

The influence of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile on Chilean Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to analyse the impact of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile –the largest Palestinian community outside the Arab world- on Chilean foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The research engages with the history of Palestine and the emigration of Palestinians to Chile, as well as their integration and organization in the country, their role and positions in Chilean internal politics and economy, and the evolution of the Palestinian national movement, in order to explain the Palestinian diaspora’s involvement in Palestinian politics. This research will also analyse Chilean-Palestinian bilateral relations, and the influence or impact of the diaspora community on Chilean foreign policy regarding the Palestinian struggle. This thesis argues that in different historical moments the Palestinian diaspora in Chile played a variable role and had diverse impacts on Chilean foreign policy regarding Palestine, and that the signature of the Oslo agreements in the mid-90s was a pivotal moment in this evolution.

Key concepts: Palestinian diaspora, Palestine, Chile, migration, Foreign Policy, United Nations.
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This research is for my family and friends with Palestinian roots, because of the simple fact of being Palestinian and recognizing oneself as such is an act of resistance. It is important to know where we come from, to decide where we will go.

Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Conceptual Review</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Contextualization of Palestine</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>The Palestinians in Chile</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Bilateral analysis of Palestine-Chile politics: Have policies changed facing different Chilean governments?</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>The diverse impact of the Palestinian diaspora in Chilean foreign policy regarding Palestine and Israel</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>References</i>	<i>58</i>

*"You told me, you know, that when a child is brought to a foreign country, it picks up the language in a few weeks, and forgets its own. Well, I am a child in your country"*¹

Introduction

In spite of the geographical distance between the two countries, Chile is home to the largest Palestinian diaspora community outside the Arab world.² There have been two important migratory flows of Palestinians to Chile: first, this diaspora began its massive migration at the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century and second, after the partition of Palestine in 1947.³ Regardless of the time of arrival, the Palestinian diaspora in Chile is mostly Christian.⁴ After many generations in Chile, this diaspora has become influential in economic, social and political terms, and occupies important positions in the country's political, bureaucratic and financial infrastructure.

The aim of this research is to analyze to what extent the Palestinian diaspora in Chile has influenced Chile's foreign policy in relation to Palestine and Israel. In the first part of this study, a theoretical framework drawing from literature related to the influence of diaspora groups on international politics will be provided. Subsequently, this work will offer a historical overview of the situation of Palestine from the end of the 19th century to the present. Finally, it will refer to the way in which Palestinians began to emigrate from their country to Latin America, explain how they settled in Chile, and examine the process of their integration. The conception of the role

¹ George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion, quoted in "Arabesques", Anton Shammas, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001, page 1.

² Information that has been confirmed by studies conducted by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

³ Sabella Bernard, "Jerusalem and Bethlehem Immigrant Families to Chile in the Early Twentieth Century | The Institute for Palestine Studies," Palestine-studies.org, 2017, accessed 12th May 2019: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/Pages%20from%20JQ%2072%20-%20Sabella.pdf>

⁴ Cooperativa, "Chile, el país con más palestinos fuera del mundo árabe e Israel", Cooperativa, August 2014, accessed 9th May 2019: <https://www.cooperativa.cl/noticias/pais/relaciones-exteriores/medio-oriente/chile-el-pais-con-mas-palestinos-fuera-del-mundo-arabe-e-israel/2014-08-14/093540.html>

and impact of diasporas on host countries depends on the theoretical framework employed, which will be further discussed in the section to follow. While constructivism offers an enhanced ability to explain diaspora movements through manifestations of identity, for this research a liberal framework will be used. This frame offers more explanatory value in assessing the role of the Palestinian diaspora in policy-making decisions in contemporary Chile.

The second part will reconstruct the history of bilateral relations between Palestine and Chile, focusing on some particular milestones and relevant historical moments, and the positions that Chile adopted in the international sphere in their regard. This research will contextualize Chile's situation both in terms of internal politics, alluding to the period of the military dictatorship and the return of democracy in 1990, and in a regional scope. Furthermore, the chapter explains the positions and politics of the Palestinian diaspora movement in Chile in relation to Palestine - and the variable influences that they exerted in Chilean foreign policy in this respect - by considering their particular process of integration in the host country, national and international factors, the international context, and the internal politics of Chile and Palestine.

Indeed, all the elements analyzed throughout this study will allow us to understand the evolution of the politics of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile regarding Palestine, and its impact on Chilean foreign policy in this regard. Although the Palestinian diaspora in Chile is one of the largest in the world and occupies important positions in the political and economic decision-making process in the country, for more than 50 years its influence in Chilean foreign policy regarding Palestine remained extremely limited, as Palestinian advocates were unable to convince the Chilean authorities to adopt stronger positions regarding the defense of the Palestinian cause. In that sense, from the partition in 1947 until after the Oslo Accords, the economic, political and social centrality of Palestinians in Chile was not strongly reflected, if at all, in the Chilean foreign policy concerning Palestine, or in the public political positions of the Palestinian diaspora itself.

This study will also elaborate on the factors that explain the fundamental change that took place in the politics of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile regarding Palestine after the Oslo Agreements. That Indeed, after the Oslo Agreements we witnessed a more institutional, substantial, coherent, and systematic involvement of the Palestinians in Chile regarding the Palestinian cause, which has been increasingly reflected in their impact on Chilean foreign policy and in their bilateral relations.

The methodology used in this research is qualitative, consisting of primary and secondary sources, a literature review, United Nations documents, and information obtained from interviews. Interviews were conducted with people of Palestinian origin in Chile who have taken part in this history, with Chilean politicians of Palestinian origin, and with academics who are experts in matters related to the Middle East and, more specifically, to Palestine.

Conceptual Review

Diasporas are immigrant groups that can actively or passively influence international policy. Regardless of the many ways in which diasporas may be conceived, they are relevant actors, participating in the international system, contributing to the formulation of policies and acting as agents of positive change. However, as some authors point out, from the theoretical perspective of international relations, little space has been given to analyze diasporas.⁵ To talk about diasporas means to talk about heterogeneities; a mixture of feelings, interests, and cultures. Although diasporas are non-state actors, many times they find themselves in direct dialogue with the State apparatus (through direct involvement, with several members becoming part of the state machinery, etc.), both in the country of origin and in the host country.

But before entering into the analysis of the relationship of the diaspora with international politics, there will be a review of what literature in the field has understood as the diaspora. It has been debated what is meant by diaspora and what elements identify it as such. Sheffer⁶ argues that diasporas are often involved in ethnic or international conflicts, and are part of a cultural, social, economic and, especially, political struggle.⁷ While this author says that diasporas are minority ethnic groups that reside outside their homeland but maintain a strong attachment to it, Vertovec⁸ points out that the term diaspora is currently used to describe any population considered "deterritorialized" or "transnational".

⁵ Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, "Diasporas and International Relations Theory", *International Organization* 57, 2003, accessed 28th May 2019: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/7CF236EDAD6B8BC9A86BD8A887EE13BB/S0020818303573015a.pdf/diasporas_and_international_relations_theory.pdf

⁶ Gabriel Sheffer, "Modern Diasporas in International Politics", *Croom Helm Ltd*, Australia, 1986, p.3.

⁷ Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics : At Home Abroad* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁸ Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, *Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism* (Cheltenham: Elgar, 1999).

Nevertheless, Rogers Brubaker⁹ argues that not all of those groups should be seen as diasporas, since the elasticity of the term could, in a very broad interpretation, diminish its significance and explanatory potential. Thus, in Brubaker's words, the universalization of the diaspora, paradoxically, means the disappearance of the diaspora. Rogers Brubaker points out that the diaspora is a category, a project, a claim and a position. For him, diasporas have three distinctive elements: dispersion in space, understood as any kind of dispersion outside state borders; orientation towards a "homeland", as an authorized source of value, identity and loyalty; and the maintenance of limits, which implies the preservation of a distinctive identity vis-à-vis one (or several) host society(s). On the other hand, there are authors who believe that the existence of conflicts is what defines a diaspora as such, since it is a necessity of collective decision to preserve emblems and symbols, and a territorial identification.¹⁰ There is a lot of conceptual material that relates these groups to hybridity and heterogeneity. Brubaker¹¹, for example, considers that for the diaspora to remain a diaspora, what happens to future generations is of paramount importance. In that sense, the analysis of value transmission is key to understanding how cultures and identities can be preserved over time. Exogenous marriages can also end identity continuity. After more than 100 years of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile, and despite increasing exogenous marriages, it seems that the identification with Palestine is still alive.

⁹ Rogers Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1–19, accessed 8th May 2019: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000289997>

¹⁰ Brisa Varela, "De Armenia a La Ciudad de Buenos Aires: La Reconstrucción Del 'Lugar Comunitario' a Escala Local," *Amérique Latine Histoire et Mémoire. Les Cahiers ALHIM. Les Cahiers ALHIM*, no. 9 (November 3, 2004), accessed 8th May 2019: <https://journals.openedition.org/alhim/392>

¹¹ Rogers Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1–19, accessed 8th May 2019: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000289997>

Consequently, the settlement of people in different places opens the discussion regarding identities. Stuart Hall¹² conceives cultural identities in two ways. The first, which had much importance in the post-colonial era, seeking to vindicate oppressed peoples and just causes, understands it as a collective memory. It is about sharing experiences, values and history. The second conception recognizes that cultural identities are subject to permanent changes and transformations, so that the visible result today is the product of what has become through time. This vision brings together different perspectives of particular causes. It gives, then, the possibility of the diversification of the diaspora.¹³

But what is identity? Do territorial definitions express identities? Benedict Anderson¹⁴ conceives nationality as a particular type of cultural artifact and refers to emotions that it evokes. This author points out the dynamics of imaginary social organization and cultural process, self-understanding and solidarity. His approach emphasizes the material conditions that shape culture, and the institutions that facilitate its reproduction. But cultural perception is not rigid, rather it is dynamic, mobile, mutable, and responds to the external context, the expectations of the environment, and many other factors.¹⁵ In line with Benedict, Hovanessian¹⁶ affirms that the identity of the diaspora is related to a symbolic elaboration made by the subjects that compose it, where true power comes from the force of evocation. But identities are not isolated. In that sense, referring to the identity of migrants necessarily implies considering both the processes that are

¹² Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", *Lawrence and Wishart*, 1990, accessed 12th April 2019: <http://rlwclarke.net/Theory/SourcesPrimary/HallCulturalIdentityandDiaspora.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities", *British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*, New York, 1996, accessed 8th May 2019: <file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/Anderson%20-%20Imagined%20Communities.pdf>

¹⁵ Pnina Werbner, "Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora—Between Aesthetic and 'Real' Politics," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 9, no. 1 (2000): 5–20, accessed 8th May 2019: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/444310/pdf>

¹⁶ Hovanessian, Martine. *Le Lien Communautaire : Trois Générations d'Arméniens*. Paris: Colin, 1992.

occurring within the host countries, as well as various global processes that can certainly affect and reshape these diasporas.¹⁷

The role that identities have in relation to the diaspora is a very relevant issue. Nevertheless, this study aims to determine the relationship of the diaspora with international politics, particularly applied to the case of the Palestinians in Chile. Although it is true that the diaspora has preserved its identity after more than 100 years of settlement in Chile, identification of the role that Palestinian diaspora has played in Chilean foreign policy in relation to Palestine is the main aim of this project.

Considerations of the impact of the diaspora in international relations will depend very much on how the international system is conceived. Classical realism and neo-realism will not consider that the diaspora can play a fundamental role, since they perceive the state as an all-powerful entity to which sovereignty has been surrendered. According to realism, each state is a rational actor that always acts according to its interests, and the main objective of each state is to guarantee its own security. The state's level of power will be determined by both economic and military capabilities. On the other hand, although Neo-realism focuses more on the international system and not on human nature, it has the same ideological bases as realism, so the way in which it conceives the preponderance of the diaspora as an actor in the system, will be very similar. This study focuses on the experience of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile. It will be argued that the Palestinian diaspora in Chile, although it had a preponderant role at the time of the partition of Palestine, had a space of time where it was not really pro-active in lobbying Chilean policy-making. Under realist theories, this inactivity would be seen as not really important in terms of eliciting progress in defending the rights of the Palestinians, because it would not be a really valid interlocutor to raise these demands.

¹⁷ Ibid, p.10.

However, some realist theorists have considered the diaspora as an extension of their homeland, aiming to promote those interests.¹⁸ Thus, it is possible for diasporas to influence host countries, but only when there is a coincidence of interests between the two countries. As Papastergiadis expresses, identity and collectivity must be approached in an interdisciplinary way.¹⁹ The diasporas must overcome the dichotomy produced by the feeling of stability in the host country, and the desire to provoke changes and movements in the international sphere. Liberalism, on the other hand, gives importance to non-state actors, recognizing that advocacy groups could influence foreign policy decisions. Moreover, neoliberalism, by referring to global interactions and interdependence, provides space for diasporas and other actors in the international system.²⁰

Liberalism, then, opens the door to the action of these new actors, who can interact both with the state apparatus of the host country, as well as to reach the authorities of power in the homeland. This double connection makes the diaspora an object of interest for further study. In the case of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile, it will be argued that there have been times when it has directly influenced politics. Through certain specific facts that will be shown in the chapter of the bilateral analysis of the relations between Chile and Palestine, it will be exemplified with concrete facts when the diaspora has been a relevant actor in the decision making. Of course, this will be done with the exception that it does not ensure that it was the only element that was taken into consideration by Chile at the time of the decision.

