



**THE IMPACT OF THE 1973 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR ON POLITICAL PROCESSES IN
THE MIDDLE EAST**

Raimkulov Sheroz,

a graduate

student of the Department of World

History, Sharaf Rashidov

Samarkand State University, II stage

Abstract: This article analyzes the causes and consequences of the fourth major military conflict between the Arab states and Israel. The reason for the start of hostilities was the recovery of the territories lost by the Arab states in the "Six-Day War". As a result of the war, both sides suffered heavy losses. This war clearly demonstrated the need for a policy of compromise between the Arab states and Israel.

Keywords: Egypt, Israel, Sinai Peninsula, Arab states, Syria, USSR, USA, Suez Canal, Golan Heights.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada Arab davlatlari va Isroil o'rtasidai to'rtinchi katta harbiy to'qnashuvning boshlanish sabablari va oqibatlari tahlil qilib o'tilgan. Bunda Arab davlatlarining "Olti kunlik urush" da yoqotgan hududlarini qaytarib olish harbiy harakatlarning boshlanishiga sabab bo'lgan. Urush natijasida ikki tomon ham ko'p talofat ko'rgan. Ushbu urush Arab davlatlari va Isroil o'rtasida kelishuv siyosatining olib borilishi zarurligini yaqqol namoyon qildi.

Kalit so'zlar: Misr, Isroil, Sinay yarim oroli, Arab davlatlari, Suriya, SSSR, AQSH, Suvaysh kanali, Golan tepaligi.

Аннотации: В статье анализируются причины и последствия четвертого крупного военного конфликта между арабскими государствами и Израилем. Поводом к началу военных действий стало возвращение арабскими государствами территорий, утраченных в Шестидневной войне. В результате войны обе стороны понесли тяжелые потери. Эта война ясно продемонстрировала необходимость политики компромисса между арабскими государствами и Израилем.

Ключевые слова: Египет, Израиль, Синайский полуостров, арабские государства, Сирия, СССР, США, Суэцкий канал, Голанские высоты.

Introduction. The tragedy of October 6, 1973 - the day when the long-standing conflict between the two countries of the Middle East turned into an open military confrontation. In 1973, on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, Egyptian troops, together with the Syrian military, suddenly attacked Israel, which had been at war. This conflict lasted eighteen days and was the fourth major Arab-Israeli conflict, known as the "Yom Kippur War".

The military attack on Israeli territory was initiated by two Middle Eastern states: Egypt and Syria. Diplomats of these countries repeatedly tried to negotiate with the Israeli government on the return of the lands captured in 1967. However, Israel categorically rejected the proposals of its neighbors, forcing the Arabs to take extremely drastic measures and sign the "three nos". This was the beginning of a slow political conflict, which went down in history as the "war of confrontation". The return of once-conquered lands became a matter of principle for the Arabs, linked to the desire to wash away the shame of the previous "Six-Day War".

Main part. The desire to return the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, which Egypt had occupied since 1967, and to restore its territorial integrity, gained importance in the fall of 1970 after President Gamal Abdel Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, came to power in Egypt.[1] The Arabs, thirsting for revenge, began preparations for the upcoming uprising in 1971 when they built special training centers near Alexandria and Cairo, which were called "Bar-Lev Lines", where the mobilized Egyptian armed forces practiced practical skills in conducting combat operations in conditions of forcing the canal and overcoming terrain.[2] The number of sapper units in the Egyptian armed forces increased. Particular attention was paid to the delivery of equipment to the bridge. In addition, the Egyptians decided to use a very unusual approach to solve the problem of moving heavy equipment through the sand pits encountered on the road. In the summer of 1973, they purchased one hundred and sixty water cannons in Germany and England. The idea was simple and ingenious: instead of overcoming an obstacle from above, it was decided to use water cannons to wash the road on loose sandy banks.

The next step was to involve Syria in the attack on Israel. In order to divert the attention and forces of the Israelis, military operations were to begin from the Golan Heights, and the fact that Israel was waging war on two fronts at once would significantly increase the Egyptians' chances of victory. According to some sources, the attack by Israeli aircraft on Syrian MIGs on September 13, 1973 was an additional impetus for this Arab state to enter the war. [1] The air clash, in which the Israelis shot down twelve Syrian aircraft, took place on the Lebanese-Syrian border. One of the lessons learned from the Six-Day War was the massive rearmament of the Syrian and Egyptian armies. The USSR made a significant contribution to equipping them with more modern military equipment, supplying Egypt not only with tanks of various modifications, but also with experienced instructors who taught soldiers how to properly conduct combat operations using armored vehicles. The Arabs equipped their troops with a large number of Malyutka ATGMs, which were capable of quickly and effectively destroying enemy equipment. The periodic exercises, which initially alarmed Israeli intelligence and border patrols, eventually began to be perceived as a routine by their neighbors.

The Arabs were not careful in choosing the day of the attack, which was one of the main Jewish holidays, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). They knew that the Israelis would spend the Day of Atonement in prayer, and the cities would seem to have disappeared: institutions and public transport would not work, radio and television would stop broadcasting. However, the cunning enemy did not take into account that it was precisely the lack of traffic on transport routes that allowed the Israelis to quickly mobilize and receive reinforcements shortly after the start of the attack.

