

STUDIA ORIENTALIA

111

**STUDIA
ORIENTALIA
VOLUME 111**

Published by the Finnish Oriental Society



Helsinki 2011

Studia Orientalia, vol. 111, 2011

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Societas Orientalis Fennica
c/o Department of World Cultures
P.O. Box 59 (Unioninkatu 38 B)
FI-00014 University of Helsinki
FINLAND

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Lotta Aunio

ISSN 0039-3282
ISBN 978-951-9380-79-7

WS Bookwell Oy
Jyväskylä 2011

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ARABIC LOANWORDS IN HEBREW

Haseeb Shehadeh

One of the results of contact between cultures is borrowing between languages. Hebrew is a unique language in several respects. It is the national language of the Jews, who number approximately 13 million people (almost half of whom do not know Hebrew). The writer Nathan Shaham (1925–) has observed that few native speakers of Hebrew are versed in the normative language.¹ Hebrew is the only known case of a human language that ceased to be spoken and then, after a very long interval, came to be spoken again. Hebrew was a written language and a language of prayer during the long interval from 200 to 1880.² In this respect, it is similar to Latin, Greek, and classical Arabic. Furthermore, approximately one third of Modern Hebrew (MH) speakers are Palestinian Arabs.³ Of the 85 languages spoken by the seven million inhabitants of Israel, Hebrew is the most common; it is followed by Arabic, the second official language (on paper), and then Russian.⁴ More than 1,300 Arabic words and expressions have entered spoken and written Hebrew (most being spoken Israeli Hebrew and slang). It should be mentioned that a large portion of the population in Israel has family origins in the various Arab countries. It also goes without saying that there are different types of Israeli slang, according to age and social class. One can talk about children's slang, army slang, kibbutzim slang and Internet slang.

One of the most salient examples of the Arab Muslim impact on Jewish culture is the replacement of Aramaic by Arabic as the main literary language for prose. Arabic is second only to Aramaic with regard to its language kinship with Hebrew, as has been recognised since the Middle Ages (MA).⁵ The influence of Arabic, both spoken (in innumerable dialects, including those spoken by Jews) and written, took place in the mediaeval and modern periods of Hebrew; its vocabulary forms more than half of the Hebrew lexicon, according to the

1 Shaham 2006: 70.

2 See, e.g. Spiegel 1962, Fellman 1973, Chomsky 1977: 212–274 and Rabin 1996. About the struggle for linguistic survival, see Hinton & Hale 2001

3 Those living in the State of Israel on one hand and those living in the Western Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip on the other hand.

4 See Saban & Amara 2002; Shehadeh 2008.

5 See Ibn Janāh: 16–18.

renowned dictionary of Abraham Even-Shoshan (Rosenstein, 1906–1984). The approximately 8,000 lexical items in the Bible are not sufficient to entirely meet the needs of either a written language or a spoken one.

In the golden age of Jewish culture on the Iberian Peninsula (*tor haz-zahav, al-'aṣr al-dahabiyy*), a deep and comprehensive Arabic influence was present. During two main historical periods – the MA in Andalusia for eight centuries and the modern era in Palestine from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the present – Jews and Arabs were in contact. In Andalusia, contact was very close; the Jews were entirely assimilated into Arab society and culture. Yitshak Avineri (1900–1977) believes that even when there are mutual peaceful relations between these two Semitic peoples, massive borrowing from Arabic is not likely, as Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858–1922) believed. Between Hebrew and Arabic there is a closeness in material and form, but not in spirit and soul.⁶ In my opinion, this statement can be at least partially true when referring to MH, which exhibits remarkable deviations from the main features of Semitic languages.⁷

For more than 1,700 years Hebrew was a written language that was hardly spoken. Eight centuries of Arab rule in Andalusia left a deep linguistic impact on Hebrew in general and on its translations (e.g. the Tibbonite) in particular.⁸ Arabic was the lingua franca, the language of science and culture. Even a great scholar like Maimonides (1138–1204) could not avoid the Judaeo-Arabic vernacular; it crept into his written Arabic when he wrote his only book in Hebrew, the *Mishne Torah*.⁹

The Jewish people have twice experienced the emergence of secular (quasi-secular) literature in the broad sense:¹⁰ first during the MA under the overwhelming impact of Arabic civilisation in southern Spain and Provence, and then from the Haskalah period of Jewish Enlightenment (1780–1855) onwards. During the latter period, in the nineteenth century, there emerged the first Hebrew newspapers.¹¹ Only in the East and in Andalusia did the Jewish communities speak a Semitic language: namely, mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic. Mediaeval Hebrew in Andalusia underwent a deep process of Arabicisation; the same also holds true for Meir Bardugo's short articles.¹² Until the middle of the twentieth century, most Hebrew writers spoke an Indo-European language as their mother

6 אביניר 1964: 460.

7 See Wexler 1990; Zuckermann 2003.

8 גושן-גוטשטיין 2006; Goldenberg 1972.

