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re: **MA thesis submitted by Theodore (Teddy) Katz**

My clients, Alexandroni Brigade veterans, who filed a libel suit against Mr. Teddy Katz (hereinafter, "Katz") with respect to his master's thesis (which shall be described below) and publications related to it have empowered me to contact you, as members of the committee appointed by the rector of the university to examine the correspondence between the citations appearing in the thesis and the tapes collected:

1. In March, Mr. Katz submitted a final paper (hereinafter, "Thesis") to fulfill part of the requirements for receipt of a master's degree from the Department of Middle Eastern History in the Faculty of Humanities at University of Haifa.

The title of the Thesis was "The Exodus of the Arabs from the Villages at the foot of the Southern Carmel in 1948".

2. Chapter 4 of the Thesis, which is actually the main chapter, details the "Tantura Affair".
3. In the introduction to Chapter 4, Mr. Katz writes the following:

**"All together 14 Jews died in the battle, including a member of PALLYAM (sea companies) who fell from friendly fire. Not more than 10 or 20 of the Arab fighters of Tantura died in the battle, but at the end of the fighting there were no less than 200 to 250 men who had been killed under circumstances where they had been without any weapons and completely without protection.**

**These are the hard facts from the testimony, some of which will be cited below"** (pg. 88 of the Thesis).

4. The publication of the foregoing statements generated a great deal of noise and even led to additional coverage in various media outlets. In a significant number of the discussions held on the issue, Mr. Katz participated as a "guest of honor" and he stated that he stands strongly behind what had written. The public reacted very strongly to the accusations leveled against my clients by Mr. Katz, and an article published in *Ma'ariv* on January 21, 2000 even quotes Professor Assa Kasher, who drafted the IDF Code of Ethics, as who refers to the "perpetrators of the massacre", which he does not doubt took place as "war criminals".

As a result of the above, my clients filed a libel suit in the Tel Aviv District Court against Mr. Teddy Katz.

5. As part of the law suit, there was a document discovery process, during which my clients received most of the recordings of the interviews conducted by Mr. Katz. Some of the recordings were not provided to my clients, as Mr. Katz claimed that they were "lost" and that he no longer had them in his possession.
6. My clients took the trouble to transcribe the recordings and even translated into Hebrew the conversations which had originally taken place in Arabic. For this purpose they used a professional translator whose mother tongue is Arabic.
7. **In comparing the recordings with the citations in the Thesis submitted by Katz, my clients revealed to their astonishment that Katz had systematically and tendentiously distorted the statements of those who had been interviewed and that his "academic" paper was nothing more than tightly woven fabric of distortions and lies.**
8. We would like to emphasize that we are not referring to "mistakes" that were made in good faith, but rather, as can easily be discerned, a systematic method of false quotations, whose sole purpose was to prove a conclusion set out in advance.
9. After two days of thorough examination in court regarding his affidavit, during which false quotes were revealed in Mr. Katz Thesis as were unbridgeable gaps between statements cited by Mr. Katz and what was actually said to him in the interviews he conducted, Mr. Katz signed a written apology, stating as follows:

**"In March 1998, I submitted a final paper to fulfill part of the requirements for receipt of a master's degree from the**

**Department of Middle Eastern History at University of Haifa (hereinafter, "Thesis").**

**In the chapter of the Thesis that deals with Tantura, I wrote that the overall picture from the testimonies is that for several hours after the battle was over, soldiers of the Alexandroni Brigade hunted down the adult men of the village in order to murder them. When they had finished, there were no less than 200 to 250 men who had been killed under circumstances where they had been without any weapons and completely without protection.**

**I would like to clarify that after re-examining the matter, it is clear to me beyond any doubt that there is absolutely no foundation for the allegation that a massacre was committed in Tantura by the Alexandroni Brigade soldiers or by any other Jewish fighting group.**

**Let me clarify that what I wrote was also evidently misunderstood, as I did not intend to state that a massacre took place in Tantura and even today I state that there was no massacre at Tantura.**

**I believe the Alexandroni veterans who emphatically denied the massacre, and I retract every part of my Thesis that implies that there was a massacre or that defenseless and unprotected people.**

**In light of the above, I believe I owe a sincere apology to the Alexandroni veterans, their families and the families of the Alexandroni men who died in battle for leveling such false accusations against them.**

**This apology will be published in an appropriate section of a major newspaper."**

10. As part of the settlement concluded between the parties (which Mr. Katz tried to revoke one day after signing), Mr. Katz undertook to publish the letter of apology in two daily newspapers. The settlement was given the status of a judgment after the Court reject all of the claims raised by Mr. Katz that he had signed the agreement in a moment of "weakness". It goes without saying that the letter of apology signed by Mr. Katz was drafted in full agreement with his lawyer, who was present at the meeting during which the letter of apology and the settlement were signed. To complete the picture, let us note that Mr. Katz filed an appeal of the judgment and even filed a motion for a stay of performance. The Supreme Court issued a temporary stay of performance and submitted the motion for the response of my clients.
11. As a result of the foregoing, on December 26, 2000, my clients sent a letter to the University of Haifa, asking the heads of the university and heads of the relevant academic bodies to act to rescind the degree that had been conferred on Mr. Katz. Following said letter, committees were established to examine the transcriptions of the interviews conducted by Katz and to compare them to the citations throughout his Thesis as well as to examine the procedures for conferring advanced degrees in general and specifically the procedure for approving this particular Thesis.

