THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA: METHODS OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION

A COMUNIDADE PALESTINA NA ARGENTINA: MÉTODOS DE COMUNICAÇÃO MIDIÁTICA

LA COMUNIDAD PALESTINA EN ARGENTINA: MÉTODOS DE COMUNICACIÓN MEDIÁTICA

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ABSTRACT
This article aims to highlight the Arab-Palestinian institutions' role in working for Palestine and contributing through their political relations to transmit their message in the media, how far the media response has been in addressing the situation of the Palestinian people under occupation, and the extent of the Israeli influence on the Argentine press. This research adopts two methodological procedures: literature review and in-depth interviews. We interviewed five people who worked with Palestinian institutions in Argentina, among the first Palestinians to immigrate, four journalists interested in politics, and one politician interested in media. Through these answers, it becomes clear to what extent they were able, through their activities over the years, to transmit the voice and message of the Palestinian cause to the Argentine media and impact public opinion in the face of the influences of the Israeli narrative.

Keywords: Communication; Argentina; palestinian community; media coverage; identity.

RESUMO
Este artigo tem como objetivo destacar o papel das instituições árabe-palestinas no trabalho pela Palestina e contribuir, por meio de suas relações políticas, para a transmissão de sua mensagem na mídia, até que ponto a resposta da mídia tem abordado a situação do povo palestino sob ocupação e a extensão da influência israelense na imprensa argentina. Esta pesquisa adota dois procedimentos metodológicos: revisão da literatura e entrevistas em profundidade. Entrevistamos cinco pessoas que trabalharam com instituições palestinas na Argentina, entre os primeiros palestinos a imigrar, quatro jornalistas interessados em política e um político interessado em mídia. Por meio dessas respostas, fica claro até que ponto eles conseguiram, por meio de suas atividades ao longo dos anos, transmitir a voz e a mensagem da causa palestina para a mídia argentina e impactar a opinião pública diante das influências da narrativa israelense.

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THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA: METHODS OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Palavras-chave: Comunicação; Argentina; comunidade palestina; cobertura da mídia; identidade.

RESUMEN
Este artículo pretende destacar el papel de las instituciones árabe-palestinas que trabajan por Palestina y contribuyen a través de sus relaciones políticas a transmitir su mensaje en los medios de comunicación, hasta qué punto la respuesta mediática ha abordado la situación del pueblo palestino bajo ocupación y el alcance de la influencia israelí en la prensa argentina. Esta investigación adopta dos procedimientos metodológicos: revisión bibliográfica y entrevistas en profundidad. Entrevistamos a cinco personas que trabajaron con instituciones palestinas en Argentina, entre los primeros palestinos que inmigraron, a cuatro periodistas interesados en la política y a un político interesado en los medios de comunicación. A través de estas respuestas, se pone de manifiesto hasta qué punto fueron capaces, a través de sus actividades a lo largo de los años, de transmitir la voz y el mensaje de la causa palestina a los medios de comunicación argentinos e impactar en la opinión pública frente a las influencias de la narrativa israelí.

Palabras clave: Comunicación; Argentina; comunidad palestina; cobertura mediática; identidad.

1. Introduction

Despite the geographical distance of the Argentine Republic from Palestine, there was always pressure on the country to take a position on the Israel-Palestine issue. But since the 1947 UN Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine, when it abstained from voting, Argentina has sought to maintain a position of equidistance, with preference for one side or the other at certain times. Like other South American countries, Argentina supported the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders and, in this regard, has always supported the Palestinian right.

Carlos Ortiz de Rozas, former Argentina's representative at the United Nations, ratified in 1976 two resolutions recognizing the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as "a fundamental actor to achieve a just and lasting agreement in the region and condemned the [Israeli] settlement policy."

Argentina's position at that time was primarily consistent with that of the late President Juan Perón, who saw that it was possible to have greater freedom to make decisions and vote against the United States, showing a degree of political independence. On a particular note, Argentina saw the French colonial withdrawal from the Arab world as an opportunity to build ties with those emerging...
countries.

It is noteworthy that the Arab, Syrian and Lebanese community in general, and the Palestinian community in particular, despite a relatively small presence, displayed a positive attitude towards the position adopted by President Perón.