9 See Shehadeh 2004.

10 See Lachover 1953; Klausner 1920.

11 See Kouts 1999a; 1999b. On Hebrew since the Haskalah onwards see, e.g. 2009 ביהו.

12 Published in the Jerusalemite weekly *kol ha'ir*, 1987–1989. These short articles deserve a separate study.

tongue. It is safe to say that dozens of Arabic loanwords entered the Hebrew language during the MA. Most of those words were learned, such as: קוּסֵב 'pole', לַחַן 'melody', אֹרֶז 'horizon', מֵרְכֵז 'centre' (and so the verb רָכַז, was coined), הַנְדָסָה 'geometry' (originally from Persian, which then passed into the Babylonian Talmud), אִקְלִים 'climate' was originally from Greek.¹³ Yet many words (such as עֶצֶל, عضل, for 'muscle', סוּרְ, סוּר, 'poet', בִּלְגָם, בִּלְגָם, 'phlegm', קַנְדוּל, 'aspalathus', (נוֹע, שׂאֵר, בִּלְגָם, قندول) were not accepted in MH; they are found only in mediaeval texts.¹⁴

The major Arabic influence on mediaeval Hebrew is reflected in loan translations (calques), in semantic borrowings, and in syntax. The words and terms are Hebrew, but their meanings and structures are Arabic: *mišne* 'dual', *qibbuš* 'plural', *niqbaš* 'total', *tenu'a* 'vowel', 'movement', *kammūt* 'quantity' (-*ut* in Hebrew corresponds to -*iyya* in Arabic), *šoreš* 'root', 'stem' in grammar, *hippil* 'subtract' from the Arabic *ṭaraḥa*, *he'tiq* 'translate' based on *naqala*, *toševet* 'base of a triangle', etc., *šam* 'there is', *lo zulat* 'solely', 'umnam' 'but', 'yet', 'ešel' 'according to', *zaqar* 'to mention', *ṭa'am* 'food', *kali* 'adverb', *ha'vara* 'metaphor', *qəhal ham-maskilim* (plural of words denoting human beings, *ḡam' al-'āqil*), *seder* 'poetry' (from Ar. *naẓm*), *hamšala* 'comparison', *yaša* 'to result', *moša* 'point of articulation', *agulla*, 'iggul' 'circle', *ma še-'aḥar haṭ-ṭeva'* 'metaphysics', *kalal* 'to add', *mefiq le* 'agrees with', *māšilḥa*¹⁵ 'area' on the basis of *misāḥa* in Arabic, and *šavur* 'fraction'. In terms of syntax, it suffices to say that the relative clause in Tibbonite Hebrew generally adheres to the Arabic rules; namely, there are syndetic and asyndetic phrases (*šila* and *šifa*). An example is taken here from Maimonides' preface to the *More nevuḳim* (*Guide for the Perplexed*): "ləva'er 'inyine šemot ba'u bəšifre han-nəvu'a" meaning 'to explain meanings of nouns [that] came [to occur] in the books of the prophets'. The difficulty of this mediaeval Hebrew (and, in particular, that of the Tibbonites) led to many MH translations.

In numerous cases, the grammatical gender of Hebrew words follows the gender of their equivalent Arabic words. Accordingly, words such as *ṭa'ut* 'error', 'emet' 'truth', 'et' 'time', *dəyo* 'ink', *ḡanut* 'defamation', *ṭeva'* 'nature', *da'at* 'opinion' and *taklit* 'intent', 'end' are masculine, whereas words such as *gan* 'garden', 'ale' 'leaf' and 'i' 'island' are feminine. Words ending with the morpheme -*ut* such as *histapqut* 'contentment', *māš'ut* 'reality', *šam'ut* 'modesty' are, as a rule, masculine because they express abstract notions like the Arabic verbal nouns (*mašdars*).

13 قطب، لحن، أفق، مركز، رکز، هندسة، إقليم. See Goldenberg 1972; Kutscher 1982: 163; Chomsky 1977: 195; on mathematical terms, see Sarfatti 1968; on philosophical terms, see Efros 1924; 1926–1927; 1929–1930; 1969; Kaddari 1970.

14 אבירי 1964: 458.

15 See חייא בר.

Often Hebrew verbs take the same prepositions used in Arabic, such as *hiskim* 'al' 'to agree unanimously on' (from 'aḡma'a 'ala), 'azar et 'to help', *haqar* 'al' 'to search for', *ba ba* 'to bring', and *hiqqif ba* 'to surround'.¹⁶

How does an ancient vocabulary that is largely connected with religion adjust to modern secular life?¹⁷ After the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, the entire administration was hebraised. The connection of Jewish nationalism with Hebrew as a national language emerged as early as the spring of 1879, thanks to Eliezer Ben Yehuda. Yet it should be noted that Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), the visionary of the State, did not know Hebrew; the same holds true of his two children.

The coining of new words and terms was carried out in two major ways: from within and from without. This essential task in human languages was achieved in the MA on an individual basis, mainly by writers, poets, and translators such as the Tibbonite and the Qimḥi families. In modern times, this formation has largely been institutionalised by organisations such as the Hebrew Language Council (ועד הלשון established in 1890) and later by its successor, the Academy of the Hebrew Language (established in 1953). The Jewish year 5750, which corresponds to 1989–1990, was declared by the government of Israel as the Hebrew Language Year.

The influence of Arabic has been enormously important in Islamic countries. Arabic is a major source of vocabulary words for languages such as Bengali, Berber, Gujarati, Hindustani (especially the spoken language), Indonesian, Kurdish, Malay, Pashto, Persian, Rohingya, Sindhi, Spanish, Swahili, Portuguese, Punjabi, Tagalog, Turkish, and Urdu. Arabic loanwords in Islamic languages such as Persian, Turkish, and Urdu are too numerous to count.

To a large degree, MH came into being through a process of adapting the language of an ancient oriental culture to the language of a modern western culture. On the whole, MH is the product of Ashkenazi Jewry. During its long history, the Hebrew language (and particularly its modern variety) has absorbed thousands of words from numerous languages such as Egyptian, Akkadian, Greek, Latin, Persian, Aramaic, Yiddish, English, French, Russian, and Arabic. MH has experienced a course of Westernisation, and the Arabic impact on it is mainly reflected in its sub-standard level. On the other hand, in 1913 Eliezer Ben-Yehuda began advocating extensive borrowing from Arabic and other Semitic linguistic relatives.¹⁸ He succeeded in borrowing a small number of words from literary Arabic, such as פרווה, תמרון, מברק, רשמי, רציני, אדיב, רבה, גרביים, 'socks', 'jam', 'polite',

16 See 2006 גושן-גוטשטיין 1954, קלאר. Similar linguistic features are found in the Hebrew of the Arabs in Israel; see Shehadeh 1997: 49–71.

