Making Peace or Piecemeal? Arnold Wesker's Screenplay and Wolfgang Storch's TV Adaptation of Arthur Koestler's *Thieves in the Night*

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When Peter Kosminsky's four-part TV series *The Promise* was screened in the UK in early 2011, it generated much controversy about its representation of the Middle East conflict and its history. Accused of inciting "hatred of Jews as a whole, not just of Israel as a state",[1] the director insisted that he "wanted to remind British people that we have some culpability in one of the most tragic and intractable conflicts of our age".[2] Yet the reminder may have been lost somewhere on the way. As its narrative progresses, Kosminsky's series charts the changing attitude of a British soldier in the last years of the Mandate for Palestine from pro-Jewish to pro-Arab, paralleling this with the alleged brutality of Israeli intervention in Gaza in the present. Not so much an interrogation of British culpability, as claimed by the director, the TV series rather proceeds to challenge the ethical foundations of Israel. The protagonist confesses in his final diary entry:

> I suppose I feel embarrassed and ashamed, like the whole thing was a failure. We've left the Arabs in the shit. I know that if I know anything. But what about the Jews and their bloody state for which they've fought so hard? Three years ago, I'd have said give 'em whatever they want. They deserve it after all they've been through. Now, I'm not so sure. This precious state of theirs has been born in violence and in cruelty to its neighbours. I'm not sure how it can hope to thrive.[3]

The abdication of British responsibility for the calamitous political constellation in the Middle East and the substitution of Israel for the culprit ultimately suggested by the Channel Four production continue the trajectory of an 'eyes wide shut' response predominant in British cultural production ever since the de facto establishment of the Mandate for Palestine in 1918.[4]

An earlier attempt at engaging critically with the conflict and its antecedents, addressing at least implicitly also the question of British culpability, was the TV adaptation of Arthur Koestler's *Thieves in the Night* (1946). Tellingly, this was ultimately not a British production venture but – for reasons explored below – a German and Israeli one, though various British production firms had intermittently been involved in the project.[5] Eventually directed by Wolfgang Storch, who also wrote the final script, the three parts of the mini-series were screened on German national TV (ARD) in October 1989. Storch's screenplay and filmed version were the last of a succession of otherwise abortive attempts to adapt the novel, the earliest of which dates back at least to 1982. Among those temporarily enlisted for the project was also the British Jewish dramatist Arnold Wesker who worked for the German TV channel Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR) on a screen adaptation from 1983 to 1985. After having been ousted from the production, Wesker published an excerpt of his screenplay in the *Jewish Chronicle* in August 1986: the scene of the peace making ceremony is the only fruit of his labours ever to have appeared in print, but the original scripts survive in various stages of their genesis as a manuscript (MS) and three successive typescripts (1–3TS) in the author's papers at the Harry Ransom Center (HRC) at the University of Texas at Austin.[6]

Storch's and Wesker's approaches to their source text were very different and are not only symptomatic, to some extent at least, of the various responses to Koestler's novel but are also a testament to contemporary political sensitivities and the pervasive presence of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. A touchstone for these different approaches and

perceptions is the so-called "Peace Making Ceremony" which is central to Koestler's novel no less than to Storch's and Wesker's adaptations, but differs greatly in their respective execution. In what follows, I will first explore Wesker's version in light of its textual genesis and context within the screenplay and will then proceed to compare to this Storch's screen version as filmed against the background of the frequently acrimonious history of the production.[7]

Where Kosminisky's *The Promise*, contrary to the director's assertion, is ultimately another exercise in repressing notions of British culpability in the past, the TV adaptation of Koestler's *Thieves in the Night* originated within the context of German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, of coming to terms with the past. When he first commissioned the screenplay from Wesker, Dieter Meichsner, at this time Head of TV Drama with the NDR, explained his initiative to the dramatist with what was in effect his intention to justify the ways of Israel to humankind. The immediate context for this objective was the wide-spread criticism also in Germany of the Israeli advance into Lebanon in 1982 and his insistence on the continued burden of German guilt over the Holocaust. The tone of the adaptation as a whole was to be contained within this comprehensive apologetic framework.

Wesker, while critical of Israeli transgressions, was content to elaborate his screenplay within these parameters. It was nevertheless his avowed intention to shift Koestler's admitted bias towards the Jewish perspective by developing a more balanced representation of the Arab side. As we will see, not all of the German producers involved in the project were happy with this shift. But what eventually led to the dismissal of Wesker was the incompatibility of his approach with that of the designated French Jewish director, François Villiers (born Salomons).

Wesker emphasised his double commitment to preserving the integrity of Koestler's novel and to producing a "script of substance".[8] Yet his efforts satisfied the expectations of

the various producers involved in the project only partially. While Meichsner appears to have been his staunch defender to the very end, David Conroy of London International Films criticised the lack of the visual component in Wesker's drafts and recommended that the playwright compose an entirely new script in which he was to focus less on the story's historical than on its human aspect. Conroy envisaged a frontier narrative that might as well be set in the Wild West and feature white settlers and Red Indians and against which the human drama should be played out.[9] Villiers too, whose style Conroy had characterised as very visual,[10] remained stubbornly dissatisfied with Wesker's script which he considered much too verbose and explanative, even after the playwright's extensive revisions.

At long last, despairing of the possibility of screenwriter and director ever working together, both were replaced with Wolfgang Storch. The German director had gained solid experience in America and Australia and was competent to compose the English-language script of the adaptation. With his choice, predominantly commercial considerations seem finally to have prevailed over historical responsibility. And Storch delivered: he rescinded the controversial potential and critical engagement with which the British Jewish playwright had infused his screenplay and created what was, in effect, the "cowboys and Indian version" of the adaptation so deplored by Wesker.[11]

Arthur Koestler's *Thieves in the Night* and the Peace Making Ceremony

Due to its undeniably propagandistic bias, there is perhaps more than a hint of the "cowboys and Indian" approach also in *Thieves in the Night*. Having published his novel simultaneously in London and New York in autumn of 1946, Koestler sought to intervene with it on both sides of the Atlantic in the public and political debates on the increasingly violent confrontation of Jews, Arabs, and Britons during the final phase of the British Mandate for

Palestine. Partially written in the country and reflecting some of its author's own experiences, *Thieves in the Night* charts, interrogates, and cautiously justifies the radicalisation of the British half-Jew Joseph against the background of the escalation of violence and the resurgence of Jewish terrorism in Mandate Palestine between 1937 and 1939 when the situation was exacerbated with the publication of the so-called *MacDonald White Paper* which imposed further restrictions on Jewish immigration on the eve of the Second World War.

Beginning with the nocturnal establishment of the tower and stockade settlement Ezra's Tower adjacent to the Arab village of Kfar Tabiyeh, Koestler weaves a rich tapestry of figural constellations which represent the three sides of the unconventional and explosive colonial triangle in Mandate Palestine. It includes, among the Jews, kibbutzniks (in addition to Joseph, among others Moshe, Reuben, and Dina), terrorists (such as Bauman), and officials (such as District Officer Kaplan); among the British, officers (such as the Muslim convert Squadron Leader James Abdul Rahman Henderson and Col Wyndham, modelled after the historical Orde Wingate), administrators (such as the Assistant Chief Commissioner, Assistant District Commissioner Newton, and the effete Cyril Watson, lecturer at the British Council in Jerusalem) and their wives (such as Lady Joyce and Mrs Newton); among the Palestinians, the crafty Mukhtar of Kfar Tabiyeh, his dastardly son Issa, and District Officer Tubashi as well as Salla and Farid as paragons of the supposedly pretentious and ineffectual Arab intelligentsia. The American journalist Matthews, like Joseph for Koestler's British readers, is construed as an identification figure for the novel's transatlantic readership. His initial rejection and eventual passionate endorsement of the Zionist project is clearly intended to guide the readers' response to the political and moral conundrum unfolding in *Thieves in the Night*.

The novel interweaves passages related by a heterodiegetic narrator, supposedly objective concentrated accounts of historical circumstances and extracts from 'historical' documents with entries in Joseph's diary through which the British half-Jew acts as a secondary, intradiegetic narrator. His diary entries moreover include poignant reflections on the moral dilemma posed by the escalating situation in Palestine. The calamitous interaction of the three hostile factions, for instance, is explained by Joseph with two parables. These, although showing some sympathy with the Arab 'natives', are nevertheless replete with stereotypes and suffused with a sense of colonialist entitlement and superiority. Further augmented in Koestler's narrative with the dimension of the human predicament, they also epitomise to some extent the ideological superstructure of the novel and offer a rational justification of the Jewish colonisation venture and of the Arab resistance to it:

> Of course they [i.e. the Arabs] don't like us [i.e. the Jews]. They are slum-children in possession of a vast playground where they wallow happily in the dust. In comes another bunch of children who have nowhere to play and start cleaning up the place and building tents and lavatories with a horrible burst of efficiency. "Get out from here," they cry, "we don't want you." – "But there is plenty of room," says the clever lot, "and we've got permission to share it, and after we've improved it the place will be much nicer for you too." – "Get out, get out," they cry, having already pinched some of the newcomers' tools and toys; "get out, we don't want you. This is our place and we like it as it is."[12]

This understanding of Arab and Jewish incompatibility, crucial to the novel, is further elaborated in another parable in which Joseph likens the Jewish colonisation of Palestine to the driving force of evolution:

> Once upon a time the most perfect product of creation were the fish. They were swimming happily the seven seas, and apart from the occasional accident of being eaten by the bigger ones, all was well with them.
>
> Then came the time when some force drove some fish to creep ashore and become amphibious. Those who did had a terrible time of it.[13]

Joseph explains: "The Arabs are the fish. They are happy, they have tradition and beauty and self-sufficiency and lead a timeless, care-free, lackadaisical life. Compared to them we are the graceless amphibians."[14] Significantly, his exegesis includes also the third factor in the Palestinian 'equation', the British presence in the country: "That's one of the reasons", Joseph continues, "why the English love them and dislike us. It is not political. It is their nostalgia for the lost paradise – a kind of eternal week-end – and their detestation of the 8.35 to the City. For behold, we are the force that drives the fishes ashore, the nervous whip of evolution."[15]