In 1947, a Lebanese diplomat met with Perón to request government support for the Arab position in the upcoming UN vote on Palestine. According to newspaper reports, Perón suggested to his guest that Argentina's position was unequivocal and that his country was in solidarity with the Arab cause.

The Arab League and the relevant communities received the ensuing abstention as a discreet alignment with the Palestinian cause. The Syrian-Lebanese Society of Santiago del Estero, the Syrian-Lebanese Club of San Juan and the Arab-Muslim Society of Córdoba Province, among other Arab civic organizations in the country, sent notes of gratitude to the government. The Arab newspaper Los Dones de Tucumán – the Arab provincial stronghold of Argentina – thanked Perón for its support to the Arab cause, as did the Central Arab Committee for Aid to Palestine.

Among the most prominent Arab figures in Argentina who worked to prevent a vote in favor of partition were the committee's secretary general, the Peronist Elías Richa; the Palestinian director of the Arab Library in Argentina, Ibrahim Hallar; and the head of the Arab League delegation to Latin America, Akram Zuaiter, who arrived in Argentina in 1947.

Zuaiter created the Argentine-Arab Committee, calling a meeting with other Argentine-Arab groups to coordinate actions pro-Palestine. The committee proved its efficacy in centralizing and mobilizing Argentine Arab communities from then on.

Hallaar encouraged the organization by scheduling visits by senior Arab figures to Argentina to meet with State authorities. In 1947, Hallar received Mahmoud Azmi Bey, one the most prominent members of the Arab League, whose visit gathered particular interest from the media.

The Palestinian question, as called by the UN, emerged at a remarkable moment for Latin America. Before the expansion of the UN from 60 to 80 members in 1957, Latin America represented the largest voting bloc in the General Assembly. As UN resolutions required a two-thirds majority, Latin
America became the main target of the Arab and Jewish lobby (KLICH, 1995).

Elías Richa and Ibrahim Hallar participated in a public act celebrating the decision. Hallar congratulated the crowd and noted that Argentina was a symbol of resistance to the unjustified cause of a Jewish national home in the Palestinian lands. An Argentine circular made headlines in October 1947, thanking Perón for his pro-Arab policy. Scholar Edward Glick concluded that the vote on partition "to a large extent [could] be explained by the influence of its Arab communities" (GLICK, 1958).

The vote triggered a sudden and rapid increase in Argentina's diplomatic activity in the Arab world. Ignacio Klich rightly states that "despite the Middle East's distance from Argentina's 'normal orbit of interest,' Perón's first two electoral terms witnessed the expansion of the previous regime's ties with that region" (KLICH, 1997).

Arab institutions such as the Syrian-Lebanese Club, the Lebanese National Assembly and the Arab-Islamic Community of Córdoba province commended the Argentine Republic for supporting their international position. As Hall mentions, foreign communities and the concentration of people in some areas can impose a fait accompli and influence those around them, and that is what happened with the Arab community in Argentina.

Despite Perón's position in support of Palestinian rights against partition, he quickly backed down from the position, seeking not to displease Israel. He appointed Pablo Mangel as the first Argentine ambassador to Israel and was the first Latin American government to establish formal diplomatic relations with the new State (JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBRARY, 2012).

In the following decades, Argentina signed trade agreements and had major exchanges with Israel, including the acquisition of equipment during the Malvinas War, while Israel had a persistent demand that Argentina not pressure it with condemnations in international forums.

While Israel was paramount for Argentine diplomatic interests, "Palestine was one of the most important markets in the Middle East for Argentine products after the Second World War" (KLICH, 2014).

In his speech before the fortieth General Assembly in 1985, Argentine
Counselor Dante Caputo emphasized concern for the Palestinian issue. By supporting the Palestinian right to an independent State and the rights of "all states in the region, including Israel, to live within secure and internationally recognized borders," the counselor condemned the violent advance of the occupation (CAPUTO, 1985). "For the same reasons, we condemn all actions that threaten the existence of these rights, such as the occupation of territories by force, and acts of terrorism and violence that ruin lives, destroy families and maim children and young people" (CASTRO, F.; CASTRO, F., 2009).

