

COMMEMORATING ISRAEL, FORGETTING PALESTINE:
REPRESENTATION AND REMEMBERING IN DISPENSATIONAL DISCOURSES

BY

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Abstract

In recent decades, significant bodies of research have emerged with regard to understanding (a) Indigenous identities as “glocal” expressions (e.g., Minde 2008; Niezen 2003; Bigenho 2007), (b) Christian Zionism (e.g., Ariel 1991; Spector 2009), and (c) how ideology and power relate to language, society, and cognition (e.g., Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983; Lakoff 1987; Reisigl and Wodak 2001). Yet, research in each area in relation to the others has remained somewhat independent, and the intersection of these themes remains to be fully explored. This work contributes to previous scholarship in these areas by addressing points of contact among these themes with respect to how producers of certain Christian Zionist discourses represent and remember Israel and Palestine.

In this thesis I explore the historical, socio-political, and cognitive dynamics of Christian Zionist dispensationalism from a critical discourse analytic perspective. I consider the relationship between dispensational discourses and complex, competing articulations of Indigenous identity by Palestinians and Israelis. I base my analysis on a corpus of 246 dispensational texts that represent various institutions, genres and modalities, and span nearly eight decades (1934-2011). Within the broad field of critical discourse analysis, I utilize methods from the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2001) and the socio-cognitive approach (Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a) to consider the relationship between rhetorical strategies in dispensational discourses and discursive manipulation through the formation of biased mental models (Van Dijk 2006). By analyzing various texts from these theological – and ideological – paradigms, which themselves realize dispensational discourses, I consider how dispensationalisms discursively represent and remember (or forget) Israel/Israelis and Palestine/Palestinians.

With this in mind, I also draw from cultural memory studies, and consider dispensational discourses to be metaphorical *lieux de mémoire* ('sites of memory'; Nora 1989) where commemoration of Israel takes place for nationalistic, ideological, and socio-political purposes. I argue that dispensational discourses reproduce biased mental models of Palestine and Israel through a cultural narrative of commemorating Israel. My analysis suggests that representation and remembering in dispensational discourses relates to a complex framework of othering, which underlies a function of co-articulating Indigenous identity.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and Dispensational Discourses

This thesis is an integrative approach to understanding the function of representation and (not) remembering Israel and Palestine in U.S. evangelical religio-political discourses. The particular discourse strands, or “thematically uniform discourse processes” (Jäger 2009:46), I investigate are both theological and political in character, which are united by particularized constructions of the role of Israel in human history (including present and future) as a pervasive theme. I incorporate methods from critical discourse analysis and cultural memory studies in order to explore the cognitive, sociopolitical, and historical dimensions of these discourses from a critical discourse analytic perspective. More specifically, I focus on how beliefs and ideologies inform ways of discursive representation and remembering – which also crucially entail silence and forgetting – and I examine how these elements interact dynamically to engender biased mental models of Israel and Palestine through commemorating Israel. Finally, because such discursive commemoration often involves notions of nationalism and identity, I consider how representation and (not) remembering can either legitimize or delegitimize Palestinian and Israeli constructions of Indigenous identity.

In recent decades, a significant amount of research has emerged that aims to understand the complex nature and manifestations of Christian support for Israel, or Christian Zionism (e.g., Halsell 1986; Ariel 1991; Weber 2004; Masalha 2007; Mittleman, Johnson and Isserman 2007; Sizer 2004; Spector 2009; Goldman 2009; Lewis 2010). The focus of this body of research is largely historical, social, and political, exploring the developments of Christian Zionism over time and its socio-political implications and consequences. However, to my knowledge, there is no current scholarship that seeks to understand forms of Christian Zionism with explicit primacy

given to discourse, cognition, or cultural memory. In this thesis, I contribute to prior scholarship by combining theoretical and methodological perspectives to examine the synergistic relations of these three elements with regard to representation and remembering of Israel and Palestine in a subset of Christian Zionist discourses known as dispensationalisms.

Dispensationalisms are a cluster of related and more or less coherent theological – and Christian Zionist – frameworks, which are generally situated within U.S.-based evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity. Within these movements, churches and institutions in the United States have been highly influential in developing and disseminating dispensational teachings since their emergence in the early to mid-19th century. One crucial theme that features prominently in historical expressions of dispensational theologies is a unique conceptualization of Israel and the role Israel has (and will have) in relation to what are known as the “end-times,” that is, the times nearing the end of the world.¹ Dispensationalisms implicate the national existence and endurance of Israel as an integral aspect of God’s economy and how God relates to humanity. Consequently, dispensationalists have generated and, at times, explicitly encouraged political, financial, and ideological support for modern Israel. The full extent of the consequences enacted through dispensational discourses toward Palestinians, Israelis, and Jews is yet to be explored, especially as it relates to discourse, cognition, and memory.

The aim of this thesis is, to the degree possible, to make manifest and understand the linguistic mechanisms and structures that underlie the discursive dissemination of dispensationalist worldviews and doctrines, focusing on how entities related to Israel and

¹ The belief that the world will end is present in much Christian literature, especially apocalyptic literature. In part, the belief derives from expectations in the Bible that redemption entails not only human redemption, but the whole of creation, as well, which will be transformed when a new earth is established (see Romans 8: 20-22; 2 Peter 3:7-10; Revelation 21:1). With regard to the theological frameworks that underlie the discourses I analyze in this thesis, the “end-times” are commonly conceptualized as a period that precedes the end of the world when prophetic events will unfold. Many proponents of dispensationalisms believe that this period will be forecasted by “signs of the times” (Matthew 16:3) that indicate, among other things, Israel as a national, ethnic entity will feature prominently in geopolitics.

Palestine are represented and remembered through discourse. This work seeks to understand how language (and other forms of semiotic communication, such as images) employed in dispensationalist discourses serves to construct perceptions, attitudes, events, and people(s), especially as they pertain to Palestine/Palestinians and Israel/Israelis/Jews. With this in mind, I take a critical discourse analytic approach to analyzing a corpus of dispensational texts produced in the U.S. over the last eighty years, and these represent a variety of genres and modalities. My particular topic is the role of dispensationalisms, both historically and present, in the Israel-Palestine conflict, especially with regard to the development of attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies that support one or both sides through discursive representation and remembering. I am particularly interested in ways that ideologies relate to language and language use (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987), as well as how they relate to power in discourse (Wodak and Meyer 2009:8; Reisigl and Wodak 2009:88). Moreover, I consider the relationship of dispensational discourses to Israeli and Palestinian constructions of identity, especially articulations of Indigenous identity. My guiding research question is the following: What is the relationship between dispensationalisms and attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, and actions towards peoples, places, entities, and events in Israel and Palestine? In order to address these issues, the following questions are also treated: How do dispensationalisms discursively represent and remember peoples, places, and events related to Israel and Palestine? How do dispensational discourses serve to (de)legitimize Palestinian and Indigenous articulations of Indigenous identity?

The analysis herein is not limited exclusively to linguistic analysis, but also integrates a study of the relationship between discourse and society through the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 2009). This is further complemented by an analysis of how social

structures and discourses relate to and are mediated by cognition through the sociocognitive approach (Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a, 2009b). Since dispensationalisms frequently *re-present* hegemonic views of Israel's history, this work also discusses the structures that underlie discursive remembering and forgetting within dispensational frameworks. Based on several case studies I will argue that dispensationalisms (and certain ones more than others) have been highly influential in developing biased mental models of issues, people(s) and events that relate to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Moreover, I argue that a critical discourse analysis of the linguistic representations and discursive strategies evidenced in dispensational texts reveals manipulation that enables, enacts, reproduces, and/or informs racist ideologies toward both Palestinians and Israelis.

1.2 A Brief Outline and Preview of Things to Come

This thesis is composed of four sections: an introduction and methodological orientation (Section 1), an exploration of the historical and sociopolitical context of dispensationalisms (Section 2), textual analysis (Section 3), and conclusions (Section 4). Moreover, I further conceptualize the organization of these sections as being divided into two principle parts as a means of understanding the discursive construction of concepts and events related to Palestine and Israel from within dispensational frameworks. The first part (Sections 1-2) centers on conceptual, theoretical, methodological and historical considerations, including both the underpinnings for the type of analysis I employ, as well as a detailed introduction to the U.S.-based dispensationalisms focus of that analysis as religio-political discourses characterized by plurality. The second part (Sections 3-4) moves to textual analysis, data interpretation, and conclusions that are informed by methods from critical discourse analysis (CDA) and cultural memory

studies as well as recursively orienting to aspects of the sociopolitical and historical context of dispensational discourses.

After this outline and summary, the remainder of Section 1 details relevant components of the specific methodological approaches among CDA and cultural memory studies that I have selected as means of analysis and interpretation. Within CDA, these include the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2001) and the sociocognitive approach (Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a). Though each of these has distinct methodological and theoretical orientations, they should be viewed as complementary, rather than opposing (Wodak and Reisigl 1999; Wodak 2006). My intention in selecting these specific approaches is to offer a relatively comprehensive discourse analysis of dispensationalisms by highlighting not only their historical importance, but also the effect of these discourses on memory and cognition and, to some degree, how the socio-historical, political, and discursive aspects are mediated by a cognitive interface (Van Dijk 2009b). Conjoining these approaches potentially offers the advantage of two distinct, but balancing, viewpoints: 1) the sociocognitive approach's focus on general perspective in terms of agency and broad linguistic operationalizations as well as 2) the discourse-historical approach's concentration on detailed case studies, structures of knowledges, and specific linguistic operationalizations (Wodak and Meyer 2009:20, 22). Along with integrating these approaches, I draw from insights in cultural memory studies to aim at producing a more analytically rich, though not entirely comprehensive, analysis that converges on discourse, cognition, and memory. With these three elements in mind, I also incorporate aspects of Van Dijk's (2006) theory of manipulation as well as concepts from cultural memory studies to consider how pasts are made present through remembering and forgetting, and how this can become a form of illegitimate power abuse.

Section 2 below discusses the major varieties of dispensationalisms, focusing on their theological and historical development as they relate to the influential scholarship produced at an influential U.S. evangelical institution known as Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) from the 1930s on. This seminary has historically held a prominent role in both the development and the dissemination of all the forms of dispensationalisms discussed herein. Either the proponents themselves (of one form of dispensationalism or other) studied and/or taught at this institution, or the ideology prominent in a given variety and related text(s) is directly traceable to individuals that come from there. Though not all members of DTS have been rigidly dispensational (Hannah 2009), the seminary nevertheless has produced a vast amount of dispensational scholarship and is often recognized as a (/the) preeminently dispensational institution. The heritage of DTS does extend far beyond dispensationalism, which often becomes a simplistic caricature for the whole of the institution. Notwithstanding, one of DTS's founders, along with various presidents, faculty, and students of DTS not only developed systematic and robust dispensational frameworks, they were also critical in propelling and popularizing them in the public and global spheres.

The content of the articles in DTS's major academic publication, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, is often related to eschatology (the study of "last things") and biblical prophecy. Thus, the content is often centered on "end-times" events, people, and places, and the Jews, Israel, and Palestine are prominent themes. Moreover, certain major historical events have in dispensational discourses served as strong impetuses for remembering modern Israeli history in light of selective interpretations of biblical prophecy: the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948, the 1967 war, and the Yom Kippur War (1973). These events, and their perception with regard to eschatological fulfillment, served as catalysts for ideological, economic, and political support by

evangelical Christians (Ariel 2006) and are therefore a key aspect of the historical and sociopolitical context of dispensational texts in the latter half of the 20th century. Following the discussion of dispensationalisms with respect to these events, I focus on several modern manifestations of dispensational discourses that stem, in part, from the theological work produced at DTS, and this also includes key texts produced, for example, book form or through websites.

Part two (Sections 3-4) transitions to the critical discourse analysis of actual dispensational texts, centering around scholarship from DTS's theological journal *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Apart from this principal text source, the additional discursive manifestations and constructions of dispensationalisms that are included here have been selected for numerous reasons. First, one or more individuals that either attended or taught at DTS have – at least in terms of ideology and doctrine – influenced all of the text sources included. This is partly evidenced in dispensational discourses by the way discourse participants inaugurate relationships between texts, such as integrating elements from extant texts through intertextuality. Additionally, this is reflected in the doctrines and ideologies communicated by text producers.

Second, among the texts I analyzed, all of the groups and institutions (to which individual text producers of dispensational discourses as social actors are associated) are currently operating and, to some degree, prospering, which makes this research both timely and relevant. For example, DTS is still a major developer and disseminator of dispensational doctrines. Moreover, many of the texts analyzed in this thesis are related to John Hagee, an influential pastor, televangelist, author, and self-described dispensationalist. Hagee does not hold any formal affiliation with DTS, but, in his books and teachings he draws from end-times ideologies developed by various DTS scholars, such as John F. Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost, Roy B.

Zuck, J. Vernon McGee, and Charles Dyer. Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, where Hagee serves as senior pastor, boasts a membership of over 20,000², and the pro-Israel organization he founded, Christians United for Israel (CUFI) has expanded rapidly throughout the U.S. since its inception in 2006³. CUFI's aims are explicitly political, engendering unilateral support for the Israeli state through, for example, mobilizing its members to lobby and collaborate with influential groups such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Recently, CUFI introduced college and children's programs to promote Israeli support on university campuses and stimulate pro-Israel values in younger generations.

Calvary Chapel is another dispensationally-oriented evangelical institution represented in this work. Founded by Chuck Smith, Calvary Chapel grew rapidly out of a larger 1970s Christian movement known as the Jesus Movement in the U.S. West Coast (Spector 2009; Shires 2002), and is also currently expanding through active church planting in both the U.S.⁴ and abroad. Calvary Chapel is nondenominational, but maintains unifying doctrinal elements to which individual churches adhere. Similar to the way in which DTS embeds dispensational theology into its doctrinal statement, Calvary Chapel chooses dispensationalism as one of its "distinctives" (Smith 2000): theological stances that distinguish this movement from other forms of Christianity or, more specifically, other forms of evangelical Protestantism. For Calvary Chapel, this and other "distinctives" unite discrete, autonomous churches under a broad institutional banner, while as a whole it retains nondenominational status. This organization does not have any direct affiliation with DTS, but Calvary Chapel pastors draw from DTS scholarship,

² <http://www.sacornerstone.org/about-johnhagee>

³ There are over 525,000 members as of early 2011.

⁴ The Hartford Institute for Religion and Research hosts an online database of megachurches, which are defined as churches with 2,000+ weekly attendees (<http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/database.html>). Three of the top 25 megachurches by number are affiliated with Calvary Chapel: Harvest Christian Fellowship (Riverside, CA; Pastor Greg Laurie), Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale (Fort Lauderdale, FL; Pastor Bob Coy), and Calvary of Albuquerque (Albuquerque, NM; Pastor Skip Hezig).

for example, during Bible exposition in church settings. Moreover, dispensational works produced by DTS scholars (such as J. Dwight Pentecost's *Things to Come* and John F. Walvoord's commentaries on Daniel and Revelation) often serve as textbooks in Calvary's educational institutions like Calvary Chapel Bible College (Murietta, CA)⁵, which is a ministry of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa.

Calvary Chapel has undergone dramatic growth since its inception during the Jesus Movement of the 1970s, and its missionary/evangelization activities are often spurred by an eschatological emphasis. Some Calvary Chapel churches use popular fiction expressions of dispensational ideologies like the *Left Behind* movies during evangelistic outreaches. These films, along with the book series from which they are based, portray a purportedly biblically-based but fictional account of the events that are said to immediately precede the Second Coming of Christ. This includes the removal of all true Christians from the earth in an event known as "the rapture," which sets a series of prophetic events in motion, such as a period of intense tribulation, wars, and the building of a third Jewish temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Moreover, many components of Chuck Smith's teachings on eschatology resemble predictions made popular in a 1970 book by Hal Lindsey (a DTS graduate) and Carole C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (cf. Smith 1991). Lindsey and Carlson's work was "the best-selling nonfiction book of the [1970s] decade" (Johnson 1989; Spector 2009), and it helped to normalize the filtering of current events through dispensational interpretations of prophetic passages in the Bible (Spector 2009:27; Weber 2004). This book featured prominently during the Jesus Movement (Shires 2002), and was quite significant for the emergence of Calvary Chapel, as well.

⁵ Calvary Chapel Bible College in Murietta has additional affiliate campuses both in the U.S. and throughout the world (http://calvarychapelbiblecollege.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=55).

A third reason for selecting texts from these institutions is that they have extended influence for sustained periods of time (e.g., the decades-long influence of DTS) and/or they possess tremendous potential to shape the worldviews of the large amounts of people. For example, Pastor John Hagee has been extremely influential through institutions such as Cornerstone Church, CUFI, and AIPAC. Calvary Chapel has also succeeded in broadening the influence of dispensational discourses through individual churches established in the U.S. and abroad. Another group of texts I discuss is produced by For Zion's Sake Ministries (FZSM), which is situated within the aforementioned Calvary Chapel movement (Spector 2009). Originally an extension of Calvary Chapel Jerusalem, one of the principal objectives of this ministry is aiding Jewish *aliyah* (emigration to Israel). FZSM labels itself as an "Israel Humanitarian Aid Organization" (<http://forzion.com/>) and produces a regular, usually bi-weekly newsletter that is disseminated via the Internet on the ministry's website as well as through email. Throughout the world, Calvary Chapel churches and church-supported ministries like FZSM are important venues that mobilize dispensationalisms, broadening their impact on a global scale.

A fourth reason for selecting these particular sources is that they also span various genres, and many are multimodal. Consequently, the texts analyzed below include not only journal articles, but also sermons delivered in churches, popular nonfiction books, pamphlets, websites, Internet news updates, and fiction novels.

1.3 Dispensationalisms as Religio-political Discourses

Individual and collective dispensationalist ideological texts are embedded in religio-political discourses that are themselves instantiations of "language as social practice" (Fairclough and

Wodak 1997). With regard to the production of texts in evangelical Christian institutional settings, (typically) elites are uniquely in a position to control discourses that are disseminated to a larger audience. With concepts such as *critique* and *power* serving as foundational elements, critical discourse analysis (CDA) offers an interpretive framework of how discursive and social elements interact in dispensational discourses. With this interactional emphasis in mind, Fairclough and Wodak note that a dialectal relationship holds between language (in use) and society:

Describing discourse as a social practice implies a dialectal relationship between a particular discourse event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it. The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important questions of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people. (Fairclough and Wodak 1997:258, quoted in Wodak and Meyer 2009:5-6)

Following Reisigl and Wodak (2001), I assume a distinction between the *discourse* and *text*, such that, among other differences, a discourse may be comprised of multiple texts. This concurs with Van Dijk's (1998), and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001, 2009) conceptualizations of these terms, with *discourse* viewed as “structured forms of knowledge” while *text* refers to “concrete oral utterances or written documents” (Wodak and Meyer 2009:6). These texts are embedded in discourses and the discursive events that they both shape and are shaped by. Additionally, my notion of text is comprehensive enough to include oral and written forms, including nonverbal elements such as semiotics, and it also extends to multimodalities. Consequently, when we consider either individual or collective dispensational texts, we encounter a variety of text types

and genres, as well as a variety of discursive events for which our analysis must take into account. Dispensational texts are necessarily religious texts, since they are produced within the broader framework of evangelical Christianity, though many (if not most) evangelicals are not dispensationalists, a significant point of interest given the popularity of dispensational ideologies. Dispensationalisms are expressions of theological viewpoints and sets of theological claims that delineate specific doctrines in the field of eschatology, the study of “last things” (e.g., death, resurrection, judgment, and the end-times). Related to the hermeneutic methods that they employ, dispensationalists believe that the Bible predicts a national restoration of Israel in relation to key end-times events. As a result of the prominence ascribed to Israel, dispensationalisms create a religious framework with which the Israel-Palestine issue is conceptualized, interpreted, remembered, and understood. However, the lines between religious and political are blurred, because they often implicate, for example, prescriptive action toward political actors and may reproduce social, ethnic, and political inequalities. Dispensationalisms also exhibit a tendency for the producers of such texts to interpret the Bible in light of the present, linking biblical passages with current events. For these reasons, I categorize dispensational texts and discourses as being both religious and political, or simply religio-political.

As a result, we expect dispensationalisms to relate to and be embedded in both religious/theological and political contexts, such as church organizations and lobby groups. The social settings in which dispensational discursive events are (re)produced, shaping and being shaped by (following Fairclough and Wodak 1997:258):

- (1) *The situation(s)*: e.g., preaching/teaching, Sunday sermon, mid-week bible study, radio or television program (live or pre-recorded), political speech, academic instruction, interview, etc.

- (2) *The institution(s)*: e.g., church, university, lobby group, international organization, etc.
- (3) *The social structure(s)*: e.g., church hierarchy/leadership, academic structure(s), political structures, etc.

With these elements in mind, the analysis below is centered on an understanding of how dispensationalisms relate to the religious and political situations, institutions, and social structures in which they are (re)produced. The texts selected include: academic journal articles from an evangelical institution, websites and web newsletters from church and parachurch organizations (that is, groups that work with churches but are independent of them), a speech to a pro-Israel lobby group, nonfiction books, and websites. Each of these texts and text types instantiate different and unique compositions of the social settings of specific dispensational texts and discourses, which interact in multiple ways.

Yet additional aspects of discourse relate to notions of *power*, *ideology*, and *knowledge*, concepts that are ubiquitous in CDA. Discourses can either “sustain and reproduce the status quo” or they can result in transformational contributions (Fairclough and Wodak 1997:258). The “socially consequential” characteristic of discourses (Fairclough and Wodak 1997:258; Wodak 2003:187) entail potential power inequalities that are often the result of ideologies, which are composed of, e.g., beliefs and attitudes, and these in turn relate back to the situations, institutions, and social structures from which they are instantiated. Being religio-political, dispensational ideologies, and the discursive practices that embody dispensationalisms, represent things (political events, wars, organizations) and people (individuals, ethnic groups) in particular ways that are consistent with dispensational schemata. These are manifest by context-dependent linguistic realizations that are, for example, employed in rhetorical strategies often aimed at positive self- and negative other-representation. Thus, for example, the consistent reification of Israel (either as a an ethnic people group or as a nation-state) as “God’s (chosen) people” who

have been granted national identity and land by divine ordinance may serve, at least in part, to enact dominance, prejudice, and racism towards Palestinians, specifically, and Arabs or Muslims, generally. Arabs and Muslims are at times associated with “terrorism/extremism/sexism/(Islam-)fascism” (see, e.g., Hagee 2006) in certain current dispensationalist discourses. In the analysis below, then, one question that is consistently applied is, how does language relate to social power and (in)justice in dispensationalisms and dispensational discourses?

1.4 Dispensationalisms as Plural Ideological Frameworks

So far I have referred to dispensationalism and dispensational ideology as plural frameworks, thus necessitating talk of dispensationalisms and dispensational ideologies. By *framework* I mean a more or less coherent set of principles, beliefs, and ideologies that are systematized. *Plural frameworks* are those that differ from one another individually by degree, but are still united under a common theme, which may be for purposes of categorization or situating them historically. The primary motivating factor for my referring to plural frameworks is twofold. The first reason is based on practical and historical exigencies that must be understood so that we do not assume an uncritical reductionist framework of uniform “dispensationalism.” By retaining the distinction between plural dispensationalisms as opposed to a more abstract singular unit, we can perhaps distinguish between different relationships that hold between language, society and cognition that are discursively manifest in relation to particular contexts, including the ideological framework(s) from within which they are produced. This gives us a clearer sense of the multidimensional layers of dispensational discourses. So, for example the linguistic means of referring to the land and people in Palestine and Israel, such as collectives, toponyms and

ethnonyms, may differ across what are termed classical, revised, and progressive dispensationalisms. The differences between each are dispensational variety are manifold, and some negatively frame the latter as a departure from “rather than a development within normative dispensationalism” (Ryrie 1996:97). Classical and revised dispensationalisms extend both before and after the establishment of the State of Israel. Jewish people living in Palestine prior to the founding of Israel are therefore not referred to as “Israelis” in classical or early revised dispensationalisms (though they are referred to as “Israel” or “the Jews”). Also, Palestinians are frequently referred to generically as “Arabs” in earlier texts that precede more recent expressions of explicit Palestinian national identity (Khalidi 1997). Alternatively, the linguistic representations of entities pertaining to Israel and Palestine may be equivalent on a surface level, even though their use, context, and content will differ across frameworks, some of which is due to recontextualization. In some cases, and especially in classical dispensationalism, “Palestine” is used to refer to the land of Israel-Palestine. Among post-1948 texts, “Palestine” is still a referential term, but it is a common means of reference to the region without implying support for Palestinian nationalism, and this is manifest through the use of the modifier “geographical,” as in “geographical Palestine.” Additionally, particular rhetorical strategies may be specific to a particular strand of dispensationalism, thus enacting and reproducing unequal power relations in a distinct manner that results in unique functioning of ideologies in daily life that cannot be predicated of other frameworks. As an example within the texts analyzed here, John Hagee’s invoking of “Islamic terrorism” in a post-9/11 context stands out as a unique form of revised dispensationalism. These and other options are treated at length in the discussion below (Sections 2-4).

Admitting the plurality of dispensationalisms in my analysis has an additional benefit when considered from a methodological standpoint. That is, inclusion of multiple examples and varieties of dispensationalist discourses gives us a fuller picture of their linguistic, social and cognitive influences on individuals and groups (or, according to the sociocognitive approach, their relationships to mental models which become the source of “influence”). In order to begin to understand such structural complexity, we must acknowledge points of ideological convergence and divergence, while simultaneously avoiding the danger of wrongly imposing meanings and “literacies” (Locke 2004:13; Gee 1996, 2004) that are only valid when made in relationship to, say, a single framework. Moreover, if we do not give prominence to important developments within dispensational doctrines, we fail to recognize the complexity inherent among variants that are sometimes spoken of as if they constitute a single, uniform theological system. Consider the nature and implications of the New Covenant⁶ in classical and post-classical dispensationalisms, for example, or to compare the revised dispensationalism of John Hagee with that of the progressive dispensationalism initially developed, espoused, and expressed by a group of evangelical scholars in the 1980s and 1990s (Blaising and Bock 1993; Saucy 1993). Though in certain ways progressive and earlier dispensational frameworks share common ground ideologically, these are to some extent quite radically different forms within the broad category of dispensationalisms, and their superficially similar context-dependent utterances therefore merit separate treatment. Moreover, since rhetorical strategies are each “more or less intentional plan of practices” (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:44), exploring complexity

⁶ The New Covenant in dispensational theology refers to the biblical concept of the covenant that God established through the Person and work of Jesus Christ, but the phrase has roots in both the Old and New Testaments (Jeremiah 31:31; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:8, 13; 9:15; 12:24). Each dispensational framework disagrees as to the exact nature of the New Covenant, such as whether or not two New Covenants might exist, one for Israel and the other for the Church. Consequently, the interpretation of the New Covenant relates to the dispensational understanding of God’s relationship with Israel throughout time. Progressive dispensationalists tend to propose a more holistic, rather than dual-covenant, view.

constrained by context-dependency informs our ability to infer intent. Overall, critical distinctions that relate a specific framework to expressions of knowledge and power would be lost in a singular approach to so-called dispensationalism. As a result, we must take care what conclusions we do or do not extend from one viewpoint to another. This thesis focuses primarily on late classical and revised dispensationalisms, though at times I do integrate aspects from progressive dispensationalism, as well, in order to highlight points of convergence and departure.

1.5 Representation and Remembering

This thesis considers salient textual themes and structures across numerous texts that are embedded into dispensational discourses pertaining to the Israel-Palestine conflict. I combine methods from two approaches within the field of critical discourse analysis (CDA), the discourse-historical approach (DHA) and the sociocognitive approach (SCA), in order to examine the discursive constructions of entities (i.e., people[s], places, and events), and their function in relation to individual and social mental models, related to the Israel-Palestine conflict among texts in the theological frameworks of dispensationalisms. The texts selected for analysis here represent a variety of genres and modalities. This sampling of texts serves to illustrate somewhat the historical properties of dispensational texts and how they relate to one another (i.e., intertextuality) both diachronically and synchronically, as well as how they invoke overlapping discourses (i.e., interdiscursivity) for ideological and political purposes.

Highlighting the ideological effects that are reproduced by dispensational discourses as social action, I situate my analysis of these discourses, and the texts which embody them, within Van Dijk's (2006) theory of manipulation. In CDA, manipulation is a critical notion not only because it is "a form of social power abuse," but since it also "impl[ies] *discursive* power abuse"

(Van Dijk 2006:359, emphasis added). Manipulation by and large occurs and is enacted by textual mediums, including, of course, oral and written texts as well as, for example, semiotic data. Since we are primarily dealing with intra-evangelical religious situations, institutions, and social structures, our primary concern is how “‘communicative’ or ‘symbolic’ forms of manipulation as a form of interaction” are expressed discursively (Van Dijk 2006:360) within the hierarchical structure(s) provided by evangelicalism, such as church government, which includes pastoral authority. These are the primary sources of social power within the dispensational frameworks that extend to include political discourses, and thus, form part of the context for these religio-political discourses. Often in dispensational texts, manipulation occurs in order to persuade, for example to encourage political and economic support on behalf of Israel, or to encourage conversion by attempting to validate dispensational beliefs with real-world events (for example, use of the popular Left Behind movies in evangelistic outreaches, as previously mentioned).

Moreover, I consider dispensational discourses, in part, as particular *lieux de mémoire* (‘sites of memory’; Nora 1989), which become spaces for active remembering, forgetting, and the “commemorating of past events” (Wodak and Richardson 2009:231). These sites of memory are enacted in accordance with particularized, and often biased or one-sided, mental models. These conceptual “museums” reflect and substantiate subjective representations of entities, and are manifested by and (re)produced through discourse, relating to the sociocognitive interface of discourse that mediates individual/group beliefs and socio-political actions. A selection from Pim den Boer’s (2008) summation of Pierre Nora’s *lieux de mémoire* is instructive. In addition to being “mnemotechnical devices” aiding memory, *lieux de mémoire* are also:

[E]xtremely ideological, full of nationalism, and far from being neutral or free of value judgment. Most *lieux de mémoire* were created, invented, or reworded to serve the nation-state. (Den Boer 2008:21)

The ideologies constructed in dispensational discourses are indeed non-neutral and full of value judgments, but they are also significantly nationalistic. Dispensionalisms, by virtue of the doctrines they espouse, frequently remember and commemorate Israel, which lends itself toward some type of support for this nation-state. Moreover, this can combine with U.S. nationalism through an argumentation that unites the moral and political destiny of the U.S. and its identity with the destiny of Israel, a theme that traces back to the early dispensationalist William Blackstone (Ariel 2006). The dispensational and related texts considered here evince a variety of linguistic (including semiotic) structures and strategies aimed at positive Israeli representation and, by implicit extension as well as explicit mentioning, negative Palestinian representation. In particular, I trace and analyze the linguistic means by which ideological and political support for Israel is legitimized, while Palestinian issues are silenced and delegitimized. Conceptualizing dispensational discourses as *lieux de mémoire* may also reveal salient themes that persist over time as part of the “canon” (Assman 2008) of dispensational cultural memory, which also may serve as a means of understanding narrative organization (Wertsch 2004, 2008a, 2008b) in dispensational discourses.

1.5.1 A Dual Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis generally deals with the relationship between language and society, with concepts such as discourse and power featuring prominently (Van Dijk 2001, 2008a). In CDA frameworks, texts and discourses derived from large stretches of text and talk serve as basic units of analysis, rather than, say, decontextualized sentences. Moreover, the locus of CDA

is language-in-use, often with an emphasis on the performative nature of language (among other forms of semiotic expression), such as how people “do things with words” (Austin 1975) in order to (re)present the “self” and the “other” in accordance with hegemonic worldviews through discourse. CDA does not exclusively seek solely to evaluate, for example, linguistic units of analysis as they function according to a particular grammatical structure in discourse. Rather, while CDA is informed by linguistic theory, it is also “problem-oriented” in its approach, and views language/discourse as non-neutral, constituting society and being constituted by it (Wodak and Meyer 2009:2; Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Wodak, de Cilia, Reisigl, and Liebhart 2009). The social embeddedness of language and discursive constitution of society is but one principal element that undergirds CDA. Language is, however, not itself powerful as if it were an autonomous agent; instead, language use is powerful because of the social actors as agents that employ it and exercise power through discourse, which is often (co-)constructed for achieving political and material purposes (Wodak 2007, 2008b).

Given the close affiliation between language and politics (Chilton and Schäffner 2002), word and phrase choice, along with the various meanings those words and phrases carry, are often manipulated in order to produce a desired effect (Wilson 2001) based on speaker intentions and mutual understanding between the speaker and hearer. As Teun A. van Dijk has observed, political discourse enjoys a significant role “in the enactment, reproduction, and legitimization of power and domination” (Van Dijk 2001:360) and is therefore a frequent object of analysis for practitioners of CDA. Critical discourse analysts have produced significant contributions to the understanding of how discrimination, prejudice, racism, xenophobia, and other forms of dissimulation are enacted in political discourses (Wodak 2008b). In a similar vein, and drawing from the tri-fold “critique” advocated in the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl and Wodak

2009:88), this paper focuses on how particular linguistic elements are utilized in order to enact manipulation and racism through religio-political texts in patterns of representation, which express and reproduce underlying social representations and ways of remembering, thus both exploiting and constructing cultural memory. However, such discriminatory patterns and structures are not always immediately apparent. For this reason the demystification and understanding of *implicit* (often presupposed) beliefs communicated in discourse is fundamental to CDA, since manipulation is often achieved through the implicit expression of beliefs via discourse (Van Dijk 2001, 2006). Manifesting latent and explicit ideologies in texts and discourses clarifies the content of discriminatory social practices, such as discursive strategies of self- and other-(re)presentation.

Still, in general many scholars agree that CDA itself is not a method, but instead a stance taken toward discourse and discourse analysis that has socio-philosophical roots in Critical Theory (Wodak and Meyer 2009). This leads CDA researchers to be problem-oriented in their approaches, engaging discourse through discourse in order to transform existing social inequalities (Wodak and Meyer 2009). Bearing in mind the constraint that CDA itself is not a strict form of analysis, I have chosen to utilize two specific methods within the broad field of CDA: the discourse-historical approach (DHA), principally as delineated by Reisigl and Wodak (2001, 2009), and Teun A. van Dijk's (2008b, 2009a, 2009b) sociocognitive approach (SCA). Though these approaches have previously been viewed as "incompatible" (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:31), much recent CDA research has been devoted to ways in which they might be considered complementary (Wodak 2006). In particular, these two methods in conjunction offer a unique perspective from which to view the operation of cognition in mediating between discourse and society (Wodak 2006; Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a).

The selection of these methodological approaches is also due to the nature of my research topic as well as my primary research question. Again, my particular topic is the role of dispensationalisms, both historically and present, in the Israel-Palestine conflict, especially with regard to the development of attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies that support one or both sides through discursive representation and remembering. My guiding research question is the following: What is the relationship between dispensationalisms, on the one hand, and attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, and actions towards peoples, places, entities, and events in Israel and Palestine? In order to address this issue, the following question must also be treated: How do dispensationalisms discursively represent and remember peoples, places, and events related to Israel and Palestine?

1.5.2 Discourse and Text

By combining these two specific approaches to critical discourse analysis (CDA) we also inevitably narrow in on specific senses of analytic concepts such as “text” and “discourse” from among the multitude of extant uses (see Wodak 2008a). In employing these terms throughout this thesis, I principally follow the use as outlined in the discourse-historical approach (DHA). As briefly stated above, I assume a distinction between “discourse” and “text.” Within the discourse-historical framework, three principal elements constitute discourse: “(a) macro-topic relatedness, (b) pluri-perspectivity and (c) argumentativity” (Reisigl and Wodak 2009:89). Thus, discourses are considered to be in a “dialectal relationship between particular discursive practices and the specific field of actions [...] in which they are embedded (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:35-36; Fairclough and Wodak 1997). Discourses are dynamic and fluid “clusters” of semiotic practices wherein language users as social actors construct and relate meaning from a particular

perspective or worldview (Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Fairclough 2009⁷). Moreover, discourses are “verbal-symbolic” (Van Dijk 2009b) or “semiotic” (Fairclough 2009) in nature, with language as one semiotic element among many.

Borrowing from David Kronenfeld’s conceptualization of language (in the sense of *langue*) and culture, I also consider discourses to be “technically epiphenomenal” (Kronenfeld 2008:68) in the sense that they are instantiated and invoked through texts but are not truly independent of them. That is, akin to the manner in which he defines abstract, shared properties of language and culture, discourses do not exist in a strong, deterministic sense, even though “we each as individuals rely upon them as if they actually do” (Kronenfeld 2008:68). Discourses are structured entities that are embodied by texts, which are themselves concrete manifestations or instances of semiotic events in communicative situations and settings, though discourses also relate to cognition and representations in mental models. Texts are the “*materially durable* products of linguistic action” (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:36, emphasis added), such as a speech given to a lobby group, a sermon preached during a church service, or a webpage from a particular institution. Texts are also multimodal, social semiotic forms of communication, transcending purely linguistic dimensions to include not only writing or speaking but also photographs, art, videos, color, and layout (Kress 2010; Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006). Discourses, by extension, are also multimodal (Van Dijk 2009b), being composed of these various semiotic modes as tools for meaning-making and communication (Blommaert 2005). In this way, discourses are composites of texts and all the various features of semiotic action. Discourses are semiotic (including linguistic), social, *and* historical resources from which

⁷ Fairclough (2009; see also Fairclough et al. 2004) distinguishes further between discourse and semiosis, with the former being “semiotic ways of construing [rather than representing] aspects of the world” in relation to various individual and group perspectives, while he construes the latter as “meaning-making as an element of the social process” (2009:162). I agree with Fairclough’s conceptualization and emphasis on linguistic plus non-verbal semiotic elements, but I consider meaning-making as a whole a discursive and cognitive enterprise.

discourse participants draw – by engaging with material texts mediated by cognition – in order to formulate mental models for the understanding (interpretation) and production of discourse (Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a). Generally speaking, then, *discourse* in the sense that I use it here refers more to an abstract entity, and its categorization is also partly construed from the perspective of the analyst. Taking this in conjunction with the aforementioned points, I employ the term *discourse* in two ways: 1) a discourse may relate to the topic or content of one or more texts, such as a “discourse on Israel,” or 2) a bundle of discourses may be related to an overarching framework that unites them, such as “dispensational discourses.” The phrase “dispensational discourses,” then, narrows down on specific sets and subsets of discourses in order to categorize them under a unifying theme.

