THE COUNTER-DIRECTONS OF THE SEPHARDIM

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The Sephardic approach to … life is characterized by hessed,***[1]*** *optimism and a spirit of inclusiveness and hospitality. The Sephardic tradition is compassionate, tolerant, and sympathetic to the human predicament.****[2]***

— Rabbi Marc D. Angel

In his 1990 novel, *Mr. Mani,* Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua anchors his historical exploration of the formation of modern Jewish identity in several pivotal experiences: the despair and fatigue of the 1982 Lebanon war, often called Israel's "first war of choice"; the first *Intifada;* the failed hopes for an Arab-Israeli peace; and the escalating terror attacks on Israeli civilians.[3] Yehoshua posits that an ominously self-destructive pathology exists in Israel and that it has resulted in the nation's extended periods of "oppression, defamation, persecution and martyrdom."[4]

The novel explores the impacts and implications of Jewish attitudes that to a large degree have shaped the past[5] and that are likely to impact the present contours of Israeli identity unless fundamental changes are made. At its foundation, *Mr. Mani* questions the role of religion and nationalism in the formation of Israel and even the modern Middle East.

In Yehoshua's view, Israel has a self-destructive heritage that manifests in the Jewish people's desire to retain their identity as a nation while resisting the responsibilities of creating and maintaining an independent national existence within distinctly defined territorial boundaries. Israeli society, Yehoshua implies in *Mr. Mani*, has failed to achieve the dreams of its Zionist Ashkenazic founders and resembles other Western societies in many ways. The salient aspects of the Zionist effort to shift the center of Jewish existence from Diaspora to Zion constitute a contemporary transformation of the Diasporic conviction that the continuing cohesion of the Jewish people is not predicated on their adherence to particular territorial and communal bounds but rather on their peoplehood.[6]

Taking it further, Yehoshua proposes that an alternative, a bicultural Sephardic Zionism, would be more constructive,[7] and that Israeli society would do well to free itself from itself from the more narrow Ashkenazic and Exilic heritage, which he sees as no longer appropriate in the present state-oriented situation. To that end, the cross-culturalism of the Sephardim and the idea of the Sephardim as the link between Jews and Arabs[8] are prominent themes in *Mr. Mani*. Yehoshua centers on the Sephardic identity and the Sephardic response to historic events to emphasize what might have been

rather than what is the present situation in Israel. The Sephardim in this novel are portrayed as cosmopolitans, whose worldliness has allowed them to remain free of the ravages of ideology and free to glimpse historical options and the turning points of history not seen by others. At the same time, the Sephardim's susceptibility to obsessive notions and obsessive desires prevents them from making an impact on history; indeed, it puts their very survival at stake.[9]

While *Mr. Mani* focuses on the hidden realms of the individual psyche embedded in its familial, social, and cultural context, Yehoshua also addresses ideological, political, and ethical issues, and he questions the very tenets of Israeli society: Judaism, Zionism, religion and nationalism, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and anti-semitism.

Certainly a Sephardic response to historical events in Israel, conditioned by the pillars of the Sephardic identity and a different attitude toward Arabs, would have resulted in a distinctly different situation in Israel. Such an inquiry involves an intellectual game of "what if": What if Arab-Israeli relations had taken a different course and the many conflicts between these two peoples had been averted? Yehoshua adds the Sephardic angle to this "what if" exercise when he bemoans the marginality of the Sephardic community in the early days of European Jewish settlement, when the ultimate fate of the region was being forged.

To develop this "what-if" argument further, it is helpful to understand Yehoshua and his insights into the Sephardic identity and his own experiences as a Sephardic Jew and how they are expressed in the novel's plot and themes. This essay reviews the Sephardic counter-history after a discussion of the crossroads of history portrayed in *Mr. Mani*, and it explores why Yehoshua chronicles the Israeli counter-narrative of the last 150 years through such a dysfunctional family and why the Sephardic relationship with the Arabs offers a distinctly different framework for the State of Israel.

A. B. Yehoshua

Yehoshua, one of Israel's leading writers and recipient of many literary prizes, was born in Jerusalem in 1936. *Mr. Mani*, his fourth book, was greeted with universal critical acclaim in Israel and the United States, and literary critic Alfred Kazan called it "one of the most remarkable pieces of fiction I have ever read."[10] Yehoshua's books have been translated into 26 languages, and many of his stories and novels have been adapted for the theater, cinema, television, and opera,[11] demonstrating their wide appeal.

Unlike most prominent Israeli cultural figures, Yehoshua was born into a Sephardic, rather than an Ashkenazic, Jewish family. Indeed, he represents the fifth generation of a Sephardic family on his father's side and the first generation on his mother's side. His father, Jacob Yehoshua, an Orientalist by training, wrote a number of books recounting the life of the Sephardic community in Jerusalem from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, and two books on the Palestinian press of that time. While his father's occupation with the language, history, and culture of the Palestinians probably opened Yehoshua's eyes to their unique plight and thus indirectly influenced his worldview, his father's numerous books served him well in *Mr. Mani.* His mother, Malka née Rosolio, came from a wealthy Francophone Moroccan family whose members immigrated to Palestine in 1932, and she too had a strong influence on Yehoshua. She insured that he had a secular education and was exposed to Zionist ideology and to a moderate Sephardic version of Jewish tradition. Thus, both his mother and father contributed to his preoccupation with the complex theme of identity, which underlies all his writings.[12]

After some years in Paris and a return to Israel and following the Six-Day War and its ensuing upheaval, Yehoshua became involved in left-wing movements and started publishing essays that elaborated on his ideological and political stance. His active participation coupled with his intellectual and rhetorical skills have made him one of the major spokesmen for the Zionist left wing and the Israeli peace camp, at home and abroad.

