

Israel @ 70

Achievements and Challenges

Through the Eyes of Contemporary Israeli Literature

Zot Hashira - Study Kit

1947-1958

The First Decade

1947-1958
The First Decade

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Introduction

The first decade of the young state of Israel starts a few months before its declaration of independence. On November 29th 1947, the UN passes the “Partition Plan” decision, which divides British Mandate Palestine into two states; an Arab and a Jewish one. A lot had been said already about who had accepted and who did not and the results of these decisions.

In this program however, we want to focus on two major issues of the first decade of the state; the need to fight for its existence and the wave of immigrants who arrive at its shores in the early years.

Both focus points will be seen through a double lens; the great achievement they represent and the challenges they have created.

A Short Historical Background

In 1947, when the UN passes the partition plan decision, there were about 600.000 Jews living in the land of Israel.

A small part of them were descendants of Jews who had lived in the land for a few centuries already, mainly in the five holy cities. This was a traditional population. A larger part were immigrants and descendants of those who had made Aliya in one of the five major waves of immigration preceding the birth of the state.

Following WWII there was an opposition against the British Mandate over Palestine, both by Jews and Arabs. The UN had sent an investigating committee UNSCOP. Following their recommendation it had passed a resolution to divide Palestine into two states; an Arab and a Jewish one. The grand majority of the Arab population refused the resolution, the majority of the Jewish population had accepted it.

The events that followed lead to Israel’s war of independence. Israel needed to fight for its existence and learn to face the sacrifice of young lives.

The mass immigration of Jews from Muslim countries as well as Holocaust survivors from Europe, had become the second major task of the state. During the war of independence about 750.000 Palestinian had left their towns and villages. In Israel, the mere language one uses to describe this, tags one politically; Did they run away out of fear, have they been chased away, did their leaders tell them to leave temporarily until they could come back victoriously.

Probably all answers are true and so are the outcomes. Palestinian refugee camps in all the neighboring countries and a relatively small Arab population remaining within Israel.

At the same time hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab countries as well as Holocaust survivors from Europe are arriving at the shores of the young state.

Main Issue in This decade

Achievements:

- The Creation of the Defense Force
- The Ingathering of the Exiles – the Mass Aliya

Challenges

- The Arab Minority and the Refugees
- Discrimination among Olim

Achievements I:

The Creation of the Defense Force

- The Silver Platter – Nathan Alterman

About the Poem

The poem, which is an iconic text in Israel poetry of remembrance, was published in the Davar Newspaper on December 18th 1947. It is thus connected to the date of the partition decision of November 29th 1947, yet not immediately. Three weeks had passed between the UN Partition decision and the publication. The events of these weeks are crucial not only for the understanding of the poem and the poet's intention in writing it. They are key to the formative days of the state of Israeli and its military forces.

About the Poet

Nathan Alterman (1910 -1970) was one of the most important poets of the pre state and the early years of the state of Israel. His body of poetry is vast and includes volumes and volumes of lyrical, historical, personal and national poems and prose. Yet he is mainly remembered for this one poem. The Silver Platter that was published in "The Seventh Column" – his weekly Friday column in the Davar daily newspaper for over 30 years. In this column Alterman had reacted poetically to contemporary events. Reading the collected works of this column, is a unique way of learning the history of the state of Israel.

Alterman was not paid for "The Seventh Column". He had held the position of the night editor for his livelihood.

Teaching “The Silver Platter”

When teaching the poem you could choose one or more of the following possibilities or a combination:

- A. Text: biblical sources and imagery created for the nation and its relations to the fallen soldiers.
- B. Comparison between “The Silver Platter” and its predecessor, almost forgotten poem: “And it was Evening”
- C. The historical context leading up to the composition of the poem and its impact.

- **Option A - Text:** biblical sources and imagery created for the nation and its relations to the fallen soldiers.

Read the poem with participants

Ask questions about possible dates of publication: often times the reading of the poems suggests a date following the battles, namely after the war of independence, yet the poem was written at the very beginning of that war, thus positioning the poet in a prophetic role, of he who sees the future and can promise the hard days will end.

Note the time of day- sunset - conforming to the biblical concept of the beginning of a new day.

Note other biblical allusions (see source page)

Note the anonymity of the soldiers, the equality of genders, and the lack of decorum – all characteristic of the early IDF just emerging from the anonymity of the undergrounds.

Note the name of the state (“The Jews’ State) the poem is published on December 1947 – The state of Israel was not yet named.

Text and Biblical references

Page of Biblical references follows

The Silver Platter / Nathan Alterman

A state is not given to a people on a silver platter – Chaim Weitzman

...And the land will grow still Crimson skies dimming, misting reference Joshua
Slowly paling again Over smoking frontiers
As the nation stands up torn at heart but existing
To receive its unique wonder in two thousand years Note change from Hebrew

As the moment draws near, It will rise, darkness facing
Stand straight in the moonlight in terror and joy.
...When across from it step out towards it slowly pacing
In plain sight of all; A young girl and a boy Note gender equality

Dressed in battle gear, dirty, shoes heavy with grime
On the path they will climb up while their lips remain sealed
To change garb, to wipe brow they have not yet found time reference to Zecharia – the
building of the second temple
Still bone weary from days and from nights in the field

Full of endless fatigue and all drained of emotion
Yet the dew of their youth is still seen on their head
Thus like statues they stand stiff and still with no motion
and no sign that will show if they live or are dead. Note change from Hebrew

Then a nation in tears and amazed at this matter,
Will ask: who are you? And the two will then say reference to Genesis
with soft voice: We-- are the silver platter
on which the Jews' state was presented today. Israel is not named yet.

Then they fall back in darkness as the dazed nation looks
and the rest can be found in the history books. Hebrew תולדות ישראל

מגש הכסף

"אין מדינה נתנה לעם על מגש של כסף"

חיים ויצמן

...והארץ תשקט. עין שמים אודמת
תעמצם לאטה
על גבולות עשנים.
ואמה תעמד – קרועת לב אף גושמת... –
לקבל את הנס
האחד אין שני...

היא לשקט תכון. היא תקום למול סהר
ועמדה, טרם-יום, עוטה חג ואימה.
— אז מנגד יצאו
נערה ונער
ואט-אט יצעדו הם אל מול האמה.

לובשי חל וחגור, וכבדי נעלים,
בנתיב יעלו הם
הלוח והחרש.
לא החליפו בנגד, לא מחו עוד במים
את עקבות יום-הפרך וליל קר-האש.

עופים עד בלי קץ, נזירים ממרגוע,
ונוטפים טללי נעורים עבריים —
דם השנים יגשו,
ועמדו לבלי-נוע.
ואין אות אם חיים הם או אם ירויים.

