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PALESTINIANS IN LATIN AMERICA: From Media Coverage to Communicational Processes for the Culture, History, and Struggle Preservation

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DEDICATION

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To the revolutionaries and resistance fighters throughout my land, to Palestine, to Jerusalem and Gaza, and to their steadfast people. And to the researchers, academics, journalists, photographers, and artists who were murdered by the machinery of injustice, I dedicate this humble work to you, before your heroism and your courageous and righteous sacrifices.

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CONTENTS

ALZOUBI, Ahmad. PALESTINIANS IN LATIN AMERICA: From Media Coverage to Communicational Processes for the Culture, History, and Struggle Preservation. 2024. Thesis (PhD in Communication Sciences). Methodist University of São Paulo, São Bernardo do Campo, Brazil.

ABSTRACT:

This doctoral research examines the communicative practices of the Palestinian diaspora in Latin America and their interaction with conventional media coverage that has resorted to the "Israel-Palestine conflict" formula, as disseminated by international news agencies and replicated by newspapers in the region that is the focus of this study. The theoretical framework encompasses the history and theories of Palestinian migration, diaspora, humanitarian and peace journalism, as well as special coverage in conflict zones. Investigating communicative strategies to preserve cultural identity and the right of return to Palestine, the thesis employs a descriptive qualitative methodology, anchored in three central procedures: bibliographic review, content analysis of five prominent newspapers from the countries studied (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, and Honduras), and in-depth interviews. Through in-depth interviews with influential members of the Palestinian diaspora in the five focus countries, the thesis explores the maintenance of cultural traditions and the Arabic language and examines media representation, highlighting the discrepancy between the predominant Western narrative and Latin American perspectives on Palestine. As a direct result of the research, it is possible to identify the continuous cultural and historical resistance to the violent occupation of Palestine and the influence of International Law on the sense of belonging that defies time. The research contributes to understanding how journalistic practice can broaden critical awareness and social responsibility in covering the Palestinian issue.

KEYWORDS:

Palestinian Diaspora. International Journalism. Islamophobia. Humanitarian and Peace Journalism. Latin America.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis stems from an in-depth analysis of the communication practices of the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America, even if informal, opposing them with the "Israel-Palestine conflict" journalistic formula, widely disseminated by international news agencies and replicated by regional newspapers.

The study focuses on the communication strategies employed by Palestinians in the Latin American Diaspora to preserve their culture and maintain their connection to their homeland, to which they have the right to return under International Law—a right denied for 76 years. Drawing on the principles of humanitarian and peace journalism, this research also examines how these practices aim to counter a media narrative reliant on a singular, worn-out formula about Palestine.

This work examines how the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America preserves its history, including its relationship with the Arabic language spoken in its ancestral villages, as well as Palestinian peasant and traditional customs. Similarly, it explores how the Palestinian issue, a central concern for the Diaspora, has been portrayed by local media. Our academic approach encompasses how members of the Palestinian community in host countries seek to inform themselves and convey their ideas, values and impressions of Palestinian reality.

Media activity, due to its influence on society, always demands thorough analysis, given the news standards it adopts in its coverage of events of public interest. Considering that the political and ideological positions of media institutions tend to shape journalistic practices, the principles of objectivity, transparency and professional integrity are precisely what can lead to comprehensive coverage closer to reality. The contradiction between a superficial, mass-produced narrative and the lived reality of the marginalised protagonists becomes evident when examined through the lens of humanitarian and peace journalism as well as specialised coverage in war and conflict zones. This topic requires extensive study to identify the flaws in international coverage and the reasons behind the way facts are presented, which often seems designed to align public sentiment with the media's preferred perspective.

It was from this perspective that this book was born, aiming to gain a deep understanding of how the Palestinian Diaspora, through its communication practices, has not only managed to go far beyond the approach and discourse of conventional media, but has also sought ways to strengthen its cultural and historical ties to Palestine. In this vein, the hypothesis underpinning this research is that the lack of a resolution to the Palestinian issue, which faces increasingly violent occupation in the ongoing Nakba—the catastrophe solidified with the creation of the State of Israel in 1948—exerts a strong influence on those who have emigrated and reinforces a lasting sense of belonging. This belonging is expressed through community relations and their natural or mediated forms of communication related to Palestinian resistance in the occupied land.

The methodology employed combines a review of the literature on Palestinian migrations, media and Latin America, with content analysis of news reports and in-depth interviews across five countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador and Honduras. According to

data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the latter three represent the largest presence of the Palestinian Diaspora in South America. Argentina was included due to its historical significance as a location once proposed by Theodor Herzl for the creation of a Jewish national homeland. Brazil, in turn, was selected for its international and regional influence, serving, to a great extent, as a kind of political leader on the continent.

The analysis focuses on five widely circulated and prominent newspapers from the studied countries, examining how they covered the Palestinian issue and conveyed human suffering based on the principles of humanitarian and peace journalism, which prioritise human beings, placing them at the centre of coverage. A descriptive approach to the Palestinian communities in the studied countries was complemented by interviews to demonstrate the extent to which the Diaspora adheres to its identity, culture, the Arabic language and its views on conventional media.

The theoretical framework begins with studies in the field of international relations, focusing on the relationship between Latin America and Palestine, as well as the understanding of the Palestinian Diaspora and identity. The second part of the theoretical framework incorporates studies in humanitarian and peace journalism, within the context of the Palestinian community's narrative. These two fields are further supported by studies in international journalism.

The first chapter provides an overview of the Palestinian issue, starting with the deliberate forced displacement that began approximately 80 years ago and continues to this day.

The second chapter introduces the Palestinian community in Latin America, with a focus on the countries examined in the study. Initially, we discuss the concepts of immigration and diaspora, highlighting how the Diaspora can represent a form of resistance, as discussed by Stuart Hall (2003). We explore the various ways Palestinians arrived in Latin American countries and the origins of their families, many of whom are tied to villages and cities in Palestine destroyed during the Nakba. Among the countries studied, we observe unique characteristics, such as in Argentina, which has a small Palestinian community and presents a challenge as a case study on immigration, where incidents of attacks have strained relations between Jews and Arabs due to reservations about the perpetrators. Another unique case is Chile, where the expanded community and the strength of its institutions have created a sympathetic image of the Palestinian cause. This positive representation is also reinforced during certain critical moments in the history of relations between Latin America and Palestine.

In the third chapter, we explore the connection between the concepts and practices of humanitarian and peace journalism, drawing on the works of experts such as Johan Galtung, Cilene Victor, Steven Youngblood, Wilhelm Kempf, Dov Shinar, Martin Scott, Mel Bunce and Kate Wright, in contrast to traditional journalistic theories. We examine how these concepts underpin the content analysis of Latin American newspapers' coverage of Palestine, seeking to identify approaches that transcend the conventional perspective imposed by the dominance of news agencies from the Global North.

This book also explores the relationship between the MacBride Report on the predominance of the Global North's perspective in Western news agencies and how the study's sample—comprising *Clarín* (Argentina), *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil), *El Mercurio*

(Chile), *La Prensa Gráfica* (El Salvador) and *El Heraldo* (Honduras)—has regularly addressed the Palestinian issue. We demonstrate how these newspapers approach the role of the Palestinian Diaspora in these countries, providing space for the contributions of Latin American Palestinians in various economic, political and social aspects, which differs from giving voice to the narrative of occupied Palestine.

Additionally, we mention examples of Palestinian journalists who faced adversity to provide coverage distinct from the Western narrative, including the assassination of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh on 11 May, 2022, as reported by the Committee to Protect Journalists and the unprecedented number of journalists killed while covering Gaza after 7 October, 2023. As observed at the time of writing, the killings of journalists have continued at an alarming rate.

The fourth chapter is based on interviews conducted with prominent figures of the Palestinian community in the host countries, following ethical guidelines and consent procedures in accordance with the Research Ethics Committee of the Methodist University of São Paulo (CEP-UMESP). The selected sample comprises individuals connected to communication, religion, academia and politics, who are mentioned in this book anonymously under these categories.

We aim to explore how these individuals worked to preserve Palestinian identity and resistance while contributing to the development of strong societies capable of engaging with the Palestinian cause, as exemplified in the cases of Chile and Brazil. We strive to understand the extent to which the effects of the prejudices faced by the first Palestinians are still felt today, requiring a distinction between forms of discrimination that could be termed "Turcophobia" or "Palestinophobia", and the racist and religious intolerance characterising Islamophobia in the early decades of this millennium and, more recently, after October 2023, the expressions of hatred or fear from those who adhere to Israeli narratives and criminalise Palestinians. We also investigate the sources of information that the Diaspora community has adopted to stay informed about events in Palestine and how these concerns are reflected in their lives.

Among the challenges faced in Diaspora communication, this chapter addresses the lack of representation of Palestinian voices in Latin American journalism and the rising number of Palestinian journalists killed over the past 20 years.

Investigating the impact of media representation on collective perceptions of events offers a deeper understanding of how journalistic practices are conducted, particularly when the media reproduces and amplifies hegemonic voices embedded in official discourse. This work aims to explore how media constructions surrounding events contribute to the development of a social perception that is disproportionately distant from the reality of the facts and the propagation of moral panic, as discussed by Stanley Fish (1980) and Zygmunt Bauman (2016).

Despite its preeminence and influence in daily life and journalistic practice, the topic addressed in this study has relatively few bibliographic and academic references compared to other subjects in the field of communication. In this context, this work also aims to contribute to journalists, researchers and enthusiasts interested in the subject, enabling them to consider, based on the analyses and results, the consequences of the

methodological model of journalistic coverage of the Palestinian issue in Latin America, considering the complexity imposed by our common networked society.

Journalism on the Palestinian issue still lacks greater academic contribution, such as the adoption of specific programmes in schools on social communication. It also lacks the contribution of regional media institutions, for example, by sending reporters and photographers to occupied Palestine to report news directly or by accessing and valuing diverse sources without subordination to a narrative that *a priori* justifies the occupier's side or without relying on mass-produced information from the Global North, specifically from the US and the UK.

It is timely for academia to produce data and foundations that can contribute to positively changing the existing scenario, encouraging more assertive practices to increase attention to the role of critical journalism and its social responsibility. By focusing on aspects of communication about Palestine in Latin America, considering the perceptions of communities that historically connect these two worlds, this book seeks to contribute to this direction.

CHAPTER 1.

The Palestinian Issue: Summary

This chapter examines the history of Palestine and the formation of the State of Israel, covering historical events from 1880 to 1967, as well as the subsequent emergence of Palestinian struggle and resistance movements.

A chronological sequence helps to understand the rise of the Zionist project and its consolidation into the exclusively Jewish State of Israel, a factor in the exclusion and displacement of Palestinians. The 2018 Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People is an expression of this.

The Beginning of the Zionist Project

The displacement and expulsion of Palestinians were part of Zionist ideas and to this day, policies continue to advance the uprooting of Palestinians from their lands. The appropriation of their land came to be treated as a right to establish the State of Israel, before which Arabs were expected to either accept Israeli sovereignty over the country or leave Palestine (Masalha, 1997). According to representations of this colonial project, Abdel Wahab El-Messiri (1999) defined the word Zionism as the Jewish religious heritage referring to Mount Zion and Jerusalem, encompassing the entire Holy Land.

The year 1882 marked the beginning of Zionist colonisation in Palestine, following the arrival of members of the Russian Bilu Society, and the purpose of expulsion and forced displacement by the group of Zionist founders was already evident (Masalha, 1992).

The argument for occupying Palestine in the early 19th century appears in the words of Israel Zangwill, who described it as “a land without a people for a people without a land” (Masalha, 1992). Myths like this served the purpose of forcibly expelling the Palestinian population.

The Jewish Immigration

An initial stage in promoting immigration to Palestine was entrusted to a central office for Labour of the Jewish Society, to recruit skilled labour, such as carpenters specialising in furniture design, glass installers and other artisans. The office would send them, along with their families, to the new land, ensuring they did not feel alienated and would provide them with a dignified and secure life. This marked the beginning of Jewish immigration to Palestine.

This immigration cost approximately £50 million (Nedava, 1934), equivalent to about $200 million at the time. The idea of a public stock subscription was introduced to fund the project, with contributions from both the poor and the rich, each according to their income, to build the “modern state”.

The immigration plan was divided into three groups: workers for the land, skilled labour for house construction and the wealthy (Masalha, 1992). Rabbis would cooperate through their speeches and sermons, promoting a transition from misery to happiness, from poverty to wealth and from dispersion to a homeland. In general, the focus was on the immigration of the middle classes, as they were the ones who led institutions, businesses and associations. The goal was for them to build their dreams and aspirations by working in the new land and the “Jewish homeland”, free from persecution, discrimination or racism. The plan was for the Jewish Society to work towards obtaining diplomatic recognition abroad as a constituent force of the state, while internally fostering relationships with the Jewish people to establish the essential foundational institutions necessary for the Jewish state (Herzl, 2007).

The First Zionist Settlements in Palestine

Jews in Palestine did not exceed two per cent of the total population, or approximately 5,000 people, before 1870. Half of them lived in Jerusalem, and the rest in Hebron, Safed and Tiberias (Teveth, 1985). However, after the organised immigration from 1881 to 1904, they grew to about five per cent of Palestine’s population (Parfitt, 1987).

In the history of Arab-Jewish relations, the issue of settlement was a new development. A Jewish minority had lived in Palestine for hundreds of years, speaking Arabic and sharing Arab customs, culture and characteristics, fully integrated into society.

It cannot be said that Arabs or Muslims in the 19th century were hostile to Zionism, as they were unaware that it was a colonial project. Only after this perception became evident—particularly with the Balfour Declaration of 2 November, 1917, in which Britain expressed its support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine and the implementation of the British Mandate following World War I (1914-1918)—did resistance to Zionism emerge. This resistance came from peasants, intellectuals, workers and the national bourgeoisie of a people who had lived in Palestine for centuries, opposing the colonisation of their land. The establishment of a Jewish state in a country with a majority non-Jewish Arab population had only one meaning: to expel them from their land. Before Zionist colonisation, there were no records of problems between Jews, Muslims or Christians. Many Jewish neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias and Safed at the time provide evidence of this. The Arab peoples of that period were unfamiliar with anti-Semitism.

The Ottoman Sultanate and Arab countries occasionally witnessed waves of incitement against minorities and discriminatory practices, especially during times of crisis. This was the exception, not the rule. However, there were no phenomena of hostility specifically against Jews, or what could be called anti-Semitism. It is worth noting that the Orthodox Jewish community in Jerusalem was among the first to condemn the secular Zionist project in Palestine, opposing it ideologically in a petition addressed to the Ottoman Sultan.

The colonisers, who brought Western ideas from Russia, Germany and Europe—cultures foreign to the indigenous peoples—faced numerous confrontations and resistance from peasants and locals.

In 1906, “there were 700,000 people in all of Palestine, of whom only 55,000 were Jews, and of these, only 550 were so-called ‘pioneers’, that is, Zionists” (Teveth, 1985, pp. 9-10). Comparing these “pioneers” with the native Jews of Palestine, we find that the latter were mostly Orthodox. They lived in Jerusalem and some smaller cities and fiercely opposed the political goals of Zionism.

The colony of Rishon LeZion was founded by Bilu, a Russian youth movement established in 1882, which immigrated to Palestine the same year. The British assistant consul in Palestine at the time facilitated immigration and secured 3,000 dunams in the village of Ayun Kara, near the city of Jaffa. When the new colony faced a severe financial crisis, Edmond James de Rothschild sent 25,000 French francs in aid. This colony developed and became a local council in 1921, a municipality in 1950, and its population grew from dozens to 10,000 inhabitants by 1948. It is considered a major economic centre for the State of Israel, with one of the most important companies belonging to the German-Jewish Rothschild family, forming a cornerstone of Israel’s economy and wine industry in occupied Palestine to this day. It is noteworthy that Rothschild spent 40 million French francs from 1884 to 1897 to support Zionist colonisation. There are many factories and international brands in this colony, which also houses a nuclear reactor and a radiation monitoring centre. Rishon LeZion is considered the first colony to teach the Hebrew language (Sayegh, 1968).

Palestinians resisted the idea of the colonial project, rejecting the presence of Jews from Europe and causing Petah Tikva to fail initially. The notables of Jerusalem sent a petition

to the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire in 1893, demanding that the immigration of Russian Jews to Palestine be halted (Manna, 2003). The issue escalated into violent clashes between Palestinian peasants and Zionist settlers, resulting in deaths, injuries and material losses to properties, crops and homes, which discouraged settlers from seizing agricultural land.

The position of Palestinian peasants, in general, and the Ottoman Empire, since 1881, was to limit immigration. The latter declared that it would allow Jews to emigrate to any part of the Ottoman Empire except Palestine, provided they became Ottoman citizens and respected and submitted to the laws of the state. This position posed a significant obstacle to the colonisation project until the start of World War I in 1914 (Manna, 2003).

The Jewish State Book

The author of the book, *The Jewish State,* which carries the subtitle *Proposal of a Modern Solution for the Jewish Question,* is Theodor Herzl (1860-1904). Herzl was a journalist and correspondent in Paris for an Austrian newspaper when a case of espionage for Germany erupted, in which the French Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus was accused between 1894 and 1895. The trial caused a wave of anti-Semitism in France (Khalidi, 1998). Herzl wrote the book arguing that this would not end until a Jewish homeland was established.

He sought to revive the idea of European expansion initiated by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 in Egypt, when Napoleon aimed to take Acre (a Palestinian city) from the Ottomans the following year. Herzl advocated for the occupation of Jerusalem and Palestine to establish a Jewish homeland (Weider, 1997).

To legitimise the colonial project and gain international credibility, Herzl made significant efforts. However, German Jews did not believe in the establishment of the State of Israel due to their religious belief that it depended on divine will and the coming of the Messiah. Therefore, they considered Zionist politics heretic and incompatible with religion (Pew Research Center, 2016).[1]

Anti-Zionist Jews question the claim of biblical explanations for the existence of a Jewish state in the land and prophecies related to the need for such a state for the return of the Messiah.[2] The position of Orthodox Jews is well-known, including the formation of the anti-Zionist party Agudat Israel in 1912. It is not the purpose of this work to delve into the topic of the strong opposition of Orthodox Jews to Zionism or even that of Reform Judaism.

To ensure the success of the Zionist project, Herzl theorised that Jews would not move from their locations except to better places, that they would not leave their old homes

[1] Pew Research Center. *Report on Israel's Religiously Divided Society*, 2016. Available at: pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/.

[2] Anti-Zionist positions were articulated, for example, at the Conservative Conference of Frankfurt (1845), the Rabbinical Conference of Philadelphia (1869), the Pittsburgh Platform (1885) and in a resolution issued at the first Central Conference of Reform Rabbis (1890) (Bishara, 2019, p. 3).

except for new homes equipped before their immigration and that only those convinced of the idea of a Jewish state and of improving their economic and social status would go.

Herzl explained that Jews would not be expelled from their places in the world, where they were exposed to racism and viewed as inferior, to the new land without the support of other governments to work, promote and adopt the idea and to generate benefits from it. He also spoke of the establishment of the corporate entity (the Jewish community) and the Jewish company that would operate economic activities (Herzl, 2007).

For him, the suffering of the Jews was continuous and recurring, with all classes subjected to persecution. He summarised the situation by recalling two phrases: “Don’t buy from Jews” and “Juden Raus”, the title of a Nazi game meaning “Jews out” (Herzl, 2007, p. 61).

The anti-Semitism to which Jews were subjected in Germany and Russia was where Herzl began in the late 19th century, believing that the solution could not be integration into European societies, but rather “giving us a part of the great world that satisfies our just requirements for the nation of the Jews, and we can handle the rest” (Herzl, 2007, p. 38). Thus, he encouraged Jews, telling them that he might not see a Jewish state in his lifetime, but that work should be done in that direction, reminding them how many nations and societies, smaller in number and capacity, had been able to establish their own states, thereby guaranteeing their sovereignty.

Herzl indicated that there were two options for Jewish immigration: Argentina and Palestine, where there had been experiences “worthy of colonisation”. He described Argentina as one of the fertile countries with a low population density and a temperate climate. He set the terms for the new homeland, including how to divide the land, its fertility and a strictly centralised administration. The plan was for Argentinians to gain enormous profits from the purchase or transfer of land. But Herzl also said that Palestine was “our unforgettable historical homeland” and that “the name alone would be a powerfully stirring rallying cry for our people” (Herzl, 2007).

Called the “spiritual father of the Jewish state”, Herzl announced that the implementation would be carried out through two bodies: the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Jewish Company. The idea of the Jewish Society was to prepare the Jewish community through training in the fields of science and politics. The idea of the Jewish Company focused on the practical implementation after the establishment of the state, with the aim of liquidating the benefits represented by the commercial businesses of Jews as they departed and to organise their businesses in the new land (Herzl, 2007).

Herzl proposed gradual displacement, where the poor and farmers would cultivate and reclaim the land, which would require the establishment of markets to meet agricultural demands and stimulate the circulation of goods. In this case, railways, roads, bridges, river rectification, communication equipment and modern-style housing construction were needed. Attracted by this activity, merchants would immigrate on their own and at their own expense to open new economic horizons. And in this case, Jews around the world would perceive the new Jewish state as an opportunity. The tone was this: those who do not come with us will be left behind (Herzl, 2007).

In his vision, the Jewish Society would fulfil the role for which it was created, negotiating with the current landowners under the protection of European powers, should they support the displacement plan. Multiple sums and benefits would be paid in exchange for the purchase of land. The Jewish state would incur large debts, but in return, it would establish itself as a modern state, which would benefit neighbouring countries through cultivation and investment, ultimately increasing the value of the land and its surroundings.

Herzl relied on Orientalist representations, stating, "for Europe, we would constitute there a piece of a fortress against Asia, we would be the advanced sentinel of civilisation against barbarism" (Herzl, 1896, p. 19).

First Zionist Congress: The Basel Program

The First Zionist Congress was held in August 1897 in the Swiss city of Basel. The plan was to hold it in the German city of Munich. However, Jewish religious opposition prevented it, from which it can still be inferred today that the establishment of Israel finds no support in religion, but is instead a political project (Pew Research Center, 2016).[3]

As president of the Congress, Herzl stated that its goal was to discuss the establishment of a national home for the Jews. It is noteworthy that the languages of the conference were German and Yiddish, not Hebrew, and at this congress, it was decided to revive the Hebrew language and promote it among Jews and settlers (El-Messiri, 1999).

The number of Jews in the world before the First Zionist Congress and the beginning of immigration for colonisation purposes to Palestine in the early 1880s was approximately 7.75 million (Khalidi, 1998). Most were located in Eastern Europe, with Russia accounting for more than 75 per cent of them. The Russian czar pushed Jews into ghettos, forcing them to reside in certain provinces, such as western Poland and other regions. His policies triggered persecutions against Jews, who suffered repeated attacks known as pogroms. This led them, as Walid Khalidi explains in his book *A Hundred Years of Zionism,* to emigrate from Russia to the US. Between 1881 and 1914, over two million Russian Jews emigrated to the US (Khalidi, 1998).

The First Zionist Congress, led by Herzl, outlined the program of the Zionist administration. Previously, the Zionist movement was not an organised or active force in international politics, and this conference was the one that considered the establishment of the State of Israel in Palestine and the practical steps to achieve it, in what became known as the Basel Program, named after the Swiss city where it was held and implemented until its dissolution in 1951. In its place, the Jerusalem Program was established, as defined at the first meeting following the creation of the State of Israel (Khalidi, 1998).

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[3] Pew Research Center. *Report on Israel's Religiously Divided Society*, 2016. Available at: pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/.

Herzl sought to alleviate the participants' fears regarding the Ottoman Empire's reception of the proposal, which warned about the organised immigration of Jews to Palestine to establish their national home. Thus, he urged discouraged and religious Jews, as well as the wealthy, to migrate to Palestine and establish their homeland. The first Zionist conference identified the practical steps to achieve this (Manna, 2003).

The Basel Program had four points, as mentioned by the *Palestinian Encyclopedia* (1984, pp. 345-346):

- Promotion of agricultural and non-agricultural settlements in Palestine
- Organisation of the entirety of the "Jewish people"
- Promotion of some sense of Jewish identity and national conscience
- Agreements with governments to establish a Jewish home state

Among his efforts, Herzl appealed twice to the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, attempting to persuade him to accept the idea of Jews immigrating to Palestine, which was under Ottoman control and administration. However, the Sultan categorically refused.

Herzl preferred to use the word "homeland", avoiding the mention of "state" for several reasons. It was important to try to reassure the Ottomans, in particular, and gain international public opinion, while not alienating the Jewish aristocrats living in Europe who considered themselves European citizens. These aristocrats rejected Herzl's movements, fearing that his ideas would fuel anti-Semitism (Manna, 2003).

Some supporters of the Zionist proposal to establish a national home for the Jews opposed the word "homeland", but as stated in the 1897 Basel Program, mentioned by the *Palestinian Encyclopedia*, Herzl argued, "there is no need to worry about the wording of this word, because people will understand, in any case, that it means a state" (1984, (1) pp. 345-346). Twenty years later, the same strategy was revealed in the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which promised a national home for the Jews, when in fact it was a colonial project for a state that avoided including Arabs and their rights, ignoring their existence from the outset (*Palestinian Encyclopedia*, 1984).

Herzl travelled to Constantinople in 1902, where he met British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain (Khalidi, 2018). From this period onwards, Britain allied itself with the Zionist project and began working towards the colonisation of Palestine.

One of the most important outcomes of the First Zionist Congress was the establishment of two institutions that contributed to the establishment of the State of Israel: The Jewish National Fund in 1901 and the Jewish Investment Fund in 1889, which represented a practical application of the ideas Herzl mentioned in *The Jewish State.* Herzl followed in the footsteps of several Jewish thinkers worldwide in crystallising and formulating Zionist ideas, such as Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795-1874), Moses Hess (1812-1875), Mohelfer (1824-1898), Nepsker (1891) and Asher Zvi Hirsch Ginsberg (1856-1927).

Kalischer argued that settlement in Palestine should precede the expected Messiah, while Hess believed it would be impossible to promote Jews in the Diaspora, particularly in Christian Europe and that a Jewish state should be established in Palestine. All agreed

that anti-Semitism was an argument that could be used to convince Christian countries like France (Khalidi, 1998).

Zionist Jewish thought, even before the convening of the Zionist Congress, held that assimilation in Europe was impossible and that leaders and officials should foster national sentiment, heritage and Jewish identity, which could only be achieved through immigration and the establishment of settlements in Palestine (Masalha, 1992).

For Herzl, the future Jewish homeland was the solution to the problem of Jews in Europe, considering that other societies such as Serbia, the Balkans and Romania had realised their dreams of a homeland, and the Jews would be no less capable of achieving it. This would be a great incentive, to which the fear of anti-Semitism would be added.

However, Herzl did not specifically describe the Jewish situation or the injustice to which Jews worldwide and in Europe were exposed at the First Zionist Congress. Instead, he argued that Jews could establish and administer a homeland away from European conflict, based on Palestine or Argentina, depending on their choice. The decision would be made by Jews collectively, but the important thing was the establishment of the homeland. Ultimately, Palestine was chosen, and a roadmap and a clear political system for creating a homeland there were established.

At the convening of the Second Zionist Congress the following year, the Jewish Settlement Bank was established to assist the Basel Program in implementing its decisions (Khalidi, 1998). Herzl summarised the outcome of the First Zionist Congress as, “If I were to summarise the Basel Program in one sentence—though I cannot say it publicly—I would say that Basel created the Jewish state” (Herzl, 1960).

Land Acquisitions and the Ousting of Sultan Abdul Hamid II

Sultan Abdul Hamid II’s position was clear regarding settlement and land purchases. He sent his ambassadors to track the effects of land purchases and issued instructions to the heads of diplomatic missions to prevent Jewish settlement in Palestine (Manna, 2003).

Sultan Abdul Hamid II was deposed in 1909 (Manna, 2003), and the subsequent government (Union and Progress) faced pressure from European countries and international Jewish organisations to allow Jews to migrate to Palestine and purchase land. The voices of Arabs warning of the dangers of this immigration diminished due to the political situation of the time and the great turmoil in the region. One of the most prominent figures who recognised the danger of Jewish immigration was Muhammad Rasheed Rida, an Islamic nationalist (Lamb, 2000).

On 20 August, 1909, a new constitution was approved by the Ottomans, in the same year that Sultan Abdul Hamid was deposed after refusing to establish a national home for the Jews in exchange for paying off Ottoman debts to Europe, as proposed by Herzl (Manna, 2003).

The new Ottoman Constitution abolished censorship of publications and allowed greater freedom of the press and expression. The year 1909 is considered the birth year of the

Palestinian press, which played a significant role in educating society about the dangers of Zionist immigration, warning against, and inciting resistance to, the policy of Judaisation (Khoury, 1967). The first Palestinian newspaper, *Al-Karmel* (1908-1914), was founded by Nagib Nassar. From its very first day, it adopted the struggle against the Zionist project. Another was the Palestinian newspaper of the Issa Brotherhood in 1911 (Manna, 2003). Most of the press was dedicated to the dangers of immigration, land sales and Zionist settlement. The newspapers *Al-Muqtabas* (1908-1913) and *Al-Mufid* (1908-1912) played the most prominent role in educating and awakening public opinion about the imminent danger.

World War I: The Impact on Palestine

The Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of Germany, against the Franco-British-Russian alliance, on 5 November, 1914 (Manna, 2003). The outcome was the victory of the British alliance and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, including its provinces such as Palestine.

This was a period of epidemics, with the spread of cholera, typhus, typhoid fever and locust swarms that destroyed crops and claimed many lives in Palestine. The Ottoman Army was going through a period of general weakness and debilitation. Palestinians believed that the British and their army would control and occupy Palestine due to the sanitary (Al-Aref, 1943) and economic conditions (Schilcher, 1992, pp. 229-258), as well as the poor military status of Palestine, in particular, and the Ottomans, in general (Manna, 2003).

The British Army took and occupied Egypt. In February 1917, it reached Rafah and then invaded Khan Yunis, in southern Gaza, entering with little resistance. The Ottomans managed to repel the attack on Gaza at the end of March 1917 (Manna, 2003, p. 262). The British attacked Gaza by air and land, but failed to invade it, suffering heavy losses. The British forces repeated the attack, but could not succeed and, for the second time, suffered heavy human losses.

This led to a change in the British commander of the battle, with Edmund Allenby taking over the campaign with significant powers and resources. Britain strengthened its army in Egypt to invade Gaza and Palestine, supporting it with advanced warplanes and deadly weapons. The Ottoman Army was not prepared at the same level for the confrontation, having already lost World War I. Allenby decided to attack the Ottoman forces in October 1917. He first occupied Beersheba with little resistance (Al-Aref, 1934). Then, he advanced with British forces, equipped with modern weapons, towards Gaza. The Ottoman Army did not hold out for long, and the British occupied Gaza on 7 November, 1917. Great devastation befell Gaza as a result of the land and sea bombardment that lasted nearly eight months. Allenby stated in a speech, “Gaza has been, from the beginning of history to the present day, the gate of conquerors” (Al-Aref, 1934). The British invasion advanced to the north of Palestine, occupying Jaffa in November and Jerusalem two months later, due to the resistance encountered there.

Jerusalem fell on 9 December, 1917, and "the fall of Jerusalem's prestige had a significant impact on the Arabs, Palestinians and Ottomans" (Manna, 2003), due to its historical, religious and moral significance, after being ruled by the Ottomans for four centuries.

The occupation of Jerusalem marked the beginning of the British invasion of Palestine. The Balfour Declaration was issued on 2 November, 1917, prior to the occupation of Jerusalem and following the occupation of Gaza. With the Ottomans weakened, the end of their control over Palestine was only a matter of days (Manna, 2003).

Zionism sought to expel all Palestinians from their land, and Winston Churchill wrote, "There are Jews whom we have committed to bringing to Palestine, and it is assumed that the local population will be expelled to protect them" (Masalha, 1992, p. 35).

The attitude of Zionist leaders like David Ben-Gurion, Heckler German and David Rubin was to ignore the Arab presence in Palestine (Masalha, 1992). Although they did not openly admit it, they were certain that it was necessary to work towards expelling them by all means and methods, including force.

Meanwhile, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, a Zionist ideologue and founder of the Union of Revisionist Zionists, who envisioned a Jewish-majority state across the entire territory of the British Mandate on both sides of the Jordan River, acknowledged in his work *The Iron Wall [We and the Arabs]* that Palestinians would not accept the Zionist enterprise and that, like all native peoples, they would resist the invaders. The solution, therefore, was to build an "iron wall" of Jewish military force. According to Masalha, Jabotinsky clearly understood the psyche of the dispossessed and colonised; there was no likelihood that the Arab majority would agree to become a minority in their own land. Indeed, they would continue to resist the Zionist project, and thus the Iron Wall was not an end in itself, but a means to break their resistance.

For his part, Chaim Weizmann, the first president of the State of Israel in 1949, stated, "They could be gotten rid of with money and could also be suppressed with a bit of firmness" (Ibid, 1972). He believed that the Palestinians represented nothing organised or strong. However, after his arrival in Palestine as head of the Zionist mission, he wrote a letter to his daughter describing the Palestinians as "the rocks of the Judean region" (Ibid, 1972, pp. 31-32), as obstacles that would need to be removed on this difficult path. His view that the Arabs were stones to be removed became a guiding principle in the Zionist treatment of the Palestinian population.

Zionist descriptions of the Palestinian Arabs portrayed them as disorganised and incoherent groups, without any prominent national party, who could be seduced with money, expelled and received by other peoples of the Arabian Peninsula due to their shared Arab identity.

However, the Zionist movement was surprised by the scale of organised Palestinian resistance and, consequently, by the fact that they could not make the Palestinian Arabs surrender in the way they had expected. Former Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), who was the head of the Mapai party (an acronym for Mifleget Po'alei Eretz Yisrael) in 1929, declared:

> The debate over whether an Arab national movement exists or not is a meaningless verbal exercise; what matters to us is that the movement attracts the masses. We do not consider it a revival movement, and its moral value is doubtful. But politically speaking, it is a national movement... The Arab cannot and must not be a Zionist. He could never wish for the Jews to become a majority. This is the real antagonism between us and the Arabs. Both of us want to be the majority (Masalha, 1992).

A plan for the expulsion of Palestinians began to take shape in the 1930s and 1940s, with the opinion that Arab nationalism should absorb these Palestinians. Thus, communications began with Arab leaders in the region to persuade them of the possibility of transferring Palestinians to their countries, specifically Saudi Arabia and Iraq (Masalha, 1992).

The racist and extremist discourse sought to prepare Zionist public opinion that repression and the forced displacement of the Palestinian population would be the best solution (Shahak, 1989). These ideological views fuelled the violent terrorist campaign launched by the Irgun in the late 1930s, with Jabotinsky's approval, to intimidate the native inhabitants and force their transfer. For example, this group detonated a cart of vegetables loaded with explosives in a crowded Arab market in Jerusalem. They also threw bombs into markets in Haifa and Jerusalem and fired indiscriminately at Arab homes (Katz, 1968).

Zionist gangs competed in their goal of subduing Arabs to force them out, and the Yishuv (the local Jewish community before the establishment of the State of Israel) consistently supported and encouraged a comprehensive confrontation to expel the Palestinians. This gained greater momentum with the support of the British Mandate and its army, strengthening Zionist confidence in initiating a faster and more violent expulsion and colonial construction projects for the Zionist Jewish state (Masalha, 1992).

The Jewish state, from the beginning, imposed the Zionist will through excessive force on the Arabs of Palestine. At a meeting of the Mapai party, Ben-Gurion said, "There is no chance of reaching an understanding with the Arabs unless we first reach an understanding with the British to make us the superpower in Palestine" (Teveth, 1985, p. 155).

Mapai, Israel's "socialist Zionist" party, was established in 1930 through the merger of Ahdut Ha'avodah and Hapo'el Hatza'ir, with a "pragmatic socialist agenda". It later transformed into the Israeli Labor Party. Reflecting on the implementation of the doctrine of Jewish Labor years later, Mapai leader David Hacohen explained:

> I remember being one of the first comrades [of Ahdut Ha'avodah] to go to London after the First World War... There I became a socialist... [In Palestine] I had to argue with my friends about Jewish socialism because I would not accept Arabs in my union, Histadrut: advocating that we preach to housewives not to buy from Arab stores to prevent them from getting jobs there... pouring kerosene

> on Arab tomato crops; attacking Jewish housewives in Arab markets and destroying the eggs they bought from Arabs; thanking the Keren Kayemet [Jewish National Fund] for sending Hankin to Beirut to buy land from absent effendis [landowners] and evict the fellahin [peasants] from the land—buying dozens of dunums from an Arab is allowed, but selling, God forbid selling a dunum from a Jew to an Arab (Masalha, 2022).

This was preceded by meetings with Arab leaders in the 1930s, such as King Faisal Bin Abdulaziz, Awni Abd Al-Hadi, Shakib Arslan, Musa Alami and George Antonius, to negotiate the departure of Arabs from Palestine in exchange for money and the purchase of other lands in Arab countries, such as Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. However, this proposal was not accepted (Shachtman, 1959, (2), p. 152).

The Palestinian Resistance (1917-1948)

The Al-Buraq Uprising

The settlement project to establish the Jewish national home experienced a notable decline in activity between 1925 and 1928, primarily due to insufficient material support for Jewish immigration (Khalidi, 1987) and the ongoing resistance of the Arabs. However, 1929 marked a significant recovery in this immigration. The number of immigrants doubled between 1927 and 1928 (Charif, 2019).

In August 1929, the situation for Arabs in Jerusalem deteriorated. Jews were marking the anniversary of the “Destruction of the Temple” and held large demonstrations. On 15 August, 1929, a group from the “revisionist” movement, led by Jabotinsky, shouted in the streets of Jerusalem, “the Wall is our wall”, accusing “those who desecrate our holy places”. Upon reaching the Al-Buraq Wall (Western Wall), they raised the Zionist flag, sang the Jewish national anthem and chanted racist and provocative slogans against Arabs and Muslims (Charif, 2019). On 16 August, 1929, after Friday prayers, Muslims burned the *Istarhamat*, a hole in the Al-Buraq Wall where Jews placed their letters and hopes (Charif, 2019).

On 24 August, 1929, large demonstrations erupted across Palestine, and unrest spread to all its cities. The most violent occurred in the cities of Hebron, Jaffa, Bisan and Nablus, where Arabs burned British police headquarters and attacked Zionist settlements (Charif, 2019). As a result, clashes broke out between Arab and Jewish youths. The British Mandate forces distributed firearms and ammunition to various Jews. The spread of the news further inflamed Arab anger, leading them to attack settlements in Jerusalem and Jewish neighbourhoods. Jewish groups attacked a mosque, killing the imam and six members of his family. Arabs retaliated by attacking Jewish gatherings in Jaffa and Safed, resulting in the deaths of 45 Jews and an untold number of Arabs. A larger number of Arabs fell during clashes with British Army units and Mandate police, who defended the Jews and supplied them with ammunition (Charif, 2019).

The British Mandate authorities blamed the Arabs, and consequently, the high commissioner decided to execute three of them, Fu'ad Hijazi from Safed, Mahmoud Jamjoum and Atta Ahmad Al-Zeer from Hebron, on 27 June, 1930, while none of the Jews were executed. Nine hundred Arabs were arrested compared to 92 Jews (*Palestinian Encyclopedia*, 1984).

As a result, the British Mandate authorities formed an investigation committee headed by Judge Walter Shaw, which included three representatives from the British Parliament. The committee concluded that Arab hostility towards Jews stemmed from fear of their future, resulting from the purchase of land for Jews and their exclusion from any degree of political and economic autonomy. One of the committee's recommendations was that "Palestine cannot receive more Jewish immigrants except by replacing the local population with them", referring the issue of the Al-Buraq Wall to a specialised committee on history at the United Nations (UN) Council (Charif, 2019).

In 1930, the UN agreed to form a specialised committee to investigate the Al-Buraq Wall. For this purpose, a committee was formed and sent to Jerusalem in June 1930. Its report, published in December of that year, concluded, "The Al-Buraq Wall is 'Islamic' and is a waqf (endowment) for Muslims". As mentioned in the book *The Arab Right to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem* (*Alhak Alarabe Fe Haet Almabka Fe Alquds: Tqrer Allagna Aldawlia Almuqadam Ela Usbat Alumam Am 1930*), published in 1973 by the Institute for Palestine Studies, the Al-Buraq Wall belongs exclusively to Muslims, and it is not permitted to place any phrases, benches, chairs, curtains or tents near the wall (UN, 1930).

In October 1930, Britain formed a technical committee to investigate the causes of tension between Arabs and Jews, led by John Hope Simpson. After examining the course of events, the committee concluded, as mentioned in the international committee's report submitted to the League of Nations in 1930 (UN, 1930), that "there is a real crisis in Jewish land acquisition at the expense of Arabs, which has greatly contributed to the problem of unemployment among Palestinians. Additionally, illegal Jewish immigration is a constant danger and a persistent concern".

The Great Palestinian Rebellion

The revolution erupted when Palestinian peasants realised their lands were being stolen, upon learning of the British Mandate's schemes. The event began in May 1936 with a massive uprising. Under the leadership of Amin Al-Husseini, the revolution unfolded in three stages.

The first stage, from May 1936 to July 1937, included a general strike considered the longest of the 20th century against Western colonialism by national liberation movements (Khalidi, 1987). As a result, commercial and economic activity came to a halt, and unrest spread to the countryside and villages; rural populations and peasants took up arms against the British Mandate and settler groups. Britain then formed an investigative committee to address the revolutionaries' demands and end the strike. Lord William Peel chaired the British Royal Commission of Inquiry (Peel Commission). Arab heads of state

called for an end to the strike, and the Arab Higher Committee, which led the revolution, agreed. However, the Palestinian popular uprising soon reignited due to the policies of Zionist gangs.

The second phase focused on the period from July 1937 to the fall of 1938, following the publication of the Peel Commission report in July 1937, which identified "two reasons behind the unrest": the Palestinians' desire for independence and their hatred for the establishment of a national home for the Jews.

The commission recommended dividing Palestine into a Jewish state and a Palestinian state that would merge with Transjordan. Britain responded to the escalation of resistance by refusing to partition Palestine, stating that persecuted Jews should be helped to find a home. The British Mandate then issued an order to dissolve the Arab Higher Committee, which was managing the revolution, and arrested all its members, exiling five of the leaders to the Seychelles Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

The British Mandate forces bombarded revolutionary headquarters with tanks and planes, destroyed their homes, villages and dwellings, executed anyone found with weapons and imprisoned thousands of people, including peasants, writers, intellectuals, clergy, employees and the wealthy. The 1936 revolution involved all classes of Palestinian society, who felt their lands were being stolen before their eyes (Masalha, 1997).

The British Mandate sought the help of the Haganah, which established a unit called the Special Force to carry out nighttime assassinations of influential figures and leaders in society. It also created the organisation Irgun Zvai Leumi, a Zionist militia that operated with brutal methods, such as throwing grenades, planting time bombs in markets and alleys crowded with women and children, and resorting to intimidation and terror tactics against the rebellious Palestinian society.

The number of Palestinian casualties in 1938 was estimated at one thousand, with 54 Palestinians executed by hanging and 2,463 imprisoned, while the total Palestinian population at the time did not exceed one million (Masalha, 1997). Nevertheless, the resistance and revolution continued uninterrupted, and most cities came under the control of the revolutionaries, including the Old City of Jerusalem. The revolution received widespread approval, support and solidarity from the Arab world.

In the third phase, which lasted from late 1938 to the summer of 1939 (Khalidi, 1987), Britain sent massive reinforcements to its army in Palestine after opening the doors to recruitment and mobilisation to confront the Great Palestinian Revolution, which had taken control of central villages and cities. The administration of Palestine was handed over to the British military, and the clashes were violent, resulting in significant loss of life, with 55 executed Palestinians in 1939 (Khalidi, 1987). The casualties in 1939 were estimated at over 1,200 Palestinians, with twice as many arrests compared to 1938. Britain and its Mandate forces seized five times more weapons, rifles and ammunition than in the previous year.

Britain convened a conference in London on 7 February, 1937, which lasted until 27 March, but no agreement was reached with the Arabs to establish a national home for the Jews (Khalidi, 1987). Britain published the *White Paper* in May 1939, in which it committed to establishing a national home for the Jews and allowing 75,000 of them to

immigrate to Palestine. The *White Paper* marked the end of the Anglo-Zionist Entente that began with the Balfour Declaration in 1917 (Khalidi, 1987). Among the most prominent historical figures of the Palestinian revolution were Fawzi Al-Qawuqji, Amin Al-Husseini, Raghib Al-Nashashibi and Abu Ibrahim Al-Kabir.

The Nakba (1948)

During the events known as the Nakba (catastrophe), Zionist gangs expelled three-quarters of a million Palestinians (Masalha, 1992), occupying their lands through intimidation or the force of arms.

The Nakba was the deliberate extermination of a portion of the population by a group seeking to homogenise an ethnically mixed area to better control it (Pappé, 2006). Masalha describes it as "the destruction of historical Palestine and the ethnic cleansing of its inhabitants" (2011, p. 5). The Zionists began colonising Palestinian lands even before 1948. After completing the establishment of Zionist settlements on Palestinian lands, these outposts expanded from individual settlements to entire cities.

The Yishuv "is the Jewish presence in Palestine (before the establishment of the State of Israel). It is a Hebrew word meaning settlement or residence, and it refers to the Jewish groups that settled in Palestine for religious purposes" (Al-Messiri, 1999, p. 89). These groups enjoyed military and administrative superiority over the local Arab communities resisting displacement, and this superiority played a role in the outbreak of the 1948 war. In December 1947, the Haganah leadership pushed for the adoption of an offensive strategy and organised attacks against the Arab civilian population, leading to killings, displacement, burning and shootings.