1.5.3 Discourse, Cognition and Memory

Both the discourse-historical approach (DHA) and the sociocognitive approach (SCA) offer potentially unique manners of addressing the (re)presentation and remembering entities pertaining to Israel-Palestine as they pertain to discourse, manipulation, and memory. The DHA is a hermeneutically-based approach with a unique emphasis on and four-fold conceptualization of “context,” which, for example, takes into account not only the “text-internal co-text,” but also the “relationship[s] between utterances, texts, genres and discourses” (intertextuality and interdiscursivity), the “social/sociological variables and institutional frames” behind text production, and larger socio-political context, as well (Resigl and Wodak 2001:41, 2009). Consequently, among other things, the DHA focuses on the socio-historical embeddedness and context of discourse(s), and it could therefore be rather illuminating in revealing diachronic processes (and synchronic ones, too), as well as, say, transformations and manipulations of and

through texts and discourses. In addition, as a basis for asking questions of the texts I analyze, I have integrated the following questions as developed in the DHA in order to select for particular rhetorical strategies of positive self- and negative other-representation (or some similar type of ingroup/outgroup dichotomy; Reisigl and Wodak 2001:xiii, 44-56):

- (1) How are persons [also, events, and other entities] referred to linguistically? (*referential strategies*)
- (2) What traits, characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to them? (*predicational strategies*)
- (3) By what means of arguments and argumentation schemes do specific persons or social groups try to justify and legitimate the exclusion, discrimination, suppression and exploitation of others? (*argumentation strategies*, including *fallacies*)
- (4) From what perspective or point of view are these namings, attributions and arguments expressed? (*perspectivation* and *framing strategies*)
- (5) Are the respective discriminating utterances articulated overtly, are they even intensified or are they mitigated? (*mitigation* and *intensification strategies*)

In the analysis below I will make reference to these five strategies, their function in each of the individual texts (when applicable), and how they relate to the notions of manipulation and memory. Recursive and “heuristic” (Reisigl and Wodak 2009:93) orientation to these questions in the analysis enables us to make manifest the ways in which, for example, social actors or events are represented and remembered in dispensational discourses either positively or negatively .

In this thesis, I am also interested in examining the effects of discourse upon cognition and memory, with particular attention paid to the formation of mental models (as they are conceptualized in the SCA) and how they operate in the process of discursive manipulation (Van Dijk 2006, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b). Importantly, this adds another dimension or layer to contextual complexity: “context,” as conceptualized in the SCA is not external to the minds of individual discourse participants. The SCA defines context in relation to (inter)subjective, dynamically formed mental models of the relevant portions of the communicative event (Van Dijk 2008a,

2008b). Notwithstanding, rather than considering such sociocognitivism to be in opposition to the hermeneutically-based DHA and its historical emphasis, in agreement with Wodak (2006) I consider these differences in emphasis to be capable of being integrated in order to develop a more complete theoretical approach to context. Co-text, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, socio-political context, and institutional frames are among the very elements whose representations (which are communicated and remembered through discourse) are integrated into the mental models of individual discourse participants.

1.5.3.1 Manipulation

According to Van Dijk (2006, 2008a), manipulation is a form, not only of social power control, but also of illegitimate social power abuse and thus entails dominance (Van Dijk 1993, 2008a). It is, as he writes, “a communicative and interactional practice, in which the manipulator exercises control over other people” (Van Dijk 2006:360). In his framework, then, manipulation is an influence that is discursive – achieved through text, talk, and other communicative environments and interactions – rather than physical. Importantly, as Van Dijk argues, manipulation of this type is characterized by three “dimensions” that require “triangulating a social, cognitive, and discursive approach” (Van Dijk 2006:361):

Manipulation is a social phenomenon – especially because it involves interaction and power abuse between groups and social actors – a cognitive phenomenon because manipulation always involves the manipulation of the minds of participants, and a discursive-semiotic phenomenon, because manipulation is being exercised through text, talk and visual images. (Van Dijk 2006:361)

For these reasons, Van Dijk advocates the use of theory and methods that integrate each of these elements. Applying the SCA in conjunction with the DHA does, however, reveal a bias, or at least a strong emphasis, toward the role of language use in manipulation and its relationship to

society and (individual) cognition. Further studies could explore these latter two dimensions in greater depth, but herein I underscore the need for a “solid ‘linguistic’ basis” in CDA in light of “the verbal-symbolic nature of discourse” (Van Dijk 2009b:65).

In terms of cognition, Van Dijk maintains that manipulation influences both “short term memory (STM)-based discourse understanding,” as well as long term memory, including episodic memory (Van Dijk 2006:365, 367). Though not wholly unique to manipulation, style, modes of presentation, structure and rhetorical strategies affects the online processing and understanding of meaning in STM in order that, for example, “readers pay more attention to some pieces of information than others” (Van Dijk 2006:365). STM-based manipulation of discourse understanding can be used to construct and propagate hegemonic narratives. Moreover, Van Dijk notes that “most manipulation is geared to more stable results, and hence focuses on long term memory (LTM), that is, knowledge, attitudes and ideologies” (Van Dijk 2006:367). Mental models – which constrain our discourse understanding – situated in episodic memory are primary targets for discursive manipulation because of their primacy in discourse comprehension and their more durative nature.

Also, Van Dijk argues that the link between discourse and society is indirect, and therefore needs to be mediated by mental models as part of a sociocognitive interface (Van Dijk 2008b, 2009a, 2009b). These mental models include “semantic mental models” and “pragmatic context models,” which are subjective representations held individually, as well as intersubjective representations in collective memory (Van Dijk 2009b). Accordingly, Van Dijk maintains that society or the social situation is not the “*influencing’ force*,” but rather “*social members’ representations or constructions of such social structure and social situations*” (Van Dijk 2008b:120, emphasis original). Hannes Heer and Ruth Wodak remark that, according to his

framework, Van Dijk “assumes that every linguistic perception and every value judgment can be traced back to a filtering by means of these cognitive schema” (Heer and Wodak 2008:3).

Moreover, from their work on remembering and the discursive construction of history with regard to anti-Semitism, Heer and Wodak note:

A link can be made here with prejudice research. Schemata and event models determine how experiences are assimilated, for example, according to internalized prejudices. This means, to over-simplify, that a speaker with anti-Semitic inclinations will interpret even positive experiences with Jews negatively – on the basis of ingrained and internalized experiences and schemata (event models). Stereotypes, prejudices and attitudes, as well as the influence of ideologies, can be explained through the internalization of cognitive schemata and event models. (Heer and Wodak 2008:3-4)

In a similar manner, from previous work that I have done analyzing dispensational discourses, it is apparent that biased mental models, *re-presented* discursively (Neumann 2008; Dunn 2008), of peoples and events related to the Israel-Palestine conflict may reproduce and construct the perception of Israel and Israelis as (almost exclusively) positive and Palestine and Palestinians as (almost exclusively) negative. Mental models and their formation with respect to dispensational discourses are biased in that selective remembering and forgetting takes place for ideological purposes that (intentionally or otherwise) favor one group above the other. As I attempt to demonstrate below, discursive re-presentation in dispensationalisms contributes to the formation of (inter)subjective representations that are part of cognitive mental models. These, in turn, become the basis for “filtering,” interpreting, and constructing discourse.

It is with this re-presentational feature in mind that I pursue the notion of dispensational discourses as *lieux de mémoire* (‘sites of memory’) and, also metaphorically, as “museums” where discursive commemoration takes place (Nora 1989; Wodak and Richardson 2009:231). Dispensationalisms frequently recount Israel’s “history,” commemorating certain aspects of Israel’s past for purposes of legitimation: 1) in order to legitimate Israel (in terms of, say, claim

to land or national status), 2) in order to legitimate Israel's actions (such as the displacement of indigenous Palestinians), and 3) in order to legitimate dispensational theology (for example, as being validated by reference to historical and current events). These "sites" are indexed for both individual and cultural memory – both of which involve remembering and forgetting (Esposito 2008; Assmann 2008) – but, notably, these analytic concepts are not easily distinguished in practice since "the cognitive and the social/medial continuously interact" (Erll 2008:5), especially in everyday discourse. Discursive manipulation is, in part, rather successful because the manipulator constructs a biased view that is typically not recognized by the recipient, who also may lack information or knowledge that could potentially challenge manipulative assertions (Van Dijk 2006). Thus the recipient of prejudiced or manipulative discourse potentially invokes these biased views as part of their own (inter)subjective mental models in order to construct knowledge and become producers of discourse themselves. Discourse manipulation also often has as its goal the influencing of social and political action by discursively constructing prejudiced beliefs and attitudes, such as, in many of the examples below, privileging one side over another in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Thus, manipulation influences "the very basis of all social cognition: general, socioculturally shared *knowledge*" by silencing, say, some historical narratives and other "critical general knowledge" so that "only partial, misguided or biased knowledge is allowed distribution" (Van Dijk 2006:371, emphasis original). In short, remembering through discourse can itself become an illegitimate form of power abuse when, for example, it promotes, perpetuates, or enacts social injustice and inequalities by selectively remembering and forgetting. Metaphorically conceptualizing dispensationalisms and dispensational discourses as *lieux de mémoire* and museums potentially enables them to be viewed and analyzed as "sites for commemorating successes," such as the discursive

establishment and promulgation of a biased mental model of Israel, Israelis, Palestine, and Palestinians in manners that privilege the State of Israel (and its purposes within dispensational views). In this regard, a key question to consider is the following: how might a critical discourse analytic stance enable insight to how dispensational discourses reconstruct the past in order to remember Israel and Palestine?

1.5.4 Representation, Remembering, and Co-articulations of Indigenous Identity

One final aspect that I address in this thesis is the consequences that strategies of representation and (not) remembering in dispensational discourses have with regard to Israeli and Palestinian articulations of Indigenous identity. The term *indigenous* is not prominent in dispensational discourses, though it can be explicit in texts that are recontextualized (e.g., “Israel 101” in texts by Christians United for Israel). Notwithstanding, the concept of indigenesness is salient in these discourses as producers of dispensational texts construct particularized identities through ways/strategies of representing and (not) remembering. These constructed identities either collaborate with or are obstacles to articulations of indigeneity by Israelis, Jews and Palestinians, even though dispensational discourses are typically produced in non-Indigenous contexts by non-Indigenous persons. The construction of Indigenousness in dispensational discourses is conceptualized herein as an instance of *co-articulating* Indigenous identity.

Outside of dispensational discourses, Israelis, Jews, and Palestinians are often referred to, either by themselves or others, as “indigenous.” However, this usage is not always, or even necessarily, synonymous with “indigenism” as in pertains to the modern global Indigenous movement (Niezen 2003). More recently, Palestinians have articulated Indigenous identity in the latter sense (Niezen 2005; Jamal 2011), although they have not been entirely successful in

mobilizing such an identity on an international or transnational scale. As a non-Indigenous scholar, I make no attempt to argue for either Israeli, Jewish, or Palestinian identity directly, but rather take instances of self-articulating indigeneity at face value, respecting and affirming self-determination because this principal rests at the core of Indigenous Peoples' struggle for survival and rights. Both Palestinian and Israeli claims of Indigenous identity are often rooted in elements that resonate in Indigenous discourses, such as: dispossession by a dominant nation-state, distinct ethnic and/or national identity (that holds even in diaspora), social injustice and human rights violations, issues pertaining to self-determination and sovereignty, and identity based on intimate relationship with an ancestral land-base (Minde 2008). Producers of dispensational discourses effectively enter into discursively constructing Indigenous identity with regard to Israel-Palestine through the way that Israelis, Jews, and Palestinians are represented and (not) remembered.

Indigenous identities are often affirmed (or denied) through the “global-local dialectic” of “glocalization” (Mitsikopoulou 2008:353; Koller 2008) as both global and local discourses are appropriated for use in alternating contexts (Mitsikopoulou 2008). That is, at least at present, Indigenousness is often discursively constructed as part of the modern global Indigenous movement (Niezen 2003), which manifests itself in unique communal and individual identities locally. Indigenous identity holds in local and global contexts by appealing to and drawing from local and global discourses alike. Thus, Indigenous identity is in some ways a truly glocal phenomenon that is constructed and negotiated discursively. Rather than being in intrinsic opposition, these two senses (and domains) of indigeneity can and do work in concert, invoking and strengthening one another.

Additionally, these processes of glocalization can lead to co-articulations of Indigenous identity. Indigeneity under Niezen's (2003) framework of indigenism is itself a form of glocal

co-articulation: Indigenous Peoples from discrete local communities collaborate on a global scale and in global contexts, such as the United Nations (Minde 2008). Consequently, co-articulation of Indigenous identity may stem from indigeneity being embedded in Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts (whether initiated from the Indigenous community itself or not). In this way, for example, Bolivian indigeneity has been propelled into the global sphere through constructions and perceptions created through non-Indigenous Japanese performances of Bolivian “folk” music (Bigenho 2007). Co-articulation of Indigenous identity in instances involving both Indigenous Peoples and the non-Indigenous are complex and contested, with mixed outcomes for Indigenous Peoples themselves. For example, Indigenous Peoples in Bolivia do not uniformly approve of Japanese articulations of Bolivian indigeneity, and such performances by the dominant group crucially silence or disregard the Indigenous Aynu residing inside the Japanese nation-state.

However, dispensational co-articulations of indigeneity with regard to Israeli/Jewish and Palestinian identity do entail more explicit and irreconcilable oppositions. These co-articulations can become obstacles to Palestinian self-determination in terms of (Indigenous) identity as well as a means for objectifying Jews and Israelis. Articulations of Palestinian Indigenous identity have increasingly been expressed by Palestinians through the new media (Niezen 2005) and often rely on intimate and historical relationships to lands that are presently incorporated into the dominant nation-state of Israel. Israelis in turn construct competing relationships and identities through discourse. Furthermore, non-Indigenous individuals and groups outside of Palestine and Israel, such as U.S. dispensationalists, participate in co-articulating Indigenous identity by legitimizing an Israeli narrative and delegitimizing Palestinian ones. This thesis aims to contribute to an understanding of how this takes place by focusing on strategies of representation

and remembering in dispensational discourses and how text producers reinforce and/or legitimize particularized constructions of Israeli and Jewish indigenesness while simultaneously delegitimizing Palestinian claims.

2 Dispensionalisms: Historical and Sociopolitical Context

2.1 Introduction and Outline

This section discusses the historical and sociopolitical dimensions of dispensational discourses, exploring their significance with regard to discursive representation and remembering (or not) of Israel and Palestine. In order to motivate the relevance of these aspects, I outline the general theological and political development of dispensationalisms as part of their broader discourse context. Accordingly, such an emphasis in this section aims at considering in detail the widest macro-societal elements of discourse “context” (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:41).

I base the general organization of what follows on salient features of dispensationalisms as they emerge and transform over time. Prior to detailing historical developments, though, Section 2.2 provides an orientation to the relevance of the subject by considering shifting trends in U.S. Christian thought, which gave rise to Israel’s primacy among many U.S. evangelicals and fundamentalists. In Section 2.3, I situate dispensationalisms in relation to alternative “end-times” frameworks that have and/or still do enjoy prominence in the U.S., with particular attention paid to dispensational expectation of a Jewish “restoration” to Palestine. These sections provide a basis for outlining significant doctrinal developments that are internal to dispensationalisms, with scholarship from Dallas Theological Seminary coming to the fore (Sections 2.4-2.5).

Beginning in Section 2.6, the political implications of dispensational ideologies mentioned intermittently throughout Section 2 come more sharply into focus. This includes an increased awareness of specific facets of Middle East geopolitics as indexes of prophetic significance, expansion of dispensational texts into popular culture, and the establishing of political alliances with the U.S. Christian Right and the Israeli Right. Section 2.7 centers on the importance of Middle East geopolitics in dispensational discourses and their representations of Arabs, oil, Islam, and terror. Section 2.8 narrows on the representation and (not) remembering of

Palestinians in dispensational discourses. After this, I briefly address a more recent development among dispensationalisms (Section 2.9). Finally, I close by considering some implications of dispensationalisms for discourse and social cognition.

2.2 Shifting Trends in 19th & 20th Century U.S. Christian Thought

Yes, God gave them [the Jews] the land of Palestine something like four thousand years ago. It is God's covenant gift to his people Israel...But Israel has sinned and drifted from God. And the land has for many years been in the hands of the Gentiles. ...They shall one day be removed and the people of Israel shall be fully restored to the possession of the land, mandates notwithstanding, Arabs notwithstanding, and dictators notwithstanding. God's word shall be fulfilled to the last breath. (From Editorial in *Grace and Truth*, October, 1937, as quoted in Kann 1937:457)

In the early 19th century, many Christians in the United States evidenced a growing interest in the discipline of eschatology (the study of “last things,” such as the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus Christ). Eschatological frameworks among Protestant groups were in transition during this time; belief that human history was following a positive progression began to wane, and expectations that terrible events (e.g., wars) and social trends (e.g., a decrease in morality) would unfold before the end of the world began to grow, especially given the outbreak of two World Wars in the early 20th century. Alternative eschatological frameworks gained prominence in U.S. Christian thought as an emphasis on developing biblically-grounded (and geopolitically relevant) eschatological doctrines surged in churches, Bible schools, and prophecy conferences.

Fundamentalist and evangelical circles increasingly ascribed great significance to the land of Palestine and the Jewish people. Belief spread that the Bible predicted the “restoration” of Jews to the land of Palestine as a central motif in events that definitively signaled that the “last things” were about to take place. Heightened conflict in the 1930s-1940s and continued influx of Jewish immigrants to Palestine led many U.S. Christians – particularly dispensationalists – to

believe that prophetic passages from the Bible were either being fulfilled at a rising rate or drawing intensely close. The Middle East geopolitics of the early 20th century seemed to confirm dispensational doctrines, with proponents arguing that wars, revolutions, and political upheavals were taking place according to a predetermined, divine timetable that was either explicitly laid out in the Bible or necessary in order to prepare for future events.

Accordingly, many U.S. Christians anticipated Jewish immigration to Palestine long prior to the dispossession of the indigenous population of Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Prior to modern Israel's founding, the "literal method" of biblical interpretation had become increasingly plausible among certain Christian scholarly communities in the U.S. The attractiveness of this hermeneutic was reinforced by the imminent prospect of a "regathering" of dispersed Jews for the formation of a national entity located in biblical geography, since this seemed to be the "literal" outworking of many biblical passages. The land of Palestine, and eventually the state of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, began to be viewed as a timepiece for determining the relative occurrence of prophetic events. With the import ascribed to geopolitics in Palestine, serious attention was given to ideologies that emerged in the U.S. during the 19th century that "predicted" the establishment of a future Jewish kingdom wherein Jesus Christ would reign *on earth* from Jerusalem. Eventually, a precise system of interpretation developed among fundamentalists and evangelicals known as dispensationalism⁸.

Dispensational ideologies were (and still are) popularized and promulgated in Bible schools and their subsequent scholarly publications, as well as in books, magazines, tracts,

⁸ As I indicated in Section 1, the singular phrase "dispensationalism" is commonly used in reference to multiple historically and theologically related ideological frameworks that I collectively call dispensationalisms in order to account for their complexity. In retrospect, Christian theologians typically categorize dispensationalisms into three relatively coherent types: classical, revised, and progressive (Blaising 1994). I detail some of the principal distinguishing factors that motivate this tripartite categorization in the discussion below, though classical and revised dispensationalisms are explored more thoroughly due to the resonant themes in the texts I have included for analysis in this thesis.

prophecy conferences and preaching in individual churches. One of the more enduringly influential sources of cultural texts that advanced dispensationalisms was Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). Apart from published books and talks at prophecy conferences by DTS faculty and alumni, many dispensational texts were disseminated through DTS's peer-reviewed journal *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Scholars at DTS labored to systematize dispensational doctrines in order to establish it as a coherent biblical worldview. Partly the result of decades' worth of scholarship published in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, DTS emerged as a (if not *the*) preeminent dispensational institution in the U.S. The majority of this section (and, to a certain extent, the entire thesis) focuses on the scholarship produced from DTS, under the hypothesis that such works are a substantive part of the foundation for the discursive construction of many dispensational texts today. Indeed, fundamentalists and evangelicals who advocate dispensational ideologies and have also enjoyed large degrees of political influence in the U.S., such as Jerry Falwell (Halsell 1986), recommend dispensational texts produced by DTS scholars (Clouse 2008:269).

In recent years, DTS has even been deemed “the intellectual center of dispensationalism” in the U.S. (Balmer and Winner 2002:76). Moreover, DTS's longest standing president, John Walvoord (1952-1986), was “one of the most influential prophecy writers of the 20th century” (Kidd 2009:18). Nevertheless, DTS receives scant attention, and does not feature prominently in much of the previous scholarship that has analyzed the either fundamentalists, evangelicals, and/or Christian Zionists and their relationship with Israel. Though such works account for greater scope in their analysis by treating multiple forms of Christian Zionism, I have here decided to concentrate on texts from within a small set of closely related frameworks. Christian Zionism can appear to be a singular ideological movement based on a set of coherent values and doctrines, but its manifestations actually exhibit a great deal of internal complexity among those

subsumed by this category, and this often produces varying motivations informing their support of Israel (Spector 2009). While prominent elements unite Christian Zionists, such as biblical argumentation to support Israel, attention needs to be given to the details and complexities of specific individuals, institutions, and theological frameworks so that we can work toward greater understanding of these and how they relate to discourse, society, and cognition.

Additionally, while the majority of scholars have treated the potential consequences of such ideological frameworks toward Jews, (Jewish) Israelis, and Israel, few have explored their consequences towards Palestinians, Palestine, and Arabs. This trend is, however, slowly changing (Ateek 1989, 2008, Masalha 2007, and Braverman 2010, among others). Additionally, there are further evaluations of Christian Zionist views toward Israel-Palestine that are not in book form, including the 2010 *Christ at the Checkpoint* conference held last year at Bethlehem Bible College in Bethlehem, Palestine, and the 2010 documentary *With God on Our Side*.

This thesis integrates both representations of Palestine/Palestinians *and* Israel/Israelis as aspects that are necessary to understanding Christian dispensational discourses along with their sociopolitical and cognitive effects. Based on the analysis of dispensational texts in Section 3, I argue that the successful discursive promulgation of these doctrines, along with the disregarding of actual events and the acceptance of pro-Zionist propaganda, indirectly led to a dehumanization and demonization of the Palestinian people, mindsets that are still prevalent today in the early 21st century. Additionally, while dispensational discourses resonate with philo-Semitism, they are also complicated by the presence of anti-Semitism through Israeli and Jewish objectification. For example, historian Mark Noll notes that “the ‘end-time’ aspiration toward the conversion of the Jews,” which was seen as intimately related to their occupation of Palestine, “could be read as anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic at the same time” (Ethics and Public Policy Center 2004:15).

The attention given to the outcomes and consequences toward Israel, Israelis, and Jews over and above Palestine and Palestinians in prior considerations of dispensationalisms is not surprising in light of their explicit prominence as crucial themes in dispensational discourses.

Notwithstanding, such primacy has also brought with it *silencing*: silencing of the complexity among Jews and Israelis, silencing of the Israeli dispossession of Palestinians, and silencing of Palestinian perspectives. Beginning with early dispensational discourses up through the 1980s, silence, silencing and exclusion occur through “suppression” and “backgrounding” depending on whether or not social actors are realized (or referred to) in the text (Van Leeuwen 1996:38). After this period, and markedly so after 9/11, Palestinians are more commonly referred to in discourse, but often in order to frame them in terms of terrorism or to situate them within the supposedly homogeneous category “Arab,” who are often construed as the (perennial) enemies of Israel and the Jews. As I will attempt to demonstrate, such asymmetry in dispensational discourses has provided fertile ground for the construction of biased mental models of Palestine and Israel, as evidenced by considering in detail the manner in which each is represented and remembered (or not) in such discourses. Moreover, I argue that an analysis of dispensational discourses reveals complex representations, remembering, and forgetting that blend broader themes of racism and ethnicism, including philo-Semitism, anti-Semitism, anti-Palestinianism, and anti-Arabism. These are various manifestations of “syncretic racism,” a term that “encompasses everyday racism and xeno-racism and other concepts of racism (such as racialisation, otherism, etc.)” and entails “the construction of differences which serve ideological, political, and/or practical discrimination on all levels of society” (Wodak 2008:293).

Most dispensationalisms possessed an inherent motive for Israel’s national existence and, thus, dispensational discourses normalized particular ways of discursively representing and

remembering by commemorating Israel while simultaneously forgetting or delegitimizing Palestine and Palestinians. This combined with a post-World War II desire to respond to and make reparations for the U.S. failings to counter the increasingly widespread discrimination against Jewish people. U.S. sentiments about Israel's national existence and critical efforts to counter rampant anti-Semitism unfortunately resulted in exploiting an extant anti-Arab mentality (Said 1978; Spector 2009) that, over the last seven decades, has been exacerbated by a U.S.-backed and often Christian-backed Israeli state (Spector 2009; Ariel 2011). Moreover, the systematic, discursive development and dissemination of dispensationalisms in the 20th century generated particular representations and remembering (or not) of Palestine/Palestinians, Israel/Israelis, and the Israel-Palestine conflict, which became the ideological foundation for many of today's dispensational expressions. The political implications of these discourses are paramount, especially given the quantity of pro-Israel political support they generate. This support is often coupled with the objectification of Jews and Israelis as well as the enactment of racism and prejudice toward Palestinians who are silenced in early dispensational texts, but increasingly represented and remembered exclusively as terrorists in the post-9/11 context.

Before turning to ideologies concerning and representations of Jews, Israelis, and Palestinians in dispensational discourses, I will now turn to how these discourses are contextually situated in relation to similar, though opposing, eschatological frameworks.

2.3 Historical Development and Theological Foundations

2.3.1 Christian Millennial Movements

Dispensationalisms can be broadly categorized as millennial movements (Whalen 2000a) and as forms of apocalypticism (Boyer 2003), which often focus on prophetically “revealing” or

“unveiling” the nature and course of the end of the world. The concept of the millennium in Christian theology primarily derives its understanding and nomenclature from a single passage in the New Testament. Revelation 20:1-7 describes a period of “one thousand years”⁹ in which Satan is bound and Jesus Christ reigns. This millennial reign ushers in an era of peace and righteousness before the Last Judgment inaugurates eternal afterlife.

The nature of the millennium – its duration and timing, the locations of major events, and the principal actors involved – is contested among Christians that espouse diverse eschatological beliefs. Beliefs and ideologies regarding such aspects inform unique discursive representations and rememberings. In U.S. Christianity since the 18th century, three principal millennial views feature prominently on the theological landscape: postmillennialism, amillennialism, and premillennialism (Clouse 1977:7; Couch 1996:259-260; Ariel 1991:11). Within this triad, dispensationalisms are particular manifestations of premillennialism. There are also three major dispensational varieties that have developed since dispensationalisms emerged in the 19th century. Figure 1 (see below) illustrates the divisions and relationships among the millennial views. Following is a brief synopsis of some major tenets in each of these eschatological frameworks so that the distinctive properties of dispensationalisms are more apparent. Explicit mentioning is given to the general proposals that each view provides regarding the meaning of the millennium and the entities of Israel and the Church, since the conceptualizations of these informs the unique propositions of dispensational teachings. Dispensationalisms are therefore better understood when considered in relation to competing theological frameworks.¹⁰

⁹ The word *millennium* itself comes from the Latin words *mille* and *annus*, together meaning “thousand years.” Millennial doctrines belong to the theological domain of eschatology, which generally pertains to the last things and events of human history and individual human lives, such as death, resurrection, and judgment.

¹⁰ One of the rhetorical strategies that recurs in dispensational discourses is the legitimizing of their own literal hermeneutics and de-legitimizing of the alternative hermeneutical methods that underlie opposing paradigms. Part of the reason that dispensational doctrines became so prominent in the 20th century was due to the ability for scholars and theologians to articulate their ideologies in terms of a hermeneutic system and philosophy of history that was

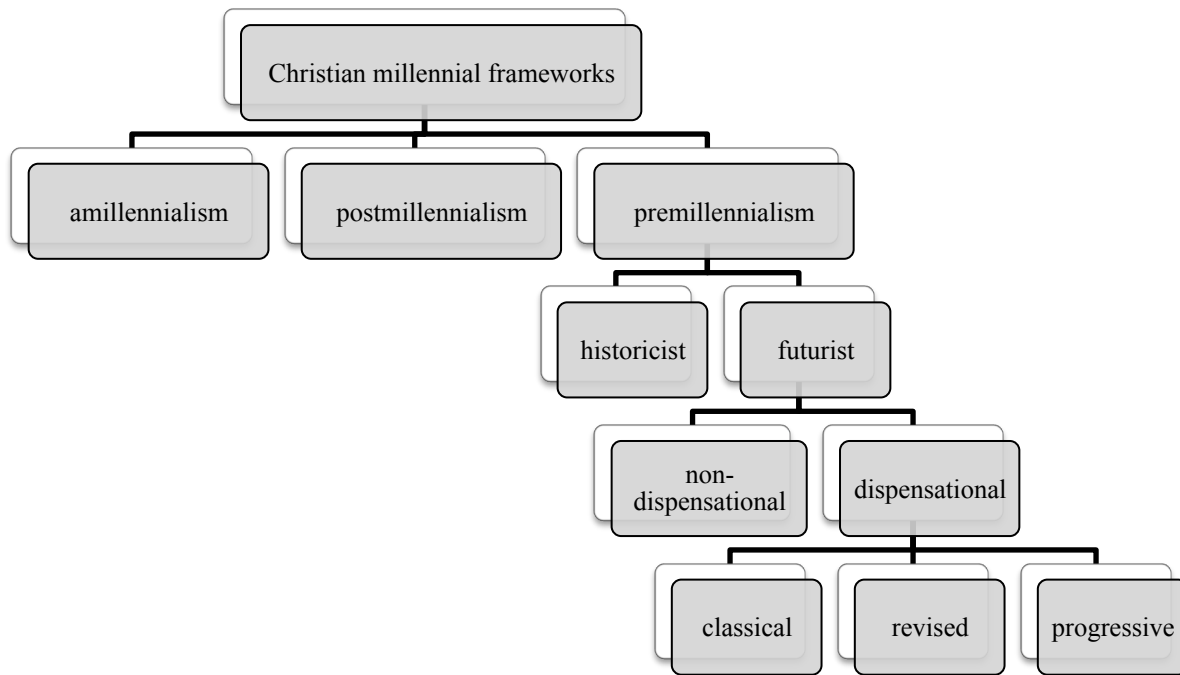


Figure 1. *Dispensationalisms in relation to other Christian millennial frameworks.*

2.3.1.1 Postmillennialism

In Western Christianity, postmillennialism arose in the late 17th/early 18th century (Walvoord 1949; Moorhead 2003:468), becoming quite popular soon after (Landes 2000; Marsden 2006:49). The central feature of this view is an optimistic nature of humanity, which is said to continually progress until a thousand years of peace, prosperity, and righteousness are achieved, *after* which Christ will return to earth (hence, *post*-millennialism). Postmillennialism enjoyed its greatest popularity toward the end of the 19th and into the beginning of the 20th centuries. Its advocates proposed that global conditions would improve as time progresses; imperialism and colonialism, industrialization, and modernity seemed for many in the U.S. to be serving this end.

both tenable to conservative fundamentalists and evangelicals as well as being able to sustain popular millenarian fascination by using Middle East geopolitics as a litmus test for their claims.

Human agency is viewed as the driving factor in ameliorating global circumstances, which led many postmillennialists to be active in achieving social reform (Whalen 2000b) to “usher in the millennium” (Boyer 1998:144). However, the outbreak of two world wars within a thirty-year period crushed the sense of optimism which this view encouraged.

Within postmillennialism, Israel and the Church collapse into one entity, and the biblical promises to Israel receive fulfillment in an earthly millennium. The Church is considered the true “Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16) in direct continuity with the saints of the Hebrew Scriptures. The terrestrial nature of the millennium is globally distributed as a result of worldwide sociopolitical reformation in accordance with the Christian gospel. There is typically no eschatological anticipation of a national restoration of Jewish people to Palestine for prophetic fulfillment. In the U.S. during the 18th-19th centuries, postmillennialists often conceptualized the glorious millennial reign under the rubric of a “Christian nation” – not a Jewish one – to be characterized by “a redeemed social order” (Boyer 1998:145). The U.S. was even envisioned as a primary candidate for becoming the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21-22).¹¹ A more familiar understanding of Jewish restoration among postmillennialists was expressed in terms of spirituality rather than materiality. With spirituality as a core facet of Jewish restoration, Jewish conversion could be imagined in terms of integration into the Christian nation, not “regathering” to Palestine to form a national entity within biblical geography.

¹¹ As Boyer notes, “the colonizing venture [of America] began at a time of intense apocalyptic awareness in England,” and this imbued it with “eschatological meaning” manifest in early colonial discourses (Boyer 1992:68). Many Puritans, whose emphasis on human agency bringing about a time of peace and righteousness (i.e., the millennium), envisioned America as a possible location for the center of God’s kingdom on earth. Importantly, despite major theological differences between postmillennial and dispensational paradigms, they do share significant parallels such as the “prophetic destiny” of the U.S. as well as “finding apocalyptic meaning in current events” (Boyer 1992:69).

2.3.1.2 Amillennialism

Postmillennialism was a stronger competitor to dispensational views in terms of popular 19th century millennialism but, historically, amillennialism has held a more dominant and hegemonic position in Western Christianity. It has been the longest consistently taught of the three millennial positions, stipulating that the phrase “one thousand years” (Revelation 20:1-7) figuratively refers to an unspecified time period where Christ will reign either on earth or from heaven. Amillennialism thus receives its name from the denunciation of a literal millennium. In this view, the thousand-year reign of Christ is now, having begun during His first advent.

Some amillennialists consider Christ’s reign to be internal; that is, in such a view Christ is reigns in and through His saints who are on earth. This contrasts starkly with dispensational views, which posit the *physical* return of Jesus in order to establish His kingdom reign from the literal city of Jerusalem. Since amillennialists do not employ a strictly literal hermeneutic, they are often accused by dispensationalists of “spiritualizing” or “allegorizing” prophetic texts (see Pentecost 1978). Like postmillennialists, amillennialists maintain that the prophecies given to Israel are fulfilled in the Church.¹² The church is the “New Israel,” and thus biblical promises to ethnic Israel now find realization in the spiritual church.¹³ Amillennialists (and postmillennialists) posit continuity between the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, envisioning the church as the extension of Israel (and not necessarily its replacement). For reasons I discuss below, these principles are rejected by dispensationalists, who advocate discontinuity and characterize the Christian church as a departure from God’s primary dealing with ethnic Israel.

¹² Consequently, both post- and amillennial views are often accused of “replacement theology” by their opponents, who characterize their “supercessionism” as anti-Judaic or even anti-Semitic (see, for example, Hagee 2006:108; Diprose 2004 [1998]; Horner 2007; Vlach 2010).

¹³ Some amillennialists do anticipate that God will deal specially with Jews (ethnic Israel) in the last days, but this does not imply separate paradigms for the church and Israel and relocation to Palestine is either downplayed or missing altogether.

2.3.1.3 Premillennialism

Premillennialism derives its name from the belief that the return of Christ will occur *before* the institution of His kingdom and subsequent thousand-year reign (hence, *pre*-millennialism). This perspective is therefore intrinsically futurist with regard to the timing of the millennium, and such futurism is quite salient in dispensational discourses (see Section 3). Premillennialism is also the youngest of the three Christian millennial views.¹⁴

Though premillennial varieties of sorts sprang up in Christian thought at various times in Church history, they often did so in a manner that was disconnected, drawing on previously articulated ideas but never forming a systematic theology that transferred over time.¹⁵ Futuristic interpretations of the millennium emerged in somewhat robust forms after the Protestant Reformation, but strong and vigorous premillennial movements did not appear until the 17th and 18th centuries in England, and afterward in the U.S. in the first quarter of the 19th century.

With regard to hermeneutics, premillennialists generally claim to uphold a more literal rendering of the Bible. The millennium is thus interpreted as an exact period of one thousand years.

Premillennialists generally tend to distinguish between Israel (/the Jews) and the Church and propose a terrestrial nature of the millennium. The category of premillennialism divides into two

¹⁴ In a sense, the earliest expression of Christian belief that Christ would return before the millennium is found in a framework known as chiliasm (from the Greek word *χιλία* meaning “one thousand” in the phrase [τα] χιλια ετη “[the] thousand years” [Revelation 20:1-7]). Advanced during the early Patristic period (c. 100-500 A.D.), proponents of chiliasm emphasized an earthly millennium yet to come. The view was ultimately condemned as heresy by the established Church in the 4th century for being impious and materialistic. However, and significantly, more recent articulations of premillennialism are not contiguous with early chiliasm. There are also major doctrinal distinctions between chiliasm and modern premillennialism. For example, chiliasts did not advocate or propose a national restoration of Jews to Palestine. Despite this difference, dispensationalists often invoke chiliasm for two reasons. On the one hand, early dispensationalists often believed that the majority of the Church was apostate, and the (re)emergence of premillennial thought was argued by its proponents to be a return to genuine biblical and apostolic teaching. Second, opponents of dispensationalisms and other premillennial forms appealed to their novelty as a means of discrediting them, framing them as “sectarian” (Sandeen 1970) and schismatic. With this in mind, dispensationalists appeal to the antiquity of chiliasm as a means of legitimizing their own doctrines through establishing historical continuity.

¹⁵ The variety of premillennialism proposed by Jesuit scholars during the Catholic counter-Reformation is one notable example.

major groups: historicists and futurists. The former typically sees apocalyptic prophecy unfolding throughout history while the latter reserves such fulfillment for a later date.

Dispensationalisms are a variety of futurist premillennialism. The eschatology proposed awaits future fulfillment, which is informed by a strictly literal hermeneutic known as the “grammatico-historical” or “literal-historical” method of interpretation (Pentecost 1978; Zuck 1991).¹⁶ As I discuss below, dispensational beliefs regarding the millennium, Israel, and the Church motivate their unique place among Christian millennial frameworks.

2.3.2 Dispensational Anticipation of Jewish Restoration to Palestine

Dispensationalists thrust prophecy into the future and ascribed a central role to Israel. Advocates maintained that (ethnic, national) Israel is unique, and that the biblical prophecies given to Israel will be fulfilled by a literal nation. These can be regarded as (at least part of) the *sine qua non* of dispensationalisms (Bateman 1999:22-23). Because of the 1st century Jewish diaspora, which began after the destruction of the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem (70 A.D.), dispensational ideologies necessitated a “regathering” of dispersed Jews to the land of Palestine – said to still be allotted to them by God – whose boundaries were defined in the Hebrew Scriptures. With this as a central motif of dispensationalisms, the following discussion explores the historical roots of dispensational expectations for Jewish “restoration” to Palestine.

Dispensationalists were not the first Christians to anticipate mass immigration of Jews to Palestine during the end-times based on Bible prophecy (Mashala 2007:89; Ariel 1991:1; Lewis 2010:29-30). Christian interest in the conversion of the Jews and their restoration to the land of Palestine intensified in England in the 16th-19th centuries, especially through historic

¹⁶ As I discuss below, a more recent dispensational framework known as progressive dispensationalism employs a different hermeneutic, allowing for the present realization of eschatology in part.

premillennialism.¹⁷ Historicists used Bible prophecy as an explanatory tool for past events, an indicator of present events, and a predictor of future ones. Their pattern of linking current events with Bible prophecy was not wholly novel at the time, but it became increasingly prevalent when millennial views flourished in Britain and the U.S. in the 19th century. Moreover, it contributed to a standard that dispensationalisms would pattern after, even though early dispensationalists discouraged viewing present circumstances as fulfilling millennial/prophetic expectations.

Both historicists and dispensationalists sought to exert political influence working toward the resettlement of Jews in Palestine. One of the most striking features about premillennial and dispensational thought is the amount of time with which Christian Zionism preceded the secular movement of Jewish Zionism (Masalha 2007:85; Ariel 2006). The notion of Jewish restoration in Christian thought had been a recurrent and nebulous theme for centuries, but in the 19th century premillennialists became active participants who aimed at either bringing this prophetic event into fruition or at least preparing the groundwork for its ultimate realization. Importantly, this includes the emergence of dispensationalism in the U.S. in the 1820s, which developed nearly seven decades before the formal emergence of Jewish Zionism.

