

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE ARAB - ISRAELI CONFLICT, 2000-2023

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**BEING A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) DEGREE IN DEPARTMENT IF HISTORY
AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

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DECLARATION

OSHIOGBE FAITH OMOEPUA declare that,

- i. This study is based on a study undertaken by me in the Department of DEPARTMENT IF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, Faculty of ARTS , University of Benin, Benin City, under the supervision of **Prof O.** of the DEPARTMENT IF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, Faculty of ARTS , University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.
- ii. This work has not been submitted for the award of degree elsewhere.
- iii. Ideas and views are product of my personal research and where the view of others has been expressed, they have been duly acknowledged.
- iv. Any liability arising from this work is to be wholly borne by me alone

OSHIOGBE FAITH OMOEPUA

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DATE

CERTIFICATION

We, certify that this research project was carried out by **OSHIOGBE FAITH OMOEPUA** in DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, Faculty of ARTS , University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria. It is adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (BSc.) degree in Arts.

MR. MZ AKALI
(Project Supervisor)

Date

DR. FRANK IKPONWOSA
(Head of Department)

Date

DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to God Almighty for His abundant grace in my life and for seeing me through my academic pursuit and aspirations. He has been my source of strength and on his wings only I have soared. I also want to dedicate this project to my Family and friends for the love and encouragement they have shown towards me during the course of this program, all I can say is thank you and God bless you.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION/ BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In the digital age, the arab-israeli conflict, which is a long-running and deeply rooted geopolitical conflict, has greatly evolved. The rise of social media in the period 2000 to 2023 transformed the way information is shared, conflicts are discussed, and public opinion is formed. This timeline includes significant events such as the second intifada, the gaza wars, the arab spring, and current skirmishes, all of which were greatly influenced by the rise of social media at the start of the 21st century. By the mid-2000s, social media platforms such as facebook (launched in 2004), twitter (2006), and youtube (2005) had gained traction, offering unprecedented avenues for sharing data and connecting people around the world. These platforms, in particular, provided new ways for both sides to spread their stories, mobilise supporters, and influence international perception of the arab-israeli conflict. Traditional media outlets controlled the story in the early 2000s largely, with political and national interests influencing it. However, as social media gained traction, it democratized information transfer. During the gaza war in 2008-2009, ordinary palestinians, activists, and non-state actors began to post firsthand accounts, photographs, and videos, revealing unfiltered perspectives from the ground. during the gaza war, social media became a vital tool for palestinians to document and share their experiences, bypassing traditional media channels. In the same vein, israeli citizens and the military used social media to express their views and oppose palestinian narratives. This period marked the start of a major shift, when real-time reporting from conflict zones via social media began to shape global public opinion. the arab spring, which began in late 2010, exemplified the power of social media in mobilizing political movements. Although the arab spring was not about the arab-israeli conflict, the

uprisings in neighboring countries had a significant effect on the region. The arab spring sparked a renewed sense of possibility for change among palestinians, who were instrumental in organizing demonstrations, spreading news, and mobilizing international support. Activists used social media to organize demonstrations, post strategic reports, and draw international attention to their cause. Social media in israel enabled internal discussions on topics such as democracy, human rights, and the country's approach to the palestinian territories. The digital age became a battleground for competing stories and ideologies, reflecting the wider regional upheaval. The arab-israeli conflict has long been characterized by conflicting accounts. This trend has been amplified by social media, allowing both sides to engage in information warfare. Misinformation, propaganda, and digital manipulation have become common tactics. During the uprising in gaza, both israeli and palestinian actors have used social media to spread critical information, often exaggerated or false, to gain traction and support. the 2014 gaza war was a turning point for social media's role in the conflict. #gazaunderattack and #israelunderfire hashtags were trending around the world, with millions of tweets shaping public discourse. Emotions and perceptions were influenced by visual content, particularly graphic images and videos. Both sides accused each other of spreading false information and propaganda, highlighting the challenges of verifying facts in the digital age. This therefore has portray to a large extent that the long lasting war has been shaped by the advent of social media from the 21st century and even till date.

Aim and Objectives

This study aims to critically analyse the rise of social media and its role in shaping and influencing the Arab Israeli conflict from the beginning of the 21st century to 2023 .