The UN General Assembly adopted, by a majority vote, the partition of Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, on 29 November, 1947 (Al-Messiri, 1999). This moment coincided with the complete preparation of the Yishuv. The Haganah formed its armed gangs to enter into a civil war with the Arabs, empty the land of the Arab-Palestinian population and create a fait accompli. The Haganah began attacking, as planned and approved in May 1946, to destroy Arab transportation in Palestine, blow up houses and expel their inhabitants (Toldot, 1939).

Citing Ilan Pappé (2006) and Masalha (1992), there were concrete plans to implement the Zionist ethnic cleansing project starting in the 1930s. The idea of transferring the local Arab population and making room for Jewish colonisation had already been suggested by the "founder" of modern political Zionism, Herzl, and was repeatedly mentioned by other leaders until the 1948 war, when circumstances made it possible (Sahd, 2012). After launching numerous military attacks between 1948 and 1950, the Zionist forces, which later became the Israeli Army, established many Jewish settlements on the ruins of Palestinian cities and villages, comprising 78 per cent of the territory of historical Palestine. Ben-Gurion issued the order: "During the offensive, we must act decisively and harshly without considering anything" (Ben-Gurion, 1982, p. 101).

These incursions caused shock and disrupted the social balance of the extensive Palestinian family, leading to migration and forced expulsion due to the horror of the attacks and the spread of panic. The goal of the sudden invasions was to render the Arabs "completely defenceless" (Jenkins, 1947). In late 1947 and the early months of 1948, several attacks and surprise nighttime raids were carried out. Houses were destroyed, some villages were bombed, and young people and children were killed. These are some of the attacks that occurred during that brutal period (John, 1947): Faga and the Arabs of As-Sawarka, the incident involving the death of the entire Abu Al-Laban family (11 people), the Arabs of Al-Shobaki, Al-Tira, the Rex Cinema in Jerusalem, Al-Abbasiyya, Bab Al-Amud in Jerusalem, Jaffa and the Abu Kabir neighbourhood, as well as hundreds of villages that were destroyed; and against their inhabitants, specifically in Galilee, Marj Ibn Amir and Safed (Atiyah, 1948).

In the process of Judaising the occupied lands, as reported by Masalha, the Zionists began using the name Palestine associated with the term Eretz Yisrael, and this lasted from the late 19th century until 1948. Arab names were appropriated through a hybridisation of Jewish settlement names, forcing the idea of indigenisation or naturalisation of the settlers. Mytho-narratives from the Bible and archaeology were instrumentalised, with the Hebraisation and biblicalisation of Arab-Palestinian toponyms and the use of toponymic lists from the Palestine Exploration Fund and the works of Western biblical archaeologists (Masalha, 2022).

Plan Dalet

This plan for consolidating the Zionist colonial project, also known as Plan D, was developed in 1947 and took some time to implement. It aimed to control the largest number of villages completely depopulated of Arab-Palestinian inhabitants and to expand the Jewish state beyond the UN partition resolution of November 1947, occupying as much land and as many villages as possible by any means necessary. The plan included encouraging evacuation through persuasion and seduction, though few agreed to leave; using the argument that the Jewish state was inevitable; holding talks with village mayors, dignitaries and local notables; intimidation through propaganda about massacres carried out in neighbouring towns and villages, such as Deir Yassin; and expulsion by force of arms.

Plan Dalet aimed to besiege the three main cities: Jaffa, Haifa and Jerusalem. It severely suffocated them, cut off communications, forcibly closed shops, devastated the economy and cut off their means of subsistence. Since the inhabitants were unprepared for an attack, the best option was to surrender and leave (Masalha, 1992).

Few villages surrendered and left without resistance, but the Yishuv decided to expel the Arabs by force of arms and torture. On 19 May, orders were given to one of the gang leaders: "Attack in the name of victory, kill men, destroy and burn the villages of Al-Kabri, Umm Al-Faraj, and Al-Nahr" (Eshel, 1973, p. 172). Ben-Gurion often stated, "It is better that as few Arabs as possible remain in the land of the (Israeli) state" (Bar-Zohar, 1937, p. 703).

According to information released by the Israeli Army's Intelligence Division on 1 June, 1948, Plan Dalet successfully implemented its objectives. As a result, 370,000 Palestinians left the country, and their lands were occupied by Zionist forces, with the Haganah responsible for 55 per cent of these actions. The attacks by the Lehi and Irgun gangs increased expulsions by 15 per cent. Panic campaigns, moral and psychological pressure and measures taken by the Israeli army accounted for 14 per cent. As a result, 84 per cent of Palestinians left due to Zionist attacks and actions (Morris, 1948, pp. 5-19; Masalha, 1992).

The most crucial focus of the massacres committed by Zionist groups was the displacement of the majority of the population through sudden and unexpected attacks across all parts of Palestine: in the southwest, west, east and north of Galilee, in Lod, central Palestine and western Jerusalem (Masalha, 2021), until the comprehensive and complete evacuation of the Arab population from the land.

The Deir Yassin massacre, which occurred on 9 April, 1948, had a significant impact on the ethnic cleansing of neighbouring villages, as noted by Israeli journalist Amos Ben-Verd, based on the testimonies of those who participated in the attack:

The Haganah soldiers, who entered the village a few days after the massacre, found dozens of unburied corpses, including the bodies of children, women and the elderly. There were headless corpses and others with mutilated stomachs. Many women's bodies were found inside their homes, riddled with bullets. The unburied corpses emitted a foul smell. Some of the Israeli army recruits (the Haganah) fainted upon seeing these scenes (*Haaretz*, 1989).

In December 1948, concerned about the visit of Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Freedom Party of the US, scientist Albert Einstein and other intellectuals published a letter in *The New York Times* to denounce the genocide that the visitor had commanded in Palestine, at the helm of "a political party very similar in its organisation, methods, political philosophy, and social appeal to the Nazi and fascist parties. It was formed from the membership and following of the former Irgun Zvai Leumi, a terrorist, right-wing and chauvinist organisation in Palestine".

In a disturbing excerpt, the signatories describe the takeover of the village of Deir Yassin:

> Terrorist bands attacked this peaceful village, which was not a military objective in the fighting, killed most of its inhabitants—240 men, women and children—and kept a few of them alive to parade as captives through the streets of Jerusalem. Most of the Jewish community was horrified by the deed, and the Jewish Agency sent a telegram of apology to King Abdullah of Transjordan. But the terrorists, far from being ashamed of their act, were proud of this massacre, publicised it widely, and invited all the foreign correspondents present in the country to view the heaped corpses and the general havoc at Deir Yassin (Einstein et al, 1948).

In the village of Al-Dawayima, located east of Hebron, at the end of October 1948, the massacre was perpetrated by the 89th Battalion of the Israeli army. A soldier who witnessed the massacre described the episode, “The first wave of conquerors killed about 80-100 Arabs (men). Children were killed by smashing their heads with sticks” (*Israel Imperial News*, London, March 1968).

The first wave of conquerors killed about 80 to 100 Arabs (men), and children were brutally killed. There was no house without dead people. An officer ordered one of the soldiers to place two women in a particular home and blow it up over their heads, but the soldier refused. The officer ordered the men to bring the women into the house and commit the heinous act. One of the soldiers boasted of having raped a woman and then shooting her. One woman, with a baby in her arms, was working to clean the courtyard where the soldiers ate, where she worked for one or two days. In the end, they shot her and her baby. These educated officers turned into bastard murderers, and this did not happen in the heat of battle, but as a result of the regime of expulsion and destruction. The smaller the number of remaining Arabs, the better, and this principle was the political driver of the expulsions and massacres (Morris, 1988, pp. 222-223).

Many other massacres and crimes were committed during that period up to the present day and have become a conduct of the Israeli army to expand settlements and displace residents from their cities and villages, including the massacres of Balad Al-Shaykh, Tantura, the village of Abu Shusha, the King David Hotel, Qibya, Kfar Qasim, as well as Deir Yassin and Al-Dawayima (Masalha, 1992).

Although international and particularly Arab diplomatic conditions, as well as the fall of the Ottoman Empire, paved the way for the complete expulsion of Arabs from Palestine, this did not happen for the essential reason that there is a difference in Zionist understanding between the workers and extremists of the Israeli army and the leadership of the Yishuv; between those who support partial expulsion and those who support complete transfer, like Yosef Weitz. This discrepancy led to contradictions and the dispersion of ideas of complete expulsion of the Arabs by the Israeli leadership (Masalha, 2021).

The Occupation of the Gaza Strip (1956-1957)

Gaza is located in the southern Palestinian coastal plain and, according to the 1947 Partition Plan, was supposed to be part of the Arab-Palestinian state. With the 1948 war, large areas were seized and annexed to Israel, and the Egyptians retained the city of Gaza and some neighbouring towns, an area that later became known as the Gaza Strip, with a length of 25 miles and a width of about four miles in the south, totalling approximately 365 kilometres (Masalha, 1997).

Gaza was, and still is, a strategic challenge for Israel due to its demography. Its population, which was 180,000 in 1947, grew to over 240,000 during the Nakba in 1948 (Masalha, 1997), internally displaced from their villages and cities through violence by the State of Israel, resulting in the problem of dense population concentration in a limited

geographic area. For this reason, and due to the extreme need of the displaced from northern Palestine (Jericho), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Refugees (UNRWA) was established in December 1949 (Masalha, 1997).

Palestinians were expelled from villages in central and northern Palestine to Gaza, and afterwards, they attempted to return to their villages and cities, exercising the right of return supported by UN Resolution 194, paragraph three, issued on 11 December, 1948 (Masalha, 1997). The refugees tried to return to their homes, but were unable to, and Israel began attacking anyone who thought of returning. In the eyes of the Israelis, they became a threat to the State of Israel (Morris, 1997). To discourage them from returning, the Israelis launched indiscriminate attacks to intimidate, instil fear and make them leave Gaza and flee Palestine (Rokach, 1980).

Covering an ongoing process of massacres, diplomatic communication in the following years played a crucial role in a narrative of criminalising Palestinians distributed through embassies. Israeli information was provided to officials of other countries, who reproduced it without question, as reported by a diplomatic aide at the Cuban Embassy in the 1960s:

> We had a mechanism for sending news and telegrams via Telex. We used to report that the Palestinians had stolen the homes of the indigenous people, who were the Jews. And that Palestinian terrorists killed children and burned churches, and that they were barbarians. We were providing this information through the British ambassador, and sometimes we would inspect and see that some Palestinians had indeed done this, and the mechanism was to send the official message by Telex, and the Cuban mission headquarters in London would send these reports to Havana. After 50 years of work at our Embassy in Tel Aviv and as an ambassador in the Middle East and various Gulf states, the truth became clear to me. Oh, how foolish and deceitful we were. It turned out that what we saw in occupied Palestine was that the Israelis had killed the Palestinians, not the other way around.

The Israelis tried to pressure Egypt to confront the refugees and came up with the idea of expelling the Palestinians from Gaza to the Sinai, persuading Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser (Masalha, 1997). He took measures not to interfere with the depopulation, but the Israelis were determined. The news leaked to the Palestinians in Gaza, who then staged demonstrations against the expulsion plan and took action against Abdel Nasser and his government. They surrounded the Egyptian government headquarters in Gaza and burned its vehicles as well. Abdel Nasser backed down and was forced to abandon the Sinai project (Palumbo, 1986).

The Israelis decided to invade the Gaza Strip on 21 October, 1956 (Masalha, 1997, p. 66), occupying it and the Sinai for four months. They besieged cities, committed heinous massacres, and killed hundreds of defenceless civilians without reason. Statistics, as mentioned by Israeli historian Benny Morris (Masalha, 1997), indicate that Israeli police and army forces killed 2,700 Arab refugees and over 5,000 others. Most of the dead were

refugee peasants from other Palestinian villages and cities, as well as unarmed civilians (Eli, 1982).

The displaced were former residents of the city of Al-Majdal, whom the Zionists expelled to the Gaza Strip so that Jewish immigrants could settle in the empty Arab homes; the city was renamed Ashkelon. Still, Ben-Gurion was not satisfied with the outcome. In 1956, the population of the Gaza Strip reached nearly 900,000 Arab refugees from Palestine. The Palestinian refugees did not leave as Israel had hoped, and Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip. Ezra Danin, head of the official committee established to study the resettlement and expulsion of refugees from Gaza, objected. In a letter to David Shaltiel, Israel's ambassador to Brazil, he noted, "We could have changed a lot in Gaza, but we were not given permission and money for it". The occupation of Gaza lasted only one year, from 1956 to 1957. However, the Israelis did not abandon the idea of expelling its inhabitants (Danin, 1957, p. 251), nurturing it in the following years because the Gaza Strip is home to more than three-quarters of Palestinian refugees, which is perceived as a permanent threat to the State of Israel.

The Naksa (1967)

In its early phase, Zionism was seen by its vanguard defenders as a movement entirely dependent on mechanical factors, "There is a country that comes to be called Palestine, a country without a people, and on the other side is the Jewish people, and they have no country. What more is intended, then, than to insert the finger into the ring to unite these people and this country?" (Litvinoff, 1938).

Other leaders of the Zionist movement, such as Lord Shaftesbury, expressed that this did not necessarily mean an unpopulated land, but rather that there was no civilisation, and in the case of a population, it would at most be an Arab camp (Zangwill, 1920).

The Arabs did not recognise the State of Israel, which displaced the Palestinian people in 1948 during the Nakba. The ruling elites competed among themselves over who was more hostile to Israel. Ben-Gurion believed that the 1948 war had not been enough and that it was necessary to inflict another defeat on the Arabs and force them to accept the State of Israel (Bishara, 2017).

Between 5 and 10 June, 1967, in just six days, Israel militarily occupied the West Bank, Gaza and the Old City of Jerusalem. Among other reasons for the outbreak of the war were the declaration of the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1964 and Egypt's demand that UN forces withdraw their army from the Sinai, closing the Strait of Tiran in the Red Sea to Israeli navigation on 22 May, which Israel viewed as a declaration of war.

The method of depopulation was renewed after the 1967 war (Naksa), and the expulsion of Arab-Palestinians was reactivated, specifically in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel took control of all of Palestine, and this period marked a turning point in the lives of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. But despite the control and expulsion of 300,000 Palestinians, Israel continued to face the demographic problem (Masalha,

1992), which was discussed in government projects, cabinets, newspapers and by writers. This continued under the far-right Likud government, as in the case of Ariel Sharon, who worked to expel Palestinians from the land, just as Ben-Gurion had done in Lod and Ramla in June 1948. He blamed the Labor Party, stating that if it had followed Ben-Gurion's method of expulsion and depopulation, Israel would not now be facing the Arab "demographic problem".

In the early 1970s, after the Naksa, Israelis from various groups decided to expand depopulation, arguing that the ten million square kilometres of Arab countries could absorb the Palestinians and provide them with housing and work. Colonel Aharon Davidi (1927-2012), a senior professor in the Department of Geography at Tel Aviv University, often advocated for the solution of transferring Palestinians to Arab countries, arguing that since they possessed great wealth, there would be no problem if they helped each other (Masalha, 1997).

This was also the opinion of the Zionist writer Haim Hazaz (1898-1973):

> There is a Jewish issue (the West Bank), which has a large number of Arab residents who must be evacuated to neighbouring Arab countries. This is not a banishment like the banishment of Jews among non-Jews. They are moving to their brothers, to a large, vast, and sparsely populated country with a shared culture, language, and religion. This (transfer) is like what happened between Turkey and Greece and between India and Pakistan, correcting the world's situation in one place by (exchanging the Arab population) placing them in their specific location. We will take responsibility for this task and assist in planning and funding (Ben-Ami, 1977, pp. 20-21).

Dov Yosefi, a senior Israeli born in Chile who served in the diplomatic corps in Latin America for years, wrote an article titled "A Humanitarian Solution to the Demographic Problem", concluding, among other points:

> If we want to prevent mutual and continuous bloodshed, there is no solution—(other than) transferring the Arab population from the Land of Israel to Arab countries... Indeed, this is somewhat painful (to those who understand it as we Jews do), but it is inevitable and preferable to the cumulative poisoning that destroys the entire body. There is no doubt that this solution will come sooner or later. The question remains whether it will come through peaceful means via regional planning and international aid, or God forbid, as a result of bloody events (Ben-Ami, 2013, pp. 349-350).

The Israeli "transfer" link was intended to facilitate it in exchange for a substantial amount of money. But forced displacement after 1967 took on violent forms. Israel's plan was to uproot entire villages, demolish their homes, change their dependencies and names

and build new settlements, as happened with the villages of Nuba, Emmaus and Yalo, adjacent to the Green Line northwest of Jerusalem. Later, Amos Kenan, an Israeli journalist, revealed the story of Beit Nuba in vivid detail:

> We gave orders to block the entrances to the village and prevent the residents from returning from their hiding places to the village after Israeli radio stations announced and urged them to return to their homes. But the order required shooting over their heads and telling them not to enter the village. The houses of Beit Nuba are built with beautiful stones; some are luxurious. Each house was surrounded by a small garden with olive and apricot trees, vines and presses. They were all in good condition. Among the trees were carefully planted terraces with vegetables... At noon, the first bulldozer arrived and demolished the first house on the outskirts of the village. In ten minutes, the house turned into rubble, including all its contents. The olive and cypress trees were all uprooted. After three houses, the first column arrived from the direction of Ramallah... Some soldiers who spoke Arabic went up to warn them. There were old men who could barely walk, orphaned old women, mothers holding their babies and small children. The children were crying and asking for water. They were all carrying white flags (*Israel Imperial News*, 1968).

The Palestinian Resistance Movements

Within the Palestinian population, parties and organisations emerged to resist the establishment of the State of Israel from 1948 to the present day. Based on the chronology of Palestinian politics, the first organisation to work in an organised manner in internal Palestinian politics was the Arab Higher Committee, led by Amin Al-Husseini, which was established on 25 April, 1936 (Faraj, 1998). It culminated in the formation of the All-Palestine Government on 22 September, 1948, under the leadership of Ahmed Helmy Pasha, a member of the committee (Faraj, 1998). The government was ended by the decision of Egyptian President Abdel Nasser, who saw that it had failed in its purpose. In 1964, the PLO was established, led by Ahmad Al-Shukeiri, following a decision by the League of Arab States. However, some movements were founded, but did not continue due to various circumstances.

The Arab Nationalist Movement was active from 1952 to 1970 (Faraj, 1998) and included Kuwaiti Ahmad Muhammad Al-Khatib, Iraqi Hamid Al-Jubouri, Palestinian George Habash and other Arab personalities, all influenced by the thought of Constantin Zureiq, a Syrian historian and theorist of Arab nationalism in the modern era. Their goal was to educate the Palestinian public about the danger of Zionism. They were interested in launching educational publications, such as *The Revenge* bulletin. One of their most important tasks was resisting reconciliation with Israel and warning about its dangers. Later, Habash founded the Arab Nationalist Movement in Syria in 1958, and writer

Ghassan Kanafani became responsible for publishing magazines and raising awareness among Palestinian refugees and other Arabs (Faraj, 1998).

In December 1967, Habash founded the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which had among its most prominent leaders and spokespersons Kanafani himself, who headed the magazine *Al-Hadaf*, published in Arabic and English. A year later, as a split from the PFLP, Nayef Hawatmeh would form the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, another leftist faction of the PLO (Faraj, 1998).

A large group of organisations emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, which would later become extinct, such as the Palestinian Workers' Communist Party, the Palestinian National Liberation Front, the Arab-Palestinian Organisation, the Arab Nationalist Movement "Palestine Region", the Youth Congress Party, the Land Movement and the Popular Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Faraj, 1998).

The Palestine Liberation Organisation

The PLO was one of the most important contemporary national liberation movements, resisting with arms and struggle in its early days. Formed with the support of Arab countries, it became an Arab and international model of resistance against colonisation.

On 15 September, 1963, three months after the death of Pasha, head of the All-Palestine Government, the fortieth session of the Arab League Council discussed his successor and the choice fell on Ahmed Asaad Al-Shukeiri (Faraj, 1998).

In a speech before the Arab League Council, Al-Shukeiri presented the goal that "the people of Palestine become a just national force that contributes to the liberation of Palestine with the hands of those capable of bearing arms" (Abdul-Rahman, 1987, p. 67).

Al-Shukeiri made it clear that he would form a body, not a government, and that it would not exercise sovereignty, but rather be an organisation for the Palestinian people that would cooperate with all Arab countries, aiming to mobilise the energies of the Palestinian people for a communicative, military and political battle (Moses, 1984). Thus, he selected representatives from all Palestinian factions, members of Parliament, dignitaries and village councillors in Jordan. He held a meeting in Jerusalem on 28 May, 1964, attended by King Hussein Bin Talal and all Arab foreign ministers, except those from Saudi Arabia. The conference issued a declaration establishing the PLO (Faraj, 1998).

Al-Shukeiri and the elected leadership began working to organise armed resistance, marking the establishment of a headquarters for the organisation in Jerusalem, the opening of offices in all Arab capitals, the creation of the Palestine Liberation Army, as well as a national council and fund (Dajani, 1986). Al-Shukeiri's focus was to shape and build the character and a real system for the Palestinian people (Hijazi, 1988). On 5 June, 1967, as previously mentioned, the Naksa occurred when Israel militarily occupied the remaining Palestinian lands, in addition to the Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai.

The Palestinians expected the PLO to play a prominent role in this war, but Al-Shukeiri suffered a defeat after a wave of pressure from Arab and Palestinian personalities to remove him. He submitted his resignation on 25 December, 1967, following a political dispute with the majority of Arab countries, which he described as, “The problem with Arab presidents and kings is that you cannot work with them, and you cannot work without them” (Al-Shukeiri, 308, p. 308). Yahya Hammuda succeeded him, but left the position less than two years later, on 3 February, 1969 (Faraj, 1998).

After that, Yasser Arafat, who had founded the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, Fatah, in 1959, assumed leadership of the PLO, a position he held from 1969 until his death in 2004 (Faraj, 1998, p. 88). The PLO gained great popularity and positive resonance among Palestinians because it achieved a significant victory in the Battle of Al-Karamah on 21 March, 1969, fought primarily alongside the Jordanian Arab Army against Israeli occupation forces.

Many Palestinians joined the PLO after the Battle of Al-Karamah. Fatah became the largest faction within the PLO and began advocating for a provisional democratic state in Palestine in 1974, which was met with absolute rejection by many parties, for whom the liberation of Palestine and the expulsion of the occupier remained the highest priority, as later seen with the so-called Rejectionist Front. The most famous critics were Kanafani and Naji Al-Ali. In 1988, the PLO officially adopted the two-state solution, envisioning a Palestinian state in the territories militarily occupied in 1967, alongside an Israeli state.

Fatah

The founding of Fatah dates back to a group of historical figures, the most prominent of whom are Arafat, Khalil Al-Wazir, Suleiman Hamad and Youssef Amireh. Initially, Fatah was a secret movement that selected individuals considered to have good morals and loyalty to the land and the people (Hart, 1989). However, it underwent radical changes after the year of the Naksa (1967), and a large number of people joined its ranks. Arafat played the most prominent role, becoming the coordinator of the movement. The beginning of its partisan and national action was established in Kuwait (Faraj, 1998). Its historical leaders, Abdul Fattah Hammoud, Abu Youssef Al-Najjar and Kamal Al-Adwan (Faraj, 1998), were martyred, leaving only Arafat. Fatah then joined the PLO and later turned to reconciliation projects with Israel.

Hamas

The Islamic Resistance Movement, abbreviated as Hamas, emerged on 6 December, 1987, with an Islamic perspective on the national movement. At first, an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood (Hroub, 1996), Hamas enjoyed a prominent role in the resistance against the Israeli occupation in Palestine. However, the movement evolved in shaping its rhetoric and literature, emerging from a purely religious conviction.

The movement embraced the narrative of usurpation of Palestine, and its leaders' statements became denunciations of the occupation, exposing its crimes and advocating for the resistance, by all means available—from the organised armed struggle to any action intending to uncover and politically and legally discredit the occupier, both in the media and international forums.

The year 2006 was crucial for Hamas, following its democratic victory in the legislative elections in Palestine. Israel and the imperialist powers rejected the results. In a dispute with the Palestinian Authority, Hamas took over the government in Gaza. Israel then imposed a military blockage on the narrow strip, which is still ongoing.

By reviewing its charter of principles, Hamas advanced to the following formula: accepting the transitory establishment of an independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, within the 4 June, 1967 borders, as a "common and consensual national formula"; however, reaffirming that "no part of Palestine will be forsaken, no matter reasons, circumstances, and pressure; no matter how lasting is the occupation" (General Political and Principles Charter of Hamas, Art. 20, 2017)—that is to say, never relinquishing the full rights of the Palestinian people; therefore, by not accepting or recognising the illegitimate colonial Zionist regime.[4]

Islamic Jihad Movement

Founded by Fathi Shaqaqi in 1981, Islamic Jihad advocates for the liberation of all of Palestine from Zionist colonialism. Its work is based on resistance against the occupier (Faraj, 1998).

One of the most important factors in its establishment (Muhammad, 2015) was the failure of pan-Arab nationalism to liberate Palestine and the fact that the Israeli occupation continued its aggression against the Palestinian people.

The Islamic Jihad Movement emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood. It underwent a series of developments, the most significant of which were intellectual and political activity from 1981 to 1983, a shift to armed action from 1984 to 1987, and participation in the first Intifada from late 1987 until 1993, followed by the Al-Aqsa Intifada (the second Intifada) until the beginning of the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009 (Muhammad, 2017).

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

The PFLP was founded on 11 December, 1967, as the left-wing faction of the PLO, with a Marxist-Leninist orientation. The 1967 Israeli occupation impacted the Arab Nationalist

[4] The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, 2017, *Document principles and general policies of Hamas*.

Movement, which decided to adopt armed struggle against the occupation. The PFLP's slogan was "Confront the enemy everywhere". Mohammad Mahmoud Alaswad, nicknamed the "Guevara of Gaza", contributed to significant changes in the daily confrontations with Israeli occupation forces in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Juncture

For over 76 years of continuous Nakba, these are the key issues faced by Palestinians:

Right of Return

According to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Ramadan, 2022), every person who has left their country has the right to return. On 11 December, 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 194, which affirms the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland (Mohsen, 2020). Since 1948, the international community has repeatedly called—in all its meetings to this day—for the implementation of the inalienable right of Palestinians in the Diaspora to return to their homes. Yet, the refugee issue persists to this day.

Palestinians Inside the Green Line

The remaining Arab-Palestinian inhabitants of the State of Israel, who live within the 1949 Armistice Line, face the 2018 Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People (Bisharat, 2019). This law stipulates that the Land of Israel is the national homeland of the Jewish people, institutionalising a state of racial discrimination against Palestinian citizens. It also declares Hebrew as the sole official language of the state, leaving no room for the Arabic language and designates Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel. Rooted in the idea of ethnic and religious superiority, the law encourages Jewish migration to the land.

Jerusalem, Judaisation and Identity Conflict

The centrality of Jerusalem to the Palestinian issue is undeniable, with Israel imposing on Arabs the acceptance of its occupation and complete Judaisation (Omar, 2011). This stems from a deeply rooted belief in the ideology upon which the State of Israel was founded. The methods of Judaisation and the scale of Israeli settlements have undergone radical and rapid changes, beginning with the first occupation of the western part of the city in 1948, followed by the occupation of the remainder in 1967.

The West Bank and the Blockade on the Gaza Strip

The suffering of Palestinians in the West Bank revolves around the severing of ties between administrative zones A, B and C, with barriers between cities, land confiscation, economic blockade due to the construction and expansion of settlements that seize more and more land and a water crisis that denies Palestinians even the right to dig artesian wells.

Israel's refusal to accept the victory of Hamas in the 29 January, 2006, legislative elections led to the blockade of the Gaza Strip. Since 2008 (Muhareb, 2020, p. 198), Israel has launched repeated attacks on the territory in an attempt to undermine its government and delegitimise the armed resistance represented by Hamas's specialised military wing, the Izz Ad-Din Al-Qassam Brigades, which is responsible for the armed defence of Palestine. The genocide perpetrated by the State of Israel since early October 2023 had already killed at least approximately 45,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, by the end of November 2024.[5] Israel has used internationally banned weapons, such as American-made white phosphorus, according to Human Rights Watch (Abdullah, 2020). The organisation has also accused Israel of "violating the laws of war" in ways that "appear to constitute war crimes" (Abdullah, 2020) and of maintaining an apartheid regime.

This brief overview makes it clear that the Palestinian issue has evolved since the advent of Jewish immigration and the establishment of the State of Israel, which has seized over 89 per cent of Arab-Palestinian land in more than 76 years and has never complied with any UN resolutions since the General Assembly recommended the partition of Palestinian territory in 1947. These realities have led to divisions within Palestinian society that persist to this day. Israel continues to commit crimes against humanity in an ongoing Nakba and stands accused of genocide.

[5] At the time we concluded this book, approximately 50,000 Palestinians had been killed in Gaza during 530 days of genocide, according to official estimates, numbers believed to be undercounted. In an article published by the British network *The Guardian*, researcher Devi Sridhar, chair of Global Public Health at the University of Edinburgh, estimates that by the end of 2024, the death toll, direct or indirect, could reach around 335,500 Palestinians. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/article/2024/sep/05/scientists-death-disease-gaza-polio-vaccinations-israel.

CHAPTER 2.

The Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America

The Palestinian Diaspora began in the 19th century, but gained momentum in the following century, primarily due to ethnic cleansing and the occupation of their land. By the mid-20th century, nearly 1.5 million people had been displaced (Masalha, 1992). The immigrants built their futures and present in the countries of the Diaspora, settling in neighbouring Arab nations such as Jordan, Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon, as well as in Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Australia.

This chapter examines the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America and how immigrants and refugees have managed, over the hundred-plus years since the first arrivals in the region, to build institutions, associations and wealth while maintaining connections with their homeland, customs and traditions. At the same time, the chapter explores how they arrived and integrated into these new societies, contributing to the establishment of large and resilient families that remain connected to occupied Palestine to this day. These communities' efforts, employing their diplomatic, political, mediatic and popular actions, contributed to the recognition of the State of Palestine within the borders of 4 June, 1967, by each of the South American countries (Alzoubi, 2023). The so-called 1967 borders amount to temporary limits, according to the 1949 armistice, encompassing only the lands Israel occupied during the Palestinian Naksa.

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Palestinian immigration to Latin America in general, focusing on five countries: Chile, which has the largest number of Palestinian immigrants in the region according to a 2019 survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian communities worldwide; El Salvador and Honduras, which have the highest concentration of Palestinians after Chile; Brazil, as the largest country in South America in terms of population and territory, also holding a leadership position in the region and thus influencing the defence of the Palestinian cause and Argentina, for hosting an active pro-Israel Jewish community and having once been considered by Theodor Herzl as a potential homeland for Jews.

Like all migration phenomena, there were real reasons behind the so-called "push and pull factors" (Masalha, 2006) that drove thousands of young Palestinians to Latin American countries. Poverty, deprivation and economic hardship following the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s, along with the urgent need to improve living conditions, contributed to the migration of young people to Latin America. This led some companies to send agents to encourage immigration to their countries, promising prosperity. Seeking this labour force, Emperor Dom Pedro II visited Palestine and the surrounding region in 1899, aiming to incentivise young people to immigrate to Brazil to work in coffee plantations and agriculture. The declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, following the forced expulsion of Palestinians and massacres that began in late 1947, along with subsequent events, triggered the second wave of immigration (Akmir, 2006).

Generally, Arabs and Palestinians assimilated, learned local languages such as Spanish and Portuguese, began drinking mate (a traditional South American caffeine-rich infused

herbal drink) and saw their second-generation descendants study law and engage in politics. All of this helped them integrate into their host societies, contributing to culturally heterogeneous communities (Gimenez, 2000).

Additionally, the documents approved for Palestinian registration in most Latin American countries contained serious errors regarding immigrants' religion and nationality. For example, some records listed them as Muslims, others as Mohammedans, and some even as “Turkish” or “Ottoman” in religion, often conflating nationality and faith (Jozami, 1994). As a result, there remains a persistent discrepancy in the reported numbers of Muslims and their proportion within the Arab community, complicating efforts to determine accurate figures (Akmir, 2006).

Gladys Jozami (1994), in her study *La inmigración Sirio-Libanesa en América Latina – Identidad Religiosa e Integración Cultural en Cristianos Sirios y Libaneses en Argentina, 1890-1990*, observes that Arabs clung to their origin regardless of their religious affiliation. This became evident in international conflicts involving Arabs and how they remained connected to their homelands through numerous institutions that were established, whose very names signalled their Arab identity.

The Concept of Diaspora and Migration

Migration is generally understood as a collective human movement resulting from changes in living conditions and the pursuit of better opportunities elsewhere. These individuals are *emigrants* from their place of origin, *migrants* as they cross geographical borders and *immigrants* in the countries where they settle (Vallin, 1994). History has witnessed countless political, ethnic and religious conflicts that have forced many to abandon their homeland out of fear for their lives, seeking migration as a means to fulfil personal and daily survival goals (Akmir, 2006).

Immigration manifests as a *presence*, while emigration is expressed as an *absence*. A presence is felt; an absence is noted—and that is all. A presence can be adjusted, regulated, controlled and managed. An absence is masked, compensated for or denied. These differences in status shape the discourses applied to *presence* (immigration), which can be spoken of, and *absence* (emigration), about which there is nothing to say except that it must be filled (Sayad, 2004, p. 120).

Middle Eastern migration to Latin America began to take its toll in the early 19th century, although its motivations were no different from those driving migration elsewhere: chiefly, the expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland and their search for better living spaces.

Palestinian immigration to Latin America can be divided into two phases:

1. **The first phase, pre-1948**, marked the beginning of the Palestinian Diaspora, stemming from the instability of the Ottoman Empire—particularly after economic conditions deteriorated amid failed reforms and modernisation

projects—leaving many inhabitants no choice, but to seek better prospects in distant lands (Agar Corbinos, 1997).

2. **The second phase** spans the period after the establishment of Israel in 1948 and the forced expulsion of Palestine's native population, who fled violence perpetrated by Zionist militias like the Haganah and the *Naksa* of 1967, which displaced even more Palestinians (Masalha, 2002). Palestinian migration intensified after the Nakba—the Arabic word for "catastrophe", referring to the 1948 exodus in which roughly 800,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes and villages under attack by Zionist militias.

The Nakba profoundly impacted Palestinian migration. Traumatised by displacement, loss and poverty, most Palestinian families migrated internally or to neighbouring countries like Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. But some migrated beyond the Arab world, adapting to unfamiliar places, cultures and values, building families and raising new generations there (Ghabra, 2019).

Palestinians are products of the new Diasporas created by post-colonial migrations, learning to inhabit at least two identities, speak two cultural languages and negotiate between them. Hybrid cultures represent one of many identity types produced in late modernity and there are countless more to uncover (Hall, 2003).

Néstor García Canclini (2006) observes hybridisation in the mixtures that occur in societies incorporating immigration. The idea of hybridism, the central theme of his main work, outlines a new approach to addressing what was previously considered a transitory state of "asynchronicity". The perspective he proposes is also linked to the important Latin American field of "cultural studies", which is closely related to sociology and often intertwined with this subject, where Jesús Martín Barbero and the influences of the Frankfurt School and Gramsci stand out.

> [...] mestizaje, syncretism, transculturation, creolisation are still used in much anthropological and ethno-historical literature to specify particular forms of more or less traditional hybridisation. But how to designate the fusions between neighbourhood and media cultures, between consumption styles of different generations, between local and transnational music, which occur in border areas and big cities ([and] not only there)? The word hybridisation seems more flexible to name these mixtures where not only ethnic or religious elements are combined, but also intertwined with products of advanced technologies and with modern or postmodern social processes (Canclini, 2006).

Involuntary exile and forced displacement are deeply ingrained in the memories of those who leave their origins, as the context, memories and images abruptly end with departure. An affective memory comes to coexist and contrast with the shattered reality, as Ghassan Kanafani recalls the experience of returning.

One night I was told: we are returning to Palestine. We walked in the dark for many kilometres on arduous and winding paths in the mountains—me, my uncle and a guide who made his living from his knowledge of the region. In the morning, I was faced with a steel wall of faded hope. Finally I was in the promised Palestine. But where was it? No. No, this is not Palestine, that magical land, the end of my darkness and torment! And it does not embrace me as I had imagined (Farah, 2012, 29).

Two decades ago, dozens of Latin Americans of Palestinian origin visited Palestine to learn about the reality of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The visit represented an attempt to bridge a gap between them and their homeland, so as not to make Palestinians in Latin America, as a Palestinian poet described them, "children who lost their mother" (Aljamal and Amour, 2020).

The search for belonging, whether in the place of departure or arrival, refers to the question of community, which does not have the same formation in different locations or times, and always necessitates its reconstruction and integration into a new type of community relations, making it more difficult. Furthermore, there is a greater fragmentation of the community as a safe harbour in the West. Zygmunt Bauman argues that community is an institution in crisis, subject to the weakening of its lasting bonds, in the name of individual liberation. For him, there is a reduction in the community's powers to assign generalising roles to individuals belonging to groups (Bauman, 2003).

The persistence of trauma appears in the question posed by Penny Johnson and Raja Shehadeh:

> But what I learned is that exile from within is as brutal as exile from without. I suppose it would be useful to think again about this antinomy. To not fall victim to cynicism, you love forever, even when you know that "forever" is an unattainable concept. You have to love with all the broken pieces of your heart, coexist with contradictions, not succumb to them. You live for permanence, even when you know nothing is permanent. Traditional psychology says six months is the time limit for grieving trauma, more than that is excessive and requires medication. I wonder what more than six decades would require? (Johnson, Shehadeh, 2013, p. 143)

According to Hall, understanding cultural identity belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something that exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere; they have history. But like everything historical, identities are subject to constant transformations.

Far from being eternally fixed in an essential past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power. Far from being based on the mere "recovery" of a past waiting to be found, which when found would secure our sense of identity in eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned and within which we position ourselves, through narratives of the past. It is not a universal and transcendent spirit within us, in which history has left no fundamental marks. It is not, once and for all.

It is not a fixed origin to which we can make a final and absolute Return. Of course, it is not just a ghost either. It is "something," not just a trick of the imagination. It has its histories, and histories have their effects, whether real, material and symbolic. The past continues to speak to us, but we do not know if it addresses us as a simple and real "past" because our relationship with it, like the relationship of a child with its mother, has always existed "independent of separation". It is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. Cultural identities are points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made in the discourses of history and culture. They are not an essence, but a positioning. Thus, there is always a politics of identity, a politics of position, which are not fully guaranteed in a transcendental and unproblematic "law of origin" (Hall, 2003, p. 109).

Generally, Palestinian immigration and the Diaspora in Latin America can also be divided by the fact that the first Palestinian immigrants before the 1948 Nakba were Christians, which helped and encouraged them to integrate later into new Latin societies and made them more prepared for immigration than others, in contrast to the immigration that began after the 1948 Nakba, which was a mix of Christians and Muslims (Agar Corbinos, 1983).

For Abdelmalek Sayad, the approach to immigration cannot be depoliticised:

> The immigrant is a paradigmatic example of a type of object we would like to deal with in purely ethical terms. The most pernicious way to subvert immigration, ensuring it becomes subject to the most total domination possible, is to depoliticise it. And the best way to depoliticise a social problem is to technicise it or absorb it completely into the field of ethics (Sayad, 2004, p. 224).

The 20th century marks multifaceted migration, primarily driven by resistance to imposed losses, war, violence or economic deprivation, yet carrying cultural and identity baggage, with significant ties to the life left behind that will shape their experience in the new world, their relationship with new societal impositions and their integration.

When discussing hybridism, where he sees intertwined power and domination relations, Canclini questions: how can we discern where ethnic power ends and family power begins, or the boundaries between political and economic power? Sometimes it's possible, but what matters most is the cunning with which the threads are mixed, the secret orders are given and answered affirmatively (Canclini, 2006, p. 346).

Statistics and History

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics conducted a meticulous demographic survey, finding that approximately 15.3 million Palestinians resided in various countries around the globe in 2019. This Palestinian Diaspora is predominantly located in the Arab world, with estimates indicating that about seven million individuals comprise the Palestinian population in that region.

The geographical distribution of Palestinians reveals a significant concentration in nations adjacent to Palestine—specifically Jordan, Syria and Lebanon—where approximately 5,555,451 Palestinians are registered. Additionally, a substantial portion of the population, around 1,337,400 individuals, resides in other Arab countries.

In South America, the Palestinian community comprises 821,800 people, while in Europe, the contingent is 293,800. North America hosts approximately 299,000 Palestinians. In Asia, specifically in Malaysia, Pakistan and Indonesia, the Palestinian population totals around 5,100 individuals, and in Australia, the number is 1,500.

The sample selection for this study was guided by the numerical magnitude of Palestinian communities in the examined nations, as elucidated in the subsequent table. Additionally, the political impact of certain countries was considered for analysis, regardless of the size of the Palestinian population in their territories. In this context, Brazil and Argentina were highlighted as notable case studies due to their significant political weight and influence in the international arena, making them relevant for investigation despite their differing numbers of Palestinian residents.

Table 1: The Palestinian Diaspora in the Latin American Countries

Country	**Palestinian Community**
Chile	500,000
El Salvador	100,000
Venezuela	80,000
Brazil	60,000
Honduras	54,000
Mexico	13,000
Colombia	12,000
Guatemala	1,700
Argentina	1,100
Total	821,800

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

The migration that began at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century, when Palestinians departed for Latin America, represents a significant chapter of human mobility that deserves recognition. After crossing the Atlantic and arriving in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia, located on the banks of the Magdalena River, many Palestinian immigrants dispersed throughout the continent, settling and establishing communities in countries such as Chile, Honduras, El Salvador, Peru and Colombia (Akmir, 2006).

Within these groups, influential families emerged, such as the Abu Shaybah family from Beit Jala, who rose to prominent positions in both industry and politics in Colombia. Notably, Chile stood out as a destination for Palestinian immigration, where individuals initially worked as street vendors before progressing to become prominent entrepreneurs, owners of banking institutions and leaders in transnational commercial lines.

However, the change in Palestine's political status—from a region under Ottoman administration to a British Mandate—substantially complicated immigrants' mobility and connection with their homeland. Passport alterations and visa requirements imposed significant barriers, restricting return to Palestine. Despite these bureaucratic obstacles, Palestinians in Latin America began organising themselves, especially in the second and third generations, although many descendants gradually lost fluency in Arabic. These communities maintained close attention to developments in their land of origin, demonstrating their engagement through the publication of periodicals like *Islah* and the founding of associations and sports clubs that reflected the vigour and resilience of their cultural identity (Teles, 2023).

Remarkably, in 1962, *La Voz de Palestina* (*The Voice of Palestine*) began Spanish-language broadcasts from Santiago, evidencing the persistence of ties to Palestine, albeit shaped by distance and emotional affection. As the Palestinian Diaspora established itself in new territories, it not only adopted these countries as home, but also forged robust civic connections while maintaining a persistent emotional bond with its ancestral homeland. This complex relationship between place of residence and ancestral land reveals a dual dynamic of integration and preservation of cultural identity in the Palestinian Diaspora (Cumsille, 2017).

The Palestinian migration to Latin America between the late 19th century and early 20th century constitutes a relevant migratory phenomenon in diaspora studies. Palestinian immigrants settled in various Latin American countries that were then experiencing significant economic and industrial renewal, requiring an influx of labour. Brazil, Honduras and Chile represent notable examples that underwent vigorous economic growth, absorbing Palestinians primarily as a workforce (Akmir, 2006).

The Palestinian presence in Latin America is generally significant, particularly when considering institutions originating from this immigration, such as Club Palestino in Chile, founded over 100 years ago to preserve Arab, and specifically Palestinian, cultural identity (Abdel Hai, 2021).

However, the trajectory wasn't easy for a population exiled from its own land. Palestinians migrated to Latin American countries from the mid-19th to mid-20th century primarily due to economic conditions. The Mexican Revolution, which lasted from 1910 to 1920, was a significant factor in the decision of Palestinians to avoid Mexico and seek refuge in other countries, such as Venezuela, following the discovery of oil in 1917 or in Central American nations bordering Mexico. Economic downturns in Latin America have also led to declines in Palestinian immigration at certain times. For instance, Arab immigration to Argentina decreased from 4,704 people in 1930 to 306 in 1932 according to Immigration Department records. Substantial Palestinian immigration and the building of strong, extensive communities occurred after the 1948 Palestinian occupation, the 1967 Naksa, and the 1975 Lebanese Civil War outbreak. Migration between Palestine and Latin

America was perilous, given the geographical distance, with early immigrants spending dozens of days at sea. Movement between these countries was also difficult (Akmir, 2006).

Let me share a brief story to enrich this information. My father recounted that when he came with about 20 friends. Their destination wasn't Brazil, but Argentina. In the Middle East at that time, Argentina was perceived as a land of prosperity. At Constantinople's Port, they bought a small phrasebook to translate Arabic to Spanish for basic communication during the voyage. Their first stop was Rio de Janeiro and the second was Santos. Possibly due to language misunderstandings, they disembarked at Santos port believing they'd arrived in Argentina, only to realise their mistake later. These young men had left home emotionally prepared for a new world, only to find themselves in an entirely unexpected one (Oliveira, 2017, p. 17).

Determining the actual size of Palestine's Latin American community is challenging because official records contained flaws from immigration's earliest days. Palestinians were often registered under different nationalities—as Turkish (due to Ottoman passports), Middle Eastern or under European nations whose ships transported them. Others entered illegally, leaving no official records, while some changed names to ease integration (Akmir, 2006).

