



The Oxford Book of Hebrew Short Stories

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It is unusual for a creative literature to be so much younger than its language, and the story of the development of Hebrew fiction is no less fascinating than the stories that embody it in this collection. The extraordinary revival of Hebrew as a spoken language at the turn of the twentieth century led to an explosion of literary activity that eventually drew a clear line of progression from the Jewish writers of Eastern Europe to their modern descendants in present-day Israel.

From a narrative whose concerns were predominantly historical and religious, Hebrew fiction has grown to embrace the modern world and to deal with subjects such as daily life in a small Jewish town, intellectual disillusionment, and the huge political changes with which Jewish writers have had to come to terms following the establishment of the State of Israel. War inevitably features often in these 33 stories which reflect, more than the literature of any other country, the social and political dilemmas of a multifarious culture. Alongside the grand themes are more intimate explorations of human relationships, and of individual triumph and anguish within the complexities of twentieth-century life.

This anthology demonstrates the astonishing richness and diversity of Hebrew short fiction by including not only established authors of the stature of Amos Oz, A. B. Yehoshua, Yehuda Amichai, and David Grossman, but also less well-known writers whose stories have not been published in translation before: Orly Castel-Bloom and Savyon Liebrecht among the younger women writers, Yitzhak Oren among the more experimental older generation. Glenda Abramson's informative introduction sets the scene for a powerful literary collection, the definitive anthology of a vibrant modern genre.

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