In either parable Joseph takes recourse to orientalist stereotypes of the perception of the Arab other – both from a Jewish and from a British perspective. The Jews, in contrast, are stylised in either case as the force of progress which explains their rejection by both the Arabs and the British, if for different reasons. Together, both parables offer an anatomy of the conflict in Mandate Palestine on a reflective level which is emulated and elaborated in considerably more detail on the level of the plot, most comprehensively in the peace making ceremony. Engineered by the ambitious Tubashi, it represents the attempt to reconcile the leading families of Kfar Tabiyeh. Their long-lasting blood feud emerges as the epitome of the backwardness of the Fellaheen. Conducted in the presence of British dignitaries and the village's Jewish neighbours from Ezra's Tower, the ceremony's description lays bare the

tensions between all the groups involved and, no less important, also among them. Complicating the moral conundrum even further, the novel later suggests the concept of the blood feud, while repulsive, to be a necessity in the contemporary "political ice age":[16] when the brutal rape and murder of Joseph's beloved Dina at the hands of Issa and his accomplices are avenged by Jewish terrorists on the Mukhtar, they cite the traditional formula of the blood feud. The novel thus gives new momentum to the spiral of violence but, at the very least implicitly, it also evokes the possibilities of reconciliation associated with the peace making ceremony.

The Genesis and Context of Arnold Wesker's Version of the Peace Making Ceremony

Arguably the single most important change introduced by Wesker to his adaptation of *Thieves in the Night* to challenge the "cowboys and Indian" binary was his attempt to achieve a more sympathetic representation of the Palestinian Arabs. To this end he devised a sequence of new scenes in the Salon of Mme Makropoulos, added the characters of Musa and Salla, and re-wrote the "Peace Making Ceremony". The latter is of particular interest in this context because the screenwriter explicitly emphasised its crucial significance to him in his correspondence with Villiers. It is, moreover, also the only extract from his scripts Wesker ever published on the basis of the third typescript (3TS) which he had substantially revised to accommodate the director's suggestions.

Wesker indeed thoroughly reworked the "Peace Making Ceremony". Yet his revisions comprised not so much the requested cuts but rather a comprehensive re-ordering and numerous changes in emphasis. Thus, he re-arranged the logical development of events and preceded the ceremony with two new scenes. In these it is the Assistant Chief Commissioner (A.Ch.C.) – and not Cyril Watson, as in the previous versions (1TS and 2TS) – who explains

the circumstances to his wife, Lady Joyce, while dressing and continuing over breakfast.[17] Yet one of the most effective changes is the conflation of the Arab District Officer Jussuf Tubashi with the Arab Education Officer Salla Moussad, a new character whom Wesker had added to the story already in 1TS.[18] With Salla, as well as with Musa, the Mukhtar's second son, whom the screenwriter had also added, Wesker sought to comply with Koestler's wish to advance a less biased representation of the Arab other.

Indeed, the first encounter of Salla and Musa in the "Peace Making Ceremony" is crucial for the representation of the Palestinian Arabs in Wesker's adaptation. Musa, the mute son of the Mukhtar, symbolises in the dramatist's conception "the helpless, silent witness to his father's lies, his brother's brutality, and Arab stubbornness in general".[19] It was precisely this symbolic quality which was criticised by the producer Peter Claus Schmidt of the Hamburg based production firm of KG Allmedia as too trivial.[20] When Musa, keen to prove himself, in a scene described by Wesker in 1TS as "charming", takes a tray with coffee to the top of the watchtower at Ezra's Tower,[21] Schmidt reads this as a somewhat cynical, because potentially patronising, allegory of the ability of the Arabs to meet the challenges with which they are confronted.[22]

It is quite interesting that Schmidt sensed at this stage in Wesker's script a shift of sympathy in favour of the Arab perspective that went too far for him, although both Salla and Musa are to some extent ambivalent. Already in 1TS Wesker had moreover added a frame narrative set in the days immediately preceding the Six-Day War of June 1967. With this he aimed to introduce a contrapuntal structure whose envisaged impact he attributed to the independently unfolding historical parallel.[23] Schmidt had been similarly unhappy about this frame narrative because, in his opinion, it put too much emphasis on Israel's martial character at a time when the nation was already compromised following the invasion of Lebanon in 1982.[24] This, like the revised representation of the Arabs, was perceived by Schmidt as the

result of a conceptual shift in emphasis which seemed dubious to the German producer,[25] even though he was not categorically opposed to a shift in perspective that Koestler himself had suggested.[26] His sense was nevertheless that Wesker's intervention was heavy-handed and, as he variously insisted, too symbolistic.[27]

Schmidt seems not to have seen the ambivalence of the newly added Arab characters. Nor was it in all likelihood entirely intentional. After all, Wesker construes with Musa, no less than with Salla, a trite binary which contrasts 'good' and 'bad' Arabs and allows the former to become in different ways victims of the latter. The very same binary is repeatedly put into context in the script with a more comprehensive essentialist binary between Jews and Arabs. And this was transferred by Wesker also to the third typescript draft – even after cutting the 1967 scenes. A good example is a sequence of scenes overlayed with text excerpts which was added only in 3TS and which clearly distinguishes the Jews from the Arabs.

The sequence commences with a pan across Ezra's Tower; the accompanying text is a quote from David Ben-Gurion's evidence given to the Peel Commission (1937):

> Titles:
> "It is our belief that a great Jewish community, a free Jewish nation in Palestine with a large scope for its activities, will be of great benefit to our Arab neighbours… We need each other. We can benefit each other."
> David Ben Gurion to the Peel Commission 7 January 1937.[28]

The next scene in stark contrast shows the village square of Kfar Tabiyeh. This is not only visually an antithesis to the clean and well-ordered Jewish settlement, but the impression is further supported through the perception of Musa as a kind of focaliser:

> VILLAGE ELDERS, among them ZAID KHALIBI & ABU TAFIDE, and other FELLAHEEN sit drinking coffee. The general squalor is in sharp contrast to the cleanliness and order of Ezra's Tower.
>
> MUSA is nearby watching them. Not without some disdain.[29]

When shortly afterwards Musa is sent by his father, the Mukhtar, to get cigarettes in the village shop, the image of dirt and decay is further visually reinforced and is in turn accompanied by a quote from the evidence of the Arab politician Auni Abd al-Hadi[30] given to the Peel Commission:

> The courtyard is filthy. A couple of goats are chained up. Chickens run around. The floor is covered with animal shit and urine.
>
> Titles:
> "Every Arab in Palestine will do everything in his power to crush down Zionism, because Zionism and Arabism can never be united together."
> Awini Bey Abdulhadi to the Peel Commission. 13 January 1937.[31]

Ben-Gurion's offer of co-operation is thus contrasted with what Bauman in the last scene of Wesker's 1967 frame narrative denounces as the "heroic rejection" of the Arabs.[32] At the same time this sequence of scenes is also an implicit visualisation of Koestler's playground parable that had been moved to the frame narrative by the screenwriter already in 1TS.[33] This demonstrates that Wesker was indeed trying to achieve a more visual conception. It also

implies that the Arabs in fact need the Jews to transcend their squalid existence – which is, however, recognised only by the few 'good' Arabs, such as Musa or Salla.

In Koestler's novel, the Jewish District Officer Kaplan insists during the "Peace Making Ceremony" towards Assistant District Commissioner (A.D.C.) Newton on the absolute imperative to educate the Arabs. To Newton's sarcastic question since when this was a concern of his he responds: "Since I've discovered that our only chance to come to terms with them is to have them properly educated. You can't come to an agreement with a fanatical horde of illiterates. I want to get some sense knocked into their heads so that we shall have a mentally grown-up partner to deal with."[34] This dialogue is included in all of Wesker's typescript drafts almost verbatim and without changes. Yet its continuation in 3TS diverges significantly from 1TS and 2TS where it is rendered as follows:

> NEWTON: Since when have you taken Arab education so much to heart?
>
> KAPLAN: You can't come to an agreement with a fanatical horde of illiterates. We need mentally grown up partners to deal with.
>
> NEWTON: Like Tubashi?
>
> KAPLAN: Don't remind me! Education doesn't always work![35]

Kaplan's reservations are prompted by Tubashi, who is described in 1TS as "a young Arab district officer, efficient and ambitious, educated at the University of Beyrout, hoping to lead the Palestinian Arabs from mediaeval backwardness to a modern corporate state, [he] is the architect of the 'peace treaty'".[36] In the novel, Kaplan's antipathy is further motivated by Tubashi's fascist penchant:

> This young man had studied at the University of Beyrout, was an admirer of the Roman dictator, and determined to make a career in the Government Service so that later, when the English and the Hebrews were driven out, he might become one of the leaders of the nation on the path from mediaeval backwardness towards the modern corporate state.[37]

In 3TS, quoted below from the printed text in the *Jewish Chronicle*, Wesker conflated Tubashi with Salla and the exchange between Newton and Kaplan accordingly ends very differently:

> **Kaplan:** You can't come to an agreement with a fanatical horde of illiterates. We need mentally grown-up partners to deal with.
>
> **Newton:** Like Salla.
>
> **Kaplan:** Ah! If only![38]

Education as a means of orientation, and embodied by the sincere Salla, here appears no longer to be ambivalent but unequivocally positive and is presented as prerequisite to an understanding between Jews and Arabs. For Salla, and it is of course no coincidence that he is introduced by Wesker as Education Officer for the Galilee, Arab education is consequently the most urgent concern. Chatting with Zaid Khalabi, it emerges that he was educated in Switzerland. The reaction of the Arab dignitary from Kfar Tabiyeh – "I envy you" – is no less intriguing than Salla's rejoinder:

> **Salla:** I wish others did.
>
> **Zaid:** That's a strange wish. I'm sure many do.