The objectives includes;

1. To analyze the evolution of information dissemination
2. To evaluate the role of social media in shaping public opinions
3. To investigate the use of social media by different stakeholders
4. To critically examine the how social media has enable grassroots activism and mobilization
5. Assess the challenges and risks of social media use.

Scope of the Project

This project examines the impact of social media on the Arab-Israeli conflict from the early 2000s to 2023. It focuses on how social media platforms have transformed information dissemination, public opinion, and grassroots activism . The study will analyze key events where social media played a significant role, such as the second infidas ,Gaza Wars and the Arab Spring. It also addresses the challenges of misinformation and propaganda.

Research methodology

The research work adopted historical methods in its data collection. The study employs the secondary sources in the conduct of this research which comprises books, journals, YouTube research videos, published works and internet sources. Some of these materials were sourced from academia.edu.com and from the prestigious John Harris library, University of Benin, Edo State.

CHAPTERIZATION

Chapter one: background to the study.

This chapter examines the background/introduction to the study, the aims and objectives of the research work, scope of the study, research methodology, chapter outline, literature review and endnotes.

Chapter Two: Influence of social media on public opinion on Israel, Arab world, and the global community.

Here, the study seeks to analyze the evolution of information dissemination and how social media has influenced public opinion in Israel, the Arab world, and the global community. It studies the role of social media in shaping international perspectives on key events such as the Second Intifada, the Gaza Wars, and other significant escalations.

Chapter Three: the use of social media by stakeholders and parties involved in the conflict.

The chapter evaluates how social media has been used and still in use by various stakeholders or parties of the conflict and how it has helped them overtime during the course of the conflict.

Chapter Four: the use of social media for propaganda, misinformation and narrative control.

In this chapter, the study explores how social media has been used for propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control by various actors within the conflict.

Chapter five : conclusion

This concludes the study and gives recommendations on further research on the impacts of social media and the Arab Israeli conflict.

Literature review

The Arab Israeli conflict which has lasted for many centuries now and currently ongoing is one which has been influenced by the advent of social media. The rise of social media has brought about drastic changes in the state relations and even the course of a conflict and the Arab Israeli conflict is not exempted.

The book palestine online: transnationalism, the Internet and the construction of identity by Miriyam Aouragh This book was published in 2011 and it looks at how Palestinians use such platforms for political discussions, protesting or engaging the worldwide diaspora. In the current political and geographical space of Palestine,

Aouragh explores how digital media has come to enable transnational solidarity and resistance. She combines ethnographic research with a critical analysis of digital communication, offering insights into how the internet transforms social and political dynamics within the Palestinian context. The book is a valuable contribution to understanding the intersection of technology and politics in the Middle East.

Also, in "Cyberwars in the Middle East" by Ahmed Badran, Alaa El-Din Arafat, and Gulsah Dark delves into the complex landscape of cyber warfare and its implications for the Middle East. This work explores how cyber operations have become a pivotal component of modern conflicts and geopolitical strategies in the region. It examines the roles of various state and non-state actors, including their methods, objectives, and the impact of their cyber activities on regional security and stability. The book addresses significant incidents of cyber warfare, the evolving nature of cyber threats, and the measures taken by Middle Eastern countries to counter these threats. Through detailed case studies and analysis, the authors shed light on the increasingly digital dimension of warfare and its profound effects on the Middle East's political and security environment.

Furthermore, the book "Social Media in the Arab World: Communication and Public Opinion in the Gulf States" by Barrie Gunter offers an in-depth analysis of how social media platforms have transformed communication and public opinion in the Gulf States. Published in 2013, the book explores the rise of social media in countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman. Gunter examines the impact of social media on political engagement, public discourse, and social movements within these states. He addresses how these platforms have become tools for both government propaganda and public dissent, influencing policy-making and societal norms. The book uses a mix of empirical

research and case studies to illustrate the dynamic relationship between social media, politics, and culture in the Gulf region, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges that arise from this digital evolution.

In "The New Media and the New Middle East," edited by Philip Seib, experts discuss how new media has changed the Middle East. This book, published in 2007, looks at how things like the internet, satellite TV, and social media have affected politics, society, and culture in the region. Writers in the book study how new media has influenced areas like democracy, public views, identity, and relationships between countries. The book talks about real-life examples from different countries in the Middle East, showing how social media can empower people and be used for control. It shows how digital platforms can help more people get involved in politics and make society better, but it also talks about how governments can block information and spread misleading messages. In general, the book gives a detailed view of how technology and society interact in the Middle East today.

