

From mskimmer@MSCC.HUJI.AC.IL Wed Nov 21 11:09:38 2001
 Date: Wed, 21 Nov 2001 11:03:45 +0200
 From: Kimmerling <mskimmer@MSCC.HUJI.AC.IL>
 To: ACADEMIA@TECHUNIX.TECHNION.AC.IL
 Subject: Tantura

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=====>      Caveat lector
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Following the challenge of Prof. Censor I'll repast my message initial message to the list. But let me add to that message the following: Haifa University's decision did not changed my mind. I read carefully all the Hebrew documentations available so far and lead to three major conclusion:

- a. There are too many indications that following and after the conquest of Tantura a considerable number of civilians were killed in various places of the big village (probably by different Jewish "branches", not only Alexandroni people).
 - b. As the initial Haifa's committee of historians (which were not sympathetic to Mr. Katz and his thesis), stated there were no intentional fraud or systematic manipulations with the raw material collected and taped by Katz. On contrary, only in very few cases were found significant discrepancies between Katz field notebook a very common phenomenon in such kind of research. I don't have independent knowledge and sources on this case, but I was impressed by the authenticity of Katz's work and many (not all the testimonies) supplied in the thesis, despite its weak methodological tools and sloppy presentations. The fact that Mr. Katz wasn't well trained in the techniques of oral history just strength my BELIEVE IN HIS PERSONAL INTEGRITY. The thesis dealt with conquer of villages and the "Tantura case" is only part of a bigger work. For the other cases were no findings in Katz thesis for unusual combatant behavior committed by Jewish forces.
 - c. The almost conclusive evidence that can refute the relatively solidly based findings of the thesis is to open up the place that according to several testimonies is located the brother grave of the massacred villagers. Let me take the advantage of this post to challenge the Alexandroni veterans to demand the excavation of that place (today seems to be a kibbutz parking lot), in order to prove their innocence. Otherwise, no any court decision or academic functionaries decision will remove the qualm about the events in Tantura that day.
- bk.

On Sun, 11 Nov 2001, Kimmerling wrote:

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> Before some of us will continue to celebrate their ideological
> "victory" by HC decision on "Katz-affair" let me draw your attention that
> both regional and supreme courts decisions were procedural.
> Rightfully non-courts decided on historical and historiographical issues
> and non decided if was or was not committed a massacre during the
> occupation and leveling of the village of Tantura.
>
> Thus, despite of Katz
> legal obligation to publish his denial, his findings can be refuted or
> reaffirmed only by a solid replicative historical research. As one who had
> read carefully the report of Haifa University inquire committee's
> report, I have to mention that the committee did not found any conclusive
> evidences of intentional and systematic falsification of data and
> fining's made by Mr. Katz. They did found methodological flaws and
> sloppiness. In one case the committee even found an evidence that should
> supported Katz thesis on the occurrence of a massacre, but this evidence
> was omitted from the thesis.
> Baruch.
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