> **Salla:** Not enough to want to educate their children beyond writing, arithmetic and study of the Koran.[39]

Only education, it is implied – and more specifically western education, beyond traditional Qur'anic school – can transform the Arabs from the "fanatical horde of illiterates" invoked by Kaplan into politically mature citizens. Wesker clearly participates in colonial discourse here. Yet it is significant that he has Salla gain his degree in philosophy and politics not at an Arab university – for instance in Beirut, as does Tubashi – but in Zurich.[40] Wesker obviously quite deliberately chose a 'neutral' European institution and not one in the colonial metropolis of England.

Salla's aim is to achieve a national unification according to the western model – elsewhere he explicitly refers to the USA.[41] For this reason education is to him no less important than the settlement of Arab in-fighting originating in ignorance. This explains also his motivation to settle the blood feud between the Hamdan and the Abu Shaouish in Kfar Tabiyeh. At the same time, he believes in the solution of the Jewish-Arab conflict through the national unification of the Arabs. During the ceremony he articulates towards Zaid his credo of a Pan-Arabism which, in what is only seemingly a paradox, concedes also the legitimacy of the Jewish settlement of Palestine; but it also is a reminder of the onus of the responsibility placed upon the British:

> The Jews aren't the real threat. The *British* decide policy. The Jews are simply a *part* of that policy. We're going to witness two warring families become friends. If that could be multiplied throughout the Arab world, if we could become one Arab nation, couldn't we live with a few million Jews in our midst?[42]

Well aware of the background of his audience and deliberately taking frequent recourse to the Qur'an, he accordingly extols "forgiveness" in his speech on occasion of the ceremony as "one of the most moving of all good works".[43]

It is also during the "Peace Making Ceremony" that Salla for the first time encounters Musa. The boy who inquisitively follows the events, including the lies of his father which remain incomprehensible to him,[44] feels attracted to Salla: "*Something about **Salla** attracts him*".[45] But Salla too becomes aware of Musa: "***Salla** notices **Musa**. He smiles at him. **Musa** beams a happy smile back. **Salla** beckons him. **Musa** turns away in shyness. **Salla** urges him forward with playful beckoning. **Musa** approaches.*"[46] That the boy is mute, as Zaid explains to him, is of no concern to Salla:

> **Zaid:** No one bothers with a child who has no tongue.
>
> **Salla:** No tongue, but look at those intelligent eyes.
>
> **Zaid:** The Husseini youth movement wanted to adopt him.
>
> **Salla:** (Contemptuously) The Husseinis! They make us the laughing stock of the world – murdering anyone who disagrees with them, declaring holy wars every five minutes. The Jews are builders, we are the farters of great winds. (Mocking). *"Alu hum!" "A-Dowla Ma' ana!"** [*"At them!" "The government is with us!"] We deserve to lose this land.
>
> ***Zaid** is amazed with such talk.*[47]

The divisive demagogy of the Husseini and their readiness to use violence are for Salla clear signs of the Arab ignorance quite explicitly contrasted by him to Jewish constructiveness. Once again, the symbolic aspect of Musa is important in this context. The very fact that the Husseini want to make use of the mute indicates the typical recruitment pattern of ideological

movements which try to make sure of the uneducated masses. That Musa does not fall for the ideological seduction but craves genuine education, as is emphasised throughout the scripts,[48] demonstrates his inner strength no less than – by extrapolation – that of the 'mute' Palestinian majority.

In order to ascertain Musa's potential, Salla subsequently begins to test him playfully:

> ***Salla**, desperately needing something reassuring about his people, turns suddenly to **Musa**, and holds up both hands.*
>
> **Salla:** Half!
>
> ***Musa** lowers one of **Salla's** hands.*
>
> ***Salla** points two fingers.*
>
> **Salla:** Gun.
>
> ***Musa** covers his eyes like a blind man and staggers foolishly (i.e. violence is for fools).*
>
> **Salla:** Food!
>
> ***Musa** makes the action of driving a vehicle.*
>
> **Zaid:** A horse, Musa, a horse not a motor car.
>
> **Salla:** (Contemptuously) I think he was driving a tractor. Knowledge, Musa!
>
> ***Musa** looks around, excited. He searches for something special. Finds it. A huge rusty old oil drum. Leaps on it. Stands like a prince above the crowd.*[49]

Salla is not disappointed by the mute boy. He is not only impressed with Musa's imagination but also with his profound understanding which is indicated by the boy's answers to his increasingly difficult questions. Musa's ability to find a concrete way of articulating the

abstract concept of knowledge which is so important to Salla is perhaps the most conspicuous instance. Salla therefore intends to support the special talent of the mute boy:

> *The **Mukhtar** approaches.*
>
> **Mukhtar:** You have made friends with my poor son.
>
> **Salla:** I'd like to teach him. He's very special.
>
> **Mukhtar:** He's very fortunate. Everyone wants to educate him. The Jews of the settlements also wanted to teach him to read.
>
> **Salla:** Why didn't you let them?
>
> **Mukhtar:** There are men in the hills who are not friendly to those who are friendly with Jews.[50]

Once again it is the manifestation of the "heroic rejection" which foils the Arab education to political maturity. To overcome the intransigence of which it is an expression requires a subtle impetus as well as inexhaustible patience:

> **Salla:** Then perhaps the village will find funds to improve its own school?
>
> **Mukhtar:** You have achieved peace between two feuding families. Slowly. Slowly.[51]

A crucial element of the symbolic character ascribed to Musa is that he is perceived by all those around him as a supposed *tabula rasa* in which something may yet be inscribed, or not – depending on the respective point of view. He is time and again debased as an object (and in him the Palestinian Arabs) to whom the status of a subject is granted exclusively by Salla; and to a certain extent also by the Jews of Ezra's Tower, even if they never really get to know him. The British perception too, as articulated by Col Wyndham, does not do him

justice. At the end of the excerpt published in the *Jewish Chronicle*, Wyndham holds forth about the other Britons:[52] "Dreadful people. Glad I don't have to travel back to Jerusalem with them. Half educated! Tired wit! Make me ashamed." Specifically addressing Musa, he adds to this in Arabic (with subtitles): "You mustn't think all of us are like them. We also produced Shakespeare and Milton and Locke and Ruskin and Rutherford and Brunel and – what's your name?"[53] Musa can respond to this only with the "throaty sound of the mute" which prompts Wyndham to turn away from him: "Oh, dear Christ! The child can't speak. (Wanders off.) Sad life. Sad, sad, sad life."[54] His reference to English literature, philosophy and art (history) as well as science and technology is interesting in particular because it represents an articulation of the established stereotype of the superiority of British civilisation as it had emerged for instance in Macaulay's notorious "Minute on Indian Education" (1835). When Wyndham turns away from Musa, whose real intelligence completely eludes him, this appears to be symbolic of the relationship between coloniser and colonised subject. More ominously, it also foreshadows the British abdication of responsibility in the conflict.

Another encounter between coloniser and colonised subject should be considered in the same context. In this instance, however, a very different relationship between power and knowledge is suggested. It represents the third angle of the distinctive triangular colonial constellation in Palestine. While Wesker invests Wyndham with power and knowledge superior to that of the Arab boy, he inverts this in the encounter of Lady Joyce and the Palestinian Jew Mrs Shenkin. In contrast to his literary model, in which Mrs Shenkin is anything but eloquent and represents the anti-Zionist orthodox segment of Jewry in Palestine,[55] Wesker turns her into an educated woman who puts to shame the coloniser in the guise of Lady Joyce with her superior knowledge of the other's national literature. The occasion for this readjustment of the relationship between power and knowledge arises when Mrs Shenkin proudly praises her son for translating Pushkin from Russian into Hebrew –

even though he has no knowledge of Russian.[56] As in Koestler's novel, the response of Lady Joyce is one of restrained arrogance. Yet in Wesker's script she is quickly forced to realise her mistake:

> LADY J: How very interesting.
>
> MRS SHENKIN knows she's being laughed at but knows too that LADY JOYCE understands nothing about translating poetry.
>
> MRS SHENKIN: I think you'll find many of your poets work like that. Mr Ezra Pound translating from the Chinese didn't, I think, speak Chinese. Nor your William Morris could understand Icelandic.
>
> LADY J: (Trying to rally) Ah, yes, and I don't suppose Elizabeth Browning could understand Portuguese.
>
> MRS SHENKIN: But then it wasn't necessary. I don't think her Sonnets from the Portuguese were actually Portuguese sonnets.
>
> LADY J: (Steely but chastised) Really.[57]

The Foucauldian equation of knowledge and power is thus challenged in the script. The obvious disparity of knowledge between the two women does not correspond to the actual power relations embodied by them and calls for a balanced readjustment.

A similar disparity was already indicated in the "Peace Making Ceremony" in Koestler's novel. Here, it was based on the 'oxymoronic' perception of the Jews in Palestine as "white natives"[58] and its deeply unsettling effect on British constructions of the self which, however, finds no explicit articulation in Wesker's screenplay.[59] Rather it is, in the "Peace Making Ceremony", the Jewish perception of the colonisers' mentality of the British which illustrates this conception. When Lady Joyce haughtily turns away from the Jewish District

Officer, Kaplan in the subsequent conversation with A.D.C. Newton expresses the tension inherent in such a conception. At the same time, he links the perception of the native also to the conception of the picturesque, a quality conspicuously lacking in the Jews, just as they cannot be compared to the natives:

> **Newton:** I don't think the Assistant High Commissioner's wife quite understands your Jewish brand of self-mockery. And if you want to hang on to your job I'd advise you to conduct yourself –
>
> **Kaplan:** – more as natives should?
>
> **Newton:** You know I didn't mean that.
>
> **Kaplan:** We must be a very unrewarding bunch for you to be administering – not knowing our place as we should. If only we were as picturesque as the Arabs.
>
> **Newton:** You're all so damned educated. How do you expect Lady Joyce to know how to speak to people who are supposed to do as they're told but have degrees in subjects she's never heard of?[60]

Musa's ardent desire to be allowed to learn and thus to escape the spiral of violence and, as is arguably suggested, the colonial hegemony is central to the positive representation of an Arab perspective intended by Wesker. This desire is moreover, as seen above, also a crucial element in the interaction between Musa and Salla in the "Peace Making Ceremony". Yet the intellectual potential of Musa – suppressed in any case as a result of the disparaging perception of his muteness – is ultimately completely destroyed by the circumstances and by those who bring them about. And again, this may be an indication of a perhaps all too obvious symbolism.