"War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age" written by Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker talks about how warfare has changed in the digital age. The book, published in 2009, looks at how technology and media have affected irregular warfare. It discusses how both state and non-state groups, like insurgents, terrorists, and military forces, use new media to shape public opinion, recruit supporters, and carry out psychological operations. Rid and Hecker study real-life examples from conflicts worldwide to show how digital tools, social media, and other technologies are used for spreading propaganda, organizing operations, and fighting against enemies. They talk about how these changes affect military strategy, counterinsurgency, and security policy. They point out the difficulties and advantages of the information age in modern warfare. This book helps readers understand how technology is changing

conflict and how different types of forces are adjusting to this new setting. It is a useful tool for anyone interested in military studies, security policy, and how digital media is influenced.

"The Role of Social Media in the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Mobilization, Information, and Disinformation," published in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, examines how social media has shaped various aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The article discusses the dual role of social media as both a tool for mobilization and a platform for spreading information and disinformation. It analyzes how different groups involved in the conflict use social media to rally support, organize protests, and disseminate their narratives to a global audience. The study highlights the ways social media has transformed the conflict's dynamics, making it more decentralized and allowing for the rapid spread of both factual information and propaganda. The article also considers the challenges posed by the proliferation of disinformation, which can exacerbate tensions and complicate peace efforts. Overall, the journal article provides a comprehensive look at the impact of digital platforms on the conflict, offering insights into the broader implications of social media on modern warfare and political struggles.

In the book "Digital Jihad: Palestinian Resistance in the Digital Era" written by Erik Skare, we learn about how Palestinian militant groups are using digital technology for their resistance. The book, released in 2016, talks about how these groups use the internet, social media, and other digital tools to share their messages, find new members, and plan activities. Skare studies the content and plans behind digital propaganda, showing how these groups try to impact people both in their community and around the world. The book explores how digital jihad affects modern conflicts by looking at power, control, and communication. Skare uses case studies

and analysis to show how technology and militant activism intersect in Palestine, showing how digital tools are changing resistance movements in the Middle East.

The Israel-Palestine conflict, Gadi Wolfsfeld's book, *The Role of the Media in Violent Conflicts in the Digital Age: Israel and Palestinian Leaders' Perceptions*, explores how media narratives and coverage affect violent conflicts. Wolfsfeld investigates the ways in which various media outlets—both digital and traditional— influence political discourse, public opinion, and conflict dynamics. He examines the divergent perspectives and media usage of Israeli and Palestinian leaders, highlighting the manner in which each side uses the media to support their positions and win over other countries. Wolfsfeld also discusses how social media can accentuate particular narratives, influence global perceptions, and make the peace process more difficult. In the end, the book makes the case that the media may effectively influence public opinion both domestically and internationally and shape the trajectory of war by constructing narratives.

The article "Lies on Social Media Inflammate Israel-Palestinian Conflict" by Sheera Frenkel, published in *The New York Times* on May 16, 2021, explores how misinformation on social media has intensified tensions during the Israel-Palestine conflict. Frenkel highlights that videos and posts, often outdated or misrepresented, circulated widely on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram, spreading false claims about current events. For instance, some videos shared as recent conflict footage were actually from years earlier and different locations, while misleading messages warned of imminent violence, fueling anxiety and distrust in both communities. Misinformation included altered or out-of-context media

suggesting fake injuries or exaggerated events, often targeting specific groups to heighten fear. Experts and social media analysts note that such posts, shared rapidly in the heat of conflict, contribute to confusion and exacerbate hostilities, even leading to potential violence.

Another article is "Does Social Media Influence Conflict? Evidence from the 2012 Gaza Conflict" by Thomas Zeitzoff examines how social media impacts public opinion and behavior during conflicts, specifically focusing on the 2012 Gaza conflict between Israel and Hamas. Zeitzoff explores the role of Twitter as a platform for political messaging, propaganda, and influence. The study uses quantitative data from social media activity, including tweets from both sides of the conflict, to analyze how these posts affected public perception and engagement. Zeitzoff finds that social media can both amplify and polarize opinions during conflicts, intensifying public support for respective sides rather than bridging divides. The study also suggests that social media contributes to a rapid dissemination of information, which influences real-time opinions and can increase public hostility. Zeitzoff concludes that while social media has democratized information access, it can also exacerbate tensions and polarize individuals in conflict situations, impacting both local and international audiences' views.

