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The Gatekeepers

By Donna Robinson Divine

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Introduction

Published in April 2019, the Special Issue of *Israel Studies* hit a nerve so raw it still tingles online journals and newspapers. As one of the co-editors who conceived the project which has come to be known as *Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, I am flattered by the attention but troubled that the argument it advances has been ignored by so many.[1] Because a handful of established scholars seemingly preferred to denounce rather than engage with the issues raised in this volume, they effectively ended up grafting a level of legitimacy on the highly flawed discourse the Special Issue examined. One might well ask why an exploration and deconstruction of a discourse would elicit such blasts of hostility against the project and so unabashedly mete out savage insults to its contributors.

Word Crimes is meant to examine the linkage between language and thought – long a staple of philosophical inquiry[2] and to ask whether deploying terms like genocide or apartheid offers a genuine understanding of the complexities of the Conflict. It aims to call attention to how certain words and ideas have begun to settle into a public discourse and to take the measure of the consequences for the academic study of Israel, of Palestinians, of the Conflict and not incidentally, of politics. The politics propagated by this discourse is binary–fit into good or bad rubrics that appeal to feelings not into categories that show the way power is actually wielded. Identifying the words that have become the central elements in this discourse, the volume shows how a lexical transformation has acquired a totemic standing in the academy and is spreading beyond campus perimeters with a momentum augmented in an increasingly networked world. *Word Crimes* focuses on terms because they function much like oracles coaxing judgements in the absence of evidence so long as Israel is assigned to a rhetorical zone once reserved for brutal regimes committing ghastly crimes. Events are pigeonholed into moral absolutes that appeal to emotions or to a larger ideological agenda and not to an accurate depiction of the issues and of the reasons for the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Word Crimes stirred up a powerful anger provoking a sense of righteousness but not a clarity of thought. From the moment it was posted online, alarm was sounded when people saw only the title and table of contents. One person expressed shock at 'the inflammatory and demonizing title' while another asked 'who are exactly the criminals and what should their punishment be?'[3] – all on open access listservs where rage accumulated and quickly catalysed into charges that the Special Issue compromised the intellectual status of the Journal and of the Association for Israel Studies because of the Journal's loose relationship with it. In fact, this one Special Issue was said to have the potential to wreak havoc with the entire field of Israel Studies.

Much of the anger was directed at me because at the time, I served as both President of the Association for Israel Studies and one of the editors of *Word Crimes*. Every comment I issued, as one of the volume's editors, was construed as an official statement of the Association inevitably restraining them. I completed my term of office in June 2019, and for that reason, I am no longer constrained in what I can say. Moreover, I am convinced that there is more to say particularly about the factors promoting, if not causing, the uproar. Ironically, the reactions, with their remarkably formulaic denunciations, were filtered through the very template *Word Crimes* interrogated. Critics dismissed *Word Crimes* characterising it as a species of Israeli government propaganda. Rating a project as failing to meet minimal academic standards without offering credible evidence is, itself, so transgressive of academic norms that it ought to be the focus for close examination particular since the project was clearly intended to open not close down discussion. But before scrutinising the reaction, let me review the reasons we – the editors and contributors – decided to subject what is becoming a common discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to sustained analysis and to do so, by examining its linguistic parts.

I. The Special Issue

As much as the essays in the collection are about words, they are also about history and politics.

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The first section focuses on terms–indigeneity, colonialism, occupation, terrorism, and apartheid – that claim to disclose new aspects of the Conflict's history and of the mechanisms deployed to perpetuate it. It is worthwhile to note that utilising these terms as historical paradigms has generated no new data or information that could be the basis for a new or deeper understanding of the Conflict. Rather they have seized attention because they propel a supposed link between Israel and Zionism and an imperialism enlightened scholars are expected to condemn instantly converting a vocabulary of historical explanation into a crude moral idiom. The Special Issue's second section focuses on terms coopted from the modern Jewish experience – holocaust, refugee, human rights, Zionism, and Israel Lobby – to show how they have been projected on to the experience of Palestinians in order to transfer the imaginative narrative of one beleaguered people to another. Finally, the volume evaluates concepts that are decidedly post-modern inventions – Islamophobia, intersectionality, pink washing. These trendy terms aim to rally allies around a new logic of ethical reasoning and political action. The last essay in the volume addresses the contorted reasoning required to apply the pivotal concept 'civil society'–taken for granted as expanding democracies in the late twentieth century–to NGOs whose actions are not simply funded but also programmed by foreign governments and whose ties to movements thriving on acts of terror are well-known and well-documented. Such linkages are more likely to deny than preserve the autonomy believed central to civil society and to democracy diminishing not expanding a spirit of active political engagement among Palestinians.