After witnessing the rape and murder of Dina at the hands of his brother Issa and his accomplices, which he in vain tried to prevent, Musa lapses into a state of catatonic shock from which he never emerges. When Salla sees him again at the Mukhtar's funeral (killed in revenge for Dina), he is stunned by the change suffered by the bright boy:

> Propped up in a chair, unbearably sad, slowly dying, it seems, in his own shocked world, is MUSA the silent.
>
> The other figure is SALLA, the teacher, who has just appeared as the procession leaves. He finds MUSA. Bends to the boy, moves his hand in front of him. Strokes his face. No response.
>
> SALLA turns to regard the parting column, fury in his eyes.[61]

Salla's fury is directed at those who are responsible for the change in Musa. Clearly, he has his suspicions about the circumstances. This emerges in particular later in the scene at Mme Markopoulos' Salon where he behaves towards Issa with reserve and pointedly enquires about the provenance of the scabbed scratches in his face.

The scene in the house of Mme Makropoulos is another addition of Wesker's which has no equivalent in Koestler's novel – Schmidt accordingly felt that it was redundant, too long, and once again focused too much on the Arab perspective.[62] Yet for Wesker this scene offered not only the opportunity to show Salla in a congenial political context and thus at the same time to attempt the somewhat more differentiated representation of the Arab reaction to the notorious *MacDonald White Paper* of 1939 which severely restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine at the eve of the Second World War and throughout the Holocaust. It moreover allowed him another thinly veiled reference to a historical 'institution': the Salon of Mme Makropoulos was obviously inspired by the celebrated precedent of Katy Antonius in

Jerusalem. The widow of the Arab writer and politician George Antonius, who had become famous in particular for his *The Arab Awakening. The Story of the Arab National Movement* (1938),[63] lived in Jerusalem in a house that belonged to the Mufti, Haj Amin. There, if historically only in the 1940s, she organised a political Salon that facilitated the rapprochement in particular of Britons and Arabs.[64] The British journalist and politician Richard Crossman commented: "It is easy to see why the British prefer the Arab upper class to the Jews", for: "This Arab intelligentsia has a French culture, amusing, civilized, tragic and gay. Compared with them the Jews seem tense, *bourgeois*, central European."[65] Accordingly, Wesker introduces Mme Makropoulos as "the widow of Joseph Makropoulos, the author of 'Pan Arab Renaissance'. She has a political salon in Jerusalem where higher British officials and visiting celebrities can meet Arab intelligentsia."[66]

When the A.Ch.C. seeks to justify the 1939 *White Paper* towards Salla and the American journalist Mathews (Matthews in the novel), the latter claims that the text, broadcast on the radio that very evening, was in effect a betrayal of the Jews. Salla gives to consider: "It's not so simple is it? Our tragedy, is the tragedy of a conflict of two rights." To Mathew's incredulous interjection – "*You* think that?" – Salla responds: "It places me in a very threatened minority."[67] After all, his remark implies his acceptance of the Jewish claim to the land. Yet Salla's opinion is shared by others within the circle of the Arab intelligentsia gathered at the Salon. The siblings Wajida and Taufiq Nuseibeh[68] have similar thoughts and Wajida in particular soon feels attracted to the Education Officer.

In the course of the conversation with Mathews and the A.Ch.C. Salla explains:

> SALLA: I got my inspiration from Joseph Makropoulos's book. Pan Arabism is the *only* solution, not separate entities, quarrelling, jockeying for position to be leader of the Arab world.

MATHEWS: Can you see it ever happening? Do you have peers in other Arab countries who agree with you?

SALLA: There you have the problem. The Arab mind doesn't really comprehend the concept of nationhood, only of tribe. The Arab has loyalty to what is tangible, not what is abstract.

MATHEWS: An approach with which I have some sympathy.

SALLA: As I do! But then I look at the way you united the states of America and made it work, and I think why not us? Why not us?[69]

Mathews' sympathy with the (alleged) Arab conception of loyalty may be calculated to legitimise the Arab perspective towards the viewer. Yet Salla's resignation in the face of the Arab inability to achieve national unification and the reference to the postcolonial history of the United States are in effect hardly more than another confirmation of the Arab lack of political maturity. Wajida subsequently expresses similar concerns. With reference to the *White Paper* she asks: "What can it achieve? The Jews virtually *have* a state, and they won't stand still. What have we got? Ignorance. Superstition. And a mediaeval economy fuelled by jealousy and blood feuds."[70] The reference to the blood feud emphasises once again retrospectively the significance of the "Peace Making Ceremony" which – initiated by Salla – is in effect the first step towards (western) civilisation and values.

Wajida and Salla's conversation is rudely disturbed by Mathews: "Blunt and direct. Most Arabs are impossible to discuss with because they succumb to windy rhetoric, exaggeration, and heroic emotion? Comment!"[71] Salla, skirting Mathews's interruptions, attempts to give a concise answer:

SALLA: Arab history is a past rich in logic, philosophy, maths and medicine –

> MATHEWS: You taught the Jews to be a tribe of doctors, I know –
>
> SALLA: – then religion took over –
>
> MATHEWS: Ah! The priests!
>
> SALLA: – who destroyed the language, paralysed learning and began four hundred years of decline into ignorance. And ignorance, as we all know, even in Europe, is a soil fertile for an emotional rhetoric which can turn the heads of mobs. Once there was only one language. Religion and invasions split it and split it and split[72].

Salla's model of explanation is unambiguous. It is clearly related to the present of the late 1930s through the person of the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin, and his followers. Yet in relation to debates on fundamentalism it remains topical not only in our own present but was pertinent also apropos the upsurge of both Jewish and Muslim fundamentalism in the wake of the Six-Day War invoked in Wesker's frame narrative in 1–2TS.[73]

Between Salla and Wajida subsequently develops an emotional bond which is, however, cruelly severed when Salla is assassinated. But prior to this, and this too is symbolic, Salla and Wajida begin to care for Musa – the intelligentsia directs the bewildered and distraught people. Together with Wajida, who feels no less sympathy for the boy than the Education Officer, Salla takes him to a Jewish psychiatrist whom he introduces to the young woman as his foster brother. His intention is therapeutic: with this example of a genuine, uncompromised and uncompromising Jewish-Arab friendship he seeks to dispel her despair about Musa's catatonic state. In the brief meeting the continued friendship between Salla and Samuelson is emphasised in contrast to similar relationships which were not immune against ideological indoctrination. Both "work together on a committee for Joint Jewish-Arab co-operation", and Samuelson explains that he is not a Zionist. "Nationalism", he maintains, "is a human aberration, it seems to give human beings a licence for endless killing."[74] Both Salla

and Samuelson thus practice a humane alternative to the strife between Arabs and Jews motivated by purely ideological differences. Yet the hope created by their example is crushed by the intransigence of those around them.

Together with Wajida, Salla takes Musa to his mother who is supposed to care for him. On the way home with her brother Taufiq, Wajida reflects on Salla and her growing affection for him, when suddenly they hear what sounds like the backfire of a car. Yet in reality it is the deadly shot fired by one "of the Mufti's assassins" on Salla. A note inscribed with a single word is pinned to the body's jacket: "TRAITOR".[75] The westernised and (therefore?) 'good' Arab falls victim to the ignorance and intolerance of the 'bad' Arabs, thus confirming all the rampant stereotypes. Schmidt thought these scenes too were redundant, though he approved of the idea to stigmatise Salla as traitor.[76] In the event, the very character of Salla and everything relating to it was rejected by Wolfgang Storch when he wrote his own script, if he had even been given access to Wesker's earlier effort.

The "Peace Making Ceremony": Koestler, Wesker, and Storch

Shooting for the TV series eventually commenced in December 1987 on location in Israel. Its three (instead of the initially envisaged six, and then four) episodes were broadcast in October 1989 on the German national channel ARD (Das Erste). The "Peace Making Ceremony", completely rewritten by Wolfgang Storch, was the centre piece of the second episode. Neither the script nor any further documents relating to the production were archived.[77] While it is therefore not possible to explore the genesis of the screenplay in any further detail, the comparison of Storch's final version as broadcast with Wesker's published excerpts and with Koestler's original text of *Thieves in the Night* is nevertheless instructive.

The scene as shot takes eleven and a half minutes of playing time,[78] and while it is difficult to compare it in quantitative terms to the earlier versions, my own transcript covers seven and a half pages and is therefore indeed very much closer to Villiers' stipulation of five than the twenty-one, or eventually twenty, pages Wesker thought indispensable.[79] In broad strokes, Storch's version remains very close to the novel. The director's interventions consist mainly of a slight reordering and of severe cuts. Most significantly, no additions were made beyond very minor insertions of new transitions where necessary and the inclusion of Mathews among the guests at the ceremony.[80] Yet the journalist's presence is only that of an observer who remains in the background throughout and is variously seen taking notes and sardonically smiling at the excesses of British snobbery, thus guiding the viewers' response as a kind of focaliser figure.

