Palestinian diplomacy and communication in latin america case Brazil

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ABSTRACT
Diplomacy and soft power relations with worldwide countries have been and continue to be ambitious for an official Palestinian institution. Political and diplomatic outreach, media communication, and opening relations and embassies with countries and regimes increase legitimacy and convey the message to decision-makers. In Latin America, before the digital connectivity boom, letters and speeches helped build public opinion in favor of the recognition of the Palestinian State. Today, Palestinians are increasingly seeking diplomatic and media communication with the international community to gain support for their full sovereignty, the end of apartheid, settlements, and the recovery of rights. Along with institutional relations, new technologies—although under the control of large corporations—have been exploited by Palestinians to break the siege and allow communication as an extension of diplomatic efforts. This article intends to highlight the role of Palestinian diplomatic relations and media communication between them and the Brazilian government, aiming for political recognition of Palestine. To this end, the research adopts two methodological procedures: literature review and content analysis, based on in-depth interviews. Seven people who worked in the Palestinian diplomatic corps in Brazil were interviewed, including ambassadors and media figures who contributed to diplomatic communication and appeared in the Brazilian media to gain recognition.

Keywords: Diplomatic Communication, Palestinian Diplomacy, Latin America, Palestinian Embassies, Diplomatic Media, Palestinian Community, Digital Media, Social Media.

RESUMO
A diplomacia e as relações de poder suave com países de todo o mundo têm sido e continuam a ser ambiciosas para uma instituição oficial palestina. O alcance político...
e diplomático, a comunicação da mídia e a abertura de relações e embaixadas com países e regimes aumentam a legitimidade e transmitem a mensagem aos tomadores de decisão. Na América Latina, antes do boom da conectividade digital, cartas e discursos ajudaram a construir a opinião pública a favor do reconhecimento do Estado Palestino. Hoje, os palestinos estão cada vez mais buscando comunicação diplomática e midiática com a comunidade internacional para obter apoio para sua soberania plena, o fim do apartheid, acordos, e a recuperação de direitos. Juntamente com as relações institucionais, novas tecnologias - embora sob o controle de grandes corporações - têm sido exploradas pelos palestinos para romper o cerco e permitir a comunicação como uma extensão dos esforços diplomáticos. Este artigo pretende destacar o papel das relações diplomáticas palestinas e da comunicação da mídia entre eles e o governo brasileiro, visando o reconhecimento político da Palestina. Para isso, a pesquisa adota dois procedimentos metodológicos: revisão de literatura e análise de conteúdo, com base em entrevistas aprofundadas. Sete pessoas que trabalhavam no corpo diplomático palestino no Brasil foram entrevistadas, incluindo embaixadores e figuras da mídia que contribuíram para a comunicação diplomática e apareceram na mídia brasileira para ganhar reconhecimento.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação Diplomática, Diplomacia Palestina, América Latina, Embaixadas Palestinas, Mídia Diplomática, Comunidade Palestina, Mídia Digital, Mídia Social.

**RESUMEN**
La diplomacia y las relaciones de poder con países de todo el mundo han sido y siguen siendo ambiciosas para una institución palestina oficial. El alcance político y diplomático, la comunicación con los medios de comunicación y la apertura de relaciones y embajadas con países y regímenes aumentan la legitimidad y transmiten el mensaje a los responsables de la toma de decisiones. En América Latina, antes del auge de la conectividad digital, las cartas y los discursos ayudaron a construir la opinión pública a favor del reconocimiento del Estado palestino. Hoy en día, los palestinos buscan cada vez más comunicación diplomática y mediática con la comunidad internacional para obtener apoyo para su plena soberanía, el fin del apartheid, los asentamientos y la recuperación de los derechos. Junto con las relaciones institucionales, las nuevas tecnologías —aunque bajo el control de grandes corporaciones— han sido explotadas por los palestinos para romper el asedio y permitir la comunicación como una extensión de los esfuerzos diplomáticos. Este artículo pretende destacar el papel de las relaciones diplomáticas palestinas y la comunicación mediática entre ellos y el gobierno brasileño, con el objetivo de reconocer políticamente a Palestina. Para ello, la investigación adopta dos procedimientos metodológicos: revisión bibliográfica y análisis de contenido, basados en entrevistas en profundidad. Se entrevistó a siete personas que trabajaban en el cuerpo diplomático palestino en Brasil, incluidos embajadores y figuras de los medios de comunicación que contribuyeron a la comunicación diplomática y aparecieron en los medios de comunicación brasileños para obtener reconocimiento.
Palabras clave: Comunicación Diplomática, Diplomacia Palestina, América Latina, Embajadas Palestinas, Medios Diplomáticos, Comunidad Palestina, Medios Digitales, Medios Sociales.