17 See the well-known article, Ben-Hayyim (1953 & 1992).

18 10:1948; see Shehadeh 1998: 156–157; Nahir 2003.

'serious', 'official', 'telegram', 'maneuver', 'fur'), which are among the 250 words he coined.¹⁹ He believed that the rich Arabic vocabulary belongs to Hebrew as much as the other Semitic languages.²⁰ Some Jewish scholars, including David Yellin (1864–1941), have supported this idea of free borrowing from Arabic, whereas others like Aharon M. Mazya (1858–1930) held a different view.²¹

The following quotation may shed some light on the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel: "And do not forget that our élites are very closed", notes Sami Michael. "Very closed. I experienced it myself when I came here in '49. We are only externally ready to be open. And it is interesting that inasmuch as we descend the ladder, there is more co-operation. For example, in the under-world: gamblers, drugs, idolatry. There, there is partnership. Racism – contrary to all that we know – is more upwards. Members of their élite die to join us. Thirsty to attach themselves. Yet, they are not interested in meeting Bochbot and Boskila. They like to meet with their parallel classes in Israeli society. And they are not ready."²²

Arabic words such as *Intifāḍa*, *Ġihād*, *Ḥizbu-llāh*, and *Ḥamās* have entered many languages. The first of these words was initially rejected in Israel at the official level. It was replaced by various words such as, מהומות, הפרעות סדר, התפרעויות, מאורעות, פרעות, מרד (‘events’, ‘riots’, ‘disturbances causing disorder’, ‘rioting’, ‘pogroms’, ‘revolt’). The Director General of the Israeli broadcasting authority, Uri Porat, banned the use of *Intifāḍa*, claiming that “it was established by hostile elements”. Shelomo Qor, Porat’s deputy, added “I want the radio and the television to be Zionist. We have our own language and we should not use their expressions.”²³ The linguistic struggle to suppress the term *Intifāḍa* for ‘uprising’ failed. The word became common, employed in book titles,²⁴ in press reports and literary works,²⁵ and on the radio. Some 40 Arabic loanwords are used in the below mentioned book of David Grossman (1954–), which is 250 pages in length. Some of these are partially vocalised, and a few words are put in parentheses in order to indicate their foreign origin.²⁶ The relatively large number of Arabic loanwords can be explained

19 Chomsky 1977: 217; Kutscher 1982: 209; 1979 אביניר 1946: 82; אבישור 1997, 2003; פימנטה 1961; שונרי 1979.

20 See <benyehuda.org/by/mekorot.html>.

21 Shehadeh 1998: 158.

22 This is my translation from Hebrew. See Grossman 1993: 101; cf. Yehoshua 2007: 322.

23 See, for example, the *Jerusalemite weekly*, 29.7.1988, כל העיר, p. 9; 25.10.1988, הארץ, p. 4.

24 Shalev 1990. See 2004: שמש; 2004: גלבר; Hever (ed.) 2009; on Nakba in Arabic, Hebrew and English, see <http://www.zochrot.org/>. *Nakba* literally means ‘disaster’, ‘catastrophe’ and it refers to the 1948 war whereas *Naksa* meaning ‘setback’, ‘relapse’ refers to the 1967 war between Arab countries and Israel called by Jews and Zionists The Six Day War. The term *Naksa* was coined by the well-known Egyptian journalist, Muḥammad Ḥasanein Haikal (1923–).

25 See, e.g. Grossman 1993: 7, 11, 17, 24, 29, 30, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 121.

26 Grossman 1993: 7, 11, 15, 16, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 43, 50, 51, 58, 59, 60, 72, 96,

by the nature of the subject of the book: the situation of Arabs in Israel. In addition, Grossman's liberal political attitude and his knowledge of Arabic must be taken into consideration. Two dozen Arabic loanwords are found in another of Grossman's books, *Yellow Wind*.²⁷ In *Friendly Fire* (mentioned above), I found only six Arabic loanwords in 375 pages:²⁸ יאללה, אהלן וסאהלן, מנגלים, האינתיפאדה, פינג'ן, איחס, 'fie', 'kettle', 'uprising', 'barbeques', 'welcome', 'let us'. Examination of books by 'Amos 'Oz (1939–) gives only a small number of Arabic loanwords; they can be counted on one hand.²⁹ Scrutiny of three Hebrew novels written by Arabs in Israel, Naim Araydi (1950–)³⁰ and Sayed Qashu (1975–),³¹ shows that there is a remarkable difference concerning the usage of Arabic words in their Hebrew. The former, a Druze, makes use of eight Arabic words: אהלן וסאהלן, החירמון, מחבוסה, סולחה, שרמוטה, שרמוטה, פסוליה, פסוליה, 'prostitute', 'making peace', the name of a game, 'running after woman', 'welcome', 'kidney beans', 'sheikhs') whereas Qashu has approximately 70 words in the first book³³ and nearly 50 in the second.³⁴

Sometimes Arabic loanwords entered Hebrew through European languages (mainly English and French), as in the following cases: אדמירל, אלכוהול, אלגיברה, 'admiral', 'alcohol', 'algebra', 'store', 'tariff', 'coffee', 'carat', 'sofa', 'soap'.³⁵ Having acquired their place in Hebrew, these are used by all types of speakers and in all types of occasions.