Although the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics officially records 821,800 Palestinians in Latin America—Chile (500,000), Brazil (60,000), Mexico (13,000), Colombia (12,000), Argentina (1,100), Venezuela (80,000), Honduras (54,000), Guatemala (1,700) and El Salvador (100,000) —the actual number is higher. Many of Palestinian origin hold nationalities of transit countries or have unrecorded origins. Significant numbers changed names and religions, diluting Palestinian affiliation. These statistics don't account for unregistered origins.[6]

Palestinians were familiar with the “vocation chain” phenomenon, which geographically distributed their communities across Latin America. This system involved migrants being encouraged by relatives or friends from their hometowns to join established communities. This network alleviated the psychological suffering of the Diaspora, which includes the loss of homeland, traditions and spiritual connections (Daher, 2005).

The extended Palestinian family, which maintains its unity, culture, cohesion and commitment through intermarriage, participation in family occasions and strong connections, manifests itself in various aspects. The most notable are the moral and material obligations towards relatives (particularly those incumbent upon the eldest son in each family), as they often find themselves in close proximity to one another within the host country. The family unit extended beyond just children and spouses to include other relatives, which helped them face difficulties in the host nation (Chain, 2001).

The “vocation chain” through which Palestinian communities organise themselves in the Diaspora is particularly evident in Latin America, structured according to villages and families that serve as connecting links. For example, the Palestinian community in Chile

[6] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Available in Arabic at: https://pcbs.gov.ps/site/lang__ar/507/default.aspx.

primarily originates from two villages, Bethlehem and Beit Jala, while most Palestinians in Brazil come from villages around Ramallah. In Argentina, some trace their roots to small villages near Ramallah or from Beit Sahour, Beit Jala and Bethlehem or relocated from Chilean-Palestinian communities after fleeing again during the 1973 military regime period.

This confirms, as Professor Shafiq Ghabra notes in his book *Al-Nakba and the Emergence of the Palestinian Diaspora in Kuwait*, the strength of Palestinian family ties and their extensive interdependence within both nuclear and extended family networks. Palestinians are not accustomed to migrating alone; their family and relatives must be nearby.

For most, the journey to Latin America was a long and arduous adventure, beginning with the decision to emigrate from their homeland. Often, the mother's gold jewellery or livestock were sold to fund the trip (Ghabra, 2006). The farming family would sacrifice their most precious possessions for what they believed was best for their member. Thus, the family would invest great hopes in that immigrant, including dreams of a better future for themselves. The young Palestinian would emigrate to an unknown life and society, and some studies mention one of their pre-departure concerns: acquiring Western clothing to avoid standing out, as most immigrants were peasants from Palestinian villages who wore traditional farmer attire.

Suitcase of a Palestinian immigrant who arrived in Argentina in 1948, displayed at the Embassy of the State of Palestine in Buenos Aires (Source: Family collection/Courtesy).

Before the Nakba, immigration typically departed from the ports of Haifa or Jaffa, and later from Beirut or Tripoli. Palestinian immigrants endured 30 to 50 days at sea. Due to poor economic conditions, they travelled in the lowest ship class, which was breeding grounds for insects and rats, with substandard food and services (Tenório & González, 1990).

The ships stopped at European capitals, where Palestinians transferred to larger vessels that continued across the Atlantic to a strange new world. Upon reaching Latin American ports, such as Rio de Janeiro or Santos in Brazil, or Buenos Aires in Argentina, relatives and friends would welcome them, hosting them for days while planning their new lives (Flores, 1996).

As researcher Maria Teresa Zahir notes (cited in Daher, 1983), the integration process forces societies to adapt to new cultures, requiring immigrants to adjust to cultural models distinct from their original ones. This adaptation was necessitated by professional integration demands, creating what's termed a “fit in case”, where individuals from one

culture coexist with host communities through social laws rather than intimate relationships (Daher, 1983, pp. 28-29).

Despite adversities, Palestinian expatriates across Latin America worked tirelessly to save earnings and realise their dream of opening shops (Tenório & González, 1990). They then brought families through the "vocation chain", where each member gradually invited parents and siblings to live together and expand the business. This chain significantly alleviated exile's suffering, beginning with nuclear families and eventually including entire villages, such as Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Beit Ur Al-Tahta, Al-Mazra'a Al-Sharqiya and Yalu, whose populations often migrated to the same destinations.

Settlement patterns in Latin American cities and states depended on kinship ties, religious affiliations or family connections, with immigrants dividing labour and assisting one another. A strong sense of patriotism, loyalty and commitment to village and tribe members persisted. Concentrated neighbourhoods helped newcomers understand host societies while forming solid blocs in unfamiliar environments, providing them with the strength and knowledge to overcome challenges and gain economic power. This reinforced shared origins and contributed to stability factors in Palestinian distribution across the continent (Daher, 1983).

First-generation male immigrants largely avoided marrying foreigners, with strong social challenges facing those who broke this norm (Hernández). Today's descendants integrate more for practical reasons. Ximena Tapia's study (1982) shows intercultural marriage deepens integration, though some families still prefer Palestinian spouses to maintain Arab traditions (Agar Corbinos, 2006).

Language posed another challenge, as Arabic and rural dialects were considered vital markers of identity. The first generation viewed children's Arabic proficiency as proof of cultural survival, establishing language schools like São Paulo's 1962 Arabic school (still operating in Vila Carrão). The University of São Paulo's Department of Arabic Literature and Middle Eastern Studies was established in the 1960s. Yet, descendants lost their village accents, and Arabic weakened due to disuse as Spanish and Portuguese gained dominance. However, Arabic music and dabke (a folk dance) remain prevalent at weddings and gatherings (Jubran, 2019).

Some Palestinians, facilitated by host societies, attempted to change their names to achieve more flexible integration or conceal their religion. For instance, Ahmad might become Armando and Abdullah transformed into Abdo. Others directly translated Arabic names to Spanish equivalents or similar-sounding names; for example, the Christian Arabic name Hanna became Juan, Khalil turned to Julio and Issa to Salvador. Some adopted common local surnames, such as Flores, Campos, García or Diaz (Agar Corbinos, 2006).

Most Palestinian immigrants during this period were young men without families, lacking knowledge of the local language, customs or culture. Before settling, many migrants had travelled through multiple countries during their exile. Despite vast cultural differences, Palestinian immigrants strove to preserve their identity. This was strongest among the first generation, but persists today, with many still seeking spouses from Palestine or the Diaspora to maintain linguistic, religious and cultural ties to their origins.

To preserve traditions, immigrants established community institutions that organised weddings, funerals, annual gatherings, religious holidays and social events for relatives and friends (Schiocchet, 2015).

The Palestinian Diaspora typically worked as *muskati* (peddlers). Tenório explains that many Palestinian and Arab immigrants were street vendors carrying baskets filled with miscellaneous goods, including handkerchiefs, socks, mirrors, pins, thread spools, soap and buttons. Their presence was announced by loud cries in broken Spanish, repeating "store products", as they travelled through villages and cities, covering dozens of kilometres to sell their wares (Tenório & González, 1990).

The Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America has achieved notable success. While adapting to host countries, they maintain their identity through hybrid labels, such as Palestinian-Chilean or Chilean-Palestinian. They've distinguished themselves through work ethic, family values (both nuclear and extended) and enduring ties to Palestine, influencing the societies they joined through marriage and cultural affinity.

However, despite substantial contributions to their new homelands, the Diaspora's representation and recognition remain inadequate regarding effective support for Palestinians' rights to an independent state and ancestral land return, in accordance with principles of international justice.

The Palestinian Diaspora in Argentina

Much of today's Palestinian community in Argentina descends from a major wave of Arab immigration between the late 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, when the Middle East was still under Ottoman rule. At the time, these migrants identified as "Arab" in nationality, as Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and other regions were not yet independent states.

These Arabs established social, cultural and educational institutions across the country, uniting people of diverse geographic, ethnic and religious backgrounds without distinction. They also founded newspapers and magazines, some of which were bilingual (Arabic-Spanish). Many of these associations no longer exist.

Among Arab families, researchers suggest that many today may not even know their precise national origin—whether their ancestors were from Palestine or not—since their grandparents or great-grandparents were often registered in Argentina as "Syrian". The Palestinians who arrived before 1917 were few in number, mostly young peasants who did not identify as "Palestinian", but rather as "Arab" in nationality.

Another wave was forced to migrate after the United Nations (UN) 1947 Partition Plan for Palestine, which triggered the Nakba. They left behind their families, communities, work and education in their homeland, as was the case for many young people from Haifa, whose descendants now live in Argentina.

Industrial School for Boys, Haifa, 1946, from where most left occupied Palestine for Argentina after 1948 (Source: Family archive/Courtesy).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Middle Eastern migrants carried documents issued by the Ottoman Empire, which ruled the region. As a result, in both Argentina and Brazil, they were often labelled as “Turks”. Some records provide more precise indications of their origin, offering evidence that many were actually from Palestine. To this day, many Argentines do not distinguish between Turks, Arabs or Muslims.

Passport of Palestinian student Mohd Ezz Ed Din, who immigrated to Argentina in 1947, showing his birthplace as Bassa, a subdistrict of Acre in Mandatory Palestine (Source: Family archive/Courtesy).

Descendants of these immigrants later founded Palestinian associations. From the 1980s onwards, part of Argentina's Palestinian community arrived from Chile, carrying non-Palestinian passports, after the coup that overthrew President Salvador Allende.

In 1984, a group of Chilean exiles of Palestinian origin, who had fled Chilean Dictator Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, formed a theatre company that became a cultural hub for Argentines of Palestinian descent. This initiative helped unite the community and raise awareness of the Palestinian cause in Argentina (Montenegro & Setton, 2009, p. 6).

Unlike European immigrants, Arabs were barred from staying in Buenos Aires's immigrant hostels. Marginalised and mockingly called "Turks", they faced scorn and exclusion. Yet, due to their strong commercial presence, the neighbourhoods where they settled became known as the "Turkish Quarter", spanning four key streets in Buenos Aires: Reconquista, Charcas, Córdoba and Paraguay (Silva, 2006).

Arab-Jewish Relations in Argentina

Before Israel's establishment, Arab-Jewish relations in Argentina were marked by a degree of coexistence, as noted in Ignacio Klich's 1998 study. Some Arab associations

even included Jewish members without distinction. However, this dynamic shifted dramatically after the 1948 Nakba (Klich, 1998).

Arabs in Argentina, Syrians, Lebanese, Palestinians (both Muslim and Christian) and even some prominent Jews, publicly rejected Israel's creation. One notable case was Jawad Nader, editor of a Syrian-Lebanese newspaper, who led a major campaign (1946-1947) urging community members, regardless of religion or origin, as well as Jewish allies, to support Palestine and donate to its cause. Meanwhile, Zionist groups, including the Jewish University, tried to persuade Sephardic Jews and Arab communities to back Israel. Ultimately, Palestinian solidarity grew stronger in Argentina, while Zionist efforts faltered, partly because Sephardic Jews at the time viewed Zionism as a secular ideology.

Economic ties between Arab and Jewish merchants maintained minimal contact, which helped soften tensions. Still, the Arab-Israeli conflict led to Jews withdrawing from Arab associations that had previously included them (Maria, 2002). Diplomatic and public debates over Palestine and Israel intensified in Argentina. In 1947, a delegation from the Arab League, led by Akram Zuaiter, toured Latin America, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico, to rally support against the UN Partition Plan. In his book, *A Mission on the Continent*, Akram Zuaiter describes efforts to persuade these nations to reject Israel's establishment and uphold Palestinian rights (Zuaiter, 1950).

Some Zionist currents attempted to establish a settlement for Palestinian refugees in Argentina. This history generated great controversy in the 1930s and 1940s, an approach supported by the British, who transferred a Palestinian group to Argentina and gave them land in this country in exchange for relinquishing theirs (in Palestine) in favour of Argentine Jews. Klich (1995) lists the reasons that led to this, namely: an awareness that Argentina was one of the preferred cities for Arabs during the 1940s; the friendship linking General Juan Perón's government to Arab countries and the State of Israel after its creation and the appointment of a person tasked with handling Arab culture to head the Immigration Department.

Klich recounts that several Israeli politicians planned to establish a settlement for Palestinians in Argentina, and Yitzhak Navon, who later became president of the State of Israel (from 1978 to 1983), called for the establishment of this settlement, but the project failed. The reason is that Israel wanted to establish a settlement for Muslim Palestinians at a time when Christian immigration was preferred in Argentina.

The Buenos Aires Attack and Worsening Relations

On 17 March, 1992, an explosive device detonated at the Israeli Embassy in Argentina, killing several members of its diplomatic mission. On 18 July, 1994, another explosion occurred at the headquarters of the Israeli Mutual Society, leaving many dead.

Investigations and leaks spoke about the interaction between the perpetrators and some officials at the Iranian Embassy in Buenos Aires, specifically Cultural Attaché Mohsen Rabbani, who was also the Sheikh of the Al-Tawhid Mosque of the Shiite sect in the same city, and who later became the subject of an international arrest warrant.

Argentine public opinion established a connection between the two attacks and Arab immigrants, mainly Muslims. Although the community and its symbols criticised both attacks and stated that they were heinous acts, there are various topics, books and articles published in the press that associate the attacks with the Arab community, and religious leaders of the Islamic community received numerous threatening phone calls. In 2001, an explosive device was detonated at the Al-Tawhid Mosque in Belgrano (Maria, 2006).

Argentina is a country that has many frictions with Arab issues, specifically with the Palestinian question, with Herzl having spoken about establishing the Jewish national home in Argentina as a second option. Argentina's official position in general is characterised by neutrality or votes in favour of Israel in international forums, and the reason for this is the strength of the Jewish community and its control over sensitive articulations.

The Palestinian Diaspora in Brazil

Brazilian elites were fully convinced about receiving Arab immigrants in general after 1850, because the slave system in place would not last long and Brazil saw at the time the need to replace this labour. It was necessary to secure workers to achieve industrial success and economic development. Arab culture contributed to the formation of Brazilian culture and greatly to cultural diversity, by transcending the traditional ethnic dualism of racist nature, which believes that the white race is superior to the Black race, a hallmark of Portuguese colonisation (Montenegro, 2006).

Despite the smaller number of Palestinians in Brazil, estimated at around 60,000 people, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian communities worldwide, their presence is broad in various fields, including politics, economics, communication and social spheres. It is essential to recall that Brazilian diplomat Oswaldo Aranha played a crucial role in pressuring countries to vote in favour of the partition of Palestine, thereby delaying the vote at the special session of the UN General Assembly, which he presided over, by three days. This delay ensured that the partition was approved.

The arrival of Palestinian immigrants occurred under challenging circumstances, which were perhaps nearly impossible. However, concentration and living in the same city greatly helped to overcome the suffering of the early days and the difficulties of distance, including assistance to young people and the poor, as well as the welcome from the community of newcomers to Brazil.

Most members of the Palestinian community in Brazil came from the Ramallah region. For example, according to Denise Fagundes Jardim, those from the village of Al-Mazra'a Al-Sharqiya mainly resided in Chuí; those from the village of Jaljulia, in Porto Alegre and those from the villages of Yalo, Silwad, Beit Ur Al-Tahta, Beit Ur Al-Fawqa, Deir Jarir, Al-Safa, Kafr Malik, Kafr Nima and Kober lived in Florianópolis (Jardim, 2003). They still maintain a strong presence in southern Brazil, particularly in the states of Rio

Grande do Sul and Paraná, with a notable presence in the city of Foz do Iguaçu, in the latter state.

The first immigrants considered their stay in Brazil to be temporary, believing that they would return to their homeland after some time in exile, during which they would earn money for subsistence. But the promises of Arab countries to defeat the occupation on 15 May, 1948, and the Naksa on 5 June, 1967, frustrated the idea of return. For permanent residence in the new homeland (Safady, 1972), it was necessary for them to overcome the expectation of imminent return to achieve forms of integration and welcome in society.

Palestinian immigration to Brazil is divided into three stages. The first stage occurred between 1870 and 1890, with small numbers of people from some villages in Beit Sahour and Beit Jala migrating to the Northeast. The second stage, from 1895 to 1941, was higher than the first, and the third, in terms of numerical importance, occurred between 1948 and 2001. This migration was concentrated mainly in the southern states (Truzzi, 2001).

Foreigners who entered Brazil between 1900 and 1939 included Portuguese, Italians, Spaniards, Germans, Japanese and Arabs. Those from the Middle East (Lesser, 1999) were registered as “Syrians”, “Moroccans”, “Armenians”, “Iraqis” and “Palestinians”, totalling 40,595 people between 1920 and 1929. Regarding the precise identification of Palestinians, they entered Brazil with Turkish passports at the time, with numbers of 611 in 1933 and 66 in 1939 (Lesser, 1999).

Palestinians generally established cultural clubs and civil society institutions where community members gathered for weddings and leisure activities, as well as schools to teach Arabic. However, some of these activities did not continue in subsequent generations.

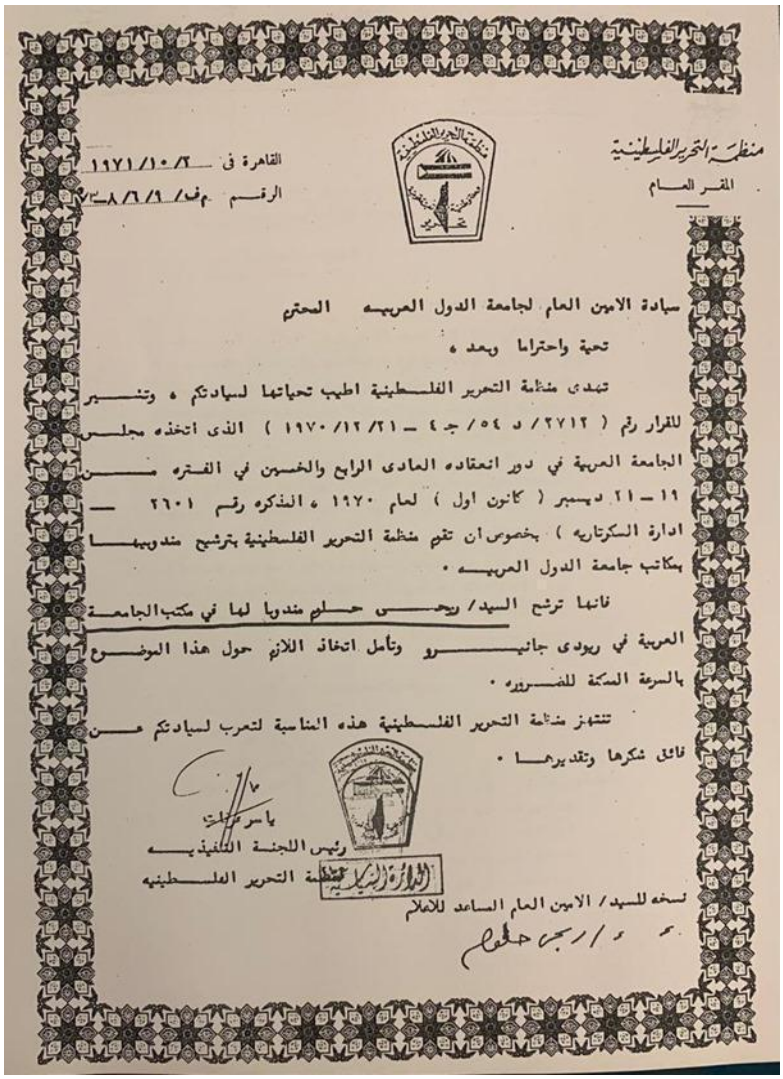
The Palestinian Diaspora in Brazil sought to maintain its identity through various means, with first-generation Palestinians working as peddlers in Brazilian cities and towns. In 1901, five Arabic-language newspapers were published in Brazil, including both daily and weekly editions. Their content went beyond local news, also promoting Arab culture and immigrant literature. The press grew until 1917, when there were 13 newspapers, eight of which were published in São Paulo and five in Rio de Janeiro. However, former President of Brazil Getúlio Vargas's 1942 decision to ban foreign-language newspapers led to the decline and closure of the Arab press in Brazil. Some adopted Portuguese, and after the four-year ban ended, a few resumed operations, such as *Al-Urubat* newspaper, but most disappeared. The government's decision effectively eliminated them (Montenegro, 2006).

Most Palestinian immigrants were Muslim, which created integration barriers in predominantly Christian Brazil. The closeness among immigrants led to the popular belief that “a Turk only marries a Turkish woman”, meaning Arabs would only marry Arabs and Palestinians sought Palestinian spouses—evidence of efforts to maintain traditions while integrating. Family cohesion also manifested in small businesses. Palestinians who settled in São Paulo excelled in commercial ventures, often involving the entire family.

Palestinian-Brazilian family in their fabric store in Catanduva, São Paulo, Brazil, 1970. The photo was taken to send to relatives in occupied Palestine, showing the mother with her three children and the family business, named “Casa Palestina” (Palestine House), demonstrating community interaction and integration (Source: Family archive/Courtesy).

Modern Palestinian immigration to Brazil brings together a group that originated from Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, and settled in the southern region, specifically in the states of Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul. In the latter, in the city of Chuí, located on the border with Uruguay, which has a population of 6,500 people, documents indicate 134 Jordanians and 13 Palestinians; in the city of Uruguaiana, on the border with Argentina, 162 Jordanians and three Palestinian families and in the city of Santana do Livramento, 97 Jordanians and seven Palestinian families. It was found that, regardless of their geographical affiliation, all define themselves as Palestinians due to their deep connection with their land of origin. This is evidenced in their political and popular activity that is always related to the Palestinian cause, remembering it, exposing the crimes of the Israeli occupation and the right of their families who still live in Palestine and reviving the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (Jardim, 2003).

The adaptation efforts of Palestinians and diplomatic rapprochement occurred in parallel.



منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
المقر العام

القاهرة في ٢/١٠/١٩٧١
الرقم م ف/ ٨/٦/٩/٣٧

سيادة الامين العام لجامعة الدول العربيه المحترم

تحية واحتراما وبعد ،

تهدى منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية اطيب تحياتها لسيادتكم ، وتشير للقرار رقم (٢٧١٢/ د ٥٤/ ج ٤ ـ ٢١/١٢/١٩٧٠) الذى اتخذه مجلس الجامعة العربية في دور انعقاده العادى الرابع والخمسين في الفتره من ١٩ ـ ٢١ ديسمبر (كانون اول) لعام ١٩٧٠ ، المذكره رقم ٢٦٠١ ـ ادارة السكرتاريه) بخصوص ان تقوم منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية بترشيح مندوبيها بمكاتب جامعة الدول العربيه .

فانها ترشح السيد/ ريحي حلوم مندوبا لها في مكتب الجامعة العربية في ريودى جانيرو وتأمل اتخاذ اللازم حول هذا الموضوع بالسرعة الممكنة للضروره .

تنتهز منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية هذه المناسبة لتعرب لسيادتكم عن فائق شكرها وتقديرها .

ياسر عرفات
رئيس اللجنة التنفيذيه
لمنظمة التحرير الفلسطينيه

نسخه للسيد/ الامين العام المساعد للاعلام

The document records the decision to send journalist Ribhi Halloum, the attaché of the Arab League mission in Rio de Janeiro in 1970 and the first diplomat of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Brazil. The resolution bears the signature of Yasser Arafat (Source: Family archive/Courtesy).

The period marked by dictatorships in Latin America also affected diplomatic relations, as seen in the case of the same envoy, Ribhi Halloum, whom the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Itamaraty) blocked during the military regime.

On that occasion, Itamaraty expressed reservations only regarding Halloum personally, a high-ranking Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official who was to join the delegation to Brazil and who had been involved, in 1972, in Brazilian territory, in activities considered “harmful to national security” (Cf. Brazil. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information for the President of the Republic No. 75, March 6, 1975) (Ipri, 2019).


حملة تحريض اسرائيلية ضد الديبلوماسيين العرب في اوروبا واميركا الجنوبية

اعتقال دبلوماسي جزائري في مطار امستردام

اختطفتني المخابرات البرازيلية بالرصاص في الشارع العام واصابة زميلي!!

An Arabic newspaper reveals the obstruction of the functions of counsellor Ribhi Halloum in the early 1970s, diplomatic representative of the PLO (Source: Family archive)

The Palestinian community has consistently fought to preserve its identity and support its families in the Palestinian territories. Examples include pressure campaigns targeting the Brazilian government, specifically Itamaraty, to secure the release of Brazilian citizens of Palestinian origin detained by Israel, such as Lamia Maarouf Hassan, freed in 1997 after 11 years in occupation prisons, and Islam Hamed, who remains imprisoned to this day. Hamed was first incarcerated at the age of 17, spent time in a Palestinian Authority (PA) jail, and has been held in Israeli prisons since October 2015.

The community, through the organised political efforts of its members and bodies, contributed to Brazil's recognition of the State of Palestine on 3 December 2010, within the borders established by UN Resolution 242 of 4 June, 1967.

Forced exile has always created a bond rooted in the shared loss of a homeland, as well as in a collective right to justice, reflected in demands to preserve identity and the right of return. This forges solidarity ties expressed through political stances.

Tonight, we wish to tell Congress members that the Workers' Party doesn't merely stand *in solidarity* with the Palestinian people—that would be too little. In truth, we are *bound in brotherhood* to the Palestinian struggle led by the PLO, because we recognise that their resistance—the fight they've shown the world—is the very reason any freedom-loving citizen joins this cause. When we saw on Brazilian television the massacres of Palestinians in Lebanon, children gunned down without knowing why, we remembered children dying here in Brazil for lack of bread. When we witness Palestinian suffering and resistance, we grow more convinced, more hopeful, and begin to understand why Israeli soldiers, why Israel's government harbours such hatred for Palestinians. We start to see why Palestinians cannot respect Israel's rights (Asfora, 2010, p.125).

A distinction emerges between recent and earlier Palestinian immigration in terms of political and media engagement. Younger generations focus more on Brazilian domestic politics than on their ancestors' homeland. Yet, they still champion the Palestinian cause, despite tensions within Brazilian elites over Israel, particularly during Jair Bolsonaro's presidency (2019-2022), which explicitly supported Israel through actions like pledging to move Brazil's embassy to Jerusalem and erasing Palestinian presence (Alzoubi, 2023).

Jews in Brazil and Fleeing Anti-Semitism

Jewish immigration to Brazil's South-Central region gained momentum only after the 1920s, when US and Argentine restrictions were lifted (Lesser, 1995). Substantial numbers then arrived from the Balkans and Eastern and Central Europe. Most 19th-century migrants fled European persecution, from pogroms to the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism profoundly shaped Jewish identity and relations with non-Jewish societies across generations.

Another European import was Zionism. Emerging as a 19th-century political movement, it advocated mass Jewish immigration to Palestine to “(re)build” a Jewish state as the solution to antisemitism and Jewish “normalisation” (Snyder, 1984).

Jewish immigrants to Brazil rarely came from rural areas. As non-farmers, they lacked landowning patrons. Urban nativists—though usually at odds with rural elites on immigration policy—also viewed Jews negatively: as a treacherous, non-white race whose racial ambiguity made them dangerously indistinguishable. Jewish rejection became one of the few consensus issues between urban and rural politicians (Lesser, 1995, p.99).

Jeffrey Lesser (1995) notes additional 1920s elite anti-Semitism factors: blaming urban immigrants broadly for social unrest and associating Eastern European Jews with communism, post-1917 Russian Revolution.

The Palestinian Diaspora in Chile

Before the waves of immigration, Chile was broadly divided into two groups: large landowners belonging to the dominant aristocracy and small-scale peasants. The economy relied heavily on raw material exports, particularly potassium nitrate (Agar Corbinos, 2006).

According to historian Sergio Villalobos, Chile needed foreign labour as it entered a period of economic development, introducing new mechanisms in the business sector and labour market. These immigrants brought fresh ideas, which found fertile ground in the country’s hunger for modern science. In other words, there was no conflict between the newcomers and Chile’s aspirations (Agar Corbinos, 1983).

Chile is home to the largest Palestinian community in Latin America and the second-largest Palestinian Diaspora outside the Arab world. By 2020, estimates placed the Palestinian population at around 500,000 (Al-Hayy, 2009). Having resided in Chile for over 150 years, they maintain deep roots and wield influence in politics, economic life, culture and sports.

This presence traces back to the late Ottoman Empire and efforts to escape forced conscription. Palestinians also resisted the Zionist plans that threatened their land rights in the mid-19th century. During the Crimean War, small groups of Palestinians reached Chile: some via Argentine ports, then crossing the Andes by mule, others entered through Brazil's Port of Santos, while a portion travelled through European ports like Genoa (Italy) or Marseille (France), often departing from Beirut, Haifa or Alexandria.[7] Their goal was to work in agriculture and trade to improve their families' economic conditions (Akmir, 2006).

The predominance of Catholic Christians among Chilean-Palestinians eased their acceptance and integration. This made Chile the epicentre of the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America, forming the largest concentration outside the Arab world, second only to Jordan. Institutions like Club Deportivo Palestino, founded in 1920, became emblematic, not just as recreational spaces, but as hubs for cultural preservation, where the Arabic language, peasant traditions and Palestinian identity were actively nurtured (Akmir, 2006).

Palestinian integration in Chile, their commitment to community institutions and investments in education for the first generation were crucial to their recognition and success. The media played a key role in framing them as a model of successful integration. In politics, economics and media, the Palestinian community is often cited as a benchmark for prosperity and influence (Meruane, 2019).

Unlike state-sponsored European migrations (e.g., Germans from 1845 onwards), Arab and, particularly, Palestinian, immigration was spontaneous, lacking policies to encourage stability or integration. This meant greater challenges for those relying solely on their own capacities, without land allocations for agricultural settlements, as European immigrants received (Agar Corbinos, 2006).

Statistics from 1854, 1865, 1875 and 1885 document the presence of Turkish immigrants and record the first Palestinian immigrant to Chile in 1881, although sources disagree on the individual's name. From 1895, records began distinguishing immigrants' geographic origins. After 1920, with the fall of the Ottoman Empire, new data identified immigrants as Syrian, Palestinian, Lebanese, Arab or Turkish, showing 5,514 Arab immigrants, including 1,164 Palestinians (Tenório & González, 1990).

Palestinian immigration to Chile since the late 19th century, coinciding with the discovery of potassium nitrate in the country's north, varied annually, with Palestinians accounting for 51 per cent of the total Arab immigrants to Chile. Between 1910 and 1913, Palestinians

[7] The longest and highest mountain range in Latin America stretches for 8,000 kilometres and spans across Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Bolivia and Argentina.

represented 56 per cent of the total Arab immigration. Of the 2,994 families registered by geographic origin, Palestinians constituted 51 per cent, with approximately 70 per cent coming from the Bethlehem and Beit Jala villages (Agar Corbinos, 2001).

However, this is not a homogeneous community in terms of behaviour, politics or predominant activities and interests. In some ways, the community reflects Chilean society and its diversity, but also shares Palestinian ancestry from previous generations and institutions stemming from these origins, which play important roles in preserving cultural ties, habits and traditions, as well as the visibility of Palestinian cultural identities in Chilean territory.

Reaching Chile represented a great risk for early immigrants, with a journey typically lasting 50 days, and relying on mule experience to cross the Andes Mountains for four consecutive days. It was customary for immigrants to be met by relatives or friends, but this didn't apply to those crossing the Andes. As the first arrivals, they had no one waiting for them. Early Palestinian immigrants were predominantly single men without specific professions or training, aged between ten and 30 years old. They were united by common values, courage and family support, especially from fathers and mothers. For them, alienation initially required seriousness and a sense of responsibility. This meant leaving their homeland didn't sever kinship ties with their country of origin (Tenório & González, 1990).

Beyond understanding how Palestinians in Chile adhere to their Palestinian identity, communication and culture, and to what extent they relate to and communicate with their country of origin, we also examine what in the Palestinian Diaspora's cultural identity can be attributed to a past of resisting colonial distortion. And how the “hidden histories” mentioned by Stuart Hall have fuelled many anti-colonial and anti-racist movements of our time, playing a critical role in forming a Chilean-Palestinian society capable of reinterpreting its cultural legacy, experiences and historical traumas into new creative elements of identity and cultural adaptation.

The Palestinians' suffering stemmed from realising their new life in Chile was entirely different and filled with challenges. Initially excluded and marginalised, they clustered in the same neighbourhoods and persisted despite rejection, even when enrolling their children in Chilean schools. Chilean historian Antonia Rebolledo (1994) notes that Arabs were considered an inferior race, subjected to criticism, defamation and slander. Newspapers like *El Mercurio* stereotyped Arabs as operating modest businesses in poor, marginal neighbourhoods. The actual reason for their rejection was their different ethnicity and relentless work ethic: they saved obsessively, worked incessantly and ran family-operated stores to meet basic needs.

Chilean researcher Maria Teresa Zahir observes that Arab clothing, speech and lifestyle have become objects of mockery. They were disdainfully called “Turks”, as reflected in *El Mercurio*'s publications that combined negative attitudes towards Arabs with ridicule of their customs (Hernández, 1991, p.107). Educated elites also rejected Arabs (including most Palestinians), resenting how their arrival in Santiago “darkened the complexion of its inhabitants”.

According to Akmir (2006), European contempt for non-white races gradually faded in early 21st-century Chile as Chilean-Palestinians rose to prominence in politics, business, economics and celebrity. Notable early figures included Juan Abu Jarur, who established Chile's premier cotton factory in 1936. The community also founded financial institutions, such as Banco de Chile, Corbanca and Banco Palestino, demonstrating successful integration (Akmir, 2006).

Over time, near-complete integration occurred through marriages between Palestinian men and Chilean women, signalling the decline of marginalisation. Despite vast differences in culture, language and climate, shared Christianity facilitated integration, though most Palestinian immigrants were Orthodox rather than Catholic, many converted to Catholicism.

As Ghabra explains in *The Nakba and the Emergence of the Palestinian Diaspora in Kuwait* (2019), early immigrants tended to concentrate in specific areas. The Mapuche neighbourhood's Patronato Street remains an Arab (primarily Palestinian) enclave where they pursued development. Historically, Palestinians lived in three main zones: Recoleta, the San Pablo neighbourhood and downtown, although their descendants now reside in areas like Ñuñoa (Agar Corbinos, 1983).

Palestinians established many institutions to preserve their identity and culture in Chile, most notably Palestino Sports Club, founded by the first immigrants from Palestine and one of Chile's and Latin America's most illustrious clubs; the Palestinian Federation; the Right of Return Committee; the Palestinian Democratic Committee; the Union of Palestinian Women; the General Union of Palestinian Students; the Arab School and Bethlehem 2000 Foundation; the Palestinian Club of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar; the Youth Association for Palestine (AJPP) and the Syrian-Palestinian Children's Home (Agar Corbinos, 1983).

In Chile, there are three Arab schools (primary, secondary and comprehensive) with Palestinian-origin principals in three cities, Concepción, Viña del Mar and Santiago. These schools offer students the opportunity to learn about Palestinian and Arab history and folklore. There are also ten Arab Christian churches and one mosque. Chilean solidarity movements with Palestine convened a 2017 conference in Santiago for Palestinian communities from various Latin American countries, aiming to create a unified lobby in support of Palestinian rights (Luna, 2017).

Regarding cultural mediation and identity formation in diasporic communities, Palestinian migration to Chile dates between the 1850s and 1900s, with most individuals coming from Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour and other areas. Subsequent waves occurred between 1900 and the 1948 Nakba, then after the 1967 Naksa, the Lebanese Civil War and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Other waves followed the first and second Palestinian Intifadas (popular uprisings) and deportations from Kuwait and Iraq after the Gulf Wars.

The Palestinian Club dates back 100 years to the early immigrants' interest in social life, particularly in football. It remains one of Santiago's premier social clubs, offering swimming, tennis and dining facilities, as well as hosting public events. Its founding

purpose was to unite the community in the country hosting the world's third- or fourth-largest Palestinian Diaspora.

Given the significant size and social presence of the Chilean-Palestinian community, various identity-building mechanisms (Jardim, 2003) emerge in the experiences and social interactions of young people, helping to maintain their Palestinian identity in exile.

Initially formed as a football club, the Palestinian Club became a gathering place for 19th- and early 20th-century immigrants in Santiago's northern suburbs. We can reflect on Hall's assertion that identity forms through one's social relations, family context, personal experiences and "the values, ideas and norms organising one's worldview"—a non-essentialist perspective that focuses not on what we are, but what we become through history, language and culture. This connects to questions about "who we might become", "how we've been represented" and "how this representation affects our self-representation" (Hall, 2003, p.109).

Palestinians have lived in Chile for 150 years, completing their migration process by experiencing all aspects of Chilean life: from poverty and wealth to marginalisation and acceptance. Navigating these dichotomies has ultimately integrated them into Chile's enlightened middle class, while nurturing both national belonging and deep roots in Chilean society.

The Palestinian Diaspora in Honduras

Honduras is considered the home of one of the world's oldest Palestinian Diasporas, with estimates indicating between 50,000 and 60,000 members.

Palestinians arrived in Honduras (like other Central American countries) due not only to Middle Eastern realities driving emigration, but also Honduras' 19th-century conditions—a subsistence economy requiring modernisation to support the banana trade with the US. Most immigrants came from Bethlehem and Jerusalem, predominantly Catholic or Orthodox, with a Muslim minority. Many intended to reach the US, but disembarked, or were left, in the Caribbean, mistaking it for their intended destination. This may (or may not) include Rosa and Salomon Handal (documented between 1898 and 1899), whom Honduran historian Dario Euraque identifies among the earliest Palestinians in San Pedro Sula.

Those who stayed attracted relatives, especially when Honduras' pro-immigration policies (1866, 1895 and 1906 laws) offered rights and resources, initially targeting Europeans and North Americans, but remaining unrestricted until 1929. Palestinian businesses operated as family enterprises, with kinship networks enabling their transition from street vendors to shop owners along the North Coast, forming regional commercial networks by the early 1900s.

Extended families worked together in stores, managing, sustaining households and growing businesses, often without compensation. Ironically, the Honduran elites' disdain for commerce and industry created opportunities. As researcher Manzar Foroohar notes,

Palestinians arrived when “Liberal capitalism required a merchant class for growing market demands... As outsiders, they weren't constrained by host societies' cultural norms and readily entered lucrative but culturally undervalued trades”. Their homeland connection inspired Honduras' first Spanish-language Palestinian newspaper, *Ecos de Palestina*.

Citing various researchers such as Nancie González (1992), Jorge Amaya Banegas (1997) and Camila Pastor (2012), Central American immigration scholar Lirio Gutiérrez Rivera asserts that just as the mestizo discourse of the elite excluded Black people as central historical subjects in the history of the banana industry, it also excluded Middle Eastern immigrants, particularly Palestinian merchants and entrepreneurs, as subjects in Honduras' economic history throughout the 20th century. One reason for this was the host society elite's perception of Palestinians as temporary immigrants and as an isolated group that did not “racially mix” with local inhabitants. Indeed, Palestinians were relatively isolated in the first half of the 20th century due to their clan structures, particularly the practice of endogamous marriage (González 1992; Amaya 1997). For many of them, Honduras was truly meant to be a temporary residence, with the goal of saving enough capital to return to their home society, and some did indeed return. Furthermore, many viewed Honduras as a poor and underdeveloped country. The racial and ethnic representations of the country and Latin America in general as poor, pre-modern and uncivilised appear to be embedded in earlier hierarchical racial and ethnic constructions of the Americas that derive from “nationalist and imperialist ideologies of the Middle East, [particularly] Ottoman representations of the New World”.

In their work *La construcción del sector Público y el Estado Nacional de Honduras*, Mario Posas and Rafael Del Cid document that the growing US demand for bananas in the early 20th century, along with the advent of refrigerated transport, faster ships and railroad construction, and state support for banana companies led to North American investment and attracted immigrants who settled on Honduras's northern coast.

However, they explain that “Palestinians in Honduras apparently did not cultivate bananas, but rather supplied household utensils and tools for banana growers, and over time, they came to control the region's commerce in those areas where banana companies did not establish their presence”.

This preference for commerce over agriculture is likely linked to the fact that Palestinians who migrated at that time intended to return to Palestine and therefore did not settle on the land. Many, however, were men who migrated alone, hoping to save money to bring their families and remain in the country. Others returned to Palestine to marry Palestinian women and then came back to Honduras.

In 1915, San Pedro Sula writer Gonzalo “Chalo” Luque recorded the surnames of Palestinian families in the city at that time: Abraham Musa, Anís Blanco, Bishara Handal, César Abud, Constantino Larach, Domingo Larach, Elías Yacamán, Jacobo Jaar, Jacobo Larach, Jorge Blanco, Miguel Handal, Miguel Kawas, Nicolás Gabrié, Sabas Larach and Salomón Marcos.

Roberto Marin Gusmão, in *A Century of Palestinian Diaspora in Central America*, documents these immigrants' rapid economic ascent:

By 1930, Honduras had 58 clothing factories, 20 of which were Palestinian-owned, with La Perfección and La Sampedrana in San Pedro Sula being the most prominent. La Perfección alone operated 91 sewing machines and employed 112 textile workers. Census statistics from 1931 show that Palestinians dominated commerce in San Pedro Sula, El Progreso, Tela, La Ceiba and other cities. The documented Palestinian population grew from 592 (1933-34) to 812 (1936-37), not counting undocumented immigrants (Gusmão, 2000).

Further evidence comes from Foroohar's analysis of 1918 San Pedro Sula shop taxes, “Arab shop owners paid 47.5 per cent of sales taxes, while Honduran merchants contributed just 2.5 per cent. By the 1930s, Palestinian control of the city's commerce was firmly established, with families, such as Larach, Canahuati, Sahuri, Saybe, Yacamán and Handal, owning major establishments. Their dominance was particularly strong in import/export—controlling 67 per cent of registered investment value in San Pedro Sula (1919-36 Mercantile Registry), compared to Hondurans' five per cent share”.

Noé Pineda Portillo noted in *El Heraldo* (1984), “Regardless of their background in Palestine, nearly all Arab immigrants became merchants in Honduras—partly due to local opportunities, but also because the weak Honduran oligarchy focused solely on agriculture. Ultimately, it was these Arab and Palestinian immigrants who came to control the nation's commercial networks”.

This economic success drew resentment from elites who preferred sharing the country with European and North American immigrants. The xenophobic undercurrent appears in “Asian Turkish Immigration in Central America” (*Economic Review*, Tegucigalpa, August 1910), which stated:

> The arrival of Turkish-Asian populations to the country has been intensifying for some time with the characteristics of a formally established migratory flow. Recently, this immigration was prohibited in Costa Rica and several other Latin American countries, as well as California, which openly opposed it.

The countries that opposed this immigration did so after conducting an in-depth study of the living and working habits of those who would be affected, focusing primarily on the disruption that the introduction of an element contrary to general rules would cause in the economic life of those countries.

We must rid ourselves of all sentimentality on this matter of national interest and reject these inconvenient immigrations, while keeping Central America open to selected elements (read: Europeans and North Americans) who possess sufficient moral and economic capacity to be useful and progressive factors.

This xenophobia resurfaced in 1922 in the newspaper *El Cronista*, openly calling for the expulsion of Turks from San Pedro Sula and other cities of the North Coast. It was this environment that led the government of Vicente Mejía Colindres to enact a new

immigration law under Decree No. 101 in 1929, imposing restrictions on the entry of foreigners of certain nationalities, including Palestinians, who now had to pay 5,000 pesos to be accepted, a fee not required of Europeans or North Americans, who were welcomed with privileges.

Although significantly reduced, Palestinian immigration continued during this period, especially among relatives of those already established who could afford the new fees. On the other hand, this era saw the beginning of naturalisations for Palestinian immigrants.

Between 1937 and 1957, Arab merchants controlled approximately 75 per cent of investments in the import/export sector and around 50 per cent of manufacturing investments. Researcher Dario Euraque states that “even in the 1940s and 1950s, most Hondurans did not view Arab immigrants as 'nationals', regardless of their economic position and their official status as established and/or naturalised Honduran citizens”.

The First Organisations

In the 1920s and 1930s, Honduran-Palestinians founded several associations, such as the *Asociación Femenina Hondureña Árabe* (Honduran Arab Women's Association), the *Sociedad Unión Juventud Árabe* (Arab Youth Union Association) and the *Hondureño Árabe* (Honduran Arab Women's Social Centre), which established transnational networks that provided various forms of support to Palestinian immigrant families.

In San Pedro Sula, the *Sociedad de la Unión Palestina* (Palestinian Union Society) focused on cultural, leisure and culinary activities. Sports also played a significant role, particularly their passion for soccer. In San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba, Palestinian entrepreneurs supported clubs that formed teams competing at national and international levels, such as *Club Deportivo Marathón*.

Meanwhile, the *Sociedad Unión Juventud Árabe* (Arab Youth Union Society) was founded in 1939 in Tegucigalpa, inspiring the creation of similar organisations in Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. This entity launched the weekly newspaper *Rumbos* and the radio programme *The Arab Hour*, where articles and poetry were published, and the situation in Palestine at the time was also discussed.

A clear indication of how engaged and actively connected the Palestinian community was to events in their homeland is the fact that when Britain published the so-called *White Paper* in 1939—proposing its own solution to the crisis triggered by the mass immigration of European Jews to Palestine and the Palestinian uprising—the *Sociedad Unión Juventud Árabe* of Tegucigalpa addressed the British prime minister, presenting the stance of Arabs residing in Honduras, as documented by historian Jorge Alberto Amaya Banegas:

Tegucigalpa, D.C., June 8, 1939

Mr. Neville Chamberlain,

Prime Minister of His Britannic Majesty,

London.