1 INTRODUCTION

Latin American countries inherently have some special relationship with Palestine, as they suffered from Portuguese and Spanish colonialism, additionally to US domination—just as Palestine suffers today from Zionist colonialism and by powerful allies.

The governments of the continent supported the right of the Palestinian people to live with dignity and establish their State within the 1967 borders, and this became evident in the early 2000s with the rise of national liberation movements and popular left parties to power.

Public diplomacy, coupled with communication with international systems and entities, is a crucial issue for Palestinians, who seek to reach, through official institutions and civil society, the world's imagination in favor of their cause of liberation from the Israeli occupation.

Jan Melissen (2005) states that the new public diplomacy is a form of open diplomacy that aims to influence public opinion in external societies with or without the government's consent—with the explicit cultivation of unofficial groups within the domestic sphere of a target state, such as civil society groups, influential individuals and other non-governmental organizations (Melissen, 2015).

Joseph Nye (2003) defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals" without appealing to coercion. Nye interprets that the bases of soft power—norms, ethics, values, style, policies, and institutions—can be referenced by the term "culture" and is one of the many power resources that diplomacy uses as a conscious strategy to influence others (Melissen, 2005, p.8; Nye, 2008). In some contexts, soft power is cultural power (Snow, 2008, p.3).

The dissemination of Mahmoud Darwish's literature is an example of these resources. Translated into most languages, including Portuguese and Spanish, his work
showed a distinct literary genre in conveying the Palestinian message and communicating with societies, making them more friendly to Palestine and appreciative of its liberation. The character "Handala," for instance, also established one of the most comprehensive types of communication, just as the famous novelist Ghassan Kanafani managed to convey his message to the outside world and illustrate the struggle of the Palestinian people through literature.

However, beyond the effort to produce interest and empathy for the Palestinian culture and situation, the diplomatic institutional and mediatic work is also an inducer of this imaginary.

Some diplomatic moments were remarkable in the rapprochement of Latin America with Palestine, such as the serial recognition of the Palestinian State by many of its countries.

Donahue and Prosser (1997) explain that international communication fundamentally occurs in two ways, acting in specific and complementary manners. The first occurs between groups—shared by different collective cultures. The second, also intercultural, is carried out by individuals who speak on behalf of a State, adopting formal speeches (DONAHUE; PROSSER, 1997).

The "circumstances model the creation of the idea, once introduced into the diplomatic discourse, which becomes a circumstance to delimit the diplomatic activity itself" (SANTOS, 2014).

Pimentel and Panke (2020) note:

[...] diplomatic speeches appear as a means for world leaders to develop narratives and plots that give meaning to their actions, reverberating and expanding their reach in the media. From the political communication perspective, these speeches articulate games of disputes and maintenance of power.

However, they agree with Carvalho (2011), Gomes (2011), and Oliver (1950), who claim that there is a scarcity of studies of this discursive genre and highlight, in particular, the lack of communication research.
We found that studies that deal with diplomatic speeches in the area of communication represent only 5% and 6% of the total in the platforms of the Capes Thesis and Dissertation Bank (BTDC); the published and indexed articles in the EBSCO host platforms, respectively (Pimentel; Panke, 2020).

To understand the social communication factor in spreading the Palestinian diplomatic agenda, this work opted for the methodology of sample interviews on the relationship of actors linked to the Palestinian cause with the media.

