Defining the Contours of Debate:
Anti-Semitism, Anti-Semitic Anti-Zionism, and Legitimate Political Activism at the University of California

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I analyze the evolution of the definition, or established academic understanding, of "anti-Semitism," and the ways in which American organizations and activists, supportive of the Israeli government, seek to expand its meaning. I use a genealogical approach, in conjunction with qualitative content and historical discourse analysis, to engage texts on a domestic and institutional level. I look at past academic literature addressing the meaning of anti-Semitism, and how public perception about its features has changed over time. I argue that it is often used as a broad, prescriptive term, driven by motivated actors, seeking to expand what discourse can be labelled as anti-Semitic. Conflating legitimate criticism of Israeli policies with anti-Semitism has been successfully used as a political tactic, so I explore the rhetoric and discursive frames adopted by opposing activists focused on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. In particular, I focus on the narratives and arguments used to cast aspersions on the motivations driving organizations like the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign. In the latter half of my thesis, I do a case study on the University of California, and how some oppositional groups use claims of anti-Semitic to censure unfavorable discourses.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADL - Anti-Defamation League

BDS - Boycott, Divestment and Sanction

EUMC - European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia

JVP - Jewish Voice for Peace

SJP - Students for Justice in Palestine

UC - University of California public college system

UCBR - University of California Board of Regents

UCB - University of California Berkeley

INTRODUCTION

Israel, and the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, consistently maintains a high degree of prominence in academic and political discourse. Articulations of support for Israel itself remains an omnipresent feature of American politics and mainstream journalism.[1] In September 2016, a new foreign aid package was agreed upon, whereby, starting in 2018, American aid to Israel will increase from $3.1 to $3.8 billion dollars a year.[2] The enormity of this annual expenditure makes examining the machinations driving American policy highly relevant. Moreover, this imperative is further heightened, given that a significant portion of the aid money goes to subsidize Israel's controversial policies in the West Bank and Gaza. In the last three decades, every single American president, and until the current Donald Trump administration, every Secretary of State and representative to the United Nations, has publicly stated that specific policies of the Israeli government, such as building settlements in the West Bank, hinders peace negotiations with Palestinians and contributes to the perpetuation of violence. Despite this, in both the executive and legislative branches of government, Israel enjoys near-unequivocal bipartisan support in the voting patterns and explicit platforms of both major American political parties. This lends itself to the question - Why do the Republican and Democratic parties, as well as the majority of civil society, unconditionally approve of legislation providing Israel with social and military aid, intended to combat violence, even though Israel has consistently pursued policies that directly contradict the official stance of the US government?

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[1] David Harris, "U.S.-Israel Friendship Endures," AJC: Global Jewish Advocacy, April 25, 2011, http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=7oJILSPwFfJSG&b=8479751&ct=12485681.
[2] Oren Dorell, "U.S. $38B military aid package to Israel sends a message," *USA Today*, September 14, 2016, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/09/14/united-states-military-aid-israel/90358564/.

In this thesis, I argue that concerns about anti-Semitism, and fears of such labels, influence rhetoric about Israel and its government policies. Through lobbying, negative labelling, and public relations campaigns, organizations establish conditions for what can be considered legitimate criticism regarding Israel, which shapes the overall contours public discourse. Discourse, as defined by David Campbell, refers to "a specific set of representations and practices through which meanings are produced, identities constituted, social relations established, and political and ethical outcomes made more or less possible."[3] Thus, the promotion of selective language can shape the way events themselves are interpreted. This is used as a tactic by certain actors, seeking to shape discourse surrounding Israel, in the pursuit of specific political agendas.

Meanings are interpreted through the lens of "historical and political legitimating principles," which are subtly "shaped and reshaped in the social and political atmosphere of the present."[4] If one understands discourse as "a process but not a static phase," then the significance of narrative framing and argumentation patterns in contesting dialogues becomes more apparent.[5] In the US, refutations of negative commentary about Israeli policies frequently display specific discursive themes and patterns, such as framing critics or critiques as anti-Semitic. When counter-arguments include accusations of anti-Semitism, the speaker is "try[ing] to affect the boundaries of what can be said and what is silenced in the discourse," regardless of whether the claim is valid or not.[6] I argue that the term has been politicized, and its meaning expanded, in part by partisans seeking to delegitimize their opposition. Conflating criticism of Israeli policies

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[3] David Campbell, "Poststructuralism," in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kirki and Steve Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 226.
[4] Ingolfur Asgeir Johannesson, "The politics of historical discourse analysis: a qualitative research method?," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 3, no. 2 (May 2010): 253.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

with anti-Semitism, effectively serves to constrain debate and enable the perpetuation of Israeli actions in the West Bank and Gaza.

Literature Review

Peter Ullrich and Michael Kohlstruck address the issue of narrative legitimacy in studies of anti-Semitism and discourse, emphasizing the importance of explicitly stating the research justification and methodological rationale at the outset, as "political-moral discourses on anti-Semitism are heavily superimposed on the field of anti-Semitism research."[7] Considering the situational context of specific discourses is imperative, as "accusations of anti-Semitism can indeed be an instrument in the political struggle for power."[8] This can be achieved by means of over-simplifications that reduce particular discourses to interpretations, based on a "binary structure of their reception scheme [anti-Semitic or not]."[9] It is therefore essential to acknowledge the possibility for such rhetorical frames, especially given that mainstream society views outward expressions of anti-Semitism as grotesque. As a result of this aversion, people are susceptible to passing moral judgements and accepting discursive frames that present a broad generalization of anti-Semitism, rather than focusing on individual context.

It is vitally important to identify instances where accusations of anti-Semitism may be politically motivated and strategic, as concern over such labels can lead to censorship. Michel Foucault describes aspects of discourse as governed by a "regime of truth," which is organized by "the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true."[10] Many, although

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[7] Peter Ullrich and Michael Kohlstruck, "Patterns of the public discourse on anti-Semitism. The example of the reception of the study 'Anti-Semitism as a problem and a symbol,'" *Conflict & Communication Online* 16, no. 1 (2017): 6.

[8] Ullrich and Kohlstruck, "Patterns of the public discourse," 7.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), 131.

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certainly not all, of the most vocal pro-Israel organizations focused on tracking anti-Semitism are historically Jewish. Since Jews are the victims of anti-Semitism, they are presumably the most aware and likely to identify discrimination or harassment towards them. Thus, conceivably, Jewish, and in this instance pro-Israel, organizations are granted more legitimacy than outsiders when it comes to identifying explicit and implicit anti-Semitism. As previously noted, explicit anti-Semitism is considered intolerable by mainstream society, meaning association with such inclinations is likely to damage one's reputation and legitimacy.

James Keeley describes the disciplinary power of discourse, in terms of determining what is considered "normal" and what is "deviant."[11] The two categories interact continuously, and through this action help to constantly redefine the other. The pro-Israel organizations in this thesis identify the rhetoric of BDS as anti-Semitic. Their responses fit Keeley's description of discipline, in that, "in defining some behavior as 'normal,' it thereby also defines others as 'abnormal' and thus subject to correction," whereby, "[t]hose who resist or ignore its [predominant discourse] standards are considered deviant or at least suspect. … which is then used to justify the maintenance and development of the system intended to control or eliminate it."[12] The organizations examined in this thesis, such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the AMCHA Initiative, strive to undermine narratives they find disagreeable. They do so, by raising questions about the integrity and goals of pro-Palestinian organizations and, when necessary, using lobbyists and legal means. These methods serve to delegitimize and potentially censor unfavorable discourse, and thus can be used as methods of narrative discipline.

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[11] James Keeley, "Toward a Foucauldian Analysis of International Regimes," *International Organization* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1990): 92.
[12] Ibid.

Narrative discipline and attempts to legitimize one discourse over another result in active contestations about the "correct" interpretation of a situation. However, there is "no way of defining an issue or of describing an event that is neutral or somehow objectively 'true.' Instead, competing interpretations exist simultaneously."[13] The means and existence of narrative discipline, in terms of strategic framing and accusations of anti-Semitism, relies heavily on history, and positioning modern discourse in the context of past phenomena. "Genealogy" can then be used to "accentuat[e] the diachronic intertwining of discourses, practices and dispositifs (cognitive/material infrastructures) in historical power struggles or struggles for truth."[14] As an extension of this, "as history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized."[15] Discourse is a tactic, which can weaponize history to substantiate and further politically motivated aspirations. Therefore, genealogy and discourse analysis can elucidate how the expansion of traditional understandings, and the potential for manipulation of discursive constructions, manifests in present-day scenarios.

Explanation of Key Terminology

In the following writing, I follow James Keeley's description of "discourse," as not just a statement, but, rather, a statement connected to a social practice, that "when embodied in an array of implementing instruments and practices, a discourse becomes a creative part of the reality it purports to understand."[16] In addition, I understand frames as, "discursive filters that

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[13] Amoshaun Toft, "Contesting the deviant other: Discursive strategies for the production of homeless subjectivities," *Discourse & Society* 25, no. 6 (2014): 787.

[14] Reinar Keller, "Analysing Discourse: An Approach from the Sociology of Knowledge," *Forum: Qualitative Social Research Sozialforschung* 6, no. 3, Article 32 (September 2005): 6.

[15] Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," in *Language and Politics*, ed. Michael J. Shapiro (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 10.

[16] Keeley, "Toward a Foucauldian Analysis," 91.

select from the multitude of communicated or communicable pieces of information those that are relevant for continuing the discourse, i.e. that are particularly connective or 'resonant.'"[17]

For the purposes of this thesis, I use "pro-Israel" as a shorthand to refer to actors and organizations that promote a particular political ideology, rather than as a blanket term that describes those who support Israel as a Jewish state and defend the necessity of Zionism. I define pro-Israel as advocates for the mainstream Israeli narrative, which maintains that its control over the West Bank and Gaza is both necessary and unquestionably legitimate. Furthermore, proponents of this particular ideology maintain that almost any critical discourse on Israeli policy inherently contains elements of anti-Semitism. I do not support this notion, and rely on a traditional and much less contentious definition of anti-Semitism in my analysis, which defines anti-Semitism as racial and religious animosity towards Jews.