The writing careers of A. B. Yehoshua and his father reveal an interesting parallel: Jacob turned from his scholarly preoccupation with the history of the Palestinian Arabs to the Sephardic community of his childhood after his own father's death in 1955. The son turned more openly in his fiction to Sephardic characters after Jacob's death in 1982.[13] In an article, Yehoshua stated that "although my father was in no palpable way connected with Spain, he defined himself as a Sephardic Jew." Jacob's identity as a Sephardic Jew was not meant merely to signify his difference from Ashkenazic Jews but was also bound up with Spain itself, which he regarded as the original source of that identity. Within his extended family, Jacob spoke the Judeo-Spanish language, Ladino, which gave him a sense of carrying living genes of the true Spanish language.[14] In the spring of 1987, the son wrote an introduction to the father's sentimental, nostalgic recreations of his Jerusalem childhood, in that introduction, A.B. investigates the complex, if often repressed, nature of his own Sephardic identity, through a fusion of three themes, which foreshadow *Mr. Mani*: "Yehoshua's relationship to his father, his attitude to his Sephardim, and the type of fiction he produces. …We …see in this essay of 1987 some of the same basic structures that shape *Mar Mani*, which was written about the same time."[15]

Yehoshu's Reflections on the Identity and Experience of the Sephardic Jew

In "Beyond Folklore: The Identity of the Sephardic Jew," Yehoshua asked why a man like himself, a thoroughly secular Israeli steeped in Western culture, whose principal identity was as an Israeli, a man with no particular connection with the Spanish language or culture, defined himself deep down as a Sephardic Jew? He then noted that in many of his novels, characters appear who may be identified as Sephardic Jews. These include the five generations of central characters in *Mr. Mani*, who stand at five critical crossroads in the history of the last 150 years, and each time, at each crossroads, another Mani is offered an historical or political option that is not, in the end, realized.[16]

In Yehoshua's opinion, this Sephardic identity contains – overtly or covertly – Christian, Muslim, and Jewish elements that are blended in the memory of a wondrous and powerful cultural symbiosis, real or mythic, during a Spanish Golden Age in the first centuries of the second millennium. The three-way dialogue during that period also produced highly significant and influential texts. Therefore, even after the Christians took absolute control of Spain and made it into a strictly Catholic country, there remained within Spanish identity a recollection of that strong symbiosis, which even after the expulsion of the Jews and the Muslims continued to murmur beneath the surface in Christian Spain. [17]

When the Jews left Spain and moved to Muslim countries in North Africa, the Christian element, the Christian memory, remained in their identity as well despite the absence of Christianity in their immediate surroundings. Similarly, Jews who moved to such Christian lands as Italy, Southern France, or even Holland, retained a whisper of Arabic culture and Islam in their identities even when there were no Muslims or Arabs in the vicinity.[18]

Yehoshua explained that the special quality that is preserved in Sephardic identity is its ability to include the Other even when he is gone and forgotten. The consciousness of the Other became a structural element that enriched and fertilized Sephardic identity, even as the reality of the Other became foggy and ultimately vanished altogether. This internal element developed into a kind of cultural gene, strengthening its carriers' capacity for tolerance and pluralism. The wistfulness or nostalgia for the vanished Other was handed down from generation to generation, for hundreds of years after the expulsion. This sad, nostalgic mood permeates folk songs in Ladino, the language whose very existence nourished Sephardic identity even when the languages actually spoken by Sephardic Jews in other countries were different. The subconscious existence of the absent Other in Sephardic identity – whether that of the Muslim as fellow exile or of the forced Jewish and Muslim converts who stayed behind in Spain – made the Sephardic Jew heavier of heart but also more tolerant. [19] Yehoshua noted that religious fanatics are hard to find among Sephardic Jews. Such zealotry did develop among Ashkenazic European Jews, who had to struggle against doctrinal Christian animosities, both Catholic and Protestant, and against Jewish secularization, which became

a threat in the modern period. However, such ideological secularization, by and large, was not a factor in traditional Sephardic societies.[20]

Yehoshua spoke of what he calls “Mediterranean-style pluralism,” one of whose unifying components is the Sephardic Jew, who carries in his soul that vanished Other, the Christian and the Muslim. This is the Sephardic role; this is its mission. Not merely Ladino love songs or folkloric foods or Sephardic melodies and modes of prayer in the synagogue, but a political and cultural mission. A mission of peace and tolerance, addressed first and foremost to the Arabs of the Mediterranean, a mission with which Israelis who are not Sephardic are also likely to identify.[21]

The Mediterranean basin was the cradle of the Sephardic Jews, who gave us the most memorable poetry of the Golden Age in Spain. However, the oldest community of Jews in Jerusalem, the Sephardim, declined alongside the onset of Zionism and modernity. The early harbinger of this process appears in the middle of the nineteenth century: Rabbi Alkalay (1798-1878), the Sephardic rabbi who preceded Pinsker, Herzl, and Ahad Ha' am. His name is rarely mentioned today.[22]

Yehoshua discusses his relationship with his Sephardic past in an essay, “Remembrance of Sephardic Things Past,” included in the anthology of his father’s essays published in 1987 and in his second essay collection, *The Wall and the Mountain* (1989). In relating the influence of Sephardim on his writing, Yehoshua wrote:

I felt I could no longer dominate a text with the kind of figure that represents the Israeli in general or the Ashkenazi Israeli of the center in general. And this was my way of approaching reality: little by little, I discovered the Sephardic element that I had repressed a little and didn’t want to touch in my earlier writings. I discovered the Sephardic element in my own identity and tried to use it as a way to penetrate through to my human soul and to the Jewish experience through my own biography. And I think this is the way I came…to *Mr. Mani* itself.[23]

In discussing what his Sephardic roots meant to him personally, Yehoshua stated:

Of course it is … a return to some of my own sources and to the possibility of being courageous and admitting some of my sources … by engaging Jewish history from a Sephardic point of view[24] … I very much wanted to understand this Sephardic element – Sephardic not in the sense of the Oriental Jew, but in the sense of a Sephardic Jerusalemite of the nineteenth century.[25]

Mr. Mani

Mr. Mani reads like a frontal assault on the mystique of Sephardim. Playing with the conventions of the family saga, Yehoshua’s novel gives equal attention to five generations of a family of Spanish exiles who emigrated from Salonika to Jerusalem in the middle of the nineteenth century. The cultural and historical description is thick, and the will to engage the meaning of Sephardim unmistakable.[26]

Mr. Mani is also a direct assault against the nationalists and fundamentalists in the war for memory, hence the soul and future of his nation. Yehoshua’s way of engaging in this battle is to dive deeply into the historical and mythological past of the Jewish people. His purpose, in writing the book, “is to understand the present.”[27] He is insistent that *Mr. Mani* “…is not a historical novel”[28] – even though it covers 150 years of history. The present, he says, is the target. “I feel that Israel is at a crossroad, between war and peace, and I want very much very much to understand that crossroad.”

[29]

Yehoshua does not believe *Mr. Mani* is a novel of ideas. Rather, the essence of his idea is that Israel's collective past impinges on its collective present. He feels that before ideology, before Jewish history, before the crossroads of Jewish history, one must try to explore the unconscious material that comes from fathers to sons and from grandfathers and great-grandfathers to ourselves.[30]

In his seminal article, "Behind Every Thought Hides Another Thought," Israeli literary critic Dan Miron observed that the Yehoshua corpus can be characterized as a "poetics of wit." *Mr. Mani*, Miron suggested, exposes how narrative can be thought of as an intellectual game because of its artificial, constructed nature. Miron claimed that Yehoshua made intentional "mistakes" in his narrative: "battles will occur a year before or after they took place, locations will move a bit, people will know things they could not have known…" He believed that the reader is invited to uncover these mistakes by Yehoshua as a kind of game. [31] The "game," in many cases, directs the reader to the salient "what-if" conversation that Yehoshua is emphasizing.