When we conduct an interview, we act as mediators for the subjects to apprehend their situation from another angle. We lead our interviewees to reflect on themselves. We encourage them to seek relationships and organize them. By providing us with raw material for our research, our sources additionally reflect on their own lives, giving them a new meaning. By evaluating their social environment, they will be self-evaluating, self-affirming themselves before their community and before society, legitimizing themselves as an interlocutor, and reflecting on issues around which they might not have faced in other circumstances (Duarte, 2004).

1.1 DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

In 1951, Brazil established its commission in Tel Aviv. In 1958, the Brazilian government elevated the commission to embassy status.

The relationship with Israel, as well as with other Latin American countries, continued robust and expanding. Diplomats from the continent supported the Zionist project to establish the State of Israel in 1948, endorsing the United Nations Resolution No. 181, when 13 of the 20 Latin American members voted in favor of the partition of historical Palestine into Arab and Jewish. A firm relationship ensued for decades with Israel (Embassies.gov, 2020).

During the government of former Brazilian president Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979), Brazil took into account its economic interests with the Arab world, voting in favor of Resolution No. 3379 (Santos; Uziel, 2015), considering Zionism a form of racism. The US embassy described the vote as "disappointing, desperate, and unjust." (Santos, 2003).

The Camp David and Oslo Accords produced a feeling among Brazilian diplomats that the Palestinian issue could be finally solved, with Jerusalem as their capital. Yet, a
spirit of urgency soon superseded this general feeling: a "pressing, unavoidable task" or a "moral debt" requiring a Palestinian state.

During this period, left-wing movements began to lead a stage of democratic transformation in Latin America. The positions of condemning Israel and supporting Palestinian rights became more manifest in political opinion. One of the most influential reasons was the almost simultaneous rise of left-wing leaders to power in nine countries of Latin America: Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and El Salvador.

After decades of military dictatorships, these countries' liberation movements sought to drive away from a policy of subordination to the United States—responsible for the previous authoritarian regimes on the continent—and build new friendships and alliances in the international sphere.

During his first General Assembly as the Brazilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) spoke openly about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, giving importance to efforts for a solution.

Foreign Minister Celso Amorim (1993-1994/2003-2010) significantly focused on the Palestinian cause. During his first term, he worked for a more direct Brazilian position post-1993, when the Oslo Accords formalized relations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Two months after the agreement, the respective governments promoted the PLO mission in Brasilia to diplomatic status, representing the newly-established Palestinian Authority—therefore, with the same immunity and privileges granted to countries with representations in Brazil. The first ambassador was Ahmed Sobh. Another contribution by Amorim occurred in 2003 when he and Lula met with the Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath in the Egyptian capital, Cairo—resulting in the opening of a Brazilian embassy in Ramallah in 2004. The first Brazilian ambassador was Bernardo de Azevedo Brito. (Baeza, 2011).

After the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2009, Latin American countries varied in their support for Palestine. Venezuela, in the words of its late leader Hugo Chavez—self-declared as a revolutionary heir to Fidel Castro, particularly in his support for Palestine—described Israel as a terrorist state and colonizing power in Palestine. Chavez closed the
Israeli embassy, expelled his ambassador, and opened a new Venezuelan embassy in Palestine. At that moment, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Ecuador followed suit. The UN called for accountability of the Israeli leaders, and Venezuela was the first South American country to recognize the State of Palestine.

On the other hand, Brazil—the largest Latin American country in terms of demography, geography, and economic diversity—sought a kind of political balance by condemning the aggression, however, in a more moderate tone than Venezuela, avoiding some dispute with the United States. Chile and Argentina followed this lead. These countries have signed agreements for technology, economic, and security partnerships with Israel—despite a political position of support for Palestine against the occupation measures in the international arena.

The Palestinians had a notion that Brazil's recognition of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders could help create a positive atmosphere in Latin America toward their cause.

On November 24, 2010, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, sent a letter to Lula asking for recognition of the Palestinian State, arguing it "would be an influential and historic decision by encouraging other countries in the continent and further regions to follow your position" (Fávero; Pinheiro, 2016).