¹⁷ Premillennial doctrines were in many ways marginal and not mainstream at this time, but historicists nevertheless strained to articulate social and political upheaval in Europe in terms of the literal fulfillment of Bible prophecy (Sandein 1970). Historicism increased in popularity and eventually culminated in a theological system known as restorationism, an early form of Christian Zionism that promoted Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Several powerful British political actors in the mid- to late 19th century advocated restorationism, including some who had direct influence on policy-formation in Palestine during the Mandate Period. Two prominent examples of British restorationists were Arthur James Balfour and Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury. During his time as Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, Balfour authored the infamous Balfour Declaration of 1917, which articulated British support for Jewish Zionism including establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Lord Shaftesbury was a strong supporter of Jewish restoration to Palestine, and the pro-Zionist slogan “A land without a people for a people without a land” is commonly attributed to him (Masalha 2007:95). Although the discussion below highlights aspects of U.S. Christian theologies, it is important to be mindful of the existence of not only theological but also political relationships between Britain and the U.S. The U.S.-British relationship is contextually relevant given their historical influence on the land of Palestine and the formation of the State of Israel in 1948, as well as Orientalist ideologies (Said 1994) that developed concurrently with premillennialism in Britain. Moreover, while the historical or historicist messianic school prevailed in Britain, futurist premillennialism developed and intensified in the U.S. (Sandein 1970). This premillennial expansion would eventually be closely tied to conservative branches of Christianity in the U.S., including fundamentalism and evangelicalism (Ariel 2006:76).

2.4 The Emergence and Distinctiveness of Dispensionalisms

2.4.1 Classical Dispensionalism: Articulating the Uniqueness of Israel

Early dispensational forms were extensions and transformations of historicism, materializing as a novel eschatological belief promoted by the Irish Anglican John Nelson Darby¹⁸ and his group, the Plymouth Brethren. Eventually dispensational doctrines became integrated into the movements of fundamentalism and evangelicalism in the U.S. (Sandeem 1970; Patterson and Walker 2001; Clouse 2008). The variety of dispensationalisms associated with Darby and his followers is known as classical dispensationalism (Blaising 1994).

Dispensionalisms arose in a period where premillennial fervor was on the rise in both England and the U.S. Historic premillennialism was in many ways their immediate predecessor, and part of what distinguishes each lies in their approaches to a philosophy of history. Historicists viewed the present as the continuing fulfillment and unfolding of biblical prophecy rather than situating many prophetic events entirely in the future.¹⁹ However, dispensationalists in the mid 19th century adamantly rejected the notion that the present time held strong prophetic significance.²⁰ Darby taught that the close of the present age would reestablish the continuity of the prophetic line. As a result, dispensationalists often looked for “signs of the times” (Matthew 16:3) as indicators that the millennium was drawing near, but nevertheless withheld applying prophecies to current events, insisting that they belonged to a future era (Boyer 1998:150). This future would be a time when God once again dealt primarily with the nation of Israel.

¹⁸ Not all consider Darby the originator of dispensational thought. However, in agreement with George E. Ladd, “For all practical purposes, we may consider that this movement - for dispensationalism has had such a wide influence that it must be called a movement - had its source with Darby.” (Ladd 1952:49)

¹⁹ See King (1788, 1798), as well as works by Edward Irving, for examples.

²⁰ Notably, Darby did not always hold to this view. He initially held postmillennial views, and gradually shifted toward historic premillennialism. However, Darby became disenchanted at the historicists’ penchant for identifying prophecy with current events, which he ultimately rejected on the grounds that historicists did not properly distinguish between Israel and the church (Mangum and Sweetnam 2009:66-69).

Serving as a partial foundation to this theme of future significance, Darby advanced the idea that God deals with humanity in various ways through different dispensations (from the Latin *dispensatio*, the translational equivalent of the Greek *οικονομία*). From his interpretation of the Bible, Darby proposed eight distinct dispensations. Subsequent dispensationalists tended to follow an alternative outline proposed by Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, an eminent dispensationalist who articulated seven dispensations in his 1909 *Scofield Reference Bible*. This work was monumental in popularizing classical dispensationalism in the early 20th century. In addition to its extensive readership, it also functioned in evangelical institutions as their unofficial text of the Bible during a time when Christian Bible schools like Dallas Theological Seminary rapidly sprung up across the U.S. (Cairns 1996:480; Ariel 1991:48; see also Mangum and Sweetnam 2009:169). The *Scofield Bible* also experienced immense popularity among non-academic Christians, as it was “rooted in a populist movement” (Mangum and Sweetnam 2009:173) that emphasized the ability of laypersons to interpret the Bible for themselves.

Table 1 below lists the various dispensations according to Darby and Scofield, placing their divisions in rough correspondence (Ariel 1991:20; Sweetnam 2006:179; Elmore 1996:84). For the purposes of this thesis, the latter two in each scheme are the most significant.

<i>Darby's dispensations</i>	<i>Scofield's dispensations</i>	<i>Timing</i>
1) Paradisiacal state	1) Innocence	past
2) Noah	2) Conscience	past
3) Abraham	3) Human/Civil Government	past
	4) Promise, or Patriarchal Rule	past
4) Israel under law (prophet)	5) Mosaic Law	past
5) Israel under priesthood		past
6) Gentile		past
7) Spirit	6) Grace	present
8) Millennium	7) Kingdom	future

Table 1. *Two classical dispensationalist proposals of distinct dispensations in human history.*

Merely recognizing distinct periods of human history was itself noncontroversial among many Christian theologians (Boyer 1998:149). For this reason, the principal characteristics of classical dispensationalism (and subsequent varieties) derive from its unique eschatology (Ariel 1991:20) and formulation of the future dispensation. Darby successfully introduced an innovative concept known as the “great parenthesis” (Boyer 1998:150), emphasizing a principle of discontinuity between the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. He proposed that the prominence of the Christian Church was tangential in relation to the primary plan of God, which privileged Israel. The present age (Spirit/Grace in Table 1), marked by the beginning of the Christian Church at Pentecost, was viewed as a mystery and a parenthetical interruption in God’s dealing with Israel.

Darby then proposed yet another innovation that further distinguished dispensationalisms, namely, the “rapture” of the true Christian believers that constituted the church²¹ (Weber 2004:23-26). Classical dispensationalists proposed that at the end of the “great parenthesis,” Jesus Christ would not first come back to earth to inaugurate the millennium. Instead, Jesus would first appear in the clouds and remove the church prior to the Tribulation²², as Figure 2 illustrates, so that God can once again take up primarily dealing with Israel.

²¹ Darby and others in the Plymouth Brethren movement were somewhat anti-denominational, separating visible Christendom from the “true church” of God. However, in the U.S. dispensational doctrines were effectively mobilized because they became an interdenominational phenomenon, subsequently becoming integrated into Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, and other Protestant groups (Blaising 1994:152; Ariel 1991:25).

²² Most dispensational frameworks follow this scheme known as pretribulationism. However, since Darby’s time additional options have been proposed among premillenarians, slightly altering the timing of the rapture with regard to the Tribulation. The most common are: midtribulationism (the rapture occurs during or in the middle of the Tribulation) and posttribulationism (the rapture occurs after the Tribulation).

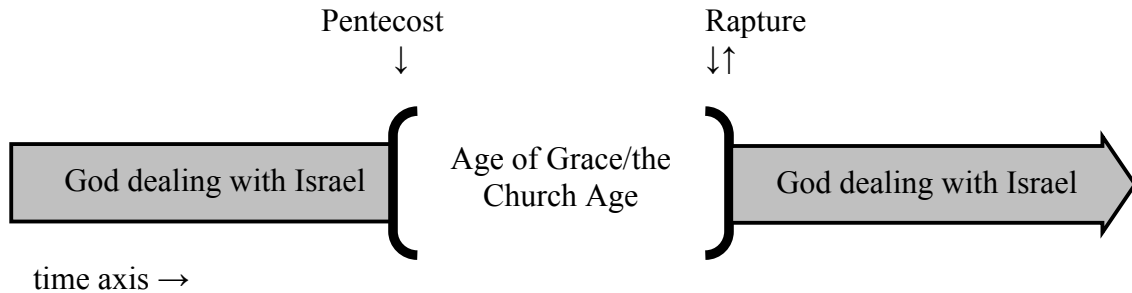


Figure 2. *The ‘Great parenthesis’ of classical dispensationalism.*

Classical dispensationalists argued that the parenthetical nature of the Age of Grace informed its prophetic *insignificance*: prophetic passages that had not yet received fulfillment belonged to a timeline where God was dealing directly with Israel. Such emphasis lies in their literal, “common sense” hermeneutic, which informed their rigid distinction between the Israel and the church. This basic – and eternally durative – binary division among the “people of God”²³ led many dispensationalists to promote the view that God had postponed the divine plan for Israel until the end of the Church Age, when God would bring Jews to their promised land for national renewal in the millennium. Drawing this distinction also allowed dispensationalists to reconsider the nature of various covenants between God and Israel as indicated in the Bible, which emerges as another critical theme of dispensational ideologies that I discuss in greater detail below.

Before treating the significance of the dispensational covenants and other teachings, I will address two additional developments in the late 19th and early 20th centuries: increased attention to the political dimensions of dispensationalisms (Section 2.4.1.1) and the appearance of a revised form (Section 2.4.2) that extended the influence of dispensational ideologies.

²³ Blaising refers to this aspect of classical dispensationalism as the “two people/two purposes theory” (Blaising 1994:151).

2.4.1.1 Political Outgrowth of Classical Dispensationalism

Dispensational doctrines, like other forms of Christian Zionism, are to a certain degree inherently political given their expectations that center around the primacy of Israel's *national* future.

However, Christian Zionists did not widely become active participants in achieving the political implications of their ideologies until the 19th century. Among U.S. dispensationalists, William E. Blackstone particularly encouraged the material outworking of dispensational ideologies. He authored the influential (1878) work *Jesus is Coming*, which further popularized Darby's teachings. Blackstone also published works on Zionism, participated in Jewish Zionist meetings and drafted two "Memorials" submitted to U.S. presidents that advocated immigration to Palestine as the solution for Jewish dispersion and persecution. Neither petition was immediately successful in terms of the requests each contained, but they did demonstrate the type and quality of political support for Zionist immigration on behalf of Protestant Christians in the U.S. who were motivated by eschatological beliefs (Ariel 2006:77). The second Memorial may have even influenced President Woodrow Wilson's support for the 1917 Balfour Declaration that asserted the right of the Jews to Palestine (Malachy 1978:139).

Blackstone left a political legacy that still influences current dispensational discourses. He uniquely articulated the important role of the U.S. in its relationship to Israel, effectively binding them together in terms of a common destiny in the will of God (Ariel 2006). The U.S. would act as a "modern Cyrus, to help restore the Jews to Zion" (Ariel 2006:77-78). Consequently, "[t]his theory enabled American evangelicals to combine their messianic belief and understanding of the course of human history with their sense of American patriotism" (Ariel 2006:78).²⁴ Blackstone was exceptional among dispensationalists because of his active

²⁴ The "Cyrus" theme is not exclusive to strictly dispensational contexts. Moshe Davis describes a conversation that included President Harry S. Truman – who announced recognition of the Israeli state "eleven minutes after the

participation in seeking to restore the Jews to their “God-given land.” He set a precedent for theologically-motivated political backing of Israel that would later resurface strongly.

2.4.2 Revised Dispensationalism: Dispensationalisms in Transition

Though dispensational doctrines as developed by Darby, Scofield, and Blackstone were widely influential among U.S. fundamentalists and evangelicals, many Christian scholars bitterly criticized their teachings. Classical dispensationalism did not lose prominence, but intra-Christian opposition led to the reworking of key elements from which revised dispensationalism emerged in the mid-20th century.

Transformations of the *Scofield Bible* illustrate the complexities of dispensationalisms during this time. A team of evangelical scholars undertook a drastic revision of Scofield’s notes in the 1967 revision of the work.²⁵ Modifications in dispensational teachings arose from disputes with Covenantal theologians (often amillennial) and non-dispensational premillennialists. Covenantalists raised issues in the locus of soteriology (things pertaining to salvation), whereas non-dispensational premillennialists largely focused on eschatological issues (Blaising 1994:156-157).²⁶ Dispensationalists began to rethink and rework the rigid and eternal distinction that Darby advocated in the “two purposes/two peoples theory” (Blaising 1994:156). In terms of soteriology, revised dispensationalists united the redemptive purposes of God and proposed “a common goal of eternal salvation” for both Israel and the church (Blaising 1994:156). However,

proclamation of Israel’s independence” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010) – when he referred to his role as that of Cyrus, “evoking the biblical imagery” (Davis 1981:83). After Truman was introduced as “the man who helped create the State of Israel,” he apparently replied “What do you mean ‘helped create?’ I am Cyrus, I am Cyrus” (Davis 1981:83).

²⁵ The term for this dispensational variety seems to have been inaugurated by Craig A. Blaising, “taking the title from the revision of the Scofield Bible in 1967” (Blaising 1994:156). Mangum and Sweetnam note that this type is also known as “essentialist dispensationalism” (Mangum and Sweetnam 2009:209).

²⁶ This is one reason that dispensational discourses in the 1930s-1950s are often marked by an apologetic of dispensational doctrines, on the one hand, and a polemic against opposing frameworks, on the other.

in order to maintain the distinct prophetic implications for Israel that were unique to dispensational ideologies, revised dispensationalists argued that God's single redemptive purpose still practically worked out differently for Israel and the church as two distinct peoples of God. Accordingly, the political implications of classical dispensationalism retained, especially the transformational geopolitics in Palestine for the establishing of a Jewish nation.

2.5 Systematization, Reputability, and Expansion: Dallas Theological Seminary

Prior to the 1920s, then, dispensational doctrines had not only emerged, they became heavily integrated into the fabric of U.S. fundamentalism and evangelicalism. Substantial work had been produced that laid the groundwork for a systematic approach to dispensationalism to be developed quite robustly. The "literal" hermeneutic of dispensationalisms received increasing credibility, in spite of attempts of higher criticism to bring into disrepute the doctrines of biblical inerrancy, inspiration, and infallibility. The acceptance and influence of this method was in part a response to the importance ascribed to local events transpiring in Palestine that seemed to validate dispensational schemes of history. Furthermore, the ascendancy of Bible schools increased substantially through the 1940's, and there was a growing trend in the U.S. Bible institute movement towards premillennialism (Cairns 1996:480). Premillennial theology – and particularly dispensationalism – was largely accepted as a means of biblical interpretation in the U.S., with the result that "on a popular level Bible institutes or related organizations" accounted for extensive amounts of literature which circulated that viewpoint (Walvoord 1949:41).

Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) in particular, founded in 1924²⁷ by Lewis Sperry Chafer²⁸ is an example of one of these institutions that contributed to the development and expansion of dispensational ideologies. DTS has held a longstanding reputation of being preeminently dispensational, and has produced several leading dispensational thinkers across dispensationalisms.²⁹ DTS acquired *Bibliotheca Sacra* in 1934,³⁰ making the journal a primary source for propagating and reworking dispensational teachings. Scholars devoted extensive attention to the subject of eschatology from the 1930s-1950s, which is evident even from a brief survey of the titles of articles produced in that time period (e.g., *What Israel Means to God* [1936], *Dispensationalism* [1936], *The Place of Israel in the Scheme of Redemption* [1941], and *Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel Still Future?* [1944], among many others).

Early *Bibliotheca Sacra* articles helped to solidify future expectations of an ethnic, national Israel, which gained reputability as dispensational doctrines became increasingly systematized. For example, in 1936 (then) editor Charles Lee Feinberg argued that the literal “miracle nation” of Israel would definitively enjoy a prominent position in God’s plan at a time yet future when they would again inherit Palestine (Feinberg 1936). Feinberg encouraged a view that God “*always* chooses” to use Israel when the extent of His dealings are national (Feinberg 1936:313, emphasis original). He proposed that God will once again “deal” on the level of nationality, making the future existence of a national Israeli entity in Palestine unavoidable. Moreover, Feinberg uniquely articulated this doctrine as well as the endurance of Israel in terms of God’s “need.” Chafer developed a principal of mutual dependency between God and Israel,

²⁷ Originally, the name for the institution was Evangelical Theological College. It was renamed Dallas Theological Seminary in 1936.

²⁸ C. I. Scofield had a profound impression on Lewis Sperry Chafer and the eschatological views he developed (Hannah 2006:61-62).

²⁹ In addition to Lewis Sperry Chafer, notable examples include Charles Lee Feinberg, John F. Walvoord, Charles C. Ryrie, J. Dwight Pentecost, J. Vernon McGee, David Jeremiah, Roy B. Zuck, Robert Saucy, Craig Blaising, and Darrell Bock.

³⁰ *Bibliotheca Sacra* has been in publication since 1843.

such that God has preserved Jewish identity despite centuries of dispersion and persecution in order to bring them into geopolitical prominence during the millennium. Israel's national existence thus came to be understood in terms of necessity.

Complementing and reinforcing national expectations concerning Israel, scholars at DTS began systematically developing and refining dispensational teachings, which, in turn, contributed to their extensive influence. DTS's founder, Lewis Sperry Chafer, defended "proper" dispensationalism in his lengthy (1936) article *Dispensationalism*. He upheld the classical dispensationalist position of distinguishing between Israel and the church in terms of nature and purpose, but Chafer grounded this duality in an economic view of history as well as the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. The latter of these aspects in particular permeated much of the dispensational scholarship that followed.

The biblical covenants³¹ that Chafer (1936) developed are central to understanding classical and revised dispensationalisms, as they are often the foundation for the belief in Israel's national restoration in order to achieve the final dispensation, the millennium. To better appreciate the function of the covenants in dispensationalisms, a cursory look at several texts produced in the 1940s at DTS by John Walvoord, in addition to J. Dwight Pentecost's landmark work *Things to Come* (1958), is helpful. Pentecost's work (the published version of his DTS dissertation) marked "the zenith of [classical] dispensational scholarship" (Sweetnam 2006:178), and much of it was informed by Walvoord's previous works and personal influence.

³¹ The emphasis on "covenant" is not unique to dispensationalisms, but the formulations of such covenants are. To avoid a point of potential confusion, the covenants in dispensationalisms are not the equivalent of those expressed in Covenantal Theology of the Reformed tradition, which is often amillennial in its eschatology. For an example of a revised dispensational treatment of the difference between these frameworks, see Zuck (1991:239-241). However, some of the principles that Zuck sees as normative within dispensationalism have been brought into question (see Bateman 1999 for a discussion of these). For an introduction to Covenant Theology as proposed from within the Reformed viewpoint, see Horton (2006).

Although scholars from DTS further systematized dispensational doctrines into a more coherent worldview, the 1940s-1960s were a transitional period for dispensational thought.³² However, while certain key doctrinal transformations took place during this period, the political implications of support for Israel still persisted. Ethnic, national Israel continued to feature prominently in both classical and revised dispensationalisms, and this is largely related to the understanding of the nature of various biblical covenants that God made with Israel. Both classical and revised dispensationalists developed a systematic framework for interpreting these covenants in a way that they saw as being harmonious with the whole of biblical teaching in addition to safeguarding the so-called plain sense of biblical texts. Most of these covenants between God and Israel were considered to still be in effect. However, quite significantly, their fulfillments were by and large deferred until a future period when God would make Israel into a nation again in order to accomplish His divine will toward Israel.

In the discussion that follows, I provide a terse description of the biblical covenants as expressed in classical and revised dispensationalisms. I also note the political implications of these covenants, and how they function to ground dispensational expectations of Israel's future.

2.5.1 Grounding National Expectations for Israel: The Abrahamic Covenant

Classical and revised dispensationalisms maintain that the first and foundational covenant, the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:7, 13, 19), establishes an everlasting and eternal promise of Israel's existence in/inheritance of Palestine (Walvoord 1945a:27-36;

³² Both external and internal forces gave rise to the reworking of soteriological and ecclesiological issues that many saw as problematic in classical dispensationalism (Blaising 1994). In particular, as mentioned above, the two peoples/two purposes theory became an "anthropological dualism" (Blaising 1994:157) that categorized Israel and the church united under a single redemptive purpose. The "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" were also treated in a more unified manner.

Pentecost 1978[1958]:93). The promises of the Abrahamic covenant thus depend upon two key considerations: 1) Israel's continuance as a nation, and 2) Israel's possession of the land of Palestine (Walvoord 1945a:32).³³

According to the classical and revised frameworks, the Abrahamic covenant entails three major promises: 1) "individual promises to Abraham," 2) "promises of the preservation of the nation," and 3) promises of "the possession of a land by that nation," Israel (Pentecost 1978 [1958]:93). Dispensationalists consider this covenant to have been given unconditionally, meaning that it can never be abrogated. The eternal and unconditional nature of this covenant, as interpreted under the rubric of the literal hermeneutic, led dispensationalists to conclude that ethnic, national Israel was in key focus since no literal fulfillment could be located within Israel's past. Although many dispensationalists considered the Jewish dispersion since the first century to be the result of disobedience to God, they declared that such circumstances were temporary, and that the nature of God's covenant relationship with Israel caused God to preserve a distinct Jewish identity across the centuries. This further informed the expectation that God would once again deal with the Jews on a national level. It is rather unsurprising, then, that dispensationalists gave so much prominence to the "inevitable" (Walvoord 1952d:303) establishment of the State of Israel, both before and after the event actually took place in 1948.

2.5.1.1 Political Implications of the Abrahamic Covenant in Dispensational Schemes

Before proceeding to the other covenants, the political implications of the Abrahamic covenant merit consideration. Specifically, Genesis 12:1-3 is the source of the principle of blessing and

³³ These themes feature prominently across texts in dispensational discourses, which, as I argue in Sections 3-4, inform the privileging of a specific Israeli/Jewish narrative that is retained in the cultural memory indexed by dispensational discourses.

cursing commonly invoked by dispensationalists: “I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse” (Genesis 12:3). Dispensationalists often maintain that the referent of “you” includes all the descendants of Abraham through Isaac (that is, ethnic Jews). Therefore, individuals and entire nations have incentive for positive treatment of the Jewish people as Abraham’s physical seed. Prior to 1948, this motivated supporting the Jews’ immigration and national restoration to Palestine. After Israel announced statehood, the concept of blessing has been taken to indicate various levels of political, economic, and ideological support (Spector 2009; Weber 2004). The prominence of dispensationalisms in the U.S. inevitably influenced U.S. support for the establishment of Israel in 1948, as well as its continued political, financial, and military backing since. Moreover, and again from a theological standpoint, the reconstitution of Israel as a political state, which was “dramatically fulfilled in May 1948,” was seen as being prophesied through the biblical covenants (Chafer and Walvoord 1974:308).

2.5.2 Enlarging the Provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant

Classical and revised dispensationalists emphasize the primacy of the Abrahamic covenant, seeing it as essential for the formulation and understanding of additional covenants between God and Israel: the Palestinian (/Land), Davidic, and New covenants.³⁴ In accordance with their literal hermeneutic, classical and revised dispensationalists reject any interpretation of these covenants that does not entail literal, ethnic Israel. Each of these is also defined as eternal and unconditional. Prior to 1948, the combination of these beliefs validated the anticipation of Jewish restoration to Palestine and motivated many to pursue means of enacting political support for a

³⁴ Another final covenant in the dispensational scheme is termed the Mosaic covenant, which pertains to the Law as given by God to Israel through Moses. Dispensationalists do not, however, view this covenant as eternal, which is why I do not include it in the discussion here.

Jewish state. After 1948, these beliefs justified the sustained support of the State of Israel. That is, according to the dispensationalist scheme of events in relation to or preparing for the end times, the restoration of Jews in Palestine was prophetically foretold so that God could bring the descendants of Abraham (the Jews) into the land that God granted to them as a possession forever. With this in mind, and because of their implications for the subject matter in this thesis, I will briefly treat the unique features and extensional elements that pertain to these covenants.

Dispensationalists maintain that the first of the post-Abrahamic covenants, the Palestinian covenant (Deuteronomy 28:1-30:20), extends the implications of the Abrahamic covenant. The Abrahamic covenant gave the nation Israel possession of the title of the land, while the Palestinian guaranteed the land's enjoyment by any subsequent generation (Walvoord 1945a:33-34; Pentecost 1978[1958]:96-97). This effectively means that God is (self-)obligated to bring about the dispensational scheme of future events, such as the Jews' possession of the land of Palestine and their conversion to belief in Jesus as their Messiah (Pentecost 1978[1958]:97). Such obligation informs dispensationalist's Israel-centric expectations of the future, which are imposed upon the temporal landscape extending from Israel's past to Israel's future. Moreover, the ultimate realization of the Palestinian covenant is considered to be imminent in light of the establishment of the state of Israel, which dispensationalists often invoke as partial fulfillment that has provided fertile ground for the unfolding of other prophetic events.

In addition to guaranteeing Israel's continuance as a national, ethnic entity and Israel's future possession of Palestine by divine grant in perpetuity, the dispensational formulations of the Davidic and New covenants further elaborate the nature of these features. The Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17) unites Israel under the common rule of Jesus as Messiah King, who reigns on earth during the millennium as David's "seed" (Walvoord 1945b). This

covenant also entails “earthly, territorial, and national blessings” for Israel (Walvoord 1945b:165). Israel as a distinct entity must be “preserved as a nation” throughout diaspora as well as come to “have a national existence, and be brought back into the land of her inheritance” (Pentecost 1978 [1958]:114). This prepares the geopolitical arena for Christ’s return, after which Christ will begin His rule from the actual city of Jerusalem, the capital of the nation of Israel.

The last of the covenants is the New covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34), which prescribes spiritual restoration of Israel as a complement of national restoration.³⁵ Related to the characterization of the present dispensation as a “great parenthesis” interrupting God’s dealing with Israel, dispensationalists maintain that this period is also marked by a temporary trend of the Jews rejecting Jesus Messiah. Early classical dispensationalists envisioned the two senses of Israel’s “restoration” as relatively concomitant events. In the early 1940s, however, spiritual restoration was pushed into the more distant future (though still imminent). The influx of Jews to Palestine during this time was proof that God continued to esteem His covenants and validation for Israel’s national existence.

However, the majority of dispensationalists in the mid-20th century did not see this immigration as the “final restoration” of Jews to Palestine, though it was perceived as essential to it. Instead, the increase of Jewish immigration came to be viewed as an incomplete realization of the territorial/national predictions of the biblical covenants, which prepared for consummation of the New covenant. This interpretation spread after Israel attained statehood and the secular nature of Jewish Zionism became apparent to dispensationalists. Since the establishment of the Israeli state was not primarily characterized by religious motivations, this made future (and

³⁵ Classical and revised dispensationalisms differ slightly with regard to the soteriological implications of this passage for Israel, as the revised variety emphasizes a more unified plan of salvation for Israel and the church (Blaising 1994). Notwithstanding, they are still both in agreement that this passage necessitates a future time in which ethnic, national Israel will again feature prominently in God’s redemptive plan.

comprehensive) realization of covenant promises more palpable. The content of the New covenant, then, builds upon the nationalist implications of previous covenants and underlies the belief that is prevalent in dispensationalisms that there will be a mass (if not universal) conversion of Jewish people in the end of days to belief in Jesus Christ as the Jewish Messiah.

2.5.3 Classical and Revised Dispensationalisms through the Mid-20th Century

In summary, although the 1940s-1950s were a transitional period in dispensational thought, classical dispensationalism was never fully displaced.³⁶ The nascent forms of revised dispensationalism were emerging, but this variety still emphasized a fairly strong distinction between Israel and the church. Revised dispensationalism newly expressed this Manichean framework in terms of a more unified plan of redemption and salvation, but the material implications of God's covenant relationship with Israel were still articulated in national and geopolitical terms. The systematic exegesis of Bible passages enabled dispensationalists to articulate their doctrines in a way that presented dispensational teaching as harmonious with the entirety of the Bible, despite their emphasis on discontinuity.

Scholars either at or associated with Dallas Theological Seminary developed and articulated dispensational doctrines as internally consistent, complex theological and historical frameworks. Early classic dispensationalism associated with Darby suffered from having been characterized as disjointed and confused (Sandeem 1970:31; Patterson and Walker 2001:101), but dispensational texts such as the *Scofield Bible* and Pentecost's *Things to Come* exhibited a more harmonious treatment of prophetic themes backed by extensive biblical references. Classical dispensationalism's predecessor declined because its proponents "fail[ed ...] to produce a

³⁶ Again the *Scofield Bible* exemplifies the durative nature of both classical and revised dispensationalism, as both the 1917 and 1967 revisions remain in print today.

method of prophetic exegesis that could win widespread support” (Sandeen 1970:39-40). The same weakness could not be said of dispensationalisms across the Atlantic, especially in the mid-20th century. DTS faculty such as Lewis Sperry Chafer and John Walvoord developed dispensationalisms into systematic paradigms supported by a precise and refined hermeneutic. Under their interpretational methodology, then, the doctrines that dispensationalists proposed could be argued to both cohere to and also preserve a biblical worldview.

Moreover, the literal hermeneutic that underlie their interpretation of the covenants provided momentum for further mobilizing dispensationalisms in two ways. First, dispensationalists utilized the populism of fundamentalism and evangelicalism by equating literal interpretation with the “plain” sense of Scripture. Average laypersons were empowered to interpret the Bible for themselves, especially when aided by accessible tools like the *Scotfield Reference Bible*. The extensive scholarship at DTS additionally contributed to an environment where dispensational doctrines and hermeneutic methods became increasingly palatable in academic circles. Though popular and academic articulations of dispensationalisms were not always in strict agreement, active presence in both domains extended the influence of dispensational teachings to a broader audience. Second, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 essentially collaborated with the history that dispensationalists proposed.

Systematizing the biblical covenants played an important role in normalizing dispensational doctrines because they generated a strong rationale for the inevitability of a future dealing with ethnic, national Israel. As Pentecost noted with regard to the earthly millennium, “the kingdom on earth is viewed as the complete fulfillment of those covenants, and [...] the millennial age is instituted out of necessity in order to fulfill the covenants” (Pentecost 1978 [1958]:476). For these reasons, in dispensational discourses the land of Palestine is often viewed

as a “key” to the problems faced by Jews since they *must* occupy Palestine in order to enjoy the fullness of covenant promises. Much of the force behind dispensational theology is the “endeavor to study the Israelite from the viewpoint of *his land*, Palestine” (Kreller 1948a:88) in order to demonstrate that Jews and Judaism – and therefore Israel – have a historical *and* future relationship to Palestine by divine, covenantal granting.

2.6 Sensationalism and Emerging Influence in the Political Sphere

Asymmetric privileging of Israel in dispensational discourses brought with it strong political implications for both the Israel-Palestine conflict as well as global and Middle East politics more generally. Nevertheless, the first half of the 20th century in the United States was not typically marked by explicit political involvement by dispensationalists, especially when compared to the decades since that time. From the 1960s onward, however, dispensationalists (and other types of Christian Zionists) tended to increase in direct political activity in issues relating to Israel.

Part of the initial political distancing may have stemmed from the disenchantment that many dispensationalists and Christian Zionists felt toward the secular nature of Jewish Zionism and the Israeli government. After all, dispensationalists awaited both the immigration of Jews to Palestine *en masse* during the end of days and the conversion of Jews to Christianity because of the soteriological implications of the New Covenant. Still, this ultimately did little to slow the momentum that dispensational doctrines had gained in the U.S., as the regathering of Jews to Palestine was deemed too miraculous to not hold prophetic significance. Moreover, subsequent military “successes” in the 1950s and 1960s for Israel validated this sentiment because they were seen as evidence that the young state was under divine protection, especially when conflict resulted in an increase of Israeli territory. Various dispensationalists dealt differently with the

theological consequences of secular Zionism, but, in general, the predicted spiritual restoration was thrust into the future while the 1948 declaration of statehood was commemorated as a crucial and necessary event that definitively demarcated a new phase in human history.

In what follows, I discuss several factors that contributed to increased political activity among dispensationalists after the 1960s. First, I note two wars that served as an impetus for political involvement, which also led to reintegrating the significance of current events. Second, dispensational doctrines were becoming more and more prevalent within the fundamentalist and evangelical movements. This popularity corresponded to the stages immediately prior in the 1970s-1980s, when prominent figures in these movements gained political strength in the U.S. and dispensational teachings became sensationalized. Third, dispensationalists also began paying greater attention to the specifics of Israeli and Middle East politics and wars rather than sweeping, generic outcomes. Fourth, dispensationalists began to articulate the importance of unwavering support for Israel as critical to the prosperity of the U.S.

2.6.1 Wars as Impetus for Political Involvement

The Suez Crisis in 1956 and the Six-Day War of 1967 are two prominent examples that illustrate the initial shifts toward direct political involvement. After Israel's preemptive attack against Egypt in 1956, planned together with Britain and France, the U.S. condemned Israel's actions by "threatening to suspend all aid to Israel" (Weber 2004:176). Many dispensationalists criticized such reactions against Israel and argued that, according to the political implications of the Abrahamic covenant, the U.S. would be in danger of collapse if a pro-Israel stance was not taken. Looking at the demise of certain political actors across history, dispensationalists proposed that nations generally prospered or suffered in relation to their positive or negative

treatment of the Jews. Divine retribution is the ultimate outcome of those who go against Israel and the Jews, for in the Abrahamic covenant God promised to Abraham's physical descendants, "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse" (Genesis 12:3). Based on this instrumental interpretation, dispensationalists advocated U.S. support for Israel in order to preserve the political status that the U.S. held internationally.³⁷

Although the existence of an Israeli state was essential to prophecy, dispensationalists were often dismayed at the territorial borders Israel obtained in 1948. Such disappointment stemmed from the observation that Israel's borders did not equal the territory allotted by God in biblical passages. In order for the covenantal promises to be fully realized, Israel needed to possess the entirety of the land from the Nile to the Euphrates (see Genesis 15:18). As a result, territorial increases were frequently interpreted as forward direction along the prophetic timeline, and the initial expansion from the Suez Crisis was one example. Additionally problematic for dispensationalists was the fact that after 1948 Israel did not control all of Jerusalem. Once the Jews obtained complete jurisdiction over Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount could potentially be razed in order to prepare the grounds for the rebuilding of a third Jewish Temple. Jerusalem, however, remained partitioned, and dispensationalists speculated whether or not the presence of Arab Gentiles in the city prevented the "times of the Gentiles" (see Luke 21:24) from being completed.

However, for dispensationalists the second "miracle" of Israel's victory against Arab armies in the June 1967 Six-Day war both validated the divine purposes for Israel and renewed expectations for the imminence of end-times events. Dispensationalists maintained (as some still do) that God fought on Israel's behalf for the capture of Jerusalem, similar to the manner in

³⁷ The politicization of "blessing" and "cursing" still plays a significant role in modern dispensational discourses. Among the texts analyzed in this thesis, these themes are particularly prominent in the texts associated with John Hagee.

which God had done during Old Testament times. This, of course, was unsurprising to dispensationalists who expected God deal again with Israel after the close of the church age. Additionally, some equated opposing Israel (either politically, militarily, or ideologically) as direct opposition to God. Not all held such an extreme view, but few denied the prophetic import that an Israeli controlled Jerusalem held. John F. Walvoord, then in the middle of his presidency at Dallas Theological Seminary, declared the capture of Jerusalem in 1967 to be “one of the most remarkable fulfillments of biblical prophecy since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70” (Walvoord 1967:22, as quoted in Weber 2004:184). The 1967 War brought reassurance for dispensationalists that current events in Israel and the Middle East were prime indicators that the end was near. After the war, there were more U.S. evangelical supporters of building a Third Temple in Jerusalem than Jews in Israel (Goldman 2009:294).

2.6.2 Making the Future Present Again: Bible Prophecy and Current Events

Interestingly, during this period dispensationalisms integrated certain themes from prior millennial views that did not feature as prominently in early dispensationalisms up through the 1940s. Apart from supporting Jewish immigration to Palestine, dispensationalists (and other premillennialists) were at times characterized as apolitical as a result of their supposed pessimism. In the 1960s and beyond, however, dispensationalists encouraged degrees of political support for Israel rather than distancing themselves from the political realm.

Classical dispensationalism had originally distinguished itself from historic premillennialism by rejecting the historicist’s penchant for assigning prophetic significance to current events. Nevertheless, after the Suez Crisis and the Six-Day War, dispensationalists have taken current events to be either highly significant in terms of prophecy or at least signposts that

indicated the end-times were drawing near. The 1960s witnessed a growing trend in the U.S. of filtering the significance of Middle East politics through prophetic passages (Kidd 2009:17). Israel's victory against the Arab armies and conquest of Jerusalem were key events that enabled such interpretation to be a more durative theme in later dispensational discourses. Consequently, though many prophecies (e.g., covenantal promises) awaited future fulfillment, dispensationalists gradually interpreted the Bible more in terms of contemporary international politics. When popular forms of dispensationalisms began to be mass-marketed in the U.S. soon after the Six-Day war, dispensationalists supplied biblical evidence for what they considered to be predicted current events to transpire before the end of the world. Using Hal Lindsey's *There's a New World Coming* as one example, these occurrences included: Russia ultimately invading Israel, a coalition of Arab armies/nations seeking Israel's annihilation, the rise of Communism, nuclear warfare, and the creation of a league of 10 nations in Europe (Lindsey 1973; Hartley 1974).

2.6.3 Sensationalizing Dispensationalisms for Mass Consumption

Still, it was an earlier work by Hal Lindsey that truly propelled dispensationalisms into the public sphere: *The Late Great Planet Earth*. This book extended dispensational ideologies into secular and religious domains, eventually becoming the best-selling nonfiction novel of the 1970s.

Lindsey had attended a dispensationally-oriented church and received theological training at Dallas Theological Seminary under teachers like John F. Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, and Dwight Pentecost (Weber 2004:188). In 1968 he delivered a series of lectures on end-times prophecy at the University of California Los Angeles where he served in the college ministry Campus Crusade for Christ, which supplied the content for his influential book (Weber 2004:189).

Lindsey viewed the 1948 establishment of the State of Israel, the conquering of Jerusalem in 1967, the rise of Russia and China as superpowers, and an Arab confederation opposing Israel as among the key pieces of a prophetic puzzle that was rapidly materializing in the 20th century (Clouse 2008:267-268). Lindsey only revisited salient dispensational themes, but the sociopolitical climate he wrote in was much more receptive to the prophetic timeline he proposed (Weber 2004:189), and this paired well with his ability to articulate complicated eschatological schemes in more of an everyday, accessible language. Lindsey no longer just convinced people that prophetic events were looming in the near future. He conveniently packaged the same events that dispensationalists had been proclaiming for decades, and successfully communicated dispensational eschatology in a manner that was easily consumed by college youth, linking prophecy to both current political and social events. However, by locating some in the near past, Lindsey persuaded his audience that the dispensational timeline had definitively begun.

