CHAPTER FOUR

"Our Cousins"—on the Arab Population of Mandatory Palestine

Dorothy Bar-Adon's archive contains a full-length, unpublished manuscript devoted to materials concerning the Jewish-Arab conflict, or what has come to be called the Arab-Israeli conflict. Having given up her American citizenship and having received a British passport as a resident of Mandatory Palestine, Bar-Adon believed that Arabs and Jews would eventually find ways of peacefully sharing the same territory, via mutual understanding, and without attempting to expel one another from the land. The common Semitic identity of Arabs and Jews, in Bar-Adon's view, would enable both peoples to create a shared life.

As she gained experience in covering events in Palestine, however, Bar-Adon concluded that stronger forces than the local Jewish and Arab populations were preventing the two peoples from living in peace. The leaderships of the neighboring Arab countries did not allow peaceful coexistence. The British Mandatory authorities severely limited Jewish immigration to Palestine; immigration continued, but was considered by Great Britain to be "illegal."

With the hope of increasing understanding between Jews and Arabs, Bar-Adon wrote not only about the Arabs of Palestine but she also she travelled to Transjordan, Baghdad, and Damascus in an attempt to understand

the forces motivating Arab objections to Jewish settlement in Palestine. Based on her personal contact with Arab people, Bar-Adon attempted to outline possible solutions for the Arab-Israeli conflict. Bar-Adon's stance vis-à-vis Arab people was based on respect and sympathy, and this despite her occasional use of terminology that is unacceptable in the twenty-first century (e.g., "primitive"). She gave special attention to the reality of Arab women's lives.

The following is the editors' attempt to provide data that will make Bar-Adon's thoughts more accessible to a reader with limited knowledge of the period. We do not, of course, pretend to provide a full historical overview of the events that Bar-Adon witnessed, and of which she wrote, but rather to mention certain events with which Bar-Adon would have expected her readers to be familiar.

During the period of the British Mandate, the Jewish population grew from 10 percent in 1917 to 30 percent by 1948. Conflict between Jews and Arabs increased, both as a result of the growth of the Jewish population and as a result of circumstances on the international stage. The Mandate powers in the Middle East—in order to moderate nationalist tendencies in neighboring countries—gave limited rights of independence to Iraq, Syria, and Transjordan. The Arabs in Palestine feared that a Jewish majority in Palestine would mitigate against Arab independence in Palestine.

Bloodshed in the form of attacks on the Jewish population dates back to the Nebi Musa celebrations in April 1920; these attacks lasted four days and resulted in 7 Jews killed, 200 wounded. The 1921 May First demonstration in Jaffa lasted four days and left 47 Jews killed and 140 wounded, 48 Arabs killed and 73 wounded by the British army and by Jewish defenders. As a result, the government of Great Britain established the Haycraft Royal Commission of Inquiry, whose main conclusions (October 1921) were the limiting of Jewish immigration to Palestine, separation of Transjordan from the proposed Jewish "national home," and turning Transjordan into an Arab monarchy under the rule of King Abdullah.

Beginning in August 1929, the Yishuv suffered pogroms, as well as conflicts resulting from disagreements as to Jews' right to pray at the so-called Wailing Wall in Jerusalem (the Western Wall). These conflicts spread, leading to attacks on Jews throughout Palestine, culminating in the massacre of 67 Jews in Hebron; the Jewish community had been residents in that ancient city for hundreds of years.

During the 1930s, events on the local and international levels impacted the Arab national awakening in Mandatory Palestine: Fascist regimes were established and strengthened in Europe, and Italy, and Germany displayed aggressive tendencies which British and French appeasement did little to moderate. By 1935, when some sixty-five thousand Jews immigrated to Palestine in one year, and the Jewish "national home" was perceived as an established fact, the ground was prepared for what became the Arab Revolt against the British Mandatory authorities in 1936–1939. The aims of the revolt were:

1) Ending the Zionist settlement of the land by destroying the Jewish economic infrastructure and starving the Yishuv.
2) Forcing the British government to abandon its commitment to the establishment of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine, as mandated by the Balfour Declaration of 1917.
3) Establishing an Arab state in Palestine, governed by Palestinian Arabs.

The Revolt led the British government to institute changes in policy: the White Paper of 1939 greatly cut back Jewish immigration to Palestine and limited the rights of Jews to purchase land. Many of Bar-Adon's articles relate to these events.

FOREWORD

1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 1–4
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Kahn relates how she decided not to include any material on the Arab population in Palestine in her autobiography, Spring Up, O Well, published in 1936, despite her interest and attempts to get to know them, because she felt that the Jewish population was not ready to hear anyone who had not yet lived in Palestine during riots and violence. She then does experience them and decides to address the question due to her passionate belief that the two nations are related and that they both must and can find a way to live together.

In my first book on Palestine, Spring Up, O Well [Kahn's autobiography, published in 1936 in the United States and England], I told something

of the lives and feelings of the four hundred thousand Jews who have returned from the ends of the earth to their home, "as of right and not on sufferance."

Of the million Arabs who were already inhabiting this home [the Arab population of the land of Israel at the end of the 1930s], I said almost nothing. When an Arab cameleer happened to trudge across a page, I made way for him. When a lithe brown Arab boy playing a flute leaped gaily into a paragraph, I made way for him too.

For Arab cameleers and Arab flute players can be charming. And it would be a dour book indeed that pictured Palestine without a single tinkle of a camel bell, held in place by the blue beads that bring good fortune to the cameleer, the camel and the sons of the camel.

But the cameleer and the flute player pushed their way into the book because they were irresistible and not because of any assistance on the part of the author. For I had grimly determined not to treat with the moot "Arab question."

This determination did not emanate from any grandiose belief that the four hundred thousand were more important than the million. Nor did it emanate for lack of interest in the Arab. The Arab had interested me more than the Jew. I had known Jews before I came to Palestine. I had not known Arabs.

Therefore Arabs presented the challenge of the unknown. I applied myself to trying to probe this unknown man who is my neighbor, my Semite cousin, and who shares this country.

Free social contact between Jew and Arab in Palestine is infrequent and difficult. But I battered the barriers whenever possible. I ate tender lamb meat in the palace of the Emira of Transjordan and foul goat cheese in the mud hut of a *fellah* [Arab peasant] woman. After a few years I felt that I was beginning to know and to understand the Arab.

This slight knowledge I planned to put into *Spring Up, O Well*. Then I lost my courage.

I lost my courage because of one sentence. The sentence was, "But you weren't here during the 1929 riots" [demonstrations and violent riots in late August 1929; 133 Jews were killed by Arabs while 110 Arabs were killed by British police who were trying to suppress the riots]. For whenever I voiced the slightest opinion to Jews about Arabs, I was met with this rebuff. Gradually I realized that one was not entitled to hold any views about Arabs until one had lived through a riot. Perhaps the rebuff was

justified. I could see Arabs giving me scented sprigs of jasmine or red pomegranates. They had done it. But Arabs amuck with daggers, I could not see. I had read about it. But I could not see it. Perhaps the rebuff was justified, and I should wait to put into words what I felt about my Semite cousins.

So I lost my courage to write about the million and confined myself to the four hundred thousand.

As I write this, machine guns are booming in Lifta Village, a few miles from Jerusalem. Curfew law [During the 1936–39 Arab Revolt the British applied defense emergency regulations including curfew laws] is in force in Jerusalem and lorries carrying police and troops tear noisily through the otherwise noiseless streets. Wheat is being burned in the north and orange trees are being uprooted in the south.

I am living through the riots of 1936. I've been living through them for ten weeks now. I saw the Jews bury their dead, chanting, "El Maleh Rachamim" (God Full of Mercy). I saw the Arabs bury their dead, chanting, "Allah Akbar" (Allah is Great). I think I've earned the right to talk about the other million.

I can do little more than talk about them. I cannot write a political treatise because I know so little of politics. The cold-blooded consideration of the "Arab question" means less to me than the hot-blooded consideration of the Arab as an individual.

Neither can I write an ethnological treatise on the Arab. For to me he is not primarily a picturesque or romantic product of the East to be surveyed, studied and reported upon.

The Arab is my close neighbor. He is my fellow citizen. He is the man with whom a few months ago I broke bread. He is the man who today is spilling the blood and burning the crops of my people. He is the many with whom a few months from now I hope I shall be breaking bread again.

No, to me the Arab is not a dashing figure on a white steed. It would be more romantic if I could consider him as such. Nor is he the "Arab problem." It would be less complicated if I could consider him as such. He is a man. He is the man with whom fate has destined I should share this country and the future of this country.

He is a man. He is a Semite. He is my blood relation. What is my feeling toward him? What is his feeling toward me? Why does he periodically rise up to kill me? Is it his fault? Or my fault? Or the fault of the British Mandatory power? When will he stop rising up to kill me and to destroy the fruit of my labors?

I shall not attempt to answer these questions that are being asked today in Palestine, in London and everywhere in the world where there are Jews. I shall simply elaborate upon the questions themselves and shall set forth a deep belief in the possibility of the reorientation (in all senses of the word) of the Jew and the Arab in Palestine.

Amid the machine guns and the bombs and the talk of Royal Commissions [the Peel Commission of 1936–1937, formally known as the Palestine Royal Commission, was a British Royal Commission of Inquiry set up to propose changes to the British Mandate for Palestine following the six-month-long Arab general strike; it recommended partitioning the country], this belief may sound like a futile whimper, less even than a cry in the wilderness. But the Semite bond antedates the machine guns. Who knows if it will not postdate them?

MAHMOUD BEY

Probably the end of 1933
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 1–7
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Bar-Adon remembers a conversation with an educated town Arab and her gratitude when he told her frankly that although he liked her as an individual, he didn't like her as part of a race he believed was invading his country. Whereas she had felt frustrated and helpless in the face of anti-Semitism in the past, in this case she felt she did have answers.

Ever since I knew that the Jews were resettling Palestine, I knew that they were faced by the "Arab problem."

I arrived in Palestine with a hotchpotch of ideas about these Arabs, gleaned from sporadic reading of Lawrence, Gertrude Bell [T.E. Lawrence, a British army officer renowned especially for his liaison role during WWI and the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman empire; Gertrude Bell, 1868–1926, an English writer, traveler, political officer, administrator, archaeologist and spy] and Zionist tracts.

Some Arabs wore flowing headgear. They had a consuming love for their camels to which they gave lyrical names. They made a rite and ritual of hospitality. They had a code of honor and a code of revenge. They ate flat loaves of bread and black olives. Some of them were homosexual.

Some of them sold land to Jews and then agitated for restriction of land sales to Jews. Some of them resented the Jew because he was a colonizer and then resented the Jewish Labor Federation's creed that Jews must not employ Arabs but must work themselves in order to preclude the possibility of Jews becoming colonizers. Some Arabs had dark eyes. Their white teeth flashed. They drank a great deal of very black coffee from very tiny cups and a white colorless liquor called arak.

With these incohesive notions, I boarded the ship in New York and found myself, a few weeks later, jogging through Jaffa and gazing at the back of a gharry driver—my introduction to Palestinian Arabs.

It was not an unusual back. But the head sat rather jauntily on the neck. The kaffiyeh was wrapped rather jauntily around the head. And most jaunty of all was the red rose stuck behind the ear of a pathetically dilapidated horse.

This rose gave the whole ramshackle contraption a certain undeniable dash and gaiety. The driver cracked his whip as though he were master of a victoria and prancing steeds. And I felt like a princess galloping off to high adventure—perhaps to a handsome commoner hiding outside the palace gates.

I've never quite gotten over this feeling of high adventure when riding in a ramshackle Arab gharry. Even if I'm only going to the cobbler's, it seems that something unexpected will happen before we return.

Simple Arabs usually put a flower behind the ear of their horses or their mules. And the more mangy the animal, the more gay is the flower (or appears to be). If they drive automobiles, or buses, or lorries, they stick a flower in the windshield.

All this has nothing to do with the ponderous "Arab problem." But I like the jauntiness of people who put roses in the ear of a dilapidated horse or in the windshield of a creaking lorry. It has nothing to do with their ethics or standard of civilization. It has only to do with their primitive joy of living, which also makes them put red scarves on their heads, yellow sashes around their waists, and dance a debka while waving a handkerchief.

I'm less afraid of the primitive when it knows joy than of the civilized when it doesn't. I never could believe that people who still know the deep joy of a flower, bright colors and dancing with a handkerchief were really bad. They can be easily misled, roused, incited to be bad. But the primitive cannot be bad in the deliberate way that the civilized can be bad.

So I liked the jaunty back of this simple Arab on the first day I came to Jaffa. I still like the simple Arab, even today when I fear the part of him that has been incited.

It was a few months later before I became acquainted with an educated, town Arab. His English and cut of his suit testified to his education abroad. We were eating ices in a casino in Tel Aviv, fronting the sea. He talked for several hours and he bought me a mixed bouquet from a passing vendor, which he presented with tremendous grace and charm. It was as though he were laying all the gardens that ever had been, including the Garden of Eden, on the table before me, and for me alone. This was my first encounter with the charm of the Arab of which I shall speak in later chapters, because it is so conspicuous a part of him.

Three years has passed since this talk with Mahmoud Bey. Most of the conversation is vague now. But I remember a few sentences clearly.

"As an individual, I like you. I want to be hospitable. My house is your house. But remember, as an individual! As a race, I don't like you because I believe you are invading my country."

I was flabbergasted and dabbled with the ice to hide my confusion. Only a few months ago I had arrived in Palestine aglow with the fervor of a homebuilder. There was, I knew, an "Arab problem." But I thought it existed chiefly in English parliamentary circles or at Zionist congresses. Otherwise, it seethed underground. It lived in dark places, like anti-Semitism in other countries. The last I expected was for an Arab who was my host, and a charming host, to say, "As a race I don't like you." And then proceed to tell my why.

At first I was flabbergasted. Then I was jubilant. I was jubilant because for the first time in my life I had met a man who disliked the Jews, knew exactly why he disliked the Jews, and whose reasons were to be respected.

Mahmoud Bey did not start with the detestably annoying prologue so familiar to Jewish ears, "Some of my best friends are Jews," because, being a Semite, he had never been schooled in the rudiments of anti-Semitism.

Nor did he find it necessary to remark that, "Some Jews are peculiar, but you're so different from the others." Mahmoud is less interested in the small differences between us—a pitch of voice, a lift of the nose which comes from being out of the ghetto—than in the large sameness between us that makes us regard Palestine as our rightful home.

So Mahmoud doesn't charge us with being dirty or wily or the instigators of the Great War or the power behind the financial crisis in America.

He isn't revolted when we talk with our hands because he talks with his hands too.

Mahmoud Bey doesn't like Jews as a race because he believes they are invading his country. This was the simplest, most terse, most straightforward reason for disliking Jews that I had every heard. It made me want to shout for joy. It made me feel that I had really come home! It made me feel as much at home as all the flag-waving by Jews in Tel Aviv had made me feel at home.

For where else but in this native land could a Jew meet men who dislike his race and who could give such a clearcut, clean, answerable reason?

Anti-Semitism has usually rendered me speechless, ashamed, and utterly defeated. What could you say to a man or to a country who inferred that you were dirty, unscrupulous, engineered wars, and sometimes murdered babies for Passover? The charges were so indefinite. Your answers had to be indefinite too. You could say that your forebears had been scholars while their forebears were still savages. You could remind them that the Jews had given the world the Bible. But the world is tired of being reminded of this gift. And some Jews are becoming fatigued with harping on their ancient glory. So anti-Semitism left one ashamed of oneself and more ashamed of those who were making the vague, unanswerable charges.

But you could talk to Mahmoud Bey. He didn't render you speechless or ashamed. Here was a Semite disliking other Semites. He doesn't dislike you for the family traits, which he also shares. He doesn't dislike you for the shape of your nose, which you can't change and have no desire to change. He makes definite charges.

By what right had you come to Palestine?

By the right of the Balfour Declaration [a letter from the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Baron Rothschild stating that Britain favors and will support the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine] and under the sanction of Feisal Ibn Hussein himself who signed the Pact of 1919 [a short-lived agreement for Arab-Jewish cooperation on the development of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, signed on January 3, 1919 by Emir Faisal (son of the King of Hejaz) and Chaim Weizmann (later President of the World Zionist Organization) as part of the Paris Peace Conference], the Arab-Jewish treaty of friendship.

What was your excuse for interfering with the liberty of the Arab people?

I need make no excuse. The Arabs had been under the heel of Turkey. Now they were a British Mandate. Jews had never entered into the question of Arab liberty.

How dare you come from America to crowd the Arab out of his own land?

I was not prepared to agree that Palestine was the Arab's own and exclusive land. And the charge that I was crowding the Arab out was ridiculous. My people were draining swamps and introducing intensive agriculture. In the Jezreel and Hepher valleys, hundreds lived now in plenty where one lived before in want. Through love and patience and courage, we are refructifying a desolate, neglected, underpopulated wasteland. Is the Arab poorer, or any more crowded, because land that a few years ago bore only *tares* (weeds —which is a word derived from the Arabic *taraha,* meaning "rejected") now bears wheat and apple trees?

Mahmoud and I were still talking, discussing, arguing when the sun set over the Mediterranean. My flowers had wilted and he presented me with another bouquet. He made bitter charges. But they were charges. There was no beating around the bush. So I answered. We both remained obdurate and unconvinced. But it didn't matter. Here was a man who had clean, healthy, definable, respectable reasons for disliking Jews. Therefore I could answer. I didn't have to plead that two thousand years ago my people wrote the Bible and extolled peace.

The sun had set now. We were both tired of talking. We sat in silence, I brooding over the fact that, for the first time in my life, I had me an avowed enemy of my people toward whom I could feel warmly. Outside of Palestine I had met honest friends of the Jews. I had never met an honest enemy. A crescent moon climbed over the crags of Jaffa, like a symbol, sealing my friendship with this honest enemy.

Later I was to learn that there are few Arabs in Palestine who are sincere enough nationalists to dislike or fear the Jews as Mahmoud Bey. The leaders continue to sell land to Jews while they are agitating against land sales. The effendi dislikes the Jews when he fears that he is loosing his death grip on the *fellahin* [Arab peasant farmers] or when foreign powers tell him

to and pay him for doing it. The fellahin dislike the Jews (or pretend to) when the effendi tells them to.

