

WAR TERRITORY DESTINY

Essays on Israel, the Arabs, and the Jewish People

Robert Eisenman

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Why We Must Stop Being Jews or Why We Must Become Hebrews Again
2. Arab Class Structure and the New Terrorism
3. The Problem with Rabbinic Judaism
4. All the World Loves a Winner (or The Danger of Losing a War to the Arabs or Letting them Think you Have)
5. This Time You Cannot Blame the Israelis
6. Viet Nam Hand-Wringing and The American Commitment
7. The Nuclear Threat to Israel
8. The Assassination of Feisal
9. Cyprus – Aphrodite's Isle

## INTRODUCTION

The present collection of Essays overlap in the areas of politics, sociology, history, and religion. There are seven Essays (the last more in the nature of a biographical narrative) and, though each deals with a particular subject matter or insight, what is finally being contemplated and being dealt with here is the future survival of the Jewish People and, with it or as an instrument or crystallization of it, that of the State of Israel.

The Essays all develop ideas conceived while the author was living in Israel in "The Occupied Territories" after both The Six-Day and *Yom Kippur* Wars. The last "*Cyprus: Aphrodite's Isle*" was written at this time but deals with an earlier Period before The Six-Day War.

Just as Herzl's *Judenstaat* (or *Jewish State*) was conceived of as a new departure to the solution of "The Jewish Question" and was subtitled as such on its first page; so, too, these essays purport to deal with no less a momentous subject than "The Jewish Question" — again, almost a hundred years after the appearance of Herzl's original essay and in the light of the new configuration of circumstances facing the Jewish People after the destruction of the Mass of European Jewry and the Establishment of the Jewish State.

The ideas being proposed may seem fantastic to the general reader but — it is suggested — no more than did Herzl's in his own day; for, just as Herzl was contemplating a physical transformation of the Jewish People, the present writer is contemplating a Spiritual transformation.

The solutions being considered are radical but, with the memory of the *Holocaust* and the possible future destruction of the Jewish People in mind, it is hoped that such questions as the destruction of Israel, the future disappearance of *Diaspora* Jewry, the Arab

Question, the relevance of Judaism to the Modern Jew, and the possible future use of nuclear weaponry in the Middle East are faced up to squarely and fairly.

These Essays are not intended to be scholarly since the process implied by that word often reduces the scope of things that can be treated and the creative imagination – the intuition that can be brought to bear on them. It is not, as some scholars seem to think, possible to document everything – you cannot, for instance, document an insight. This is not to say that one should not master a given subject range but, once having done so, one should in the proverbial sense promptly forget what one has learned.

Most scholars tend to be one-sided, their knowledge compartmentalized to a given Period in History or a particular Discipline. This is the direct antithesis to what is required in the creative process. Moreover the costliness in terms of time consumption and tediousness of mastering "the Literature" flowing around a subject tends to produce a rather deadly sterility.

I have been advised in relation to my essays regarding "The Assassination of Feisal" and "Arab Class Structure and the New Terrorism", for instance, to document them further. I do not see how documenting them further will make them any more or less accurate since they are based on personal experience and a personal intuition of the situation in question.

Nor do I think it necessary for these are (as are most of the other Essays) simply insights – insights into the present situation of the Jewish People and the present disastrous combination of forces confronting Israel in the Middle East – and, therefore, they are presented as Essays, i.e., the discussions surrounding or

bearing on a given problem, rather than articles (if there can be any definable distinction between the two genres).

Perhaps the real vehicle that should be employed to express the ideas presented in these Essays is the heightened language of Prophecy, but Prophecy – as the Rabbis among us would be quick to point out – is dead and has been for sometime. They, in particular, should be grateful for this for at least their position, so laboriously constructed, cannot be threatened from this perspective.

Perhaps Prophecy will, once more, come alive as that great Medieval Poet of the Hebrew Language and Spirit, Yehuda Halevi, foresaw it would – once the Jewish People had been fortuitously conjoined with that most precious of all Lands, the Holy Land, again. But so far it shows no signs of so doing. Therefore one is constrained to speak in the language and medium people understand and, for the present anyhow, that is flat prose.

That such momentous issues must be debated in such a paltry vehicle does not detract from the importance of the questions themselves no more than it did when Theodore Herzl cast his Utopian Visions in the same poor vessel. Rather, it reflects the mundane level of what passes for communication in the Modern World.

The Essays are provocative and are meant to be. I expect they will engender a good deal of hostile scholarly reaction, for it is not possible to make any progress towards the ideal of becoming a New People unless one shakes the old one out of certain *shibboleths* of its previous existence. There will, no doubt, be much rebuttal to the author's thesis that Rabbinic Judaism has outlived its usefulness to the Jewish People.

