

CHAPTER 5

The Arabs as a real problem

Introduction

The web of relationships which existed between the Jewish settlement and the Arabs in the land, although sufficiently complicated before the War of Liberation, became even more so after Israel's victory during that War when, with the establishment of the State of Israel, a large Arab minority found itself within the borders of the new State.

The first generation of Israeli writers to be aware of the Arab problem was the generation of native-born authors, the generation of the Palmach that began to publicise its literary creations in prose and poetry during the nineteen-forties. They were all (with the exception of Benjamin Tammuz) graduates of the pioneeristic youth-movement, and many of them had even been through a period of preparation in the kibbutz, in the framework of the Palmach (shock forces and camps). Their world view was, as such, similar to the secular ideology held by socialistic sects, with its emphasis on such stereotypes as the equality of man, the brotherhood of nations, and the class struggle.

These values began to disintegrate with Israel's confrontation with the Arabs.

The need of the generation of 1948 to deal with the Arab question had its source in the strong experience of the war. The native-born, Israelis to whom the Arabs were an inseparable part of their childhood existence, were destined to clash with them on the battlefield, as a result of the decree of cruel fate. They sought in their stories, which were often filled with contradiction, to find expression for the confusion of their souls.

5.2 The Political Problem

The root of the political problem is to be found in the strained relations which existed between the Jewish settlement and the Arabs in

the land following on the revival of Arab nationalism, which reached its climax during the riots of 1929 and 1939.

As an example is quoted a passage from the story, The Reprimanded Sheikh, by Israel Zarchi. 'No sooner had the Jews wanted to fulfil the agreement of the nations that they return to their land after 2000 years of exile and build its ruins, than the envy of the Ishmaelite inhabitants of the land was aroused: they saw how trees and all precious plants could grow in a place which had always been desolate, how the Jews produced water from a rock, and dried up malarial swamps, and created an atmosphere, and built settlements everywhere, and their anger mounted until they were ready to destroy, and they brought evil upon the Jews ... they say of late that the Western Wall is not enough for them, and they look covetously upon every holy mosque ... on the place where the horse of the prophet neighed and whinnied and stamped its foot before ascending heavenwards with its rider. The words of the inciters bore fruit. A storm raged throughout the entire land from Dan to Beer-sheba, columns of fire ascended in the holy cities of Safed and Hebron, and even old people and babies were not spared.' Similar passages are found in the novel The Men of Pekiin, by Rivkah Alter: 'During the riots which suddenly occurred against the settlement in 1936 - 1939, the English Government spread the report that it was not responsible for the lives of Jews living in Arab centres ... a bomb was thrown in an Arab market in Haifa as a reaction to the murderous deeds which had taken place in the refineries, when Arab labourers rose up against their Jewish friends and co-workers, and killed them in cold blood. The Jewish zealots said: 'If the Mandatory authorities do not protect us we must avenge our own blood, so the Arabs do not come to think that Jewish life is ownerless ... and inciters came also to Pekiin, Muslims and gangs of men ... the Jahud (Jew) is killing our people in the streets ... we must avenge them, and the Arab world will know that the blood of the faithful believers runs in our veins. Firstly were killed those families, the heads of which were out of work ... the erection of a barbed-wire fence, the purpose of which was to block the way before the liberators of Palestine'.

In the story Dust of the Journey by Nathan Shacham, the farmer Kanterowitz says: 'the inciters have already come here. Before they came we lived in peace with the Arabs. Where the small ones throw stones, the big ones throw bombs, and even Elijah, the young pioneer with romantic illusions is sobered by the national awakening. The land of Israel is no longer Zion but Palestine, the Arab is no more a pretty picture in a geography book but a living creature standing for what is his, looking with enmity upon foreigners'.

The story, Iysa Muhammad, by Jacob Ibn-Hai, is about an Arab field watchman, the brother of the Mukhtar of the village of Beth-omer, who works for the Hawajah Wise. Iysa acts as intermediary in the agricultural transactions which take place between the men of the village of Etzion and the inhabitants of the nearby Arab villages who are known for their hatred of the Jews. Although Iysa's brother, the Mukhtar, is a nationalist, Iysa declares his friendship for the Jews and his admiration for the inhabitants of the village of Etzion. Some of them suspect that he will one day act treacherously against them, but the Arabic Mukhtar, Solomon, always comes to his defence, with the argument that Iysa, a non-practising Muslim, is different from his Arab brethren, and would eat with the Jews even during the fast of Ramadan.

The old author who comes to the kibbutz and speaks about brotherly relations between the two peoples, points to Iysa as the embodiment of his ideal of brotherhood. But Iysa abhors the 'old nuisance' and evades answering his questions. He sees himself as a friend of the members of the kibbutz and is not afraid of the threats of the instigators. Once he tells the Mukhtar Solomon about a dream that he had had of the kibbutz going up in flames and in the dream he saw Betty, a woman of the kibbutz, whom he desired, pleading for her life. And he, Iysa, drew her out of the fire and saved her from the fellahin ... When the days of tension arrive the link between the kibbutz and the village of Beth-omer is broken and Iysa too stops his visits. In the meantime Solomon gets married and invites his friend, Iysa, to the wedding. Bloody riots have only just occurred and many of the members of the farm suspect Iysa of being a spy. But the Mukhtar Solomon, who continues to believe in his friendship, rides over to Beth-omer to visit Iysa, and on the way back

is ambushed by the Arab villagers. Beth-omer then becomes the headquarters of the gangs that besiege the kibbutz. An Arab armoured force followed by the Arab mob, breaks into the village of Etzion and, after a battle, men of the village are dead. Only then does Iysa Muhmad appear, riding at the head of the gang, with a revolver in his belt.

During the period of the Mandate the British were interested in keeping alive the conflict that raged between the Jewish settlement and the Arabs so that they themselves might establish dominion over the land. The Jews were aware of this intention and sought ways to create ties with the Arabs which would lead to their combined struggle against the British.

A number of authors describe the conditions of the British prisons in the land, and here one detects a certain symbolism in which the Land of Israel is seen as a British jail in which both Jews and Arabs are imprisoned.

The story, Abu Jusuf, by Hayyim Hazaz, is about an Arab jailor who is in charge of the death cell in which two Jews, Menahem and Elijah, are imprisoned: They have been sentenced to death for rebelling against the government. When Elijah asks him why the Arabs have become subjugated to the English, Abu Jusuf answers him evasively. Elijah says: 'We (the Jews and the Arabs) are the masters of the land, we are in the majority', and he asks Abu Jusuf why the Arabs don't join the Jews in driving the English out of the land. The Arab jailor replies that the time has not yet come and relates a parable about a Bedouin who, after twenty years, takes revenge on his enemy saying, 'I have been in a hurry'. Abu Yusuf then becomes angry with the two prisoners but soon apologizes to them, saying that he fears that the British policeman and the Arab prisoners will inform the authorities against him. He tells them of an event that happened a long time before, about a wicked governor who repented of his sins, healed a leprous dog and, after going to the grave of the Prophet, gave up his soul and inherited the world to come. Abu Jusuf compares himself to that stricken dog and assures the prisoners that if they

forgive him they too will inherit the world to come.

In the play, A Pomegranate Among The Hearts, by Moses Amiel, three of the characters are, an Arab jailor named Yusuf and two heroes of the Jewish underground, Amihai and Nachshon, who have been sentenced to death. Yusuf speaks with his British counterpart:

First Jailor (Yusuf): He spoils them (referring to the British governor of the prison who spoils the Jewish prisoners).

Second Jailor: Do you want to be in their place? Change over with them and you too will be spoiled.

First Jailor: He doesn't spoil Arab prisoners.

Second Jailor: You are good children - even without being pampered.

First Jailor: Will you give us a prize for that?

Second Jailor: Only one who participates in a competition receives a prize. Now you are only spectators.

First Prisoner: I don't understand.

Second Prisoner: The Jews removed you from the game - only the Jews and the English are on the field. And where are you? In the wings. And you don't know whom to applaud.

First Prisoner: It doesn't matter. Allah is great. He will pass the ball also to us.

Second Prisoner (laughing): Great is Allah.

Amihai tries to start a dialogue with Yusuf:

Amihai: I want to make it clear to you that you must stop serving them like a dog.

First Jailor: And to serve you instead?

Amihai: We are not asking you to serve us .. you can help us ...

First Jailor: I, the Arab - help you - the Jews?

Amihai: There are Arabs who do help us ...

First Arab: Mejnonim!

Amihai: There are such among you who know that eventually we will drive out the British from here, and then only you and we will remain.

First Jailor: Then you will chase us away too.

Amihai: As long as you don't rise up against us - we have nothing against you. It is a fact that our whole war is against the British and not against you ...

First Jailor: Tell me, what is it you are trying to put into my head?

Amihai: What I am trying to explain to you is that the British are foreigners in this land, foreigners both to you and to ourselves.

First Jailor: And you are not foreigners in this land?

Amihai: You know we're not.

First Jailor: I know you are. You were here two thousand years ago, but you went away, and we have been here one thousand years. So why should two thousand years outside the land give you more rights than us, who have been here without interruption for one thousand years - until this day ...

Amihai (losing his patience): You have not been here a thousand years, nor without interruption, nor did we go from here, and the matter is not as simple as you think.

The British insistence that the political game with the Arabs be played according to the rules finds expression in the story by Abraham Shanan, In Confinement, which is about Hori, the Arab warden in the prison, and Iyša, the powerful Arab head of the prisoners as well as about the other Arab and Jewish prisoners. The British governor of the prison exploits and keeps alive the traditional hatred which exists between the prisoners who come from Jaffa and those from Gaza, even within the confines of the prison walls. The prisoners play 'A game for youth' and the prisoners from Gaza are victorious.

One who particularly excels himself is Hamid, the Robber:

'Breathing heavily they butted one another amongst the slaughtering knives and razors'. Afterwards the governor gathers them together in the courtyard and scolds them: 'It is time that that the men of Jaffa and Gaza cease their hatred and love one another'. He speaks particularly about the British tradition of love for one's fellow man

and finally removes two prisoners from each cell to be flogged. In the course of the story we are introduced to some Arab prisoners; Hasan the shepherd, aged 70, whom other prisoners will not have in their cells because of the stench of decay that emanates from his body; three thieves, one of whom is a homosexual, a prisoner who had killed his daughter and whom the High-Commissioner had spared from death because of his great old age. Iysa, the eldest among the prisoners, is also sentenced to death. The wife of his brother, who goes with him from Hebron to Jerusalem is found in an alley of the city with her limbs cut off ... Iysa tells Hori about the dream of his life. It comes true at the moment when he has sexual relations with his brother's wife. The brother himself, who visits Iysa in the prison and brings him gifts, is convinced that the guilt does not lie with Iysa, but with his wife whom he describes as a loose woman. Iysa sees himself as one of the Holy Ones of Allah, because it is a shame for a Muslim to plead for mercy. He is granted amnesty and is not put to death.

When it finally becomes known among the group of Jewish prisoners from Machaneh Yehudah that armed Arabs have come up into the hills, they plan a mutiny against the guards and an escape from the prison. Arab prisoners intimate their readiness to lend a hand in overcoming the sentries so that they too might slip away with the Jews. The governor of the prison, in a speech to the prisoners, informs them that the British are about to leave the country because 'the Arabs and the Jews do not want peace but have chosen war'. This statement arouses happiness and a feeling of kinship among the Arab and Jewish prisoners. Iysa commences to dance the Debkah and 'one of the Arabs shouts out with great fervour a couplet from the well-known song: "The Jews are our dogs", but he is immediately silenced and a more acceptable couplet, "we are all prisoners but the English are our dogs", was substituted'. During the night Hori, who had warned the prisoners of the revenge the governor would take against them, is murdered by the men from Gaza.

In the story, The Emek Train to Infinity, by Isaac ben Ner, which is written against the political and spiritual background of the late

twenties, Abdul Rahman, a man of deep political acumen, makes his appearance.

The relationship between the Jews and the Arabs in the neighbouring hostile Arab states, as a political problem becomes more clearly defined.

The novel, The Man from Yonder, by Isaac ben-Ner appears to focus on 'the actual day to day problems involving the relations between Arabs and Jews as well as on the awakening of nationalistic feelings' and the enmity which surrounds the hero of the novel when his identity finally becomes known. An Israeli youth whose arm has been amputated describes in the first person what befell him during his journey by train from Cairo to the Land of Israel in that electrified atmosphere which prevailed before the explosion, of the War of Liberation; of his stay in an Arab village on the Egyptian-Palestinian border during the course of the war, and finally of his arrival in Tel Aviv.

In the train the youth becomes acquainted with a certain Michel Serj, a cultured Egyptian doctor. When the train comes to a halt in the Arab village the youth is invited by the doctor to take lodgings in the home of his fiancée who lives there. The novel explores the complicated web of relations which grows between the wounded youth (to whom the Arab environment is alien because of its unusual conventions) and his hosts. He becomes involved with a number of homeless Arab nomads who, like himself, have been held up in the village. His introverted personality, and unfortunate appearance cause him to be misunderstood by the family that offer him hospitality. Perhaps the youth is destined to reveal the secret of his hosts, which is that they are none other than the Jewish family Noad who want to give the appearance of being Arabs so that they should not be harmed by the gentiles in whose midst they live. And it is possible that the Israeli youth, held up in 'a forsaken town of sand that stands congealed in the desert sun, far from all that is happening', although once showing an indifference towards the struggle of the Hebrew settlement in the land of Israel for its freedom and independence, has come, with the passage of time, to feel a deep

responsibility for all that is happening in the lives of that settlement. He tries, with whatever strength he has, to reach the land and to become a part of the heroic struggle of his people. Michel Serj is amazed at the youth's yearning for the land of Israel: 'But it seems that you have nothing to long for ... you are alone ... no family, no wife ... what draws you there?'. Dahina, the eldest daughter of the Noad family, betrays her Egyptian fiancé who has shown kindness to the stranger, by giving herself to him. The astonishing revelation that all the members of the 'Arab' family are nothing but assimilated Jews who all along have hidden their Jewishness, embroils the hero in a barrage of hatred, which his hosts feel towards him when they come to recognize his real identity. This same family, at first so concerned about all the hero's needs, and caring for him with devotion for months while endangering itself, now attempts to take his life among the sand dunes, hoping to place the blame for the murder on two Bedouin. Michel Serj wishes to hand the Israeli over to the Egyptian security forces, but Dahina, his fiancée, prevents him from doing so. The hero-narrator then succeeds in escaping from his captors. During the War of Liberation the Zahal (the Israel Defence Forces) captures the village in which he was later held up.

In the story, The Dusty Roads of My Land, by Adam Zartel, an Israeli captain is sent to an Arab village on a security mission and dwells in the house of an English woman whose husband had been an Arab doctor. Her young daughter lives in an atmosphere filled with hatred for the Jews. The story is replete with the woman's confessions to the captain about her daughter who had been a homeless and persecuted Palestinian refugee and who had been killed by the Jews. In this way the story opens a window to the moral problem of guilt feelings towards the Arabs, which is so bound up with the political problem.

5.2 The Moral Problem of Conscience in Stories of War

The complex feelings of guilt towards the old Arab settlement that were aroused in the wake of the War of Liberation, and the appearance

in Israeli literature of such elements as conscience, inner-struggle, self-flagellation for having committed a sin - all signify a turning point in this literature, not only as regards the content but also from an artistic point of view.

The authors have succeeded in creating characters who are both alive and humane, by looking at the Arab question from a different point of view, viz., as an integral part of the creator's existence.

Yizhar Smilanski, a member of the younger generation of Israelis who grew up in the land, and a relative of Moshe Smilansky, published his story, The Prisoner, in 1948 and a year later, the story, Khirbet Hazihah. These stories reflect his life experiences during the War of Liberation, and constitute an innovation in the approach to the Arab theme. The Arabs are now seen as a moral problem in which conscience plays no small part. The influence which the stories of Yizhar exerted upon the literature of the generation of the Palmach is well known. We shall here deal mainly with The Story of Khirbet Haziyah, which is a series of war stories describing the situation of the Arab village at the time of its occupation by the Israeli Defence Forces, and will refer to such stories as The Occupied Village, as a point of comparison to the village stories of Moshe Smilansky, Moshe Satwi, and their colleagues.

The background against which The Story of Khirbet Haziyah is written is the transportation of the inhabitants of the conquered village from beyond the enemy lines, and the blowing up of their abandoned houses so as to prevent any future infiltration backwards. To put it more precisely: to burn - to blow up - to fetter - to overload - and to drive away. The narrator here touches upon the idea which is essentially bound up with the motif of the holocaust of the Jews. The nation that had suffered the afflictions of the holocaust and its tragic historical fate, is now itself the cause of suffering and affliction to a neighbouring people. Dreadful indeed are the pages describing the attitude of the Israeli soldiers to the Arabs, an attitude which often took on the character of an animal-hunt: they drove out from their homes, the old men and women, the lame and the blind,

the sick and the children, or killed them while playing the game of 'hit the target'. Yizhar here portrays the 'Hevrahman' (good fellow) type of Jewish fighter who, whether having grown up as the son of a pioneer-father in the land or having come to the land from the Nazi concentration camp, is now inclined to pour out the wrath which has accumulated in his heart upon his enemy, without realizing that he is thus emulating the devil's disciples. He is an 'ignoramus' who speaks Hebrew and fights for his country, who makes a game out of destruction and death (exactly like the son of the desert, his primitive Arab enemy, might do). Not every day are there battles but there are infiltrators and punitive expeditions, and this young man is quick to destroy houses, spoliage orchards and 'beat' donkeys, whether by command or motivated by his own desire. The good young Jewish man, who only yesterday was an Abel who needed to guard himself against the Arab Cain, is soon to beat his plough into a sword with which to slay his brother, thus transforming himself into Cain, his neighbour becoming his victim. One should not, of course, see in the author's protest an indictment of the very war which led to Liberation and National Independence, or an arraignment of the Jewish soldier as such, but the deeds here describe the moral problem which stands above the rights of any specific nation or people, the ideal being more humanistic-universal. The author is ashamed that a wicked and ugly sin has been uncovered among his own people also. One has only to change the names, and to read 'Jew' wherever the word 'Arab' is written, and vice-versa, in order for a nationalistic and enlightened Arab who reads this story to realize how great is the evil his people have caused in the past (and are only too ready to cause today and tomorrow also, to their Jewish neighbours. One who chastises his brother automatically chastises the enemies of his brother.