12. **From here, let us return to the actual issues, which we will broadly classify into two categories. The first category is false citations and systematic distortion of the statements quoted in Mr. Katz's Thesis as compared to the transcriptions of the interviewed conducted by Mr. Katz. The second is a category of statements and assertions that indicate charlatanism, negligence and tendentiousness on the part of the submitter of the Thesis. Some of the things which will be assigned to the first category, to a large extent also belong to the other category. Regardless, the things relate to one another such that they paint a clear picture of fraud and malice.**
13. Our letter does not relate to the other serious flaws found throughout Mr. Katz's Thesis, such as, for example, the failure to distinguish between second- and third-hand accounts and first-hand accounts, the manipulative manner in which Mr. Katz attempt to pressure those he interviewed into providing the answers he was looking for (a matter which to the best of our understanding is in the authority of the esteemed committee) etc., as the serious things which will point out below, significantly deviate from what can be viewed as methodological errors and sloppy work.
14. **We would further like to note that the transcriptions attached to this letter were submitted to the Court with the approval of Mr. Katz's attorney, and there was no dispute over the accuracy and correctness of the transcripts.**

## **I. False Citations, Lies and Systematic Distortions throughout the Thesis**

### **A. Ali Abed El Rachman Alarja, of the Dachnash family (Abu-Fahimi)**

15. Abu-Fahimi was mentioned on page 118 of Mr. Katz's Thesis as "**one of the key witnesses to the Tantura Affair**". In 1948, Abu-Fahimi was about 40 years old, and despite his advanced age, Mr. Katz claims that he is "one of the smartest people in the village" (p. 119).
16. Abu-Fahimi is quoted by Mr. Katz as having said the following:

**"But what happened was that they gathered all of the people of the village in the square, stood all of those who remained against the walls and murdered them in cold blood. I was an eye witness to this crime. About 95 people were murdered. I wrote down the names of those who were died."** (p. 118 as quoted from an article written by the journalist Randa Abu Abad).
17. It continues (as a direct quote of statements ostensibly made to Mr. Katz):

**"At this stage, when the ammunition was finished, we put down our weapons and surrendered. Then, the Jewish soldiers entered the village and put all the men into groups next to the sea next to a building that was there. While doing this, the soldiers walked both in front and behind the people with their semi-automatic Bren guns and every so often would shoot and kill and injure people"** (pp. 119-120 of the Thesis).
18. Mr. Katz adds by quoting Abu-Fahimi as saying:

Many were killed in different and odd ways; many of the soldiers 'small' commanders shot and killed of their own initiative... and it's also possible that some or even many of those killed found their deaths due to private initiatives taken by local commanders..." (p. 120 of the Thesis).

19. Mr. Katz adds:

**"As to the researcher's explicit question, in his opinion, Abu-Fahimi did not know how many people were killed in the village after surrender or did not want to state a definitive number..."**  
(p. 120 of the Thesis).

20. However, listening to the transcription of the interview between Mr. Katz and Abu-Fahimi, shows that not only did Abu-Fahimi not tell Mr. Katz that he had been a witness to shootings after the surrender, but that he explicitly told Mr. Katz the opposite. Abu-Fahimi told Mr. Katz no less than 4 times that **"nobody was shot after the surrender"**. This is what was told to Mr. Katz, word for word:

**"Teddy: So it's clear that they shot people after the surrender?"**

**Interpreter: That's true.**

**Teddy: This is 100% correct? They killed the people after they had surrendered? After they surrendered? 100 of them?**

**Abu-Fahimi: We did not see that they killed anyone after we surrendered.**

**Translator: He didn't see.**

**Abu-Fahimi: They did not kill. We gathered; we gathered all the residents of the village, we gathered in a large area, no they did not kill anyone. One soldier fired a few shots into the ceiling of the house. A large house that is still near the sea, but we didn't see that they killed anyone."**

21. Recall, this is a person that Mr. Katz refers to as **one of the key witnesses** to the Tantura Affair. There is and can be no doubt that the citation Mr. Katz attributes to Abu-Fahimi is false and turns on its head the meaning of the statements made by Abu-Fahimi, as they are heard on the recording of the interview conducted with him.

22. Furthermore, examination of the transcription of the interview between Mr. Katz and Abu-Fahimi shows that, indeed, Abu-Fahimi testifies that the men were led in a group to the beach, accompanied on both sides by soldiers armed with semi-automatic Bren rifles. However, the words **"and every so often would shoot and kill and injure people"**, which are quoted by Mr. Katz in his Thesis (p. 120, line 1), were not said by Abu-Fahimi, and they were added by Mr. Katz as a "quote" of Abu-Fahimi.

23. It goes without saying that **once again we have here a false and distorted citation that changes the meaning of the statement.**

There is a world of difference between a description of prisoners being led to a central area accompanied by armed soldiers (a situation that is not at all strange) and the same description when the writer adds the words which were not stated in the original: **"and every so often would shoot and kill and injure people"**.

24. **This is a very serious matter, as by doing so, Mr. Katz changes Abu-Fahimi from being a key witness from among Tantura refugees, who completely denies that a massacre took place, into a key witness that confirms that a massacre took place.**
25. The relevant pages from the Thesis regarding Abu-Fahimi's account are attached as **Appendix 1A**.
26. The transcript of the recording of the interview conducted between Mr. Katz and Abu Naif is attached as **Appendix 2A**.