Your Excellency,

We, the Arab immigrants in these lands of America, have observed with astonishment the recent decision of His Britannic Majesty's Government regarding the resolution of the Palestinian problem, as published in the White Paper—since it grants none of the rights that the Arabs justly demand.

Therefore, we, the Arab immigrants in this Republic, align ourselves with the decision of the Arab Higher Committee, presided over by His Eminence, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin Al-Husseini. Moreover, we wish to remind you that any policy of force or hostility towards our compatriots fighting for our independence will have as its only consequence the alienation of the Arabs from Great Britain—a friendship that your government should seek in the current international situation, and one far more valuable to Britain than the friendship of the Jews.

Thus, we appeal to your spirit and love for peace, urging His Majesty's Government to grant the Arabs of Palestine all the just rights they demand, which may be summarised as follows:

1. The immediate establishment of an Arab National Government in Palestine, where the Jewish minority shall receive representation proportionate to their rights, as is the case for minorities in Iraq, Egypt, Syria and other Arab nations.
2. A prohibition on the sale of land to Jews, as it is illogical to accept that the High Commissioner should have the final say in this matter.
3. The Arabs of Palestine and the rest of the world cannot accept, recognise or protect the Jewish National Home in Palestine, established by the Balfour Declaration, in disregard of Arab rights and the prior treaty concluded with King Hussein, Britain's ally in the First World War.
4. The total and absolute prohibition of Jewish immigration to Palestine.
5. The return of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem to Palestine, as he is the sole leader recognised by the overwhelming majority of Arabs.

Your Excellency,

Awaiting the attention of His Britannic Majesty's Government, we remain your most attentive servants,

[Signed]
S.H.H.

Salomón Barjúm

PRESIDENT

Mitry Siman

SECRETARY

Through the Honourable Chargé d'Affaires of His Britannic Majesty.

British Legation

Tegucigalpa, D.C. Honduras, C.A.

Reaching the Presidency

Palestinian involvement in Honduran politics achieved its greatest milestone in 1998 with the election of Carlos Roberto Flores, an influential Honduran journalist and son of Margarita Facussé and Óscar Flores.

He began his career in the late 1970s after returning from studies in the US, specifically in Illinois, joining the Liberal Party of Honduras (PLH). By 1994, he became president of Congress, supporting the liberal government of Carlos Reina. Sworn in as president in 1998, he immediately faced the devastation of Hurricane Mitch, which struck that same year and severely impacted the country's economy. Another key aspect of his administration was limiting military power, transferring authority over the Armed Forces to the presidency. Flores was succeeded by Ricardo Rodolfo Maduro, elected in November 2001 by the National Party of Honduras (PNH). This period was preceded by the growing influence of business elites in 1980s politics, as they financed presidential campaigns, reshaped electoral dynamics and promoted neoliberal policies. Wealthy Palestinian-descended families, such as Facussé, Canahuati and Larach, assumed public offices and businessmen began winning elections. In 1998, a Palestinian-descended leader finally reached the presidency.

Between Palestine and Israel

In 1947, Honduras abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution recommending the partition of Palestine. It was one of six Latin American countries to do so (alongside Argentina, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico). However, as Cecilia Baeza notes in *Latin America and the Palestinian Question (1947-2012):*

> Unlike diplomats advocating for a Jewish national home in Palestine, representatives from these countries offered no substantive arguments to justify their abstentions. Their weak ideological commitment against partition stemmed largely from realpolitik—balancing domestic interests (Jewish and Arab communities) and foreign relations (maintaining ties with Arab states)—rather than principled stances.

The following year, Honduras recognised Israel and established diplomatic relations, although ties remained strained. By 1994, Israel had no official representation in Honduras, with its ambassador in Guatemala handling affairs. In June 2009, when President Manuel Zelaya (2006-2010) was ousted, Israel was among the few countries that did not condemn the coup.

In 2012, under President Porfirio Lobo, Honduras voted in favour of Palestine's UN bid. A year later, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki visited Honduras to strengthen cooperation and thanked the country for its recognition of Palestinian statehood. However, in 2017, after Donald Trump threatened to cut aid to nations supporting a UN resolution condemning the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Honduras and Guatemala voted against the resolution, siding with the US.

By 2019, Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández announced plans to open a diplomatic and trade office in Jerusalem, pledging to relocate Honduras's embassy there, following the lead of the US and Guatemala. The PA protested, filing a complaint with the UN Secretary-General, calling the move a violation of International Law.

On 20 August, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi attended a virtual ceremony inaugurating a cooperation office in Tegucigalpa. Ashkenazi tweeted, "The Israeli flag is officially raised in Honduras' capital for the first time in 26 years. This marks a significant step in strengthening bilateral ties". Under Hernández, Israel and Honduras expanded cooperation in agriculture, health and education. A month later, Netanyahu's cabinet stated: "With flags raised in both capitals, Israel and Honduras intend to finalise plans to open embassies in Jerusalem and Tegucigalpa by year's end".

On 24 June, 2021, Honduras fulfilled its promise, becoming the fourth country to move its embassy to Jerusalem. However, relations shifted after Hernández's 2022 extradition to the US on drug trafficking charges and the inauguration of President Xiomara Castro. New Foreign Minister Enrique Reina announced discussions to return the embassy to Tel Aviv, citing the need to "respect International Law and UN resolutions" while maintaining "balanced ties with Arab states and Israel". During Colombian President Gustavo Petro's inauguration, Reina met Palestinian Foreign Minister Al-Maliki, reiterating Honduras' commitment to "restoring compliance with international norms".

Tensions with Israel escalated following Israel's war against the population of the Gaza Strip, which began on 7 October, 2023. On 4 November, as Palestinian casualties from Israeli military operations surged, Honduras recalled its ambassador from Israel, accusing

the occupying state of crimes against humanity. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Lior Haiat, spokesperson for Israel's Foreign Ministry, claimed Honduras was "supporting terrorism".

Despite this, Honduras maintained military ties with Israel. In 2023, a high-ranking delegation from Honduras's National Police travelled to Israel to finalise the acquisition of security technology equipment, including 15 Black Mamba Sandcat armoured vehicles for high-risk operations. The purchase was confirmed in January 2024 by Security Minister Gustavo Sánchez.

Unofficial estimates from the organisation Know Thy Heritage (KTH) suggest the Palestinian Diaspora in Honduras is significantly larger than official figures indicate. KTH has partnered with local groups to establish Know Thy Heritage Honduras (KHA), an association aimed at strengthening ties to Palestinian "identity, culture, history and traditions" while deepening understanding of the economic, political and humanitarian conditions in Palestine. Launched in 2023, the initiative was covered by San Pedro Sula's *Diario La Prensa* and Tegucigalpa's *Diario La Tribuna*, both newspapers owned by Honduran-Palestinians.

The Palestinian Diaspora in El Salvador

El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala experienced an expansion in coffee production that transformed their economies and societies in the second half of the 19th century. The disengaged landowning elites had no interest in small commercial businesses, and this was an opportunity that Palestinian immigrants knew how to capitalise on.

Historian Olivier Prud'homme, in his research *From Bethlehem to El Salvador,* divides the first waves of Palestinian migration to El Salvador into two periods: from 1886 to 1901, when Palestinian surnames appear in various records only as hotel guests or ship passengers and from 1902 to 1918, when these surnames begin appearing in the "resident foreigners" and "registered foreigners" records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, showing that the group was settling in the country.

Arriving in El Salvador alongside the waves that spread across Central America, Palestinian immigrants initially hoped to earn money and then return to their homeland. Most were young, single men who accepted temporary conditions that allowed them to sell goods brought from the Holy Land to the Catholic Latin American population. Religion worked in their favour, as most came from the Orthodox churches of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Muslim Palestinians faced greater difficulties due to the long-standing strategy of Christianising Latin America by restricting the growth of other religions through immigration controls.

For Palestinians, it was a new world, but not entirely unfamiliar. In their work *On Moors and Christians,* Pedro Escalante Arce and Abraham Daura note that due to the long Arab presence in Spain, El Salvador inherited "cultural traits and traditions from Arab and Arabised lands" introduced by Spanish colonisers. Researcher Melissa Rivas Montoya points to the Mudéjar influence in some colonial churches, such as:

- San Pedro y San Pablo in Caluco, Sonsonate
- Santa Cruz de Roma in Panchimalco, San Salvador
- Santa María de la O in San Juan Talpa, La Paz
- San Esteban in Texistepeque, Santa Ana
- San Miguel Arcángel in Huizúcar, La Libertad

She also cites other influences, such as the Dance of Moors and Christians and words of Arabic origin like *jarabe* (syrup), *azúcar* (sugar), *arroz* (rice), *asesino* (assassin) and *almohada* (pillow), as well as foods introduced by Arabs to Europe and later brought to the Americas: oranges, eggplants, lemons, rice, sugarcane, artichokes, cinnamon, saffron and ginger.

While religion facilitated their reception, prejudice was a major obstacle. Colonial ideology heavily shaped El Salvador, where elites believed that Europeanising the Indigenous population through *mestizaje* (racial mixing) was the path to development. This led to preferential treatment for European immigrants over those from other regions. Overcoming these prejudices required resilience from the newcomers, who arrived with a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

As in Honduras, Palestinian immigrants in El Salvador reversed social rejection through economic success. From street vendors to small shop owners, from pioneers of credit sales (*fiado*) to factory owners and later industrialists, Palestinian immigrants helped modernise the country.

Data from the 1930 Demographic Census and the 1933 Foreign Resident Payroll, compiled by Melissa, show that Palestinians at the time primarily resided in San Salvador and Santa Ana, as well as in Usulután, San Miguel and La Libertad. By the 20th century, Palestinians were present across the country, particularly in municipalities within coffee-growing regions, such as Santa Ana, La Libertad, Ahuachapán, Usulután, as well as La Paz and San Vicente, during periods of agricultural expansion. Meanwhile, San Miguel became a hub for cattle ranching and cotton farming.

The impossibility of returning due to successive crises in Palestine and the personal success of early arrivals attracted relatives, friends and, later, waves of forced migrants, especially after the Nakba, the mass expulsion of Palestinians during the founding of Israel. These newcomers eventually formed the majority of El Salvador's Palestinian immigrant community and helped consolidate family businesses into lasting enterprises.

Researcher Foroohar lists a series of successful Palestinian cases in El Salvador, from the first immigrants who became clothing and footwear merchants to entrepreneurs in the food processing industry:

> The Safie family, for example, purchased the Gerber Company in El Salvador. The Salume family, who arrived in El Salvador in 1914, opened a supermarket chain and, more recently, a highly prosperous company called Distribuidora Salum. The Siman family became one of the wealthiest families in El Salvador. They own several large, modern shopping malls in upscale neighbourhoods of San Salvador and have recently expanded their mall chain to other Central American countries, including Nicaragua. Palestinians and their descendants in El Salvador have also achieved notable success in the country's financial sector, expanding their influence to other Central American financial markets. Isa Miguel, a descendant of a Palestinian immigrant in El Salvador, for example, owns about 40 per cent of Banco de la Vivienda in Guatemala!

The discomfort of local elites with Palestinian success gained government support through new laws in the second half of the 1930s, during the dictatorship of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, who came to power through a coup. Decrees were issued aimed at preventing non-European immigrants, Arabs, Chinese and Indians, from opening, integrating or expanding businesses in the country. Municipal authorities who allowed it would be fined. There was also a series of laws with this intent in the latter half of the decade. On 15 May, 1936, the dictatorial government published Decree No. 49, the first in a series of discriminatory laws that prohibited “persons of the Arab, Palestinian, Turkish, Chinese, Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian, Persian, Hindu and Armenian races, even if naturalised, from opening new businesses of any kind or even participating in them as partners or opening branches of existing businesses”. Article 40 of Decree No. 39 (24 July, 1941) established a fine of 200 colones for officials of any municipality who allowed persons of the aforementioned races, regardless of nationality, to open or manage a commercial or industrial establishment. It is important to emphasise that the laws included descendants of immigrants born in El Salvador, as well as naturalised citizens. In El Salvador, an additional consequence was a new trend among Palestinians in the 1930s and 1940s to attempt to hide their ethnic identity and refrain from speaking Arabic outside the home due to incidents against their youth who spoke Arabic in public. This was one of the reasons for the loss of the Arabic language among the children of immigrants. Likely, the trend of many distancing themselves from the community was also accelerated by discrimination.

The economic growth of Palestinians was accompanied by their entry into political life in El Salvador, producing both right-wing and left-wing leaders, as well as eccentric figures with totalitarian profiles, such as President Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez, elected in 2019 and reelected in 2024. Before him, Elías Antonio Saca González, the grandson of Palestinian immigrants from Bethlehem, served as president from 2004 to 2009. A leader of the Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (Arena), a right-wing party that governed El Salvador from 1989 to 2009, Saca governed with an extremely conservative political and economic platform. Foroohar notes that, as president, Antonio Saca continued his party's pro-US policies and even supported Salvadoran participation in the US war in Iraq.

With Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez, El Salvador elected a president of Palestinian immigrant descent for the second time. A controversial and populist figure, Bukele

managed, through authoritarian manoeuvres and reforms, including the removal of five Supreme Court judges, to secure the right to run for reelection, which the Constitution previously prohibited. Adopting a terrifying iron fist under the pretext of ending organised crime, imprisoning thousands of people and being accused by international human rights organisations of indiscriminately incarcerating innocent people, the young ruler secured a second term with a surprising 85 per cent of the votes in the 2024 presidential elections.

The Bukele surname carries significant weight in Salvadoran society. The father of the current president, the late Armando Bukele Kattán (1944-2015), was a businessman and a Muslim religious leader, the son of Palestinian immigrants, Humberto Bukele Salman and Victoria Kattán de Bukele, who were Christians from Bethlehem. He managed companies in the advertising, textile, pharmaceutical, beverage and automotive sectors. His son, now president, is considered a friend of Israel.

On the left, the most prominent figure is guerrilla fighter Schafik Handal, who was Antonio Saca's primary opponent in the 2004 presidential elections. He was also the son of Palestinian immigrants from Bethlehem. Foroohar observes the extremes:

> While Saca was a fervent anti-communist, Handal had close ties to Latin American revolutionary movements. Indeed, it could be said that the two men personally embodied the right/left divide in Central American politics. Handal played a key role in forming the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in 1980, an alliance of Salvadoran revolutionary organisations that fought against the right-wing Salvadoran government—armed and funded by the US—and the military establishment in a long and brutal civil war that claimed about 75,000 lives. After the government and the FMLN signed a 1992 peace agreement that ended the civil war, Handal transformed his guerrilla army into a political party, which is now El Salvador's main left-wing party. He was elected to Parliament as leader of the FMLN party bloc before unsuccessfully running for president against Saca in 2004. He died of a heart attack in 2006 while returning home from the inauguration of Bolivia's newly elected leftist president Evo Morales. Handal's popularity in the country was so great that President Saca was forced to declare three days of national mourning. At his funeral, Handal's coffin was draped in Salvadoran and Palestinian flags.

Although the Handal family originated in the merchant class, many of its members have actively participated in leftist political formations and progressive organisations in the country. Schafik's brother, Antonio Handal, was one of the thousands of people “disappeared” by the Salvadoran regime in the 1980s and another brother, Farid Handal, head of El Salvador's Communist Party, was killed in combat in 1989. Schafik's son, Jorge Schafik Handal Vega, also a leader of the FMLN, served as an FMLN deputy in the Central American Parliament.

El Salvador's connection to events in Palestine appears at several moments, but especially during the UN vote authorising the partition of Palestine, when El Salvador abstained. Melissa Rivas Montoya gathered some newspaper clippings from the time of the Nakba

reporting on discussions in the country, such as the headlines: “Arab lawyer on anti-Zionist mission arrives in this city” (*La Prensa Gráfica*, April 24, 1948); “Arab viewpoint on Palestine case presented to journalists” (*La Prensa Gráfica*, April 25, 1948); “El Salvador before the Arab world” (*La Prensa Gráfica*, May 5, 1948) and “Divine Saviour will go to S. Ana in prayer for peace” (*El Diario de Hoy*, 16 July, 1948).

In one case, a note signed by El Arab on 5 May, 1948, was published in *La Prensa Gráfica*, thanking El Salvador for its abstention during the vote on the partition of Palestine and praising the country's stance on the Palestinian issue. Another note mentioned the celebration of the Patron Saint festivities in Santa Ana, where a procession for world peace was held, praying for Palestine and the protection of the Holy Sepulchre against the grave danger of destruction.

In 1948, many Palestinians expelled by the Nakba began arriving in Central America, constituting another stage in the formation of the Palestinian Diaspora in El Salvador. This was the third wave, following the initial ones from 1860 to 1916 under the Ottoman Empire and from 1918 to 1948 during the British Mandate. According to Viola Raheb in *Sisters and Brothers in Diaspora: Palestinian Christians in Latin America*, a small wave of migration occurred between 2000 and 2005, coinciding with the second Intifada.

These new generations, researchers note, reinforced the Diaspora's attention to recent events impacting Palestinian life. The Palestinian community, scholars argue, has played a significant role in Central America, critically shaping relations with Israel, as evidenced by its encouragement of Costa Rican President Óscar Arias to relocate the Costa Rican Embassy from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in 2006, a move later followed by Salvadoran President Antonio Saca. Costa Rica and El Salvador had been the last two countries in the world to maintain embassies in Jerusalem, a stance that contradicted Palestinian claims to the city and the international consensus supporting those rights.

Both Saca and his rival, Schafik Handal, were donors for the construction of the Plaza Palestina in San Salvador in 2004, honouring the “victims of Israel’s creation in 1948” with a map of pre-partition Palestine. In 2005, Handal’s FMLN established a second memorial park in San Salvador, dedicated to the late Yasser Arafat. Foroohar notes that the Arafat Park sparked a diplomatic dispute, leading Israel to temporarily withdraw its ambassador from El Salvador.

Although fully integrated into Salvadoran society, the Palestinian community in El Salvador can also be viewed as an extension of the Palestinian resistance in Latin America. Some accounts mention that during the 1948 Nakba, some immigrants sold all their possessions and returned to fight for Palestine. Beyond the Arafat statue in downtown San Salvador, several streets bear names like “Palestine” or “Bethlehem”.

The Palestinian imprint is also visible in organisations like the Club Palestino (later renamed Club El Prado). Just as Palestinian immigrants integrated into and enriched Salvadoran culture, the club evolved into a social space open to all Salvadorans.

Restrictive Laws and Policies on Immigration in the Early 20th Century

In the 1930s, Chile, Argentina, El Salvador and Honduras implemented laws or administrative measures restricting Palestinian immigration, reinforcing discrimination. These laws were gradually repealed as Palestinians integrated into society and achieved success in various areas, especially commerce.

Restrictions in Chile

Chile, which today has the largest Palestinian population in Latin America, did not initially have an open border policy for all immigration. From the beginning, there was consensus about maintaining supervision and selection of immigrants.

According to Azún Candina Polomer and Ricardo Marzuca Butto from the University of Chile in *Arab Migration and Integration in the Southern Cone in the First Half of the 20th Century: The Chilean Case*, it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 people arrived from the Levant to Chile between 1885 and 1940, dates considered as the period of most significant Arab migration to the country.

Meanwhile, the 1905 Free Immigration Regulation emphasised the quality of desired immigrants, defining "free immigrant" as "any foreigner arriving through immigration agencies to take existing employment or proposing to settle; of European or United States origin; being a farmer, miner or capable of exercising a trade, commerce or industry; under 50 years of age; and able to prove morality and skills" (Escalona, 2014).

Through self-protection mechanisms of the Chilean-Palestinian community, which created various associations and Arabic-language publications, the flow was maintained. Of immigrant families surveyed in 1940, 51 per cent came from Palestine, 30 per cent from Syria and 19 per cent from Lebanon. After World War II, the flow of Syrians and Lebanese decreased as these countries gained independence from the French Mandate, while the conflict situation in their area continued to attract a steady influx of Palestinians. By 1970, their relative share had increased to 60 per cent. In this context, facing Arab immigration and presence in Chile, a phenomenon called "Turcophobia", or anti-Arab discrimination, developed, with open hostility, rejection and exclusion. Racial prejudice played an important role in the poor reception given to Arabs.

To analyse these restrictions in Latin American countries, it is essential to examine the relationship with immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the newly independent young nations sought to guide their own demographic formation, considering European and US influence and world events.

Breaking free from colonial status through the formation of independent nations led Latin America to abandon restrictions on previously unwanted foreigners and welcome them as assets in the 19th century, especially to meet technical and labour needs and populate their territories. The criterion for incorporation was living or being born on national soil (*jus soli*) rather than descending from historical nationals (*jus sanguinis*).

As Suelen Bonani notes when researching original and naturalised nationality in Brazil, American countries, considered immigration destinations, "mostly choose the jus soli

criterion to integrate descendants of their immigrants. European countries, on the contrary, are historically emigration states and mostly adopt the jus sanguinis criterion, since the need here is to protect descendants of their national emigrants born outside their parents' country of origin" (Bonani, 2014).

However, the welcome was selective regarding non-whites. The construction of identity by the new American nations was mixed with the idealisation of Europeans as a standard pursued by elites. This generated the first concerns about selecting immigrants based on each country's interests. Beyond colonial notions of superiority over natives and non-white foreigners, the new nations of the Americas felt the effects of the emergence of eugenicist thought, which accompanied the flourishing of genetic research in Europe.

Nancy Leys Stepan, in *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender and Nation in Latin America*, observes that in Brazil, eugenics was born associated with the public health movement, but by the 1920s many eugenicists condemned the country for having a less homogeneous and healthy population and suggested measures such as sterilisation of the mentally ill and racial segregation.

The Latin American Phenomenon

Several Latin American governments implemented selective immigration policies with the aim of promoting a whitening of the population, believing that certain genetic traits and intellectual qualities would lead to an imagined "racial improvement".

The 19th-century Spanish-American republics and Brazil, in the late 19th century, included in their national laws lists of restrictions on the entry of certain foreigners considered dangerous or harmful to society.

The 1898 Constitution of the United States of Central America, which at the time united Central American states into a single country following the example of the US, stated, "Laws may establish the manner and cases in which the entry of a foreigner into the territory of the Republic may be denied or their expulsion ordered for being considered harmful" (Article 50).

The 1894 Honduran Constitution contains the concept of "harmful foreigner" (Article 17), the 1893 Nicaraguan Constitution uses the exact wording (Article 17), as does Peru's 1920 Constitution (Article 29); Venezuela's 1893 Constitution refers to foreigners "notoriously detrimental to public order" (Article 78, 4) and Art. 17 of Uruguay's 1967 Constitution is very similar. In Mexico, Article 33 of the Constitution granted the government the power to expel any foreigner deemed "harmful" without judicial review.

Throughout the region, restrictions persisted in different ways. In Guatemala, President Jorge Ubico (1931-1944) issued Decree No. 1,813 on 4 May, 1936, prohibiting the opening of new commercial and industrial establishments, or branches of existing ones, "owned or operated by individuals of the following nationalities: Turks, Syrians, Lebanese, Arabs, Palestinians, Armenians, Egyptians, Persians, Afghans, Hindus and Poles, as well as members of races originating from the African continent".

An unintended consequence of the discrimination and anti-immigration/anti-Palestinian legislation of the 1930s was to accelerate the assimilation of the Palestinian community in host countries. In Honduras, where few Palestinians had opted for Honduran citizenship in the early decades, the number of naturalisations increased rapidly after the new law was enacted as a means to circumvent the legal obstacles it created.

During the first decades of the 20th century, the concept of the "undesirable foreigner" exhibited very similar characteristics across Latin America, as discussed by Tobias Schwarz from the University of Cologne in Germany, when investigating immigration policies in Latin America (Schwarz, 2012).

Vicken Kayayan, in *Arabophobia and Islamophobia in Latin America*, situates the approach to these phenomena in the region at the beginning of the 20th century, when Arab immigration took on a massive character, with approximately 320,000 people from "Greater Syria" having already settled in the region between 1881 and 1901 (Gualtieri, 2009), taking advantage of open borders to establish themselves. Kayayan observes that, in general, the Latin American tertiary sector was very underdeveloped, and so the Arabs, who had much experience in commerce, managed to establish various warehouses and achieved remarkable economic success. However, Kayayan points out, this success also meant stigmatisation and discrimination by local elites.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, these elites have propagated an Arabophobic discourse in Latin America. The term "*Turco*" (Turk) took on derogatory and racist connotations, alluding to precariousness, itinerant commerce and filth (Akmir, 2009, p. 27). In 1910, the Argentine newspapers *La Nación* and *La Prensa* even published opinion articles stating that Arabs were racially inferior and lacked values, unlike European immigrants (Civantos, 2006, p. 9). These sentiments of hatred quickly spread across Latin America.

Following the economic crisis of 1929, Latin American governments gradually closed their borders to non-European transcontinental immigration, particularly targeting Arab, African and Asian populations (Marmora, Domenach & Guillon, 1995). This marked a shift from the early years of independence, when immigration was broadly encouraged, albeit with the image of the European coloniser and development in mind.

Administrative Restrictions in Argentina

Argentina's 1853 Constitution opened the country to "… all men of the world who wish to dwell on Argentine soil". However, Article 25 revealed the prevailing immigration ideology by ensuring that the government would promote European immigration. According to Schwarz, the Argentine elite sought to influence the population's composition in two ways: by marginalising the existing Indigenous population (through displacement and/or extermination) and by increasing the white population through mass immigration from Europe. Most countries on the continent enacted laws to exclude individuals deemed to be sick, unfit for work or dangerous. Over time, these laws were

adapted or expanded into domestic regulations to block or hinder immigration from specific countries.

Argentina, which never formally codified its restrictions against Arabs, progressively increased administrative barriers for foreigners when enforcing the immigration laws of 1902 and 1910, effectively targeting them. Initially, there was no ethnic component. Law No. 4,144 of 22 November, 1902, consisted of five articles granting the Executive Branch the power to expel any foreigner who had been convicted or was being prosecuted by foreign courts for common crimes or offences. Additionally, the law clarified that the government could order the removal of any foreigner who threatened or compromised national security or disturbed public order. The stipulated deadline for leaving the country was three days, and detention could be ordered until the moment of embarkation. In just the first week after the law's approval, 500 people were deported.

One focus of these restrictions was to bar the entry of European anarchists. On this matter, the libertarian newspaper *La Protesta* wrote on 1 May, 1903:

> The expulsions were carried out with unheard-of brutality, targeting honest workers, fathers of large families who had been settled in the Republic for years, where their Argentine-born children had been raised. These upstanding men, solely for the "crime" of having participated in labour unrest or freely expressing their thoughts, were arrested like bandits and shipped off to their countries of origin without even being granted an hour to prepare for the sudden journey. The brutality of the police procedure (sic) was such that many of the expelled were not even allowed to say goodbye to their wives, children or mothers. It was an unspeakable outrage.

Between 27 and 28 June, 1910, the so-called Social Defence Law was approved by the National Congress. Between 1902 and 1910, five states of siege were enacted, lasting a total of 18 months, supposedly as preventive measures against worker demonstrations. One of the authors of the 1910 law, Argentine congressman Lucas Ayarragaray, explained during a session the importance of selecting the type of immigration, in addition to banning anarchism. His perception was primarily aimed at the ethnic consolidation of the Argentine nation:

> It is against this situation that this country, which already has very inferior ethnic elements in its population, must take precautions—by bringing in superior elements, selecting the flow of immigration to incorporate healthy individuals, and thus ensuring a future race that is physiologically well-constituted on purified ethnic foundations. We do not need yellow immigration, but rather European fathers and mothers, of the white race, to elevate (sic) the hybrid and mestizo elements that form the base of this country's population.

Gabriela Anahí Costanzo, in *Lo Inadmisible Hecho Historia. La Ley de Residencia de 1902 y la Ley de Defensa Social de 1910* (*The Inadmissible Made History: The 1902 Residence Law and the 1910 Social Defence Law*), points out that at the time, the drama of immigrants arriving in the country did not end when they stepped off the boat. Many of the newcomers were not the intended inhabitants, either because they were not Anglo-Saxon or because they held specific political views. The repressive period led many Palestinian immigrants to leave Argentina for Chile, crossing the mountain ranges on mules.

Immigration Quotas in Brazil

The influence of the US also led to the adoption of restrictive laws in Latin America. In 1924, under the pretext of already having a "quantitatively optimal" population for its physical space, the US adopted immigration legislation by establishing quotas. Melhem Adas, in *A Geografia da América* (*The Geography of the Americas*), argues, "The US Quota Law of 1924 was, in reality, a racist political and ideological measure, as it sought to 'protect' or 'safeguard' Anglo-Saxon civilisation from the presence of 'inferior races' that arrived after World War I".

In Brazil, the 1934 Immigration Quota Law was inspired by the US law—"racist in content, despite the myth of racial democracy being cultivated in Brazil", as Adas noted. However, the concern with selecting immigrants predates this. The Brazilian Decree No. 5,663 of 17 June, 1874, expressed interest in receiving and hiring "Germans, Austrians, Swiss, Northern Italians, Basques, Belgians, Swedes, Danes and French—healthy, hardworking and moralised farmers [...]".

In 1934, racial exclusion entered the Constitution, introducing *"*necessary restrictions*"* to ensure the "ethnic integration" of immigrants. The law then copied the US quota system, stipulating that "The annual influx of immigrants from any country shall not exceed two per cent of the total number of nationals from that country settled in Brazil over the past fifty years".

Language Censorship in the Vargas Era

In the early 20th century, Arab immigrants in Brazil maintained publications in their own language, as was common among other foreign communities.

The preservation of Arab culture and language by Palestinians in Brazil was particularly affected by the *"abrasileiramento"* (Brazilianisation) policy enforced by the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (DIP), which granted operating licences to newspapers and exercised prior censorship. Andréa Franciéle Weber, in her work *O Combate à Imprensa em Língua Estrangeira No Brasil: Políticas e Ideias Linguísticas Na Legislação Da Era Vargas* (*The Crackdown on Foreign-Language Press in Brazil: Linguistic Policies and Ideas in Vargas-Era Legislation*), cites Neumann (2004), noting

that in 1941, Getúlio Vargas instructed the DIP to give foreign-language newspapers six months to adapt exclusively to the national language. Those who failed to comply would have their licences revoked and unregistered publications would be shut down immediately. Neumann further reports that the newspaper *Correio do Povo* published a list of 22 foreign-language periodicals affected by this order in the state of Rio Grande do Sul alone.

Table: The linguistic distribution of the Brazilian press in 1912

Language	**Publications**
Portuguese	1,307
German	25
Italian	20
Polish	6
Arabic	6
Spanish	4
French	3
English	1
Plurilingual	5
Total	1,377

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Brazil (1908-1912)

Lists and Taxes in Central America

The countries of the Central American region shared common influences. During the colonial period, they formed a single territory (called the Kingdom of Guatemala, which included part of Mexico and Panama). In 1824, after gaining complete independence from Mexico and Spain, the countries of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica formed the Federal Republic of Central America, a single nation that remained united for about 15 years. Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua reunited briefly from 1886 to 1898, forming the Greater Republic of Central America, whose Constitution stipulated that its laws could "establish the manner and cases in which a foreigner may be denied entry into the territory of the Republic or ordered to be expelled for being considered harmful".

Discrimination was a common policy in the region at the beginning of the century among the countries that had been part of the former Federation. Guatemala, in 1936, published

the *Ley de Extranjería* (Decree 1,781), which prohibited the entry "of individuals, regardless of their nationality, Turks, Syrians, Lebanese, Arabs, Greeks, Palestinians, Armenians, Egyptians, Afghans, [Hindus], Bulgarians, Russians and native races from the northern coast of Africa".

Restrictions in Honduras

After the separation, Honduras's 1894 Constitution retained the concept of the "harmful foreigner", like other Latin American countries, as noted by Pablo Yankelevich in *Extranjeros Indeseables en México (1911-1940): Una Aproximación Cuantitativa a la Aplicación del Artículo 33 Constitucional.*

At the same time, the country was dependent on foreign labour. Vladimir López Recinos, a researcher on migration, notes that since 1920, Honduras's economy has been heavily reliant on banana exports to the global market. Eighty per cent of the country's national exports came from this fruit or its byproducts. However, the production, transportation and commercialisation of most of the country's mercantile wealth were operated by foreigners, primarily American, English, German, Arab and Jewish immigrants. The American case was different because these immigrants came to exploit business opportunities, but did not stay in the country for long.

However, Honduras attempted to exclude Arabs through a 1929 decree that introduced a system of administrative discrimination, under which "Arab, Turkish, Syrian, Armenian, Black and Chinese immigrants had to pay an exorbitantly high fee of $2,500 US dollars before entering the country". The subsequent 1934 Immigration Law barred the entry of Black or dark-skinned people into Honduras, unlike the treatment granted to men and women of Caucasian origin. It also defined groups of undesirable immigrants based on their racial backgrounds, who were to be heavily taxed upon entry. Honduras only allowed the entry of Arabs, Turks, Syrians, Armenians, Palestinians, Czechoslovaks, Lebanese and Poles, provided they guaranteed the Bureau of Immigration and Colonisation that they would dedicate themselves exclusively to agriculture or the introduction or improvement of new industries.

Palestinians faced difficult times, yet persisted. Initially, some were involved in the textile trade, but over the years, they expanded their activities and their participation in the national economy as American companies gradually vacated the commercial space in the country's economy.

Restrictions in El Salvador

In El Salvador's legislation of the 1930s, in addition to "indigenous people from China or Mongolia, Blacks, Malays and Romani, also known in the country as 'Hungarians'", the entry of "new immigrants from Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine or Turkey, commonly referred to as 'Turks'" was prohibited.

Beyond these groups, the 1933 Migration Law included an extensive list of criteria to bar foreigners from the country, such as “street vendors, charlatans or *buhoneros*; those who fail to pay the immigration tax; those unable to present to immigration authorities the sum of five hundred colóns or its equivalent in foreign currency or bank securities”.

Since 1929, Turks were already considered a danger, and the 1897 Alien Law was amended to include restrictions on “individuals of the Arab race or those known in the country by the name of Turks (sic), even if they present citizenship or naturalisation papers from another country”.

The laws of the time not only prohibited the entry of certain ethnic groups, but also generally stipulated that descendants of immigrants born on Salvadoran soil inherited their parents' nationality, meaning they had to undergo naturalisation to acquire Salvadoran citizenship.

New Forms of Discrimination

Legal restrictions were initially limited in duration, eventually being overcome as Palestinians managed to establish themselves as a significant economic force in these countries. However, discrimination took on new forms.

The second half of the 20th century was marked not only by the consolidation of the first immigrant communities, but also by the arrival of new Palestinians displaced by the establishment of the State of Israel. This included Arab-Muslim migration to Latin America, which successfully established mosques and thrived economically in the region. Nevertheless, there is evidence of rising Islamophobia and discrimination against these populations (Akmir, 2009; Kusumo, 2013). For example, in Argentina, after September 11, 2001, several groups vandalised graves in Buenos Aires’s Muslim cemetery and even planted two bombs in two of the city’s mosques (Civantos, 2006).

According to Kayayan, discrimination is further fuelled by sensationalist media. Most articles addressing Islam or the Middle East reflect a severe lack of understanding of the region’s political context and the ethnic-religious diversity of the Arab world, thereby perpetuating a distorted image of Islam, one directly linked to terrorism.

In these times of global conflict, there is an urgent need for accurate and impartial information. Responsible education and journalism are fundamental pillars for peaceful coexistence.

CHAPTER 3.

Palestine in the Latin American Media

This chapter establishes the connection between the concepts and practices of humanitarian and peace journalism, supported by the works of experts such as Johan Galtung, Cilene Victor, Steven Youngblood, Wilhelm Kempf, Dov Shinar, Martin Scott, Mel Bunce and Kate Wright, and traditional journalistic theories, including news values, narrative frameworks and journalistic objectivity. This theoretical discussion serves as the foundation for the content analysis of Latin American newspapers' coverage of Palestine, aiming to identify humanitarian and peace journalism approaches that could counterbalance the dominant narrative imposed by Global North news agencies.

The content analysis focuses on one major newspaper from each of the five key Latin American countries in this study: *Clarín* (Argentina), *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil), *El Mercurio* (Chile), *La Prensa Gráfica* (El Salvador) and *El Heraldo* (Honduras). The study examines Palestine-related content published over a period of three and a half years, from January 2020 to June 2023. Using the keyword "*Palestina*" (Palestine), digital archives were searched, limiting results to news articles, opinion pieces and interviews. The methodology employed is quantitative content analysis.

The research aims to identify and understand the representation of the Middle East in Latin American media, with a particular focus on the perpetuation of Orientalism, as defined by Edward Said (2008). It explores how this representation influences coverage of Palestine, often reduced to labels such as the "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" or "Arab-Israeli war", while ignoring critical distinctions, such as the difference between an occupying force and an occupied people, the humanitarian crisis and human rights violations, particularly those affecting children, women and the elderly in the region.

The central hypothesis guiding this chapter is that the conventional "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" narrative confines reporting to event-based coverage, neglecting the principles of humanitarian and peace journalism and, inadvertently, fostering Islamophobia. This research was developed within the scope of the *Jornalismo Humanitário e Media Interventions* (HumanizaCom) research group at São Paulo's Methodist University. It evaluates how humanitarian and peace journalism can challenge conflict-centred narratives and offer alternative perspectives that prevent the spread of moral panic and "compassion fatigue", phenomena that arise from war and conflict coverage that is devoid of ethical commitment, relying instead on sensationalist ideologies and tactics.

It is important to note that the quantitative content analysis focuses on coverage of violent events perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces in Sheikh Jarrah and Al-Aqsa Mosque during the study period (January 2020 to June 2023) across the five newspapers. The decision to begin with content analysis before turning to theoretical frameworks was based on the intention to avoid a disconnected conceptual discussion of humanitarian and peace journalism, while simultaneously identifying pathways to reshape the coverage patterns revealed by the analysis.

To understand how the press in these five Latin American countries covers Palestine-related events, it is essential to examine news values and assess whether principles such as neutrality, objectivity and transparency are upheld. These factors may explain why certain events gain media visibility while others are overlooked. The media's approach to the Palestinian issue aligns with Scott's (2018) observation that media attention does not necessarily correlate with the severity of crises or the number of people affected. Instead, it is more closely tied to geopolitical relevance and cultural proximity to the dominant Western (or Global North) audience. Challenging these partial news values, humanitarian and peace journalism strives for a more balanced and comprehensive representation that reflects reality more authentically. It seeks to amplify visibility for the Palestinian issue through a less biased and more inclusive approach, as proposed by Scott.

It is essential to understand, in this context, the ideal of the Palestinian people's struggle for recognition. For this purpose, we turn to the theoretical contributions of Axel Honneth (2003), who draws on the young Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel to identify the most general elements of the "struggle for recognition" and decipher the "moral grammar of social conflicts". Within this framework, when considering the model proposed by George Herbert Mead, which analyses recognition relations and the struggle based on love and the right to esteem, it becomes evident that Palestinians, in their initial phase of migration to Latin America, faced a lack of such recognition.

Numerous factors contributed to this, including the lack of a welcoming community, poverty and an urgent need to work to meet basic individual or family needs in both the country of origin and the Diaspora. Migration was seen as a means for collective economic improvement, reflecting the vision of an extended family. Thomas Hobbes (1966) asserts that, when conceptualising human coexistence in the new multipolar context, migrants must commit to ensuring their future well-being, demonstrating proactivity resulting from adaptation to the new Western environment and harmonious coexistence with others who are foreign in customs and traditions.

In addition to inherent challenges, it is essential to form new relationships that contribute to recognition and the existence of individuals, as discussed in *Leviathan* (1966). Hobbes emphasises the battle for self-esteem and preservation, an issue highlighted by Shafiq Al-Ghabra when discussing how Palestinians in Kuwait achieved substantial integration and progress at all levels after the 1948 Nakba, in the most consolidated Palestinian communities in the Diaspora (Ghabra, 2012).

Returning to Honneth's philosophical perspective on people's struggle to maintain their physical, cultural and spiritual identity is vital for understanding social interactions. He argues that societies that aspire to integrate and fight for recognition generally distinguish themselves through the morality of acceptance. The role of the family in the social complex of the struggle for recognition is emphasised by Honneth, with family members working together to establish the roots of continuity. Recognition stemming from mutual needs among people gradually gives rise to a state of integration, known as recognition of customs, as opposed to formal laws and instructions.

When contemplating the situation of Palestinians and their Diaspora induced by Israeli policies, or, from another perspective, this Diaspora as exile, we observe that many families suffered the loss of family stability, separated by the conditions of members

forced to emigrate in search of a better future for themselves and others. This search extends beyond children, reaching the extended family, which includes in-laws and other relatives, often dependent on neighbours' assistance due to the magnitude of the family group's needs.

In the struggle to live with dignity and freedom, women often take on the solitary task of raising and educating children, which has been recurring since 1948 and persists to this day in Palestinian society. Integration requires a secure family environment, which is frequently abandoned. Palestinians have experienced this over the years in all areas of immigration and diaspora, dealing with the rupture of emotional and family stability that migration imposes. What would theoretically be an anomalous condition, paradoxically, becomes the norm for Palestinians forced to migrate.

The struggle for recognition always requires organised effort, and at certain moments, state intervention becomes necessary to help organise and overcome the challenges and discrepancies present in the host society's environment (Hegel, 1986, cited in Honneth, 2003). Interactions between different communities can cause instabilities, but they can also serve as an impetus for uniting forces, aiming to build their own model that preserves cultural and moral heritage, promoting survival, continuity and social construction.

The media outlets selected for this study reflect careful consideration of the political, diplomatic and cultural dynamics of their contexts. The newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*, for example, was chosen as a representative of traditional Brazilian media and was preferred for its relevance and broad digital access.

Argentina, with the largest Jewish community in Latin America, where the possibility of establishing a national home for the Jewish people was considered, as proposed by Theodor Herzl in *The Jewish State* (1900), has *Clarín*, its oldest and most significant newspaper, in covering the Palestinian issue.

In Honduras, where the fourth-largest Palestinian community in South America resides, the newspaper *El Heraldo* stands out for its frequent coverage of the Palestinian issue, which is why it was included in the research.

El Salvador, with the largest Palestinian community in Central America and governed by President Nayib Bukele of Palestinian origin (2019-2024), has in *La Prensa Gráfica* a vital means of disseminating information.

In Chile, the country with the largest number of Palestinians in South America and strong support for the Palestinian cause, where the community expresses its connection to cultural heritage through music, costumes and traditions, prominent media figures such as Álvaro Saieh, Nicolás Massú and Francisco Chahuán justified the choice of the newspaper *El Mercurio.*

The set of materials analysed in the five outlets includes the production of news and articles accessible electronically through commercial subscription services. The study period encompassed notable events, such as the assassination of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in May 2022, and the controversial statement by then newly elected Brazilian President Bolsonaro in November 2018 about his promise to transfer the Brazilian Embassy to Jerusalem, aligning with the policy adopted by then and current US President

Donald Trump, in addition to recurring conflicts in the Gaza Strip. The objective of monitoring the repercussions of these events was to conduct a quantitative diagnosis of the case studied, complementing the content analysis and deepening the discussion proposed by this research. Throughout the studied period, the materials were electronically selected and manually verified by the author to minimise the errors inherent to automation.

For the definition of analysis categories, we employed Laurence Bardin's method (2011), which allows for greater flexibility in content analysis, based on the principle of mutual exclusion. Each element is uniquely categorised, analysed with objectivity and impartiality, thereby avoiding discrepancies and distortions in analytical reasoning and ensuring that the analysis aligns with the research objectives and theoretical framework. The categorisation process follows the structure proposed by Bardin (1977), which organises the research by categorising the elements collected and their subsequent classification.

According to the inventory, the study addresses three main categories of analysis: form, practice and textual resources. Regarding form, we examine the quantity of materials per outlet and the frequency of mentions of Palestine or Israel. The categorisation of practice involves identifying journalistic genres and information sources in the articles. In analysing textual resources, we consider the use and recurrence of polyphony and polysemy throughout the coverage.

Regarding the theoretical foundation necessary for investigating the concept of journalistic sources, the theoretical contributions of Manuel Carlos Chaparro (2007), Nílson Lage (2001) and Felipe Pena (2005) were considered. The research on journalistic genres employs a classificatory triad that categorises press production into informative, interpretative and opinion-based genres, as proposed by Marques de Melo (2003), who builds upon the assumptions and contributions of Harold Lasswell (1987), Charles Robert Wright (1968) and Raymond Nixon (1963). De Melo's original model comprises five categories, from which we selected the triad most commonly used in journalism, particularly in political journalism. Thus, the discussion about journalistic genre classification systems, which remains an area of disagreement, is addressed by considering the most elementary and commonly used models among Brazilian journalists. The inclusion of journalistic genres as a content analysis criterion aims to investigate the journalistic contribution of the chosen outlets in the coverage of events in Palestine and how this theme is approached in Brazilian media.

In evaluating textual resources, we revisit the linguistic concepts of polysemy and polyphony. According to Mikhail Bakhtin (1988, 1997), textual polyphony is characterised by the plurality of voices in a text, which contributes to the complexity of the presented context. The concept of polysemy refers to the multiplicity of meanings that a word or expression can acquire depending on the context in which it is used. For example, when the name of a group or religion is used pejoratively, it often conveys a negative connotation, particularly in situations that refer to violent and oppressive practices.

The analysis of polyphony and polysemy criteria is applied to the coverage of the so-called "Israel-Palestine conflict", with special attention to the use of information from

international agencies by the studied outlets. News agencies are a globalised source of information and often compensate for the lack of correspondents and special envoys in international journalism for local or regional media (Natali, 2007), or even the total absence of these professionals in many cases. Furthermore, the occurrence of polysemy in opinion and interpretative categories is evaluated. The frequency of mentions of Islam and its association with perpetrators of terrorist acts is also studied, considering the discussions and controversies that emerged after the 11 September, 2001, attacks. The research assumes that promoting debate from divergent voices is a presupposition of journalism's social role.