Alexander Wendt's constructivist theory asserts that the structures of human association are cultural phenomena and that their function, in addition to regulating behavior, is the search

¹⁸ Charalampos Papasotiriou, "Diaspora kai Ethniki Stratigiki", *Diaspora and National Strategy*, Athens, 2000.

¹⁹ Nikos Papastergiadis, "Dialogues in the Diasporas: Essays and conversations on cultural identity", Rivers Oram Press, 1998, p. 32.

²⁰ David M. Kotz, "Globalization and Neoliberalism," *Rethinking Marxism* 14, no. 2 (2002): 64–79, accessed 8th May 2019: https://people.umass.edu/dmkotz/Glob_and_NL_02.pdf

for the construction of identity. According to Wendt, these factors correspond to a dimension of international relations and influence decision-making in the international system.²¹ This theory is closely linked to the discussion of identities and how this element can be determinant to influence the decisions made.

Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth²² analyzed diasporas as independent actors of the international system and used both liberalism, for the role they can play in the internal environment of the country where they are settled, and constructivism, relative to identities. This vision is shared in the case of this analysis, but it is applied once the action of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile is put into practice, that is, after the Oslo Accords. Indeed, this research will provide arguments that will help observers to understand the silence of the Palestinians in Chile for more than 50 years, that is, from partition to the year 2000.

As mentioned above, in this period of time the Palestinian diaspora in Chile was able to act - due to its socioeconomic position in the host country - but in which, however, it did not do so proactively. One of the issues addressed by the literature has been the level of diaspora integration and their commitment to nationalist projects in the country of origin. This argument about integration will be one of the reasons that will explain this space of time without an organized action by the Palestinian diaspora in Chile. It will be explained that the very fact of the need to settle in Chile and integrate into the host country, plus the privileged political position that the migrants obtained once they arrived, were reasons why they did not have a preponderant role in defending the rights of the Palestinians at home. When Safran characterizes the diaspora, it manifests a resistance to the reception and insertion of (new) people in the receiving country, as

²¹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.193.

²² Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, "Diasporas and International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 57, no. 3 (2003): 449–79, accessed 28th May 2019: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/7CF236EDAD6B8BC9A86BD8A887EE13BB/S0020818303573015a.pdf/diasporas_and_international_relations_theory.pdf

the desire to return to their homeland prevails, which implies creating a collective idealization of the place of origin, embellishing the idea of return.²³ Nonetheless, due to history and international conditions, the Palestinian migrants who arrived in Chile did not foresee this return, which is why most of them decided to strive for a total integration into Chilean society.

Roger Waldinger and Lauren Duquette-Rury, point out that an immigrant is also an emigrant, because there will always be links with his origins.²⁴ They conducted a study and concluded that although many migrants are already distanced from the domestic politics of their country of origin and disillusioned with their government, based on nostalgic and sentimental elements, they are loyal nationals.²⁵ In relation to the level of integration of migrants, Anar Ahmadov and Gwendolyn Sasse studied²⁶, specifically, Polish people from the United Kingdom and the link between the migration experience and the commitment of migrants to their homeland. Thus, they considered the networks of these migrants in the host country, and the characteristics of that country. The result of this study is not surprising, because the better conditions migrants have in the host countries, the lower the political commitment to their homeland.²⁷ This result coincides with what this research explains why Palestinians in Chile for more than 50 years were not as active in defending the Palestinian cause. The socioeconomic position of a large number of Palestinians in Chile, and their occupation as merchants rather than intellectuals, may have been one of the reasons for the lack of strong organization in Chile, the host country.

²³ William Safran, "Concepts, Theories, and Challenges of Diaspora: A panoptic Approach", Società italiana per lo studio della storia contemporanea, 2007, accessed 9th May 2019: <http://www.sissco.it/articoli/cantieri-di-storia-iv-391/programma-392/dispersione-globalizzazione-e-costruzione-dellalterita-diaspore-e-migrazioni-nel-bacino-del-mediterraneo-ed-oltre-xix-xx-sec-435/concepts-theories-and-challenges-of-diaspora-a-panoptic-approach-441/>

²⁴ Roger Waldinger and Lauren Duquette-Rury, "Emigrant Politics, Immigrant Engagement: Homeland Ties and Immigrant Political Identity in the United States", Russell Sage Foundation, June 2016, accessed 9th May 2019: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/625096/pdf>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Anar K. Ahmadov and Gwendolyn Sasse, "Empowering to Engage with the Homeland: Do Migration Experience and Environment Foster Political Remittances?," Comparative Migration Studies 4, no. 1 (November 3, 2016), accessed 9th May 2019: <https://comparativemigrationstudies.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40878-016-0041-z>

²⁷ Ibid.

Other studies try to compare the level of politicized ethnic identity of different ethnic groups. Thus, for example, Kenneth Wald²⁸ conducted research based on three ethnic groups in the United States: Arab-American Christians, Arab-American Muslims, and American Jews. To do so, he used surveys as research mechanisms to assess the willingness of these groups to mobilize politically in the United States, but in favor of the needs and interests of their homeland. They conclude that when the political behavior of the diasporas seeks to prioritize their homeland, one can speak of the politicization of that ethnic identity. However, the behavior will be different depending on the ethnic group being analyzed. In addition, the reason why these diasporas formed outside of their homeland would be another factor implying greater or lesser politicization. In that sense, those who were forced to leave their homeland will be more likely to become politicized. In addition, this study referred to the adaptation of the diasporas and noted that the less culture shock, the better levels of integration into the host country.²⁹ Why were the Palestinians in Chile only partially politicized for many years? That's what this study analyzes. And it is argued that both the privileged position of some diaspora groups, as well as their total integration in Chile (which also includes the religious and cultural sphere, since most Palestinians in Chile are Christians), were moving them away from the attempt to defend the Palestinian cause. However, as will be shown in this research, in the 1970s the PLO attempted to re-politicize the Palestinian diaspora, as they probably understood that they could be relevant actors in defending Palestinian rights.

Regarding this, the diaspora's level of political commitment to its homeland may generate some reticence or mistrust in the host country, where this could be considered a threat, which

²⁸ Kenneth D Wald, "Homeland Interests in Hostland Politics: Politicized Ethnic Identity among Middle Eastern Heritage Groups in the United States," Allacademic.com, 2013, accessed 9th May 2019: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fusers.clas.ufl.edu%2Fkenwald%2Fpos6292%2Fwald%25202006.doc>

²⁹ Ibid.

could lead to discrimination against the diaspora. To the question of how to achieve a better integration of the diaspora in the host country, the answers are diverse. There are positions that affirm that the forgetting of the roots implies a better integration, and others believe the opposite.³⁰

The excellent integration of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile and its socioeconomic position in the country was mentioned. As a third factor, which is actually a consequence of the mixture of the first two factors mentioned above, the study refers to the lack of unity of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile. This aspect of internal differences that has been addressed in the literature will be one of the arguments used to explain the inactivity of the diaspora over a period of more than 50 years. There are other visions, however, that recognize internal divisions that complicate the discourse and structures of diasporas.³¹ Floya Anthias³², rather than focusing on the reasons that unite the diaspora, talks about the common point of origin that the diaspora has, ignoring the differentiating nuances that the diaspora may have in its internal facet. Under this perspective, the political differences between certain groups of the Palestinian diaspora, led mostly by successful entrepreneurs as opposed to intellectuals and professionals, would be overcome by feeling and identification with Palestine. Even that it is true that the Palestinian identity has been very strong, because it has lasted despite the antiquity of the diaspora, this research will show that this way of conceiving the unity of the diaspora is not always applicable. Although the diaspora issue is relatively new in international relations, there are signs that it is increasingly being considered as a relevant element of the international system. The diaspora's

³⁰ Steven Vertovec, "The Political Importance of Diasporas," migrationpolicy.org, March 2, 2017, accessed 9th May 2019: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/political-importance-diasporas/>

³¹ Pnina Werbner. "Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies", University of Toronto Press, 2000, Vol. 9, No1, accessed 8th May 2019: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/444310/pdf>

³² Floya Anthias, "Evaluating 'Diaspora': Beyond Ethnicity?," Sociology 32, no. 3 (1998): 557–80, accessed 8th May 2019: https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/3019D84293F55B2062EE06BE34739868/S0038038598000091a.pdf/evaluating_diaspora_beyond_ethnicity.pdf

experience, its connections, its dual perspective and its commitment to the well-being of its homeland make it an important actor in any development or reconstruction plan. Some United Nations Specialized Agencies have understood the importance of the diaspora and have used its potential to facilitate the implementation of plans. In line with the new realization, for example, UNDP reported on the Somali diaspora and their contribution to Somalia's economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts.³³

³³ UNDP, "Somalia's Missing Million", *United Nations Development Programme Somalia*, Kenya, 2009, accessed 8th May 2019: <file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/Somalia%2520Missing%2520Millions.pdf>

Contextualization of Palestine

In order to explain the arrival of the Palestinians in Chile, it is necessary to go back to some of the historical periods of Palestine. To this end, in what follows the study discusses the situation of Palestine under the Ottoman Empire, Palestine under the British mandate and, finally, the period of the partition of Palestine in 1948.

Arab immigration to Latin America dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and there are political and economic factors to explain their arrival. From the economic perspective, given the financial crisis of the Empire caused by the mismanagement of the rulers and wars, living conditions were quite precarious. That is why, Syrian and Palestinian citizens sought to improve their living conditions by leaving their countries. At first, they thought of making money and returning to their homeland. However, the reception of the Latin American peoples was better than expected, so the Arab community began a chain of immigration. Politically, and due the economic instability of the Ottoman Empire, many people suffered injustice and discrimination. In addition to that, given the mandatory nature of military service, a lot of young people preferred to escape avoiding this obligation.³⁴ The itinerary of Arab migration began in the ports of Beirut, Haifa and Alexandria, passing through Marseilles or Genova until arriving in Buenos Aires, from where they continued their journey crossing the mountain range by mule or trans-Andean train.³⁵

On the other hand, since the first years of the 20th century, the Arabs were encouraged by British agents with military, economic and political support to contribute to the Ottoman defeat

³⁴ Said Bahajin, "El Modelo Latinoamericano En La Integración de Los Inmigrantes Árabes," Ra Ximhai, December 31, 2008, 737–74, accessed 10th May 2019: <http://www.revistas.unam.mx/index.php/rxm/article/view/6994>

³⁵ Sabella Bernard, "Jerusalem and Bethlehem Immigrant Families to Chile in the Early Twentieth Century | The Institute for Palestine Studies," Palestine-studies.org, 2017, accessed 12th May 2019: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/Pages%20from%20JQ%2072%20-%20Sabella.pdf>

by rebelling against them, attacking supply routes and taking control of virtually the entire Red Sea coast. In the face of this scenario of total uncertainty and international disturbance, there was a place for the Sykes-Picot Agreement which, after a few months of negotiation, was finally signed in May 1916.³⁶ This secret agreement between France and the United Kingdom was intended to dismember the Ottoman Empire. The French and British had promised independence for the Arabs only if they aided the powers of that time by rebelling against the Ottomans.³⁷ The British, under the command of General Allenby, defeated the Turkish army in 1917 and occupied Syria and Palestine. Following Turkey's capitulation in October 1918, the French and English confirmed the dividing lines they had drawn in 1916, through the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and at the San Remo Conference, the Treaty of Versailles entrusted Great Britain with the administration of Palestine. This administration was maintained until after the end of World War II.³⁸ The British therefore broke their promise to the Palestinians.

An antecedent even prior to the British mandate is the Balfour Declaration, of 1917. This document was a private letter sent by British Foreign Minister Balfour to Lord Rothschild, a distinguished member of the British Jewish community, promising Palestine to the Jews. It became an official document in 1922 when the League of Nations formalized the British administration in Palestine.³⁹ During the period of the British Mandate, the Zionists worked to ensure the establishment of a national Jewish home in Palestine, which was considered by the Palestinians as a violation of their rights, as they had inhabited the territory for thousands of years. Likewise, British support for Zionism contravened the agreement reached between the

³⁶ Guichu Turdera, "Acuerdo Sykes-Picot: Dibujo de Las Fronteras (y Tensiones) de Oriente Medio," United Explanations, June 21, 2016, accessed 12th May 2019: <http://www.unitedexplanations.org/2016/06/22/acuerdo-sykes-picot-dibujo-de-las-fronteras-y-tensiones-de-orient-medio/>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ United Nations, "The question of Palestine", United Nations, accessed 12th May 2019:

<https://www.un.org/unispal/history/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i-1917-1947/>

³⁹ Dore Gold, "La importancia histórica de la Declaración Balfour", *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, 2017, accessed 12th May 2019: <http://porisrael.org/2017/11/02/la-importancia-historica-de-la-declaracion-de-balfour/>

allied powers and the Arabs, when they offered them independence in exchange for rebelling against the Ottomans. After more than 20 years of British rule, and only two years after the creation of United Nations, Great Britain entrusted the UN to decide on the Palestinian issue. As a result, On November 29th, 1947, the UN approved the Palestinian Partition Plan in two states, one Jewish and one Arab, leaving Jerusalem under international administration.⁴⁰

The diaspora organized itself surrounding certain key events. On May 1948, the Jewish state proclaimed its independence as "Israel" and, since then, it has been occupying Palestinian territory, in contravention of international law. Indeed, since 1948, millions of Palestinians have been forced into exile as a result of wars, destruction and human rights violations.⁴¹ Undoubtedly, the proclamation of the State of Israel was one of the events that aroused movement in the diasporas. As will be reviewed in the chapter on bilateral relations between Chile and Palestine, this fact was also a motive for the mobilization of Palestinians in Chile.