And yet, even when I met with the hatred of Mahmoud Bey, I had found it a clean and honest hatred, compared to anti-Semitism that breeds in dark places.

A few years later a Jew remarked to me, "The Arabs must be our cousins. You can think of everyone else as a *goy* [a gentile]. But you can't think of an Arab as a goy."

His words summed up my meeting with Mahmoud Bey. A *goy* means not so much a non-Jew as a non-Semite. If you change or forget your religion, you remain a Semite. Even Hitler knows that. Anti-Semitism can be cultivated among non-Semites. But laws of logic prevent Semites from becoming anti-Semites. Therefore the hate of the Arab should not be confused with anti-Semitism. This hatred when it exists is honest and an honest Jew should be prepared to meet it honestly.

So my conglomeration of impressions from Lawrence, Gertrude Bell, and Zionist tracts began to be straightened out.

UMM TALLAL

Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 142–144
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive
Earlier version in *The Palestine Post,* "Umm Tallal the Emira in Drawing Room on Her Son's Wedding Day," November 29, 1934

Kahn describes a reception given by Emira Umm Tallal on her son's wedding day. (Emira is a title of high office, used throughout the Muslim world; Umm Tallal was the mother of Tallal, who was the father of Hussein, king of Jordan.) It was a festive occasion attended by royalty and slave girls who danced for each other and then feasted. The wedding, attended by fifteen hundred people, took place the next day.

The interest that people evince in a royal bride cannot be eclipsed by any other feature of the wedding, even if the groom is as important of a figure as Emir Tallal, eldest son and heir apparent of Emir Abdullah of Transjordan. And so, though the men of Transjordan according to the tradition of this part of the world were the most important figures in the festive nuptial ceremonies at Amman, it was to their wives, sisters and daughters

that they were compelled to look for an answer to the burning question, "What does the bride look like?" And the air in Amman was alive with stories of the bride's lustrous back-bobbed hair and dark, thick-lashed eyes. Indeed, as privileged ladies were to discover, the young bride, brought only several days ago from Egypt, proved to be everything that a daughter of Emir Jamil and relative of King Ghazi [of the Hashemite Kingdom from 1933 to 1939] of Iraq was expected to be.

Wives of important people fortunate enough to be invited to the palace by the emira, one of the wives of Emir Abdullah, who is known as Um Tallal (Mother of Tallal) came from all parts of the country to meet the bride. At five o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, an antechamber to the throne room was filled with all the hubbub that accompanies last-minute preparations when a crowd of women is about to embark upon an adventure. In the next room was the royal family.

To the Western eye, the dinner, which began at five o'clock and did not conclude until after ten, was everything that an Eastern royal wedding feast should be, from the numerous black slave girls who removed one's wraps, down to the quartered sheep and delectable Damascus sweets.

The first few hours of the reception proved that all women do not chatter like magpies. Chairs were drawn up in a circle, and after all had kissed and touched with their foreheads the hand of Umm Tallal they sat in repose and apparent meditation, broken only by simultaneous rising to their feet as each member of the royal family appeared. There was King Ali's [King of Hejaz and Grand Sharif of Mecca from October 1924 until December 1925] wife, wearing a white-fitted gown, and lots of little princesses, far too many to keep straight. The breathless moment, of course, was when the bride entered, in a smart frock that bore the traces of either Cairo or Paris. In her wake came Emira Haya, the sister of the groom who, according to tradition, wore a gown almost identical to that worn by her new sister-in-law.

The slaves, their brilliant-colored dresses in sharp contrast to their dark skins of gleaming ebony suddenly appeared with Arab musical instruments, and the entertainment, provided by the guests themselves, began. There were many Oriental dances to the accompaniment of singing and handclapping. A number of the performers stopped in the middle of their "act" and ran bashfully back to their places, somewhat abashed by the impressive figure of Umm Tallal seated in their chair before which they were dancing. Then there was a comedy number with one woman exercising the

privilege of the harem to poke fun at the men. Appearing in trousers and kaffiyeh, she went through a number of antics which vastly amused Umm Tallal. The Circassian women executed their native dance which the bride watched with solemn attention. One of the ladies whispered that the bride herself had been seen to dance beautifully before her wedding, but now such levity is, alas, forbidden.

Then there was a call for an American dance and a slave girl returned from some corner with a gramophone (that may have seen better days) and a number of "jazz records." All the princesses attentively looked at the solo foxtrot, which I did, and the applause was abundant.

Dinner was then served and the rest of the story of this night is just plates and plates of roast sheep, rice and nuts and other Eastern tidbits.

The next morning camel meat was piled five feet high in preparation for the great midday feast given by Majed Pasha Adwan in honor of the wedding. About sunrise the slaughterers and chefs began to prepare the luncheon, of which 1,500 people partook. Four camels and fifty bushels of rice were prepared in huge cauldrons in the "desert kitchen," improvised not far from the Palace.

The donor personally supervised the entire process of preparation. While the aroma of the steaming rice and boiling meat filled the air, the part of 1,500 guests waited on the ground under the huge brown tents that had been especially erected for the occasion. A few meters away stood five camels, the gift of another sheik, innocently unaware that tomorrow they in turn will be stewing for the feast. The host supervised the last rite of literally shoveling the content of the vats onto one hundred large copper trays, which were alternately conveyed to the waiting crowd. The feast ended with the usual festive and colorful sword dance.

"NABLUS SOAP"

Zif Zif, pp. 111–113
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive
Earlier version in *The Palestine Post*, "Nablus Soap Is Best," June 5, 1935

Kahn writes about her visit to the Nablus factory that hand made and cut "the best soap in the world." "The Master," who had learned the trade from his father (who had learned it from his…), oversaw his three sons.

"Is this the soap factory? Are you manufacturing soap now? May we watch?"

We address our question to three men who were seated near a large cauldron that was bubbling like a miniature Vesuvius in action. They stopped their simple midday meal long enough to tell us that we must wait for "The Master."

Where and who was this intriguing Master of the Kingdom of Soap? Then we noticed a slight figure bent in prayer on a nondescript couch not far away. Neither the loud bubbling of the cauldron nor the sudden intrusion of chatterbox sightseers had disturbed the remote dignity of the pious "Master."

After he had finished his rather prolonged supplications to Allah he took his place cross-legged on a special chair reserved for him and nodded his willingness to answer our questions. But he was not inclined to be garrulous. The remote dignity seemed to trail with him, even after he had finished his prayers and, sitting cross-legged like an ancient potentate, he invested soapmaking with great mystery; as though to say that anyone who didn't know all there was to know about soap didn't deserve to be told.

There is one fact that is established at the outset and everything else is commentary, "Nablus soap is the best in the world." Everyone from the Master down to the smallest boy shoveling olive pits into the fire tells you this as though it were the alpha and omega of all existence. They have heard rumors that there are people in America and Europe who take this soapmaking business seriously. But this in no way affects their deep conviction that "Nablus soap is the best in the world."

It is fifty years since the Master was first initiated into the secrets of soap manufacturing in this very room. His father had taught him and his grandfather had taught his father. No one knew exactly when soapmaking had been introduced into his family. Fifty years had wrought not a single change in this room except that he had developed from apprentice to Master; that he had three sons who were now grouped about him, the mainstay of the factory; and that soda was mixed with olive oil instead of a hard substance that, when he was a boy, was taken from the nearby hills as a principal ingredient of the soap.

The bubbling cauldron is almost a one-man show, constituting the first and almost the last process. Here the olive oil and soda are brewed until they reach the proper consistency to be taken upstairs.

We followed the Master's sons up a pair of old stone stairs into a large arch-ceilinged room. Here was a Little Egypt replete with pyramids, pyramids of glistening soap which stretched from ceiling to floor. Yesterday had been cutting day. The contents of the cauldron were now in pyramids while drying. This soap, however, is only the common variety. The Master's sons brought for our inspection the *piéce de résistance*, colored balls and cubes of soap that delight the eye as well as the laundry.

All of this is made completely by hand, even to the cutting of the thousands of cubes. Therefore it must be sold by weight, as the cakes may not be of uniform size, although, to the inexperienced eye they all look as alike as peas.

The last point of interest takes us underground. Here the fire that boils the oil and soda is fed constantly. Waves of heat bathe your face as you descend the rickety steps. But the two little gamins seated on either side of the oven are impervious. In time to their own lilting Arab tune, they throw handfuls of olive skins and seeds into the hungry fire that must be kept blazing.

By using the refuse of the olives, the fuel problem is solved. The children tell you that they are accustomed to this heat. For hours on end they sit thus, singing and tossing in handfuls of fuel. They too are convinced that "Nablus soap is the best in the world" and putting pits on the fire is more of a rite than a chore. In this dim light and grimy air they appear as nothing more than animated voices and fists.

The Master is an executive now. The actual work is in the hands of his sturdy sons. So, when we ascend we find him as we left him, sitting cross-legged and contemplating the seething substance as though he could divine the secret of all things in the green-gray eddies.

One takes leave of the Master with the feeling that if one's sons were journalists, and if his son were a journalist, he might return and find the olive oil and soda sizzling away in the same way in the same spot under the happily contented eyes of those who know that "Nablus soap is the best in the world."

THE BRITISH

Probably written in 1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 37–43
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Bar-Adon sees the British as the base of a triangle—the Jews and the Arabs are the other two legs. She commends the Mandatory Power for

> *its delicate handling of a difficult situation. If the British do mingle with the population, they usually prefer the Arabs since they are the more exotic and different, with the touch of servility the British are accustomed to from their experience in other parts of the Empire. The Jew is too similar and familiar, also irritating in his preoccupation with building a homeland and in his incessant questioning of orders.*

The British are the base of the triangle upon which the two legs are standing. This base can serve either to bring together or to keep apart the two legs. It is natural that the legs should coincide at the vertex. And I believe this has happened in Palestine. Where Arab and Jew have met on a friendly basis, it has been of their own doing.

I can neither criticize, analyze nor even comment upon the British Mandatory power. The Mandatory seems to operate along the same general lines as the Empire. And empires and ways of empires are as strange and wonderful to me as to most American-bred folk. I have heard stray phrases such as "carrying water on both shoulders" and "divide and rule." But nothing concrete comes out of these stray phrases beyond the vague impression of castles and pawns. There is a great deal of moving about. The pawns are always raising a hue and cry. And in the end, the Empire triumphs. There are also servants of His Majesty's government who serve the Empire in remote outposts of civilization and provide material for engrossing stories by Somerset Maugham [British playwright, novelist and short story writer]. Sometimes these servants drink much whiskey or become involved with native women to forget. But they remain loyal to the Empire through thick and think and in the end the Empire, somehow, triumphs.

I know only what everyone who lives in Palestine knows too; that the British Mandatory power has had a mammoth and delicate task to perform. Whether the task is being performed for the sake of the Arabs, the Jews, or the Empire is beside the point. Establishing a Jewish homeland is a unique and historic undertaking. And in proportion to the importance of the undertaking, there have been the difficulties with the undertaking. Britain has managed to balance water on both shoulders, even though it spills over a bit now and then. It is doubtful if any other nation in the world could have succeeded so well.

And perhaps by holding the two legs of the triangle apart, the base has performed its particular function. Perhaps it is entirely the business of the Jews and the Arabs themselves whether or not they have the wisdom to

coincide at the vertex. The Mandatory remains an impersonal, more or less mechanical, instrument of which the Jews and the Arabs send their protests and their demands, which are "seriously considered."

In times of peace, His Excellency the High Commissioner inspects the crops in the Jewish settlements and he inspects the crops in the Arab villages. In times of rioting, he visits the injured Arabs in government hospitals and the injured Jews in the Hadassah hospitals. This, I suppose, must be a minor part of this vague operation known as "carrying water on both shoulders." To one who believes that nothing is more important than the fusing of the two populations, the whole performance seems at times discouraging; one can imagine that in fifty years from now another high commissioner may be inspecting other Jewish and Arab crops and visiting other Jewish and Arab wounded.

But the entire experiment in Palestine would have been impossible without this base to hold the two legs of the triangle apart or together. And probably it would have been impossible for the Mandatory to function effectively except as a mechanical instrument. Such an instrument is best able to deal with what goes on in heads. As for what goes on in hearts, this should be dealt with by the Arabs and the Jews themselves.

It is easier to talk about those who are administering and serving the Mandate than about the Mandatory power. When I first arrived in Palestine and was still wide-eyed enough to ask general questions, I remember asking a British constable who was on duty at the Arlosoroff murder trial in Jaffa whether he preferred Jews or Arabs. He replied, "I prefer Arabs because when you tell them to do something, they do it. When you tell a Jew to do something, he asks you 'why.'" (This, of course, was three years before the present disturbances.)

Since that day, I have speculated a great deal about the triangle. But I have never forgotten the forthright answer of the constable and I have often wondered if there is much more to be said to explain why there is so little social intercourse between the British and the rest of the population. People who do what you tell them to do become boresome. And people who persist in asking "why" become irksome. It is cozier to stay within one's own circle than to be bored or to be irked.

Actually, there is little reason for the Englishman to rouse himself from the coziness of his own circle. He came here to do a certain job, whether he is a constable or a high official. He is doing that job. He is interested in Palestine in the same way as he is interested in all parts of the globe that

concern Britain. But this fate is not bound up with the fate of Palestine. Next week or next month he may be transferred to India or the Barbados. Then Palestine will be but a headline in the newspapers and a barren spot on the shore of the Mediterranean where Jews and Arabs are squabbling. No one can blame the Englishman. If Palestine were not my country, I should wonder myself why the Jews and Arabs are making so much noise about it.

There is little necessity for the Englishman to want to associate with the natives. There is more necessity for the natives to want to associate with the Englishman. We are all—Jews and Arabs—painfully far away from understanding the British mentality. And since our destiny rests a great deal with how that mentality functions, it would be well for us to become acquainted by the dignity, humor and human qualities of these men who are talking about us so familiarly somewhere in London. But, unfortunately, many of the Englishmen we meet here are no more than human editions of Hansard's [printed transcripts of parliamentary debates; named after Thomas Curson Hansard, an early printer and publisher of these transcripts]. Sometimes they impress us by the things they say or do. But few of us know why they say or do these things. We never quite know what makes the wheels go round in an Englishman. Jews and Arabs of the higher circles exchange pleasantries with them at garden fetes or on the King's birthday, or at the High Commissioner's dinner table. It doesn't seem to go much beyond these pleasantries.

There is probably more intercourse between the Englishman and the Arab than between the Englishman and the Jew. I believe the constable in Jaffa supplied the reason. Mixed with the charm and the graciousness of the Arab, even the most important Arab is a gram or so of servility. This may not be conscious or recognized by either party. But, be it ever so subtle or ever so slight, it is there. The Englishman may not ask for or demand this servility. But at least, he knows how to treat it. He is accustomed to it in the colonies. He regards it as his due from all natives and he accepts it with the same grace as a beautiful woman accepts small favors.

Also, the Englishman who comes out to the colonies looks for the picturesque and the exotic. He likes to have lambs slaughtered for him and he likes to roll rice into small balls and eat it with his fingers, even if the sauce drips down his cuffs. All this is part of the pageantry of coming to the colonies. He may think he has outgrown this pageantry. He never quite does. The picturesque compensates, in part, for the discomforts in these sorts of places. Otherwise, they are a dreary, depressing, inadequate

imitation of the West. That's what Tel Aviv must be to the average Englishman. At least, that's what Tel Aviv would be to me if I were an Englishman.

The constable also answered the question why there is so little intermingling of Jews and English. The Jew has always asked himself "why" even when he was in places where he daren't ask aloud. Now he is at home and dare ask aloud. So he asks anybody "why" about anything. And no Englishman in a colony likes to be asked "why" by a colonist.

I think this "why" that sprouts out of the eyes, ears and mouth of the Jew confuses the Englishman a bit. Here is a brand new type of colonist. How exactly is one to deal with him?

Even in the informality of a drawing room this colonist is puzzling. He isn't different enough from an Englishman to be interesting, as an Arab can be interesting. And yet he isn't exactly like an Englishman. He is ridiculously wrapped up in this business of a homeland, sometimes tense about it, sometimes fanatical. He is grateful to the Englishman for having made the homeland possible. He realizes that without him it would probably have been impossible. It is a debt that he will not easily forget. But at the same time he is proud. He is as proud as the Englishman is proud. Despite his gratitude to the Englishman, he regards Palestine as his home. He will live for it in times of peace. He will die for it in times of trouble. And at all times he will persist in asking "why" about it.

No doubt if many of these same Jews and Englishman met in England, there would be a common intellectual meeting ground. But it's different in Palestine.

Add to this the gregariousness of the Jew, and the picture of airtight social compartments is complete. The Jew is accustomed to being herded together for one reason or another with his fellow Jews. It has become second nature to him. He has even learned to like it. He has not been in Palestine long enough, nor under favorable enough conditions to lose this herding instinct which comes from being on the defensive. He likes to talk to his own people. They share his problems, his joys and his fears. He would like to know the Englishman. But under the existing conditions, this requires an effort. He retires instead to the coziness of his own circle.

So here is the Englishman, the stolid base of the triangle: sometimes drawn to the Arab by the picturesque and then withdrawing because of boredom; and a bit baffled by this new kind of colonist, the Jew who is proud and who persists in asking anybody "why" about anything.

THE ARAB

Probably written in 1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 43–61
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

According to Kahn, the burden of creating a relationship between the Arabs and the Jews rests on the Jews as the ones coming into the country. She stresses the differences between the town and the village Arab.

She admires the hospitality, generosity, and dignity of the village Arab but feels that the illiteracy of this generation would prevent any closeness with the educated Jews. The town Arab is torn between his own culture and the West—sometimes he rejects his own culture's positive values and adopts vulgar ones from the West. He protests the sale of land to Jews, only after selling his own. An attempt to learn more from an American-educated Arab woman fails when that woman flatly denies (perceived) discrimination against women in her society, barring the possibility of open discussion.

The burden of the duty of establishing relationships rests with the Jew who is returning to Palestine. One would hardly have expected the traditional hospitality of the Arab to extend as far as making actual advances toward the incoming people, externally so different from himself. I cannot see where the Arab could have done more than wait with folded hands for these advances to be made. And in this respect the Jew has sometimes fallen short because he has had to expend his energies in so many directions.

Because of the marked class cleavage, we must consider the town and village Arab separately.