On December 1, the Brazilian president recognized the Palestinian State within the 1967 borders through an official letter. Three months later, all South American countries did the same, except Colombia, at that juncture.

Brazil, through its Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, acted to promote "peace."

Brazilian positions at the United Nations over time are equally in support of the Palestinians and recognition of Israel's concerns about its security. Brazil has, so to speak, a positive diplomatic "legacy" regarding the Middle East, particularly with Palestinians and Israelis. Such "legacy" does not imply that Brazilian positions have always pleased the stakeholders or that—considering the due chronological distance—they seem to us to be the most accurate, but rather that, as added value, we have diplomatic efforts acting, in general, in a balanced and positive way in the search for peace and security in the region (Bandarra, 2016).
Amorim visited the Palestinian territories over five times (2005-2009), culminating in the ensuing visit of President Lula to Palestine and the Israeli territories. Lula invited Abbas to visit Brasilia. In 2007, Brazil participated in the Annapolis Conference, held in the United States of America. It was the only Latin American country present. It was also the first time that Brazil actively cooperated in discussions on fundamental issues regarding peace in the Middle East outside the sphere of the United Nations (Amorim, 2015).

The Latin American continent took a strong stance against the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip in 2014. The Brazilian government condemned the unjustified bombing; Ecuador called its ambassador back from Tel Aviv, along with Brazil, Chile, Peru, and El Salvador.

In her speech before the 69th United Nations General Assembly, former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff stated:

> I would like to reiterate that we cannot remain indifferent to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, especially after the dramatic events in the Gaza Strip. We condemn the disproportionate use of force, which has heavily victimized the civilian population, including women and children. We need to find solutions for this conflict instead of precariously managing it. Effective negotiations between the parties must lead to the two-state solution—Palestine and Israel living side by side, in safety, within internationally recognized borders (Rousseff, 2014).

### 1.2 DIPLOMATIC ROUTE IN BRAZIL

The PLO launched diplomatic relations with Brazil by requesting an official visit to the Latin American country through the Brazilian embassy in Beirut in 1974.

The then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Azeredo da Silveira, considered that the arrival of the PLO delegation "would not seem, at first, to offer major problems from a strictly political point of view" (Fávero; Pinheiro, 2016), considering that it had become urgent to decide on the matter, "at the highest political level and in the light of considerable national interests." The organization wanted then to establish an official liaison mission in Brazil (Hartz, 2016).
The delegation sent by Yasser Arafat, composed of the then director of the Political Department, Abd al-Latif Abu Hijleh, and the head of the Latin American Department, Wadi Muhammad, officially requested the opening of a representation office in Brazil. The Latin American government agreed that the diplomatic mission would operate within the delegation of the Arab League. Salah al-Zawawi assumed as press advisor on Palestinian affairs from April 1976 to February 1979.

The Arab League in Brazil—especially the Republic of Iraq—sought to represent the PLO with an independent office and to install it as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, causing a fierce dissension in the Brazilian press (BRASIL, 1988). A political debate also took place after the legal advisor, Antônio Augusto Cançado Trindade, in an official document, considered that recognizing the PLO autonomous diplomatic status would be an "inadvisable precedent."

At this juncture, the special advisor to President José Sarney, Rubens Ricupero, recommended not to raise the issue at that time (Brasil, 1989, p. 461), allegedly aiming to "study the case" (Brasil, 1986). Only in 1993, after Oslo, Palestine could open a Special Delegation in Brasília, equivalent to an embassy since 1998. In 2004, Brazil opened a similar office in Ramallah. In 2010, when Brazil finally recognized the State of Palestine, the Special Delegation evolved into an embassy.

1.3 PALESTINE-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS

As Edward Said (2003) points out when commenting about the American activist Rachel Corrie, killed in Rafah in 2003, there is a big difference between treating the Palestinian people as a group of individuals and recognizing them as a nation.