Yizhar, the author-educationist, has from the start a clear didactic purpose. In his other story, The Wood on the Hill, he talks about the hostile disregard the fighter Aharon has for the primitive wounded Arab who asks his Jewish attackers for water. Yet this was a temporary phenomenon. In the story, The Khirbet, and also, The Captive, which have the War of Liberation as their setting, the tables are turned: the weak are transformed into the strong.

After regaling the reader with scenes taken from the grandeur and beauty of the land, as well as with scenes of horror of the ugliness of man, the author portrays, among the villagers who have been expelled during a punitive expedition, an Arab woman in whom both human pride and natural beauty are to be found: 'This wretched thing did not cast one glance at the wreckage of her life ... I felt ashamed in her presence'.

The story, Khirbet Haziyah, aroused much controversy among Israeli society, revolving as it did around the very real problem of whether it is fitting and proper to exile Arab villagers from their homes. The public saw in the very fact of expulsion, a failure inherent in Israeli victory. Like Yizhar, they were shocked that a nation that had itself been exiled and tortured for centuries could send another people into exile and that it could harden its heart to others when it had the power to be merciful. The expulsion, which takes place between sunrise and sunset, is only the framework of the story. The essential factor is the development of the feelings and thoughts of the main figure - the author himself - and the portrayal of the situation of an isolated man, the individual, rather than of the political situation of the society. To the hero-narrator the expulsion is not just, and he opposes it with great fervour. In the opinion of the military command it is an effective and necessary act, and self-understood, as were expulsions of a similar nature. Yet the hero does not dare to act against the expulsion and submits to its implementation, although not without despair and loathing, and contempt towards his comrades. This archetype of the hero makes its appearance again and again, It appears in the story, The Captive, although there the power of decision is the hero's own, even though he too fails in his struggle with himself.

From the point of view of structure and language, the story The Khirbet has a recognizable foundation of reportage and morality on its side, which is not present in The Captive.

The Arab village stories by Moses Satwi (The Arab Village, We Sowed in Tears, The Morning Has Begun) and by Moshe Smilansky (Sons of Arabia) recall the idyllic peaceful atmosphere of those villages. The descriptions reveal the romantic love and humanistic attitude of the authors towards the inhabitants and their primitive way of life, their superstitions, tranquility and quietude. Yizhar came and described in a humanistic way a new and tragic reality - the Arab village during the severe crisis which befell it following the commencement of the War of Liberation. His story recalls that moment of tranquility which had lasted for generations and which is suddenly disturbed and broken. The tranquility of the inhabitants of Khirbet Haziyah, who do not manage to make their beds or extinguish the fire of their ovens when evil comes upon them. The motif of guilt-feelings towards the Arab settlement is expressed symbolically in Yizhar's story by silence and shouting. The Israeli soldiers who enter the village first meet with the silence of the streets and of the empty houses. In one of the passages at the beginning of the story Yizhar evokes memories of Arab villages that had previously been conquered with great agitation and tumult. In the story, The Khirbet, the empty village begins to 'shout' in the face of the sudden catastrophe which had befallen it and put an end to its life. In this symbolic context of 'shouting' is heard the cry of the women who are being led away to the motor cars, the mad cry of the despairing woman who tries to run back to her destroyed house, the cry of a young girl who is raped in the field and has no-one to help her, and the cry of the poor who are left naked, barefoot, and without protection in the cold of the night. And, in contrast to this, the quietness of the proud mother and the stupefied silence of the Arab boy are described.

A Story That Did Not Begin, by Yizhar, includes a chapter entitled The Silence of the Villages, which is an elegy about a primitive Arab dwelling of the past that was conquered and destroyed in the War of Liberation. The destruction of a complete village, the fearsome picture of soldiers who direct their fire at fleeing villagers, the nightmarish sight of the streets of the deserted village before its

bombing, the meeting with the old couple who were left behind and with the wandering old blind man - all these pictures arouse a well-known association with scenes of horror from the Second World War.

The story of the Khirbet is but one event in the many which take place during the War of Liberation, as it is reflected in the consciousness of the author who is afflicted with guilt feelings and makes a reckoning of the historical values of a people who have been transformed from those who were once banished by others. Yizhar's heroes in both stories weigh up the pathos of their own fate (psychological-existential) against the utter violence which has become the fate of the Arabs (the physical), and in both stories the criticism includes in its purview the broad national-historical significance of the War of Liberation.

The same atmosphere and idea of the weakness of the sensitive individual against the torpor of the group appears in the two stories by Joshua bar Yosef, Fleas, and The Pacifist.

Fleas is set in a captured Arab village from which all its inhabitants have fled. A platoon of soldiers who have not taken part in the battle is sent to the village to hold it and the platoon staff are located in the mosque of the village. The soldiers are attacked by fleas. One of the soldiers says: 'The Arabs have not really escaped from here - they have left behind the fleas'. The fleas are the essential expression of all that is filthy in the village. The soldiers are surprised how the Arabs have managed to live for generation after generation in this filth. Apart from the fleas they are also bothered by flies. 'It seems as if the god of the flies and the fleas and the reptiles brought the Israeli soldiers as sustenance for the nation of reptiles in the forsaken village.' On the other hand, the insects and reptiles are 'the few that still live in the desolate village'. Finally the soldiers burn down the filthy houses. The platoon of soldiers appears in the story as an entity typical of Yizhar's 'chevramanim' (good fellows).

In the story, The Pacifist, we again meet Yizhar's isolated hero who stands alone, the individual against society. The soldier,

Gershon, is an exceptional young man, a vegetarian. His behaviour is strange, despite the fact that in battle he is a good soldier. He maintains that he had volunteered to fight in the war so that he might defend himself against the Arabs who were intent on killing him. He gains the nickname 'Pacifist' but in truth he expresses the self-same words which are to be found in the hearts of all the other soldiers.

The story commences in a conquered Arab village, the inhabitants of which have fled to the hills. The soldiers are drunk with victory. They dance and make merry amidst the ruins of the village but Gershon sits on a rock and cries like a small child. Later in another conquered Arab village, two youths of about ten years old are all that remain of the inhabitants who had fled. These youths who had heard from their elders what the Jews would do after they had conquered their settlement, are gripped by an hysterical fear on seeing the Jewish soldiers. Gershon pacifies them and brings them food from the platoon kitchen. The whole day he attends to them devotedly, 'like a father looking after his children', until he wins their trust and they begin to smile at the soldiers. On other occasions Gershon would walk about in the forsaken Arab villages caring for stray dogs. During a night-time operation in which the enemy soldiers are driven back, Gershon remains in the field in order to tend to the Arab wounded. The next day they find his body, desecrated in a manner which only the primitive imagination of the desert could devise, purposely left lying in the same place in which he had bandaged the wounded the previous day.

The plot of the story, Hot Milk, by Jacob Even Chen, is set in a wood next to an Arab village in which Israeli soldiers are camping. Some Arab youths from the village approach the camp and when one of the soldiers, Chaim, shouts at them to go away, one of them answers in Hebrew, 'This is my house - this is my village ... you are only a visitor here'. Later Chaim and his friend, Benjamin, volunteer to go to the village in order to fetch milk for a soldier who has become ill. On coming to the house of the Hebrew-speaking Arab boy, whose name is Ahmad, the latter complains about the Arab villagers who had conducted their lives in such a quiet manner but had now lost everything. Chaim

wishes to answer that it was the Arabs who had started the war when they had declared their intention to slaughter all the Jews, but talks to the Arab youth instead about the lot of the Jews in the Diaspora. Ahmad's answer is, 'Your home was never there. You did not look upon those lands as your birth-place. You always wanted to flee from them but we always looked upon this land as our fixed home. Here our forefathers lived'. Ahmad later helps to carry the milk through the wadi and is shot in the leg by the soldiers of the Israeli guard. He hides away in the reeds where Chaim finds him and after bandaging his wounds, transports him to the hospital. Chaim and Benjamin then tell his parents in the village that he was wounded. Ahmad says to Chaim: 'This is how you conduct yourselves towards us, you kill and rob our property and then you pay us damages from the property that has been stolen from us. Behold you said during the war that all the Arabs would remain in their places, that evil would not befall them, and afterwards you forced many of them to flee across the border'. Ahmad escapes from the hospital and the commander of the police supposes that he has fled across the border to a neighbouring Arab country. The story expresses the struggle between the two peoples for the right to the homeland of Eretz Yisrael.

Son of Etzion, by Jacob Even Chen, is about a soldier, Ariel, who is fighting on the Jordan front during the Six Day War. He was born in Kfar Etzion and his father was killed there at the time of the pogroms. For many years Ariel had vowed to break into the Arab village and avenge the death of his father, yet, while passing through the Arab villages, it seems to him that these fellahin with their wives and children are not the real objects of his revenge. His duties take him to the Mount of Gerizim, through the Arab village is noted for its hatred of the Jews. He plans his own private campaign of revenge. He says: 'Had it been them who had entered a Hebrew city they wouldn't have left a soul alive'. The soldier sitting next to him replies: 'We're not going to behave like them'.

The emphasis on the morality of the Israeli soldier is also to be found in the novel, 'By G-d, Mother, I Hate the War', by Yigal Lev, which was written against the backdrop of the Six Day War. In the

chapter entitled, Refugees and Victors, the Israeli Defence Forces pass through Arab villages on their way to the bank (on the Jordan front). In the eyes of the fighters the land of Israel appears spacious and boundless. Just then a stream of refugees passes by and the author dwells upon the description of one of the families among them. The soldiers give the wife some water, but her husband snatches the jerry can with the water before the woman manages to offer it to her small children. The woman is subservient to her husband 'with a kind of sad acceptance of the law, without a hint of rebellion'. Only after her husband has drunk does she give the children to drink and as for herself 'She did not put the jug to her mouth, but stood waiting, crouched for her husband to get up and snatch the jug from her hand in order to drink it all up'.

After the husband finishes drinking 'He cruelly turned the jug over with its mouth to the ground to show that the water was finished'. The hero of the novel, who is one of the soldiers, pities the woman and hands her his own water bottle.

In a captured Arab village the soldiers burst into the house of an honoured Sheikh to whom the whole village belonged. In the room a small child had been purposely abandoned so as to determine what would become of him: a test of the Israeli soldiers' morality. The Sheikh says to them in English: 'As Mohammed lives, you are not a conquering army. Had we been victorious in the war, we would have slaughtered you all, women and children included'. The Arab refugee to whose wife the soldiers gave water had likewise looked upon them with contempt. In the eyes of the Arabs, to be humane towards a child or a woman is a sign of weakness though the weak person be also the victor in battle. One of the fighters, Yankele, knows the Arabs well and teaches his friends Arab proverbs that will give them some insight into the Arab mentality. He quotes the words of Saidi (the Arab poet of the 13th century). 'At a time when one must be severe there is no place for tenderness. Through tenderness you will not transform your enemy into a friend but will only increase his appetite.' A similar proverb is, 'One who draws the sword from its scabbard must know that it also has a sharp edge and not just the safe black handle

that is in the palm of his hand'. After the soldiers discover that the Jordanian fighter, who was hiding with arms in his possession, is the son of the Sheikh, they blow up the Sheikh's house.

The novel, The Living and the Dead, by Aaron Meged, is about 'the white city' that was captured by the Israeli Defence Forces, not the city of Gaza as it really exists, but rather a city which lies on the boundary of the imagination. Here too one finds complicated guilt-feelings towards the old Arab settlement.

The story, Iysa Muhmad, by Jacob Even Chen, concludes with the liberation of Gush Etzion during the Six Day War. The people of Kfar Etzion who survived the pogroms, meet Iysa, one time leader of the Arab bands. They leave him alone and do not avenge the blood of those who had been slaughtered. Iysa thereupon sends to them to let them know that he is ready to renew his friendship with them.

The Swallows, a story by Zerubabel Gilead concludes with the War of Liberation. Following the capture of an Arab village which lay on the main road to the capital city, a worker travels by jeep to the nearby command station, where his unit is preparing for the continuation of the battle. In the fields leading to the border hundreds of Arab refugees are on the move: 'bloc by bloc they moved past in the darkness, laden with parcels, with rags on their backs and in their hands, and children, and asses and shouting women ...'. In this story too the fate of the Arab refugees is wedded to that of the tragic-historical fate of the people of Israel: 'By the twilight of the dawn against the horizon ... they resembled an ancient and well known tragic etching of the Jewish people which made one shudder'. One refugee dressed in the uniform of a railway official approaches the jeep and asks for water. The worker recognizes him as Fuad the Egyptian, and throws his water bottle at Fuad's feet 'and immediately started up the jeep and broke away from the place as fast as he could go'. The feeling of revulsion towards that wicked inhuman Egyptian has its source in a childhood experience that is linked to the name of Fuad and in the 'swallows covered in blood' which the worker can never forget.

The problem of the Arab refugees became a central political problem in the Israel-Arab conflict.

Aaron Meged, in the story, The Treasure, directs his attention to the moral side of this problem. He relates the activities of an Arab refugee Suleiman Ibn-Rashid who, by night, infiltrates his abandoned village which is now inhabited by Jews, in search of a treasure, some silver shekels, which he had left in the wood of the villager Aerif, before fleeing during the War of Liberation. The story is written solely from the stand-point of the refugee, and describes his yearning for his home, his fields, and his village. It distresses him to see the pomegranate and plum trees, the fruits of which have not been picked in their season. The village is completely abandoned and neglected, since its true owners have fled: the garden of Ibrahim' Latif, the field of Abu-Yusuf, his neighbour, the house of the Mukhtar and the Medata, the dung heap, the court-yard, the house of Kamil Dejadi.

The hatred that the Arab refugee feels so strongly remains, nevertheless, hidden to the outsider by a veil of servility: 'You Jews have done well by coming to our village ... may the Almighty cause his blessing to rain down upon you because you have acted so wisely in conquering our village in the face of all the Arab states ... I truly wish to return to my village in which I and my father were born ... and only there do I wish to die'. He recalls the night on which he escaped from the village just as it was about to be captured. 'Then the women wailed in the night, and the baby shrieked and it was impossible to keep it quiet, and Amina baked for the last time ... ' The conquest of the village was like a sudden calamity which came and destroyed the lives of his tranquil family.

The problem of the refugees in the story by Meged is essentially a socio-ethical one. 'Good Israel ... it is good that they came here. We are dung, the Arabs. We are not even worth the dung of a camel ... and may the name and memory of the Arab legion, and of Kawakji and of the King Abdullah and the King Farouk be blotted out ... and even more so of the Mufti, may he die. That they have brought these troubles upon us. Only allow me to remain here.' Suleiman is filled with

lewd thoughts while watching a Jewish woman who now lives in the house that was once his, and whom he sees from his hiding place while looking through the window. 'His room, they invaded it, robbed it, ... and in it this foreigner, the naked one of her mother. He would take one jump through the window and with this dagger would cut her throat and tear off her breasts and cut open her belly ... ' In his desire for revenge he tries to burn down the entire village. Also in the house of Abdul-Aziz 'who now eats sand in Jericho' Jews are living. 'Ya you Jewish harlot from the house of harlots ... I can rape her, this Jewess.' This simplistic approach of identification with the Arabs, as illustrated in the works of Meged, does not appear in Yizhar's work.

The lot of the Arab refugees in the poem by Arnon Ben-Nahum, Refuge, reminds one of the Biblical figure, Hagar, the mother of Ishmael: 'Through your window I shall not come as a thief / Nor to recline on the table of charity / To take up on my shoulder your cold stones / And to sow thorns in my mouth / I determine the whirling cloud / That breaks down the branches of the olive tree / I am pursued into the depths of the furnace / And ascend to the heights of the vulture'. Characteristic of such war stories as Warm Milk and Son of Etzion by Jacob Even Chen and the novel By G-d Mother I Hate War, by Yigal Lev, is the motif of the hatred of the Arabs for the Jews at a time when the Israeli fighter goes out to war without displaying any reciprocal hatred for his enemy.

A dramatic episode in the Six Day War is described by Isaac Ben-Ner in his story, The Sound of a Pipe by the Wadi. An Egyptian captain, wounded and losing blood, lies spread-eagled on a heap of bodies in a burned-out truck which has been hit. He calls to the Israeli soldiers to shoot him, and threatens to throw the grenade which is in his hand if they do not. One soldier interprets his words as being of a belligerent nature. Another is of the opinion that the Egyptian wishes to be brought down from the truck. The author - one of the soldiers - addresses the Egyptian in English: 'See what your leaders have done to you'. Another soldier wearing a skull-cap adds, 'Your Nasser dragged you here'. Ezekiel Naar tries to pour

water into the Egyptian's mouth, but he closes his lips tightly. Ezekiel says to his friends: 'It is possible that he is cursing us. How can he be afraid to die, when he has no prospect of living?'