On the other end of the spectrum, I use "pro-Palestinian" as a shorthand to describe individuals and organizations that typically focus their activism on improving the conditions for Palestinians. That does not mean they are inherently anti-Semitic, anti-Israel, or even necessarily anti-Zionist, but rather they see ending Israeli policies that contribute to the suffering or human rights violations of Palestinians as their main priority. To exemplify the difference, the pro-Israel groups I look at support Israeli control over the Palestinian territories, as they argue the land either rightfully belongs to Israel, or that the military domination is necessary for security reasons. Alternately, pro-Palestinian groups seek to end those same policies, on the grounds that they violate civil liberties, discriminate, and cause undue suffering for the Palestinians living there.

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[17] Ullrich and Kohlstruck, "Patterns of the public discourse," 4.

I would like to further clarify that when I use generalities, such as "criticism of Israel," I do not mean criticism of Israel's citizenry as a whole, or, unless stated, criticism directed at Israel's identification as a state for Jews. The breadth of this thesis does not allow for a deeper exploration of the intricacies of the Israeli government and its parliamentary factions. However, it is worth noting that, since 1977, nine of the last twelve prime ministers have been members of the Likud party.[18] Therefore, while there have been a plethora of policies and diverse diplomatic approaches over the years, there has still been a substantial degree of overarching coherence in the government's ideological positions towards the West Bank and Gaza. The make-up of the military and judiciary further reflect this, given the long-term dominance of the party. Likud is considered center-right, although it increasingly relies on coalitions with other far-right parties, which support the expansion of Jewish-only settlements, or outright annexation, of Jerusalem and the West Bank.[19] Its party platform explicitly states that it views the entirety of Israel-proper, along with the Palestinian territories, as part of a single Jewish state.[20] Moreover, prior to the 2015 election, when the current prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was elected to his fourth term, he stated that there will never be a Palestinian state under his leadership.[21] Therefore, overall, unless otherwise stated, Likud's public positions, objectives, and tactics employed in the

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[18] A.L.G, "The Evolution of Israeli Politics," *The Economist*, March 15, 2015, https://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2015/03/economist-explains-11.
[19] For an overview of the modern Likud party and its history, see:
Aaron Walter, "Likud: A Balance of Historic Ideology and Reality," E-International Relations, January 27, 2012, http://www.e-ir.info/2012/01/27/likud-a-balance-of-historic-ideology-and-reality/;
Likud National Liberal Party, "About the Likud Party," 2017, accessed August 17, 2017, https://www.likud.org.il/en/about-the-likud/history-of-the-movement;
Eytan Schwartz, *Elections in Israel: Is Change Possible?*, (Friedrich Ebert Stifling, March 2015), http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/11245-20150317.pdf.
[20] Jewish Virtual Library, "Likud Party: Original Party Platform (1977)," accessed August 17, 2017, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/original-party-platform-of-the-likud-party.
[21] Maayan Lubell, "Netanyahu says no Palestinian state as long as he's prime minister," *Reuters*, March 16, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-election/netanyahu-says-no-palestinian-state-as-long-as-hes-prime-minister-idUSKBN0MC1I820150316.

Palestinian territories, are emblematic of the policies I refer to when I use the term "criticism of Israel."

__Methodology__

I conduct a historical discourse analysis, to examine the meaning of anti-Semitism in contemporary debates involving Israel, and the micro-level implications it has on discourse about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Michel Foucault argued that, "all meanings are constructed through language and discourse and all knowledge is, therefore, interpretation - unstable, contingent, and constituted always and already through the play of power that legitimizes some interpretations and not others."[22] Genealogy is a natural complement to discourse analysis, as, "using a historical research design is of particular relevance to research about contemporary social and cultural issues, as it enhances an understanding of the present. Any contemporary issue is bound intrinsically with the social and historical milieu of the past."[23]

Since there is no consensus on the meaning of anti-Semitism, it is important to examine how the term is broadly understood and applied. To understand these variances, I begin chapter one with a genealogy of anti-Semitism as a term, to show how the term's usage has evolved over the years. Its first academic usage in the mid-nineteenth century defined it as discrimination of Jews based on their supposed ethnic, religious, and cultural inferiority compared to their Anglo European counterparts.[24] In its later articulations, the meaning of anti-Semitism has become much more subjective, and its academic and institutional usage has been expanded to address

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[22] Yoosun Park, "Historical Discourse Analysis," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods 1&2*, ed. Lisa Given (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2008), 394.
[23] Park, "Historical Discourse Analysis," 395.
[24] Jewish Virtual Library (American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise), "Wilhelm Marr," accessed March 5, 2017, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/wilhelm-marr.

views on Zionism and Israeli policies, oftentimes at the behest of actors promoting certain "pro-Israel" vantage points.[25]

The meaning of pro-Israel is further integral to chapter two and three, as select activists and organizations, both pro-Israel and those seen as pro-Palestinian oppositional forces, will be explored in greater depth. This involves examining the goals, as described or published by particular people or groups, and how they describe their adversaries, with particular emphasis on the narratives presented by pro-Israel activists. This relies on discourse analysis, primarily using online mission statements, press releases, and editorials.

After looking at the relevant organizations in chapter two, I then explain, in chapter three, their role in contentious debates and recent events at multiple public state universities in the University of California system. The University of California Riverside (UCR), Irvine (UCI) and Berkeley (UCB), all have lively activist networks, and have been the source of numerous intercollegiate disputes, ranging from hostilities amongst the study body, administrative lobbying, policy changes, and even litigation.

The analysis includes references to events that contributed to the University of California Board of Regents' decision to hold meetings and publish a statement about intolerance, in 2015. This came about after heavy lobbying by pro-Israel activists, which said that the rhetoric of groups like BDS contributed to rising anti-Semitism on college campuses. The proposals faced resistance from professors, academics, journalists, and pro-Palestinian groups, as they argued it conflated anti-Semitism with political activism focused on Israel.[26] Thus, the ensuing debates

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[25] Manfred Gerstenfeld, "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism: Common Characteristics and Motifs." *Jewish Political Studies Review* 19, no. 1/ 2 (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Spring 2007).

[26] Conor Friedersdorf, "The UC System Turns the Left's Logic Against Anti-Zionism," *The Atlantic*, March 20, 2016, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/the-uc-system-turns-the-anti-speech-lefts-logic-against-anti-zionism/474288/.

and events provide an excellent case for studying how partisan actors use subjective

interpretations of anti-Semitism to counter pro-Palestinian narratives. In addition, I look at the

formation, cancellation, and subsequent reinstatement of a class about Israel and Palestine,

taught through the lens of settler colonialism.

To analyze the role of partisan discourse at the University of California, I visited the

websites of major pro-Israel organizations on the national and local level. The most established

and prominent actors include the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), AMCHA Initiative, and

StandWithUs. Each organization published a plethora of contemporaneous statements about the

UC system, and was actively engaged in the aforementioned events.

To collect less partisan oriented texts for analysis, I used the *LexisNexis Academic* search

engine for articles written between 2014 and 2016, using the keywords of "anti-Semitism,"

"California," and "anti-Zionism," along with further sub-searches for Irvine, Berkeley, Los

Angeles, and Riverside, which are the campuses with the most high-profile activity. I included

all California newspapers in the research pool, although there was much carry-over in the

literature. I then looked through the articles and used purposive sampling to select those relevant

to the subject.

Historical discourse analysis is integral to the case studies, as this approach "examine[s]

both formal and informal practices," while tracing how "particular discursive devices found in

examined texts or discourses functio[n] to construct certain normative ideas and views of events

and people."[27] Chapter three focuses on analyzing the power of discursive frames about anti-

Semitism, and how they shaped public opinion and influenced policies at the University of

California system. The pro-Israel activists generally portray the pro-Palestinian activists as anti-

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[27] Park, "Historical Discourse Analysis," 395.

Israel, anti-Zionist, and anti-Semitic. The pro-Palestinian groups counter those accusations,

arguing that they are deliberate distortions intended to discredit them, by misrepresenting their

outspokenness about Israeli policies as antipathy towards Jews.[28]

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[28] Maia Carter-Hallward and Patrick Shaver, "'War by other means' or non-violent resistance? Examining the discourses surrounding Berkeley's divestment bill," *Peace & Change* 37, no. 3 (2012).

CHAPTER 1 - GENEALOGY OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Initially, anti-Semitism was an academic term used as a secular condemnation of Jews, which sought to vilify them based on race and biological rationales, rather than religious reasons. The term became widely used, and eventually came to be known as hostility or discrimination towards Jews. Since the creation of Israel, the definition has continually been expanded to cover a much wider range of actions. In the most general terms, one of the most notable changes has been institutionalized acceptance that "excessive" criticism of Israel also constitutes anti-Semitism.[29] It is generally understood to mean excessive criticism relative to the actions of other states. Since it is comparative, it is open to broad interpretation and there is no consensus as to what excessive criticism specifically entails. Therefore, the vague and relative nature of this interpretation of anti-Semitism makes the legitimate application of it highly subjective.

In the following chapter, I will conduct a historical discourse analysis, to analyze the genealogy of the meaning of "anti-Semitism" and the micro-level implications. Since its meaning is subjective, it is important to examine how the term is broadly understood and applied. Richard Price describes James Keeley's genealogical analysis approach as involving multiple components, such as:

> (1) the identification of contending discourses and how they change over time; (2) the identification of features… that came to be regarded as essential in disputes over first, the definition of acceptable behavior, second, the naming and evaluation of the weapon, and third, standards of judgment to be applied; and (3) the identification of the various strategies and mechanisms to "exercise power" - that is, to create, transform, or destroy networks of relations that sustain a discourse and the political space that it orders. identifying contrasting narratives and analyzing how they have changed.[30]

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[29] US Department of State, "Defining Anti-Semitism," January 20, 2017, https://www.state.gov/s/rga/resources/267538.htm.

[30] Richard Price, "A Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo," *International Organization* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1995): 89.

If "[d]iscourse is shaped by power relations and knowledge production that define the terms of the debate in the public sphere," this suggests that common perceptions towards Jews are temporal and based on their relative role in society.[31] Historically, Jews were oftentimes viewed as a separate transnational ethno-religious group that was never fully accepted or assimilated into the countries they resided in, regardless of their citizenship. They were oftentimes treated as a stigmatized minority, while paradoxically portrayed as an ominous force that exerts shadowy control over the government and media. This depiction, as both the powerless and unduly powerful, has shaped public discussions and popular conceptions of the Jewish people in modern era.