אז תשאל האמה, שטופת דמע-נקסם.
ואמרה: מי אתם? והשנים, שוקטים,
יענו לה: אנחנו מגש הכסף
שעליו לך נתנה מדינת-היהודים.

כך יאמרו. ונפלו לרגלה עוטפי-צל.
והשאר יספר בתולדות ישראל.

Biblical Sources for Silver Platter

וְשֵׁם חֶבְרוֹן לְפָנִים קָרִית אַרְבַּע הָאֲדָם הַגָּדוֹל בְּעֶנְקִים הוּא וְהָאָרֶץ שְׁקֵטָה מִמִּלְחָמָה: יְהוֹשֻׁעַ יד, טו

And the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba (the city of Arba); Arba was the Joshua 14,15 greatest man among the 'Anakim. **And the land had rest from war.**

וַיָּבֹא אֶל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי מִי אֵתָה בְּנִי: בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ז י"ח

And he came to his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am. **Who are you, my son?**" Genesis 27,18

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף וַיֹּסֶף וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אֵלֶּה: בְּרֵאשִׁית מ"ח ח'

Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and he said, "**Who are these?**" Genesis 48,8

אֲנִי־רֹאֲנִי אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה וְהַשָּׁטָן עֹמֵד עַל יְמִינוֹ לְשָׁטְנוֹ: ב: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל הַשָּׁטָן יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשָּׁטָן וַיִּגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַבַּחֲר בִּירוּשָׁלַם הַלּוֹא זֶה אוֹד מִצָּל מֵאִשׁ: ג וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ הָיָה לְבוּשׁ בְּגָדִים צֹאִים וְעֹמֵד לִפְנֵי הַמִּלְאָךְ: ד וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל הָעֹמְדִים לִפְנָיו לֵאמֹר הִסִּירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצָּאִים מֵעָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רֹאֵה הָעֶבְרָתִי מֵעָלָיָה עֲוֹנָה וְהַלְבֵּשׁ אֹתָהּ מִחֻלְצוֹת: ה. וַיֹּאמֶר יְשִׁימוּ צָנִיף טְהוֹר עַל רֹאשׁוֹ וַיְשִׁימוּ הַצָּנִיף הַטְּהוֹר עַל רֹאשׁוֹ וַיַּלְבִּשֻׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמִלְאָךְ יְהוָה עֹמֵד: ו וַיַּעַד מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר: ז כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם בְּדֶרֶךְ כִּי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם אֶת מִשְׁמְרָתִי תִשְׁמֹר וְגַם אֹתָהּ תָּדִין אֶת בֵּיתִי וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת חֻצְרִי וְנִתְּתִי לָהּ מִהֲלָכִים בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה: ח שְׁמַע נָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ | הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל אֹתָהּ וְרַעֲיָהּ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לִפְנֶיהָ כִּי אֲנִשִּׁי מוֹפֶת הִמָּה כִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא אֶת עַבְדִּי צֶמַח: ט כִּי | הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר נִתְּתִי לִפְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל אֶבֶן אַחַת שְׁבַעָה עֵינַיִם הִנְנִי מִפְתַּח פֶּתַחָה נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִשְׁתִּי אֶת עֶזְרִי הָאָרֶץ הַהִיא בְּיוֹם אֶחָד: י בְּיוֹם הַהוּא נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ אֵל תַּחַת גֹּפֶן וְאֵל תַּחַת תְּאֵנָה זְכְרִיָה ג

And He showed me Joshua, the High Priest, standing before the angel of the Lord. And Satan was standing on his right, to accuse him. 2. And the Lord said to Satan: The Lord shall rebuke you, O Satan; and the Lord shall rebuke you, He who chose Jerusalem. Is this one not a brand plucked from fire? 3. Now Joshua was wearing filthy garments and standing before the angel. 4. And he [the angel] raised his voice and said to those standing before him, saying, "Take the filthy garments off him." And he said to him, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I have clad you with clean garments." 5. And I said, "Let them put a pure miter on his head," and they put the pure miter on his head. And they had clothed him with garments while the angel of the Lord was standing. 6. And the angel of the Lord warned Joshua, saying, 7. So said the Lord of Hosts: If you walk in My ways, and if you keep My charge, you, too, shall judge My house, and you, too, shall guard My courtyards, and I will give you free access among these who stand by. 8. Hearken, now, O Joshua the High Priest-you and your companions who sit before you, for they are men worthy of a miracle-for, behold! I bring My servant, the Shoot. 9. For, behold the stone that I have placed before Joshua. Seven eyes are directed to one stone. Behold! I untie its knots, says the Lord of Hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. 10. On that day, says the Lord of Hosts, you shall call-each man to his neighbor-to come under his vine and under his fig tree. Zecharia 3

- **Option B - Comparison with “And it was Evening”**

On Sunday November 30th 1947, following the Partition plan decision, Alterman had published in his weekly column in Davar his first poetic response to this major historical event.

Read the poem and note the reference to the destructive wind from the book of Job, (see sources) the vulnerability of the infant state, reflecting fear and concern about its future.

This reading will call for the question, what had caused the shift of mood from utter fear to a message of hope and empowerment, yet cognizant of the sacrifice.

And It Was Evening Nathan Alterman November 30th 1947

And the people of the **Jewish State**. [The State of Israel was not yet named](#)
Wiped off their cheek, with their sleeve,
A witness less tear of joy
and had praised the **God of reward**. [See Hebrew for ברכת הגומל reference](#)
They congratulated each other with few words...
And turned to the border posts.
And it was evening like yesterday [Biblical reference to the story of creation](#)
The moon's eye stood watching
And **Albion** smiled soundlessly [Britain](#)
As Arabia pulled out its knife.
And everything is as it had always been...
Yet everything had become so different...
As a **unique wind (Ruach) had passed**. [Biblical reference to Job](#)

Since the Ruach of the awesome day
Hit the Jews like a sea
And dropped in their lap the news
Like a warm newborn
And all as before, just a white crib
Came to be in the nation's heart

And when the fires leaped to the roof
To threaten with fear
They joined the **holiday's candles** [The poem is published Erev Hanukah](#)
In the poor home of a generation
On its forehead brightly shining
The inscription of life and freedom