It should be noted that institutions as well as individuals continuously attempt to replace Arabic words with Hebrew words like *khamsin* ('hot and dry weather'), which has been used since the beginning of the twentieth century by Isaac Shami (1888–1949). Today *šarav* is used, especially on the radio; *tayyara* has been replaced by 'afifon ('kite'), *fistukim* by *boṭnim* ('peanut', 'pistachio'), and so forth. It should be noted that the word *fustuq* appears in written Arabic; the collective plural *fuzdu* (*futtu* in children's language) in Palestinian Arabic originates from Persian. MH loaned this word and added to it the masculine plural suffix. Other such additions include *bzāzim* ('breasts'), which was in use in the early 1970s, and

107, 112, 116, 117, 118, 126, 128, 132, 175, 180, 188, 192.

27 Grossman 1989.

28 Grossman 1993: 99, 117, 217, 312, 241, 243, 343.

29 2009; 2007; 2002; 1983 עו.

30 Araydi 1992.

31 Quashu 2002; 2004.

32 Araydi 1992: 22, 40, 65, 66, 71, 94, 96.

33 Quashu 2002: 7, 12, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, 34, 40, 46, 49, 50, 62, 73, 79, 84, 95, 100, 109, 111, 116, 119, 123, 134, 137, 150, 154, 155.

34 Quashu 2004: 16, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 49, 57, 58, 59, 66, 69, 80, 91, 93, 107, 116, 133, 138, 158, 198, 234.

35 See Hunke 1960, Chapter one. This book was translated into several languages, including Arabic. See Kaye 1986: 557–558; Cannon & Kaye 1994; 2002 דג.

mišmešim ('apricot'). Nonetheless, not all attempts of replacing Arabic words with Hebrew ones were successful: note the word *mašle* instead of *mangal* ('barbeque').

Despite one hundred years of Arab-Israeli conflict and great animosity towards Arabs and Islam in Israeli society, we find more than thirteen hundred Arabic loanwords in modern spoken Hebrew, including slang. Hebrew is full of slang; most of its vocabulary comes from Arabic. Some groups in the *Yiššuv* (the Jewish population in Palestine before 1948) have consciously adopted Arabic words in order to sever ties with the *gola* ('diaspora'), to be integrated and to establish roots in Palestine. Members of the *Haš-šomer* (a Jewish self-defence organisation founded in 1905), for instance, wore the *Kaffieh* 'Arab headdress' and used Arabic words such as *daḥīlak*, *ma'alesh*, *fiṅṅan* ('I beg you', 'nevermind', 'kettle').³⁶ The Israeli Defence Forces play a central role in creating this slang, as well as colloquial Hebrew. Some of the same vocabulary is also used in the press, on the radio, and in literature (but not in the names of shops, offices, or restaurants). In his *Dictionary of Israeli Slang*, Ruvik Rosenthal³⁷ has included more than 500 loanwords from Arabic, which are distributed throughout the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Sixty-five loanwords begin with the Hebrew letter *alef*. Examples include *ahbal*, *aḥla*, *aswad* ('stupid', 'excellent', 'opium'). For each remaining letter of the alphabet, the number of loanwords is respectively 42, 25, 24, 17, 9, 13, 63, 14, 21, 19, 12, 55, 12, 30, 20, 17, 4, 17, 9, 20, and 10. "Arabic is the queen of Israeli slang", says Rosenthal. The borders between normative Hebrew and slang are not clear or unequivocal. Slang, as has been said, is the poetry of the simple man. Some of these loanwords moved to Hebrew from Israeli Yiddish, which has absorbed over 450 words from Arabic.³⁸ Needless to say, there is a continuous shift in the usage of these loanwords, the overwhelming majority of which are nouns and adjectives. The patterns *maf'ul*, the passive participle of *fa'ala*, and the comparative form *'af'al* are common. Sometimes *'af'al* is used with Hebrew words such as *aṭraf*, meaning 'more crazy'. There are an estimated

36 Its meaning in Arabic is 'a cup'. Its origin is Greek > Aramaic > Persian > Arabic > Hebrew and Turkish > Hungarian. See Kutscher 1961: 93–95. On linguistic features of that period, see Sappan 1969; 1956 וחפר; 1947; בן אמוץ; והאלטר 1947; on etymological aspects, see Klein 1987 and 1995 שטאל; it is noteworthy to add that E. Ben-Yehuda himself tried to dress as an Arab, see 2005 רחוטל; 135–134: 1983; פיאמנטה.

37 רחוטל 2005 and see 2007; 2004; 2001 רחוטל.

38 1966 ספן mentions approx. 100 Arabic loanwords and in 1972 nearly 90. Netzer 2007 refers to approx. 350 Arabic loanwords in Hebrew; see 1966 קוטבר. On various types of slang such as in the army, in the internet, in prison, among the youth, among the sabras, fishermen, policemen, thieves, football players, etc. see, e.g. Achiasaf et al. 1993; Ben Amotz & Ben Yehuda 1972, 1982; Spears 1981; 2005 שחק; בן שחק 1993; אסף וברטל 1993; אלטבאואר 1954; אלדר 1994; אירמאי 1995; אורבך 2002; ברלוביץ 1964; גרימון 1991; חיון 1966; יהב 1990; יהלום 2003; ישראלי 2003, 2005; מוצ'ניק 1994; מורג וספן 1968; מירקין 1967; נצר 2006–2007; סלע 2007; עינת וחסין 1999; שיר 1993; שלו 2002; שפירא 1997.

forty Arabic loanwords used as verbs in Hebrew, such as *leva'es* 'to cause disappointment' and *le-kaseyah* 'to mow', 'to beat'.³⁹ Arabic loan translations (calques) and semantic borrowing in modern Israeli Hebrew are limited, in contrast to the situation in mediaeval Hebrew in Andalusia. Some examples are in order:⁴⁰ חתיכה, לסגור את החנות, הוא שם אותו בכיס, חמוה, יכול על, גמר על, ערב אור, אבטיח על הסכין, נכון ודחצי, גועי ('beautiful female', 'shut it off', 'it is guaranteed as if it is in my pocket', 'stupid', 'to overcome', 'beat the living daylight out of him', 'good evening' (as an answer), 'ripe for taking', '150% right', 'original').