## **B. Mahmoud Abu-Salah (Abu Naif)**

27. Mr. Katz dedicates a special section of his Thesis to the account of Abu Naif, who according to the writer was 17 years old when Tantura was conquered.
28. On page 121 of the Thesis, Mr. Katz quotes Abu Naif as saying:

**“It was very lucky that they appeared, otherwise the soldiers could have continued to kill and kill the people, with no end”.**  
(The word “they” refers to people from Zichron Yakov – the undersigned).
29. Examining the transcript of the interview Mr. Katz conducted with Abu Naif shows that despite Mr. Katz's numerous attempts to goad Abu Naif into referring to a massacre which he had witnessed, Abu Naif does not tell Katz that he is trying to put words in his mouth, but does state unequivocally that he was not an eye witness to the murder of people after the battle was over.
30. The following is what was said by Abu Naif in the interview Mr. Katz conducted with him (pp. 2-3 of the transcript of the recording of the interview with Abu Naif, attached as **Appendix B2**):

**“Teddy: We are always clean like soap. And it shouldn't be that way. It's not fair. It's not good, because it's not real. We need to learn about things as they were. I am not coming to say who is good and who is bad. Forget about that for the moment. The Arabs are not OK. The Jews are not OK. It doesn't matter. The important thing is to know what happened, and that's why the question is after 8 AM, when what happened happened, what was next.**

**Abu Naif: I can't say... If someone came and told me that they killed five or killed ten there. I didn't see it with my own eyes.”**

31. Moreover, on pages 121 and 122 of Mr. Katz's Thesis, Abu Naif is quoted as telling Mr. Katz the following:

**“Aside from this incident, I had three other three cousins who collected the bodies of those killed and while they were doing that, they themselves were shot and killed. Later, they shot another cousin, and I had another two relatives who were killed in the village on the same day... These are for certain the cases I know of personally, because they were my relatives and**

**I knew them personally and I knew and also partially saw what happened to them...**

**The babies, children and women were taken to Faradis, and then, after a week or two, they moved everyone to Tulkarem... Our people buried the dead there in large graves, 40 or 50 each of these graves, and some of those who dug the graves were killed later, in cold blood..."**

**32. Examining the transcription of the recording shows that here as well this is a false citation that is not at all existent in the transcription:**

**32.1 Indeed, Abu Naif tells Mr. Katz that seven of his relatives were killed, however despite Mr. Katz's insistence, he refuses to say that they were killed after surrendering.**

**32.2 Abu Naif did not tell Mr. Katz that three of his cousins were shot when collecting the bodies of the dead. He also does not say that he "partially saw" what happened to his cousins. Again, this is a tendentious and systematic false citation.**

**32.3 Even the sentence "Our people buried the dead there in large graves, 40 or 50 each of these graves, and some of those who dug the graves were killed later, in cold blood..." was not stated by Abu Naif, thus here too we have a false citation by Mr. Katz.**

**33. It is especially interesting that the last sentence appears as a quote of Abu Naif on page 122 of the Thesis, immediately after the description of the "mass murder" conducted in the cemetery (a quote, which as we showed was never made):**

**"Actually, I was personally saved by my personal acquaintance of Shmuel Karnieli, the son of Yehuda for whom I later worked for over 6 years."**

To the innocent reader it seems clear that Abu Naif is telling Katz how he was saved from the horrible massacre he witnessed.

**34. And again, by reading the transcript, it becomes clear that this is yet another lie and manipulation by Mr. Katz, as Abu Naif not only does not tell him about a massacre which he witness, and therefore naturally does not say that he was rescued from the massacre, and the name of Shmuel Karniel is raised as the person who actually "saved him" from prison for several months after Tantura was conquered.**

**35. The following is what was said on page 9 of the transcript of Abu Naif:**

**"Abu Naif: I was, I stayed in jail. I didn't tell you who saved me from prison.**

**Teddy: Who?**

**Abu Naif: Shmuel Karni, the officer that was the commander in this area.**

**Teddy: Shmuel Karnieli.**

**Abu Naif: Yes, rest in peace. He came to the camp and took me out of the camp.**

**Teddy: Because of that you stayed here.**

**Abu Naif: Yes.**

**Teddy: Otherwise you would have gone along with everyone.**

36. **Again these are exceedingly serious issues, even fraud, when the writer totally distorts his factual findings and presents quotations that were never made.**
37. And so, in Mr. Katz's thesis, a man by the name of Shmuel Karnieli, who according to the account of Abu Naif helped release him early from the prisoner's camp to a person who saved Abu Naif "from the massacre".
38. The relevant pages of the Thesis relating to the account of Abu Naif are attached as **Appendix 1B**.