The differences to Wesker's screenplay are much more pronounced. While offering nothing that is not also included in the abortive earlier adaptation, in the scene as filmed, the addition of 'enlightened' Palestinians as well as the emphasis on a possible reconciliation between Jews and Arabs, linked by Wesker to the very idea of the peace making ceremony, have been reversed. Storch's omissions from the original text moreover serve to simplify the complexity of the situation and project much more crudely than either the novel or Wesker's adaptation British superciliousness and Arab deviousness, with the Jewish presence at the ceremony reduced almost to mere extras.

The setting and local colour are provided in an establishing shot showing the house of the Mukhtar nestled into the hillside, cars in front (obviously those of the British visitors) and sheep being driven by; in the background, Arab music can be heard before the camera cuts to the interior with groups of Arab guests in conversation. Followed by the camera, Issa walks through the crowd, taking a drink to his father on the terrace where the Mukhtar contentedly

smokes his hukkah among other village notables. Mathews then enters with Tubashi and makes his way to the British party on which the focus subsequently rests.

Conversation among the British group revolves around the 'eyesore' of the Jewish settlement of Ezra's Tower on the other side of the valley. The implied contrast between the picturesque Arab village conforming to stereotype and the aggressive modernism of the kibbutz which defies established categories is symptomatic of the irreconcilable positions of Arabs and Jews throughout Storch's conception of the scene, as is the British partiality towards the Palestinians to which Col Wyndham offers the only exception and which the Mukhtar deftly exploits with a calculating display of exaggerated self-pity.[81]

The short sequence serves Storch to highlight the internal divisions among the British, observed with some satisfaction by Tubashi. More specifically, it shows Wyndham's isolation among them. For the remainder of the peace making ceremony, his character is reduced to the odd irritated but disregarded interjection. Like Mathews, with whom he associates, he is in effect relegated to the position of a mere observer. By and large, however, Storch's adaptation significantly simplifies the multidirectional tensions originally inscribed into the scene and which Wesker had been at pains to retain.[82]

Storch in fact mostly defused the explosive potential of the clash between progress and the paralysing effects of tradition. Wesker – following Koestler – made it pivotal to his exploration of the triangular constellation in Palestine of Arabs, Jews, and the British. The complexity of the situation is linked by him more specifically to the stereotypical construction of identities which – unchallenged in Storch's adaptation – is interrogated in Wesker's script mainly through those individuals within each group which, to varying degrees, are able to transcend the received restrictions of habit, custom, and ideology and to articulate their dissent: Col Wyndham, Joseph, and Salla.

Where in Storch's version Col Wyndham simply turns away with a resigned "Ach"[83] from the much abbreviated conversation among the Britons, Wesker has him join the Jewish guests from Ezra's Tower and shrewdly directs the scene towards a critical anatomy of the British national character and colonial mentality:

> **Joseph:** You mustn't judge the British by the ones they send abroad.
>
> **Wyndham:** I don't see why not!
>
> **Joseph:** At home we're more shy than arrogant.
>
> **Wyndham:** Strange part of the English ruling-class *you're* familiar with.
>
> **Joseph:** Inhibition is a national disease.
>
> **Reuben:** Ah! Poor misunderstood nation! Timidity drove them to grab an Empire.
>
> **Wyndham:** (Excitedly) He's got it! This fellow's got the right idea! Ha! "Poor misunderstood nation!" Like that! Ha! Ha!.[84]

Storch completely eliminated the critical anti-colonial Jewish stance towards the British from his version of the peace making ceremony. Any intrinsic criticism of the British attitude is conveyed in his adaptation almost exclusively through Mathews' bemused glances and smiles and the Colonel's frustrated interjections. But the exchange as quoted from Wesker's screenplay is also an elaboration on the original text. The core of the exchange occurs in the novel between Joseph and his fellow kibbutznik Moshe on their way home to Ezra's Tower after the ceremony. Wesker not only added with Col Wyndham's an insider's perception to the debate which challenges that of the British half-Jew Joseph, but the dramatist, whose socialist leanings (if unorthodox) are well-known,[85] also introduced a more political slant to the conversation with the explicit reference to the ruling class and the implicit suggestion that

this is not paradigmatic of the other strata of British society – an implicit vindication of the latent potential of British society and effectively a call for the abolition of its stratification.

This puts a spin on Koestler's representation of the British as Wesker appears to attribute the colonial impetus to the ruling class proper and to absolve the lower classes from its stigma in analogy to the perceived Palestinian social hierarchy and the self-interested agency of its notables. The criticism of British social stratification introduced by Wesker arguably was of no concern to the German director, but Storch also eliminated another aspect of the triangular colonial constellation which the British playwright salvaged from Koestler's *Thieves in the Night* and which suggests a particular affinity between the British and the Arabs in contrast to the pragmatic mentality of the Jewish pioneers. Slightly reordering the text of his source but otherwise adopting Kaplan's words almost verbatim, Wesker has him remark to Joseph and Reuben: "Have you noticed the deep affinity between the British and the Oriental outlook on life? The same detachment, the same traditionalism, the same mystic belief that somehow in the end everything will work out all right. Patience! Don't hurry! Take your time! The three sacred commandments of His Majesty's administration."[86] Like Koestler, Wesker denounces the inertia of British society and political institutions which stymie progress also in the class-bound United Kingdom. The Arab analogy thus serves not only to explain the partiality fostered by the British towards the Arabs, but to criticise British society and its political apparatus for the same prejudices and grievances salient in Arab society in Palestine.

The third angle of the colonial triangle in Mandate Palestine, largely neglected in Storch's adaptation, is eventually elaborated by Wesker when Joseph suggests an affinity also between the Jews and the British. Again, this is an addition to Koestler's original text. As such it may once more reflect the playwright's subjective interest in the British context and, more specifically in this instance, in the British Jewish context. But it is almost certainly also

to be seen in relation to Wesker's efforts to utilise the "Peace Making Ceremony" for the development of the "dramatic tensions" between all the players in his historical drama as he had maintained towards Villiers.[87]

In Storch's version, Moshe asks Joseph whether he noticed that they were being ostracised by the British party at the ceremony. Yet to the other's pragmatic question why they should not go to the Britons themselves to strike up a conversation, he responds only with a derisive: "We?"[88] The implication is clear enough: the disdain is mutual, as is the arrogance of which it is the product, but Storch chose to leave the reasons for this rejection unexplained. In the novel, Moshe's response following his surprised "Me?" – and repudiating Joseph's inclusive "*we*" – strikes a very different note: "Crawl before that arrogant bunch of *Herrenvolk* number two?"[89]

Both in Koestler's text and in Wesker's adaptation, Joseph rejects the comparison between the British sense of superiority and the racially informed notion of Aryan supremacy of Nazi provenance – which Storch, possibly in the spirit of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, chose to ignore entirely.[90] To Reuben's much abbreviated "What, me? To those Herrenvolk?", Joseph retorts in Wesker's script: "The English are not Herrenvolk. They're a bit like the Jews. The Jews have continuity through The Book, the English have continuity from not having been occupied for a thousand years. Both have been around for so long they can't get worked up about anything."[91] This dialogue between Reuben and Joseph on their return to Ezra's Tower is not included in the published extract of Wesker's screenplay, but in 3TS immediately follows upon it. Predictably, the suggestion prompts Reuben's incredulous protest, but Joseph explains: "The Jews only get worked up about the Jews. The rest they take in their stride."[92] Storch's adaptation eschews Jewish self-interrogation and questions of identity are mostly elided by the director. To Wesker, in contrast, as for Koestler, these are

crucial issues which both the novel and the earlier script negotiate in relation to constructions of British and Arab identities and political interplay.

On the walk to the actual peace making ceremony through the village, Koestler – and Wesker, following his model – includes four 'stations'. They become paradigmatic of the alleged cultural backwardness of the Fellaheen, of the paralysis enforced by their adherence to tradition, and of the challenges posed by this to an understanding between Arabs and Jews: the first revolves around agricultural methods and efficiency; the second centres on gender equality; the third on superstition; and the fourth on education. Only the first and third stations were retained by Storch who with the other two eliminated also their critical potential. Wesker, in contrast, apparently considered all four of crucial significance to the calibration of the "dramatic tensions" unfolding in the scene.

At the first station the thriving fields of the Jewish settlement in the valley are compared to the same but sickly stunted crop in the adjacent Arab fields which are farmed traditionally. The Mukhtar explains that the fertiliser used by the settlers is too expensive for the Arabs and that the rates to rent the Jews' tractor are extortionate. In Storch's much abbreviated script no further explanation is forthcoming, while Wesker – like Koestler – exposes the Mukhtar's claims through the agency of Col Wyndham as brazen and self-serving lies meant to deflect from his own culpability.[93]

The second of these stations in the novel is a woman boiling sorrel in the road in an old tin can.[94] Tubashi, like the guide to an ethnographic exhibition, asks the Britons whether they would like to see the "interior of a hut".[95] Wesker's substitute for Tubashi, Salla, who is much less servile and genuinely enlightened, makes no such offer. Rather, it is Lady Joyce, "grateful for the opportunity to look at your delightful village", who stops next to the woman and her three children, making Salla wince at her "*patronising tone*"[96] and thus introduce an element of resistance to the pervasive perception of the 'natives' as quaint and picturesque.

As in the novel, it emerges that the woman, aged beyond her years, was bought in the previous year by her impoverished husband. The Mukhtar explains: "[H]is wife died a year ago and he had to buy a new one of the cheapest sort. This one cost him five pounds." The dramatist added some text to this with Lady Joyce exclaiming: "How can you still buy and sell women like cattle? In the twentieth century?"[97] and Salla conceding: "There is a great deal to be changed and improved".[98]

The same pattern of alleging another instance of cultural backwardness of the Arabs and the acknowledged need to address it informs also the fourth station. The procession stops in front of the school house.[99] Kaplan denounces the Mukhtar for his resistance to the education of the villagers. He exposes his lies about the leavers' age (ten instead of twelve) and about the funding of the school (by the government and not by the village).[100] But more importantly, when Lady Joyce asks why there are no girls in school, he takes a stab at the Mukhtar which relates back to the earlier occasion when the inequality of women was revealed.