Before advancing the discussion about media coverage based on the so-called "Israel-Palestine conflict" formula, we will open parentheses with some examples of language and approach used in specific events. One of them refers to reports related to the death of Abu Akleh on 11 May, 2022, showing that this topic was also covered by the newspapers that compose this analysis, with the exception of *La Prensa Gráfica*. In archive searches, no articles about the assassination were found in this newspaper.

Source: *El Mercurio*, 12 May, 2022.

Repórter da Al Jazeera é morta durante operação de Israel na Cisjordânia

Shireen Abu Akleh usava colete de imprensa; emissora acusa tropas israelenses, mas premiê nega

JENIN (CISJORDÂNIA) | REUTERS e AFP Uma repórter do canal de notícias Al

Source: *Folha de S. Paulo*, 11 May, 2022.

Periodista palestina de Al Jazeera murió por un disparo de las fuerzas israelíes, según la ONU

La periodista se encontraba en las inmediaciones del campamento de refugiados de Yenín, bastión de las facciones armadas palestinas donde las fuerzas israelíes realizaban una incursión.

La periodista palestino-estadounidense llevaba un chaleco antibalas con la palabra "prensa" estampada y un casco, pero la bala le alcanzó justo debajo de este.

Foto: AFP

Source: *El Heraldo*, 24 June, 2022.

Una periodista de Al Jazeera murió de un tiro durante un operativo israelí en Cisjordania

La cadena afirmó que Shireen Abu Akleh fue asesinada "deliberadamente" por las fuerzas israelíes, mientras que Israel atribuyó la muerte a disparos palestinos.

Source: *Clarín*, 11 May, 2022.

Regarding the so-called “Deal of the Century”, presented in January 2020 by the US as a proposed solution to the “Israel-Palestine conflict”, without, however, hearing or considering Palestinian perspectives, most news coverage in Brazil originated from international news agencies.

The opinion of Israel’s ambassador to Brazil at the time, Yossi Shelley, was published in *Folha de S. Paulo* to express his strong support for this agreement and to praise the position of then-Brazilian President Bolsonaro on the matter. He further stated that Israel’s normalisation of relations with Arab countries would be both natural and necessary for achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

The reported position of Brazil’s Foreign Ministry (Itamaraty) regarding its acceptance of the Deal of the Century reflected the Bolsonaro administration’s view that the proposal offered a promising vision after more than seven unfruitful decades and that Brazil supported peace and coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis.

The proposal, however, would not consider the long-standing Brazilian position in favour of establishing a Palestinian State within the 4 June, 1967, borders, with East Jerusalem as capital. Bolsonaro, a staunch ally of Israel, expressed support for recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, as well as for the plan presented by Trump, deeming it an “ideal solution” to resolve the “Israel-Palestine conflict”.

For their part, El Salvador and Honduras issued no official statements regarding the Deal of the Century. They chose instead to address the matter through television programmes, newspapers and other publications. Honduras expressed support for former US President Trump, particularly regarding the decision to relocate the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Despite adopting a stance of neutrality towards the conflict, the US influence leads Honduras to align with its policies. The favourable perception of the plan is disseminated throughout the region by international news agencies such as *Reuters*, *Associated Press* (*AP*) and *Agence France-Presse* (*AFP*).

73 años en la senda de la paz

Aunque el camino no ha estado libre de obstáculos, en este país vislumbran un panorama prometedor hacia la paz y el progreso en Medio Oriente y señalan: “es el futuro que Israel está comprometido a impulsar”.

En 1994, se firmó el Tratado de Paz entre el Estado de Israel y el Reino Hashemita de Jordania.

En 2020, Israel, Emiratos Árabes Unidos y Bahréin anunciaron su voluntad de establecer relaciones diplomáticas plenas.

Source: *El Mercurio*, 11 June, 2021.

The article published in *El Mercurio* ("*73 años en la senda de la paz*"), written by the press office of the Embassy of Israel, seeks to emphasise Israel's right to pursue normalisation with countries in the region bordering Israel, recalling the history of agreements—beginning with the 1978 Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel, followed by Jordan in 1994—and asserting that these countries gained from these relations. The article further states that, after nearly two and a half decades, Israel resumed normalisation agreements, starting with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and, days later, with Bahrain, highlighting these as major achievements and that it continued to seek normalisation agreements with Saudi Arabia and all countries in the region.

El nuevo Oriente Medio de Donald Trump y sus sueños de perpetuación

Dos países árabes acaban de normalizar relaciones con Israel, con la bendición del mandatario norteamericano. Trump traduce ese éxito como una ganancia electoral. Y, entretanto, sugiere, a lo Chávez o Evo Morales, su derecho a no solo ganar en noviembre sino a buscar un tercer mandato consecutivo, aunque la Constitución se lo prohíba.

Source: *Clarín*, 18 September, 2020.

The article, published in *Clarín* and authored by writer Marcelo Cantelmi, addresses the history of Arab-Israeli relations and the first normalisation agreement with Egypt, presenting it as a success. However, former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by a citizen of his own country due to the normalisation agreement, which Egyptians viewed as a transgression of Arab values and an abandonment of the rights of the Palestinian people, particularly the right of return.

Exteriores respalda el plan de paz de Trump favorable a Israel

El gobierno brasileño califica el documento de realista y ambicioso; Palestina lo critica

Source: *Folha de S. Paulo*, 30 January, 2020.

In a departure from its historical stance of supporting the Palestinian cause, Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the diplomatic advances led by the UAE and Bahrain. The Brazilian administration, represented by Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo, not only positively received these diplomatic moves, but also appealed to the US to continue implementing the plan known as the Deal of the Century, formulated during Trump's presidency. As interpreted through official documents, Brazil considered that normalisation agreements could serve as catalysts for peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East, including for the State of Israel, aligning with the principles of Trump's peace plan, which, in the view of the Brazilian government at the time, served the interests of all involved parties and was consistent with ideals of logic and justice.

Beyond rhetorical support, the Bolsonaro administration (2018-2022) took concrete measures to back these normalisation initiatives, as evidenced by the meeting between the Brazilian foreign minister and ambassadors from the involved countries, held in Brasília. This meeting, in addition to strengthening bilateral ties, included an encounter with then-President Bolsonaro, who reiterated Brazil's position in encouraging the continuation of normalisation agreements with the State of Israel.

CHART

Hegemony of International News Agencies: The Israel-Palestine Conflict Framework and Islamophobia

Israel—Palestine Conflict

Reuters *AP* ***WP*** *NYT+Globo*

NYT	*AFP*	*Xinhua*
No reference		*Opinion*
More than one agency		*News desk*
Translation/Reproduction		*Special Envoy*
Correspondent		
	Conflict Israel—Hamas	

Source: Prepared by the author

The quantitative content analysis provides important clues to elucidate the correlation between the hegemony of news agencies in event coverage and how the Israel-Palestine conflict has been reported. The study analysed a sample of reports from January 2020 to June 2023, revealing a tendency to underrepresent the humanitarian crisis in Palestine while disproportionately emphasising specific events, such as conflicts and military offensives. One significant finding of the analysis was the detection of elements that could be interpreted as Islamophobic, particularly in characterising Hamas exclusively as an "extremist group" or "militia", directly linking it to Islam in a generalised and distorted manner.

In the subsequent phase, the research expanded to include journalistic coverage in five different countries, as mentioned. It should be noted that variations in editorial formats and limitations in accessing media platforms presented challenges when replicating the analysis approach used with news agencies. The objective was to discern the predominant influence of these agencies in shaping the narrative around the "Israel-Palestine conflict".

The "Israel-Palestine Conflict" Framework and the MacBride Report

In 1980, the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), conducted a comprehensive examination of the global information and communication infrastructure. The commission was tasked with assessing the need for a new paradigm within the journalism ecosystem, recognising and challenging the profound imbalances that threatened the development of countries on a significant geopolitical scale, as well as the formation and maintenance of global strategic alliances.

This work resulted in the document Many Voices, One World: Communications and Society Today and Tomorrow (*Muitas Vozes*, *Um Só Mundo: Comunicação e Sociedade Agora e No Futuro*), known as the MacBride Report, a reference to the commission's rapporteur, Seán MacBride, an Irish politician, Amnesty International chair and 1974

Nobel Peace Prize laureate for his dedication to human rights. The MacBride Report (1980) catalysed an international debate on media concentration, the influence of news agencies and the intrinsic relationship between unequal access to communication resources and a country's socioeconomic development. The document outlined the dominance of Western news agencies and highlighted the resulting distortions, particularly in Latin America, where such media hegemony reinforced the perpetuation of political thought under the shadow of intellectual and cultural neocolonialism.

The report argued that press freedom is a fundamental pillar of democracy and essential to the right to access and transmit information. The commission thus advocated for implementing a global communications system as an alternative to the one dominated by industrialised nations. Although acclaimed in many countries, the report faced criticism and political pressure that led to UNESCO's retreat, particularly after the notorious US withdrawal from the organisation and the subsequent funding cuts during the former US President Ronald Reagan administration (1981-1988).

The MacBride Report broadly asserted that the most powerful nations consistently held a superior position in the media, which could have harmful economic, political and social effects for the majority. The United States rejected the document, accusing it of being distorted and unrealistic, and subsequently withdrew from both the commission and UNESCO. At the time, the US launched a systematic campaign to sway public opinion, leveraging major international newspapers against UNESCO and the report. Following the US lead, the UK also withdrew from UNESCO. This would not be the first time the US halted funding to the UN.

Generally, international news agencies grew strategically throughout the 20th century, assuming control over global news dissemination. They began establishing newspapers in Latin American countries that relied on Central Intelligence Agency-sourced information about anti-Nazi alliances during World War II (1939-1945) and sought to replace the image of Nazism with that of Communism as a Western threat during the Cold War. The US used Latin America and its newspapers to propagate this ideology (Sousa, 2008).

Between 1974 and 1976, the US deliberately defaulted on payments in retaliation for UN General Assembly resolutions condemning Israel over the situation in occupied Arab territories (Preston, Herman & Schiller, 1989). Undoubtedly, the US withdrawal from UNESCO (ratified in 1984)—under the claim of "political interference", particularly regarding the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate—was more drastic, as it undermined UNESCO's ability to fulfil its original 1945 objectives (Souza-Gomes, 1990, p. 97).

A similar event later compromised UNESCO's funding. As illustrated by Nilo Dytz Filho (2014) in his work on the organisation's crisis and reform, the suspension of US contributions reduced UNESCO's 2012-2013 budget by 22 per cent, equivalent to a 143.6 million loss. This financial strain worsened when the US refused to pay an additional $79.1 million for debts incurred in 2011 and prior years. UNESCO thus faced a severe budgetary crisis just eight years after the US rejoined, following nearly two decades of absence. The context was the State Department's interpretation of Palestine's UNESCO

membership vote as "regrettable, premature, and damaging to the shared goal of a comprehensive, just, and lasting Middle East peace" (Nuland, 2011).

The concerns about media concentration worldwide, highlighted in the MacBride Report, are evident in the coverage of events in the occupied Palestinian territories. This report highlights how the perspective of major international news agencies, which dominate and influence global information flows, can shape what reaches the public. Such influence becomes glaring when facts about Israeli-occupied Palestine are presented in ways that normalise the occupier's narrative, privileging Israeli discourse over Palestinian perspectives.

Another issue highlighted in the report is the scarcity of information from certain regions, which is reflected in the frequently incomplete and distorted representation of Palestine, thereby fostering a misleading understanding of reality.

The MacBride Commission emphasised the need to safeguard information freedom, irrespective of ideological obstructions. Beyond the capacity to disseminate news globally through journalistic and digital platforms, challenges persist in accessing restricted areas—such as refugee camps and conflict zones—where media presence and reporting capabilities are often limited or nonexistent.

Professional insecurity, exacerbated by threats and violence, further constricts information flows. This is starkly illustrated by cases like British filmmaker James Miller (1968-2003), shot dead by an Israeli soldier while filming in Gaza in 2003 and Italian journalist Simone Camilli (1979-2014), working for *AP*, killed by an Israeli missile in Beit Lahia, Gaza. The distortion of news about Palestine is directly tied to these challenges: restricted movement, fear, assassinations and censorship—all themes raised in the report that remain acutely relevant today. In Latin America, media distortion of Palestinian issues presents unique complexities, as coverage varies significantly across countries.

Key factors include:

1. The stance of the US, which treats Latin American countries as its "backyard", influences regional media to adopt a North American perspective, frequently reflecting the US viewpoint, particularly regarding the "Israel-Palestine conflict".
2. The commercial and security agreements established by various Latin American countries with Israel position it as a strategic partner, especially in the military sector.
3. The presence of Israeli investments and their significant media influence facilitates the adoption of the Israeli narrative across the continent, particularly in journalism, international relations and public perception, while the Palestinian narrative remains limited, largely due to restrictions imposed in Palestinian areas under Israeli control. Administratively, Israel controls 78 per cent of the territory, representing a substantial obstacle to independent media coverage.

4. The media outlets analysed in the research (*Clarín, Folha de S. Paulo, El Mercurio, La Prensa Gráfica* and *El Heraldo*), in their coverage of the so-called "Israel-Palestine conflict", rely primarily on international agencies, particularly North American ones, which serve as references for collecting opinion articles and interviews, perpetuating the view of a power that is Israel's main ally in its capacity for aggression against occupied Palestine.

The distortion of news since 1947, the year of Palestine's partition that enabled Israel's creation and precipitated the Palestinian Nakba, has been mediated by international agencies with a pro-Israel bias, shaping public and intellectual opinion across Latin America.

Palestine in Latin American Newspapers

Building on the theoretical discussions and documents examined in previous chapters, this work proposes an understanding of its central theme through a case study and content analysis of news and press coverage regarding events in Palestine—the primary focus of Chapters One and Two.

The proposed study employs the case study strategy outlined by Robert Yin (2005), which is suitable for investigating the type of coverage in Latin America for matters involving Palestine and Israel as a set of interconnected events. According to Yin, case studies serve as empirical investigations that enable the analytical observation of contemporary phenomena in real-world contexts, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are unclear, as is the case with this study.

Comparative analyses of different subjects yield distinct insights, which, as Robert E. Stake (2005) argues, can lead to higher-quality research. This study encompasses sub-units of analysis—comprising articles, reports and news on the "Arab-Israeli conflict" covered by Latin American outlets—and can be classified, according to Yin's (2001) framework, as an integrated multiple-case study. During the study period, the Gaza Strip experienced repeated attacks, providing an opportunity to examine how media in the surveyed countries covered these events.

The content analysis follows the theoretical premises posited by Bardin (2009), aiming to derive, through systematic description of messages, "indicators (quantitative or otherwise) that enable inferences about the conditions of production/reception (inferred variables) of these messages" (Bardin, 2009, p. 38).

As noted earlier, the quantitative content analysis focused on one newspaper from each of five countries: *Clarín* (Argentina), *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil), *El Mercurio* (Chile), *La Prensa Gráfica* (El Salvador) and *El Heraldo* (Honduras). The study period spanned January 2020 to June 2023.

This timeframe aimed to capture news on Palestine beyond peak aggression periods while also delving into Israel's attack on Gaza during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan

2021—an episode known as the *"Saif Al-Quds War"*—to analyse how these outlets covered the 21-day assault and compare their approaches before, during and after the event.

Under Bolsonaro's government, which maintained overt ties to Israel, media products—especially religious TV programmes—heavily emphasised connections between Brazilian pastors and visits to Jerusalem. Government and party demonstrations in favour of Israel broke with Brazil's tradition of respect for the Palestinian people. In contrast, the victorious 2022 presidential candidate, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (elected for a third term), reinstated support for international resolutions on Palestinians' right to a state within 1967 borders—a benchmark for two-state solution advocates. After the 1967 war, Israel exceeded these boundaries by occupying the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, East Jerusalem and most of the Golan Heights. Lula reiterated this stance repeatedly, including his condemnation of Israeli Security Minister Ben-Gvir's 2023 incursion into Al-Aqsa Mosque, thereby realigning with Brazil's traditional position on Palestine in media discourse.[8]

The analysis extended to articles published one year after the 2021 ceasefire (through June 2023) to assess potential follow-up coverage, such as the worsening humanitarian crisis in occupied territories. However, findings revealed no sustained media attention to the aftermath for Palestinians.

It is important to note that the research utilised artificial intelligence resources, specifically R Studio, a programming language that enables data scraping and mining. Faced with the ethical dilemmas of using artificial intelligence to scrape data from news websites, since it involves paid content, the approach was to conduct surveys in the online archives of the five newspapers, utilising the service available to subscribers, and apply R Studio only for data mining.

In the first phase of the research, the focus was on coverage by theme in the five Latin American newspapers. During the period from January 2020 to June 2023, the survey conducted in the archives of the five outlets, using the keywords "Palestine", "Sheikh Jarrah", "Al-Aqsa Mosque" and "Israel-Palestine conflict", resulted in 604 contents, comprising: 267 news articles and reports from *Folha de S. Paulo;* 173 news articles and reports from *Clarín;* 97 news articles and reports from *El Mercurio;* 45 from *La Prensa Gráfica and* 22 from *El Heraldo.*

The following graphs illustrate the origin of information, categorised as follows: in-house content (produced by the outlet's team), news agencies, international correspondents and foreign media translations/republications. In each of the five outlets, the predominance of news agencies from the Global North is evident, as will be discussed further.

[8] Source: O Brasil com Lula, a opção pela democracia. *Middle East Monitor* (*MEMO*), São Paulo, 4 November, 2022. Available at: https://encr.pw/i0UOf.

Clarín: Argentina

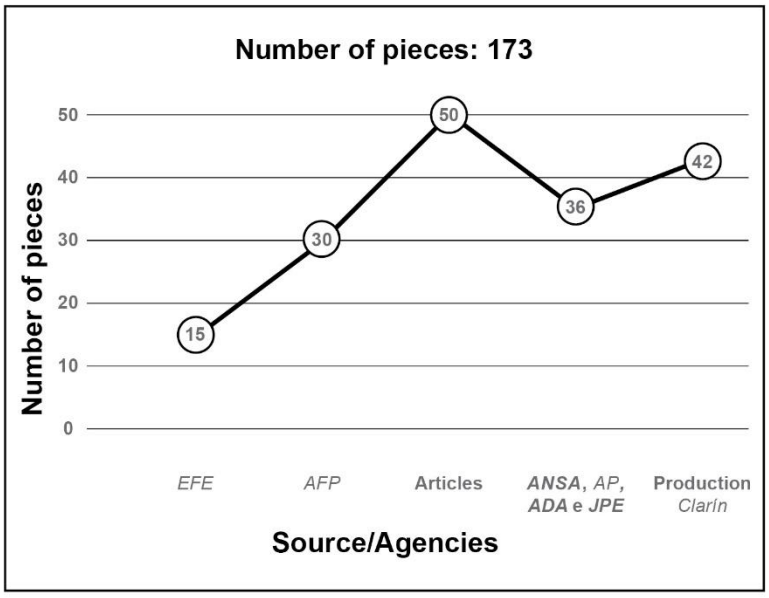
Clarín is the largest newspaper in Argentina and the second most widely distributed Spanish-language newspaper in the world. Founded in 1945, it was initially circulated as a tabloid. It became the first Argentine media outlet to print and sell Sunday editions, becoming the best-selling newspaper in Argentina during the 1960s. Its website was launched in 1996 and receives around 6 million daily visits. *Clarín* holds a 44 per cent share of the newspaper market in Buenos Aires and its website attracts approximately 32 million visits.

For this reason, *Clarín* was selected for analysing how the press in Argentina covers the advancement of Israel's occupation of Palestine. The search using relevant keywords yielded 173 reports, including articles, news pieces and interviews—123 news items and 50 articles or interviews. The interviews were more favourable to the Israeli side than to the Palestinian side. Foreign news agencies (*L'Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata*, *AP*, *ADA*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *AFP*, *Agencia EFE* and *United Press International*) accounted for 81 per cent of the content. The two agencies (*AFP* and *EFE*) alone made up 45 per cent of the news, indicating the dominance of Spanish and French agencies in Argentine media. Based on the following graph, Argentina stands out for publishing articles from diverse sources on the issue.

Table
Media analisis of the Argentinean newspaper El Clarín

Source/Agencies	Number of pieces	(%)
EFE	15	9%
AFP	30	17%
Articles (original or associates')	50	29%
ANSA, AP, ADA, and JPE	36	21%
Authoral production (*El Mercurio*)	42	24%
Total	173	100%

Chart



Source: Prepared by the author.

Folha de S. Paulo: Brazil

Based on the analysis of *Folha de S. Paulo*, covering the study period from January 2020 to June 2023, this newspaper stood out as the most representative in media coverage among the Latin American outlets examined. Founded in 1921, *Folha de S. Paulo* is one of the oldest newspapers in Latin America and, according to the study, the most engaged with the Middle East, particularly Palestine, even maintaining, at times, a correspondent

in Jerusalem. According to the Brazilian Circulation Verification Institute (IVC), it is the most widely read newspaper and the second oldest in Brazil, after *O Estado de S. Paulo*.

The outlet has a strong social media presence, with nearly six million followers, while its digital reach hit 212 million views in 2017, with an average circulation of 314 million. In 1986, it became Brazil's highest-circulating Sunday newspaper, surpassing one million copies on that day alone. It also operates what is considered the most technologically advanced printing press in Latin America. According to IVC data provided to the National Newspaper Association (ANJ), *Folha de S. Paulo* was the first Portuguese-language digital newspaper, covering news, sports, culture, and contemporary issues. By 2010, it had begun producing mobile-formatted news. The paper has won dozens of awards, including the ExxonMobil Journalism Prize, among many others and operates on a paid subscription model.[9] Due to its prominence among Brazilian media, *Folha de S. Paulo* was selected for this study's sample. Its website published 267 pieces related to the "Israel-Palestine conflict", including 77 opinion articles, mostly by Brazilian writers, with some translated from international sources.

The following graph, which tracks news sourcing at *Folha de S. Paulo*, reveals that *Reuters* is the top source used. This highlights the dominance of Global North news agencies over Brazil's mass media. *AFP* ranks last, accounting for just four per cent of published content. When including reproductions from *The New York Times* (*NYT*), it becomes clear that over 50 per cent of Brazil's news and information on the Israel-Palestine conflict relies on foreign agencies.

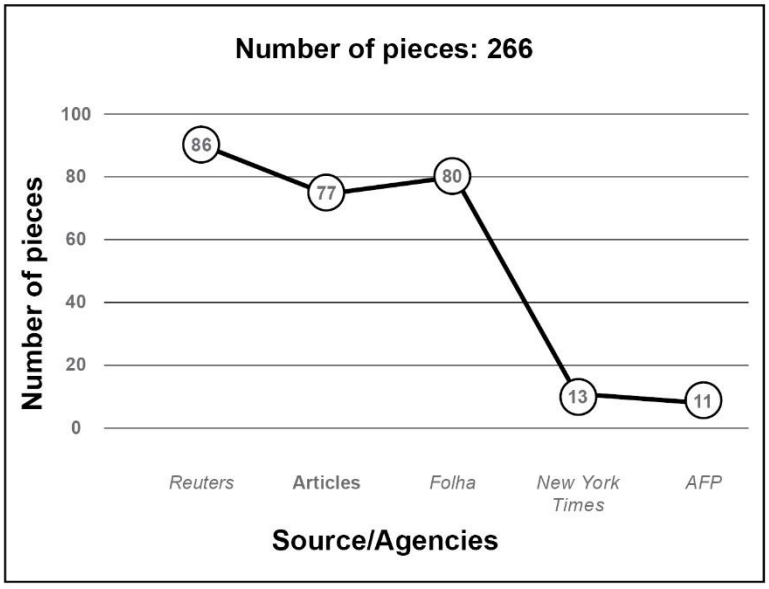
A review of Brazil's major newspapers reveals a preference for external agencies, which shape public opinion, rather than relying on their own reporters or conducting independent journalistic fieldwork with local sources.

[9] Source: *Folha de S. Paulo*. Available at: https://www.folha.uol.com.br/.

Table
Media analisis of the Brazilian newspaper Folha de S. Paulo

Source/Agencies	Number of pieces	(%)
Reuters	86	32%
Articles (original or associates')	77	29%
Folha	80	30%
New York Times	13	5%
AFP	11	4%
Total	267	100%

Chart



Source: Prepared by the author.

El Mercurio: Chile

El Mercurio owns several newspapers, including *Diario Austral*, *El Llanquihue*, *El Líder*, El Mercurio, *El Sur*, *La Crónica de Chillán*, *La Estrella*, *La Segunda* and *Las Últimas Noticias*, among others. The group is controlled by Agustín Edwards Eastman, a member of one of Chile's most influential economic and political families, which played an active role in the 1973 military coup and the subsequent dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990) (Herrero, 2014). At the time, *El Mercurio* had a daily circulation of approximately

250,000 copies. With a right-wing editorial stance, the newspaper became known for its support of the coup that overthrew President Salvador Allende (Santos, 2016). It is one of the largest and oldest news outlets in the region, first published in 1900. The company has expanded through popular websites like *EMOL* and *SoyChile*, as well as a second national newspaper (*Las Últimas Noticias*), three national radio stations and over 20 local newspapers (Vega, 2022).

When Allende assumed office at La Moneda Palace in October 1970, the balance of power between opposition and pro-government newspapers showed relative parity in circulation. However, *El Mercurio's* influence remained decisive. During the Unidad Popular government years, ownership of major media outlets was split into two groups: business-owned newspapers and weekly magazines on one side and party-aligned media on the other (Santos, 2016).

The following graph illustrates the number of articles published by *El Mercurio* on the researched topic, comprising 35 pieces. Of these, 15 per cent cited foreign news agencies, three per cent utilised other agencies and 48 per cent were produced in-house. This is the highest rate of original reporting among all countries studied, suggesting Chile's coverage was significantly influenced by its large Palestinian community, which has been present since the early 20th century. Notably, Chile even has a historic football club honouring Palestinian heritage and cause: Club Deportivo Palestino.

Most news about occupied Palestine did not follow the same editorial slant observed in *Folha de S. Paulo*, which, for example, repeatedly hosted the Israeli ambassador for interviews and statements without granting equal space to the Palestinian ambassador. It is worth noting that *El Mercurio* also interviewed the Israeli ambassador during the study period, suggesting an effort at neutrality without fully aligning with either side. However, the Palestinian perspective was bolstered by the Chilean government's condemnations of repeated attacks on Gaza.

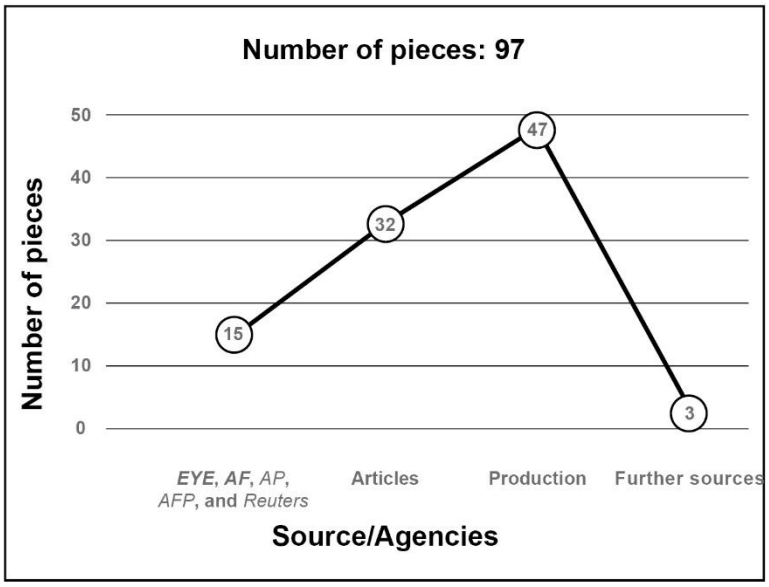
Michelle Bachelet, Chile's former president (2006-2010 and 2014-2018) and later UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018), took a clear stance: she called for an end to the occupation. Bachelet described the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as "catastrophic and tragic". Her voice aligned with the Palestinian community's influence on Chilean policymakers. Notably, Palestinians in Chile have held key political positions, such as Francisco Shahwan, who served as vice president (2006-2010) during Bachelet's first term.

The deep integration of the Palestinian community into Chilean society contributed to more balanced media coverage compared to that of other countries examined in this study.

Table
Media analisis of the Chilean newspaper El Mercurio

Source/Agencies	Number of pieces	(%)
EYE, *AF*, *AP*, *AFP*, and *Reuters*	15	15%
Articles (original or associates')	32	33%
Authoral production (*El Mercurio*)	47	48%
Further sources	3	3%
Total	97	100%

Chart



Source: Prepared by the author.

La Prensa Gráfica: El Salvador

This newspaper was founded in 1915 and is considered one of the oldest in Central America. It has over 2.5 million social media followers and more than 5.6 million digital readers. Despite this, its media coverage was modest, paying little attention to the escalation of the conflict. The research collected 45 articles, with sources distributed as follows: 80 per cent from foreign agencies (29 per cent from *EFE*, 47 per cent from *BBC*

and four per cent from *AP*). This demonstrates how foreign agencies dominate El Salvador's media narrative regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. Of the total, 16 per cent were opinion pieces, most of which favoured Israeli perspectives over Palestinian ones, as evidenced by the analysis of headlines, references and authors.

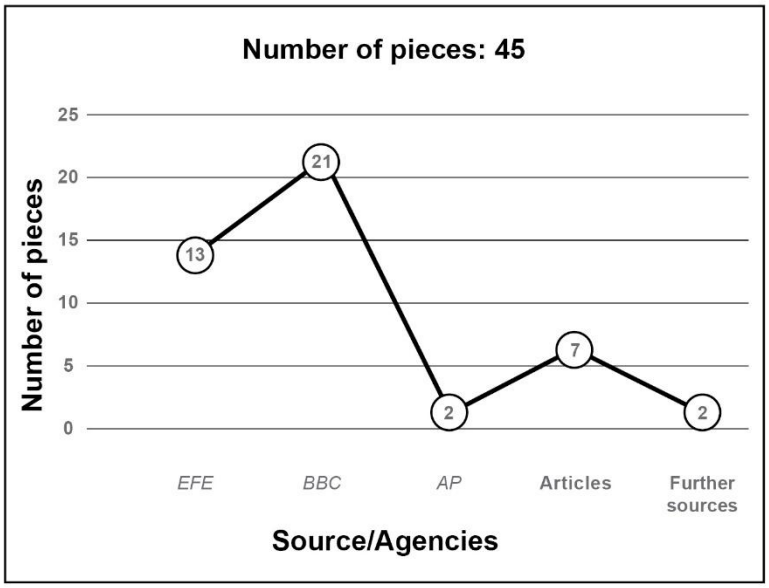
These findings may seem surprising, given that El Salvador has a large and influential Palestinian community that is active in both economic and political spheres. Notably, the country's current president, Nayib Bukele, is of Palestinian descent, as was former president Antonio Saca (2004-2009). However, the strong influence of the US in Central America plays a significant role. This influence became particularly evident after Operation Enduring Freedom, launched in response to the 11 September, 2001, terrorist attacks. The operation expanded to the region in 2008 under the US Southern Command, giving rise to Operation Enduring Freedom – Caribbean and Central America (OEF-CCA). This regional military campaign reflected the US's ongoing strategic efforts to project its military power and security doctrine across the Americas, consolidating its presence and strengthening its geopolitical influence beyond its immediate borders (Global Security, 2013).

El Salvador's official position on the Palestinian conflict is one of neutrality. However, under this strong military influence—more aligned with US decisions and opinions—the country has supported Israel in international forums (Daud, 2022).

Table
Media analisis of the Salvadorean newspaper La Prensa Gráfica

Source/Agencies	Number of pieces	(%)
EFE	13	29%
BBC	21	47%
AP	2	4%
Articles (original or associates')	7	16%
Further sources	2	4%
Total	45	100%

Chart



Source: Prepared by the author.

El Heraldo: Honduras

The newspaper *El Heraldo* is headquartered in Tegucigalpa, Honduras's capital, where it is printed. It was founded on 26 November, 1979, by businessman Jorge J. Larach, owner of Publynsa Organisation, S.A. It has branches in the city of San Pedro Sula, Cortés Department. The newspaper *El Heraldo* is part of the editorial group formed by *Publicity Organisation, S.A.* (*OPSA*), which includes the newspapers *La Prensa* and *Diario*

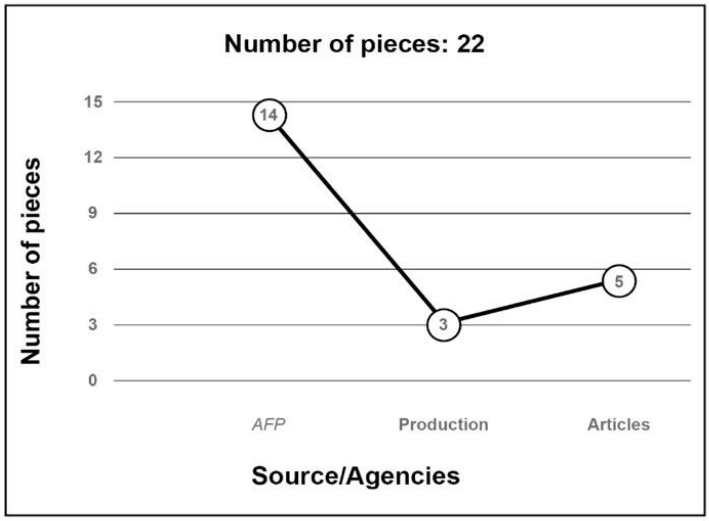
Deportivo Diez and *Editora y Publicaciones, S.A.* (*EPSA*), which operates under the *Estilo* brand.

Most news published by *El Heraldo* about the Palestinian question during the studied period came from *AFP*, representing nearly 64 per cent, compared to 23 per cent from other sources and an original production rate of almost 14 per cent. This suggests that French journalism has a substantial impact on the country's press, as reflected in the narratives and editorial positions.

Table
Media analisis of the Hondurean newspaper El Heraldo

Source/Agencies	Number of pieces	(%)
AFP	14	64%
Authoral production (*El Heraldo*)	3	14%
Articles (original or associates')	5	22%
Total	22	100%

Chart



Source: Prepared by the author.

Result Analysis

The analysis of coverage related to the Israel-Palestine conflict was conducted over a period of three and a half years, from January 2020 to June 2023. In Brazil, the press was preoccupied with media coverage of statements by Bolsonaro, who claimed he intended to relocate the Brazilian Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, as an extension of the Deal of the Century proposed by Trump.

Some issues drew particular attention from the Palestinian Diaspora. In 2021, Israel launched new attacks on the Gaza Strip during Ramadan, the holy month for Muslims, and in 2022, *Al Jazeera* journalist Abu Akleh was shot and killed while wearing a press vest. Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in the early days of his term in 2023, dismissed the Brazilian ambassador to Tel Aviv appointed by former President Bolsonaro. In May 2023, following attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque led by Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, the Lula government also issued a statement through Itamaraty (Brazil's Foreign Ministry), condemning actions that "by their very nature" incite changes to the status of holy sites in Jerusalem. Brazil stated in its note that it "considers fundamental the respect for arrangements established by the Hashemite Custodianship of the Holy Land, responsible for administering Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, as provided in the 1994 peace agreements between Israel and Jordan", meaning these incursions by Israel are not permitted.

Among the 77 articles collected from Brazil, the largest portion relates to 2022, representing 28.12 per cent of the total, indicating that the killing of Palestinian-American journalist Abu Akleh received the most prominent coverage, and its effects continue to this day, with no final decision on responsibility and consequences for what occurred.

The content analysis considers not only quantitative aspects, but also reveals textual characteristics and how coverage was generated across the five media outlets and their respective countries. This exercise aims to provide an overview of media representation of the Israel-Palestine conflict, examining the systematic journalistic approach to the longest occupation of our time.

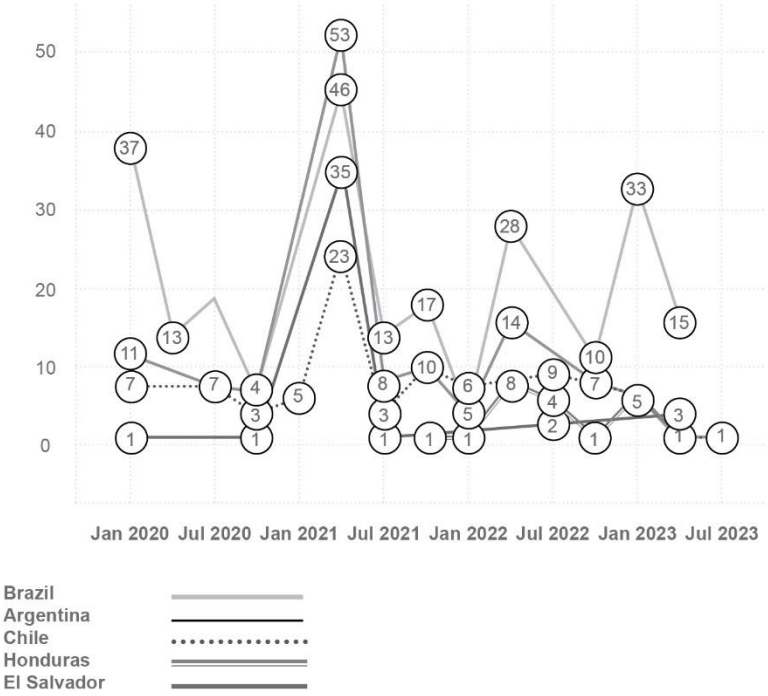
It is worth noting that among all the collected and monitored material, there are few opinion articles and interviews that provide general information about Palestine under occupation and its historical context. The low number of articles published by the Latin American media included in the study, including *Folha de S. Paulo* with 15 publications, may be interpreted as a warning sign about the limitations of journalistic approaches and the elements used to cover the attacks, categorised according to the criteria identified by content analysis in the following chapters.

Even meeting theoretical newsworthiness criteria, no media outlet covered the events in real time through their online editions. Only *Folha de S. Paulo* published reports on each event, while Clarín only reported on the attacks two days later. The other media outlets, *La Prensa Gráfica*, *El Mercurio* and *El Heraldo*, covered news about the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, celebrated annually on 29 November. *Folha de S. Paulo* was the outlet that dedicated the least time and space to covering this date.

During research on the events of the Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip during Ramadan 2021, it was found that *Folha de S. Paulo* was the first to publish related content in the form of an opinion-based article. Considering only the facts, *Folha de S. Paulo's* coverage was equivalent to that of other countries in the study, despite producing a quantitatively greater amount of content. Coverage of Palestine was generally continuous, although the distribution of journalistic genres was sparse. During this period, *El Mercurio* focused on sports content, more sympathetic to Palestine, due to the existence of Club Deportivo Palestino, which is over 120 years old. *Reuters* had the greatest presence among the five newspapers, indicating its influence on editorial lines.

Next, we present all data in graphs, totalling 655 news items, articles and interviews during the analysed period. Argentina was the country that covered the region the most during the "Saif Al-Quds War" period in Ramadan 2021, with an average of 53 publications including news, articles and interviews, followed by Brazil with an average of 46 and El Salvador with only 35—a surprising figure given the large Palestinian presence in the country. Even so, coverage of the 2021 Ramadan war exceeded that of El Salvador's newspaper by more than 77 per cent during the study period, but almost always reproduced news from international agencies.

Chart
Total of pieces by country and quarter period

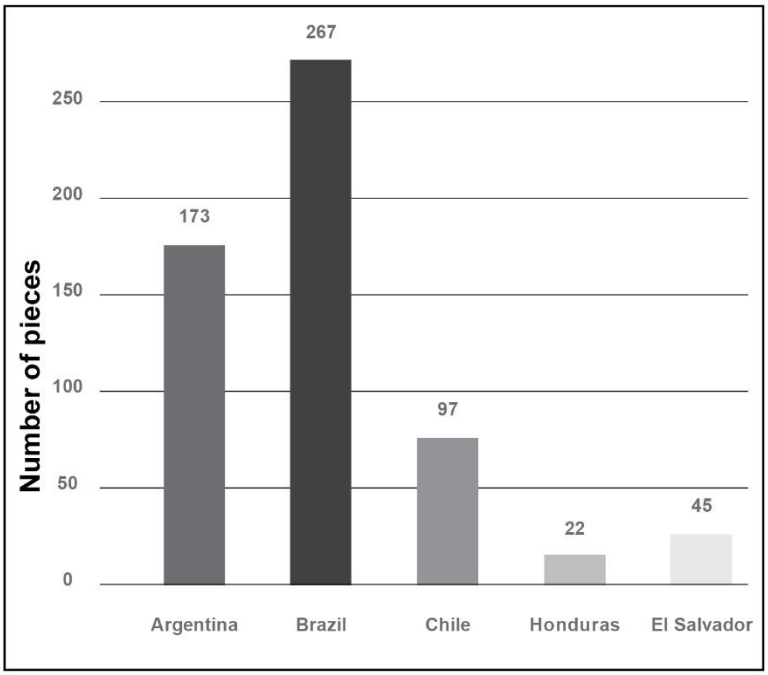


Source: Prepared by the author.

The following graph shows that Brazil, considered the largest country in Latin America, ranked first in the number of news items, followed by Argentina, whose media appears to be the most pro-Israel leaning, consistently showing interest in any new information or data related to Israel.

The following graph clearly shows that Honduras and El Salvador combined do not match the coverage weight of Chile, Brazil and Argentina in reporting on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Chart – *Total of pieces (Latin America)*

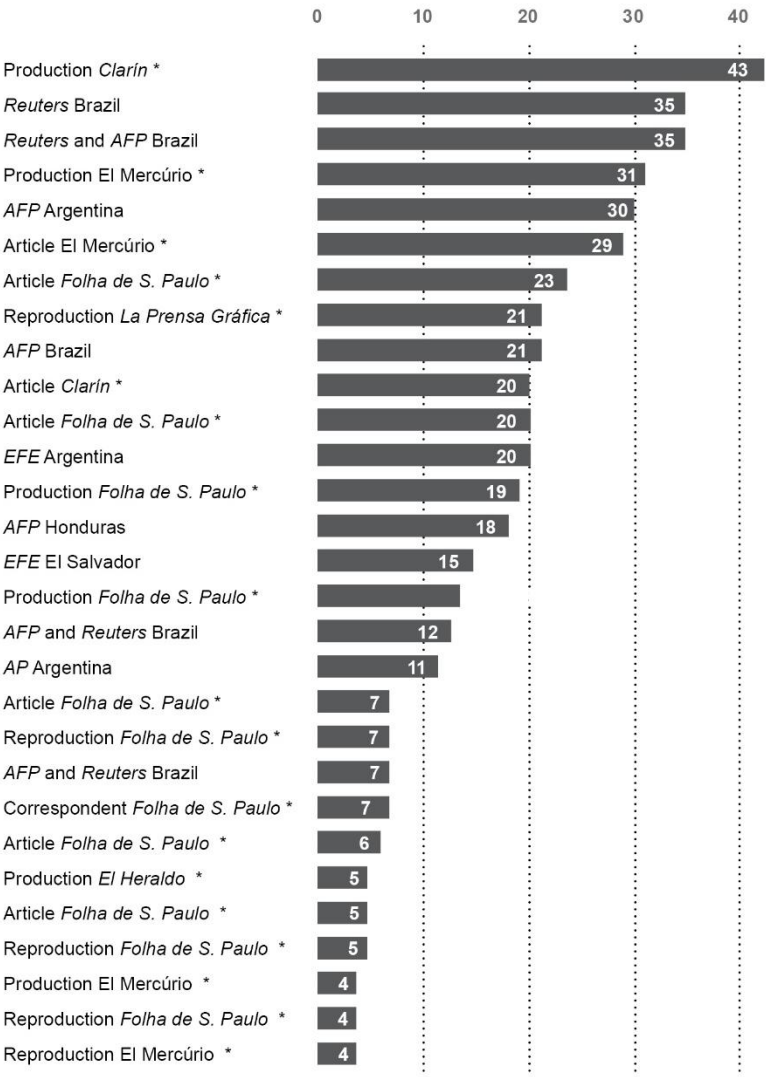


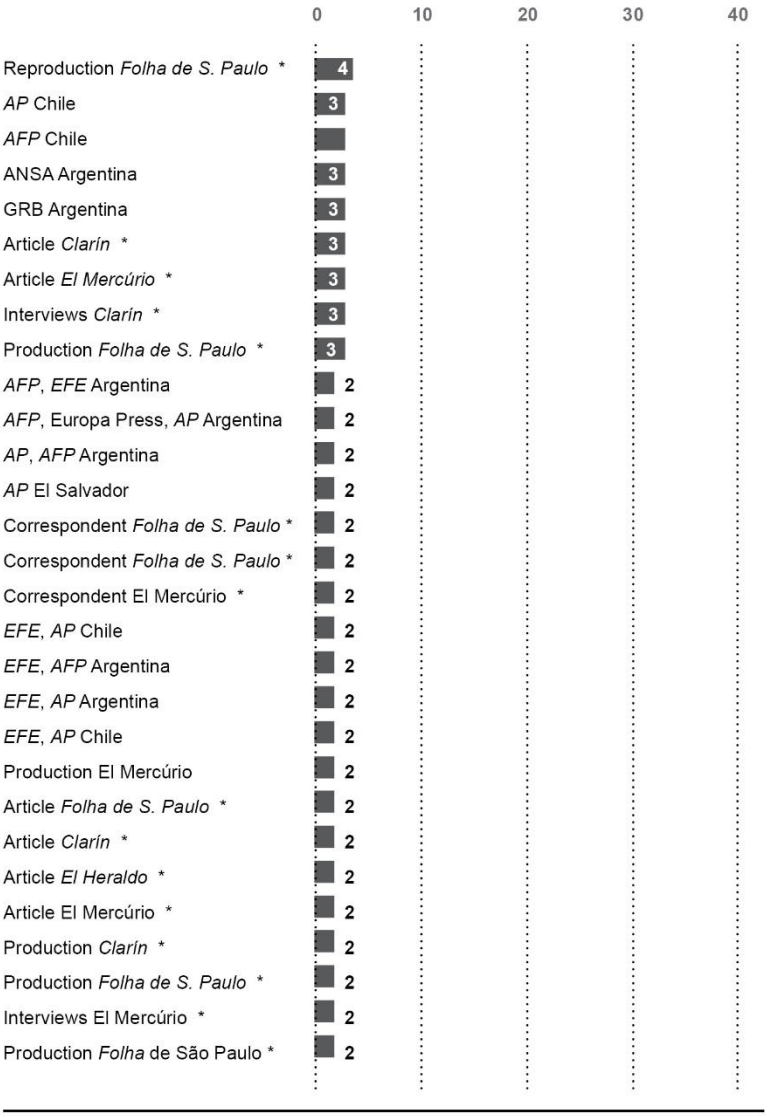
Source: Prepared by the author.