Above all, Yehoshua describes *Mr. Mani* as "a conversation novel." Indeed, this chronicle of the Mani family from the mid-eighteenth-century to the mid-1980s comprises five conversations, documenting five speakers. Only the last speaker is a Mani; the others relate the fate of the Manis they have known. These conversations are unique, also, in that most of the speakers occupy positions of power during the periods in which the conversations take place.[32] An otherwise absent editor supplies each conversation's prologue and epilogue in a neutral, authoritative tone.[33] Yehoshua succeeds in forcing the reader into a double take – as an outsider and an insider, both a detached observer and an involved confessor.[34]

In each conversation, a new speaker describes his or her encounter with a different member of the Mani family. The responses of the speaker's conversational partner are omitted, but his or her identity is known to the reader and clearly influences how the speaker communicates.

The novel begins in the present and moves back in time, reenacting the life of six generations of the putatively typical Sephardic family, the Manis. The shadow of Freud looms large over *Mr. Mani*, where Yehoshua – who has been married to a psychoanalyst for half a century – invites readers on an archeological approach, that is, to dig into the text in order to recover underlying connections and decode recurring symbols.[35] Yehoshua's historical intersections are obvious, recognized episodes in the construction of the Zionist narrative: the rise of nationalism in Europe (1848), the Zionist Congresses (1899), the Belfour Declaration (1918), the Holocaust (1944), and the Lebanon War (1982).[36] Yehoshua touches on these historical intersections by way of this family, which is the subject of each conversation. These conversations continue, by allusion, all the way back to the mythic origins of the Jewish people in the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac.[37] Over all, the conversations retrace the emergence of modern nationalism, in particular Zionism, and its effect on the Middle East and the Jerusalem Sephardim. Significant in its absence is the most crucial date in the rise of modern Jewish nationalism: 1948, the establishment of Israel as a sovereign state, the epochal date without which one cannot conceive of the modern Jewish world – or the world of this novel.[38]

The speakers in the conversations describe the Manis as outsiders who produced idiosyncratic individuals in extreme reaction to their surroundings. The first and last conversations feature speakers who have decided to revive the dying Sephardic Mani clan: Hagar Shiloh in the 1980s and Avraham Mani in 1848, both of whom resolve not to let the future generations die out. The three middle speakers have brief encounters with a Mani: a German soldier in Crete in 1944, a Jewish British lieutenant in Palestine/Eretz Israel in 1918, and a Jewish physician in western Galicia (Poland) in 1899.

In this novel, Yehoshua "regresses" to a mode of narration that can, in part, be seen as traditional. Not only is there conversation in which the voice of the interlocutor is not heard; there is a further "regression" to the romantic depiction of the Arab as typically found in the writing of the pre-statehood generation. In a way, the novel – dedicated to the author's father– is a return not only to the era depicted but to the older literary approaches as well, i.e., to the hitherto unacknowledged Sephardic literary forefathers. Yehoshua employs a double framework here: on one hand, there is his

faithfulness, through speech, to the periods he depicts, and on the other, there is the hindsight of the 1980s. In the process, Yehoshua reclaims his lost literary Sephardic "parentage," and, therefore he sees the Arab cry for nationalism in a far different light.[39]

Kibbutz Mash'abei Sadeh, 1982

The first and most contemporary section of *Mr. Mani* takes place in the midst of the war Israel was conducting in Lebanon in 1982. The speaker, Hagar Shiloh, is talking to her mother at Kibbutz Mash'abei Sadeh, of which they are members. Hagar, whose lover is Efi (Ephraim) Mani, believes she is pregnant and is trying to tell her mother about her visit to Efi's father, Gavriel Mani, in Jerusalem. She saves Efi's father Gavriel, a respected judge, from suicide. Hagar's pregnancy turns out to be illusory, but she later becomes pregnant and gives birth to Roni Mani. Efi refuses to marry her, and she decides to raise the baby alone.[40] In her conversation with her mother, Hagar feels that she is in a play whose implacable script has already been written: the end of the dynasty. Against all odds, therefore, she decides to change the text; she is not alone but is part of a long story in the hands of someone else. As an Ashkenazic, she is doing something audacious in trying to enter the Sephardic clan and invigorate its tired blood. She seeks her place in a family that is not a family but "a version of a family."[41]

Hagar's brief sojourn in Arab East Jerusalem is one of the most delicately suggestive episodes in *Mr. Mani.* She concludes that this is a place in which she is an outsider while it is a place to which the Arabs she encounters naturally belong. She feels the distinct and separate Arab space most strongly as she rides the hospital van after her short stay in an Arab hospital where she thought she had miscarried:

I began traveling through Jerusalem from the *opposite direction* that evening, together with the hospital workers who had finished their shift. And it was the most wondrous journey, Mom. To places where you have never been, through neighborhoods and little villages that are right inside the city itself, dripping at times through barren ravines, still spotted with snow, and bumping into dark streets, full of potholes and big puddles, that would suddenly turn into bustling commercial centers alive with colors and people, young and old, walking along with their donkeys, or shopping bags. And everyone actually seemed very pleasant and very relaxed, as it they really felt good being alone together and may have even become accustomed to it.[42]

Hagar's account of her experiences in the Arab sector of Jerusalem supports the Sephardic narrative that views the division of the Land of Israel into two States would be as healthy for the integrity of the Palestinian identity as it would for the transformation of the Israeli sense of self.[43]

Heraklion, Crete, 1944

In German-occupied Crete, a young German paratrooper, Egon Bruner, explains relates to his mother his experiences in Crete with the Mani family, which he was hunting down. During an interrogation, Efrayim Mani tries to convince Egon that he is no longer a Jew because he has willingly canceled his Jewishness and has become, simply, a person. Having been brought up without a mother and by an adoptive father and perhaps aware that his real father was not a Jew, Efrayim believed he could escape his historical identity and destiny.[44]

Egon experiences the human toll that occupation inflicts not only on the occupied but on the occupier as well. Upon encountering members of the Mani family, Ego experiences his first taste of what he later come to call:

…that sweet and sour dish called Conqueror's Fear from which we eat until it makes us sick. This is the cause of the anxiety and the dread that emanate from each one of us, even when he is walking along innocently, absorbed in the loftiest and most humane thoughts. This is the reason for the careful attention that each of our soldiers gives to every move he makes, even when he begins to loathe himself.[45]

In this chapter, Yehoshua suggests that the dangers of Israeli militancy and its occupation of Arab lands is fraught with the dangers experienced by Egon in Crete. The "what-if" scenario is a return to the amity of the Arabs and Jews in Jerusalem before 1948.

