

OUTLINE

BOOK ONE

1. The Year 1648 in Goray: Rabbi Benish vs. Eleazar Babad; summer
2. Rabbi Benish & his Household: Oyzer vs. Levi
3. Extraordinary Rumors: Rabbi Benish vs. the World
4. Goray before 1648 [The Old Goray & the New]
5. The Agunah & the Emissary: midwinter
6. Reb Mordecai Joseph: emissary is expelled by R. Benish;
all hell breaks out in besmedresh;
MJ beats up Chanina the charity scholar;
ancient enmity between kabbalist/rabbi
7. Reb Eleazar Babad & his daughter Rechele; her uncle the shoykhet
8. Rechele in Lublin: her trauma erev Yom Kippur
9. Reb Itsche Mattes the Packman: chooses Rechele;
Levi at center of Sabbatians
10. Reb Itche Mates sends a proposal: his self-abnegation; her suffering;
her father disappears
11. A Letter from Lublin
12. Rabbi Benish Prepares for war; the engagement party
13. "The Others" Wreak Revenge:
R. Benish's downfall in the snow storm
14. Rabbi Benish forsakes his congregation

BOOK TWO

1. In the bathhouse; the wedding ceremony; winter
2. The Seven Days of Benediction: marriage not consummated
3. Reb Gedalye; early spring; restores meat;
4. The Rejoicing in Goray; Pesach; Gedalya now heads Goray
Rechele copulates w/Gedalye following her vision
5. Rechele Prophecies; Itche Mates & Mordecai Joseph
set out to awaken the world
[154-55] Rechele finds her VOICE
157 Reb Gedalye proclaims the return of the Shechinah
159 Mordecai Joseph begins to preach
6. A wedding on a dung-hill: women's minyan est.;
Goray becomes pilgrimage site
7. The hour of union: summer drought;
terrible privation of the peasantry

shop, that and horseback riding prevented her from getting pregnant, because above all, *Life had to be a blast*, which left me Hebraically tongue-tied, but Terry laughed and said, *The way to prevent gossip is by giving them nothing to gossip about*. Hanna agreed.

So I sought out the male members of the department, avoiding those on Galit's hit-list, and late one Tuesday afternoon after Bibi's stunning victory had left the campus in a state of shell-shock, I bumped into Avner Holtzman in the Gillman cafeteria. The moment he saw me he rushed off to grab a seat for the two of us in the auditorium, for sure enough, by the time I found him, in third row center, there were easily 400 people present, Jews of all ages, with fifty more crowding the aisles. They had come to celebrate the publication of S. Yizhar's collection of stories, which felt ^{to me} like a combination folkfest and slug-fest, because Nurit Govrin, the first speaker, with her ^{schoolmarmish} ~~high pitched matronly~~ voice, was no match for "Shula," Shulamit Aloni, the outgoing Commissar of Education, who qualified for the job at age fifteen when Yizhar took her class on arduous hikes and forced them to read *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, *War and Peace*, *Crime and Punishment*, and to memorize Bialik and Tchernichowsky, like the idyll she recited from memory with the Ashkenazi stress, now *there* was a teacher who made language and literature come alive, not like the arcane speech just delivered by Professor Govrin (laughter, scattered applause), which our debonair emcee, Dan Laor, was skillfully able to parry, followed by the young novelist Meir Shalev, a great admirer of Yizhar's prose ever since he, Shalev, began to dream of becoming a writer himself, especially of the master's ability to render the Israeli landscape, hear this passage from the book that describes the thrill of riding a motorcycle at full throttle with Judy, the English teacher, holding on and shouting with ecstasy, and finally the guest of honor, recently turned eighty, who began by pronouncing, "I am not history. I am not perched on the mountain top. I am at its foot, climbing ever upwards." (Loud applause.) By mixing fact and fiction in his new book, he had run roughshod over reality, he said, and harbored no regrets ^{about his life,} except, perhaps, for having suppressed the European past, which suddenly reminded me of Sutzkever.

- vs. messianic fervor of Goray
[172] Reb Gedalye amidst the blood; it's clean!
8. Golden Jackets & Marzipan Candy: Elul, Rosh Hashanah;
[179] destroy that which they had rebuilt;
terrible disillusionment
 9. Sukes-Simhas Torah & Beyond;
The Evil One Triumphs: hail/flood, natural catastrophe;
penitent return of Itshe Mates & Mordecai Joseph
turn against Gedalye
[193] reversal: back to 1648
 10. The Faithful & their Opponents: Sabbatians win the day;
climax of sexual depravity
[197] KULO ZAKAY/KULO HAYYAV
[201] Reb Gedalye as satan Incarnate
 11. The sacred & the profane: fight it out within Rechele
* [206-7] the Face vs. the Place
 12. Rechele is impregnated by Satan:
shtetl & village now in equal decline
 13. The dybbuk of Goray
 14. Mise benishike; the death of Rechele & Itshe Mates

Maybe three miles away from here as the dove flies he sat, on the top floor of his apartment building in uptown Tel Aviv, surrounded by his books and priceless paintings (minus the Chagalls that had already been sold), Yizhar's exact contemporary, who also made his debut in the late Thirties, ^{as a poet of the natural landscape} ~~who also~~ fought in all the heroic battles, ^{having} who also became "history," and who also just published a new and ^{highly} unusual book, only ^{who} there was ~~no one~~ left to rally the Yiddish masses into these God-awful desks of a late Tuesday afternoon, ^{to rejoice therein? barks and laughter.}

The ~~map~~ Nesher children, Tara and Shirale, greeted me with ~~joy~~ Shirale had awaited my return, that we might dine together on the Chinese cooking executed by the Polish housekeeper under Aryeh's supervision. So what if the Wonton tasted like kreplach?

I stayed over that night and was awakened at 3:00 am by the phone. Aryeh picked up. It was a Christian fundamentalist calling from the State of Washington. He wanted to speak to a member of the Chosen People because he had just been healed from his cancer by an herb that is mentioned in the Old Testament and Aryeh, believing that as a member of the Chosen People he must be on call 24 hours a day, answered all his questions politely, and failed to pass the receiver to his chosen wife, who would have told the caller off, saying, the Chosen People are asleep right now, thank you very much.

If I ever figure out how to balance Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, when not to wear a yarmulka^e, and why Yiddish had to lose out to Hebrew and English, I'll give this chapter a proper ending.