It would not be entirely correct to call the Egyptian and Syrian attacks sudden, since it is well known that mobilization in Israel was announced early in the morning, long before the start of the invasion. Some members of the Israeli government had long been demanding urgent measures, and the regular receipt of intelligence about the impending attack alarmed all the ruling circles of this country. However, the uncertainty and indecision of Prime Minister Golda Meir, who was under pressure from the US Secretary of State, as well as the suspicion of the then Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan, ultimately proved decisive.

The Israeli military was stunned by the force with which the enemy attacked the territory it had captured in Sinai on October 6. Describing the tank battles of the Fourth Arab-Israeli War, many historians compare them to such great historical events as the Battle of Kursk in World War II. Witnesses of the battle recall the countless armada of Egyptian tanks stretching towards the horizon towards the Israelis. The ground shook constantly from the explosions of artillery shells. It was one of the largest tank battles in world history. At 14:00, an air attack was launched on Israeli positions, and five minutes later Egyptian artillery launched a powerful strike involving more than two thousand guns and mortars[2]. The readiness of the attack is evidenced by the fact that in just twenty minutes the Egyptians had put out of action all the Israeli defensive firing points, and ten minutes later they were on top of the fortress and directed their shells deeper into the defenses. Their troops crossed the Suez Canal along its entire length, simultaneously preparing crossings for equipment at seventy pre-determined locations. After lunch, an overjoyed Anwar Sadat called the Soviet ambassador in Cairo, Vladimir Vinogradov, and shouted into the receiver: "We have crossed the canal, we are on the east bank."

Although the surprise, speed, and scale of the enemy's attack took the Israelis by surprise, their reaction was not long in coming. As soon as the first Egyptian soldiers set foot on Israeli soil, they were immediately attacked by tank units. Having no time to prepare, they acted blindly, without intelligence, which turned out to be a very rash decision. As a result, by the end of the day, Egyptian ATGM crews, with the help of infantry, managed to disable more than two hundred Israeli tanks. The glorious Israeli air force also suffered defeat after defeat, losing more than eighty aircraft in just three days.

On the evening of October 7, two tank, one mechanized and five Egyptian infantry divisions already controlled the Sinai Peninsula. The number of infantrymen exceeded one hundred thousand people, and the number of tanks exceeded eight hundred. At the same time, the Egyptian Second Army went on the offensive towards the Mediterranean coast, and the Third Army in the Suez area. The fighting continued at night, and in this regard the Egyptians and Syrians had one significant advantage. The fact is that the main part of the Arab tank fleet was made up of Soviet T-55s with night vision devices that could be controlled by the crew commander and the gunner himself[3]. This made it possible to successfully fire on enemy armored vehicles. In addition, the high maneuverability due to the small size and relatively low weight of the T-55 made them less vulnerable to heavier and larger Israeli tanks. However, the Israeli army tanks, despite their large size and weight, provided more comfortable conditions for their crews, the elevation of the gun and the angle of depression, had two to three times more ammunition and fuel tanks and more powerful engines. These factors later played an important role in the outcome of that war.

The successes of the Arabs in the Sinai direction were offset by the failures of the Syrians in the Golan Heights. Two days after the first attack, the Israelis came to their senses and on October 8 they launched a decisive military operation and dealt a very good blow to the Syrians. By October 14, the Israeli army had made significant progress in the Damascus direction and was firmly entrenched in the positions it had taken in order not to stretch communications.[5]

On October 10, after four days of fierce fighting, the situation on the battlefield stabilized somewhat and a short respite began. From time to time, the Israelis launched small counterattacks on Egyptian artillery positions. The lull was explained very simply: both sides of the military conflict were waiting for reinforcements from their sponsors, the United States for the Israelis, and the USSR for Egypt and Syria. The Israelis preferred not to take risks; their position was already too dangerous, and any enemy attack could open the way for the Arabs to the north and end in a breakthrough of the defense.

Activity on the Sinai front was resumed at 6:30 a.m. on October 14, when four Egyptian infantry and two tank divisions launched a sharp attack on the enemy, advancing ten kilometers in movement.[4] However, then the Arabs attacked two hundred dug-in Israeli tanks. With the support of eighteen helicopters equipped with TOW ATGMs, the Israelis managed to destroy almost half of the Egyptian tank brigade advancing near the Mitla Pass. Then, in the night battle, they destroyed another two hundred and sixty Egyptian tanks and two hundred armored personnel carriers. The losses of the Israeli army amounted to a little more than forty tanks. On this day, General Mandler, who commanded the Israeli armored units in Sinai, was killed. The losses on both sides were so great that the Israeli army was weakened. If it had not been for US assistance, it is unlikely that the outcome of the October War would have been so favorable for Israel. In those days, European countries had completely refused to provide military assistance to the country. Golda Meir called Washington day and night, asking to meet with the American president and arrange an airlift. His phrases sounded like this: "Help us today. "Tomorrow will be too late." At the same time, the Prime Minister constantly reminded the Americans that "a huge supply of Russian weapons" was being delivered to Syria and Egypt. Golda Meir, by her own admission, cried with joy - twenty-seven thousand tons of military cargo were delivered to distant allies - tanks, shells and rockets, cluster bombs.