James L. Gelvin's *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know* provides a concise yet comprehensive analysis of the Arab Spring, explaining the causes, dynamics, and consequences of the uprisings that swept through the Arab world beginning in late 2010. The book delves into the political, economic, and social factors that led to the protests, including authoritarian regimes, youth unemployment, and the influence of social media. Gelvin also examines the role of key actors, such as activists, governments, and international players, and explores why some regimes fell

while others managed to survive. He also addresses the impact of the uprisings on regional and global politics, discussing the implications for democracy, stability, and foreign intervention.

"Media and Political Contestation in the Contemporary Arab World: A Decade of Change," edited by Lena Jayyusi and Anne Sofie Roald, is an interdisciplinary anthology that examines the dynamic interplay between media and political landscapes in the Arab world over a transformative decade. The book delves into the role of media in shaping public discourse, mobilizing social movements, and contesting political power, particularly in the context of events like the Arab Spring. It analyzes the ways in which media has been utilized by both authorities and activists to sway public opinion, document events, and foster political engagement. By providing case studies and theoretical insights, the editors and contributors shed light on the complex relationship between media and political contestation, highlighting the media's capacity to both challenge and reinforce existing power structures.

"The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media," edited by Mohamed Zayani, is a comprehensive anthology that examines the profound impact of Al Jazeera on the media landscape of the Arab world. The book delves into the network's role in shaping public discourse, influencing political dynamics, and reconstructing Arab identities during a pivotal period in Middle Eastern history. Through a collection of essays by various scholars, the volume provides rare insights into Al Jazeera's politics, agenda, programming, and its coverage of regional crises, as well as its portrayal of the West. The contributors analyze how Al Jazeera has challenged traditional state-controlled media, contributed to the emergence of a new Arab public sphere, and played a democratizing role in the region.

However, in the article "(In)Security in Social Media: Exploring Israeli and Palestinian Security-Related Discourses on Facebook" by Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt and Gadi Wolfsfeld examines the role of social media in shaping security-related discussions among Israeli and Palestinian users on Facebook. The article explores how both communities utilize social media to express fears, grievances, and political narratives. It delves into the ways these platforms serve as spaces for both contestation and dialogue, highlighting the role of digital platforms in intensifying or mitigating conflict-related tensions. The authors also analyze the implications of these discourses for broader security perceptions and political outcomes.

"Israel's War on Gaza and the Weaponisation of Social Media" by Ravale Mohyidin is a policy outlook that examines the complex role of social media platforms such as Meta, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) in shaping information and public opinion during the ongoing Israeli war on Gaza. It delves into how these platforms have been utilized to disseminate narratives, influence perceptions, and mobilize support, effectively becoming tools in the broader context of the conflict. The article also presents vital policy recommendations for responsible content moderation, localization, and proactive public education to combat misinformation.

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CHAPTER TWO

The evolution of information dissemination in our world today is one important study that investigates the ways in which media development has influenced societal structures, cultural norms, and human perception throughout history. The notion that communication's shape or medium, not merely its content, has a fundamental impact on how societies interact, organize, and comprehend is at the heart of this study. Every media, including print, oral traditions, and more recently, electronic media, has a distinct impact on society that influences how people communicate, think, and build relationships. Through in-person communication, oral traditions fostered strong communal ties in early societies, but they also restricted the dissemination and durability of information.

In early societies, oral traditions created strong communal bonds through face-to-face communication, yet limited the spread and permanence of information. The invention of the printing press in the 15th century brought a major shift. Print media enabled widespread distribution of text, fostering literacy and allowing people to interact with information independently. This era, described as the "typographic age," emphasized linear and analytical thought and marked the rise of more individualistic and nationalistic cultures, as standardized language and access to diverse ideas became widespread.

Therefore we examine the impact of the electronic age, beginning with the emergence of radio and television, which introduced an unprecedented sense of immediacy and interconnectedness. In this era, people could experience world events as they happened, creating a shared "global village" where information was transmitted across vast distances almost instantly. While this connectedness brought

people closer to global events, it also introduced new challenges, as the speed of communication favored immediacy over depth and reflection.