> **Mukhtar:** But it's against tradition to send girls to school.
>
> **Kaplan:** Otherwise they might learn they're not cattle for sale.
>
> **Mrs Newton:** Mr Kaplan! We are their guests. Remember that, please.
>
> **Salla:** It's a tradition we're trying to change, Lady Joyce.

The brief exchange about the role and nature of tradition reveals different perceptions which range from opportunistic complacency (the Mukhtar), to aggressive criticism (Kaplan), to polite detachment (Mrs Newton), to – once again – the acknowledgement that change is necessary and to a declaration of intent to implement this change (Salla). It thus appears to be paradigmatic of the problems besetting the peace process in Mandate Palestine. Lady Joyce's

subsequent cutting rejoinder about gender separation in synagogues confirms the anti-Jewish bias of the British and is answered by Kaplan as seen above with a "Jewish brand of self-mockery" that, as Newton suggests, simply goes beyond her understanding.[101] It is also one of the few (albeit implicit) references to Jewish internal diversity, as the focus throughout the screenplay is otherwise almost exclusively on the progressive element of the Zionist pioneers.

The third station is dealt with by Wesker only very briefly, but has been given much prominence by Storch. It is politically the least controversial of the four and is focused not so much on the immediate need to rectify social ills but rather showcases the contradiction of British prudery and the almost naïve ethnographic – and, as already indicated, patronising – curiosity of the coloniser.[102] Walking past a woman held to be a witch, Watson in conversation with Tubashi and Mrs Newton discusses the use of amulets against impotence and the allegedly common practice of homosexuality and sodomy, much to the latter's indignation and distress, only emphasised by the faint sneer Lady Joyce permits herself. Wesker, while retaining Watson's reference to homosexual practices, divests his explanations from the critique of Arab proneness to superstition suggested by Koestler's original text and exploited by Storch in what is almost an element of comical relief. While implicitly suggesting, like Koestler and Storch, in addition to British prudery also a latent homosexual proclivity in Watson, Wesker, once again interweaving the strands of the various stations, has him explain the "charming" and "bucolic" attachment of Arab men to one another with their having "to wait so long to save enough money to buy a wife".[103]

In the ensuing ceremony, it is in Storch's adaptation once again the British irreverent and arrogant perspective which is given precedence.[104] Wesker, in turn, chose to omit the British mockery of the ceremony that is to be found already in the novel, because its symbolism as a vehicle of reconciliation became central to his own conception of the scene. Rather, adding also to Koestler's description, he included Salla's speech during the event.

Supposedly in Arabic and subtitled in English, Wesker's screenplay proffers in fact only the English text of a speech that extols common sense and, as discussed above, forgiveness and which is later appreciatively referred to by Joseph towards Kaplan who concedes that he may need to revise his opinion of the Arab.[105] But it is also picked up by Zaid, Wesker's addition of a village notable, who acknowledges towards Salla the significance of the other's words but also his own failure of living up to them: "Your pretty speech doesn't apply to me, *I* won't leave this world feeling I've done good works."[106] The script thus evokes a sense of lost opportunities but also of hope, because from Zaid's exchange with Salla emerges the interaction between the latter and Musa which, as mentioned above, kindles the Education Officer's interest in the mute boy.

In Storch's TV adaptation, the scene of the peace making ceremony is eventually brought to a close with two shots in which the fact that none of the British party deigned to speak with any of the Jews from Ezra's Tower is commented upon from the perspective of the Jews and of the Arabs, respectively. Moshe's rejection of the very idea of approaching the British himself has already been discussed in relation to Wesker's elaboration of the original passage.[107] On the Arab side, the Mukhtar exults towards Issa: "One thing is certain: That they never exchanged a word between them. They are like dogs and cats. *Il Hamdulillah!*"[108] His inference emphasises the Arab's calculating deviousness, seeking to profit from the quarrel: "But we can be the stick, the stick which beats both, the dogs and the cats."[109] These are the final words in Storch's version of the "Peace Making Ceremony", which is brought to a conclusion with a fantasia that reaffirms not only the notion of the picturesque and adventurous character of the Arabs but also the implicit threat in the Mukhtar's concluding words. When the horsemen charge into the courtyard and all of a sudden start shooting in the air, the Jewish group, sitting next to them, duck involuntarily, while the Mukhtar watches with glee and chuckles knowingly.

The Mukhtar's stick parable is not included in Wesker's rendering of the peace making ceremony but, as in the novel, follows on it with the Mukhtar being unable to sleep and calling for his son(s) to join him. Again, the playwright's addition of the character of Musa offers a significant re-interpretation of the scene. His newly added text shows the Mukhtar to have been positively affected by Salla's efforts. If for motives of his own, he confirms his commitment to keeping peace in the village and he even acknowledges the benefit of education: "I want my boys to be educated and grow wise, and I want them to make this village the most beautiful in all Palestine."[110] His declaration makes Musa clap his hands with excitement and the Mukhtar promises to have him taught how to read. It is only then, in Wesker's script, that he elaborates the stick parable. Following through with Musa's added presence, the screenplay records the younger boy's distress at this prospect and the scene concludes with his scheming father's assertion towards Issa: "Look at your sensitive brother. Unhappy at the thought of beating poor animals. Have no fear, Musa my son, we won't use a stick to beat dumb animals; not *dumb* animals."[111] The Mukhtar, it is clear, has understood neither his younger son's shifting loyalties and honest desire for reconciliation and progress nor the value of education as promoted by Salla.

Perhaps the most significant difference between Storch's script and Wesker's is their respective representation of the Jews and of the Arabs. With the exception of Tubashi's short interventions and some innocuous responses by Issa to his father, the Mukhtar is the only Arab given a voice in the scene as filmed. And his voice, throughout in accented English (or German, in the dubbed version), is sweetly deceptive and calculating. In addition, occasional sequences in Arabic are interspersed within the dialogue, some of which are paraphrased by Tubashi or Major Edwards (Squadron Leader Henderson in the novel), but which for the most part remain untranslated. Their sole purpose appears to be the creation of local colour, there is no sense of losing any vital information in the process. At the same time, the native

idiom produces a sense of distance and, potentially, also of mistrust. The Jewish characters in contrast, throughout Storch's adaptation, never use any other language than English (German), if occasionally with strong accents.[112]

In Koestler's *Thieves in the Night*, the Mukhtar appears to know little or no English; he fully relies on Tubashi as his interpreter, and there is – throughout the peace making ceremony – no direct communication between him and others, with the exception of the Jews and those Britons who speak Arabic. In contrast, the Mukhtar is able to communicate in English in both screenplays. Both also elide the Hebrew spoken in the novel by the Jewish characters which, in Kaplan's case, further serves to characterise him. When the Jewish District Officer joins the settlers during the ceremony and talks to them in Hebrew, "his voice lost its bitterness and sounded almost warm."[113] Nuances such as this are lost in both screenplays, although it was originally Wesker's intention to have all characters speak in their own languages and to supply subtitles where necessary.[114] Even so, the linguistic competence of the settlers is emphasised as another trait that distinguishes them from the truculent Arabs. As Watson observes: "Did you notice how well those Jewish settlers speak Arabic?" To which Lady Joyce responds with sarcasm: "They're infant prodigies, don't you know!"[115] The Jews' linguistic versatility is to her merely another prompt to hide her inferiority complex behind the haughty demonstration of ironic contempt.

Wesker reiterates the point in his script in a more sinister way when Watson remarks to Lady Joyce that it never occurred to the settlers "to come over and talk to us". Her response demonstrates British sublimation strategies towards the fate of the "patronising" and superior "infant prodigies" she perceives the Jews to be:

Lady Joyce: What else did you expect?

Watson: On the other hand one's got to be fair to them.

Lady Joyce: Why?

Watson: Persecution and all that.

Lady Joyce: Oh, all that? Exaggerated.[116]

Fairness, arrogance, and understatement as clichéd British character traits are pitted against one another here in the screenwriter's effort to heighten the "dramatic tensions" between the participants in the ceremony. In fact, Lady Joyce's nonchalant rejection of Jewish claims to victimhood – which to the reader, if anachronistically, suggests of course the Holocaust – are another addition of Wesker's to the novel which serves him to profile the nature of the frictions between the British and the Jews far beyond Storch's innocuous rendering of the scene and even beyond Koestler's novel. Wesker's orginal conception of this exchange was even more negative about the British bias and lack of empathy. In 1TS, the lines are still divided up differently and, more importantly, the dialogue continues with damning statements by Lady Joyce and Squadron Leader Henderson:

WATSON: Persecution and all that.

LADY J: Oh. All *that*.

HENDERSON: Exaggerated.

LADY J: Deserved, I'd say.

HENDERSON: But not too loudly.[117]

The implied condoning of the Holocaust was softened in 3TS, but the allusion was retained. The novel too was similarly predicated on the reader's knowledge of the Holocaust. Storch, in contrast, was much more reticent and never made the link to the Holocaust explicit, even

though Meichsner's early communications with Wesker had explicitly suggested the engagement with Germany's Nazi past as a strong motivation for his interest in the project.[118]

The representation of the Jews is indeed the second striking difference between Storch's and Wesker's adaptations of the novel. In the "Peace Making Ceremony", they are reduced by the director to mere observers; not so much to their own detriment, however, but to the Arabs', whose stereotypical representation is given more room as a result of the lack of interaction between both. Kaplan, too, though present through most of the scene, is deprived of all his agency. The meeting between him and the envoys from the Jewish settlement is completely devoid of meaning and exhausts itself in a few singularly bland phrases:

> KAPLAN: Hello.
>
> JOSEPH: Hello.
>
> KAPLAN: How are you?
>
> JOSEPH: Thanks, rather well.
>
> MOSHE: Hello, Robert.
>
> KAPLAN: How are things in Ezra's Tower?
>
> MOSHE: Rather well.
>
> JOSEPH: Yes, not too bad at all.[119]

Wesker, in turn, adopts the much more detailed exchange from the novel, although he too introduces a different note with the cynical banter between Kaplan and Reuben:

> **Kaplan:** How are things up there?
>
> *Cut away to Ezra's Tower in the distance.*

> **Reuben:** (Sardonically) Expenditure going up, income going down; 22 per cent of the commune on the sick list, and we have refugees with no vocational training arriving next week. What could be better?
>
> **Kaplan:** Your complaints don't impress me. Your lot all thrive on it.
>
> **Reuben:** You don't say![120]

The brief dialogue impresses on the reader not only the precariousness of the Jewish position, even without Arab and British antagonism, but also the determination to deal with it and it thus ultimately adds to the 'heroic' characterisation of the Jews.