In the story, Victors and Defeated, by Gideon Talpaz, there is a chapter entitled Their Eyes, in which he describes the Arabs in conquered Jerusalem during the Six Day War. The feeling of hatred mixed with fear can be seen in their eyes. The author asks a rhetorical question: 'What would have happened had the situation been reversed, G-d forbid, and they were the conquerors and we the conquered?'

In the story, The Time of the Reception of Prof. K G Zeligman, Abraham Raz describes his meeting in liberated Jerusalem, after the Six Day War, with an English-speaking Jordanian woman. The woman is searching for the grave of her husband who fell as a Jordanian soldier on the Givat Hamivtar. The author is confused by a question which she puts to him and for which there is no answer: 'What became of the bodies?'

In The Break-In, by Gideon Talpaz, there is an attempt to bring about a meeting between the Israeli fighters and the other side, viz., the representatives of the conquered Arabs.

An echo of Yizhar's approach can be heard in the stories, The Bitter End of D, by Mati Meged, and Four Camels from the Desert, by Gideon Talpaz.

In The Bitter End of D, the author visits his good friend, who has been appointed military governor of the captured town R in the Gaza Strip. The visit proves disappointing however. The military governor and his friends drink whisky, and are surrounded by the furniture which they took as spoils from the Arabs. In his house the governor, D, keeps a beautiful and exotic Arab concubine called Chalyuh, who serves the guests bare-breasted and naked down to her hips. From time to time D generously 'lends her out' to his guests because 'she knows a thing or two which our girls don't'. 'Rancid' is the most well-used adjective of the Israeli conquerors to signify all that is

bound up with the Arab town. During his second visit to the town the author hears that the governor D has begun to smoke hashish and is steeped in a perpetual drunkenness while demonstrating a kind of eastern fatalism so characteristic of conquerors who become tyrants. He no longer has control over his men and signs everything concerning town affairs that his captains offer him without so much as reading it. During the night the soldiers rape a group of local women. Thereupon, confusion which can only be suppressed by armed force, breaks out in the town. D's end comes when he is murdered by his concubine Chalyuh, who had earlier been released and had returned to her village.

The story is defective in that it places the whole weight of the conflict between Jews and Arabs upon the ethical nature of Jewish' conduct towards the Arabs from the point of view of cause (the Jews) and effect (the Arabs in their attitude to the Jews). The author and the military governor D are two sides of the selfsame standpoint of Yizhar, a kind of transfiguration of the Israeli in his attitude to the Arabs.

In the story, Four Camels from the Desert, Gideon Talpaz tells the horrifying story of an Israeli medical officer who injects poison into the Arab sick who have been left behind in an abandoned hospital in one of the occupied regions. The commander of the region, a cynical and wicked person, covers up for him. Opposing them is the humanistic doctor, who attempts to save the Egyptian woman Munah Ja'bar who is stricken with cancer of the blood. He brings her chocolate and is not prepared to participate in the murderous game of the group of Israeli soldiers who do away with twenty-three helpless Arab patients. One captive draws a knife and two others attempt to escape, but Zivi manages to kill them both while pouring abuse and invective upon them. Talpaz tells too about the men of an Israeli tank corps who are stuck in the desert. One of them is a son of parents who have perished in the Holocaust, and who therefore has sufficient reason to hate the Arabs and desire their death. Egyptian soldiers, defeated and dying of thirst, approach them and ask for water (The Queen of Hearts).

This story about the 'good' Israeli doctor was written in the first person and the author speaks in his own name. The essence of the story concerns the deterioration of man as a humanistic creature. This view finds expression in the confrontation between a doctor and a medical officer who loses the image of man at a time when he has to treat those who belong to the enemy camp.

War stories which describe the situation of the Arab who falls captive to the Israelis may be termed 'the captive' stories, using the well-known story by Yizhar, The Captive, as a model.

In The Captive, the landscape becomes one with the plot. The landscape is not just a background and framework to the plot. If it were, the story would then be merely a pastoral tale (of the same genre as Jumah el-Ahabel, by Isaac Shami, or In the Tents of the Wilderness, by Pesach bar Adon). But it is an integral part of a complete harmonic whole. Into this landscape, in which 'shepherds and their flocks' roam freely, there comes, at the beginning of the story, a group of soldiers to disrupt the calm. The tranquility of the shepherds and their flocks contrasts sharply with the invasion of the soldiers: 'There were shepherds in the distance, walking tranquilly, leading their sheep in the heart of the field, walking naturally and at peace with the casualness of the good old days, when there was no evil ... the sheep licking quietly, sheep from the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ... the distant village dozed'.

The commander of the group decides that it is impossible to return with empty hands, that some shepherd must be caught, or something must be burned. The shepherd who is subsequently captured serves in the story as a representative of the human species 'innocent and upright and shunning evil', but he constitutes too an organic part of the landscape: 'His voice was more like the bleating of a sheep than like that of a man (and indeed he spoke with his sheep in the language of bleatings and grindings of the teeth), his foot was "hoofed" - the foot of an ox, to which his tattered sandals clung and were "as one flesh" '. The capture of the prisoner is like the hunt of a wild beast, and his flight from his pursuers like that of a 'chased' gazelle':

'and we burst into a gallop towards the young man who was sitting on a stone in the shade of an oak tree. He jumped to his feet and immediately terror gripped him and he threw aside his staff and ran senselessly like a chased gazelle, and disappeared around the other side of the hill, straight into the hands of the hunters'. The description of his capture and the leading away of his sheep is a parody on the lives of the shepherds and stresses the boorishness of the invaders: 'We'll take the sheep too'. (said the commander) .. He opened his mouth and called out Bb-r-r-r and Bta-ta-ta, and the other signs and sounds which have become conventional since the earliest times between a shepherd and his flock, and he got one of us to walk, like a leader, in front and to bleat out "come on, come on" and two by two on every side they were made to wave their rifles like shepherds' staffs and to burst out in the singing of shepherds to their flock'. And all the while the great Arab sun pours down its red light upon the group that is returning with its captive to the base. The shepherd, a son of the hills named Hasan, is led blind-folded and the author asks himself how many years have yet to pass before the captive is allowed to return to his home - should he ever return, 'to the hills' and to the 'straight paths' in which shepherds are 'men who are trained in the silence of sheep'.

The plot of the story consists of four situations: The hunt of the captive, the journey to the command post, the questioning and sending him away in a jeep. The interrogation of the captive takes place in a closed room, in an oppressive atmosphere of cigarette smoke and the smell of sweat. The situation is diametrically opposed to the world of the captive, which is a world of wide-open spaces, light and vegetation. The only one who pays attention to the landscape that lies beyond the walls of the room, the only one who feels the iniquity of what is being done to the captive - is the 'sentry who stands at the door', none other than the author himself. The captive stretches out his thick hands, 'the hands of a villager', towards the group that now surrounds him, in a gesture which is symbolic of the natural link between himself and the landscape. They encircle the blind-folded captive in a hostile and mocking manner and the blows light upon him from all sides. The interrogators bombard him with questions: about the Egyptians in

the village, about their weapons and fortifications. 'They commanded him to describe to them the fortifications of the village.'

In this story Yizhar lays bare the chasm which divides the enlightened world of the spiritual individual, who is in possession of a soul, from the noisy existence of the public domain. Young men lacking in self-awareness, devoid of culture and far from enlightenment - who know only how to kill and be killed, to sacrifice themselves, to fight and even to be victorious - they are the ones who, in fact, place their stamp on society. Yizhar takes a definite stand against the boorishness and primitive mirth of these 'chevramanim' (good fellows) who put on airs and maltreat human beings because they lack respect for their fellow-man. He opposes the senseless vulgarity which 'bobs up' on the surface of the life of society, as a result of an emergency situation which is brought about by the circumstances of existence. Through the character of the stupid captive in all his helplessness, and the characters of his stupid captors who hold the upper hand, the author comes to realize that no-one can fight against the force of circumstances or one's fate.

Contemplative monologue in the paragraph which concludes the story is used to describe the inner battle which takes place in the soul of the author-hero, who accompanies the captive in the jeep to the command post and ultimately to prison. It seems to him as if Hasan is pleading 'Free me! Be a man!' . The decision is then in his power, for should he so desire he could free the captive without anyone knowing. He feels the reprimand inherent in the landscape, and continues to struggle and wrestle with himself - and all the time the jeep continues on its way.

The story has an anti-militaristic undertone. The victors in the war actually turn into the vanquished from a spiritual and moral point of view, an idea which is repeated in the concluding chapter of the story by Benjamin Tamuz, A Swimming Competition. The author finds himself in a platoon during the War of Liberation, which storms the richly fragrant orchard in Jaffa. 'We broke inside and put our machine

gun into action ... towards the village ... and it seemed that a number of them had managed to infiltrate at a particular time and to flee into the orchard where I had spent a few days some twenty years earlier with the Yashisha family.' In precisely the same stone house and courtyard in the orchard in Tel Arish, a well fortified Arab post was located. After a severe battle the post was taken 'and the house, which stood close by the stream, became a heap of ruins'. The author stands victorious opposite Abdul-Karim who has been taken prisoner. Abdul-Karim says: 'You are the winners,' and the author answers him: 'As long as I have not beaten you in the swimming pool it is not yet known who the winner is'. And he invites the prisoner, Abdul-Karim, to yet another swimming competition in that same pool in which as a child he had once lost to him. 'At that moment a shot was heard from beyond the orchard. My heart stopped beating. I knew that Abdul-Karim had been killed.' The prisoner had been shot by a 'stray' bullet coming from one of the soldiers.

A similar approach to that of Yizhar is evident here in the demonstration of the moral supremacy of the spiritual individual - the hero-author - in contrast to the soldier who shot the prisoner, and to the commander who says: 'We have lost information ... they have killed your Arab'. The author, while in the presence of the prisoner's body, thinks: 'It seems as if only a few minutes ago he imagined me swimming in the pool. His face was not the face of a man who had lost'. He seems to still hear the voice of Abdul-Karim: 'I beat you here in the pool'. The story illustrates, in a semi-allegorical fashion, the weight of guilt borne by the victorious. Unlike the story of Yizhar, this story lacks pathos and the undertone of sermonizing. The description of the landscape and the heroes is convincing but the structure remains superficial: the exact meeting of the two rivals during childhood and at the time of the battle, the swimming competition which had to be arranged, as it were, after the battle between the conqueror and the vanquished, force upon the story a certain schematism and shallowness. The moral 'sting in the tail' which the author strives to achieve, only renders the story defective. Everything leads up to the final saying, 'Here in the courtyard I was myself, we were all vanquished'.

A criticism of the two stories that make up The Captive appears in the work of a Palestinian author living in Lebanon, Asan Kenafani, in his article The Jewish Personality in Contemporary Zionist Literature, which was published in the periodical El-Edeb in 1963. (This criticism also appears in the book by Yehoshafat Harkabi, The Arab Standpoint in the Arab-Israeli Conflict.)

On The Captive by Yizhar, and The Swimming Competition by Tamuz, Kenafani remarks that from the point of view of their objectivity of approach there is an advancement in this literature, because both these authors lived in the land before 1948 and know the circumstances as they really were, but neither Yizhar nor Tamuz are able to complete their story in a natural manner. For example, Yizhar concludes without giving any information of what became of the captive shepherd, and as for the ending of The Swimming Competition by Tamuz, Kenafani sees in it a sign of recognition, albeit latent, that the struggle with the Arabs is not yet finished, nor the victory by Israel complete ...

The frank and human attempt to describe the meeting between a Jew and an Arab during the war was made by Isaac Orpaz in his story, On the Sharp Edge of a Bullet, (seen against the background of the Sinai War - 1956). Its hero is a simple soldier who comes across an Arab in Khirbet Jamon - a village in the Gaza Strip which had been taken. Only by chance (he had run out of bullets) did the soldier fail to shoot and kill the Arab the moment he appeared. The Arab who falls captive is a wretched Bedouin, whose name is Ibrahim Abd-el-Hasan Jamoni from Khirbet Jamon. His village was destroyed during the war, and only a stone structure at the top of the hill, the tomb of the Sheikh, still remains intact. Ibrahim is on his way to Jordan to sell an old Turkish rifle which he has in his possession, so that he might be able to pay the bride-price for a young girl whom he fancies, as well as to search for his family there. His brother has been killed in the war. The Jewish soldier is young and innocent and not very clever. The soldier and the captive know about each other's worlds only from what they have managed to pick up in the street in the way of rumour, (the Jew also read something in the newspaper). At first they suspect one another, but slowly the barriers

of strangeness disappear and a trust is built up between them. The Jew attempts to understand the Arab. He is even ready to turn a blind eye and hints that the captive might run away if he so desires. But Ibrahim does not leave him and even saves him from being attacked by a viper. During the whole journey the love-hate relationship between the soldier and his prisoner is described.

Rejecting his filth and fatalism, the soldier-narrator finds it difficult to relate to Ibrahim as a human being. It seems to him as if the Arab is lacking in human qualities and is to be regarded as an animal. On the other hand, the Arab reveals a spark of manliness and the capacity to be free like himself. Ibrahim shows him a snapshot of the woman he loves, who looks as if she were little more than a child. Ibrahim had come to ask for her hand in marriage, but her father had driven him away as if he were a dog. The narrator identifies with Ibrahim: 'I felt as if I had forcefully immersed this Arab in a bathful of water ... and began peeling off his coarse dirt ... afterwards I gave him to eat and drink as I would a human being ... He was certainly thinking about his little 'Razalah' who was waiting for him ... this was just like the girl whom you thought had been destined for yourself ... until she was given to another and all because you had nothing to offer her as security - no money, no abode, no vocation in life which would require intelligence, ... and you begin to feel pity for him and think how much alike you both are ... It becomes apparent that you, after having considered the matter, rise up in revolt, while he comes to terms with his fate, believing that everything is from Allah. If they would only set him up on his feet, raise up his head, ... pat him on his back and say to him "friend", it seems that he too would begin to think, the ability to think being nothing else but a consequence of being a man who enjoys freedom in his world'. In this story one senses the desire to lay bare the roots of the impediments and obstacles which obstruct the paths of the Jews and Arabs as well as the feeling of guilt which accompanies the desire: 'Where is the freedom in the world of Ibrahim Abd-el-hasan Jamoni and what is his tomorrow? Uprooted from the place of his fathers, where is his place under the sun?'

Here too the story ends with the death of the captive. The soldier leads him to the encampment of his unit and there the Arab is shot by one of the soldiers, Yankele. The hero-narrator once again stands alone against the united company of his comrades-in-arms: 'In the vehicle before us young men were singing, "We bring peace unto you" ... while I was looking at the grave-plot of my dear friend Ibrahim'.

The story, The Vineyard of Hasan, by Samuel Moore, is about an old Arab vinegrower named Hasan who was one of the refugees who had fled beyond the border during the 1948 war and had infiltrated back to his garden one year later. 'On becoming aware that the rifles were pointing in his direction, he did not blink an eye-lid but continued in his work ... as if there had never been a war, and as if death itself had not been a hedge between the two peoples.' The narrator, together with his comrades, had established the settlement 'Erez' on a height near the Gaza Strip. The members of the commune had caught Hasan and handed him over to the military for purposes of investigation. Hasan pleaded that there had been a famine on the Egyptian side of the border which had compelled him to return to his vineyard. He was thereupon returned forcibly to the other side of the border, but he would come back each day and work in the garden where he had erected a booth for himself - 'because here was his home, and he had nothing on the other side'.

The narrator admits that his 'confidence in the justness of his own actions made our decision all the more difficult'. He and his comrades would come to Hasan's booth where they would be honoured with peeled almonds. When the infiltrators from beyond the border came and stole the fruits of the settlement farm, the members of the settlement vented their anger on Hasan, breaking his booth, beating him up and driving him away to the other side of the border.

From the point of view of its subject matter, which deals with the Arab refugee problem, this story is close to that of Aharon Megeed's The Treasure, both stories emphasizing the natural link which exists between the Arabs and the land of their birth. Here once again the story concludes with the death of the old and stubborn vinekeeper.

One night while Hasan, together with his ass, crosses the border, he pays no heed to a call to stop and identify himself, and is shot by none other than the narrator who is on guard duty that night.

Adam Zartel, in his story The Plateau of the Desert, raises the ethical question: What should be done to a Bedouin boy who has been thrown by chance into the path of an Israeli reconnaissance patrol? Should he be killed in order to prevent him from divulging information to the enemy? or should he be permitted live? If he is to be killed who will commit the foul deed? The soldiers wrestle with the problem but the decision is taken out of their hands when the boy is struck down by a bullet shot by the Egyptians who discover the whereabouts of the scouts who had penetrated into their territory.

5.3 The Social Problem

It is an interesting phenomenon that the nearer we approach our own times the weaker are the ties of acquaintanceship which bind the Hebrew writer to the person of the Arabs and to their way of life. This acquaintanceship actually comes to an end in Yizhar's story The Captive in which only echoes of the recognition of the existence of the Arab remains. Thereafter the focus is upon the Arabs who remained in the State of Israel, who demand education and express the desire to flee from the village, and who strive for change and social progress.

The new generation of native Hebrew authors does not depict the old Arab way of life which, in the wake of political and social change in the land, underwent a process of disintegration, and finally disappeared altogether. The socio-political status of the Arabs changed with their having become a minority group after the establishment of the state. It is these social changes between Arabs and Jews and the mutual ties which existed between them, as well as the influence which the Jews have had upon the Arabs who remained within the borders of the state, which the writers describe. Even such veterans as Jacob Chorgin and Eliezer Smali became aware of such change.