The village Arab may mar the charm of his flowing garments by adding a shabby European cloth coat or a pair of brown brogues. He has listened to the radio so often in coffeehouses that the unseen voice is no longer a grave mystery. But despite these surface flourishes, he remains an unadulterated Easterner.

I have been in Palestine only three years. I think my experiences are not unlike those of other immigrants. Like most Jews, I have been obsessed with busyness. I have looked at much and seen little. I have not learned Arabic. The things that I have learned, many people know without coming

to Palestine. I know that one must always accept coffee when it is proffered by an Arab, even if he wipes out the cup before you drink with the dirty hem of his *abaya* [a simple, loose overgarment]. I have learned a bit here and a bit there about the Arab.

The principal thing that I have learned is how much I must still learn. I am still of the West. I have come back to Palestine. He was already here. And when my first flush of busyness subsides, I must learn about him. He will not learn about me unless I teach him. He peers at my bobbed hair and free ways, his wonder tinged with amazement. Otherwise he pursues the tenor of his ways, not very perturbed by the fact that I have come from America to settle in Palestine. My coming is far more momentous to me than to him.

In times of peace, he has the composure of the East. If he were an American, he would formulate solutions to complexities before the complexities arose. Being an Easterner, he is slow to sense complexities and does not create them. If I and my ways do not collide with him, he does not collide with me. When, however, his leaders tell him that I have desecrated mosques and murdered babies, he believes them and sets out to murder me. He does not know me well enough to have faith that I would not desecrate a mosque and have no interest in murdering babies. It is partly my fault that he does not have this faith. Learning the ways of this Easterner and teaching him mine is a mammoth task and a sacred duty. I am busy, but I dare not be too busy to realize that he will not take the initiative.

What are the chances for executing this duty?

I reiterate that I do not know the Arab well. I have been to his festivals. I have slept in the tents of his wives. I have ridden in his buses to Jericho, all tangled up with chickens and melons and cacti fruit. I have brushed past him. And I have emerged with the impression—which can be no more than impression—that I like the simple Arab.

Jews who have been here longer and who know the Arab better may refute me. I may be speaking from the depth of my ignorance. But many Jews who have been here a long time tell me that they like the simple Arab too. And the longer they have been here, and the better they have known him, the more sure they seem to be that friendship between the Arab and the Jew is a possibility and a probability.

The village Arab, aside from being an unadulterated Easterner, is a simple man. I cannot see where he is different from simple men the world

over, except for his particular and peculiar headgear or traditional customs. A Russian journalist once told me, "Our peasants are peculiar. They will take you into their hovels and will share with you their bread and vodka. But while you sleep, they may steal everything—even your shoes. But you cannot be annoyed. They don't realize that they are doing anything wrong. And at heart they are such good people."

I wonder if, after all, the Russian peasant is so peculiar. I wonder if all simple people are not peculiar to us who have long since stopped being simple and have become very complex. They have a naiveté that confounds us. They have a confusing code which involves sharing and also involves the survival of the fittest. This code prompts them to offer us shelter and bread and, sometimes, to steal our shoes while we sleep. But at heart they are good people. Being naive with the naiveté of a child, they are quick to sense kindness or insult and to respond. They have no prejudices. And they laugh and cry and hate and love without malice aforethought. This same naiveté, which prompted them to share their bread with me a few months ago, is prompting them tonight, as I write this, to kill British constables and to burn the wheat of Jewish settlers.

It seems to me that the same rules that apply to simple men, in general, should apply to simple Arabs in particular. And, as far as I can see, these rules do apply. I remember the day I rode to Hebron in an Arab bus. It was orange season and everyone on the bus was eating oranges. The floor was a jungle of peels and the juice was gushing in miniature fountains down chins and across wrists. The last thing one felt like doing was eating an orange. But when the Arab occupying the same seat proffered my companion and me his sack of fruit, there was nothing to do but eat an orange. And when, with superb gallantry, he offered to peel it (after wiping his knife on a filthy sack) there seemed nothing to do but have it peeled. My companion, meanwhile, was frantically peeling her orange with her fingers, fearing lest his gallantry and his dirty knife extend to her. She was a tourist. So it didn't matter. But I wasn't. So it mattered. It mattered very much that I accept this gallantry with the same graciousness as the gesture was made, although I might formulate a secret hope that soon he will learn not to clean his knife on his filthy sack.

It is always like that when you're with simple Arabs—some filth and much charm and warmth and spontaneity, all mixed together. I've looked for hate in the mixture—deliberately looked for it. I've been told it's supposed to be there. I've simply failed to find it. I have tried to be a

realist. And knowing that hate has much to do with realism, I have looked for hate. I have long since discarded rose-colored glasses. Wherever I go, I search for this hate because if it is there, then it is high time that I knew about it.

Many times I've searched in Ramallah when I went to buy pottery, and in Bethlehem when I went to buy mother of pearl brooches, and in Hebron when I went to buy glass, and in Nablus when I went to see the Samaritans. I've searched Jericho and Tulkarm. I've searched in trains and buses. I've searched on the shores of the Dead Sea and in the desert beyond Be'er Sheva.

I have failed to find this hate, except sometimes among the schooled town Arab, whom I shall discuss later.

I think that if men and women looked at me with hate in their eyes, I'd recognize it as soon as the next fellow. But I can't put into their eyes what I haven't seen. And I've seen only what one usually sees among simple people—a conglomeration of filth and warmth. And in Palestine, this warmth seems to include Jews as spontaneously as it includes anybody else.

Usually we more complex organisms, who neither share gracefully nor steal the shoes of our guests, are not called upon to mingle very closely with these simple folk. If we mingle at all, it is to observe them politely through pince-nez, as did the Russian journalist; but we Jews in Palestine are called to mingle very closely. And despite the naive virtues of the simple Arab, establishing relationships is difficult.

There is no opportunity, for this generation at least, to enjoy the slightest bond of mind or intellect. The Jews, including the village Jew (or especially the village Jew) has been cultured and horticultured to a fine point. The village Arab is illiterate. In most cases, the Jew has encompassed the world and come back to simplicity. The Arab clings to his simplicity because he knows nothing else. Though they reach the same spot, they are at the opposite ends of the poles. The Jew is not capable of coming back to peasantry as the Arab understands peasantry. In the next generation, or the next after that, the village Jew may be less complex and the village Arab less simple. But this doesn't reduce the gap today. And this gap of mind is painful to the Jew as it is painful to few men. He has put so much of his life into books. What is he to say to this man who cannot even read a book? So there are almost a million men here to whom the Jew cannot speak—even when he knows Arabic.

But meantime where is the language of the heart. The simple Arab will not take the initiative in establishing a relationship. He is not even

aware of the necessity. But he will not bar the way. He will share his sack of oranges with the Jew and he will accept our sack.

Sacks of oranges. Such little things. Such small drops in the bucket of the complicated "Arab-Jewish problems." Perhaps small. Perhaps as large as the bucket. For who has ever drawn the line where small things end and large things begin?

The town Arab is quite a different species of man from his village brother. It is not solely busyness that has kept the Jew from being able to reach him. Nor is it that the Jew prefers a simple man to an educated one. For, as I have said, the Jew is so immersed in his books that he must pick his way back to the simple man. I believe that the thing that is baffling the Jew is that the town Arab today is neither cultivated nor wild, neither tamed nor untamed, neither simple nor complex. He is at the crossroads of many things. How is the Jew—how is anyone—to reach him?

The town Arab may have been converted to Christianity and attended the Friend's School in Ramallah. He may have graduated from the American University in Beirut. He even may have studied in England.

In most cases his father did not. He is the first generation to taste of higher Western education and to be thrown into a new environment. The learning and the environment may be in his head. But they have not had time to be absorbed into his bloodstream. At times they rattle him. He suffers all the proverbial dangers of a little knowledge.

This frequently results in his becoming a hybrid product, combining the East with a smattering of the West. A combination of Eastern and Western influences should be sought. But he is not yet sufficiently discriminating. The West is apt to mesmerize him. Too often he relinquishes some of the good things of the East and adopts some of the bad things of the West. He has not yet the wisdom to pick and choose, to separate the wheat from the chaff. He is too quick to distance his own and to allow himself to be wooed and won by the glamor of the new. But he never takes more from the West than the glamor, the superficial or the distinctly bad. Sometimes he is like a parrot who only picks up swearwords. He is neither here nor there. In his effort to be smart, he becomes a smart aleck. In the same way that adolescent boys must pass through that "difficult stage," he is passing through a difficult stage in his general development.

I think this hybrid stage must be trying for him. He is not to be censured. One meets with the same thing in Baghdad and Damascus, and probably wherever East and West are colliding. The education process is

always gradual. The fact that it has begun at all is cause for rejoicing rather than censure. At the same time, it is extremely difficult for the Jew who must find a way to reach him and to talk to him during this transitional period. If only we could wait until he passes through this "difficult stage" and comes out safely on the other side. But we cannot wait. We must talk to him today. And I believe this hybridness is one of the principal factors that has kept us from reaching him. At the present moment, he doesn't know exactly what kind of a man he is personally or politically. Neither do we.

This quality of being neither here nor there reveals itself in small ways and large ways, from the cut of his suit to the variety of his nationalism.

Sometimes he displays an excessive admiration for anything Western in order to stress the fact that he has studied in Beirut or London. In this event, he prefers speaking English, even poor English, to Arabic. He abandons his naive dress and is not yet able to choose his western clothes in good taste. In his home he discards low stools and divans in favor of garish, overstuffed furniture.

One of the most pleasant homes I have ever seen belonged to the Arab servant of a friend of mine. We visited him on his wedding day, traveling an hour on horseback from the main road to reach his little village. A rug, stools, and plenty of cushions comprised almost the whole of the furnishings. The square, box-like rooms of a Western house need decoration to make them livable. But the Arab rooms, with their graceful arches, nooks and deep window ledges are their own adornment. These houses must have been conceived by some wise architect of the East who knew well the climate and conditions of the country but who knew nothing at all about overstuffed furniture and bric-a-brac manufactured in Japan.

It seems rather a shame that the Jews have not adopted these Arab houses—it is doubtful if they can improve upon them. And it seems more of a shame when the Arabs destroy, by improvement, the beauty that is their own heritage.

The clothes and the home of the hybrid Arab are unimportant externals that in no way concern the Jew. Yet they serve as a key to important internals that must concern the Jew if he is to bridge the present gap. They explain and give physical body to the loosening of spiritual moorings; dignified, splendid, Oriental moorings that should be too proud to creak before the West.

The honor, pride, and above all else, dignity of the thoroughbred Arab needs no elaboration. This dignity was based on traditions that did not

countenance compromise. This Arab was guided by tradition even down to the tune that he beat when he ground his coffee. He knew his friends. He knew his enemies. They knew that he knew.

This is not to be interpreted as a lament because the educated Arab does not sit cross-legged in the desert and grind his coffee. It is natural that he should want his coffee prepared for him in the best fashion provided by the cafés of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv or Haifa.

But it is a lament that he does not hold onto the best of his own spiritual traditions—the honor and pride and dignity of the coffee grinders—until such time as he fully adopts the traditions of the West. But that is his business and he seems to be tending in that direction. At all events, he cannot continue to vacillate. He must come back to the East, or go completely West, or fuse the best of the two wisely.

The same hybrid impulses that prompt him to put a suite of overstuffed furniture in a vaulted room are responsible for his politics. Of late, he has become a dilettante in nationalism. He looks wistfully in the direction of Mussolini. Sometimes he sends his children to Italy to thoroughly imbibe the ways and means. But because he is a dilettante with only a smattering of the West, the constructive phases of Mussolini's program, which have benefited at least his own people, completely escape the Arab.

In recent years, the influential and opulent Arab has not lifted a finger to better the condition of his people. Not a single educational, scientific and cultural or health institution has sprung up in Palestine through the will of the Arab people. Now and again there are rumors of a university or vague references to "funds" which, owing to inner dissention, come to naught. It is only in times of rioting that these "funds" materialize. The educated classes cannot say that they do not want these things. They want them and they use them for themselves. But to give them to those less opulent than themselves is a social trick of the West that they have not yet learned.

Of late years one has heard much of the lessening of beggars and penury in Italy. In a series of articles on Palestine by Mr. St. John Ervine [Irish author, writer, critic and dramatist], one got the impression that there was nothing else here but Arabs whining for *baksheesh*. Mr. Ervine said, "I am not ready to believe that a ruling race can come out of a people whose infants' first articulate word is not *Allah* but *baksheesh*. . . . When I see Arabs displaying some of that pride that is, I am continually assured, the badge of all their tribe, I shall begin to believe in their nobility."

I wish that Mr. Ervine could have met with me the thirteen-year-old son of Sheikh Mithgal Pasha in Transjordan, already a man, already a Crown Prince of the desert in his own right, more interested in showing his splendid horsemanship to his guests than in collecting baksheesh. There wasn't a whine in his taut brown body.

But the educated Arab has renounced this freedom and pride of the desert of his own free will and not through the coercion of the British Mandate or the Jews. He had renounced it before they came to Palestine. Often he proclaims himself less attracted by what remains of the desert tradition than is the tourist. Well and good. But he has taken away the dignity of Mithgal Pasha's son and replaced it with the whine of baksheesh. Either the child must have the dignity of the untamed, or he must have the advantages of the tamed. As long as he remains a diluted hybrid, he will whine, and the Westerner—be he Mr. St. John Ervine or the Jew—will be obliged to seek for that ancient nobility.

In times of peace, the influential Arab busies himself with land transactions and other personal and private business. Sometimes he winters in Cairo and summers in Lebanon. And his people whine unless they are cared for by government funds, now plentiful owing to Jewish immigration. In times of riots, he summons his "people" to fight for a cause that he has never troubled to define to them.

It is this kind of dilettante nationalism that makes it difficult for the Jew to approach the town Arab. For it is a nationalism that seizes like a vulture on the degradations of Italy and Germany and any other parts of the West that have anything to say about nationalism. But of the constructive forces that are these countries' only excuse for being, they remain completely unaware.

Meantime, the Jew has come home with an overwhelming love for the country. Nationalism to him, as far as Palestine is concerned, can only be translated into terms of long-needed trees and wheat and grapes and cities, into terms of hospitals and schools and laboratories. He does not expect even the town Arab to know as much about these things as he knows. But if only the town Arab would show that he wants to know….

There are in Palestine a few town Arabs, like Mahmoud Bey, who are nationalists and at the same time idealists. They preach the non-sale of land to Jews and, I believe, they abstain from selling. Jews respect this type of Arab, even when we disagree most bitterly with the premise of his argument.

We respect him because he knows what he believes and is willing to sacrifice for that belief when the need arises. We understand him because he functions as we function. We Jews need land. And yet time and time again I have heard Jews complain, "The leaders agitate against the sale of land. But they all sell their own land." Paradoxically enough, this selling of land disturbs the Jew despite his terrific land hunger. It disturbs him because he finds that his Arab countrymen, with whom he must reach an understanding, are vacillating. And this vacillation leads them to betray their own people. They have relinquished ancient tribal loyalty and have not yet learned modern national loyalty. And if they betray their own people, whom will they not betray?

Unfortunately the number of Mahmoud Beys [Bey—Ottoman or Turkish title for chieftain, traditionally applied to the leaders of small tribal groups] in Palestine is shockingly few. The number of educated Arabs, who have started to agitate about land sales after they succumbed to selling their own land at exorbitant prices, is shockingly many.

I do not desire to delve into the fine points of politics in Palestine. I mention the sale of land only because it is so characteristic of the relationships, large and small, between town Arabs and Jews.

Had the nationalist Arab consistently refused to sell his land to the Jews, a different solution to the carrying out of the Mandate would have been sought several decades ago. Had the nationalist Arab objected to the influx of Jewish immigration and capital a long time before the newcomers had settled themselves in their homes and before the six million pound surplus had piled up in the government treasury, the Jew would be less confused by the Arab outcry.

But the tactics of the town Arab confuse the Jew and postpone understanding tactics. At best, they are unpleasant. The Jew had hoped to have been done with them when he came to Palestine. His position was simple enough. He had been given the right to have a homeland in Palestine. He rallied funds from Jews, rich and poor, throughout the world. He moved in bag and baggage and put not only his nose but also his body and soul to the grindstone. He was not prepared for tactics.

If he had to encounter opposition, he would have preferred it to be the honest, hostile, opposition of a Mahmoud Bey. But the tactics of a hybrid town Arab, who himself does not know what he wants, are difficult to meet. And I think that it is this undercurrent of tactics, more than anything else, that has made social contact difficult.

There are, or course, some pleasant relationships between town Arabs and Jews. It must always be borne in mind that the Arab is usually hospitable and charming, no matter when or under what circumstances you meet him. So there are friendly interchanges of opinion at rotary club meetings or in the course of business dealings, especially since the Arab has the Eastern knack for mixing business with pleasure. In Jerusalem, where a number of Jewish tenants rent houses from Arab landlords, one frequently hears, "Our Arab landlord and his family are delightful."

And in this way, acquaintanceships have sprung up. There is the elaborate interchange of compliments and pleasantries. Sometimes one family is invited to tea. Unfortunately, these acquaintanceships usually remain acquaintanceships, based a good deal on the proverbial Arab graciousness that none can withstand.

There is still too much strain and too little spontaneity. Inviting Arabs to tea or being invited by Arabs is still somewhat in the nature of an event; still something to mention to one's friends afterward. No doubt it is the same in Arab circles. There is as yet little vestige of those deep bonds of friendship that can link people together tightly enough to transcend politics and memoranda.

The Muslim custom of keeping their women in the background helps to make social intercourse less free. Jews are still a bit embarrassed by this "man's world." If they plan to invite Ibrahim Bey, there is some uneasiness in the household. Has Ibrahim Bey a wife or wives? Is she a Muslim? Is she ever seen in public? Should she or should she not be included in the invitation?

Some deep friendships have grown up. And when they have, they often prove themselves of fabric strong enough to withstand hard wear. One of the blessings of every riot in Palestine has been that it unearths such bonds. Out of the blood and horror of the 1929 slaughters [during the week of riots from August 23 to 29, 133 Jews were killed by Arabs and 339 others were injured], numerous instances emerged of Jews and Arabs risking their lives for each other. And no doubt when the smoke of the present [1936–39] disturbances clears away, history will have repeated itself.