1.1 The Creation of "Anti-Semitism"

In 1881, Wilhelm Marr, author of *The Victory of Judaism Over Christendom*, coined the term "antisemitism," which changed the nature of European antipathy for Jews.[32] Although Arabs are also considered 'Semites,' Marr attributed the term to solely refer to followers of Judaism. In the late 19th century, *Judenhass* was the German term used to express antipathy towards Jews. Marr, whose aversion to Jews stemmed more from secular racism than religious discrimination, sought to avoid the religious connotations associated with *Judenhass*.[33] He sought to emphasize the racial inferiority of Jews, or Semites, compared to their "Aryan" counterparts. In his written work, he argued against Jewish emancipation and contended that

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[31] As paraphrased by John Vasquez, "The Post-Positivist Debate: Reconstructing Scientific Enquiry and International Relations Theory After Enlightenment's Fall," in *International Relations Theory Today*, ed. Ken Booth and Steve Smith (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), 333-334.

[32] Wilhelm Marr, *The Victory of Judaism Over Germanism*, 8th ed. (Bern: Rudolph Costenoble, 1897), trans. Gerhard Rohringer (2009), http://www.kevinmacdonald.net/Marr-Text-English.pdf.

[33] Jewish Virtual Library (American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise), "Wilhelm Marr," accessed March 5, 2017, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/wilhelm-marr.

Jews were beginning to become more powerful than Germans in governance.[34] Through fear-mongering, Marr became one of the most well-known early promulgators of the stereotype that Jews control the media and government. His strongly racial condemnations of Jews established the most common anti-Semitic tropes, such as Jews' racial or biological inferiority, moral bankruptcy, and detrimental impact on society. What began as primarily religious antagonism evolved into a hatred of Jews, both as an individual or collective unit.

Anti-Semitism eventually entered into common parlance, and became associated with religious, economic, social, racial, and economic discrimination against Jews. Proponents traditionally qualify their beliefs using specific tropes, such as a perceived social-cultural threat posed by Jews, due to their nonconformist religious beliefs, lack of social assimilation (both forced and selective), questionable patriotism, unscrupulous business practices, inappropriate behaviors, and racial inferiority.[35]

In the most basic encyclopedic terms, anti-Semitism is defined as:

1. Hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious or racial group.[36]
2. Hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group.[37]
3. Hostility to or prejudiced against Jews.[38]

These descriptions reflect the consensus understanding of the foundational elements of anti-Semitism, with Nazism as the pinnacle historical example of this outlook in its most extreme manifestation. The Holocaust remains the most unequivocal example of irrational and

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[34] Ibid;
Marr, *The Victory of Judaism*.
[35] The Holocaust Chronicle, "Prologue: Roots of the Holocaust," 2009,
http://www.holocaustchronicle.org/staticpages/41.html.
[36] Michael Berenbaum, "Anti-Semitism," Encyclopædia Britannica, June 10, 2014,
https://www.britannica.com/topic/anti-Semitism.
[37] Merriam-Webster, "Anti-semitism," accessed March 10, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anti-Semitism.
[38] Oxford Living Dictionaries, "Anti-Semitism," accessed March 4, 2017,
https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/anti-semitic.

indiscriminate hatred of Jews. The Final Solution, carried out by Nazi Germany, sought to exterminate the entire Jewish population, which was justified using the core components of anti-Semitism listed above. The horrifying violence and destruction was the ultimate culmination of the abhorrent ideology propagated by Marr.

1.2 Zionism and Israel

After World War II, the newly formed United Nations declared that the best way to prevent the future persecution of Jews, was to create a Jewish state. In November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181 (II), which partitioned the former British Mandate of Palestine, dividing the territory into a Jewish state and an Arab state, while internationalizing Jerusalem.[39] On May 14, 1948, Israel formally declared its independence as a Jewish state, although it did not acknowledge the UN partition or delineate its borders, as was set forth in Resolution 181.[40]

The creation of Israel was the actualization of the long-desired goal of the Zionist movement, which sought to establish an independent state for Jews. As Wilhelm Marr wrote about the dangers Jews posed to German society, Zionists argued for the establishment of a Jewish state, to protect Jews from persecution and oppression. Zionism was originally a predominantly secular movement, championed by Theodore Herzl at the end of 19th century. Another branch of the movement consisted of religious Zionists. Religious Zionists were more uncompromising than their secular counterparts, and insisted that the Jewish state must be

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[39] Camelia Suleiman, *Language and Identity in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Self-Perception in the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 14.
[40] Hasan Afif El-Hasan, *Is the Two-State Solution Already Dead? A Political and Military History of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2010), 114.

15

founded in historic Palestine,[41] the area of which roughly consists of modern Israel-proper and the Palestinian Territories. Their impetus is the belief that *Eretz Israel* (Land of Israel) belongs to the Jewish people. God promised the land to the Jews, and therefore they must eventually return to their rightful homeland after 2,000 years of exile. However, in 1947, Arabs accounted for 70% of the population living in historic Palestine, yet they were allocated 43% of the land. More specifically, Arabs accounted for 47% of the population presently living in the land partitioned for the Jewish state.[42] These demographic considerations inherently politicized the partitioning, extending beyond the realm of Zionist ideology and dismissals of territorial disputes as anti-Semitism.

The creation of Israel presented a new issue for secular Zionists and religious Zionists, in terms of the modern understanding of the Jewish people and the meaning of anti-Semitism. This makes the previous discrepancies in what drives anti-Semitic rationales more significant - is "Jewish" a religion, race, or ethnicity? If there is a Jewish state, does it serve as a beacon representing the interests of Jews worldwide? Moreover, if there is a state that is distinctly Jewish, does that mean criticism of the state is inherently anti-Semitic? The nuances of these questions have led to robust and contentious debates about how to define anti-Semitism, in an era where there are not only Jewish people, but a Jewish state that plays a role in international politics.

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[41] The land as it was last known in its undivided form, under the British Mandate, which encompasses present-day Israel proper, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Sinai Peninsula.
[42] In 1947, in the land partitioned for a Jewish state, there were presently 499,000 Jews and 438,000 Arabs, meaning Arabs accounted for 46.74% of the population.
Statistics from Suleiman, *Language and Identity* (2010), 14.

1.3 The "New" anti-Semitism

Israel has fundamentally changed the meaning of anti-Semitism, as the term can no longer be summarized as irrational hate or displaced blame of Jews. The increased focus on Israel, and its controversial policies, has led some academics to re-evaluate the basic elements of modern anti-Semitism. A multitude of writers have addressed the notion of a "new anti-Semitism." Proponents break it down into very simplistic terms - this form of anti-Semitism is new, not necessarily because the underlying sentiments differ, but rather because explicit patterns and articulations differ from those common in past manifestations.[43] According to one perspective, "it is 'new' in the sense that it does not fit the pattern of ethnic (ancient) antisemitism, religious (Christian), or racial (nineteenth- and twentieth-century) antisemitism."[44] In this modern manifestation, "the collective expression of antisemitism, with Israel as a focal point, rather than the individual animus of the past."[45]

Jonathon Sacks, the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, argues that, "[anti-Semitism is] undeniably the most successful ideology of modern times. Its success is due to the fact that, like a virus, it mutates. At times it has been directed against Jews as individuals. Today it is directed against Jews as a sovereign people."[46] This encapsulates the idea that Israel upturned previous notions of anti-Semitism. Klug refers to the "new kind" of anti-Semitism, countering Sacks, that "there are signs that a new anti-Jewish stereotype [influenced by Israel's use of military force] might be developing. But it has its own aetiology; it is not produced by *modifying* the old anti-

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[43] Michael Berenbaum, *Not Your Father's Antisemitism: Hatred of Jews in the 21st Century* (Minnesota: Paragon House, 2008), 231.

[44] Jerome Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 13.

[45] Jerome Chanes, "Esau Hates Jacob: What's New About the New Antisemitism?," in *Antisemitism in North America: new world, old hate*, ed. Stephen Baum (Boston, Massachusetts: Brill, 2016), 49.

[46] As quoted by Brian Klug, in "A Plea for Distinctions - Disentangling Anti-Americanism from Anti-Semitism," *Central European University Press* (2007): 140-141.

Semitic figure of the 'Jew.' It is not a *mutation* of a pre-existing 'virus,' but a brand new 'bug.'"[47]

Manford Gerstenfeld argues for a much broader understanding of anti-Semitism, which takes Israel into account. He states that the primary indicator, or "core theme," of anti-Semitism is that Jews "embody absolute evil," which primarily manifests in three ways: ethnic (racist) anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, and anti-Zionist or anti-Israelism.[48] The last permutation, he argues, may be the most pernicious, as it can be the most difficult to positively identify. Bigots can masque their contempt for Jews under the cloak of social or political critique of Israel. Jerome Chanes argues that "[i]t might be legitimately argued that criticism of Israel is in itself a form of antisemitism; it creates an atmosphere that is conducive to antisemitism, and much of it may be motivated by antisemitic sentiments."[49]

Gerstenfeld contends that anti-Israelism, as a form of anti-Semitism, emerged after the Six-Day War, in 1967. Prior to that, anti-Semitic discourse was primarily suppressed in mainstream society, although he asserts that many Europeans continued to personally maintain such views. The atrocities of the Holocaust contributed to a newfound image of Jews as "the symbol of the ultimate victim."[50] However, Israel's success in the Six-Day War, coupled with further successful military engagements, transformed the imagine of Jews as a powerless victim to one of strength. Now that Jews, seen as an extension of Israel, were no longer just hapless victims, the stigma against criticizing them became less pronounced. Therefore, since Israel has become inextricably linked with certain aspects of Jewish culture worldwide, it has become

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[47] Klug, "A Plea for Distinctions," 146.
[48] Gerstenfeld, Manfred. "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism: Common Characteristics and Motifs," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 19, no. 1 / 2 (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Spring 2007), 84.
[49] Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook*, 13.
[50] Gerstenfeld, "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism," 85.

increasingly important to find some degree of consensus as to what precisely constitutes anti-Semitism.