In Storch's anodyne version, any critical potential of the conversation among the Jews, and in particular Wesker's profound elaboration throughout on the original suggestion in *Thieves in the Night* of the crucial significance of Arab education, has been eliminated from the innocuous encounter which remains, moreover, confined to the Jewish group. The suggestion of an understanding between the more sensible and prudent members of the British party, such as Col Wyndham, and the Jews as well as the implication of the emergence of Arab political maturity embodied by Salla are completely obliterated from Storch's version. Of course, the figure of Salla itself is missing from the final script, as is Musa. Storch chose moreover to eliminate all of the ambivalence attributed to Tubashi both by Koestler and by Wesker. Outside the "Peace Making Ceremony" he appears only once, and then only to initiate with factual mention of the impending ceremony a discussion between Mathews, the A.Ch.C., and with the Newtons on the Jews and their role in the development of western civilisation.[121]

Intriguingly, both Storch and Wesker chose to eliminate from their screenplays the figure of Sheikh Silmi.[122] The Bedouin was introduced by Koestler to provide a 'genuine' Arab perspective on the Fellaheen. Kaplan explains that "he's got all the contempt of the pure

Bedu for the degenerate cross-breeds who live in towns and villages. He calls them mongrels, sons of bitches, and denies that they are Arabs at all."[123] When the Sheikh is later given his own voice, he confirms, talking about the peace making ceremony: "It was a mockery […] It was like monkeys playing at being Arabs."[124] This echoes to some extent the British perception of the performative character of the "show", as it is called by Watson,[125] but it also indicates the lack of penetration of the British perspective and the gullibility of the colonisers; when Watson sees the one-eyed Mukhtar of the Hamdan approach during the ceremony, he whispers with romantically infused enthusiasm: "This is the real thing, […] He looks like a brigand."[126] While the notion of the ceremony as a performance has been retained in both screenplays, the negative connotations conveyed by the Sheikh have been purged from both scripts.

The concluding fantasia follows in the novel immediately on the Sheikh's derogatory remarks and is thus tainted by the same accusation of being a pretentious counterfeit. Wesker conveys in his screenplay the same sense of contempt, but associates it also once again with the different perception of Jews and Arabs by the British:

> **Reuben:** Habibi! If we did that we'd be put in jail for carrying illegal weapons.
>
> **Kaplan:** Of course you realise that ceremony was all amateur theatrics? A mockery! The Palestinians are cross-breeds, mongrels. They play at being Arabs, to amuse the English.
>
> **Reuben:** Where *did* they get those new Mausers from?
>
> **Kaplan:** (Meaning they come from Italy) Ask Il Duce.[127]

The “amateur theatrics” of the Fellaheen are not only identified as such by Kaplan, but the screenwriter’s directions further subvert the heroic appearance of the show by insisting that their horses were “*underfed*”.[128]

More importantly, however, like Koestler in his novel, Wesker uses the incident to draw attention once more to the British bias towards the picturesque Arabs which had dire consequences for the safety of the Jews in Mandate Palestine. Since the first Arab riots against Zionist immigration in 1920, Jewish lives and interests had been at peril. In the following year, the paramilitary self-defence organisation of the Haganah was established by Vladimir Jabotinsky who was later in the year sentenced to fifteen years of hard labour and deportation for the illegal possession of arms (later pardoned). Following the Arab riots of 1929, in 1931 the more radical arm of the Irgun (or Etzel) split off the Haganah.[129] *Thieves in the Night* is set in 1937–39, during the Arab revolt of 1936–39, and charts the radicalisation of Joseph as he eventually supports the armed resistance of the Irgun. The “Peace Making Ceremony” precedes this development, but the fantasia and the reaction of the Jewish settlers provide historical context and foreshadow the eventual armed confrontation not only with Arab terrorists but also with the mandatory power. The fantasia thus introduces an ominous note to the proceedings which moreover links Arab nationalist aspirations with the fascist regime in Italy and thus evokes implicitly – if not entirely correctly – also the spectre of Jewish persecution in Europe extending its tendrils to Palestine.[130]

Storch, without elaborating the critical context, nevertheless conveys a sense of foreboding with the Mukhtar’s sneer at the cowering Jews. At the same time, the charging horsemen refer back to the beginning of the first episode of his TV adaptation of Koestler’s novel. The camera follows the lorries of the Jewish settlers through the night on their way to the establishment of Ezra’s Tower and close-ups of the protagonists reveal the dreams and hopes they attach to the Jewish return to Palestine. The Arab threat is variously referred to, as

is the Jewish resolve. Visually, this scene is contrasted when a cross-cut reveals horsemen, indistinct in the dark, as they gallop down a slope and reign in their horses, suggesting that they have discovered the lorries. The set-up is clearly derived from the Western genre in analogy to countless Indian attacks on covered wagon trains.[131] Dov Seltzer's heroic and sentimental film music supports the visual effect with syncopated rhythms that suggest galloping horses and with the more plaintive harmonica, both likewise familiar from innumerable Hollywood frontier movies.

Whether in direct response to some of the earlier criticism of Wesker's treatment of his source by Conroy and Schmidt, or whether following an impulse of his own, Storch thus almost literally returns to the cowboys and Indians formula emphatically rejected by Wesker. Having set the stage visually for such an understanding, the whole of his adaptation sustains the implications and thus adopts also the bias of the genre in favour of the pioneers. The reversion to this idea, dictated most likely by commercial interests more than anything else, highlights why Wesker's mostly abortive approach to the 1946 novel should be considered at all; why the various layers of the genesis of a text should be delved into which, for the most part, remains hidden in blue cardboard boxes in the freezing vault of the HRC: Wesker's screenplay has its own merit and offers a significant reading of Koestler's novel; it is, as the playwright claimed, a "script of substance". As an international co-production, the successive stages of the project and the clash of the frequently quite acerbic individual voices of those involved in it moreover reveal competing motivations as well as conflicting and shifting strategies of representing the history of Israel and the Middle East conflict which have lost nothing of their relevance also in the present day – as is suggested not least also by the recent controversy provoked by *The Promise*.

Notes

[1] Jonathan Goldberg, "Viewers want to see The Promise… in court," *The Jewish Chronicle* (11 March 2011), 31.

[2] Quoted in Marcus Dysch, "Peter Kosminsky says he kept Promise," *The Jewish Chronicle Online* (31 March 2011), www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/47277/peter-kosminsky-says-he-kept-promise (accessed 16 June 2011).

[3] *The Promise,* dir. Peter Kosminsky (UK: Channel 4, 2011), parts 1–4; on DVD, part 4, 1:39:38–1:40:03.

[4] See, e.g., Axel Stähler, "Anti-Semitism and Israel in British Jewish Fiction: Perspectives on Clive Sinclair's *Blood Libels* (1985) and Howard Jacobson's *The Finkler Question* (2010)", *Jewish Culture and History* 14.2–3 (2013): 112–125, esp. 112–17.

[5] See Axel Stähler, "'Historical Argument' or 'Cowboys and Indians'? Arnold Wesker's TV Screenplay (1983–1986) of Arthur Koestler's *Thieves in the Night* (1946)", …???

[6] Altogether four versions of this text are extant, the initial holograph (MS), HRC Wesker Box 90.5–8 and three typescript drafts, including substantial handwritten corrections: (1TS), HRC Wesker Box 90.9–12; (2TS), HRC Wesker Box 91.1–4; (3TS), HRC Wesker Box 92.1–4. Parenthetic references to these scripts include in Roman numerals the episode (I–IV), followed by scene and page numbers in Arabic numerals, e.g. (3TS: I.1.1). Where not otherwise indicated, all quotations from Wesker's successive scripts silently include his revisions and corrections and harmonise orthographic and typographical conventions.

[7] For a more detailed discussion of the background to the production, see Stähler, "'Historical Argument' or 'Cowboys and Indians'?" …???

[8] Arnold Wesker to François Villiers on 28 February 1985, HRC Wesker Box 92.5, in response to Villiers' earlier correspondence of 20 February 1985.

[9] See David Conroy to Shlomo Mograbi (Israfilm) on 28 September 1984, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

[10] See Conroy to Wesker on 14 November 1984, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

[11] Wesker to Dieter Meichsner on 14 June 1985, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

[12] Arthur Koestler, *Thieves in the Night: Chronicle of an Experiment* (London: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 160–1.

[13] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 343.

[14] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 343.

[15] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 343.

[16] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 298.

[17] Arnold Wesker, "Thieves in the Night. A Film Adaptation of Arthur Koestler's Novel by Arnold Wesker", *The Jewish Chronicle Literary Supplement* (22 August 1986), iv–vi, iv.

[18] This may have been suggested to Wesker by Peter Claus Schmidt (KG Allmedia), see "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", HRC Wesker Box 92.5, p. 8.

[19] Arnold Wesker, "Notes to be read before and after reading the scripts", HRC Wesker Box 92.5, p. 2.

[20] See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 3.

[21] (1TS: II.25.18).

[22] See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 6.

[23] Wesker, "Notes to be read", p. 3.

[24] See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 1.

[25] See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 10.