This academic jargon now so fully draped in scholarly prestige implies that Israel's founding in 1948 is not settled history. The intention is not simply to raise ethical questions but also to suggest the possibility of righting what is taken for granted as an historical wrong. Those who subscribe to this approach are not talking about historical facts that continue to weigh heavily on present circumstances which is to say the persistence of Israel's unresolved conflicts with Palestinians, problems that affect the Jewish state's politics and complicate the operations of its democracy. The implication that shadows this discourse is that history can be reversed registering a kind of magical thinking more fit for novels than for classrooms. More than 70 years since its founding and more than a half century since the war that reconfigured the Jewish state and not incidentally, the entire Middle East, raising the same questions posed during the first decades of the twentieth century opens a chasm between language and reality.

Driving this change, as all others on and off campuses, is the emergence of a new media landscape that has offered scholars new forms of expression. Blogging and tweeting are increasingly important–signs of savvy entrepreneurship bringing publicity most colleges and universities welcome. But they can blur the lines between free speech and the kind of speech possessing academic integrity that expresses the findings of careful research, logical and rational probing, and is made available for rigorous testing. Once there was a clear differentiation between polemics and scholarship; now the two have been fused sometimes by jargon laden theories inaccessible to anyone without years of graduate study. All of this fosters a social pressure that aims to close discussion, not open it, but above all, creates the impression that only a campus generated Intifada against the idea of a Jewish state can bring justice to Palestine and define progressive politics in the twenty-first century. The challenges posed by students and faculty who embrace these notions are considerable, but they constitute a more immediate threat to the academy than to Israel. Faculty need to be reminded that their mission is to teach students how to think not what to think. And students must be given the tools required for confronting ideas they do not like or that make them uncomfortable, always holding them tightly to the principle of engaging respectfully with those with whom they disagree. That surely means more time should be spent in the library than in sessions organising protests. Far better to read about the Dark Ages than to recreate them on campus.

Word Crimes offers potent insight into the difference between how language operates as an echo chamber advocating a mission and how it functions when it strives for exactitude and for a reliable assessment of a complex situation. In a sense, *Word Crimes* functions as a figurative exorcism breaking the spell of a discourse by exposing its scholarly weaknesses. Its essays are motivated by nothing more than the conviction that conclusions must be supported by facts and tested in accordance with the principles long undergirding the academy and the ones primarily responsible for bestowing legitimate praise and power on it. To repeat: this collection is as important for the academy as it is for the study of the Israeli-Palestine Conflict.

II. The Uproar

The all-too common habit of letting emotions shape campus discourse on this topic produced reactions to *Word Crimes* far in excess of what is warranted by any measurable intellectual standard. Why scholars whose hold on the academic study of Israel is taken for granted and whose research was praised in the volume allowed their feelings to bury their logic is worth considering since their own careful work has been diminished by a vocabulary now serving a cause rather than the historical record. Let me elaborate. Consider how the provocative discussions of settler colonialism generated by Gershon Shafir's 1989 *Land, Labour, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–*

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1914[4] advanced discussions of the relationship between land and nationalism even as it sparked investigations of the many contradictions between Zionism and other settler colonial societies.

Then ponder the current branding of Israel as a settler colonial society that has had such a catalytic effect on destroying the idea of a legitimate Jewish state whatever its borders or policies. A settler-colonialist Israel delivers up a Jewish state that presumably developed a rationale adequate to justify the use of force not in order to survive or to place moral restraints on its use but rather to mask its atrocities. Building its claims on the idea that the plough is no less an instrument of violence than the sword, the settler colonial paradigm means that Israel, by its very nature, is a country engaged in an ethnic cleansing with genocidal tendencies, a disciplined criminal action by Jews to wipe out of existence a people whose nationalist ambitions stand in their way.[5]

That scholars who judged the special issue a badge of shame simply for tackling a discourse so clearly contaminated by politics stoked the rage and drummed it up until it drew media attention and became a matter of public debate suggest how beholden leaders in this field are to a hermetic so-called progressive view of this Conflict. Some resigned from the *Israel Studies* editorial board to demonstrate the depth of their opposition to *Word Crimes* calling public attention to their opposition by granting interviews in mainstream media outlets. Some took to social media to weave a tale valorising all sorts of disinformation while pulling no punches or adhering to no recognisable standards. Denouncing the essays rather than engaging with the arguments violated what was once a foundational educational value: that the purpose of scholarship is to investigate that which is taken for granted. Dismissing the essays also allowed people to avoid having to think about where their own academic politics are taking the study of Israel. No surprise that in these overheated reactions, there was more than a hint that the field of Israel Studies has to adopt language acceptable to BDS proponents to prove its bona fides. Condemning *Word Crimes* as 'Orwellian' may, perhaps, be best understood as an illustration of a collective Freudian projection.