Between June 5 and 10, 1967, Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan and Syria, leading to the Six Day War and the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai.⁴² On November 22, 1967, United Nations resolution 242 requested Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.⁴³ The most immediate consequence of this was the growing autonomy of Palestinian organizations fighting against Israel. This process would lead to control of the PLO being taken over by the various Fedayeen militia groups, the most dominant of which was Yasser Arafat's Al-Fatah. As a result, in 1969, Arafat became president of the PLO

⁴⁰ United Nations, "The question of Palestine", United Nations, accessed 12th May 2019:

<https://www.un.org/unispal/history/origins-and-evolution-of-the-palestine-problem/part-i-1917-1947/>

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Julio de la Guardia, "El legado de la Guerra de los Seis Días", *Estudios de Política Exterior*, 2017, accessed 12th May 2019:

<https://www.politicaexterior.com/actualidad/el-legado-de-la-guerra-de-los-seis-dias/>

⁴³ United Nations, "La situación en el Oriente Medio", *UN Security Council*, November 1967, accessed 13th May 2019:

[https://undocs.org/es/S/RES/242%20\(1967\)](https://undocs.org/es/S/RES/242%20(1967))

Executive Committee.⁴⁴ In 1970, the PLO was expelled from Jordan and moved its headquarters to Lebanon.

On October 6, 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a military campaign to claim lost territories against Israel six years earlier, in 1967. The countries fought for 19 days, until UN Resolution 340 ended hostilities on October 25.⁴⁵ Another crucial moment in the Palestinian history was Sabra y Shatila, which took place between 16 and 18 September 1982. This massacre against Palestinians living in two refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon, was perpetrated by a Lebanese Christian militia, the Phalangists, which was under the political and military control of the State of Israel.⁴⁶ This massacre was described as an act of genocide by the United Nations General Assembly through its resolution 37/123.⁴⁷ Thus, to date the occupation in Palestine has remained in force and there are many dates that can be indicated as crucial to this conflict's analysis. In 1987, for example, the first Intifada broke out. However, 1993 is particularly important, as the signing of the Oslo I Accords in Washington granted Palestine autonomy for Gaza and the West Bank. In 1995, on October 24, Oslo II was signed extending autonomy to Jenin, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarem, Qalqilya and Hebron.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the failure of the Camp David conversations could also have been one of the antecedents of the second Intifada.

The Palestinian "Intifadas" are uprisings that seek to fight against Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. The importance of these movements is that, given that they arise to combat

⁴⁴ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Palestine Liberation Organization | Definition, Goals, History, & Facts," in Encyclopædia Britannica, April 11, 2019, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palestine-Liberation-Organization>

⁴⁵ United Nations, "Fuerza de Emergencia de las Naciones Unidas en el Oriente Medio", *UN Security Council*, 1973, accessed 12th May 2019: [https://undocs.org/es/S/RES/340%20\(1973\)](https://undocs.org/es/S/RES/340%20(1973))

⁴⁶ Signoles Aude, "Sabra and Shatila", *Sciences Po*, 2008, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/sabra-and-chatila>

⁴⁷ United Nations, "The situation in the Middle East", *UN General Assembly*, 1982, A/RES/37/123, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/37/a37r123.htm>

⁴⁸ Asamblea General Consejo de Seguridad,

the occupation of the Palestinian territories, the feeling of every Palestinian dispersed in the world resurfaces, as it reminds the constant reason for struggle. In September 2000, the Second Intifada broke out after Ariel Sharon's visit to the Esplanade of the Mosques.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, Sharon's visit to the Esplanade of the Mosques only acted as a detonator, activated by the leader of Likud for electoral purposes. The Intifada would have exploded anyway sooner or later.⁵⁰ The year 2002, a few months before the second Intifada exploded (June 2002), Israel began the construction of the separation wall in Palestine, which was declared illegal by the UN in July 2004.⁵¹ In November of the same year, Yasser Arafat died, who was replaced by Mahmoud Abbas, winning the elections of the Palestinian National Authority in January 2005.⁵²

In 2006, Hamas won by an absolute majority the legislative elections, even though it contested for the first time.⁵³ On September 23rd, 2011, Mahmoud Abas made a historic intervention at the UN for the entry of Palestine as a full member, but it was blocked by the United States.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, on October 31st of that year, UNESCO recognized Palestine as a full member, despite the rejection of Israel, USA and Germany.⁵⁵ Likewise, on 29th November

⁴⁹ Al Jazeera, "The second Intifada", *Al Jazeera*, 2003, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2003/12/20084101554875168.html>

⁵⁰ José Luis and Calvo Albero, "Imprimir Página Web Claves y Consecuencias de La Segunda Intifada," November 2011, accessed 22nd May 2019: http://biblioteca.ribei.org/153/1/Claves_y_consecuencias_de_la_Segunda_Intifada_-_Elcano.pdf

⁵¹ Naciones Unidas, "Opinión Consultiva de la Corte Internacional de Justicia sobre las consecuencias jurídicas de la construcción de un muro en el territorio palestino ocupado", Naciones Unidas, A/ES-10/273, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/advisory-opinions/advisory-opinions-2004-es.pdf>

⁵² The New York Times, "Abbas Declares Victory in Palestinian Presidential Vote," The New York Times, January 9, 2005, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/09/international/middleeast/abbas-declares-victory-in-palestinian-presidential.html>

⁵³ Reuters Editorial, "TIMELINE-Key Events since 2006 Hamas Election Victory," U.S. (Reuters, June 17, 2007), accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-timeline/timeline-key-events-since-2006-hamas-election-victory-idUSL1752364420070620>

⁵⁴ Naciones Unidas, "Historia de la Cuestión de Palestina", *Naciones Unidas*, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://www.un.org/unispal/es/history/>

⁵⁵ Naciones Unidas, "Asamblea General acepta a Palestina como Estado observador no miembro de la ONU", *Naciones Unidas*, November 2012, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://news.un.org/es/story/2012/11/1258601>

2012, resolution 67/19 of the General Assembly of the United Nations agreed to the admission of Palestine as an observer state not a member of the Organization.⁵⁶

Even though Palestinian history has many milestones that give rise to an infinite number of analyses and appraisals in this regard, this research is primarily concerned with the responses of the Chilean Palestinian community to Chile's approaches towards these issues. To this end, and given the need to limit this research, in the chapter of the bilateral analysis of relations between Chile and Palestine, the events that are relevant for the purpose of this analysis will be mentioned. The objective is to focus on specific moments, analyzing concrete facts where the diaspora may or may not have played a preponderant role in influencing Chile's decisions regarding Palestine.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

The Palestinians in Chile

The Palestinian diaspora in Chile has the particularity of being an Arab diaspora that has been successfully integrated into a non-Arab society. Thus, for example, if we compare Arabs who have migrated to Europe, the United States or Canada, it differs from the experience lived by Palestinians in Chile. One of the reasons, could be religious and cultural. Most of the Palestinian immigrants were Christians. This is explained by their home towns of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahur. In fact, in 1900, the population of Bethlehem was 20,000 people where 95% were Christian and that of Beit Jala was 5,000 with one hundred percent Christian.⁵⁷ Today, Chile is a country with more than 18,500,000 inhabitants, 500,000 of whom are estimated to be of Palestinian descent.⁵⁸ While the Palestinian diaspora is exceptional, this does not mean that it cannot be the subject of comparisons with other diasporas. Thus, for instance, there are undoubtedly similarities with the Kurdish situation, a people without a definite state, a product of their geographical location. Their region encompasses a wide, strategic and conflict-ridden area between Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia and Turkey. This situation is also that of Palestine, a land that connects East with West.

The settlement of Palestinians in Chile is a history of effort, hard work, integration and adaptation. The first migratory flows to Latin America came escaping from the precarious conditions they suffered under the Ottoman Empire and, later, from the oppression imposed

⁵⁷ Abdelmalik Zahdeh, "La comunidad palestina en Santiago de Chile Un estudio de la cultura, la identidad y la religión de los palestinos chilenos", *Institutt for Fremmedspråk Universitetet I Bergen*, Våren, 2012, accessed 22nd May 2019: <http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/6090/94452570.pdf?sequence=1>

⁵⁸ Martin Pasquier, "Innovation Is Everywhere," *Innovation Is Everywhere*, September 26, 2014, accessed 9th April 2019: <https://www.innovationiseverywhere.com/palestinian-startups-chile-diaspora-investments/>; countrymeters.info, "Poblacion de Chile 2019," Countrymeters.info, 2019, accessed 9th April 2019: <https://countrymeters.info/es/Chile>

under the British Mandate. However, another massive emigration occurred between the 1950s and 1960s after the creation of Israel.⁵⁹

What was happening in Latin America when the first Arabs arrived? Migration was viewed as a basic system for forming society and accomplishing progress in the new republics. After the wars of independence, the decrease of population was an element that favored European migration as a state decision in some Latin American nations, for example, Chile.⁶⁰ In the new republics, depopulation was seen as an impediment to progress. This idea became a political project among the different leaders of independence, and incorporation of European migrants became a necessity. At the end of the 19th century, Chile was undergoing significant social transformations due to monetary and geographic reasons. The misuse of saltpeter wealth had damaged the economy. In fact, in the 1880s, Chile triumphed in the Pacific War and incorporated the provinces of Tarapacá and Antofagasta into its territory. The desert of Atacama, an important addition among the new regions, one of whose mining wealth, the saltpeter, would make the country the main global producer of this natural fertilizer. There was a process of progressive expansion of the production of saltpeter until the end of the First World War. Once the war ended, the crisis of the saltpeter industry began as a result of the competition of synthetic saltpeter, which forced a strong advertising campaign for natural saltpeter.⁶¹ This innovation provoked the displacement of a significant fragment of the population of the rustic zones towards the center and north of Chile, in search of better opportunities, weakening agricultural activity⁶²; a procedure comparable to the one that took place in Europe after industrialization. As Osvaldo

⁵⁹ Claudia Rivera, “La Diáspora Palestina en América Latina”, *Invest Palestine*, October 2017, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://investpalestine.ps/la-diaspora-palestina-en-america-latina/?lang=es>

⁶⁰ Adam McKeown Ph.D, “Global Migration 1846-1940,” *Journal of World History* 15, no. 2 (2004): 155–89, accessed 10th May 2019: <file:///F:/Tesis/Global%20Migration.pdf>

⁶¹ Memoria Chilena, “La industria salitrera (1880-1930)”, Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, accessed 22nd May 2019: <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-3309.html>

⁶² Antonia Rebolledo Hernandez, “La Turcofobia, discriminacion antiarabe en Chile, 1900-1950”, Instituto de Historia de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1994, accessed 12nd May 2019: http://archivochile.com/Historia_de_Chile/otros_artic/HCHotrosart0018.pdf

Larrañaga points out, in 1910 Chile had 3,249,279 inhabitants, 10% of whom lived in Santiago.⁶³ He explains that the country was transforming because of the costs of the repair works that had to be carried out in Valparaíso (Chile's main port), after the 1906 earthquake. Under these conditions, in order to improve the economy, Chile urged the arrival of European foreigners, for which it offered land concessions as an incentive.⁶⁴ Although the Arabs were not considered in these concessions, the historical context shows that given the circumstances of the country, there was a certain openness to Arab immigration too.