ויהי ערב

נתן אלתרמן 30 בנובמבר 1947

וְאַנְשֵׁי מְדִינַת הַיְּהוּדִים
אֶז מַחֲוֵי מְלָחִים בְּשָׂרוֹל
אֶת דְּמַעַת הַשְּׂמִמָּה אֵין-עֲדִים
וַיִּזְדּוּ לְאַלֹּהֵי הַגָּמוּל.
וַיִּבְרְכוּ אִישׁ-אֶחָיו בְּדַבָּרִים מְעֻטִּים...
וַיִּפְּנוּ אֶל עֲמֻדֹת הַגָּבוֹל.
וַיְהִי עָרֵב. וַיָּשׁוּב כְּמִתְמוֹל
עֵין יָרֵחַ עֲמֻדָּה צוֹפָה,
וְחִיכָה אֶלְפִּיּוֹן בְּלִי קוֹל,
וְעָרֵב סְכִינָה שְׁלֵפָה...
וְהַכֹּל כְּמֵאז... אֶד שׁוֹנָה כֹּה הַכֹּל...
יַעַן רוּחַ אֶחָד חֲלָפָה

יַעַן רוּחַ הַחֵג הַנּוֹרָא
הִיכְתָּה בִּיהוּדִים כִּים
וְהוֹטְלָה אֶל חִיקָם הַבְּשׁוּרָה
כִּמוּ יֶלֶד יוֹלֵד וְחָם
וְהַכֹּל כְּמִתְמוֹל אֲבֵל עֶרֶשׂ צַחֲוֶרָה
הוֹקְמָה בִּלְבָבוֹ שֶׁל עַם

וּבִקְפוּץ הַשְּׂרָפוֹת עַל גִּג
לְאִיִּם לְהַפִּיל מִגּוֹר
הֵן נוֹסְפוּ אֶל נֶרוֹ שֶׁל חֵג
בְּבִיתוֹ הָעֲנִי שֶׁל דּוֹר
וַיּוֹאֵר בְּמִצְחוֹ שְׁבַעֲתִיִּים הַתֵּג
שֶׁחֲרַת לּוֹ חַיִּים וְדִרּוֹר

Biblical Sources for “And There Was Evening”

ויהי ערב

הוֹקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: בְּרֵאשִׁית א,ה
And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night, and it was evening and it was morning, one day. Genesis, 1,5

וְהִנֵּה רוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה בָּאָה | מֵעֶבֶר הַמִּדְבָּר וַיָּגַע בָּאַרְבַּע פְּנוֹת הַבַּיִת וַיִּפֹּל עַל הַנְּעָרִים וַיָּאֲמָלְטָה רַק
אֲנִי לְבַדִּי לְהִגִּיד לָךְ: אִיּוֹב א יט

Behold, **a great wind came** from the other side of the desert, and struck the four corners of the house; it fell upon the youths, who died, and only I alone escaped to tell you." Job 1,19

- **Option C - The Historical Context**

For this teaching, follow the PowerPoint (**Silver Platter Israel70**). It goes step by step through the days following the Partition Decision to the publication of “The Silver Platter”. The PowerPoint refers to two main questions:

1. What had happened between Alterman’s first reaction to the Partition plan in the poem: “And There Was Evening” and the publication of “The Silver Platter”?
2. When and where did Weitzman say the sentence that Alterman uses as the moto and the title for his poem?

The search for the answers to these questions, will lead learners through the drama of the weeks following the UN partition decision. Among the many bitter battles fought during those early days, the battle of Shat in the Negev, stands out as the strongest immediate influence on Nathan Alterman, on the days before he wrote “The Silver Platter”. Slides 11-15 tell the story of the battle, the victims, the funeral in Tel Aviv and the eulogies that were published in Davar, while Alterman is the night editor of the paper.

Slides 16-18 will help uncover the source for the Weitzman quote that gives the poem its title and moto.

As you proceed, the calendar slides will fill up gradually leading to the day of publication.

As a conclusion read the poem once more to let the participants enjoy the newly discovered meanings.

Contemporary Sources for Silver Platter *(All the following sources are part of the PowerPoint presentation)*

Dan Laor 2009

Fourteen days had passed from the publication of “And there was Evening” to the publication of the “Silver Platter”. In those days the violence acts grew and it became clear that the state that had not yet been born is on the threshold of an existential war. The newspapers had reported the fighting daily and were counting the victims and reciting their names. On December 7th, Davar had published, in a black frame a list of three names of the people who fell “Defending Tel Aviv’s suburbs”, as well as an articles about civilians killed in Tel Aviv and Haifa, the death of two kibutz Negba memebbers, killed in an attack of an Arab mob on a truck traveling from Gat to Negba. On December 9th, Davar continues to relate “Yesterday’s Events, throughout the Country”. Under this title they report attacks in Tel Aviv suburbs and one on Rushmia Bridge and Hadar Ha’Carmel outskirts in Haifa. In a black frame, the paper announces the murder of Haganah member Yehoshua Globerman, on his way from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, next to the article is the victim’s picture. On December 12th, the paper tells about “Battles in the Old City” of Jerusalem, an attack on a convoy that had left from Jerusalem to Gush Etzion (ten killed, six wounded) and also about a murderous attack of Jewish cars at Yazur. The total of all the causalities appears again in a black frame. On December 15th the headline says “14 of the people who had accompanied the convoy to Ben Shemen, fell and 9 were wounded by Arab Legion soldiers”. Next to the list of names, another black framed list of all those who were killed throughout the country, on the previous day. By December 18th – which is the date when the Silver Platter is written, the number of dead had reached hundred and twenty.

ארבעה-עשר יום חלפו בין מועד פרסומו של השיר "ויהי ערב" לבין פרסומו של "מגש הכסף". במהלך אותם ימים גברו פעולות האיבה, וניכר היה היטב כי המדינה שטרם נולדה נמצאת על ספה של מלחמת קיום: מדי יום ביומו דיווחו העיתונים היומיים על פעולות האיבה ומנו את מספר הקורבנות ושמותיהם. ב־7 בדצמבר פרסם **דבר** במסגרת שחורה רשימה ובה שמותיהם של שלושה לוחמים שנפלו "בהגנה על פרברי תל־אביב", וכן ידיעות על אזרחים שנהרגו בתל־אביב ובחיפה, ועל מותם של שני חברי קיבוץ נגבה, שנהרגו בעת התנפלות המון ערבי על משאית שנסעה מגת לנגבה. ב־9 בדצמבר המשיך **דבר** לסקור את "מאורעות יום אתמול בארץ": מתחת לכותרת זו נמסר כי נמשכות ההתנפלויות על פרוורי תל־רביב, וכן דווח על התקפה על גשר רושמייה וגבולות הדר הכרמל. במסגרת שחורה בישר העיתון על הירצחו של איש ה"הגנה" יהושע גלוברמן בדרך מירושלים לתל־אביב, כשלצדה תמונת דיוקנו של הקורבן. ב־12 בדצמבר הודיע העיתון על "קרבות בעיר העתיקה" בירושלים, על התקפה על שיירת מכוניות שיצאה מירושלים לכפר עציון (עשרה נהרגו, שישה נפצעו) ועל מתקפה רצחנית על מכוניות יהודיות בכפר יאזור. סיכום הנפגעים הובא שוב במסגרת שחורה. ב־15 בדצמבר פרסם העיתון ידיעה שכותרתה: "14 ממלני שיירה לבן־שמן נפלו ו־9 נפצעו מירי חיילי הלגיון הערבי". בצד הרשימה פורסמה במסגרת שחורה רשימת כלל החללים שנפלו בארץ במהלך היום הקודם. עד ה־18 בדצמבר – שהוא, כמשוער, מועד כתיבת השיר הנדון – הגיע מספר ההרוגים במלחמה למאה ועשרים איש.