The roots of the Arab social problem are to be found as far back as the days of the Second and Third Aliyah. If Moshe Stavi (In the Negev) and particularly Isaac Shinhar (The Tamarisk), and to a certain degree also, Brenner (In the Paths of the Orangegroves) brought up the subject of the exploitation of the fellahin at the hands of the Effendis the problem was seen as one which the Arabs had brought upon themselves, since both the terribly poor farmers and their rich landlords were in effect brethren. With the Jewish immigration to the land the feeling of hatred and alienation of the Arabs was directed toward them and led to a 'class-warfare' which was to affect the material existence of both peoples.

In the story, In the Market Place of the Labourers, by Samuel Joseph Agnon, a number of Jewish labourers come to the land to build it but are unable to find work. Isaac Komer and Yedidiah Rabinowitz go to the market place where they offer themselves out as labourers to Jewish farmers. The farmers who provide the work are mistaken in the belief that a Jewish labourer is expensive whereas his Arab counterpart may be gained cheaply, and do not recognize the fact that 'whatsoever a Jewish labourer earns he returns to them: he rents a room in the settlement, buys his necessities in their stores, whereas Mahmud and Ahmad take their wages away from the settlement and spend it in Arab cities ... Isaac walks about in the land among fields and vineyards ... all of which are crowded with Arabs, and the owner of the field or vineyard ... goes about among them riding on his animal, rebuking them and joking with them, while they accept his rebukes with love'. (From the point of view of subject matter, there is a parallel between this story and that of A Z Rabinowitz, The Decree Has Been Annulled.)

The Arab labourers are not concerned about their livelihood: 'They interrupt (their work) for prayer and for a meal, and take a long time over both. They know that the ground is not liable to run away from beneath their feet'.

The novel, Under the Sun, by Moshe Shamir, written against the background of the Third Aliyah, reminds one of the socio-national

problems that find expression in the novel Haddassah, by Moshe Smilansky. Shamir gives an edge to the social problem when he describes the relations which exist between the farmer Shapiro and the Arab farmhand named Abu-Fa'del, who works for him. The latter's status is that of a 'house-slave' who turns in obeisance to the Jewish farmer and says: 'Ya Effendi', 'Ya Sheikh'. Shapiro lives with Zerifa, the daughter of the farmhand who gives him a son. The infant dies when he is a year old. Abu-Fa'del knows that he must not work his daughter too hard but keep her, to a certain extent, in a suitable condition for Mr Shapiro's purposes.

With the commencement of the anti-Jewish riots Shapiro dismisses the family of the farmhand and sends them empty-handed from his estate. His cruel attitude towards the Arab family, among whom sucklings and cripples are to be counted, seems to lend to the problem that selfsame moral significance with which the stories in The Conquered Village dealt. But here the expulsion is not decreed in the wake of political circumstances (the war), the riots serving merely as a backdrop to the plot of the novel. It is possible too that the Biblical motif of the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael by the Patriarch Abraham, which stands here in an associative context - makes the problem even more conspicuous. In Shamir's novel the emphasis is primarily on the social problem of the Arabs. The Jewish farmer appears as a rich and powerful citrus grower, yet Shamir's sympathies are on the side of the Arab against the Jewish 'exploiter' through an identification with the cry of despair of those who toil and suffer deprivation. Shapiro drives out Abu-Fa'del and the members of his family 'to Ramallah or to Lod, to Tul-Karem or to Kalkiliyah, to Shechem ... because here they will slaughter you and the members of your household, and you have nothing to do here ... Here not one Arab has remained in the settlement'. Abu Fa'del answers: 'This is my home here'. He gets down on his knees and implores his master to allow him to remain in his post: 'Ya Shapiro, spare us, and have compassion on our children. We are yours and all that we have is yours'.

In Shapiro's attitude to the family of Abu Fa'del one detects a fear that is mingled with loathing and contempt: 'Those parasites, living on a farm which is not their's, they have earned a livelihood and nourished

themselves, given birth and suckled and stunk and excreted and raised lice and bugs ... ' Shapiro goes to the settlement and orders the Arab to be gone by the time he gets back. In his thoughts he imagines the act of vengeance which the banished Abu Fa'del is bound to execute - to rob him of his property and burn down his house and his farm as is the way of the Arabs. (This attitude to the Arabs appears also in Shamir's Chapters of Ishmael.) On the other hand, he hopes that the farmhand will leave his daughter Zerifa behind, so that she might serve him, lonely widower that he is 'because a woman was good in the house, and if not a woman then at least a maid-servant'. Abu Fa'del leaves Shapiro's courtyard without touching anything, and in the night the Arabs come to take revenge and kill the farmer. In the novel the struggle between the neighbouring kibbutz and the settlement, between the 'Left' and the 'Right' is likewise described: 'Here the farmers made their way with Arab labour, in a kind of partnership with them, even a kind of brotherhood, a kind of assimilation'.

A residue of the old Arab way of life appears in the story of Joshua Bar-Joseph, 'Abu-Ali embodied as it is in the figure of the hero of the story who appears as one whose identity as either a Kurd or an Arab is in doubt'. Dressed as one distinguished among his people, he is a man of property and a father of a large progeny. The story describes the circle of Abu Ali's big family and many friends to whom he often tells stories which recall his past life as well as words of gossip. 'He was a sort of remnant of a generation that had passed on and ceased to be, walking about in the streets of Beit Rimon.'

In the play-story The Legends of Lod, by Moshe Shamir, an Arab appears before a family of Jewish immigrants in Lod requesting that they return his house, in which they are living. The story is transformed into a comedy which pokes fun at the relations between landlords and tenants in Israel, particularly at the Law of Protection of the Tenant, which still prevails. Eventually the Arab flees from his house when it becomes clear to him that the loss of money he incurs as a landlord exceeds that of his income.

Palestinians without national identity, 'semi-Arabs' whose ancestors

came to settle in the land, make their appearance in An Exotic Tale by Menachem Kapliuk, and in The Brothers Kandwati by Gideon Talpaz.

Kapliuk's hero is Jemshid Effendi who was brought to a refugee camp after the War of Liberation and who says of himself: 'I am neither a Jew nor an Arab and I was born here, not far from the banks of the Kinneret. My ancestors were Persians.'. His grandfather was a vizier in the court of the 'King of Kings' the Persian Shah, while his uncle the Imam, who had gone into exile in Akko because of a misdemeanour on his part, had connections with the Mukhtar Abu Ahmad, commander of 'the Arab Salvation Army', with Kemal, the commander of the police force of Nazareth. He continues the story of his life up to the days of the War of Independence, and the conquest of Nazareth by the Israeli Army, dwelling on the incident in which the son of the Kadi in Nazareth committed suicide rather than deliver his weapons to those cursed by Allah.

In his story Talpaz speaks about the Christian Arabs of Crusader stock, the brothers Kandwati, who live in conquered Bethlehem, and hate the Muslims who conspire against their property.

The story of Eliezer Smali, An Exchange of Guards, gives concrete form to the changes which have taken place in the traditional education of the Arabs and to the decline of the old Arab village. The story begins with a description of the landscape of the village focusing on a primitive school which stands next to a mosque. In the school pupils sit on mats and read from their books at the tops of their voices, and a teacher of about sixty years, barefoot and wearing a turban, subjugates them with his stick. The narrator, also a teacher from the nearby village in the Emek, introduces himself to his Egyptian counterpart, who blesses him with the words, 'Welcome my brother!'. The syllabus, designed on traditional lines, includes the Koran, the words of Albokari, the words of Yakkut ('here it is told about how the first Temple was built in Mecca, and then about the Temple in the holy Jerusalem') and the Proverbs of Solomon. Because his school is a private one the teacher, Haj Ibrahim El Mitzri teaches the whole day from dawn to dusk, both in winter and in summertime. His salary is

one sack of wheat per year from each father. The new school which would one day stand in the village, and on which work had already begun under the auspices of the Government, at first disturbed Haj Ibrahim's calm and later is counted among the old teacher's chief sources of trouble.

At the second meeting between himself and the narrator in the morning train which passes through the Emek on its way to Haifa, Haj Ibrahim reveals that he is returning to his birthplace, to Egypt. He is leaving the village and his post because, with the transfer of his school to its new building, the children have begun to conduct themselves in an impudent manner and to act disrespectfully towards him, one even having said to him that he would soon be replaced by a new teacher who would be appointed under the auspices of the Government. The embittered teacher speaks about the social and moral deterioration in the village which he had left. 'Not two fellahin are friends in the whole village, there are quarrels and strife in matters of land and water, theft and unfair competition have created rifts in the village and knives are always flashing and blood being shed like water.' And he adds an Arabic proverb: 'He who builds a new house brings in a new wife. A new school, a new teacher'. The new curriculum which the government has set includes the English Language, Geography, Football, and the planting of saplings ... Haj Ibrahim is of the opinion that they only brought this all about in order to subordinate the children to Satan's power and that they are not concerned about religion and the Commandments. They had sent him away, naked and barefoot after twenty years of work and toil. The old Arab teacher was the victim of progress.

The story by Jacob Horgin, Long Live the Enlightenment, is about three generations of members of an Arab family who live in a village in the State of Israel. The Haj Ali, the conservative within the family, represents the old generation. Ismaiyn, the boorish attendant of the Haj, gleans news and information for him from the people in the street as well as from the radio, and presents them to him together with an additional commentary of his own. The story begins with an amusing conversation which takes place between the Haj Ali and Ismaiyn about the Jewish political parties in Israel. Emissaries of

the various parties have recently visited the villages with the intention of gaining votes in the forthcoming parliamentary elections. The Haj Ali asks his grand-daughter, Aelya, a secondary school graduate, to explain to him the names of the Jewish parties and their significance. The girl does so and the Haj Ali declares: 'From now on I will answer the emissaries of the parties ... I and my family will remain in the party of which my fathers' fathers were members, and it is the party of Allah and his messenger'. Aelya, who represents the younger generation in the family wants to study Law at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and to become the first Arab woman magistrate in the land. After having received a favourable response from the whole family she then asks permission of her grandfather. The Haj is not enthusiastic about the idea, preferring that his grand-daughter remain at home until Allah sends her a husband. The Haj Ali has three sons. Yasin, Aelya's father, encourages her to study. The girl then discusses with the Haj Ali the new status of women in society - how women have made up their minds not to be subjugated any longer to their menfolk, but the Haj Ali is familiar only with the old customs and remains adamant in his insistence that Allah had, after all, given a special status to women, in his Holy Book, for good or ill, and anyone trying to change that custom would be considered an unbeliever even more than a Druze or a Jew or a Christian. The old Haj scorns his first-born Yasin for having brought only daughters into the world, something regarded as a great shame in the eyes of the Muslim. His youngest son Niymer is a member of the Communist party, a chauvinistic Arab who believes every word of propaganda that issues from the Arab radio stations. In a conversation with his brother Yasin he says of himself: 'I am not like you with a European suit on top, that only serves to cover the peasant with all his empty customs beneath. I feel completely free from father's eternal guardianship'. The second son of the Haj, Hussein, is deformed and stutters, but his eyes are always in the 'Koran'. The relationship between the Haj Ali and the Jewish farmer, Hawaja Sarrul, from the nearby settlement, had begun some sixty years previously. At first the Arab villagers had hated the Jewish settlers because of matters involving land ownership and had even attempted to attack them. One of the attackers was, however, killed and this gave rise to a situation of 'Gom' (blood-

vengeance). After the costly traditional 'indulgence fee' was paid as a form of ransom by the settlement, normal relations were established between the two peoples and these developed, in the course of time, into a real friendship. These relations stood the test during the periods of anti-Jewish riots and the establishment of the State following the War of Liberation. Haj Ali was then the son of a fellah called Ali Kamis, who had found work with the farmer Hawaja Sarrul in the settlement. When Ali was 60 years old he decided to fulfil his vow and go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He returned crowned in the turban of a Haj, and his new status brought him much honour. The farmer would send the new Haj the best of the grapes of his vineyard, and Ali would reciprocate by sending from the produce of his olive-yard. In the story Yasin finally journeys to the settlement of the Hawaja Sarrul to ask his father's old friend to influence him regarding the studies of his daughter. The farmer convinces the Haj that it is permissible for a woman to acquire knowledge, since there is no explicit prohibition against such a thing in the Koran.

This story, in its portrayal of the relations which exist between two generations, a father and his sons, reflects a struggle which takes place between two separate worlds: the old world, steeped in ignorance, with its suffocating customs and traditions and which is moribund and dying, (represented by the Haj Ali) and in contra-distinction, the new world of revolt and self-liberation from the shackles of the patriarchal way of life and from filial control (Niymer), a world of aspirations towards learning and enlightenment, and social progress (Aelya). In the middle of these worlds stands the intermediate generation which bridges the gap between them (Yasin and Hussein).

The problem becomes all the more acute when the Arab leaves his village and comes into direct confrontation with Israeli society. In the novel, A Cup of Bitter Coffee, by Joshua Goranoh, the life and struggles of Ahmad Shapik, a young intellectual Arab who tries to find his place in modern Israeli society, are depicted. We are told in the introduction to the book that the author of the novel possesses a many-sided familiarity with his subject, having held open conversations with the hero-characters he portrays. The elder brother of Ahmad, Joseph

(then still known as Yusuf), was driven in shame from his village in the Galilee some six years before the story begins, by his father the Mukhtar of the village, because he had committed adultery with the third wife of the elder, Ali Amran, the Mukhtar's right-hand man. The young woman had been slaughtered on the spot (the adulteress's death-sentence). Although, in accordance with the laws of the Koran, Yusuf had come under the death sentence because of his severe transgression, his life was nevertheless saved as a result of the authoritative and immediate action taken by the military ruler of the region. He was well-versed in Arab custom and issued Yusuf with a permit that would enable him to go far away from the vicinity of the crime and live in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa region on a permanent basis. In this manner Yusuf, the Galilean fellah, had gone out to live a life of exile in the metropolis.

He then encourages his brother Ahmad to continue his studies in the secondary school in Nazareth, which he does, completing them with distinction. Ahmad's second brother Hasan, the husband of Fatima his cousin, is persuaded by two enemy agents, who had infiltrated into the country from the north, to perform hostile acts against the State, such as making a record of the movements of military vehicles to and fro from the areas of training. One night he falls into an Israeli ambush and is killed. Because of Hasan's activities their father, the Mukhtar, is then removed from his office and the land given to him by the military governor, passes into the possession of the new Mukhtar, Aerif Amran, the eldest son of the aforementioned Ali Amran. The burden of supporting the family now falls upon the shoulders of the sons. Ahmad is compelled to relinquish his life's dream to study Law in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The refusal of a permit to allow him to study after his brother Hasan has been exposed as a spy, is another impediment to his success. The elders of the village avoid the Mukhtar as they would a leper, so as not to endanger their own reputations in the eyes of the omnipotent military governor. Ahmad then works as an editor on the paper 'Awad el-Samin' in Nazareth. The knowledge that the destiny of the Arabs for good or for ill is in the hands of the military governor is repugnant to him, as is the fact that the Arabs' lands were confiscated without protest, and that all the roads leading to high positions and honoured posts were closed to them: 'If only we could organize ourselves to mobilize and fight for our rights'. More

than Ahmad, the author appears to demand this of the Arabs.

The essence of the plot lies in the confrontation between the two brothers, Ahmad and Yusuf, which is reflected in an argument which takes place between them. Yusuf wishes to return to his village, despite his excommunication and the vengeance which the members of the family of Amran and the villagers wish to wreak upon him. In contrast, Ahmad no longer wishes to be a fellah. He flees from the village and from the authority of his father, at a time when the latter chooses as a wife for him the undesirable Amina, the squint-eyed daughter of the Sharif. Ahmad wishes to prove his ability and to gain status in the Jewish state. 'Are not we, the Arabs, able to raise ourselves up and to acquire positions of importance? I have decided to prove to everyone, both Arabs and Jews, that we can compete against Jews and attain our rightful place despite all the limitations and the difficulties which they have heaped up at our feet.' Yusuf, who is now called Joseph, has already lived six years among the Jews and during this time has gained much experience. He is of the opinion that the Jews will never allow Ahmad the Arab to get ahead, and no certificate or document will help him to do so. But Ahmad has faith that he will indeed succeed. The two brothers are also different in appearance. Joseph is dark-skinned and his ethnic origins are obvious to the eye, both in the contours of his face and in his heavy guttural pronunciation, but Ahmad's appearance is like that of a Westerner, enlightened and light-skinned as he is. He learns English, Economics, Sociology, and even writes poems. While yet in school Ahmad is full of nationalistic feelings and thoughts of vengeance, having fallen under the influence of an extremist nationalistic teacher. Another brother of Ahmad, Latif, is a youth who flirts with the girls of Tel Aviv. Yusuf works for the brothers Zilberman and tries to persuade Ahmad to join him in the building trade. The author puts the following words into Ahmad's mouth: 'The military governor ... how much degradation, sorrow, and disappointments are bound up in these words ... Only one who lives under the surveillance of the military governor who is a law unto himself, can understand this. This concept has become rooted in our lives and transformed into an inextricable part of our daily language, like bread, water, love or death'.

The owner of the coffeehouse, Marko, a Jew from Russia, also identifies himself with Ahmad. 'You Arabs are the Jews of the Jews ... In Europe there are anti-Semites who hate the Jews, causing them distress and wishing to finish them off ... and that's why the Jews went and established a State for themselves ... but they too now search for Jews of their own upon whom they might perform a little anti-Semitism and they have found the Arabs.' The struggle between the generations is also reflected in this novel. The old generation that is weighed down by ancient customs is represented by the father, Shapik Ali, Amran, and the elders of the village, the struggling intermediate generation by Yusuf, and the new generation that flees from the village and makes an attempt to assimilate into the Israeli society, by Ahmad Shapik and Latif, his brother, each according to his way.