Chile received with surprise the Palestinian migration, because they were people who did not speak Spanish and were quite underprivileged.⁶⁵ Given that the first migrants arrived with Turkish passports, for many years Chileans referred to the Arabs as "Turks," but with a pejorative connotation.⁶⁶ This rejection may also have been another reason why the Palestinians decided they wanted rapid integration into society. However, the Arabs adopted the language, customs, and religion. In fact, Palestinians were hard-working people who began as street vendors.⁶⁷ Their perseverance allowed them to progress financially, and to later dedicate themselves to the textile industry and, later, to banking, agriculture and mining.⁶⁸ In the case of Chile, Palestinian migration was not only concentrated in the capital, Santiago, but these migrants settled

⁶³ Osvaldo Larrañaga, "El Estado Bienestar en Chile: 1910 - 2010", Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo - Chile Área de Reducción de la Pobreza y la Desigualdad, Chile, March 2010, accessed 10th May 2019: http://www.cl.undp.org/content/chile/es/home/library/poverty/documentos_de_trabajo/el-estado-bienestar-en-chile--1910---2010.html

⁶⁴ Adam McKeown Ph.D, "Global Migration 1846-1940," Journal of World History 15, no. 2 (2004): 155–89, accessed 10th May 2019: <file:///F:/Tesis/Global%20Migration.pdf>

⁶⁵ Antonia Rebolledo Hernandez, "La Turcofobia, discriminacion antiarabe en Chile, 1900-1950", Instituto de Historia de la Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile, 1994, accessed 2nd April 2019: http://archivochile.com/Historia_de_Chile/otros_artic/HCHotrosart0018.pdf

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Sabella Bernard, "Jerusalem and Bethlehem Immigrant Families to Chile in the Early Twentieth Century | The Institute for Palestine Studies," Palestine-studies.org, 2017, accessed 1st May 2019: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/Pages%20from%20JQ%2072%20-%20Sabella.pdf>

⁶⁸ Memoria Chilena, "La inmigración árabe a Chile (1885-1950)", Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, accessed 14th May 2019: <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-3523.html>

throughout the country, energizing the economy⁶⁹, and later Palestinians participated in Chile's industrialization process.⁷⁰

The economic prosperity of these migrants was the reason why the migration took place in chain. In fact, the Palestinian families, for a valuable cause, are generous and concerned about the welfare of their own. Therefore, when the first Palestinians in Chile began to succeed, they encouraged their relatives to follow suit. Such was the effect of this migration that there are cases in which the original families ceased to exist in Palestine and settled entirely in Chile.⁷¹ In 1937, they founded their own bank (BCI) and an insurance company, among other initiatives. Palestinian immigrants considered it essential to educate their children. For this reason, in the 1920s and 1930s the community had among them doctors, professors, and engineers.⁷² However, the largest professionalization began in the 1960s, entering university careers.⁷³ The new generations integrated themselves into Chilean society, dedicating themselves to liberal professions, politics and artistic and cultural expressions. The involvement of Palestinians in Chilean politics also goes back many years. In fact, in the 1940s, the first politicians of Palestinian origin began to be elected. For example, Carlos Melej in 1935 was councilor, and in 1941 he was mayor of Vallenar and deputy. Likewise, in 1944, Alfredo Naser was alderman and mayor of Valparaíso, and in 1949 Marco Antonio Salum also entered parliament.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Ahmad Hassan Mattar, "Guía social de la colonia Árabe en Chile", *Club Palestino*, 1941.

⁷⁰ Abdelmalik Zahdeh, "La comunidad palestina en Santiago de Chile Un estudio de la cultura, la identidad y la religión de los palestinos chilenos", *Institutt for Fremmedspråk Universitetet I Bergen*, Våren, 2012, accessed 22nd May 2019: <http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/6090/94452570.pdf?sequence=1>

⁷¹ Sabella Bernard, "Jerusalem and Bethlehem Immigrant Families to Chile in the Early Twentieth Century | The Institute for Palestine Studies," *Palestine-studies.org*, 2017, accessed 1st May 2019: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/Pages%20from%20JQ%2072%20-%20Sabella.pdf>

⁷² Palestina Libre, "Los Palestinos de Chile," *Palestinalibre.org*, 2014, accessed 14th May 2019: <http://www.palestinalibre.org/articulo.php?a=50318>

⁷³ Claudia Rivera, "La Diáspora Palestina en América Latina", *Invest Palestine*, October 2017, accessed 13th May 2019: <https://investpalestine.ps/la-diaspora-palestina-en-america-latina/?lang=es>

⁷⁴ Palestina Libre, "Los Palestinos de Chile," *Palestinalibre.org*, 2014, accessed 14th May 2019: <http://www.palestinalibre.org/articulo.php?a=50318>

Notwithstanding the way in which the first immigrants settled in Chile, the permanent effort of the great majority of Palestinians transformed this diaspora into one of the most solid groups, with political and economic power. However, an attachment to the Arab culture in Chile and to the Palestinian identity was also maintained, and a series of institutions were set up in Chile, providing spaces for sociability and, in general, preserving culture and origin.⁷⁵ Therefore, from the social perspective, given the transformation of the economic status of the Palestinians, being part of that community has a positive connotation for Chilean society.⁷⁶

Before the First World War, the Arabic speaking diaspora which settled in Chile began to circulate information that strengthened significant and lasting connections between the homeland, the diaspora and the local. Consequently, these networks were able to reinforce the communication of the dispersed jaaliyaat (migrant community), contributing to social and economic success in the diaspora. Some of them even began to be published in Spanish as a way of involving locals in the issues of this new group.⁷⁷ Chile's Arab newspapers thus became mechanisms for public awareness and action. In the years between the wars, Palestine became a cause of activism for the whole jaaliya, giving rise to different groups and organizations.⁷⁸ In 1912, *Al Muerched*, the first Chilean newspaper written in Arabic, appeared. It is estimated that there were at least 12 such publications during the 40 years of immigration.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Abdelmalik Zahdeh, "La comunidad palestina en Santiago de Chile Un estudio de la cultura, la identidad y la religión de los palestinos chilenos", *Institutt for Fremmedspråk Universitetet I Bergen*, Våren, 2012, accessed 22nd May 2019: <http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/6090/94452570.pdf?sequence=1>

⁷⁷ Sabella Bernard, "Jerusalem and Bethlehem Immigrant Families to Chile in the Early Twentieth Century | The Institute for Palestine Studies," *Palestine-studies.org*, 2017, accessed 1st May 2019: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/Pages%20from%20JQ%2072%20-%20Sabella.pdf>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Óscar Contardo, "De los turcos, solo el pasaporte", *Artes y Letras de El Mercurio*, April 2002, accessed 13th May 2019: <http://rl154.cl.tripod.com/pinmigracion.htm>

For the Palestinians, the right of return was the initial antecedent of the organization of the diaspora in the terms in which it is conceived today. Nadim Bawalsa⁸⁰ expressed that the struggle to guarantee the rights of Palestinian migrants to Palestinian citizenship and nationality became a cause for collective action in the Arabic-speaking diaspora, which remains united and empowered to this day, as it shares a continuous experience of a homeland that has symbolic and material significance. During the British Mandate in Palestine in 1925, the British issued the Order of Palestinian Citizenship. It was a nationality law that facilitated the naturalization of Jewish immigrants to Palestine as Palestinians, denying citizenship to non-Jewish applicants. Therefore, and as a result of this law, Palestinians who were not living in Palestine at that time could not become legal citizens, thus depriving more than 10,000 Palestinian migrants of their rights as citizens. In response, there was coordination between the migrant community established in Chile and other regional and transnational communities to defend their rights.⁸¹ Thus, the fact of the loss of Palestinian nationality constituted the first and strongest political experience of their status as Palestinians.

As was pointed out, the Palestinian diaspora has consolidated itself as one of the strongest groups in Chilean society, acting in all social spheres, with great political and economic power. In spite of its capacity of insertion in Chile and the good relations with the host country, motivated by the struggle for the independence of Palestine, this diaspora has known how to preserve its traditions and culture. During the 1940s, immigrants and their children had already acquired a good economic and social position.⁸² However, it is important to highlight as part of the diaspora institutions one of the first and most important of all. In 1920, the “Club Deportivo

⁸⁰ Nadim Bawalsa, “Palestine West of the Andes,” NACLA Report on the Americas, 2018, accessed 30th March 2019: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2018.1448592>

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Palestina Libre, “Los Palestinos de Chile,” Palestinalibre.org, 2014, accessed 14th May 2019: <http://www.palestinalibre.org/articulo.php?a=50318>

Palestino” was born in Osorno, southern Chile, inaugurating its own stadium in 1979.⁸³ A first division football team that over time has had the ability to represent transversally the interests of the Palestinians. In fact, the fame of this team has crossed borders, gaining great recognition even in Palestine. Another Palestinian institution, the “Club Palestino”, popularly known as the “Estadio Palestino”, was founded in 1938.⁸⁴ In the educational area, the “Colegio Árabe” of Santiago was founded in 1977.⁸⁵ In 1984 the Palestinian communities in Chile and Brazil came together, giving rise to COPLAC (the Latin American Confederation of Palestinian Institutions), institutionalizing the connections between the diaspora and the Palestine Liberation Organization.⁸⁶ This turned out to be a great impulse, especially for the youth, who they grouped together and began to practice and spread the dabke, a traditional Palestinian dance. In Chile, university students founded the local branch of the “Union General de Estudiantes Palestinos”. This organizational germ that was re-boostered in the 80s, has been a continuous process that has resulted in that present generations have been professionalized and are covering the vast majority of professional, political and economic activities. For instance, in the Chilean parliament there are a large number of State Representatives of Palestinian origin. Likewise, inter parliamentary groups in support of Palestine were formed, which are integrated by political representatives from the left, center and right of the country.⁸⁷

Another outstanding institution is the “Fundación Palestina Belen 2000”. It was created in 2001 and focuses on Palestinian children. Its challenge involves caring for their future, their

⁸³ Club Deportivo Palestino, “Club Deportivo Palestino,” Palestino.cl, 2014, accessed 14th May 2019: <http://www.palestino.cl/club>

⁸⁴ Galeon, “Instituciones Americano-Arabes”, Galeon, accessed 8th April 2019: <http://www.arabe.galeon.com/instituciones/pinstituciones02.htm>

⁸⁵ Colegio Árabe, “Colegio Árabe - Santiago de Chile,” Colegioarabe.cl, 2019, accessed 8th April 2019: <http://colegioarabe.cl/historia/>

⁸⁶ Cecilia Baeza, Palestinians in Latin America,” Journal of Palestine Studies 43, no. 2 (February 2014): 59–72, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://altahrir.wordpress.com/2013/12/05/a-new-palestinian-consciousness-history-of-the-diaspora-in-latin-america/>

⁸⁷ Camara de Diputados de Chile, “Integrantes de Grupo Interparlamentario Chileno-Palestino,” Camara.cl, 2019, accessed 14th May 2019: https://www.camara.cl/camara/grupo_detalle.aspx?prmId=33&prmnombre=Chileno-Palestino

families and contributing to improving their current living conditions, primarily in the areas of education, health and recreation.⁸⁸ The founders are businessmen of Palestinian origin of great renown in Chilean society. Therefore, although it is a non-political foundation, the interaction and integration of its founding partners in the high Chilean spheres allows an important lobbying capacity in favor of the interests of the Palestinian community. Returning to the origins of the form of connection of Palestinians dispersed in Latin America, the Foundation publishes a monthly magazine called “Al Damir”, which researches the humanitarian situation in Palestine, tells stories of migrants, and promotes the collection of funds to send to Palestine, among other functions. Furthermore, in addition to be the sponsor of the “Club Deportivo Palestino”, the Bank of Palestine, in November 2017, opened its offices in Santiago de Chile, being the first Arab bank in Latin America.⁸⁹

Nowadays, the “Federación Palestina” of Chile, since June 2018, is the representative of the “Comunidad Palestina” in Chile in relation to the rest of the national community, its authorities, and its organizations. It is also the representative in front of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Palestinian National Authority, in the Occupied Territories, and in front of any other Palestinian organization in the world. The “Federación Palestina” of Chile promotes brotherhood between the Chilean and Palestinian peoples, and the defense and respect of human rights and international law in all parts of the world, and especially in Palestine. At the same time, it promotes mutual knowledge, and an adequate synthesis between continuity and transformation between Palestinian and Chilean cultural identities.⁹⁰ According to information provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, in April 2019 the Palestinian community

⁸⁸ Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000, “Fundación | Fundación Palestina Belén 2000,” Fundacionbelen2000.cl, 2018, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://fundacionbelen2000.cl/fundacion/>

⁸⁹ RumboCerto Comunicaciones, “From Palestine to Chile: Looking for Roots”, PRGN, accessed 10th April 2019: <https://www.prgn.com/case-study/palestine-chile-looking-roots/>

⁹⁰ Federación Palestina of Chile, “Nuestra Historia”, Federación Palestina of Chile, accessed 10th April 2019: <http://www.federacionpalestina.cl/institucion.php?s=historia>

requested a meeting with the Minister(s), in order to present the new “Federación Palestina” directive and address issues of interest to Palestine.

Bilateral analysis of Palestine-Chile politics: Have policies changed facing different Chilean governments?

The previous chapter showed the position of Palestinians in Chile, with special mention of influential groups within the diaspora. Faced with this, it is worth asking how these groups operate in Chile in relation to the decisions that Chile adopts regarding the Palestinian issue. With this objective, this chapter will begin by referring to Chile's guiding principles in international matters, as well as Chile's position on the conflict in Palestine. Subsequently, a series of events will be mentioned, starting with the partition of Palestine in 1947, which will show possible links of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile with the decisions that the government has taken in relation to Palestine. Afterwards, the military dictatorship's policies in the international and especially regional panorama will be evaluated, as it also influenced Chile's policy change in relation to Palestine. Another important factor to discuss would be the events of the 80s, highlighting the first intifada in 1987. Likewise, it will be mentioned the Chilean scenario of the return to democracy, to end with current events after the year 2000, highlighting the recognition of Palestine by Chile.

In accordance with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile,⁹¹ the principles of Chilean foreign policy are the fundamental guidelines that sustain and give coherence to the decisions that Chile adopts in matters of foreign relations. In this sense, firstly, Chile respects international law, adhering to the legal instruments that regulate international relations. Chile believes that by maintaining respect among States, it is possible to preserve peace and security in the international community. Chile gives particular importance to the validity and respect of treaties, believing that respect for the commitments undertaken is, in this regard, a fundamental principle of Chilean society. Chile also supports the peaceful settlement of disputes, adhering to the prohibition of

⁹¹ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, "Principios de la Política Exterior Chilena", *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile*, accessed 16th May 2019: <https://minrel.gob.cl/principios-de-la-politica-exterior-chilena/minrel/2008-08-02/194424.html>

threats or use of force in international relations that is contrary to the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations. Thus, Chile, as a founding member of the United Nations, gives fundamental value to the strict application of its principles, supporting all initiatives aimed at achieving peaceful solutions to international conflicts.