Denunciations so promiscuously pitched over social media limit access and/or insight into the thinking behind these views. But the letter of resignation written and signed by some members of the Journal's editorial advisory board, the unmonitored and open listservs that triggered alarm against *Word Crimes*, newspaper articles, and petitions all discredited the Special Issue and maligned the people who put it together in remarkably similar language quickly translated into sound bites.[6]

The letter of resignation listed a series of demands – they turned out to be ultimatums – intended to repair what was viewed as a flawed review process responsible for an issue dismissed as advocacy. But the charges forming the reasons for their resignation not only lacked coherence they also, if true, argued for remaining on the Board if only to safeguard its intellectual quality going forward. *Word Crimes* was the eighteenth special issue of *Israel Studies*, the first to elicit this kind of opposition and raise questions about the review process. Opponents demanded new procedures that would give the editorial board a well-defined role in determining the content and topic for future issues. Although the general editors acknowledged flaws in the editorial process, promised to provide space in future issues to publish critiques of the project or of individual essays, and establish more editorial controls over special issues, they refused to withdraw the issue from circulation or commit to a plan for their own resignations thus failing to satisfy the critics.

Even conceding the validity of some of the demands, why should they form the basis for a reckoning over the Journal's status or the integrity of its leadership grave enough to propel resignations? This is a journal that has published hundreds of controversial articles over many years without provoking an outcry. Furthermore, why did the editorial board members who resigned insist their letter be published in the Journal? Why was it necessary to impeach the scholarly credentials of the volume's contributors while aiming implied threats at younger scholars? Underscoring their Olympian university status, the critics seemed to want their letter to be taken as a manifesto of their intellectual integrity and not incidentally of their presumed command over the academic standards in the field of Israel Studies. To achieve these objectives, they essentially set up a petri-dish environment on open listservs that quickly leached into social media sites bulldozing any meaningful discussion of the volume or of the issues it addresses.

Fierce criticism initially hurled by people who admitted to simply browsing the titles later insisted that reading the essays had not altered their views. Contributors were said to have produced sub-par work and dismissed as 'light-weight'. The reputation of the editors was smeared as having practiced deception in the review process or perhaps having paid to ensure publication in an attempt to hijack the Journal for some powerful advocacy force lurking behind this project. That this was damaging to a group of scholars – including people in the junior ranks–is as obvious as it is shameful. There are established ways to launch critiques in peer-reviewed journals. Sadly, the kind of rhetoric on display over this special issue was not even close to following established norms. Choosing Facebook as the platform to incite opposition to the Special Issue and gather names for petitions sent spinning through cyberspace and then picked up by

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various news outlets was designed, as is often the case with social media, not for accuracy – the posts and petitions are filled with misstatements – but rather for maximum humiliation. The tone on social media even exhibited an eagerness to serve up bogus accusations of racism, accompanied by the kind of fervour for enemies likely found on the streets of Paris in 1789.

The essays in *Word Crimes* are no summons for a restoration of the heroic myths of founding the Jewish state; they are, rather, a plea for a return to the library, to the archives, and to the painstaking research that has liberated scholars from subscribing to a simple narrative of the country's state-building experiences as fulfiling only a progressive national mission. Many newly minted Israeli academicians – some calling themselves new historians, others critical sociologists – probed the Zionist nation-building project by examining its impact on Palestine's Arab population, Middle Eastern immigrants, and on the lives and experiences of women without guidance from a politicised vocabulary that is more a reflection of our own times than of the reality of times past.

While *Word Crimes* addresses the scholarly community, it also attempts to reach beyond the gates of the University and its Israel Studies scholars by providing short accessible thought pieces: some essays present fully researched arguments; some gesture towards the larger critical narrative presented. Writers as well as policymakers were invited to join the project. The editing was 'light' because the contributors held a variety of views, and it was thought preferable to let their very brief essays speak for themselves. The intention was to widen not narrow the discussion. The notion that people should not write on topics normally outside of their own disciplinary training – as the petitions assert–is simply a way to avoid tackling the serious issues the essays raise. It is also a strange view coming from a field that combines varying disciplines and training and is a purported exemplar of what interdisciplinarity can achieve. By no means intended to provide the final word on the topic but rather to broaden the conversation by including new kinds of participants holding diverse perspectives, the collection brought together something rarely done in these times–people who are located on all points of the political spectrum.