### **C. Mahmoud Abu El Razek Hasadia (Abu Riatchi)**

39. Abu Riatchi is quoted on page 152 of the Thesis as saying:

**"I know that that they shot young people after the battle and that many people were killed in the battle, even after everyone had surrendered and stopping fighting. There was an atmosphere of anarchy, and everyone did whatever he wanted..."**

40. The recording of the interview with Abu Riatchi, attached as **Appendix 2C**, shows that Abu Riatchi did not say these words, **and that once again we have a false citation.**
41. Furthermore, from reading the transcription of the recording, we learn that Abu Riatchi tells Mr. Katz that **he was not in Tantura at all on the day of the battle** and that this is not only a false citation, but an account of a person who explicitly told Mr. Katz that he had not been there. The following is what was said in the transcript (p. 7):

Mr. Katz asks:

**"You said that the Jews came by train, did you hear it or see it?"**

Abu Riatchi responds:

**"How could I have seen? I was in Faradis that day. I am heard stories. They told me about the things that helped the Jewish win."**

42. Moreover, even Abu Riatchi's account, which was hearsay testimony, shows that based on everything he heard, nobody was killed after the battle because Yaakov Al Mukhtar (who is Yaakov Epstein from Zichron Yaakov) saved them all (p. 10 of the Abu Riatchi transcript):

**Teddy: Do you think that managed to kill any of them before Yaakov Al Mukhtar arrived?**

**Abu Riatchi: No – Yaakov accompanied them, and after they buried the Jewish bodies, the stood them in a row and wanted to shoot them and them Yaakov Al Mukhtar interfered and prevented them from being killed."**

43. The relevant pages from the Thesis regarding Abu Riatchi's account are attached as **Appendix 1C**.

#### **D. Nimer Div Ali Jarban**

44. On page 154 of the Thesis, Mr. Katz attributes the following to another interviewee – Nimer Div Ali Jarban (hereinafter, “Nimer”) (born in 1918):

**“According to Nimer – on that day they killed no fewer than 85 in the village. 80 of them were men and 5 women. The women where were killed in the village – all were killed during the battle without meaning to harm them. Children, for example, were not hurt at all. The Jews came with a prepared list of names, read the names of the people, and each person whose name was read stepped aside. Later they took them to the cemetery and shot them there.”**

45. Reading the transcript of the recording of the interview between Mr. Katz and Nimer shows that **Nimir did not tell Mr. Katz the things that Mr. Katz attributes to him.**
46. Nimer told Mr. Katz that they read the names of the collaborators who were taken. He did not say, in any way whatsoever, that they took people to the cemetery and shot them (an action which Mr. Katz refers to in his Thesis as “selection”, with all of the connotations this word has). He also did not tell Mr. Katz that more people were killed after the battle was over.

**Again, we see a tendentious and malicious attribution of things which were never said by the witness.**

47. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding the account of Nimer Div Ali Jarban are attached as **Appendix 1D**.
48. The transcription of the recording of the interview with Nimer Div Ali Jarban is attached as **Appendix 2D**.

#### **E. Najia Hassan Iov**

49. On page 142 of the Thesis, a woman by the name of Najia Hassan Iov (hereinafter, “Najia”) is quoted as saying the following:

**“Two people from outside the village were soldiers for them, they came to the army dressed as civilians and with their faces covered, and they identified all of the people they looked for according to the lists they had, and all of the people they pointed out were immediately taken and done away with, even if it turned out later that it was a mistake and they didn’t have anything against them... In total no fewer than 150 men were killed in the village on that day and maybe even more.”**

50. **Reading the transcript of the interview with Najia shows that here again we have a false citation, as despite Mr. Katz’s insistence, Najia refuses to tell the story Mr. Katz insistently pleads that she tell.**
51. Najia tells Mr. Katz about a person named Salim Abu Shaker, who was taken with his hands bound behind his back to a distant house (and there she thinks they shot him), however she refuses to say that others were also taken there. The following is

what Najia said in the interview Mr. Katz conducted with her (pp. 10 -11 of the transcript):

**Teddy: So the army only took this one person or also others?**

**Najia: No, they only took him. I saw with my own eyes that they took when we were on the beach. I did not see that they did not take others.**

**Teddy: I imagine that the army did not bring them so that they could only point out one, but many.**

**Najia: But I'm telling about what I saw.**"

52. The statements attributed to Najia in Mr. Katz's Thesis were not made by her and were even explicitly denied despite Mr. Katz's pleading and pressure. **Once again we have a false citation, the purpose of which is to mislead readers and lead them to the conclusion determined in advance by Mr. Katz.**
53. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding the account of Najia Hassan lov are attached as **Appendix 1E**.
54. The transcript of the recording of the interview Mr. Katz conducted with Najia Hassan lov is attached as **Appendix 2E**.

#### **F. Tufik El Abed Salach (Abu El-Abd)**

55. On page 161 of his Thesis attributes the following to one Tufik El Abed Salach, who is Abu El-Abd, who was 20 at the time of the conquest:

**"According to Abu El-Abd, fire was exchanged from midnight through 8:00 or 9:00 in the morning and then it was all over. They gathered everyone on the beach; women and children separate from the Med. Children who were 12 joined the men.**

**There were people who were killed only because they were found to have weapons. There was a list of bearers of arms with the village committee, and they found it in the village office. According to Abu El-Abd, they killed about 85 men on that day."**

56. Comparing this to the transcript of the interview Mr. Katz conducted with Abu El-Abd shows, yet again, that this is attributing this that were never said by the witness, not in whole or in part. The following is what was said by Abu El-Abd (p. 20 of the transcript of the recording of the interview with Abu El-Abed, attached as **Appendix 2F**):

**"Teddy: Now did you see them taking people and did you hear them kill them or did you see something with your own eyes?**

**"Abu El-Abd: No, we did not see, we only heard, and aside from that all of the people who went to get their weapons went back and did not appear, and then everyone concluded that they had been killed. We did not see anything, but maybe there are some people who saw something. While I was 20 at the time, I could not move around alone without permission from my parents.**

Aside from that, when they took the people to the prison, everybody started searching for their relatives. Some fled to Ein Azalzel, Igzim and Faradis, and only later did we know who was killed, who was alive, who fled and so on.