On the other hand, Chile believes in independence and respect for sovereignty. The political and economic self-determination of states and territorial integrity are fundamental values in this regard. Along with that, Chile recognizes the evolution of international law in areas such as human rights and shares the idea that humanitarian actions for qualified cases, authorized in the multilateral framework of the United Nations, can be used in serious situations that endanger domestic populations. Chile also advocates for territorial integrity.⁹²

Secondly, Chile promotes democracy and respect for human rights, and adheres to international instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights, which must be complementary to national systems and must be exercised when local resources do not exist or, if they do exist, are not effective. Thirdly, Chile believes in the responsibility to cooperate in order to face together and with increasingly effective tools the new international challenges and threats.⁹³ In regard to the conflict in Palestine, since the return to democracy in 1990, the Chilean government has also had a permanent stance of adherence to a just and lasting solution, with full observance to international law. However, there have been certain contradictions, such as the signing of a customs agreement with Israel, approved in 2017, which does not align with the broader narrative. Nevertheless, in general terms, Chile has constantly encouraged compliance with the various resolutions issued by the UN, in order to ensure the coexistence of two states - one Israeli and one Palestinian - within secure and internationally recognized borders; the Israeli

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

withdrawal from the occupied territories; the rejection of violence; and the consecration of a special international status for the political administration of Jerusalem. This position was declared by President Ricardo Lagos during the visit to Chile of the Palestinian National Authority, President Mahmoud Abbas, in May 2005;⁹⁴ later ratified by the first administration of President Michelle Bachelet, which in November 2009 received a new visit from the Palestinian President;⁹⁵ and reaffirmed once again by the government of the current President, Sebastián Piñera (in his first administration), which on January 7, 2011 officially recognized Palestine as a free, independent and sovereign state.⁹⁶

For the purpose of this research, I will review different events that have happened within Chile in relation to Palestine. Thus, it will begin with the vote on the partition of Palestine, in 1947 followed by a review of the period of the military dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990), the policy that was implemented at that time in relation to the occupation and how the international and regional scenario influenced the change of paradigm. Subsequently, policies and series of events that occurred after the return of democracy, will also be discussed.

⁹⁴ El Universo, "Lagos: hay una deuda historica con el pueblo palestino", El Universo, accessed 14th May 2019:

<https://www.eluniverso.com/2005/05/12/0001/14/6F2026AFCABB4B02B70C6351AD38F2EA.html>

⁹⁵ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, "Comunicado Conjunto entre Presidenta Bachelet y Mahmud Abbas, Presidente de la Autoridad Nacional Palestina", November 2009, January 2005, accessed 14th May 2019:

<https://minrel.gob.cl/minrel/site/artic/20091126/pags/20091126092310.html>

⁹⁶ Emol, "Chile reconoce a Palestina como un 'Estado libre, independiente y soberano'", Emol, accessed 14th May 2019:

<https://www.emol.com/noticias/nacional/2011/01/07/457123/chile-reconoce-a-palestina-como-un-estado-libre-independiente-y-soberano.html>

The resurgence of Palestinian identity and the strengthening of relations between Palestine and Latin America were influenced by the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. In Resolution 181 of 1947, the United Nations sought to end the British Mandate in Palestine, establishing in exchange a plan for partition of that territory, in order to create two states: one Israeli and one Palestinian. Under this resolution, Jerusalem was constituted as a 'corpus separatum', under a special international regime, administered by the United Nations. Cecilia Baeza⁹⁷ explains that faced with the vote of the Palestinian partition in 1947, Akram Zuaiteran, an important lobbyist, traveled to convince Latin American leaders not to support it, which Chile and Honduras agreed to, eventually abstaining from voting in favor of the resolution. Thirteen of the thirty-three votes in favor came from Latin America.⁹⁸ Over the next two decades, the positions of Latin American governments remained generally favorable to Israel.⁹⁹ Despite the fact that the lobbyist was sent from Palestine, the fact that he decided to go to Latin America, and specifically to Chile, is an indication that the Palestinian community in Chile was already quite influential. Furthermore, as argued by Ricardo Marzuca,¹⁰⁰ it is very likely that this visit was organized jointly with the diaspora in Chile. Marzuca explains that, in addition to that, in 1947 an Arab coordination Committee of the institutions was formed in Chile,¹⁰¹ chaired by Nicolas Yarur, which played an important role in Chile's position at the United Nations, since it influenced the government to abstain from voting in favor of the resolution.

Likewise, Marzuca points out that another instance that influenced the Chilean point of view was a debate that took place in the law school of the University of Chile. This debate

⁹⁷ Cecilia Baeza, "Palestinians in Latin America," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 43, no. 2 (February 2014): 59–72, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://altahrir.wordpress.com/2013/12/05/a-new-palestinian-consciousness-history-of-the-diaspora-in-latin-america/>

⁹⁸ Cecilia Baeza, "Implicaciones para Palestina del giro a la derecha de América Latina", *Debate Plural*, February 2019, accessed 23rd May 2019: <http://debateplural.com/2019/02/12/implicaciones-para-palestina-del-giro-a-la-derecha-de-america-latina/>

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Faculty Member, Centro de Estudios Árabes, Universidad de Chile, Skype call, Santiago of Chile, 17th May 2019.

¹⁰¹ Mundo Árabe, "Asamblea Constituyente de Árabes y sus descendientes", *Mundo Árabe*, October 1947, accessed 22nd May 2019: <http://www.mundoarabe.cl/ediciones/385#pagina&1>

influenced the decision of Chilean authorities primarily because it was publicized extensively in the press. Secondly, this was because well reputed Chilean lawyers of Palestinian origin participated in the debate. Therefore, both the Palestinian lobbyist's visit to Chile and the debate were actions that influenced public opinion, impacting Chile's decision regarding its foreign policy decision.

During the Cold War, Latin American foreign policy was influenced by relations with the United States. Although this was certainly not the only factor, the relationship with this country was also quite relevant at the time of defining international positions.¹⁰² At the same time, as a consequence of the Yom Kippur war in 1973, OPEC decided not to export any more oil to the countries that had supported Israel. In this context, some Latin American countries opted for a rapprochement with the Palestinian cause in order to avoid the oil embargo. Brazil, which depended on oil imports from Arab countries, was the most susceptible Latin American country to apply this new diplomatic orientation and from 1974, it began to regularly pass UNGA resolutions in favor of Palestinian rights.¹⁰³ Baeza points out that in Chile, in the first years of the military coup, Pinochet adopted an anti-Arab stance in reaction to the policy of the Allende government. Actually, in 1974, under Pinochet's dictatorship, Chile voted against Resolution 3236,¹⁰⁴ through which the General Assembly reaffirmed the rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to their homes and property.¹⁰⁵ OPEC and the trade of oil were important factors leading to the increasing support towards Palestinian rights.

¹⁰² Cecilia Baeza, "América latina y la cuestión palestina (1947-2012)", *Universidad de Brasilia*, accessed 16th May 2019: https://www.academia.edu/3393105/América_latina_y_la_cuestión_palestina_1947-2012_

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Hugo Harvey Parada, "Chile - Israel Relations 1973-1990: The Hidden Connection", *RiL Editores*, accessed 16th May 2019: <https://books.google.hu/books?id=5fNYGZ-NShwC&dq=UN+res+3236+chile&q=3236#v=snippet&q=3236&f=false>

¹⁰⁵ Security Council Report, "UN Documents", *Security Council Report*, 22nd November 1974, accessed 16th May 2019: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/IP-A-RES-3236.php>

Notwithstanding, in this international and regional context, one year later, in November 10th, 1975, with 72 votes in favor, 35 against and 32 abstentions, the UN determined that "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination. Chile abstained. On the other hand, Brazil, following a shift in its position, voted in favor. The highly controversial nature of the resolution made the adoption of the text a strong political gesture.¹⁰⁶ A few years later, in August 1980, following Israel's proclamation of Jerusalem as "eternal and indivisible capital", the Security Council rejected this decision and called on the diplomatic representations located in Jerusalem to be relocated to Tel Aviv. Among those countries was Chile, which abided by the decision.¹⁰⁷ On this subject, relations between Chile and Israel began in 1949, with the Chilean recognition of the State of Israel, and the first Israeli Ambassador to Chile arrived in May 1950.¹⁰⁸ The '80s ended with the first Intifada in the occupied Palestinian territories, in December 1987,¹⁰⁹ which was followed in November 1988 by the proclamation of the Palestinian State by the PLO in Algiers (Algeria).¹¹⁰

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that Chile's stance on Palestine kept fluctuating. It seems that the regional context was crucial in shaping Chilean foreign policy. But what happened to the diaspora in this period? There are records from the newspaper "Mundo Arabe" that show a link between the businessmen of the diaspora and the military dictatorship. However, in the next chapter the reasons why it is believed that the diaspora was not actively participating in trying to influence Chile's decisions will be discussed. As a prelude, the fact that

¹⁰⁶ Norma Breda dos Santos and Eduardo Uziel, "Forty Years of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379 (XXX) on Zionism and Racism: the Brazilian Vote as an instance of United States - Brazil Relations", *Rev. bras. polít. Int.*, vol.58 no.2, Brasília July/Dec. 2015, accessed 16th May 2019: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0034-73292015000200080

¹⁰⁷ Cecilia Baeza, "América latina y la cuestión palestina (1947-2012)", *Universidad de Brasilia*, accessed 16th May 2019: https://www.academia.edu/3393105/América_latina_y_la_cuestión_palestina_1947-2012

¹⁰⁸ Embassy of Chile in Israel, "Bilateral Relationship", Embassy of Chile in Israel, accessed 21st May 2019: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090212042340/http://embachile.org.il/bilateral.htm>

¹⁰⁹ BBC, "Palestinian territories – Timeline", *BBC*, April 2019, accessed 21st May 2019: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29362505>

¹¹⁰ Javier Valenzuela, "El Consejo Nacional Palestino estudia hoy en Argel proclamar un Estado independiente", *El Pais*, November 1988, accessed 21st May 2019: https://elpais.com/diario/1988/11/12/internacional/595292420_850215.html

they were businessmen and not intellectuals is one of the reasons why the diaspora probably did not ask for a greater balance on the part of Chile. In other words, Chile's Palestinian financial elite even though it could have been aligned with the dictatorship,¹¹¹ it did not lobby for a favorable position on Palestine. The reason behind might be because they were motivated more by corporate interests and diverged with Chilean Palestinian intellectuals on Palestine's internal politics.

In spite of this supposed shift in Chile's position on the Palestinian question, as an additional and contradictory piece of information, it is necessary to make reference to the fact that Chile and Israel have been linked by the existing relationship in defense matters.¹¹² In fact, there are declarations that argue that the military dictatorship lasted so long in Chile because of the support of third countries, including Israel.¹¹³ Also, in an interview with the Spanish press, Lily Traubmann, daughter of an executed politician, assures that "all the weapons of the Chilean police and army (during the Pinochet regime) were Israeli".¹¹⁴ Thus, this may be another reason why Chile was not active enough in defending Palestinian rights internationally, despite having a large Palestinian diaspora.

This scenario of an inconsistent stance in the positions of Latin American countries, and particularly Chile, in the face of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, changed in the 1990s, becoming more balanced. Indeed, according to Baeza,¹¹⁵ three factors had an influence: on the one hand, the end of the Cold War; the democratic stabilization of Latin American countries (coincided with

¹¹¹ Mundo Árabe, "La colaboración de la colectividad árabe ha sido amplia y generosa", Mundo Árabe, October 1974, accessed 23rd May 2019: <http://www.mundoarabe.cl/ediciones/1061#pagina&30>

¹¹² Ejército de Chile, "Comandante de las Fuerzas Terrestres de Israel en visita oficial al Ejército de Chile", *Ejército de Chile*, March 2018, accessed 21st May 2019: <https://www.ejercito.cl/noticias/Comandante%20de%20las%20Fuerzas%20Terrestres%20de%20Israel%20en%20visita%20oficial%20al%20Ejército%20de%20Chile%20-1977>

¹¹³ HispanTV, "La Dictadura de Pinochet En Chile Permaneció Por Apoyo de Israel | HISPANTV," HISPANTV, 2018, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.hispantv.com/noticias/chile/377572/israel-pinochet-dictadura-armas-apoyo>

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Cecilia Baeza, "América latina y la cuestión palestina (1947-2012)", *Universidad de Brasilia*, accessed 21st May 2019: https://www.academia.edu/3393105/América_latina_y_la_cuestión_palestina_1947-2012

the end of Pinochet's dictatorship), and the creation of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).¹¹⁶ In Chile, after the 1988 plebiscite, where the NO option that decided the end of the Pinochet regime won and after the 1989 elections, Patricio Aylwin assumed the presidency on March 11th, 1990.¹¹⁷ The Oslo Accords reinforced this more balanced dynamic. However, this supposed balance was nevertheless misaligned, favoring Israel. For instance, on December 16th, 1991, reversing the previous Chilean pronouncement, almost all Latin American states (except Cuba) voted to repeal resolution 3379 equating Zionism with a form of racism (resolution 46/86).¹¹⁸