The year 1970 thus marked an exceptional time when “the sensationalizing of dispensationalism began” (Sweetnam 2006:180), initiated by *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Lindsey’s extravagant, “radical” variety has been criticized as “a dramatic mutation of dispensationalism” (Sweetnam 2006:192) and is not currently mainstream among dispensational scholars in academia.³⁸ However, dispensationalisms extend well beyond academic institutions, and popular culture (including sensationalist texts) is a significant vehicle for mobilizing dispensational ideologies. After the release of *The Late Great Planet Earth*, popular works with dispensational themes emerged at a rising rate. This included fiction and nonfiction books, but

³⁸ I agree with Sweetnam’s claim that Lindsey’s dispensational teachings are in some ways a “mutation” of dispensationalism. However, this is rather unsurprising given the amount of transformations that dispensationalisms have undergone since their emergence in the 19th century, some of which have been treated above. This is yet another reason why I intentionally problematize the use of “dispensationalism” in reference to a supposedly singular framework. Lindsey’s teachings cannot be representative of the complexity among dispensational varieties, but at the same time his ability to popularize and commodify such ideologies was unparalleled at the time. His early works have seemingly left an indelible imprint on dispensational discourses and his influence is difficult to overstate.

also movies such as the popular four-part *A Thief in the Night Series* that began in 1972, as well as increased radio and television broadcasts with dispensational motifs. In 1979 Lindsey's book was even turned into a documentary-style film narrated by Orson Welles. Whether they are ultimately considered mainstream or not, sensationalized varieties have not only become a prominent feature in many dispensationalist discourses, they also inform a common tendency to view current events in light of biblical prophecy, diligently watching for the signs of the times "[w]ith the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other" (Weber 2004:9).³⁹

Lindsey's ideologies also influenced expressions of dispensationalisms through the modified philosophy of history demonstrated in his works. "Lindsey pushed Darby's chronologies into the present" (Hale 2011:249), and this has left a legacy in dispensational

³⁹ Al Hartley's (1974) graphical representation of Lindsey's *There's a New World Coming* celebrates the intimate relationship between Bible predictions and current events. The comic centers on the experience of three teenagers who, after one of them opened up the book of Revelation, are transported to the near future where they are able to see the events of the Apocalypse actually taking place. Regardless of how marginal some of Lindsey's interpretations are (e.g., that John described modern helicopters as locusts), his texts still exhibit major tenets that are more mainstream, or at least quite common. The first two "signs that herald the return of Jesus to the earth!" are "the return of the dispersed Jews to Israel!" and "the Jews' recapture of Jerusalem" (Hartley 1974:6-7; Lindsey 1970). Additional "signs" that are still somewhat current in dispensational discourses include: "the rise of Russia as a world power and enemy of Israel," "the Arab confederation against Israel," "Red China's ability to field an army of 200 million soldiers," and "the revival of the Roman empire in the form of a ten-nation confederacy" (Hartley 1974:6). At the close of the comic, one of the characters states, "Well, we've read the book of Revelation --- --- and here are today's headlines ---" (Hartley 1974:31). In this final frame this character is holding a partially visible newspaper with "crime" and "war" as boldly emphasized headlines, and another character stands behind him with a look of awe on his face. The main female character is visually foregrounded, her eyes wide open as she exclaims, "It all fits together perfectly!!!" (Hartley 1974:31). Lindsey still speaks at prophecy conferences, maintains his own website (www.hallindsey.com) with news updates laced with ascribed prophetic significance, and continues to author books.

Moreover, sensationalist texts also serve as stimuli for evangelism. In some ways this may have been the underlying motive of *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Weber 2004:188), which concludes with evangelistic sentiments. In 2003 LifeWay Christian Resources released a web-based evangelistic tool called *Share Eternity with Someone Today* centered on a popular set of dispensational fiction novels, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins' *Left Behind Series*. *Share Eternity with Someone Today* aimed at equipping Christian readership to use the novels as a basis for evangelism with tips ranging from how to bring up conversations about the novels to buying extra copies so that they can be intentionally left for nonbelievers to find. The same year, LaHaye and Jenkins along with Norman B. Rohrer released *These Will Not Be Left Behind: Incredible Stories of Lives Transformed after Reading the Left Behind Novels*, which included narratives from people who found faith in Christ as a result of the apocalyptic series. In Calvary Chapel churches, the *Left Behind* movies have been shown at evangelistic outreaches, with an invitation to believe in Christ immediately following the screening, matching the template utilized in Hartley (1974): convince people that the Bible predetermined today's current events then persuade them to accept Christianity so that they will not suffer the wrath to come. The element of evangelism is important to consider because, if dispensationalisms form a basis for belief and conversion, dispensational ideologies may for some be a core component of Christian identity.

discourses, affecting the manner in which mental models are formed and cultural memory takes place. Bible prophecy, it was argued, was transpiring through current events at unprecedented rates. Much of prophecy still awaited future fulfillment, but pastors, Bible teachers, and many other Christians in the U.S. soon began “recognizing” political events and actors in the text of the Bible. In the historical and sociopolitical context in which Lindsey’s book was published, his influence extended not only throughout the U.S., but surprisingly in Israel, as well. As I discuss later, the decades following the 1967 War gave rise to an unprecedented (and unexpected) alliance between the Christian Right in the U.S. and the Israeli Right. Part of this may have stemmed from Lindsey’s book having been translated into Hebrew and read by Israeli leaders. In particular, former Israeli Prime Ministers David Ben-Gurion and Menachim Begin both expressed lively interest for *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Goldman 2009:293)⁴⁰.

2.6.4 Dispensationalisms Go Counterculture: The Jesus Movement and Calvary Chapel

The success of Lindsey’s book was also propelled by an increase of fundamentalism and evangelicalism in the U.S. beginning in the 1970s. *The Late Great Planet Earth* was widely read was throughout a fundamentalist counterculture revival known as the Jesus Movement (Richardson and Davis 1983). The movement was a largely youth-driven Protestant revival of sorts, which emerged during the late 1960s in several places on the U.S. West Coast before attracting national attention. Many organizations that developed from this grassroots movement adopted dispensational ideologies, which was partly due to the influence of *The Late Great*

⁴⁰ Stephen Spector notes that “when [Ben-Gurion] died in 1973,” a copy of “*The Late Great Planet Earth* was on his reading table” (Spector 2009:146).

Planet Earth during this time.⁴¹ Among the defining characteristics of the movement was a vibrant apocalypticism (Ellwood 1973; Balmer 2002:303). Though the movement was not unified under a single leader, Chuck Smith was one of the principal figures. He eventually founded Calvary Chapel, an organization of semiautonomous, non-denominational churches. Calvary Chapel stood at the center of the Jesus Movement (Balmer and Winner 2002:76), and it has experienced sustained growth since.⁴² It has remained markedly dispensational since its inception, and, because of a missional emphasis, is one source for globalizing dispensational ideologies. Moreover, Calvary Chapel holds particular relevance for this thesis in that one of institutional producers of texts I analyze in Section 3 is For Zion's Sake Ministries, which has formal affiliation with the Calvary Chapel church that Chuck Smith pastors.

Doctrinally, Calvary Chapel churches are united by a set of “distinctives” that includes dispensationalism. The chronology and principles that Lindsey set forth in *The Late Great Planet Earth* appear to have informed the views adopted by Chuck Smith, which were integrated into the larger Calvary Chapel movement. For example, both Lindsey and Chuck Smith teach that the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is prophetically significant for ushering in subsequent end-times events. Early articulations of this event's importance stemmed from their interpretation of the phrase “this generation” as used by Christ in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) as a key to determining the rapture of the Church:

Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; so, you too, when you see all these

⁴¹ Al Hartley's comic version of Lindsey's book even includes a cultural reference to one of the prominent musical figures of the Jesus Movement, Larry Norman, who is seen singing a line from one of his songs about the rapture (Hartley 1974:4). Popular music was an important social and cultural element of the Jesus Movement, and it often reflected the dispensationally-oriented apocalyptic sentiments that were gaining more and more prevalence at the time.

⁴² As of April 2011, the Calvary Chapel website (www.calvarychapel.com) lists over 600 domestic and more than 300 international “fellowships,” or churches. This number does not include many churches and church organizations that are either associated with the Calvary Chapel movement or groups that are applying for fellowship status.

things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, *this generation* will not pass away until all these things take place. (Matthew 24:32-34, emphasis added).

Lindsey proposed that the “fig tree” symbolized the nation Israel, which became “tender and put forth its leaves” in 1948. He then argued that the phrase “this generation” referred to the people alive when Israel announced statehood. Lindsey calculated that a “generation” equated roughly forty years; thus, the latest time Jesus would return to rapture the church would be 1988. This inaugurated discussion of the “terminal generation” – the final generation before the rapture, the Great Tribulation, the Battle of Armageddon, and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Chuck Smith repeated similar argumentation when he maintained that Jesus could return “anytime before 1981” (Smith 1978:35).⁴³ Though he and Lindsey both typically refrain from date-setting, the notion that Jesus would rapture the church in or around the 1980s was quite prevalent in Jesus Movement and served as a major impetus for evangelization and conversion. Lindsey had firmly established that moral demise and other social conditions in the U.S. along with global politics were predicted in the Bible and indicators that the end-times must be imminent. This mentality spread into the Jesus Movement, generally, but also the Calvary Chapel movement more specifically, whose influence is still strong almost three decades after the Jesus Movement winded down. Talk of the “terminal generation” continues to be prominent among Calvary Chapel pastors, though the understanding of “this generation” has expanded and is now commonly said to still hold in the present day. The strict dispensational “distinctive” of the Calvary Chapel movement has also led associated individuals and groups to become involved in supporting Israel through economically and politically in diverse ways.⁴⁴ One prominent

⁴³ Again illustrating the significance of the 1967 War, Smith allowed that the generation that saw the occupation of Jerusalem in that year could also be the terminal generation (Smith 1978:36).

⁴⁴ Chuck Smith and his church have provided funding aimed at preparing for the rebuilding of a third Jewish temple in Jerusalem (Weber 2004:259; Spector 2009:115). In April 2004, I attended a two-week tour of Israel with a Calvary Chapel church from the U.S. During our stay in Jerusalem, we visited what was called the Temple Mount

example is For Zion's Sake Ministries (FZSM) led by Bradley Antlovich who has ties to Smith's church in Costa Mesa. Originally an extension of a Calvary Chapel in Jerusalem, FZSM supports *aliyah* (Jewish immigration to Israel) of Russian Jews (Spector 2009:115). FZSM regularly produces "news and digest on Israel and Middle East affairs," which are disseminated through their website (forzion.com) as well as through email "news updates." Some of these news updates are among the corpus of texts that I analyze in Section 3.

2.6.5 Converging Political "Rights": The Israeli Right and the U.S. Christian Right

Shortly after dispensational doctrines expanded through mass marketing and the media, and after the popularity of the Jesus Movement started to wane, fundamentalists and evangelicals featured prominently in U.S. politics. Many of their goals related tangentially (if at all) to eschatological doctrines, but the emergence of the New Christian Right in the 1980s also brought with it strong advocacy for a U.S.-backed Israeli state that took new forms. The Jesus Movement, influenced by the sweeping popularity of Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, "helped lay the groundwork for fundamentalists' return to politics in the eighties" (Hale 2011:249). Soon after Lindsey's book reached Israel, key Israeli politicians began courting U.S. fundamentalist and evangelical leaders who advocated dispensationalisms, and this set off the initial steps toward forging a durative – though complex – relationship between the Israeli Right and the U.S. Christian Right in the 1980s (Goldman 2009). These relationships produced much more than financial backing;⁴⁵ they resulted in a strong U.S. Christian contingency whose leaders exerted

Institute, an organization that purposes to prepare materials necessary for the reinstatement of the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices (should the third temple ever be built). I recall the pastor sharing examples of how individuals and groups from various Calvary Chapels had provided financial support for this and similar institutions, as well as the general excitement among those present with regard to the prophetic significance of the organization's work.

⁴⁵ For example, of archeological projects such as X-raying the Temple Mount in order to determine what the precise location of the Jewish Temple was, which Chuck Smith had helped support (Spector 2009:115).

large amounts of political influence in order to work toward achieving a consistent and resolutely U.S.-backed Israeli state. Even the preeminent Israeli lobby group the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) began transforming its agenda to accommodate the political right in the U.S. when the New Christian Right was emerging quite powerfully (Weber 2004:221).

The Israeli government first “played its fundamentalist card” (Boyer 1992:204) by sending Yona Malachy of the Department of Religious Affairs to the U.S. just two months after the Six-Day war (Spector 2009:145). His mission was to explore the possibility of developing fundamentalist allies for Israel in the U.S. (Weber 2004:221). Malachy was successful in encouraging “tangible” expressions of Israeli support, such as a pro-Israel proclamation authored by faculty at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (Spector 2009:145; Weber 2004:221). However, the fruit of his work in the U.S. became more evident in the early 1980s, a few years after a portion of his work was published posthumously. Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church and founder of the conservative Christian lobby group Moral Majority, was one of the first dispensationalists to develop a direct relationship with members of the Israeli government. Falwell entered into the political arena largely because of the significance of the Six-Day War (Halsell 1986:72-73), and maintained a strong pro-Israel stance ever since. Israeli Prime Ministers Menachem Begin and Benjamin Netanyahu, both from the far right Likud party that Begin founded, each developed relationships with Falwell, inviting him to tour the Holy Land, consulting with him on political issues, and encouraging him to be ready to mobilize Christian support for Israel. Begin even presented Falwell with the Vladimir Ze’ev Jabotinsky⁴⁶ Award for Zionist excellence in 1980 (Goldman 2009:295).⁴⁷ Members of the Likud party had a clear

⁴⁶ Jabotinsky was a Zionist leader who believed that the Jews had a divine mandate to occupy Israel, a belief that neatly corresponded with dispensational ideologies.

⁴⁷ Fundamentalist and Christian Zionist Pat Robertson also received this award from Ariel Sharon in 2001 (Spector 2009:153).

political motive for reaching out to dispensationalists and other U.S. Christian Zionists, partly because the “maximalist territorial policies [of the Israeli far Right] complemented the theological aspirations” (Shindler 2000:155) of many in the U.S. Christian Right.

2.6.6 Organizing Grassroots Support for Israel

Pastor John Hagee of Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, also began to work intimately with Jewish and Israeli leaders, especially Benjamin Netanyahu. When Israel launched a preemptive strike against Iraq in 1981 to disable their almost completed Osirak nuclear reactor, both Falwell and Hagee became outspoken supporters of the strike, despite U.S. and international criticism. Additionally, both Falwell and Hagee strongly emphasized the need for the U.S. to support Israel for its own self-preservation. As mentioned above, dispensationalist William E. Blackstone articulated a similar argument almost a century earlier. However, Falwell and Hagee successfully mobilized their constituents to produce material support for Israel and the Jewish people. Following the criticism that Israel drew from the U.S. and the international community from its airstrike in Iraq, Hagee worked with local Orthodox Rabbi Arnold Sheinberg to launch the first Night to Honor Israel, an event created to defend and celebrate Israel. Hagee’s dispensational understanding of the importance ascribed to Israel in God’s divine plan as well as his application of the blessing and cursing of the Abrahamic covenant informed his decision to host such events. During the first Night to Honor Israel, Hagee defended Israel’s military actions and preached that support for Israel was a biblical obligation to Christians. Afterward, he presented a “four-foot cardboard \$10,000 check” as an “offering” to the president of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem (Hagee 1999:13-15). Hagee still holds the event annually, and equips churches across the U.S. to do the same. Since its inception in 1981, John Hagee has helped

raise over \$73 million for Israeli and Jewish organizations (Jewish Herald-Voice, 2010). The 2010 event alone resulted in over \$8 million raised.

In 2006, John Hagee collaborated with over 400 evangelical leaders to launch a national grassroots movement to support Israel: Christians United for Israel (CUFI), the “Christian AIPAC” (Chaim 2006). CUFI’s website boasts that it is currently “the largest pro-Israel organization in the United States” (CUFI, 2011a). CUFI holds thousands of annual pro-Israel events both in the U.S. and Israel. Its leaders encourage members to participate in these events to express solidarity with and support for Israel, and they also encourage members to actively pursue political domains where their voice can be heard. This includes email and letter campaigns to elected officials as well as their annual “Washington Summit” where pro-Israel politicians and Christians are invited to speak on issues related to Israel and the Middle East (so long as their agenda accords with the religio-political agenda of dispensationalisms and/or Christian Zionism). After the summit, participants rally to lobby Congress in support of Israel.⁴⁸

CUFI has developed several other important initiatives aimed at broadening its impact, including hosting a Night to Honor Israel in Jerusalem, CUFI on Campus, and CUFI Kids. Last year CUFI held their second annual “Jerusalem Summit” with about 1,000 members in attendance in addition to Israeli government and military officials. During this event, Pastor Hagee presented to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (who also delivered an address thanking CUFI for its steady support) a 238-foot scroll with more than 200,000 signatures from Christians in the U.S. that have signed a pledge to support Israel. Netanyahu and Hagee both reiterated the importance of a U.S.-backed and Christian-backed Israel, and Hagee presented a short video

⁴⁸ The 2011 list of speakers for the Washington Summit includes Pastor Hagee and Prime Minister Netanyahu (via satellite), as well as conservative television host Glenn Beck, U.S. permanent Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton, conservative syndicated radio host Dennis Prager, and Israel’s Ambassador to the U.S., Michael Oren (CUFI, 2011d).

presentation illustrating how John Hagee Ministries has generated \$58 million in support for various Israeli organizations since 2001, some of which included funding for Israeli settlements in occupied territory (Blumenthal 2010). CUFI on Campus is a college program whose chapters seek to promote Israel and counter anti-Semitism at universities in the U.S. by training student activists. Since 2009 the organization has funded certain members to be part of a two week tour of, or “advocacy mission” to, Israel. CUFI Kids was launched in late 2006 with the goal of “teach[ing] the future generation the importance of loving Israel” (CUFI 2011e). Children participate in various exercises and games with pro-Israel themes, watch puppet shows instructing them how to bless Israel, and are even invited to attend the “educational” Camp CUFI during the Washington Summit. CUFI even holds a kid-targeted Night to Honor Israel, Jr.

The type of politically oriented support that dispensational leaders such as Falwell and Hagee generate is not isolated or marginal. Since the emergence of dispensationalists as prominent religio-political figures, multiple pro-Israel organizations – including several with underlying dispensational ideologies – have been established: Christians Concerned for Israel, Christians for Israel, the National Unity Coalition for Israel, Bridges for Peace, the Christian Friends of Israeli Communities, the International Fellowship for Christians and Jews, and the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (Weber 2004:222-243). The activities of these organizations range from putting on conferences, to humanitarian efforts and food banks, to financially supporting Jewish immigration to Israel and the building of Israeli settlements.

Also beginning in the 1980s, the Israeli Right began working with dispensational and other Christian Zionist leaders in the U.S. to establish a consistent flow of tourism for the economic benefit of Israel (Shindler 2000; Weber 2004). This strategy has been referred to as “tour bus diplomacy” (Weber 2004:214). While Israeli leaders such as the first Prime Minister of

Israel, David Ben-Gurion, had been inviting fundamentalist and evangelical guests to visit the Holy Land as early as the 1950s, tour bus diplomacy became a major strategic investment during the Carter and Reagan administrations. During the 1980s, “hundreds of evangelical pastors received free trips to the Holy Land” funded by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism (Weber 2004:14). This included notable fundamentalists like Falwell and Pat Robertson, but individuals like Chuck Smith and John Hagee were also influenced by strategically guided tours around this time, an influence they extended through their organizations. Smith and other Calvary Chapel pastors offer guided tours to Israel on a regular basis, which exhibit a similar patterning in terms of places visited. Timothy P. Weber remarks on this “calculated” nature of the tours developed by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, with schedules derived from a predetermined “modus operandi”:

Tourists were to fly on the Israeli airline El Al, employ tour guides licensed by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism (required by government regulation after 1981), and use only Israeli ground transportation companies. (Weber 2004:214)

This setup established a mechanism that generated consistent economic resources for the Israeli state, an industry which is still strong today. Among dispensationalist and other Christian Zionist groups, Holy Land tours are offered perennially, and in ways that typically disprivilege the Palestinian population. Although significant to biblical scholarship, Bethlehem and Gaza are avoided because they are deemed too dangerous. The tours are commonly structured such that contact with actual Palestinians is minimized or avoided altogether.

2.6.7 Dispensationalisms in the Political Arena

In sum, as dispensationalisms interacted with competing theological frameworks and reacted to the post-1948 political climate, the resultant transformations brought dispensational ideologies into the public sphere and the political arena. Doctrinally and ideologically, this gave rise to an

increasing trend toward ascribing prophetic significance to current events, even though early classical dispensationalism had urged “prophetic caution” (Sweetnam 2006:180) in this regard. Pragmatically, such transformations nurtured an environment where dispensationalists became active participants in prophecy by engaging politics through advancing a strong pro-Israel agenda in the U.S. William Blackstone’s theme of a common destiny between Israel and the U.S. reemerged strongly in the 1980s, serving as a core component of the dispensational argumentation in popular spheres whose aim was generating political advocates for Israel. For some dispensationalists, sustaining Israel’s national security was interpreted as a biblical obligation that held over all Christians, and this understanding was rooted in the blessings and cursings of the Abrahamic covenant as proposed in dispensational teachings.

2.7 Arabs, Oil, Islam, and Terror: Bible Prophecy Filtered through Middle East Geopolitics

Privileging a particular ideological narrative of Israel that justifies both the establishment of the Israeli state as well as its political and military actions was a common characteristic of many dispensational discourses throughout the first half of the 20th century. It is, therefore, somewhat unsurprising that some dispensationalists would begin to view Arabs as the enemies of God’s people, the Jews. Conditions in Palestine prior to Israel’s dispossession of the indigenous population and announcement of statehood were largely dismissed by or unimportant to dispensationalists whose singular focus was often the fulfillment of God’s plan for Israel regardless of cost. Rather than placing the Palestinian dispossession as a crucial element of the Israel-Palestine conflict, dispensationalists set themselves up to be somewhat predisposed to conceptualize Palestinians as Arab outsiders and terrorists who simply sought to annihilate Israel. Moreover, dispensationalists reasoned that Jewish persecution and anti-Semitism

throughout history must have been so prevalent because Satan realized that God's divine plans consistently depend upon the Jewish people. The horrendous Shoah (the Holocaust) committed at the hands of Nazi Germany was viewed by some as a desperate attempt by Satan to completely wipe out all Jews and cause God's future plans through Israel to fail.⁴⁹ In the early decades of the 1900s as Arab nations became increasingly frustrated with the geopolitics of Palestine under the British Mandate period, and as Arab nations disapproved of Israel's dispossession of the indigenous population of Palestine in 1948, dispensationalists simplistically reduced Arab motives to Satanically inspired opposition to God and His chosen people. With this in place, the Israel-Palestine conflict could additionally be analyzed as primarily a religious conflict, with the seed of Isaac (Israel and the Jews) engaged in an ancient quarrel with the seed of Ishmael (Arabs and Muslims). In these manners dispensationalists recapitulated extant Orientalist ideologies, but they also reworked anti-Arabism and Islamophobia to be centered on their beliefs and attitudes toward Israel and the Jewish people.

By the time Hal Lindsey published *The Late Great Planet Earth* in 1970, the belief that there was a biblical and prophetic basis for the existence of an anti-Israel coalition of Arab nations was well established. The notion of the Arab/Muslim enemy has been sustained for quite some time in premillennial discourses and cultural memory.⁵⁰ In the 20th century, Arabs and

⁴⁹ A few dispensationalists, John Hagee being a notable example, expressed anti-Semitic beliefs themselves by claiming that the Bible actually predicted the Shoah, for which he later apologized. I have additionally heard Calvary Chapel pastors remark that the Shoah ended up serving an important catalyst for greater Jewish immigration to Palestine.

⁵⁰ Among 18th century historic premillennialists in England, writers like Edward King proposed that the "Saracens" and the "Turks" were mentioned in the Bible as the means by which the first two "woes" of Revelation 9-11 came upon the earth. Such interpretations were initially rejected by classical dispensationalists who disdained historicism's imposition of biblical prophecy onto the present. However, as dispensational doctrines began systematizing and shifting toward the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dispensationalists looked for significance among present events and political actors as indicators that future prophetic events were nearing. Current events weren't always viewed as necessarily fulfilling prophecy *per se*, though they were often seen as setting the stage for coming prophetic events. For example, by the time the *Scotfield Bible* was released in 1909 there was wide agreement among dispensationalists from their interpretation of Ezekiel 38 that Russia would lead other European nations in an attack against Israel, culminating in the battle of Armageddon (Scotfield 1909:883). Many

Muslims were “rediscovered” (Weber 2004:207) in the Bible as the “southern kingdom” from Daniel 11. Dispensationalists celebrated Israel’s victories over the Arabs in both 1948 and 1967, though many expected that Russia and the Arabs would eventually launch an assault against Israel during Armageddon. Israel would end up victorious, but only after suffering massive loss of lives that some have likened to the anticipation of a second Shoah (see discussion on Mark Hitchcock below for a modern expression of this belief). It is worth noting that virtually any Arab disagreement with Israel was not only expected as an indicator of end-times, it also served as proof that the dispensational interpretation of the Bible was being fulfilled as predicted.

Shortly after Lindsey popularized his predictions regarding an anti-Israel Arab coalition, Dallas Theological Seminary president John F. Walvoord published a work that “gave Muslims a new centrality in the events of the last days” (Kidd 2009:18). Walvoord’s (1974) *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis: What the Bible Says about the Future of the Middle East and the End of Western Civilization* hit the press in the year following the oil crisis of 1973 and quickly became a *New York Times* bestseller. In October 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, starting the Yom Kippur War. The U.S. under President Richard Nixon responded by supplying Israel with weapons and other materials, while Russia responded by assisting Egypt and Syria. Soon after, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raised oil prices, and ultimately several Arab members of OPEC placed an oil embargo on the U.S. The surprise attack against Israel was a setback for dispensationalists who expected continuous land increase for Israel until after the rapture of the Church. Nevertheless, the Russian-Arab alliance still fit the

dispensationalists believed that Russia would form allies in order to compose the northern kingdom mentioned in Daniel 11, which was essential for the fulfillment of prophecies regarding Armageddon. This sentiment is still held today, particularly in popular dispensational discourses, and it was also the source of intense speculation up through the Cold War as dispensationalists anticipated the rise of Russia as a world superpower. Still, although the importance ascribed to Russia in dispensational discourses has remained fairly constant, Arabs, Arab nations, and Islam became progressively more prominent in the latter half of the 20th century.

general dispensational paradigm, and the crisis in the U.S. from increased oil prices as well as a subsequent stock market crash exacerbated apocalyptic expectations. From these events, Walvoord argued that the oil crisis produced an important shift of power in international politics, with Middle Eastern nations coming to the fore. This put the Middle East at the center of global conflicts and organized the geopolitical domain for predicted end-times events when Arab armies would eventually attempt to destroy Israel.⁵¹

After the Yom Kippur War and the oil embargo, other Middle East events were soon interpreted as having utmost importance for Bible prophecy. Another outstanding political event was the 1979 revolution in Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini. The attention given to this by dispensational scholars fixed Iran's place in end-times prophecy, which is quite prominent in current dispensational discourses given President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's explicit animosity toward Israel and his desire to develop nuclear capabilities. However, in the 1990s and beyond, dispensationalists capitalized on Middle East politics beginning with the Gulf Wars. Again, individuals from Dallas Theological Seminary contributed heavily to the novel trend as old works resurfaced and new ones emerged. DTS alumnus Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* increased in sales by 83 percent in 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait (Weber 2004:208). John Walvoord's *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East* was revised and reissued in 1991 before Operation Desert Storm, and he soon found himself thrust into the news media as an analyst for the Persian Gulf War's "prophetic significance" (Weber 2004:208).

⁵¹ The significance of Arab states' control over oil is still interpreted in relation to biblical prophecy, as DTS alumnus David Jeremiah maintained in part of his (2010) *The Coming Economic Armageddon: What the Bible Warns about the New Economic Economy*. This theme also features prominently in Jeremiah's (2008) New York Times, USA and Wall Street Journal bestseller *What in World is Going On?: Ten Prophetic Clues You Cannot Afford to Ignore*, which opens with the significance of Israel's becoming a state and the Abrahamic covenant before treating the economic importance of oil. Other elements significant to the end-times according to Jeremiah include the rise of Islam and a "new axis of evil" led by Russia and Iran (Jeremiah 2008:162).

Also a graduate from DTS, Charles Dyer exploited the geographical significance of Iraq: inside its borders was the site of ancient Babylon. In 1991, while an associate professor at DTS, Dyer wrote *The Rise of Babylon: Signs of the End Times*. Dyer claimed that Saddam Hussein would rebuild Babylon so that the city could feature prominently in the end-times. This enabled dispensationalists who agreed with Dyer to promote their literal hermeneutic, since “Babylon” in Revelation could now be identified with its literal referent rather than holding figurative significance. Dyer’s book was updated in 2003 under the modified title *The Rise of Babylon: Is Iraq at the Center of the Final Drama?*, and in 2004 he released another work on the subject, *What’s Next?: God, Israel and the Future of Iraq*. Central to this latter book’s thesis was that “the Islamic world’s antipathy to the West and toward the U.S. in particular” was rooted simply in “the existence of Israel” (Dyer 2004:67). Iraq, the war on terror, and failed peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine all stemmed from the religious significance of the Holy Land. Israel was viewed as the “epicenter of events shaking the Middle East” (Dyer 2004:16) and the locus of God’s future plans for the earth. Interestingly, Dyer further proposes a commonly held belief that the Israel-Palestine conflict will eventually see a peaceful resolution, though there is a twist. During the final seven years of Daniel’s “seventy weeks” (Daniel 9:24-27), a world leader “will broker a multinational peace agreement – one that seems to ‘solve’ the Middle East crisis” (Dyer 2004:99). Dyer sees this leader as a European, while others have proposed an alternative ethnic identity (such as Israeli/Jewish or Arab/Muslim, for example). Many who hold this type of view see this leader as the Antichrist. Regardless, Dyer notes that peace will be temporary, and eventually nations “either dominated by Islamic fundamentalism or struggling with it” (Chechnya, Turkey, Iran, Sudan, and Libya) inspire a multinational assault against Israel that eventually culminates in Armageddon and a battle for Jerusalem (Dyer 2004:98-99). This

massive confrontation is resolved by Christ when He returns to the Mount of Olives and destroys the Gentile (non-Jewish) nations that warred against Israel.

Another DTS graduate involved in popularizing dispensational ideologies with Arabs and Islam as prominent themes is Mark Hitchcock, who also considers the war against Jerusalem (what he terms “the Final Holocaust”) an imminent prophetic event. A student of John F. Walvoord, in 2007 Hitchcock revised Walvoord’s *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East* with the help of Walvoord’s son, John E. Walvoord. The updated work was released under the newly relevant title *Armageddon, Oil, and Terror: What the Bible Says about the Future*. Hitchcock and John E. Walvoord explain the displacement of “Middle East” with “Terror” in the title as intended “to reflect Dr. Walvoord’s belief that terrorism is an essential element that is setting the stage for the end-time scenario presented in Scripture (Walvoord and Hitchcock 2007:ix). Still, this does not strictly signal a departure from focusing on the Middle East, as the Middle East and Islam are viewed as being saturated with terrorism, as well as being the principal centers of it, throughout the work. The change in the title is significant in light of the discourses on terror in the post-9/11 context. In this “increasingly dangerous” world after 9/11, John E. Walvoord and Hitchcock declare that “Israel’s struggle with Hamas and Hezbollah is now a centerpiece in the war on terror” (Walvoord and Hitchcock 2007:viii).

In terms of terror and oil, the national security of both Israel and the U.S. are portrayed as inextricably bound together in unified opposition to the Middle East and militant Islam, though Hitchcock believes that the U.S. will begin to decrease in power and possibly join other nations in opposing Israel. The book also has an accompanying website called Prophecy Hotline (www.prophecyhotline.com). The site features prophetically-relevant news updates and discussion on what Hitchcock and Walvoord consider the twelve most significant prophetic

events, many of which bear a strong resemblance to similar lists proposed as early as 1970 in Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*: 1) oil as an economic weapon, 2) global Islamic terror, 3) Israel's aggressive self-defense, 4) the decline of the U.S., 5) a revised Roman Empire, 6) the Russian and Islamic coalition to invade Israel, 7) the rise of the Antichrist as a one-world leader, 8) an attack on Jerusalem, 9) Babylon as a global economic superpower, 10) the rise of China, 11) natural disasters and famine, and 12) Armageddon.⁵²

Among dispensational discourses, the themes of the Middle East and Islam are additionally prevalent in prophecy conferences, new and old media, and fiction novels. One author whose works are becoming more and more prominent among dispensationalists and other Christian Zionists, and whose works extend to all these genres, is Joel C. Rosenberg. While I am not aware of any instance that Rosenberg uses "dispensationalist" as a self-descriptor, his works nevertheless intersect with salient dispensational ideologies, and he also promotes and collaborates with dispensational authors, pastors, and teachers.⁵³ Rosenberg considers himself an evangelical Christian, a Jewish believer in Jesus, an author, and a communications advisor/strategist. He is the founder of a philanthropic organization called the Joshua fund, whose "mission" is based off of the dispensational interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant: "Blessing Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus, according to Genesis 12:1-3" (The Joshua Fund, 2011). The principal theme of Rosenberg's works center on Israel and the relationship of Bible prophecy to current and future events, especially the preeminence of Israel

⁵² Other works by Hitchcock that expound on these events in great detail and put special emphasis on Islam and the Middle East include: *The Coming Islamic Invasion of Israel* (2002), *Iran the Coming Crisis: Radical Islam, Oil, and the Nuclear Threat* (2006), & *The Apocalypse of Ahmadinejad: The Revelation of Iran's Nuclear Prophet* (2007).

⁵³ For example, the list of recommended reading on Bible prophecy from his website includes works from dispensationalists such as Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel (*The Final Act: Setting the Stage of the End Times Drama*), and several alumni and faculty from Dallas Theological Seminary: J. Dwight Pentecost (*Things to Come*), John F. Walvoord (*Every Prophecy of the Bible: Clear Explanations for Uncertain Times*), Mark Hitchcock (*The Complete Book of Bible Prophecy* and *The Second Coming of Babylon*), Charles Dyer (*The Rise of Babylon*), and Randall Price (*The Temple and Bible Prophecy: A Definitive Look at Its Past, Present, and Future*).

in God's plan for the end-times. Additionally significant is Rosenberg's interpretation of Ezekiel 38-39, which express his dispensationally-oriented beliefs in the rebuilding of a third Jewish temple and the predicted coming war(s) against Israel from a Russian- and Iranian-led coalition.

Rosenberg's popularity began with a series of fiction novels he authored – collectively known as the *Political Thriller Series* – that are based on revised dispensational themes interwoven with current geopolitics. To date the series is comprised of five novels: *The Last Jihad* (2002), *The Last Days* (2003), *The Ezekiel Option* (2005), *The Copper Scroll* (2006), and *Dead Heat* (2008). Many websites and other domains that promote Rosenberg's novels describe his works in ways that virtually ascribe to him the mantle of a prophet, and this informs his marketability. The following comes from the product description of Rosenberg's first novel on his publisher's website:

The book that started it all, *The Last Jihad* is the first of Joel C. Rosenberg's *New York Times* best-selling series, with 500,000 in print. The first page puts readers in the cockpit of a hijacked jet on a kamikaze mission into an American city—**but it was written nine months before 9/11/01**. As the plot unfolds, White House advisors Jon Bennett and Erin McCoy are under attack in Jerusalem as the U.S. goes to war with Iraq over weapons of mass destruction—**but The Last Jihad was published four months before the actual Iraq war began**. (Tyndale House Publishers, 2011, emphasis added)

Part of what fueled Rosenberg's popularity was his seemingly adept ability to write about events before they actually took place. His personal website advertises his “trademark style” for fiction as “edge-of-your-seat fiction that reads like tomorrow's headlines” (Joel C. Rosenberg, 2011).

The post-9/11 context has proven essential to the success of Rosenberg's novels. The first two of the *Political Thriller Series* were reissued in August 2006 as “9/11 Anniversary Editions” with an added “author's note” from Rosenberg that recounts the events of 9/11, explains his reaction to the seemingly predictive nature of the book, and poses a cohort of rhetorical questions raising concern as to whether we have truly learned from radical Islam's terror attacks.

Rosenberg has been called a “modern Nostradamus” (Bedard 2003),⁵⁴ but, according to Rosenberg, his seeming ability to predict future headlines is not psychic powers or luck (Rosenberg 2006b:15). He maintains that “there is a way to anticipate future headlines” (Rosenberg 2006b:15), and the key to doing so is rooted in dispensational interpretations of Bible prophecy and their forecast of end-times events.

Rosenberg’s novels treat relevant issues that are common in popular dispensational discourses of the revised and classical varieties: Israel is central to end-times events, Israel and the U.S. are threatened by radical Islam, Russia and Iran are racing to develop nuclear weapons that will annihilate Israel, Jews will build a third temple in Jerusalem, Iraq as the new Babylon rises in power. Like Lindsey’s *The Late Great Planet Earth* and the extremely popular 12-part Left Behind Series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, Rosenberg packages dispensational ideologies for accessibility, sensationalism, and mass consumption. However (and as is true of all of these authors just mentioned), Rosenberg firmly believes that the content underlying his novels is true and rooted in the authority of biblical prophecy.

Building on the success of his fictional works, Rosenberg ventured into nonfiction with the publication of his (2006) *Epicenter: Why the Current Rumbblings in the Middle East Will Change Your Future*.⁵⁵ The book essentially functions as an explanation to why Rosenberg wrote the Political Thriller Series (Rosenberg 2006b:xvi), articulating the thesis that Israel essentially

⁵⁴ The second and third books in the *Political Thriller Series* made further “predictions” for which he is well-known: His second thriller-*The Last Days*-opens with the death of Yasser Arafat and a U.S. diplomatic convoy ambushed in Gaza. **Six days before *The Last Days* was published in hardcover, a U.S. diplomatic convoy was ambushed in Gaza. Thirteen months later, Yasser Arafat died [...]** *The Ezekiel Option* centers on a Russian dictator who forms a military alliance with the leaders of Iran who are feverishly pursuing nuclear weapons and threatening to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. **On the day it was published in June 2005, Iran elected a new leader who vowed to accelerate the country's nuclear program and later vowed to "wipe Israel off the map." Six months after the book was published, Moscow signed a \$1 billion arms deal with Tehran.** (Epicenter Conference 2011, 2011, emphasis added)

⁵⁵ The manner in which “will” is used in the title suggests a rather strong epistemic modality, and this is a feature of dispensational discourses more generally that I address in Section 3.

serves as the primary world epicenter geographically, politically, and historically. Rosenberg proposes a series of epicenters that can be visualized somewhat as concentric circles: “Israel [is] at the epicenter of the world [...] Jerusalem at the epicenter of Israel, and the Temple Mount at the epicenter of Jerusalem” (Rosenberg 2006b:243). This concept further derives from the constant predication of Middle East events (usually involving Israel) as “political earthquakes,” and events from the Israel-Palestine and Arab-Israeli conflicts are considered to have drawn the world’s focus to the epicenter of Israel (Rosenberg 2006b:ix-x). For Rosenberg, The new impending crisis we now face is a nuclear Iran whose sole aim is the destruction of Israel and the U.S., which we should labor to delay even though Rosenberg maintains that Iran and Russia will eventually invade Israel in the War of God and Magog described in Ezekiel 38-39. Exploiting the popular sentiments of Rosenberg’s ability to predict the future, ten of the book’s fifteen chapters are framed as “future headlines” (Rosenberg 2006b). In 2008 Rosenberg launched the annual Epicenter Conference based on the book.⁵⁶ The conferences draw several thousand attendees, and feature pro-Israel speakers from various backgrounds.⁵⁷ In addition to evangelical pastors and leaders, pro-Israel politicians and military personnel also participate in the conference, such as retired Lt. Gen. William Boykin, former U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, who has participated in every conference discussing topics like potential (and what are argued to be impending) threats to U.S. and Israeli security.