This collection of loanwords represents all aspects of life. One may divide vocabulary, according to subject matter, into several categories:

A) Food, such as: *falafil*, *ful*, *humus*, *kube*, *mangal*, *mğadara*, *şakşuka*, *za'tar*, *bamya*, *leben*, *tabule*, *labane*, *sumsum* (falafel, fava beans, hummus or chickpea dish, kube or minced meat and bulgur pastry, barbeque, dish made of lentils and bulgur or rice, onions and olive oil, Shakshuka, thymus vulgaris, okra, sour milk, salad with bulgur, olive oil and lemon, Arabic white cheese, sesame). A small restaurant specialising in hummus is called *kumsiya*, while *fuliya* is used for a restaurant serving *ful* (fava beans).

B) Human relations: *'ala kēfak*, *kīf ḥālak*, *'ahlan wa-sahlan*, *daḥilak*, *ḏīr bālak*, *mabsut*, *şababa*, *şulḥa*, *walla*, *ya ḥabibi*, *yalla*, *bekef*, *aḥla* (as you wish, how are you, welcome, I beg you, be careful, satisfied, delightful, reconciliation, wow, oh dear, let us, with pleasure, excellent).

C) Politics: *fataḥ*, *fida'i*, *ḥamas*, *hudna*, *intifada*, *ḡihad*, *şahīd*, *tabdiya*, *tanzim* (PLO, commando, Ḥamas (*ḥaraka islāmiyya muqāwima* = Islamic resistant movement), armistice, uprising, jihad, martyr, pacification, organisation).

D) Adjectives: *abu 'ali*, *abu ḡilde*, *abu kamune*, *abbal*, *fadi* in *kalām fādi*, *fadiḥa*, *kharta barta*, *kasah*, *maḡnun*, *hava*, *tafran*, *tamam*, *saḥbaki*, *şafa*, *zift*, *ars* (threatening person, derogatory nickname for an Arab, stingy, foolish, nonsense, embarrassing incident, foolishness, violence, crazy, arrogant, bankrupt, perfect, friendly, attractive woman, bad, serpentine).

E) Curses: connected to mother, father, sister, brother, wife and so on by the vulgar word *kus* (womb), as in *qus'omo*.⁴¹

In an article published in 1955, Haim Blanc (1926–1984) was among the first scholars to turn his attention to the Arabic component of modern spoken

39 See 2004; 1997 נוצר.

40 See 1963; אלוני 1963 בר אדון.

41 See Grossman 1993: 118.

Hebrew. There he deals with approximately 40 words classified into five categories which include food, lifestyle, children's games, calls, greetings, and curses.⁴²

In 1960 Kalman Katzenelson wrote:

Arabic has the best chances to replace Modern Hebrew and to become the language of the State of Israel, and just because of the objection of the Arabs this expectation did not materialise. No doubt, if the Arabs had proposed peace and co-operation their proposal would have been expected. Such a change would have led to the beginning of the end of Modern Hebrew.⁴³

Yitshak Avineri wrote in 1964 that “in spoken Hebrew the borders and fences were cracked and the influence of spoken Arabic spoils it and makes it as it were poor and indigent and goes around begging. The Arabic words and expressions have a sweet taste compared to the Hebrew equivalents.”⁴⁴ I may add that they are natural, vivid, and real. During the second Jewish immigration to Palestine, the inclination to borrow from Arabic was strong. Jewish writers in the 1960s–1980s were accustomed to putting Arabic words in brackets to stress their foreignness, but in later practice such words appear more or less as an integral part of the text. They are written in accordance with the general MH pronunciation that does not distinguish between *kaf* and *qof*, *ain* and *alef*, *tav* and *ṭet*, *ḥet* and *kaf*, etc. The Arabic sound *ḡim* is transcribed as ג' as in ג'ן ('devil'), ג'יפה ('stench') and *ḡain* is transcribed as ג as in רזאלה 'fascinating young woman' (and 'gazelle' from Arabic). The intonation remains as in Arabic: nouns preserve the Arabic vocalisation but verbs follow the Hebrew patterns. The rules of *begad kefat* are not applied in Arabic loanwords (e.g. *falafel*, *falafelia*, 'kiosk for selling falafel', *fannān* 'entertainer', *fašla* 'failure').

The direct influence of Modern Standard Arabic on MH has been limited, the reason being that most of the revivalists came from Eastern Europe and lacked any knowledge of Arabic. The same holds true for the lion's share of early MH writers. It is important to mention that only in 1988 did Arabic begin to be taught as a compulsory subject in Jewish schools in Israel, a decision that has been only partially implemented. Another important reason is that Arabic has been regarded as a representative of a mediaeval culture while the speakers of MH, as well as early leaders of the Zionist Movement, were striving for the creation of a Western Hebrew culture. In addition, one must cite the very unfriendly relations (not to mention hostility) between the descendants of Abraham, the children

42 See 1955 בלנק; cf. 2005 אבישור, 1946 אבינרי.

43 בצנלסון: 59.