As Baeza explains, as a result of Peace negotiations, Palestine opened diplomatic missions in Latin America, the first of which was in 1992 (even before Brazil). Chile, driven by the diaspora and parliamentarians, led the normalization process with Palestine. Indeed, on the 17th December 1992, the National Congress organized a ceremony in support of the PLO, the first-time representatives of the Palestinian community met officially with Chilean parliamentarians. The President of the House of Deputies, José Antonio Viera Gallo, asked for diplomatic recognition of the PLO office in Chile, whose process was accelerated by the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993.¹¹⁹ Relations between Chile and Palestine began to flow, without necessarily implying a deterioration of relations with Israel. In fact, in 1995 a Scientific Cooperation Agreement was signed between Chile and Palestine.¹²⁰ In April 1998, Chile opened

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ediciones El País, "Patricio Aylwin Asume Hoy La Presidencia de Chile," EL PAÍS, March 10, 1990, accessed 17th May 2019: https://elpais.com/diario/1990/03/11/internacional/637110010_850215.html

¹¹⁸ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "260 General Assembly Resolution 46-86- Revocation of Resolution 3379- 16 December 1991- and statement by President Herzog", *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, December 1991, accessed 21st May 2019:

<https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook8/pages/260%20general%20assembly%20resolution%2046-86-%20revocation.aspx>

¹¹⁹ Cecilia Baeza, "América latina y la cuestión palestina (1947-2012)", *Universidad de Brasilia*, accessed 21st May 2019: https://www.academia.edu/3393105/América_latina_y_la_cuestión_palestina_1947-2012

¹²⁰ Ibid.

the first Latin American diplomatic representation in Ramallah, the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority.¹²¹

In the 2000s, the election of left and center-left governments in Latin America influenced the approach countries began to take on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The need to seek greater autonomy from the United States began to emerge, through the diversification of political and commercial partners. Since 2008, Latin American governments have shown absolute solidarity with Palestine. The wave of recognitions of the State of Palestine between 2008 and 2013 marked a climax of this turnaround.¹²² Brazil began to play an important role in relation to the conflict, expressing more concern and support for the Palestinian question.¹²³ In 2009, with the purpose of recognizing the State of Palestine, the President of the National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, visited some countries in the region, such as Brazil, Argentina and Chile. As a result, in December 2010, Brazil expressed this recognition, so did other countries in the region, including Chile.¹²⁴

Indeed, in January 2011, Chile recognized Palestine as a "free, independent and sovereign state", adding to the recognition that Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador also made earlier in the region. However, one of the criticisms towards government policy was that this recognition was not explicit in the announcement if it is with the borders that Palestine had prior to 1967. At that time, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of that period, Alfredo Moreno, confirmed President Sebastián Piñera's visit to Israel and Palestine.¹²⁵ According to the Chilean press,¹²⁶ this decision

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Cecilia Baeza, "Implicaciones para Palestina del giro a la derecha de América Latina", *Debate Plural*, February 2019, accessed 23rd May 2019: <http://debateplural.com/2019/02/12/implicaciones-para-palestina-del-giro-a-la-derecha-de-america-latina/>

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Alessandra Corrêa, "Abbas Busca Apoio de Lula à Independência Palestina," BBC News Brasil (BBC News Brasil, November 20, 2009), accessed 21st May 2019: https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2009/11/091119_abbasbrasil_ac

¹²⁵ Emol, "Chile reconoce a Palestina como un "Estado libre, independiente y soberano", *Emol*, January 2011, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.emol.com/noticias/nacional/2011/01/07/457123/chile-reconoce-a-palestina-como-un-estado-libre-independiente-y-soberano.html>

was preceded by an intense lobby of both parties with the government, triggered also by the recognition of the Palestinian State that had announced weeks before by other governments in the region, such as Brazil and Argentina. In fact, several Chilean parliamentarians requested meetings with the Presidency in order to argue for and against the recognition of the Palestinian State. The same happened with the respective ambassadors of both nations appointed for Chile. In addition, the Chilean President spoke by telephone with the Israeli Prime Minister and also contacted the President of the Palestinian National Authority, who met with the Chilean President in Brazil and then sent him a letter requesting his support.

According to the national press, Chile's interest in pronouncing on this matter would also be motivated by the importance of both diasporas in the country.¹²⁷ Likewise, “el Mostrador”, another Chilean newspaper, reported that Chile's recognition of Palestine was strongly influenced by a meeting of the Palestinian community with government authorities as part of a global strategy whose main objective was to gain the support of the European Union in that recognition. This press article also points out that there was a strong offensive on the part of Palestinian organizations in order for Chile to make the recognition. As part of these actions, Palestinians sought support from parliamentarians, which resulted in the formation of a broad and cross-sectional group of senators and deputies in favor of Palestine.¹²⁸ The BBC reported that, according to some analysts, diplomatic movements for Chile's recognition of Palestine may have been influenced by pressure from the Palestinian diaspora in Chile, which is considered the

¹²⁶ La Tercera, “Reconocimiento Del Estado Palestino: Decisión Coherente | La Tercera,” *Latercera.com*, 2011, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.latercera.com/noticia/reconocimiento-del-estado-palestino-decision-coherente/>

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ El Mostrador, “La reunión clave del lobby palestino en Chile”, *El Mostrador*, December 2010, accessed 19th May 2019: <http://www.palestinalibre.org/articulo.php?a=28676>; But there is not only the Palestinian Chilean interparliamentary group, but also in the year 2014 (3 years later), the Israeli Chilean Interparliamentary Group was created after the new one. Through both instances, both Palestinian and Israeli communities raise the issues of their interest to Parliament and try to exert pressure on the national authorities.

largest outside the Middle East. In this sense, it was pointed out that not only does the diaspora matter because of its size in Chile, but also because of its social and economic status.¹²⁹

In August 2011, the Palestinian Community met the Minister Secretary General of Government, Mr. Marcelo Díaz, in order to address issues of interest and concern to the Palestinian community on the national stage. The meeting was part of a cycle of appointments that the community was making to keep the Chilean political authorities duly informed on the Palestinian reality and the required international solidarity. That same year, Mr. Marcelo Díaz participated in a parliamentary visit to Palestine, where he declared to the press that reality is incredibly worse than one thinks.¹³⁰ With regard to the parliamentary sphere, according to the records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,¹³¹ on August 29, 2011, that is, a few months after the express recognition of Palestine by Chile, the Chilean Palestinian interparliamentary group requested a meeting with the Minister. The objective was to discuss Chile's position on this recognition and to discuss Palestine's permanent entry into the United Nations. On 29 November 2012, through United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/19, it was agreed that Palestine would be admitted as an observer State, not a member of the Organization.¹³² Chile voted in favor of this resolution.¹³³

¹²⁹ Redacción, “Chile Se Une Al Reconocimiento Del Estado Palestino,” BBC News Mundo (BBC News Mundo, January 12, 2011), accessed 21st May 2019:

https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2011/01/110111_america_latina_reconocimiento_estado_palestino_chile_pea

¹³⁰ Federación Palestina, “Comunidad palestina se reúne con Secretario General de Gobierno”, *Federación Palestina*, August 2011, accessed 21st May 2019: <http://www.federacionpalestina.cl/noticia.php?id=1633>

¹³¹ Information requested by the transparency system of the Government of Chile.

¹³² Naciones Unidas, “La Cuestión de Palestina y la Asamblea General”, Naciones Unidas, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.un.org/unispal/es/data-collection/general-assembly/>

¹³³ Naciones Unidas, “Cuestión de Palestina”, *Asamblea General*, November 2012, accessed 19th May 2019: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/67/L.28&referer=/english/&Lang=S

Furthermore, before resolution 67/19, in the year 2011, the Palestinian National Authority became a full member of UNESCO with 107 votes in favor, 14 against and 52 abstentions. Chile voted in favor of this resolution.¹³⁴

On the other hand, and contrary to the policies that Chile was adopting in relation to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in January 2014, Chilean and Israeli customs signed a cooperation agreement for mutual administrative assistance, thus helping to further enhance trade between the two countries. This agreement contains protocols for the exchange of information in the fight against illegitimate trade and technical assistance (including training and internships for the exchange of experiences, advice and even technology transfer). On this occasion, the Ambassador of Israel in Chile, David Dadonn, stated that the agreement ratifies the interest of both countries to advance in their commercial relationship, generating the necessary conditions for it.¹³⁵ Facing this situation, the “Federación Palestina” of Chile reacted by pointing out that Israel does not comply with the agreements it already has signed with Chile, such as the free migration agreement. Indeed, it was expressed that while some Chilean citizens are harassed and subjected to harsh treatment to enter Israel, and even deported, Israeli citizens enter Chile freely, despite the fact that in recent times some of them have damaged and irresponsibly put at risk the Chilean forest and tourist heritage.¹³⁶ The group also expressed concern that this agreement could mean a first step towards the signing of a Free Trade Agreement with Israel, an idea rejected in 2012, among other reasons, because of Israel's brutal attack on Gaza. Nevertheless, this Agreement was approved by the Parliament in December 2017 (Under Michelle Bachelet's

¹³⁴ Guardian Staff, “How Unesco Countries Voted on Palestinian Membership,” the Guardian (The Guardian, November 2011), accessed 22nd May 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/01/unesco-countries-vote-palestinian-membership>

¹³⁵ Direccion Nacional de Aduanas de Chile, “Chile e Israel firman importante convenio aduanero”, *Aduanas de Chile*, accessed 19th May 2019: <http://www.aduana.cl/chile-e-israel-firman-importante-convenio-aduanero/aduana/2014-01-20/153440.html>

¹³⁶ Cooperativa.cl, “Federación Palestina Deploró Acuerdo Entre Aduanas de Chile e Israel,” Cooperativa.cl, 2014, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.cooperativa.cl/noticias/pais/organismos-del-estado/federacion-palestina-deploro-acuerdo-entre-aduanas-de-chile-e-israel/2014-01-25/190130.html>

Government).¹³⁷ Out of a total of 20 votes, there were 2 rejections and 1 abstention. One of the rejections was that of Senator Eugenio Tuma, of Palestinian origin, who indicated that an essential issue is that the agreement does not mention the limits of the territories of Israel. For this reason, he referred to the right of reservation and interpretative declaration under the provisions of Article 54 of the Constitution, with regard to the observance of the general rules of international law. In relation to the Agreement, Tuma expressed that signing it, Chile deviates from the strict respect for the resolutions of multilateral organizations such as the United Nations, which have repeatedly condemned the occupation of the territory of the Palestinian people.¹³⁸

This is where the Free Trade Agreements matters; according to an interview with an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, a Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Cooperation between Chile and Palestine has been in force since 2012. However, he pointed out that it is not feasible to sign a Free Trade Agreement with Palestine, since due to the Israeli occupation, the Palestinian government has no border control or ports of entry for goods. Regarding the possible signing of a Free Trade Agreement between Chile and Israel, as it was reported, the Palestinian government and part of the Palestinian private sector in Chile have expressed their clear opposition. Nevertheless, should this happen, Palestine could demand the inclusion of a clause on the denomination of origin of products coming from Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories, being expressly excluded, in accordance with the guidelines of the European Union. Along with the possibility to sign a Free Trade Agreement between Chile and Israel, it is worth considering that Israel joined 2014 as an observer State of the Pacific Alliance, since it did so just at the moment when the European Union decided labelling Israeli products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Facing this situation, Palestinian

¹³⁷ Senado, “Aprueban Acuerdo Sobre Cooperación y Asistencia e Materia Aduanera Entre Chile e Israel - Senado - República de Chile,” Senado, 2018, accessed 19th May 2019: <http://www.senado.cl/aprueban-acuerdo-sobre-cooperacion-y-asistencia-e-materia-aduanera-entre/senado/2017-11-30/122436.html>

¹³⁸ Ibid.

organizations in Chile were mobilized and expressed their concern to the Chilean authorities. Indeed, they pointed out that concretizing ties with Israel means endorsing an entity that constantly violates Human Rights and United Nations resolutions, and would be transmitted a message of impunity.¹³⁹ According to the information given by the “Federación Palestina”, the Foreign Minister of the time, Hernando Muñoz, referred that Chile does not endorse the policies of its government, like those of any other Observer State, that are contrary to the resolutions of the United Nations or International Law.¹⁴⁰

Regardless of the debate that generated and continues generating a possible signing of a Free Trade Agreement between Chile and Israel, relations with Palestine persisted fluid. In that respect, the First Meeting of Bilateral Political Consultations between Chile and Palestine -at the level of Vice Ministers of Foreign Affairs-, was held in June 2014, in Ramallah (Palestine).¹⁴¹ On that occasion, both bilateral and multilateral issues were addressed, the latter with a special focus on the Middle East region. Likewise, in terms of cooperation, Palestine expressed that it would set in motion the Palestinian Cooperation Agency; the Diplomatic Academy of that country and showed interest in knowing the Chilean experience in the management of SMEs, in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in exchanging knowledge on certification and production standards. Cultural issues were also addressed.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Federación Palestina de Chile, “Ante las pretensiones de Israel con la Alianza del Pacífico, Chile asegura que no le entregará facilidades arancelarias”, Federación Palestina, August 2016, Accessed 21th May 2019:

<http://www.federacionpalestina.cl/noticia.php?id=1626>

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, “Subsecretario Edgardo Riveros visita el Estado de Palestina”, Chile en el Exterior, June 2014, accessed 18th May 2019: <https://chile.gob.cl/chile/blog/palestina/subsecretario-edgardo-riveros-visita-el-estado-de-palestina>

¹⁴² Ibid.