Shaut Battle Eulogies

A shudder ran through the huge gathering when, the teacher Miriam Shachor's father stood up to deliver his eulogy in all of the bereaved parents' name: I am not here to eulogise nor to shed tears, he had said. I come to encourage. I call upon the youth to enrol and fill up the ranks. My beloved Miriam, was privileged to fall as a hero, on the holly soil and to sanctify the soil of the Negev.

We the parents are privileged to know we have raised sons who knew how to protect the homeland. The people of Israel will rise and build its state

צמרכורת עברה בקהל העצום בעמוד
המורה, אביה של מרים שחור, לומר
דברי הספר בשם ההורים השכולים:
אינני בא להספיד, ולא להויד דמעות —
אמר. אני בא לעודד. אני קורא לנו
ער להתגייס ולמלא את השורות. מרים
שלי, החביבה, זכתה ליפול כגבורה על
אדמת הקודש, ולקדש את אדמת הנגב.
אשרינו ההורים אשר ידענו כך לגדל
בנים שידעו לעמוד על משמר המולדת.
עם ישראל יקום ויבנה את ארצו.

דבר היום

כח אנו מלווים אתכם, אלא בדרכי
כח כולה. כח הדרך הזאת משותפת
לכולנו, להולכים היום ולאלה שילכו
מחר. כי אין כל שביל צדדי, לכן
כה רבים ההולכים בה. ידענו: כאשר
יוריקו השדות מעמל גדתי ישראל
שישכינו שלום בארצם וישכנו בת
לבטה. לא ישמרו החברים הנופלים
בדרך טינה לאלה שיגיעו. מאחדת
אותנו המטרה, מאחדת אותנו הסכנה.
כך הולכים אנו לחיות עם, עם אחד
במאבק משחרר, ובעמל משחרר.
אתם יודעים למות ואתם יודעים
להכות באויב. באגדופכם הקמוץ —
אלפים שנות רצון להשיב מכה
לאויב. ואתם תדעו להושיט יד
לשלום, בידכם המושטת לאחווה —
אלפים שנות רצון להציע שלום, לא
רק להתחנן לו.
אנו מלווים אתכם, ובאבל יגאה
לבנו על העושים דבר העם במחש
כים. על ההולכים למות למען יחיה
ישראל.

ג. ר. / ליוונו אתכם, כמעשנו
עתה יום-יום, המערכה אך החלה
ואין לראות את שלביה ואת קצה.
במותכם אתם יוצאים מן המחחרת
והעולם ידע: אלה הם חיילי-חלור
ציו של הצבא בלי מדים, של העם
הצבא העומד לפקודה בעבודת יומו,
ההולך לעמדות בין יום עבודה למש
נה, המצניע את גבורתו מעין זר
וטומן אותה בחיק כל הדורות הבאים.
בדרך הקצרה הזאת ממקום המוות
למקום המנוחה גודע, כי הייתם חיי
לים בצבא האפור הזה, אפור וכאור
יהל. בשעות מעטות אלה ידע העם:
אלה הם העושים דבר האומה במח
שכים, למען יגאה האור.
בראותנו את הוריקם צמודים אל
ארונותיכם וחבריכם צועדים דומם,
כשוהר קרבונם מוציא גם אותם
לשעה קלה ממעטה הסוד, ברגעים
כאשר נופל החיץ בין ערגת הגאולה
לבין החיים הצעירים שנגדעו, יוד
עים כולנו המלווים: לא רק במות

Dvar Hayom

We have accompanied you. As we are doing now every day. The battle had only started and its phases and end cannot yet be seen. In your death you are emerging out of the underground, and the world knows. These are the pioneer soldiers of the uniformness army of the people-army who stand ready for order in their daily toil. Who go to the outposts between two working days. Who modestly hide their heroism of any stranger's eye and buries it the lap of all the coming generations. In this short journey from the place of death to the place of rest, we learned that you have been soldiers in this grey army, and like shining light. In these short hours, let the people know, these are those who are doing the work in darkness, so their light may shine.

As we see your parents, clinging to your coffins and your friends marching silently as the light of your sacrifice brings them too, out of the shrouded secret, for a short while. In these moments when the barrier between the longing for Geula and the destroyed young lives disappears, all of us know, it is not only in your death that we accompany you but in all your journey. This road is shared by all of us. To those who went today and those who will go tomorrow. There is no side alley. This is why they are so many on the road... We are accompanying you, our heart swells in mourning for those who die so Israel can live.

The First Decade 1947- 1958

Achievement II - The Ingathering of the Exiles – the Mass Immigration Shaar Aliya

About the Place or what is Shaar Aliya?

Shaar Aliya was one of the largest transit camps for new immigrants arriving to Israel during its early years. It was located at the southern entrance to Haifa.

During the first year of its activities, over 100,000 people had passed through its gates. Mainly European Holocaust survivors and immigrants from Muslim countries. The literal meaning of the name is "The Gate of Immigration" most immigrants however, had pronounced it as one distorted meaningless word: "sharalia"

About The writer

Hava Alberstein, a famous Israeli singer, composer and lyric writer had lived there during her childhood. Born in 1947, she had made Aliya with her parents from Poland in 1953 to the transit camp of Shaar Aliya, she had later written the song reflecting the tumult of emotions and feelings that remained with her and many of her generation who went through this experience.

Teaching Sharaliya

When teaching this song, you may want to start with a short description of life in the transit camps, through which most of the immigrants had started their life in the country.

- Use the PowerPoint (Shaar Aliya Israel 70) for pictures that depict misery, poverty, shortage of food, next to a strong will of life, seen by the number of young children and babies born in these camps.
- Remind participants, that most of the inhabitants were Holocaust survivors, who had lived in camps for many years prior to their arrival, next to refugees from Muslim countries who had left behind communities they have been part of for hundreds of years.
- Listen to Sharaliya by Chava Alberstein. Click image of clip on slide no8. Have students follow with translation as needed. The link may not work but the song file is part of this unit.