44 אבינרי 1964: 456.

of Isaac, and the children of Ishmael. Subsequently, MH is alien to the spirit of Semitic languages in several respects.⁴⁵

The dictionary of Dhan Ben Amotz and Netiva ben-Yehuda contains over six hundred Arabic words and expressions, some of which are already outdated (as is often the case with slang). The majority of these borrowed words fall into the category of adjectives. They include words of Turkish origin, which entered Hebrew through the Arabic language: *avanta*, *avantaḡi*, *aškara*, *baqšiš*, *dugri* ('lack of seriousness', 'swindler', 'really', 'bribe', 'straight'). The migration of words from one language to another brings about changes in their forms and meanings. For example, the Turkish word *tuz* 'salt' entered many Arabic dialects (including Palestinian) as *tuẓz* or *tozz* with the meaning of 'pshaw', 'you are worthless', or 'I do not care'.⁴⁶ The same can be said about such Persian words as *argila*, *darwiš*, *khan* ('smoking bottle', 'ascetic', 'inn').

In numerous cases, Arabic loanwords in Hebrew have undergone linguistic modifications (including semantic modifications). The word *ḥarman* originated from Turkish, meaning 'he who tastes wines and tobacco in order to evaluate them'. In spoken Hebrew, however, it means 'a lusty person' or 'he who runs after women'. In Arabic *'uḍrub* means 'hit' or 'strike', but in spoken Hebrew *uḍrub* means 'go ahead'; *ḥiz* (originally Syriac) *ʾannabi* in Arabic literally meant 'the buttock of the prophet' (words that are not used together), whereas in Hebrew the meaning is 'a distant location';⁴⁷ *'adas* means 'lentils' in Arabic and 'rubble' in Hebrew; *'arṣ* in Arabic is 'pimp' and *ars* in Hebrew is 'serpentine'; *salāmto* in Arabic means 'hopefully he will recover' but in Hebrew 'he is alright'; *Aḥmad* in Arabic is a common proper name of Muslim males, whereas *Aḥme(a)d* in Hebrew means 'derogatory nickname of an Arab'; *baḡel* in Arabic means 'mule' and in Hebrew 'a person who keeps distance from women'; *Nablus* in Arabic is the name of the known city in the Western Bank and in spoken Hebrew it means 'homosexual'.⁴⁸

45 See, e.g. Wexler 1990; Chanoch 1930; Fisherman 1986; Masson 1986; Zuckermann 2003. Some scholars believe that Hebrew did not cease to be a spoken language, see e.g. Chomsky 1977: 235–253; הרמתי 2000.

46 This semantic shift took place as a result of the following events told by old people who lived in Palestine before the year 1917. Personally I heard it from my grandfather Ḥreiz Elias Shehadeh (1883–1977). When Turkish tax collectors came to Arab villages to collect taxes on agricultural products (such as wheat, barley, lentils, chickpeas, etc.), they found the sacks full of salt. They left the farmers' houses, saying "tuz, tuz", which the Arabs understood as 'pshaw'. The farmers' trick of putting some salt on the top of the sacks had worked.

47 באב אלתו 'the door of the buttock' is also in use; see Netzer 2007: 243, n. 286.

48 See 84: ספן 1972.

דא(ו)וא(ו)ויו, ד(א)חקה, דאחקות, דב, דבא, דבורה, דבע, דבקה, דבש, דוּבָה, דוגראי/דוגרי, (ב)דוגרי, דוגריות, דויון, דונם, דח'יל אללה, דח'ילק(פ), דח'יל רבקה, דח'לה, דח'ו, הדיוואן, דיר ב(א)לק, דישידאש, דפאויה, דפאויס, דרבוקה, דרבק, דרוויש, דרטה.

האנוה, הבריז, הגה הג'רה, הודנה, היית מחרוק, הסתחבק, הסתלבט, הפליק, הק(פ), השתרמט, התבאס, התחפף, התח'רבש, התחרמן, התחרפן, התחרקש, התחשש, התכסחות, התמסטל, הסתחבק, התעון, התעלק, התפדח, התפלח, התפלחות, התפנו, התפקשש, התפשט, התפשלות, השתרמט, התקווה.

ו(ו)אדי, ונאבוה, ואלה אל-עזים, ואלז, ונ'טאן, ונ'ט(ע)ראס, וואחד, וואחש, ו(ו)אללה, וואללה, ואללק, וואסח, וויסח, וזיה ויסכ, ולא אישי, ולה, וללה, וללה, ולכ, ונך, וקף.

זבאלה, זבבירים, זבד, זבון, זבל(אן), זבוהר, זבז, זחוג, זחל(א)וי, זיארך זיבי, זינואנה, זיפת/זיפתי, ז'לובאת, ז'למה, ז'מבורה, זעתר, ז'רנוק(ג)ה.

ח(א)דָר, חאוה, ח'זוק, חאטה, חאטות, חאפלה, ח'אן, חארות, ח'ארטה ברטה, חבוב, חבובה, חביבי, חביבלה, חביבתי, ח'בר, ח'בית, ח'ו, ח'בינה, ח'ו(א)ג'ה, חואניג, ח'זה, חונה, חומס, חומסים, חומסייה, חומסיות, חופה, חוראני, חושה, חושקש, ח'זוק, חזלם,⁵¹ חיזבאללה, חיזון, חילבה, חימס, ח'יפף, בחייאת דיני, בחייאת רבקה, ח'יה, ח'ירבה, חישש, ח'ל(א)ס, חלאקה, חלבי, ח'ליאה לאללה, ח'ליכ ז'נטי, ח'ליף, ח'ליק, חלפום, חלס, חלסנה, חלקה, חמאל, חמאס, חמאסניק, חמאה, חמ(א)רה, חמדולילה, חמולה, חמל, חחמלה מלאנה, ח'מסה, ח'מ'סה ח'מסה, חמסין, חמרה, ח'נאק, חנון, חנטריש, חסקה, חפלה, ח'פוף, ח'פוף ונדוף, ח'פיפי, ח'פיפיות, ח'פיפניק, ח'פיפניקות, חפף, ח'פפן, ח'ה, ח'רא, חראם, חר(א)רה, חרב ודרב, ח'רב, חרבון, ח'רבוש, ח'רבש, ח'רגיל, ח'רוף, חרטה, חרטהט אבו יסמין, ח'ריאת, ח'רין, חרם עליך, ח'רמאן, ח'רמן, ח'רפן, ח'רפן, ח(א)ר(א)קה, חרקות, חשוש(ים), חשיש, חשישניק, חשש, ח'תיאה.

