

Frölich Róbert, Brigadiere General

Introduction by the author of the PhD essay:

Armed conflicts on the Holy Land in the 20th century

Scientific head of subject:

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Phrasing the scientific problem

This essay of mine is a summary of the 20th century' conflicts by a seemingly new interpretation which involves religious philosophy, military science and historical studies. The research to this subject is based upon Hungarian and international publications, that gives a new approach to the conflicts on the Holy Land. Since a significant amount of the data on this matter are classified to be confidential, my research work ran into a lot of obstacles.

The most important political and historical event of the 20th century – in a Jewish point of view – was the birth of the State of Israel. Achieving an independent state meant the fulfillment of a two-thousand year old dream. After just one day of the establishment of the State of Israel it had to face a fierce enemy that had a hatred which was growing for centuries and now focused it all on total destruction, the Arab world.

To only search for the reasons behind the conflicts through the religious Jewish-Muslim opposites leads to narrowing down the question to simplicity. The roots of the conflicts between nations of the Biblical age living in the Middle-East, more specifically the Jewish people and its neighbouring nations was that they had a very small land to share their territories on. We also have to consider the geographical importance of that region although the reasons of this importance are still changing from time to time as well. And yet, the theory that this is an Arab-Jewish archconflict still stands today. But how far this theory is from the truth a perfect example to show is that the Jews fleeing from the Spanish Inquisition have

found homes in the motherland of the moslem Turkish Empire or in it's then occupied territories such as Bulgaria and at the same time jews were facing barriers to their livelihood in their historical land, Palestine. Jerusalem being a religiously sacred city made this question a lot more complicated. Due to the fact that Suleiman the II. has ordered to build a wall to block the Golden Gate so that the Messiah of the jewish people could not enter the holy city. On the other hand there is the often brought up arguement which says „ Jerusalem is the third most sacred city of Islam” but in the Koran which is the only authority for the moslem people, Jerusalem is not mentioned at all. But it is also an undoubtable fact that the roots of the hostilities have been long forgotten. As the 20th century's British Empire has gained a mandate over Palestine, they found that firing up the anchient opposites will lead to giving them control via the „Divide et impera” policy. The result of these historical mistakes – maybe crimes – are the seemingly unsolvable, tensed and ready to explode crises of today.

In this essay of mine I wish to uncover the ideological roots of wars, the jewish ideology and wiew of life that has shown its devastating power throughout these wars. I wish to prove that although Israel is a modern, democratic state in it's mentality and military philosofoy they live and fight their wars by the same principles as Joshua fought his conquests.

The goals of this research are:

1. To uncover the wars of the predecessor anchient jewish country, to introduce the anchient jewish military ethics.
2. To uncover and analyse all the course of events that led to the foundation of the State of Israel with a jewish aspect and ideology.
3. To prove the egsistence of the significant coherence between the military philosofoy of the anchient jewis state and the modern State of Israel through the wars of it's past.

Utilised research patterns:

- Available **Hungarian and international specified literature** – mainly publications in Hungarian, English and **Hebrew**, the Internet, the **study** of related scientific essays and field works released during the conduct of this reasearch.
- **Consultansy** with experts on the field of my PhD essay, **personal conversations with veteran soldiers in Hungary and in Israel.**
- **Research** in the TZAHAL – Israeli Defence Forces public archives.

The unstable situation in the military- and defencepolicy and the changing political directives on the Holy Land does not make it possible to draw a final conclusion from analising the course of events. The Intifadas and the peace process are among many events that has happened after the war in Lebanon that go beyond the boundaries of my essay. I have concluded my research on the 31st of July 2004.

This essay consists of an introduction, four chapters and six appendixes. This essay consists of an introducion, four chapters and six appendixes. The material in the appendixes are to help to understand better the subjects discussed in the chapders.

Brief summary of the research and analysis by each chapter

I. Chapter

In this chapter I have **introduced** the history of the ancient Jewish people from the early beginning till the end of their independent state. Gaining the knowledge of the Jewish history in viewing and studying the conflicts of the present is a new segment that will put some military actions and the methods of diplomacy into a new perspective. The aspects of the ancient Jewish warfare and morals have a fairly big volume in this chapter. I have **analysed** most of the military and tactical evidences in the Bible and the Rabbinical literature. Although these can not be analysed tactically in a proper way but they give a clear picture of the psychology and manner of warfare and religion's penetrating effects on life itself. I have **concluded** that religion had influence on the Jewish warfare and they have not departed from the Jewish moral and philosophy even when deployed in military operations. In this perspective, according to the existing sources the Jewish mentality was unique and unprecedented in the world.

II. Chapter

In this chapter I thoroughly **analyse** the historical path leading to the foundation of the modern age State of Israel. I have **introduced** the ideological roots that still determine the mentality of Israel. In creating the modern Israel the most significant cornerstones were the works of the Russian Zionist movements and Theodor Herzl. Mainly the anti-Semitism in East-Europe led to the five great emigration waves during which the foundation of the sociological structure of the future Israel was created. The immigrants had no other choice but besides forming civilian organisations they founded armed groups as well in self defence (later for the fight for independence) against the neighbouring Arabs and the

occupying english. These groups were the basis for the Jewish Brigade under world war II. also for the units of the jewish rescue missions sent to Europe and the TZAHAL – Israeli Defence Forces. I have **concluded** that the jewish passive, religious cionism which under the dispersion of the jewish people was the only form of their wish for return, has changed into an active political cionism this was a historical necessity that insured from the jewish people's side the formation of the jewish state.