- Offer a careful reading of the text. Use annotated version.
- As you conclude reading the poem – have a conversation about the immensity of the task of absorbing this large number of immigrants. The efforts on both the state side and the immigrants themselves. Encourage individual stories of families who had left and came to the USA or of those who have been involved in helping Aliya and absorption

“Sharaliya” (Aliyah Gate)

Chava Alberstein

This story begins **at the end**
A passenger ship **berthed at dock**
Weary people in a new land
Stand before a large gate, gazing up
In silence. People from the **ends of time**,
From the ends of light and life
With thick garments and **heavy steps**.

Work your way through highlighted words to create a picture of the new arrivals and why are they depicted this way – They are mostly Holocaust survivors! Thus the “Weary” vocabulary

Note the absence of Hora dancing, happy pioneers that we normally associate with Aliya to Israel.

Nothing is like what they **promised**:
They **promised** a warm land, but it’s windy and stormy
The roof flew off in winter, pots covered the floor.
Everything was sodden with water, the **down quilts**
from Poland.
Everyone was sobbing but I was already asleep
Like a real princess – asleep with an umbrella.

Note the un-kept promises in the “Promised Land”

Down quilts are totally useless in Israel most of the time – yet were carried here to offer a memory of home – no matter how blemished. The princess under the umbrella, was probably a story told by her parents to protect the child from the harsh reality.

Someone says – “We’re here”
Another answers – “Perhaps”
Someone calls – “We’ve found it”
Others whisper – “If only...”
Someone shouts – “In the meantime”,
They shout back – “Until when?”
We’ll never know
Who came in and who went out
Who passed through and who remained in Sharaliya.

Note the clipped, seemingly non emotional conversation.

Can you discern the underlying concerns, hopes, ambivalence about the new homeland?

Get your students to assume the roles of the people speaking in the poem and add a few word of their own to each statement.

“Kol Zion Lagolah” (Israel Radio broadcast to the Diaspora)

Every hour in another language

The radio plays, sitting like deportees in the underground

As if warming by a stove

Understanding every word, singing along with the songs.

These short broadcasts about an hour or less a day, where the only time the immigrants fully understood what was said.

In the morning returning to the new language

It breaks the teeth, hard and indifferent

All your plans have become dreams.

Change your profession, change your name.

Change your memories, embellish the past.

Over there everyone was a prince – and this is what remains.

A piano in every room, stables in the yard,

Every word is the absolute truth – more or less...

The Aliya experience demands lots of changes for the future, yet Chava Alberstein allows herself a smile about the new immigrants who embellish their past in the process.

Once again the radio, “Searching for Relatives”*

Long lists, names, addresses, numbers

Those who changed their names have given up

They no longer listen to the program, they are weary.

Meanwhile my father bought a camera

“Five minute photos” – pictures for certification:

Aliyah certificate, I.D. certificate, certificate of membership,

We have no language, no livelihood, but with a certificate we’ll manage.

This daily radio program was a constant tragic feature in the everyday life of the Holocaust survivors. The attempt to locate relatives or find out what had happened to them arose with new hopes daily and ended with a slow acceptance of the inevitable. Changing names was a sign of that. It meant that one is not expecting anyone to find them anymore.

In the heat of summer we bring out chairs

The Hasbara (advocacy) Center brings films and lectures

An accordion plays, accompanying some singer

“Agala im Susa,” oy, oy, “Kineret, Kineret.”

The slow acceptance of the new Israeli culture through its popular songs

Folding bed, folding table

Friday evening we go for a walk.

White shirts, shined shoes

We go for a walk, but there's nothing to see.

Rows of shutters, a few trees and a fence

We return slowly, no need to hurry.

Note the restoration of dignity in spite of the bleak surroundings.

This story begins at the end

The tale of a ship that reached the shore

The transit camp, the final stage

Bulgarian, Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew,

A gray place with no color, no scenery

And the beginning, a beginning with no end...

The beauty of the concluding verse is in the fact that it is a reversal of the first one.

The new endless beginning is happening after all.

The great Aliya is not a romantic story – nevertheless it is one of Israel's greatest achievements.

Someone says – “We’re here”

Another answers – “Perhaps”

Someone calls – “We’ve found it”

Others whisper – “If only...”

Someone shouts – “In the meantime”,

They shout back – “Until when?”

We’ll never know

Who came in and who went out

Who passed through and who remained in Sharaliya.

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שרליה - שער עלייה

חיה אלברשטיין

את הסיפור הזה מתחילים מהסוף

אנייה עם נוסעים הגיעה לחוף

אנשים עייפים בארץ חדשה

עומדים מול שער גדול ומסתכלים בו בשתיקה

אנשים מקצה הזמן, מקצה האור והחיים

בבגדים עבים בצעדים כבדים

שום דבר לא היה כמו בהבטחות

הבטיחו ארץ חמה היו רוחות וסערות

הגג עץ בחורף, הרצפה מלאה סירים

הכל ספוג במים שמיכות הפוך מפולין

כולם מתייפחים אבל אני כבר ישנה

כמו נסיכה אמיתית - ישנה עם מטריה

מישהו אומר - "הגענו"

מישהו אומר - "אולי"

מישהו צועק - "מצאנו"

לוחשים לו "הלוואי"

מישהו קורא - "בינתיים"

צועקים לו - "עד מתי"

לעולם כבר לא נדע

מי נכנס ומי יצא

מי עבר ומי נשאר

בשרליה, שרליה ...

"קול ציון לגולה" כל שעה שפה אחרת

הרדיו מנגן, יושבים כמו גולים במחתרת

כמו ליד התנור יושבים, מתחממים

מבינים כל מילה, שרים את השירים

ובבוקר חוזרים אל השפה החדשה

שוברת שיניים אדישה וקשה

כל התוכניות נהפכו לחלומות

מחליפים מקצוע, מחליפים את השמות

מחליפים זכרונות מקשטים את העבר

שם כולם נסיכים היו וזה מה שנשאר

היה פסנתר בכל חדר אורוות סוסים בחצר

כל מילה היא אמת, אמת פחות או יותר ..

שרליה, שרליה ...

ושוב הרדיו מדבר "מדור חיפוש קרובים"

רשימות ארוכות שמות כתובות ומספרים

מי שהחליף את השם בעצם כבר ויתר

אינו מקשיב לתכנית אין בו כוח יותר

ובינתיים אבי קנה לו מצלמה

"פוטו חמש דקות" - תמונות לתעודה

תעודת עולה, תעודת זהות, פנקס חבר,

אין שפה, אין פרנסה, יש תעודה כבר נסתדר

ובקיץ החם מוציאים את הכסאות

מרכז הסברה מביא סרטים והרצאות

אקורדיון מנגן מלווה איזו זמרת

'עגלה עם סוסה', 'אוי אוי כנרת כנרת'

שרליה, שרליה ...