טאבו, טאויל והביל, טאוולה, טאקה, טבון, טבונים, טוז, טוטה, טול, עלא טול, טול בלב, טוריה, טח'ינה, טיארך, טיו, טיוז/טיוז אבז, טייב, טמבל, טמאע, טמבון, טמבל, טפון.

ת(ה), תא אללה, תא בייה, תא בלילי, תא וילי, תא ולדי, תא חלילי, תא חראם, תא סלאם, תא עיני, תא רבי, תא רוחי, תאללה, תאללה/תאללה ביי/תראות, תיה בסיטה, תום עסל תום בסל, תח'רבב ביתח, תח'רה דינכ, תנה, תלען אבוק, תמני, תבוט, תעני, תענו, תעל אבוק, תעל רבכום וכו', תרט (= תא רית).

כאלס, כאסאח, כאפה, כאפייה, כ(א)פיות, כביר, כולה, כולה, כוניפה, כוס אומק וכו', כוסון, כוסית, כוש'תבאן, כיופ, כיופם, כייפ, כיסח, כייפ, כייפ, כייפ, כייפית, כייפ(ק), כיפ חאלאק, כייפיות, כייפ, כייפיות, כלאם פאדי, כלב, כנאפה, כנס לדיר באלק, כסח, כסח, כסחיסט, כסחן, כסחני, כסחיות, כסחיום, כסלן, כפ.

לא, לא וואללה, לאטח, לאללה, לא סמח אללה, לאפה, לבון, לבנה, לבניה, לחן, לטכ, לטמה, לטף, ליפה, לך להתקווה, לפלפ.

51 An acronym of מלה זה לא מלה (literally 'shit is not the word') meaning 'awful', 'dreadful'. A similar case is חרגיל (made from חרגיל meaning 'very bad', 'shit as usual').

מ(א) פיש, מא(ע)פן, מאשאללה, מבאוס, מבאס, מבואס, מב(פ)סוט, מבסוט ח'אלס, מבסוטות, מבסוטיות, מבסוטים, מבעוס, מברופ(ק), מברופ(ק) עליכ וכו', מג'דרה, מג'רף, מג'יף, מג'ונן, מג'ונב,⁵² מג'נון, מדאפה, מדרוב, מהבול, מואזין, מואזינים, מוג'אהדין, מוח'אבראת, מוח'אראם, מוח'כת(א)ה מופתי, מזבוט, מזבלה, מזקה, מקבוסה, מח'ופף, מחור'א, מח'ור'פון, מח'טושה, מח'לוא(ה), מח'לוטה, מח'נוט, מח'סופכ, מח'סון, מח'רוק, מח'שי, מין הון, מכביס, מל(א)בס, מל(א)בסי, מלוח'ייה, מל'ח'ווס, מלט(ת)וכ, מל(י)אן, מל'עין, מל'פוף, מן אללה, מן הון להון, מן זמאן, מנ'אייק, מנג'ל, למנגל, מנ'חוס, מניוק, מניק, מנ'פוח', מנ'פוס, מנ'שן אללה, מנ'שן ח'ט'רכ, מנ'שה מסב'חה, מסב'חה, מסג'ה, מס'ח'ב, מס'ח'רה, מס'ט(ת)ול, מס'טל, מס'פין, מס'רי, מס'רוח,⁵³ מעא'לג', מע(א)פן, מעבול, מעיינה, מע'לוס, מע'ליש(ים), מע'מול, מע'נטז, מע'רוף, מ'פוד'ח, מ'פוס'תק, מ'פוש'ל, מ'צ'רי, מ'ק'ל'ו'בה, מ'רכ'ז, מ'שא'ל'לה, מ'ת'ח'נג'ל.

נאג', נא(א)ג'ס, נא(א)חס, נבוט(ת), נבלוס, ננ'חה,⁵⁴ נג(ק)לה, נד'יה, נול, נח'נה, נח'ס, ניג'וס(ים), ניג'ס, ניפ'ס, ננ'בה, נפ'סה, נמ'נס, ינע'ל אבוק, נפ'חה, נפ'ס, נפ'סיסט.

סאדאד, סאדה, סאו'ח'תו, סא'חב, סא'חה, ס(א)חי, סאלאמתק, סא'מק, סב(א)בה, סב'בה אגוזים, סבאבי, סנון, סבח, סבידה, סבראי, סב'רה, סב'ראות, סבר'ס, סוב'חה, סוטול, סול'חה, סומ'אק, סומ'סום, סופ'תח, סח'ב/כ, סח'בקי, סח'בקייה, סח'בקיות, ס(ז)חוק(ג), ס'חה, ס'חטיקה, ס'חי, ס'חלב, ס'חתיון, סטאפראללה, ס'לה, ס'טלן, ס'טלנות, סיא'סה, סיבו, סיבק, סיח', סני'יה, סיפ'רה, סיפ'תח, יא סית, סלאם ע'לפ'ום, סל'אמתק, סלמאת, סמבוטק, סנאדה, סנדוק, סריע, סת'לבט.

