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## RESEARCH NOTES

## SOME NOTES CONCERNING HIGH PRIESTS IN THE FIRST CENTURY C.E.

by Hanan Eshel (pp. 495–504)

1. In the first line of the recently published double document 4Q348, a high priest is mentioned. A. Yardeni who published this document neither deciphered the name of the high priest, nor understood that he was mentioned as part of the dating formula. In this paper I suggest that (a) the high priest in 4Q348 is Joseph, son of Camydus, who served in this function in 46–47 C.E., and (b) that the unusual dating formula reflects the fact that some people in Judea avoided dating documents according to the Roman emperors.

2. An inscription from Masada bearing the name of Ananias the High Priest may indicate that this name was used to assure the purity of the content of the vessel. That being so, I would suggest that the paleo-Hebrew seal of Elienai, dated by N. Avigad to the first century C.E., was the seal of Elionaeus, son of Cantheras, who served as high priest in 44–46 C.E. This seal was used to vouch for the purity of the content of the sealed vessels.

Hence, the British reaction to events in Palestine has not to be understood in terms of how the Administration carried out the policy of the government in London, but precisely in terms of its inability to implement that policy – or for that matter, any other policy. It was the Palestine civil war that affected Britain, rather than the other way round. Britain and its Palestine Administration, previously the fomentor of events in Palestine, now became, to a degree, subject to the unfolding situation. This loss of control caused the British to terminate thirty years of rule, that recent research has evaluated in very positive terms, in a most unseemly manner.

I argue in this article that the determining factor for the outcome of the civil war was the practical collapse of the British government in Palestine, rather than the collapse of the Palestinian Arabs, who were in an inferior military position throughout the fighting. In making this claim, I am offering an alternative view to the conventional wisdom regarding the main stages of the war. Historiography of the 1948 war (the Israeli in particular, but others as well) tends to view 'Hagana' actions on the way to Jerusalem (operation 'Nachshon'), conducted at the beginning of April 1948, as the turning point in the events and the cause for the Jewish victory. Since, in my opinion, the British role was the determining factor in the nature of the war until May 1948, I suggest that the capture of Haifa by the 'Hagana', which transpired through the silent consent of the British at the end of April (20–22), was the critical turning point. In Haifa, everyone – Jews and Arabs – could see that the government was either unable or uninterested in getting involved. That moment seems to have energized the Jewish side's momentum.

In this article I further challenge the widely-accepted notion, commonly maintained by Israeli historians, that the action, or inaction, of the Jewish leadership of the Yishuv was the reason for its success. Instead, I have attempted to show that an analysis of the victor's actions in a civil war is insufficient and that the war must be portrayed through the prism of all of its participants. This orientation has encountered obvious opposition in Israel. Furthermore, it challenges British historiography, which neither perceives the Mandatory government as a central factor in the 1948 war nor attributes to it an almost total collapse.

THE BRITISH AND THE OUTCOME OF THE CIVIL WAR IN PALESTINE – THE  
'HAIFA TURNING POINT', APRIL 1948

by Motti Golani (pp. 455–494)

On May 14, 1948, the Mandate that was granted to Britain by the League of Nations expired. Marked by long months of a civil war between Jews and Arabs, the last phase of the Mandate significantly affected the manner in which Britain concluded its mission in Palestine. The war, that lasted from December 1947 until May 1948, was inevitably influenced by the fact that British rule, including the civil administration, the police, and the army, continued to exist formally until the middle of May. Research on this period of the civil war has concentrated on the nature and intention of British policy and whether it was carried out by the British administration in Palestine until the very day of the evacuation. Some have argued that the British blatantly supported the Arabs, while others have claimed that they backed the Jews. Still other studies maintain that the British sought to bring about a situation of chaos in order to discredit the United Nations' partition plan. Be these positions as they may be, all agree that Britain exercised a crucial role that had a deliberate and conscious impact on the events.

The research, primarily Israeli and British, on Britain's stance in the Palestine war has come a long way, to the point where the question of whether the British supported the Jews or the Arabs is no longer addressed. British research (contrary to Israeli and Arab studies) also touches on the helplessness of Britain in the face of the war, stressing that once the war broke out and the evacuation plan was coordinated, Britain lost its ability to act independently in Palestine. Moreover, Britain's problematic international standing in the aftermath of the Second World War, particularly in the Middle East, is seen as a linchpin to understanding its Palestine policy.

This article inquires into the nature of Britain's reaction to the civil war in Palestine itself. It is concerned with the following questions: What generated the feeling of chaos in those final months of the Mandate? Why did each side accuse the British for aiding the other? As British policy was determined in London, it is legitimate to ask how independent Britain was to make policy at the time and how did it affect the actions of the High Commissioner and his staff in Palestine?

I will argue that whatever policy the British had formulated, the Mandatory administration, in the face of a surging war, was not in a position to implement it.

## SUMMARIES

### FROM THE GENERATION OF MOSES TO THE GENERATION OF THE MESSIAH: THE JEWS CONFRONT 'AMALEK' AND HIS INCARNATIONS

by Elliott Horowitz (pp. 425–454)

This article examines the various ways in which the biblical narrative concerning Israel's war with the Amalekites, as well as the commandments to remember and to destroy Amalek were understood by Jews during late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Amalek's familial descent from Esau (his grandfather) and the widespread association first between Esau and Rome, and then, in medieval times, between Esau and Christianity led many Jews to connect Amalek, implicitly or explicitly, with Christian Europe. This could create problems, of course, for medieval Jews who psychologically identified European Christendom with the realm of Amalek, but wished to live in (relative) peace with their environment.

One curious tradition which emerged in the tenth century, and lasted through the nineteenth, was that the Armenians were the descendants of Amalek. From the eleventh century the war against Amalek is (prudently) transferred to the realm of liturgy, with the transformation, in northern Europe, of the Kaddish into an anti-Amalekite prayer. In south-western Europe Amalek came, in the later Middle Ages, to be allegorized in various ways, allowing it to be seen, on the one hand, as a symbol of the 'evil inclination', but also to be expanded to include peoples of non-Edomite descent, such as the Arabs. The latter step had also been taken in the Christian world, which eventually allowed Reformation figures to associate the Jews themselves with Amalek.

From the nineteenth century the opinion began to be expressed, even in traditional rabbinical circles, that there was no longer any way of identifying the descendants of Amalek, or that they had actually disappeared. Nonetheless, in the twentieth century the Nazis, and to a lesser degree, the Soviet Union, came to be associated with Amalek, in both word and image.