Many arguments will doubtlessly be mustered to show my lack of

scholarly precision as well as my lack of appreciation for the great contributions Rabbinic Judaism has made to the Jewish People throughout its History. But these will not affect the final Truth of the insight, thus expressed, which can only be arrived at in the end by intuition. Every scholar's viewpoint, regardless of the documentation, in the final analysis only reflects his preconceived notions.

Scholars notoriously amass any amount of evidence to back up or reinforce a particular thesis, but no amount of such activity is worth a bit without some accompanying creative insight. For this reason, these Essays are aimed at the general public for this public via simple common sense and straightforward folk wisdom is very often wiser than the supposed "wise" of our time.

They are meant to be read in something of the manner one might read the Essays of a D. H. Lawrence or a Friedrich Nietzsche, a Rousseau or others – only they deal specifically with "The Jewish Problem" and, in particular, at the present juncture in Jewish History when the Jewish People will either survive in the *Diaspora* and in the new Jewish State or be inundated, as the Arabs seem to think they will. It is the thesis of this author that such an eventuality depends more on the Jews themselves and how they see themselves as a People and how they mobilize themselves for this struggle than it does the Arabs.

I am content to leave it to the general public to test and decide the worthiness and merit of the ideas being put forth in these Essays as none of them is really suitable for publication in academic journals, periodicals, or magazines. These cater to the tastes, prejudices, and preconceptions of the elite in a given field

– “the *Peter Principle*” being operative here – or a certain coterie or clientele none of whose ideas ever filter very much down to the general public.

See, for example, the present state of Biblical criticism, both Old Testament and New, or the ideas bantered back and forth in most journals of sociology or political science as if basing one’s arguments or theses on anyone else’s can have anything to do with their accuracy or as if mastering a huge mass of useless information generally out of fear of losing one’s position or to give utterance to observations that might just as well have remained unuttered can have anything whatever to do with the Truth Value of a given proposition or intuition.

The Essays themselves need not be read in any particular order though I have placed the longest one first and, to balance this, the second longest in the middle and one of similar length, last – the rest being arranged more or less in diminishing order of length.

The first *Why We must Stop Being Jews or Why we must Become Hebrews once again* – subtitled “*An Essay on the Rebuilding of the Third Temple*” – is really almost a book in itself and in length, dealing with such problems as why the Jews must change their mental and spiritual nature in order to become a real Territorial People again and to therefore survive, the social structure and unrest in Israel, the retreat after The *Yom Kippur* War, why Rabbinic Judaism is insufficient to sustain a Landed People after the *Holocaust* as it was the *Diaspora* during it, the UN Anti-Zionist Resolution, Henry Kissinger, the rebuilding of the Third Temple, the Priesthood and other Temple orders, Holy War, what to do with the Mosque of Omar, etc. – many of which topics might seem mad to the average reader but

which I feel are of sufficient import and sociological, religious, political, and psychological implications to prove useful.

The second longest, *The Problem with Rabbinic Judaism*, deals specifically with "The Jewish Problem" as such and the question of why Rabbinic Judaism – in all its variations: Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform – is and was insufficient to deal with the present problems of the Jewish People and what therefore should be done about this.

*Arab Class Structure and the New Terrorism* deals with the underlying sociological problems of the present unrest among Arabs in Israel and the Occupied Territories. While written in the early 70's, it reflects my experiences while living there from 1968-73 and was not finished in its present form till 1976.

*All the World Loves a Winner (or the Danger of Losing a War to the Arabs)* deals with the danger of losing such a War such as The Yom Kippur one in the eyes of the World and in the mind of the Arab – to say nothing of letting them think you have. *Viet Nam Hand-Wringing and The American Commitment* and *This Time You Cannot Blame the Israelis* deal with similar issues.

*The Nuclear Threat to Israel*, as the title implies, is still the greatest threat Israel faces becoming ever more critical. *The Assassination of Feisal* offers a radical re-assessment of the reasons for his assassination in the wake of the Arab Oil Embargo of 1974.

The last piece, *Cyprus – Aphrodite's Isle*, as already remarked, is not really an Essay in any real sense at all but a biographical narrative and, though the events it describes took place in the midst of the Turk-Greek Crisis in 1962, it was written during this

Period and reflects the same general political ethos as the others.

As the poet Baudelaire said in the Introduction to his *Flowers of Evil*, "I have included a certain amount of filth to please the gentlemen of the press". In the same way I have thrown in a footnote now and then to please the Scholarly World. I hope it will prove more grateful than the press of Baudelaire's Time.