Israel bombed Gaza in July 2014.¹⁴³ Faced with this situation, the Chilean-Palestinian Interparliamentary group met the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Heraldo Muñoz, to request concrete actions of the State of Chile and not only words of condemnation to what Israel is doing in Palestinian territory.¹⁴⁴ Afterwards, within the framework of the United Nations Human Rights Council, by resolution S-21/1 dated 23 July 2014, it approved (by 29 votes in favor, one against and 17 abstentions) the establishment of an international commission of inquiry into possible human rights violations committed during the Israeli military offensive in Gaza that year. Chile voted in favor and encouraged a comprehensive solution and condemned the construction of Israeli settlements, which are contrary to United Nations resolutions and international law.¹⁴⁵

In 2019, the Human Rights Council released a report on the exactions committed by Israeli military and police forces against Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza during the so-called "Return March" in 2018, resulting in 189 Palestinian deaths (including 183 from Israeli army fire) and 6106 Palestinian injuries. This investigation responds to the specific request in resolution S-28/1, adopted in May 2018, adopted with 29 votes in favor (including Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela), two against (United States and Australia) and 14 abstentions (including Panama), in which Chile reaffirmed its 2014 position. The adoption of this resolution motivated the United States to withdraw from the Human Rights Council in June 2018.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Redacción, "Gaza: El Mayor Bombardeo Israelí Deja Al Menos 100 Palestinos Muertos," BBC News Mundo (BBC News Mundo, July 20, 2014), accessed 22nd May 2019:

https://www.bbc.com/mundo/ultimas_noticias/2014/07/140720_ultnot_gaza_shejiaya_bombardeos_muertos_mz

¹⁴⁴ El Dínamo, "Parlamentarios del grupo chileno-palestino presionan al canciller Muñoz por bombardeo a Gaza", *El Dínamo*, July 2014, accessed 22nd May 2019: <https://www.eldinamo.cl/pais/2014/07/14/parlamentarios-del-grupo-chileno-palestino-presionan-al-canciller-munoz-por-bombardeo-a-gaza/>

¹⁴⁵ Nicolas Boeglin, "Naciones Unidas: Consejo de Derechos Humanos Aprueba Resolución Para Investigar Ataques de Israel En Gaza," *Derecho Internacional Público* - www.dipublico.org (Derecho Internacional Público - www.dipublico.org, July 28, 2014), accessed 19th May 2019: <http://derechointernacionalcr.blogspot.com/2014/07/consejo-de-derechos-humanos-aprueba.html>

¹⁴⁶ Palestina Libre, "A propósito del reciente informe de Naciones Unidas que califica duramente las exacciones cometidas por Israel contra civiles palestinos", *Palestina Libre*, March 2019, accessed 19th May 2019: <http://palestinalibre.org/articulo.php?a=72035>

But Chile's participation in the Security Council was also important in diplomatic terms, because Palestine turned out to be a relevant issue. Above all, taking into consideration the number of Palestinian victims of the Israeli military operation "Protective Margin", which is estimated at more than two thousand one hundred people, mostly civilians, including women and children. Chile showed solidarity with Palestine by condemning Israel's disproportionate use of force and for not respecting fundamental norms of international humanitarian law. As a consequence, Chile called its Ambassador in Tel Aviv in consultations and he had to come back and inform about the situation.¹⁴⁷ It also contributed US\$150,000 from the Chile Fund against Hunger and Poverty for the population of Gaza.¹⁴⁸ In this regard, on December 30, 2014, the Security Council considered a text proposed by Jordan on Palestine, which demanded among other things the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territories before the end of 2017. No consensus was reached on that document. It gathered eight votes in favor, including Chile (Argentina, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Luxembourg and Russia), two against (Australia and the United States) and five abstentions (South Korea, Lithuania, Nigeria, the United Kingdom and Rwanda).¹⁴⁹ In relation to this, when Michelle Bachelet was appointed High Commissioner for Human Rights (in August 2018), some Israelis perceived this fact as a threat, considering Chile's political position as pro-Palestinian. They even alluded in the media to Chile's condemnation of "Operation Protective Margin," where thousands of Palestinians were killed.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, "Chile llama a consultas a su Embajador en Israel", *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile*, July 2014, accessed 18th May 2019: <https://minrel.gob.cl/chile-llama-a-consultas-a-su-embajador-en-israel/minrel/2014-07-29/114843.html>

¹⁴⁸ UNDP, "Fondo Chile contra el Hambre y la Pobreza", *UNDP*, 2015, accessed 18th May 2019: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/chile/docs/fondo-chile/undp_cl_fondochile-Brochure-2015.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Nicolas Boeglin, "El Voto Sobre Palestina En El Consejo de Seguridad: Balance y Perspectivas," *Periodistas en Español* (Periodistas en Español, January 3, 2015), accessed 18th May 2019: <https://esquemaeconomico.wordpress.com/2015/01/06/el-resultado-del-voto-sobre-palestina-en-el-consejo-de-seguridad-balance-y-perspectivas/>

¹⁵⁰ Noticias de Israel, "Michelle Bachelet de Chile es la nueva jefa de Derechos Humanos de la ONU", *Noticias de Israel*, August 2018, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://israelnoticias.com/onu/michelle-bachelet-chile-jefa-de-derechos-humanos-onu/>

Trump's announcement of Jerusalem's recognition as Israel's capital was another of the facts that prompted Chile's pronouncement. The Chilean government, decided to reconsider this situation and not to adopt decisions that could incite hatred.¹⁵¹ Likewise, former President Michelle Bachelet expressed U.S. Vice President Mike Pence that Chile will not support coups or military interventions.¹⁵²

In May 2018, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera received his Palestinian counterpart, Mahmoud Abbas, who made an official visit to Chile. Piñera, one more time, highlighted the importance of relations between the two countries. He referred to the recognition of the Palestinian State on January 7, 2011, which was followed by an official visit of the Chilean President to Palestine. As a result, a joint statement was signed that, alluding to this first bilateral meeting held in 2011, it was agreed to energize the working group formed that year, strengthening cooperation, trade and some other areas of work. Regarding the situation in the Middle East, Piñera pointed out that Chile is respectful of human rights and international law and supports a peaceful two-state solution. In addition, he recalled that Chile was the first Latin American country to open a Representation Office in Ramallah, in 1998.¹⁵³

As it has been pointed out, this group is transversal, that is to say, it has parliamentarians of all political positions. As pointed out before, Chile has a considerable number of politicians of Palestinian origin, in all the benches. In fact, in Congress they are members of the Chamber and senators from the right, center and left. There are also other politicians, such as mayors, former

¹⁵¹ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, “Chile manifiesta preocupación por decisión de Estados Unidos de reconocer a Jerusalén como capital de Israel”, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, December 2017, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://minrel.gob.cl/chile-manifiesta-preocupacion-por-decision-de-estados-unidos-de-minrel/2017-12-06/195229.html>

¹⁵² Trends Latinos, “Chile rejects Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital”, *Trends Latinos*, December 2017, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://trendslatinos.com/chile-rejects-trumps-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-israels-capital/>

¹⁵³ <https://magnet.cl>, “Gob.Cl: Article: President Piñera Receives Official Visit From Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas,” www.gob.cl, 2018, accessed 19th May 2019: <https://www.gob.cl/en/news/president-pinera-receives-official-visit-palestinian-president-mahmoud-abbas/>

national prosecutors, etc. For instance, Francisco Chahuán¹⁵⁴ is Senator of National Renewal (right-wing party), Fuad Chahin¹⁵⁵ is President of the Christian Democracy (center), and Daniel Jadue¹⁵⁶ is Mayor of Recoleta and belongs to the communist party.

The creation of the Palestinian Chilean interparliamentary group has been a working mechanism that contributes to mutual political understanding and closer cooperation in the social, economic, commercial, cultural and political fields. The Chilean-Palestinian Inter-Parliamentary group has more than 40 members, not only parliamentarians of Palestinian origin, and is composed of both the left and the right of the country. In that sense, what happens at the level of Congress is relevant in the position that Chile adopts in foreign policy. As an example, in November 2018 the Congress worked in a project that seeks to prohibit the entry into Chile of Israeli products produced in Israeli colonies located in occupied Palestine. In this way, the government of Sebastián Piñera was asked to study mechanisms to prohibit the entry into Chile of products manufactured and coming from the Israeli colonies in occupied Palestine. The members of the Parliament want to specify on products from Israel whether they have been produced in "illegal colonies that are contrary to international law", as decided in July 2018 Ireland, the country that heads this initiative among the countries of the European Union (EU).

Also, in July 2018, the Chilean members of the Parliament approved another project requesting the President to extreme the efforts to respect the UN resolutions and the International Law, regarding Palestine as "free, independent and sovereign" State. This project was launched after a trip of parliamentarians to Palestine, where they could see on the ground the humiliations

¹⁵⁴ Del Congreso, "Biblioteca Del Congreso Nacional | Historia Política," bcn.cl, 2018, accessed 16th May 2019: https://www.bcn.cl/historiapolitica/resenas_parlamentarias/wiki/Francisco_Chahu%C3%A1n_Chahu%C3%A1n

¹⁵⁵ Del Congreso, "Biblioteca Del Congreso Nacional | Historia Política," bcn.cl, 2018, accessed 16th May 2019: https://www.bcn.cl/historiapolitica/resenas_parlamentarias/wiki/Fuad_Eduardo_Chahin_Valenzuela

¹⁵⁶ Daniel Jadue, "Sobre mí", Daniel Jadue, accessed 16th May 2019: <http://www.danieljadue.cl/web/category/prensa/>

to which Palestinians are exposed by the occupation.¹⁵⁷ At the same time as this research is being written, the work of the Palestinian community in Chile continues to be quite active. In fact, on May 21st, 2019, a group of deputies sent a letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, asking to publish the database of companies operating in Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. This letter was an initiative of the Palestinian Community of Chile and the president of the Chilean-Palestinian interparliamentary group, Sergio Gahona, and it was supported by parliamentarians from different benches. According to Gahona, there is a list of more than 200 companies currently doing business in occupied Palestinian territory.¹⁵⁸

Referring to what has been wielded over the years, the letter states that the members of the parliament invoke UN Security Council Resolution 2334, which condemns measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 and which calls for an immediate and complete end to all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory. They also point out that benefiting economically from the occupation of Palestine is a violation of the obligations of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as settlement activity constitutes a war crime.¹⁵⁹

From the facts presented, since the 2000s Chile has had a clear position regarding the conflict in Palestine. Indeed, although with some contradictions, such as the signing of the Customs Agreement, Chile is a stable country in terms of foreign policy, and when it has had to pronounce itself at the United Nations, it has done so in favor of Palestine. However, it seems

¹⁵⁷ Keivanfar s, "Parlamentarios Chilenos Dan Luz Verde Al Boicot de Productos Israelíes | Ababil," Ababil.org, November 28, 2018, <https://ababil.org/archives/10168>.

¹⁵⁸ Cooperativa.cl, "Diputados Piden Que Bachelet Revele Qué Empresas Israelíes 'Hacen Negocio' En La Palestina Ocupada," Cooperativa.cl, 2019, accessed 21st May 2019: <https://www.cooperativa.cl/noticias/mundo/medio-orient/palestina/diputados-piden-que-bachelet-revele-que-empresas-israelies-hacen/2019-05-21/123505.html>

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

that since the arrival of the Palestinians in Chile there has always been an attitude that seems to be proactive in relation to the policies adopted by Chile. And because of the position of this group in Chilean society, it could be assumed that at certain times some of the lobbying movements that have been exercised could have had an effect on Chile's decisions. However, given the confluence of factors involved in Chile's decision making, this study, rather than ensuring diaspora influence, has sought to show the kind of work it does around its concern for Palestine.

The diverse impact of the Palestinian diaspora in Chilean foreign policy regarding Palestine and Israel

Although it is difficult to determine the real impact of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile on Chilean foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, what is possible to point out is that this diaspora is in a privileged situation to do so, something that in itself is quite exceptional. As Ricardo Marzuca¹⁶⁰ mentions, they participated actively in the process of industrialization of Chile, so the powerful economic groups within the community have become part of the influential groups of the Chilean elite. The economic success of certain Palestinians in Chile, together with the political influence of those parliamentarians who are scattered across the different political parties, must have had a role in dealing with issues that concern Chilean politics. Indeed, the Ranking of Wealth in Chile, in 2018, gave as a result that one of the three biggest fortunes in the country is of the Palestinian economic group, "Yarur".¹⁶¹

As a rest of the Arab diaspora's spread in Latin America, these groups became more interested in the defense of free market principles, because they are aligned with the industry in which they have been working since the beginning. Even more so in Chile, which in the last 30 years has signed 26 Free Trade Agreements, which opened the borders to 64 economies in the world.¹⁶² However, as was stated in the previous chapter, what history shows is that, indeed, in 1947 there was influence on the part of the Palestinian community in the decision that Chile took regarding the vote on partition in the United Nations. As the previous chapter pointed out, the visit of the Palestinian lobbyist, in addition to the debate held in the Law School of the University of Chile, is proof of this. However, there were a number of years, from 1947 to the 90', in which

¹⁶⁰ Faculty Member, Centro de Estudios Árabes, Universidad de Chile, Skype call, Santiago of Chile, 15th May 2019.