The charge that the essays comprise a dictionary of acceptable terms is as false as it is ridiculous. There is a distinction between arguing certain words channel thoughts in one direction, on the one hand, and calling for a ban on their use, on the other. Rather than stipulate a set of acceptable terms, the essays weave a cautionary tale of how certain words now deployed routinely in discussing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict are more polemical than accurately reflective of developments. In the Introduction, I offered some examples. I did not take a position on whether what happened at Deir Yassin should or should not be called a massacre. I thought it significant that a publisher had rejected a manuscript on the killings not because it failed on empirical or logical grounds but rather because it was deemed unfit for an English-speaking audience.[7] Similarly, the prize awarded to a tendentious book charging Israel with harvesting organs of Palestinians is, I argued, an illustration of how degraded academic standards have become because the research is filled with errors easily dispelled by a simple Google search.[8] Finally, I tried to show that this language also prevents a deep understanding of Palestinian history and politics by presuming that Israel exercises total control over the lives of Palestinians according them no 'agency' or capacity to change 'Ha-Matzav'. [The Situation] The notion embraced by Palestinians of an all-powerful Zionism can be found in Arabic texts even in the early days of the Zionist project when Zionism had very little power and an insignificant global presence.[9] This is not to celebrate the Occupation but rather to argue that to end it requires considering more than simply Israel's policies and actions.

Today much of the academic discourse on the Middle East Conflict has distorted the truth by transforming even the very idea of what constitutes a 'fact'. 'Facts' are stitched into a narrative often to effect loyalty rather than to verify assertions. This presumed intractable conflict over land has been substantially reconceived as a war over words. And although the hegemonic discourse claims to be opening up new and better ways of understanding the Conflict, it has had a profound impact on closing down the possibility of following the best available evidence. An academic perspective, now expected to guide action and render moral judgements, cannot serve as a robust agenda for research.

The ironies produced by this new set of terms for the Conflict abound. Take, for example, the current language of human rights whose gravitational pull now denies Israel the blessings it once conferred on the establishment of a Jewish state as advancing the cause for justice. Thus is Zionism, more judged than understood, condemned as racist. The esteem bestowed on words and deeds associated with the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is a function of their capacity not to promote peace, coexistence, or reconciliation but rather to signal affinity with a global progressive politics.

To read newspapers and magazine articles on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, to watch the violence broadcast on cable news or to toggle through social media for information is to be bombarded by negative images of Israel and on more than one occasion of Jews. How an attack is initially framed, of course, gives it disproportionate influence on how it will be remembered. Reporters, fumbling their way through

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platitudes, produce a script rather than an analysis. There is a power attributed to the right words in the right order or captured at the right angle for YouTube.

If the narrative amplifies sentiments in American culture that foster sympathy with the poor and powerless, it is accepted turning unverified pronouncements into unverified reports that ignore or omit the dynamics explaining the vector of developments. Echoes of pain and loss can carry a narrative across oceans and continents drawing false analogies between disparate groups or movements or histories that may expand allies but do nothing to deepen understanding of what caused their suffering and dislocation. The acrobatic logic interweaves fact and fiction spinning elaborate associative webs that deploy metaphors to fashion linkages between people, politics, and history with nothing in common except their calls for a reckoning with the powers presumably denying them justice.

III. Petition

The Petition sent to the AIS Board offers the clearest illustration of the overwrought and incoherent reaction to *Word Crimes*. Drafted by Yair Wallach, Pears Lecturer in Israeli Studies, at SOAS, University of London, the Petition objects to the title and to the Introduction's vocabulary alleging both are designed to shut down debate by 'criminalizing' it. Mistakenly declaring the Association for Israel Studies to be the Journal's sponsor,[10] the Petition calls on the Association to recommit to the principle of intellectual diversity. This presumed peril to intellectual diversity is compounded, according to press interviews, by my serving simultaneously as an editor of *Word Crimes* and as AIS President.[11]