Jerusalem, Palestine, 1918

Ivor Stephen Horowitz, a young Jewish lawyer serving in the British Army in Jerusalem, which has recently been occupied by the British army, explains to his superior the case of the political agitator, Yosef Mani, who is being tried for treason and is eventually sentenced by a military court to banishment on the island of Crete.

Yosef grew up among the polyglot of Christian, Jewish, and Arab groups that made up Jerusalem during the first decade of the century. Yosef advocates the idea of bi-nationalism[46]—two people on one land —and concentrates on political pursuits. He is preoccupied with the questions of national identity and engages in "practical education," attending meetings of Shiites, Druze, Christian Communists, Maronites, Catholics, and all kinds of clerical assemblies, moving from identity to identity. He also maintains his connections with the Sephardic Jewish community and makes the acquaintance of many young eastern European Jews headed for Palestine.

Having made himself an indispensable translator in the British advancing army, Yosef offers his services as a spy to the Turks in exchange for the opportunity to address gatherings of Arab villagers throughout the countryside. His message to his sleepy and uncomprehending listeners is that in the wake of the Balfour Declaration, Palestine will be divided up among those wise enough to grasp the opportunity and that the Arabs will lose out unless they awaken to the meaning of the hour. Night after night, he stands before groups of sullen Arab villages who have been forcibly assembled by the Turks to warn them of the coming perils and advise them of the steps they must take to avert this:

And this is what he would say to them: "Who are you? Wake up before it is too late and the world is completely changed. Get yourself an identity fast!" And he takes out his Arabic translation of Lord Balfour's declaration and reads it to them without explanation. Then he continues, "This land is yours and it is ours, half for you and half for us." And he points toward Jerusalem, and says, "The British are over there and the Turks are over here, but they will all leave, and we will be left alone. So stop sleeping and wake up."[47]

Yosef wants the Arabs to awaken to the fact that the Balfour Declaration's promise of a Jewish national home will mean a massive influx of Jewish immigrants, which will drastically alter the

demographic balance and put the Palestinian Arabs at a distinct disadvantage. He wants them to understand that, as a result of these new circumstances, the Jews have become “like a swarm of locusts that is now hiding in the desert but will soon swoop down.”[48] He also offers them a preemptive solution. Toward the end of each speech, Yosef displays a handmade map of Palestine and reiterates,

“Get yourself an identity. All over the world nations are taking on identities. If you delay, it will be too late. If you delay, there will be a disaster. Because we are coming.” And he takes out a pair of scissors and says, “Half for us and half for you.” Then he cuts the map from top to bottom, giving them half with the mountains and the Jordan River and keeping the coast and the sea for himself.” [49]

When they seem disappointed by not getting the sea, he takes out another map and cuts it in half another way. [50]

Here, Yehoshua goes back to the crossroads of the Balfour Declaration, where Britain’s call for the establishment of the State of Israel, instead of advocating a two-state solution, would have dramatically changed the history of Israel and Palestine.

Jelleny-Szad, 1899

A young doctor, Efrayim Shapiro, reports to his father his experiences at the Third Zionist Congress and his subsequent trips to Jerusalem with his sister, Linka, who has had an affair with a Dr. Moshe Mani, an obstetrician. This dialog takes place in Jelleny-Szad in southern Poland (near Oswiecim) in 1899.

Moshe Mani ran a lying-in clinic in Jerusalem using modern obstetrics, and women from all the nationalities in Jerusalem came to give birth under these enlightened conditions. The clinic is described as “multiethnic, syncretistic, and ecumenical.”[51] Dr. Mani appears as a polyglot microcosm mingling women of all nationalities, a confusion of boundaries of all sorts.[52]

Fascinated by the figure of Herzl and his vision of a Zionist state, the doctor travels to Basel for the Zionist Congress of 1899 and there meets Efrayim and Linka from Galicia who return with him to Jerusalem. The doctor has fallen in love with Linka and accompanies the Shapiros on their return to Galicia. Dr. Mani tells the two visitors that one day, with the progress of technology, there will be a train running from Jerusalem to Oswiecim, the Polish town with the name Auschwitz (which is the neighboring town to the Shapiros' estate in Jelleny-Szad).

Here, of course, Yehoshua is imaging a counter-history where Jews in the Diaspora emigrated to Israel and were saved from the ovens of the Nazis.

Athens, 1848

In Athens, Avraham Mani reports to his elderly mentor, Rabbi Shabbetai Hananiaha-Haddaya, the intricate tale of his trip to Jerusalem and the death of his son. Avraham, the rigidly conservative patriarch, and Yosef, his iconoclastic son, differ in their views of religion and territory.[53] Avraham’s dedication to a universal Jewish faith conflicts with the aspirations of Yosef to a mode of national existence that is essentially territorial. Yosef disavows traditional notions of Jewish peoplehood and

dedicates himself to transforming his nation by uniting its people around the territory they inhabit. He wishes to fuse all the inhabitants of the land into a single national body that is founded on a native belonging to this land.[54]

Yosef Mani was the first member of his family to settle in Jerusalem, an act of cardinal importance in a novel that attempts to formulate – or reformulate – the historical background of the Zionist state. Young Yosef traveled to Jerusalem from Istanbul in 1846 not out of any sense of religious yearning or nationalism but simply to marry Tamara, to whom he had been betrothed the year before. This chapter describes a world of Sephardic families residing in the major cities of the Eastern Mediterranean and living out their lives mostly unaffected by the dynamic political winds sweeping Europe. Yosef, for instance, was born in Salonika, spent his youth at the home of his teacher in Istanbul, and is betrothed in Beirut to Tamara Valerio from Jerusalem. He is familiar with the streets of Istanbul and Jerusalem; he speaks Ladino, Turkish, French, English, and Arabic; in Jerusalem, he works as a courier and guide for the British consulate. He is impressed by the similarity between the Arabs and the Jews and develops a theory, his *idée fixe*, that the Arab inhabitants of Palestine (whom he calls *Ishmaelites*) are the unknowing descendants of the original Hebrews and really are “Jews who still don’t know they are Jews.”[55] Avraham, the father, also has an *idée fixe,* which demands that the unity of religion and nationality be maintained and the continuity of the family dynasty be perpetuated.