Jacques Givet wrote, "[t]he anti-Zionist becomes an overt anti-Semite as soon as he goes beyond criticism of the policies of the Jerusalem government (a favorite activity of the Israelis themselves) and challenges the very existence of the State of Israel."[51]

Natan Sharansky specifies further, arguing that,

> The first "D" is the test of demonization. When the Jewish state is being demonized; when Israel's actions are blown out of all sensible proportion… this is anti-Semitism, not legitimate criticism of Israel.
> The second "D" is the test of double standards. When criticism of Israel is applied selectively; when Israel is singled out by the United Nations for human rights abuses while the behavior of known and major abusers, such as China, Iran, Cuba, and Syria, is ignored.
> The third "D" is the test of delegitimization. When Israel's fundamental right to exist is denied - alone among all peoples in the world - this too is anti-Semitism.[52]

Sharansky provides a more in-depth explanation, but the framework he provides remains highly subjective. The European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) acknowledged this in a 2004 report on anti-Semitism, emphasizing the ambiguity of the term in the modern context. The EUMC faced ample criticism after deciding not to publish a study on anti-Semitism. Some criticized the decision as suppression and trivialization of a serious problem, whereas the EUMC justified not publishing it based on the study's failure to meet adequate research standards.[53] Under significant pressure, the EUMC published the report and tasked Jewish non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with presenting a more concrete

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[51] As quoted by Gerstenfeld, in "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism," 89.
[52] Natan Sharansky, as quoted by Gerstenfeld, in "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism," 90-91.
[53] Marc Perelman, "E.U. Accused of Burying Report on Antisemitism Pointing to Muslim Role," *Forward*, November 28, 2003, https://forward.com/news/7158/eu-accused-of-burying-report-on-antisemitism-point/.

definition.[54] This endeavor produced what the EUMC characterizes as their contemporary

working definition, which contains the following specifications:

> Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. …

> *Denying* the *Jewish people* their *right to self-determination*, e.g., *by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor*.

> Applying *double standards* by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

> Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

> However, criticism of Israel *similar to* that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.[55]

The EUMC's qualifications, which serves as the basis of the US State Department's

definition, provides one of the most straightforward articulations, but it too remains highly

subjective, and, arguably, counterproductive. It would be impossible to determine some sort of

concrete boundary between legitimate criticism and double standard. Furthermore, if the

conception of anti-Semitism includes racially motivated hatred of Jews, then that implies a tacit

acknowledgment of a Jewish race. If one presupposes that, then having a state based around it is

inherently a racial endeavor. This may not necessarily be true of Israel, but the argument itself is

highly contradictory. This demonstrates why Gerstenfeld and Sharanky's formulation is

problematic. They both predicate on the notion that Jews share a religious-ethnohistory,

emblematized by Israel's designation as a Jewish state. It is anti-Semitic not to acknowledge this

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[54] Gerstenfeld, "Anti-Israelism and Anti-Semitism," 91.
[55] EPWG, "EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism - EPWG," accessed March 4, 2017 (Emphasis added), http://www.antisem.eu/projects/eumc-working-definition-of-antisemitism/.

shared Jewish identity, but it is also anti-Semitic to note that this identity is based on religious

and racial criteria.

1.4 Primary Themes: Anti-Zionist Anti-Semitism or Legitimate Criticism?

"Zionism… became successful - created a nation-state - precisely at a time when the nation-state
fell out of fashion."
-Jerome Chanes[56]

"To be sure, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism are distinguishable: one is a political position, the
other a prejudice. Yet, as Mitchell Cohen has noted,
The overlap between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionist discourses today is considerable, and
it is especially striking at a time when many intellectuals, notably the post-modernist left
and post-colonial theorists, base their work on the very notion of 'discourse,' contending
that clusters of assumptions, embedded in our languages and cultures, pre-select how we
think about the world, and mesh the production of knowledge and power."
- Andrei S. Markovits[57]

Supporters have sought to pre-empt charges that Israel's sympathizers conflate critiques

of Israeli policy with anti-Semitism, through personal argumentation and institutionalizing

definitions. One of the main formulations, which will play a significant role in chapter three, is

the idea of anti-Zionist forms of anti-Semitism. One perspective, which acknowledges the

potential legitimacy of debates surrounding Israeli policies, delineates that, "[t]he point at which

such attacks become antisemitism is the point at which the *legitimacy* of the Zionist enterprise or

the state of Israel is questioned, because it is at that point that the legitimacy of Jewish

peoplehood is questioned. This, tautologically, is antisemitism"[58] This purportedly even-handed

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[56] Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook*, 12.
[57] Andrei Markovits, "An Inseparable Tandem of European Identity? Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism in the Short and Long Run," in *Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective: Convergence and Divergence*, ed. Jeffrey Herf (New York: Routledge, 2007), 79.
[58] Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook*, 12-13.

description lacks necessary nuance, as one can acknowledge that there is a Jewish people, yet not wholeheartedly accept the notion of a unique historical homeland or accept the right of Jews to establish a semi-theocracy there in the present-day. The leadership of many Jewish organizations, such as the ADL, initially equivocated on whether to support Zionism, while a substantial number of Orthodox Jews spoke out against it. To this day, many Jews and Jewish organizations, such as Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), question Zionism, yet they cannot reasonably be considered anti-Semites.

Ron Rosenbaum presents an even more troubling concept, stating that, "'the heart of anti-Zionist anti-Semitism…' is denial of these irrefutable facts: 'Jews want to live in peace, but three wars in which Arab states tried to drive them into the sea, and a terror campaign by Palestinians who reject the idea of a Jewish state, have left Israelis with the tragic choice between self-defense and self-destruction."[59] This is highly problematic, because it uses inflammatory language to describe highly subjective interpretations as "irrefutable facts."

Norman Finkelstein criticizes Rosenbaum, and the concept of "new anti-Semitism," as well as anti-Zionist anti-Semitism. Finkelstein asserts that this idea is promulgated by "Israel's apologists," while "the allegation of a new anti-Semitism is neither new nor about anti-Semitism."[60] He summarizes this perspective of anti-Semitism as, "any challenge inimical to Jewish interest. If not subjectively driven by animus towards Jews, it was nonetheless objectively harmful to them."[61] This "Jewish interest" is not broadly conceived as a general well-being. Rather, it is narrowly applied to the promotion of the Jewish state, and censure of those who scrutinize its policies.

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[59] Norman Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 43. Quoting Ron Rosenbaum, "Introduction," in *Those Who Forget*, p. lix.
[60] Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah,* 21.
[61] Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah,* 27.

1.5 Conclusion

Prior to the creation of Israel, anti-Semitism was much easier to identify. It maintained the base characteristics of irrational hate or displaced blame on Jews. Anti-Semitism stemming from racial stereotypes emphasize beliefs about Jews' racial or biological inferiority, immorality, and corrosive impact on society. The establishment of Israel greatly complicated the standards for identifying anti-Semitism. The partitioning of historic Palestine to create the Jewish state, on land that nearly half the population living on was Muslim or Christian, contributed to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of non-Jews. An externally imposed territorial division will inevitability lead to conflict between the opposing sides claiming land ownership. Therefore, it cannot reasonably be postulated that local animosity was purely rooted in an innate blind hatred.

Criticizing Israel can unquestionably be used to shield underlying anti-Semitic feelings, but that does not mean all critique of Israel stems from this. The difficulty then, comes from distinguishing between the two motives. The amount of foreign aid provided to Israel, its military supremacy, and controversial policies in the region lend itself to external examination. Simultaneously, one must subjectively determine where the boundary lies between legitimate critique and an unfair 'double standard' for state conduct.

Klug provides insight, stating that,

Given that the word "anti-Semitism" is so emotive; given that invariably it connotes "the familiar hatred of the Jew"; given the tendency to see anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist sentiment as the return of this hatred; and given that the old hatred has never gone away: given all these things, extending the reach of the word "anti-Semitism" is unwise... For it is liable to prevent us from seeing the facts for what they are.[62]

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[62] Klug, "A Plea for Distinctions," 146.

Klug's nuanced warning suggests that the connection between an irrational hatred of Jews and feelings towards the Israeli state are too complex to be categorized under one blanket term. His further point that over-simplification can obfuscate facts will become even more pertinent in the subsequent sections. Israel and the Jewish people are not monolithic. In regard to Israel, especially in terms of its government policies, the unwavering denouncement of critique as anti-Semitism can arguably be designated at times as lazy logic, or, more perversely, strategic.[63] The intricacies of Israel's foreign and domestic policies are complex, and distant from most "Western" countries. Therefore, public perception is most easily shaped by whomever has the largest platform and can depict a compelling narrative.

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[63] Klug, "A Plea for Distinctions," 146.

CHAPTER 2 - PROMINENT ORGANIZATIONS

Politicians are often more susceptible to well-organized moneyed interest groups than college students. Therefore, grassroots activists often find more success with students than with those in elected office. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of campus organizations, such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), that prioritize the rights of Palestinians in their conflict with Israel. These groups have been declared anti-Semitic by a number of actors, most of whom focus on the rights of Jewish Israelis in discussions about the intractability of the conflict.

Denouncements of BDS and SJP, as well as anti-BDS legislation, has become increasingly frequent on the federal, state, and municipal levels of the American government. According to Noah Pollak, executive director of the Emergency Committee for Israel and outspoken critic of BDS, the push to pass new laws is a response to the success of student organizations. He says that, "You don't want to fight on your enemy's [pro-Palestinian students] terrain… While you were doing your campus antics, the grown-ups were in the state legislatures passing laws that make your cause improbable."[64]

Pollack's acknowledgement of the proliferation of Palestinian advocacy organizations is true, but their tangible achievements remain rather limited in scope. Instead, their primary successes have come from raising awareness about the plight of Palestinians. Their activities have provoked strong backlash, but in doing so, they initiated significant debates on college campuses. These include questions about anti-Semitism, Israeli policies, and free speech, which otherwise would have likely been overlooked. Therefore, in highlighting divergent narratives,

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[64] Eitan Arom, "As BDS opponents move from campuses to state capitols, California is up next," *Jewish News Service*, April 13, 2016, http://www.jns.org/latest-articles/2016/4/13/as-bds-opponents-move-from-campuses-to-state-capitols-california-is-up-next-1#.Wi2h-7Q-cfE=.

they alter the nature of local discourse, by increasing awareness of conflicting narratives about anti-Semitism and critical opinions of Israeli policy.

