deal with the Arabs. A description of a quarrel which takes place with Arab shepherds amidst the standing corn is somewhat biased towards the Arabs (a trace of the ideal of 'the brotherhood of nations' and sympathy for the wretched).

In the story by Deborah Omer, The Boundary which is in the Heart, the child-narrator meets up with a Bedouin boy riding on a mare in the valley of Beth-Shean. In the eyes of the boy there is a trace of hatred, 'that we have come to rob ... the land, the valley of Beth-Shean'. The young girl again meets the Bedouin boy, whose name is Abdullah, while visiting the Sheikh's tent, at a time when the men of the kibbutz have been invited to the wedding of his eldest daughter. Abdullah is the oldest son of the Sheikh, the Sheikh having produced

only daughters, 'the curse of Allah', before his birth. During the fantaziya Abdullah shoots with his rifle as well as any adult, and surprises all with his ability to hit the target. The girl-narrator admires him but the strangeness which exists between the children of the kibbutz and the Bedouin boy persists: 'A deep strangeness like a chasm without a bridge'. The narrator admits that the two sides were never able to arrive at any real relationship of neighbourliness. The Bedouin invites the Jews to join them in their festivities, and the Sheikh and members of his entourage are frequently invited to the kibbutz, but with equal frequency quarrels break out leading to injury and further lack of understanding between them. The Arab inhabitants of the valley of Beth Shean see themselves as owners of that valley. And they could never come to terms with the presence of the Jews there. Abdullah excels himself during these quarrels and after some years, upon the death of the Sheikh, Abdullah takes his place as leader of the tribe.

With the rise of the State of Israel a border now separated the kibbutz from the Bedouin, thus creating a further dimension in the problem of relations between the two peoples: 'This was in fact a quiet border ... only a sense of alienation separated the two peoples ... a distance of years of hatred and strangeness to which was now added the humiliations of war'.

But there were Arabs who remained neighbours, even after the border which separated them was mapped out. So Aliza Amir, in her book Just As There is Green, came to describe the Arabs which she knew, her own house having stood on the very border itself. 'They are our neighbours, and not some abstract and mysterious enemy ... and their bells will continue to awaken our mornings for many years to come'.