Continued on page 21 of the transcript:

**Teddy: Another question. When you were all on the beach, did you see what the soldiers did or are you relying on stories?**

**Abu El-Abd: I did not see anything, everything is stories I was told after the war.**

**Teddy: How did they bury the bodies of those who were killed?**

**Abu El-Abd: The soldiers recruited some of the residents of Tantura in order to bury the bodies, but when they took the men to prison, they brought people from Faradis and had them bury the bodies.**

**Teddy: Did you see the people who did the burying?**

**Abu El-Abd: No, I wasn't there, but the second group that came to the prison related information about the burial of the bodies. But there were still bodies, even after the residents of Faradis did the burials.**

**Teddy: Did all of those who help in the burial return alive?**

**Abu El-Abd: Yes, they returned. There were actually not many, maybe 7 or 8."**

57. Here again, the attribution of statements to a witness in Mr. Katz's Thesis is false, as the witness told Mr. Katz the exact opposite.
58. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Abu El-Abd's account are attached as **Appendix 1F**.

### **G. Shlomo Imbar**

59. Shlomo Imbar was another witness whom Teddy Katz tries to pressure into relying on his conclusions that there had been a massacre, and here, too, the system of distortion, false citations and falsehoods repeats itself.
60. Shlomo Imbar, who continued as a career officer in the IDF with the rank of Brigadier General, is in the opinion of Katz, a key witness, and he is quoted in Mr. Katz's Thesis on p. 136 as saying the following:

**"And I should note that even the Germans did not kill unarmed and unprotected prisoners. When all was said and done, their prisoners came back alive. Here in Tantura, they murdered Arabs."**
61. Examination of the transcript of the interview Mr. Katz conducted with Shlomo Imbar, attached as **Appendix 2G**, reveals that the citation is not true. The following is what was said on page 19 of the transcript:

**Teddy: After all, I also write, I also remember, even if I make a recording, but forget all of that, you're talking to me using these kind of concepts, you've gone to war against the Germans, the Germans despite their being the most bitter enemy did not kill prisoners.**

**Shlomo Imbar: They did not kill Western prisoners, but they did Russians.**

62. The word "murder" does not appear in the statements made by Imbar, and certainly the sentence, "**Here in Tantura, they murdered Arabs**" does not appear in the transcript.
63. As we will see below, Shlomo Imbar told Mr. Katz things that were quite the opposite.
64. Even the citation that appears on page 136 of the Thesis, according to which Imbar ostensibly said, "**Despite this I was there throughout the day and saw things I'd rather not talk about**" is not true and there is no mention of it whatsoever in the transcript of the interview.
65. Despite the fact that Mr. Katz attempts to pressure Shlomo Imbar into stating that he witnessed the killing of prisoners, Imbar denies this categorically. The following is what was said:

**Teddy: The village was captured and the residents were gathered. What happened between the two.**

**Shlomo Inbar: Nothing.**

**Teddy: It's a shame, a true shame, and I'll tell you why, because I'm not only interviewing you, I'm also interviewing Arabs.**

66. And again on pages 21 and 22 of the transcript:

**Teddy: I'll ask you from a different angle.**

**For example, do you by chance remember if you saw if this went according to some kind of lists, selective, they looked for special people.**

**Shlomo Imbar: Under no circumstances no.**

**Teddy: The shot freely in all directions.**

**Shlomo Imbar: I said they shot, under no circumstances that I know of.**

67. And then again on page 64 of the transcript:

Mr. Katz asks:

**"...The story says that from the moment that it happened, they obviously stormed forward furiously and killed all of those where were in front of them, but they continued into the village, and took out anything they saw move.**

**Again, far be it from me to pass judgment now, first of all the question is if you ever heard a story like this."**

Shlomo Imbar responds:

**“Look, this is the first time I’ve heard this. I can’t confirm it, and I can’t deny it.”**

68. This also appears on page 11 of the transcript attached to Mr. Katz’s affidavit, where Mr. Imbar tells Mr. Katz explicitly when Mr. Katz refers to events that took place in the cemetery: **“I assume that it’s not possible they killed people there.”**
69. So here again we have another key witness who is falsely quoted by Mr. Katz in a manner which completely transforms what was said to him in the recorded interview.
70. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Shlomo Imbar’s account are attached as **Appendix 1G**.

#### **H. Elchanan Annani**

71. On pages 158-159 of the Thesis, Mr. Katz relates to the account of a person named Elchanan Annani as follows:

**“As opposed to the other Alexandroni veterans who were interviewed, who despite repeated questions, many of whom for some reason did not remember a phenomenon of mass killing in Tantura – Elchanan Annani remembered and even search for explanations for what happened in Tantura on the day the village was taken.”**

72. Reading the transcript of the recording of the interview Mr. Katz conducted with Elchanan Annani, attached as **Appendix 1H**, shows that Mr. Annani told Mr. Katz that he had been a scout who led the forces to the entrance to the village, **though he did not enter the village and therefore cannot provide testimony as to what happened there.**

73. The following is what was said (p. 26 of the transcript):

**Teddy: Not in Tantura, until what time on that day of the battle did you stay there. Did you leave with everyone or earlier.**

**Elchanan: I don’t think I entered the village, it’s really vague, I brought them to the line of fighting and then left.**

74. Moreover, **the statement that Elchanan Annani remembered the phenomenon of mass killing in Tantura is also a lie, as in the transcript there is no mention at all of a statement by Annani that he was witness to mass killing in Tantura.**
75. Once again this is a false citation which joins the foregoing list of false citations.
76. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Elchanan Annani’s account are attached as **Appendix 1H**.