In the middle east information dissemination started as Oral communication which had a major role in the Middle East's early information-sharing systems. History, legislation, and cultural knowledge were transmitted orally, through storytelling, poetry, and recitations. To spread political, social, and tribal messages, pre-Islamic Arabs used poets and oral historians like the rawi (reciter) and sha'ir (poet). The Development of Writing Systems Some of the oldest writing systems in the world originated in the Middle East, including Cuneiform, developed by the Sumerians in Mesopotamia around 3100 BCE, used for recording trade, laws, and administration.

Hieroglyphics also, used by ancient Egyptians to document religious texts, royal decrees, and historical events. Islam also played a significant role in Information Dissemination. The Quran emphasized literacy and learning, leading to widespread efforts to document and transmit religious texts. mosques and madrasas (educational institutions) became centers of learning and hubs for knowledge sharing. also, manuscripts and Libraries , such as the House of Wisdom in Baghdad (9th century), facilitated the collection, translation, and dissemination of knowledge from Greek, Persian, and Indian sources. Copyists and scribes played a crucial role too in producing and distributing manuscripts. Lastly, trade and Travel aided the spread of information as merchants, pilgrims, and scholars acted as conduits for information dissemination across the Islamic world, connecting cities such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba.

In the later centuries, during the 15th - 19th century which was the Islamic golden age and knowledge networks saw the evolution of information dissemination from oral traditions and early writing systems to a modern digital platforms and this saw the Introduction of the Printing Press. Although the printing press was invented in Europe in the 15th century, it was not widely adopted in the Middle East until the 19th century, partly due to concerns about religious orthodoxy and manual copying traditions. By the mid-19th century, newspapers and periodicals began to emerge, driven by modernization efforts in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt. publications like *Al-Waqa'i' al-Misriyya* in Egypt became key vehicles for disseminating political, social, and cultural ideas.

Fast forward to the 20th century where radio and television rapidly expanded as mass communication technologies. These forums were utilized by governments to advance modernity and nationalism. As Arab nationalism grew, pan-Arab media outlets like *Voice of the Arabs* (Egypt) gained traction. Likewise, Political Movements and Print Media Newspapers were essential for disseminating nationalist ideologies, challenging colonial rulers, and inspiring people to support independence campaigns. Now, in the 21st century Social media and the digital revolutionary was at it's peak. Satellite TV and the Internet State media monopolies were broken with the introduction of the internet and satellite networks like *Al-Jazeera*, which transformed the flow of information. Access to international viewpoints and alternative narratives were made possible via digital platforms. This also was reflected during the Arab Spring (2010–2012), social media sites like Facebook and Twitter played a crucial role in facilitating grassroots movement and the quick dissemination of information. But new capabilities also made propaganda, disinformation, and cybersurveillance easier.

It's is widely known and unarguably that the rise and evolution of social media has influenced the speed of information dissemination and in that same manner greatly shape and influence public opinion. This influence of social media on public opinion is not just limited to a state or a region but has extended to the shaping of international perspectives on key events which the Arab Israeli conflict is one of them in the international system. According to (*marc lynch 2012*), he stated that "The rise of social media radically changed how people organize politically, but perhaps more importantly, how they shape public opinion. In events like the Arab Spring, it was as much about narrative creation as mobilization. (*P.W. Singer and Emerald 2018*). also agreed that "Social media is not just a neutral communication tool; it has become a battlefield where public opinion is shaped, manipulated, and weaponized." This portrays the power and influence of social media. Joseph Nye stated in (*The Future of Power, 2011*). "Social media enables the diffusion of soft power by allowing non-state actors to influence the global agenda. It has become a tool for shaping public opinion across borders, often faster than traditional diplomacy can respond."

With the explanation from these scholars and authors, one could infer social media as a power tool in shaping public opinion.

The Arab Israeli conflict being the focal point of this project is that which has span for centuries and termed by some scholars in international relations intractable and unending, and this is to the end that it has been largely influenced by the rise of social media and shaped opinions of conflicting parties and even international perspectives on the conflict. In Israel, social media has allowed for direct government messaging and public mobilization, while also fostering polarized debates between peace advocates and hardliners.