Many Palestinian refugees settled in Latin America after 1967, shadowing a wave of immigrants from Bethlehem and Beit Jala to Chile in the early 20th century. These were the beginnings of the Palestinian recognition in the continent. In 1988, the PLO opened its first embassy in Latin America in Nicaragua, following a robust student exchange with Cuba, where dozens of Palestinian students graduated and mastered the Spanish language. Arafat supported their stay in the continent to establish political and
social Palestinian efforts. The opening of Latin American embassies and consulates continued. The following table shows the opening of Palestinian embassies and diplomatic recognition.

Table 1 – Recognition of the Palestinian State by Latin American countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Recognition Date</th>
<th>Borders of June 4, 1967, or not?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>November 16, 1988</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>November 16, 1988</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>February 5, 2008</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>April 27, 2009</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>July 14, 2009</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>December 1, 2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>December 6, 2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>December 17, 2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>December 24, 2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>January 7, 2011</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>January 13, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>January 24, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>January 27, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>February 1, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>March 15, 2011</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>August 25, 2011</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>August 26, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
<td>August 29, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>September 9, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>September 19, 2011</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>September 22, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>September 25, 2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>April 9, 2013</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>September 27, 2013</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>August 3, 2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>July 30, 2019</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
<td>September 14, 2015</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The author.

These diplomatic decisions had an assertive basis of work and communication with the Palestinian community, mastery of the local languages, and understanding of government systems and mechanisms of action.

The official support for the Palestinian cause was also evident in the Latin American general support for United Nations resolutions defending the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, additionally to public disapproval of the Israeli violations in the occupied territories—West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem. The Latin
American support was not limited to recognizing Palestine as an independent state, as most of them also supported the General Assembly Resolution No. 67/19, voted on November 29, 2012, to grant Palestine the status of "non-member observer state" in the United Nations, when only Panama opposed it.

1.4 DIPLOMACY, MEDIA, AND LIAISON

The confrontation and scope of the narratives influence the political positions of the state and sources of pressure when the accepted portrayals clash with decision-making. The UN is an example of the extent of the narratives sensitive to the Palestinian situation, which have generated hundreds of resolutions, and the weight behind the Israeli allegations to ignore them, associated with a notion of "self-defense"—inconsistent with the dynamics of an occupying force against the occupied people (Bishara, 2011). They can only sustain such a narrative by reaching a considerable proportion of public opinion as "a group may be terrorist for some, but freedom fighters for others" (Héctor, 2014).

Taylor (2006) believes that influence begins and ends in the media. And if the fact is not news in the media, it is not happening to the public. For him, the prevalence of the media influences public attitudes instead of its political importance.

The media would also be the most prominent influencing forces on decision-makers by providing allegedly objective and free opinion polls. They indicate that opinions on Israeli public diplomacy vary between those who firmly believe it is one of the most successful public diplomacy in the world and those who consider it a failed diplomacy due to internal and external factors.

But even those who believe in the success of Israeli public diplomacy attribute its effectiveness to the US influence, not Latin America or the Middle East, for example. They attribute this to the strength of the Israeli lobby, especially the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said he was very grateful for the existence of this organization, which he considered Israel's "best friend" in the world (Taylor, 2006).
Gilboa Eytan (2008) believes that public diplomacy is broader than that. From his point of view, the media currently encompasses the information boom represented by the Internet, international satellite news channels, and their rapid propagation mediums.

Instead of letters and speeches circulating in the Latin American media until they unfolded into a wave of recognition of the State of Israel, diplomacy today has new means of publicizing and circulation.

Some say technology is modern as long as it fulfills its role of reaching and influencing the public (Lord, 2006). Therefore, the so-called modern media technology has served, in many developing ways, the Palestinian cause and their social media trends for diplomacy. The aggression in Gaza or the Israeli invasions of the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Gilboa, 2006) earned global attention, bringing to the forefront a renewed global diplomacy talking boldly and clearly to Israel, asking it to stop its violations and acts of aggression (Price; Susan; Margolin, 2008).

The demands for accountability for the journalist Shireen Abu Akleh's execution also amplified the Palestinian and pro-Palestinian voices, even pressuring the public in the United States to request clarifications—considering her citizenship as a Palestinian-American.