The above survey indicates that Arabs’, Islam’s, and the Middle East’s roles in Bible prophecy among dispensational discourses has undergone dramatic increase in waves relative to

⁵⁶ Conferences to date occurred in 2008 (Jerusalem), 2009 (San Diego), 2010 (Philadelphia; also the Signs of the Times Conference was held this year in the Philippines) and 2011 (Jerusalem).

⁵⁷ Past speakers include Chuck Smith (2008, 2009), Skip Heitzig (2008, 2009, 2011), Ray Bentley (2011), Greg Laurie (2010) and Mike MacIntosh (2009) – all who are currently or have been associated with the Calvary Chapel movement as pastors. Other dispensationalist speakers include Kay Arthur (2010, 2011), author and founder of Precept Ministries, and Janet Parshall (2010), a conservative Christian radio talk-show host. Arthur and Parshall are also important exceptions to dispensational discourses that are dominantly male in terms of production.

certain political events: the declaration of Israel's statehood in 1948, the 1967 war and conquest of Jerusalem, the oil crisis and Yom Kippur War in 1973, the Gulf Wars beginning in 1991, and the New York terror attacks in 2001. Each of these produced successive and accumulative interest in Arab, Islamic, and Middle East geopolitics, framing them as essential indicators that impending end-times events are truly "setting the stage" for the "final drama" to unfold. This trend of shifting interests also provided an ideological environment that allowed for novel articulation of the U.S.-Israel relationship. As we saw earlier with individuals such as William Blackstone in the late 19th/early 20th centuries as well as more widespread attitudes among members of the emergent New Christian Right in the 1980s, the U.S.'s destiny was dependent upon the manner in which it treated Israel, whether politically, economically, and perhaps even ideologically. This belief was never usurped, but rather added to as dispensationalists "rediscovered" Arab nations and Islam in prophetic passages of the Bible. Subsequent geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East like the Iranian revolution and the Gulf wars, the rising import of oil as an economic asset controlled by many Arab nations, the newfound ability to interpret Revelation's "Babylon" as a literal city, and the terror attacks of 9/11 all worked in concert to fuel the belief that the Middle East, Arabs, and Islamic fundamentalism were featuring prominently in exact accordance with new dispensational schemes of the present and future. Consequently, Israel-U.S. solidarity was robustly rearticulated in terms of opposition to common enemies – typically Arab, Islamic, located in the Middle East, or some combination of these. Furthermore, and not surprisingly, in dispensational discourses since the 1970s (and markedly so after 9/11) these entities became progressively associated with terror and the singular desire to annihilate both Israel and the United States. This also corresponded quite well to the ideological and political positions of the conservative Right in Israel and the conservative Right in the U.S.

2.8 Palestinians in Dispensational Discourses

After the [1967] war, I began to take these [Christian Zionist and dispensationalist] theories seriously. What concerned me and infuriated another Arab Christian student from Syria, who also attended the same College, is that our professors and our colleagues were excited at the end of the war because Israel defeated three Arab nations and seized the West Bank from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria and the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. Their exhilaration was due to their belief that God miraculously stood with Israel and helped Israel in order to fulfill Biblical prophecies and to speed up the return of Jesus. The victory of Israel over three Arab nations was also a confirmation for them that the theories we were studying in class were true. While my friend and I were grieving the death and the destruction that the bloody war caused on many innocent people, our friends were celebrating what they thought was a fulfillment of Biblical prophecies. They were totally indifferent and insensitive to the ravages of war and its toll on human life. (Awad 2010:3-4)

(Lacking) Representation and (not) remembering of Palestinians in dispensational discourses has also undergone a distinct trend since the latter half of the 20th century that derives from the dispensationalist predisposition to prioritize Israel. Overall, this trend is one of initial silence, suppression, and backgrounding to generic treatment of Palestinians as “Arabs,” to explicit representation and othering that includes framing Palestinians as terrorists and Islamic militants. Thus, in some ways the representations and rememberings of Palestinians patterns historically in a manner that parallels dispensational treatments of Arabs, Islam, and the Middle East, as described above. The dispossession of 750,000 indigenous Palestinians in 1948 is typically not discussed in dispensational texts near that time, nor are other atrocities committed against Palestinians, such as the Deir Yassin massacre. In later texts, atrocities may receive explicit mention, but in a way that justifies Israel’s actions. These two elements bear striking similarity with Israeli discourses, including textbooks, media, and political discourse (Pappé 2010:59; Peled-Elhanan 2010). Dispensational discourses commonly view Palestine and Palestinians through an Israeli lens, and the constant articulation of Israeli and Jewish identity/identities as enduring from past to future does not easily accommodate the co-existence of Palestinians with a

distinct identity and claim to the same land. When the refugees are mentioned or implied, their distinct identity often is dissolved, and becomes absorbed into the generic “Arab.” The Palestinian perspective of *al-Nakba* (“the catastrophe”) is either wanting or entirely absent.

Recently, evangelical Christian and sociology professor Tony Campolo has called Christian Zionism – and particularly the dispensational forms that developed from Darby – “theology that legitimates oppression” (Campolo 2010). More specifically, he maintains that Christian Zionism and dispensationalisms legitimate and enact the oppression of Palestinians. In general, part of my conclusion in Section 4 accords with Campolo’s argument, but it is important to bear in mind certain contextualized tendencies of dispensational discourses over time that may contribute to this type of action. Classical and early revised dispensationalists through the mid-20th century did not primarily concern themselves with the (seeming) minutiae of Middle East politics. Instead, they favored general outcomes rather than detailed analyses of political developments and events. In such an environment, the long-awaited “restoration” of the Jews to Palestine seemed to be in many ways *the* exclusive political event, engendering an ethos of ignorance with regard to actual events on the ground in Palestine, along with the lives and histories of Palestinians.

In some ways, this tendency changed drastically starting with the 1956 Suez Crisis, and especially so after the 1967 War, as also discussed above. Dispensationalists increasingly valued the significance of the present global political climate, which served for many as an indicator of the nearness and characteristics of end-times events. After the initial increase of Israeli territory that each of these events brought about, dispensationalists focused on more specific elements of Middle East geopolitics, especially as it pertained to Israel-Palestine. However, this is not to say that all elements were treated with equity by dispensationalists; their strong pro-Israel ideologies

informed the way they perspectivized Palestinians. This often meant that asymmetric privileging of a particular Israeli and Jewish narrative drew sympathy for the cause of Israelis and Jews, but not Palestinians who were characterized as foreigners invading Israel's covenant land.⁵⁸

Furthermore, because dispensationalists believed so firmly that God had divinely ordained Israel to become a state in 1948, Palestinian resistance and opposition were considered not only a violation of Israeli sovereignty, but also a futile violation of the divine will.⁵⁹

As dispensationalists became more and more attuned to political events in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the negative representations of Palestinians in dispensational discourses were exacerbated. This, too, is due to the phenomenon that attention to political detail translated into a biased perception of events in Israel and Palestine. Dispensationalists became well acquainted with every violent attack on Israel from Palestinians, though, for example, Palestinian nonviolent resistance was silenced. If Israeli atrocities were manifest they were commonly dismissed as propaganda. Palestinians became synonymous with Arabs (which denied or downplayed their discrete identity), radical Islam, terror, and violence. The latter three of these are especially prevalent in the post-9/11 context, which additionally corresponds to “the revival of anti-Palestinianism in the United States” during this time (Pappé 2010:71).

⁵⁸ An example of this type appears at the opening of section 2.2 above, which is taken from the closing portion of Herbert Kann's (1937) article *Israel's Blindness: The Mystery of It*, published in *Bibliotheca Sacra*. After arguing from Romans 11:25-27 that God will again deal with ethnic, national Israel, Kann quotes an editorial that reaffirms his thesis regarding the future restoration of Israel to the land of Palestine, which will take place, among other things, “Arabs notwithstanding” (Kann 1937:457).

⁵⁹ On the other hand, dispensationalists as a whole did not entirely overlook the ethical implications of Israel's actions towards Palestinians in favor of a utilitarian worldview. Charles C. Ryrie from Dallas Theological Seminary – a prominent dispensational academic – did indeed believe that occupation of Jerusalem after the 1967 War was part of the “territorial gains” necessary for Israel to possess all the covenant land (Weber 2004:185). Nevertheless, while Ryrie allowed for the possibility that some of Israel's potentially unethical actions may have been “used by God in the mysterious accomplishing of his purpose,” God would not simply excuse them (Weber 2004:185). Essentially, Ryrie believed that both Israel and Palestine would be held accountable to God for their actions, regardless of the role that such actions played in setting the stage for the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Still, even among dispensationalists like Ryrie who did not uncritically accept Israel's actions toward Palestinians, there appears to be a robust, ideologically motivated bias that effectively marginalized Palestinians and legitimated their oppression. Israel's actions towards Palestinians at times may have been unethical, which would ultimately be judged, but the overall scheme centered on Israel remained undisturbed, regardless of the cost to Palestinians.

Examples from three dispensational texts produced since 2003 can serve to illustrate these aspects. In 2003, Randall Price, a graduate of DTS who studied under John F. Walvoord, authored *Fast Facts on the Middle East Conflict*. Early on, Price gives his answer for “What brought about the Arab-Israeli conflict?”: the Arab-Israeli War began in 1948 because the Jews accepted the proposed U.N. partition plan while the Arabs rejected it and “went to war to destroy the newly announced Jewish state” (Price 2003:12). Arabs in general portrayed as the primary “cause” of the Palestinian refugee problem because Arab leaders warned Palestinians “to evacuate before the arrival of the advancing Arab armies” going to war with the young Israeli state (Price 2003:78). Though Price mentions Jewish Zionist immigration to Palestine beginning in the 19th century, he does not provide any clear reasons for why the Arabs might have rejected the partition plan (for example, the Jewish minority would receive the majority of land) other than the implicit assumption that Arabs and Muslims have a bent to destroy Israel. His argumentation resonates with the ideology common in popular dispensational discourses that Jews and Muslims are engaged in an ancient religious conflict, primarily instigated by the latter. So, Islam and Judaism are both contributing factors to the Middle East conflict, with the result that the former “Unifies Arabs, promotes jihad against Jews,” while the latter “Isolates Jews, promotes return to land” (Price 2003:16).

Interestingly, Price does mention the Deir Yassin massacre of 1948, but he frames it as “The *Legend* of Deir Yassin” (Price 2003:90, emphasis added).⁶⁰ According to Price’s description of the events, “the Arabs [first] took control of Jerusalem and held many strategic vantage points,” including the village of Deir Yassin (Price 2003:90). Israelis attacked the village, but created an “escape route for the Arab citizens who did not wish to fight” (Price

⁶⁰ This could have at least two connotations: either it is something made up, a myth, or it is deemed legendary and worthy of commendation.

2003:90). Many Arabs subsequently “feigned surrender” and attacked the Israelis, who were forced to defend themselves and “no longer discriminate between Arab civilians and armed soldiers” (Price 2003:90). Price reports that among the dead were found multiple “Arab men disguised as women” (Price 2003:90). While it is unique to find explicit mentioning of the events at Deir Yassin, we see in Price’s text a rather clear example of how bias toward Israel favors a particular type of remembering that serves to commemorate Israeli history. In particular, the event is described as a “legend,” and the notion of it being a massacre is problematized (Price 2003:90), with additional blame placed on Arabs who caused the attacks in the first place. With this in mind, it is not surprising that Price marks “revisionist history” as a principal characteristic of “the Palestinian problem” (Price 2003:16).

Earlier I referenced another alumnus from DTS, Charles Dyer, who contributed significantly to the belief that Iraq will feature prominently during the end-times with his books *The Rise of Babylon* and *What’s Next?: God, Israel and the Future of Iraq*. In the second of these works, Dyer opposes hatred of Arabs and the naive and dangerous view that expulsion of Palestinians from Israel will ultimately solve the Middle East “crisis” (Dyer 2004:86). Dyer simplistically treats alternative causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict and essentially considers it to be rooted in religion. He considers terrorism the “corollary” of the “Palestinian problem” that “has stymied and continues to stymie efforts on behalf of peace” (Dyer 2004:31). In accordance with Price (2003), the Arab rejection of the U.N. partition plan in 1947 is viewed as the root cause of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Surprisingly, Dyer draws a sympathetic connection to the Palestinian’s remembrance of *al-Nakba*, though his remark that “we are paying the price” for failing to “understand such grievances” (Dyer 2004:27) is somewhat opaque. Implications from

other portions of his book indicate, however, that this “price” is the U.S. failure to understand the gravity of terrorism, not an expression of solidarity with Palestinians (see Dyer 2004:45).

Throughout the book, Dyer introduces several individuals that Dyer has met in a series of tours to Israel and Palestine. A brief look at how two Palestinians are represented demonstrates the complexity with which Palestinians can be overtly represented in dispensational discourses. The first Palestinian is not named, but referred to as “a shopkeeper in Bethlehem” (Dyer 2004:36). Dyer remarks that he is a Christian, but is quick to point out that the man is “not a believer in the evangelical sense” (Dyer 2004:36, although there are strong evangelical Christian communities in Bethlehem that Dyer does not mention). This man has experienced financial hardships, and in addition:

has been attacked by Muslims and shaken down by the notoriously corrupt Palestinian authority. He has suffered greatly under Palestinian rule. Yet he continues to blame Israel. (Dyer 2004:36)

Dyer quickly “discovers” that this man’s motivation for blaming Israel is misguided by conspiracy theories and the belief that the U.S. political domain is infected with Jewish Zionists (Dyer 2004:37). Dyer ends this story by expressing his disappointment from his “imaginings that the Christian Arabs” (i.e., Palestinian Christians) might be a source for initiating peace between Israelis and Palestinians by collaborating with Muslims (Dyer 2004:38). However, Dyer concludes, “But they’ll never do that. It’s as if their ethnicity transcends their religion” (Dyer 2004:38). Again, the Palestinians are framed as the causers of conflict, as well as the obstacle to its resolution. Moreover, in this case discontentment with Israel is caricatured as misguided and fantasy-based. Dyer does not truly view Palestine as a potential “peace partner” for Israel, though he does believe the Bible provides a “sort of peace plan” (Dyer 2004:76-77).

The second Palestinian individual mentioned by Dyer leads us into a salient theme among certain dispensational texts: the Palestinian ex-terrorist. Dyer introduces another “shopkeeper,” “Shaban the ex-terrorist” from “the Old City,” Jerusalem (Dyer 2004:118). Dyer describes the man as “growing more dignified with age,” but promptly notes that when Shaban was younger he “looked like our image of a terrorist – lanky, bearded, with a broken tooth and dark, passionate eyes” (Dyer 2004:118-119). Shaban was an ex-“PLO terrorist,” and apparently had renounced terrorism (Dyer 2004:119). For Dyer, “Shaban probably represents the majority of Muslims in Israel”: devout, disenchanted with Israel, “but he’s not so devout that he’s dedicated to [Israel’s] destruction,” which he “assumes that Allah will take care of [...] in his time” (Dyer 2004:120). The take-home message from Dyer’s relationship with Shaban appears to be that “It’s one of those contradictions you’ll find all over the Middle East” (Dyer 2004:120).

Dyer is no longer unique in recruiting Palestinian ex-terrorists for use in dispensational discourses. Another example of such comes from John Hagee’s (2006) *Jerusalem Countdown: A Prelude to War*. Hagee acknowledges a group of people that “identify themselves as Palestinians worldwide,” but considers “the people now called Palestinians” to be from Egypt, Syria, and Iraq (Hagee 2007a:58). Thus, Hagee frames Palestinians as outsiders attempting to lay claim of Israel’s land. For Hagee, “[r]eferring to Israel as ‘occupied territory’ is propaganda” (Hagee 2007a:58). Hagee typically demonizes Palestinian attempts at obtaining statehood as disguised efforts to eventually annihilate Israel and occupy the entirety of the land. In *Jerusalem Countdown* especially, Hagee is rather infamous for invoking his insider “sources” in Israel, some of which remain unnamed. The only explicit mentioning of a Palestinian source is Walid Shoebat, a self-proclaimed former PLO-trained suicide bomber that converted to Christianity and now desires to bless and love Israel. In *Jerusalem Countdown*, Hagee publishes portions of an

interview between him and Shoebat that appeared on “national and worldwide telecast” from John Hagee Ministries (Hagee 2006:6). In the interview, Hagee primes Shoebat to claim that “over 73 percent of the Arab world supports the jihad ideology” to destroy the U.S. and Israel, as well as the claim that “lying” is normative in Islam and characterizes Palestinian politics (Hagee 2006:6-7). Shoebat contributes positively to the major thesis of *Jerusalem Countdown*: the fact that political events are steering us toward an imminent nuclear war with Iran.

The explicit discursive mentioning of Palestinians in dispensational discourses still seems to fit the overwhelming tendency to produce pro-Israel support, even among those like Dyer (2004) who acknowledge stereotypes and simplistic conceptualizations of the Middle East. Dyer acknowledges Palestinians as being among his “friends,” but it is notable that the only two Palestinians mentioned by Dyer have either misguided antipathy toward Israel or former terrorist inclinations that, while presently rejected, could still persist through an Islamic-based belief that Israel will ultimately be destroyed by Allah. The ex-Palestinian terrorist theme is also significant in Hagee (2006), which creates the false impression that the only Palestinians worthy of trust are those who have converted to Hagee’s brand of Christianity. Price (2003) and Hagee (2006) both mention Palestinians in order to deny their historical perspective as well as their discrete identity, which is framed as a modern expression (or denied outright as in Hagee 2007a) in contrast to the enduring Israeli/Jewish identity. Price is rather unique in discussing the Deir Yassin massacre, but he legitimizes violent acts from Israel by interpreting the Palestinian role as that of the aggressor and manipulator. Price and Hagee both also repeat the salient theme of Israel being the sole democracy in the Middle East, situated amidst radical Islamic fundamentalist states.

2.9 Progressive Dispensationalism

Dispensationalisms exhibit several prominent and (relatively) constant themes, but they have remained in flux since their inception. Transformations imply fluid and nebulous boundaries for concepts that are reshaped according to external and internal factors, such as doctrinal developments and geopolitics, as we have seen. This also allows room for individual dispensationalists to reject dominant and popular views while retaining a dispensationalist identity. Moreover, transformations also brought about hybridity as dispensationalists' ideologies coalesced with alternative frameworks (e.g., Reformed Covenant theology) that earlier dispensationalists opposed explicitly on philosophical and hermeneutic grounds. This is perhaps most evident in the third dispensational variety, progressive dispensationalism.

Progressive dispensationalism emerged in 1986 as the outworking of the Dispensational Study Group (DSG), a collection of scholars meeting to discuss dispensationalisms and dispensational trends through the venue of the Evangelical Theological Society (Blaising 1994; Clutter 1989). These scholars represented a variety of institutions, but members of Dallas Theological Seminary were at the forefront of initiating these discussions, such as Craig A. Blaising, Darrell L. Bock, and Mark Bailey. Eventually the DSG began working toward a more unified consensus of a modified dispensational view, which was made public with the release of three books.⁶¹ The departure from classical and revised dispensationalisms stemmed from a different hermeneutic that emphasized the historic and literary nature of the Bible (Blaising 1994:160). Instead of an insistent literalism that pushed covenant fulfillment to an exclusively future time, progressive dispensationalists employed an “already/not yet hermeneutic” (Pate 1998:31) that characterized the present as a tension between what has already been (or begun to

⁶¹ *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for a Definition* (1992) edited by Blaising and Bock, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (1993) by Robert L. Saucy, and *Progressive Dispensationalism* (1993), also by Blaising and Bock.

be) fulfilled and what is yet to take place. Progressive dispensationalists proposed an even more unified soteriological plan than that of revised dispensationalism, one that encompassed both Israel and the church with the kingdom of God as a central and pervasive theme (Saucy 2008:9). Accordingly, progressive dispensationalists explicitly reject the two peoples/two purposes theory and maintain that the church currently enjoys portions of the covenant promises to Israel while not at all replacing Israel. Still, while the Israel/church distinction is not as rigid as in classical and revised dispensationalisms, Saucy (and other progressives) “strongly affirm with all dispensationalists a future for national Israel” (Saucy 2008:20).

Furthermore – and quite significantly – progressive dispensationalists usually exercise greater prophetic caution and “reject the excesses of popular apocalypticism that frequently mishandle the literary genre of the apocalyptic” (Blaising 1994:160). The hype of associating (and continuously updating) biblical prophecy with current events is virtually nonexistent in progressive dispensational literature, which could have important consequences for the political implications of dispensational discourses. This variety is becoming more and more embedded into the doctrinal fabric of key evangelical Christian institutions, even including Talbot School of Theology and Dallas Theological Seminary. However, just as revised dispensationalism never completely superseded its classical predecessor, so progressive dispensationalism currently runs parallel to the other two frameworks. Of the three, the revised variety appears to now hold the most extensive audience and greatest power. Some also consider the progressive expression too great a departure from traditional dispensational views to be accepted. Perhaps most important is that, in terms of broader influence, progressive dispensationalism seems to be primarily relegated

to the academic domain;⁶² in general it lacks representation in popular spheres, and this may be attributed at least in part to the absence of sensationalism among its proponents. Consequently, though progressive dispensationalism is growing among evangelical Christian academics and becoming somewhat institutionalized, its presence in the public sphere does not match the more traditional dispensational views. With regard to the texts under examination in this thesis, only a small number (all from *Bibliotheca Sacra*) could be classified as progressive.

2.10 Summary: Implications for Discourse and Social Cognition

The above exploration of the sociopolitical, historical, and, to a certain extent, institutional contexts of dispensational discourses orients us toward several salient themes or discourse topics, some of which have long been sustained in the canon of cultural memory within certain branches of Protestant Christianity. These themes are derived from a more literal interpretation of the Bible, which in turn gives rise to specific expectations about and ideologies toward Israel in the end-times. As we discussed above, this includes: the gathering of dispersed Jews to Palestine to form a national entity, the literal fulfillment of covenantal promises (which can entail the extension of Israeli territory to incorporate land that is currently part of other Middle Eastern states), the building of a third Jewish temple in Jerusalem, and an Arab- and Islamic-coalition warring against Israel that leads up to the battle of Armageddon. Moreover, these themes became directly associated with, and constantly transformed according to, global and Middle East geopolitics as conflicts in the region that seemed to be hastening the fulfillment of dispensational schemes. The meaning of current events was established by filtering them according to beliefs

⁶² There are few progressive dispensational leaders in the public sphere, though DTS alumnus Tony Evans, founder of the Urban Alternative and pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship of Dallas, Texas, is one potential notable example. Nevertheless, prophecy is not a central theme for Evans in his ministry.

pertaining to prophetic passages in the Bible. Dispensational doctrines also became popularized and sensationalized as they were marketed for mass consumption, leading at times to tension between popular and academic expressions of dispensationalisms.

As ideologies about Israel in the Jews and their role in history increasingly informed expectations about the end-times, dispensationalists began to privilege the Israeli and Jewish perspective (or at least the dispensational construction of such). This narrative corresponded to expansionist political aspirations held by many in the Israeli Right from the 1980s on, which generated strong relationships among Israeli and U.S. Christian politicians. As the New Christian Right strengthened in the U.S., dispensationalists also began to organize politically. Moreover, they expected material outcomes of their beliefs and ideologies, such as “blessing” Israel as a moral/biblical mandate in addition to being an incentive for safeguarding the status of the U.S. as a global superpower. Though many dispensationalists believed in the ultimate demise of the U.S., they believed that such demise could be hastened, which would be encouraged in part by taking an unambiguously pro-Israel stance. In this sense, dispensationalists blended premillennial pessimism with the optimistic postmillennial vision for the U.S. (Clouse 2008:271). More and more, dispensationalists became intimately involved with precise details of Middle East geopolitics, but the actual details acknowledged and the understanding of such events appears to have been heavily influenced by their predisposed partiality toward Israel. Thus, violent acts by Israel toward Palestinians remained unrecognized while dispensationalists (and, perhaps the U.S. in general) became acutely attuned to violent acts against Israel by Palestinians. Also, as Russia’s power declined after the Cold War, Arab nations and militant Islam gradually took over as the preeminent adversaries of Israel, though Russia still remained an important political actor in dispensational frameworks.

While this section has devoted much attention to “the broader sociopolitical and historical context” that dispensational discourses and “discursive practices are embedded in and related to” (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:141), I have said very little about the more micro-level components of dispensational discourses. In the next section I discuss dispensational discourses from a text level in order to situate my claims in relation to detailed linguistic analysis. Given the nature of dispensational discourses as religio-political discourses, “a study of political discourse is theoretically and empirically relevant only when discourse structures can be related to properties of political structures and processes” (Van Dijk 2008a:155). This is especially important since sociopolitical elements can inform discourse production and comprehension, and discourses in turn can enact sociopolitical action. Additionally, Van Dijk has convincingly argued (see Section 1) to above that the discourse-society relationship is not direct and is actually mediated by cognition (Van Dijk 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a). Consequently, applications of critical discourse analysis should begin to take into account every component of “the discourse-cognition-society triangle” (Van Dijk 2009b:64). This emphasis orients us to the following general questions: 1) What entities⁶³ are represented in dispensational texts, and what entities are left out?, 2) How are these entities represented?, 3) and Why are these entities represented while others are not?

In order to address these questions, in Section 3 I present data from the analysis of multiple dispensational texts from a variety of genres. This analysis is mostly oriented toward answering what entities are represented and how, and the sociopolitical and historical context discussed in this section serves as a basis for beginning to answer why entities are represented (or excluded) the way they are in dispensational texts and discourses. In particular, the discourse themes and topics discussed above reappear in order to understand the linguistic and other social-semiotic devices that underlie salient discursive strategies such as positive self- and negative

⁶³ Here, “entities” is shorthand for persons, peoples, events, objects, political actors, etc.

other-representation. In order to explore the role of cognition in dispensational discourses, I use the textual and contextual analyses to infer the nature of the mental models that inform the comprehension and production of such discourses. In Section 4 I address the implications of my analysis in terms of the formation of biased mental models through discursive manipulation, as well as the relationship of dispensational discourses on cultural memory.

3 Methods and Analysis

3.1 Introduction

Without leaving the sociopolitical and historical context of dispensationalisms entirely behind, I now transition to a detailed analysis of specific texts to further understand how Jews, Israelis, Israel, Palestinians, and Palestine are represented and remembered (or not) in dispensational discourses. I begin this section by discussing my data sources and outlining the selection criteria for the texts I included in the corpus utilized herein (Section 3.2.1). I then proceed to a description of the methods I employ, drawing attention to the questions I “asked” of the texts that are aimed at illuminating discursive strategies of representation (Section 3.2.2). Section 3.3 moves to analysis, and is organized according to two broad meta-themes: 1) positive representation and remembering (Section 3.3.1), and 2) negative representation and forgetting (Section 3.3.2). Finally, I close in Section 3.4 by summarizing the general patterns and themes that trend in dispensational discourses.

3.2 Data and Methods

3.2.1 Data Sources

Each text or text source selected was produced by an individual or a group that promotes dispensational doctrines. The texts in my corpus extend across a period of almost eight decades (from 1934-2011). The majority of these texts come from the academic journal *Bibliotheca Sacra* due to the vast influence that scholars from Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) have had on dispensational discourses. However, the total texts represent multiple genres and institutions. Besides the genre of academic journal, texts analyzed belong to the genres of new media websites, email news updates, nonfiction books, political speeches, and pamphlets/booklets. The

combination of these genres also relates to an additional motive for text selection. Specifically, given that “discourses are often multimodally realized” (Van Leeuwen 2006:292), these texts collectively illustrate both the linguistic and semiotic basis of discourse formation, production, and comprehension, which includes elements that belong to several modes of communication: language (verbal and nonverbal, including written and oral), images, design, and color. Including multimodal texts enabled me to integrate aspects of how both linguistic and other social-semiotic means of communication contribute to the overall discourse strategies that are salient in dispensational discourses.

Table 2 below lists the text sources I incorporated in the analysis that follows, including the amount of texts produced by or pertaining to a given institution or individual, the years to which each source corresponds, and the genre(s) that each source represents.

<i>Institution/Individual</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i># Texts</i>	<i>Genre</i>
Dallas Theological Seminary (<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>)	1934-2010	198	Academic journal
Christians United for Israel (CUFI)	July 2010-May 2011	38	Email news updates; Websites; Pamphlets/booklets; Newsletters
For Zion’s Sake Ministries (FZSM)/Bradley Antlovich	November 2007-April 2011	8	Email news updates; Websites
John Hagee (CUFI National Chairman)	2007-2008	3	Nonfiction books; Political (lobby) speech
Total:		246	

Table 2. *Dispensational and non-dispensational text sources included in the present analysis.*

DTS explicitly promoted dispensational doctrines largely through *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Therefore, articles from *Bibliotheca Sacra* constitute the overwhelming majority of the corpus utilized in

this thesis. In order to narrow down the potential articles for analysis from several hundred to the 198 that are included here, I selected articles nearest to the dates of April 15 and October 15 of each year as a means of randomization. This method also served as a safeguard against “cherry-picking” specific texts. Since *Bibliotheca Sacra* is published quarterly, I incorporated relevant articles from the April-June and October-December editions of each year. Articles not primarily treating in some way the subject of Israel/Palestine and/or eschatology were excluded from the corpus and, therefore, from this analysis. I chose 1934 as a beginning point for the selection of texts from *Bibliotheca Sacra*, since this was the year in which the journal was obtained in 1934 and published by DTS.

For email news updates included that were produced by Christians United for Israel (CUFI) and For Zion’s Sake Ministries (FZSM), I followed the aforementioned standard for randomization.⁶⁴ Additionally, to better understand the multimodal properties of the CUFI texts, I incorporated into the corpus the organization’s website as well as supplementary digital and non-digital texts that were referenced in the select CUFI email news updates I analyzed. These included a 20-page color booklet/pro-Israel activism guide entitled *Blessing Israel*, two letters distributed by CUFI, and special email communications (e.g., “Action Alerts”).

The remaining texts admitted into the corpus were three texts produced by John Hagee, founder/national chairman of CUFI and the author of many dispensationally-oriented books with an overt pro-Israel stance. In choosing Hagee’s texts, I randomly selected one of his books for consideration, which was the 2007 revision of his 2006 *USA Today* best-seller *Jerusalem Countdown*.⁶⁵ Moreover, I analyzed a speech that Hagee delivered, largely as representative of

⁶⁴ In one case, I made an exception to this due to the availability of texts. From January through June 2010 I did not receive email updates from FZSM and, as a result, I included the earliest 2010 text (July 28, 2010) as a substitute.

⁶⁵ This particular text is of further interest for CDA research because a movie of the same title (and based on Hagee’s book) is scheduled to release on August 26, 2011. Together the book and the movie form an object of

CUFI, at the 2007 policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which is a prominent and politically influential pro-Israel lobby group in the United States. Later that same year, Hagee published another book entitled *In Defense of Israel*, which is fundamentally an exposition and extension of his 2007 address to AIPAC. I included this book in the corpus as well, due to its immediate relevance to the AIPAC speech.

3.2.2 Methods

My analysis of dispensational texts focuses specifically on themes and rhetorical strategies pertaining to the representation of and remembering (or not remembering) Israel and Palestine. The methodological approach I have adopted for this thesis primarily combines two balancing paradigms within the broad field of critical discourse analysis: the discourse-historical approach (DHA; Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 2009) and the sociocognitive approach (SCA; Van Dijk 2006, 2008b, 2009a). Each of these frameworks emphasizes the need for textual evidence in (critical) discourse studies. Such evidence serves as a basis to either formulate conclusions about discursive strategies of positive and negative representation (DHA, SCA) or infer underlying mental models of discourse production and comprehension (SCA). In addition to these two approaches, I also integrate theories of social semiotic communication (Kress 2010) and silencing (Thiesmeyer 2003b) in my analysis of dispensational discourses. Afterward, in Section 4, I use this analysis to draw conclusions with regard to discursive manipulation (Van Dijk 2006, 2008a) through the formation of biased mental models as well as discussing the relationship between dispensational discourses and cultural memory.

analysis known as “transmedia,” that is, “sets of related media” that “either form a commercial franchise [...] or some more loosely connected intertextual set” (Wodak and Meyer 2009:16). These intertextual sets produce “economic and material relationships as well as textual and semantic ones” (Wodak and Meyer 2009:16) that are important in the analysis of discourse. I hope to explore this and other transmedia texts pertaining to dispensational discourses (such as the *Left Behind Series* and related products) in subsequent work.

Adopting the analytic tools provided by the DHA, I incorporated the following questions throughout the textual analysis in order to investigate rhetorical strategies of dispensational discourses (Reisigl and Wodak 2009:93; Reisigl and Wodak 2001:xiii, 45; Wodak 2008):

- How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes and actions named and referred to linguistically? (*referential strategies*)
- What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events and processes? (*predicational strategies*)
- What arguments are employed in the discourse in question? (*argumentation strategies*, including *fallacies*)
- From what perspective are these nominations, attributions, and arguments expressed? (*perspectivation strategies* and *framing*)
- Are the respective utterances articulated overtly; are they intensified or mitigated? (*mitigation* and *intensification strategies*)

I applied these five questions in a constant, iterative manner, using them as a tool for identifying linguistic and social-semiotic structures relevant to representing and (not) remembering Israel and Palestine in dispensational discourses. Each of the strategies to which the above questions correspond is broadly construed as a specified type of “a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal” (Reisigl and Wodak 2009:94). Producers of discourse may recruit such strategies to achieve positive and/or negative representation of social actors and other entities (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:46). In the analysis below I pay particular attention to the strategies of reference/nomination, predication, and perspectivization by orienting toward what is or is not mentioned not in the text along with how it is mentioned (e.g., framing devices). This textual analysis involves situating the answers to these “what” and “how” questions in relation to their broader sociopolitical context and enables drawing conclusions with regard to why certain entities are or are not represented and remembered and why these features matter (Koller 2010) in dispensational discourses.

In order to reduce the scope of the analysis and be more precisely focused on representation and remembering of Israel and Palestine in dispensational discourses, I developed a list of quasi-*a priori* terms for coding the texts. I consider these terms “quasi-*a priori*” because, although they were generated prior to the analysis, to a large extent I developed them based on previous (and somewhat extensive) exposure to dispensationalisms. This type of coding does, however, contrast with emergent codes that arose directly from the analysis for this thesis. The following table provides a listing of both *a priori* and emergent codes:

<i>Code Type</i>	<i>Code</i>
predetermined codes/LRs:	Israel* Palestin* Jew* Arab* nation* Hebrew* dispensation* *millenni*
emergent codes/themes:	Israel’s endurance God’s need for Israel scripture reference prophecy future millennium/kingdom rhetorical question/device appeal to scriptural authority fact/proof/truth land terrorism (radical) Islam

Table 2. *Predetermined and emerging codes.*

The predetermined codes were a specific set of terms as linguistic realizations (LRs) or “tokens” that I wanted to account for. They also served as a basic means for beginning to identify rhetorical strategies, such as referential and predicational strategies, as they pertained to my

research questions. The asterisks above signal the inclusion of variants for these terms, such as ‘Israeli(s)’ and ‘Israelite(s)’ for ‘Israel*,’ ‘Palestine’ and ‘Palestinian(s)’ for ‘Palestin*,’ or ‘millennium’ and ‘(pre/post/a)millennial’ for ‘*millenni*.’ Also, I sought to avoid certain terms containing these forms when they were not relevant to the present linguistic realization, such as ‘incarnation’ and ‘explanation’ which include ‘nation’ but is excluded by searching for the form ‘nation*.’ The emerging codes developed during the analysis of the texts themselves, which was done in a recursive manner. Instead of corresponding to specific LRs, these codes relate to recurrent themes or topics that were evidenced by the data.

3.3 Analysis

Following a grounded theory approach to qualitative analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967), the organizational principal underlying the presentation of data below is thematic, guided by emerging themes that trend across texts and genres within dispensational discourses. Broadly, I categorize these themes as either positive representation and remembering (Section 3.3.1) or negative representation and silencing (Section 3.3.2). In the discussion that follows, I begin with strategies of positive representation and remembering of Israel, highlighting three salient themes of dispensational discourses: 1) the endurance of Israel as a collective, national identity across time and space, 2) the primacy of Israel’s relationship to the land of Palestine, and 3) the future of Israel. The construction of these themes also relates to the performative act of silencing as it is enacted through discourse. As a result, I also discuss the role of silencing in dispensational discourses as it pertains to the Palestinian perspective of *al-Nakba* ‘The Catastrophe.’ Finally, I provide examples of how dispensational text producers negatively construct Israel’s “enemies,” which includes framing Palestinians as terrorists.

3.3.1 Positive Representation and Remembering

3.3.1.1 The Endurance of Israel's Collective, Ethnic, and National Identity

The distinguishing characteristic of premillennial dispensationalisms does not strictly derive from either their premillennialism or their emphasis on separate dispensations. Rather, one of the most distinctive doctrines in classical and revised dispensationalisms is the belief in the endurance⁶⁶ or continuity of Israel as a unique national entity. This belief presupposes a unifying collective identity for Israel and Jewish people that extends through space and time. Israel, as many dispensationalists argue, is the centerpiece of God's plan for humanity. Therefore, the very existence of Jewish people despite experiencing persecution and genocide committed against them is considered evidence that God has divinely preserved and sustained them for a national purpose. Moreover, dispensationalists believed God had entered into unconditional covenants with Israel as described in the Hebrew Scriptures. When interpreted literally, these biblical passages seemed to require future fulfillment. The implementation of covenant promises according to literal interpretation further necessitated that Israel be a nation whose territory would be located within (and in some cases also beyond) Palestine. However, especially prior to the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the dispensationalist interpretation seemed implausible because Jewish people were geographically dispersed.