An impressive 200 people signed the Petition addressed to AIS. Interestingly, most are not AIS members – nor is Dr. Wallach–and many are well-known proponents of a boycott of Israeli educational institutions. But among the AIS members who signed the Petition concerned with a commitment to intellectual diversity were scholars who had served on the Association's Board–or even as its officers–or who were invited to join the Board or to become an officer. Some had won AIS awards for their work, and a large number had received grants enabling them to participate in national conferences. The 2019 Conference Programme provided further evidence of the diversity of perspectives on almost every one of its pages, and it is one that I not only applaud, it is also one that I actively encouraged as co-chair of the Conference and President of AIS. It is difficult to imagine stronger proof of an unshakeable AIS commitment to intellectual diversity. Torn between readily available 'evidence' and 'outrage,' Petition supporters appear to have rejected the easily substantiated former in order to manufacture a rage around the latter falsehood that the publication of *Word Crimes* jeopardised the core academic ideal of intellectual diversity in AIS and in *Israel Studies*. It is striking to have to remind established scholars that protecting intellectual diversity also demands shielding minority views – or what might be called fresh perspectives–from being trampled by majorities or by those, however small in number, who consider themselves entitled to define the borders of acceptable discourse.

The Petition directed to AIS is riddled with errors but none so glaring as the meaning attributed to the title and to some of the words in the Introduction. No less an authority than Merriam-Webster lists 'mistake' as one of the definitions for 'crime' and suggests 'sanity' – another word flagged in the Petition–as a synonym for 'rationality' and 'balance'. Just as an aside, Merriam-Webster won its status in the nineteenth century in what a recently published book by Princeton University Press calls *Dictionary Wars*.[12] The English language has much more depth and flexibility than is acknowledged in the Petition.

The notion that as AIS President, I should not have published something as controversial as *Word Crimes* deserves added comment because it echoes statements from AIS colleagues who did not put their words into print. Let me begin by stating the obvious; namely, that I did not identify myself as AIS President in the publication but rather as Professor Emerita of Smith College. But if Association officers cannot compartmentalise their activities, it is necessary to ask how an injunction against publishing something that sparks controversy might be enforced? I was surprised by the reactions to the Special Issue since I have published articles and books for the past forty years without triggering much notice let alone dissent. Moreover, if officers are not allowed to publish during their terms of service, doesn't such a ban compromise their academic freedom or even their fundamental rights? Is there any credible academic association that imposes such stringent rules on its officers?

It stretches the term irony beyond recognition to point out that the very people asking for assurances critical discussions will continue both in the Association for Israel Studies and between the covers of *Israel Studies* are the very people refusing to engage in an intellectual exchange with the arguments set out in *Word Crimes*. Instead, they have sought to 'deplatform' or 'cancel' people associated with the Special Issue from conferences, doubling down on the insidious and untrue accusations originally served up on various listservs. Of course, given the times and the circumstances, it was also inevitable that the people who wrote and circulated the petition ramped up their smears on social media until *Word Crimes* was brought into the orbit of racism and of the so-called unprecedented dangers to democracy unfolding in the last decades in Israel and the United States. Any literate person – let alone

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someone possessing a Phd – should be able to see that *Word Crimes* had nothing to do with elections in either Israel or the United States or with government policies formed in either country. Not to put too fine a point on all of the allegations undergirding this controversy, they are as false as they are hollow.

The problem of narratives about Israel and the Conflict is that they angrily feed off one another, as symbols grasped by partisans for one cause or another. *Word Crimes* argues for an alternative–not a consensus on causes or resolutions–but rather for a reasoned dialogue about these differences and a serious probing of concrete evidence. Imagine, if you can, a response to the publication offering an analysis of the conceptual or empirical flaws of the overall argument or of one or another of the specific essays instead of the assault on the academic status of the Journal and on the intellectual integrity of those involved in this special issue. Needless to say, a more cordial exchange could have produced a more reasoned testing of arguments. In a genuine academic community, intellectuals do not try to silence or 'troll' one another but rather to talk despite their differences even with no other aim than to display the grounds of their diversity.