Such ties reveal themselves in times of stress. Why not in our day-to-day existence?

Why? I do not know. But I believe that when the Jew tries to know this town Arab, he is able to get just so far and no further. Then he bumps up against this disconcerting hybridness. If he bumped up against honest hostility, he would

meet it. But he bumps up against a man who is no longer of the East, not quite of the West, and not very sure in which direction he is tending.

This hybrid quality, as opposed to the dignity born of self-assurance, was illustrated in a story told to me by a Jewish executive. One day, while driving, he passed an automobile that had been in an accident. He took the injured occupants to the hospital. One of the men whom he had helped was an influential Arab sheikh. When he recovered, the sheikh sought the Jew out and was extravagant in his gratitude. The incident resulted in a deep friendship which ripened with the passing years.

On his deathbed, the sheikh sent for the Jew and with characteristic simplicity asked him to "act as a father to my son." The Jew accepted his fosterfatherhood.

Years passed. The busy executive and the growing boy kept in close touch.

"And now?" I asked.

"Well, now it's difficult. Whenever there are disturbances, I don't see him. He is a bit of a nationalist. Before the 1929 riots, he came to me for advice. What could I say to him? I could only remind him that now he is a man. He is an Arab and must behave as an Arab in the way that he believes right."

So now and again there is this chasm between the fosterfather and his protégé. For the young man has not attained yet that self-confidence, that dignity, that bigness of soul that had raised his father so far above and beyond movements.

I remember an encounter that I had with the wife of a prominent Arab attorney. I wished to discuss with her the status of Arab women in Palestine. Hitherto my relations with Arab women has been confined mostly to simple Muslims who wistfully admired my modern jewelry and were pleased when I remarked that their own hammered silver earrings were more beautiful. So I looked forward to my meeting with Mrs. Y., who had studied in America. I wanted to push beyond the romantic veils of the harem, and Mrs. Y. could help me.

I came to her office and we plunged into the subject. I was hungry for information and my eager questions tumbled over each other. But an unpleasant clash came when I mentioned the fact that the fellahin women walk beside the donkeys while their husbands ride. She was incensed. She felt that I was insulting her people. And then she flatly denied that women do walk beside their husbands.

I was taken aback. We were not theorizing. We were talking facts, and I had seen Arab women walking alongside donkeys more times than I

could remember. They are as much a part of the Palestinian landscape as olive trees and cacti.

Had Mrs. Y. replied, "That is the way of the East and we like our way," there would have been no quarrel. No one has ever proved that the Western treatment of women is superior to the Eastern. Perhaps women in purdah are shut out from as much evil as good. Who is to judge?

Or had Mrs. Y. declared that the position of fellahin women is not enviable but it is on the road to improvement, there would still have been grounds for discussion.

Under the circumstances, I could only gulp down my coffee, hurriedly finish my cigarette and flee. I had no way of meeting this smoldering resentment of hers that made it appear as though the fellahin women walking on the roads were a figment of my antagonistic imagination.

Here again was the hybrid—the lack of pride in the East, and the intangible resentment against the Jew and the West.

Before I left, however, Mrs. Y. invited me to come to have tea at her home. I said that I would. I thought that I would. But somehow I never did. I cross-examined myself. Was her invitation sincere or was it mechanical Arab cordiality? Did she really want to see me again? How could we talk in the face of this unreasonable resentment of hers? Would the tea hour be as strained as the interview had been? By the time I finished the self cross-examination, there was no spontaneity. So I postponed going until another day. And I never went.

This is just a stray encounter but more or less typical of what often happens when we Jews try to slip across the frontiers. I have tried many times and met with one kind of barrier or another. Other Jews have never tried and cannot tell you exactly why they have never tried.

I recall a recent conversation with a Jewish woman who had lived here for some fifteen years. She was expressing some opinion about the Arab population and I interrupted with, "Do you know many Arabs personally?"

Miss G. was taken by surprise, reflected for a moment and admitted, "Well, no. Practically none." Then she corrected herself, "Yes, I know my Arab landlord of course. I like his family, especially his young daughter. Once she came to my house for lunch. I liked her."

I tried to pin Miss G. down. Did she intend to remain here for the rest of her life? Yes. Didn't she feel any curiosity about these people among whom she has lived for fifteen years and with whom she intended to remain?

I could tell by her surprise that it was probably the first time she had been pinned down. Her replies were halting, "Yes, they are my neighbors. Of course.

I never had any prejudice against them. I like them when they're nice, just as I like anyone else. But I have always had my own friends, just as I had my own friends in England. I never avoided meeting them. It just never happened."

So that's it. A Jew can live in Palestine for fifteen years and just never happen to meet an Arab. Or you can try to make it happen and find a Mrs. Y. who discourages you.

I don't know how we Jews are going to slip over these frontiers. All I do know is that we have to slip over these frontiers—every last Jew who intends to remain in Palestine. Even if it means planting less vineyards and building less cities, we've got to tackle these frontiers. A Jew living in England can afford to remain within the warm circle of her own friends. A Jew coming to Palestine cannot. The circle must be widened to include new friends of the East.

It isn't easy. It would be easier if the Arabs would stretch forth a hand. But the gap must be bridged. If they don't help, the Jews must do it themselves. It isn't easy.

But nothing in Palestine is ever easy. You have to move a boulder to find room to plant a potato. And you have to slip over frontiers to get to a man.

So here is the triangle.
The Jew obsessed with a busyness that shuts out all the world but renaissance.
The Englishman carrying out the Mandate like a capable hand moving chess pawns.
The simple Arab ready to share his sack of oranges and ready to accept those of the Jews.
The town Arab who is passing through that "difficult stage."

THE TRIANGLE

Probably written in 1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 29–37
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Bar-Adon feels that very little progress was made in building "peace and understanding" between Jews and Arabs because neither side had accepted the vital necessity of doing so. She understands the Arab refusal to show gratitude toward the Jews for the "gifts of the West" that

they brought (which would have come eventually). Again she insists that the Jew must be the initiator in breaking down barriers, although she understands that perhaps this has not happened because he has been overwhelmed by the task of building the country: Tel Aviv, the agricultural settlements, hospitals, roads, etc.

How far have the Jews and Arabs gone toward achieving an understanding?

The basic blood bond prevents natural hatred and provides the foundation for this understanding. But the structure that will ultimately rise on this foundation has hardly been begun. Occasionally bricks and mortar have been brought. But the great task of building still lies ahead, with all of its mountainous difficulties and all of its inestimable rewards to both sections of the population.

This structure will have to be built with infinite patience, deep wisdom and fine appreciation for the delicacy of all human mechanisms.

The first requisite, however, is the conviction on the part of the builders that the structure is necessary; and the realization that it will not spring up out of the ground like a mushroom.

As I write this, the riots of 1936 are in full swing. The Jews and the English are mouthing hysterical slogans about the need for "peace and understanding." The Arabs are too roused to mouth anything beyond the age-old battle cry of death and destruction.

The "peace and understanding" slogans have nothing to do with the ultimate structure. Peace and understanding, if they are to be interpreted as lack of hostility, could be secured cheaply. If the Arab leaders had been restrained from prostituting the newspapers for purposes of incitement, probably we would have had peace. If the British bayonet had been more apparent on April 19, probably we would have had peace. But this is a negative peace.

The basic peace, existing between one Semite and another Semite, we have already. But this too is a negative peace. It is there because it happens to be there.

The ultimate structure must be the kind of deep peace and rich understanding that comes of a shared culture and that will bring more abundant living to Jew and Arab.

One must struggle and wait and work toward this kind of understanding. Once it has been established, the Arab agitator may lose his taste for agitating and may spend his energies in more constructive fields. If he does not, he will find it more difficult and perhaps impossible to inflame the Arab masses against their Jewish neighbors.

Why has so little progress been made in the building of this structure of peace and understanding? Tel Aviv is twenty-six years old and the first BILU settlers came from Russia to Jaffa fifty-four years ago.

Fifty-four years is a long time in the life of a man. In the life of men and nations, it is trifling. It was not to be expected that these Semite peoples, separated for centuries and exposed during that separation to diametrically opposed forces, would have become completely reunited in fifty-four years.

Notwithstanding, more steps toward reuniting could have been taken in more than five decades. There are numerous reasons why they have not. Perhaps the basic reason is that none of the people involved has looked squarely in the face the crying necessity for fusion.

This may sound paradoxical. On the surface it may appear as though the major consideration in Palestine has been the "Arab-Jewish problem." In times of upheaval, this is certainly true. In times of peace, it is true in a political rather than a social sense. And human beings will probably never reach the point where politics outweigh society.

Whether or not there is a legislative council, whether fewer or more dunams of land are sold to Jews, whether a thousand more or less immigrants come into the country, are all beside the point as long as Jews and Arabs live in narrow, prescribed circles and fail to intermingle freely.

Why has there been so little social intercourse between Jew and Arab? Who is to blame?

The marked increase in the Arab population in the vicinity of Jewish settlements and comparative decrease in towns like Nablus and Gaza testify to the fact that the Arab is ready to accept the gifts of the West.

I say "gifts of the West" pointedly. I abhor the argument that Jews have brought gifts. I don't blame the Arabs for abhorring it too.

I distrust righteous, magnanimous gift-bearers. And usually I don't like to receive gifts, even if they happen to be gifts that I need or want. I like honest give and take. But I don't like gifts. I see no reason why the

Arab should like to receive gifts either. And worse still is to be reminded of those gifts.

Jews inside of Palestine neither think nor talk about the "gifts of the Jews." They realize that the Jews have brought from the West what they needed to build a healthy country. They planted trees, made roads and built hospitals because they wanted them and needed them. They are pioneers and harsh realists. They do not believe for one moment that they would have done these backbreaking things for the Arab population. This would have been preposterous. But, having built these things, it would have been equally as preposterous to have closed them to their Arab neighbors. From a purely selfish point of new, it would be foolish to foster sick people in a healthy country.

So the Jew inside of Palestine takes a different view than some people outside of Palestine who sometimes foolishly refer to these "gifts to the Arabs." The Jew here is too much of a realist to view himself as a philanthropist or a benefactor. He brought certain things to Palestine. They were good things. It is natural that the Arabs should have partaken of them. It could not have been otherwise.

Being a realist, the Jew in Palestine does object, however, when Arab leaders or sentimental English tourists infer that the things the Jew has brought are not good, or that the Arab has not partaken of them to his benefit. The things he brought came from the West and, at all events, would have come here eventually. The Jew was merely an instrument that brought them more quickly. The Arab masses, when not incited, have accepted these gifts of the West.

And yet, in some ways, I believe that the Jew has failed to discharge his duty. Since he was returning to Palestine, this duty was tremendous, in some ways overwhelming. It was, of course, a self-imposed duty. It was a condition of the declaration that gave him Palestine as a Homeland. But the Jews have imposed a number of duties on themselves, such as returning to the Arabs a part of the land that they purchased and made fit for cultivation.

This duty meant that he must not stop at transporting the gifts of the West; he must not stop at throwing open his doors. He must teach the Arab to know the man who has transported these gifts; he must coax him, when necessary, to enter the open doors. He must not only invite him to participate in the Levant Fair at Tel Aviv [an international trade fair held in Tel Aviv in the 1930s]. He must coax him, educate him, until he is able to understand the importance of becoming a vital part of the trade fabric

of the country. Yes, the Jew must coax him if necessary. This is no time for petty pride. All this the Jew must do. A tremendous duty!

And yet, under normal circumstances, I think the Jew would have discharged this duty of examining and becoming thoroughly acquainted with his fellow countrymen who were already occupying the country. But the return of the Jew has not been accomplished under normal circumstances. From the moment he set foot in the country, he was faced with staggering difficulties and problems. No busier person can be imagined than a Jew coming to Palestine! And this busyness has been one of the prime factors that has kept him from devoting himself to getting to know his Arab neighbors better.

I want to explain this busyness. It is difficult to put into words. Probably never before have men and women been so absorbed in any task as have the Jews in the resettlement of Palestine. For centuries they have waited and prayed for this return, and when the Balfour Declaration gave them the right for which they had prayed, they devoted themselves to the upbuilding with a zeal that beggars description. To properly explain this busyness would entail the explaining of modern Jewish Palestine.

To understand this busyness, one must know the dynamic, thriving phenomenal city of Tel Aviv, with its 150,000 inhabitants and its theaters, schools, hospitals, factories and art museum. Only then can one realize why inhabitants of Tel Aviv have been so frightfully busy since they began putting tents on sand dunes twenty-six years ago.

Every ounce of strength of almost every man and woman, living in Tel Aviv has gone into the birthing of the all-Jewish city. Without this combined strength, the city would not have been built. And the Jews needed a city in their homeland.

There are today thousands of Jews living in Tel Aviv who know as little about an Arab as an Englishman living in Manchester or an American living in Timbuktu. If their Arab fruit vendor cheats them out of a piaster's worth of grapes, they conclude that all Arabs are sly. If their Arab fishmonger brings them a bouquet of roses, they conclude that all Arabs are delightful. During times of peace, they think little more about the Arab than they do about the Icelander. In time of rioting, they fear him because he murders.

I do not hold a brief for this kind of airtight, insulated living. But I think I know why the Jew in Tel Aviv lives this way. He is absorbed in a task as few other men have ever been absorbed. And if he were less absorbed, he would not have built Tel Aviv in twenty-six years. And the Jew needed a city. After centuries of homelessness, he deserved one.

One must walk through the local products pavilion of the Levant Fair. Here one sees silks, leather bags, razor blades, refrigerators, biscuits, perfumes, and fertilizer—all made in Palestine.

English ladies, like Amy Fullerton, who published diaries in the eighties [1880s] of their visits to the Holy Land, record how they were obliged to bring to Palestine the simplest articles, such as tea and sunglasses. Were these ladies to stroll through the Levant Fair, they would understand better than we why the Jewish manufacturer has been so busy.

One must also know the agricultural settlements. How the Jewish pioneers turned swamps into orange groves, wheat fields and tomato patches is now a well-known saga that hardly bears repeating. It was a gigantic task. It sapped men's energies and even their lifeblood. Every vine, every blade of grass, every tree that is blossoming and bearing fruit in these stony wastelands tells the story of the busyness of these pioneers.

They came to the barrenness of the Jezreel Valley or to the isolated outpost of Tel Hai. They faced the task of refructifying the unfriendly soil. And they were plunged into a busyness that made them forget everything in the world, except the vagaries of rain and sun and wind and crop.

Sometimes they forgot kith and kin whom they had left in other parts of the world. Sometimes they forgot to eat when they had not enough to eat in their terrific struggle for a new life. Perhaps it was not well that it should have been so. But there was no other way. Palestine only could have been revived by these strange, ideal-intoxicated people who were content to be busy. So busy that they forgot all else—sometimes even forgot the other part of the population.

Strangely enough, despite their busyness, closer relationships with Arabs are enjoyed by these colonists than by any other sections of the population. These relationships, however, have not been tended or cultivated. They grew up in the way that good things have of growing up among simple people. The Jewish colonists dug wells. And the Arabs, who had been accustomed to lugging their water for miles on muleback, began to use their wells. Jews were invited to Arab festivals in nearby camps. Sometimes they went through picturesque peace rites. I saw Arabs joining in the hora dances at the May Day celebration at the Dead Sea. I saw Arabs seated around the Passover table in the kibbutz of Givat Brenner.

The early pioneers had to make the modern language from the ancient one. The newcomers today have to learn the modern language. It is a difficult language. It keeps them busy—too busy to learn Arabic. But their

children, to whom Hebrew is a mother tongue, are learning Arabic in the schools, and for these children it will be less difficult to know their Arab neighbors. The renaissance involved the establishing of schools, a university, newspapers, theaters; in fact all of the necessities and amenities of life that accumulated over a long period of time elsewhere.

And it must be borne in mind too that the Jew came from the West to the East. He had to contend with the ordinary physical difficulties such as disease and change of climate. Never before have a people, scattered, broken and crippled by centuries of wandering, attempted a renaissance. Therefore, this people have suffered backaches, headaches, and heartaches. They have much to show for these aches. And they may also have to show a few sins of omission and commission. It is understandable.

Once before, the Jews withdrew from the world for forty years and remained in the desert between Egypt and Palestine in order to become changed from slaves to freemen. Perhaps we are witnessing this withdrawal again. This generation of Jews, who are too busy to raise their eyes from their crops and their cities and their factories, are in the desert again—the desert of transition.

SEVEN FAT YEARS

Probably written in 1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 29–37
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

The title refers to the seven years of comparative peace and prosperity between the riots of 1929 and 1936. Despite the high level of violence between Arabs, there were few attacks on Jews, evidence of the basic blood bond between two Semite peoples. The village Arab had to be incited by the newspapers and led to believe that his basic rights were being usurped by the Jews.

The wonder is not that the "return of the native" has been punctuated by uprisings. The wonder is that these uprisings have been so few when the differences between the two populations confronting each other in this tiny patch of territory are taken into consideration.

Palestine enjoyed seven fat years of comparative peace and prosperity between the riots of 1929 and 1936. Few nations of homogeneous

populations can boast such tranquil internal relations during those stormy years of general economic depression and civil strife. Arabic newspapers, which are in the control of a handful, are hotbeds of unbridled incitement. And yet the sheikhs and the leaders must practically carry the masses to battle by the scruff of the neck or browbeat them to revolt by intimidation. This is not the natural uprising of a people consumed with hate against alien newcomers by whom they are being oppressed, down-trodden and dispossessed.

No other Eastern country has been subjected to a sudden onslaught from the West in the same way as has Palestine. And yet, at no time, even in 1936, has there been a spontaneous rising up of Arabs against Jews.

For seven years, from 1929 to April 1936, Jews and Arabs lived and worked together side-by-side in isolated sections of the country, and there were practically no attacks by Arabs on individuals or settlements.

This was not owing to the insensibility of the Arab masses. Arabs in Palestine are not to be confused with Chinese coolies or Indian untouchables. Overpopulation, which can turn semi-starved millions into pathetic clods, has never plagued Palestine. Even in times of oppression and poverty, the Arab had a place to pitch his tent or to build his mud hut. His few sheep and goats could find stubble between the crevices of the rocks. He is naive and gullible. But he is also alert and alive. He has not been crushed to insensibility. He is not so far removed from the desert that he does not retain a distinct sense of possession. He would not sit by passively and watch his few needs being filched from him by newcomers. He sits passively only when he knows that his black olives of yesterday have been supplanted by meat and potatoes.