Fabiani (2014) recalls the concern of Israelis and pro-Israel Argentines in the mid-1980s regarding the possibility of opening a PLO representation in the country, as expressed both in favor of Arab leaders and in opposition to the Zionist-biased media agencies.

Even the traditional daily of the Argentine Financial Field mentioned the pressures on the government coming from the Arab market and the Jewish community, in favor and against such a measure. In this context, the DAIA (Delegation of Argentine Israelite Associations) requested a meeting with the national authorities to express their resentment at the authorization, especially considering Argentine solidarity with the Third World at a time when the Non-Aligned Movement was considering nominating the country for the group's presidency. During the meeting, President Alfonsin assured that he would not give "any support to any initiative that could harm national unity" (JTA 1985 apud FABANI, 2014).

The Argentine government maintained for years a positive relationship with the Jewish community. Argentina was even among the countries considered as possible addresses for a Jewish national home before the establishment of the State of Israel in Palestine. But even so, the government did not automatically lean towards support for Israel, as claimed by the community after the vote on the partition, and sought to maintain its historical stance of equidistance, sometimes quite critical, as was the case with Israel's action in Lebanon and the Palestinian Intifada.

For example, President Alfonsin canceled a visit to Tel Aviv in response to the Israeli repressive treatment of the Palestinian popular uprising. As Fabani (2014) recalls, his was the first democratic government of Argentina after years of the bloodiest of military regimes, and Alfonsin "was not willing to visit a country whose action was being strongly criticized by the international community"
THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA: METHODS OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION

(ALFONSIN apud FABANI, 2014).

Argentina's position "was generally characterized by avoiding the extremely critical resolutions of Tel Aviv, which contained recommendations for actions of armed struggle against this country" (FABANI, 2014).

The Arab community in Argentina, the country's third most relevant, has its roots in the late 19th century. However, it institutionally organized its ranks during the 1970s.

Arab descendants, especially Lebanese and Syrians, are well integrated into Argentine life at various levels of influence. We cite, for example, Carlos Menem, former president of Argentina; Juliana Awada, former first lady of Argentina; the famous journalist Daniel Haddad, owner of Radio Belgrano; Jorge Antonio; and many famous footballers, players, and coaches.

The cultural diversity and these personalities' prominence imply overcoming difficulties of the early 19th century, when Arabs were cautious to speak their native language, fearing racism.

The Federacion de Entidades Argentino Arabes (FEARAB), a tertiary institution that brings together several provincial federations, was created in 1972 and has generally maintained a friendly relationship with the various national administrations since then.

In 1984, a group of Chilean exiles of Palestinian origin who left the neighboring country and settled in Argentina after Pinochet's military coup formed a theater company—building an exchange space for Argentines of Palestinian origin and a starting point to gather the community and publicize the situation of the Palestinian people in the host country (MONTENEGRO; SETTON, 2009, p. 6).

The same year gave birth to the Sanaud Argentine-Palestinian Cultural Center, with the mission of disseminating these territories' history, culture, and politics. In 1987, the Argentine-Palestinian Federation was created. In the early 1980s, when the Argentine Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian People was created, there was still no Palestinian National Authority.

The Information Office in Argentina was born in 1985. In the words of one who was its director and general secretary, Suhail Akel, the group sought "the
claim of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the dissemination of the Palestinian question, the remembrance of key dates for our people" and particularly "the defense of the recognition by the Argentine government of a future diplomatic office of the Palestine Liberation Organization" (DIARIO RIO NEGRO, 1989 apud FABANI, 2014).

The country's position has changed more than once recently. Some swaying became evident when Argentine President Alberto Fernandez, who took office in 2020, chose Israel for his first official visit, precisely on the anniversary of the Holocaust.

2. Argentine Presidents and their Roles in Media Communication

Based on the Arab-Palestinian institutions' role in working for Palestine, based on a literature review, it will be presented how they contributed through their political relations to transmit their message in the media; the extent of the media's response in addressing the situation of the Palestinian people under occupation; and the extent of Israel's influence in the Argentine press.

Juan Domingo Perón was a military man, Argentine politician, and president of Argentina for three terms: from 1946 to 1952, from 1952 to 1955, and from 1973 to 1974. For him, Argentina's rejection of the Israeli embassy transfer from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem did not favor the deepening of the bond between the two countries. Concerning this issue, Argentina maintained its position even after appeals and efforts from Israel.