The topic dealt with in the novel, In a New Light, by Attallah Mansour, is the absorption of an Arab into an Israeli kibbutz. The author is an Israeli Druze who writes Hebrew and thus sees the problem from the Arabs' point of view. By so doing the author professes to shed 'a new light' upon the affirmation of Arab-Jewish partnership in the State of Israel, his intention being to prove that the settlements of the kibbutz Artsi are much like other kibbutzim, neither can, nor wish to, take in Arabs as members with equal rights. In the story this accusation is directed against a leftist kibbutz, the members of which are deemed hypocrites who, despite the lip-service they pay to the ideals of international equality and brotherhood, remain in practice Chauvinists who find it difficult to absorb an Arab member into their ranks. Indeed, just such a member is soon likened to a kind of bone in the throat which one can neither swallow nor spit out. Yet despite everything a solution is found when, at the general meeting of the kibbutz, they decide to accept an Arab for two reasons: because there are no objections against him 'having conducted himself in a way that might arouse suspicion in anyone, regarding the slightest lack of integrity on his part', and secondly, because, being just before the elections, the party 'was fighting for its life in the face of unrestrained attacks from both the right and the left, and it is forbidden for us at the time to provide those who hate the party (Mapam) with an excuse for attacking it'. It was imperative therefore that

they accept him. The truth of the matter is, that the Arab Joseph, the hero of the novel, does not reveal his identity to the members of the kibbutz during his trial-period of a year, just as he does not reveal it to them after he has been there for a long period of time. When the matter does, however, become known, his comrades are stunned and, quite naturally, begin to suspect him of having been sent to them with the nefarious intention of reporting back to the enemy the security situation which exists within State institutions.

Nejema and the Social Worker, a story by Afra Eligon, reflects one facet in the life of the young generation of Arabs in the State of Israel. It tells about a young Arab girl, Nejema, from a small village in the Galil, whose parents have hired her out to work as a maid with the family Weinstein in Tel Aviv. Weinstein's children give her a new name, Nogah. She has an Arab girlfriend from Kfar Kassem, called Ruti, who also works as a maid with the Deutsch family. Ruti's boyfriend, Zohar, owns a private motor-car in which they all travel to Yaffo on Saturday nights to go dancing. Nejema learns Hebrew, eats Jewish foods, and also writes letters in Hebrew to her cousin and fiancé, Ahmad, whom she has left behind in her village in the Galil. In these letters she refers to him as Nachman. Ahmad also answers her letters in Hebrew. Nejema then meets Yehuda, a young Jew who has come from Iraq and, having fallen deeply in love with her, goes to live with her in a small room in Bat Yam. She hopes to become converted so that she might marry him but, after she falls pregnant, Yehuda betrays her by having relations with another woman. Nejema, in her anger, takes revenge upon Yehuda because of the manner in which he has humiliated her and almost murders him. The judge thereupon passes sentence upon her that she be handed over to a social worker. Later, before returning to her village in the Galil to be married to her cousin, she asks to see the Iraqi Jew, Yehuda, once more so that she might say farewell to him.

In the story, Saiyd, by Gideon Talpaz, the character of a Jordanian Arab living in liberated Jerusalem after the Six Day War is laid bare before our eyes. His grandfather was a Bedouin, his father a Christian, he was born in Rabat Ammon and speaks a pure English. A very 'smooth' Arab, evasive and very shy, Saiyd is a hotelier in both the Old City and

in Rabat Ammon. On one more occasion he says to the narrator: 'I knew that you wouldn't harm me. I am not a soldier. Radio Cairo filled our hearts with hatred for the Jews from morning to evening ... that was only propaganda. Had I run away perhaps I would never have got my hotel back'. Despite a great reverence for him, Saiyd regards the King Hussein as a fool for having gone to war against Israel. Saiyd contends that Jewish men are not as beautiful as Arab men but that Jewish girls are beautiful, and he is prepared to travel to Tel Aviv so that he might go out with them. What he now misses most are the Ramallah radio broadcasts, but there is an Israeli song, 'Jerusalem the Golden', about which he is 'mad'.

The continuation of the theme of J Burla in such works as The Vision of Botras and Encounters finds its expression in Israeli fiction with the introduction of the idea of Jewish-Arab friendship in the State of Israel as a very real social problem.

This is the pivotal point around which the novel Kohl from Ashes, by K Chitnik (Yecheil Dinor) revolves. It is an exceptional love-story about a native-born Israeli, Galilyah, and her husband, Harry, a refugee from the Polish holocaust, in the reconstructed home where Jewish-Arab meetings are arranged weekly with the aim of 'establishing peace and brotherhood between the two peoples'. There, respected personalities from Israeli society such as academics, public figures, authors and scientists, meet with the leaders and intellectuals of the Arab minority who live in the land. The intention of the author to provide a solution to the Arab problem through verbal communication and spiritual contact between adults, as well as small children, is thus made clear. In the story Galilyah adopts the idea of respecting a man because he is a man, and not because of religious or ethnic distinctions. She respects the Arab labourer, whom the British Klimp forces to work with rigour in the desert sands of Egypt, and identifies herself with the struggles of the Arab, Abdullah, in whose mouth the author puts the following words: 'What is better for me, that I should remain an Arab whose name is Abdullah; one whom the government official prefers to regard as an enemy without rights, yet still to retain a certain feeling of self-respect? Or is it better that I should become

become an Arab who disguises himself and walks about among the Jews, under the pseudonym Berel, and then I will be worse than the donkey who drags gravel in Tel Aviv As for me, I have neither a name, nor the honour to bear a name'.

Here too the motif of the holocaust is coupled with that of the Arab problem. The couple, Galilyah and Harry, have themselves been persecuted; Harry experienced the holocaust in the Nazi camps of destruction and Galilyah remembers the pogrom in Yafo.

The couple work in a practical manner for the rights of the Arabs in the State of Israel. Thus Galilyah says to an official of the Security office who belongs to the Arab Department: 'The Ghetto tradition of Jewish suffering compels me to go out to the Arab villages in the 'triangle' (area in Israel) and in the Galilee, to those who are not permitted to travel freely because of the condition of detention which has been imposed upon them: to them I bring the simple and hearty blessing of Salaam Aleikem (peace be unto you) with a warm smile'. The name 'Arab' has taken on the connotation of 'an enemy' amongst the Jews. An Arab is unable to find a lodging place in a Jewish settlement, and there is a hidden, and sometimes open, discrimination shown towards the Arab minority which resides in the State. In consequence, the couple's activity soon arouses the suspicion of those in charge of security, who have been watching their deeds closely.

Added to the social problem one often finds a political-security implication. The aim of the novelist is to show that there has grown up in the State a new generation of village-born Arabs parallel to the new generation of 'Sabras' (native-born Israelis) who have never experienced nor known the wars and acts of hatred perpetrated between the peoples. These Arabs are prepared to live a life of peaceful cooperation with the Jews. This assumption gives rise to the idea that spheres of understanding and friendship be established between Jews and Arabs (similar to those which are to be found in the home of the author in Tel Aviv). The author of the novel believes that only the meeting together of the two peoples will bring about the removal of the partitions which separate them from one

another, as well as the strengthening of the progressive powers who believe in peace. The bridge of peace between Israel and the Arab countries will not be erected until there is a prior understanding between Jews and Arabs in the State of Israel itself.

The story, One who Carries his Body in his Arms, by K Tsitnik, supplements the previous novel in that it too describes a meeting of Jews and Arabs in an Arab village, during which speeches are made, and face to face conversation is indulged in.

The young poet Y Ben-Yehuda sings to his Arab friends about friendship and peace in his poem, Salim: 'Put your hand into mine / your heartbeats into mine / your blood into mine and the nuptial wine / will give resonance to the song, Salim'.

In his poem, Ya Hussan, Ben-Yehuda expresses the hope for peace between Israel and the Arab countries, that will come through bridges of friendship similar to that which he has built in the land between himself and an Arab boy. Indeed, the nation of Israel, which had lost six million Jews during the Holocaust, has every reason to be desirous of living in peace with its Arab neighbours. 'Do not be afraid, Ya Hussan / of your brother beyond the latitude and the partition / tell about my nation from whom there has been destroyed / a third of its people / about my simple nation that weaves its dreams / while in the workshops, factories, fields / and in the plains of the vineyard / tell about it Hussan, it is weary of the ways of hatred / its open collar is open to your heart ...'

The social problem is exacerbated when the relations of brotherhood between the two peoples develop into a love-relationship between the sexes. The novel, A Stranger Will Not Enter, by Hemdah Alon, suggests a further way of bringing the Jews and Arabs in the land closer together, through the presentation of a story of young love between a Jewish girl, Roni, and an Arab youth, Ali. The youth represents the selfsame aforementioned Arab type who wishes to cease being an Arab and seeks asylum far from his village. The authoress, not having ever lived in an Arab environment, appears to have no real grasp of the true

character of the young Arab man. Essentially Ali represents the son of a feudalistic Arab family with its strong control over all its members. He has two brothers: the first-born, Salim, and the younger, Mansur, who, together with Ali, were educated in England. His father, Muhmad Kedari, a man of wealth, is the leader of the Arab community in Nazareth. With the outbreak of the War of Liberation the mother had fled to Lebanon together with her daughters, Saiyda and Ziynav, and her son, Mansur, where they lived in a refugee camp. There Ziynav died, after which they returned to Nazareth. Ali had gone to Jerusalem to continue his studies in the Hebrew University and there met Roni, the daughter of a Jewish family from Haifa.

At this point in the novel the narrator ventures to touch upon a topic which, until her time, had been regarded as 'taboo' in Israeli literature, viz., the relations between the veteran Israeli settlement and the Arab minority.

The point of reference between the novel of Hemdah Alon and J Burla's, A Master Among His People, is to be found in the hostility and unwillingness shown by Israeli society towards the love-relationship which develops between a man and woman, each of whom is a member of one of the two peoples. The authoress's aim to criticise and protest against Jewish social conventions and the establishment is already hinted at at the outset, in the choice of the name of the novel, the words of which find their origin in a prohibition of the Law: 'A stranger shall not come into the midst of your people, etc....' and which warns Israel against assimilating among the nations.

The political and social conditions in the land that leave their impression on both peoples, 'strangulate' the love between Roni and Ali while it is yet in its infancy. At first, despite the opposition which surrounds them on all sides, they develop a beautiful understanding between themselves. Roni asks: 'Who has the right to throw stones at me? Who would dare forbid me to love? What justification is there in such a prohibition? ... My love for Ali is greater than my will. I will not overcome it ...'. Ali says to Roni: 'Don't you know that I love you ... with all my heart, in grief

and without hope'. Despite their 'disappointed love' the two heroes of the novel are described as individuals who break down many of the artificial barriers which exist in society. Roni's room-mate, Ruti, warns her: 'It is better that the old woman (owner of the house) does not know that the guest is an Arab'. At a time when the young couple meet, the tragedies of the war that broke out between the Arabs and the Jews in 1947, and the innocent victims that fell in the wake of the war, are discussed. The Arab character of Ali, who preserves the chastity of Roni during the period when they are alone together in the house of the Kadri family in Ein Kerem, is described. Roni's life becomes loathsome, and she sees no way that she can escape having to reveal the secret of her love to her sister's husband. At a festive gathering to celebrate the Day of Independence at which Roni is present, Ali is not invited because of his origins. Responsible officials intervene in an attempt to convince, and at times even to threaten Roni to break off her relations with the Arab. Roni's brother, Gideon, who is a captain in the Israeli Defence Force, contacts Ali directly, threatens him, and demands that he leave his sister alone, arguing that whoever establishes contact with the local Arabs under the conditions which then prevailed might be regarded as a traitor against his people and his homeland. Roni's father, an advocate who is in constant contact with the Arabs, likewise now joins the dissenters and tries to convince Roni that 'here love is nothing but a feeling that lacks nobility'.

Roni defends the Arabs as human beings who belong to the human family. Events then happen quickly and Roni reads in a newspaper about Ali's attempt to leave the land in an illegal manner. The pressure upon Ali continues in the prison and Roni, filled with doubts about the matter of Ali's imprisonment, tries with all her might to have him released. She meets with him in the prison and convinces him of the necessity of their getting married so that they might 'serve as a wonderful example of the love between the two peoples'. Ali hesitates and this naturally echoes his fears and the difficulties which he has encountered. Roni recalls her uncle in the kibbutz, who holds aloft the banner on which the principles of equality and the brotherhood of nations are emblazoned, and hopes that

he might understand her problem and perhaps even help her and Ali to find a life of tranquility and married bliss in the kibbutz. The socialist uncle Jacob wishes to understand and be convinced but he too eventually becomes opposed to the idea. The father says to Roni: 'I have learned from experience that an Arab remains an Arab'. The brother, Gideon, interferes and warns Roni about 'her bitter end' and Ruti, her friend, threatens that she will never live with her in the same room 'if she continues her relations with Ali'.

The fear of society's vengeance upon them overcomes the lovers, even before their relationship is allowed to reach its climax. The conditions which presently prevail in Israel demonstrate conspicuously how impossible it is to attempt to create a bond of love between Jews and Arabs without torment. The world of an Arab family from Nazareth and of that of a Jewish family from Haifa; a young Jewish girl, a student and graduate of the youth movement; the reality of Arabs who hate Israel and of the defence forces who fight against them and the reality of Jews who hate Arabs and whom they confine to a life of tyrannical deprivation - all these are described in the novel in an objective and frank manner. The authoress once again returns to that self-same approach seen before, which is blended with self-hatred because of the fact that 'Israeli society' is closed, chauvinistic, narrow of vision, hypocritical, and lacking in honesty. This approach is felt even as regards the War of Liberation, when Roni apologises to Ali because her brother Gideon is a sergeant in the Israeli Defence Force and has performed security tasks during that War. Someone from the Secret Service questions Roni about her relations with Ali, in order to determine the exact extent to which Ali is aware of the circumstances of his brother Mansur's infiltration to the other side of the enemy lines. Roni asks innocently: 'So what if Ali's brother tried to cross the border. That doesn't mean to say that he's a spy and generally ... one must understand them'.

Ali's biography differs greatly from that of most members of his social class. Ali, the restrained intellectual, tries to test reality in an objective manner. His fear of his young brother, Mansur, who reveals himself as a leader of a group of extreme nationalists, is great.

He is a type of enlightened Arab - the ideal towards which the Palestinian aristocracy aspired before the great breach occurred.

The novel, A Stranger Shall Not Enter, preceded the two novels, Kohl from Ashes, by K Tzitnick, and A Cup of Bitter Coffee, by Y Goranoth, which are linked to it from an idealistic point of view. To these may also be added the novel, In a New Light, by A Mansour. In all of them the institutions of the State responsible for the Arab problem are criticised and in all of them the social problem appears against the political-security question in the land.

Ali Kedari in A Stranger Shall Not Enter, is like Ahmad Sapik (A Cup of Bitter Coffee), and Roni reminds one of Galilyah (Kohl from Ashes). These types, which are described as having come to maturity during the period after the 1948 war, may easily be encompassed in the same social framework because, in all their cases, the distance between themselves and their fathers is great, while that which they have in common as natives of the land and as contemporaries is considerable. The phenomenon of the love of Roni and Ali is nothing but a natural product that has grown and will grow again in the future, as a result of the daily confluence between Arab and Jew.

This human-romantic topic also appears in the novel by A Mansour, In a New Light, in which the love of the Arab Joseph and the young American Jewess is portrayed. The love lasts throughout the novel and is woven into the development of its main theme, which is the social problem of the Arabs.

CHAPTER 6

THE ARAB PROBLEM AS AN EXISTENTIAL CONDITION

6.1 Introduction

A new development in the treatment of the image of the Arabs in Israeli literature crystallized during the fifties and sixties, resulted in a new orientation in approach to the subject, with the appearance of the 'Young Guard' or the 'Generation of the State', as one is now accustomed to designate young authors who were born during the period close to the establishment of the State.

The topic underwent a complete metamorphosis, but together with this it seems that, from the point of view of ideas and central motifs, this development was much more rounded. A comparison of the literature produced in Eretz Israel during the twenties (particularly the stories by Y H Brenner, Y Rabinowitz, and M Smilansky) with that written close to the War of Liberation and afterwards, and particularly during the last decade, demonstrates a parallel symmetry as well as a common point of origin, viz., the historiosophical point of view, which sees the Arabs, as it were, through an historical mirror, the image of which finds its associative projection in the historical destiny of the Jewish nation.

6.2 The historiosophic viewpoint:

The Arabs as an historical destiny

A group of native-born authors, at the head of which stood Yonathan Retush and Aaron Amir, who were active close to the commencement of the War of Liberation, declared a spiritual severance from the Jewish cultural heritage of the Diaspora which had been created during the period between the destruction of the first Temple and the formation of the Jewish State, as well as a return to the ancient Canaanite mythology, namely to the sources of the 'Canaanite' Hebrew culture of the Biblical period. On the face of it the territorial reason of 'being a free people on its land' which constituted the basis of the Hebrew settlement, took on a political significance. The men of the settlement were now designated 'the Canaanites' or 'the Hebrews' (as

such do they appear, for example in Professor Baruch Kurtzweil's book, Hebrew Literature, Continuity or Revolution). The 'Canaanites' ... Yonathan Retush, Aaron Amir, Benjamin Tammuz, Yitzchak Shilo, and their associates, looked upon their work as an organic continuation of the Bible and its ancient Canaanite-Semitic sister-literature, and expressed their views about the place of the Jew in the Land which they designated 'the Semitic expanse'. Yet this tendency was nothing but a reincarnation of the romantic 'chalutzic' ideals of the Second Aliyah which had found expression in the Watchman stories and in the stories of the early pioneers of Jacob Rabinowitz (The Wanderings of Amishai the Watchman), Moses Smilansky (Abner, and Hawajah Nasar) and Yehuda Ya'ari (Between the Dog and the Shepherd, The Sun Rises and the Sun Also Sets). All these reflect the romantic yearning for the Orient and for the glorious Biblical past as well as the identification with the primitive way of life of the Bedouin and the fellahin, which these writers regarded as a residue of that of the ancient Hebrews. They expressed their longings in the quest for remnants of the Ten Lost Tribes in the desert - or to be more precise, for roots in the old-new homeland. And together with this, these stories fostered too the motifs of the defence and safeguarding of the life of the Jewish settlement and the Jewish heroism of days gone by, all of which are prominent features of the literature of the 'Canaanites'.