Nor can his passivity be said to be owing only to the British bayonet. Physical evidences of the bayonet have never been too conspicuous in Palestine, as witness the dearth of troops in 1929 and the imported soldiers from Egypt in 1936. The simple Arab is not very remote from marauding and murdering. His passions run high. The moral effect of British occupation could not have staved off individual attacks.

This can be proved by the crime sheets. Stabbing of one Arab by another Arab is so frequent that local newspapers dispose of the most gruesome cases in a few lines. An Arab woman being stabbed by her husband is not news. If she is unfaithful, she is apt to be stabbed. And her lover as well. An Arab will stab for less, as judged by Western standards. He will stab his neighbor whom he believes has dishonorably defrauded him of a shilling. It is his code of honor and revenge. Even the British bayonets and criminal

courts cannot abolish entirely this deep-rooted code. The Arab knows how to deal with his avowed enemy first and take Western codes and punishment into consideration afterward. This reversion is understandable. Crime sheets from all Arab towns and villages in the country testify to the continuance of this code of honor and revenge.

And the present disturbances of 1936 are testifying to the fact that the Jews are not exempt from this code. If led to believe that his rights have been violated by the Jew, he will murder him in the same way that he will murder his unfaithful wife or his neighbor who has robbed him of a shilling. No one expects this code, rooted in the bones and blood of the Arab to evaporate as soon as he learns to operate an automobile or to use an automatic cigarette lighter. And no one should expect this code that applies to his wife and to his brother to exempt the Jew.

But first he must be led to believe that his rights are being violated. He is not dull. He is not stupid. And yet he has never arrived at the conclusion that his rights are being violated. Always he has had to be led to the belief. While he jogs along the dusty road on the back of his patient mule, his keen eyes see much. And yet year in and year out he has failed to see danger or avarice in his Jewish neighbors. He has tended his vineyards and his fig trees and left the Jewish settler to tend his in peace.

These seven fat years cannot be discounted lightly, especially since they followed on the heels of the 1929 blood orgy. The Arabs are not insensible. They settle private and personal accounts, despite the British bayonets. They attack the Jew when led to believe that their rights have been violated. How then, are we to explain these seven years?

The explanation seems to hark back to the note in the voice of the Jew that the Englishman in his Surrey cottage could not understand, back to that indefinable something that distinguishes a Semite from a non-Semite, back to the simplest and strongest bond in the world—the blood bond.

It is not natural for an Arab to hate a Jew. And nature usually prevails. Nature can be trammeled, stifled, perverted. But usually she will prevail. Therefore, if the Arab is provoked, or if he believes his rights have been assailed, he will attack the Jew. But he will not hate the Jew merely because he exists, as does the anti-Semite. The Arab is familiar with the color of the skin of the Jew. He is familiar with the slant of his nose. He is even familiar with the syllables of the Hebrew language. Because they are so like his own. His "salaama" is very like the "shalom" of the Jew. He is aware of these links and feels even more than he is aware of.

German refugees have arrived in large numbers during the latter part of these seven years; another direct impact with the West. And yet the Arab did not rise up. Probably he knows that he can best digest that part of the West that he desires when it is fed to him by Semites.

No mechanism is more delicate than the human being and no task more trying than the adjustment of human beings to other human beings. When two men are stranded on an island, fighting for their very existence, there is as much chance for bitter discord as for accord. It may arise because one man is irked by the way the other man shells his coconuts.

Thousands of Jews have poured into Palestine. They have brought the strange and wonderful contrivances of the West. When and where has there been such a dramatic meeting of human beings? When and where such fertile ground for bitter discord? Not the kind of artificial hate that is whipped up like a spectacular typhoon. But the kind of hate that eats into people's vitals day and after day and spreads poisoned vapors that would confound even the British bayonets. Such hate, which would have proclaimed itself whenever a Jew passed an Arab on the road, would have been understandable in the process of the adjustment of two such different human beings. Such hate would have been no wonder.

But these seven fat years are a wonder. They are more important in a historical sense than the present disturbances. They may mark the beginning of a fusion of East and West. They transcend statesmen and portfolios and memoranda.

Lately we have heard much of the force of anti-Semitism. These seven fat years speak, in accents clean and undeniable of Semitism, of that blood bond between Jew and Arab that prevents a natural hate.

MUEZZIN OR HASID

This article expresses Bar-Adon's central belief in the closeness of Jews and Arabs:

And I believe that there is a bond of brotherhood between the Semite Jew and the Semite Arab…

On the night that my friend couldn't tell a muezzin from a Hasid, I felt closer to the heart of the Arab-Jewish problem. It was only something I felt in my bones. But anti-Semitism is usually based on what people feel in their bones. Why shouldn't Semitism be based on the same thing?

That night didn't bring me closer to the solution of temporal difficulties. But it made the problem seem less immense and the gap less yawning than statesmen and memoranda had led me to believe.

September 1936
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 12–18
Earlier version in *The Palestine Post*

This is the comradeship of any thirsty men in any dry land. I maintain that the comradeship of the Arab and the Jew has even a more solid foundation. They are not only two thirsty men but also two Semite men.

The question of how far the Jew has become alienated from the East during his wanderings is debatable. Most American, English or Russian Jews, even though they return to Palestine, do not consider themselves, at a superficial glance, Semite in the way that the Arabs or Yemenite Jews are Semites.

I cannot speak scientifically about the corpuscles in the blood or the cells in the brain of a so-called American, English or Russian Jew. How much of him still belongs to the East, I do not know. Nor have I graphs and diagrams to prove my case.

I know only that the Jew, whether he has tried to maintain his identity or whether he has tried, as in Germany, to assimilate, has stuck out on the world's anatomy like a carbuncle (and I use the word safely as meaning either a precious stone or a malicious tumor).

The world, despite its wideness, has never quite found room for the Jew. It has given many and varied excuses for not finding room for him. The chief reason, which it does not give because it does not know it, is a note in the voice of the Jew. The world has never understood this note and therefore has feared it greatly. Call this note a sob. Call it mysticism. Since living in Palestine, I have learned to call it Semitism.

I may be indulging in fancy. But I believe that the way the stars sit in the sky here, and the way the sun strikes back from the sand, has something to do with this note that an Englishman in a Surrey cottage couldn't understand, even if he wanted to.

The Arab has this same note in his voice when he praises Allah. The Arab who has not been condemned to wandering has this note in his voice.

Can it be then, that this note in the voice of the Jew comes not from persecution and wondering, as is supposed? But that it comes from the way the stars sit in the sky in Palestine and the sun strikes back from the sand?

Can it be that the particular and peculiar geography of this part of the world puts a man in a certain juxtaposition with nature, which catapults him to strange depths and strange heights?

A man who lives in a land where the stars seem to jostle on his shoulders like opals is, perhaps, a different creature than the man who lives where the stars proudly stud distant planets like diamond chips. It is not possible that this intimacy of the stars and this heat of the sands have been crystallized in the note of the Jew from which the rest of the world shies.

The Arab has remained in this part of the world, and the note has remained in his voice. The Jew has trudged around, carrying this note with him, his blessing and his curse. Now some Jews have come home again. They have brought this note with them. It mingles with the note of the Arab. I cannot believe that the fusion will birth discord.

Arab leaders, Jewish leaders, British parliamentarians and the League of Nations may emphasize discord. But there is a force in these notes that may ultimately transcend statesmen, a simpler and stronger force, the force of blood, the force of two people who have known and responded to a land where stars jostle the shoulders of men like opals.

I remember the morning when this theory was welded into fact. Or perhaps the theory was born on that morning. I was walking with a friend through the streets of Jerusalem at about four o'clock. As I was turning into my gate, we heard a voice. It was a voice with that strange note that the Englishman in a Surrey cottage couldn't understand.

"He is a muezzin calling from a minaret," I said.

My friend answered, "No, he is a Hasid reading prayers in the cellar of some synagogue."

We were both stubborn and finally had to settle the question by following the sound to its source. The air is so clear in Jerusalem that, although the voice seemed close at hand, it led us far afield.

Meanwhile we argued and the further we walked, the more impatient my companion became, "Don't you think I know a Hasid when I hear one? Didn't I study in a yeshiva [institutes of talmudic learning] in Russia? Many a time I chanted just like that man until morning. I tell you, he is a Hasid."

We pursued the elusive sound through a maze of narrow, silent streets, I looking up for the minaret, he peering down into the cellars. Sometimes the sound stopped. Then it rose again, from nowhere and from everywhere like a sob encompassing the sleeping city.

Day was breaking, with the customary suddenness of dawn in Palestine, when we came within sight of the minaret and the muezzin calling to Allah with the intimacy of one who has lived close to the stars.

We had walked far to discover whether this chant that was hovering over Jerusalem at dawn came from an Arab or a Jewish throat. My friend was a bit sheepish. Hadn't he been a Hasid? Didn't he know a Hasid from a muezzin?

He didn't.

This similarity between Jew and Arab (more especially the Muslim Arab, although conversion makes a slight fundamental difference) has often been remarked upon. It is more marked when witnessed.

I remember the day I walked into the courtyard of the El Azar Mosque in Cairo. Thousands of students from all parts of the world came here to take the twelve-year course in the Koran. Squatting on the ground in the vast courtyard were Muslims of all ages. Young lads, with delicately chiseled brown features; old men with white beards, sensitive nostrils, and furrowed brows. Some gathered in groups around one man who read aloud. Others sat alone, swaying back and forth over the book. The air was weighted with the low droning of those who read aloud.

For twelve years they study here—and yet they must know the Koran by heart before they enroll. I could have remained for a long time looking at these students with their fine Semitic heads.

But my companions from Palestine were impatient. One of them explained, "This is not new to us. We lived like this ourselves in yeshivot in Russia."

I remember, too, a certain dawn when coming from Egypt to Palestine in a third-class carriage. One could sleep only fitfully on the hard, wooden benches. I awakened just as the dawn was streaking across the desert. In the uncertain light, I saw an Arab on his wooden bench, at the other end of the carriage, praying to Allah. I was traveling with members of the Jewish Labor Federation. These young people have abandoned traditional religious forms. Less emancipated Jews would have been donning their prayer shawls and adjusting the straps of their tefillin, preparatory to greeting the day with prayer.

I first saw an Arab drop to his knees in simple, unceremonious piety in a public park in Jaffa. He was a gardener. At prayer time, he laid aside his trowel and faced the East. The next time I saw such prayer was in the laundry room of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. I was touring the

hotel and happened to come into the laundry at noon. The Arab employee was kneeling in a window ledge. And the next time I saw such prayer was in a soap factory in Nablus. I had come to watch the primitive soapmaking methods. I found the "master" of the shop kneeling in a corner, not far from the bubbling cauldron.

I have met this same simple intimacy with God among Jews, even in America. I have seen Jews put on their tefillin at dawn in the sleeping car of the Chicago Limited.

For the Muslim and the Jew there is no intermediary between God and man. The rabbi and the sheikh are, in the last analysis, teachers. There is no confession to the priest.

Oh, the stark simplicity of a Muslim prostrated on a rug in a mosque, or of a Jew with his body pressed against the stones of the Wailing Wall. The hate that sometimes eddies around the Dome of the Rock and the Wailing Wall is false, artificial and infinitesimal compared to the magnitude of this shared simplicity. It is primitive and therefore noble. It antedates the time when man created from fear the medicine men and intermediaries. It goes back to the purity of the beginning.

It is Adam talking to God or Allah.

True, both the Muslim and the Jew in Palestine are moving further away from traditional religious forms. Young Jews are to be found in meeting halls rather than synagogues on Saturdays, and young Muslims turned back to the mosques in large numbers only recently when some mosques were turned into virtual meeting halls, being the platform for airing national grievances. But Semite characteristics, whether expressed in religious forms or through some other channel, remain fundamentally unchanged.

These praying Jews and Arabs may have nothing to do with the "Arab-Jewish problem" as statesmen view it. True, they have nothing to do with the important portfolios containing important memoranda on important questions such as restriction of sale of land to Jews, restriction of Jewish immigration and the absorptive capacity of the country.

But one begins to lose faith in these important portfolios with their memoranda. They are doing so appallingly little toward easing the headache of the world. Washington is cluttered with memoranda while America stinks with poverty. Geneva was swamped with memoranda while Italy tramped into Ethiopia. There are memoranda and more memoranda, and Hitler continues to crucify the Jews in Germany.

Whither memoranda?

Perhaps in the last analysis, men and the passionate divinities and degradations of men are all the matter. And these divinities and degradations are complicated, but not unusually changed, by memoranda. Changes are made at the source, within the men. Perhaps there are more gleams of truth outside of portfolios than inside. I believe there are.

And I believe that there is a bond of brotherhood between the Semite Jew and the Semite Arab that has nothing to do with portfolios or memoranda. If assisted, but not strangled by important memoranda, this bond will make itself felt.

On the night that my friend couldn't tell a muezzin from a Hasid, I felt closer to the heart of the Arab-Jewish problem. It was only something I felt in my bones. But anti-Semitism is usually based on what people feel in their bones. Why shouldn't Semitism, be based on the same thing?

That night didn't bring me closer to the solution of temporal difficulties. But it made the problem seem less immense and the gap less yawning than statesmen and memoranda had led me to believe.

PENELOPE POSTPONES

Written after 1936–1939 riots
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 8–11
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Kahn reflects on the need for Jews and Arabs to understand each other and on how it would be possible were people not incited to hatred and violence.

Since this meeting with Mahmoud Bey, I have spent weeks and months turning over this question of Arab-Jewish relations as though it was a ball. When the light fell this way, peace seemed possible. When the light fell that way, it seemed that, with Jeremiah, we cried for peace, peace, when there was no peace.

Sometimes, when in Tel Aviv, that all-Jewish city which is an unadulterated patch of the West, understanding between these two peoples appeared to be remote.

East is East and West is West. Jaffa is Jaffa and Tel Aviv is Tel Aviv. They are separated not by a few meters of beach but by centuries.

In Jaffa, husky Arabs leap joyously into the waves in their nakedness. They sit in coffeehouses, smoking nargilehs and gazing stolidly out to sea.

In Tel Aviv, Jews parade in lido bathing suits. They sit on terraces of hotels and talk of the drama, books and tomorrow.

> Will the Jew ever understand the richness of this stolid silence
> of the Arabs?
> Will the Arab ever understand the richness of this talk of tomorrow?
> Will the Jew ever understand the wisdom of living sparingly?
> Will the Arab ever understand the wisdom of living eagerly?

I had never asked myself whether the Jew would learn to live and think like the Arab or whether the Arab would learn to live and think like the Jew. This seemed neither necessary nor beneficial to either people. But understanding? That is imperative.

Here I must say clearly what I shall reiterate in the remainder of the book.

I believe that the fact that Jews and Arabs are Semites pull them closer together than any temporal differences of opinion pulls them apart.

I believe that there is no need for the Jew and Arab to learn to "tolerate" each other in Palestine for, as Semites, they already possess the basis for a deep understanding and even affection.

I believe that understanding between Jew and Arab will come, if enmity is not artificially simulated from without.

I believe that despite the uprisings of 1921, 1922, 1929, and 1936, the following phrase from the pact of 1919 is as true and as meaningful today as when signed by King Feisal and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, "mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people, and realizing that the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine…."

I believe that none of the diseases affecting and infecting Arab-Jewish relations are congenital or chronic. In varying measures, the Jews, Arabs and English are responsible for them; the Arab masses by their gullibility, the Arab leaders by their corruptibility; the Jews by their preoccupation with upbuilding, which left little time or energy for the important duty of becoming acquainted with their neighbors; the English by thwarting any attempt to foster friendly relations between the two sections of the population.

I believe that the Jew has much to learn from the Arab. The Arab has much to learn from the Jew. A fusion will come, whether it will be in ten years or a hundred years. And this fusion of East, as retained by the Arab, and West, as carried back by the Jew, will mark an epoch in the history of peoples.

I have said that in Tel Aviv, one was conscious of a gap caused by centuries of living apart and developing in different directions. In the agricultural colonies, these centuries evaporate, and one realizes that the differences are decoys. They are the decoys erected everywhere by a wily civilization for the purpose of separating peoples.

For civilization is like Penelope who told her suitors that she would forget Odysseus when the work of her loom was completed. But unraveled her handwork by night. She postpones the coming of understanding by this unraveling of the work of her loom. Artificial hindrances are manufactured. Thus civilization is postponed.

In the colonies there are no decoys. An Arab from a neighboring village strides into a Jewish settlement to ask for water. The day is hot. *Chamseen* winds blow from the desert and the sun beats down without mercy. The pioneer fetches water. The Arab slakes his thirst greedily with this nectar of Palestine.

The Jew from Tel Aviv may have little to say to the Arab from Jaffa. But there is no need for talk when the eyes of this Jew and Arab meet over a can of cooling water on a chamseen day. For they both understand the meaning of water in Palestine, he who thirsts for it and he who has made it to flow again in this parched wasteland.

Parliaments may decorously discuss "Arab-Jewish relations." Their rhetoric is like the tapping of a woodpecker in a tree compared to the thunderous silence of a Jewish pioneer and an Arab fellah sharing a can of water on a chamseen day.

SPRING OF JASMINE

Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 81–91
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Kahn stresses the importance of Arab charm, which she considers inherent, and its effect on human relations and politics. She quotes Henrietta Szold who said that "it made the wheels of daily living go

round more easily." Kahn gives several specific examples of this charm and generosity and explains why, due to his past history and present preoccupation with building the homeland, the Jew has neither the time nor the energy to cultivate charm. She ultimately criticizes the British for not attending the real problems in Palestine, bewitched as they are by the charm.

One day I was descending one of the hilly slopes of Ein Karem [a neighborhood west of Jerusalem]. I stepped to the side of the path to allow a small donkey to pass. Seated on the donkey was a fellah, his long legs almost touching the ground. In his hand he carried a single pink rose. It was a perfect flower. His fingers were cupped lest a slight breeze ruffle the petals. The donkey was dilapidated and drab. The fellah was ragged and none too clean. But the flower was perfect.

Over the roofs of the little whitewashed cottages, I watched the donkey making the tedious descent down the stony path, the rider holding on with one hand and guarding his flower with the other. He drew up in front of an inn and, with a gracious bow, presented the rose to the English proprietress who was standing at the gate.