In order to articulate an unbroken relationship between past (particularly pre-70 A.D.), present, and future Jews, dispensationalists discursively constructed Israel's collective identity such that ethnic, religious, and national identity extended across time and space. Looking at the representation of Israel as a social actor in dispensational discourses, we note "constructive

⁶⁶ "Endurance" is a notion posited by endurance theorists in philosophy and their general position with regard to the identity of physical objects (Lewis 1986). The dispensational articulation of Israeli and Jewish (collective) identity seems to imply that Israeli and Jewish collective identity extends through both space (in Israel/Palestine or in dispersion) and time (past, present, future, eternity) in order to establish a continuous referent/object for covenantal blessing.

strategies” and “strategies of perpetuation” (Wodak et al. 2009[1999]:35, 37) as types of referential and predicational strategies that emphasize Israel’s (/the Jews’) continuity as a national, political entity. For example, the following text fragments taken from *Bibliotheca Sacra* articles within the last decade illustrate the construction of Israel’s identity across the temporal horizon:

- (1) When the Messiah will reign in the millennial kingdom, a true government will be instituted. While justification is the same in every era, this government will involve worship of the one true God, the administration of law, and interaction between nations and individuals. The five sacrifices discussed in these two articles above will be a part of society **as God culminates His work through Israel, which was initiated with the call of Abram long ago.** (Hullinger 2010:179)
- (2) David's "kingdom" is his realm, the people over whom his descendants' rule would extend. (This promise builds on the Abrahamic Covenant [Gen. 12:2] in **guaranteeing the continuance of Israel as a people.**) (Pond 2002:205)

In these passages, the phrases “initiated [...] long ago” and “continuance [...] as a people” emphasize Israel’s continuity through time. In (1), Jerry M. Hullinger argues that the animal sacrifices prescribed under Levitical law will be reinstated in the future as they take place in a Jewish Temple that many dispensationalists believe will be built in Jerusalem. As (1) also indicates, these sacrifices will be integrated into the socio-political fabric of Israel in the millennium, and this establishes a strong connection with the cultural and religious practices of ancient Judaism. Moreover, the “work” that God does “through Israel” in the future is said to have already begun, having been “initiated with the call of Abram long ago.” In the dispensational scheme, the covenantal promises God made to Abraham, such as national occupation of Palestine and the reign of Jesus Christ from Jerusalem, await complete fulfillment in Jews that have been “regathered” to Palestine. The full realization of the Abrahamic and other covenants depend upon, as (2) states explicitly, “the continuance of Israel as a people.”

Accordingly, dispensational texts are often marked by language that articulates Israel's identity as temporally constant from the Old Testament period to the present time in order to establish a continuous and identifiable referent for the object of covenantal blessing.

The collective national identity of Israel that producers of dispensational discourses construct transcends not only time but extends across geographical space as well.

Dispensationalists maintain that the Jewish Diaspora that began in the 1st century is a temporary displacement that does not deteriorate Israel's identity, which is primarily construed as national and ethnic.⁶⁷ Dispensational discourses frequently mention the "period of Israel's dispersion" (3) "among the nations" (4) to articulate both temporal and spatial continuity:

- (3) God will first conclude His work for the Gentiles **in the period of Israel's dispersion**; then He will return to bring in the promised blessings for Israel. (Walvoord 1945:166 [from "The fulfillment of the Davidic covenant"])
- (4) From this point on we must resort to secular history in tracing the history of Israel in and out of the land. It is sufficient to say that Israel has never, since the overthrow by Babylon and the Assyrians, possessed the land. **Always some Israelites have lived in Palestine, but Israel as a whole has been dispersed among the nations.** There has been nothing in the way of a national entity in Palestine as far as the Jew is concerned that can measure up to the standards for national Israel set forth in Moses and the prophets. (Kreller 1948:203-204)
- (5) Ever since **for almost two milleniums** [sic] **Israel has been among the nations**, and the Pentateuchal prophecies regarding such **worldwide scattering** have been and are being fulfilled. (Kreller 1948:204)
- (6) **The foundation of the state of Israel in recent years has been a part of the predicted regathering of scattered Israel back to their ancient land.** [...] That over one million Jews are already in Palestine in a movement that parallels in many ways the Exodus from Egypt is tangible evidence which cannot be ignored reasonably. The significance of the regathering is that it justifies the literal interpretation of prophecy which anticipated just such a movement. (Walvoord 1952:295-296)

⁶⁷ I have not here listed "religious" as a dimension of Israeli/Jewish identity because, in dispensational discourses, Israeli/Jewish identity holds whether or not there is a consistent religious element. This is not to say that the religious component of Israeli/Jewish identity has no prominence in dispensational discourses. Still, it is worth noting that dispensationalists often describe the period of dispersion as secular in nature. This relates to the dispensational expectation that Israel's future will necessarily entail spiritual/religious renewal.

- (7) Where is Israel? Where are those who are scattered throughout the Diaspora? **The mighty right hand of God has gathered them from the nations of the world and Israel was miraculously born May 15, 1948.** (Hagee 2007b – AIPAC speech)

Dispensational discourses do not typically recount details of Jewish life in the “dispersion” and “worldwide scattering.” Generic mentioning of Jewish dispersion is prominent, but the particulars of this “period” are not as important as discursively ensuring national continuity, which also serves as a strategy for legitimating Israel’s claim to the land (cf. Section 3.3.1.2). The endurance of Israel’s identity is critical to dispensationalisms that predict future dealings with national Israel by God. This is perhaps especially important in classical and revised dispensationalisms that (a) rigidly demarcate between Israel and the church in their anthropology, and (b) consider as part of their philosophy of history that the present dispensation (which corresponds with Israel’s dispersion) is parenthetical to God’s dealing with Israel.

Moreover, in constructing Israel’s endurance the ethnonym “Israel” in (3-7) functions as a generalizing and essentializing type of synecdoche that relates the whole for the part (*totum pro parte*) and corresponds to rhetorical strategies of reference and predication (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:57). An example of this can be seen in (4) where “some Israelites” that “have [always] lived in Palestine” are contrasted with “Israel as a whole” that is “dispersed.”⁶⁸ Synecdoche can be an important feature of rhetorical strategies that communicate “sameness” when national identity is discursively constructed (Wodak et al. 2009[1999]).

Dispensational discourses convey the sameness of Israel through use of synecdoche in cooperation with other discursive strategies that likewise serve to establish Israel’s continuity

⁶⁸ The particular article that examples (4-5) are taken from is part of the April-June issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra* that was published in 1948. I assume that the article was written prior to the announcement of Israel’s statehood on May 15, 1948, even though the article was released at nearly the same time. Thus, when Kreller refers to Jews as “dispersed,” it appears that he is not yet aware of the establishment of the state at the time of writing. Moreover, it is important to recognize that while the establishment of Israel in 1948 was deemed prophetically significant by many dispensationalists, they nevertheless awaited a fuller “restoration” of Jews to Palestine since more Jews lived throughout the world than in Israel.

across space and time. When Jewish immigration to Palestine increased in 20th century and eventually the State of Israel was established, these events were framed in terms of Israel's continuity. Israel was not born, but rather *reborn*, and prophetic passages that dispensationalists believed awaited future fulfillment were interpreted as Israel *again* being situated at the center of God's plan. The dispensational ideology enables Israel's present and future national identity to be conceptualized as enduring by relating it to prior characteristics (as in 8) and future perpetuation (as in 9):

- (8) Accordingly, the prophet [Zechariah] observes a beautiful order: national **resuscitation** (v. 4-10, 12, 13), national **regathering** (v. 12), national **regeneration** (v. 14a), national **reestablishment** (v. 14b). (Unger 1949:441)
- (9) The many references in the prophecies to eternity, the promise of **an eternal nation**, eternal possession of the land, an eternal throne, an eternal king, and an eternal kingdom, guarantee that **Israel as a nation will retain its identity** not only through the millennium, but **throughout all eternity**. (Martin 1944:231)

Israel retains its former, national identity throughout dispersion though, crucially, the purpose that dispensationalists maintain underlies this preservation is the ultimate geopolitical manifestation in the land of Palestine.

In dispensational texts that are “modal ensembles” (Kress 2010:28) and not exclusively written text, linguistic and non-linguistic signs collaborate in order contribute to the meaning of Israel's endurance. In Figure 3 below, taken from Christians United for Israel's “Get Informed” page on their website (www.cufi.org), referential and predicational strategies merge with visual imagery to communicate modern Israel's intimate link with the past (CUFI 2011b):



Figure 3. Image from the 'Get Informed' Page of Christians United for Israel's Website.⁶⁹

In this multimodal text fragment, "Israel" primarily refers to the modern state of Israel, though the extension to include Jews that are not Israeli citizens may be implied. The use of present tense in the phrase "is facing some of the most serious threats" makes the danger imminent while situating such "threats" in relation to "her [i.e., Israel's] history" implies historical and political continuity over time. These rhetorical strategies are further informed by their juxtaposition with a partial image of an antique map of Israel. The label *Terre Sainte* 'Holy Land' emphasizes the dispensational belief that modern Israel is a direct continuation of the Israel of the past with a rich historical basis in the land. Moreover, the territorial boundaries that are visible extend farther east than the state of Israel's current borders. This could invoke the dispensational belief that Israel will in the future possess a larger portion of land than is currently occupied and, in this way, extends continuity into the future as in (9) where it is said that "Israel as a nation will retain its identity" both "through the millennium" as well as "throughout all eternity."

Another way in which dispensational text producers construct Israel's endurance is through a particularizing synecdoche that replaces a "semantically wider term" for one that is singular and more "semantically narrow" (Wodak et al. 2009[1999]:44). Figure 3 above illustrates this, with the singular feminine pronoun "her" used as a referent for Israel. This

⁶⁹ This banner was retrieved April 26, 2011, from http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=get_informed.

synecdoche involves “the relation ‘singular-plural’” (Wodak et al. 2009[1999]:44) and is a referential strategy that in dispensational discourses can serve to perpetuate stereotypes. The text fragment in (10) below demonstrates other uses of the particularizing (/singular for plural) synecdoche, which entails the singular religionym “the Jew” as well as the singular masculine pronoun “he” to refer to a collective group that has been discursively homogenized:

- (10) **The Jew is the miracle of history**, and can no more be understood apart from God than the universe can. [...] **[T]he mystery of the Jew, the most ancient of peoples yet the most modern of men**, baffles both the historian and the philosopher who would neglect the proper consideration of the relationship between **this nation** and God. Dispersed for centuries among all nations, without any national center, without a national capital, national government, national flag—with no national rallying point whatever, secular or religious, yet entering always eagerly into the life about him wherever permitted to do so, for ages the object of infamous, unreasoning and devilish hatred, plundered, persecuted and outraged in every natural right, every tenderest sensibility—**the Jew has remained unique in all the world. He** has never been driven to hatred, never to conspiracy, never to disloyalty. Wherever **the Jew** lives **he** is loyal to the government under which **he** lives. All other ancient peoples, again and again, have gone down under the law of degeneracy. This law, inflexible and inexorable in its effect upon the Gentile, never touches **the Jew. The Jew** has seen the conquerors of **his** people, two or three thousand years ago, descend steadily in the scale of national influence and of personal character until they have become objects of pity and contempt, **yet he abides** in undiminished vigor of mind and body. Surely only God can be the cause of this, and this fact demonstrates the Bible to be the Word of God. The Scriptures contain predictions concerning **the Jews** uttered so long before the events occurred that no human foresight could have anticipated them. These predictions were so literally fulfilled in such a precise and minute detail according to the specifications laid down beforehand, that there is eliminated from the predictions all possible guessing, and we have indeed the Word of God and **the unique, chosen nation of God which He chose for a definite and great purpose.** (Kann 1937:443-445)

The use of the singular terms “the Jew” and “he” in (10) function in a way that corresponds to the use of particularizing synecdoches in anti-Semitic discourses of Austria (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). In particular, they are “means of referential [...] assimilation and inclusion” and “serve stereotypical generalisation and essentialisation that refer in a leveling manner to a whole group of persons” (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:57). The stereotypes present in (10) are superficially

positive (e.g., the predication of “the Jew” that “he abides in undiminished vigor of mind and body”), and these also contribute to the argumentation that supports the endurance of Israel’s national identity. That is, according to this passage, “the Jew” is “*the* miracle of history” (emphasis added): simultaneously “ancient” and “modern,” and wholly “unique in all the world.” Such predicational strategies serve to dissimilate Jewish people from the nations of the world within which they live although, significantly in (10), they are not affected by “the law of degeneracy” and therefore remain culturally, ethnically, and morally pure. The comparison between “the Jew” and “the Gentile” contributes to national identity by combining negative presentation of the Gentile Other with strategies of dissimilarity (Wodak et al. 2009[1999]:42). This “argumentation scheme” involves “topo[i] of difference” (Wodak et. al 2009[1999]:42) so that the enduring identity of “the Jew” who has “seen the conquerors of his people, two or three thousand years ago” nonetheless still “abides.” Moreover, the scope of the identity under consideration is national and collective, as “the Jew” appears to be coreferential with “this nation” that is “the unique, chosen nation of God.” The act of preserving “this nation” is ascribed to God and is “for a definite and great purpose,” which invokes the full realization of covenantal promises that dispensationalists anticipate.

3.3.1.2 The Land as a Permanent Possession for Israel by Divine Covenant

Some of the examples above also manifest a second prominent theme in dispensational discourses: the relationship between Israel and the land. This theme is interconnected with the concept of Israel’s enduring identity because it assumes historical continuity and the endurance of Israel’s identity for possession of Palestine in perpetuity. The construction of Israel’s national identity in dispensational discourses is such that it endures whether or not Jews (of whom this

identity is said to hold) actually comprise a physical nation in Palestine. However, although dispensationalists regarded Jewish diasporic identity to entail nationality (as well as ethnicity) they did not conceive of this identity as a substitute for the ultimate realization of Jewish nationality within Palestine. Palestine was considered to be the Jewish homeland regardless of whether or not a Jewish state was in existence there. The following in (11) illustrates this tension between national Jewish identity in diaspora and possession of the land:

(11) Truly there is a future, a bright and glorious future, for Israel. The prophets write much on this theme. There is to be a **regathering of dispersed Israel into their own land.** (Kreller 1948:205)

Again, the notion of “regathering” entails the endurance of Israel’s collective identity across space and time since “Israel” stands for the whole of Jewish people. However, the possessive phrase “their own land” in (11) further indicates that, according to dispensational frameworks, ownership of Palestine is not predicated upon physical location within Palestine.⁷⁰

According to dispensationalists, Jewish possession of Palestine is principally (if not exclusively) predicated on the covenantal promises of God, which they see expressed in distinct but interrelated covenants between God and Israel. These dispensational covenants entail explicit geopolitical implications for Palestine. The rhetorical strategies involved in formulating the conditions of Israel’s possession of the land include predications that semantically extend through time (e.g., “in perpetuity,” “permanent,” “forever”) similar to the construction of Israel’s identity:

⁷⁰ See also example (36) and related discussion below. The phrase “their own land” may be recontextualized from a passage in the book of Ezekiel, which reads, “Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land””’ (Ezekiel 37:21, New American Standard Bible; the phrase “their own land” also appears in translations that would have been available for use by Kreller in 1948).

- (12) To the little land of Palestine, about 150 miles long and 60 miles wide, almost a billion souls—Jews, Christians, and Moslem—look as the sacred center of their faith. Though many are not aware of the fact, one of the integral features of the Abrahamic Covenant is **the grant of the land of Palestine to Abraham and his seed in perpetuity** (See Gen. 12:7). (Feinberg 1955:311)
- (13) The nature of the Abrahamic **land promise** is that it is **an unconditional promise** in its ultimate fulfillment, and it is **an everlasting promise** which indicates a **permanent possession of the land**. (Townsend 1985:328)
- (14) The lesson we should observe here is the faithfulness of God to keep covenant. With relation to the land this is paramount. The unchangeable and eternal God keeping covenant with His people is fundamental in Judaism, in particular as regards **the right and title to the land in which Israel, God's earthly people, are to dwell forever**. (Kreller 1948:199)

Just as the Abrahamic covenant was considered grounds for “guaranteeing the continuance of Israel as a people” (see example [2] above), so dispensationalists maintain that this covenant is grounds for, as (13) states, “permanent possession of the land.” The referential terms “covenant” and “promise” imply assuredness and, in the context of dispensational covenants concerning land, these terms emphasize that God will personally guarantee that ethnic (the “seed” of Abraham), national Israel “dwell forever” in Palestine.

How producers of dispensational discourses communicate the covenants also provides a frame or perspective from which to view the land of Palestine and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Dispensational discourses are often characterized by, as in (12-14), framing the land in terms of a legally-binding, contractual relationship between God and the Jews (e.g., “right,” “title,” “grant”). It is in this sense that “the right and title to the land” has been “grant[ed]” through the “unconditional” and “everlasting promise” to “Israel, God’s earthly people.”

As with discursively constructing Israel’s enduring identity, multimodality is also a resource in articulating Israel’s relationship to the land of Palestine among new media dispensational texts. The image below in Figure 4 is the header for the “prayer reports” and

“news reports” disseminated by For Zion’s Sake Ministries (FZSM). Prior to 2010, this was also the main logo of the FZSM website.



Figure 4. *For Zion’s Sake Ministries Logo with al-Aqsa Mosque.*⁷¹

Three prominent features of the above image contribute to the articulation of the Israeli/Jewish land-nation relationship. The name of the ministry, taken from Isaiah 62:1, involves the use of “Zion” as a referential term for the land of Palestine, and this naming creates historical continuity between biblical Zion and the modern Israeli state. In like manner, the Jewish or Hebrew Calendar is displayed in the bottom right corner of the image, extending the history of modern Israel almost six millennia into the past rather than just six decades. The photograph of Jerusalem invokes the past-present land relationship since, for example, the walls of the Old City are prominent in the foreground. The al-Aqsa mosque is also visually prominent, though the sweeping flag of Israel superimposed on the photograph seems to suggest the primacy of

⁷¹ From an FZSM email news report on October 14, 2009 (FZSM 2009).

Judaism and Israel, not Islam or Palestine, even though the primary area depicted is (Arab) East Jerusalem, which Palestinians consider to be part of the West Bank.⁷²

Among dispensationalists, Jerusalem became a site of increased interest when the Israeli military conquered the city in the 1967 War. Jerusalem holds prominence not only as the expected capital of Israel, but it is also the site of an anticipated Jewish temple, as (15) indicates.

- (15) One of the important results of the six-day war of June, 1967, **when Israel conquered Jerusalem, was the revival of the question whether Israel would rebuild a temple on the traditional temple site in Jerusalem.** Orthodox Jews for many years have been praying daily for the rebuilding of the temple. In this expectation, they have had the support of premillenarians who interpret Scriptural prophecies as meaning what they say when they refer to a future temple in Jerusalem. (Walvoord 1968:99)

Moreover, the conquering of Jerusalem by Israeli forces tied ancient Jewish history with future expectations of dispensational frameworks, as the capturing of the city from “Gentiles” seemed to signal that “an event of profound prophetic significance” had taken place⁷³:

- (16) An event of profound prophetic significance took place on June 7, 1967. It was on that date, during the famous Six-Day Arab-Israeli War, **that Israel repossessed the site of the Temple area in the old city of Jerusalem, after almost 1900 years of Gentile possession.** (McCall 1971:341)

In late 2010, FZSM released a new website header that communicates not only a past-present land relationship, but also implies a past-present-future land relationship that centers on

⁷² In their May 19, 2011 news report, FZSM rearticulated the historical continuity of Israel’s relationship to the land of Palestine in what appears to be a reaction against U.S. President Barak Obama’s suggestion that Israel accept the pre-1967 borders in peace negotiations with Palestine. The following is a caption to a video FZSM posted commemorating Israel’s Independence Day: “The history of Jerusalem did not start in 1967. Thousands of years of Jewish history took place in what is now called ‘Arab East Jerusalem.’ Only when the Jewish residents were driven from their homes in 1948 was the city divided between East and West” (FZSM 2011).

⁷³ The version of Jesus’ Olivet Discourse in the Gospel of Luke mentions that “Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). Some dispensationalists took the conquering of Jerusalem in 1967 to be the end of Gentile dominance in Jerusalem, which would signal the close of the parenthetical period when God would fulfill the covenantal promises to national Israel.

Jerusalem. The image in Figure 5 temporarily replaced Figure 4 as the header on news and prayer reports, and is currently the image used on their main website (forzion.com).⁷⁴



News and digest on Israel and Middle East affairs compiled by FOR ZION'S SAKE MINISTRIES.

Figure 5. *For Zion's Sake Ministries Logo with Jewish Temple Replacing the al-Aqsa Mosque.*⁷⁵

The most striking element of the new image is the replacement of the al-Aqsa mosque with a transformed Temple Mount that features a future Jewish temple. This image establishes continuity with the past by appealing to earlier Jewish temples built in Jerusalem that long preceded the Muslim holy site, which also functions as a strategy for legitimizing Israel's relationship and claims to Jerusalem (and, by extension, all of the land for which Jerusalem is said to be capital). Moreover, the image visually materializes expectations of the future held by many dispensationalists that the Jews will build a third temple in order to reinstitute animal sacrifices when they possess their covenant land. In this respect, modern day Israel mediates between the past and future narratives of Israel in dispensational discourses.

⁷⁴ As of May 22, 2011. On the main website, the blue banner with the title "News Report from Jerusalem" is replaced with tabs linking to WebPages, such as "News," "Ministries," and "Bless Israel."

⁷⁵ From an FZSM email news report on October 14, 2010 (FZSM 2010).

3.3.1.3 Israel's Epistemic and Deontic Futures: Guaranteed and Imminent

The image of a third Jewish temple replacing the al-Aqsa mosque also demonstrates the significance of the construction of future worlds in dispensational discourses. Dispensationalists ascribed great importance the “miraculous” event of the establishment of the state of Israel (see, for example, House 2009:463), but they nevertheless do not consider the “current regathering to the land” (17) of Palestine to be the ultimate fulfillment of covenant promises. Instead, dispensationalists maintain that complete implementation of covenant promises to Israel pertains to a future reality, as (17-18) indicate:

- (17) First of all, **the present return to the land is not the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. The present boundaries of the State of Israel are a far cry from those given in Genesis 15:12-21.** Secondly, the present return to the land is a fulfillment of prophecy only to the extent that Scripture (Zeph. 2:1-2; Matt. 24:12; Rev. 11; 16:21) reveals Israel **will** be back in the land in the latter days of Israel's age in unbelief. **The current regathering to the land is not a regathering to the Lord.** (Feinberg 1955:319)
- (18) Israel's day of glory **is yet to come** and the Christ **will** reign on earth. (Walvoord 1953:110)

From these text fragments, written within a decade after Israel announced its statehood, we note that dispensationalists await a time when Israel's borders will extend past the present geopolitical boundaries, when Israel will convert to belief in Jesus as the Messiah (the “regathering to the Lord” as opposed to “[t]he current regathering to the land”), and when Jesus “will reign on earth” from Israel during the millennium.⁷⁶

The construction of the future as a core component of dispensational discourses is to a certain extent rather unsurprising: as a premillennial framework, dispensationalisms are by nature predominantly futurist. Still, this function of dispensational discourses has important

⁷⁶ Some dispensationalists also posit that when Christ returns He will touch down on the Mount of Olives (east of Jerusalem) and then enter the city through the sealed eastern gate of Old Jerusalem. This is the gate that is visible in Figures 4 and 5 from FZSM, adding another layer of meaning and complexity what is communicated through these images.

rhetorical and sociocognitive functions as beliefs regarding the future inform the interpretation of current political events (through the mental models associated with such events). Many prophetic passages that dispensationalists perceive as involving an Israeli/Jewish national entity, such as those indicated above in (17), pertain to a temporal domain that is yet to occur. In this discursively constructed future, which takes place beyond “the current regathering,” dispensationalists anticipate ultimate “hope” after a period when many Jews are expected be “destroyed” (19) before their predicted spiritual conversion and “ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant” that “guarantees an everlasting possession of the land” (20) to Israel:

- (19) The blessings and **the bright future in store** for the remnant indicate that ultimately there is hope for the covenant nation. Though many members of the nation **will** be destroyed in the **impending** judgment as a result of their wickedness (1:4-18), a remnant of that nation **will** survive. And this remnant **will** become the new, genuine people of Yahweh. (King 1994:425)
- (20) [T]he ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, including the land promise, **is guaranteed** because **in the future** the Lord **will** graciously enable Israel to meet the condition of obedience. So the idea that the Abrahamic promises have been forfeited by disobedience, while true with respect to many individual Israelites in the past must be rejected as not being ultimately true of the nation **in the future**. The Lord **will** keep His covenanted land promise to Abraham and his **future** descendants. [...] The character of the Abrahamic Covenant is such that it **guarantees an everlasting** possession of the land by Abraham and his seed. (Townsend 1985:323-324)

The examples in (17-20) demonstrate that dispensational expectations for the future of Israel are deeply rooted in the past: the future “is guaranteed” and definitively “in store” because “the Lord will keep His covenanted land promise.” As John Hagee maintains in *Jerusalem Countdown*, one needs to “journey through the pages of world history and sacred Scripture to personally *experience Israel’s past before you can grasp the magnificent future* God has planned for Israel and the Jewish people” (Hagee 2006:81, emphasis added). The expected future is brought into the present in order to make sense of current realities and events.

Elements illustrating the construction of the future in dispensational discourses can be categorized somewhat according to the type of modality they express. Patricia L. Dunmire notes a “discourse analytic [...] distinction between deontic and epistemic modality” (Dunmire 2008:84-85) such that a speaker’s degrees of commitment to either the obligation or reality of a proposition are expressed differently. *Deontic modality* pertains to action and “expresses notions of obligation, conviction, and permission” and is commonly expressed through the use of modal auxiliaries such as *must* and *should* (Dunmire 2008:85). *Epistemic modality* pertains to “the status and/or certainty” of particular knowledge or belief and is often expressed by modal auxiliaries such as *might* and *will* (Dunmire 2008:85). Within this division, the above examples belong to the rubric of epistemic modality. That is, these examples illustrate the function of the modal auxiliary “will” in the process of discursively constructing future (possible) world in accordance with the dispensational philosophy of history (including the future). Moreover, Dunmire draws from Fleischman’s (1982) categorical division of the relative location of future events in discourse as a binary distinction that depends upon the temporal relationships to that of the actual speech event. “Proximal” future events are discursively constructed as temporally nearer to the speech event than “distal” future events, which are even further in prospective time. Dunmire stresses that the future in discourse is not “a monolithic, unified whole” (Dunmire 2008:86). Rather, the future is partitioned in discourse, and the typologies of modality and future events emphasize the “dynamic” nature of the future as it is shaped through text and talk.

However, (while I agree with Dunmire’s overall argument with regard to the dynamicity of future events, I maintain that) the construction of the future in dispensational discourses does not neatly fit within the aforementioned categorizations. The above examples (17-20) appear superficially to belong to the domain of epistemic, rather than deontic, futures since the modal

auxiliary “will” is salient and they display the degree of certainty with which the speakers have for the propositions expressed by each utterance. Indeed, the primary rhetorical function of these examples is the construction of particular future realities (e.g., Christ reigning on earth from Jerusalem) along with controlling knowledge and belief toward such. Notwithstanding, in order to understand how the future functions in dispensational discourse in particular, it is critical to consider the basis by which text producers construct future realities, which in turn relates to the discourse-specific context. Among dispensational discourses, the expectation of a given epistemic future is intimately, and perhaps inseparably, related to a deontic future whereby God is obligated to bring about such an expectation.

In the context of dispensationalisms (especially the classical and revised varieties), the following properties are significant with regard to the future: (a) expectations of the future are derived from, and therefore situated in relation to, the authority of the Bible, (b) dispensational interpretations are legitimized and perspectivized as authoritative since their hermeneutic is constructed as revealing the “plain” sense of biblical texts, and (c) since the Bible is considered uniquely authoritative as a divinely inspired work, it is considered the foundation for determining both orthodox (right belief) as well as orthopraxy (right action). These three features form part of the context by which production and comprehension of dispensational discourses occurs, and they collaboratively inform a complex and dynamic interrelatedness between knowledge/belief (epistemic modality) and action (deontic modality) that is bidirectionally influential. The future reality constructed in dispensational discourses implies and informs sociopolitical action as text and text interpretation are construed as united. Therefore, what “will” occur evokes obligation of particular present actions (e.g., “blessing Israel” politically and economically may be construed as a requirement). Additionally, and explicit in the above examples, what “will” occur in terms

of future events “must” transpire because God is divinely obligated to bring them about. For example, prophetic events that pertain to the “future national kingdom of Israel” not only “are to be,” but they “must [...] take place,” as in (21) below:

- (21) It is the author's view that both classical and progressive dispensationalists are correct in seeing a **future** national kingdom of Israel, ruled by Jesus in Jerusalem. God's unconditional covenants and promises in the Old Testament **are to be** fulfilled literally for the nation Israel. God promised Israel that they would be gathered to their own land, live in peace in that land, and be ruled by the Messiah. None of these things has happened yet and **must** therefore take place **in the future**. (House 2009:481)

The epistemic future of dispensational discourses bleeds into notions of deontic future because the certainty of future dispensational worlds is informed by articulations of God being obligated to cause them to take place. This does not suggest that the deontic/epistemic division is by any means unnecessary, but, at least in dispensational discourses, their boundaries appear to be quite nebulous and each category informs/reinforces the other.

The hybridity that is a feature of future modalities in dispensational discourses also extends somewhat to the proximal/distal categorization of future events. This, too, necessitates considering the discursive construction of the future with regard to how it is contextually situated, as mentioned previously. Additionally relevant to this theme is the dispensational doctrine of imminence, which emphasizes that the “rapture,” when Jesus Christ returns to remove the church from the earth, is imminent and can occur at any moment (Walvoord 1979[1957]:73).⁷⁷ The effect that this can have on certain epistemic futures is that they are in some ways ambiguous with regard to the proximal/distal division. Moreover, when the distinction between proximal and distal events is evident, their status is based on their

⁷⁷ Another way of wording this is that in the dispensational scheme there are no prophetically significant intervening events between the present time and the rapture, though some dispensationalists allow for possible exceptions (see Smith 1991:45-46). The doctrine of the imminence of the rapture has been held since the 19th century, although the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 has increased the sense of imminence among many dispensationalists as well as provided assurance for its reality.

relationship to future realities/events rather than just the timing of the actual speech moment.

The examples in (22-23) illustrate these properties:

- (22) God **will** rearrange the land for a great temple. [...] The Church is truly a separate part of the divine program, having its own promise for **the future**. This **will** be removal from the earth at the rapture, at which time God's program for the Jew **will** be picked up and continued from the point it was at the time of Christ's death. The tribulation period **will** follow, then the millennial day, at which time the Old Testament prophets **will** see their fulfillment. It **will** simply be a continuation of the old Jewish order, this time with Christ accepted and reigning as King. The Jews **will** continue with their annual sacrifices in worship as they did before Christ died. [...] It is our conclusion that the Jews **will** observe literal sacrifices when they have returned to the land of their millennial [sic] kingdom. (Mitchell 1953:358, 360)
- (23) The millennial temple **is** the last temple **to be** built in Jerusalem. However, there **is** also a temple **to be** built before the millennial temple and that is what may be called the tribulation temple because it **will** stand during the time of the tribulation. [...] The tribulation temple **will** therefore be destroyed and Christ **will** build the millennial temple afterwards. (McCall 1971:344)

Taken together, (22-23) provide a listing of future events that can be more or less sequentially ordered. However, some events, like the “rearrang[ing] the land” and the rapture, are ambiguous with respect to how near or far they are expected to occur in relation to the speech moment. From the time of the speech moment, these dispensational expectations are imminent. Other expected events are more proximal or more distal in relation to one another, but their statuses are dynamically constituted relative to the events that are ambiguous. So, for example, in (22-23) the rapture is followed by “the Jew” being “picked up” again by God, which is followed by the tribulation period and the building of the tribulation temple, which is followed by reinstating animal sacrifices, and so on. The proximity or distance of these events in relation to one another is clearly communicated, but their ultimate nearness or distance in relation to the speech moment is suspended since the events that they depend upon are temporally unspecified.

In dispensational discourses, then, the interplay between deontic/epistemic and proximal/distal divides corresponds to rhetorical functions. Dissolving these categorical boundaries enables text producers to construct future realities as necessary (/certain/guaranteed/obligated), and imminent. The effect of this is twofold: 1) the future realities proposed in dispensational discourses are assured because what “will/must” occur epistemically also “will/must” occur deontically because God is obligated to bring it about, and 2) belief in the future-as-rooted-in-past legitimates the present. Moreover, the certainty of Israel’s future reinforces and is reinforced by Israel’s ethnic and national uniqueness and endurance, which further strengthens motives for “blessing” Israel through political, financial, and ideological support.

3.3.2 Negative Representation and Forgetting

3.3.2.1 Silencing and Forgetting Palestinian Perspectives

Commemorating and remembering a particular narrative and history of Israel is common in dispensational discourses, and these actions produce and are reinforced by silencing the narratives and histories of Palestinians. In this section, I draw from the interdisciplinary approach to a theory of silencing developed in Thiesmeyer (2003b), wherein silencing is conceived of as a discursive act that is performative and meaningful (Thiesmeyer 2003a). According to this theory, silencing is not just “the absence of expression” but is also crucially a “socially constructed practice” that is a function of discourse (Thiesmeyer 2003a:4). Silencing is often “disguised” and not overtly manifest, and functions as a legitimating strategy by enacting control over and access to ways of using language that legitimizes certain forms while delegitimizing others at the same time (Thiesmeyer 2003a:2). In dispensational discourses, silencing is an action that often

delegitimizes and excludes Palestinians, which is partly a consequence of how these discourses legitimize and include specific (/particularized) ways of representing and remembering Israel and Jewish people.

In general, the texts I analyzed from *Bibliotheca Sacra* are characterized by “absence” of Palestinians, who do not commonly receive explicit mentioning. The examples below in (24-25) pertain to the aforementioned themes of land and Israel’s endurance, and in constructing these aspects of Israel’s identity they also illustrate silencing in dispensational discourses of the pre-1948 non-Jewish population, many of whom became Palestinian refugees:

- (24) In connection with Israel's greatness as a nation there is the very prominent assurance of the possession of a land, that of **Palestine, for the establishment and development of [Jewish/Israeli] national life.** (Lincoln 1943:319)
- (25) [...] God in His all-wise plan has ordained Israel to be an earthly people united in every way to a particular land, the Promised Land. **Historically, it proved to be a land of promise to Israel coming out of Egypt and it will yet prove to be a land of promise to a dispersed and afflicted and unbelieving people.** The glory of the Lord was manifested in the past dealings with Israel; it will again be shown forth to all the world when in the future He will anew take up His dealings with His people. **The land was central in Israel's economy and will yet be central in her future welfare. We have seen she has every right and title to the land by divine grace. She has resided in the land and left her stamp upon it. Those things which make for Judaism necessitate the occupation of the land by Israel and there is every promise in the prophets of both Testaments that the occupation is sure and glorious.** (Kreller 1948:212)

As we see in (24), the perspective from which land issues are viewed in dispensational discourses is Israel and “Israel’s greatness as a nation.” The land of Palestine is given with “assurance” to Israel for the express purpose of “the establishment and development national life,” although the consequences to the indigenous population (i.e., dispossession) are silenced. In (25), the tension between Israel’s past and expected future according to dispensationalisms is evident as history is exploited as an authoritative basis for definitively and exclusively associating Palestine with Israel, which has “every right and title to the land by divine grace”

(25). Israel is feminized in (25) with the use of the generalizing and essentializing feminine pronouns “she/her,” who has “resided in the land and left her stamp upon it.” The imprint of Palestinians is not mentioned and forgotten.

The discursive construction of Israel’s relation to the land of Palestine in these examples not only frames the relationship in terms of Israel’s primacy, but, significantly, it silences any non-Jewish relationship to the land by suppressing actual details of the history of Palestine in the almost two millennia that preceded the establishment of the modern State of Israel.

Dispensational discourses often displace the time interval from the 1st century Diaspora that began in 70 A.D. until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Jewish Zionism emerged and Jewish immigration to Palestine began increasing. Israel’s enduring identity thus retains coherence in part because this period is trivialized and backgrounded, which silences any non-Jewish relationships to the land. In (24-25), the discursive privileging of Israel invokes distant past and the necessity of Israel’s future, which silences Palestinians and leaves little or no room for non-Israeli/Jewish presence in the land.

In contrast to (24-25), examples (26-27) are text fragments of *Bibliotheca Sacra* articles that do make explicit mentioning of Palestinians. However, in such cases Palestinians are referred to by the use of generic ethnonyms such as “the Gentiles” and “(the) Arabs” as a referential strategy:

- (26) Yes, God gave them [the Jewish people] the land of Palestine something like four thousand years ago. It is God’s covenant gift to his people Israel...But Israel has sinned and drifted from God. And the land has for many years been in the hands of **the Gentiles**. ...They shall one day be removed and the people of Israel shall be fully restored to the possession of the land, mandates notwithstanding, **Arabs** notwithstanding, and dictators notwithstanding. God’s word shall be fulfilled to the last breath. (From Editorial in *Grace and Truth*, October, 1937, as quoted in Kann 1937:457)

- (27) From 1920 to the latter part of the next decade there were many incidents of violence between **the Arabs** and Jews in the land, a result of a number of unfortunate factors. The answer of the British Government to these accumulated facts of violence was to restrict drastically Jewish immigration, a policy stated in the well known "White Paper" of May, 1939. Apart from a short respite during World War II the violence between Jews, **Arabs**, and the English continued unabated. [...] The Jews, happy that at last they were assured of a Jewish State in Palestine authorized by the nations of the world, accepted the partition plan. **The Arabs** have loudly and consistently rejected it in toto from that hour to this. (Feinberg 1955:315-316)

Notably, both of these examples position “the Gentiles” and “(the) Arabs” in opposition to the will of God as set forth in dispensational discourses, which here entails that the Gentiles (i.e., non-Jewish peoples) be “removed” from Palestine in order that Israel be “restored to the possession of the land.” In (26) such opposition is considered futile due to the assurance of the dispensational belief that the Bible predicts Israel’s perpetual existence as a nation. In (27), Palestinian opposition to “Jews in the land” is articulated in terms of “violence.” The reasons or causes for violence are downplayed and silenced, as they are ambiguously deemed “a result of a number of unfortunate factors.” Britain’s reaction of “restrict[ing] drastically Jewish immigration” is implicitly negative, as it temporarily countered what dispensationalists viewed as essential to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy concerning Israel.

Moreover, the distinction made between the reactions of “the Jews” and “the Arabs” to the proposed United Nations 1947 Partition Plan is of interest with regard to strategies of silencing. “The Jews” are described as “happy” and “accept[ing]” of the plan while “the Arabs” on the other hand “rejected it *in toto*.” This polarizing silences the possibility that geopolitical concerns in Palestine prior to the plan, such as increased waves of Jewish immigration and building of settlements, or possible unfairness with regard to the partitioning of the land, may have informed Palestinian and Arab criticism of the plan. Instead, Palestinian and Arab rejection

of the plan is problematized while the actual rationale for such rejection is silenced, allowing them to be blamed as the root cause of the Israel-Palestine conflict (see also [29] below).⁷⁸

Although dispensational discourses may explicitly mention Palestinians, in the texts I analyzed Palestinian perspectives are almost universally silenced. In particular, dispensational discourses typically commemorate what are considered key events in modern Israel's national history, with the establishment of statehood in 1948 as one preeminent example (see, for example, House 2009; Hagee 2006, 2007a, 2007b). Commemoration of Israel can be overt and explicit, or even presupposed in dispensational discourses, but, regardless, remembering the dispossession of the indigenous population in what is referred to by Palestinians as *al-Nakba* is almost wholly absent and forgotten.

