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## Comment about 6-3-02

**Comment Header:** and what about the truth?

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**Date Posted:** June 05, 2002 09:42 AM

I am at loss to untangle the web of disinformation and manipulation contained in the ill-tempered article published by Ilan Pappé. Where does one begin? Perhaps I should mention that Ilan was called before a disciplinary committee, not because of his political views, but for his unrelenting efforts to destroy the reputation of colleagues (those who provide “ the scaffolding for the Zionist narrative”) through a letter and e.mail campaign meant to discourage participation of American academics in the promotion procedure of fellow professors at Haifa? Ilan’s target was, for example, an Arab faculty member who dare contradict his narrative. He was in his mind collaborator! There is a condescending sub-text here: only Jewish scholars can reveal the truth; Arab academics are, according to Dr. Pappé, beholden unto the system.

There are other significant omissions in Dr. Pappé’s exercise in victimology. One may wonder, for example, why he fails to mention that there is no procedure at all for the time being, since the Presiding Judge issued an interim decision which suggests a re-submission of an amended charge!! BTW, there are other faculty members at our university who share Dr.Pappé's political mind and positions, but no one of them was called to a disciplinary court...

As for Ilan Pappé’s “unequivocal conclusion” that a massacre took place at Tantura, I refer readers to his endorsement of post-narrative strategies, subjective narratives and his rejection of the idea of “unequivocal” historical truth. In the matter of political scaffolding under the guise of academic scholarship, Dr. Pappé is the unequivocal master. I cannot contain my amusement as to the manner in which Dr. Pappé damns the work of Benny Morris, the founding-father of the “new historians,” and tries to sell his own derivate work as original and-- once again-- “unequivocally” true. Without Benny Morris there would be no Ilan Pappé; his work is mostly embellishments of Morris’s important studies. Finally, I am saddened by Dr. Pappé’s vilification of the University of Haifa. About 20 percent of our 14,000 students are Israeli Arabs, and due to the very unfortunate circumstances of recent events, the University of Haifa is one of the few remaining sites for dialogue-difficult and often frustrating-between Jews and Arabs. It is a complex process involving setbacks, disappointment and disagreement. Dr. Pappé is aware of these facts, but in his zeal to market himself as a martyr in the cause of “unequivocal truth” he callously and carelessly destroys this beacon of hope in very dark times.

Yossi Ben-Artzi