However, there is a dark side to this seemingly comfortable cosmopolitanism: Yosef is a homosexual, a voyeur, and will not have sex with his wife; therefore, he will not father children. Yosef is killed, apparently by one of his Arab lovers (possibly with assistance from Avraham[56]), in order to preserve the continuity of national and religious unity both within his family and within the larger Jewish community.[57] Avraham, who had come to Jerusalem from Salonika to look into the doings of the young couple, sleeps with his very young daughter-in-law and she bears his child, Moshe.[58]

In this culminating fifth section, Yehoshua addresses his concern with the relationship of the Jewish people to the land of Israel and to the Arabs who inhabit it. In the novel, the first Yosef reflects Yehoshua’s wish for the Sephardim’s early nineteenth-century experience of living peacefully, side by side with the Arabs.

Arab Relations

One of the most interesting issues in *Mr. Mani* is the Jews’ relationship with the Arab. In Yehoshua’s earlier fiction, the Arab maintains a central but separate existence. In contrast, in *Mr. Mani* it seems as if the Arab has entered into the psyche of the Israeli and the self-definition of the Israeli is intimately bound up with that of the Arab. This is in stark contrast to the position of the Arab in earlier Hebrew literature where the depiction of the Arab was so romanticized, so kept at a distance, that there could be no talk of the Arab's taking a place "within" the Israeli psyche.[59]

Mr. Mani’s image of the Arab may well be traceable to the emergence of Yehoshua’s Sephardic roots in his writings and to his increasing homage to Sephardic as well as to Ashkenazic writers and thinkers of the pre-statehood days. For example, as noted above, he portrays Yosef of the 1848 Mani family as believing that Arabs are in essence ancient Jews who ought to be brought back into the fold. Presumably, the recovery of a common ancestor of Arab and Jews can serve to eliminate the animosity between them and liberate both sides from their cultural limitations.[60]

The Sephardic sense of familiarity with Arab culture is depicted in the epilogue and biographical data that conclude every conversation in the novel. Gavriel Mani decides to travel to the kibbutz in the Negev to see his grandson; he drives through Hebron, to the horror of Hagar and her mother, Yael. Over their apprehensions, he assures them that he feels entirely safe in going from Jerusalem to Beersheba through Hebron and that the villagers are peaceful. It is the fall of 1987, and when a stone is thrown at his car, he confesses that to take this road is now inadvisable, although it still tempts him. [61]

Mr. Mani's narrative seeks to discern, critique, and ultimately, transform the manner in which traditional notions of Jewish territorial affinity affect Israeli perceptions of the national and territorial prerogatives of the Arabs who inhabit the Land of Israel.[62]

The Arab-Israeli Conflicts

Mr. Mani opens with a signature paragraph introducing Hagar Shiloh and the brute fact that time in Israel is measured by the dates of wars.[63]

Born in 1962 in *Mash'abei Sadeh*, a kibbutz thirty kilometers south of Beersheba that was founded in 1949. Her parents, Roni and Yael Shiloh, first arrived there in 1956 in the course of the army service. Hagar's father Roni was killed on the last day of the Six Day War as a reservist on the Golan Heights. As Hagar was five at the time, her claim to have clear memories of her father may be correct.[64]

The Arab-Israeli conflict and its many wars might have been solved long ago had the leadership of the Zionist movement been entrusted to the indigenous Sephardim of Eretz Yisrael who understood Arab sensibilities better than did the Ashkenazim.[65] An essay by Elie Eliachar, a former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem and a member of one of Israel's oldest Oriental Jewish families, makes the same argument: "Had the Zionist leaders in those days been wise enough to accept the guidance of these [Sephardic] and other individuals who had experience with Arabs, a better understanding between Jews and Arabs might have been brought about without any harm done to our national movement." [66]

Eliachar pointed to item after item that antagonized the Arabs to the point of armed conflict: land purchases that did not take the Arab tenants into consideration, Hebrew language instruction in schools that excluded the Arabs, repeated personal insults of Arab dignitaries, incursions into their lands. He wrote in 1975 that his position of 1936 presented to the Royal Commission still held and things would have been different had the Sephardic point of view conditioned the relationship with the Arabs.[67]

We are Jews of Semitic-Oriental origin despite the extensive sojourn of a considerable number of people from the West. The Land of Israel lies in the Orient and our first duty on returning is to regain the Oriental characteristics which we lost in the West, without in any way relinquishing all the positive traits we acquired there. Jews and Arabs are Semites and hence related. The Hebrew and Arabic languages stem from a common source, as do our religious beliefs: even many of our basic characteristics are alike. [68]

Eliachar's views on the Sephardim are generally consistent with Yehoshua's notion that a Sephardic version of Zionism would have created a different landscape where two peoples would be living side by side in peace.

Sephardic Themes

Sephardic responses to the Ashkenazic culture and hegemony challenge the “Zionist master narrative” created by the Ashkenazic literary establishment.[69] Sephardic Zionism as an ideology, with its pluralistic foundation and tolerance toward the Arabs, was displaced by the Ashkenazic power structure, which was European in origin, and whose notions of Jewish nationalism were thus founded along the lines of nineteenth-century European nationalist models. Sephardic Zionism, only remotely influenced by these new ideas, is implied in *Mr. Mani.* The Sephardic Manis respect Arab nationalism and have an intimacy with the Arab communities of the Mediterranean. As a consequence, the Sephardic Jew is more at home in the Middle East than the Ashkenazi and, perhaps, more capable of living at peace with the Arab inhabitants of the area.

Several scholars, writing about *Mr. Mani*, failed to connect the Sephardic critique of Ashkenazic Zionist ideology to Yehoshua’s interrogation of the entire history of the Jewish people in *Mr. Mani*. For example, Gilead Moragh finds the notion puzzling that *Mr. Mani* is preoccupied with questions of Sephardic identity and that it provides a counter-narrative to prevailing versions of Zionism discourse by engaging Jewish history from a Sephardic point of view. Moragh argues that with one significant exception, the fifth conversation, Sephardic characters have little voice and no independent existence in *Mr. Mani*.

The little there is in their speech is reported speech, and their inner worlds are reconstructed or invented by others who are often profoundly alien to them. The narrative perspective in the first four conversations belongs to a sequence of explicitly non-Sephardic narrators who are appropriating the Mani story to serve their own needs. It is not surprising that in these narratives, the Manis do not come to embody much that is typical or representative of the Sephardic community and its culture. This also explains the paucity of knowledge about what most of the Mani men actually think or feel. [70]

Yael Feldman agrees with Moragh: “The Manis are far from being a representative Sephardic family and it is impossible to maintain that the Mani perspective constitutes a hidden Sephardic critique of European Zionist ideology.” [71] However, I disagree with Morahg and Feldman on this matter and find the writings of Yaron Peleg and Alan L. Mintz to be much more in line with my thinking concerning the Sephardic counter-narrative.