Alberto Fernandez participated in Carlos Menem's administration and was a councilor of Buenos Aires for one term between 2000 and 2003. From 2003 to 2008, Fernández was Chief of Staff of the Argentine Nation, holding the position throughout the presidency of Néstor Kirchner and part of the presidency of Cristina Kirchner. In his view, the embassy transfer would be counterproductive and contrary to the policy of equidistance. A decision of this nature would undoubtedly have affected relations with some countries in the Middle East, with which Argentina was also interested in preserving its trade partnership. Despite the recognition of the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, Argentina has a media and journalistic ceiling to deal with the Palestinian cause.

Carlos Saúl Menem Akil was an Argentine politician who served as
President of Argentina from July 8, 1989, to December 10, 1999. In 1990, Menen allowed the inauguration of the first PLO Buenos Aires office but did not officially recognize the organization. The ensuing measure only happened in 1996, with the Argentine recognition of the Palestinian National Authority, after Israel and the PLO recognized each other, which preceded the signing of the Oslo Accords (FABANI, 2013).

In 2005, a year after Yasser Arafat's passing, the elected president Nestor Kirchner signed a decree authorizing the opening of an Argentine diplomatic office in Palestine. However, Kirchner signed agreements with Israel on agricultural cooperation and industrial development as soon as the following year.

Argentina opened its representation in Ramallah in 2008, under Cristina Kirchner's administration (2007-2015). In late 2010, the president sent a message to her counterpart from the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, recognizing "a free and independent (Palestinian) state, within the borders existing in 1967“ (FABANI, 2013).

During Mauricio Macri's administration, on September 11, 2017, Argentina received for the first time the visit of an Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, itself a media highlight. In June 2018, under a boycott campaign, the Argentine football team refused to play a friendly match with Israel (BUSSO; BARRETO, 2020).

The following president, Alberto Fernandez, unprecedentedly chose Israel for his first visit after his inauguration in January 2020. That year, Argentina approved the IHRA definition of antisemitism. Concerning the move of Israel's capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Argentina maintained its opposition, as contrary to the policy of equidistance, potentially affecting relations with some Middle East countries (ANDERSON, 2020).

3. Inquiry Analysis

We conducted five interviews with people working in institutions for Palestine in Argentina, four journalists interested in politics, and one politician interested in media. Through these answers, it becomes clear to what extent they were able, through their activities over the years, to convey the voice and
message of the Palestinian cause to the Argentine media and influence political public opinion in the face of the influences of the Israeli narrative. To preserve the identity of the interviewees, we refer to them with the letters R1, R2, and so forth.

The table below shows the references of each interviewee, namely:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N.</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Birth and Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Palestinian psychologist, labor activist, and translator of several books.</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Al-Bassa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Soccer player.</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>San Antonio Oeste, Argentina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Journalist, foreign correspondent.</td>
<td>R4</td>
<td>Born in the city of Villarica, Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>R5</td>
<td>Syrian-Argentine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The author.

3.1 Interviewee R1

According to interviewee R1, there was a large wave of Arab immigration to Argentina from the late 19th century to the first quarter of the 20th century, especially during the Ottoman rule of the Middle East. Arabs who emigrated during the Ottoman period considered themselves of "Arab" nationality since Lebanon, Syria, or Palestine did not formally exist as independent states. Their shared national identity orbited on their territorial, linguistic, and cultural unity and ethnic and religious diversity. Diversity was not only a matter of tolerance but also a source of pride since, for Arab culture, "differences enrich" the community.

For all these reasons, the Arabs of that time had a worldview and a national consciousness very distinct from those produced by the Arabs after the European occupation, which forced each country to fight separately to find their independence. That is why these Arabs founded social, cultural, and educational institutions in various areas of the country, bringing together Arabs of any
THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA: METHODS OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION

did not have geographical, ethnic, and religious origins—without distinction. They also founded newspapers and magazines, some bilingual (Arabic-Spanish). Many of these associations have, however, disappeared.