2.1 Pro-Israel Organizations

"The main purpose behind these periodic, meticulously orchestrated media extravaganzas is not to fight anti-Semitism but rather to exploit the historical suffering of Jews in order to immunize Israel against criticism. Each campaign to combat the 'new anti-Semitism' has coincided with renewed international pressures on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories in exchange for recognition from neighboring Arab states."
-Norman Finkelstein[65]

"This is serious and frightening, and only in America - not in Israel - is this a problem. These are Jewish organizations that believe they should keep people who disagree with them on the Middle East away from anyone who might listen."
-Tony Judt[66]

2.1.1 Anti-Defamation League (ADL)

The ADL is one of the most prominent and influential Jewish organizations in the US. It was formed in 1913, and describes itself as, "[w]e protect the Jewish people," with its purpose being "[t]o stop the defamation of the Jewish people, and to secure justice and fair treatment to all."[67] The organization acts to monitor instances of anti-Semitism, and frequently publishes opinions about issues involving free speech, Jews, Israel, and anti-Semitism. It is a national organization, but has local chapters and representatives, and engages in active lobbying and media interventions. It has been entrenched in controversies in the past, as it was caught

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[65] Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah*, 21-22.
[66] Quoted by Michael Powell, "In N.Y., Sparks Fly Over Israel Criticism," *Washington Post*, October 9, 2006, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/08/AR2006100800817.html
[67] Anti-Defamation League, "Who We Are," accessed October 9, 2017, https://www.adl.org/who-we-are; Anti-Defamation League, "Our Mission," accessed October 9, 2017, https://www.adl.org/who-we-are/our-mission.

surveilling and collecting information on academics, activists, and politicians.[68] In 1993, evidence emerged of an ADL employee of nearly forty years, who worked as "an undercover spy who picked through garbage and amassed secret files."[69]

Noam Chomsky, who is frequently targeted by the ADL, stated that when he gives public lectures there are typically protestors who distribute writings with quotes falsely attributed to him. Chomsky believes the ADL is behind this literature, which he says is usually corroborated by the people passing the pamphlets out. He describes such tactics, saying that, "[t]hey are of course not illegal. If the ADL chooses to behave in this fashion, it has a right to do so; but this should also be exposed."[70] This approach is confirmed by others, such as former US Congressman Paul Findley, who states that the ADL disseminates information about events by people and groups it views unfavorably. Findley details how the ADL publishes "counteraction guidance," whereby its supporters should take action and ensure that its targets "would have no peace."[71]

Chomsky questions the ADL's mainstream legitimacy, given its perfidious behaviors and heavily biased ideological lobbying:

> The ADL has virtually abandoned its earlier role as a civil rights organization, becoming 'one of the main pillars' of Israeli propaganda in the U.S., as the Israeli press casually describes it, engaged in surveillance, blacklisting, compilation of FBI-style files circulated to adherents for the purpose of defamation, angry public responses to criticism of Israeli actions, and so on. These efforts, buttressed by insinuations of anti-Semitism or direct accusations, are intended to deflect or undermine opposition to Israeli policies,

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[68] Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby* (Chicago, IL: Laurence Hill Books, 1985), 184.

[69] Richard Paddock, "New Details of Extensive ADL Spy Operation Emerge: Inquiry: Transcripts reveal nearly 40 years of espionage by a man who infiltrated political groups," *Los Angeles Times*, April 13, 1993, http://articles.latimes.com/1993-04-13/news/mn-22383_1_spy-operation.

[70] Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out,* 185.

[71] Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out,* 57.

including Israel's refusal, with U.S. support, to move towards a general political settlement.[72]

Norman Finkelstein also criticizes the ADL and its national director, Abraham Foxman, for saying that, "we currently face as great a threat to the safety and security of the Jewish people as the one we faced in the 1930s - if not a greater one."[73] Finkelstein argues that this demonstrates how the organization uses fear-mongering and incendiary language to undermine legitimate criticisms and censure discourse about Israel.

2.1.2 AMCHA Initiative

The AMCHA Initiative was founded in 2011. In Hebrew, *amcha* means "your people," and "connotes 'grassroots,' 'the masses,' and 'ordinary people.'"[74] The organization identifies three primary categories of campus anti-Semitism - Targeting Jewish Students and Staff, Antisemitic Expression, and BDS Activity.[75] To address these concerns, "AMCHA Initiative strives to bring together people from all over North America so that they might speak in one voice in order to express their concern for the safety and well-being of Jewish college and university students."[76] One of its founders, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, teaches Hebrew at the University of California. She states that, "she is trying to advocate on behalf of Jewish students who suffer intellectual and emotional harassment because of what AMCHA sees as a pervasive atmosphere of anti-Israel sentiment on campus."[77]

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[72] Noam Chomsky, "Necessary Illusions," Appendix V, Segment 20/33 (1989), http://home.nvg.org/~skars/ni/ni-c10-s20.html.

[73] Abraham H. Foxman, as quoted by Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah*, 21.

[74] AMCHA Initiative, "AMCHA Initiative's Mission and Objectives," accessed October 11, 2017, https://amchainitiative.org/mission-and-objectives/.

[75] AMCHA Initiative, "AMCHA Initiative's Categories of Antisemitic Activity," accessed October 11, 2017, https://amchainitiative.org/categories-antisemitic-activity.

[76] AMCHA, "AMCHA Initiative's Mission and Objectives."

[77] Paul Berger, "Jewish Professors Hit Back Against Pro-Israel Campus 'Blacklist'," *Forward*, October 1, 2014, https://forward.com/news/israel/206628/jewish-professors-hit-back-against-pro-israel-camp/.

AMCHA has faced ample criticism, as they use controversial tactics that at times are reminiscent of McCarthyism. For example, after the 2014 bombardment of Gaza, AMCHA published a blacklist of 218 professors who signed a petition supportive of an academic boycott of Israel. AMCHA's founders justified it on the grounds that, "[w]e believe the professors who have signed this petition may be so biased against the Jewish state that they are unable to teach accurately or fairly about Israel or the Arab-Israel conflict, and may even inject antisemitic tropes into their lectures or class discussion."[78] Moreover, AMCHA says that classes taught by these professors, may show an "anti-Israel bias, or possibly even antisemitic rhetoric."[79]

Critics of AMCHA argue that the organization, "strains the basic principle of academic freedom." The *Forward* cites David Myers, that, "I think they have a very clear idea of what they think they will find and they find it, and it confirms what they knew in advance." The article further paraphrases him, saying that, their "research is neither objective nor balanced. AMCHA's definition of anti-Israel is so broad that it sweeps up many academics with strong connections to Israel."[80]

AMCHA presents itself as a fair-minded organization that actively monitors anti-Semitism on campus. However, the organization has a heavy pro-Israel bias, and frequently suggests any mildly critical discourse on Israel as indicative of anti-Semitic tendencies. It is highly ideological, and relies on reputational smears in an attempt to censure and suppress dialogue. Given Rossman-Benjamin's affiliation with the University of California, the organization remains most active at colleges within the state. It was a primary player in the events described in the following chapter.

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[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

2.2 Pro-Palestinian Organizations

2.2.1 Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS)

BDS was begun by Palestinians, and says that it found its inspirations in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. The campaign "upholds the simple principle that Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity."[81] The national website describes its tactics as:

> BOYCOTTS involve withdrawing support for Israel and Israeli and international companies that are involved in the violation of Palestinian human rights, as well as complicit Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions.
>
> DIVESTMENT campaigns urge banks, local councils, churches, pension funds and universities to withdraw investments from all Israeli companies and from international companies involved in violating Palestinian rights.
>
> SANCTIONS campaigns pressure governments to fulfil their legal obligation to hold Israel to account including by ending military trade, free-trade agreements and expelling Israel from international forums such as the UN and FIFA.[82]

The organization claims to have had "a major impact and is effectively challenging international support for Israeli apartheid and settler-colonialism." However, its tangible successes are relatively minimal. BDS has arguably been most successful on college campuses in California, so chapter three focuses on the controversial movement and the ramifications of counter-activism at UC.

Leaders of the BDS campaign describe it as a peaceful movement, which strives to alter polices of the Israeli government through sustained economic, academic, social and international

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[81] BDS, "What is BDS?," accessed October 11, 2017, https://bdsmovement.net/what-is-bds.
[82] Ibid.

public pressure. However, its opponents argue that it strives to delegitimize Israel and isolate it within the global community, while, ultimately, hoping to destroy it as a Jewish state.[83]

The ADL states that, "[t]he BDS campaign is rampant with misinformation and distortion."[84] AMCHA describes BDS as "Antisemitic in intent," as they say it condones terrorism and denies the right of Jews to self-determination. They state that BDS is "Antisemitic in Expression," as they apply a double-standard to Israel, while striving to delegitimize and demonize the state. Moreover, they say that BDS is "Antisemitic in effect," as they target and contribute to a hostile environment for Jewish students.[85] They summarize their criticism of the organization that,

> By demonizing the Jewish state with false charges of crimes against humanity, and singling out only one country in the world—Israel—for censure and abuse, while ignoring entrenched human rights abuses that are rampant throughout the Middle East, including against religious, ethnic minorities, and women, the movement exposes its bigotry towards Jews.[86]

BDS is one of the primary focuses of AMCHA, as its director, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, argues, "[t]he reality on UC campuses today is that almost every anti-Semitic act can be directly linked to BDS. And every BDS campaign has resulted in Jewish students reporting feeling threatened, harassed, bullied and unsafe. It's not hard to understand why. BDS is steeped in hatred."[87]

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[83] Carter-Hallward and Shaver, "War by other means' or non-violent resistance?";
Fiamma Nirenstein, "Europe and the changing Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 19, no. 1 (2015): 69.
[84] Anti-Defamation League, "Anti-Israel Activity & BDS," accessed May 6, 2017, https://www.adl.org/what-we-do/israel/anti-israel-activity-bds.
[85] AMCHA Initiative, "How anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaigns are anti-Semitic," 2017, accessed October 11, 2017, https://amchainitiative.org/why-bds-antisemitic.
[86] AMCHA Initiative, "The History and Antisemitic Nature of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Campaigns," 2017, accessed October 11, 2017, https://amchainitiative.org/1842-2/.
[87] Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, "Divestment movement inspires threats to Jewish students," *San Jose Mercury News*, January 14, 2016, LexisNexis.