In Peleg’s view, for example, *Mr. Mani* examines the Sephardic element in pre-Zionist Palestine from an Ashkenazic point of view, which looks at the Palestinian Sephardim with a mixture of admiration, bewilderment, and anxiety. The Ashkenazis sense the almost mythic ability of the Sephardim to survive in an ever-changing world, an ability that is sustained by their native attachment to the land and their natural relations with the Arabs. The novel pays homage to the deep affinity of the Sephardim to Eretz Israel, irrespective of politics. The characters in *Mr. Mani* are a natural part of the Mediterranean world. They know it intimately and move through it freely. For them, Zionism is just another regional political phase that does not determine their relation to the Land of Israel. The Ashkenazic point of view calls attention to the nature of Zionism as an artificial and perhaps even a harmful development in Jewish history. The natural attachment of the Sephardim to the Mediterranean Muslim world questions not only the validity of Zionism but its overall benefit to the Jews. The novel seems to say that, unlike their Ashkenazic brethren, the Sephardim never really had a Jewish problem.[72]

In “Constructing and Deconstructing the Mystique of Sephardim in Yehoshua’s *Mr. Mani* and Journey to the End of the Millennium,” Mintz notes the manner in which *Mr. Mani* peels away the layers of historical inevitability and rolls back the triumph of Western ideology as it moves one step closer to a time when nations and national identities were finally consolidated. *Mr. Mani* provocatively and perversely follows this line not into the recesses of the Ashkenazic Diaspora where Zionism was derived but into the world of Sephardic Jewry, which historically composed the largest segment of continuous Jewish settlement in Jerusalem, though it is a smaller percentage of world Jewry. Jerusalem is presented before Zionism and places within it an hypostatized Sephardim whose

growing entanglement with Western Zionism can be traced through resistance and capitulation.[73]

Mr. Mani makes claims for a superior worldliness of the Sephardim, a quality that enabled them to see alternatives to the ideology-driven march of Western history. Jews of the Ottoman Empire lived in closer and less conflicting contact with Muslim peoples than with the members of the other principal minority, the Christians. Their mercantile travels gave them an international perspective and a sensitivity to the relations among national groups.

In contrast to the Judaism of their East European coreligionists, the religious convictions of the Sephardim were deeply but less fanatically held and were less insulated from the world. When religious faith collapsed for a segment of Russian Jewry at the end of the nineteenth century, political Zionism was seized upon as a substitute for failed messianic beliefs and turned into an ideological movement. The Sephardim chose a path of accommodation instead. Rather than rejecting religion and adopting secular replacements for it, they made room for elements of modernity alongside their family-centered piety. Zionism came to them naturally, not as a radical redefinition of the Jewish people but as an extension of a primordial attachment to both an ideal geography and a real place. [74]

The Dysfunctional Mani Family

The Manis as a family and as individuals are ineffectual and obsessed in ways that undercut the legitimacy of their visionary policies and it all starts with the first Yosef Mani. In fact, as mentioned above, Yosef believed that the Arabs are Jews who have forgotten their Jewishness. According to the account given by his father, an unreliable but insightful narrator, Yosef's ideas are the ultimate result of the boy having been seduced by the young wife of his elderly rabbi and teacher, which in turn leads to his homosexuality and his death. The father calls the son's notions an *idée fixe*, and he journeys from Salonika to try to ensure that the marriage "bears seed and not just *idées fixes*." His failure to do so and his guilt over impregnating his daughter-in-law lead him later in life to contemplate suicide. And so the urge to suicide, obscurely enacted by Judge Mani more than a century later, is imprinted in the genetic code of the Manis.[75] *Mr. Mani* is about obsessions that are self-destructive in that the heroes in the novel are directed by an antique self-destruction, with murder and incest lying in their unconscious.[76]

Because the Mani family's notions come to naught, their decision to pursue their ideas at the expense of the preservation of their species is doubly self-defeating. For faced with the choice to sow their seed or to sow their ideas, they constantly do the latter. In contrast to received notions of potent oriental patriarchs propagating vast clans, the Manis have to be tricked into reproducing. From the father who sleeps with his daughter-in-law at one end of the novel to the kibbutz student who gets Judge Mani an illegitimate grandson at the other, this is a family whose dynastic line hangs by a very tattered thread.[77] The Manis prefer to remain bachelors, are barely attracted to the female sex, and would rather not fulfill the commandment to be fruitful and multiply. Each of them has but one descendent, who only with difficulty secures the continuation of the line. The either/or choice between sexuality and political consciousness is vividly expressed in the case of Yosef Mani, the treacherous translator and *homo politicus* of the third conversation.[78]

All the characters in *Mr. Mani* are self-deceiving individuals who "do not understand themselves and the motives for their behavior in personal relationships"[79] and in compensation, they "fashion group-identifications (Sephardim, Zionism, Pacifism, Universalism, Nazism, Religion,) which they delude themselves into believing will solve all their problems." [80] Moreover, the Manis suffer from an assortment of psychological problems, ranging from passivity to aggression, from incest to filicide, and from frigidity and repressed homosexuality to suicidal urges. Undoubtedly, this is a portrait of a family far removed from the classic ethnic stereotype of the Sephardic family.

Why, then, would Yehoshua undermine his own creation? I believe that Yehoshua turns, symbolically, to the biblical tales of the patriarchs and matriarchs because they, like the Manis, are

hardly paragons of virtue. There is the story of Tamara, who sleeps with her father-in-law Judah in order to produce an heir to her husband, the transfer of the burden of infertility from the matriarch of Genesis to the Mani patriarchs; Abraham and Joseph and the *aqedah* episode; and Ishmael, the banished son of Abraham and Hagar. [81]

The fifth conversation gives us the only speaker who is a Mani. In one of many reversals, Avraham Mani comes to his teacher, Rabbi Shabbetai Hananiaha-Haddaya, as the rabbi is dying to give confession and extract vengeance.

Yehoshua sees the Manis as reflecting many of the problems of family relations and, especially, the father-son dynamic. “Family relations,” wrote Yehoshua in an essay published in 1998, “…are, in my view, one of the areas of life that are richest in moral dilemmas and choices. Here…a person’s morality is tested. Especially because connections of love and mutual dependence are so characteristic of family relations, the moral equations become subtle, complex, and often painful.”[82] Interestingly, Yehoshua’s wife, a psychoanalyst, has remarked that all his fiction is at heart about the friction between father and son.[83]

Most of the members of the house of Mani are indeed “mani-acs” who represent the Mani dynasty over a period of 150 years. Yehoshua’s depiction of them represents his views on the biblical narrative, family relations, and father-son dynamic. In effect, Yehoshua is saying that there is a little “Mani” in all of us, some to a lesser or greater degree.