In analyzes Israel's use of social media as part of its broader public diplomacy efforts, focusing on how it communicates its narratives during asymmetric conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel uses social media platforms to share its security concerns and justify military operations, especially during escalations such as the Gaza wars. The Israeli government, particularly the IDF (Israel Defense Forces), actively posts updates on Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook to provide real-time information about attacks, defensive measures, and humanitarian efforts. These messages aim to portray Israel as a victim of aggression (e.g., from Hamas rockets) and as a state acting within the bounds of international law. The book also highlights Israel's "Hasbara" strategy, which translates to "explanation" or public diplomacy. This includes the use of infographics, videos, and personal stories to frame Israel's actions as necessary for national security and to counter criticisms of human rights violations. For instance, social media campaigns often emphasize Israel's technological innovations (like the Iron Dome system) and humanitarian measures, such as warnings to civilians before strikes. Israel's social media strategy also involves countering Palestinian narratives, which often focus on civilian casualties and the humanitarian impact of military actions. This includes disputing viral videos or images critical of Israel and providing alternative explanations to mitigate negative perceptions. Furthermore, Israel's targeted engagement with global audiences, using English-language social media accounts to influence international public opinion. By addressing global platforms, Israel aims to shape perceptions among foreign governments, diaspora communities, and the general public. Lastly social media more importantly has fostered a connection between the government of Israel and the people, as the government through several social media platforms has shared its reasons for its actions and policies which has directly or indirectly shaped the mindset

and opinions of people and therefore gained internal support for its actions towards the Palestinians and the Arab world in general.

On the other hand, Palestine and the Arab world has result to social media as a vital tool in it's war with Israel and Israelis. In *"Palestine Online: Transnationalism, the Internet and the Construction of Identity"* by Miriyam Aouragh. She explores how social media shapes public opinion among Palestinians, particularly in the context of resistance, identity construction, and international advocacy. She also explains that the internet is both a space and an instrument for linking Palestinian diasporas in Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon especially. Futhermore, it shows how Palestinians utilize the internet to build and sustain their national identity under conditions of displacement and occupation. Palestinians use digital platforms to share their lived experiences under occupation, offering alternative perspectives that shape public opinion both locally and globally. This now has played a key role in shaping the opinions and mindset of Palestinians towards Israel and the conflict, as they see the actions of Israel as inhumane and their actions as justified during the course of the war. Palestinians has sort to reach global audiences, mobilizing international support for their cause. Hashtag campaigns, viral videos, and live-streamed events, for example, bring attention to human rights abuses and humanitarian crises in ways that influence global public opinion.

It can also be said that the internet serves as a virtual homeland for displaced Palestinians, allowing them to maintain cultural and political connections. *Tawil-Souri* has remarked that social media offers Palestinians "a critical platform to mobilize public opinion and contest narratives of victimhood versus resistance," allowing them to articulate their agency in the struggle for self-determination.

Marc Lynch (The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East)

mentions that Palestinian activists "leveraged the Arab Spring's momentum and social media networks to draw parallels between their struggle and broader regional demands for justice and freedom," reshaping public opinion across the Arab world and beyond. All of these showcase how Palestine and the Arab world has utilize social media since it's inception to critically shape public opinion to their favours and benefits in the course of the Arab Israeli conflict.

Now, analyzing key conflicts or wars between Israel and Palestine, we could see how social media turned the tides and totally influenced the course of the wars at various points. And for the purpose of this project we would be taking a critical look at the second intifada, the Gaza war and other significant escalations which span from the year 2000 which was the period that saw the rise of social media. Also, it would be focusing on how international perspectives are shaped through social media on the Arab Israeli conflict.

The intifada, either of two popular uprisings of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip aimed at ending Israel's occupation of those territories and creating an independent Palestinian state. The first intifada began in December 1987 and ended in September 1993 with the signing of the first Oslo Accords, which provided a framework for peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The first intifada did not witnessed the use of social media as it had not been introduced then but there were use of leaflets and flyers and more importantly oral communication and other very local means.

The second Intifada (2000–2005), also known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada, was a more violent Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation, marked by a significant increase in the use of digital media compared to the First Intifada. It began in late September 2000, following Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which Palestinians viewed as provocative. Unlike the First Intifada, the Second Intifada involved armed clashes, suicide bombings, and large-scale military operations. The death toll was much higher—about 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis were killed. During this conflict, Palestinians used guerrilla warfare and terrorist tactics, while Israel deployed heavy military responses, including incursions into Palestinian cities and the construction of the West Bank barrier.