2.2.2 Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)

SJP promotes its goals as ending the occupation and colonialization of Palestinian land. It also prioritizes achieving full equality for Palestinians and those living in the refugee diaspora.[88] Critics of the organization frequently describe it as an aggressively radical group, which propagates sensational falsehoods, sympathizes with terrorists, and supports the destruction of the Jewish Israeli state.[89]

2.3 Conclusion

In summation, BDS and SJP are the most established student organizations advocating for Palestinians, and are the target of many pro-Israel activists. They are frequently portrayed as anti-Semitic by their detractors, who argue that their public positions, goals, and tactics belies contempt for Jews and Israel. Prominent academics, such as Noam Chomsky and Judith Butler, who are not members of these groups, but have publicly espoused support for them, have also faced criticism from pro-Israel individuals. Larry Summers, who was at the time serving as the president of Harvard University, decried that, "[p]rofoundly anti-Israel views are increasingly finding support in progressive intellectual communities. Serious and thoughtful people are advocating and taking actions [supportive of BDS] that are anti-semitic in their effect if not their intent."[90]

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[88] National Students for Justice in Palestine, "About National SJP," accessed October 5, 2017, http://www.nationalsjp.org/about-nsjp.html.
[89] Anti-Defamation League, "Profile: Students for Justice in Palestine, 2014.
[90] Larry Summers, "Address at Morning Prayers" (speech, Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 17, 2002), Harvard Memorial Church, https://www.harvard.edu/president/speeches/summers_2002/morningprayers.php; Larry Summers, "Remarks: Academic Freedom and Anti-Semitism" (speech, January 29, 2015), Columbia Center for Law and Liberty, http://larrysummers.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/AcademicFreedomAndAntiSemitism_FINAL1-2.pdf.

After his speech, Butler noted that Summers, as well as other pro-Israel proponents, fails to explain why pro-Palestinian activism and divestment campaigns are anti-Semitic.[91] Other supporters, both on the student and professorial levels, argue that oppositional actors deliberately conflate anti-Semitism and Israel, as a strategic method to censor and undermine pro-Palestinian activism. The vigorous debates have made delineating anti-Semitism from legitimate criticism of Israeli policies difficult for academic institutions and public officials, resulting in ongoing conflicts and discursive contestations between activists focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Due to length constraints, the following chapter will not go into detail about specific campaigns and events held by pro-Palestinian organizations. Instead, it will look at two situations that arose due to lobbying by pro-Israel groups. However, it should be noted that these instances were initiated as a direct response to activism by BDS and SJP on the various University of California campuses. Some of the statements critical of the pro-Israel actors come from members or supporters of the groups.

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[91] Judith Butler, "No, it's not anti-Semitism," *London Review of Books* 25, no. 16 (August 21, 2003), https://www.lrb.co.uk/v25/n16/contents.

CHAPTER 3 - COMPETING DISCOURSES: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

To analyze the role of partisan discourse at the University of California, I visited the websites of major pro-Israel organizations on the national and local level. As previously described, the most established and prominent actors include the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the AMCHA Initiative. Each organization participated in the controversies at UC and published contemporaneous articles about the ongoing situations. To collect less partisan oriented texts for analysis, I used the LexisNexis Academic search engine for articles written between 2014 and 2016, using the keywords of "anti-Semitism" and "California," along with further sub-searches for Irvine, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Riverside, which are the campuses with the most high-profile activity. To further narrow the results and zone in on the relevant articles, I also did sub searches of "Boycott, Divestment and Sanction" and "anti-Zionism." I included all California newspapers in the research pool, given the specificity of the query and localized nature of the case studies.[92] I found that many of the articles in the results appeared in other California newspapers, or were reproduced from articles that were originally published on the *Forward*, a popular left-leaning Jewish news site. The *Los Angeles Times* produced the most original and in-depth articles, with participants in the local debates writing editorial pieces.

After collecting the results from LexisNexis, I scanned the articles to eliminate duplicates and unrelated pieces, before using purposive sampling to select those pertinent to the research topic. Since this thesis focuses on how particular interpretations of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are strategically used to frame issues involving Israel and Jewish students at universities, editorials and opinion pieces are emphasized in the analysis.

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[92] LexisNexis Academic, http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/.

Chapter three engages a methodology similar to the one presented by Julia Chaitin, Shoshana Steinberg, and Sharon Steinberg. In "Polarized words: discourse on the boycott of Israel, social justice and conflict resolution," the authors examined how perspectives about BDS and the Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel are presented by Jews, Israelis, Palestinians, and other people worldwide.[93] Their qualitative approach to collecting and classifying research aligns well with my research question, as they organize their texts based on discursive constructs and the author's presentation of facts. However, they primarily compare and contrast patterns they found in general discourse about the BDS campaign as a strategy, in terms of how they relate to theories about social-justice and conflict resolution. Instead, I focus on the themes of arguments, the implications of the frames, and the way the discourse is used to further political objectives in specific cases.

Chaitin et al, favor Alvesson and Skoldberg's formulation of discourse analysis, which they describe as, "focus[ing] on understanding the expression of different attitudes, how utterances are constructed and the functions they fulfil."[94] Their method begins with the construction of questions to organize the material. I build upon their interpretation, by following the structure of their method of analysis, although I change some of their questions. I categorized the texts thematically, based upon the answers to the following: What is explicitly stated? What is being interpreted? What nuances and contradictions appear? Are loaded words, or "highly-emotional terms that often trigger negative emotions and defensiveness,"[95] used to describe events or the motivations of particular actors? What values and beliefs can be deduced? What is the overall message? These questions helped to identify common themes and argumentation

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[93] Julia Chaitin, Shoshana Steinberg, and Sharon Steinberg, "Polarized words: discourse on the boycott of Israel, social justice and conflict resolution," *International Journal of Conflict Management* 28, no. 3 (2017).
[94] Chaitin, et. al, "Polarized words," 278
[95] Chaitin, et. al, "Polarized words," 278.

frameworks in the discourse. Identifying applications of anti-Semitic terminology and the

arguments used by pro-Israel activists, in discourse about the UC system and to counter pro-

Palestinian narratives, facilitated the case study analysis. After reading the various articles, I

identified two events that seem most demonstrative of the themes and characterizations.

3.1 UCB Course on Israel and Settler Colonialism

"[The amount of foreign and military aid from the US] ensuring that Israel can maintain the largest and strongest military in the region. And yet, some of Israel's advocates in Northern California say they've been battling for Israel's very existence. The existential threat? A one-unit, pass/fail course… run by an undergraduate student, Paul Hadweh, who grew up in Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank."
-Simone Zimmerman[96]

In September 2016, after receiving letters of complaint from forty-three Jewish and pro-

Israel advocacy groups, UCB announced the cancellation of a new class, called "Palestine: A

Settler Colonial Analysis."[97] The syllabus and course description are essentially extended

versions of the title of the course, which is a one-credit elective.[98] The class was formed through

a UC program that allows students to create courses, under the supervision of a faculty member.

The University of California Board of Regents (UCBR) approved it, but shortly after the class

began it was cancelled with little warning. The student directing the class, Paul Hadweh,

commented that, "I first learned that our course was under scrutiny from a report in the Israeli

media that describes the involvement of an Israeli government minister in efforts to cancel the

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[96] Simone Zimmerman, "A minor victory, but a long way to go," *The Jewish News of Northern California*, September 23, 2016, https://www.jweekly.com/2016/09/23/was-u-c-berkeley-right-to-reinstate-palestine-course/.
[97] "UC Berkeley Suspends 'Palestine: A Settler Colonial Analysis' Course Amid Anti-Semitism Accusations," *Haaretz*, September 18, 2016, https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/americas/1.742703.
[98] "Palestine: A Settler Colonial Analysis: About the Course," Fall 2017, https://decal.berkeley.edu/courses/4080.

course. Two hours later, I received an email from the university notifying us of the suspension."[99]

Opposition was further justified on the basis of a UC Regents policy that stipulates courses cannot to taught for "the advance of partisan interest" or "political indoctrination."[100] AMCHA published a group letter, which charged that "the course's objectives, reading materials and guest speakers are politically motivated, meet our government's criteria for antisemitism, and are intended to indoctrinate students to hate the Jewish state and take action to eliminate it."[101] The article further stated that, "it [is] clear that a key goal of the class is to encourage students to accept unquestioningly the false and defamatory idea that Israel is an illegitimate settler colonial state," and that "in the context of the other course objectives, means that a significant part of the course will be devoted to thinking about ways to 'decolonize' — that is, eliminate — Israel."[102]

The course's syllabus makes no mention of destroying Israel. In actuality, the text of the original syllabus said the class will "explore the possibilities of a decolonized Palestine, one in which justice is realized for all its peoples and equality is not only espoused, but practiced."[103] The pro-Israel groups involved present a very black and white scenario, where either one unflinchingly supports Israel as a Jewish state, or they are anti-Semitic. They seek to constrain debate by establishing parameters for what can be considered normal dialogue, while identifying any conflicting narratives as deviant and impermissible. Clearly, the course presents perspectives

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[99] Palestine Legal, "UC Berkeley Censors Course on Palestine and Settler Colonialism," September 14, 2016, https://palestinelegal.org/news/2016/9/14/uc-berkeley-censors-course-on-palestine-and-settler-colonialism.
[100] AMCHA Initiative, "Letter to UC Berkeley Chancellor Dirks Regarding Serious Concerns About Vetting Procedure for DeCal Courses at UC Berkeley," September 13, 2016, https://Amchainitiative.org/letter-to-uc-berkeley-chancellor-dirks.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Palestine Legal, "UC Berkeley Censors Course."
"Palestine: A Settler Colonial Analysis: About the Course."

critical of Zionism, such as the implementation of Israel's modern policies and possibly the ideology itself. However, that is not the same as anti-Semitism predicated in elements of irrational hate. The organizations that signed the letter are promoting a selective interpretation of what is meant by "decolonization" in this context. Suggesting that wording proves the class aspires to promote a revolutionary or violent expulsion of Jews is disingenuous and misleading.

Objections to this course provide a prime example of the way a broad and subjective understanding of anti-Semitism can be used to try to discipline narratives. The international controversy and framing of the accusations demonstrates major themes in influential partisan pro-Israel discourse, which presents topics that potentially challenge the idea of Jewish hegemony in the area as a veiled attempt to destroy Jews. The ADL released a statement, saying that, "'Palestine: A Settler Colonial Analysis' presents students with blatantly biased views towards Zionism and Israel as fact. As the title implies, the class thesis and much of its syllabus is built on the foundation of the denial of the Jewish connection to the Land of Israel and the attempt to negate the right of Jews, like any other people, to assert their self-determination."[104]

In an opinion piece, Jonathon Greenbalt elaborated on why he believes the course to be premised in anti-Semitism. According to him, Jews cannot be considered colonizers, since they have connection to the land going back thousands of years. Thus, "[s]imply put, to deny this history is an out-and-out lie. It is anti-Semitism because it's an immense falsehood intended to harm the Jewish people and to deny them their right to self-determination in their historic homeland."[105] This displays a very broad interpretation of anti-Semitism, as it seemingly labels

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[104] Seth Brysk, "ADL Deeply Concerned About Biased Course Denying Jewish History and Self-Determination," Anti-Defamation League, September 20, 2016, http://sanfrancisco.adl.org/news/adl-deeply-concerned-about-biased-course-denying-jewish-history-and-self-determination/.