The quest for social media control has also grown. According to a statement on December 30 by the Palestinian Coalition for Digital Rights (PDRC) and the Palestinian Council of Human Rights Organizations (PCHRO), Israeli censorship of online Palestinian content has deepened extensively since 2016.

According to the organizations, the so-called Israeli Cyber Unit sent 2,421 requests to social media companies to remove Palestinian content in 2016. That number has grown exponentially since then, as the Cyber Unit alone requested the removal of more than 20,000 Palestinian items. The organizations further warned that new legislation, approved by a Ministerial Committee on December 27, "would only strengthen the relationship between the Cyber Unit and social media companies" (Ramzy, 2022).

Control suggests, on the other hand, a concern with the growing use of social media by public diplomacy and soft power efforts, effectively spreading the Palestinian
1.5 CONTENT ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study intends to highlight the role of Palestinian diplomatic relations and media communication with the Brazilian government, aiming to recognize the Palestinian State. Given that scope, the following presents a path to the methodological construction of Content Analysis.

Laurence Bardin (2011) implies a three-stage method: first, pre-analysis, including a general reading of selected material (in our case, the interviews); second, explore the material, segmenting sentences, defining criteria for categorization by themes. Once done, we group the data thematically, allowing inferences. The third stage comprises the treatment of the results, inference, and interpretation, capturing the manifest and latent contents of the entire material.

1.5.1 Analysis Categories and Methods

At this stage, our study may analyze the established corpus more deeply, aiming to bring the individual record into context. Based on the interviews conducted with seven people who worked in the Palestinian diplomatic efforts in Brazil—including ambassadors and media figures who contributed to diplomatic liaison and appeared in the local media in Brazil to achieve recognition—we established the following categories. For better visualization, we propose the ensuing table.
Table 2 — Categories and Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Analysis Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Diplomatic work and media contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Media opposition to the Palestinian agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Palestinian or Palestinian-connected subjects covered by media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mentions to the Zionist lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Grassroot media production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cultural and academic efforts to propagate the cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>International influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lula’s influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>New media access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The author

The mentioned categories define choices by subject, focusing the examination approach to breakdown the diplomatic and mediatic efforts exchanged by Palestinian actors and the Brazilian government—aiming to recognize politically the Palestinian State, cause, and agenda.

1.5.2 Results, Inference, and Interpretation

Based on the analytical criteria, using our interviews as sources, we found considerable elements searching for a systematic link between them. We may conclude:

1st. Diplomatic work and media contact

The first category of analysis demonstrates that diplomatic and mediatic work has always had a potent connection, to the point that major newspapers and television channels sought comments from our interviewees, turning them into reference voices for Brazilian foreign policy, besides establishing a friendly relationship with political diplomats and media figures in Latin America.

2nd. Media opposition to the Palestinian agenda

Regarding the mediatic opposition or reluctance to the Palestinian agenda, we may understand there is coverage, yet one-sided as a rule. Another relevant issue concerns the fact that the press only highlights Palestine when there are "conflicts"—that said, crimes of war or against humanity committed in the region.
The coverage is often superficial and distorted because of editorial lines and commercial interests. Our interviews also pointed out that mainstream broadsheets and broadcasts, like TV Globo and Folha de S. Paulo, adopt the Israeli narrative, only briefly mentioning Palestine and its people.

3rd. Palestinian or Palestinian-connected subjects covered by media

The third category demonstrates which topics the mainstream media regularly covers regarding Palestine. The current political scenario often incurs in particular coverage of the Palestinians by ideological lenses, especially during the mandate of Jair Bolsonaro.

The interviewees apprehend that the coverage stems almost from the "traditional media, uncommitted to the facts, without the correct contextual analysis" (Interviewee 3).

They also note that the Brazilian media interacts with the Palestinian cause remarkably during the bloodiest assaults on Gaza, when it is not possible to exempt itself from reality since further media also focus on the juncture. An example of a story refers to the interaction between mediatic figures and Palestinian activists during the Lebanese war caused by the Zionist invasion of Beirut.