[26] See a draft press release composed by Wesker dated 14 February 1984 and entitled "Wesker to Adapt Koestler", HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

[27] See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 1.

[28] (3TS: II.21.10).

[29] (3TS: II.22.10).

[30] Already in 1911, Auni Abd al-Hadi was among the founders of the nationalistic al-Fatat, see Gudrun Krämer, *Geschichte Palästinas* (Munich: Beck, 2002), p. 151. Later, from 1932–34 he led the Pan-Arab Arab Independence Party (*hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi*) which opposed not only Zionism but also the authority of the mandatory power, see Krämer, *Geschichte Palästinas*, p. 299; Basheer M. Nafi (1998), *Arabism, Islamism and the Palestine Question, 1908–1941: A Political History* (Reading: Ithaca, 1998), pp. 35–47, 60–61; and Avi Shlaim, "The Balfour Declaration and its Consequences", in William Roger Louis (ed.), *Yet More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain* (London: Tauris, 2005), pp. 251–70.

[31] (3TS: II.24.11).

[32] (1TS: IV.111.79).

[33] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 160–1; see (1TS: II.33.24).

[34] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 135.

[35] (1TS: II.92.52).

[36] (1TS: II.78.41).

[37] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 124.

[38] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v.

[39] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", iv.

[40] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v.

[41] See (1TS: IV.59.55–6).

[42] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", iv.

[43] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v.

[44] See, e.g., Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", iv.

[45] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[46] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[47] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[48] See (1TS: II.111.61).

[49] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[50] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v–vi.

[51] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, vi.

[52] Schmidt considered the figure of Col Wyndham also as problematic because he felt that it was unrepresentative; he erroneously assumed that Wesker had adopted it from Rolf Hädrich’s earlier screenplay and that it did not occur in Koestler’s novel. See “Remarks of P. C. Schmidt”, p. 8. However, Wesker was not prepared to eliminate the character who, as already in the novel, is based on the historical Col Orde Wingate, see Koestler, *Thieves in the Night,* p. 125.

[53] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, vi.

[54] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, vi.

[55] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night,* p. 206.

[56] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night,* p. 208.

[57] (1TS: IV.13.14).

[58] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night,* p. 43.

[59] See (1TS: I.95.47).

[60] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[61] (3TS: III.144.77).

[62] See “Remarks of P. C. Schmidt”, p. 11.

[63] See Martin Kramer, “Ambition, Arabism, and George Antonius”, in Martin Kramer (ed.), *Arab Awakening and Islamic Revival: The Politics of Ideas in the Middle East*

(New Brunswick: Transaction, 1996), pp. 112–23 and Susan Silsby Boyle, *Betrayal of Palestine: The Story of George Antonius* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001).

64 Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, transl. Haim Watzman (1999; New York: Owl Books, 2001), p. 469.

65 Quoted in Segev, *One Palestine, Complete*, pp. 469–70. After her husband's death, Katy Antonius had a relationship with Sir Evelyn Barker, Commander-in-Chief of the British troops in Palestine, who frequently expressed his anti-Jewish and pro-Arab bias towards her; see Segev, *One Palestine, Complete*, pp. 480, 498–9.

66 (1TS: IV.59.49).

67 (1TS: IV.59.53).

68 This is the name of an influential moderate Palestinian family. For Judge Anwar Nusseibeh, see Segev, *One Palestine, Complete*, pp. 369–70, etc. Schmidt advised against using the names of real families, see "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 11.

69 (1TS: IV.59.55–6).

70 (1TS: IV.59.58).

71 (1TS: IV.59.59).

72 (1TS: IV.59.59).

73 See, e.g., James Piscatori, "Islamic Fundamentalism in the Wake of the Six Day War: Religious Self-Assertion in Political Conflict", in Laurence J. Silberstein (ed.), *Jewish Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective: Religion, Ideology, and the Crisis of Modernity* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp. 79–93; Gassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); David S. New, *Holy War: The Rise of Militant Christian, Jewish and Islamic Fundamentalism* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2002); David Zeidan, *The Resurgence of Religion: A Comparative Study of Selected Themes in*

Christian and Islamic Fundamentalist Discourses (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003); and Leonard Weinberg, *Religious Fundamentalism and Political Extremism* (London: Cass, 2004). For the orientalist provenance of this perception, see, e.g., Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, with a new afterword (1978; London: Penguin, 1995), p. 172.

74 See (3TS: IV.47.28–9); cf. (1TS: IV.95.71).

75 (1TS: IV.99.73).

76 See "Remarks of P. C. Schmidt", p. 11.

77 E-mail communication from NDR of 19 May 2014. I am grateful to the NDR for having made the complete series available to me on DVD and to the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent for bearing the expenses. The series was shot in English but the copy archived by the NDR and available to me is dubbed in German. I have not been able to locate the original English language version of the TV adaptation. Since the script generally follows Koestler's original text rather closely, I have based my translation from the German dialogue into English on the novel wherever possible.

78 See *Diebe in der Nacht*, dir. Wolfgang Storch (D/ISR: NDR and Israfilm, 1988), parts I–III, on DVD (unpubl.), part II, 00:25:37–37:06.

79 See Villiers to Wesker on 20 February 1985, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

80 The variant spelling of Mathews' name with only one t, as in Wesker's but not in Koestler's text, suggests that Storch may in fact have worked from the playwright's script.

81 See *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:26:53–27:30; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 128.

82 See Wesker to Villiers on 28 February 1985, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

83 *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:27:55.

[84] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv.

[85] See, e.g., Kevin G. Asman, “The Failure and Promise of ‘Socialism as Personal Contact’ in Arnold Wesker’s *Roots*” and Meenakshi Ponnuswami, “Histories of the New Left: Arnold Wesker and the Angrier Young Men”, in Reade W. Dornan (ed.), *Arnold Wesker: A Casebook* (New York and London: Garland, 1998), 34–48 and 137–62, respectively.

[86] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv–v; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 137.

[87] See Wesker to Villiers on 28 February 1985, HRC Wesker Box 92.5.

[88] “Wir?”, *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:35:26.

[89] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 143.

[90] See the director in interview with Stefanie Rosenkrantz and Klaus Meyer-Andersen, “Kein Film kann wiedergutmachen”, *Stern TV* (3 December 1987): 4–9, 8.

[91] (3TS: III.107.2).

[92] (3TS: III.107.2).

[93] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv; see also Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 128.

[94] See Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 130–1.

[95] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 130.

[96] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv.

[97] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv.

[98] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv.

[99] See Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 134–5.

[100] See Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 134–5.

[101] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, v.

[102] See Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 132–3.

[103] Wesker, “Thieves in the Night”, iv; see also Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 132.

[104] See *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:33:35–43; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 138.

[105] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v.

[106] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v.

[107] Wesker retained this reference, even though in his script Col Wyndham is an exception.

[108] "Aber, eins steht fest: Dass sie kein Wort miteinander gesprochen haben. Sie sind wie Hund und Katze. *Il Hamdulillah!*", *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:36:22–39; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 144.

[109] "Aber wir können der Stock sein, der Stock, der beide prügelt, die Hunde und die Katzen", *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:36:41–54; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 145.

[110] (3TS: III.108.2).

[111] (3TS: III.108.2).

[112] The only exception are the songs of the pioneers which are sung in Hebrew, see during the nocturnal lorry trek and later, dancing the hora, "El yivneh hagalil" (God Will Build Galilee), *Diebe in der Nacht*, part I, 00:03:30–04:50 and 00:52:40–54:55, respectively; and at the beginning of the third part, sung in defiance on the refugee ship *Assimi*, "Hatikvah" (The Hope), later to become the Israeli national anthem, *Diebe in der Nacht*, part III, 00:00:58–02:02.

[113] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 136.

[114] Wesker, "Notes to be read", p. 4.

[115] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", v; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 136.

[116] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", vi.

[117] (1TS: II.107.60).

[118] See Meichsner to Wesker on 12 October 1983, HRC Wesker Box 92.5 and Stähler, "'Historical Argument' or 'Cowboys and Indians'?" …???

[119] "KAPLAN: Hallo. / JOSEPH: Hallo. / KAPLAN: Wie geht's denn? / JOSEPH: Danke, recht gut. / MOSHE: Hallo, Robert. / KAPLAN: Wie stehen die Dinge in Ezra's Tower? / MOSHE: Ziemlich gut. / JOSEPH: Ja, gar nicht so schlecht." *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:30:17–23; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, pp. 136–7.

[120] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", iv; cf. Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 136.

[121] See *Diebe in der Nacht*, part II, 00:18:15–20:19.

[122] In Wesker's case, this may not have been the dramatist's own decision as the Sheikh is still included in 1TS and 2TS.

[123] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 141.

[124] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 141.

[125] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 127, see also p. 139.

[126] Koestler, *Thieves in the Night*, p. 139.

[127] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", vi.

[128] Wesker, "Thieves in the Night", vi.

[129] For the development of Jewish paramilitary defence structures and, eventually, terrorism in Mandate Palestine, see, e.g., J. Bowyer Bell, *Terror out of Zion: Irgun Zvai Leumi, LEHI, and the Palestine Underground, 1929–1949* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1977).

[130] Italian fascism was not predicated on antisemitism in the same way German fascism was. The persecution of Jews in Mussolini's Italy began in 1938 with the implementation of racial laws but was exacerbated only after the country's German occupation in 1943, see the contributions to *Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi Rule, 1922–1945*, ed. Joshua D. Zimmerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[131] For the attack motif in Westerns, see Gregory F. Michno and Susan J. Michno, *Circle the Wagons! Attacks on Wagon Trains in History and Hollywood Films* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008). Incidentally, in the novel, no mention is made of the Arab horsemen

in the description of the nocturnal journey of the convoy. Its progress is observed only by the animals of the night: “Some jackals, invisibly escorting the convoy behind the rocks, howled pointlessly and without conviction”, Koestler, *Thieves in the Night,* p. 6.