

Most Cruel – The King

By Nissim Aloni

Play no. 127

Opening show: 19/12/1953

Directed by : Shraga Fridman

Designed by: Moshe Mokady

Music : Ben-Zion Orgad

Choreography : Ruth Harris

Assistant Director : Menachem Golan

The Cast

The Speaker: Shlomo Bertonoff

Chorus: Baruch David, Eliezer Plotnik, Gideon Zinger, Shmuel Atsmon, Peretz Halevi, Menachem Golan, Arie Gersho

Tsrua: Hanna Rovina

Yerovam Ben Nevat: Nachum Buchman

Yonathan: Misha Asherov, Shmuel Atsmon

Shimee: Haim Amitai, Shraga Fridman

Guard to Yarovam's House: Shmuel Atsmon, Arie Gershon

Maacha , Wife of Rechav'am Ben Shlomo: Tova Pardo

Rechav'am Ben Shlomo: Shimon Finkel

Scribe: Shlomo Bertonoff

Dancer: Nira Soslovsky

Elah: David Vardi, Baruch David

Young men in Rehavam's court and the people of Ephraim:

Baruch David, Eliezer Plotnik, Gideon Zinger, Shmuel Atsmon, Peretz Halevi, Menachem Golan, Arie Gershon.

Israel, in the middle of the tenth century B.C. is no longer the strong country of David's reign.

The end of the following reign, Solomon's, is marked by the awakening of Egypt and Assyria; by corruption in the state itself, and as consequences, rebellions of its conquered peoples and finally civil war.

Yarovam, son Nevat, is the leader of the civil revolt. Inspired by the Prophet of Shilo, Ahia, enraged by his father's death in the huge Lebanese labor camps, and goaded on by a fanatical mother; he tries to overthrow Solomon, but fails. He then escapes to Egypt.

Ten years pass. The opportunity for revolt, presents itself again with Solomon's death and the pending coronation of his son, Rechavam. Yerovam is called back from Egypt by his tribe's elders.

The man who returns is not the man who fled ten years earlier. Sophisticated, matured, full of doubts as to the usefulness of bloodshed; he is, never the less, still conscious of the decadent state of the nation.

His return is greeted by the unchanged fanaticism of his mother and a furious people.

When the queen, his former lover, appears at his home and suggests an escape to another country he refuses, though inwardly tending towards such a personal solution. However, he decides to meet with the king as a last

attempt to alleviate the situation without violence; but himself incapable of acting on his decision.

Yet, the opportunity occurs. His mother, Tzrua, is arrested, the official reason being witchcraft; and Yarovam goes to the King.

Here Yarovam received the final push towards revolt when he finds the king unwilling to listen, ironical, half-drunk, midway between the imbecile and the demon. He is ordered by the king to leave the country lest his mother be hanged.

The revolutionary Yarovam now emerges. His doubts were cruel; but he sees the king as crueler, the cause of the war and bloodshed.

The queen suddenly appears among the revolutionaries, a short time before the coronation, to announce the king ready to give them peace and fulfill all their conditions if they deliver Yarovam to him.

The prophet, Ahia, has changed allegiance from Yarovam to the king.

Yarovam and his friend Yonatan question the prophet's authority, antagonize Tzrua, and set out to arouse the people.

Trumpets announce the coronation procession about to begin. Tzrua attempts to block its path, but it passes in spite of her and she falls.

Yarovam sees now that after all he has become the man his mother always wanted him to be. "A stranger to love, to happiness and gaiety. For it's a cruel way, the way I go".