

ararat

A QUARTERLY VOL. XLIV WINTER 2003 NO. 173 \$24.00 A YEAR \$7.00 AN ISSUE



JUDEAN HILLS

by Michael Stone

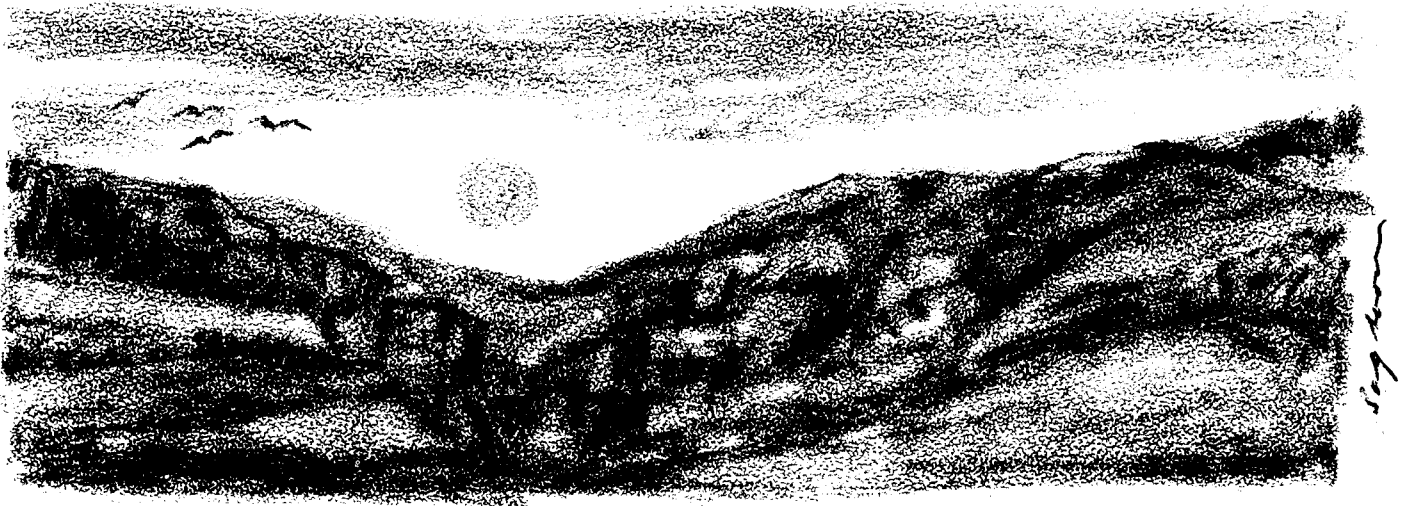
Summer's orange ball falling behind
Judean hills ridged round with
dry stone terrace walls,
ancient shards beneath.

Tree-naked,
bare scored ribs seen
through stretched skin,
stones and brush without earth's fat.

Light purple cyclamens in spring,
brown mushrooms sticky in February,
wild iris, white and low,
and turtles crawling.

White firebreaks cut into
the old new forests' pine and cypress
where needles brown now and shiny,
fall, rot into black humus white mushroom spore
pregnant,
and rich smell
in crevices below rocks
embossed with fossil shells
from a sea long gone.

valley villages
with long grey chicken coops.
mountaintop perched clustered lights,
and sheik's tombs with humped roofs.





Augustine

CLICHÉS

by Michael Stone

The subjects that catch my eye,
have caught others' eyes before.

Once I called Ararat a
many clichéd mountain.

But it is so powerful
that it cracks the cliché
like a nut.

New is seeing, not the seen.

How many falls have been,
But when green withdraws,
Sap's sucked in,
Red flares.

In a log, a gas pocket hisses,
flames yellow-red,
and dies.

ARMENIA VIEWS

by Michael Stone

In Armenia this time,
I was too busy,
So I did not see much.

But at sundown
in the mountains I saw
New mown fields'
cropped straw stubs,
Reflecting the low sun's yellow,
Up against the road.

Beyond them, green pasture
and dark, tilled soil,
in the foothills.

A valley's gash,
Mountains' black silhouette,
sky's deep blue above,
fading upwards into yellow.