Among these Arab immigrants, there was a diminutive number of Jews, mainly from Dimashq (Damascus), who participated in Arab institutions alongside Christians and Muslims until 1948, when Israel settled on Palestinian soil, and they isolated themselves from these institutions to found Zionist associations with Ashkenazi (European) Jews, devoting to spreading the Zionist ideology and the Hebrew language.

Likely, many Palestinian descendants do not even know their Palestinian origins since the early Argentine State frequently registered them as "Syrians."

Since the Ottoman Empire was responsible for issuing their original documents, the Argentine public adopted the term "Turks" to refer to Arab citizens, showing an incognizance of the cultural and identity differences between Turks, Arabs, and Muslims. Such designations may also demonstrate an almost non-existent influence that Arabs have had on Argentines. Therefore, Arabs there were arguably invisible.

The Palestinians arriving in the country before 1917 were very few and primarily peasants, very young, with no immediate self-awareness of Palestinian national identity, but rather "Arab." It was some of their descendants who founded some Palestinian associations—starting in the 1980s.

Meanwhile, Arafat appointed PLO diplomatic representatives for several American countries—after Oslo, recognized as "ambassadors." It was through these "representatives" that the Fatah leaders, mainly from Brazil and Chile, promoted the creation of Palestinian federations aiming to manage the community of Palestinian origins. They then promoted the creation of COPLAC (Palestinian Confederation of Latin America and the Caribbean), aiming to ensure political control throughout the continent.

Interviewee R1 states that in his entire life, he has only met about 30 Palestinian families residing in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. The first group, the majority, are descendants of Christian Palestinians who emigrated before the First World War. The second group comes from Chile, from equally
Christian roots of the Ottoman era, especially from Bethlehem city and their neighboring villages, such as Beit Jala and Beit Sahur. Almost all of them are closely related to the Palestinian embassy, and their "activism" is more focused on the Palestinian Authority than the national cause. The third group refers to Palestinians born in Palestine or exiles from the Arab countries; they are Muslims who emigrated in the last ten years.

In 2017, seven families created the association Casa Palestine. Two families were from Yarmouk, originally from Saffuriya and Al-Mujaydil, An-Nassira district; four Argentines, originally from Al-Bassa, Al-Birwa, and An-Nassira district; and one Venezuelan, originally from Salfit, near Nablus.

The Argentine media only talks about Palestine when there is a very bloody event, for example, a new round of Gaza bombardments. Apart from that, Palestine does not exist here either in the media or in textbooks. When they mention it, they almost always do so according to the Zionist narrative, rarely consulting Palestinian citizens, not even the Palestinian embassy.

Few Argentine journalists sympathize with the cause. But even they only talk about Palestine in the cases mentioned. No media deals with Palestine customarily.

3.2 Interviewee R2

The second interviewee was a football player. He had good times with the Palestinian national team, describing it as an excellent experience, playing for the Spanish Union of Chile when they found out he was of Palestinian descent.

He made it a point to tell a little of his story, saying that:

My grandparents came fleeing from the war and arrived by boat in Argentina. The truth is that many people in Argentina do not know what is happening in Palestine or do not know the reason for the conflict.

A relevant fact refers to a match between Argentina and Israel canceled by Argentine authorities because of alleged risks to the players. The interviewee claims to be an elite athlete and recognizes that the challenges are daily and prominent—as today's football is changing and requires adaption. The media described him as Chilean, as he was in Chile when the regular team called him up. The interviewee claims not to know outstanding historical figures of the
Palestinian community in Argentina in the past and present. For him, people must know the history of Palestine to understand the Palestinian struggle.

3.3 Interviewee R3

The third interviewee states that some relatives stayed in Lebanon, Syria (Damascus, Hama, and Skalbie), and the rest in Latin America (Argentina). New generations moved to the US, Guatemala, Germany, and Australia.

In Argentina, there are TV channels by air, such as Channel 2, Channel 7 Public Television (state), Channel 9, Channel 11 (Telefonica de Argentina), Channel 13 (owned by Grupo Diario, owner of Clarín newspaper, plus 280 cable TV channels in the whole country. In Buenos Aires, some cable television channels compete with the air channels in news, surpassing them in rating. Channel 5, for instance, is close to the current government.