[105] Jonathan Greenblatt, "UC Berkeley Course: The Travesty of the Distortion of History Under the Guise of Academic Discipline," October 10, 2016, Anti-Defamation League, https://www.adl.org/blog/uc-berkeley-course-the-travesty-of-the-distortion-of-history-under-the-guise-of-academic.

anything challenging to Jews or selective interests as anti-Semitic. This aligns with other ADL

statements attacking the course using an argument similar to that it employs against BDS, saying

the syllabus shows, "a one-sided, biased narrative consistent with the current movement to

delegitimize Israel."[106] Once again, the ADL challenges narratives it dislikes by conflating Jews

with Israel, political discussions as attempts to undermine its existence, and differing opinions as

automatically rooted in anti-Semitism.

In response to charges that they were attempting to suppress academic freedom, Tammi

Rossman-Benjamin, a UC professor and director of AMCHA, wrote that, "[s]adly, some in

academia are so blinded by their hate for Israel that they are willing to compromise their

commitments to education and willingly abuse their positions of power to advance their own

personal, political agenda," and that they "disregard the trust that young, vulnerable minds

unquestioningly put in them. They have figured out a way to game the educational system in

order to weaponize young soldiers in their political war. And they do all this while hiding behind

the cloak of academic freedom."[107] This narrative is highly defamatory, but it is defended on the

grounds that the course stems from "the foundation of the denial of the Jewish connection to the

Land of Israel and the attempt to negate the right of Jews, like any other people, to assert their

self-determination." However, as Simone Zimmerman, a UCB alum and founding member of the

anti-Occupation group IfNotNow, notes, UC has an "Israel Studies" program, where "[s]tudents

can take courses on Israeli independence that don't have to explicitly mention the Nakba, the

violent displacement of over 750,000 Palestinians from their homes in 1948 . … Palestinian

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[106] Seth Brysk, quoted by Drew Himmelstein, "Palestine course reinstated at Berkeley, draws Jewish ire," StandWithUs, September 22, 2016, https://www.standwithus.com/news/article.asp?id=4906.
[107] Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, "Why We Protested a Palestinian Course at Berkeley," *Forward*, September 9, 2016, https://forward.com/opinion/350270/why-we-protested-a-palestinian-course-at-berkeley.

students don't get to accuse those classes of having a 'political agenda' or of 'ignoring history' or of threatening their existence, yet those would be very fair cases to make."[108]

In response to the course's cancellation, Palestine Legal threatened to sue the school for suppressing free speech and academic freedom.[109] In addition, faculty members and outside academics criticized UCBR's decision, arguing that it violated the First Amendment and the principles of academic freedom.[110] In response, after abruptly cancelling the course mid-semester, the UCBR decided to reinstate it. Tammi Rossman-Benjamin responded, saying "after complete distortions about the meaning of academic freedom were made and lawsuits were threatened from Palestine Legal and other groups with a vested interest in brainwashing students with classes like these, the university backed down and reinstated the course."[111] Reflecting on the its reinstatement, Zimmerman said that "the fact that it was attacked and suspended to begin with highlights a tragic reality: Today in America, a Palestinian who wants to teach about the place where he was born is considered politically motivated and dangerous."[112]

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[108] Simone Zimmerman, "Berkeley's Choice to Nix Palestinian Course Disgusts Me as a Jewish Alum," *Forward*, September 18, 2016, https://forward.com/opinion/350233/berkeleys-choice-to-nix-palestinian-course-disgusts-me-as-a-jewish-alum/?attribution=articles-article-related-1-headline.
[109] Palestine Legal, "UC Berkeley Reinstates Course on Palestine," October 20, 2016, https://palestinelegal.org/news/2016/9/19/uc-berkeley-reinstates-course-on-palestine.
[110] Jewish Voice for Peace, "Tell Chancellor Dirks: Reinstate DeCal Student Course on Palestine," http://org.salsalabs.com/o/301/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=20362.
[111] Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, "Academic integrity lost to anti-Semitism," *The Jewish News of Northern California*, September 23, 2016, https://www.jweekly.com/2016/09/23/was-u-c-berkeley-right-to-reinstate-palestine-course/.
[112] Ibid.

3.2 UCBR's Report on Intolerance

"Although the UC report claims the need to track 'the evolving nature of anti-Semitism,' what needs to be tracked instead is the drive to hijack, for malign political purposes, the definition of a genuine scourge."
-Judith Butler and Saree Makdisi[113]

"Just as black students shouldn't be told what is and isn't racism, LGBTQ students shouldn't be told how to feel about homo- phobia, Jewish students shouldn't be told 'this isn't anti-Semitism.' We know our own identity. When someone calls us a 'Zionist Nazi,' they are attacking our religious, personal and communal identity at its very core."
-Rabbi Evan Goodman[114]

3.2.1 Impetus and Justifications

In 2015, the University of California's Board of Regents announced that it would conduct a study on intolerance and discrimination on its various campuses. The impetus for the working group stemmed from lobbying by pro-Israel activists and organizations, including the AMCHA Initiative and the ADL, which maintained that pro-Palestinian activism fomented hostile and unsafe environments for Jewish students.[115] AMCHA emphasized the need to explicitly condemn anti-Zionism, as well as the discourses of BDS, JVP, and SJP, as they are "the driving force behind the alarming rise in anti-Semitism on campuses."[116]

The initial version of the report condemned anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, seemingly equating the two phenomena. As UC professors noted, "the report was produced under a cloud of

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[113] Judith Butler and Saree Makdisi, "Suppressing criticism of Zionism on campus is catastrophic censorship," *Los Angeles Times,* March 23, 2016, http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-makdisibutler-uc-antisemitism-report-20160323-story.html.

[114] Evan Goodman, "Anti-Zionism is the face of contemporary anti-Semitism," *Torrance Daily Breeze*, March 20, 2016, LexisNexis.

[115] Jewish Voice for Peace, "Letter to UC Regents: University of California Deserves Real Experts on Intolerance," January 13, 2016, https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/uc-deserves-experts-on-intolerance/.

[116] AMCHA Initiative, "AMCHA TO UC Regents: JVP, SJP, & Palestine Legal Are Living in a Misleading, Self-Serving Fantasy World," March 21, 2016, https://amchainitiative.org/SJP-living-misleading-selfserving-fantasy-pressr.

external pressure," including "UC regent Richard Blum, who publicly issued a veiled threat: 'My wife, and your senior senator' — Dianne Feinstein — 'is prepared to be critical of this university,' unless UC finds a way to punish the supposed new form of anti-Semitism."[117] Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) criticized its goals, saying that effort came "in response to a campaign to cast human rights activism on behalf of Palestinians as somehow anti-Jewish."[118]

The initiation of the working group further provoked controversy on the various UC campuses, as it seemingly ignored all forms of intolerance aside from that directed at Jewish students. In response, the UCBR expanded the working group's mandate, but did little to change its leadership. JVP argued that the working group was still highly problematic, even after it broadened its probe, due to the controversial "experts" leading the investigation. According to them, the experts selected demonstrate that UCBR "failed to exercise due diligence in choosing those whose advice it solicited," such that, "the resulting statement will not address intolerance at all, but will reflect a biased effort to redefine anti-Semitism as including criticism of Israel."[119] JVP went on to say that, "We are extremely concerned that not only is there is no expert on Islamophobia or any religious bias other than anti-Semitism, but that Mr. Marcus and Rabbi Hier both represent a particular Jewish viewpoint on Israel, one that sees criticism of Israel as anti-Semitic."[120]

The perspective of one of the experts in the working group explicitly touted the possibility, and desirability, or censuring public debate. In 2013, Kenneth Marcus wrote, "[t]hese cases [accusations of anti-Semitism] - even when rejected - expose administrators to bad publicity. … No university wants to be accused of creating an abusive environment," and that

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[117] Butler and Makdisi, "Suppressing criticism of Zionism."
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.

"Israel haters now publicly complain that these cases make it harder for them to recruit new adherents."[121] Marcus explicitly identifies discursive discipline as the goal, by using defamation and willful misrepresentation when necessary to achieve a political objective.

One of the primary means of obfuscating the nature of criticism is through the institutionalization of the ambiguous EUMC and State Department definition. JVP criticized the potential implementation, as the expansion would then include "'demonizing, delegitimizing, or applying a double standard' to Israel, a definition so broad and subjective it is practically unusable."[122] Kenneth Stern, one of the authors of the EUMC definition, defends the value in it, but argues that "enshrin[ing] such a definition on a college campus is an ill-advised idea that will make matters worse, and not only for Jewish students; it would also damage the university as a whole."[123] Furthermore, "[w]hether one agrees with their view [of BDS] or not, why cheapen the word 'antisemitism,' let alone distort it, by applying it to such advocates, particularly on a college campus?"[124]

Butler and Makdisi addressed a similar theme, arguing that "[the working group] is less interested in actual conditions of intolerance that we all must oppose than in singling out and redefining anti-Semitism to include political viewpoints that it seeks to suppress."[125] Moreover, "[t]he rhetoric that troubles Ms. Rossman-Benjamin is not the problem, but rather a symptom of the problem. The problem is that debate has become binary, black and white – what Ms.

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[121] Kenneth Marcus, "Standing Up for Jewish Students*," Jerusalem Post*, September 9, 2013, as quoted by Jewish Voice for Peace.
[122] Jewish Voice for Peace, "Letter to UC Regents."
[123] Kenneth Stern, "Should a major university system have a particular definition of anti-Semitism?," *Jewish Journal*, June 22, 2015, http://jewishjournal.com/opinion/175207/.
[124] Stern, "Should a major university."
[125] Butler and Makdisi, "Suppressing criticism of Zionism."