However, there are two significant exceptions to this trend that involve silencing as a discursive act. The first is from an article published in *Bibliotheca Sacra* by Frank E. Gaebelein entitled "Arnold Toynbee and the Jews" (a reissuing of Gaebelein's address to the International Congress on Prophecy in November, 1955).⁷⁹ In the article/address, Gaebelein discusses

⁷⁸ In one sense, it is somewhat unsurprising that dispensational texts, especially ones produced as early as 1937 (26) and 1955 (27), would be marked by absence of terms such as *Palestinian/s* and prominent use of generic terms like *Arab/s* (however, see the use of "Palestinian Arabs" as a more unique identifier in example [28]). The texts that these examples are taken from preceded to a degree the strong expressions of Palestinian nationalism that became more prominent publicly after the 1960s. However, dispensationalists often explicitly reject attempts by Palestinians of articulating a discrete, national identity on the basis that Palestinians can or should be absorbed into a more generic Arab identity. For example, John Hagee refers to Palestinians in his (2007) book *In Defense of Israel*, but he ultimately and explicitly dismisses Palestinian identity, considering them instead to be immigrants from Arab nations surrounding Israel:

The land of Israel has never belonged to the Palestinians. Never! It was labeled Palestina by the Roman emperor Hadrian in A.D. 130, but there has never been a land called Palestine. There is no Palestinian language. Before 1948, the people now called Palestinians lived in Egypt. They lived in Syria. They lived in Iraq. They moved into the land of Israel when they were displaced by the war of 1948, which the Arab nations started, but Israel is not occupying territory these people call home. (Hagee 2007:58)

The avoidance of ascribing discrete, national identity to Palestinians in dispensational discourses is important in comparison to the utter uniqueness and ethno-national purity ascribed to Israelis and Jewish people, who retain discrete identity across space and time. Notable, too, in this quote from Hagee is his blaming of "the Arab nations" for causing the 1948 War. His conceptualizations of Israeli/Jewish identity and Palestinian non-identity seem to relate to and inform his overall conceptualization of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

⁷⁹ Toynbee was a British historian that initially supported Jewish Zionism, but later became a self-proclaimed advocate and "Western spokesman for the Arab cause" (Friedman 1999:73).

Toynbee's thoughts concerning the Jews because of Toynbee's prominence as a historian in addition to Gaebelien's considering the Jews to be a "subject" of "Biblical and current interest" related to prophecy (Gaebelien 1956:309). In the following excerpt, Gaebelien quotes Toynbee at length wherein the latter argues that the Jews "imitate[d] some of the evil deeds that the Nazis had committed against the Jews" when they "evicted Palestinian Arabs from their homes":

- (28) **But Toynbee's most scathing denunciation is reserved for the attitude of Israel toward the Arabs.** Consider, for instance, this passage: "If the heinousness of sin is to be measured by the degree to which the sinner is sinning against the light that God has vouchsafed to him, the Jews had even less excuse in A. D. 1948 for **evicting Palestinian Arabs from their homes** than Nebuchadnezzar and Titus and Hadrian and the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition had had for uprooting, persecuting and exterminating Jews in Palestine and elsewhere at divers times in the past. In A. D. 1948 the Jews knew from personal experience what they were doing and it was their supreme tragedy that the lesson learnt by them from their encounter with the Nazi German Gentiles should have been not to eschew but to imitate some of the evil deeds that the Nazis had committed against the Jews. On the day of judgment," Toynbee charges, "the gravest crimes standing to the German National Socialists' account might be, not that they had exterminated a majority of the Western Jews but that they had caused the surviving remnant of Jewry to stumble" (ibid., VIH, 290-91).

When it comes to the future of the Jews, or eschatology in relation to Israel, Toynbee's position is plain. Since the Jews are for him nothing more than a fossil civilization, they can hardly have much of a future. Of the Biblical doctrine of the believing remnant in Israel that continues through the ages, he seems to know nothing. For a remnant, a believing, living remnant, is a very different thing from a fossil. (Gaebelien 1956:318-319)

This example is the first (and one of the only) explicit mentioning of the Palestinian dispossession in the texts I analyzed. It occurs through intertextuality and interdiscursivity, wherein a separate text from a distinct discourse is brought into this dispensational text for the purpose of countering the arguments and views it contains. Moreover, while discussing in some way the Palestinian dispossession is exceptional in dispensational discourses of the academic genre, it nevertheless still contributes to asymmetric privileging of Israel because Gaebelien

silences the refugee issue in his response to the quote by turning his attention to the future/eschatological prospect of “the Jews” instead of exploring this topic.

What Gaebelein sees as “Toynbee’s most scathing denunciation” involves several elements, but they all center on his disapproval of “the Jews [...] evicting Palestinian Arabs from their homes” in order to establish an Israeli state. The dispossession of the indigenous population and subsequent creation of nearly 750,000 Palestinian refugees is generally absent in dispensational discourses. However, Gaebelein’s inclusion of this quote evidences that such absence cannot merely signify lack of knowledge on behalf of the producers of dispensational texts. Instead, it appears that some dispensationalists were well aware of the refugee problem, and could have viewed it as an (perhaps unfortunate but nevertheless) acceptable consequence of the prophetic events concerning Israel unfolding. Gaebelein silences the “evicting of Palestinian Arabs” by his response, wherein he does not address the topic, but instead reinforces the dispensational expectation of a national future for the Jewish people as his counterargument. This emphasis on Israel’s future justifies the present, including the negative consequences toward Palestinians, and silences the refugee issue by backgrounding it in order to further argue against Toynbee’s anti-Semitic claims that the Jewish people are a “fossil civilization.”

Another more recent instance of silencing Palestinian perspectives occurred through a text released by Christians United for Israel (CUFI) in reaction to Palestinians engaging in mass peaceful demonstrations at Israel’s borders on Sunday, May 15th, 2011, in remembrance of *al-Nakba*. David Brog, executive director of CUFI, authored the following excerpt from the “Brog’s Blog” section that featured prominently on CUFI’s May 17 weekly email update (CUFI, personal communication, May 17, 2011)⁸⁰:

⁸⁰ This text can also be accessed (in a fuller form than is provided in the CUFI email) through the weblog of David Brog, “Brog’s Blog,” at <http://brogsblog.wordpress.com/2011/05/18/the-catastrophe/>.

- (29) a. On Sunday, May 15th, people across the country and around the world celebrated Israel Independence Day. It was on May 15, 1948 – sixty-three years ago – that Israel’s leaders declared the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in their ancient land after centuries of exile.
- b. But for multitudes in the Arab and Muslim world, May 15th is not a day to celebrate. They have a different name for Israel Independence Day. They call it “al-Nakba” – the catastrophe. And indeed, for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, Israel’s birth did ultimately prove to be a catastrophe. During Israel’s war of independence, approximately 600,000 Palestinian Arabs became refugees. Some fled out of fear of the battles raging in their backyards. Some were forced out by their own leaders. And, yes, some were forced out by the Israeli military.
- c. But here’s an interesting question that the Nakba mourners prefer to dodge: Who started the war? There would not have been one Palestinian refugee – not one – had the Arabs not launched a war of aggression to destroy the Jewish State immediately after its birth. The Jews had agreed to divide the land into two states – one Jewish and one Arab. It was the Palestinians who rejected this compromise and tried to conquer all of the land for themselves.
- d. There’s an old Jewish joke that the definition of chutzpah (“nerve”) is to murder your parents and then throw yourself on the mercy of the court as an orphan. The same applies to those who attacked Israel in an effort to destroy it and then complained about the manner in which Israel dared to defend itself.

In the first two sections (29a-b), Brog initially positions himself as somewhat sympathetic to the plight of Palestinians, drawing attention to *al-Nakba* specifically. He then expands upon the meaning of the name, acknowledging that, “for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, Israel’s birth did ultimately prove to be a catastrophe” (29b). Moreover, unlike certain dispensational texts that construct the refugee issue as primarily the product of Arab hostility (see, for example, Price 2003), Brog concedes, albeit reluctantly and in a way that downplays Israeli aggression: “And, yes, some were forced out by the Israeli military.” However, immediately after mitigating the actions of the Israeli military, Brog quickly silences the Palestinian perspective of *al-Nakba* by blaming “the Arabs” for creating refugees by having “launched a war of aggression,”

“rejected” the partition plan, and “tried to conquer” all of Palestine (29c). Consistent with other dispensational texts that treat political events, Brog frames “the Arabs” as aggressors and on the offensive, attacking young Israel that is merely trying “to defend itself” (29d) “after its birth” (29c). Moreover, the use of the “old Jewish joke” to liken Palestinian and Arab discontent at the refugee issue to a murderous child expecting unjust mercy “as an orphan” justifies Israel’s dispossession of the indigenous population by silencing the Palestinian point of view.

3.3.2.2 Palestinians as Terrorists and Enemies of Israel

In addition to the salient themes of Israel’s enduring identity, relationship to land, and future – aspects of the discursive construction of Israel that entail positive representation, dispensational texts also prominently feature negative representation of “Israel’s enemies.” On the one hand, these enemies are impartially comprised of “nations” throughout the world, as dispensationalists often maintain that certain prophetic passages of the Bible predict a massive end-times global war against Israel:

- (30) As we have intimated above in the course of our remarks, we place the entire passage [Zechariah 12:1-9] in the time of the Great Tribulation and more specifically in the Battle of Armageddon, when **the nations of the earth will make their last frantic effort to blot Israel out of existence**, only to be met by the most crushing defeat at the hands of the Lord of hosts Himself. (Feinberg 1945:426)

Still, while many dispensationalists expect a massive universal attack against Israel by “the nations of the earth” to eventually unfold, certain nations and political actors feature more prominently than others in dispensational discourses as the adversaries of Israel. As discussed in Section 2, this includes Russia, Iran, Arab nations generally, and Palestine/Palestinians. Especially in texts produced by For Zion’s Sake Ministries (FZSM), Christians United for Israel (CUFI), and John Hagee, Israel is construed as perpetually being in imminent danger, surrounded

by hostile and aggressive Arab nations and Palestinians that are singularly bent on Israel's destruction. Continued emphasis on Middle East conflicts that involve Israel reinforces the expected belief that end-times events such as Armageddon are drawing near. Moreover, these events are constructed in dichotic and simplistic fashion such that Israel and Israelis are construed as democratic seekers of peace constantly (and merely) defending itself against Palestinians and others that are framed almost exclusively as aggressors and terrorists.

The FZSM and CUFI texts utilize both linguistic and non-linguistic social semiotic elements in the construction of Palestinians as terrorists and aggressors. The texts I analyzed from FZSM and CUFI are all characteristically "modal ensembles" where elements such as language, design, visual images, and color all collaborate to construct meaning. Figure 6 is a text fragment from a FZSM news report issued on November 14, 2007, and is an example of the overall design of the email news reports. Underneath the header, which includes the FZSM logo stressing Israel's relationship to Palestine and Jerusalem (see Figures 4 and 5 in Section 3.3.1.2 above), the body of the email contains a listing of news headlines "on Israel and Middle East affairs" and a snapshot of a featured video, which has an accompanying caption describing the video's content. As Figure 6 also demonstrates with regard to design, left of the video caption is a featured passage from the Bible, which is commonly taken from the Hebrew Scriptures reinforcing the significance of Israel historically, presently, and in the future. Finally, immediately below the video caption and Scripture passage is a weekly "Shop in Zion special."

Headlines

1. The Lynching Date is Set
2. Israel plans nuclear strike on Iran
3. Archaeologist uncovers Scriptures' famed wall
4. Dimona on Red Alert for possible Syrian strike
5. Holocaust: Babes in the woods - and cellars
6. Back Into the Trenches
7. Calls for renunciation of Fatah Covenant
8. Washington secretly lifting its boycott of Syria



Scripture:

When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, When He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the children of Israel. (Deuteronomy 32:8)

Video: "Suffering Terror"

A Biblical view of God's promises to Israel at a time of increasing opposition to Her very existence.

[click picture above to watch video](#)



This week's [Shop in Zion](#) special --

Philistine - The Great Deception

Is the Israeli-PLO Peace process the beginning of the end of the Arab-Israeli conflict, or is it a prelude to an all-out assault on Israel by the Arab nations?

[Click image to view in store](#)

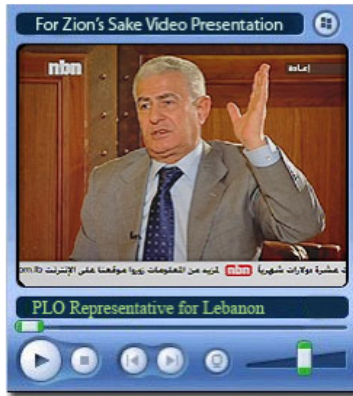
Figure 6. Image from For Zion's Sake Ministries News Report on November 14, 2007.⁸¹

In the above figure, the video image, along with its description and the “Shop in Zion” featured product, are of particular import to the construction of Palestinians as terrorists. The video image displays what appears to be a member, or at least supporter, of the Fatah faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization who is standing before an image of Yasser Arafat and wielding a handgun. The progressive aspect in the phrase “Israel’s enemies *are gathering*” (emphasis added) stresses the imminent nature of the danger that Israel faces. In the video caption, Israel is feminized with the use of “Her” as a referential strategy and singular for plural particularizing synecdoche. This recalls the use of the feminine pronoun from the CUFI text

⁸¹ FZSM 2007.

fragment in Figure 3 above, which warns: “Israel is facing some of the most serious threats in her history” (see Section 3.3.1.1). However, instead of articulating Israel’s imminent danger to motivate political support for Israel as the CUFI text does, this portion of the FZSM text reinforces the assuredness of Israel’s secure future through “God’s promises to Israel” despite “increasing opposition to Her very existence.” This last phrase also significantly articulates Israel’s “existence” as the principal cause for “opposition” to Israel, which is a mitigation strategy that could be downplaying aspects such as the role of Israel’s use of military force and building of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Moreover, the “Shop in Zion special,” advertising Roman Bennett’s (1995) *Philistine: The Great Deception* delegitimizes the Palestinian desire for peace by framing Palestinians as concealing their ulterior motive that entails “an all-out assault on Israel by the Arab nations.” Other FZSM news reports delegitimize Palestinian peace efforts in a similar manner, portraying Palestinians as obstacles to peace who desire to “Drive Israelis Out of All of Palestine” (see the video caption in Figure 7 below) and refuse “to recognize Israel as a Jewish State” (see Figure 8, bottom left).



Video: PLO Promises

Palestinian Authority Representative in Lebanon Abbas Zaki Supports Anti-Israeli Attacks and States: We Act According to the Phased Plan. Once We Get Jerusalem, We Will Move On to Drive Israelis Out of All of Palestine

[click picture above to view video](#)

Figure 7. *Featured Video from For Zion's Sake Ministries News Report on April 16, 2008.*⁸²

Peace Talks



[PA will never recognize Israel as Jewish state](#)

The Palestinian Authority will never recognize Israel as a Jewish state, senior Palestinian officials said on Tuesday, after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu proposed to freeze settlement construction in exchange for that condition. Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said that demand could never be accepted... [\[Read More\]](#)

[Fatah official says two-state solution is over](#)

The Palestinian Authority has concluded that the peace process based on a two-state solution has failed, a senior Fatah official said on Tuesday. His statement came as PA officials repeated their rejection of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's proposal... [\[Read More\]](#)



[Double-talking on Israel: U.S. aids Palestinians?](#)

JERUSALEM - Despite its history of friendly relations with Israel, the U.S. has been aiding Palestinian Authority construction in areas where the work could tilt the outcome of Mideast negotiations in favor of the Palestinians. By aiding... [\[Read More\]](#)



Figure 8. *'Peace Talks' Section of For Zion's Sake Ministries News Report on October 14, 2010.*⁸³

⁸² FZSM (2008).

The Shop in Zion online store (www.shopinzion.com) promotes Bennett's book as revealing the ultimate truth behind by "telling it like it is" and providing "a clear understanding of the Arab mind and Arab intentions" (For Zion's Sake Ministries 2011), which singularly entails destroying Israel and the Jews. The book title also evokes imagery that is prominent in narratives of Israel that liken the Arab-Israeli conflict to the biblical account of David and Goliath (Rose 2004:117; Masalha 2006:56-57). For example, the following article from *Bibliotheca Sacra* employs such imagery in positioning Israel, "slightly smaller than the state of New Jersey," against "six Muslim Arab states, in a region of twenty-two Muslim countries":

- (31) THE EXISTENCE OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL is nothing short of miraculous. It is a land of slightly under eight thousand square miles, or slightly smaller than the state of New Jersey, directly surrounded by six Muslim Arab states, in a region of twenty-two Muslim countries. Since its founding in 1948, Israel has been invaded by armies vastly superior in number, and it has often been attacked by terrorists bent on destroying the nation. (House 2009:463)

In the David and Goliath analogy, Israel is seen as young, inexperienced in military conquest, and without substantial power to fend off its opposition of the great Arab Philistine whose size, strength, and weapons are considerably overwhelming. As a result, the success of Israel in events such as the wars of 1948 and 1967 is seen as miraculous and achieved through divine assistance. Palestinian attempts at attaining statehood are construed as masking the true Palestinian desire of wiping Israel out of existence.

Among the texts I analyzed, those produced by John Hagee and Christians United for Israel (CUFI) exhibit similar argumentation in constructing the Palestinian "enemy." However, these texts also demonstrate the prominent construction of Israel and the U.S. as "us" who together face Palestinians and others as "our" common enemies. In order to understand how Palestinians are negatively constructed in texts produced by Hagee and CUFI, then, it is

⁸³ FZSM (2010).

necessary to first consider how ingroup construction of Israel/Judaism and the United States/Christianity functions.

In the (2006) book *Jerusalem Countdown*, which predicts an imminent nuclear war that propels the world toward Armageddon, John Hagee uses conjunction as means of collocating certain nations and religious groups together. This simple linguistic device functions as a means of achieving and establishing positive self- and negative other-representation throughout *Jerusalem Countdown*. This operation effectively categorizes actors as either Us or Them, carves up the geopolitical landscape, and sets a tone for how these actors are to be perceived in not only the text, but in extension to the actual referents in the real world. In Hagee's book, the following are among the conjoined entities:

Conjunction of Political Actors and Other Entities

- (32) Israel and America, America and Israel, Hitler's Nazis and Lenin's Communism, Christians and Jews, Jews and Christians, Christianity and Islam, Gentiles and Jews, Russia and China, the United States and Israel, Iran and Syria, the Palestinian terrorists and Hamas

By considering the immediate co-text of each conjoined pair, along with taking into account what is said about them (predicational strategies), these entities can be categorized according to their function in Hagee's text as either positive self-representation/ingroup formation or negative other-representation/outgroup formation. Table 4 provides examples of the role of conjunction in positive ingroup formation.

<i>Entities</i>	<i>Example(s)</i>
Israel and America	<p>...Israel and America will be on a nuclear collision course with Iran!</p> <p>Ahmadinejad’s response to the nations of the world who are concerned that they are making nuclear weapons to attack Israel and America is as follows: “Our answer to those who are angry about Iran achieving the full nuclear cycle is in one phrase, we say: Be angry and die of this anger.”</p> <p>The coming nuclear showdown with Iran is a certainty. The war of Ezekiel 38-39 could begin before this book gets published. Israel and America must confront Iran’s nuclear ability and the willingness to destroy Israel with nuclear weapons. For Israel to wait is to risk committing national suicide. The leaders of the Islamic Revolutionary Government of Iran are passionate in their hatred for Israel and America.</p>
America and Israel	<p>Iran’s hatred for America and Israel is without limit.</p> <p>America and Israel will be forced to stop Iran’s nuclear production or gamble with the national security of both nations.</p> <p>What will be the response of Islamic nations if America and Israel bomb Iran’s nuclear production sites?</p> <p>There is a clear and present danger to America and Israel from a nuclear Iran. There will soon be a nuclear blast in the Middle East that will transform the road to Armageddon into a racetrack. America and Israel will either take down Iran, or Iran will become nuclear and take down America and Israel.</p> <p>Clearly, North Korea has an agenda against America. The country is also on the side of the Islamo-fascists desiring to end America and Israel...</p> <p>Tragically, many Christians do not see the danger radical Islam poses for America and Israel.</p> <p>If Iran gets nuclear weapons, America will see nuclear suitcase bombs that will have the ability to kill 1-1.5 million people per atomic blast. Just because you can’t imagine it happening, don’t be foolish enough to believe it can’t happen, because the enemies of America and Israel are working night and day to make it a reality.</p>
Christians and Jews	<p>The new revelations shared in this chapter and the next make it clear: America is now engaged in a bloody battle with religious fanatics on a mission from their god to kill Christians and Jews.</p> <p>[One of Islam’s “three main goals” is to] Exterminate Christians and Jews</p> <p>It is their desire, their hope, and their absolute ambition to die in a war against Christians and Jews to please Allah.</p>
Jews and Christians	<p>Muslims must do more good works than bad or die a martyr’s death and be saved (in effect, salvation by works), and all Jews and Christians are accursed.</p>
Americans and Jews	<p>That means the Islamic army consists of 200 million who are willing to die killing Americans and Jews.</p>

Table 4. *Hagee’s discursive construction of Us by use of conjunction and rhetorical strategies in Jerusalem Countdown.*

These examples demonstrate that conjunction is a common device for collocation and uniting Israel, Jews, America, and Christians, as well as positioning them united in opposition to common enemies (e.g., “Iran,” “[radical] Islam,” “Islamofascists,” and “Muslims”) as they are discursively constructed.

Texts produced by CUFI, whose national chairman and founder is John Hagee, employ both language and other social-semiotic elements such as images and color to construct the U.S./Christian-Israel/Jewish ingroup. Figure 9 below is taken from CUFI’s website⁸⁴, but these images and graphics also appear on their email news updates and the pamphlets/booklets that they distribute.



Figure 9. *Website Graphics from www.cufi.org.*

The images, color, and design of the website (and other CUFI texts) effectively unite and collocate Israel/Judaism and the U.S./Christianity in a way that is analogous to conjunction. The CUFI seal prominently displays the Israeli and American flags, which are anthropomorphized somewhat as hands extend from each to come together in a handshake that symbolizes peace and partnership. The flags that are behind the seal further reinforce the Israel-U.S. relationship by fading into one another. Moreover, color plays an important role in contributing to meaning. Blue, white, and gold are all symbolic of Israel, for example, with blue and white being the

⁸⁴ This image was current as of May 5, 2011, and was retrieved from <http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage> (CUFI 2011c).

colors of Israel's flag and gold possibly symbolizing Jerusalem, the "golden city." Finally, this CUFI text fragment exhibits intertextuality and recontextualization with the use of Isaiah 62:1 as a them and motto for the organization, which has a dual effect in that it (a) articulates modern Israel's identity in ancient past as well as (b) strengthens the notion often argued by Hagee that support for Israel is a biblical mandate. Accordingly, as Hagee stated before AIPAC in 2007, "the matter of Israel is no longer just a Jewish issue; it is a Christian-Jewish issue" (Hagee 2007b:5).

Also part of the discursive unification of Israel and the U.S. in CUFI texts is their joint opposition to a common enemy. Immediately after declaring Israel to be "a Christian issue," Hagee closed his address to AIPAC with the following, collocating "America and Israel" and situating them as fighting together in "a war of good versus evil":

- (33) I believe 2007 is the year of destiny. **America and Israel are at war with a common enemy.** It is a war of good versus evil. It is a war of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness versus the culture of death. (Hagee 2007b:5)

Another example that communicates this same point is an email from CUFI from on October 14, 2010, recruiting "message[s] of encouragement" for "Israeli soldiers defending Israel's border with Lebanon" that would be "hand-delivered" by "CUFI pastors" during a tour to Israel (see Figure 10).



CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL
*will hand-deliver your message of encouragement to
 Israeli Soldiers defending Israel's border with Lebanon*

Next month we are bringing our first CUFI pastors tour to Israel. During our visit, we will meet with a group of Israeli soldiers who patrol Israel's northern border with Lebanon.



We would like to encourage these soldiers in their dangerous and difficult work by hand delivering to them your letters of support. Please take a minute of your time and write a **brief note of encouragement** to these brave young men and women who are standing on the front lines defending Israel - and America - from those who seek to destroy us both.

We know that they will be touched to learn that they do not stand alone.

May God Bless,

Pastor John Hagee National Chairman Christians United for Israel	David Brog Executive Director Christians United for Israel
--	--



Figure 10. *CUFI Email from October 14, 2010, Recruiting Messages of Encouragement for Israeli Soldiers.*⁸⁵

On the one hand, the very act of delivering such messages communicates a strong U.S.-Israel relationship. However, the language employed to persuade email recipients to participate in supporting Israel through this action is also important in the way that it constructs Israel and the U.S. as both facing danger from a common enemy. Part of the motive for supporting Israeli soldiers according to this text is that they “are standing on the front lines defending Israel – and America – from those who seek to destroy us both.” Again, Israel and America collocate

⁸⁵ CUFI (2010).

together, and this is reinforced by conjunction in addition to the use of “us” and “both” as referential strategies uniting these entities together.

Returning to the use of conjunction as a strategy for ingroup and outgroup formation in Hagee’s *Jerusalem Countdown*, we encounter a complex grouping of those who are discursively constructed as the enemies of Israel and the U.S. The following table demonstrates some examples of negative outgroup formation in his book. Among the texts I analyzed, the entities mentioned here also feature prominently as antagonistic in other CUFIs texts, such as their email news updates, as well as new reports from For Zion’s Sake Ministries.

<i>Entities</i>	<i>Example(s)</i>
Hitler’s Nazis and Lenin’s Communism	Iran’s nuclear program...is as great a threat to democracy as Hitler’s Nazis and Lenin’s Communism
Russia and China	Russia and China have formed an axis of power with Iran Russia and China have done everything in their power to protect Iran from sanctions... It is very clear that Russia and China have sided with Iran against the United States and Israel
Iran and Syria	[North Korea] is also on the side of the Islamo-fascists desiring to end America and Israel, since it supplies weapons technology for Iran and Syria
the Palestinian terrorists and Hamas	America is trying appeasement – trying to give the Palestinian terrorists and Hamas Judea and Samaria...to give them Gaza...to think the unthinkable and give them part of Jerusalem for a capital of a terrorist state dedicated to the destruction of Israel.
Russia, China, North Korea and Pakistan	Technology and scientists from Russia, China, North Korea and Pakistan have propelled Iran’s nuclear program much closer to producing a bomb than Iraq ever was
Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordon, Egypt, and Libya	What will be Iran’s response to Israel’s military attack of their nuclear weapons’ plants? How will Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and Libya respond? If these Arab nations unite their forces under Russia’s leadership...

Table 5. *Hagee’s discursive construction of Them by use of conjunction and rhetorical strategies in Jerusalem Countdown.*

As the examples in Table 5 demonstrate, in addition to the close relationship between Israel/Jews and Americans/Christians that Hagee constructs, he also uses conjunction to form a multifaceted outgroup that exists in opposition to Israel and the U.S. Important for the present discussion, this composite “other” includes Palestinians (referred to in the shaded portion above as “the

Palestinian terrorists and Hamas”) who are depicted as wanting to develop “a terrorist state dedicated to the destruction of Israel.” Palestinians thus feature as a core entity of the common enemy that threatens not only Israel but also the U.S. Moreover, the threats of terrorism and destroying Israel are not only elements of the predicational strategies Hagee uses with regard to Palestinians, these notions also function as framing strategies for perspectivizing Palestinians in a negative manner.

The example in Table 5 referring to Palestinians can also serve to illustrate these latter points. The phrase “America is trying appeasement” bears unique significance when contextualized in relation to some of Hagee’s other texts, particularly his 2007 AIPAC speech (as well as the related book, *In Defense of Israel*). At the 2007 AIPAC policy conference, Hagee expressed concern that Israel would be partitioned and “parcel[ed] out” “in a futile effort to *appease* Israel’s enemies in the Middle East” (Hagee 2007b:2, emphasis added). He included the U.S. State Department among those who might attempt such an act, likening it to trying “to turn Israel into crocodile food” (Hagee 2007b:3). In the immediate co-text of these comments, Hagee expands upon the semantics of “appeasement” by quoting Winston Churchill as saying “an appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile in the hope that it will eat him last” (Hagee 2007b:3). This frames Palestinians as violent aggressors whose sole aim is the annihilation of Israel and the U.S. Moreover, this delegitimizes Palestinian peace efforts by constructing them as a façade that covers their true intention to completely destroy Israel, a point that he makes explicit in

Jerusalem Countdown:

- (34) Islamic fundamentalists will not honor or abide by any Roadmap for Peace. They are using this Roadmap for Peace as a weapon of war. They want peace with Israel one piece at a time. Now they have Gaza. Next they are asking for the West Bank. And the ultimate plum is the city of Jerusalem, which they will make the capital city for a Palestinian state that will be a terrorist state, whose objective will be the destruction of Israel. (Hagee 2006:60)

Hagee's argumentation also demonstrates another key element that informs negative outgroup formation: reducing the Israel-Palestine (/Arab-Israeli) conflict to theological motives (Hagee 2006, 2007a, 2007b). Although Hagee ostensibly acknowledges some religious and ethnic diversity among Palestinians (Hagee 2007a:57-58), the overall representation and framing of Palestinians in his texts is one of almost exclusive relation to "radical Islam," which is a common thread in Hagee's construction of the negative "other."

Thus, in (34) above where Hagee utilizes the construction of a particular epistemic future for emphasis, "Islamic fundamentalists" are those that "*will* make [Jerusalem] the capital city for a Palestinian state that *will* be a terrorist state" (emphasis added). Moreover, the predication that they "*will not* honor or abide by any Roadmap for Peace" stems from Hagee's belief, based on the authority of Walid Shoebat ("trained from his youth to become a PLO terrorist and suicide bomber who converted to Christianity" [Hagee 2006:6]), that "lying is acceptable in Islam for the purpose of advancing the Islamic faith" (Hagee 2006:7). Again, this supports the discursive construction of Palestinians as deceptive and further emphasizes the delegitimization of Palestinian claims for achieving peace with Israel. In the following example, Hagee blames "the impasse between Palestinians and Jews over the city of Jerusalem" on what he argues is a central religio-political "objective" of Islam, that of the "submission" of all nations:

- (35) *Islam* does not mean peace – it means submission. Their objective is for everyone to be in submission to them.

That's the reason the Islamic prayer tower is the highest point in every city. It must have a position of physical supremacy. **That's the reason for the impasse between Palestinians and Jews over the city of Jerusalem.** Sitting in the throat of all Islamic nations is Israel – with an unconditional blood covenant from the throne of God that has given to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the land of Israel *forever*. God didn't loan the land of Israel to the Jews; He gave it to them. (Hagee 2006:71)

Accordingly, and as mentioned previously, for Hagee the principal issue underlying the Israel-Palestine conflict is one of theology, in which the children of Isaac (i.e., the Jews) are engaged in an ancient war against the children of Ishmael (i.e., the Arabs) that is “dragging humanity toward a nuclear conflict in the Middle East” (Hagee 2006:183-184).

Another significant element in texts produced by Hagee and CUFI that relates to negative representation of Palestinians is the legitimization of Israel’s and the Jews’ relationship to the land of Palestine while simultaneously delegitimizing Palestinian claims. In an exposition of Ezekiel 37:21, which Hagee views as a prophecy that was “fulfilled” when in 1948 the State of Israel was “reborn” (a predicational strategy that articulates Israel’s endurance), Hagee explicitly argues that “the Jews” – not the Palestinians – possessed the land, which they were “br[ought] back to” by covenant promise:

- (36) **God made it exceedingly clear that He would bring the Jews back to “*their own land.*” He would not bring them back to the Palestinians’ land** – He would restore them to the Promised Land of the eternal covenant God had made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. (Hagee 2006:131, italics original)

The notion of “bring[ing] the Jews back to ‘*their own land*’” implies possession of Palestine by the Jewish people in a way that transcends time and space, retroactively ascribing ownership even prior to the establishment of the state. Because God “gave” the land of Palestine to the Jewish people “forever” (see [35]), the (non-Jewish) Palestinians that lived in the land prior to modern Israel’s founding cannot be said to have possessed the land. Moreover, this relates to Hagee’s construction of Palestinians as Arab outsiders, as in his *In Defense of Israel*, where he maintains that “Just as Jews came to Palestine before 1948, many Palestinian Arabs were also immigrants from Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, who were searching for a better life under British rule” (Hagee 2007a:58; see also fn. 78 above). Since Hagee believes the land to be definitely and

permanently granted to the Jewish people by divine covenant, any attempt to “divide” the land – and especially Jerusalem – between Israel and Palestinians “clearly violates the word of God” (Hagee 2006:61-62). So Hagee, and by extension his organization, CUFI, encourages the U.S. to “not pressure Israel to give up land” or “divide the city of Jerusalem”:

- (37) America should not pressure Israel to give up land and America must never pressure Israel to divide the City of Jerusalem.

Dore Gold in his latest book, *The Fight for Jerusalem* said and I quote – turning part or all of Jerusalem to the Palestinians would be tantamount to turning it over to the Taliban – end of quote. I agree. Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish people now and forever. Jerusalem is united under Jewish control and must always remain under Jewish control. (Hagee 2007b:3)

This quote from Hagee’s AIPAC speech also demonstrates intertextuality with Hagee integrating a quote from Dore Gold that associates Palestinians and their political aims with that of terrorists, for “turning part or all of Jerusalem to the Palestinians would be tantamount to turning it over to the Taliban.” The reference to the Taliban and their association with Palestinians in this text has a significant rhetorical impact, especially in the context of post-9/11, and this could be seen as yet another articulation of Palestinians as being the common enemy of the U.S. and Israel. The use of the phrase “I agree” makes Hagee’s stance with regard to Gold’s proposition explicit, and this is further developed by Hagee’s stance with regard to Jerusalem’s future, predicating of the city that it is now and “must always” be Jewish.⁸⁶

The overall absence and silencing of Palestinians and Palestinian perspectives among texts from *Bibliotheca Sacra* starkly contrasts the amount with which Palestinians are overtly featured in texts produced by For Zion’s Sake Ministries, Christians United for Israel, and John

⁸⁶ A further topic of exploration related to (de-)legitimization and land could be the use of place names in dispensational discourses for areas in Palestine and Israel. Rashid Khalidi has noted that “the act of naming” of Jerusalem and other places achieves “validation” and often “an attempt to privilege one dimension of a complex reality at the expense of others, with the ultimate aim of blotting the others out” (Khalidi 1997:14-15). In dispensational discourses, the Hebrew-derived names are almost exclusively preferred, not just with regard to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount (instead of, say, *Urshalim/Bayt al-Maqdis, al-Quds al-Sharif/Haram al-Sharif*, respectively) but also other areas, as well. So, for example, in the shaded example of Table 5 Hagee employs the biblical names “Judea and Samaria” in referring to the West Bank.

Hagee. Still, taken together they offer a significant contribution to meaning-making in dispensational discourses as a whole, since the silencing of Palestinian perspectives combines well with negative representations and the stereotyping of Palestinians as tools of delegitimization. However, such negative representation and remembering can also be interpreted as an act of silencing, given that the complex elements of Palestinian reality and identity are ignored and forgotten in order to favor a biased conceptualization of Palestinians-as-terrorists that concords with dispensational ideologies.

3.4 Summary

In the above discussion, I presented data from dispensational texts to demonstrate in part how Israel and Palestine are represented and (not) remembered through discourse. These texts were produced by multiple individuals and institutions, represent elements of dispensational discourses for a period of almost eight decades, pertain to numerous discourse topics, and also belong to various discourse genres. I centered the discussion around five salient and emergent themes that patterned across the texts I analyzed: 1) the endurance of Israel's collective identity, 2) the intimate relationship of Israel to the land, 3) the guaranteed and imminent future of national Israel, 4) silencing of Palestinian perspectives, and 5) constructing Palestinians as terrorists and common enemies of Israel and the U.S. Additionally, I categorized these themes broadly as either positive representation and remembering or negative representation and forgetting. Based on the data discussed above, it appears that these categories are interdependent as they pertain to Israel/Israelis and Palestine/Palestinians, respectively. That is, in dispensational discourses the positive representation of Israel/Israelis/Jewish people seems to have as its corollary the negative representation, silencing and forgetting of Palestine/Palestinians, and vice versa. The consequence of privileging a particular, biased narrative that commemorates Israel

appears to be the discursive exclusion and delegitimization of Palestinians. In the following section, I consider the above points and themes in relation to the socio-political and historical context of dispensational discourses developed in Section 2. Moreover, I situate the analysis within Van Dijk's (2006) theory of manipulation and use the analysis from this section to infer the content of mental models that underlie production of dispensational discourses. Finally, in conclusion I apply elements from cultural memory studies to consider the relationship between discourse and collective memory in the context of dispensational discourses.

4 Discussion and Conclusions: Commemorating Israel, Forgetting Palestine

The analysis from the previous sections suggests that dispensational discourses exhibit both an overwhelming tendency to support Israel and an exclusive focusing on a particularized Jewish/Israeli identity while simultaneously disregarding indigenous Palestinians. These properties stem from an ideological predisposition that informs (a) support for Jewish immigration to Palestine, (b) privileging Israelite or Jewish identity, and (c) delegitimizing Palestinian perspectives and identity. These observations parallel conclusions from other scholarship aimed at analyzing forms of Christian Zionism. For example, prior research suggests that many people in the United States have been influenced by biblical discourses such that they are “predisposed to support the return of the Jews to Palestine” (Anderson 2005:1). Moreover, even in “the largely secular West,” pro-Israel and pro-Zionist support (including support of “settler colonialism in Palestine”) often derives from “an inherited Christian tradition [that] supports the notion that Palestine has always been somehow ‘the land of Israel’” (Masalha 2007:310).

However, before further exploring the significance of these properties from the perspectives of cultural memory studies and social cognition, a certain degree of caution is necessary with regard to how strongly we articulate the relationship between dispensationalisms and support for Israel and Jews, on the one hand, and the disprivileging of Palestinians, on the other. We must refrain from assuming causality, for “dispensationalisms do not require, i.e., logically entail, supporting governments or people when they commit social and political injustice and oppression” (Feinberg 2010:3). Recognizing the lack of deterministic causality has two important implications. On the one hand, some dispensationalists maintain that uncritical support for Israel at any cost – including oppressive acts toward Palestinians – is a

misapplication of dispensationalisms from individuals or groups that sustain greater public visibility even though they are not representative of the whole of dispensationalists. Second, considering the role of causation is of methodological import for this thesis. For, while discourse, society, and cognition do inform one another, this influence is not causal in a strong, deterministic sense: the domains of discourse and society are instead *mediated* by a cognitive interface that includes mental models of events and context (Van Dijk 2009b). Consequently, dispensationalisms do not necessarily causally produce particular responses among participants of dispensational discourses.

Still, there is a deep correlation between structures of text and talk in dispensational discourses and pro-Israel/anti-Palestinian ideologies and political actions. Even if dispensational discourses do not *causally* enact pro-Israel and anti-Palestinian beliefs and actions, we may wonder, how did (/do) dispensationalisms successfully perpetuate such a strong pro-Israel stance that eventually produced intense political convictions in support of Israel and Jews (and often against Palestine and Palestinians)? Moreover, how did/do dispensational discourses generate or contribute to the production and establishment of a hegemonic narrative of Israel? How did/do dispensational discourses enact “syncretic racism” (Wodak 2010:293)?