The following graph shows the sources used by the newspapers included in the study. A quick observation reveals that *Clarín's* original reporting ranked first, followed by *Reuters*, a foreign agency, in the Brazilian press. News from *AFP* in Brazil came in third place and *El Mercurio'*s production ranked fourth.

Among the sources used by the surveyed newspapers across the five countries in their coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, we observe that 60 per cent come from international news agencies, particularly from the US, the UK and France—countries that have supported Israel and consider its presence in the Middle East strategically important for their interests, especially the US, which provides military and political support.

Chart – *Number of references in the Latin American coverage*





* No reference to agencies

Source: Prepared by the author.

The following graph shows that countries with smaller Palestinian communities (based on data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics) have less journalistic coverage on the issue, which also supports the selection of countries with political weight and influence on public opinion. Brazil and Argentina, which represent the continent's most prominent political influence, receive the most media coverage.

Perspectives of Humanitarian and Peace Journalism and Media Under-Representation

The media's role in interpreting and narrating events in the Middle East, particularly in the complex Israel-Palestine dynamic, remains a constant focus of global interest. Confrontations like those occurring in May 2021 are often reported as unexpected episodes, overshadowing the extensive and persistent humanitarian crisis affecting Palestinians. This representation overlooks historical context and the profound roots of events, resulting in coverage that rarely endures beyond the immediate news cycle. This pattern creates a critical deficiency in media reporting, which fails to provide in-depth analyses that could nourish public opinion with multifaceted perspectives and substantive knowledge (Shinar, 2003).

The need to rethink conventional journalistic approaches to conflicts and wars led researcher Johan Galtung to develop the concept of peace journalism. His critical view of traditional media, which often propagates the perspectives of warring factions and propaganda, drove him to advocate for reporting that emphasises understanding and conflict resolution rather than merely chronicling struggle and division. Galtung concluded that responsible, ethical journalism should explore not only the symptoms of conflicts, but also their root causes, proposing pathways for healing and prevention (Galtung, 1998).

For peace journalism to materialise in practice, four essential components should guide conflict coverage: a focus on peace and understanding, a dedication to objective truth, a commitment to human stories and an effort to identify and highlight viable solutions (Galtung, 1998). When applying these principles to the so-called Israel-Palestine conflict, journalists are challenged to move beyond superficial event reporting and delve into the complexities and nuances of the issues, particularly the power imbalance between the parties.

Galtung's original conception of peace journalism has evolved to accommodate a more complex and interconnected reality. Professor Dov Shinar advocated for journalism that dismantles stereotypes and offers a more balanced, humanised view of events—an approach particularly relevant when addressing the suffering of Palestinians. Shinar argues that adopting such journalism isn't merely an alternative, but an imperative professional transformation necessary for journalists to fulfil their role of informing and educating society in constructive and peaceful ways (Shinar, 2009).

When observing the persistence and severity of humanitarian crises, especially in the Middle East, the need for more deliberate and conscious journalistic approaches becomes evident. Coverage of events like Israel-Palestine confrontations demands reporting that transcends the escalation of violence and military manoeuvres to explore the human reality behind the facts. Journalists have a duty to illuminate the personal and collective narratives that exist within the conflict, recognising that each account is but one thread in the broader tapestry of shared human experience.

This journalistic responsibility is amplified by the advent of humanitarian journalism, which emerges as an essential complement to peace journalism. This new approach

emphasises humanitarian ethics, focusing on the people affected by crises and serving as a humanitarian exercise itself. Journalism should be a beneficial force, equipping journalists to actively promote understanding and empathy while countering misinformation and mitigating the perpetuation of conflict (Scott, 2017). Humanitarian journalism thus not only reports events, but also seeks to positively influence the social sphere by addressing complex, multifaceted issues with due respect for human dignity and values.

The need to deepen coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict represents journalism's ongoing challenge to develop a practice that transcends mere information dissemination. This challenge extends to education, inspiration and the promotion of peace and justice on a global scale. Through the collective engagement of journalists committed to peace and humanitarian practices, emerges the prospect of not just documenting history, but actively shaping and transforming reality.

According to Victor (2021), the practice of peace journalism finds its value in the "how" rather than the "what" of reporting. This approach forms the link with humanitarian journalism, an emerging discipline born from the need to reimagine journalistic coverage in the face of risk situations, conflicts and humanitarian crises that have unfolded from the late 20th century to the present day. Scott and other pioneers, such as Bunce and Wright, redefine humanitarian journalism by aligning it not only with crisis coverage and its protagonists, but also with a humanitarian ethic reflected in journalistic practice (Scott, 2018). They ground humanitarian journalism in the principles of good journalistic practice, combined with humanitarian values, emphasising the journalist's social role that extends beyond mere event documentation to recognise the significant and potentially transformative social impact of their work.

Regarding under-representation, it's crucial to highlight that the Palestinian Diaspora and its historical ramifications remain largely neglected in contemporary narratives about events affecting their communities in Latin America. Media coverage fails to provide adequate visibility to the humanitarian dimension of the Palestinian struggle, which extends beyond narrative to encompass a people's inalienable right to self-determination and sovereignty (Schiocchet, 2015).

The second wave of the Palestinian Diaspora, present in countries such as Brazil, Honduras, El Salvador and Argentina, represents another significant aspect of Palestinian migration. Although isolated migrations to these nations occurred in the late 19th century, it was after the establishment of Israel in 1948—the event known as the Nakba that triggered mass displacement and adversity for Palestinians—that larger numbers were forced to migrate. Initially relegated to street vending, Palestinians faced the vicissitudes and challenges of forced displacement, including language barriers, anguish and poverty, leading to over half a million displaced persons and countless victims.

The first generation that endured the Nakba worked to support both their immediate families and an extensive network of relatives scattered by forced migration, leaving behind homes, dreams and land. They relocated to various distinct regions, including Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Syria and Iraq. Over time and through subsequent integration, many representatives of this community rose to prominent positions as industrialists, bankers and merchants on the international stage.

Notably, this segment of the Palestinian Diaspora tends to preserve practices and traditions distinct from the host society, particularly regarding religious rules and precepts, as most are Muslim in predominantly Christian or secular countries. This constitutes a salient aspect of their collective identity. The first generation anticipated temporary residence, expecting an imminent return to Palestine and the restoration of rights usurped by Israel. This perspective led to initial reluctance to make long-term investments in host countries, operating under the premise that exile would be brief.

Moreover, acquiring information about Palestine through media channels is frequently hindered by restrictions imposed under Israeli occupation. International correspondents face significant dangers when attempting to access Palestinian territories—a fear grounded in the tragic realities faced by professionals like *AP* journalist Simone Camilli and *Corriere della Sera* photographer Raffaele Ciriello, both killed while covering events in the region. These incidents establish a grim precedent that continues to obstruct on-the-ground reporting and the flow of information from Palestinian territories to international news agencies.

On specific occasions, major newspapers deploy journalists to conflict zones to ensure authentic coverage based on direct observation of events. This was exemplified by *Folha de S. Paulo*, demonstrating its commitment to field journalism by sending a correspondent to the West Bank. Embedded in the news context, the reporter could then provide an account based on personal experience and on-site observations, delivering an immersive and detailed narrative to readers:

In response, the Israeli community gathered in front of my house and began insulting and slandering me and my family for sympathising with Palestinians and not falsifying the facts (Brazilian journalist after visiting Palestine).

The Palestinian migration to Latin America in the 20th century was predominantly composed of working-class individuals, reflecting the economic demands of destination countries that were characterised by both agricultural and industrial economies at the time. These countries did not attract highly educated individuals, intellectuals, or those seeking advanced educational opportunities, a stark contrast with migrants drawn to the US by the prestige of its universities and the prevalence of English. This distinction is crucial for understanding the differing diaspora experiences and media representations of Palestinians across the Americas.

Research shows that Palestinians in the US have a significant media presence, with a more noticeable and influential media narrative than that observed among Palestinians in Latin America. This difference can be attributed to various sociopolitical and cultural factors, including distinct migration patterns and historical contexts.

Tragic events like the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres catalysed political solidarity and organisation among Palestinians in Latin America, culminating in a groundbreaking conference held in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1984. This historic meeting led to the election of representatives to the Palestinian National Council, thereby strengthening the political voice of the Diaspora in the region.

The Palestinian influence, solidified over generations, manifested in multiple endorsements of the Palestinian cause by Latin American governments. Notable examples

include Venezuela and Bolivia severing diplomatic relations with Israel following the 2008-2009 Gaza massacre, as well as Nicaragua after Israel's 2010 attack on the Mavi Marmara ship (Freedom Flotilla). The Latin American movement continued with protests from Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil against Israeli actions in Gaza in 2014, denouncing them as "genocide and crimes against humanity".

Cuba's commitment to the Palestinian cause deserves particular emphasis, demonstrated through its consistent support for UN resolutions and its provision of financial assistance to Palestinian students pursuing free medical education in Cuban universities. Cuba pioneered Latin America's diplomatic break with Israel in 1973, establishing a historic alignment with Palestinian solidarity. These contextual factors have reinforced the Palestinian community's sense of connection to their homeland, strengthened by the empathy of Latin American peoples who often draw parallels between Palestinian suffering and historical violence against indigenous and Black populations in the region.

Nevertheless, the limited media representation of Palestine in Latin America stems partially from objective factors, particularly the geographical distance separating Latin American nations from the Israel-Palestine conflict. Linguistic barriers compound this separation, as the continent's predominant languages (Spanish and Portuguese) find no natural counterparts in the Arab world, creating additional obstacles for news dissemination.

Israel's capacity to cultivate and maintain robust strategic relationships across Latin America, through military, religious and other agreements, undeniably shapes media narratives. These connections extend to support for the Zionist movement in media outlets and a growing influence among Pentecostal evangelical churches. Furthermore, the fragmented and inconsistent positions of Arab governments regarding Palestine cannot be overlooked, as this disunity directly impacts the absence of a consolidated, coherent media narrative. The Arab world's divided stance inevitably influences how Palestinian circumstances are portrayed across media platforms.

Though geographically removed from Middle Eastern tensions, the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America could achieve more effective media and political representation through unified official Arab support. This would require a concerted, collaborative effort—a collective movement impossible without robust media backing that unequivocally endorses Palestinian rights.

A striking contrast exists between the official positions of Arab states (which generally endorse a two-state solution) and popular aspirations for a free, sovereign Palestine, encompassing "from the river to the sea". While some view certain Arab nations' normalisation with Israel as a pragmatic adaptation to contemporary international systems, the Palestinian Diaspora and Arab masses largely perceive it as betraying their national aspirations.

Field Journalists: Risks and Challenges

This section compiles data collected up to February 2024, noting that the genocide in Gaza since the beginning of October 2023—which had already resulted in a historic number of journalists killed and injured while performing their duties—was still ongoing. Thus, the number of professionals in question who lose their lives continues to rise at an alarming rate.

Before addressing the numbers in question, it is essential to mention that statistical data on journalist deaths is always underreported. For this reason, we relied on two sources of information: the Committee to Protect Journalists and the UN, through their reports and official news channels.

All the journalists killed were Palestinian and influential. According to statements from the UN, "We are alarmed by the unusually high number of journalists and media workers killed, attacked, injured, and detained in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in Gaza" (UN, 2024).

According to a report by Reporters Without Borders, 144 Palestinian and foreign journalists were targeted in attacks perpetrated by occupation forces between 2000 and 2022 while reporting on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. These attacks included gunfire, tear gas, physical assaults, arrests, destruction of journalistic equipment and even targeted attacks resulting in fatalities.

Data from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) shows that Israel directly and deliberately killed 99 journalists between 2000 and February 2024, despite their clear and public status as professionals performing their duties. These killings were carried out to silence media voices and intimidate journalists, who are guaranteed protection under International Humanitarian Law to work within safe zones (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2024).

Between October 2023 and February 2024 alone, Israel killed more than 84 journalists—a number that continues to rise—with at least a quarter of them being struck down during live broadcasts and media coverage of the war. This has turned journalism into a living hell, with reporters working under completely inhumane conditions, devoid of safety to perform their duties, compounded by shortages of equipment, continuous power outages and regular media blackouts (OCHA, 2024). By early August 2024, just ten months later, this number had nearly doubled. Israel's repeated attacks on Palestinians reveal a systematic campaign to silence the press. In the Gaza genocide beginning 7 October, 2023, Israel has been killing journalists at a rate of about one per day (CPJ, 2024).

Rarely have journalists paid such a high price simply for doing their jobs as those in Gaza now. Prominent cases include *Al Jazeera* journalist Wael Al-Dahdouh, who lost his wife, two children and grandson in an Israeli airstrike on 25 October, 2023. Al-Dahdouh survived a drone attack that killed his cameraman in late December. Then he lost another son, also an *Al Jazeera* journalist, who was killed alongside a fellow reporter in a targeted Israeli drone strike on their vehicle on 7 January, 2024 (UN, 2024).

Journalists as Targets

Investigations into the killings of Abu Akleh and other journalists have generally been inconclusive and often aligned with the Israeli narrative, emphasising soldiers' perceived "threat" as justification for lethal force. Even in cases where journalists were clearly identified with vests and helmets marked "PRESS", and even when journalists' homes were bombed, Israeli authorities argued that terrorists could use such vests as camouflage.

This was the case with *Reuters* photojournalist Fadel Shanaa. The claim was that he was handling a "black object"—his tripod-mounted camera, which was allegedly interpreted as a threat, despite his actions being merely a part of his journalistic duties. After the bombing of Shanaa's clearly marked "PRESS" vehicle, *Reuters*'s then-Editor-in-Chief David Schlesinger emphasised that the vehicle's markings unequivocally identified Shanaa's journalistic role, highlighting his commitment to professional ethics.

Other high-profile cases, like that of Italian photojournalist Raffaele Ciriello of *Corriere della Sera*, killed in 2002, revealed how international correspondents face serious risks when covering Palestinian territories. He was fatally shot while attempting to photograph an Israeli tank approximately 200 metres away. Witness accounts, including those from journalist Giampaolo Cerri, and reports in Italian media indicate that the gunfire originated from the direction of the tank. Nevertheless, an Israeli government press office representative told *The Boston Globe* that the victim appeared to be in a firing position. Israel later denied responsibility for Ciriello's death, citing either a lack of evidence or military forces' unawareness of the incident. These events highlight the challenges and dangers faced by journalists in conflict zones, as well as the complexity of providing an accurate representation of the situation, particularly when state entities dispute event narratives while journalists operate under high-risk conditions.

Since 2001, the CPJ has documented cases of violence against media professionals, recording the tragic killings of at least 22 journalists that year by Israeli occupation forces, most of whom were of Palestinian origin. The year 2014 stood out due to investigations into the killings of five journalists, with particular attention to legal proceedings concerning the massive bombardment that killed three journalists during the Israeli military operation known as "Protective Edge". Subsequent investigations focused on the killing of Abu Akleh and other media professionals. However, the outcomes were widely viewed as unsatisfactory, given Israel's frequent justification that a soldier's perceived threat or fear alone could warrant the use of lethal force.

These claims were made not only when journalists were clearly identifiable by press attire, but even when their homes were bombed despite the professionals not being engaged in journalistic work at the time. On certain occasions, Israeli authorities offered the explanation that terrorists might use press flak jackets as camouflage, thereby justifying soldiers' fatal actions. These events highlight the vulnerability of journalists in conflict zones and the inherent complexities of factual reporting amid competing narratives from state entities, underscoring the urgent need for protection and proper recognition of media professionals in high-risk situations.

A 2019 UN investigation into the case of photojournalist Ahmed Abu Hussein—who was wearing a vest clearly marked "PRESS" and where dozens of journalists were injured—concluded there were "reasonable grounds to believe Israeli snipers deliberately opened fire on journalists", However, Israeli authorities consistently denied responsibility, claiming Palestinians had fired the shots and that journalists were caught in crossfire.

The attacks on the media are not limited to individual journalists, but extend to their institutions and workplaces. During the 2021 Israeli bombardment, dozens of buildings housing media organisations were destroyed (CPJ, 2021). Israeli airstrikes levelled the Al-Jawhara and Al-Shorouk towers, the *Shehab News Agency*, the offices of *Al-Ayyam* newspaper, the *Event Media Services Company*, *Al-Youm News*, *Ma'an Wasawa Agency* and the *Holy Land* and *Baladna* radio stations, totalling over 33 media entities targeted. The building housing *AP* and *Al Jazeera* offices was also demolished, drawing widespread condemnation from the international press and professional organisations.

In the case of Abu Akleh, investigations by *NYT*, *The Washington Post*, *AP*, *CNN*, the investigative group Bellingcat and the research collective Forensic Architecture all concluded the fatal bullet was fired by an Israeli soldier—despite her wearing a press helmet marked in English and additional large white lettering on her chest, back and neck (CPJ, 2023).

The International Federation of Journalists condemned the systematic targeting and killing of Palestinian journalists, with its General Secretary Anthony Bellanger stating, "The systematic attacks on media institutions represent a shameful attempt by the Israeli military to silence voices reporting on their violence in Gaza, in violation of International Law. Attacks against journalists must end". The horror of these attacks is captured in a photograph showing journalist Shatha Hanaysha in despair beside the body of her colleague Abu Akleh, shot dead by an Israeli soldier on 11 May, 2022, at the entrance to Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank.

Many journalists and photographers have stated that the 2018 killing of Yasser Murtaja "planted fear in all our hearts". These fears intensified after Abu Akleh's assassination. Palestinian reporter Hafez Abu Sabra confessed, "Personally I'm not afraid, but I have a five-year-old daughter who keeps begging me not to go to work, so I won't die like Shireen in Jenin".

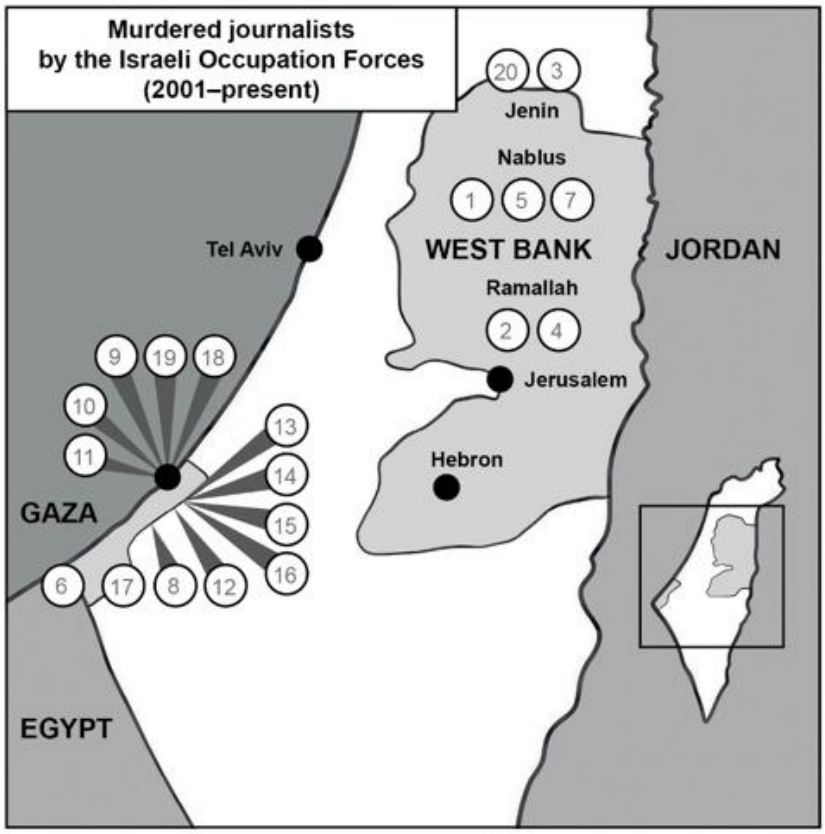
Nidal Shtayyeh, a Palestinian photographer for China's *Xinhua News Agency*, wrote on social media about covering a 2022 military operation in Jenin. Shtayyeh told the CPJ that he and colleagues came under Israeli fire while filming from an unfinished building, "We were trapped behind a wall for an hour, terrified of being hit by bullets".

Shtayyeh called Amira Hass, a renowned Israeli journalist at *Haaretz*, who immediately contacted the military spokesperson. Hass later told CPJ, "I told the officer on duty: 'Act quickly. We don't want another Shireen Abu Akleh, do we?'" Following this intervention, the journalists were permitted to leave, though they endured severe psychological trauma.

Israel remains unpunished in investigations into attacks on journalists. On the contrary, it continues to perpetrate and even escalate these attacks, as evidenced by reviewing previous years' records of crimes involving the persecution and killing of media

professionals—violations regularly documented by the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, a prominent prisoners' rights association.

Map: Locations Where Palestinian Journalists Were Shot and Killed Between 2001 and 2020



Source: CPJ.

As President of the Foreign Press Association in Israel Guillaume Lavallée said, "They don't consider Palestinian journalists as journalists; they see us as Palestinian protesters and attack us just as they attack protesters".

The map above shows the alarming number of attacks against journalists. The Israeli military is responsible for 80 per cent of the killings of journalists and media professionals in the Palestinian territories. There have been attacks on reporters and photographers from international agencies, including *Reuters* and others. Unfortunately, to this day, despite documented evidence, "Israel has never put a soldier on trial for the intentional or unintentional killing of a journalist" (CPJ, 2023).

The occupation frequently criminalises its victims—photographers and journalists—accusing them of being terrorists. In some cases, it claims without any proof that their press insignia were nothing more than a facade.

Speaking about the attack on Murtaja, then-Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman alleged that the victim worked for Hamas, receiving a monthly salary from its military wing since 2011, holding the rank of corporal or equivalent, and using his position to gather intelligence. However, the US State Department revealed that Murtaja was funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the case was investigated. He was simply a photographer.

Many families, like that of Palestinian journalist Imad Abu Zahra, have turned to Israeli courts over the death of their son, but the legal proceedings yielded no accountability. Abu Zahra worked as a foreign press assistant and was photographing an Israeli troop carrier that had crashed into an electricity pole during the 2002 assault on Jenin refugee camp. Israeli gunfire killed him and wounded a colleague. Abu Zahra's mother told the CPJ, "My son used to tell me he was protected as a journalist and that no one would harm him. But he died with a camera in his hands—he carried no weapon because he wanted to show the world what was really happening".

The Abu Zahra family filed a lawsuit in Israeli courts seeking compensation for damages resulting from Imad's death. The judge dismissed the case, claiming their son was *"*not a journalist but a saboteur", and in 2011 ordered them to pay court fees of approximately 5,800 shekels.

The family of cameraman Nazih Darwazeh, killed by Zionist occupation forces on 19 April, 2003, while filming Israeli raids in Nablus in the West Bank, considered filing a premeditated murder case in Israeli courts. They ultimately abandoned the idea, first due to the absence of justice, and second because of the prohibitively high costs imposed by the courts for such procedures.

Following the assassination of Akleh, *Al Jazeera* appealed to the International Criminal Court, which declared it had no jurisdiction over Palestinian territories. *Al Jazeera* also petitioned the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to hold the killer accountable, but Israel refused to cooperate with the investigation.

Regarding international agencies and foreign media, evidence suggests Israel systematically targets journalists who might relay on-the-ground information to the outside world. In one incident, a *BBC* crew was blocked—their car, marked with a red "TV" sign, was searched, and the team was forced against a wall. The journalists, wearing official press vests, were verbally abused, *"*They were detained for hours, ordered to display their belongings, and their cameras were confiscated in a humiliating manner. These were international journalists with foreign passports—imagine if they'd been Palestinian?" (*Anadolu Agency*, 2023).

Result Analysis: Developments and Coverage

Studies on media coverage of events in the Middle East are not new, though they remain scarce. Among the research on press behaviour in covering this issue is Edmund Ghareeb's (1983) study, which dates back to the late 1970s and observed a pro-Israel bias in news outlets and agencies. His methodology involved interviewing 17 US media

professionals, including Middle East correspondents, TV editors and news agency reporters. Of these, 11 confirmed the presence of an anti-Arab slant in their outlets.

This approach may reflect an Islamophobic tendency, particularly when such journalistic content is amplified through social media in countries where these platforms serve as primary news sources. In this context, the intersection of humanitarian and peace journalism could be one way to mitigate the impact of the framing used by news agencies and curb the spread of Islamophobia.

The study also found that the countries analysed rarely send correspondents to Palestine. Even Brazil—which holds a politically progressive stance towards Palestinians—relies on international agencies like *Reuters*, *AFP*, *AP* and *United Press International*, which shape pro-Israel narratives at the expense of Palestinians, as well as on TV networks like *CNN* and *BBC*, which reflect their governments' positions by supporting Israel with full media backing. The segregation, harassment and violence against journalists who support Palestine—or who remain neutral in investigations or news reporting—receive inadequate attention.

An analysis of the newspapers and authors studied reveals a dominant pro-Israel perspective in the media. For instance, Israeli ambassadors are frequently interviewed or invited as panellists, expressing their views without Palestinian counterpoints. This was evident in coverage of Abu Akleh's assassination or the violent 2021 Ramadan assault on Gaza.

Data collected over three and a half years shows that Brazil produces the most content (photos, articles, videos and interviews) on the Israel-Palestine conflict. This likely stems from Brazil's political weight in Latin America and its clear international stances, which many regional countries follow in UN votes.

On the other hand, media coverage in Chile tends to be more neutral, and in this context, its portrayal of the Palestinian side appears more balanced compared to outlets in Brazil or Argentina, for example.

It is also crucial to exercise great care to ensure journalism does not equate the conditions of the occupier and the occupied, nor propagate or fuel Islamophobia in news coverage and commentary about Palestinians, particularly when discussing national liberation movements resisting occupation.

International law must also be considered, as it upholds the right to resist occupation, including through armed struggle against the occupier. This is affirmed by UN Resolution 3,236 (1974), which explicitly grants the Palestinian people the right to "use all available means" to achieve their freedom.

CHAPTER 4.

The Diaspora's Perspective

The Struggle for Recognition

To be in a new country, after a migration marked by violent events in their homeland, implies for migrants an emotional burden that ends up being shared in some way with their new surroundings.

By bringing their interest or concern for events in Palestine into the new daily life of migrated families—whether through previous ties to their land of origin or current connections with relatives, businesses or Palestinian institutions—refugees also share their struggle for recognition of the Palestinian situation and their international rights with new social circles, becoming part of them as well.

Latin American Palestinians are the product of new diasporas created by post-colonial migrations. They must learn to inhabit, at the very least, two identities, to speak two cultural languages and to translate and negotiate between them. Hybrid cultures constitute one of the many distinctively new types of identity produced in the era of late modernity (Hall, 2003, p. 89).

This sharing, however, begins with the memory of the trauma of forced displacement, which creates a painful historical connection between the worlds of departure and arrival. This connection lies at the root of the struggle for recognition of the Diaspora's historical cause. This memory naturally appears in the testimonies of descendants of families who migrated in the last century, with stories that reveal the scale of the trauma.

Descendants of those who came from the port of Jaffa or Beirut and headed to the Andes Mountains recount that their ancestors ended up on ships infected with cholera, a great terror in the middle of the ocean. Typically, these travellers, bound for the unknown and the hope of a new life, stayed on the lower decks of the ships, side by side with mice, rats and insects. Any migrant who died or fell ill was thrown into the sea without hesitation, due to the collective fear of contamination. This memory is present in interviews such as that of one of Chile's religious leaders, who reports, "Back then, anyone who had cholera on the ship died and was thrown into the sea. My grandmother protected my grandfather's body under her skirt and dress. For four days, she ate nothing and she always thanked God for having survived".

As writer Shafiq Ghabra (2019) notes, many of those who left Palestine on foot for Kuwait never even reached the ships, like one Palestinian who got lost and died in the Arabian Desert. But this was no isolated case. These are countless stories, not individual incidents. Entire families vanished.

Yet what I've learned is that inner exile is as brutal as outer exile. Perhaps it would be helpful to reconsider this dichotomy. To avoid succumbing to cynicism, you love forever—even when you know "forever" is an unattainable concept. You must love with every broken piece of your heart, coexist with contradictions without surrendering to

them. You live for permanence, even when you know nothing is permanent. Traditional psychology claims six months as the limit for grieving trauma; beyond that requires medication. So, what would six decades demand? (Johnson & Shehadeh, 2013, p. 143).

The sagas of certain families simultaneously carry memories of successive tragedies that forced migration. In a way, these events reinforce emotional ties to vanished towns and villages—their memories immortalised by loss. They also strengthen bonds with host countries, which welcomed them for varied national interests.

Argentina became a landing point for the same Palestinian family in two distinct historical moments, as one interviewee recounts. Though a specific case, it reflects the collective odyssey of Palestinians expelled from their land, enduring repeated displacements that brought waves to Latin America before taking root. An Argentine journalist witnesses this generational chain:

> You know what? I was born in Argentina, right? So was my father. But my grandfather was from Palestine—he emigrated here in the early 1800s. In Argentina, he married, had children, then returned to Palestine with the whole family. In 1948, their village was attacked. Everyone was expelled to Lebanon. But three years later, in 1950, the Argentine government repatriated them because my grandmother, father and uncle were Argentine-born citizens, and my grandparents' marriage was registered here. My grandfather didn't return—he died in Lebanon—but the rest came back. They never saw home again, not even our village in northern Palestine, just kilometres from Heras near the Lebanese border. It was among the first villages occupied in March 1948 under the Zionists' Plan Dalet—before Israel even existed.

A Honduran journalist also notes that early migrations to Latin America during Ottoman rule laid the groundwork for subsequent waves of Palestinians to choose the same destination. She explains:

> I was 12 years old when we lived in Bethlehem, Palestine, with my parents, extended family, and my father's uncles. So, when did Palestinians first come to Honduras? We're talking around 1900, when the Ottomans controlled the Palestinian territories. They came because much of my grandfather's family was already here. The first major wave of migration from Palestine to Honduras happened at the end of the 19th century. Here, they found respect, opportunities for trade, and a respite from Ottoman and Turkish oppression.

Multiple accounts reveal how these early migrations paved the way for later arrivals, solidifying host countries as safe havens for rebuilding lives among kin, as seen in Honduras's Palestinian community. The journalist adds that her grandparents were met by relatives and friends in Honduras, a country receptive to their commercial ambitions.

This pattern of transient movement preceding permanent settlement characterises the global dispersal of the Palestinian Diaspora. A Chilean nun interviewed recounted leaving her family in Zarnuqa in 1948, when relatives were already scattered between Egypt and Palestine, “Each settled somewhere—Al-Arish, Cairo, Mansoura. My immediate family went to Gaza, while I migrated to Bolivia, then a decade later, to Chile”.

Post-2003 Iraq War, another segment of Chile’s Palestinian community arrived. Initially displaced to Iraq in 1948, many were forced to flee again after the US invasion, ending up in Jordan’s infamous refugee camps after neighbouring states refused them. This compelled distant nations, such as Brazil, Chile and New Zealand, to offer refuge.

These unstable trajectories—from Palestine to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, then Bolivia and Chile over the course of four decades—confirm that such displacements aren’t confined to history. In 2024, Palestinians endured repeated forced migrations, echoing past tragedies.

In Gaza today, in 2024, we witness people being forcibly displaced and subjected to starvation tactics meant to either kill them or compel their emigration from the occupied Palestinian territories for mere survival. This exemplifies the unbroken chain of Palestinian forced displacement suffering, stretching from the British Mandate era to our present day.

For many interviewees, the struggle for recognition hinges on keeping memories alive, as they embody the collective rights of an entire people. As one Brazilian journalist of Palestinian descent explains:

> All my siblings are married and have children, so we’re now in the second generation of Palestinian-Brazilians—or Brazilian-Palestinians, if you will. We keep this Palestinian identity very much alive, largely thanks to my father. He was deeply involved in our community, always offering support and teaching others. As a mother and as a Palestinian’s daughter myself—I’m Brazilian, a mother, proud daughter of Palestinians—I strive to carry our culture forward. I teach my children about it, ensuring they truly understand the Palestinian cause. Especially now, during this interview, as we’re living through Gaza's war, with Israel’s military incursions bombing the entire region, dehumanising people, attacking hospitals and schools... things we've never witnessed before.

The hybridity in diaspora culture, as mentioned by Stuart Hall (2003), which incorporates itself into the local culture without abandoning the original culture, may have contributed to the formation of hybrid movements in support of the Palestinian struggle for recognition, in the case of the Palestinian community in Latin America. As many interviewees note, these movements are not only composed of Palestinians by origin, but also include labour unions and political groups with internationalist agendas, non-governmental organisations working in fields such as human rights, indigenous rights,

immigrant rights, among others, as well as student movements connected to youth mobilisations worldwide.

The information circulating within these organisations—coming from groups linked to Palestine or the international community—brings them closer to the struggle for recognition of the Palestinian cause, which manifests itself in different ways. One example is the homeless movement in São Paulo, which named a housing occupation in a downtown building after the historic Palestinian leader Leila Khaled.

Another example was the Humanitarian Mission carried out as part of the World Social Forum process in 2015, when Brazilian activists travelled to Palestine in solidarity with Gaza, which had been heavily attacked by Israel in 2014. The group was prevented by Israel from entering Gaza, but conducted visits and interviews in the West Bank to gather information and share it with Latin America and the World Social Forum process (Brazilian WSF Collective, 2015). However, two members were denied entry into Palestine at the Israeli-controlled border—both with Arab surnames, one of them being Palestinian. The mission was mainly composed of non-Palestinian activists, solidarity workers and members of the Front in Defence of the Palestinian People.

International Law and Belonging

When they were expelled from Palestine during the establishment of the State of Israel, many Christian and Muslim Arabs hoped to return home soon. That's why they took care to lock their doors before leaving. It was in vain, as none of the refugees from the first Arab-Israeli war were able to return. Their lands were confiscated, and many villages were erased from the map. By 1950, the number of refugees registered by the United Nations (UN) exceeded 900,000. Within Israel, only 150,000 Arabs remained, of whom 20 per cent were forced to leave their lands, becoming internally displaced persons (Botelho, 2006, p. 41).

On 11 December, 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 194, establishing the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, from which they had been forcibly displaced during the Nakba. The resolution states that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so as soon as possible, and that compensation should be paid to those choosing not to return, as well as for all lost or damaged property, which—under principles of International Law or in the interest of justice—must be repaid by the responsible government or authority. It instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate repatriation, resettlement, economic and social rehabilitation and the payment of compensation, while maintaining close relations with the director of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and, through it, with the relevant UN bodies and agencies. This resolution established the right of return or compensation for "Palestinians and their descendants whose place of residence between June 1946 and May 1948 was Palestine and who, as a result of the 1948 war, lost both their homes and means of livelihood", as defined by UNRWA.

As a result, all Palestinians forced to migrate were excluded, even though displacement continued in the following years, with many heading to Kuwait and the Americas during the 1950s and 1960s. When Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967, most of these Palestinians were permanently cut off from returning.

By the late 1960s, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Arab League framed the refugee issue as a collective rather than an individual problem. This advocacy for a collective solution represented a demand for a political, not just technical, resolution to the refugee crisis (Feldman, 2008).

By collectivising the right of return, the premise of preserving Palestinians' claim to their ancestral land reinforced a natural belonging that forced migration could not erase, regardless of when they were displaced or the loss of their homes, land and identity.

In Brazil, Palestinian immigration surged after the Nakba. While most families relocated within the region—to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon—some moved beyond the Arab world, with a significant number settling in Latin America, particularly Brazil. Many still held onto the hope of one day returning to their homeland, which was now occupied.

One night, I was told, "*We are going back to Palestine".* We walked in darkness for many kilometres, through harsh and winding mountain paths—me, my uncle and a guide who made his living from his knowledge of the region. By morning, I stood before a steel wall of faded hope. Finally, I was in the promised Palestine. But where was it? No. No, this is not Palestine—not that magical land, the end of my darkness and torment! And it did not embrace me as I had imagined (Farah, 2012, p. 29).

Despite cultural differences and a new language, the newly arrived Palestinian immigrants in Brazil tried to preserve their identity. This was more common among the first generation of youth, but even today, many seek spouses from Palestine or the Diaspora to maintain shared bonds of language, customs, religion and heritage.

The right of return does not necessarily mean a firm decision to resettle in Palestine, but rather the right to choose. A Salvadoran journalist interviewed expressed this frustration, saying she would love to have the option to visit her parents' and grandparents' homeland and that being denied this leaves many Palestinians angry because "anyone else from another country living in the Diaspora at least has that right. Maybe they can't return for economic reasons, but they still have the right".

For many, belonging to Palestine goes beyond the political struggle for the enforcement of International Law—it is an inalienable emotional bond that shapes life in the Diaspora.

Major Institutions

Among the countries covered in this research, some Palestinian community entities are mentioned in interviews or listed among attendees at Latin American-wide meetings on Palestinian issues.

In Chile, these include the following organisations: Federación Palestina, Club Palestino, Comité Democrático Palestino, Grupo Palestina Libre, Unión General de Estudiantes Palestinos, Organización Solidaria con Palestina (OSP-UC), Centro Árabe de Concepción and Juventud Chileno-Árabe por Palestina de Valdivia (COPLAC, 2017).

In Brazil, those mentioned by interviewees or participating in meetings and demonstrations include the Federação Árabe-Palestina do Brasil (FEPAL), Fórum Latino-Palestino, Frente em Defesa do Povo Palestino, Monitor do Oriente Médio, Sanaúd - Juventude Palestina and the Câmara de Comércio Árabe-Brasileira. At the meeting to reestablish the Confederação Palestina da América Latina e do Caribe (COPLAC), the following were also mentioned: União Democrática das Entidades Palestinas do Brasil, Sociedade Árabe Palestino-Brasileira de Santa Maria, Sociedade Palestina de Brasília, Sociedade Árabe Palestino-Brasileira de Porto Alegre, Sociedade Árabe-Palestina Beneficente do Brasil, Centro Cultural Árabe-Palestino de Mato Grosso do Sul, Comitê Catarinense de Solidariedade ao Povo Palestino, Centro Cultural Árabe Palestino-Brasileiro de São Paulo, Sociedade Árabe-Palestina de Corumbá, Comitê da Palestina Democrática, Centro Cultural Palestino-Brasileiro do Rio Grande do Sul and Instituto Brasil Palestina.

In Central America, with fewer organisations, the main entities from the researched countries mentioned in the interviews are Club Árabe Salvadoreño, Asociación Palestina de El Salvador and Fundación Palestina Hondureña.

Argentina has two comprehensive entities: the Federación de Entidades Argentino-Palestinas and the Comité Argentino de Solidaridad con el Pueblo Palestino, composed of various organisations both within and outside the Palestinian community. The federation is one of 14 regional or provincial organisations that form part of the Confederación de Federaciones Argentino-Árabes (FEARAB Argentina), which in turn is part of FEARAB América.

Generally, solidarity with international causes involves social, political, trade union and academic organisations outside the community that participate in joint initiatives or demonstrations, such as the embrace of the Palestinian Embassy in Buenos Aires called for by the organisations Coordinadora por el Cambio Social, Frente de Izquierda y de Trabajadores-Unidad (FIT-U), Encuentro Memoria Verdad y Justicia, Encuentro Patriótico, Miles, Liberación Popular, MST, Asambleas del Pueblo and the Liga Argentina por los Derechos Humanos. In Argentina, we can also mention Artistas por Palestina.

Academic activities also attract interest and involve the Palestinian community in the researched countries, such as the Foro Internacional por Palestina, promoted in July 2023 by the Centro Latino-Americano de Ciências Sociais and the Universidad Nacional de Luján, the Grupo Especial Revista Al Zeytun, the Observatorio Geohistórico, Departamento de Ciências Sociales, the Cátedra de Estudios Palestinos Edward Said at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Nueva Editorial Canaán, Universidad Internacional Al-Mustafa, as well as demonstrations by the Frente Cultural Che Adelita and the Federación Internacional de Escritores por la Libertad.

In Brazil, entities such as the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT) and the Central Sindical CSP-Conlutas participate in the Frente em Defesa do Povo Palestino alongside

Palestinian organisations, human rights groups, student movements, feminist collectives, media organisations, anti-Zionist Jewish groups and left-wing party activists from groups like United Socialist Workers' Party (Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado), Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores), Communist Party of Brazil (Partido Comunista do Brasil), Socialism and Liberty Party (Partido Socialismo e Liberdade), Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro) and the Brazilian Revolutionary Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro Revolucionário), among others.

Diasporic Voices

To preserve their traditions, immigrants have established institutions focused on community affairs and welfare, creating spaces for weddings, mourning, annual gatherings, religious holidays and social interactions with relatives and close family friends. At the same time, they strive to serve as voices of the Diaspora, maintain active engagement, professionalise institutional work and engage with political spheres to highlight the Palestinian cause in its struggle against Israeli occupation.

There exists a significant number of groups and organisations. Latin America hosts several regional entities that unite local or national organisations with shared objectives, particularly in demonstrating solidarity and pressuring governments to support Palestinian rights. Among these organisations are: the Palestinian Union of Latin America (UPAL), which brings together Palestinian communities across the continent and held its most recent congress in March 2023 in Colombia; the Palestinian Confederation of Latin America and COPLAC, which after decades of inactivity held a refounding congress in Santiago, Chile in October 2017, bringing together entities from 11 Latin American countries; more recently, the Latin-Palestinian Forum, launched in 2022 following the participation of Latin American leaders in international meetings of the World League of Parliamentarians for Al-Quds (Jerusalem), which held its first Board of Trustees meeting in June 2023 with participants from ten Latin American countries, with the mission of coordinating social movement actions with parliamentary initiatives across the continent.

There is also a Latin American committee of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel to end the occupation of Palestine, comprising individual activists and organisations committed to the boycott campaign. Following the October 2023 attacks, the voices of national leaders gained prominence, including those of Brazilian journalist Soraya Misleh (Front in Defence of the Palestinian People), Mohamad El-Kadri (Latin-Palestinian Forum) and Ualid Rabah (FEPAL).

However, according to some interviewees, the institutions are not sufficiently organised. They point out that there are no proper schools or other institutions dedicated to education. “Some Palestinian communities are beginning to organise Arabic language classes within mosques. Some Palestinian communities are working to build mosques to provide a place for prayer and other religious activities. These are new developments taking place, but today’s Palestinian community in Brazil and Latin America, generally speaking, is not organised”, says a Brazilian political leader:

For the Diaspora to have the expected voice, a noted deficiency is knowledge about the global politics that sustains the occupation of Palestine. We believe the most important thing right now is the political and historical education of the new generation. We're going to invest everything in this—the political and historical education of the new generation!

In the words of an Argentine journalist, one can perceive the concern to involve the community in activities about Palestine, especially to counter the very strong Zionist presence in their country. The issue ends up attracting social activists who care about Palestinian rights, as he explains:

We take it upon ourselves, sometimes even personally and individually, to ensure the transmission of the history of the Nakba and the Palestinian people doesn't fade. And there are many activists who aren't Palestinian, who do more important communication work than what a Palestinian or Arab might do here in Argentina, where every activity is much more significant than elsewhere due to the interference and power of Zionism.

This is corroborated by an Argentine professor, who states that solidarity with Palestine also faces "the difficulty of Argentina adopting in its legislation the definition of anti-Semitism formulated by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance". For him, the risk of judicialising criticism of Israel is a perilous path:

We have many Jewish comrades who work with us for Palestine, who are anti-Zionists. There are those who call themselves leftist Zionists, who believe in the theory of states. But we have comrades who have absolutely nothing to do with Zionism, want nothing to do with Zionism, and fight it just like we do.

Argentina was one of the countries considered to host the Jewish national home, along with Uganda, before the option for Palestine was chosen. But in Argentina's case, the country was consulted, which didn't happen with the Palestinian people. This episode is present in the accounts of another interviewed Argentine professor:

> Here they are called Jewish gauchos who settled in a very large and important community in Entre Ríos province, and I believe this served as a basic idea for Theodor Herzl's proposal that Argentina could be a territory where the State of Israel would be established. They claimed it was an extremely rich country, with vast expanses and territory stretching to Patagonia that was completely uninhabited. There were even some approaches made to the Argentine government to advance this project, but they were rejected by Argentine authorities because they didn't want an autonomous, independent or semi-independent entity with representation in the country, as Zionism intended for Argentina. So, in Argentina's specific case, I believe it has the third-largest Jewish community in the world. They have power at the media level and the ability to exert pressure on the government. They have very powerful institutions, namely the Delegation of Argentine Israelite Associations (Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas) and Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina).