On October 14, a group of Israeli saboteurs disabled the Egyptian radio interception center in the Jebel Ataka area. This loss greatly complicated its ability to control troops and conduct reconnaissance. On October 15, the Israelis launched their first frontal counterattacks with nine tank brigades. Although fierce fighting continued throughout the day, neither side achieved success.

October 15-16, 1973 On the night of 18 October, a small Israeli detachment of seven tanks and eight armored personnel carriers crossed the Great Bitter Lake, capturing a small bridge on the Egyptian side. The enemy army allowed the Israelis to advance without allocating additional resources to the defense of the West Bank. Thanks to the presence of a bridge dug on the enemy side, the Sharon units were able to build a pontoon bridge and transport tanks to the opposite bank. On 18 October, the 252nd and 162nd Israeli divisions crossed the canal and began to penetrate the rear of the main group of Egyptian troops, representing the Third Army.[3] One of the first and most significant losses for the Egyptians was the complete destruction of the air defense forces located west of the canal. And this, in turn, opened the sky for Israeli aviation. On 19 October, the Third The position of the army went from superior to threatened. The Israeli army was preparing to deliver a decisive blow to its hated neighbor, but at that moment the UN decided to intervene in the relations of the Middle Eastern states, demanding an immediate cessation of hostilities. Both sides took advantage of the short lull to gather their forces to catch their breath and prepare for new battles. The Israeli army was in no hurry to follow the advice of the “big brothers” and stopped only after the capture of Suez on October 25, which was the final chord of the battle in Sinai. Three days of psychological pressure on the ruling circles of Tel Aviv, bringing the US nuclear forces and the Soviet airborne forces to full combat readiness, had their effect[4]. The war was stopped.

All participants in the war suffered heavy losses: in nineteen days of fighting, the Arab states lost three hundred and sixty-eight helicopters and airplanes (sixty-nine of which were shot down by “their” air defense forces due to errors and misunderstandings) and one thousand seven hundred armored vehicles. More than eighteen thousand people were killed, about fifty thousand were injured. Israel lost one hundred and fourteen helicopters and airplanes, more than eight hundred armored vehicles and tanks. About two and a half thousand Israelis were killed, seven and a half thousand were injured. The Fourth Arab-Israeli War, according to most historians, ended in a draw, with the exception of one positive moment: the Israeli elite finally began to work seriously on improving relations with the countries of the Middle East. After the end of hostilities in Israel, a commission was created headed by Shimon Agranat, the chairman of the Supreme Court of Israel. It was she who was tasked with understanding the causes of the “misunderstanding” that almost turned into a national disaster. The initial conclusions of the commission, published on April 1, 1974, shocked the public. According to its conclusion, under the guise of training exercises for Israeli intelligence services, the Egyptian military was prevented from revealing its true intentions and the premature mobilization of forces was delayed in order not to provoke the Arabs into conflict. Four months after the end of the conflict, Golda Meir openly stated that the highest levels of the Israeli leadership had made serious mistakes that almost led to defeat. In response, the majority of the country's population recognized her as the main culprit of the “Yom Kippur War”. Some time later, more precisely, on April 11, 1974, at the height of a wave of mass street protests, the prime minister was forced to resign and handed over his post to Yitzhak Rabin, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States, who had commanded the General Staff of the Israeli Army during the Six-Day War. "

Sharon, the war hero who almost single-handedly saved the nation from defeat, also received his share, as he led the Southern District until the end of the summer of 1973. The implementation of the current policy of national reconciliation was up to Menachem Begin, the successor to Yitzhak Rabin, who was appointed Prime Minister of Israel in 1977. The result of this policy was the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979, which effectively ended the Arab struggle against the Jewish state. The irony of history is that Begin reconciled with Sadat in 1971 on terms that Golda Meir had rejected. The severe slap in the face of the "October War" proved once again to Israel and the world that pride is a very bad adviser in politics.[3]

Conclusion. The October War is becoming increasingly important as it recedes into the past. In particular, it was a new era of military conflicts, in which various missiles of the “surface-to-air”, “surface-to-surface”, “sea-to-surface” and “air-to-surface” classes began to be widely used. In view of the findings, military strategists had to reconsider all military technology and science. In addition, the Arab-Israeli war was the official cause of the first global oil crisis. On October 17, 1973, the main Arab oil exporters decided to reduce oil production and impose an embargo on supplies to the United States. These measures had a significant impact on the world economy. Among the subjective factors, it is worth noting the foreign policy of Anwar Sadat, who began to

transform Egypt from an ally of the USSR into a state openly hostile to cooperation with the United States. Soviet diplomats, under the auspices of Washington, gradually began to be excluded from participation in the Middle East peace process, which took the form of bilateral agreements between Israel and Egypt. In 1976, the first C-130 military transport aircraft from the United States arrived in Egypt. At the same time (more precisely, on March 14, 1976), A. Sadat announced the termination of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR. Within a month, all Soviet military services left the country.

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