¹⁶¹ Universidad del Desarrollo, "Ranking de Grupos Económicos Chilenos, RGE - Facultad de Economía y Negocios," Facultad de Economía y Negocios, October 18, 2018, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://negocios.udd.cl/noticias/2018/10/ranking-de-riqueza-de-grupos-economicos-chilenos-15/>

¹⁶² Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, "Canciller Ampuero lanza libro 'Estudio del Impacto de los Tratados de Libre Comercio de Chile'", *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile*, January 2019, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://minrel.gob.cl/canciller-ampuero-lanza-libro-estudio-del-impacto-de-los-tratados-de-minrel/2019-01-10/130409.html>

the diaspora did not play a very prominent role in relation to the decisions taken by Chile. It was not until the 2000's that the community in Chile began to play a more active and preponderant role around Palestine, which was symbolized in 2011 with recognition of Palestine by the Chilean government.

The explanations for this inactivity from 1947 can be due to various factors. But for the purpose of this research, three will be addressed. First, the level of total integration of these Palestinians into Chilean society could explain this lack of diaspora organization and action. Secondly, it could be due to the fact that this diaspora had a privileged economic situation and, therefore, its interests were more economic than political. Finally, there is a lack of union of the Palestinian diaspora that can be linked with these two reasons. Baeza points out that this lack of unity amongst the Palestinian diaspora is one of the distinctive elements between Arabs and Jews, because although the Jewish diaspora is much smaller than the Arab diaspora, Zionism is a link that necessarily unites the Jewish groups.¹⁶³

In relation to integration, as Emilio Dabed¹⁶⁴ explains, in migratory flows, the generation that first arrives is strongly influenced by an objective of integration into the host country. In the case of the Palestinians in Chile, this objective was even greater, since the newcomers do not foresee the return. A proof of this is that in the new generations the linguistic bond disappears and, when this happens, there are a series of affections that also disappear, because they are directly linked to language.

As a second reason, regarding the economic position of the Arabs, there are many points that can be mentioned. At the regional level, it is estimated that 5% of the Latin American

¹⁶³ Cecilia Baeza, "Implicaciones para Palestina del giro a la derecha de América Latina", Debate Plural, February 2019, accessed 23rd May 2019: <http://debateplural.com/2019/02/12/implicaciones-para-palestina-del-giro-a-la-derecha-de-america-latina/>

¹⁶⁴ Emilio Dabed is a lawyer, specializing in constitutional and International Law, and PhD in political sciences. Currently, he is an Adjunct Professor of Law at Osgoode, York University Law School and Visiting Fellow at Nathanson Center on Transnational Human Rights, Crime and Security, Osgoode, York University Law School, Toronto, Canada. Interviewed by Skype, Toronto, 21st May 2019.

population is of Arab origin, which is equivalent to approximately 25 to 30 million people.¹⁶⁵ In general terms, there are a lot of them who belong to the upper class of society.¹⁶⁶ These elite groups, because of their link to market opening and free trade, tend to support right-wing parties in the countries where they are based. But, how does their social class and political position relate to the Palestinian issue? As Baeza explains, given that the Palestinian cause has been linked to discursive elements coming from the left, it is possible that the Arab diaspora in Latin America (including Syrians and Lebanese) may have distanced themselves from the defense of Palestinian rights. Moreover, considering that until the 1980s the ‘Palestinian’ was linked to the revolutionary armed group, the PLO.

According to Dabed, it can be said that the businessmen did not have great political interest in contrast to another sector of the diaspora, more intellectual and more informed about politics. However, the recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1974 by the United Nations as the only legitimate representation of the Palestinian people, was one of the milestones that revived the politicization of the Palestinian identity.¹⁶⁷ In fact, the activity of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile was motivated by the PLO in an awareness-raising work of the youth groups scattered in Latin America.¹⁶⁸ This may have led to internal divisions among Palestinians, but these were resolved in 1982, with the massacre of Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps, which undoubtedly promoted the first manifestation of unity among Palestinians.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, in Latin America and specifically in Chile, the circumstance that there were no democratic governments hindered an active mobilization in defense of Palestine.

¹⁶⁵ Cecilia Baeza, “Implicaciones para Palestina del giro a la derecha de América Latina”, *Debate Plural*, February 2019, accessed 23rd May 2019: <http://debateplural.com/2019/02/12/implicaciones-para-palestina-del-giro-a-la-derecha-de-america-latina/>

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Cecilia Baeza, “Palestinians in Latin America,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 43, no. 2 (February 2014): 59–72, accessed 14th May 2019: <https://altahrir.wordpress.com/2013/12/05/a-new-palestinian-consciousness-history-of-the-diaspora-in-latin-america/>

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

Therefore, already in the 90s the PLO's request for a better diaspora organization began to be put into practice.¹⁷⁰

The concrete fact is that regardless of the PLO's efforts to politicize the diaspora, there were no strong political ties with Chile, with a few exceptions.¹⁷¹ As Dabed explains, there were important businessmen residing in the Gulf, Lebanon or Jordan, who were working closely with Arafat and were directly linked to his government. This did not happen with Palestinian residents in Latin America. However, after Oslo, there has been a turnaround in the Palestinian diaspora. We can see this in the group of powerful diaspora businessmen who began to show a stronger and more substantial commitment to promoting Palestinian rights. According to Dabed, this was due to the political turn of Arafat after Oslo, where the Palestinian leadership starts disassociating itself from the revolutionary language of the past. Thus, for the powerful economic groups of the diaspora and some of their institutions, the language that the Palestinian National Authority was beginning to use was more familiar. Dabed points out that this new discursive register abandons the armed struggle and rather highlights a discourse of democratic state building, neoliberal economic development and the defense of the Palestinian cause through international law.

With the abandonment of the revolutionary armed struggle, Palestinian organizations in Chile arose. For instance, the “Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000” was created in a context in which the Oslo Accords had failed and, a few years later, in September 2000, the second Intifada broke out. These events gave a boost to the diaspora's action. Baeza points out that the fact that the Internet had already been a tool of use was a key element in the awareness implied by this

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ For instance, Nancy Lolas is a Chilean with Palestinian origins, who was a member of the Palestinian National Council representing the diaspora in Latin America. For more information: <https://revistas.elheraldo.co/latitud/historico/cambios-en-el-mundo-arabe-forjar-un-hombre-nuevo-nancy-lolas-12982>

second Intifada in the Diaspora.¹⁷² Also, Baeza mentions that the diplomatic status obtained by the Palestinian Authority after Oslo also had a mobilizing effect. Its official recognition by local authorities enabled some conservative members of the Latin American Palestinian diaspora to support a cause previously considered linked to "international terrorism". This circumstance contributed to the political influence that the Palestinian lobby was able to begin to have, as it was formed and began to work in a more persuasive manner.¹⁷³ The “Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000” is a good example of this, because its founding partners are well-known businessmen of Palestinian origin, and as Marzuca¹⁷⁴ explains, most of them have been linked with the right-wing party in Chile.

The “Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000” is still important. Mario Nazal is one of the founders. Referring to the organization, Nazal mentions that the institution has achieved great prestige and is considered one of the most important at the national level. When he was asked whether the Palestinian community in Chile has had occasion to influence Chilean foreign policy, he refers to the efforts of Palestinian organizations in Chile and the Embassy to deliver reliable information to the Chilean authorities. In addition, he refers to invitations to politicians and government officials to get to know Palestine directly, visiting its territory. It also refers to events organized by institutions in Chile, in which they invite people related to politics, economics, etc. In fact, without pronouncing on the effectiveness of the activities that the community carries out, it is clear from their response that the different groups and organizations try to remain active.

The free market is not only a programmatic policy of Palestinian authority, but it is established in the Palestinian Constitution. In this regard, another example of the emergence of institutions aligned with the new discourse of the Palestinian National Authority is “Invest

¹⁷² Cecilia Baeza, “Implicaciones para Palestina del giro a la derecha de América Latina”, *Debate Plural*, February 2019, accessed 25th May 2019: <http://debateplural.com/2019/02/12/implicaciones-para-palestina-del-giro-a-la-derecha-de-america-latina/>

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Faculty Member, Centro de Estudios Árabes, Universidad de Chile, Skype call, Santiago of Chile, 15th May 2019.

Palestine”, defined as a private company of consultants which aims to facilitate the financing and development of projects and businesses in Palestine. It is based in Chile and Palestine.¹⁷⁵ Another example of the close institutional ties existing today between the Palestinian diaspora in Chile and the Palestinian Authority is the fact that the Palestinian community in Chile strongly contributes to the founding of the Palestinian embassy in Chile.

Finally, and returning to the period when the diaspora was largely inactive, it can be said that there is a factor of disunity in the Palestinian diaspora that can be explained by the two points above mentioned. On the one hand, the first generations coming from Palestine wanted to be integrated into Chilean society, which is why they were not involved with the Palestinian national political movement. Many of those first migrants were those who achieved economic positions of power, becoming part of the Chilean elite. On the other hand, once the new generations are settled in Chile, a professional mass emerges, within which there are politicians, professors and, in general, more intellectuals. This generation that it is interested in Palestinian politics, begins to disagree with the politics that follows the post Oslo Accords.¹⁷⁶

As Dabed explains, this group of more progressive Palestinians are critical of the political project that came with Oslo because it has been mostly an authoritarian set of policies for Palestine, highly corrupt, applying a neo-liberal agenda, and involved in normalization and security coordination with Israel. In fact, Dabed points out that since its inception, the Palestinian Authority’s objective was to provide security for Israel, and this is why it received huge economic backing from the US, and European countries, making the Palestinian Authority completely dependent on this “aid”. Therefore, the only leader the Palestinian authority could have was someone accepted by Israel, the US and European countries who were making

¹⁷⁵ Invest Palestine, “Welcome to Invest Palestine”, *Invest Palestine*, accessed 26th May 2019: <http://investpalestine.ps/>

¹⁷⁶ Emilio Dabed, *Ibid.*

economic contributions. In fact, the only objective of Oslo and the condition for the Palestinian authority to continue to have money is that it collaborates in maintaining control of the Palestinian population. This Project had an authoritarian evolution that ended in a dictatorship. Thus, Oslo's objective was not Palestinian democracy, but the maintenance and security of Israel. These facts and the critics that are addressed to the Palestinian Authority in this regard by the more progressive sections of the Palestinian community in Chile have prevented a stronger unity of the diaspora in defense of the Palestinian struggle.¹⁷⁷ From this perspective, Dabed indicates that the support of certain official Palestinian organizations in Chile for the Palestinian Authority creates friction in the diaspora itself as it reflects differences among the viewpoints of the Palestinian businessmen and that of the most progressive sections of the Palestinian community in Chile.

Overall, there are objective facts that show that the Palestinian diaspora, although it played a major role in the vote for Chile in the partition, was not really active until 2000. Indeed, after the Oslo Accords, a series of organizations and new commitments emerged that directly linked the powerful groups (in economic terms) of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile with the guidelines of the Palestinian National Authority. Under this organization is how the Palestinian lobby is working today in Chile. In fact, the presence of these economic groups, the politicians of Palestinian origin, the interparliamentary group of friendship with Palestine, the different organizations, among other factors, are the ones who today try to bring to the Chilean authority the political position of Palestine, enforcing its rights.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

Conclusion

It is difficult to determine the exact impact of the Palestinian diaspora on Chilean foreign policy decisions because, as shown in this research, they are influenced by a number of primary and secondary factors. There have been moments when it was easier to identify how the Palestinian diaspora mobilization had effects on the policies adopted by Chile, for instance, what happened with the partition vote in 1947 and, likewise, with all the mobilization that followed the Oslo Accords. Indeed, these mobilizations led to Chile's recognition of Palestine in 2011. But in the case of this recognition as, of course, in many other events and historical moments in the Chilean-Palestinian bilateral relations, other international, regional, economic, and political circumstances also contributed.

However, this research has explained and documented how the Palestinian diaspora has been involved in politics and has influenced Chilean foreign policy regarding Palestine. This involvement and influence have fluctuated in different periods of time determined by historical factors, the efforts for integration of Palestinians in Chile, Chilean and Palestinian internal politics, and economic, regional and international events. This history can be divided in three fundamental periods of time: from the time of their immigration to Chile until 1947 in which the Palestinian diaspora was still involved in Palestinian politics and strongly worked to prevent the Partition of Palestine; a second period from 1948 to mid-90's in which the involvement of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile followed the patterns of international politics in which the Palestinian cause was fundamentally sidelined, and mostly seen as matter of security; and a third period, after the signature of the Oslo agreements, which brought the Palestinian situation again to the fore of international politics. It is in this period of time that the influence of Palestinians in the country's foreign policy has been more systematic. This can be explained, among other

factors, by Chile's return to democracy, the importance of the Chilean-Palestinian community in economic, political and social terms, and by the shift of the discourse of the Palestinian national movement from resistance and revolution to a discourse of state building, economic development and respect for international legality. This shift promoted a more substantial involvement of the Palestinian diaspora in Palestinian politics, making the impact of the Palestinian lobby on Chilean foreign policy in this respect more organized, visible, coherent and substantial. This should be, maybe, the subject of a more detailed study in a doctoral thesis.

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