**Each and every one of the false citations described in the foregoing would be sufficient to disqualify Mr. Katz’s Thesis, as these are not trivial omissions (which should also not be found in a thesis), but systematic distortions of statements made to the author. All the more so, because the cumulative weight of all of the false citations which have been described require the conclusion that this is a Thesis**

which must be disqualified and that it is unthinkable that it remain upon the University shelves as a Thesis that was approved and even gained its author an academic degree.

## **II. Systematicness, Charlatanism and Negligence**

### **I. Tzavha Mahmoud Tanji**

77. Another key witness in Mr. Katz's Thesis is Ms. Tzavha Mahmoud Tanji (hereinafter, "Tzavha" cited on page 162 of the Thesis.

The transcript of the interview with Tzavha is attached as **Appendix 2I**.

78. Tzavha was 76, and Mr. Katz describes her on page 162 of the Thesis as a sickly woman who **has a clear mind and memory**. Mr. Katz's statement regarding Tzavha's clarity of mind and memory has a great deal of importance, which we shall show.

79. Tzavha tells Mr. Katz tall tales which completely conflict with all other versions reported to Mr. Katz by both Jewish and Arab interviewees alike, and even the official documents which tell the story of the battle.

80. Thus, for example, Tzavha tells Mr. Katz that the battle for the village of Tantura lasted a week (although there is no dispute that the battle began at midnight and ended in the early morning hours), though Mr. Katz has no problem stating that this version:

**"Does not materially conflict with the other descriptions we have, but it mainly adds elements to them that flush the story out, (and because of that - the undersigned) it is not flawed and there is no problem with it at all"** (p. 162 of the Thesis).

81. The same Tzavha also tells Mr. Katz that until the end of the battle, the women and children spent two weeks on the beach, during which **"there were still young people in the mountains fighting"** (pp. 8, 13, 14 of the transcript).

Then Tzavha tells Mr. Katz that at the end of those two weeks, the women were led to busses that took them away, and that she then saw many dead bodies of men in the cemetery (p. 12 of the transcript).

82. It is clear beyond all doubt that this is an account by a woman who is very confused and which cannot be given any weight whatsoever. Despite this, Mr. Katz finds it appropriate to say that Tzavha **"has a clear mind and memory"** and that her account **"does not conflict with other descriptions"**. This is done so that he can give weight to her account regarding "the killing" which she ostensibly witnessed.

83. **Again, this shows tendentiousness and intentional deception by Mr. Katz, and there is not, nor can there be, any doubt that it was clear to Mr. Katz that this was the account of a woman who is completely senile, and which can not be given any weight.**

84. But this is even more serious, as if we look at the transcript of the aforementioned interview Mr. Katz conducted with Najia, **Appendix 2E**, we can learn something in else about the honesty and integrity of Mr. Katz, who states in his Thesis that Tzavha is a woman with **"a clear mind and memory"**.

At the end of the interview with Najia (p. 11 of the transcript of Najia), Mr. Katz asks the interviewee: **“Do you know Haj Tzavha?”**

Najia answers: **“Of course.”**

Interpreter: **“We visited her and she told us stories that were mixed up.”**

And Najia confirms: **“Yes, poor thing, she’s gone mad.”**

85. The relevant pages of the Thesis relating to the account given by Tzavha Mahmoud Tanji are attached as **Appendix 11**.

## **J. Rachamim Levy**

86. In his Thesis, Mr. Katz quotes Abu Riatchi, who says the following (p. 151 of the Thesis):

**“There’s a Yemenite man in Zichron Yaakov called Rachamim, and he boasted to me that on the day Tantura was captured, he used his Sten to shoot and kill at least 15 of the locals in Tantura. I worked with him later for years in construction, and I know him well. I also know his home in the *moshava*: between Meshulam and David Yosef in the Yemenite quarter.”**

87. Mr. Katz adds and relates (p. 15 of the Thesis) that:

**“The author heard about a Yemenite man who acted cruelly to a number of locals in Tantura from several Tantura refugees.”**

88. Mr. Katz adds to this with the following (p. 151 of the Thesis):

**“The author located the “hero” in the story of Abu Riatchi, who is evidently Rachamim Levy, a resident of Zichron Yaakov, currently over 80, who worked for years in construction, and regarding who several people in Zichron Yaakov suggested that his comments be taken with a grain of salt.”**

89. Mr. Katz interviewed Mr. Rachamim Levy when he was over 80. According to Mr. Rachamim Levy, he was not in the Tantura battle and at that time he was in Kara with the Alexandroni Brigade.

90. Mr. Katz goes to the trouble of refuting Rachamim Levy’s alibi by stating that the battle over Kara was on May 9, 1948 and not on May 23, 1948 – the date on which Tantura was taken. He leaves the statements that way.

91. Here, Mr. Katz brings the account of a Jewish Yemenite who murdered prisoners, identifies Rachamim Levy as the hero of Abu Riatchi’s story and leads Rachamim Levy to its denial with a comment on the dubious credibility of Levy according to **“several people in Zichron Yaakov”** (p. 151 of the Thesis) and refuting his alibi regarding his whereabouts at the time of the battle.