Conclusion

Mr. Mani is replete with references to the “what-ifs” of the Sephardic Zionist counter-narrative. The Sephardic point of view, reflected in this fictional chronicle, points to the close proximity and amity between Arabs and Jews. The Sephardic community is a community of moderation. Hence, there are opportunities for accommodation with the Arabs and Christian Europeans that are invisible to the Ashkenazic coreligionists.[84]

Mr. Mani is not a nostalgic evocation of the Sephardic past or an embittered tirade against Ashkenazic humiliation of Sephardic or Oriental Jews, the two convenient subgenres of Hebrew fiction situated in non-Ashkenazi milieus. Rather, it is an agonized fictionalization of the problems of Israeli existence in the time of its composition, after the Lebanon War, and at the beginning of the *Intifada.* Actual political events of the 1980s are referred to only in the first of the five sections of the novel, and then only as background to the story, which takes place in Jerusalem. However, like many Israeli novels, it is motivated by a well-grounded conviction that something has gone awry in the realization of the Zionist dream. Yehoshua attempts to work out here the search for what went wrong. The innocent assumption is that if you can identify the wrong turn, you can return to it and make the right turn.[85]

Neither sparing nor idealizing the Sephardim, Yehoshua posits an alternative narrative in which Sephardim participate in the traditional Zionist story and create their own version. The Mani (read: Sephardic) attachment to the land of Israel is not political, ideological, or interchangeable; rather it is organic. The Manis are the link to the land and also the bridge to the Arabs, the true indigenous people.[86] By placing Dr. Mani with Herzl at the Zionist Congress meeting in 1899, Yehoshua effectively includes the Sephardim in the European enterprise. European Zionism is embodied by the figure of Herzl, shown to be weak and ailing, on the verge of total collapse. By contrast, the Sephardic counterpart, Dr. Mani, is robust.

In *Mr. Mani*, Yehoshua suggests a different Zionism conceived by Sephardic Jews as an alternative to the Zionism developed by the Ashkenazic Jews, which, in his estimation, prevents Israel from resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Through the Mani family lineage, the novel points to a Sephardic Jewish solution. In contrast to Ashkenazic Zionism, which ignored the national aspirations of the Arabs when conceiving the establishment of the Jewish state, each generation of the Mani family in

Yehoshua's novel attempts to establish the Jewish hold on the Land of Israel by means of a compromise with the Arabs.[87] In this hypothetical scenario, the nation-state is undermined as the major achievement of the Zionist movement. With all the attention paid to dates, the absence of 1948 is an omission fraught with significance. European Zionism is weak and fails.

The Sephardic counter-narrative is further exemplified in the novel by the initiatives of the Manis in response to the events depicted in 1918 and 1899.Though there are many differences between England in 1918 and Poland in 1899, the central message is similar. If the Mani of either conversation, father Moshe of the fourth conversation or son Joseph of the third, had succeeded in his rhetorical endeavors, the era of the Shoah would have found a different Jewish people in Europe. If Moshe Mani had persuaded Efrayim Shapiro to stay in Jerusalem, there would have been no Shapiros in Poland to transport to Auschwitz. If Joseph Mani had persuaded the Arabs to take on the national political identity in 1918 or, more subtly, if he had persuaded Ivor Horowitz immediately that he was an English Jew and not a Jewish Englishman, perhaps he, and not his grandson, would have been the first family to settle in Israel, in the 1920s, not the 1960s or 1970s, and perhaps a state of Israel would have come into being earlier, particularly considering Great Britain's political role in the matter. What is unquestionable, however, is that if many Polish Jews of Shapiro's social position and generation had emigrated to Israel in 1899 or if many English Jews of Horowitz's social position and generation had done so in the 1920s, the Nazis would have encountered a different Jewish reality in Europe and the Middle East in the 1930s.[88] The Holocaust represents both the consequence of these earlier choices and a road that saw Jewishness as an identity purely of the mind.

At crucial junctures of modern history, such as the Balfour Declaration, the Manis, because of who they are and where they come from, are able to glimpse options invisible to the Ashkenazic Zionist movement. They contemplate an alternative path that does not foreclose possibilities, one that negates the unremitting tension with its neighbors.[89] The Yosef of section five has the ideological conviction and alternative existential vision. Yosef has come to believe that it is imperative to obliterate the ethnic and religious distinctions that divide the inhabitants of Jerusalem and cause constant conflict among them. Furthermore, Yosef constantly seeks "to forge relationships among strangers and to fight against what he considers isolation or self-segregation."[90] He does this out of his conviction that "when all will recognize their true but hidden nature, they will make peace with each other."[91] The first Yosef Mani's attitude is rooted in the ideological stance of Canaanite thinkers such as Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi, who regarded Palestinian Arabs as "converted descendents of Jews" who had remained devoted to the land after the destruction of the Second Temple. While according to Canaanites, the Arabs of Palestine privileged their loyalty to the land, the Jews chose to be loyal to their faith, losing contact with the native soil.[92]

In many important ways, the second section of *Mr. Mani* in German-occupied Crete is an extended exploration of the consequences of Israel's present-day transformation into a nation of conquerors with an evolving culture of occupation. Egon's initial aspiration for national transformation coincides closely with the fundamentals of the Zionist dream. Both are idealistic visions of a national renewal that requires casting off the heritage of a despised past and drawing on tropes of an ancient Mediterranean culture to evoke the redemption that will occur upon the nation's return to the mythic land of origin.[93]

When Yehoshua is writing about the occupation of Crete, he is thinking about Israelis in the territories that they occupy. For example, the second section of *Mr. Mani* is an extended exploration of the consequences of Israel's deliberate choice to transform itself into a nation of conquerors with an evolving culture of occupation.[94] Hence, we can begin to discern the way in which the contemporary collective choice is as monumental as those reflected in *Mr. Mani*. That is, if the Jewish people persist along the road of occupation and create no peace settlement, what new Shoah lies twenty years in the future, a future that includes the real possibility that nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of terrorists or be used by terrorist states? While one can look with dismay at the choices not taken by European Jews sixty years ago, one must contemplate the picture of grandchildren sixty years from now looking back with comparable dismay at the choices not taken now.[95]