The fateful meeting between the two peoples and the struggle for their birthright in the homeland was pungently expressed by the 'Canaanites' in terms of a decisive life and death confrontation. Their approach to the Arab problem took a marked political and militaristic turn as the romantic 'legendary' solution of the problem of the Jewish minority in the land (in the stories of the Watchman) was transfigured in the course of some twenty years into a political solution, viz., the Arabs were now to be seen as an existential condition and as an historical destiny with which one had to struggle, and overcome by force.

Canaanite poetry makes its appearance for the first time in the song, To the Deranged Gangs, by Abraham Stern, the heroic 'Yair' of the Jewish underground (Lechi), who was murdered while fighting the British:

'To you, O firstborn Ishmael, with the passing away of lost hopes / we will pray with a rifle, a machine gun, a mine'.

A strong expression of the stifling situation which prevailed during the first years of the State, and of the feeling to smash down walls and destroy boundaries is to be found in the poem of Yonathan Retush, Those That Walk in Darkness, which articulates the desire for change, for a great conflagration for a war that would restore authority and greatness to the Hebrew nation. The Arabs are here seen as a people who are not a people. 'He who loves boastful lies / to desert robbers and those who plunder ... to the wandering frontier army he is obedient / he hires desert caravans / he rents his sabre together with his camels'. The indictment of Retush in this poem is twofold: it is against the Arabs who are the external enemy, and are in his eyes corrupt primitives whom he has been commanded to conquer; and against the Jews, the Jewish religion, the Jewish character and everything that is evil and leads to divisiveness in Israel. That which is good belongs wholly to those who are descendants of the ancient and vigorous Hebrews. In the closed situation in which the land finds itself, the Jews are as much to blame as are the Arabs. The war is in effect a war of Conquest, without any attempt to achieve a 'status quo' with the Arabs. 'From the seas to the sea, from the rivers to the ends of the earth.' The feeling of being besieged is not merely the fruit of the Arabs' hatred towards the Jew but essentially a residue of the Jewish feeling of inferiority which he has brought with him from the Diaspora. Retush preaches in precisely the same manner as the Arabs against the Israeli national strength, which the latter rightly refer to from their point of view, as 'Zionism'.

In his The Song of the Land of the Hebrews, Aharon Amir tells about his desire to extend himself over 'his great and spacious land from the sea of Batsra and the sea of Eilat to the waters of the Euphrates and the rivers of Damascus'.

In Songs of the Captive Land, by Yitzchak Shilo, the poet preaches for the liberation of the ancient city of Jerusalem, the capital of the Kingdom of Israel, which is under enemy control and divided by an

artificial 'political' border. In the poem, On the Roof of the Notre Dame Hospice, he proclaims, 'Send forth your hand and take them / the gate of Yafo and the gate of Shechem'. In The Poet, The Statesman, and the Soldier, he sings a paean of praise to the war poem which he describes as having power to break down boundaries, to reach the required goals and to pave the way long before politicians and soldiers are able to do so. He writes, 'The border / the soldier who arrives at the sign post and sinks down in chains .. / not so the poet - he returns to his captured land like a warrior on his chariot ... he kisses the much-loved monuments that are beyond the border / that are erected to ancient goddesses and the heights of which hallow the celestial abode ... until the statesman removes the signpost, he will give the sign / and on the way in which the poem passed, the armies will pass'.

In Eitan Eitan's book of poems, A King Who is Forbidden to Have Furniture, there is a feeling of besiegement and grave existential doubts as well as a contrasting desire for expansion and dominion. The name of the collection gives evidence of its character: it evokes the biblical image of the people of Israel, whom the poet likens to an ancient Hebrew King, who is degraded and held in captivity by foreigners, and forbidden to have furniture. He must free himself from his chains and restore to himself the kingship that was once stolen from him.

After the victory of the Six Day War the siege was lifted and the captive land liberated, but the hatred which separates the two people, 'the boundary which is in the heart' continues to exist. The charms of the Orient, the Arab culture and particularly the Muslim religion, are only a cover for the hatred which seethes from generation to generation and for the feelings of revenge which lie in the hidden places of the soul, nor do they have the power to dim the memory of 'the disturbances of Ishmael, son of the wilderness'.

In the poem, A Bright Rock, by Alisa Nahor, the poetess visits an Arab coffee-house in East Jerusalem: 'Here am I / a stranger and my roots are aching in the cruel light / for the earth which is not theirs. Sipping sweet coffee the olive wisdom of my stock leans on gilden

rhetoric / as the binding of the Koran and plaited blessings / with arabesques interlaced with suspicion / the enemy hallows his guest ... all the valleys has Jehoshaphat made desolate and in the valley / of Ben-Hinnom grow plants of poison and fire'.

The song of lamentation, Hebron, by Yehezkiel Avisar was written to commemorate the year 1936 when Jews were murdered by Arabs in Hebron. 'When they confronted the disturbances of Ishmael, son of the wilderness / who lives by his sword, and his hand is against all.'

The hatred of the Arabs towards the Jews appears against the background of the Muslim religion, which more than once in history has advocated the slaughter of the Jews in the name of Allah and Mohammed the Prophet. This motif appears in Yitzchak Shilo's poem, Muezzin. 'The sweet call of the muezzin will not mislead me / was it not he who called for the death of old and young / in Hebron and Safed ... / there is in his bent form as he stands over the congregation of felahin the aspect of the spear and the sword. In his voice poured out in sadness there resides the roar of a beast of prey. In Libya and Yemen and Morocco this preacher blesses / every band of rioters which rises up against the Jews / and he cries out: / the law of Mohammed lies in the sword. They carry a prayer in their heart, all who come to the mosque / their hands - they spread out heavenwards in Damascus / Cairo and Baghdad / but for what do they implore, for what? / for the victory of their troops and that vengeance be seen to be done? / for the destruction of my children from the face of the earth? / those who remove their shoes from their feet will not deceive me / treading on carpets the wool of which is like green grass / also a murderer steals away barefoot by night / also a tiger walks on silken paws.'

In this connection we recall the novel, An Astounded Man, by Ohe'l Mila, who writes about the pogroms which took place against the Jews of Libya, using the Islamic wars and the wars of Mohammed as a backdrop.

After the Six Day War a number of authors of the generation of the Palmach were likewise attracted to the ideas of the Canaanites.

In Chaim Gourie's poetic story, Don't Go To Yafo, the author evokes memories of the pogrom in Yafo where Brenner was murdered. The Arab Yafo with its buildings and mosques and secret places, the city of the pogroms, was the city of his youth and he still hears the warning which cast dread in those days, 'Don't go to Yafo'.

The Palestinian infiltrators who refer to themselves as Fedayeen are seen as barbarous savages of the desert. In the story, Song of the Fedayeen, Joshua bar-Joseph tells about a certain Jonah Dag who composes a song about murderous Fedayeen who come to his village, not because they might find food in its vineyards, but with the sole intent of sabotaging property and murdering innocent people. The sound of the word Fedayeen is strange - it has the sound of the desert, of the Arab. The Jews had already left the desert during the period of the patriarchs and had become tillers of the soil. Jonah Dag vows that he will redeem his people from the Fedayeen. Under the influence of the powerful song which he had composed young men would gain strength and smite the enemy with a mighty blow and thus avenge the blood of those who were murdered by the defiled hands of the Fedayeen.

Moses Shamir, in his book, The Life of the People Ishmael, (Chapters of Ishmael) spreads out a wide canvas of the land of Israel in its entirety, which stretches lengthwise from the lower part of the Hermon to Ras Muhmad at the edge of southern Sinai, and widthwise from the Suez Canal and the shore of the Mediterranean to the line of the Jordan, Ein-Yahav. Shamir attempts to draw the conclusion that the Arabs are robbers who covet the historic land of the Jews. He bases Arab nationalism on robbery and plunder and preaches an Israeli chauvinism of the type which can only perpetuate the abysmal hatred and alienation which exists between the Jews and the Arabs. Because of his nationalistic fervour he is not prepared to take into consideration the possibility that the Arab complaint also has a justification of its own, that these are not just 'robbers' and that the tragic clash is not of necessity 'the war of the sons of light against the sons of darkness'.

The struggle for the birthright between the two peoples takes on an allegoric-symbolic or mythological idiom. Returning to the story The

Haj from Heftziba, by Jacob Steinberg, one finds that it provides a symbolic significance to the 'foundation stone' which constitutes the dwelling place of the Arab Haj. It seems as if some ancient mythological power is hidden in this stone (which also served as the foundation stone in the Temple in Jerusalem and upon which the Ark containing the tablets of Testimony stood. Today it is a prominent stone which lies in the grounds of the Temple Mount in the middle of the Mosque of Omar - 'The Dome of the Rock'. According to a Rabbinic legend the creation of the world commenced with that of the foundation stone.) Also the figure of the Haj with his strong staff is raised to the level of a symbol: 'I saw the figure of the Arab Haj bent over the foundation stone; his powerful staff held completely upright in his hand and then all at once this night watchman who sat without movement, appeared next to me with such speed as could not be measured'. The author, out of some kind of fear does not dare to approach the magic stone. 'I quickly departed from the charmed circle which surrounded the foundation stone ...' and when he accidentally strikes the stone the old Haj feels as if he himself has been struck. By this act of striking the stone, the young pioneer has, as it were, made his way into a strange realm, the foundation stone symbolizing the possession which the watchman Haj guards. The author-pioneer departs from the place: 'and I made my way round about the stone ... only my eyes remained transfixed to the stone ...'. The Haj rises from his place, stands erect, and suddenly becomes very tall (until the striking of the stone he had been sitting bent over and slightly somnolent) and he shakes his staff and curses the pioneer in his Arab tongue. The striking of the stone has, as it were, uprooted the Arab from the landscape of his destiny (a wild landscape, filled with ancient glory), from his land of birth in which he has his roots and had always lived. And the entire incident is transformed into a symbol or an allegorical figure of the fateful clash between the two peoples, the Hebrews and the Ishmaelites, for their birthright in the land. The foundation stone also symbolizes the old Arab settlement which the old Haj guards against the invasion of the Jewish pioneers, who come to settle in the land.

The story, The Tamarisk, by Isaac Shinhar, is likewise allegorical in form. It tells about a lonely tamarisk which grows in a forsaken

plot belonging to Muhmad Effendi, the landowner, and which the fellah, also called Muhmad, a wretched tenant-owner, acquires and tries to transform into a blossoming field. Once two Hawajas from the society 'Geulah' (which buys land for Jewish settlement) come beneath the shadow of the latter's roof and are ready to relieve him of all the debts which he owes to the Effendi provided he goes to settle somewhere else. After the fellah leaves the place it becomes a 'post' - a place for the encampment of a hero-watchman named Yemini. The Effendi subsequently cheats the fellah, Muhmad, who then flees to the mountains and becomes a robber and a murderer, changing his name to Muhmad the man of the mountains. He is the head of a band that ambushes the Jewish watchman and kills him in a gun-battle. Afterwards, motivated by feelings of revenge, the band attacks the home of the Effendi. The latter is captured, but following an altercation which breaks out between Muhmad and his chief assistant as to the best way to kill their captive, the Effendi takes advantage of the prevailing confusion and escapes for his life into the darkness.

The tamarisk tree has long served as a mythological symbol. (It is one of the most ancient trees in the land and is often mentioned in the Bible as a place where one might sit and take rest. In Rabbinic literature the analogy has been drawn between the tamarisk and an inn or hotel on the basis of the exposition of the three letters which make up the Hebrew word, viz., Aleph, Shin, Lamed - which constitute the three Hebrew words, Achlah, Shtiyah, Linah - eating, drinking, lodging.) No man had planted this particular tamarisk, it grew by itself in a desolate place and was the only sign of life there. The fellah's children who died were buried under the tamarisk. From the time the fellah came to live on the plot where the tamarisk grew he had forgotten his origins and was referred to in the district as Muhmad - from-the-Tamarisk. They had dug the grave for the slain watchman near the tamarisk, and it was also his meeting place with his loved-one from the near-by Kibbutz. The men of the gang had likewise bound the Effendi to the tamarisk so that they might kill him there.

The tamarisk is thus a symbol of the ground, the land, something which abides forever. Only its owners are ephemeral. The watchman

had apparently fallen victim to a murderous feud which developed between Muhmad the Fellaah and Muhmad Effendi. The allegory in the story reflects the struggle for ownership in the land between the Arabs and the Jews. The Fellaah, the Effendi, the gangs, the watchman of the kibbutz, the society 'Geulah' - all give the story an historical realism which reflects those early settlement days in the land.

Benjamin Tammuz's story, A Swimming Competition, is divided into two parts: childhood and war. The part about childhood relates how a competition takes place at a swimming pool. It is arranged between the narrator while yet a boy and Abdul Karim, a young nationalistic Arab from a family in Yafo, with whom the narrator had stayed in his childhood. Abdul Karim proves his superiority in swimming and the boy narrator who loses because of over-excitement, says to Abdul Karim: 'The day will surely come when I will beat you also in the pool'. The young Arab answers: 'If you (plural) beat us also in the pool it will be very bad ... for all of us'.

In the part of the story which deals with war the narrator-soldier stands as a conqueror in battle before his subdued Arab childhood friend, in exactly the same spot where the competition had taken place between them twenty years earlier. He invites Abdul Karim to a return-match, which to him would be decisive, completing as it were his victory in battle. The structure of the story is subordinated to a thesis which is symbolized by victory and failure in a swimming competition, in order to justify the right of Jewish existence in the region, as well as Jewish participation in the world. The pool in the scent-filled grove in Yafo is transformed into a symbol of the historic-fateful confrontation between the two peoples and the struggle between them for the birthright. The selfsame Arab courtyard in which the pool is to be found becomes an Arab fortified position during the War of Liberation and one which is captured only after a hard battle in which there are many victims. After the conquest it becomes a 'heap of ruins'. The act of the (swimming) competition is itself a symbolic parallel and metaphor standing as it does for physical superiority and victory in the battle-field, the author having presented us with a slice of life without calling it by name. In order to make the Israeli victory in

battle complete, the soldier-narrator goes down to the muddied pool, and his swimming becomes a symbol when at precisely that moment, one of the soldiers kills Abdul Karim, his opponent in the pool and in battle.

This feeling of alienation comes to its fullest expression in Benjamin Tammuz's A Story About an Olive Tree, in which the Israelis are regarded as an 'European element' in contrast to the Arab natives of the land. As a result an ambivalent attitude to the Arabs is developed in which, on the one hand, one senses a feeling a guilt towards them and envy of their rootedness, on the other, the compulsion to fight against them also manifests itself. In the story there is a strong romantic yearning for the oriental past and for the Arab way of life. Tammuz spins his allegoric adventure story round about an ancient olive tree in the plot of the Fellaḥ Mahmud Tawil, a tree which stands in the centre of family life. The war of 1948 uproots the family and new immigrants come to take their place in the abandoned village. The oil of the tree is bitter to their taste because they are foreigners and East-Europeans who are not used to enjoying the juices of the land. Eventually the new immigrants, who hate manual labour, abandon the village and escape to the city. On the command of the agronomist of the society that works the land, the olive tree is uprooted. In Tammuz one recognizes that selfsame ambivalent romanticism which regarded the Arabs as the perfect people of the land, and identified them with the 'biblical' Bedouin. The olive tree (its fruits are treasured, being one of the seven species by which the land of Israel is praised) symbolizes the strong rootedness, the smell and taste of the Orient and the Arabs. It is also a mythological symbol. In the past it produced wonderful fruit and legends and special charms were woven around it. Its previous owner, the Fellaḥ Mahmud Tawil, had tied his daughter to the trunk of this tree because she had refused to be sold as a wife to the old Elkasir, but eventually she had surrendered to her father's wishes.

The story is connected to the moral problem of Jewish relationships with their neighbours, which is a prominent feature of the stories of Yizhar. The moral dimension which Benjamin Tammuz exposes is the

feeling of alienation which the new immigrant experiences in his attitude to the old 'Arab' olive tree of the land of Israel, whose real owners are now to be found in refugee camps in Lebanon. The branches of the tree are cut off by the new immigrants, to serve as a bait for their rich relatives that they might send parcels from America. The olive tree 'longs' for its owners who are beyond the border.

The Lebanese author, A'sen Kenfani (whom we spoke of in connection with the story The Captive) explains that the branches of the olive tree that are described in Tammuz's story, symbolize their 'expectation for those who are missing', that is to say for the return of the Palestinians, but since the author does not have the courage to admit this, he needs a device and saws up the tree. The story is written as a kind of symbolic legend which seeks to emphasize the feeling of loss of roots, the uprooting which is to be found in the Israeli existence that has lost its original myths after the war and the establishment of the State.

Like the tamarisk, the olive tree is also the mythological symbol of the Land of Israel. The act of cutting off its branches uprooting symbolizes the continuation of the historic struggle between Arab and Jew. A political spirit infuses the story, and its critical satirical foundations are given strength through the sad and tragic dimension which is bound up with the fate of the tree.