מיטה מתקפלת, שולחן מתקפל

ובערב שבת אנחנו יוצאים לטייל

חולצות לבנות נעליים מבריקות

הולכים לטייל אבל אין פה מה לראות

שורות של צריפים, כמה עצים וגדר

חוזרים במתינות, הרי אין מה למהר

את הסיפור הזה מתחילים מהסוף

סיפור על אנייה שהגיעה אל החוף

על מחנה מעבר ועל תחנה סופית

ועל הבולגרית, הפולנית, היידיש, העברית,

ועל מקום אפור ללא צבע ללא נוף

ועל התחלה, התחלה שאין לה סוף

מישהו אומר - "הגענו..."

Challenge I

○ The Arab Minority and the Refugees

Wadi Al Nisnas and Abas Street – Emile Habibi


This excerpt from an Emile Habibi's article, is our window into the "other" narrative. While Israel is celebrating its victory in the war of Independence and mourning the fallen soldiers – there was little, if any, attention paid to the pain of the losing side, namely the Palestinians. Emile Habibi was one of the most articulate and talented literary voices of the Arab minority in Israel of the early years.

Historical Introduction

In 1947 there were over 70.000 Arab citizens in the city of Haifa. By the time the armistice agreements were reached in 1949, there were no more than 7000 of them left. Have they been chased away by the IDF? Did they flee? Were their own leaders to blame? Did the British powers in the last weeks of their Mandate have anything to do with this.

Emile Habibi, who was one of the most famous Arab writers of Israel, focuses his short story: "Haifa: Wadi Al-Nisnass & Abbas Street" on the few who had opted to stay and their struggle to live with the new reality.

About the Poet

	<p>Emile Habibi</p> <p>*Born in Haifa in August, 1921, where he remained until his death in May 1996.</p> <p>*Joined the Communist Party in the 1940s and was member of the Israeli Knesset from 1953-1972.</p> <p>* Began writing short stories in the 1960s, and was editor-in-chief of the Communist Party's Arabic newspaper, Al-Ithad, in the 1970s. Resigned from the Knesset in 1972 to write his first novel: Saeed the Pessoptimist, depicting the life and fortunes of an Arab citizen of the state of Israel. Published in 1974, it was an instant success, and remains one of the greatest of modern Arabic novels.</p>
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About the meaning and implications of being an Arab Israeli writer

Jerusalem Journal; To a Novelist of Nazareth, Laurels and Loud Boos

By JOEL GREENBERG

Published: May 07, 1992

When Israel marks its independence day on Thursday, it will award its highest literary honor for the first time to an Israeli Arab writer, an act of cultural recognition that has set off fierce debate in Arab intellectual circles. The dispute centers on whether the writer, Emile Habibi, a 70-year-old novelist from Nazareth and chronicler of the quandaries and conflicts of Arabs in Israel, should have agreed to accept the annual Israel Prize, given for scholarly or cultural achievement.

Winners -- there are 10 this year, in several fields -- are chosen by a committee of academicians appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and they receive the award from Israel's President and Education Minister.

Mr. Habibi's writings, often fraught with bitter irony, enjoy wide popularity among Palestinians and other Arabs, and have been translated into several languages, including Hebrew. Considered one of the Arab world's leading writers, he was awarded the Jerusalem Medal for Culture, Literature and Arts by Yasir Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in a ceremony in Cairo in 1990.

Better Than Bullets

Teaching “Haifa Wadi Nisnas Abas Street”.

- Introduce Habibi to your audience, if time allows show short [video clip](#)
- Use the PowerPoint presentation called Wadi al Nisnas for a few images of the 1948 departure of the Arab population and the artistic commemoration of those events on the walls of the wadi today.
- Read the first two paragraphs of the text and discuss the shifting point of view as we listen to an Arab voice talking about the way he perceives us/the Jews. This is a hard text to read, and questions may be raised about how much of it do we believe? Is it important to believe and accept the writer's opinions or is listening to them enough?
- Read the rest of the text, see annotations for conversation and additional information.

Haifa: Wadi Al-Nisnass & Abbas Street

By Emile Habibi

I claim to be one of those people who cannot see the moon except for its luminous side. It is thus I justify those Jewish friends with sensitive souls who claim they do not believe it when we declare that we want a lasting peace based on a Palestinian state alongside an Israeli one. I find excuses for their mistrust, telling myself and my people that perhaps their suspicion of our intentions comes from their sense of guilt at everything they have committed against us, expressed once in Moshe Diyan's phrase: "If we were in their place..."

There is no place for "if" in actual history. However, if one wants to argue using such logic, then I would say that if we were in your place we would not have allowed our reactionary forces to do to you what your forces of reaction have done to us. Furthermore, I would add that if you combined all the "ifs" in all the languages of the world, you would be unable to justify a single harm -- not even the minutest -- that you have wreaked on what you call "the other people"...

Umm Wadie (Habibi's mother)¹ was unable to overcome the shock of those days² [1948]. By then her life was behind her, and most of her sons and grandchildren were scattered in the diaspora³. Once she came down to the premises of our old political club in Wadi Al-Nisnass to participate in a joint Arab-Jewish women's meeting. Those were days of a raging general election campaign. The Jewish speaker was emphasizing our struggle for the rights of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. Umm Wadie interrupted her saying: "Will my sons and daughters return?"

Taken aback, the Jewish-Hungarian speaker replied: "They will return when peace is achieved." "Lies," shouted Umm Wadie, "my son Emile never lies to me. He

¹ Arab man and women, will be renamed after the birth of their first son, here however, Habib's mother, is named Um Wadi – namely the mother of the whole neighborhood

² Expulsion/fleeing away of the Arab population

³ Note the use of the word Diaspora which we normally associate with Jewish History – used here in a Palestinian context

told me that their return -- if ever they return -- will take a long time. By then I won't be here to see them: I'll be in my grave."

Ever since that meeting, and without me knowing, it became her custom to go secretly to a corner of Abbas Garden near our house. She would lean against a stone shaded by an olive tree⁴ and bemoan her destiny -- lonely and separated from children, especially her youngest son Naim⁵.

"Naim, where are you now? What has happened to you without me?"

Little did I know of her newly acquired habit until one day I overheard my two daughters playing at being Granny Umm Wadie bemoaning "O Naim⁶".

That year Umm Wadie left us, crossing the Mandelbaum Gate⁷ on her way to her children who had taken refuge in Damascus. It was there, in Damascus, and not in Shafa Amre [her native village, now part of Israel] that her soul returned to its maker.