The most prominent corporate newspapers are Clarin, made from a pool of companies, and La Nacion, the oldest newspaper in the country, owned by the family of Bartolome Mitre, oligarch, former President of the Republic, and governor of the province of Buenos Aires. There is also Diario Cronica, a popular tabloid, related to Cronica TV; Pagina12, related to a cable channel dedicated to news and information and currently owned by a pool of contractors, remarkably close to the government.

Zionist ideologues arguably co-opted most of the traditional media in Argentina in the last two or three decades. The Palestinians, in particular, and the Arabs, in general, have managed to create some fissures in the scale of censorship regarding the subject, especially the Israeli massacres in Gaza and the brutal repression in the Occupied Territories.

The interviewee considers that Palestine is not part of the media agenda, with rare exceptions. Alternative journalists and communicators work to relatively surpass the censorship about Palestine and other popular struggles for freedom and self-determination.

Historically, Argentina has always received immigrants in general, with solidarity and fraternity, since the first arrivals of the early 1900s. In recent decades, Argentina received Syrian refugees with remarkable affection. The
same happened in the 1990s with Koreans and, in recent years, with a massive Chinese community, for example. The Palestinians, like other Arabs, have blended very well with the national culture, adopting Argentine customs and habits of different origins and expanding their adaption capabilities. The public is generally attentive and empathetic with causes for freedom and self-determination.

The appearance of the Palestinian community in the media was noteworthy from 2003 to 2015, spreading to the administrations of Nestor and Cristina Kirchner. During Macri's former government, however, the interference of Zionism in the media was more than noticeable.

The current Palestinian coverage occurs when there is a massacre or invasion of Gaza that transcends the Israeli-promoted censorship. There are no specific partners of the Palestinian media. Although some individuals or particular networks are somewhat supportive, they are not so explicitly so. We can mention Channel 5 News, Radio AM 750, Radio Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Radio Rebelde AM 740, but not many more.

Some institutions are just a stamp, sponsored by the different ambassadors, especially in the city of Rosario (Santa Fe) and the Federation of Palestinian Entities of Argentina, in Buenos Aires, of which our interviewee was co-founder, around 1985-1987. However, in 2017, the activist and the organization parted ways. Blowback is the lack of effective elections to executive authorities, denounces the account.

For the third interviewee, the real challenge for the Palestinian communities, at least in Latin America, is democracy.

In his words:

[...] I am clear and resolute in my convictions, condemning any endemic corruption. The radio program Detrás de los Muros, adding voices of the Palestinian diaspora in Argentina, is my personal project, without advertising or financial contributions, intending to be independent in what we may say. It is a two-hour program dedicated almost exclusively to Palestine, although it dedicates a few minutes to Argentina and the Middle East.

3.4 Interviewee R4

The fourth interviewee fell victim to the persecution of military dictatorship...
in Chile, as he then focused on the world of culture and music, diametrically opposed to the regime. Therefore, these sectors formed an "underground" circuit through which they could develop cultural and artistic expressions and political mobilization.

In this context, he traveled to Buenos Aires in May 1983 to see Joan Manuel Serrat, a Catalan artist performing in the Argentine city. He stayed in for a month. However, turning to the Chilean consulate, the officials warned him to stay—otherwise, they would arrest him at the airport. This ban and forced exile lasted for over a year until the authorities removed him from the persecution lists. Nevertheless, after a few months in Chile, he decided to return to Argentina, remaining to this day.

According to his account, the Palestinian presence in the Argentine media is virtually non-existent, except for social networks and electronic media, with almost no access or coverage. The exception is when the Israeli army attacks the Palestinian people in Gaza, episodes in which the local press does not produce its information but replicates foreign agencies.

Partners of Palestine in Argentina are some alternative media networks and organizations, such as palestinasoberana.info, resumelatinoamericano.org, Argentine League for Human Rights, Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, the association of Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, Radio Rebelde AM 740, and Radio Graph.

In general, the degree of receptivity in Argentina depends on the government in power at a given time. Perhaps the media reached its most prominent breakthrough during Cristina Kirchner's former administration, which recognized Palestine as a free and independent State in 2010 and granted President Abbas the status of a formal State visit. At the time, the media had no choice but to cover entirely the subject. In addition, the then president, when speaking at the UN General Assembly, regularly referred to the Palestinian State according to the norms of international law.