Another profound mark on Argentina's relations with Zionism lies in the history of attacks against Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas and Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina and against the Israeli Embassy in the 1990s. Government suspicions fell on Iran, but without evidence or proof. As Argentine Professor A points out, "they never found the culprits".

Interviews: Methodology and Sample

For a comprehensive understanding of the Palestinian community's reality in Latin America, the study that gave rise to this book conducted 40 in-depth interviews using an academic methodology. According to Jorge Duarte (2010), this methodological approach enables a deeper understanding of the target audience's impressions and perceptions regarding the subject in question.

When we conduct an interview, we act as mediators, helping the subject examine their own situation from a different angle; we guide them to reflect upon themselves. We encourage them to seek connections and organise them. While providing raw material for our research, our interviewees also reflect on their own lives, giving them new meaning, asserting themselves before their community and society, legitimising themselves as interlocutors and contemplating issues they might not have considered under other circumstances (Duarte, 2010). Carolyn Boyce and Palena Neale also highlight the value of this methodology, which can provide people with "a more relaxed environment for information gathering... rather than filling out a survey". The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they yield significantly more detailed information than other data collection methods, such as surveys (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

Regarding the research focus of the in-depth interviews, this work explored two broad aspects that could be analysed from the set of responses. The first aspect concerns the recurring patterns and habits within the community and families that serve as processes of information transmission, reinforcement or weakening of Palestinian identity as a shared value. This includes the environmental context in which individuals exist within their family or community, as well as the community's existence within its host country and within the institutions and environments it has created, whether educational, celebratory or recreational.

The second aspect, capable of reflecting external interactions with this identity or its current distancing, is the mode of relationship, information and perception of the present reality in Palestine and the Arab world at large—considering that Palestinian culture is an inseparable part of Arab culture as a whole, including the perception of historical realities that caused migration processes.

With a set of previously agreed-upon topics equally presented to all interviewees, diversity was sought in both their residence across different countries within the study's chosen scope and in their individual profiles.

It is from this perspective that Jean-Claude Kaufmann (cited in 2000 and Santos, 2014) advocates for a qualitative methodology in sociological research, prioritising in-depth

engagement with social actors through tools such as biography, narrative, life history and in-depth interviews.

For this thesis, 40 individuals were interviewed—eight from each of the five focal countries: Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Honduras and El Salvador. Importantly, the research project was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of the Methodist University of São Paulo, ensuring interviewees' right to anonymity via Informed Consent Forms (TCLE). Thus, in this book, references to interviewees indicate only their country and personal or professional category.

To address these topics through diverse lenses, the 40 interviewees were divided into four categories: communication, religion, education and politics. They were presented with the thematic frameworks guiding the interviews, which included:

1. Participant profile: Whether they were born in one of the Middle Eastern countries or one of the five Latin American countries included in the study, gender, age, education level, profession, occupation and location.
2. Identification of key cultural and communication practices for preserving Palestinian memory, history and culture; identification of the most prominent representatives of Palestine in the participant's country of residence (one of the five Latin American countries); identification of the main institutions in their country of residence that keep Palestinian history, memory and culture alive.
3. Role and importance of local journalism (in the five target countries) in covering Palestine; analysis of how participants feel represented by major media outlets in their country of residence (the five target countries); and how these local outlets could improve coverage of Palestine and its culture.

This group consisted of men and women, aged between 22 and 70, who participated in various activities. As an analytical tool, intersectionality considers that categories such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ability, ethnicity and age—among others—are interrelated and mutually shape one another. Intersectionality is a way of understanding and explaining the complexity of the world, people and human experiences (Collins & Bilge, 2021, p. 35).

The in-depth interview is a methodological resource that, based on theories and assumptions defined by the researcher, seeks to gather responses from the subjective experience of a source selected for holding information that the researcher aims to explore (Duarte, 2010, p. 62). It is essential to note that this methodology was also combined with information obtained from a case study, as exemplified by the case of Club Palestino in Chile, the country with the highest concentration of Palestinian immigrants and descendants in Latin America.

In 2020, the number of Chilean Palestinians was estimated at around 500,000 (Al-Hayy, 2009). Having resided in the country for over 150 years, they maintain deep roots and wield influence and participation in political, economic, cultural and sporting life.

The Club Palestino was identified by all interviewed Chilean Palestinians as the institution most recognised for affirming the collective identity of the Palestinian-origin community and its ties to the so-called *Palestinian cause*—the struggle against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and for the international rights of the Palestinian people.

Media and Cultural Exchanges

Accounts from interviewees about the pressure experienced by Palestinians—between upholding habits and values considered part of their identity, staying connected to the struggles of their homeland and simultaneously embracing a new life and citizenship—corroborate Hall's observations in *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, where he asserts:

- Culture is not merely a journey of rediscovery: it is a production. It has its raw materials, its resources and its productive labour.
- We are always in the process of cultural formation. Culture is not a matter of ontology, of *being*, but of *becoming*.
- Globalisation has been illuminating the shadows of the Western Enlightenment. Identities once conceived as fixed and stable are now shipwrecked on the rocks of proliferating differentiation.
- Two opposing processes are at work in contemporary globalisation:
    - Dominant forces that threaten to subjugate all emerging cultures, imposing a homogenising cultural sameness (its effects are visible worldwide);
    - Subtler processes that decentralise Western models, leading to a dissemination of cultural differences across the globe.

For Hall, the alternative isn't clinging to closed, unitary and homogeneous models of cultural belonging, but embracing the broader processes of similarity and difference that are transforming cultures worldwide. This is the diasporic path: the trajectory of a modern people and a modern culture (2003, p. 47).

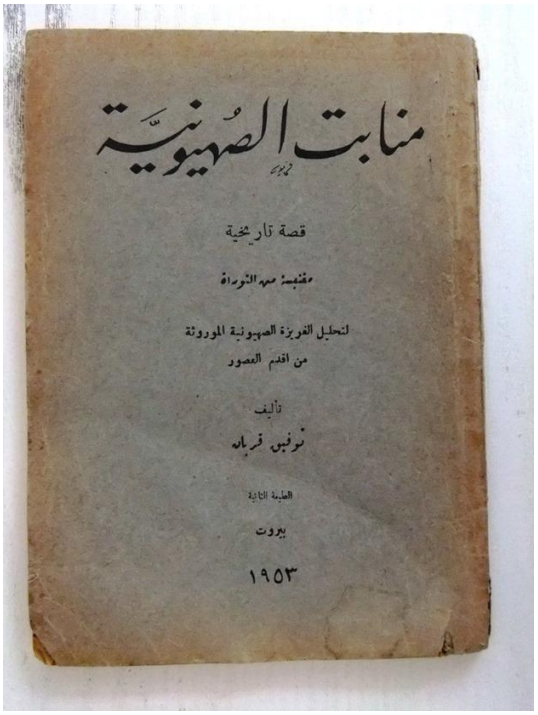
In the Palestinian case, this "becoming", this perpetual identity construction through migration, begins with most having faced impossible choices in their homeland and the trauma of forced displacement. These aspects of adaptation to new lands remain transmissible and re-signifiable for subsequent generations, especially given that ethnic cleansing has become a permanent process (Pappé, 2006), intensifying alongside the very meaning of Palestinianness. The Palestinian community has sustained mechanisms to connect with its history and communicate with Palestine since the Diaspora's earliest formation.

The early immigrants (Palestinians and Arabs in general) had a strong desire to preserve their Arab cultural heritage, as seen in the literary production later known as "immigrant literature". This led poet Elia Abu Madi to visit Brazil in 1948, where he met journalist

Habib Masoud, editor-in-chief of *Al-Usba* magazine, who took great interest in celebrating immigrant communities. The publication kept their homeland updated about their lives. Known as the "Diaspora Press", it even organised a symposium about immigrants and their ethics (Montenegro, 2006).

George Saydah's book, *Immigration and Immigrant Literature in Immigrant America*, lists 35 writers in Brazil, 18 in Argentina, three in Venezuela, two each in Ecuador and Uruguay and one writer in Mexico, Chile and Bolivia (Saydah, 1999).

At that time, most people migrated for economic reasons, primarily to improve their families' living standards. Only a few had migrated earlier, in the second half of the 19th century, including pioneers of Palestinian immigration to Latin America: Hanna Khalil and Elias Morcos (1870, Mexico), the Salama Brothers (1870, Ecuador), Bassil Hajjar (1874, Brazil), Gebran Da'it (1880, Chile), Isaac and George Lubia (1880, Venezuela), Fadl Shaker and Farid Shaker (1880, Venezuela), Saeed Sahouria (1884, Peru) and Yacoub Al-Maqdisi (1890, Dominican Republic) (Hamidullah, 1885).



Cover of the magazine *Liga Andaluza*, with the headline "Against Zionism", from 1930 (Source: Family Archive/Courtesy)

The writer Tawfiq, who immigrated to São Paulo, Brazil, and was a member of the Andalusian League, authored a book, *The Sources of Zionism: A Historical Analysis of the Torah to Examine the Zionist Instinct Inherited from Ancient Centuries*. His work highlights the persistent intellectual friction between Zionism and Palestine since its inception. Information received by the League from the Middle East at that time, specifically from Palestine, reveals the vital connection between the Diaspora and the homeland.

In Diaspora poetry, which was divided between the northern Diaspora (the US) and the southern Diaspora (Latin America, primarily Brazil and Argentina), the Palestinian question emerged as a recurring theme carried by poets—an unhealing wound felt by all with an Arab heart beating in their chest. Yet the immigrant poet does not merely lament or weep over this tragedy, despite being Arab with a throbbing Arab heart. Instead, they infused their poetry and writing with a spirit of hope, victory and resistance, spreading the ethos of steadfastness and perseverance (*sumud* in Arabic).

O house of Arabness, o house of love and longing,

I departed from you, yet my heart remains yours.

Could you bring back dawn's youthful glow,

And restore to the child life's golden sun?

Many interviewees report that these ties are both material and cultural, whether through sending financial resources to relatives who remain there, or by organising visits and stays when not blocked by Israel. All respondents affirm that they receive information from family and friends in Palestine and maintain permanent contact for reliable updates. More recently, with the rise of social media, this communication has gained new ways to access information and document events.

Whether due to social media corporations' opaque algorithmic mediation that filters content or due to national media's ties to financial pressure groups, Palestinian communities in Latin America face a complex reality. Honduran-Palestinians, for example, note that locals respect their community because of its significant economic influence. A common element of cultural exchange is the host population's interest in traditions preserved through cuisine, dance or music at family gatherings.

In Honduras, community and religious institutions utilise these cultural displays to promote integration. As one Honduran journalist aptly puts it, "We always strive to celebrate Arab food".

Support for educational activities and projects also fosters this connection. As one Honduran religious leader explains, there are serious efforts to introduce Palestine to the Honduran community through initiatives such as organising school soccer leagues, sponsoring university graduation events and supporting charitable organisations via development projects.

The interviews also reveal that the community faces Zionist opposition and a particular competition in support initiatives that could positively showcase the Palestinian presence. The religious leader recounts an uncomfortable situation for the community:

> We supported a school by establishing its computer lab and suggested naming it the “Palestine Lab”. They agreed, so we installed the Palestinian flag. Then the Israeli ambassador came, wanting to visit and support the school with another project. He asked them, “What is this in the lab? What does the name Palestine and this flag mean?” They told him it was a donation from our community. “The Palestinians here in San Salvador help us greatly”, they explained. He responded: “I think you’d better decide whether to accept support from us or from them—and this lab’s name should be changed from Palestine to Israel”.

In El Salvador, an apparent distancing of the community from the Palestinian cause seems to worry interviewees. One Salvadoran politician even speaks of “alienation” and the absence of a comprehensive, unified Palestinian identity. There is also a lack of studies about Palestinians in the country’s interior. Historical research is similarly scarce, as noted by another Salvadoran political leader: “Given that we have no experts on Palestinian history, I believe this hinders access to more information about Palestine in our media”. Yet communities resent the pervasive Zionist propaganda in Latin American cultural life, which ends up normalising violence against Palestinians in news coverage.

As a Chilean teacher remarked after 7 October, “Palestinian civilians are being killed in an inexplicable manner—including countless children—not just since 7 October, but since the British occupation began over a century ago, while the world watches silently”.

The influence of Zionist lobbies manifests through intolerance in diaspora countries where they’re most active. A notable case occurred in Argentina when musician Roger Waters toured Latin America, facing everything from warm welcomes to outright hostility, depending on the country. The former Pink Floyd member, known for his vocal solidarity with Palestine, became the target of Zionist campaigns that deliberately misassociated him with the very ideologies he opposes: Nazism and fascism. These efforts fed international media with distorted critiques of his performances, serving the purposes of their smear campaign. His concerts in Brazil, Argentina and Chile served as a barometer of Zionist lobbies’ ability to sway public opinion, despite enthusiastic crowds of both Palestinian solidarity supporters and regular music fans. In Brazil, the Israeli Federation demanded that the government bar his entry and cancel his shows, but this was ignored and the concerts proceeded as scheduled.

The outcome differed in Argentina, where Zionist lobbyists secured an agreement with the entire hotel industry to deny him accommodation. Chile, however, welcomed him warmly. Maurice Khamis, former president of Club Palestino, told Waters to consider the club his “second home”.

The erasure of Palestine is most glaring in Argentina, home to a large Zionist community. As one activist interviewed noted, “Jewish community organisations with political clout tightly control Argentine media. Most Argentine Jews are Zionist and highly organised—they’re major capitalists who dominate advertising, which lets them shape editorial lines”. This censorship extends to literature and culture. “Palestine doesn’t exist here—not in the press, bookstores or even school textbooks. It’s never mentioned unless there’s a massive bombing or attack”, said one journalist. Another attributed the lack of cultural-political

mobilisation to the Palestinian Embassy's overly formal events, which fail to engage the broader community.

Palestine in the Media

Interviewees perceive a stark imbalance in Latin American media coverage of Palestine, estimating a ratio of ten Israel-friendly news stories for every positive piece about Palestine. The prominence given to each type of news is also seen as biased. While Israel-related stories often appear as front-page headlines in newspapers of studied countries, Palestinian news typically receives small, subdued titles.

Confirming Azmi Bishara's analysis in his book, *A Social Security in Israel*, the global media fails to deeply examine the daily suffering of Palestinians, instead framing the issue only through convenient narratives.

In the surveyed South American countries, local newspapers, whether in Spanish or Portuguese, are considered aligned with Israel, uncritically adopting Zionist framing. The humanitarian crisis in Palestine caused by the occupation is rarely presented in its full context. Coverage typically only begins after international agencies report on events, often merely reproducing their materials. For instance, analysis of newspaper coverage shows the initial reporting on journalist Shireen Abu Akleh's killing was weak, extremely brief and timid.

The Palestinian voice in media often only exists due to community pressure and persistence, as emphasised by a Salvadoran journalist, "We, as Salvadoran-Palestinians, have to demand these spaces—we request coverage, and only then do they publish a column about Palestine or interview someone from our community. But these opportunities usually only happen because we pushed for them".

Following allegations of genocide committed by Israel against Palestinians in Gaza, reactions in the surveyed countries were, in some cases, diametrically opposed. In Argentina, the Israeli narrative dominated media coverage, as noted by interviewees. A teacher summarised this perception:

> I don't know all media outlets. However, the mainstream media—on TV, in newspapers and on the radio—doesn't frame this as a conflict. "Terrorism" is the word they use, invariably presenting Israel as the victim of a terrorist group's violence. They portray Palestinians as civilians caught in the middle of a conflict between Israel and terrorists. Even when reporting on civilian deaths as unjust, these media outlets still present civilians as separate from what we see as resistance, what Argentine media calls a terrorist group. In other words, they frame the situation entirely on Israel's terms. Exactly. And so, they've made most Argentines view the situation through this same lens, repeating it year after year, day after day.

Censorship also manifests in how opinions about 7 October are handled, as reported by one of the interviewed Chilean politicians: “I was at a local radio station when the host asked my thoughts on Hamas’s attack and the war against Israel. I responded: ‘It’s a natural response to the massacres of the Palestinian Nakba’. They asked: ‘Do you support it?’ I said yes—and the interview ended abruptly”.

Through in-depth interviews and analysis of Chilean newspapers, it becomes clear that Palestinian-Chileans maintain a sharp understanding of events in Palestine, even when the information they receive from local media is incomplete or favours Israeli narratives. As one interviewed Chilean professor explains: “Through various channels, the Palestinian narrative reaches us and is present in Chile at all levels. Politicians here know Palestinians aren’t ‘human animals’, as they’re labelled and promoted through Israeli media”.

Yet Latin American media remains largely impervious to contextualising Palestine in ways that critically challenge dominant Western framing. Palestinians note that even journalists’ questions seem designed not just to equate Palestinian resistance with “terrorism”, but to frame anyone defending its legitimacy as a “terrorism supporter”. “No one asks about the historical context of Israel’s occupation of Palestine. They only inquire about 7 October… We’ve suffered for 76 years—not just since 7 October”, says the Chilean professor.

Generally, interviewees in Chile and Honduras note that society respects Palestinian communities due to their economic influence. But this hasn’t translated to fair coverage of occupied Palestine. Honduran interviewees report avoiding local media altogether.

“In my 50 years of life, I’ve never gotten news from Honduran media. It flip-flops and usually sides with Israel—neither objective nor realistic”, states a Honduran politician. A teacher adds, “For decades, I’ve stopped watching TV news. It’s factually inverted lies, until falsehoods become ‘truth’ in people’s minds—especially regarding Palestine”.

In Brazil, mainstream media faces criticism for failing to properly platform Palestinian voices, as evidenced by testimony from a community leader regarding major broadcaster *Globo*’s coverage immediately after 7 October:

> On the 8th, we tweeted asking if *Globo* didn’t know Palestinians existed or that we have a federation here. They never contacted us. Every other outlet, including *Folha de S. Paulo*, *Band* and all other major media, sought out Palestinian voices in Brazil. All except *Globo*. You might wonder: why focus so much on *Globo*? Because if *Globo* changed its coverage of Palestine to be more balanced, others would follow. When *Globo* sets the worst standard, others feel empowered to do poorly too. So, *Globo* bears primary responsibility for the media genocide against Palestinians in Brazil today. In the West, media outlets—especially *Globo* in Brazil—have conditioned Brazilian public opinion to accept the genocide in Palestine.

A Brazilian teacher interviewed recounts watching her grandfather in despair before the TV, drawing parallels to today's coverage and concluding that nothing has changed:

> Because we're watching the same thing my grandfather watched—*Globo*. I'm talking about 1987, when we had few options: no internet, just one or two TV channels. Today it's the same. The way they portrayed Palestinians during the first Intifada in 1987 is identical to their 2024 coverage. They dehumanise Palestinians to justify the colonial State of Israel's ongoing massacre.

In other countries, however, Palestinian-Latin American community members appear more frequently in local media, though usually discussing general topics rather than Palestinian issues. Interviewees view this as a reflection of the community's strong development and its prominent figures in politics, business and other influential spheres. Yet these success stories often omit their collective history: how Palestinian-Latin Americans helped rebuild nations and overcame last century's discrimination, progress that only came as their economic conditions improved.

Some personalities have media presence related to their performance in economics and finance. Among them, we can mention: Alvaro Benedak Sayegh, cited by *Forbes Magazine* in 2014, with a fortune currently estimated at $2 billion; Carlos Abumohor, financial executive of banks, companies and media institutions in Chile, which he manages with his sons and Juan José Dabob, General Director of the World Bank for the Middle East and North Africa region, holding various positions including the Ministry of Finance in El Salvador. Outside the economic world, the media shows interest in sports, as seen in the case of Club Deportivo Palestino, or tennis player Nicolas Alejandro Massu Farid, a former Olympic champion for Chile. Other figures are mentioned in interviews for standing out in academia, such as Ahmad Yuvali Kattan, a researcher recognised for his outstanding performance at the University of El Salvador.

Political leaders and their involvement in domestic affairs of their resident countries, such as electoral processes, are also mentioned. Palestinian communities are highly diverse, but the Palestinian presence in Chile is particularly notable across various sectors. Furthermore, the community's economic situation has contributed to its strong and influential presence in multiple domains. However, even among Chilean interviewees, there is a perception that the loudest media voice in Chile is Israel's voice. And that the current narrative about Palestine is sustained by less influential media outlets and the left in general.

Palestinians in Politics

The presence of Palestinians in Latin American politics is viewed positively by interviewees, with numerous individuals mentioned in interviews, media and recent and

current political institutions, including parliaments and executive branches. Among these cases, the following stand out:

● Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez, President of El Salvador, reelected in 2024.

● Carlos Roberto Flores, President of Honduras from 1998 to 2002.

● Antonio Saca, former President of El Salvador from 2004 to 2009.

● Daniel Jadue, Mayor of Recoleta and former presidential candidate in Chile.
● Omar Aziz, Governor of the Brazilian State of Amazonas (2010-2014) and Senator of Brazil since 2015.

● Rafael Tarud Siwady, former Minister and former Chilean Senator, who was one of the candidates for the Presidency of Chile in 1970.

● William Handal, Salvadoran politician originally from Bethlehem. Held various political and economic positions, including Vice President of the Council of Finance Ministers of Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

● Lisa Shoman served in Honduras' Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

● Jorge Lama, former Chilean official in the US and Vice President of the Central Bank of Chile in 1978. Served in various ministries, including Development and Economy, Finance and Public Relations.

● Francisco Shahwan held various political positions, including Vice President of Chile, Deputy in the Chilean Parliament and Senate.

The political presence, however, does not appear directly linked to the Palestinian situation, although critical events like attacks on Gaza or significant dates occasionally prompt some positions to be taken.

One Brazilian politician cites the case of Senator Aziz, who supports the Palestinian cause, but "his background in youth comes from the student movement, not the Palestinian movement".

A significant case is that of El Salvador's President Bukele, of Palestinian descent and son of Armando Bukele (who passed away in 2015 and was a recognised figure in the Palestinian community for his positions and the debates he hosted on a YouTube channel). Unlike his father, the current president has not brought the Palestinian issue to the forefront of his public agenda. "I don't think he has a very clear position on Palestine", says a Honduran journalist. "I mean, he doesn't promote it, but he doesn't do the opposite either".

However, she recalls, the president used his X (formerly Twitter) account to condemn the attack. Bukele vehemently denounced Hamas as an enemy of Palestinians, stating, "The best thing that could happen to the Palestinian people is for Hamas to disappear completely. These savage animals do not represent Palestinians" (Bukele on X).

Pressure from lobbies targeting politicians of Palestinian origin willing to defend the cause is often relentless. The case of Chile's Jadue is emblematic. As a presidential pre-candidate, he was accused of a post he made during his school years, condemning Israel. The post—and Jadue himself—were labelled anti-Semitic, ultimately excluding him from the race.

A recurring theme in interviewees' accounts is that while the Palestinian cause is marginalised or erased, Israel's narrative spreads not just through Western media, but also via the rise of Pentecostal Evangelical Christianity, which influences politics as a tool of Zionist pressure. One Salvadoran politician estimates nearly half the country's population belongs to Evangelical churches tied to international Zionism.

The propaganda tied to religious proselytism reinforces a long-standing media narrative that, according to all interviewees, discriminates against Palestinians. As one interviewee states:

> ...the problem here is that people have internalised this (Zionist ideology) in their minds, in their churches, as if Palestinians were terrorists. But this isn't new; it's been 30 or 40 years in the making. Now, many have grown accustomed to hearing churches deliver incorrect, offensive speeches against Palestinians.

Conversely, a religious leader notes that some Evangelical churches use references to Israel as a faith-identifier, "They preach that if God wants to bless couples with children, they must go to Jerusalem and weep at the Al-Buraq Wall".

The alliance between Zionist-leaning Evangelical churches and politics persists not only in El Salvador and Honduras, but also in Latin America's largest country. Its peak came with their victorious support for far-right politician Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, who defeated left-wing candidate Fernando Haddad, a descendant of Lebanese immigrants. Haddad had replaced Lula da Silva, who was imprisoned as a political prisoner at the time and barred from running.

One of the key antagonisms between the two opponents was precisely the far-right politician's fervent pro-Israel stance and his push to move the Brazilian embassy to Jerusalem—disregarding the Palestinian people's international rights—contrasted with the left-wing candidate's support for a Palestinian state, a position previously recognised during Lula's earlier presidency.

During the electoral campaign, Bolsonaro managed to cultivate equal levels of identification with Israel among both Evangelical groups and Brazilian Jewish organisations. With this base of support, Evangelical backing for Bolsonaro's candidacy included numerous legislative candidates aligned with these churches who ultimately won seats in the National Congress.

According to interviewees, Zionist propaganda sometimes occupies unexpected spaces in politics. In the Brazilian case, one striking image was that of then-First Lady Michele Bolsonaro voting in the presidential election, where her husband sought a second term while wearing a t-shirt featuring the Israeli flag.

"The First Lady appears wearing another country's shirt... how is this possible? Unacceptable. So, we can imagine that [the Brazilian government] will follow the same path as the State of Israel and that's how we understand it", says a Brazilian religious leader.

The situation differs somewhat in Argentina, where Zionism organises itself clearly through the Jewish community itself and its adherence to Israel's narrative. An Argentine politician describes the country's situation:

> The Jewish community in Argentina is large, powerful and exerts pressure on governments and institutions to keep Argentina on Israel's side—as is currently happening with new president Javier Milei, who is undergoing conversion to Judaism, becoming Jewish. He's going through the entire process and will soon be Jewish, which has already resulted, as you mentioned, in Argentina abstaining from the UN General Assembly vote two or three days ago, calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. This is the path towards an Argentina more aligned with the State of Israel—an Argentina that rejects everything Palestinian at the institutional level, leaving us no space in mainstream press, radio or television, except through alternative media that turn to the internet or some progressive radio stations. Suddenly we look at the mainstream media and we have no, no, no access precisely because of pressure from these Jewish institutions in Argentina.

In Honduras, however, interviewees point to limited political and diplomatic relations with the Middle East. As one local politician states:

> There are almost no Arab country embassies in Central America in general, except for a few from Morocco and Egypt, plus some non-resident consulates. Israel, on the other hand, is deeply embedded here—they have agreements with our national army, plus water and agricultural deals. This ensures their narrative always overshadows ours.

Critique of the Media View

The deconstruction of dominant discourses in media and institutions that seek to naturalise them within public opinion is a complex activity of Critical Discourse Analysis. Its "particular interest focuses on the relationship between language, ideology and power

and its studies aim to critically analyse how social inequality is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimised and naturalised through discourses" (Ramires & Fraga, 2020).

According to Teun A. van Dijk (2008), it is necessary to identify the control of public discourse in its context (setting, actions, participants, mental representations), text structures (text genres, speech acts) and through themes (semantic macrostructures).

Exposed to media discourse control, individuals may come to accept beliefs as long as they are produced by those considered authoritative, reliable or credible sources, or due to their lack of knowledge about the discourse or information to which they are exposed.

Privileged access and coverage (whether negative or positive) regarding news protagonists constitute an important factor in the reproduction of social power, which is mediated by mass communication media (van Dijk, 2015, p. 50).

However, when produced information clashes with brutally experienced reality, a critical perspective towards the control strategies presents in its content, production and dissemination becomes part of the relationship with media. For Latin American Palestinians, this lack of trust in the media stems from coverage of significant events in occupied Palestine.

A Chilean politician emphasises that even though the community is respected, this doesn't mean the media is objective and transparent:

> The media here is American-Zionist par excellence. On 7 October, 2023, there were Chileans in the Israeli army, and the media was telling Israel's story. They didn't know we went to Palestine every year and knew exactly what was happening there. During the first Intifada, they said they went to Beit Jala and arrested the terrorists. Of course, they arrested my grandmother and uncles. They're lying. Do you expect my family to be terrorists? I know them. They arrested them and it was psychological terrorism. The news here in Chile used to say this—they're terrorists. They're my family. How do we face this?

Interviewees who remember the first Intifada (1987-1993) point to journalism that was indifferent to Palestinian sentiment, as recalled by a Brazilian journalist and professor:

> I was seven years old. My memory from that time is of my grandfather being very, very, very angry, desperate in front of the TV, swearing, asking: "How can they do this to my people, with hunger, to the land? No, they can't". Another thing that marked my childhood was him saying the television was lying, and I didn't understand why. But the news said we were terrorists. Even back then, there was this information manipulation. And then my grandfather would talk about what his people were really like, you know?

This fact shaped her life and professional choices, ultimately leading her to become a journalist and photographer.

> My grandfather would talk about what his people were like—how beautiful they were, you know? How they worked the land, how they valued family. And I thought, “Wow, when I grow up, I'll become a journalist to show these people, to talk about the people who aren't shown on TV, like my grandfather says...” I don’t look for (information) in mainstream media because I can see where the lies are, I can see the manipulation.

Palestinians ultimately develop a sharper understanding of the role of language and its practical use. These strategies manifest in discourse through different linguistic resources (verbal and non-verbal), such as the presence of sounds and changes in intonation; syntactic choices in utterance construction (Ramires & Fraga, 2020). One typical example is news reports saying Palestinian victims “died”, not that they “were killed” and by whom.

As Ramires and Fraga (2020) demonstrate, these strategies manifest through:

> Lexical choices (selecting more or less negative words, including verb tenses and moods); rhetorical devices (using metaphors and figures of speech), among others—all directly or indirectly shaping the (discriminatory or non-discriminatory) discourses circulating in societies.

Recognising when media language aims to shield specific audiences is another lesson learned by the Diaspora. A Brazilian religious leader interviewed expressed discomfort with hearing Hamas-taken Israelis called “hostages” while Israel-detained Palestinians are termed “prisoners”.

Professional conduct, body language and reactions to unforeseen events—all warrant closer scrutiny from communities that feel misrepresented. For instance, when Brazil’s largest TV network filmed a noble gesture during the 2022 Qatar World Cup (a fan rushing to assist the Brazilian coach leaving the field by carrying his young grandson on his shoulders), the reporter described the scene without mentioning the fan was Palestinian, despite being fully identifiable by his traditional keffiyah. “The reporter even stammered”, recalled a Brazilian journalist who was interviewed.

Palestinians in Culture and Sports

Community gatherings at leisure venues that evoke Arab culture appear to be a habitual occurrence among Palestinians. Latin American Palestinians report weekly visits to a

famous Arab street where Palestinian flags, photos, Handala images and keffiyehs can be found. There, they meet and converse with people from Palestine and the broader Middle East, eat typical shawarma or falafel and drink Arabic coffee, which evokes a special flavour and an indescribable feeling that, they say, helps alleviate longing for their distant homeland.

Similarly, preserving Arabic remains crucial for the community, as noted by a Chilean politician discussing education, “We have three Arabic schools in Chile, where Arabic is a core subject like any other. This maintains the language’s presence in Chile, and for the community, people's and club leaders, it’s absolutely essential”.

The Arabic language, valued by these communities, was once legally prohibited in Brazil during a period when immigrant communities published newspapers and magazines in their mother tongues. This likely contributed to immigrant families and descendants gradually abandoning Arabic at home and in community settings. Yet for first generations, Arabic proved vital for connecting with Middle Eastern events, as a Brazilian teacher explains, “There was an extensive period of cultural production, not just music, but also newspapers and magazines in Arabic. Imagine they had just left the Mandate and Ottoman Empire, and the pan-Arabism platform was very strong, right?”

This production didn’t just circulate within the community, but helped transmit information about Brazil to the Middle East, she recalls:

> There were other immigrants, like Lebanese, many here in Latin America, producing these Arabic newspapers. And these newspapers returned to the Arab world. It’s interesting because they served as platforms for resistance against the Ottoman Empire during that period. Some newspapers circulated internally, while others were sent back to the Arab world with descriptions of 1950s Brazil. The prohibition, however, didn’t specifically target Arabs...

In the 1950s, a law banned the use of other languages due to the presence of various immigrant groups. The idea was to speak only Portuguese. These groups included Italians, Arabs and Germans.

Language preservation remains a point of pride in community relations, but interviews suggest this came through resistance—it wasn’t easy. A Salvadoran teacher observes, “Many families lost their Palestinian, Arab family characteristics, distancing themselves from religious and even cultural practices. This happens frequently”.

Palestinian organisations’ efforts to strengthen ties include naming public spaces and institutions with terms evoking Palestinian history and resistance, such as sites named Palestine Street, Yasser Arafat Street, Palestine Square, Jerusalem Square or even the Leila Khaled Occupation in Brazil. Their vibrant cultural and sports presence thrives through dedicated institutions.

Immigrant surnames often indicate cities of origin. In Chile, examples include Zerán, Meruane, Garib, Al-Saqqa, Marzouka, Murad, Aaliyah, Safia, Shakhtoor, Abu Rumman,

Nima, Sahouri, Haddou, Allawi, Juan, Shaheen, Al-Kaldi, Nakhlam, Cumsille and Hernández. Most Palestinian-Arab community members in Chile come from Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Gaza and Jerusalem.

In Brazil, surnames like Baker, Alzoubi, Omar, Rabah, Hussain, Alzabin, Mashni and Odeh are common. Most Palestinian-Arabs in Brazil originate from Ramallah and its villages—Jaljilia, Al Mazra´a Al Sharqiah, Silwad, Beit Ur Al-Tahta, Beit Ur Al Fawqa, Deir Jarir, Safa, Kafr Malik, Kafr Nima and Kober, settling primarily in southern Brazil, where they maintain a strong presence today.

In Argentina, many Palestinians migrated during Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, alongside refugees from Palestinian camps in Syria after the 2011 revolution. Honduran-Palestinians bear surnames, such as Al-Araj, Kanawati, Handal, Jaar, Kharoufeh, Qatan, Bandi, Zummar and Facussé, predominantly from the Bethlehem area. Salvadoran families trace their roots to Jerusalem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour and Bethlehem.

Beyond surnames passed down in official records of Palestinian descendants, Arabic first names continue to be common among new generations. "I named my daughter Bisan, after a Palestinian city, and if God blesses me with another daughter, I'll name her Jaffa", says a Brazilian journalist. In sports, we look to Chile's Club Palestino and its role in promoting Palestine's image, distributing its jerseys worldwide. An exemplary club founded by Chile's first Palestinians, it has strengthened the community's presence for over 100 years.

In Chile, El Salvador and Honduras, community-founded clubs reinforce internal bonds while engaging broader society. In Chile, Club Palestino plays a pivotal role in affirming identity. "We're very clear it's more than a football club. It represents all Palestinians—socially, culturally, athletically", notes a Chilean politician. The association continuously links cultural and sporting life with Palestinian history and current affairs. "The club helped highlight Palestine's name, and we learned about the political dimensions of the Palestinian cause as children through its introductory workshops, meetings and summer camps", he recalls. According to a Chilean journalist, the club is one of the most significant platforms for the Palestinian cause in Chile and maintains a high level of communication between the Diaspora and Palestinian and Arab communities in the Middle East.

The formation of Chile's Palestinian community, including Club Palestino, predates the Nakba, preserving a connection to the ideal of a historical Palestine untouched by partition. This bond reinforces a sense of belonging that encompasses all Palestinians—in occupied territories and the Diaspora, creating a "nationality" symbolised by the football team, both within and beyond Chile, effectively becoming a "second national team" for many supporters. "It was founded in 1920 in Osorno, older than the State of Israel. Thus, it's a vital part of our history", emphasises a Chilean teacher.

The integration of early immigrant generations in Chile ultimately laid the foundation for attracting new Palestinian arrivals. One religious leader interviewed left Gaza six years ago, choosing Chile after hearing of "the solidarity and mutual affinity between Palestinians and Chileans. I came after realising there's no future in Gaza under the systematic displacement from three deadly wars I survived". The community's positive

image is amplified by the club's outreach, as a local journalist notes, "Palestino is Chile's third most-followed club on social media and the most globally visible through jersey distribution. It's one of South America's greatest clubs".

El Salvador also has a community club that, according to some interviewees, sought to serve as a bridge to Palestinian culture. A Salvadoran professor states that for those born in El Salvador, the association "is perhaps our first connection to Palestine".

A distinctive feature of the club is its ability to attract Salvadoran society, as noted by a local journalist:

> We pay a $90 monthly membership fee. We have access to the swimming pool and tennis courts. It's the ultimate place for Arab food. But of the 600 members, only 100 are of Palestinian origin. The rest are Salvadoran. So, the big question is: Why doesn't Club Al-Arabi have a Palestinian majority, but rather Salvadoran members?

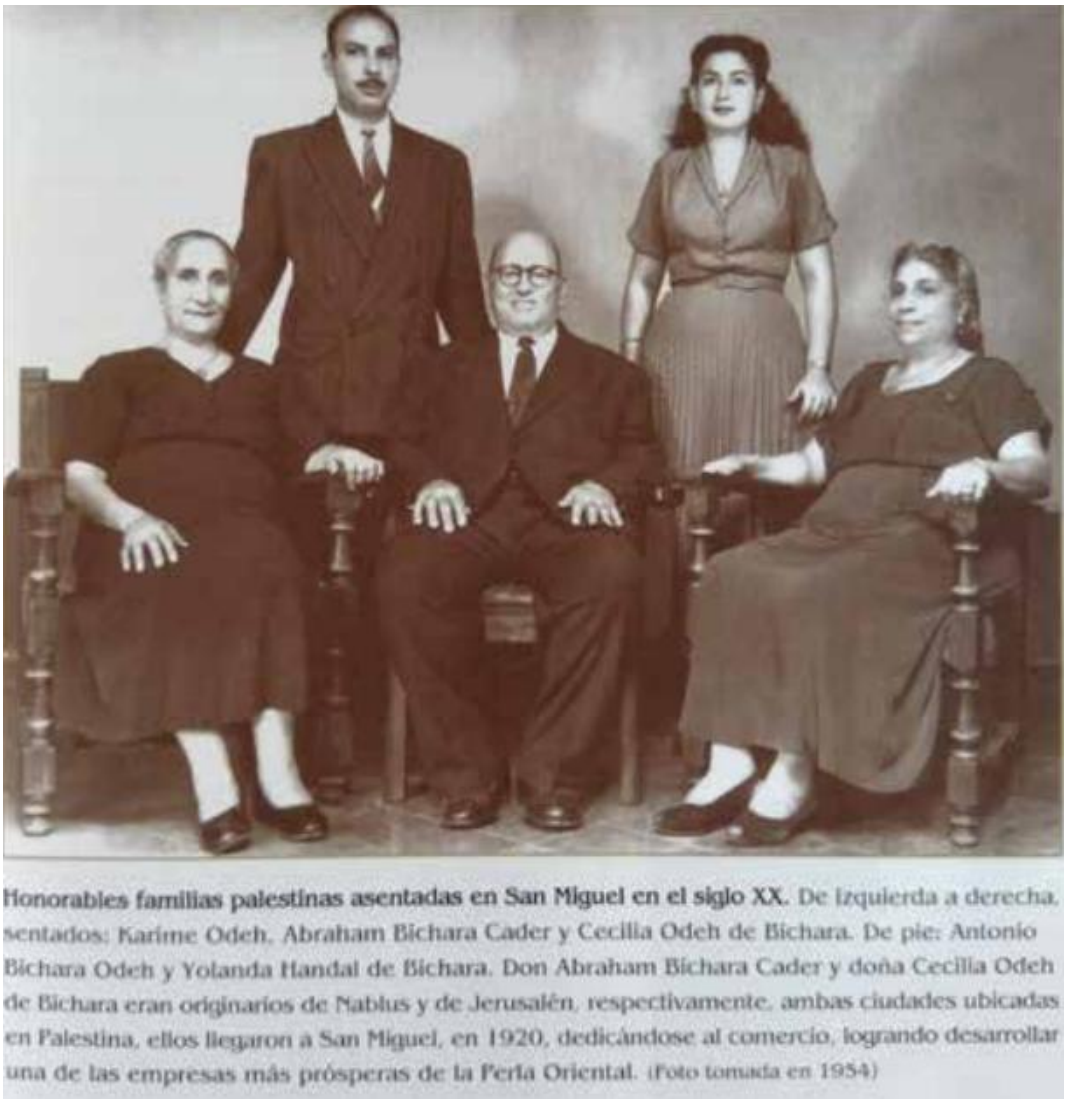
The interest in sports, tradition and cuisine often serves as a channel for exchange with communities attuned to events in the homeland, transmitting this sense of Palestinian belonging to subsequent generations.

Palestinians in the Economy

In some countries, the community managed to integrate into social life without losing its connections to Palestine over the years and while maintaining resistance to the occupation. The case of Chile, which reaffirms pre-1948 Palestine, is evident even through maps printed on jerseys of the main football team linked to the community, demonstrating this renewal of ties. In others, the focus remained on economic integration, which also served to highlight the Palestinian presence across various societal sectors and to financially support relatives in their homeland.

The work as street vendors, or "*mascates*" as they were called in Brazil, and the success of their ventures contributed to an economic integration that reflected in social life. This growth through commerce is often remembered. A Salvadoran religious leader testifies about his family's trajectory:

> My grandfather's business started with a box containing fabric, then developed into a stall, then a small shop, and later a factory that produced it. The primitive methods involved credit sales, a new concept unfamiliar to El Salvador's native population. This was one of the Palestinians' ideas, and despite not being fluent in the language, they would write numbers in front of the buyer's house.



Honorables familias palestinas asentadas en San Miguel en el siglo XX. De izquierda a derecha, sentados: Karime Odeh, Abraham Bichara Cader y Cecilia Odeh de Bichara. De pie: Antonio Bichara Odeh y Yolanda Handal de Bichara. Don Abraham Bichara Cader y doña Cecilia Odeh de Bichara eran originarios de Nablus y de Jerusalén, respectivamente, ambas ciudades ubicadas en Palestina, ellos llegaron a San Miguel, en 1920, dedicándose al comercio, logrando desarrollar una de las empresas más prósperas de la Perla Oriental. (Foto tomada en 1954)

The Bichara family in San Miguel, El Salvador, 1954 (Source: Family Archive/Courtesy)

A 1954 photograph of the Palestinian Bichara family in San Miguel, El Salvador, taken over three decades after their arrival, signalled the household's achieved economic stability after 30 years of work. Such photos were occasionally sent to relatives in Palestine to demonstrate their success, along with money to support extended families in their homeland.

The Bicharas had emigrated from Bethlehem and Jerusalem in 1920. The Salvadoran community also sought to aid people from Beit Jala and the broader Palestinian community by launching economic projects to help Palestinians remain on their land. Interviewees note that while occupation-imposed obstacles, including exorbitant taxes, were severe, the community persisted, supporting youth resistance efforts.

In Honduras, the community proudly claims to be the Americas' second-largest Palestinian Diaspora, mostly from Beit Sahour and Beit Jala, with smaller families in La Ceiba tracing roots to Ramallah. Estimates among interviewees range from 150,000 to 300,000 Honduran-Palestinians.

For a Honduran religious leader, the community's success in the country stems from the fact that the first Palestinians arriving in Honduras in the late 19th century immediately contributed to "economic and commercial activities, and later to industry, with the community's presence strongly influencing the financial sector. They contributed to the country's rebirth". A Honduran journalist notes that initial integration wasn't easy, "The image of Palestinians here in Honduras changed after the early 1980s because the community grew wealthier and more economically powerful, entering politics and achieving significant gains".

In neighbouring El Salvador, as one interviewed politician confirms, five per cent of foreign trade is linked to people and companies of Palestinian origin. As an example, she cites one of El Salvador's most important pharmaceutical laboratories, owned by a Palestinian-descended individual who is "very wealthy and powerful with connections to rulers regardless of the party in power". Another example mentioned is the energy company that manages and distributes all electricity. Additionally, there's the fact that a Palestinian descendant currently governs El Salvador.

The Palestinian community is distributed throughout all regions of Chile, with the majority concentrated in the capital, Santiago, and its surroundings, as well as in southern areas such as Concepción, Chiguayante, Linares, Curicó and Talca. Its members have achieved remarkable success integrating into Chilean society, gaining significant economic and political influence while holding high-ranking government positions. "But it's common for the Palestinian community in Chile to maintain certain customs and traditions", explains one interviewee. "The shops are on the ground floor and the home is upstairs, with the whole family working to improve their economic situation—both for themselves and their extended family in Palestine".

The Palestinian community's economic status, political participation, positive local influence and contributions to Chile's development have transformed Chilean perceptions. As a local religious leader noted, their growing economic power helped them overcome xenophobic aggression and command respect.

Resistance and Peaceful Response to Islamophobia

Comparing the past and the present, some types of prejudice, such as what might be called "Turcophobia" and "Palestinophobia", have significantly decreased, as noted by several interviewees. However, it is essential to distinguish between the prejudices of the past and today's Islamophobia, as pointed out by a Brazilian politician:

Before, it wasn't Islamophobia. It was a different sentiment, a sentiment about the Turk, the foreigner. Today's Islamophobia is a modern phenomenon, promoted not by traditional Christians, but by new Christians—Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals—who see Israel as their sole focus. So, today's Islamophobia is tied to Israel and Zionism.

The interviews also introduced a new term, "Hamasphobia", to define an alleged association between supporters of the Palestinian cause and support for Hamas. The community's response in seeking integration into broader society aligns with the view of a Chilean religious leader, who stated, "Turcophobia is less prevalent today due to the political and economic standing of the Palestinian community, which has a positive influence in various fields in Chile".

Therefore, it is more appropriate to address Islamophobia as a broader issue. We observe that the frequency of Islamophobic incidents has risen significantly and noticeably in recent times, particularly following the impact of the 9/11 attacks in the US (2001), which brought discussions about terrorism, linked to that event, to the forefront. These events placed terrorism at the centre of Western media and academic discourse. The fall of the Twin Towers marked a turning point in the attention given to the topic and the volume of published reports.