Rossman-Benjamin would define as antisemtism some pro-Palestinian advocates say is simply seeking justice and opposing racism."[126]

3.2.2 Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism Debates

The *Los Angeles Times* Editorial Board warned against the adoption of the UCBR statement, as it "blurs an important distinction," since "it conflates anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism."[127] They argue that,

> It is no doubt true that there are anti-Zionists who are also anti-Semites. But it is certainly possible to oppose Israel and not harbor or express prejudice against Jews. Some critics of Zionism are themselves Jewish. No doubt many Jewish students at UC strongly identify with Israel and are deeply offended by criticism of its policies or attacks on its legitimacy. But that doesn't justify equating those opinions with bigotry or stifling their expression.[128]

In an opinion piece, Butler and Makdisi express a similar sentiment, while summarizing the contents of the UCBR's report and identifying instances of misdirection. They emphasize its statement that, "manifestations of anti-Semitism have changed and that expressions of anti-Semitism are more coded and difficult to identify," yet, it "presents itself as the solution to a problem that it is actually helping to manufacture." They go on to say,

> [The report states] 'opposition to Zionism often is expressed in ways that are not simply statements of disagreement over politics and policy, but also assertions of prejudice and intolerance toward Jewish people and culture.' And so on to the inevitable coup de grace: 'Anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and other forms of discrimination have no place at the University of California.'
> In a few paragraphs, the report conflates two distinct phenomena: hatred of Jews on the one hand, and criticism of a political ideology on the other. The overall claim is that the latter — objections to the Israeli state, its military occupation, its demolition of homes, its two-tiered system of citizenship — is the new, covert form of anti-Semitism. These are

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[126] Butler and Makdisi, "Suppressing criticism of Zionism."
[127] LA Times Editorial Board, "UC's intolerance policy goes dangerously astray on anti-Semitism," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 2016, http://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-uc-intolerance-20160316-story.html.
[128] LA Times Editorial Board, "UC's intolerance policy."

issues regularly debated in public discourse; it is imperative that they be freely discussed in universities as well. But if the report is adopted, scholarship and teaching that include critical perspectives deemed "anti-Zionist" could be branded illegitimate, and open discussion shut down.[129]

Judea Pearl, an Israeli professor at UC Los Angeles, asserts that the UCBR's wording does not conflate anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, because,

> the statement explicitly separates the two issues, saying: 'Anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and other forms of discrimination have no place at the University of California.' The statement, in other words, condemns anti-Zionism not because it closely mimics anti-Semitism, but on its own terms — and rightly so. Anti-Semitism targets Jews as individuals; anti-Zionism targets Jews as a people. Anti-Semitism would deny Jews equal standing as human beings; anti-Zionism would ban Israel from equal membership in the family of nations.[130]

Pearl's calm rationalization goes beyond the ADL or AMCHA, by essentially equating Israel with all Jews. This explanation demonstrates the risk articulated by JVP, prior to the report's completion. The organization warned that it could de-emphasize the diversity of opinions within the Jewish community, as "Jews are not and have never been a monolith, and for the Regents to assume so would be inappropriate and offensive."[131]

In his editorial, Pearl goes on to state that, "[a]nti-Jewish factions on UC campuses and elsewhere defend themselves by saying: "I love Jews, it is only the Zionist Jews that I hate." But that's a hateful cliché, and a nonsensical one. They're attempting to separate Jews from the defining symbol of their historical identity, which is impossible.[132] Here, he is again conflating a sign people identify with, with the people themselves. He further states that, "If we examine anti-Zionist ideology closely, we see that its aims are: to uproot one people, the Jewish people, from

[129] Butler and Makdisi, "Suppressing criticism of Zionism."
[130] Judea Pearl, "Anti-Zionism is a hateful ideology. It has no place at UC," *Los Angeles Times*, March 23, 2016, http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0323-pearl-anti-zionism-20160323-story.html.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.

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its homeland, to take away its ability to defend itself in sovereignty, and to delegitimize its

historical identity. It is racist and fundamentally eliminationist."[133]

According to Ron Dolinsky, "[w]hat differentiates anti-Semitism from other forms of

racism is that it represents genocidal racism, which includes denial of the existence of a Jewish

people's history or their right to freedom and self-determination. … Every single Jew alive today

is the survivor of an ongoing movement of systematic genocide."[134] He argues that the UCBR

statement must include the State Department definition, as the historical dispossession of Jews

means that anti-Zionism must be recognized as a form of anti-Semitism.

The working group and Statement on Intolerance provoked enough controversy and

publicity that the UCBR rewrote the report. The 2016 version altered the wording to condemn

"anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism. The UC Senate acknowledge how,

> The release of the Final Report of the Working Group in the week before the March 24
> meeting produced a deluge of news articles, opinion pieces, and blog posts, primarily
> around the use of the term "anti-Zionism" in the Contextual Statement preceding the
> Principles. The amendment proposed by UCAF and endorsed by Council clarified that
> "anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism" rather than simply "anti-Zionism" should be
> considered discrimination, to distinguish Zionism – a political viewpoint protected under
> the First Amendment and academic freedom – from anti-Semitism – racial discrimination
> which, of course, is unprotected.[135]

The final version says that, "commenters noted that historic manifestations of anti-Semitism

have changed and that expressions of anti-Semitism are more coded and difficult to identify. In

particular, opposition to Zionism is often expressed in ways that are not simply statements of

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[133] Ibid.

[134] Ron Dolinsky, "California universities must define anti-Semitism," *San Jose Mercury News*, September 14, 2015, LexisNexis.

[135] University of California Academic Senate, "UC Regents Adopt Statement Against Intolerance with Academic Council Amendment," April 2016, http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/news/source/intolerance-statement.april2016.html.

disagreement over politics and policy, but also assertions of prejudice and intolerance toward

Jewish people and culture."[136] Following that, the most substantive change was, "Anti-Semitism,

anti-semitic forms of anti-Zionism and other forms of discrimination have no place at the

University of California."[137] This alteration was made to address concerns about the potential for

academic censorship, suppression of free speech and political activism, as it specifically

delineates between anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism.

The changes received tepid responses from both sides. The most vocal pro-Palestinian

organizations, such as JVP, BDS, and SJP, along with a multitude of professors, still questioned

the value and neutrality of the report overall.[138] Butler wrote in response that, "[i]f we think that

we solve the problem by identifying forms of anti-Semitic anti-Zionism, then we are left with the

question of who identifies such a position, and what are their operative definitions. These terms

are vague and overbroad and run the risk of suppressing speech and violating principles of

academic freedom."[139] One of JVP's directors, Rabbi Alissa Wise, wrote that the wording did

little to affect the political motivations driving the report, and that, "[t]he effort to conflate anti-

Zionism, political criticism of the state of Israel, with anti-Semitism, baseless hatred of Jews, is a

morally reprehensible and desperate attempt to stop a movement that seeks justice and equality

for Israelis and Palestinians, and all people. To do so is to take a dangerous step toward de-

democratizing our society."[140]

Alternately, many pro-Israel supporters felt the report did not go far enough. Rabbi

Goodman, a teacher at UC Santa Barbara, argue that, "[t]o solve a problem, you must be able to

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[136] Committee on Educational Policy, University of California, *Final Report on the Regent's Working Group on Principles Against Intolerance* (March 24, 2016): 2, http://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/aar/mare.pdf.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Jewish Voice for Peace, "UC Regents New Policy Opens Door to Policing Speech Critical of Israeli Policies," March 23, 2016, https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/uc-regents-new-policy-opens-door-policing-speech-critical-israel/.
[139] Judith Butler, "UC Regents New Policy," Jewish Voice for Peace.
[140] Alissa Wise, "UC Regents New Policy," Jewish Voice for Peace.

name it. We have a problem on our campuses. That problem is anti-Semitism… The resurgence of anti-Semitism is directly paralleled with the increase in virulent anti-Israel activity, much of it involving calls for Israel's total destruction, i.e., anti-Zionism. Many are in denial about this."[141] To make his point, Goodman uses violent imagery, and frames peaceful student activism as an existential threat. Moreover, to substantiate his claims, he invokes the controversial delegitimization element of the State Department definition, saying that, "[h]owever, when the one Jewish state in the world is obsessively singled out for condemnation, demonization and deligitimization, followed by calls for its destruction, Jewish students recognize that their personal identity is being called into question."[142]

Some students and speakers noted that they felt pro-Palestinian activists were anti-Semitic, simply because some publicly questioned the legitimacy of a state based on religion and race. As a group of "[p]ro-Israel student activists said, 'Jewish students and leaders say they don't want to squelch anyone's right to oppose Israel's policies, but calling for the annihilation of Israel… goes beyond criticism and is anti-Semitic.'"[143] In response, Kurt Horner, a UC Irvine doctoral student, who lobbied against the UCBR adopting the State Department definition, argued that "[p]ro-Israel groups love to draw that line to the point you can't have meaningful discussion."[144]

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[141] Goodman, "Anti-Zionism is the face."
[142] Goodman, "Anti-Zionism is the face."
[143] Roxana Kopetman, "Irvine will be watching what stance the UC system takes on anti-Semitism," *Orange County Register*, March 22, 2016, http://www.ocregister.com/2016/03/22/irvine-will-be-watching-what-stance-the-uc-system-takes-on-anti-semitism/.
[144] Ibid.

CONCLUSION

Since this is an individual research project, I alone determined which articles were relevant and worthy of inclusion. A brief discourse analysis of this nature requires that I cherry-pick articles. Due to length constraints, I highlight articles that align with my premise, since my research question does not ask *whether* it occurs. Instead, I accept that it does, and, thus, seek to show *how* arguments defending Israel incorporate anti-Semitism. However, I tried to limit any perceived biases through balanced sources and the categorization of articles by directed questions. The pro-Israel organizations are either groups directly involved in the case studies, or are well-established national actors that frequently commented on the proceedings.

According to Johannesson, historical discourse analysis should not be considered a true method, and researchers should not overly concern themselves with extensive methodological descriptions, as the approach cannot be truly neutral. Political and social interests guide the selection of issues, as "many social scientists do their research because they have political goals about improving their communities and society. We wish to use our competence in doing research to create knowledge that can contribute to such improvements."[145] In writing this thesis, I strived to explain how claims of anti-Semitism are sometimes used politically to achieve partisan objectives. It is my hope that in the future this awareness will increase, so that discussions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict become more nuanced and productive.

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[145] Johannesson, "The politics of historical discourse analysis," 268.

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