III. Chapter

In this chapter I have discussed the five great wars of Israel. I have **analysed** the reasons behind the war for independence, the reaction of the arab world to the foundation of the State of Israel. During my examination of the military events I came to **conclude** that there could be a relation drawn between the warfare of the Biblical and the modern ages. In the procedure of analysing the war of Suez i have **introduced** how the rabbinical phylosophy has appeared in the mentality of the military leaders of the State of Israel. Further more I have **introduced** the Biblical origines of making coalitions, seeking allies and the cooperation with them. The most deepest blend of sacrality and war tactics was demonstarted through out the Six-Day War. **By my analysis I revealed** that the occupation of Jerusalem was not only a tactical goal, but the reoccupation of the most sacred land of the jewish people. The sounding of the Sofar at the Wailing Wall at Jom Kippur represents the end of the day of forgiveness, the mercy of God. In analysing the Jom Kippur War I have **introduced** that the religious laws temporarily lose their validity for the saving of a life. In each war Israel has fought they have took special percautions for not having civilian casualties. The jewish mentality does not allow to have unarmed people to fall victims unless the penetration is unavoidable. At the discussion of the Lebanese War I have **introduced** that Israels goal during military deployment was not to gain territories but to protect it's people and itself of course.

This chapter also presents that the legendary military leaders of Israel has followed the spirits of their Biblical and rabbinical predecessors and their judgement in the eyes of the people, their acceptance and respect were based upon these.

IV. Chapter

In this chapter I have **introduced** the military rabbinate in the TZAHAL a unit that not too many people are familiar with. After **analysing** this organisation's tasks, through their work I **introduced** the possibilities of practicing the Jewish religion in the frameworks of the army. But what is more important is that I have **introduced** that the military rabbinate is the insurance of the continuity between the ancient and the modern Jewish army. The traditions kept by the rabbinate can all be originated from the ancient times. The rabbi as the determined keeper of the religion, the most significant wiseman of the religious laws is the spiritual leader and role model for the soldier. The religious laws and the code of conduct are brought to alliance by his leadership. This way the spiritual peace of the soldier can be preserved and as a result he will remain deployable and clear headed in battle. For those servicemen who are not Jewish the satisfaction of their spiritual and religious needs are also the duty of the rabbinate. The rabbinate is acting to fulfill these tasks as well.

Summary of conclusions

I have performed the analysis of the conducted military events and ethics of the ancient Jewish nation. I have also performed the introduction of the mental and physical roots of the Israeli forces as well as revealing a brief history of the Holy Land and the Jewish movements prior to the birth of the State of Israel. I have examined the five great wars of the State of Israel from a new perspective.

As a result of the analysis I have concluded that the modern age Israel could not get separated - even though it was not a conscious intension – from its predecessor ancient state. In wars they have often followed the paths of their conquering forefathers, they have utilised physical memories of the past also gaining advantages by the unique way of Jewish thinking.

If the past and the present would not have blended together into a strong bond then the State of Israel could not originate its legitimacy from the ancient land, its consciousness would not urge the people to defend their land as performing a sacred deed. The ancient Jewish moral and ethics are that made the forces of Israel victorious throughout their wars and the determination of their soldiers, the strength of their weapons were intensified by the pain and suffering of the pogroms and mass executions under the two thousand-year long dispersion of the Jewish people. The most sacred value of the Jewish philosophy is the human life. Preserving it is the primary duty. That is why Israel is always waiting for the very last minute to avoid bloodshed. Even the life of an enemy is a life that the Jewish soldier has a duty to preserve. That is why they rather capture prisoners of war and - as far as the situation allows - make the best efforts not to harm any civilians. Sacrificing one's self is a part of the Jewish moral just as well the aid of the wounded fellows in case of trouble

New scientific discoveries

As the scientific result of the conducted research work on the chosen subject I present:

1. The exposure and analysis of the principles and ideologies represented even at the time of wars by a democratic state that has evolved bound from religiousness.
2. Introduction and analysis of the course of events that has led the way to the establishment of the Jewish state, blending the traditions and the modern influences giving an open road to the individual in making a difference.
3. The drawing of conclusions that help to look at the wars of Israel from not just the shallow historical and military approach that has already been discussed by many but from a new Judaistic philosophical and ritual point of view.
4. And at last I also pronounce it to be a scientific discovery that during my research I was the first to highlight such coherences that produce a continuity between the military activities of the ancient and the modern Jewish nation's armed forces of which the military rabbinate is still one of the most significant organisations today.

The possible utilisation and practical profitability of the essay

The analysed and revealed questions throughout the essay and the derived conclusions of the results will prove to raise the attention of the experts and researchers working on the fields of the wars of Israel, the in-depth Jewish philosophy and its special ability for being able to be applied today and its actuality that is as valid today as it was in the ancient times.

I hold this essay to be highly efficient to be used as a wide ranged resource work among the frameworks of the educational institutes such as the Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, the National Rabbinical and Jewish Studies University. And this essay

could be a useful tool for those who are interested in this discussed material or the researchers as well.