Recently, Islamophobic behaviour became more prevalent, particularly following the repeated attacks on the Gaza Strip between 2008 and 2009, 2012, 2014, 2021, 2022 and 2023-2024. Incidents include harassment of Muslim women wearing the hijab, violence and threats, as noted by researcher Francirosy Campos Barbosa in a 2023 study on Islamophobia in Brazil within the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict:

The foundations of Islamophobia are:

1. Xenophobia—that is, the fear of the "other", the different—stemming from the imagined threat that Muslims could change the culture of the country they choose to live in, imposing Islamic customs that would eventually dominate public spaces in a perceived "reverse colonialism", where historically colonised peoples are now seen as potential colonisers in a process labelled as "Islamisation".
2. Religious intolerance, since Islam is not the dominant faith in countries where Islamophobia is prevalent. In this case, such intolerance often comes from social actors linked to far-right political movements.
3. Racism, as Muslims undergo a process of racialisation, with Islamic markers (like the hijab) being weaponised in prejudiced strategies against them (Barbosa & Souza, 2023, p. 206).

Discrimination takes many forms, but it is not a new phenomenon. It has been felt since the first migrations at the end of the Ottoman Empire. For many families, arriving in a new country, despite all possible adversities, meant survival and the determination to endure hardship. Frequently, facing discrimination was part of rebuilding their lives. Sometimes, Palestinian origins were erased in the effort to adapt to a new reality. One commonly reported issue was the mandatory use of Turkish passports after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, an official document for mobility that ironically diluted the distinct Arab identities (Palestinian, Syrian or Lebanese) into a homogenised, stigmatised image of immigrants in the eyes of host countries.

The label "Turco" (Turk) was prevalent in the 1930s and 1940s. The first and second generations bore the brunt of this prejudice, but its effects persist even today, as noted by a Chilean professor:

> My parents and grandparents endured many insults because of this. In fact, at school, they used to call me "Turco"—and it was always said with contempt, as an insult, to imply inferiority. This still happens today. I used to feel so much oppression and cruelty and we had to constantly explain the difference between being immigrants who arrived with Ottoman Empire passports (which were simply travel documents at the time, nothing more) and being Palestinian. Our parents and grandparents fought for this recognition, and now we are more visible as Palestinians in various fields—yet some still call us "Turcos".

Some countries were even less tolerant of immigrants' original cultures, enforcing legal restrictions and impositions on arriving groups. Discussing perspectives on migration, integration and naturalisation, Sayad raises key questions about these processes:

> Must we subordinate current immigration to future (or potential) naturalisation that will complete it? And do we truly have the means to implement such a policy? Must we pre-select the immigrants we need, and what criteria should we use to avoid harming the cultural homogeneity of the nation [...]? (Sayad, 2004, p. 226). Does this passion for equality extend to full inclusion—to integrating into the national (i.e., naturalising) all that is not naturally national? (Sayad, 2014a, p. 52). Who belongs to the nation and who does not? Who can belong, and who cannot? By what means and under what conditions can one belong—and under what conditions will the nation accept this "acquired" affiliation? (Ibid., p. 63).

In El Salvador, for example, while Palestinian descendants now consider themselves fully integrated into society, this was not a smooth process. Early generations were forced into integration through measures that, in the view of a Salvadoran politician, reflected intense racism, mirroring immigration laws in most Latin American countries that barred entry to Chinese and Palestinians.

Forced adaptation also applied to religion in some countries, like Chile, where Eastern Church Christians (originally Orthodox or Roman Catholic) faced laws restricting religious freedom, imposing only the state's secular religion. Not until 1925, when the country's Constitution was amended, did Chile become a secular state.

To circumvent earlier laws and preserve their faith, immigrants in 1917 built an Orthodox church out of clay, hidden from public view behind tall, thick walls because it was illegal. A local politician recounts, "I know the stories of many Muslim children, for example, from families who told their kids that having no religion was better than adopting the state

religion. One could say that the first generation of immigrants before 1925 believed it was better to raise children without any religion".

However, recalling these difficult past situations doesn't seem to characterise Latin American Palestinians as resentful about their initial treatment. As a Chilean religious leader notes, "People used to be afraid of the hijab, but now they ask if my family is okay, considering the genocide in Gaza. They even ask if visitors must wear a hijab. I explain that Palestine actually has cultural diversity and multiple religions".

Dealing with discrimination influenced behaviours and may have reinforced the drive for financial success. A Honduran journalist shares:

> The older community was ashamed to speak Arabic and told their children not to speak it until they were fully integrated—now they're among the wealthiest. When we talk about them, these are the most integrated people. Their success, lifestyle, social circles and education come easily. When asked, they say "my grandfather came from Palestine", communicating this through complete societal integration. This integration reduced racism against them because they became indistinguishable from locals—speaking the host country's language flawlessly, without any foreign accent.

Resistance, Recognition and Belonging

For many Latin American Palestinians who maintain political and emotional ties with Palestine today, this connection stems from how intergenerational family dynamics have preserved, or failed to preserve, their bond to their ancestors' homeland. A Honduran journalist explains:

> I can say the Palestinian cause lives within me. My children's names are extensions of my father and mother. I don't just speak Arabic, but our village dialect. Palestine is our cause, and we must work to raise public awareness. Those in Palestine must resist, and we resist too... We must resist Israel's narrative and clarify what really happened in Palestine.

Maintaining not only Arabic, but also specific regional dialects and speech patterns, appears to have been important for Palestinian families separated from their Middle Eastern relatives. A Brazilian religious leader recalls:

We were playing in the garden with relatives visiting from Jordan to Brazil. They're Palestinian, of course, though not from the villages. As I was in the distant Diaspora, they tried teaching me Arabic. When I said, "How are you?" my father overheard and corrected me: "That's the city dialect! You must say it like a Palestinian farmer—even if you were born in Brazil and live 100 years there!"

This connection emerges similarly in a Brazilian politician's interview, "Perhaps what drew me to the Palestinian movement was hearing my father speak of Palestine every single day at home. First, because each morning he'd say he dreamed of Palestine. Second, because daily we discussed Palestine's occupation or wars".

The testimony of a Honduran journalist, now a vocal advocate for Palestine, makes this particularly clear:

> My connection came because my grandmother would talk to me constantly about Palestine, sharing stories of her childhood there... As I grew older, she began telling me about the occupation—the Israeli occupation and Israel's creation. Interestingly, I was the only granddaughter she spoke to about Palestine. My cousins don't share this connection or my passion for the cause. It began with her stories, but then I developed my own curiosity to research. In university, I sought to learn more about Palestine, my people and origins. I read, researched and asked professors about Palestine, forming my own understanding while building this identity and raising awareness.

Like the journalist's siblings and cousins, an entire generation in Honduras grew up without the same connection, as she continues: "Even though it's the second country with the most Palestinian immigration in Latin America... there isn't that same organisation, that drive to fight for the cause, to say 'I'm Palestinian, I oppose the occupation'".

In El Salvador, resistance remains an ongoing effort to engage younger generations. A Salvadoran teacher shares that she's writing her book of Palestinian stories, focusing precisely on migration, war, occupation and the lives of those who left and those who stayed. "Being part of the Palestinian Association of El Salvador allows me to maintain and help young people understand their roots, their history, their family's story".

A Brazilian politician who chose to advocate for Palestine from a young age summarises diaspora activism, "It's essentially a political, social and communications struggle. Our task is to organise the community, educate them about Palestine's political and historical issues and challenge the hegemonic media".

The information access strategies of Palestinian communities, as revealed in interviews, combine seeking direct information from trusted sources (whether relatives or not) with alternative and international media. For most, maintaining these channels is essential for their sense of belonging and, consequently, their resistance. A Brazilian journalist details:

> We always try to speak with our relatives and contacts in Palestine... And it's no longer just my family that serves as my information source about Palestine. Today I have access through other channels... *Middle East Monitor* provides substantial information on Brazil. I also follow *Al Jazeera* in English.

The strategies employed by these communities, whose topics of interest end up being covered mainly by alternative media with limited reach, reveal how mainstream regional media are failing Palestinian communities. This gap is filled by various channels, including *Al Jazeera* (in English and Arabic), *Middle East Monitor* (in English and Portuguese) and Lebanese *Al Mayadeen* (in English, Spanish and Arabic), among others, which closely cover the Middle East.

Like the Brazilian journalist, virtually all interviewees, regardless of their country of residence, reported seeking news about the war in Gaza through international outlets, such as *Al Jazeera* (frequently mentioned by respondents), the Qatar-based Arab media institution with a global reach and English-language print and broadcast platforms. Western agencies, such as *Reuters* and *Agence France-Presse*, which supply numerous Latin American newspapers, were notably absent as cited sources.

An Argentine teacher's statement encapsulates the general sentiment among interviewees:

> In Argentina, with few exceptions, there's little media coverage (about Palestine) because the press has a very biased perspective. So, we get very little news from mainstream sources. What I try to do—whether through these alternative platforms or news from various media outlets, especially Arab and European ones—is to inform myself in this way.

For a Brazilian professor, the fact that over a hundred journalists have died in Gaza without international media outrage served as a telling indicator of how little interest these outlets have in unfiltered field reporting:

> Many have died, but those who remain keep reporting. What they document on the ground—some even working after losing 20 family members—doesn't interest media here. That's why we must seek alternative sources and continue to expose the failure of Western media.

Peacebuilding from the Perspective of the Diaspora

Since the 1920s, the Palestinian people have cherished the lifelong aspiration of having their own state. I possess letters from my grandfather dating back to 1934 requesting support for the Palestinian cause. Here in the Americas, I tell you with conviction that one day we will reclaim the original Palestine.

This statement comes from a Salvadoran politician, who qualifies that "if not the original Palestine", then at least according to the partition plan recommended by the UN General Assembly on 29 November, 1947.

Perspectives on Palestine's future and how to address Israel's existence as an apartheid and genocidal state may differ among those advocating for Palestinian recognition. However, unity prevails when defending Palestinians and Jerusalem's sacred sites under attack or threat, when denouncing Zionist colonisation, and when seeking international support to end the occupation, apartheid and genocide. The interviews make it clear that for Palestinians, the notion of peace does not precede the notion of justice, which means demanding Israel's accountability for its crimes before international courts.

As for the solution to the Palestinian cause, perspectives vary depending on whether groups are more or less aligned with the Palestinian Authority (PA), established in 1994 under the terms of the Oslo Accords signed in September 1993 between the PLO and the State of Israel as an interim body sharing security functions with Israel, or more or less aligned with resistance movements that reject using the PA to serve Israeli interests. This is exemplified by an Argentine journalist, who argues, "I chose the opposite path (to the PA) because the Oslo framework involves a degree of collaboration with the occupation. With three or four exceptions worldwide, Palestinian ambassadors represent the establishment we strongly criticise".

The PA faces scrutiny from solidarity movements for clinging to power after the 2006 legislative elections, when Hamas won, but was blocked by Israel and the US from forming a government, confined instead to governing Gaza, which endures constant Israeli attacks under the contested claim of "self-defence" in violation of International Law. Some solidarity movements advocate for the two-state solution based on the 1967 borders as their reference point for Palestinian rights. This framework guided Latin American governments led by Brazil in recognising Palestine "within 1967 borders". However, this approach faces growing scepticism due to its practical unfeasibility.

Another vision gaining traction is the single democratic state solution encompassing historical Palestine "from the river (Jordan) to the sea", including territories occupied since 1948, with equal rights for all inhabitants. Proponents argue Israel's 76-year appropriation of Palestinian land and resources has rendered the two-state model impossible. However, some themes unite the resistance more strongly, such as the need to mobilise to end the occupation, apartheid and ongoing genocide, especially in light of the genocide in Gaza and the threats of Judaisation in Jerusalem and the destruction of sacred sites for Christians and Muslims.

Israel's law defining itself as a Jewish state, creating distinctions against non-Jews and severe discrimination against Palestinians, constitutes an apartheid regime, denounced by organisations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Israeli group B'Tselem. This segregationist structure of Israel, along with accusations of ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocidal practices, is shared by various movements advocating for an end to the Israeli occupation and accountability for its crimes.

The condemnation of massacres against Palestinians carried out by Israel following Hamas's surprise attack on Israeli territory in October 2023 is common among all solidarity movements with Palestine. They also emphasise that these massacres did not begin now—the Nakba continues, with Palestinians being expelled from their lands over the past seven decades. Measuring Israeli oppression solely by the number of

Palestinian victims, demolished homes, bombings of civilians or untried detainees is insufficient. This is a colonial occupation and, as such, it perpetuates itself through oppression and force. The use of force escalates as the resistance to the occupation grows.

Faced with the genocide in Gaza and the accelerated ethnic cleansing in the West Bank, international public awareness of the occupation's crimes should increase. Yet, for Palestinians, this has not translated into enough international pressure to force change (Bishara, 2002, p. 285). This was evident in the first two decades of the 21st century, when pressures rose alongside cycles of violence, but never enough to stop it.

Results

It is clear from the sample studied in Brazil, Honduras, Chile, El Salvador and Argentina that the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America, specifically in the countries analysed, has economically contributed to their host nations, as Latin American Palestinians have shown great aptitude and dedication to work in commerce, with many becoming owners of large factories and businesses.

Their connection to Palestine has been maintained primarily through the ability to help their families and loved ones in occupied Palestine by sending money periodically and continuously to this day. The effort to preserve the Arabic language in Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries was also evident. All interviewees demonstrated the ability to speak Arabic with a distinct Palestinian accent, even in families that had migrated over 150 years ago and had never stopped passing the language down.

The interviewees also unanimously affirmed that Palestinian food, such as falafel, maqluba, musakhan and hummus, remains present in their community's traditions and daily meals. On the other hand, it is striking that Latin American Palestinians do not follow the local press and perceive editorial bias favouring the Israeli narrative of historical and current events at the expense of the Palestinian perspective, failing in the principles of objectivity and transparency essential to good journalism.

For all interviewees, information is vital for a community that remains connected to events in their homeland. However, this need is met through strategies that circumvent the role of the press in their host countries. The primary way they obtain news about occupied Palestine is through relatives, friends and loved ones still living there—communication that happens daily, whenever Israeli actions, attacks and blockades (such as bombings and the destruction of Gaza's infrastructure) do not obstruct it. Secondly, the community relies on journalistic content produced by Arab media or outlets covering Palestine through local sources. We observed that outlets such as *Al Jazeera*, *The New Arab*, *Middle East Monitor* and *Middle East Eye* were the most frequently cited sources for Palestinian news, often at the expense of local media.

Yet, underlying the efforts to preserve culture through family and community organisation are deep marks of Palestinian identity in Latin America, rooted in the memory of forced displacement that characterised the migration history of most who arrived in the new land. While many young people came seeking new opportunities, it was the complete lack of

prospects in their previous places of residence or transit that drove them to the Americas. Most, however, were pushed by situations of violence and domination resulting from territorial control and appropriation—conditions often worsened by the hardships of their journeys.

In a way, this memory resurfaces with every new Israeli aggression against Palestine, triggering further displacement and new traumas carried by the Palestinian Diaspora.

Palestine solidarity organisations have become voices for the Diaspora as Palestinian institutional work has significantly evolved, growing more professional and engaging with political spheres to highlight the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation.

The interviewees perceive the pressure of pro-Israel lobbies through the imbalanced coverage of Palestinian issues in local media. This suggests that Latin American journalism is failing Palestinians, the Palestinian Diaspora, Palestine itself and perhaps other matters whose coverage is dictated by the interests of globalised media aligned with US and European agendas.

In this work, it was necessary to revisit the MacBride Report, which long ago advocated for a right to balanced communication worldwide, free from the reproduction of a single dominant narrative. Humanitarian and peace journalism could help rebalance coverage by centring its approach on people, their habitats and their rights, thereby contextualising the root causes of oppression. For this, academia faces an even greater challenge: to train generations of journalists to understand their responsibility towards the future of the world, and to equip them with the professional tools needed to apply the principles of ethical journalism when investigating the facts that shape the future of individuals and humanity itself.

EPILOGUE

This book has aimed to examine the extent to which the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America maintains its identity, language and preservation of its original culture, while also seeking recognition for its integration efforts by host communities and addressing its concerns as Latin American Palestinians connected to the current situation in Palestine.

Nearly a century and a half has passed since the first Palestinians arrived in Latin America. From the beginning of their migration to the present day, we can say that Palestinians in general—regardless of religion, political affiliation or cultural background—have succeeded in keeping the Palestinian cause alive in both popular and official forums across Latin America. Moreover, Palestinians have achieved economic, financial, political and social prosperity and their deep integration into local societies has contributed to this economic stability.

Descendants of Palestinian origin have become an integral part of their host societies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Honduras and El Salvador. These countries have generally fostered positive attitudes towards the Palestinian cause and, at times, maintained a

neutral stance. This has allowed the community the freedom to advocate for their cause and their homeland—beginning with the founding generation (the first wave of migrants) and continuing with second- and third-generation descendants, or, as in Chile (home to the oldest Palestinian Diaspora on the continent), even fourth- and fifth-generation Palestinians.

However, it is noticeable that integration and preserved ties have not necessarily translated into the community's organic engagement in collective political pressure or greater influence in the battle of narratives with mainstream media over the image and social interpretation of Palestinian struggles against Israeli occupation, which the community views as illegal and criminal.

This research has aimed to determine whether these communities exert a significant influence on shaping media coverage of the Palestinian issue and its Diaspora in Latin America, particularly in the study's sample countries: Brazil, Chile, Honduras, El Salvador and Argentina. It also explored the communication strategies and resources, including informal and spontaneous ones, employed by Latin American Palestinians. Additionally, the study evaluated the contributions of humanitarian and peace journalism in developing new approaches to media coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, through an analysis of major newspapers in the studied countries: *Clarín* (Argentina), *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil), *El Mercurio* (Chile), *La Prensa Gráfica* (El Salvador) and *El Heraldo* (Honduras).

Using a sample of newspapers from January 2020 to June 2023, the research employed the keyword *"*Palestine*"*. To broaden the study's scope, in-depth interviews were conducted with 40 individuals across the five countries covered, divided into four categories (communication, religion, academia and politics)—eight interviewees per country. Prior to this, the work provides a historical introduction and a brief overview of the development and rationale behind the creation of the State of Israel, which contributed to an ongoing humanitarian crisis and suffering among Palestinians, forcing displacement while reinforcing their steadfast defence of the internationally recognised right of return. The book includes an introduction on the formation of the Diaspora in the five studied countries, the approximate size of the Palestinian community in each, and the host nations' political stance on the Palestinian issue.

The first chapter presented a historical overview of developments in the Palestinian question, beginning with the conceptualisation of the Zionist project and its aim to promote and organise Jewish immigration, highlighting the first colonies built on Palestinian land. It examined the outcomes of the First Zionist Congress—the Basel Program of 1897—the role of the British Mandate in displacing Palestinians and enabling Israel's establishment and Palestinian resistance from 1917 onwards, including the Al-Buraq Revolt (1929) and the Great Palestinian Revolution (1936-1939). It also briefly addressed the occupation of the Gaza Strip (1956-1957). For Palestinians living under occupation or in exile, Palestine has been systematically seized by Israel with international backing for nearly eight decades. The chapter referenced key resistance movements, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Hamas.

It is evident that the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the lack of social security under its rule significantly contributed to the migration of Palestinians, particularly from

Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour, to Latin America between 1870 and 1914. The aftermath of World War I (1914-1918), including the British Mandate over Palestine and Transjordan following the Ottoman collapse, further spurred migration through the 1920s.

Palestinian suffering and displacement intensified due to British Mandate policies and the rise of Zionist militias like the Haganah, leading to the forced migration of indigenous Palestinians between 1920 and 1948 as they sought safety and survival for their families. As defined by Israeli historian Gershon Shafir (1989), the Zionist colonial movement adopted a hybrid settlement model based on European land control, exploitation of local labour and a European national identity opposed to ethnic diversity.

The 1948 Nakba led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, with massacres like Deir Yassin and others contributing to the systematic and forced expulsion aimed at emptying the land of its Palestinian population, alongside economic, political and social siege. The 1956-1957 occupation of the Gaza Strip caused further forced displacement, as did the Naksa of 1967. This period marked a new beginning for organised armed resistance movements and parties, including Fatah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the PFLP. Over one million people were ultimately displaced, following numerous Palestinian popular struggles, including workers' strikes, the Al-Buraq Revolt and the Great Palestinian Revolution.

The Nakba and Naksa, subsequent economic suffering and limited political prospects drove further Palestinian migration during this phase, particularly from Ramallah and Jerusalem villages, as people sought security and new opportunities. For young Palestinian migrants of that era, the so-called "American dream" beckoned, as the US' reputation for freedom, employment opportunities and rapid economic advancement proved alluring. However, historical records show that most Palestinian immigrants disembarked at the ports of Rio de Janeiro (settling in Brazil) or Buenos Aires before crossing the Andes to Argentina or Chile, only realising upon arrival that they had reached South America rather than North America.

The second chapter examined early hardships faced by Latin American Palestinians, including discrimination, harassment, Turkophobia, Palestinophobia and Islamophobia. They were frequently stereotyped as backwards, reactionary and barbaric by some governments and feudal elites of the period, with Chile and Argentina implementing mid-20th-century entry bans against Palestinian migrants.

While these prejudicial campaigns persist today in diminished form, they stand in stark contrast to the Palestinian Diaspora's demonstrated successes across Latin America, excelling as entrepreneurs, building strong extended families and communities. Their enduring priority remains supporting relatives in occupied Palestine, maintaining commitment to the homeland and steadfastness.

Palestinian-Latin American achievements have ultimately contributed to national development across the continent, with many emerging as political leaders, business figures and influential Diaspora members. This accumulated success across multiple fields has earned recognition for their significant contributions to the progress and prosperity of their host countries.

We explore the concept of "migration as resistance" following Stuart Hall's framework, which interprets diaspora and migration as forms of resistance. Palestinians epitomise the new diasporas created by post-colonial migrations, learning to inhabit at least dual identities and cultural languages while navigating between them. As Hall (2003, p.89) notes, "Hybrid cultures constitute one of the distinctly new types of identity produced in the era of late modernity. There are many other examples waiting to be discovered".

The study also highlighted how the Palestinian Diaspora in the surveyed countries has remarkably preserved its identity while advocating for Palestinian rights. In Chile, for instance, the Diaspora has achieved unprecedented success in maintaining Palestinian identity and advancing the Palestinian cause.

When Chile's Constitution imposed Catholicism as the sole permitted religion (until 1925), early Palestinian-Chileans built their own church to practice their faith. Since the 1920s, immigrants have established the Club Palestino, a community hub that fosters political and popular education on Palestine, teaches Palestinian culinary arts and practices dabke. A significant portion of the Palestinian community in these countries enjoys strong economic standing and political influence, whether through individual achievements or ties to ruling elites across various political spheres.

However, while many Palestinian-Latino Americans wield influence as individuals, they have not consolidated as a unified lobbying group to advance their cause. Politically, some paradoxically align with right-wing parties—despite the Palestinian cause being traditionally championed by the left—only opposing the right when it supports Israel at the expense of Palestinian rights.

Full integration stemmed from several factors, including Latin America's generally lower levels of anti-Arab racism, its openness to immigrants due to shared colonial histories and geographical distance from Western-backed conflicts. Yet, some Diaspora members no longer primarily identify as Palestinian, instead seeing themselves as Chilean of Palestinian origin or Brazilian of Palestinian descent. While undeniably part of the Palestinian Diaspora, their deep integration into host societies must be acknowledged and respected.

The third chapter examined Palestine's portrayal in Latin American media and how humanitarian and peace journalism could reshape coverage. We referenced the MacBride Report (1980) because its critiques still hold true: coverage in all studied newspapers largely follows Northern global agencies, such as *Reuters, Agence France-Presse*, *Associated Press* and *United Press International*, rather than deploying local correspondents in the West Bank or Gaza, where Latin American media lack permanent bureaus.

With this, the narrative follows a kind of global media imperialism in the coverage of Palestine, with clear visibility given to the narrative of the Israeli occupation, naturalising the humanitarian crisis of the Palestinian people, which lacks the practice of humanitarian journalism, objectivity and transparency in reporting. The data showed that Israelis, represented by their ambassador in political capitals, their consul in economic capitals or their public figures, have a greater presence in the written press than Latin American

Palestinians. Islamophobia is also fuelled when residents of the Gaza Strip are described as militants of Hamas and treated as terrorists and extremists.

The timing of publications also demonstrates that, in some cases, events that impact Israel's image receive delayed coverage in some regional newspapers that follow Western media, such as the murder of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

Studies conducted in the field of social psychology indicate that the media is capable of deconstructing the atmosphere of moral panic it promotes around the association between terrorism and Islam. The message disseminated by the media directly influences individual and social perceptions of facts, which, in turn, shape public opinion. If journalistic coverage systematically associates Islam with terrorism, then it contributes to the perception of Muslims as a whole as terrorists, increasing the sense of threat perceived by non-Muslim individuals. Thus, psychosocial theorists (Von Sikorski et al., 2017) corroborate that a change in approach in the coverage of terrorism could weaken fear reactions and, consequently, combat Islamophobia.

In this sense, based on the principles of humanitarian and peace journalism, alternatives emerge to deconstruct the crystallised media representation of the Palestinian cause and its perpetrators. One of the main points of convergence between humanitarian and peace journalism is the importance given to and the encouragement of a plurality of voices in journalistic coverage, an urgent issue when it comes to reports that not only propagate, but also reproduce the official discourse and narratives framed by international news agencies. Humanitarian journalism advocates for the principles of media independence while promoting a more active role in balancing conflicts, providing space for discussions on possible solutions and giving a voice to those who have been unheard so far. These principles align with those of humanitarian and peace journalism, which revolves around fostering a plurality of opinions to expand the critical vision of public opinion, creating a normative model of responsible and conscious media coverage. The premises presented go beyond the inclusion of disparate voices in journalistic texts, which would already represent an advancement compared to the current format of coverage on the Palestinian cause.

The fourth chapter presented interviews that corroborate the difficulties of reflecting regional media. A consensus that can be highlighted is the solidarity and unquestionable support for the Palestinian cause in various possible ways: from investing in Palestinian territories to supporting the resilience of local youth, sending children to live in Palestinian cities and villages, building special homes for them, teaching them the Arabic language and driving the wheel of the local Palestinian economy.

Local integration in the studied countries is widely recognised across various fields, particularly in economics, but also in politics, making Latin American Palestinians present, influential and prosperous. Family and community habits, as well as the promotion of Palestinian traditions, are part of their integration and Latin American Palestinian identity. The presence of Palestinian cuisine, represented by dishes such as falafel, maqluba, musakhan, qidra and hummus, is evident on their tables, even among families who have immigrated over 100 years ago.

In-depth interviews revealed that images of freedom fighters, such as Ghassan Kanafani and Mahmoud Darwish, the symbolic Palestinian scarf (keffiyeh) and images of Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Ibrahimi Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are prominently displayed in their homes, shops, factories and businesses. The naming of boys and girls still follows traditional Palestinian rural customs, where a man names his firstborn son after his father and his first daughter after his mother or his wife's mother (his mother-in-law). One interviewee, whose family arrived in El Salvador in 1870, named his daughter after his own mother, a significant and notable adherence to Palestinian identity and culture.

Regarding the research question focusing on the importance of local journalism (in the five target countries) in covering Palestine and how participants see themselves represented by major media outlets in their countries of residence, it was found that Latin American Palestinians in the studied countries unanimously agreed on their distrust of the so-called mainstream media in Latin America, which international news agencies heavily influence as sources of information. Most stated that they do not follow news about Palestine and the "Israel-Palestine conflict" from major media outlets in their countries, considering that local news on Palestine comes from channels, newspapers and radio stations that entirely reproduce and promote the Israeli narrative.

Latin American Palestinians keep up with news and current events in Palestine in two ways: first, through communication with family, relatives and friends in occupied Palestine and second, through non-Western foreign media, starting with *Al Jazeera*, *Middle East Monitor* (with a Portuguese edition), *Middle East Eye*, *Al Mayadeen*, *Al-Arabi* newspaper and *Al-Jadeed*, accessed online.

When asked about their presence as Latin American Palestinians in their host countries and their excellence in work, nation-building and contributions to the economic growth of the studied countries, the perception was positive: the Palestinian Diaspora is now respected and appreciated by community leaders, the media and sometimes even governments, regardless of their ideological orientation. However, all interviewees reflected on the difficulties of their initial arrival in these countries as a persistent memory within their communities, passed down to new generations. They acknowledge that the beginning was painful and difficult for their parents and grandparents in the 1920s and 1930s.

Given this, the research sought not only to reveal the main characteristics and consequences of media representation based on humanitarian coverage of the Palestinian crisis, but also to propose theoretical and empirical alternatives that functionally contribute to dismantling disproportionate portrayals and ensuring coverage based on objectivity, transparency and journalistic integrity.

The interviews revealed that the Palestinian Diaspora is strongly represented across various commercial, economic and political sectors, with some members even holding positions of power in the Latin American countries studied. However, their influence is often tied to individuals and does not necessarily represent the Palestinian community or society as a whole. One reason may be the absence of a clearly defined Palestinian or Arab political project regarding the Diaspora—or one originating from it—that could harness these unique energies in distant parts of the world to form a lobbying force

pressuring Israel and supporting Palestinian interests. The result is that Latin American Palestinians often succeed as individuals, not as cohesive societies. The case of Chile, and the Palestinian Club represented there, may be a significant exception and could serve as a warning: communities historically, culturally and familially tied to Palestine possess immense potential to build positive international understanding of the Palestinian struggle, a potential that may not yet be collectively mobilised.

Mass media remain riddled with paradoxes, as discussed in the MacBride Report on communication in the Global South. Occupying a central position in today's societal structure, these media outlets amplify the influence of vested interest groups to achieve hidden objectives. This is evident in the Palestinian issue, where the community perceives mass media as a tool to spread individual fear and moral panic, distort the image of Palestinians and employ double standards in media coverage, favouring Israel. The role and understanding of the effects of such coverage within the organised community framework are clear. In a way, having endured the violence of displacement in the past and connecting with Palestinian suffering in the present has sharpened the community's critical view of the media, enabling them to identify common distortions in coverage. This challenge still confronts researchers and advocates of humanitarian and peace journalism. This critical perspective, if shared more broadly, could benefit society at large in the pursuit of peace journalism.

Based on the findings and analyses presented, this work lays the groundwork for further in-depth research on two key areas: first, the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America and second, the media narrative that enables the Global North's approach to dominate news coverage. There is an urgent need for coverage of the Palestinian issue from a humanitarian journalism perspective, with reporters, commentators and photographers operating independently across all Palestinian territories, Jerusalem, Gaza and Ramallah, to transmit news directly, without reliance on imperialist, biased media intermediaries that have long shaped distorted interpretations of Palestinian reality for South American audiences.

This book serves as a call to action, urging efforts within the framework of humanitarian and peace journalism to counter the misinformed public perception of the Palestinian issue and its people. Furthermore, expanding the thematic scope, it is worth suggesting that students in international and humanitarian journalism departments undergo training programmes that include on-the-ground study in occupied Palestine. This is a crucial step in understanding the disparity between mass-produced narratives and a reality grounded in principles of objectivity, transparency and impartiality, free from sympathy or prejudice, yet anchored in professionalism.

Despite the influence of international agencies, Latin American society and politics continue to be divided. In part, the entrenched collective memory of colonisation in the region fuels identification and solidarity with Palestinians under occupation. Politically, a humanitarian perspective is more pronounced in countries with left-leaning governments, such as those led by Presidents Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Brazil), Gustavo Petro (Colombia) and Miguel Díaz-Canel (Cuba). Meanwhile, Israel's narrative is embraced through an Evangelical religious lens, framing the Zionist state's establishment as hastening the Second Coming of the Messiah. Far-right governments, like those of

former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and current Argentine President Javier Milei, reinforce this biblical perspective.

The issues explored in this study demand far greater attention from Latin American media regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. The angles highlighted by the research findings underscore the importance of interdisciplinary journalism in addressing the complexity of a topic as urgent as it is timely.

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1. *Israel Imperial News*, London, March 1968
2. *Haaretz*, 4 July, 1989
3. *The Guardian* (London), 6 September, 1988
4. *Arab News Bulletin*, issued in London, no. 54, 16 January, 1948
5. *The New York Times*, 19 December, 1947

APPENDICES

1. Interview Invitation — Portuguese

Meu nome é Ahmad Sad Alzoubi, sou doutorando do Programa de PósGraduação em Comunicação Social da Universidade Metodista de São Paulo (UMESP), sob a orientação da Profa. Dra. Cilene Victor. Faço este contato para verificar o seu interesse e disponibilidade de conceder entrevista para a minha pesquisa "Palestinos na América Latina: Da cobertura da mídia aos processos comunicacionais para a preservação da cultura, da história e da luta por reconhecimento".

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar como a comunidade palestina na América Latina, com foco em cinco países, tem se sobreposto à sua representação na mídia regional e criado seus próprios meios, processos e trocas comunicacionais e culturais para a preservação de sua cultura, sua identidade e sua luta por reconhecimento.

Devo registrar que o meu projeto de doutorado foi submetido ao Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Universidade Metodista, e todos os entrevistados e entrevistadas terão suas identidades mantidas no anonimato, garantido por meio do TCLE (Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido), a ser enviado e assinado pelo senhor antes da entrevista.

A entrevista se dará por meio de plataforma online acessível, como Skype ou Zoom, com duração de 40 a 60 minutos, a ser realizada por mim. Embora a entrevista seja gravada, esse recurso é apenas para permitir a fiel transcrição das suas respostas, mas a sua imagem e identidade, como já mencionado, serão preservadas. O texto será transcrito e usadas algumas passagens no quarto capítulo da tese.

O roteiro da entrevista está dividido em três momentos: perfil do participante, identificação de práticas culturais e comunicacionais e sua opinião e avaliação acerca da cobertura da Palestina na imprensa do país onde o senhor atualmente reside, no caso, o Brasil.

Certo de contar com o seu apoio, coloco-me à disposição para eventuais esclarecimentos.

Cordialmente,

Ahmad Sad Alzoubi

Doutorando do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação Social

Universidade Metodista de São Paulo

2. Interview Invitation — Spanish

Mi nombre es Ahmad Sad Alzoubi, soy estudiante de doctorado en el Programa de Postgrado en Comunicación Social de la Universidad Metodista de São Paulo (UMESP), bajo la supervisión de la profesora Dra. Cilene Victor. Me pongo en contacto con usted para comprobar que está interesado y dispuesto a conceder una entrevista para mi proyecto de investigación "Palestinos en América Latina: de la cobertura mediática a los procesos de comunicación para la preservación de la cultura, la historia y la lucha por el reconocimiento".

El objetivo de este trabajo es investigar cómo la comunidad palestina en América Latina, centrándonos en cinco países, ha superado su representación en los medios de comunicación regionales y ha creado sus propios medios, procesos e intercambios comunicacionales y culturales para la preservación de su cultura, su identidad y su lucha por el reconocimiento.

Me gustaría señalar que mi proyecto de doctorado ha sido sometido al Comité de Ética de la Investigación de la Universidad Metodista, y que todas las personas entrevistadas mantendrán su identidad en el anonimato, garantizado mediante un Formulario de Consentimiento Libre e Informado (FICF), que será enviado y firmado por usted antes de la entrevista.

La entrevista se realizará mediante una plataforma en línea accesible, como Skype o Zoom, y durará entre 40 y 60 minutos. Aunque la entrevista será grabada, esto es sólo para permitir la transcripción fiel de sus respuestas, pero su imagen e identidad, como ya se ha mencionado, serán preservadas. El texto se transcribió y algunos pasajes se utilizarán en el cuarto capítulo de la tesis.

El guión de la entrevista se divide en tres partes: el perfil del participante, la identificación de las prácticas culturales y de comunicación y su opinión y evaluación de la cobertura de Palestina en la prensa del país donde vive actualmente, en este caso Honduras.

Espero contar con su apoyo y estoy encantado de responder a cualquier pregunta que pueda tener.

Atentamente,

Ahmad Sad Alzoubi

Estudiante de doctorado en el Programa de Postgrado en Comunicación Social

Universidade Metodista de São Paulo

3. Interview Invitation — Arabic

اسمي أحمد سعد الزعبي، طالب دكتوراه في برنامج الدراسات العليا في التواصل االجتماعي في الجامعة الميثودية في ساو باولو(UMESP) ، تحت إشراف الأستاذة الدكتورة سيلين فيكتور. أقوم بهذا التواصل للتأكد من اهتمامك ومدى استعدادك إجراء مقابلة أطروحة الدكتوراه الخاصة بي "الفلسطينيون في أمريكا اللاتينية: من التغطية اإلعالمية إلى عمليات الاتصال للحفاظ على الثقافة والتاريخ والنضال من أجل الاعتراف". الهدف من هذا البحث هو استكشاف كيف أن الجالية الفلسطينية في أمريكا اللاتينية، مع التركيز على خمس دول، تداخلت مع تمثيلها في وسائل اإلعالم الاقليمية وخلقت وسائل وعمليات وتبادل التواصل والثقافة الخاصة بها للحفاظ على ثقافتها وهويتها ونضالها من أجل الاعتراف بها. يجب أن أشير إلى أن مشروع الدكتوراه الخاص بي قد تم تقديمه إلى لجنة أخلاقيات البحث في الجامعة الميثودية، وسيتم الاحتفاظ بهويات جميع الأشخاص الذين أجريت معهم المقابلات بشكل سري، ومضمونة من خلال (TCLE)نموذج الموافقة الحرة والمستنيرة، ليتم إرسالها وتوقيعها بواسطتك قبل مقابلة. سيتم إجراء المقابلة عبر منصة يمكن الوصول إليها عبر الانترنت، مثل Skype أوZoom ، لمدة تتراوح من 40 إلى 60 دقيقة، وسأقوم بإجرائها، على الرغم من أن المقابلة مسجلة، إال أن هذه الميزة تسمح فقط بالنسخ الدقيق ا. سيتم نسخ النص واستخدام بعض الفقرات في اجابتك، ولكن سيتم الحفاظ على صورتك وهويتك، كما ذكرنا سابقا الفصل الرابع من الرسالة. ينقسم نص المقابلة إلى ثلاث لحظات: ملف تعريف المشارك، وتحديد الممارسات الثقافية والتواصلية، رأيك وتقييمك فيما يتعلق بتغطية فلسطين في صحافة البلد الذي تقيم فيه حاليًا، في هذه الحالة، هندوراس. ومن المؤكد أنني سأحظى بدعمكم، وسأظل تحت تصرفكم للحصول على أي توضيحات. مع التحية أحمد سعد الزعبي طالب دكتوراه في برنامج الدراسات العليا في الاتصال الاجتماعي الجامعة الميثودية في ساو باولو.

4. Interview Invitation — Translation to English (adapted)

My name is Ahmad Sad Alzoubi, I am a doctoral student in the Graduate Program in Social Communication at the Methodist University of São Paulo (UMESP), under the supervision of Profa. Dra. Cilene Victor. I am contacting you to verify your interest and availability to grant an interview for my research "Palestinians in Latin America: From media coverage to communicative processes for the preservation of culture, history, and the struggle for recognition."

The objective of this research is to investigate how the Palestinian community in Latin America, focusing on five countries, has overlapped its representation in the regional media and created its own means, processes, and communicative and cultural exchanges for the preservation of its culture, its identity, and its struggle for recognition.

I should note that my doctoral project has been submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the Methodist University, and all interviewees will have their identities kept anonymous, guaranteed through the Informed Consent Form (ICF), to be sent and signed by you before the interview.

The interview will take place through an accessible online platform, such as Skype or Zoom, lasting 40 to 60 minutes, to be conducted by me. Although the interview is recorded, this resource is only to allow the faithful transcription of your answers, but your image and identity, as mentioned, will be preserved. The text will be transcribed and some passages will be used in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

The interview script is divided into three parts: participant profile, identification of cultural and communicative practices, and your evaluation regarding the coverage of Palestine in the press of the country where you currently reside, in this case, Brazil.

Counting on your support, I remain at your disposal for any clarifications.

Sincerely,

Ahmad Sad Alzoubi

Doctoral student in the Graduate Program in Communication Sciences

Methodist University of São Paulo

5. Research Ethics Committee approval letter

Researcher's Statement of Responsibility

I, Ahmad Sad Mohammad Alzoubi, researcher responsible for the research entitled "PALESTINIANS IN LATIN AMERICA: from media coverage to communicative processes for the preservation of the culture, history, and struggle for recognition", declare that:

- I commit to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the information that will be obtained and used for the development of the research;
- the materials and information obtained during the development of this work will be used to achieve the objective(s) set forth in the research;
- the materials and data obtained at the end of the research will be archived under the responsibility of the Methodist University of São Paulo;
- the research results will be made public in scientific journals and/or at meetings, whether favorable or not, always respecting the privacy and individual rights of the research subjects, with no restrictive agreement regarding disclosure;
- CEP-UMESP will be informed of the suspension or termination of the research, through a report submitted annually or at the time of the research interruption; I commit to suspending the research immediately upon perceiving any risk or harm resulting from it to any of the participating subjects that was not foreseen in the consent form.

São Bernardo do Campo, May 5, 2023.

Ahmad Sad Mohammad Alzoubi

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6. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Methodist University of São Paulo — Graduate Program in Communication Sciences

You are being invited to participate in the research "Palestinians in Latin America: from media coverage to communicative processes for the preservation of culture, history, and the struggle for recognition", developed in the Graduate Program in Communication at the Methodist University of São Paulo and under the responsibility of this doctoral researcher, Ahmad Sad Mohammad Alzoubi. The objective of this research is to investigate how the Palestinian community in Latin America, residing in the five focus countries, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Brazil, and Argentina, has overlapped its representation in the regional media and created its own means, processes, and communicative and cultural exchanges for the preservation of its culture, its identity, and its struggle for recognition. You are being invited to be part of a sample of at least 25 and at most 30 adult Palestinians, over 18 years of age, who live in one of these five countries, who were born in some country in the Middle East or in one of these five in Latin America. You have full freedom to refuse to participate or withdraw your consent at any stage of the research, without any penalty for either party. If you agree to participate, your participation consists of granting an in-depth interview, which is a technique based on a script that, in the case of this research, is divided into three categories/parts: 1. participant profile: whether they were born in any of the Middle Eastern countries or in one of the five Latin American countries that make up the research; gender, age, education, profession and occupation, location; 2. identification of the main cultural and communicative practices for the preservation of Palestine's memory, history and culture; identification of the most important representatives of Palestine in the country where the research participant resides (one of the five in Latin America); identification of the main institutions in the country of residence that keep Palestinian history, memory and culture alive; 3. identification of the social role and importance of local journalism (from the five target countries) in covering Palestine; analysis of how participants see themselves represented by the main communication vehicles in the country where they reside (the five target countries); and how these local vehicles could improve coverage of Palestine and its culture. The interview lasts an average of 40 to 60 minutes and its completion, only upon acceptance of this ICF, will be carried out online, through a platform to be chosen by you, such as Zoom, Skype, Teams, Google Meet or even a WhatsApp video call. This interview will be held on the date and time indicated by you, within the research schedule (June to October of this year), and at a time when you are at your residence and not in the work or study environment, aiming for greater freedom. Although the interview is recorded, with your consent, this ICF guarantees your anonymity and the use of information solely and exclusively for academic purposes of this research. All research involving humans involves risks to participants. In this research, the possible risks to you are associated with fatigue or physical discomfort due to the duration of the interview, between 40 and 60 minutes, and possible emotional discomfort or malaise due to the content of the interview, since it will address your memory, history and culture of Palestinians, who have migrated or gone into exile, especially after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the occupation of Palestine. In these cases or in any situation you deem necessary, you have full autonomy to interrupt and/or end the interview, without any harm to either party. Benefits are also expected for you, such as the possibility of

being able to talk about your history, memory and culture that, directly or indirectly, help keep Palestinian history and culture alive, as well as being able to evaluate the role of journalism in approaching Palestine. Based on the research results, another benefit to this group is associated with the possibility of raising awareness in journalism for coverage that values Palestinian history and culture, going far beyond the approach of conflicts and attacks, and consequently reducing prejudice against Palestinians. If you deem it necessary, you have time to reflect on your participation, consulting, if necessary, your family members or other people who can help you make a free and informed decision. (Res. 466/2012-CNS, IV.I.c) You are also assured the right to request compensation and material coverage for damage caused by the research to the research participant. (CNS Resolution No. 466 of 2012, IV.3.h, IV.4.c and V.7) You are guaranteed the maintenance of secrecy and privacy of your participation and your data during all phases of the research and later in scientific dissemination. You may contact the responsible researcher Ahmad Sad Mohammad Alzoubi at any time for additional information at Rua do Sacramento, 230 – Ed. Capa, room 419 – Campus Rudge Ramos, 09640-000 – Telephone: 4366-5814 – Email: cometica@metodista.br, 11 93450-3655; dr.ahmadalzoubi89@gmail.com

This document (ICF) is prepared in Portuguese, Spanish, and Arabic, and you can choose the best language for your full comprehension and understanding of this term.

POST-INFORMATION CONSENT

I believe I have been sufficiently informed regarding the information I read or that was read to me, describing the study "Palestinians in Latin America: from media coverage to communicative processes for the preservation of culture, history, and the struggle for recognition." I informed myself with the researcher Ahmad Sad Mohammad Alzoubi about my decision to participate in this study. The purposes, procedures to be performed, discomforts and risks, confidentiality guarantees, and ongoing clarifications have become clear to me. It has also become clear that my participation is free of expenses. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study and may withdraw my consent at any time, before or during it, without penalties.

I have read and agree to participate in the research.

_____,

_____/_____/_____

Participant's Signature Responsible Researcher's Signature