The purpose of this study was to analyze representation and (not) remembering of Israel/Israelis and Palestine/Palestinians in dispensational discourses from a multidisciplinary perspective, combining approaches from critical discourse analysis and cultural memory studies. The examination of the sociopolitical and historical context of dispensationalisms, as well as a more detailed analysis of multiple dispensational texts, suggests that exploring how and why both Israel/Israelis and Palestine/Palestinians are represented and (not) remembered is critical to understanding dispensationalisms as a whole. In general, the dispensational texts I analyzed

exhibited a tendency to represent and remember Israel/Israelis positively while Palestine/Palestinians were either represented negatively or not remembered through silencing. Put another way, there appears to be a strong correlation between positive valuation and representation/remembering of Israel/Israelis, while negative valuations are typically associated with representation and (not) remembering Palestine/Palestinians. The table below summarizes these general trends with reference to the specific discourse themes involved that I outlined in Section 3:

<i>Representation type</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Positive representation of Israel/Israelis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The endurance of Israel’s collective, ethnic, and national identity that extends through space and time • The land of Palestine as a permanent possession for Israel that is granted by divine covenant • Israel’s guaranteed, imminent, and glorious future that God is (self-)obligated to bring about
Negative representation of Palestine/Palestinians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silencing and forgetting Palestinian perspectives, such as Palestinian views of <i>al-Nakba</i> or Israeli settlements • Palestinians as terrorists and enemies of Israel who singularly desire to destroy Israel and the Jews

Table 6. *General trends of representation and remembering in dispensational discourses.*

In the discussion that follows, I offer an interpretation of the results from Section 3 by integrating perspectives from cultural memory studies and the sociocognitive approach to critical discourse analysis. In Section 4.1, I propose a data-driven architecture for representational strategies, which helps to explain how and why dispensational discourses function as nationalistic *lieux de mémoire* (‘sites of memory’). Following this, in Section 4.2 I discuss the major themes of dispensational discourses in terms of the canon of cultural memory, which also relates to the “official” dispensational narrative concerning Israel. In order to address more explicitly the role of cognition in mediating between discourse and society, I consider the

prominent themes discussed in terms of discursive manipulation and the formation of biased mental models in Section 4.3. Section 4.4 returns to the concept of indigeneity, viewing dispensational discourses as a type of co-articulation of indigenous identity that privileges Israeli expressions of such over and above Palestinian indigenesness. In Section 4.5 by considering the limitations of the present research as well as future directions, which are followed by concluding comments in Section 4.6.

4.1 Dispensational Discourses as *Lieux de Mémoire* and Museums

4.1.1 The Architecture of Othering: Positive Other Representation

Discursive strategies of representation and (not) remembering are commonly treated as if they are embedded into a dichotomous framework between *positive self*-representation, on the one hand, and *negative other*-representation, on the other (e.g., Van Dijk 1984, 1987; Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Van Dijk 2008a). That is, in what I will here refer to as the “traditional framework” of discursive representation, a positive ethos more or less corresponds to the construction of “self” whereas a negative ethos more or less corresponds to the construction of the “other.” The assumption in such a framework appears to be that forms of othering entail negative representation, which is segregated from the positive representation of self. Figure 11 below illustrates this basic division.

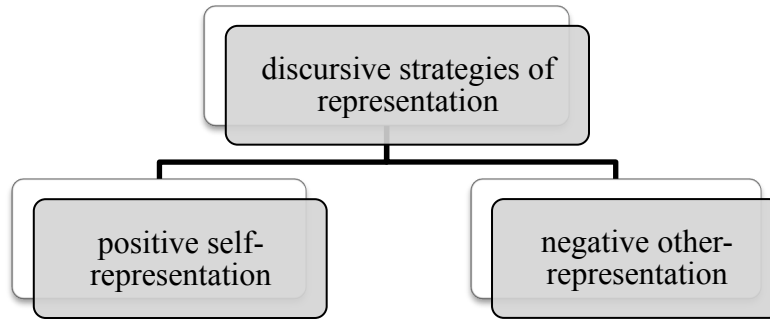


Figure 11. *The traditional dichotomy of discursive strategies of representation.*

In Section 3, I adopted a similar perspective (i.e., negative *vs.* positive) as a means of organizing and presenting data, which was based on trends that emerged from the texts I analyzed.

Notwithstanding, in organizing prevalent themes of dispensational discourses (see Table 6 above) I refrained somewhat from employing “self” and “other” as categorical values that directly correlate to positive and negative, respectively. My motivation in doing so is because the characteristics of othering in dispensational discourses problematize the traditional framework, offering unique insights into the architectural possibilities of “self/us” and “other/them.” In particular, two salient and unique themes in dispensational discourses motivate a more nuanced architecture for representational strategies that producers of these discourses employ: 1) *positive other-representation* of Jews/Israelis, and 2) integration of the Jewish/Israeli “other” into the conceptualization of “self/us.”

The positive other-representation of Jews/Israelis relates to the ontological distinction between Israel and the (largely non-Jewish/Gentile) Church that classical dispensationalists strongly advocated. Even after revised dispensationalists slightly reworked this division, dispensationalisms as a whole – and the historical schemes they developed – depended upon the Jews being sustained as a distinct, pure, ethnically identifiable, and enduring “people of God” who are sanctified from the rest of humanity and exalted for a particular, national future.

Moreover, with two distinct “peoples of God” distributed across “self” and “other,” a relationship is established such that the “other” “people of God” can be incorporated into the discursive formulation of self, to a degree. Within dispensational discourses, strategies of this sort are prevalent in texts that articulate a common destiny between Christians and Jews or the United States and Israel, who are situated in opposition to a common enemy (e.g., terrorists, [radical] Islam, Palestinians).

Incorporating these elements into the traditional “self” vs. “other” framework enables us to expand the model to accommodate these features of dispensational discourses, which can be seen in Figure 12.

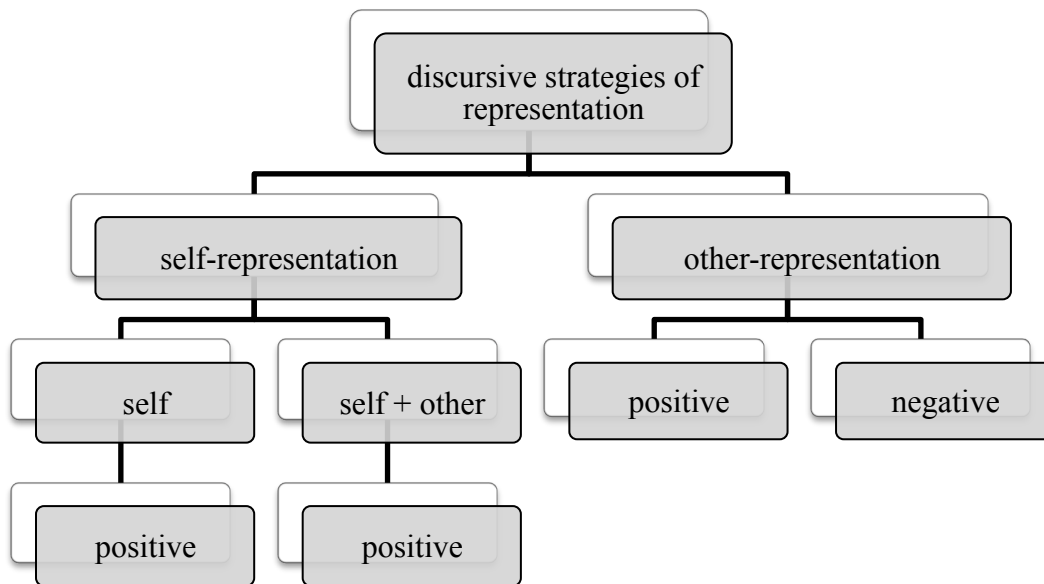


Figure 12. *Proposed architecture for strategies of representation in dispensational discourses.*

The upshot of this more elaborated architecture is that it allows for the observation that, among religious and religio-political discourses, dispensational discourses uniquely distinguish between entities categorized as “other” (e.g., Jews/Israelis vs. Palestinians) in order to represent them either positively or negatively. This characteristic, which I treat below, is paramount in

interpreting the national commemoration of Israel that is common in dispensationalisms. Additionally, from the analysis in this thesis I suggest that these values (positive self/self + other, positive/negative other) may be in some categorical sense relatively stable, but the valuation of specific entities within a particular discourse is dynamic and changing. This, in turn, relates to the discursive construction of the Jewish/Israeli “other” at times as part of “self/us.”⁸⁷

4.1.2 Commemorating Israel: Securing National Expectations

Recognizing the unique formulations of “self/us” and “other/them” in dispensational discourses is critical to understanding how and why commemoration of Israel takes place. Furthermore, exploring the function of commemoration also elucidates the nature of positive other-representation of Jews, Israelis, and Israel. As the data in Section 3 demonstrate, producers of dispensational texts articulate explicit national expectations for Jews and Israel. Commemoration of this type, which takes place for the “other,” is rather exceptional among religio-political discourses:

Evangelical Christian philosemitism has been an unusual phenomenon in the history of the relationships between religious communities. In no other case have members of one religious community considered members of another religious tradition to be God’s first nation and to hold a special role in the drama of human redemption. (Ariel 2011:283)

Much of the representation and remembering in dispensational discourses occurs in order to commemorate ancient Israel’s past as well as modern Israel’s present, linking the two across space and time. Dispensational discourses reconstruct the past partly for the purpose of national glorification of Israel, which in turn legitimizes the philosophy of history that dispensationalisms

⁸⁷ Moreover, the proposed model in Figure 12 assigns values from the perspective of dispensational discourses. From an analytical standpoint, the actual characteristics of positive other-representation of Jews, Israelis, and Israel in dispensational discourses produce negative consequences, as well. I discuss some of these consequences in Section 4.3.3.

propagate. With these aspects in mind, dispensational discourses can be considered in a metaphorical sense *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1989) and “museums” where discursive commemoration takes place (Wodak and Richardson 2009:231). This is manifest in the prominent themes of dispensationalisms that involve positive other-representation of Jews, Israelis, and Israel (see Table 6). Dispensational discourses serve to construct and maintain Israel’s primacy as a national entity throughout time, controlling the production of a coherent narrative, which makes sense of the present by invoking a particularized past.

Yet, interestingly, the museums of dispensationalisms do not merely contain relics of the past; these *lieux de mémoire* rehearse particular discursive constructions about future possibilities, as well. The hegemonic interests displayed in dispensational discourses are not, therefore, exclusive to the past and present. Rather, these discourses additionally make sense of the present by invoking their version(s) of Israel’s future, which is constructed as guaranteed and imminent. In this way the future is continuously brought into the present and actively remembered. Furthermore, the discursive construction of Israel’s past and future in dispensational discourses collaborate to function as a filter for interpreting the significance of current events. This, in turn, feeds into the active roles of discourse participants in public and political domains as suggested (explicitly or implicitly) through dispensational discourses. In terms of the ideological, material, and political outworkings of discursive commemoration – of Israel’s past, present, and future – such properties appear to be well-positioned to inform political support for Israel and Jews while simultaneously delegitimizing Palestinians. Moreover, as I discuss below with regard to biased mental model formation (Section 4.3), dispensational “museums” are characterized by forgetting and silencing in addition to remembering and representation.

4.2 The Canon and “Official” Narratives of Dispensationalisms

The more durative themes of dispensational discourses also provide insight into the “canon” or “cultural working memory” (Assmann 2008) that dispensationalisms index. This canon is actively sustained and reproduced discursively, that is, through multimodal forms of text and talk. Among dispensationalisms, the themes that correspond to positive representation of Jews and Israel in particular are such that they persist over time, “outliv[ing] the [multiple] generations” that allow “past” themes to have “a continuous presence” (Assmann 2008:100) through discourse. As nationalistic *lieux de mémoire*, dispensational discourses are characterized by (hegemonic, particularized) narratives of Israel’s past and future, safeguarding central motifs in the canon of cultural memory through constant commemoration. This includes “emphatic appreciation, repeated performance, and continued individual and public attention” (Assmann 2008:101), for example, of Israel’s enduring national identity as having been established, sustained, and defended by divine ordinance (in both ancient and modern times). In terms of selectional criteria for themes that are preserved as part of the dispensational canon, it appears that generic, templatic elements in combination with more specific events are utilized insofar as they collaborate with the national expectations for Israel that dispensationalists propose.

These generic and specific elements of dispensational narratives begin to provide a potential outline for their “official” narrative concerning the Jews, Israel, Palestine, and Palestinians. Cultural memory is shaped and “mediated” by “cultural tools” that are situated in particular “sociocultural contexts” (Wertsch 2008:139; Wertsch 2002). Narratives are among such tools that are reproduced discursively; these cultural tools provide a basis for shaping discourse and recollection of the past. Narrative organization takes place at two levels (Wertsch 2004, 2008a, 2008b). “Specific narratives” can be distinguished from “schematic narrative

templates” in that the former involves details of specific events while the latter is more abstract and shapes the interpretation and reproduction of specific narratives (Wertsch 2004, 2008a, 2008b). From the contextual and textual analyses of dispensationalisms in Sections 2-3, the following events are among the more specific narratives that feature in various dispensational texts:⁸⁸

1. Romans destroy the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem, which begins the Jewish Diaspora, 70 A.D.
2. Increased immigration of Jews to Palestine, late 19th-mid 20th century
3. Palestinians and Arab states reject and Zionists accept UN partition plan to create two states in Palestine, 1947
4. UN adopts Resolution 181 to create Arab and Jewish states in Palestine; Arabs declare war, 1948
5. Israel announces statehood, May 15, 1948
6. Arab nations attack Israel, 1948
7. Israel engages in a preemptive attack against Egypt in the Suez Crisis and gains the Sinai Peninsula, 1956
8. Arab states attack Israel in the Six Day War and Israel gains control of Jerusalem, 1967
9. Arab states attack Israel on Yom Kippur, 1973

These specific events are among those that are central to the dispensational understandings of Israel’s possession of land, national identity, and defense, which, in turn, relate to the major themes that correlate to positive other-representation.

Moreover, the analysis of dispensational discourses also reveals a more or less stable set of items that pertain to one or more schematic narrative templates. These elements include:

1. Israel is given the land of Palestine by divine grant unconditionally.
2. Israel is temporarily displaced from the land (e.g., because of disobedience to God and/or rejection of Jesus as the Messiah).
3. Israel is/will be sustained by God throughout time and Jews continually retain their ethnic and national identity for future purposes.
4. The land of Palestine will remain empty and desolate until Israel is reborn.
5. God will cause Israel to be reborn as a nation in fulfillment of His word.
6. Israel will be attacked by (all) nations before Jesus returns.

⁸⁸ More specific dates could, of course, be provided, but I have here tried to communicate the degree of specificity for these events as they are commonly constructed in dispensational discourses. Moreover, I have tried to construct the wording of these specific narratives in such a way as would be reflective of dispensationalist perspectives.

7. Jesus will return to earth to destroy Israel's enemies and rule from Jerusalem.
8. The Jews/Israel will convert to belief in Jesus as the Messiah.
9. The Jews/Israel will be God's people/nation and possess the land in perpetuity.

This template (or possibly, templates) is consistent with the texts I analyzed in Section 3, and is likewise consistent with the specific events invoked by dispensational text producers. These generic and abstract (and, in most cases, ideological) elements in the schematic template provide a mechanism that can inform how discourse participants assign meaning to the events of specific narratives. So, for example, wars or violent conflicts that result in territorial gains for Israel are deemed significant in that they potentially correspond to the (already present but also reproduced) expectation that Israel will eventually possess all of Palestine. This, in turn, is validated by the establishment of the state of Israel, which is interpreted as God regathering His people to form a national identity within biblical geography. Moreover, these can provide a basis for legitimization and justification of, for example, Israeli dispossession of Palestinians. Also, delineating elements of the schematic narrative template helps explain why dispensationalists commonly construct and interpret virtually any opposition to Israel in terms of "enemies" attacking Israel (or exclusively desiring to annihilate Israel) in a futile attempt to thwart God's purposes.

Returning to the role/function of canon in dispensational discourses, the elements pertaining to schematic templates remain most stable over time. One reason they appear more constant may be because they are ideologically-rooted, abstract events that can be distributed across specific events in the past (and the future). Specific, detailed events belonging to a particular time can thus be interpreted and reinterpreted dynamically in relation to the general

patterns imposed by the template.⁸⁹ Specific narratives may, therefore, be integrated into the dispensational canon by virtue of their ability to contribute to the more abstract elements that underlie their interpretation.

4.3 Manipulation and the Formation of Biased Mental Models

Another observation from the themes that correspond to representational strategies and elements that compose the canon of dispensational discourses is a particular bias toward Israel and the Jews. Essentially, producers of dispensational discourses interpret Israel and Palestine through an Israel bias, which produces negative representation of Palestine and Palestinians as a corollary of positive representation of Jews, Israelis, and Israel. Bias is integrated into the composition of cultural tools (e.g., narratives) that both inform and are perpetuated by dispensational discourses. Part of this manipulation relates again to narrative organization, for the “narrative template is a ‘cookie cutter imposing a shape’ on people’s understanding of the past” (Wertsch 2008a:131; Bruner 2002:6-7). When such imposition results in manipulation, dispensational discourses have a particular function of “mind control” (Van Dijk 2001:357-358), since “manipulation always involves a form of mental manipulation” (Van Dijk 2008a:211). Accordingly, manipulation results in the shaping of peoples’ beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies that effectively “control their actions” (Van Dijk 2008a:217).

From the data that I analyzed, I conclude that dispensational texts commonly reproduce a narrow historical account of Jewish history, ancient Israel, the foundation of the state of Israel, and Palestine (even though histories of Israel/Palestine are, of course, highly contentious). This is

⁸⁹ I discussed an example of such reinterpretation in section 2 when dispensationalists sought to understand the significance of Israel attaining statehood in 1948 in relation to both national/land restoration and spiritual restoration (items 5 and 8 in the schematic template, respectively).

coupled with silencing and forgetting of Palestinians and Palestinian perspectives, which, I argue, informs biased views of history and the past along with negative attitudes and prejudice toward Palestinians. Recipients of dispensational discourses may be in some way “victims of manipulation” (Van Dijk 2008a:312) because they (a) can be influenced (via texts and discourse) by text producers whom they view as authoritative, (b) are not exposed to alternative beliefs and ideologies, and/or (c) lack knowledge to challenge dispensational discourses (Van Dijk 2001:358; see also Nesler et al. 1993; Downing 1984; Wodak 1987). From this perspective, dispensational discourses are “illegitimate” forms of “power abuse” because they “violate the rights of recipients” and “reproduce, or may reproduce, social inequality” (Van Dijk 2008a:212-216). Producers of dispensational discourses therefore enact discursive manipulation through informing the creation (and sustaining) of biased mental models of Jews, Israelis, Israel, Palestinians and Palestine.

Manipulation operates at multiple levels of memory and cognition. It affects short-term memory as texts are processed, which influences the understanding of discourses (Van Dijk 2008a:217-219). Moreover, manipulation is also directed at transforming more durative aspects of memory, such as long term memory, which can control “knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies” (Van Dijk 2008a:219). Within dispensational discourses, this involves manipulating recipients’ understanding of past events, such as the establishment of the state of Israel, or general attitudes and ideologies toward certain peoples, such as Jews, Israelis, and Palestinians. Accordingly, it appears that a principal function of manipulation in dispensational discourses is the shaping of multimodal “situation models” (Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983; Johnson-Laird 1983) as part of long-term, episodic memory (Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). These situation models influence how actors (such as recipients) interpret and assign meaning to their intersubjective representations of

“the world the text refers to” (Just and Carpenter 1987:195)⁹⁰ or what is communicated through discourse. Again, from analyzing the salient themes and properties of dispensational texts, I argue that text producers enact manipulation by shaping biased mental models, such as situation models, which more or less controls (but not deterministically) discourse comprehension in a manner that is filtered through privileging and legitimizing Israel. The bias communicated through dispensational discourses shapes actors’ beliefs and ideologies toward Israel/Israelis/Jews and Palestine/Palestinians, which in turn engenders specific actions that produce political support for Israel. My point in bringing up this outcome is not to oppose political support for Israel. Rather, I wish to draw attention to the function of such support in dispensational discourses, which is achieved through manipulation, since the producers themselves are positioned to benefit from prescribed beliefs and actions that reinforce the worldview they propose.

4.3.1 Forgetting Palestine

Acts of cultural remembering are commonly paired with forgetting, as the two dynamically interact in “the continuous process of forgetting is part of social normality” (Assmann 2008). Forgetting and silencing are key components in producers of dispensational discourses promote the development of biased mental models of Palestine (and Israel, which I discuss below). In dispensational discourses, the processes of forgetting and silencing Palestine and Palestinians seem to have developed in tandem with mounting commemoration of Israel. In the mid-20th century, as Jewish immigration to Palestine increased, dispensationalists became fascinated with the belief that an Israeli state played a central role in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Thus,

⁹⁰ Just and Carpenter (1987) employ the term “referential models” for what Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) call “situation models” (Just and Carpenter 1987:195).

when Israel announced statehood in 1948, dispensational discourses became an outlet for supporting (and reconstructing) Israeli nationalism, celebrating the (partial) realization and validation of the dispensational timetable. The consequences of an Israeli state to dispossessed Palestinians either went unnoticed or were overlooked because of the shadow that Israel cast. When dispensationalists did pay more attention to political realities and specific events, their perspective was one of presupposing Israel's primacy and inherent right to the land, which disadvantaged Palestinians from the outset. This led to a perception that Palestinians were merely outsiders among the "Arabs" attacking Israel in order to supplant Israel and rob Israel of its rightful, God-given inheritance. Not surprisingly, Palestinian perspectives, including *al-Nakba* and other violent acts toward Palestinians, were lacking in dispensational discourses as they were forgotten and silenced.

Moreover, when we consider the patterns of representation and not remembering (/forgetting) Palestinians in dispensational discourses, they seem to exhibit silences analogous to "variants" of denial (Cohen 2001). This includes "literal denial," wherein atrocities and acts of violence are denied outright, "interpretive denial," wherein they are mitigated and interpreted as "something else" other than the actual act, and "implicatory denial," wherein such acts are mentioned but justified (Cohen 2001:7-9). Dispensational discourses demonstrate denial of atrocities committed on Palestinians through both silence and denial, either failing to mention such events (e.g., the Israeli dispossession of the indigenous population) or discussing them in such a manner that they are downplayed or legitimized (e.g., the "legend" of the Deir Yassin massacre). Moreover, as I demonstrated in Section 3, current dispensational discourses often have a tendency to maximize and overemphasize Palestinian violence toward Israelis, and this can have a compounding effect when coupled with denial.

Additionally, there is a potentially significant parallel that can be drawn between the consequences of asymmetric Israeli commemoration in dispensational discourse and the commemoration of Thanksgiving in the U.S. with its negative consequences toward the Indigenous Peoples of the U.S. and the silencing of genocide (Kurtiş, Adams, and Yellow Bird 2009). Rooted in Cohen's framework of denial in cultural memory, Kurtiş et al. (2009) differentiated between three conditions of silence in one of their experiments: literal-, interpretive-, and anti-silence. These respectively correspond to either "no mentioning" (i.e., no explicit discursive representation) of Indigenous Peoples, actual mentioning of Indigenous Peoples but with silence of "genocidal conquest," or explicit mentioning of genocidal conquest "as a function of national glorification" (Kurtiş et al. 2009:208). As dispensational discourses progressed in the 20th century, they commonly followed a developmental pattern of silencing Palestinians, mirroring these conditions. In early 20th century dispensational texts (pre- and post-1948), the indigenous population was scarcely represented in discourse. When dispensationalists eventually became more attuned to political events, Palestinians did receive explicit mentioning, but this began a trend of framing Palestinians as terrorists who singularly seek the destruction of Israel. After the atrocities committed against Palestinians resurfaced in the U.S. from the work of the Israeli "new historians," dispensational texts began to mention violent acts toward Palestinians as a means of justification and glorification/commemoration of the State of Israel.

4.3.2 Intentionality and Manipulation

There are two additional aspects that relate significantly to manipulation and bias in dispensational discourses. The first is a conceptual issue pertaining to the intentionality of discourse producers. In this thesis, I make no claim as to the intentions of those who produce

dispensational texts. In one sense, this is important to recognize because the producers of such texts may not be maliciously intending to manipulate their audience by communicating a pro-Israel bias. However, the illegitimacy of manipulation is not based on speakers' intentions or awareness on behalf of recipients (Van Dijk 2008a:216). Instead, discursive manipulation is illegitimate because "it violates the rights of recipients" (Van Dijk 2008a:215) of dispensational discourses who are subjected to (willingly or otherwise) biased information that is produced by people in positions of power (e.g., scholars, pastors, teachers).

4.3.3 The Darker Side of Dispensational Museums

Second, based on the data I analyzed in Section 3, I have mainly treated bias in dispensational discourses as a consequence of how Palestinians and Palestine are represented/(not) remembered negatively while Jews, Israelis, and Israel are represented/remembered positively.

Notwithstanding, as I alluded to previously, the valuation of "positive" for the representation and remembering of Jews, Israelis, and Israel is an assignment that is more *from the perspective of dispensational discourses* (as opposed to an analyst's perspective). In a sense, because dispensational discourses construct and enact pro-Israel and pro-Jewish sentiments and support they can be considered expressions of philosemitism, and scholars have recently begun devoting more attention to analyzing dispensationalisms and other forms of Christian Zionism as such (Freedman 2008; Ariel 2011). However, these scholars also draw attention to the complex, and, at times, contradictory, nature of Christian philosemitism in such cases, which can involve to the repackaging of anti-Semitic tropes (Freedman 2008).⁹¹ Producers of dispensational discourses commonly frame Jews, Israel, and Israelis positively as a valuation from their own perspective,

⁹¹ Freedman's (2008) work is of particular interest here because he bases his analysis on Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins' *Left Behind Series*, which is a popular fictional account of the end-times based on dispensational theology.

but the relatedness of dispensationalisms to philosemitism is complicated by the discursive objectification and silencing of Jews, Judaism, Israelis and Israel. Such aspects inform biased mental models of these entities, as well.

Commemorating Israel through discourse may produce political outcomes that are at times welcomed by some Jews and Israelis in spite of their theological underpinnings (Spector 2009), but such commemoration is highly particularized and paradoxical:

The phenomenon of Christians supporting Jewish and Zionist causes is full of paradoxes. Being committed, indeed fervent, evangelicals or pietists, Christian supporters of Israel insist on the exclusivity of their faith as the only true fulfillment of God's commands and as the only means to assure people's salvation. The Christian philosemite relations to the Jews have therefore been characterized by two conflicting sentiments, one supportive and appreciative, and the other critical and patronizing. (Ariel 2011:283-284)

Moreover, the presence (or lacking) of philosemitism in forms of Christian Zionism is complicated by further ambivalence between genuine care and utilitarianism:

Christian interest in the Jewish resettlement of Palestine in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and support of the Zionist cause have derived first and foremost from Christian messianic hope, and a specific mode of interpretation of biblical passages. Pro-Israel sentiments and concern for the physical well-being of the Jews derive from *the function of the Jews in the advancement of history toward the arrival of the Lord*. (Ariel 2011:284-285, emphasis added)

These paradoxes seem to hold for many of the texts analyzed in this thesis. Producers of dispensational discourses are commonly supportive, for example, of Jewish and Israeli efforts of immigration to and settlement of Palestine, or for possession of Palestine in its entirety by the state of Israel. On the other hand, producers of these discourses offer support in the context of their philosophy of history, which has geographical, political, *and* religious implications and expectations for the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. That is, dispensational anticipations include "spiritual restoration" of Israel/the Jews, or conversion to belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Dispensationalists have expressed disapproval and criticism at the secular nature of Jewish

Zionism and the state of Israel, which seems to be best explained by support that is (at least partly) based on function and utility rather than pure benevolence. Additionally, dispensationalist sentiments toward Jews and Israel are especially complex in contexts where “blessing Israel” through, say, political support is perceived as a biblical mandate (e.g., Hagee 2007a, 2007b). This makes it difficult to discern between authentic philanthropy and obligation. In texts produced by John Hagee and Christians United for Israel, “blessing Israel” is articulated in terms of self-benefit, both to individuals and to the United States, which adds subsequent layers of complexity in dealing with the relationship between dispensationalisms and philosemitism. As it relates to manipulation, then, it should be noted that even the positive representation and remembering that takes place in dispensational discourses occurs because producers of these discourses have a vested interest in constructing a particularized future of Jews, Israelis, and Israel. Such constructions are also biased and a form of silencing because complexities of Jewish and Israeli identities are ignored or disregarded in order to focus on aspects of identity that are relevant for furthering dispensational paradigms.

4.4 Co-articulating Indigenous Identity on Behalf of Israel

Dispensational discourses index a particular collective identity for their participants; this includes, for example, how they see themselves in relation to U.S. evangelical Christianity. However, dispensational discourses additionally construct national identity in a way that is rather unique among religio-political discourses. In particular, producers of dispensational texts construct a national, Jewish-Israeli identity as “other” (i.e., non-Christian, non-Gentile) on behalf of this other. This construction of Jewish/Israeli national identity by dispensationalists has further implications that pertain to both Israeli and Palestinian articulations of indigeneity. In this

section I will address how self-determined constructions of Israeli and Palestinian indigenous identities are supported and/or opposed in the non-Indigenous contexts of dispensational discourses. Though dispensational constructions of “other” identity are self-initiated, I consider these to be co-articulations of indigenous identity. As discussed in Section 3, constructing an intimate, covenantal relationship to the land of Palestine for Jews and Israelis throughout time is a core strategy of dispensational discourses, which also relates to the construction of Jewish and Israeli ethnic and national identity. The relationship between land and either Jews/Israelis or Palestinians in dispensational discourses is constructed in a way that legitimizes Jewish and Israeli claims to land while simultaneously delegitimizing Palestinian land claims.

In articulating indigenous identity, Indigenous Peoples, often stress the importance of an intimate relationship to ancestral land(s) as among the core components of such identity (Niezen 2003; Minde 2008). In Israel and Palestine, indigeneity is highly contested, as both groups offer competing claims of historical ties to land, which also relates to discursive constructions of national identity. This situation is further complicated by layers of dispossession and settlement, with the most recent being Israeli dispossession of Palestinians and settlement in Palestinian lands. Significantly, dispensationalists have a vested interest in supporting the articulation of an enduring relationship between the land and Jews, Israelis, and Israel because it comports with their ideological expectations and desire to make the future present. Moreover, because dispensationalists in the New Christian Right currently enjoy extensive political influence through organizations such as Christians United for Israel, they are able to co-articulate Jewish and Israeli indigeneity within their expansive spheres of influence.

Co-articulation of indigeneity with regard to Jewish and Israeli identity (/identities) can therefore entail more explicit and seemingly irreconcilable oppositions as it pertains to

consequences for Palestinian indigeneity. Dispensational co-articulations can be in some sense obstacles to Palestinian self-determination in terms of national identity, generally, and Indigenous identity, more specifically. This is because, as we saw from the contextual and data analyses in Sections 2-3, dispensational discourses exhibit a strong pro-Israel stance wherein they frame Israeli/Jewish-land and Palestinian-land relationships in terms of the primacy of Israel. Dispensational ideologies therefore often maintain and predict explicit involvement of the nation of Israel in the end-times, which has geopolitical implications given the covenantal dimensions of dispensational expectations. Israel, Israeli and Jewish identities (in particularized forms) feature prominently in dispensational discourses, especially with regards to nationalism and geography as they are interpreted within dispensational frameworks. When invoked explicitly, “Palestine” is frequently delimited as “geographical Palestine,” and this may be in order to avoid substantiating either claims of Palestinian (Indigenous) identity or attempts at obtaining statehood. Palestine and Palestinians are, however, typically silenced, ignored, or assimilated into a generic Arab or Middle Eastern identity so that a discreet group identity in relation to land over time is dissolved. In extreme cases, dispensationalists such as John Hagee explicitly deny the validity of Palestinian identity (Hagee 2007a). Consequently, dispensational discourses give prominence to (somewhat atemporal) Jewish and Israeli narratives, including elements of diaspora, so that Palestinians are conceived of as outsiders without an intimate land-people identity, which is reinforced by a biased view of the diasporic elements of Palestinian identity.

4.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Before closing, some limitations of this research need to be addressed, and this also leads us into future directions for further exploration.

The sources, or textual data, included in the corpus I collected are numerous, but they are still somewhat limited in their ability to represent the whole of dispensational discourses. In particular, I collected texts to illustrate multimodality as well as represent various genres and institutional expressions of dispensationalisms. Nevertheless, the texts I analyzed were weighted toward the genre of academic journal articles and the institutional setting of Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). For the present research, I believe this is justified because of the highly influential role that DTS has enjoyed in developing and disseminating dispensational ideologies. Acknowledging the vast influence of DTS establishes a basis for understanding subsequent dispensational texts, including those from other genres, such as texts produced by Christians United for Israel (CUFI) and For Zion's Sake Ministries (FZSM). Future research could therefore expand the analysis into other text sources and genres, and this could include detailed analysis of texts produced in alternative (though similar) social contexts. This might include sermons and teachings in individual churches, speeches from prophecy conferences, websites from different organizations, graphic novels, and other interactional episodes such as conversations that also comprise dispensational discourses. Additional research could also explore the role of intertextuality and interdiscursivity in dispensationalisms. This is significant because producers of dispensational texts often recontextualize elements from non-dispensational narratives that exhibit a pro-Israel stance, as well (Duncan, forthcoming). Moreover, though I have here acknowledged recent doctrinal developments in dispensational discourses that have given rise to progressive dispensationalism, this thesis is largely restricted in

scope to incorporate revised and classical forms. Given that progressive dispensationalists advocate a different hermeneutic, future work could explore how this may or may not inform diverse representations and (not) remembering of Israel and Palestine.

In addition to new sources, utilizing different methodologies could complement and further test the conclusions I have argued for in this thesis. Qualitative research methods such as participant observation and qualitative interviews in particular could potentially offer greater insight into the social settings of dispensational text production and how individuals remember and reproduce narratives of Israel and Palestine. Pilot interviews that I have completed suggest that discussing realities of the Israel-Palestine conflict which are not part of the “official” dispensational narrative gives rise to interesting complexities and contradictions that merit further investigation. Moreover, the conclusions from this research could inform quantitative and corpus-based approaches to studying dispensational discourses, or they might be a basis for developing experimental research paradigms.

The role of cognition in dispensational discourses as presented here has been one of using textual analysis and the analysis of sociopolitical and historical contexts to *infer* the content of mental models among participants of discourse. Accordingly, then, one important aspect that I have not addressed directly is the sense of “context” according to the sociocognitive approach (SCA) to critical discourse analysis, which explains context in terms of individually held context models (Van Dijk 1998, 2008b). To address context in the sense advocated in the SCA would entail an extensive historical reconstruction of each individual text producer’s “dynamic mental representations of the communicative situation” (Lucas Bietti, personal communication, March 5, 2011). Such reconstruction was not possible for this thesis due to the amount of texts analyzed in order to gain a broader understanding of the historical and sociopolitical contexts of

dispensational discourses. Bearing in mind that discourses are epiphenomenal composites of structured knowledges that are realized through texts, and that cultural memory appears to have a bidirectional relationship with discourse,⁹² I analyzed the broader context of dispensationalisms (Section 2) and individual dispensational texts (Section 3) in order to infer the development of mental models over time and consider their relationship to cultural memory. By looking at which discursive representations and rememberings do and do not appear in discourse in relation to the broader historical and sociopolitical context, I used this analysis as a means of hypothesizing about how manipulation is enacted in dispensational discourses through the formation of biased mental models.

A key component of my own argumentation in this thesis has been to invoke discursive forgetting and silencing of, for example, Palestinian perspectives of *al-Nakba* or the Deir Yassin massacre. However, my own treatment of these issues could be criticized in that it, too, silences and forgets multifaceted perspectives of the Israel-Palestine conflict, to a degree. With this in mind, more explicit treatment of forgotten and silenced Palestinian perspectives as well as the objectification of Jews, Judaism, Israel, and Israelis in dispensational discourses seems necessary in subsequent research.

Finally, some scholars have recently drawn parallels between the colonization of Palestine and the colonization of the Americas (Kimmerling 1983; Massad 2006:91), including comparative analysis of rhetoric employed by Israel and the U.S. (Salaita 2006). With this in mind, I hope that this thesis will serve as a foundation to future research that explores such potential connections between Israeli and U.S. colonialism at a discursive level, such as strategies of self- and other-representation. In particular, since eschatological implications

⁹² Discourse and cultural memory are in certain ways mutually constitutive: discourse informs cultural memory and cultural memory informs discourse production and comprehension.

informed the ideologies of many U.S. colonialists (Boyer 1992), investigating the discursive constructions of eschatological paradigms might prove to be an illuminating perspective of comparison. Moreover, Indigenous scholars often invoke Christianity as a primary destructive force for Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, and ways of doing and knowing. In some senses, this is rightly so; however, it lacks precision and therefore merits detailed exploration and understanding of how narrow theological systems within the broader framework of Christianity (e.g., dispensationalisms) operate in order to properly situate any analysis, critique, and prospective directions. This thesis takes as its objective a more limited scope in order to serve this end, and to probe deeper rather than cast a wider net. As a result, I hope that this it provides an exemplification of types of methodological analysis that might be suitable in manifesting how the discursive power abuse of Indigenous Peoples' can be enacted through religio-political discourses, thus supporting efforts of Indigenous self-determination.

4.6 Conclusions

How do dispensational discourses represent and remember Jews, Israelis, Israel, Palestinians, and Palestine through text and talk? How does this relate to enacting syncretic racism and prejudice toward these peoples and entities? What consequences might strategies of representation and remembering in dispensational discourses have for Israeli and Palestinian articulations of indigeneity?

In this thesis, I attempted to answer these questions in part by addressing these issues from the perspectives of critical discourse analysis and cultural memory, “triangulating” discourse, society, and cognition (Van Dijk 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b). The central argument of this thesis is that dispensational discourses have reproduced biased mental models of Palestine

and Israel through a cultural narrative of commemorating Israel. Dispensational discourses commemorate Israel as a function of remembering highly particularized narratives of Israel's past, present, and future. This national glorification of Israel is "commensurate with" the silencing and forgetting of Palestine's/Palestinian history and the "absence" of the indigenous population that Israel dispossessed through attaining statehood (Masalha 2007:311). When Palestinians do emerge in dispensational discourses, they are often represented and remembered in relation to terror and radical Islam, both of which are considered inimical to Israel's and the U.S.'s security.

With regard to competing articulations of Indigenous identity by Israelis and Palestinians, dispensational discourses serve to co-articulate an Indigenous identity on behalf of Israel by constructing an intimate land-people relationship between Jews and Palestine that extends from past to future. Because of future expectations that dispensationalisms anticipate for national Israel, producers of dispensational texts have a vested interest in promoting Israeli indigenesness, which also effectually delegitimizes Palestinian self-determination and indigeneity. Moreover, though Jews, Israelis, and Israel are generally represented and remembered positively in dispensational discourses, this, too, is biased. Specifically, producers of dispensational discourses also silence the complexity of Jewish and Israeli identities by constructing an exclusive Jewish/Israeli identity that, for example, excludes Jewish identity in diaspora from the first century to the early twentieth century. Thus, dispensational discourses serve, in a metaphorical sense, as *lieux de mémoire* ("sites of memory," Nora 1989): they are discursive and cultural "museums" (Richardson and Wodak 2009) where commemoration of Israel takes place through the (re)construction and dissemination of a particularized narrative regarding Israel and Palestine.

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