I don't know how this Englishwoman felt when she received the rose. I know how I felt under similar circumstances. I know how I felt the day that Mahmoud Bey gave me the mixed bouquet. And to this day I feel the same way when an Arab presents me with a single blossom.

It is as though you have never received a flower before. It is almost as though you have never seen one before. It is as though this flower was grown for you. It is almost as though nature had made the seed for you.

Away with our decorous flower shops, with their lilies and gladiolas spread out "for sale" like lovely maidens in a slave mart. After an Arab has presented you with a blossom and the blessing of Allah, you will never want to traffic in flowers again. You will be convinced that flowers are not meant to be bought and sold. They are above barter. They are meant to be presented with a gracious bow and elaborate blessings.

Besides adding a picturesque touch to the already picturesque scene of Ein Karem, what has this mangy fellah on his mangy donkey carrying a pink rose to do with the Palestine problem? He personifies Arab charm. And I believe that it is impossible to survey the Palestinian scene without taking Arab charm into full account. For this charm effects human relationships, and therefore the political problems of the country as much as

any conference that ever was or ever will be held in Government House on the hill. Arab leaders and Jewish leaders can trek up to Government House as often as they like with puckered brows and memoranda. But the mangy fellah carrying the pink rose still remains as important to the general scene as anything in their portfolios.

On that day in Ein Karem, I arrived also at the same inn and was met by the English proprietress. My companion was an artist. For a long time we had been sitting on a rock on the top of the hill. On one side stretched the magnificent hills, caught in the hard whiteness of mid-summer heat. On the other were the whitewashed cottages and trim little gardens of the Russian sisters and monks tucked away on the ledge like dollhouses.

My companion had been trying to catch the scene in colors. I had been trying to catch it in words. But the magnificent bareness of Palestine is not to be subjected by palette or dictionary.

So we arrive at the inn hot, tired, and wearied by a strange beauty that sometimes gluts one's soul because it defies expression. We didn't present the proprietress with roses. My companion wanted very English tea. I wanted very American coffee. We were weary. And we weren't very charming. Probably we weren't less charming than other Westerners. But in Palestine we aren't compared to other Westerners. It is the Jew versus the Arab. And compared to that fellah, I don't think the English proprietress found us very charming.

What an English proprietress who manages a small inn in Ein Karem thinks may be unimportant—but multiply it by what some tourists and clergymen and British high officials think—and it becomes important. For frequently a pink rose in the hand of a mangy fellah can do more to elicit sympathy for the Arab cause than all the swamps the Jews will ever drain can elicit for the Jewish cause.

Not only does this charm cloud the vision of the susceptible, but also sometimes it even postpones understanding between Jew and Arab. For the Arab is a superlatively charming fellow. And the Jew is definitely lacking in charm. Therefore the Jew is sometimes perplexed by, or suspicious of, the Arab's charm. And the Arab is apt to look upon the Jew's lack of charm as a personal insult or as gross arrogance.

I have used the word "charm" many times in describing the Arab. I know of no synonym for this quality that usually accompanies the simplest Arab like an aura. I have heard it spoken of as being "artificial" or a "pose." I believe that it is neither. I believe that they are born with it as surely as they

are born with their skin and ten toes. The daughter of the janitress of our office building has it. She is five years old. She lives in a tin hut behind the office. She has the bearing of a little princess and charm enough to subdue a tiger before his supper. I think she got that charm when she got her sloe eyes.

I've met this charm in many places. It doesn't perplex me. I'm not suspicious of it. I like it. It makes life easier and very pleasant. Buying firewood is pleasant because the Arab proprietor of the shop is charming. Having shoes mended is pleasant because the Arab shoemaker is charming. I once had an Arab scavenger who carried away the day's refuse with charm. I like it. I like it so much that I never stopped to analyze it.

One day Miss Henrietta Szold [a Zionist leader and founder of Hadassah] summed it up. We were driving to the north to visit a children's farm. Three or four women who live hermetically sealed lives in Jewish quarters were discussing the Arab question. One had had an Arab washwoman who had stolen some of the children's play suits—the same old story ending up with the declaration that Arab charm is cloying.

Miss Szold, who was sitting in the front seat and apparently not listening, turned around suddenly and asked, "Do you use a sewing machine, Mrs. X?" Mrs. X. replied that she did. "That's what Arab charm does," replied Miss Szold. "It makes the wheels of daily living go round more easily."

So call it oil. The oil of the East. I met it in the house of the mayor of Nablus. A resident of Nablus had won a large sweepstake prize, and I had come to interview him. The mayor had sold him the ticket, and we met in his home. Nablus is supposed to be fanatically anti-Semitic. Perhaps they didn't mean to be gracious. But I can still remember the warmth of the brothers and cousins and the old lady who was ill in bed. The winner of the sweepstake ticket is the owner of the soap factory. So I left the house with my car piled high to the ceiling with soap—there were cubes and balls of soap in all colors and sizes. Some were solid, and some were speckled, and there were enough to lather all Jerusalem. There were farewells and much laughter as I tried to arrange myself between the soap. And I left Nablus feeling warm.

I met with the same thing in Ramallah. I had come to see an old woman who makes lovely pottery without a wheel. I didn't know her name or her address. So I went to the mayor. The mayor, and the hunchback man who he commissioned to take me to the house of the potter, and the potter herself were all charming.

It was no trouble for the Mayor to find me a guide. It was no trouble for the guide to trudge several miles. It was no trouble for the potter

to have me invade her premises and deluge her with questions. Coffee appeared as if by magic in her primitive dwelling. Nothing is trouble for an Arab. And if it is, you are never the wiser. Call it oil. Call it what you will, it makes life easier and more pleasant.

I remember meeting this charm one day in the village of Silwan. I was exploring with a professor from the Hebrew University. We stopped an Arab to ask a direction. He directed us and then invited us to come to his house for refreshments before continuing on our way. My companion was reticent. If you stop a man in London and ask a direction, he doesn't invite you to his home. He has lived in Palestine for some time, but he was still a bit baffled by the charm of the Arab. But I was already scrambling up the hill in the footsteps of my self-appointed host. His house was ours. I was taken to meet the woman. Chairs were brought to the terrace. The traditional coffee and cigarettes appeared. The usual procedure. And yet it never seems mere etiquette. It is as though the host and the entire household and the house itself had been waiting all their lives just for this moment when you would be their guest. The coffee beans were grown—for you. The tobacco in the cigarettes was cultivated—for you. The romance of the East wears thin quickly. The mere fact of drinking coffee with a sheikh no longer holds any special zest. But I don't think the charm of these people wears thin.

We sat on the terrace for some time, watching the sun set over the Old City. Then our host accompanied us to the edge of the village. On the way home, the professor delivered himself. He had enjoyed the visit. But it was the first time he had ever done such a thing. Isn't it odd for a stranger whom you stop on the road to invite you into his home? Perhaps such invitations are only formal and it is presumptuous to accept?

I agreed with him that it was odd. But so many of the Arab customs are odd to the Jew. And perhaps his invitation was formal, and perhaps it was presumptuous for us to have accepted. But to me, Arab charm and hospitality are too warm to be analyzed and picked to pieces. I would as soon analyze the song of a thrush or the scent of a pine tree as to analyze the impulse of that old Arab in Silwan. Perhaps I'm being naive and simple. But when they open their homes to me, I walk in and hope someday they'll walk into mine.

Looking back on many incidents, they seem hardly worth recording. Just snatches—moments—and yet they trail pleasantly back like a sound or a color or a scent.

There was the day I tried to buy an especially curly lamb in Jericho. We had completed the bargain. But just as I was walking away, the child

of the family began to sob and to pull at my skirt. So I couldn't have the lamb after all because the child wanted to keep it. And the mother was so genuinely grieved for me that I went away not caring whether I had the lamb or not.

There was the man who was stamping sesame seeds with his bare feet. I had stepped into his little den in the Old City at about midnight to watch the blindfolded camels walk round and round the huge cauldron. He was knee deep in sesame seeds. He beckoned me to a stool. The dirty den, the camels, the two broken down horses—the entire place and all the sesame seeds and the sweet smelling oil—were mine.

And then there was the Arab woman who lived in a little hut on the edge of a cliff in Safed. I stopped for water. She gave me the water and then, just as I was leaving, she gave me a sprig of jasmine from her garden.

One sprig of jasmine.

What about the Jews? The plain fact is that usually they are not charming. Someone has said that it is not possible to say that one man is "kind" and another is "wise." Every man has the same ingredients in his make-up. It is a matter of which predominates.

We might say, therefore, that charm is not a predominating characteristic of the Jew.

There are numberless reasons for this. He has had to fight. Fight for his body and soul. He has had to run. He has had to fight again. And run again. He has had no particular reason through the centuries to trust mankind. Sometimes he has sunk completely into his books and his soul and his God. He has lost touch with mankind. He has not known the broadness of fields and sky and desert. He has been cooped up in dark places. And sometimes he has had to run so quickly from one dark place to another dark place that he hardly had time to catch sight of the sun.

Yes, there are numerous reasons why the Jew was not charming when he came to Palestine. And there are numberless reasons why he has not had time to cultivate charm since he arrived. Some of these reasons are explained by the busyness that I have already described.

Almost every Jew in Palestine today is putting up a grim battle of one kind or another. He used to be curator of a library in Berlin, and now he's selling secondhand books. Or he's trying to keep his restaurant in Jerusalem as clean as his restaurant in New York used to be, and his employees don't know what he's talking about. He's trying this, and he's trying that. He's trying above all else to build a homeland.

And it's grim business, this building a homeland. I'm not feeling sorry for him. He wants no pity. He's enjoying it. He's reveling in it. But, nevertheless, it's a grim business, and he hasn't the inner calm of the fellah riding on his donkey with a pink rose in his hand.

The Jewish taxi driver and plumber and plasterer may not be charming either. He's putting up a grim battle, too. He's trying to put labor back where it belongs. He's fighting for the dignity of labor. The Arab taxi driver can afford to carry your luggage upstairs for you. But the Jewish taxi driver will be apt to advise you to hire a porter. This isn't very charming. But it's an important part of his grim fight for the dignity of labor.

In the communal colonies there is a hospitality that transcends all hospitality I have ever known. Here there is the literal sharing of bread with any and all strangers who come to their gate. And there are always beds for strangers, even if the members of the kvutzah tired from a hard day in the fields, must sleep on the ground. Anyone may come to a kvutzah and stay as long as he wants. And he dare not offer payment because money has no part in the life of the kvutzah. There is hospitality in these kvutzoth that beggars description. And yet, one would not say there was charm. That is, not the same kind of charm as that of an Arab village.

For the pioneers who live in the kvutzoth are grim men and women. With their hands they are fighting to bring grain and fruit out of rocks. And with their souls they are fighting to bring a new order into a sick world. They are fighting for the simple biblical creed that every man should work according to his ability and receive according to his needs. It is doubtful if, in all the chaotic weary world today, there is any other such group of human beings, putting up a grim fight for the brotherhood of man in its truest sense.

And yet these people are not charming in the way that the Arab is charming. When you come to see them, their home is yours, no questions asked. But they do not behave as though they had been waiting for you, and only you, to arrive. They haven't been waiting for you. They've been working in the sun all day. Perhaps six months ago, they were doctors or teachers, and they're not accustomed to working in the Palestinian sun. Their hands are blistered, and their backs are aching. And even if their hands aren't blistered, they weren't waiting for you to come. For you are not important to them. They are not important to themselves. Nothing in all the world is important except the task and the creed to which they have dedicated themselves.

You may catch glimpses of eternal truth and beauty in these kvutzoth that will make life outside seem cheap and grasping and tawdry. Or you may

miss it and see nothing but grim men and women to whom you are most unimportant compared to their cows and their search for a new way of life.

I think the Jews would rather be charming than grim. I think someday, in Palestine, they will be. But first they have to get done with this engrossing business of laying the groundwork for a homeland. Not that there is not joy among the Jews in Palestine. There is more joy to the square foot than is usually seen outside of Palestine. But even this is rather a grim joy. It is the joy of work accomplished and of work yet to be accomplished. It is not the simple, charming joy of a pink rose.

It seems to boil down to this. The Arab is an exceedingly charming fellow. The Jew usually is not charming at all.

The charm of the Arab is delightful. It is the oil that makes the wheel of daily life go round more easily. Perhaps it would be best for the Jew to recognize this charm as an integral and lovely part of the nature of his neighbors and to emulate them when they can.

And perhaps it would be best for the Arab to accept once and for all the lack of charm of the Jew, to realize that the Jew does not mean to be insulting or arrogant. The Jew has many fine characteristics. But charm does not predominate in most Jews.

And perhaps it would be best for some of the tourists and clergymen and British officials to stop weighing, consciously or unconsciously, the Jew and the Arab on a scale based on charm.

Perhaps it would be best for them to realize that charm is one characteristic of which the Arab has full measure and the Jew has very little. Best for them to stop thinking, consciously or unconsciously, "But the Arab is such a charming fellow and therefore Jewish immigration should be restricted."

For the problems of Palestine are too momentous to rest on the charm of the fellah who came down the hill on a donkey carrying a pink rose.

THE WOMEN OF PALESTINE

Probably written 1936–1937
Zif Zif, pp. 192–199
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Kahn describes the differences between the various female populations: the bedouin living the same nomadic life her foremothers lived; the Arab peasant woman, whose situation is scarcely better; the Muslim

woman, still bound by tradition but also exposed to Western influence; the Christian Arab woman, emancipated in many spheres of her life; the urban Jewess, committed to building the homeland; and finally the pioneer women, working side by side with the men in her community—the woman of the future. Hopefully, the lives of future women will reflect the best of each sector.

There is perhaps no other canvas on which is so vividly depicted the woman of the past and the woman of the future as Palestine. Walking through the streets of the cities and the narrow lanes of the villages, one can see within a few paces the dramatic epic of woman's progress, from the earliest stirring of time, unfolding in a living picture.

Here is a chalutza striding down the road with all the pride and courage of a woman who is building a homeland shoulder to shoulder with the men. She sits in the councils. She works out of doors in the scorching summer sun and in the bleak winter winds. She shoulders a gun when the colonies are attacked to protect the groves and fields which she has helped to make flourish in the stony wasteland. So thoroughly has she emancipated herself that she may be rightly called a woman of the future.

On the same road we pass an Arab woman of a bedouin tribe. Her face is completely hidden beneath the tremendous load of wood that she miraculously manages to balance on her head. She wears strings of silver coins which are stretched from her ears to her nostrils, between which tattooing is visible. Mentally and spiritually, as well as physically, she is as untouched as though she has had no contact with civilization. She wanders over the hills of Palestine as did the nomads in biblical times, unaffected by the intervening centuries.

Between these two extreme groups of women, one finds several stages of development among the strangely diversified population of the Holy Land. There is the Arab fellah who is a bit more advanced than her bedouin sister. There is the Muslim woman who, although still bound by tradition, is showing signs of eventually succumbing to the Western influence. There is the Christian Arab woman who is definitely emancipated in various phases of her life. There is the Jewish woman of the cities who, while leading a less strenuous life than the chalutza, shoulders all the burden that even the urban phase of a pioneer country imposes.

Preceding all growth, there is the wrenching period of conflict between the old and the new. It is through this period that the woman

of Palestine is now passing. The British Mandate, bringing in its train an ever-increasing influx of Jews from all parts of the world, has changed the face of the Holy Land. The Arab woman, who has been drowsily nodding amid lackadaisical Orientalisms, awakens after centuries to find that a breathe of the Occident is sweeping through the land with a precipitude probably unmatched in pioneer history.

Yesterday there was little to disturb the stagnant serenity of a country whose only glory was her past. But overnight, cities have been built on sand dunes. And roads to join these cities. And on these roads, buses and automobiles race by caravans of camels. And there are shops where latest model gowns may be purchased. And sanitary butcher stores with electrical refrigeration. And there are things more strange, such as adult education, prenatal care, preschool child clinics. All these and more the British government and the Zionists are pouring into the withered lap of the Holy Land.

Is it any wonder that the native woman is confused? In another part of the world she might quickly regain her bearings and follow in the wake of her emancipated sisters. But the East moves with the same slow gait as the camel. Traditions are as deeply rooted and seemingly as permanent as the grand bare hills of the country. It is therefore not to be wondered at that the mass of Arab women remain virtually unchanged. Indeed it is the light of the ironbound traditions that have encompassed these Eastern women for countless centuries; it is amazing that any Western influence has managed to seep into the confines of the women's quarters.

We have already met the bedouin woman on the road. We may see her again when she comes to town to buy her meager supplies. Water is not plentiful in the Holy Land, but she has not learned to make use of what there is. Even during the rainy season when all vegetation and animals enjoy a long needed douche, she and her family present the same filthy exterior. You will catch sight of her trudging patiently behind the donkey on which her husband is riding. Or you will see her helping to pitch the tents of a bedouin camp in some forsaken hill. You will recognize her children in the city streets picking up dung to be sold for fertilizer. A scene in Jericho depicts well the present position of the bedouin woman. A caravan of camels has just come into the village after an all night journey. The man and the camels lie down in the road, exhausted, to rest. The women place clay jugs on their heads and plod toward the fountain to replenish the water supply. Returning to the sleeping group, they set about making a fire over which they will roast the kebab (meat) that their masters will want,

piping hot, when they awaken. The lot of the bedouin woman, from the time she marries at the age of thirteen or fourteen, is one of drudgery and complete subordination, but she is doubtless not too unhappy since the seeds of discontent have not been sown.

The position of the fellah woman is, socially, not much more advanced. She too married at an early age, and, as one of her husband's wives, devotes herself solely to his wants. However, because she is established in a home, no matter how wretched, she is within the reach of the constructive British and Jewish forces. She comes to hear of the Hadassah [Women's Zionist Organization of America] health clinics and sometimes makes use of them. When she brings her produce to market in Jerusalem, Haifa or Tel Aviv, she sits beside her huge basket of cactus fruit or oranges—a picturesque figure in her brightly embroidered dress—and watches the Western world march by. She is not yet a part of this world, but she may yet be.