The Story of a Barrel of Olives, by Benjamin Tammuz, is a kind of continuation of The Story of an Olive Tree, but with a more realistic and existential approach. It is about the sale of olives that were harvested before their time. It begins with an account of the bargaining which takes place between Abdu the Arab owner of the olives and Mr Zussman, and goes on to relate how a too heavy load is then placed on the donkey, resulting in one of the barrels containing the olives falling into a drainage canal, thus damaging the contents and lessening their value. The story then ends with the drunkenness of Abdu, the owner of the olives. The barrel of olives is a symbol of the wretched hybridization which has come to pass between the landscapes of the land of Israel and the State of Israel with its 'Maabarah' (transition camps) and new settlers.

Tammuz continues in this manner also in the new novel, The Orchard. This is the story of two stepbrothers, Obadiah and Daniel. Obadiah, the unstable brother who becomes assimilated among the Arabs to such an extent that he begins to physically resemble them, finds work in the orchard of the Turk, Mahmad Effendi, near by Yafo. In the home of the Effendi there grew up an adopted daughter called Lona. Obadiah and Lona make love in the secret places of the orchard. After some time has passed Daniel, the brother of Obadiah, buys the orchard from the Turk who is on the point of death, and takes Lona as his wife. Her image had already revealed itself to him in a vision before he had sailed on the ship. Lona is therefore his heaven-sent mate. The woman, however, continues to have sexual relations with Obadiah even after her marriage to Daniel, who closes his eyes to such acts out of excessive piety. After a number of years Lona's son joins the ranks of the Jewish Defence Force, while his uncle, the 'Arab' Obadiah, leads bands of 'Shavav' against the Jews and plots to kill his brother Daniel after Tel-Aviv has been taken. The Arabs are defeated in the war. Lona's son comes to the orchard and, in a duel with sticks, kills his Arab uncle and, having thus vied with him for his mother's love, subsequently takes his place. In the secrecy of the orchard the son turns into the lover of his mother. Daniel, consumed by guilt-feelings as a result of the murder of his brother, and haunted by atrocious thoughts about the deeds of his wife and son, kills himself in the orchard. Profiteers then buy Daniel's orchard and uproot its trees, and plans are made for the construction of housing projects upon it.

The character of Lona in the story is one of enigma, secrecy, and eccentricity, an undeciphered character, which remains perpetually in shadow, completely passive, and yet the one upon whom everyone's destiny depends. She is dumb and blind but very beautiful, an eternal woman over whom time has no dominion (certain facets of her character remind one of Hamda, the heroine of the novel, A Master Among His People, by Burla). Lona's origins are shrouded in obscurity. The narrator does not take the trouble to elucidate whether she is a Jewess or an Arab, or whether she is genuinely dumb, nor the manner in which she secretly comes to converse with Obadiah the Arab, and with the Jewish son. Neither does he reveal the contents of those conversations. It is possible

to assume that Lona is here seen as nothing but a personification of the soul of the Land of Israel, which devotes itself to both the Jews and the Arabs and particularly to the wonderful native-born Jews of the land, the 'Sabras'. Lona is also the representative of that hidden world of the plain, symbolic homiletic and esoteric exegesis of the Bible (the *pardes*, 'garden of knowledge' of the Kabbalah) and together with her garden, stands in the story as the embodiment of Kabbalistic allegory.

The beginning of the story sounds like a surrealistic legend or an enchanting story filled with enigma, romance, and nostalgia: 'There lived a Jew in Russia some generations ago, and he had two sons ... ' but half-way through the story the author retracts and, in order to win the confidence of his reader, he clothes his fabricated narrative in the attire of historical fact. Tammuz bases his allegory on a patently primeval myth - the story of the eternal struggle between Isaac and Ishmael to win the heart of this small plot of land, the symbols of which in the story are Lona and her orchard.

Lona's sexual union with both Obadiah (the Arab) and Daniel's son (the Jews) in the secrecy of the orchard symbolises the struggle between the two peoples: the Jewish settlement of the land, the Arab riots, the War of Liberation, and the Establishment of the State. This struggle is like that which takes place between two brothers who both compete for the love of a single woman.

In the book by Isaac Shilo, The Episode of Gabriel Tirosh, we return to the ideas of the 'Canaanites'. Dan presents the teacher, Gabriel Tirosh, with a question: 'Is it worthwhile to compare the relationships which existed between the Arabs and the Crusaders of old to those which exist today between the Arabs and the Jewish community?'. The teacher responds: 'We are obliged to make such a comparison'. In the book there is a tendency to take up arms against the Arabs and to become attached to the land, very much like the Crusaders in their time, each Fellaah of the Middle East thereby being transformed into a Salah-al-din. The subject of war is a thread which encompasses the entire book and the war with the Arabs is seen as a fate which cannot be averted. Gabriel Tirosh identifies himself with a courageous

Crusader-knight and as such the book signifies a new historiosophical motif: the identification in one's relationship to the Arabs with the destiny of the conquering Crusaders.

6.3 The Arabs as a condition of nightmarish fear or as an expression of spiritual distress

The feeling of alienation and hatred between the peoples, the detachment and lack of roots, the despair and nightmarish fear, all such elements which were given expression in the works of Y H Brenner (Bereavement and Failure, From the Start, From Here and From Here, Between Waters and Waters) appear again in most of the stories of 'The Young Guard' ('The Generation of the State', whose works were in the main published after the establishment of the State). As with Brenner, so now the elementary awareness of the situation of nightmarish fear and siege in which the Jews find themselves is given tangible expression. The situation of the Jewish minority surrounded by a multitude of hostile Arabs, and the awareness of the existence of a Jewish 'Ghetto' which is confronted by an Arab 'volcano' about to erupt (as is described in Brenner's work) has its parallel in the later situation in which the State of Israel finds itself encircled and dissected by an artificial and insecure border. The situation of isolation which grows out of the awareness of the existence of an Israeli 'Ghetto' (in the abstract sense of the term), which is hemmed in from all sides by the hostile Arab states whose declared aim is the destruction of the Jews. This was the reality of the situation close to the War of Liberation as well as before the War of Kadesh (1956) and before the Six Day War. The Arabs are perceived as a problem of existence, as an existential condition of the State of Israel and the Jews in the region. The border which surrounds and cuts the State into pieces is one of the accompanying symbols of this sense of nightmarish fear and siege.

Moshe Shamir gives expression to this condition in his novel, The Border. Shamir affirms his ambivalent attitude towards the Arabs: 'There are many Israelis and I among them, who see the conflict with the Arab world as a tragedy, who love the Arab way of life, the Arab culture,

the Arab village'. Yet he drastically changes his approach in My Life with Ishmael.

The book describes the reactions of Arabs and Jews on the border which divides Israeli-Jerusalem from that of its Jordanian section. A Jordanian captain named Afifi, who is a Palestinian refugee, is described with unconcealed sympathy. The author reveals a little of Afifi's character: 'Sometimes I put myself in the place of those who "sit on the mountain range and see before their eyes the magic carpet of the Hebrew section of the city ... Whatever we regard as nice is a source of provocation to them. Through this picture the character of Afifi became clear to me ... we are all in a closed circle vis a vis the oriental world in which we live, without our being able to break through to it, to become open towards it". The border which cuts up the landscape of Jerusalem into two, deprives the men who dwell in its vicinity of their true destiny and fills them with humiliation. These men are transformed into a symbol of the State of Israel.

The atmosphere of a dissected Jerusalem also finds expression in the novel, Not From Now, Not From Here, by Yehuda Amichai. Yitzhak Shilo's poem, The Border-Incident, is about the death of a simple Israeli citizen who comes by chance to the border-line and is shot by soldiers of the Arab Legion: 'He came to the edge of the city / the wall behind him - the goat field / the ploughed field / and in the field were figs and he tarried in her bosom / he desired her choice fruit and inclined himself ... bless O Lord, the soul of Yihyah son of the assistant from Batir'.

In the stories of Amos Oz the situation on the border of the Jewish settlement is emphasized. In his collection of stories, Lands of the Jackal, the colonies lie next to the border which separates Israel from the Arab states. The settlement Givat Ram which is mentioned in Oz's novel, Another Place, lies in the Jordan valley next to the Syrian border and the Golan heights which overlook it, and in which the enemy are stationed. The settlement here symbolizes the general condition of Israeli existence. 'A ring encircles our village. Something erupts outside the gates ... In the night the sound of the singing of the

soldiers of the enemy can be heard coming from the mountain ... their song continues indefinitely, wailing from somewhere over there and coming up through our windows ... '. Also in the novel My Michael, by Amos Oz, the author emphasizes the situation on the border of Jerusalem which is surrounded by Arab villages and suburbs.

Amos Oz sees the Arabs as a source of nightmarish fear. Yet the victory during the Six Day War provided the Jews with an experience of overthrow, by which the walls of the nightmarish blockade were suddenly breached and from behind their imaginative and nightmarish dimension the Arabs were again revealed as people and as neighbours.

In Yizhar's work the Arabs are a moral problem, in that of Oz, an existential condition. Esan Kanfani, who was mentioned above in the discussion of Yizhar's The Captive, and Benjamin Tammuz's The Story of an Olive Tree, and A Swimming Competition, states that these stories were interrupted in a superficial manner because their authors were unable to finish them in a natural way, a matter which symbolizes the 'unnaturalness' of Israeli existence in the region.

The functioning of the landscape strengthens the existential feeling of nightmare. The clear line taken by Brenner was that exactly indicated by the young Amos Oz, who saw Jewish existence in the land of Israel as constituting a piece of culture in the heart of a jungle in which wild animals, Arabs, a cruel landscape, and a deadly climate were to be found. These were 'the lands of the Jackal and the Night'. As with Brenner, so with Oz (who represents the young generation of Jews born in the land) the selfsame feeling of alienation towards the landscape of Israel is emphasized. He is unable to liberate himself from the desert which lies on the border of the land, nor from the fear of the Arab 'delluge' (which parallels Brenner's 'volcano') which threatens to engulf him. The continual consciousness of the Arab threat and the feeling of being besieged are also among the factors leading to the breach of naive Zionist values.

In the story, The Monastery of the Silent Ones, (the Latrun Monastery) Amos Oz's particular conception of the landscape is given

expression: 'Suddenly the voices of the jackals rose up, voices coming from beyond the border, reverberating through the precipitous Wadis and extending over the closed plains of a besieged land. The darkness dealt treacherously with those who took refuge in it, as it began to roll itself back with a clumsy slowness from the peaks of the stony eastern mountains, the lands of the enemy'. That part of the land of Judea which was then to be found under the government of Jordan is here described as 'the land of the enemy'. The landscape is thus seen as an inseparable part of the menace of the enemy who lives in it or infiltrates into it. This is an existential condition of life in a 'besieged land'.

In the story, Lands of the Jackal, (by which name the collection is known) Oz describes the strange and nightmarish landscape: 'Our lands betray us during the night-hours. Then they are not fragile, submissive, and known. Then the conquered territories are annexed to the kingdoms of the enemy'. The Arab 'flood' is described in a nightmarish vision: 'In an eye-wink masses of people appeared ... lean, and dark and drunkenly sliding down the slope of the ravines ... splitting up into a thousand groups and galloping wildly towards the west ... a decaying, obscure crowd, bald and bony, crawling with bugs and lice, creating a terrible stench. Hunger makes their countenance look horrible. Their eyes burn with madness ... they pass by the ruins of their forsaken villages and do not stop for a minute. In their rush towards the west they destroy everything that stands in their path. They uproot poles, break down fences, destroy fields and gardens. Suddenly ... you are surrounded by them ... their eyes blaze with an everlasting hatred. Their mouths are opened wide ... and their curved knives gleam in their hands. They curse you with broken, choked syllables, that issue from their throats with animalistic menace. They bare their stinking, rotten teeth at you. Their filthy hands pick your flesh with angry fervour'.

These are the Arab fedayeen who, in the story, are likened to cattle and beasts of prey, who infiltrate the area of the Jewish settlement with plunder and murder in mind.

In the novel, Another Place, by Oz, the Arabs are an inseparable part of the mountains, the lands of the jackal and night and the climate of the region: 'At the end of the week the Sharav (chamsin) began to blow. From the eastern mountain range a malicious dryness descended upon us ...'. In the chapter called Hatred, Oz merges the Sharav together with the hatred of the Arabs towards the Jews: 'For six days the Sharav continued to crush us without mercy ... the attacks of the enemy against us also began in those days'.

In the past, before the War of Liberation, the gangs of Arabs who roamed the land terrorised the Jewish settlement. In the story, In Short Underwear, Gideon Talpaz describes a night of terror in the settlement when Arab rioters arrive in the uniform of the British police, knocking on the doors and later killing the Jews. Among them is Suleiman al-Azazma, who had joined the gangs. Before that he had worked in the stable and the orchard of Tabachnik, a member of the settlement. Suleiman comes to his previous master, sends his family outside and warns them: 'Stand in line without shouting or speaking. These Jemah came only to kill'. Only with difficulty do they agree to take money. 'Suleiman demands "Your money or your life". Without games Hawaja Tabachnik!'

The story by Amos Rodner, The Hill of the Goats, is a satirical tale, an exact antithesis of Yizhar's story, The Captive, in which guilt feelings of those who are victorious and have invaded an Arab village and disturbed the tranquility of the shepherds, are given expression. The story describes the situation of an old Arab shepherd, Abu Asmaiyn, of the village Khirbat Sheikh-Naiyf, who shepherds his flocks on a hill nearby his village, known by the fellahin as 'Hill of the Goats'. The goats are here a symbol of the destruction which has taken place, because it was they who destroyed the forests of the land. During the period of the British Mandate, Jewish pioneers established a collective settlement called 'Kelum Etmol' on the hill. At the end of the story the place is deserted, the houses, the chicken-coops - everything is left desolate and in the farmyard goats graze to the sound of the old Arab shepherd.

Also in Chanoch Gail's poem the flocks appear as part of the landscape of the night and the Sharav: 'Lands of the vulture / the Ekal and the black abayah / also the nights are / dark ... here in the expanse of parched hills / your forsaken sheep are grazing / and with backs of gold / the sheep glitter / and a supplication is trilled / in Frij Allah'. The sheep are a symbol of the Arab environment (Ekal and the black abayah) of the wilderness and the destruction.

The novel, Kohl from Ashes, by K Tzitznik relates how, in the family of Galilyah, the heroine of the novel, the Arabs are identified in an unequivocal manner with the Nazis, as indeed is the case with many similar families in the land. 'The Nazis of the past have been reincarnated and have become the fedayeen'. Galilyah foresees the 'vision of the end here as it was there' (the motif of the holocaust). Israel is open wide to infiltrators who strike at its property and people living within its boundaries.

The motif of the holocaust plays a part in the historiosophic approach to the Arabs, the fate of the Arabs being seen as a reflection of the historic fate of the Jew. This is best expressed, for example, in the identification of the lot of the Arab refugees after the War of Liberation with that of the Jews during the Holocaust in Europe.

The atmosphere which prevailed in the land on the eve of the Six Day War calls up memories of the feeling of an impending holocaust. B Yehoshua, a father of a survivor of the holocaust says to those who are travelling with him in the train to Jerusalem: 'This time, O Jews, they will destroy us'.

Also in the novel, The Paratroopers at the Wall, by Chaim Gibori, one of the paratroopers says to his friends: 'You do not see the truth. The Arabs of today are not those of the War of Liberation and the Sinai Campaign. Nor those whom we beat in our punitive actions. Now they are different. They have lots of arms. This time they will beat us'.

Another motif; a masochistic identification with the lot of the Crusaders, also plays a part in the historiosophic approach to the Arabs.

The identification of the Jews in relation to the Arabs, with the Crusaders or other conquerors such as Alexander the Great, was given expression in the stories, Facing the Forests, by Abraham G Yehoshua, Hill of the Goats, by Amos Ronder, Alexander the Great, by Yitzchak Ben-Ner, and The Deeds of the Fathers, by Joshua Subul.

As in the book, The Incident of Gabriel Tirosh, by Isaac Shilo, so in Yehoshua's story, Facing the Forests, there is no moral significance whatsoever regarding the relationships between Jews and Arabs. The hatred is eternal, the despair absolute. There is only aggression, ruin, and the danger of self-destruction and loss. One looks forward to war, conflagration and catastrophe as to a redeeming act from the oppressive and strangulating tension resulting from the continuous feeling of being besieged and being in a continual state of tense alertness.

In Facing the Forests 'the fire' which breaks out is likely to become a new focus for the Jews of the land, but it also constitutes the justifiable reaction of the owners of the land (the Arabs) to the new Crusaders (the Jews). The dumb Arab 'whose eye is true' and his daughter are the shadows of the 'Crusaders' which stretch out over the forest of the philanthropists who planted it. A B Yehoshua's recognition of the contradiction which characterizes the national existence of the Jews does not have its source in any real social situation (as in the stories of Yizhar) and it is not shaped in the manner of the social story, but lies in the fundamental experience of existence. The narrator deals not with the difficulties between Jews and Arabs but with the elemental existence of the Jew in the land; the regarding of the presence of the Jew in confrontation with his Arab counterpart as a situation of existential nightmare.

The plot of the story revolves around a student who is totally immersed in researching the history of the Crusaders in the land of Israel, and who feels the need for change so that he might be alone and at rest. His friends find him work as a forestry scout whose task it is to sound the alarm in the event of fire. The scout comes to the house of an Arab whose tongue has been cut out and who is employed by the Jewish National Fund as the watchman of the forest. The scout

learns that the forests have been planted on the ruins of an Arab village and that the mute Arab was one of its inhabitants. The scout becomes obsessed by a nightmarish fear that a fire is about to break out. Yet he deals in a very strange way with the Arab who gathers tins of petrol and hides them in various parts of the forest. The scout knows of the preparations being made for the act of sabotage but does nothing to prevent it. A close bond develops between the two when the Arab declares that this is his home and that there was once a village here which they had covered over and buried beneath the forest.