92. Should Mr. Katz have bothered doing the minimum required from a master’s student writing a research paper and checked the issue in the IDF archive and in the relevant literature, he would have found the following.

92.1 Companies from brigades 31, 32 and 34 participated in the battle for Kara, but none of the forces from brigade 33 participated. (Gershon Rivlin and Zvi

Sinai, editors, Alexandroni Brigade in the War of Independence, Tel Aviv 1964, p. 186).

- 92.2 Rachmim Levy did not serve in Brigade 33 and that is why his name does not appear among the soldiers who took part in the Namal operation to take Tantura (IDF archive 6430/49, file 147, "list of the people going into action on May 22).

Regardless – there is no reason to believe that Rachmim Levy participated in the taking of Tantura.

93. Mr. Katz absolves himself in his Thesis from the need to conduct the elementary examination in the IDF archive with the unfounded excuse according to which (p. 129):

**“According to what is known, there is no specific list of the fighters, alive or fallen, according to companies or squads. Evidently the level of organization and organizational abilities during the war itself they were not prepared with this level of details in the records.”**

An examination conducted by the undersigned at the IDF archive shows that the IDF maintained exact records of the fighters in Battalion 33 who participated in the taking of Tantura, divided into companies, squads and functions.

94. Instead of doing the minimum required by checking the IDF archive for the list of soldiers who participate in the Namal operation to take Tantura (an issue that the undersigned, who is not a master's research student, arranged in a few hours), **Mr. Katz preferred to leave Rachmim Levy – an elderly man from Zichron Yaakov, to wear the mark of Cain, a murderer of prisoners and liar.**\
95. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Rachamim Levy's story is attached as **Appendix J**.

## **K. Yoseph Graf**

96. The fact that Mr. Katz, whose Thesis focuses on the battle in which Tantura was taken, did not bother to do the minimum required and did not check the names of the soldiers who took part in the battle at the IDF archive, leads us to yet another injustice regarding the account given by a man named Yoseph Graf, who according to Katz participated in the battle to take Tantura as a guide for Company C (p. 128 of the Thesis).
97. Katz also states that Yoseph Graf's account **“is quite important in and of itself”** (p. 108 at the bottom).
98. As it appears below, the great importance that Katz ascribes to the account of Yoseph Graf is attributable to the fact that it is actually the only testimony by someone who according to Katz was a soldier on the Jewish side and who tells Katz of indiscriminate shooting after taking the village.
99. Mr. Katz ignores the many questions raised by Joseph Graf's testimony which states that he was Company C's guide, as well as ignores that none of the soldiers remembers a guide named Joseph Graf. Had Mr. Katz bothered to check the names of the soldiers who participated in the Namal operation in the IDF archive,

he would have easily discovered that Joseph Graf is not included among the names of those who participated in the operation, and his name is not among the names of guides who were assigned to various forces. Attached as **Appendix 2K** to the volume of appendices is the list of guides as it appears in the IDF archive.

100. **Here too we have a combination of negligence, charlatanism and tendentiousness. As Katz referred to it as “rare testimony” that supports the story of killings, he refrained from the minimum examinations which would have immediately shown that the testimony is devoid of all value, as it is an account provided by a person who was not there (not only according to the memories of the other soldiers who stated that no person named Joseph Graf participated as a guide in the battle, but also from the official documents).**
101. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Joseph Graf’s account are attached as **Appendix 1K**.

#### **L. Rashida Hassan Al Iob Amar (hereinafter – Rashida)**

102. On page 139 of the Thesis, Mr. Katz quotes a witness named Rashida Hassan Al Iob Amar as having said the following:

**“There were many Yemenites among the soldiers and I recognized at least two of them after some time, when I went to work in Zichron Yaakov and he asked me if I knew him, I told him that I did, and I truly did remember him, because he and another on gave us water to drink. In Tantura there were many wells and there was also already running water in several courtyards. I did not see those two shooting people.”**

103. Following the citation there is a comment by the author (p. 139 of the Thesis):

**“Based on the fact that Rashida specifically notes that she did not see those two shooting, it can evidently be concluded that soldiers who were not shooting was a special sight on that day.”**

104. According to the statements, it appears that this is tendentious comment made by the author and is not the required conclusion from the text quoted from Rashida, though reading the transcript of the interview with Rashida, attached as **Appendix L2**, shows that this is even more serious as Rashida does not say “specifically” that she did not see the those two shooting, but responds to a question asked by Mr. Katz’s interpreter asked her (p. 5 of the transcript):

**“He means whether you saw them when they killed any of the men.”**

Rashida’s response was as follows:

**“No I did not see them – I swear to God that I did not see with my own eyes that they killed.”**

105. Before us we have, yet again, a combination of a citation that is not correct and a malicious tendentiousness expressed in the author’s comment.