Interviewee 4 said those images were very impactful for the people: "It was shocking to see the tanks entering the streets of West Beirut. Similarly, there were other incidents of bombings (on Gaza) and mass repression (of the Palestinians). These images, however, are impaired by editorial lines and interests, with the usual reinforcement of the 'symmetric conflict' falsy."

4th. Mentions to the Zionist lobby

This fourth category of analysis brought to light earnest issues about some contingent mentions of the Zionist lobby. Most of the mainstream media, as noted by our interviews, are subject to financial interests or even connected to Evangelical churches, supportive of the Zionist narrative.

One interviewee pointed out the connection between the modern Zionist lobby—funded by the Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy of Israel—and its influence on the Brazilian media. The interviewee states that he does not seek the press; the media seeks him. Yet, for Zionist advocates and their press representatives, the office doors are open to edit.
5th. Grassroot media production

Our study of grassroots media production brought data worthy of mentioning. The bulletin Palestine Today, for instance, played a role in spreading the word, work, official and unofficial activities, and open lectures at universities and research centers.

Interviewee 3 mentions a magazine called Sanaúd—or Palestinian Youth—that frequently publishes breaking news on Palestine, sending it as a national newsletter to embassies, institutions, personalities, and influencers.

6th. Cultural and academic efforts to propagate the cause

By analyzing the cultural and academic action, we see an advance in the identity approach of the Palestinian people. Scholars often say their focus on the issue intends to confront stereotypes or disinformation campaigns. According to these accounts, their research and studies seemingly emanate from mainstream biases. Interviewee 1 also mentioned thousands of copies of Mahmoud Darwish and other authors' books, articles, and essays printed and distributed to the public.

7th. International influence

By analyzing the media influence in more than one country, we see signs of a productive connection between the Palestinian communities through WhatsApp and further networks—in São Paulo, Brazil, and Latin America.

Interviewee 7 explains that "community leaders manage these [social media], responsible for informing associates and partners about the directions and decisions." One of these groups comprises approximately 130 members, focused on social and cultural activities.

There is also a common interest in building missions in other countries. According to Interviewee 1: "I traveled to Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Panama, and Colombia. We wrote letters to President [Fidel] Castro in Cuba, or leaders of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, or took a message from him to several countries in the continent."
8th. Lula's influence

President Lula's reach and approach imply a personal, ideological commitment to grassroots causes, defense of anti-colonial struggles, and frequent response against disinformation campaigns.

In 2007, according to one of our interviewees, Lula headed an executive and legislative delegation meeting every two months with representatives of the Palestinian community.

9th. Media access

Regarding new media access and proficiency, it is noticeable how digital media brought new communication paradigms, enabling to obtain information and interact with several sources, especially by producing content on Instagram or Facebook. These social networks—including WhatsApp—are also instrumental in organizing community activities, debates, marches, and meetings. The new technologies broadened the scope of the Palestinian narrative, building new paths and channels to express critical arguments and thoughts.

2 CONCLUSION

Our interviews and data clarified the scopes and methods of the Palestinian mediatic and political work in Latin America, focused on the Brazilian case. Palestinians have worked in contact with decision-makers and influential figures in domestic politics for decades, looking for recognition despite a hitherto restricted representation.

The Brazilian media is biased toward the Israeli narrative, portraying the Palestinian people specifically in the context of the Israeli assaults on the Gaza Strip or the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Brazilian left-wing governments of Brazil have been closer to Palestine. Previous governments were not necessarily hostile, but Lula's position was more active in the continuous defense of the Palestinian people, recognizing Palestine within the 1967 borders. Lula's approach is also remarkable for its positive impact on further South American countries that, soon after Brazil, also recognized the Palestinian State.
Former Foreign Minister Celso Amorim worked proactively since the mid-nineties, with a distinct interest in Palestine in the post-authoritarian era.

Brazil, in its democratic era, customarily adopted a policy of independence regarding the Palestinian issue, renouncing some external influence, as it happened with Osvaldo Arranha in 1947 when he presided over the UN session to approve Resolution No. 181, namely the Partition of Palestine, effectively creating the State of Israel.
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