The end of the summer is a propitious time for riots. The young Arab girl, daughter of the forest watchman reaches maturity and the scout is attracted to her. The watchman sets fire to the forest and it is completely destroyed. Then, with the morning light, the scout sees the small village in the midst of the smoke and the darkness as if born anew. (Also in the play, The Sheep, by Joseph Bar-Yosef, the settlement is built on the ruins of an Arab village in the mountains of Judah.) The police interrogate the Arab saboteur in connection with the act of arson. The Arab village which the student uncovers from beneath the forest and which belongs to the past (before the War of Liberation) establishes the problem of the Arab whose land has been plundered, on a moral plane. The narrator presents us with the idea of an Arab, but not any specific Arab. Neither is the young girl, daughter of the watchman, who reaches maturity, a real character. The Arab and his daughter, the Arab village, and the forest, are symbols of the myth concerning the struggle between the two peoples for what they regard as their birthright. The Arab is an 'elder' from the period of segregation, who serves as an example and symbol, and from whose 'mouth' they learn wisdom (despite his mute condition) (like Lona in the story The Orchard, by Tammuz).

The new forests have a clear symbolic significance, viz., the State of Israel is built on the ruins of Arab villages. Here one detects again the tendency to express one's guilt-feelings towards the old Arab settlement that had been destroyed. The Arab watchman of the forest in Facing the Forests is a kind of reincarnation of the Haj watchman who makes his appearance in The Haj from Heftzi-ba, by J Steinberg,

where he is described as the one who watches over the 'foundation stone' which itself symbolizes the Arab settlement, whereas in the story under discussion the forest watchman avenges the Arab settlement, the symbol of which is the village, by means of an act of arson.

The forest of the 'Jewish National Fund' and the Israelis who are connected with it, such as the firemen, the Department of Afforestation, the one appointed over the forests, and the police, all of whom are described in a grotesque manner as carrying out their activities on the brink of a chasm of eternal hatred and enmity, are symbols of the State of Israel. The student-scout is the only one who senses the nightmare of Jewish existence. In Facing the Forests, a strong existential perception is formed in connection with the relationships with Arabs. This perception is given a symbolic expression in the story which is both conspicuous and unequivocal through the masochistic identification with the destiny of the Crusaders. The components of this identification are: the confusion which arises concerning the right of the Jews to the land and which brings in its wake a moral dissatisfaction vis a vis the dispossessed Arabs; the image of oneself as a 'foreign' European element and an alien plant; the closed Israeli life which a whole generation had shaped out of a feeling of protracted war and siege; and the transformation of the Arab into a nightmare and a demonic power.

The story by Yitzchak Ben-Ner, Alexander the Great, is a caricature of the Sinai Campaign (1956). Two Israeli soldiers, both named Alexander, take part in a tank battle which ends in an Israeli defeat. The narrator Alexander drags his wounded namesake from a burning tank and carries him away. They wander for days and nights in the wilderness. Finally they come to a gigantic soot-covered building, tall and windowless, which might be either an ancient sanctuary or a fort. It is attached to the rocky side of the mountain and hangs precariously over the mouth of a chasm, like one of the monasteries that are to be found in the Judean desert. Their entrance into the fort gives concrete form to the surrealistic turn which the story now takes: the transition in place is also a transition in time. Within the fort live wild primitive people who conspire to kill the newcomers. The

narrator has a sub-machine gun whereas the other strange people are armed only with knives. By virtue of his superior weapon Alexander gains control over the inhabitants of the fort. The way of life of this tribe of wild men is primitive and archaic. They observe an ancient religious cult and it is not known whether they are Arabs, Muslims, Christians, or idolators, despite their being in possession of some objects of Asiatic provenance, such as curved daggers. The narrator Alexander takes from them a young woman to warm his bed at night. On the first night of their stay in the fort the wounded Alexander, out of a morbid desire for death and atonement, crawls cringingly towards the strange tribesmen.

This inclination on the part of the Israeli to commit suicide stems from the aforementioned sense of nightmare and siege. It is also a solution to the spiritual distress which such a state engenders and which is described in a number of stories which will be further reviewed.

The wild tribesmen murder the wounded Alexander with their knives. They also manage to pierce out the eye of the narrator Alexander, and prepare a pyre on which to offer him up as a sacrifice (a cultic ceremony). Eventually he overcomes and kills them all, except for one young boy whom he intends to take back with him to his land. The youth, the last remnant of the tribe, plans to strangle Alexander while he sleeps. The story ends with Alexander's wanderings with the boy.

A description of a dark world of nightmares also appears in the story, The Acts of the Fathers, by J Subul. It tells about certain 'wild people' whom others come to subjugate. The conquerors, despite their foreign nature, see themselves as the true masters over the place. They are secure in the justness of their actions, despite their war of annihilation against an enemy that is unable to defend itself because of its intellectual backwardness.

The two stories mentioned above are allegories about the nightmarish situation of the Israelis in the region, being likened to foreign invaders who are besieged and surrounded by 'primitives' (the Arabs), who conspire to drive them out and destroy them.

Another dominant idea growing out of the Israeli's sense of nightmare and siege is the perception of the Arabs as an expression of the distress of the hero, of his state of depression, guilt feelings and frustration, of his spiritual and moral degeneration, sickness, bitterness, dreams of horror, madness, and the inclination towards suicide. The connection between the theme described and the Arabs is weak. The Arabs appear as a secondary element, as an accompanying motif in relation to the central plot, and mostly serve as a solution to the plot.

The story, The Empty Pack of Cigarettes, by David Shachar, was written against the background of the days of British rule in the land, and tells about a man who returns to his house during the late hours of the night and finds that he has no more cigarettes. In order to satisfy his desire to smoke he decides to rob someone and his victim happens to be an Arab Effendi, a wicked and self-satisfied man, who has just left a whorehouse in the Arab quarter.

In the novel, The Border, by Moshe Shamir, the defects which are seen to plague the society living next to the border are described, viz., the spiritual degeneration and lack of restraint. The boy, Yevo, nicknamed Tayish, falls victim to Jordanian snipers. A border-war then breaks out which is lacking in all logic and reason. Rabbi Orlan, the hero of the novel, runs amok beyond the border to the no-man's land which lies between the two Jerusalems, and in the ruins in which he takes cover he decides to commit suicide by making use of the Arabs. The reason for Raffi's running away lies neither in the border nor in the Arabs, but in himself. Since he is unable to come to terms with himself or his environment he escapes into madness. The closed border and the continuous Arab threat are thus seen to be transformed into a kind of malaise, a vessel in which the ever present distress is cast. Whoever removes the feelings of suffocation and lack of outlet from within his soul, and searches for a cause to which he can attribute them, can easily be tempted by the Israeli existence to project his distress onto the border and the Arabs.

J Amichai, in his novel, Not From Now, Nor From Here, does not give the border as the cause for Joel's oppression, but he does find it correct to interpret Joel's death by referring to it, since it constitutes an Israeli enclave within Jordanian territory. His end comes when he enters a mine field in the hills.

The Battle, by Yariv ben-Aharon, is the story of Moses, a member of the kibbutz, who participates in the Six Day War and kills an Arab in hand to hand combat. When he returns to the kibbutz he is unable to find peace. Consumed with guilt he commits suicide by jumping off a cliff.

The hero of the novel, On the Situation of Man, by Pinhas Sadeh, is a young Israeli eccentric, Absalom Reichlin, who volunteers to serve in the parachute division and becomes a superior fighter. In one of the army's primitive raids against the Jordanians he kills an Arab soldier in self-defence. The crisis which takes place in his soul after this deed compels him to leave the army after the first year of his military service, and to isolate himself in Jerusalem in a rented room in the neighbourhood of Machaneh-Yehudah. He becomes completely estranged and alienated from the 'problems' of society and the State in which he lives. He has no inclination to project his existential anguish onto that nearby and external plane, the dark side, the border and the Arabs. But with him too it is possible to find smatterings of a dream of suicide which he plans to achieve through the instrument of the border and the Arabs: 'Sometimes it enters my mind that I should go one night to a place not too far away ... opposite the Ramallah road for instance, or opposite Wadi Fokin on the way to Bethlehem, and lie down there with my machine-gun ... and there I will begin to shoot ... and Jordanian soldiers will return my fire ... until they kill me'.

In the novel, The Life and Death of Jonathan Argaman, by Joseph Bar-Joseph, which is set at the time of the War of Liberation, the killing of an Arab during a battle at the beginning of the war leaves an indelible impression on the heart of Jonathan Argaman. His love for a young survivor of the Holocaust adds to the confusion and

encourages his feelings of guilt as a representative of a community that did not know the horrors which befell European Jewry during the war. In his regiment is a young man, Chaim, also a survivor of the Holocaust, and the previous lover of the girl. Jonathan feels additionally guilty for having stolen his comrade-in-arms' girl-friend. Eventually, when his regiment finds itself cut off and under Arab fire, Jonathan sends Chaim to silence the machine-gun which is raining down a storm of bullets upon them. He knows that he is sending a man to certain death, but his purpose is to rid himself of his rival and indeed Chaim is killed. Jonathan Argaman can then no longer stand up to the load of guilt which crushes him, and he sentences himself to death, carrying out the punishment by committing suicide.

Nomads and a Viper, by Amos Oz, opens with a description of an incursion of Bedouin nomads into the fields of the kibbutz: 'The famine brings them' (similar to Moshe Smilansky's story Muhammad). The Bedouin set upon the field in search of sources of sustenance. This is the background to the story. The hostile landscape - the jackal and the night, express the enmity and the external danger in the form of bands of nomads who wreak destruction in the farm of the kibbutz. In the story the world of a most frustrated woman, Geulah, a member of the kibbutz, is also described.

Amos Oz also wrote about Geulah in his story, Before His Time, but as a woman of twenty-six years, (she is twenty-nine years old in The Nomads and a Viper), 'ata time when Geulah Syrkin's boilers were giving off steam, the jackals of the valley were retreating to their lairs.' While on a hike outside the kibbutz Geulah meets with an Arab Bedouin who is described as a primitive creature, animal-like and almost like a beast in appearance. He is ugly and wretched, yet he arouses her passions all the same. A tapestry of fantasy is woven between Geulah and the Bedouin nomads. She excels herself in the preparation of coffee, which act is tied up with the poetic feeling which the nomads arouse in the girls of the kibbutz. The coffee serves as a reflection of Geulah's pent-up desires. Her isolated life weakens her sexual excitement. The nomad and later the viper bring her out of herself and raise that excitement to boiling point.

Geulah becomes attached to the Bedouin and adopts some of their customs as her own. As with the Bedouin, drinking coffee occupies an honoured place in her life. The daughter of the kibbutz and the nomad share certain characteristics. He is blind in one eye, and has a broken nose, and she, the plain Geulah, has a face which is pock-marked. The Bedouin shepherd laments: 'I do not yet have a girl-friend. I am still young'. And Geulah repeats his words: 'You are still young, very young ... there is no girl-friend for you'. A kind of echo of her destiny can here be heard in the words of the woman. The nomad says: 'It is forbidden to steal'. Geulah echoes back: 'It is forbidden to steal, to kill, to covet'. It seems to her as if he will rape her, and she herself is both drawn to him as well as repelled by him, but nothing happens, 'and the body of the girl was filled with revulsion even though the nomad had not touched her at all'.

When she comes back from her meeting with the shepherd-nomad Geulah is attacked by convulsions of nausea. 'This man is graced by an evasive beauty', she concludes. The nausea bears witness to her dread, to her smoking together with the nomad - to the fact that she had been drawn to him (she had asked him for a cigarette).

As Geulah pictures in her imagination the act of rape, which she so desires, the figure of the wild nomad enflames her ungratified passions. The act of rape, which did not transpire during their meeting in the garden, happens afterwards among the bushes of the kibbutz, at a time when Geulah, the ugly spinster, pits herself against her real and imaginary romantic adventures and reaches a fusion of erotic delusion and death when she is bitten by the viper. The viper is very much like the nomad in his seductive and forbidding aspect, 'weakly she turns over on her side ... a shiver of pleasure makes her skin quiver. Now she listens to the sweet wave that courses through her body and intoxicates her blood. With complete abandon Geulah answers to the sweet wave'. The 'poetic feeling' which the narrator designates the animation that comes with the arrival of the nomads, is experienced time and time again also through the instrument of the viper's bite: 'Because of the poetic feeling the girl did not notice

the serpent at all'. This lack of sentiment is what brings the poison of the viper into her body. Thus the three heroes of the plot, the nomad, the viper, and Geulah enter a triangular relationship. The serpent brings about Geulah's redemption (the name Syrkin can likewise be positively associated with the lesson of redemption taught by the generation of the founding fathers of Zionism).

The members of the executive of the kibbutz gather to discuss a punitive action against the nomads. It is a routine discussion with its usual chatter about the political and moral aspects of the problem of the nomads. The Arabs represent the dark and passionate side of life. They are also associated with the desert, the jackals, the night and disease: 'Disease stems from the wilderness'. The invasion of the nomads into the environs of the kibbutz brings with it foot-and-mouth disease, corruption, and petty thieving.

The talk about the brotherhood of nations, founders on the rock of animosity. The Bedouin elder of the tribe, like Etkin, a veteran of the kibbutz, desires to make peace. Yet the opposition widens into mythological proportions. Etkin recalls the quarrel between Cain and Abel. The members of the kibbutz are compared to Abel, and the Arabs, whom Etkin wishes to defend, to Cain. This mythological stratum finds its expression in the relationships between Geulah, the serpent, and the nomad. The eternal enmity between Cain and Abel is compared to the eternal enmity which Scriptures decreed should exist between man and the serpent: 'And I will set an enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, he will crush your head and you will bruise his heel'. (Genesis, 3:15)

The blow of the nomad, who is defined by Geulah as an animal in the likeness of the viper, becomes a blow of kindness which transforms death into redemption.

The novel, My Michael, by Amos Os tells the story of Channa Gonen, a Jerusalemite student. The dimension of nightmare and growing madness within her are an expression of her thoughts concerning two Arab twins - Aziz and Halil - the sons of Rashid Shahadah, who accompany the

heroine almost throughout the whole length of the book. In her childhood Channa had played with the twins, and now she sees them in her day-dreams as powerful men who become infiltrators wreaking havoc, destruction, and death. This habit of day-dreaming continues and reaches its climax at the end of the novel, when Channa comes to terms with her quiet madness. Although the Arab twins, the members of Fatah, are the heroes of the narrator (Channa) one must emphasize that they, in her imagination alone, are fighters in the Arab underground movement. The 'Fatah' twins have a reality in a specific social context. The Sinai Campaign parallels the spiritual climax which the novel attains and a number of its heroes, such as Kadishman, talk a great deal about political questions.

The twins are an expression of the distress of Channa who is unable to find a way to an understanding between herself and her husband, Michael.

The History of Havah Gottlieb, a novel by Miriam Schwartz, likewise points to the simultaneous feelings of nightmare and desire which the Jews feel in relation to the Arabs. Havah Gottlieb, whose childhood was spent in Meah Shearim in Jerusalem before the establishment of the State, indirectly causes the death of her brother Nehemiah when, while playing a game of hide-and-seek, she drags him into an empty house where an Arab kills the boy before her eyes. The Arab serves her as an instrument of vengeance because of her jealousy towards her younger brother. In the years that follow, guilt feelings for her part in the murder of her brother mingle in her, together with a sense of repulsion-attraction to the Arab similar to that experienced by Geulah Syrkin in The Nomad and a Viper, and to those of Channa Gonen in My Michael.

Havah becomes involved with a young Arab communist whom she had met on one occasion in her youth. While walking with her friends in the Arab neighbourhood close to Meah Shearim they are joined by a group of Arab youths. Havah later meets one of the youths, Muhmad, in a bus and falls in love with him. She then goes to his house where she lives with him, and devotes herself entirely to him. The novel is built on the tension which exists between the two ideological extremes of denial and affirmation. Eventually Havah reveals that she is carrying Muhmad's child out of wedlock and commits suicide.

Also in the story Facing the Forests, by A B Yehoshua, the Arab is the object to whom the student delivers the orders so that he might carry them out. He awakens the sleeping Arab, who lacks the power of implementation, and imbues him with the mission to erect anew the village which lies under the forest that had been destroyed by arson. The story has two centres of gravity; the estranged student and the oppressed Arab; but its essence lies in the problem of the student who is unable to operate within an academic furrow. The student's battle against the one who is appointed over the forests is the central problem of the strong, although the war of the Arabs is destined to subdue and blur it, and put it onto other more slippery tracks. The Arab is a being whom the student comes across inadvertently. The problem of the Arab is, as it were, a secondary story and minor plot. In fact, the Arab becomes a part of the hero, his spiritual function. In the war against the Jews, the Arab represents the 'son of the place'. The scout attacks the one who is appointed over the forest through the instrument of the Arab. The problem of the Arab becomes that of the student. The subjection of the Arab becomes a reflection of his own subjection, and behind the hardships of the Arab lie his own problems. In the story the Arab represents the under-developed world which cries for the material assistance of the civilized, enlightened world.

The Arab is a kind of monstrous mirror-image of the 'Sabra' (native born Israeli) and represents the yearning for the true nature of the land and its distant past.

This is an indirect solution, the literary solution to the problem of the Arabs.