"As for you, you can stay. Your life is before you, and you can afford to wait until they return."

Those were the last words of my mother, Umm Wadie, when we parted on the Israeli side of the Mandelbaum Gate.

I remained. I returned to Haifa and wrote my very first story as a citizen of the State of Israel. It was entitled "Mandelbaum Gate".

⁴ Olive trees are viewed by both Jews and Arabs as symbols of their connectedness to the land.

⁵ The name Naim means pleasant both in Hebrew and in Arabic.

⁶ Note the bitterness of tone here as the author did not see his mother's distress until he saw its mockery by his daughters.

⁷ In pre 1967 Israel, along the border between Jordan and Israel, within Jerusalem, there was a gate through which passage was possible. Arabs who had lived in Israel were allowed to cross over to the other side, with no right to return. Thus Um Wadi, had made a choice between her children.

And I remained⁸. But, until this day, and for as long as I live, I think of my mother as having remained with me, for mothers are of the roots.

⁸ Emil Habbi had instructed in his will, to have the following inscribed on hi tombstone: "I stayed in Haifa

Challenge II

- The Discrimination among Olim
“Danino’s Race” – Nathan Alterman

Introduction

While we continue to see the absorption of over a million of new immigrants in the first few years of the state one of its major achievements, it is necessary to admit some of the injustices committed in the process, namely the discrimination against Olim from Muslim countries.

In spite of the Law of Return which allowed every Jew to make Aliya and become a citizen, there have been during the 1950s a series of restrictions implemented mainly toward Olim from North Africa.

About the Poet

Nathan Alterman (1910- 1970) was one of Israel’s greatest poets. Among his great literary and poetic achievements, he was known for his “Seventh Column” a weekly section he had in the Davar daily newspaper in which he had reacted to contemporary events. In the “Seventh Culomn” Alterman had often embraced the prophetic role of the “whistle blower”. In “Danino’s Race” he is speaks out against the shameful treatment of Aliya candidates in Morocco in 1955.

About the Poem

“Danino’s Race” was published in Davar on Friday December 30th 1955. It was the height of the mass immigration. Articles describing the work of the Jewish Agency officials had appeared in Davar as well as in other papers daily. In the poem Alterman describes and criticises the screening system of Moroccan Olim on the basis of health and number of children.

Teaching “Danino’s Race”

- Start with a short background on the issues of Aliya from North Africa. Note how these are the same years as the Aliya of the Holocaust survivors from Europe, as we have seen previously in the poem *ShaarAliya*. Use PowerPoint (*Danino’s Race Israel 70*)
- Point out the discriminatory remarks about the North African Olim.
- Read the poem while paying attention to annotations.

Danino’s Race – Nathan Alterman

A week ago the Davar newspaper wrote in glowing terms about our **branch**⁹. Those appointed to check and classify, in the name of the **Return to Zion**¹⁰ and in the name of its law, those families from the Moroccan Diaspora.

The article described, firmly and with emphasis, the difficulties encountered by those who **classify**¹¹... how the work **smokes and smoulders**¹²... how their doubting hearts mutiny so that they even lose their sleep...

I read it all, fully understanding the holy nature of their work – they find themselves in the narrow straits between their **duty**¹³, and the **tears and rebellion, the wiles**¹⁴, of those awaiting the decree.

⁹ A Jewish Agency office in Morocco

¹⁰ Hebrew שיבת ציון thus a clear irony as the bureaucrats are there to stop Olim from returning to Zion

¹¹ This is barely 10 years after the Holocaust and any “Selection” reference has a very clear connotation for the readership.

¹² Smoke and smoulders – again intended Holocaust connotations.

¹³ Any reference to people merely doing their duty can also be read as a cynical Holocaust reference

¹⁴ Olim presented as manipulative

And yet, as I read this description,
I felt: that this soul searching is
Not the main issue.
It is, despite everything, only secondary.

It is, despite everything, only secondary.
As regards its importance for the individual
And even for the general public,
As opposed to the significance of the rebellion
And the battering force
Of such a clause:

“You should have seen us at work two months ago, before they did away with the restriction on the number of children. There were parents who actually didn’t believe us when we told them they cannot immigrate with more than five children. How can it be – they wept – that we can support five but not the others? In one of the small towns there was a young man, a plumber, a healthy, strapping fellow. He had seven cute kids, ranged according to height, aged twelve to two. At first he assumed I was joking. He simply stood there laughing happily, thinking he understood the jest. But gradually the meaning began to penetrate... he was terrible in his anger. “You see these two?” he yelled, “I’m going to strangle them on the spot. Two of them will die and then there will be five.”

A. Oren, “Davar”, quoting one of the screening committee¹⁵

Yes, a news item like this one, I don’t know
how you feel about it. I feel that maybe
when this law was passed, the earth quaked
beneath us, and cried out: “They – not you – are my children!”¹⁶

In my opinion, by so doing we have twisted and distorted
the foundation that creates a nation, its nature has been perverted
its strength has been damaged, it has been weakened by the burden
of those two infants, among the seven.
In my opinion, facing the podium of judges
in all those halls where they check and classify, stands motionless

¹⁵ Alterman is quoting an article that was published in his own paper a few days earlier, thus blocking responses such as “We did not know”.

¹⁶ Possible reference to the Arthur Miller play “All My Sons” that was well known in Israel.

the **Return to Zion**¹⁷, daily slapped in the face
by the hand of a convenient, craven law.

“The restriction was lifted two months ago”... yes.
But in itself it is only a small detail. So let’s bring
another paragraph. It’s hard to believe
what it says, but let’s listen attentively:

“David Danino’s identity card indicates that he is incapable of physical labor. The doctor was told that he limps a little. The doctor asked Danino to run a few steps. Danino understood that he was facing a fateful test. He leaped forward with more energy than necessary, endeavoring to prove that he can walk and run with ease. He returns and stands before the doctor, his eyes pleading dumbly. The doctor is certain that Danino’s deficiency does not disqualify him. In the hall, decorated with pictures of the king and his flags, the disqualified families are sobbing – while those families found eligible for Aliyah disperse quietly, secure in their anticipation of a great future.”

S. Tevet, “Ha’aretz”¹⁸

Yes, this item too is not missing.
It, too, must not be forgotten, this silent page of shame.
This disgraceful page about the father who leaped, leaped
and ran, while his little ones looked on silently.

A page of shame about a father for whom the Return to Zion
decreed that he should jump, and he, in his circle,
hastened, hurried, with a prayer in his heart to God above
to help him, that we shouldn’t discern the defect in his leg...

And God above heard! This is what God said to him:
“Run, run, my servant Danino¹⁹... run, don’t stumble.
I am with you! If this is the Law of Israel,
We will prevail together, as one!