ENDNOTES

[1] Biblical scholars have often complained that the word *hessed* in the Hebrew Bible is difficult to translate into English, because it has no precise equivalent in our language; it is often translated as “loving-kindness,” “mercy,” “steadfast love,” and sometimes “loyalty.”
[2] Marc D. Angel, “A Sephardic Approach to *Halakhah*,”*Midstream Magazine* (August/September, 1975).
[3] Yael S. Feldman, *Glory and Agony* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2010): 22.
[4] Paul Mendes-Fleur and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World* (NY, Oxford University Press, 2011): 620.
[5] Gilead Moragh, “The Literary Quest for National Revival,” eds. Steven L. Jacos and Zev Garber, *Maven in Blue Jeans* (West Lafayette, IN, Purdue University, 2009): 455.
[6] Gilead Morahg, “Borderline Cases: National Identity and Territorial Affinity in A. B. Yehoshua’s *Mr. Mani*,” *AJS Review*, 30:1 (2006): 168.
[7]Arnold J. Band, “*Mar Mani*: The Archeology of Self-Deception,” *Prooftexts* 12 (1992): 239.
[8] Alan L. Mintz, *The Boom in Contemporary Israeli Fiction* (Waltham, MA, Brandeis University Press, 1992): 133.
[9] Alan Mintz, “Counterlives,” *The New Republic* (June 29, 1992): 442.
[10] Ibid, 12.
[11] Doreet Hopp, “Avraham B. Yehoshua,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica.*
[12] Ibid.
[13] Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 234.
[14] Abraham B. Yehoshua, “Beyond Folklore: The Identity of the Sephardic Jew,” *Quaderns de la Mediterrania* 14 (2010), 152.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid, 153.
[18] Ibid, 154-155.
[19] Yehoshua, “Beyond,” 154.
[20] Ibid, 155.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Gila Ramras-Rauch, “A. B. Yehoshua and the Sephardic Experience,” World Literature Today, Vol. 65, No. 1 (Winter 1991): 12.
[23] Horn, *Facing*, 78-79.
[24] Morahg, “Borderline,” 173.
[25] Ibid, 79.
[26] Alan L. Mintz, “Constructing and Deconstructing Mystique of Sephardim in Yehoshua’s *Mr. Mani* and *Journey to the End of the Millenium*,” ed. Alan L. Mintz, *Translating Israel* (Syracuse, NY, Syracuse University Press, 2001): 173-174.
[27] Horn, *Facing,* 13
[28] Ibid.
[29] Horn, *Facing*, 13.
[30] Ibid, 14.
[31] Dan Miron, “Behind Every Thought Hides Another Thought: Meditations on *Mr. Mani*,” *Siman Kriyah* 21 (December 1990): 153-157.
[32] Mintz, “Constructing,” 184.
[33] Ramras-Rauch, “A. B. Yehoshua,” 10-11.
[34] Yael S. Feldman, “Identity and Counter-Identity: The Sephardi Heritage in Israel,” *Midstreams*, 43, 4 (1997): 19.
[35] Maurizio Ascari, *Literature of the Golden Age* (Jefferson, NC, McFarland, 2011): 64.
[36] Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 238.
[37] Horn, *Facing*, 18.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ramras-Rauch, “A. B. Yehoshua,” 12.
[40] A. B. Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani* (New York, Doubleday, 1992): 5-72.
[41] Ramras-Rauch, “A. B. Yehoshua,” 11.
[42] Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani*, 63.
[43] Morahg, “Borderline, 180.

[44] Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 241.
[45] Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani*, 105.
[46] Ibid, 147-201.
[47] Ibid, 189.
[48] Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani*, 190.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Morahg, “Borderline,” 178.
[51] Mintz, “Constructing,” 179.
[52] Hoffman, “*The Womb*,” 255.
[53] Morahg, “Borderline,” 174.
[54] Ibid, 175.
[55] Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 239.
[56] The agency of the first Yosef’s death is by no means unambiguous. Yehoshua has noted in both written and oral communication that the father, Avraham, actually killed his own son. Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 244, ff 11.
[57] Gilead Morahg, “The Heritage of the Aqedah in A. B. Yehoshua’s *Mr. Mani*,” eds. Mishael M. Caspi and John T. Greene, *Unbinding the Binding of Isaac* (NY, University Press of America, 2007):194-195.
[58] Band, “*Mar Mani*,” 240.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ramras-Rauch, “A. B. Yehoshua,” 9.
[61] Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani*, 5-72.
[62] Morahg, “Borderline,” 167.
[63] Arnold J. Band, “Sabbatian Echoes in A. B. Yehoshua’s *Mar Mani*,” eds. William M. Brinner, et al., *Judaism and Islam* (Leiden, the Netherlands, Brill, 2000): 343.
[64] Yehoshua, *Mr. Mani*, 5.
[65] Band, “Sabbatian,” 345.
[66] Marzell Dag and Peretz Kidron, *Living with Jews* (London, UK, Weidenfield and Nicholas, 1983): 166-167.
[67] Band, “Sabbatian,” 345.
[68] Dag, *Living,* 207.
[69] Horn, *Facing*, 172.
[70] Moragh, “Borderline,” 173.
[71] Yael Feldman, “*Behazarah leber’ eshit*,” in Ben-Dov, *Bakivun hanegedi* [*In the Opposite Direction*], 208, 209.
[72] Yoran Peleg, *Orientalism and the Hebrew Imagination* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2005): 138.
[73] Mintz, “Constructing,” 179.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid, 181.
[76] Horn, *Facing*, 6.
[77] Mintz, “Constructing,” 182.
[78] Ibid, 183.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Horn, *Facing*, 172
[81] Feldman, *Glory*, 285-302.
[82] A. B. Yehoshua, “*Kohah hanora shel ashmah qetanah*” [The terrible power of a minor guilt] (Tel Aviv, Israel, 1998): 65. Morahg, “Testing,” 241.
[83] Clive Sinclair, “Book Review: A State of Mind,” *The Independent on Sunday,* March 7, 1993.
[84] “Book Review: Translating Israel: Contemporary Hebrew Literature and Its Reception in America,” *Shofar*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Winter 2005): 121.
[85] Band, “Deceptions,” 235-236.
[86] Mintz, *The Boom,* 131.
[87] Yosef Oren, “Post-Zionism and Anti-Zionism in Israeli Literature,” ed. Shlomo Sharan, *Israel and the Post-Zionists: A Nation at Risk* (Portland, OR, Sussex Academic Press, 2003): 195.
[88] Horn, “The Shoah,” 144-145.
[89] Mintz, “Constucting,” 181.
[90] Morahg, “The Heritage,” 192-193.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ascari, *Literature*, 74.
[93] Morahg, “Borderline,” 170.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Horn, “The Shoah,” 147.