עבד, עב(א)יה, עבאיות, עג'ואים, עדס, עוז, עוז, עווה, ע'ולה, עוזי, עיב, עיד אל-פיטר/אל ל-א'חד'א, עיוני, עיל'ת, על הכיפאק, עלא באב אללה, עלא טול, עלא פיפאק, עלא ראסי, עליהום, ע'לק/א'לק, עמאייאת, ע'מה, עינטו, עינטווי, ענטז, עספ'ור'יה, עפ'ן, עפ'ן, עק(א)לים, עקרוט, ערב, ע'רס, ע'רסוואת, ע'רק ו'ח'לוי.

פ'אדי, כלאם פ'אדי, פ'אתח', פ'דאיון, פ'דיקה, פ'דיחות, פ'דל'אה, פ'דל'אות, פ'דלות, פול, פול'ייה, פור'פירה, פועה, פ'דאי, פ'ידח, פ'ידי'ינה,⁵⁵ פינג'אן, פינג'ן, פיסט(ת)וק חלבי, פיסת(ט)וקים, פיס'פס, פישול, פישל, פל(א)ח, פלאפל, פלאפלייה, פלאפלים, פלכ, פל'סר, פל'ספ'ה, פלפל, פל'קה, פנאו, פנאנות, פנו, פס'פוס, פצ'רה, פק'שוש, פק'שש, פק'ש'נות, פראנג'י, פ'רה, פ'רטה, פ'רש, פ'של, פ(א)של'ה, פ'של'אה, פ'של'אות, פ(א)שלו'נה, פ'ש'לן, פ'ש'לנות, פ'ת'וא, פ'ת'וש, פ'ת'ח, פ'ת'ח'ל'נה.

צ'בה, צדף, צ'ור'בה, צ'ב'ט, צ'זבתניק, צ'ז'ב'ט(ים), צ'יל'בה, צ'נסי אס'וד/ח'ר'א, צ'ף, צ'פ'חה, צ'פ'חות, צ'פ'יחס.

קאדי(ם), קאראח'ניית, קבאב, קה'ו'נה, קו'בה, קובות, קו'ב'נה, קוטב, קוט'ר, קומב(א)ז(ים), קוס, קוסאמו, קוס'ה, קוס'ה מח'שי, קושאן, קח'בה, קטיפה, קילוקאל, קיש'טה, קיש'לה, קלאווי, קלב'וש, קסאם/ים, קס'בה, קס'סה, קר'ח'נה.

52 An interesting example of a Hebrew root inserted into Arabic pattern; the meaning is 'beloved', 'impressive'.

53 See the preceding note; the meaning is 'wretched', 'neglected'.

54 Another interesting example: the root is Hebrew but the form is Arabic; the meaning is 'ramming', 'butt'.

55 A compound word of a Polish component and an Arabic one: the meaning is 'a remote and miserable location'.

ר(א)בָּק, רֹאחַ, רָאִיס, רֵאמֵאדוֹן, רֵאס בְּן עֵנָא,⁵⁶ רֵאסְיָה, רֵאסִית, רֵבָה, רוּחַ מִן הוֹן, רוּטְל, רוּלָה, רוֹ(א)לָה, רַחַת לְכוּם, רִיגְלָה, רִיחוֹן, רִסְ(ש)מִי, רִצִּינִי.

שְׁ(א)הִיד, שְׁ(א)טְר(י)ם, שְׁ(א)כְטָה, שְׁאָף, שְׁאָפָה, שְׁאָפּוֹת, שְׁאָרְאוּל(י)ם, שְׁבָאב, שְׁבָב, שְׁבַבְנִיק, שְׁבַרְיָה, שׁוּ, שׁוּ אַחַּבְאָרְק, שׁוּ אַסְמוֹ, שׁוּ הָדָא, שׁוּ סֵאָה שׁוּוֹ(א)רְב, שׁוּיָה שׁוּיָה, שׁוּיָה שׁוּיָה, שׁוּיָה שׁוּפּוֹנִי יֵא נֵאס, שׁוּפְלָכ, שְׁטְ(א)רָה, שְׁטְרִיּוֹת, שִׁיחַ(כ), שִׁשְׁלִיק, שְׁכְטָה, שְׁלַבְלָה, שְׁמוּטִי, שְׁמִי, שְׁקִשׁוּקָה, שְׁרִטְוּחָה, שְׁרִיף, שְׁרְמוּט, שְׁרְמוּטָה, שְׁרָעִי, שְׁרַקְיָה, שְׁרְשׁוּחָה.

תֵּאָרִיף, תְּבוּלָה, תְּהִדִּי(א)ה, תַּחְלָפָה, תַּחְרוּט, תַּחַת אַלְבְּלֵאטָה, תַּחַ(ט)זִי אַל-נְבִי, תִּזְ מְרַתוֹ, תִּזְכּוּ אַחְמָה, תִּיל, תִּיסְלָם, תִּלְחַס ט(ת)זִי, תִּמָּאס, תִּמְרוֹן, תִּמְרוֹן, תִּנְזִים, תִּנְי, תִּסְ, תִּעָאֵל, תִּט(ט)בָּאן, תִּעִישׁ, תִּעִרִיף, תִּפְ(א)דָל, תִּפְצִיד, תִּפְרָן, תִּפְרָנוֹת, תִּרְבוּשׁ(י)ם, תִּרְבַּחוֹ וְתִסְעֵדוּ.

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⁵⁶ This is a distortion of the Arabic expression *غصياً عنها/غصيناً عنها* 'against her will', 'reluctantly'.

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