Run, run, my servant Danino... I am your help...

¹⁷ שיר המעלות בשוב ה' את שיבת ציון in the original Hebrew and therefore reference to היינו כחולמים

¹⁸ Alterman is quoting, Haaretz – a competition newspaper, yet the journalist is the famous Shabtai Tevet, who is considered very trustworthy

¹⁹ ירוץ עבדך כמו אייל Yartz Avdecha K'mo Ayal. Reference to Yedid Nefesh

Run, run, don't be afraid, because I will hide your blemish.
But I will not hide the insult to the revival of My people
whose brightness sparkles in your tears."

I do not know what you may think, as long as
We still have (in spite of bad mouth and bad pen expressions) some might and dignity
To give up the luxury of this insult

Even if we recon and calculate to check
Our standard of living to its top,
we do not have the slightest right to refuse
Immigrant Danino, regardless of his limp,
As long as we still live off him a bit
In the name of fundraising for Aliya

If we do not change these ways
We will distort the principal
For which Zion stood at war
For which it may yet have to battle more.²⁰

²⁰ The last three verses had appeared in the original Davar publication but were omitted from all later book publications of the "Seventh Column". Is it possible that the clear allusion to fund raising efforts, in the name of Danino, were considered not politically correct by later editors?

נתן אלתרמן - ריצתו של העולה דנינו

1955

"דבר", לפני שבוע, כתבה פרסם
בשבח שלוחינו. אלה הממונים לברר
ולמיין, בשם שיבת-ציון ובשם-
חקה, את משפחות גולת מרוק בתור.

ספרה הכתבה, בתקף ובהבלט,
על קשי מלאכתם של הממיינים... על עשנה
וכווייתה... על מרי לבם המתלבט
והמסב, אפילו, נדודי שינה...

קראתי הדברים. הבנתי עד מאד
לקדש עמלם, להקלעם בצר
בין החובה ובין הצרי והדמעות
ושלל התחבולות של המחכים לגזר...

ובכל זאת, בקראי את התיאור הזה
הרגשתי: לא הלבט הנפשי הלה
ראוי לתשומת לב ראשית במחזה...
הוא, חרף כל, עניין שני במעלה.

הוא, חרף כל עניין, שני במעלה,
מצד חשיבותו לפרט ואף לכלל,
כנגד משמעות המרי והאלה
של קטע שכזה דרך משל:

"צריך היית לראות אותנו בעבודה לפני חודשיים. בטרם בטלו את ההגבלה על מספר הילדים. היו הורים שממש לא האמינו כשאמרנו להם כי לא יוכלו לעלות עם יותר מחמשה ילדים. איך זה – בכו בדמעות – את החמשה נוכל לפרנס ואת האחרים לא? והיה שם, באחת העירות בחור אינסטלאטור, בריא וחבוב, ועימו שבעה ילדים חמודים, מסודרים לפי הגובה, מגיל 12 ועד שנתיים. בהתחלה היה בטוח שאני מתלוצץ. פשוט עמד לו וצחק מרוצה על שהבין את המהתלה. אבל מעט מעט החלו מדברים חודרים להכרתו... נורא היה בזעמו. – אתה רואה שנים אלה? צעק. אני חונק אותם על המקום. ימותו השנים ויחיו החמשה".

א. אורן, "דבר", מפי אחד

מאנשי צוות-המיון.

כן, קטע שכזה. איני יודע מה
דעתכם על-כך. דעתי על-כך היא שאולי
בקום חוקנו זה חרדה האדמה
תחתינו ותקרא: הם – לא אתם – בני!

דעתי היא כי בכך שונה ויתעוות
יסוד יצרי-אומה ונסתלף טבעה
ונתבזה כוחה אשר כשל משאת
את שני התינוקות בין השבעה.

דעתי היא שאל מול שלחן הדיינים
בכל אותם חדרי מיון, עומדה בלי ניד
שיבת-ציון והיא יום-יום מוכה פנים
ביד חוקה נוחה ופחדנית.

"ההגבלה בטלה לפני חודשיים" ... כן.

אך אין היא כי אם פרט. לכן יובא נא כאן
עוד קטע של הוי. כמעט לא ייאמן
דברו, אך לו נקשיבה לו בראש מורכן:

"בכרטיס האישי של דוד דנינו נכתב שאינו מסוגל לעבודה גופנית. לרופא נאמר שהוא צולע במקצת.
הרופא מבקש מדנינו לרוץ מספר צעדים אנה ואנה. דנינו מבין שלפניו מבחן של חיים ומות. הוא מנתר
במרץ רב מן הדרוש ומשתדל להוכיח שמיטיב הוא ללכת ולרוץ. הוא חוזר ועומד מול הרופא ובעיניו
מבט אילם. הרופא סבור שהפגם שבדנינו אינו פוסלו. – באולם, המקושט בתמונות המלך ובדגלונים,
מתייפחות המשפחות שנפסלו. - - המשפחות שאושרו לעליה מתפזרות בשקט ובביטחון. בציפייה
לעתיד הגדול".

ש.טבת,

"הארץ"

כן, קטע שכזה גם הוא בל יעדר.
גם הוא בל ישכח. דף אלם ואשם.
דף בזיון של אב אשר ניתר, ניתר
ורץ, ותינוקיו רואים דומם.

דף בזיונו של אב אשר שיבת-ציון
ציוותה עליו קפץ, והוא, בעיגולו,
אץ, אץ, ובלבבו תפלה לאל עליון
כי יעזרו לבל נרגיש חולי רגלו...

ואל עליון שמע! וכה אמר לו אל:
רוץ, רוץ, עבדי דנינו... רוץ כי לא תמעד.
אתך אני! עם זה החוק-לישראל,
יכול נוכל לו שנינו כאחד!

רוץ, רוץ, עבדי דנינו... עזרך אני...
רוץ, רוץ ואל תחת. כי אכסה מומך.
אבל לא אכסה עלבון תחיית עמי
אשר זיוה נוצץ בדמעך.

איני יודע מה דעתכם דומה כי עוד
יש בנו בכולנו (למרות לזות שפתיים
ולזות העט) גם כוח גם כבוד
כדי ויתור על לוקסוס זה של התבזות

אם גם חשבון כספי נבוא
ואם פנה נפנה לסקור רמת חיינו עד שיאה
אין לנו צל של זכות לדחות בעלבוננו
את העולה דנינו חרף הצליעה
כל עוד חיים אנו קצת על חשבוננו
בתוקף מגביות בשם העלייה

באם לא נשנה טיבו של זה הקו
ילך ויסתלף אותו עיקר ויסוד
אשר למענו עמדה ציון בקרב
ולמענו יום קרב אולי נכון לה עוד