106. The relevant pages of the Theses regarding the account of Rashida are attached as **Appendix L1**.

### **M. Belachovitz Report**

107. Another example of the tendentiousness and maliciousness of Mr. Katz can be found in the author's comment that relates to the Deputy Commander of Company A in the operation, Yaakov Erez (then Belachovits), who hand wrote the final report summarizing the activity of Company A in the operation to take Tantura. According to Mr. Katz on page 102 of the Thesis, Yaakov Erez is **"the only person who refused to be interviewed for the Thesis, claiming "the 'tendentiousness' of the author"**.
108. After stating the foregoing, Mr. Katz adds the following comment (p. 102 of the Thesis):
- "By the way, is it possible that there are other reasons for his refusal to be interviewed? Is it possible the Belachovitz has something to hide? We cannot know."**
109. In order to complete the picture for readers, on page 103 of the Thesis Katz raises another question:
- "Why was the report of the company not written by the commander of the company himself, Paltiel Spiatitzky (Shavit)..."**
110. And Mr. Katz continues to say that (p. 103):
- "In the questions the author asked members of Paltiel's family, his brother and son, who he located with great effort, he learned mainly from Paltiel's brother that as a commander of soldiers in the battle, Paltiel was an especially moral person, put soldiers who looted on trial and bitter arguments with soldiers and friends and questions and problems of preserving morality in wartime."**
111. And this is how Mr. Katz leads reasonable readers to understand the following from what was said and to read between the lines:
- 111.1 Yaakov Erez, Deputy Commander of the company, refused to speak to Mr. Katz because he evidently had something to hide;
- 111.2 Paltiel Shavit, who was the Company Commander, did not sign the report because he, as opposed to Yaakov Erez, was a very moral person and was not prepared to sign the report;
- 111.3 The operation report signed by Yaakov Erez is false and conceals what truly took place.
112. Had Mr. Katz bothered to try to discover the truth with the soldiers of Company A whom he interviewed, he would have easily found out that the prosaic reason that the report was signed by Yaakov Erez, Deputy Commander of the Company, and not by Paltiel Shavit, Company Commander, is that the battle was led by Yaakov Erez and not by Paltiel Shavit who did not feel well and did not participate in that battle.

113. **Again we have an example of a combination of negligence, charlatanism, tendentiousness and malice, the result of which is the groundless defamation of a person whose only crime was refusing to be interviewed for Mr. Katz's thesis.**
114. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding the Belachovitz Report are attached as **Appendix M1**.

#### **N. Mottel Sokoler**

115. Another witness on which Mr. Katz relies to prove "his conclusions" is Mottel Sokoler, who according to him, helped bury "230 bodies". Mottel Sokoler is actually the only witness upon which Katz's Thesis is based, and his conclusion regarding 200-250 men killed after the battle "when they were unarmed and unprotected".
116. **The transcript of the interview with Sokoler (attached as Appendix N2) shows clearly that this person is completely senile and no weight can be given to his statements:**
  - 116.1 Sokoler, for example, insists that **Tantura was taken during the austerity period of Dov Yosef.**
  - 116.2 Sokoler also insists that the Jewish casualties were buried in the village near the school (and it is clear that he does not know how to distinguish between the location of the memorial to the soldiers who fell and the soldiers' place of burial).
  - 116.3 Sokoler insists that even where the bodies were buried, the topography has changed, creating a mountain (something that is unknown by science).
117. The same Sokoler also relates that after the village fell nobody was shot, however for this purpose Mr. Katz does not accept his account.
118. **Once again we are faced with giving decisive weight to unfounded testimony, that once again strengthens the conclusion that this is a tendentious research study that is poor and unworthy.**
119. The relevant pages of the Thesis regarding Mottel Sokoler's account are attached as **Appendix N1**.

#### **N. Mention of veterans of the Alexandroni Brigade in the Thesis**

120. Another issue that reflects Mr. Katz's honesty, integrity and good faith is the manner in which he chose to use direct quotation to cite almost none of the statements made by the Alexandroni veterans who were interviewed by him during the course of his research, and whose statements to him were unequivocal denials of the killing of prisoners after the end of the battle.
121. Not only the citation of the statements made by the Company Commander, Operations Officer and the Adjutant, as well as other commanders are absent from the Thesis (to the extent that the statements relate to the question of there having been no "massacre"). There is also not an ounce of truth to the quote of another soldier who flatly denies that there was a massacre, yet despite that this was the version provided by dozens of Alexandroni Brigade veterans who were interviewed

by Mr. Katz (with the exception of two partial quotes of soldiers who told Mr. Katz that if prisoners were killed, it may have been done by other forces).

122. Thus, readers are left with dozens of quotations from Tantura refugees (and as we have shown the link between the quotation and the source is coincidental at best) as opposed to a total absence of quotations from soldiers who flatly and steadfastly deny that there was any massacre.

## **O. Conclusion**

123. The foregoing paints a very serious picture of a master's student who submitted a Thesis that is nothing more than a tightly woven fabric of false citations.
124. This does not refer to tension between various academic methods, which recognize the value of oral testimonies and those who reject them, as to the best of our knowledge **there is no academic method which allows the research to falsify the results of the experiments conducted.**
125. In our letter, we do not relate to the many other flaws that can be found throughout the Thesis, as this is not the place to discuss them.
126. **Mr. Katz is not a "new historian", but a systematic liar who misled the academic institution that granted him its patronage and gave his Thesis the legitimacy it needed, just as he misled many others.**
127. For your convenience, we are attaching the court record of Mr. Katz's cross-examination in court so that you can realize that despite the opportunity he was given, no suitable resolution for Mr. Katz was found with respect to the matters outlined in the foregoing.
128. We would further like to state that there is and can be no doubt that Mr. Katz acted with bad faith and with clear tendentiousness. The purpose of the lies is single fold, and their result is a systematic distortion of the data collected to adjust it to the "requested results".
129. We hope that the material submitted to you will help you in your work and we are available to you to provide any assistance or clarification required,

Sincerely,

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Giora Erdinast, Adv.