In the ranks of the urban Muslim women, one finds a rustle of transition. A few years ago the Muslim woman resembled a bulky black tent, garbed in her many cloth wrappings and thick veil. But today many of the Muslim women are scarcely conspicuous. Their black coats are cut along smart and fitted lines and their gossamer veils are only slightly more concealing than the veils worn in the name of fashion by Western women. Frequently they can be seen lifting their veils when making a purchase, a liberty only recently adopted.

A few advanced Muslim families are sending their daughters to schools of higher education, after which they enter the teaching or nursing professions. At a recent graduation exercise at the Jerusalem Girls' College, Muslim girls comprised about one third of the class.

These are the beginnings of what may later prove to be a revolutionary movement in the world of Muslim women. But as yet, the life of this group remains fundamentally unchanged. The woman is never seen in the public streets unless accompanied by another woman, and during the evenings when her husband is smoking his nargileh and drinking Turkish coffee at one of the many Arab cafés, she is confined to her home. The fate of the fairly well-to-do Muslim woman today is not enviable from the Western point of view. In contrast to the lower-class woman who is little more than a beast of burden, she leads a life of complete idleness that is deadening. She cannot meet her husband's friends. Indeed, even today a man may not inquire about, or in any way allude to, the existence of the wife or wives of a Muslim. Therefore, the Muslim woman, whose sole diversion is shopping

for fine silks in the bazaars, soon becomes fat and—we are told—devotes much of the day to gossiping in the women's quarters of the houses.

The nationalist propaganda that the Arab leaders are spreading throughout the country, in an attempt to curb the British policy and to stem Jewish immigration, is awakening a few groups of Muslim women. During the protest demonstrations the women marched through the streets in public parade with the men. Delegates of the Arab Women's Federation even went so far as to appear before His Excellency the High Commissioner to enter vehement protests against the killing of the illegal demonstrators by British police. Special dispensation for these political activities are, accorded to them, by nationalistic-minded sheikhs. This letting down of the bars of Islam for political purposes may lead to further emancipation along other lines when the nationalistic wave has subsided.

The Christian woman is the most advanced among the Arabs. She has adopted the Western mode of dress; her social position is comparable to that of women elsewhere; her domestic life is stable since polygamy does not prevail; her entry into the business and professional realms is taken for granted, even by the Muslim men.

We left the Jewish chalutza striding down the road. Her skin is blackened by the sun; she is wearing a blue blouse and shorts, beneath which one sees her sturdy bare legs. Before coming to Palestine you might have passed her in the streets of London, Paris, Berlin or New York. She was a teacher, lawyer, or journalist; today, she is a peasant—a new type of intellectual peasant who lives in the kvutzoth that have been established throughout Palestine.

The group that she represents, although comparatively small, is making a unique contribution to the annals of womankind. Throughout history, women have played their part in the stirring and difficult pioneer periods of all countries, suffering deprivation and facing danger. She has done all this and more. She has helped to create a new social order that she believes approaches the philosophy of life laid down by the early Hebrew prophets.

Communal living is characteristic of life in the kvutzah, personal property having been abolished. Each member of the group goes about her tasks with a tireless energy that is fed by a passionate belief in an ideal.

To the tourist, the children of these chalutzoth appear as a new race of people—bright eyed, intelligent, and healthy as they chatter in biblical Hebrew. The children, living together in a well-built communal house, receive the most scientific care and education, although the adults may be living on thin soup and black bread.

There is no phase of life in the kvutzah in which the woman does not participate. Her voice is heeded in the council that governs the colony. She takes her place behind the plow and does her share of the agricultural work, which is more demanding here than elsewhere since the rocky soil has lain barren for centuries.

Volumes have been written—and more will yet be written—testifying to the rich drama supplied by the women during the early stages of the resettlement of Palestine by the Jews. The list of heroines who died for the cause in that soul-trying period is long; women who faced and succumbed to the malaria infested swamps and the attacks of savage native tribes.

Conditions have changed in the last decade. The kvutzoth can claim dairies and citrus groves that are as flourishing as any in the world. The swamps have been dried up by the planting of eucalyptus trees. But, despite the progress made, the lot of the chalutza is still a difficult and precarious one. Living in these outposts in the most remote sections of the country, she realizes that, if the political kettle should again boil over, she will be required to defend her colony and her children against the easily aroused Arab tribes.

The Jewish woman in the city has resumed her living along much the same lines as in Western countries. She has always been accorded recognition—witness the biblical Judge Deborah. It is not then to be wondered at that she takes her place in the professional, business and political world of the Jewish National Homeland. Equality of the sexes is one of the fundamental principles of the Histadrut, which is one of the most powerful factors in Palestine. Therefore, within the urban as well as the rural communities the woman enjoys full and equal rights with regard to occupation and general status.

The German women, Hitler refugees who are daily streaming into Palestine, deserve commendation for the manner in which they are adjusting themselves. New restaurants and shops of all kinds are being established by this group, so recently and so rudely uprooted. Wives of professional men who cannot immediately reestablish themselves here are providing for the temporary upkeep of the family.

These are the women of Palestine. Conflicting ancient and modern standards and differing Occidental and Oriental philosophies are the materials that are being woven on the loom; who knows but that, from these colorful and chaotic threads, the pattern of a new woman, who will combine the best of the East and the best of the West, may be spun.

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

1936–1939?
Inhabitants of the Rock, pp. 19–23
Unpublished manuscript from Bar-Adon's personal archive

The "native" in the title refers to the Jew whose roots are in the East, but who has lived for many generations in the West, and now brings technology and knowledge with him to rehabilitate Palestine, which had been neglected under Turkish rule. Here, therefore, as opposed to other places in the East where modernization is a gradual procedure, it is rapid and dramatic. But Bar-Adon wonders why it has to be accompanied by violence.

Because the Arab and the Jew are Semites, the gap between them is less yawning than statesmen would lead us to believe. But the gap is there. It is the gap caused by living apart for centuries, during which time the Arab in Palestine has lost much of the glory of ancient Eastern civilization while the Jew has plucked the fruits of modern Western civilization.

Superficially, no more different species of animals could be imagined than the present-day Arab and the present-day Jew. Superficialities, if spectacular enough, can dominate a picture, and the inventions and contrivances of the West are spectacular.

The Jew is fundamentally an Easterner. His life forces spring from the East, and in the East, perhaps, he is destined to fulfill himself again. But, except for those Jews who have remained in this part of the world, he comes as a messenger from the West. On top of his Eastern soul, things have accumulated—the things he learned in London, Cape Town, and New York. They are good things. But they are also charged and powerful things, apt to confuse the Eastern mind. There are things that today are fighting malaria in the Huleh swamp, which, prior to Jewish purchase, had been abandoned to a few reed-dwellers, papyrus, and water buffalo. They are the things that probe trachoma, build cities, and establish world trade.

The Jew returns to Palestine not only in the guise of an energetic Westerner but also of an ultra-energetic Westerner. At his worst, he is accustomed to living vigorously. In Palestine, he is at his best, and his vigor is a flame. He calls every muscle of mind and body into full play. He has returned home, fatigued with being buffeted about the world. But this

fatigue is transmuted into terrific energy when he is faced with the challenge of rehabilitating Palestine.

The Jew plumbs the Dead Sea for minerals; he puts grapevines on hilltops; he makes a city sprout in sand dunes. He plants. He plows. He plasters. No sun is too hot. No rain is too penetrating. No swamp is too malarial. He has returned home. He has found that home dilapidated and neglected. It must be renovated and clothed again in glory. Planting a tree is a form of religious ecstasy. In all things, he is driven forward by a force beyond himself.

To witness this performance is breathtaking. Upbuilding is usually a slower and more gradual process. Even the energetic West has time and time again expressed surprise and bewilderment at the accomplishments of the Jew in Palestine. Those who oppose the principles of Zionism have not withheld their amazement at the achievements of Zionism.

If the energetic West is amazed, then how could we expect the lackadaisical Arab to take for granted the Goliathan strides of his Jewish neighbors? The Arab peers through Oriental eyes at tractors, laboratories, well borers, trade fairs; he peers sometimes with wonder, sometimes with jealousy, sometimes with hatred.

What was the condition of this Arab when he began peering at these bewildering Western inventions? The extent to which Palestine had been allowed to become run down by the heel of Turkish rule is already history and has been faithfully recorded by travelers to the Holy Land who salted their accounts of delight at visiting sanctified sites with complaints against lepers at large, vermin, and lack of transportation. It is only when irked with the British regime that the Arab leader feigns to look back with nostalgia to the time of the Turks. The fellah does not share this nostalgia. The squalor and poverty of pre-war Palestine, is too well known to need elaboration.

This then was the kind of Jew and the kind of Arab who met in Palestine; the former was bolstered by the inventions of the West and driven forward by the zeal of a zealot; the latter was deadened and phlegmatic after years of oppression.

The Jew could not discard the trappings of the West. They were good. Therefore they had to be fused into the woof of the whole.

And this fusing of the East and the West in Palestine is high drama. Never before has Occident and Orient met on such a close and intimate basis. The potentialities for development in uncharted and undreamed of directions, for nurturing a distinctly new form of culture, are vast, provocative and challenging.

The Jew and the Arab have not lived together long enough nor examined each other closely enough to properly evaluate these potentialities. They cannot move far enough away from the canvas to get a prospective. Perhaps in this, as in so many things, it may be some poet, some worthless dreamer and prophet who will someday point the way to this fusion that practical politicians, fumbling with important portfolios, are too busy to see.

The impact of Orient and Occident in Palestine is dramatic because it is unique. In other places the West seeps gradually into the East. Native headgear was abolished by law in Iran. Doubledecker buses were recently introduced to the streets of Baghdad, after much ado and negotiation in England. Thus, slowly the West creeps Eastward.

But the Jew had no time to let his Western inventions seep into the East. At first he carried the water from great distances on mule back. But as soon as he could, he dug wells and made canals for artificial irrigation. At first he harvested his crops as best he could. But soon, he got combines. And he brought apples trees from New Jersey. And special citrus trees from California. He learned which breed of cow thrives best in the Palestinian climate and why certain diseases infest the chicken coops. He crossed continents for seedling and build laboratories to study a destructive bug.

No, there was no time for the seeping process. A long pent-up love and energy had been unloosed. And today, when the Jew looks at Tel Aviv or the fertile Jezreel Valley, he is amazed at the work of his own hands. How can the Arab be expected to take it for granted?

Sometimes the West has come in the person of a trader or soldier to conquer the East "for its own good." In that case there was no need to establish basic understanding, no need for fellowship between the colonizer and the colonized. There was need only that one knew how to issue commands and the other to obey.

But the Jews have not come as traders or soldiers. Their position is less romantic and more complex than one of Kipling's empire builders. The Jew cannot stop at feeling warmly indulgent toward the "native." For, he too, is a native. He has not come to make pacts or to make barter or to make anything else with these natives. When he needed land to live on, he paid for it as though the rocky soil were gold ore. He has never tried to simulate the purchase from the Indians of Manhattan for twenty-six dollars and a few strings of beads, for he did not come to exploit the natives. He came to live with them and to talk to them as one native to another native. There must be fusion, or there will be nothing at all.

So far we have the picture of the Jew returning to his ancient home, bringing the trappings of the West. He could not properly assimilate in the West because he is a Semite. Yet, his Semite cousins are confused by and sometimes distrustful of these Western trappings.

> How far have the Jews and Arabs gone toward achieving an understanding?
> And why should the "return of the native" be punctuated by uprisings?

THE "MAUROTH"

Dorothy Ruth Kahn
1939
Larnaca, Cyprus
An article from Bar-Adon's personal archive

Bar-Adon summarizes the three years of violence and questions the failure of the British to restore order, concluding that it is the result of deliberate "divide and conquer" policy. She claims that the events were in no sense an uprising of the Arab people against the Empire or the Jews. She notes that there are signs that the British are finally committed to restoring order, and she highlights the suffering of both the Arab and Jewish populations. She mentions the "sunrise to sunset" settlements (including Ein-Hashofet, named in honor of the Supreme Court Judge Louis D. Brandeis) and the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra, which was founded during this period, and stresses the contributions of women during this period.

April 19 will be the anniversary of the outbreak of the 1936 disturbances in Palestine. During this period, life for us has been intense; therefore it is difficult to believe that only three years have lapsed since that first bloody morning of shooting and stabbing in the streets of Jaffa. The dead were brought back for burial in the neighboring city of Tel Aviv. We believed that, as in the case of the uprisings in 1920, 1929 and 1933, peace would be restored within a few weeks by His Majesty's government. But the disturbances of 1936 proved to be more than a fortnight's eruption. When

the smoke of battle clears, doubtless it will be discovered that the course of history in this strange, volcanic country—smaller in area than the state of Rhode Island—has again veered.

The term "disturbances" has been retained, perhaps owing to the British flair for understatement. But other terms have been applied, depending on temperament or political views. Arab terrorists, in quest of recruits from the villages for their bands, have called it a "holy crusade." American journalists, in quest of headline stories, have called it a "war." Jews, unwilling to admit even to themselves that this was more than a tempest in a teapot, clung optimistically to the Hebrew word *mauroth* meaning "incidents." Arabs, wishing to minimize banditry and emphasize patriotism, have used the term "revolt" to imply that their countrymen were up in arms against the Empire rather than the Jews.

Whether the occurrences in Palestine have been a "war" or a series of "events," they have assumed large proportions, reminiscent of ancient times when a falling rampart in Jerusalem had its repercussions in the kingdoms of Rome, Greece, Cyprus, Persia, Egypt and Assyria. Since communications have compressed the modern world, shots in Jerusalem during the past three years had their echoes in Geneva; 10 Downing Street; the Palace of Emir Abdullah in Amman; the White House in Washington, D.C.; the residences of Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini and the palace of the Emir of Saudi Arabia.

The Arab kings, the American government which was a signatory to the Balfour Declaration, and Italy and Germany, who wished to embarrass England by a continuation of unsettled conditions in the Mediterranean, have all had a finger in the pie—which might be specified more accurately as a mincemeat pie.

The cause of the disturbances is no longer as pertinent a question as the cause for the continuation of them. The proper answer to this question can only be given by the empire that manipulates the strings operating the puppet show. The naive outsider (and one living in Palestine can be as remote from the actual pulse in London as one living in New York) can only pose the simple question, "Is it possible that the British Mandatory Power could have failed to restore order in a pigmy strip of territory during a period of three years?" Granted, the peculiar geography of Palestine with its hills, wadis and caves, has always favored the bandit. Even the picturesque, twisted olive trees are ideal hiding places for arms. Granted too, the rebels are known to have received financial assistance from outside

sources. Still, the idea that England was unable to restore order in three years is ludicrous. Therefore the naive outsider must come to the conclusion that maintaining the disturbances were part of the British policy, a policy known as "divide and rule" or "muddling through."

Being an ex-American and accustomed to the simplicity of a country whose interests do not extend beyond its own borders, I cannot criticize this policy. Despite some years of residence in Palestine, the complex mechanisms of Empire politics, as seen from close range, still amaze and bewilder me. It is quite possible that this policy of "muddling through," of prolonging for three years an unpleasant business that might have been scotched in three days, will prove in the long run to have been best for all parties concerned. Britain is an old hand in such matters and Solomon has said, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning." We have not yet seen the end.

One fact is self evident: at no time during these three years has there been an uprising of the Arab people as a whole in Palestine or neighboring countries against the Mandatory Power or the Jews. Had there been anything bordering on a serious uprising, the Jewish population of only four hundred thousand souls (completely unarmed in 1936) would have been massacred in the twinkling of an eye.

There is no doubt that the slight rumblings heard in 1936 could have been quickly squelched had government taken decisive action. At the time, Sir Arthur Wauchope was high commissioner and popular with all elements in the country. His vacillation and inability to end the troubles was traced to his distaste for injuring any factions involved. He has been compared to the kindhearted man who, when taking his dog to a veterinarian to have his tail amputated would say, "Please don't do it all at once. I can't bear to see him suffer. Cut it off a little at a time." As a result of this vacillation, a situation arose comparable to gangsterism in Chicago, except that the misbehavior of the Arab "Al Capones" resulted in more serious and far-reaching damage.

A most concise analysis of the situation was given a fortnight ago in a statement by the British War Office who admitted that, "The total number of permanent active rebels in the whole country does not exceed 1,000 to 1,500 men split up in small bodies under the command of various leaders. Small parties of rebels combine by night for such activities as sniping and sabotage, which have become a recognized and remunerative racket. Although mainly the effendis have supplied the administrative capacity,

they have not gained any real control of the fighting leaders and in fact they continue to be terrorized by the fear of being "bumped off." They may give advice but they cannot give orders; orders come direct from the mufti [the religious leader of the Muslims of Palestine] and his associates. Even in large towns there is little sign that the educated classes combine to give general support to the gangs."

Therefore, with the mufti playing the role of Al Capone and with Britain leisurely "muddling through," terrorism held sway for three years. British police, soldiers and civil officers, as well as Jews and Arabs paid with their lives for the "muddling." There was no road, town, village or city (except Tel Aviv, which has a concentrated Jewish population of 150,000 souls) where life and property was not menaced. The hills in the region of Jericho and the Dead Sea were again infested with bandits, as in biblical times. Jewish shepherds of Galilee were murdered and their flocks stolen. At times the audacity of the rebels and the meekness of Britain assumed farcical proportions—such as when the Arab towns of Bethlehem, Jenin and Nablus were "conquered" by the rebels who ousted or murdered law-abiding Arab officials, hoisted the rebel flag, and took over the courts, post offices, banks and police stations.

A few months ago the rebels also took possession of the Old City of Jerusalem and raised the flag over Damascus Gate. I stood on the roof of a nearby house, listening to the clicking of the army machine guns, which answered the snipers who were firing from the parapets of the mosques, and watching the planes circling over the Tower of David. Eventually the British troops entered the gates and "recaptured" the city from the bandits. The picture of a handful of villagers defying government was high farce—but at least it provided the foreign newspaper correspondents with one of the best stories of the disturbances since "Jerusalem Besieged"—always front-page stuff.

Within the past months it seems to have become evident that Britain desires to restore order. Those measures that could have been applied more successfully three years ago are now being enforced. The arms traffic is being partially controlled by a law requiring all male drivers and vehicle passengers to carry traveler permits. Last week an ordinance was announced forbidding everyone except Europeans and Jews from crossing the Syrian-Palestinian frontier (Syria having been one of the chief sources for gunrunners).