As president of COPLAC and member of the Palestinian National Council, the most prominent channels in Argentina or Latin America to give some window are the newspaper Perfil, the TV channel C5N, TN Noticias, Radio Nacional,

The interviewee may soon reach 70,000 followers online, especially on Twitter, becoming a reliable source of serious, well-founded, and profoundly respectful information, free of corporate bias or aggressiveness.

He says:

[...] I always mention the information sources so that no one can arbitrarily refute my statements [...] Gradually, several media outlets contacted me, such as Telesur, Hispan TV, Russia Today, Sputnik News, Palestine International Broadcast, Anadolu, among others, complementing my role as correspondent for Radio/Diario Universidad de Chile and opinion columnist.

3.5 Interviewee R5

Finally, we conclude with the reflections of interviewee 5. For him, the Palestinian media presence is "zero," except when there is a situation with graphic images. Apart from some pockets in radio programs, the Palestinian media presence on television is near zero.

He affirms that when they propagate some Palestinian narrative, it is only within the context of climatic or health disasters, along with a patronizing, colonizing perspective. For example, as news came that Palestinians needed vaccines, they spoke of the excellence in Argentina.

The interviewee says that:

As a journalist, I do not have space in the media to comment on the subject since the discourse focuses on externalizing the political and military circumstances, validating the crimes committed against the community.

For him, there is no better or worse government regarding Palestine, only specific attitudes of aid or support in issues such as the white and blue helmets, supervision, or peace missions. Otherwise, there was never a pro-Palestine government, except for some actions such as Cristina Kirchner's, who set up a consulate in Ramallah—yet condemned by the occupying power.

The media often intersects the Palestinian subject with Islam. However, with little information or awareness about both matters, it effectively distorts
THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN ARGENTINA: METHODS OF MEDIA
COMMUNICATION

concepts and realities in the field.

4. Conclusions

Our research clarifies that the Palestinian community in Argentina is numerically diminutive, with no official census—yet varying between 3,000 and 5,000 families. Appearances in the media, newspapers, and television interviews occur more specifically about the reiterated attacks on the Gaza Strip. The interviews also highlight that the Zionist lobby substantially subdues the Palestinian cause in Argentina by influencing the media narrative in a way recognized by the five interviewees.

However, internal and external pressures from Arab or Jewish immigrant communities, at diplomatic and political levels, seem more decisive for official Argentine policies on the Palestine-Israel issue than the media-oriented work. Like other countries in the continent, Argentina expressed support for the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders, shortly after Brazil, and within a wave of recognition in South America and the Caribbean.

If, in the period of partition, there was an effort by the Arab communities to organize an awareness campaign and mobilize press freedom, the censorship of the military regime effectively hampered these initiatives, with bloody repression of any demonstrations, dissent, and critical thinking. The dictatorship was also a prominent era of enlargement of arms trade from Israel.

In the democratic period, the government's positions were more critical in given situations, following reports of violence from the Israeli occupation, as in the case of Israel's Lebanon or the first Intifada—namely, issues of international repercussions. In the post-September 11 years, the association between the Islamic faith and "terrorism" also increased in the corporate media, contributing to a negative idea of the Arab world.

Later, the spread of images of attacks on Gaza on social networks led to condemnations of Israel by the Argentine government, as well as in other countries in the region.

On the other hand, the internal Israeli lobby, especially at the diplomatic level, showed to have greater weight in the press, according to the interviewees,
than pro-Palestine voices. Between Mauricio Macri's and Alberto Fernandez's governments, pronounced voices called for Argentina to accept the definition of anti-Semitism drafted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), considering the criticism of Israel as a form of racism. The legislative approval of this proposal had repercussions in the media, but the critical point of view on the decision was virtually unaddressed in the press.

The Palestinian access to the Argentine media is more prominent in the alternative press, generally progressive or left-wing than the mainstream outlets. Appearances in the media, newspapers, and television occur more specifically in situations of attacks or war. It is also evident from the interviews that the Palestinian cause in Argentina has little visibility in the media due to the strength of the Israeli lobby, which influences the coverage.

Despite its recognition of the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, Argentina has media and journalistic limitations in dealing with the Palestinian cause.

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