IV. Conclusion

If *Word Crimes* is so obviously a flawed project, it could easily have been ignored or criticised. Instead it has been cast into what Gershon Shafir calls 'the current Israeli context in which academic and artistic freedom are besieged … . [and where] Israel today is on an accelerating course of undermining the protections of its democracy within the Green Line and is one of the many countries turning into illiberal democracies.' Shafir goes on to argue that 'the term "word crimes" doesn't stand alone but is of a piece with the proposed code of ethics and law for loyalty in culture.'[13]

There is every reason to believe Gershon Shafir represents the views of the people who resigned from the Journal's Editorial Board since they were happy to accept his offer to edit another Special Issue of *Israel Studies* devoted to a critique of *Word Crimes*. But if *Word Crimes* can only be grasped in the context of political developments in Israel, then it seems only fair to mention that the past two presidents of the Association for Israel Studies [and coincidentally one general editor of the Journal and one of the Special Issue] wrote letters raising objections to the passage of the Ethics Code and the Entry Law. Leaving aside the uncomfortable fact that there is no material connection between *Word Crimes* contributors and these particular policies, we must ask what is achieved by joining them together and explaining one as a manifestation of the larger forces animating the other? At the very least, to assume everything a function of politics clarifies the stakes for the academy. On the one hand, there is an orthodoxy on politics as well as on language illustrated by Gershon Shafir's critique, and on the other, as demonstrated in *Word Crimes*, a commitment to open inquiry with nothing above or outside of the range for investigation and where no vocabulary is absolutely sovereign. Words can always be tested to determine whether they expand or contract knowledge? And while the feelings stirred up by the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis are so deeply held that, examining it without taking sides is difficult, if the terrible toll exacted by this hundred years' war commands only political advocacy, then the academy, itself, is likely to become one of its casualties.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes

1. The online Journal *Fathom* stands as an exception publishing a long review of the issue by Cary Nelson [May 2019] followed by a symposium including an essay by Gershon Shafir explaining his objects and responses from editors and contributors to Shafir's essay [July 2019]. Tobin's article, "Is There Room In The Academy for Honest Scholarship on Israel?", in *Jewish News Service* on May 17, 2019 is also an example of reporting that shows understanding of the academic process.
2. See Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII; Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*; and Orwell, *1984*.
3. Later repeated in newspaper articles. See Jonathan Tobin, *op. cit.*
4. Shafir, *Land, Labour and The Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian*.
5. Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, and Subaltern Resistance*.
6. Arie Dubnov, Max Ticktin Chair of Israel Studies, Associate Professor of History, The George Washington University, ventilated many of the concerns about the Special Issue in emails and on his Facebook page where he provided links to the petitions and stoked the anger while spreading misinformation. In one of his emails, he wrote that because of the damage done by the Special Issue 'to the institutional reputation of the AIS and even to the field of Israel Studies more generally,' he decided to reject the Young Scholar Award – a joint AIS-Israel Institute prize. He apparently never gave much thought to the collateral damage such a public rejection might inflict on future funding for other academicians. He also refused an invitation to serve on AIS's Board because of what he incorrectly called the organisation's 'sponsorship' of the Journal. Claiming to be a firm believer in rigorous empirically based scholarship, he went on to accuse the past and current AIS Presidents of some sort of cabal in service of Israeli propaganda

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interests – a charge without merit or evidence. Critiques of BDS function as a litmus test for Dubnov [See his review of Colin Schindler's *Republica Hebraeorum* in *Israel Studies Review* [Winter 2017]: 32 2. 164–170 where he hurls the same charge against Schindler.] He appears to dismiss the notion that one can oppose boycotting Israel on educational grounds. As an Israeli teaching in the United States, Dubnov seems not to have considered how the boycott movement may prevent young scholars from spending time in Israel in order to gain fluency in Hebrew or access to archives for research. The more boycott demands are met the more likely grants for studying in Israel will be reduced.

7. Elman provides a good summary of the publishers' reactions in her essay, "Silencing History."
8. Berger, "Academic Prize for Scholarly Form of Blood Libel". Berger Writes, "Even amidst the moral and intellectual wreckage that litters the academic landscape with respect to Israel, this award [Puar Jasbir's book has just been awarded the National Women's Studies Association Allison Piepmeier Book Prize for scholarship focusing on feminist disability studies] stands out. Nelson makes it clear that even a google search shows how the claims Jasbir makes about Israel harvesting organs are not based on any credible science. See *Israel Denial*, Chapter Six.
9. Robson, "Najib Azuri's *Le Reveil de la Nation Arabe*."
10. According to AIS Bylaws, the Association has a relationship with *Israel Studies*. Some AIS officers are members of the Journal's Editorial Board and AIS members receive a discount on subscriptions. AIS provides no funding for *Israel Studies* nor does it serve as a sponsor. Brandeis University and Ben Gurion University are the Journal's academic sponsors. *Israel Studies Review* is the journal sponsored by AIS, and as President, I never interfered with any of the decisions made by the editors.
11. I served as President from June, 2017-June 2019.
12. Martin, *The Dictionary Wars*.
13. Shafir, *op. cit.*, 2019.

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