Paradoxically enough, although the Arabs have been on the offensive and Jews on the defensive, the Arab population as a whole has suffered as

much as, if not more than, the Jewish. Firstly, the need of the Jews for a home has become increasingly desperate within the past three years. This meant that, in the face of any odds, they were determined to push forward with the upbuilding of the land. Urban areas have expanded, new factories set in motion and agricultural settlements established in the most isolated and dangerous places. The need was too great and the tempo too swift to permit demoralization within the Jewish ranks. In addition, the Jews had the comfort, at least, of knowing who their enemies were.

On the other hand, the moderate Arab (and there were thousands) who was opposed to the methods of his countrymen was forced into an intolerable position. If he did not respond to the extortioners' demands, he was taken to the "courts," held in the hills, for trial. In this way hundreds of the moderate and courageous Arabs who sincerely desired to reach an understanding with the English and the Jews, and who bravely opposed the terrorists, have lost their lives. Thousands of them with their families have fled the country and are now living in exile in Beirut, Damascus, Cairo and Alexandria.

Since the wealthy Arabs have left the country and commerce with the Jews was stopped, the condition of the poor Arab can be imagined. Illiterate, he depends on the Friday sermons in the mosques for information. There he only learns from the sheikhs (mouthpieces for the mufti) that the Jews "want to burn the Mosque" [Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. the third holiest site in Islam]. Having seen no evidence of incendiarism in three years, he is bewildered. Naturally, he does not distrust his countrymen, and yet for the Jew who brought him nothing but increased prosperity, he feels no instinctive hatred (as proved by the War Office report that, after three years of continued provocative propaganda, the rebels have only one thousand recruits). Therefore, his simple mind can only grasp the fact that owing to mysterious circumstances, it is more difficult for him to earn the few piasters required for his bread and olives. Frequently, for economic reasons alone, he is forced to join the bands in the hills, one of the few paying "enterprises" left to him.

The port of Jaffa (the ancient port of Joppa from which Jonah set sail) is again as sleepy as when Mark Twain wrote his *Innocents Abroad*, although in 1936 Jaffa had become one of the leading cities in Palestine. After Jaffa became unsafe in 1936, the city of Tel Aviv (five minutes distance) was given permission to construct a "jetty." The jetty evolved into a thriving port that now handles as much traffic as the harbor in Haifa. The Jewish

businesses located in Jaffa in 1936 had to be transferred to Tel Aviv for reasons of security. Jaffa has declined into a second-rate Levantine port town, and former boatmen and porters employed at the port, carriage drivers, hucksters and bootblacks who made their living in Tel Aviv are existing in penury. After a landmine had been laid on the Tel Aviv beach on a crowded Saturday morning and a bomb had been exploded in front of the San Remo Hotel at teatime, it was considered unsafe to allow Arabs to circulate freely in Tel Aviv. Therefore the innocent and ignorant Arab who once supported his family on what he earned by driving a carriage on Saturdays (when Jewish carriage drivers do not work) pays the price for his gangster countrymen.

So much for politics. Behind the curtain of Royal Commissions, Round Tables [a conference on the partition of Palestine; began on February 7, 1939 and lasted until March 17, 1939] and prolonged confabulations, a drama has been enacted that—like the "covered wagon" era in America—will only be properly recounted in later years by historians who can see events in retrospect.

Although Palestine is among the most ancient countries in the world, the modern Jewish section is among the new territories that came into existence only after the World War. Therefore the word "pioneer" may aptly be applied. In view of centuries of neglect under Turkish and Arab rule, this country, which once supported a flourishing population of millions, has reverted to a veritable desert. In parts, the brackish tributaries of the Jordan had made the soil salty. Wells and springs had dried up until even survey authorities pronounced the land arid. Although the dyes of Lod and the fine linens of Beit She'an were renowned in ancient times, there were no industries in Palestine before the war except soap, wine and Hebron glass. The diaries of pre-war travelers contain amusing accounts of how they brought their own tea, candles and sunglasses from England when visiting Palestine.

So, in the last three years, we have relived some of the drama of early American history—developing the country with one hand and defending ourselves against attackers with the other. As always, during such pioneer periods, women have played an important role. In the first place, it was impossible for a woman to stay behind the "front lines" even if she wanted to. Actually there were no front lines. In the above-mentioned War Office report, it is pointed out that, "Throughout the country the active rebel and peaceful citizen are inextricably mixed." An American journalist who

came here from Spain told me, "I was never so nervous in Spain as I am in Palestine. There, at least, you knew where the battlefronts were."

This meant that the most timid woman became, willy-nilly, a soldier of sorts. She traveled about in buses with iron-barred windows. An armed guard sat next to the driver. But even this was not full protection against sniping, bombs and landmines—she was never quite sure if she would return from her visit to the beauty parlor or the dressmaker. On occasions, bombs were thrown into schoolyards, so she darned her stockings or baked her cakes wondering if her children would come home safely in the afternoon. Her husband, whether a teacher, farmer or carpenter, was also in constant danger. The actual casualties for a three-year "war" have been comparatively few. But the murder of one to ten or twenty Jews almost every day has been as nerve-racking as water dropping on a stone. The suspense and insecurity over such a long period has been more trying—especially for the women who wait at home—than a quick and more terrible slaughter would have been.

But it is amazing how adaptable human beings are to any set of conditions. Going to market under armed guard has become the normal rather than the unusual thing.

Last week I was traveling from Rehovot to Tel Aviv in a new type of bus that is completely lined with metal, having only peepholes for ventilation. It gives the effect of a war tank and, naturally, interested the children. I overheard a five-year-old in the seat ahead of me ask her mother in Hebrew, "Why do we have these buses?" The mother, engrossed in her newspaper, replied off-handedly, "Because the mufti wants us to." "He doesn't want us to catch cold?" persisted the youngster. "Yes," replied the mother, lost in the morning news.

But the women's role has not been limited to her historic one of "waiting." Her contribution began soon after the 1936 outbreak when two Jewish nurses, serving in the Jaffa Arab hospital, were murdered in the hospital grounds.

A few months later the women in agricultural settlements demanded their right to assist the men in defense. After some discussions, the right was granted. The first woman to take over the watch on the water tower of a settlement, Ramat Hakovesh, was shot dead (apparently not knowing the art of crouching behind sandbags). Since then, women have not been spared participating in every form of atrocity. About half a year ago, a man and his wife and two children were kidnapped in Atlit and taken by the

band to the hills. The children were later returned in safety, but the man and his wife were never heard from again.

Strangely enough the Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra was born and developed during this hectic three-year period. The first concert under the baton of Toscanini was held six months after the outbreaks began. There are a host of amusing stories to be told of how the seventy-five musicians (most of whom had been former leaders in Berlin, Vienna or Budapest) toured the country under armed guard. Sometimes the bassoon players would stick their instruments out the window and blow long blasts to frighten away the terrorists. Here again women took their chances with the men. It is said that the pretty harpist never had a quiet moment when the orchestra was on tour for fear that her precious French harp would suffer at the hands of the snipers.

One of the most dramatic events during the uprising has been the establishment of the "sunrise to sunset" settlements. Owing to insecurity, it was impossible for the Jews to start agricultural settlements in the normal way. Therefore they migrated to the new sites at sunrise, accompanied by several hundred farmers from neighboring settlements. They brought with them partially constructed shacks and walls (resembling the Sears Roebuck collapsible houses). They worked at high speed all day, and before sunset they had put in place the four wooden defense walls, watchtower, dining shack and tents. When completed, the compound resembled the early American barricades. These settlements now number several hundred and are located in various parts of the country from Dan to Be'er Sheva. Here again the women play important roles. The settlements are located in dangerous spots, some on the Transjordan and Syrian frontiers. Usually five or ten women accompany the original forty settlers. They do the cooking and other household jobs, under most primitive conditions. As soon as the farming begins, they assist. Owing to the frequent cutting of telephone wires, there is now a Morse code system joining the Jewish settlements. In most cases, it is the women who sit in the watchtowers at night while the men are on duty below. From the towers they operate the light projectors and give or receive the necessary signals from neighboring settlements.

As I write, the pictures of hundreds of young women whom I have seen in isolated outposts flash through my mind. I remember a dozen living in a place called Ein Geb, which is located on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, near the Syrian border. The only neighbors are bedouin tribes, and assistance in time of danger could only come from across the lake.

The usual quota of women is also living in the settlement at the end of the Dead Sea where the Jews are mining potash. This is one of the lowest spots in the world, and the heat during the summer (and most of the winter) is almost unbearable. Women are also living in the new settlements bordering the Huleh swamp, which was only recently purchased and is still malarial. Here and on the Lake of Galilee, the women assist with the fishing.

One of the most hazardous settlements in the country is Ein-Hashofet, located in the heart of the hills and connected with civilization only by a small mud road, impassable during most of the rainy season. This was settled mostly by Americans and was named in honor of Judge Brandeis [associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1916 to 1939; the leader of the American Zionist movement in the United States, 1916–20] (*Ein-Hashofet* meaning "Well of the Judge"). It is strange to come into this remote, wild place, surrounded by the black tents of the bedouin, and be greeted by lusty American slang and see young women from Detroit and Chicago walking around with rifles across their shoulders and cartridge belts around their waists. In these dangerous places, licenses to carry arms have been issued by the government to everyone, even the women.

Although these new settlements are more spectacular, the women in the older, established settlements have equally difficult tasks. With the men having been on watch for three years, a large portion of the farming falls to the women, in addition to their household duties. I remember spending a few days in a small farming settlement called Kfar Hess and seeing my hostess start out with a lantern to milk the cow at nine o'clock in the evening, after she had washed the dishes and helped her son with his arithmetic. Her husband worked in the fields during the day and was on watch at night.

Many of these settlements—like the American settlement of Ein-Hashofet—are inhabited by young people who are equipped mentally and physically to face the hazards and the challenge. But some of them are inhabited by middle-aged people who were forced by circumstances into "pioneering." Such is the settlement of Shavei Tzion (Return to Zion). They are situated in the dangerous but once fertile valley of Beit She'an. They are a German Jewish community that migrated last October en masse from the town of Rexingen in the district of Stuttgart. Behind the wooden defense walls, you will find gray-haired *hausfraus* [housewives] bending over primitive Primus stoves or mixing their *kuchen* [coffeecake] batter on upturned orange crates.

This, in brief, is the story of Palestine's women during the past three years when they took their places behind stoves, brooms, hoes, sandbags, rifles, and in watchtowers, as the occasion demanded.

WHY ZIR'IN'S REFUGEES CAN'T RETURN YET

Dorothy Bar-Adon
Merhavia
An article from Bar-Adon's personal archive
Earlier version in *The Palestine Post*, August 19, 1948

Bar-Adon explains why the Israeli government opposed the return of the Arab refugees to their villages. She examines the situation from "the worm's eye" point of view of their Jewish neighbors, using the example of Zir'in, a village located on a ridge above Merhavia. That strategic advantage would preclude the return of the Arab inhabitants, who had fought against their former neighbors despite decades of peaceful relations. She clarifies that in war, one side wins, and the other must accept the consequences of losing.

The Count [Folke Bernadotte, Count of Wisborg; a Swedish diplomat chosen to be the United Nations Security Council's mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1947–48. He was assassinated in Jerusalem in 1948 by the militant Zionist group, Lehi, while pursuing his official duties] seems rather hurt because the Israel government is "not inclined to permit" the refugees to return. He "appreciates Jewish misgivings on security grounds," but he thinks the danger to Israel would be "slight."

Now, the Count is a busy man who flies around a great deal and sees things along broad lines; the bird's eye view. We who don't fly around and who would be living next door to these refugees, should they return, have the lowly worm's eye view. But it's also a view. Therefore we see these Arab refugees in clear-cut outlines as individuals, as neighbors, as men who lived across the road or just beyond the pine grove or on the other side of the wadi; in contrast to those of the bird's eye view who see them as "the Arab refugee problem" composed of so-and-so many souls (approximately) who cost such-and-such pounds (approx.) to maintain daily on starvation (approx.) rations in order to ease consciences (approx.).

In order to consider these refugees as individuals and to consider their proposed homecoming from the worm's eye view, let's look at Zir'in [an Arab village near Merhavia—the Jewish settlement where Bar-Adon lived]. I've written about Zir'in on previous occasions. I do so again on the pretext of Thoreau who wrote, "I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well." As our close neighbor we knew Zir'in well. And Zir'in being typical of tens of Arab villages, I've used it for close-ups when the scene became too panoramic and bird's eye.

So you may recall that this historic village of Jezreel, where the Kings of Israel was crowned, maintained friendly relations with our village for some thirty years without incident, even during past disturbances. There were times when I became quite lyrical about Zir'in, comparing it to a "cameo" set on the mountain; that's what it looked like. Then the delicate cameo began sniping. And if the Iraqis had taken the notion, our village and others would have been in direct and easy cannon range. Yes, we were close neighbors, uncomfortably close with all the strategic plums in Zir'in's basket.

People here didn't believe, as I wrote at the time, that the fellahin of Zir'in were responsible for the much publicized arrival of the Iraqi general and his troops. In fact, some of them had previously complained, like the other villagers, that if the British would guard the borders, hell "wouldn't pop in Palestine."

None of us know how many of our former good neighbors left the village before the Iraqi general's arrival, nor how many volunteered or were coerced to remain behind, fighting until the night when, after losses to our troops, the stronghold fell. One thing we do know is that on the night of the first unsuccessful attempt to capture Zir'in, the barbaric war cries of the women, urging their men on, were plainly heard by our soldiers. We assumed that the women were of Zir'in and not Iraqi A.T.S. personnel [Auxiliary Territorial Service—the women's branch of the British Army during World War II].

Visiting Zir'in after its capture wasn't a pleasure jaunt. Their own counterattacks had added to the original damage. There was all the emptiness and gapingness of a battered village. Stray cats and donkeys wondered in and out of houses where we had once sipped black coffee and talked of "shalom" through the nargileh smoke. An elaborately beaded makeup bag, made especially for a bride's mascara, hung forlornly on a caved-in wall. Saddest of all was the paralyzed woman whose family had deserted her in the rush. Mumbling about the will of Allah, she sat under a pomegranate

tree, her day broken only by the meals brought to her by the Jewish troops. Of all the impressions of that wry day, the memory of the woman left behind under a pomegranate tree, stayed on.

There was sadness that day, the sadness of a deserted village, of destruction, of fellahin torn from their fields. But sadness was hardly the predominating emotion. We'd have been saints or liars if we said so. The predominating emotion was relief. Only here on the spot could we realize the horrible potentialities of this "delicate cameo" who had been sniping at us from a height. Only as we walked over the ground and surveyed Zir'in with other eyes than in the lyric past when we came to eat roast lamb—only now could we thank our lucky stars for the ultimate victory. Our losses were not, as the wishful thinking of the Arabs caused them to write then, "Oh Jewish mothers, if you could see the bodies of hundreds of your sons strewn in pieces on the rocks around Zir'in," etc.,—but the number was high for the subordination of a small village whose strength lay in her height.

And now comes the bland proposal that the Arab refugees be allowed to return to their homes. The idea mayn't sound too preposterous to those in high places when it's couched in that highfalutin "rehabilitation" language. But when you reduce it to its simplest root, Zir'in—and every single Jewish town and village had its personal Zir'in—it's unthinkable that anyone should not consider it unthinkable.

We knew the fellahin of Zir'in. Our farmers helped them in agricultural matters. Those of us with a weakness for that delightful vegetable, *bamya* [okra], had to cultivate our own this year. We miss our *tchina* [tahini] and the spicy bean [cardamom] that adds piquancy to the coffee. It's too bad that the fellah couldn't continue to sell us the bamya and coffee spice. And he'd probably prefer bringing us the bamya to doing whatever he is doing at the moment. It's certainly too bad that anyone with the broad wheat fields he had should be troubled now about where his next *peta* [bread] is coming from. It's too bad. But frankly we're more relieved than sad. If he wasn't living under an olive tree, we might have been. If he wasn't the refugee, we might have been. We prefer it this way. If we said otherwise, we'd be saints or liars. That's war. That's the worm's eye view.

Neither the fellahin nor we were responsible for the spectacular arrival of the Iraqi general in Zir'in. But one thing is certain. The notion of reinstalling Zir'in as a sniping cameo over our heads is fantastic. The blood of every Jewish soldier who fell there in order to ensure the fields in this part of the Emek would cry out against it, to say nothing of those still living here.

When the children used to say, "Zir'in is sniping down on us again," we answered casually, "Really?" or "You don't say." The casualness was part of the general "carry on" act, put on for ourselves as well as for the children. But one's sense of humor and casualness and "carry on" wears thin. We are not prepared to accept with open eyes the Count's "slight" danger.

We can regret that our once good neighbors are living under olive trees somewhere and hungry. We regret too those of our soldiers who will never be hungry again because they fell on the slopes of Zir'in. We can regret a great deal. But still, the idea of such a menace being established on the mountain over our heads is fantastic.

The onus for "rehabilitation" rests squarely with those who opened the borders to the Iraqis, thereby setting the first stone rolling in this whole catastrophe. What do the British intend to do about it? For the whole high-sounding "Arab refugee problem" is only Zir'in multiplied, complicated, and soaked with sudden British crocodile tears.

We who were good neighbors can feel more poignantly for the fellah whom we once called by his first name than England who brought him to this present plight. For us he isn't the "Arab refugee problem"; he's a man with a name with whom we had no quarrel. It's sadder to think of a man with a name living under an olive tree, hungry, with his wife and children with names, than to think of the "refugee problem" living under an olive tree, hungry. And more than once we inquire with concern, "I wonder how so and so is faring now." I think most often of ten-year-old Fatma with the dark eyes and chubby cheeks. It happened like this. American jitterbugging of a sort and Arab hoochy of a sort can be made to coincide at a given point. So, at a wedding we managed a twosome. Fatma was delighted to follow me like a shadow for two whole days. Where is she now? Often her dancing feet and dark eyes protrude from the bird's eye "Arab refugee problem" in a very personal, worm's eye way.

But the idea of Fatma's father being "rehabilitated" over our heads at this stage in the game is fantastic. In other words, the average man—devoid of Britain's beatific fairplayness—would answer any invitation to rehabilitation at his expense for the benefit of Britain's keeping face.

"So sorry, old fellow, but—"