However, it is established that while social media was still in its infancy during the Second Intifada, digital communication and online platforms began to influence the conflict. Documentation of Violence was seen to characterise this period as amateur videos and early digital photography captured events on the ground, such as protests, casualties, and military responses. These images were shared on websites and early social platforms, creating international awareness and polarizing opinions. Israeli and Palestinian groups used digital tools to disseminate their narratives, framing the conflict for domestic and international audiences. Global solidarity movements were energised by social media. These platforms were used by pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian advocacy groups to create international support networks, which later sparked campaigns like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. Online activism increased broader international knowledge and engagement with the conflict, impacting public opinion in states that were not directly involved. Organizations like Indymedia and Palestinian activist groups utilized websites to

challenge mainstream media depictions. Advocacy for both sides grew as people accessed firsthand accounts of the conflict, often circumventing traditional media.

Although, states themselves did not directly utilize social media during this period, governments were influenced by the narratives spread online and by grassroots advocacy efforts, which shaped their diplomatic stances. Through critical analysis we could see that during the course of the conflict (second intifada) both Palestine and Israel got support from several states in the international system and it could be said that social media played an active role in that. States that were involved directly on the side of Palestine were Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria and Lebanon (via Hezbollah). It is worthy of stating that some states balanced U.S. connections while publicly denouncing Israeli behaviour. They supported the Palestinians politically and humanitarily, but they were hesitant to openly endorse armed resistance. Iran openly backed Hamas and other terrorist organisations in Palestine, seeing the war as a component of a larger Islamic uprising. Many Arab League states supported the Palestinian cause diplomatically, backing resolutions in the United Nations and providing funding to Palestinian institutions.

On the side of Israel, states like the United States strongly aligned with Israel, providing extensive military aid, intelligence, and diplomatic backing in the United Nations. And also supported Israel's framing of the Second Intifada as part of the global "War on Terror" post-9/11. Others were the European Union, Canada and Australia. All of these states supported Israel diplomatically and echoed the policies of the United States regarding the conflict.

The Gaza wars also was major conflict between Israel and the Arab states. Also, the term "Gaza Wars" describes a sequence of wars between Israel and Palestinian factions in Gaza, with significant intensifications in 2008–2009 (Operation Cast Lead), 2012 (Operation Pillar of Defence), 2014 (Operation Protective Edge), and beyond. These conflicts attracted international attention and condemnation due to their high levels of violence, substantial civilian losses, and extensive destruction. The origin of the Gaza wars were deeply rooted in the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Gaza wars are fueled by issues like territorial disputes, blockades, and mutual hostilities between Israel and Palestinian factions like Hamas. Tensions increased when Hamas took over Gaza in 2007 and Israel imposed a blockade to restrict the flow of people and commerce. Escalations frequently started with Israeli bombings in reprisal for rocket assaults from Gaza. Thousands of Palestinians, many of them civilians, have been killed or injured in repeated wars, with significant damage to Gaza's infrastructure. Israeli casualties include civilians and soldiers, primarily due to rocket attacks and cross-border infiltrations. The embargo causes ongoing humanitarian problems for Gaza, aggravated by war-related destruction of hospitals, schools, and houses.

Now, the series of wars which formed the Gaza wars are not exempted from the influence of social media and its various platforms which were actively used during the course of the war. This also was seen in second intifada, however during the Gaza wars, there was a more use of social media and this in turn shaped the outcome of the war and international perspectives i.e the opinions of states and their reactions to it. As at the time of the second intifada, social media was at its early stage and was not really vital as it is during the Gaza wars and since the second intifada laid the

groundwork for the use of social media as an important tool in conflict, it could be said that this spearheaded the great use of social media during the wars.

Social media has played a transformative role in shaping public opinion and international perspectives on the Gaza war. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have allowed real-time reporting, personal storytelling, and mass mobilization of support for both sides. All these platforms were not introduced during the second intifada except for YouTube that was introduced during the later part of 2005 when the conflict was already coming to an end. Social media has served as a double-edged sword during the conflict (Gaza war) it offers a platform for marginalized voices to reach global audiences but also faces significant challenges, such as corporate censorship and state pressure. *Jillian York*, Director for International Freedom of Expression, Electronic Frontier Foundation has explained that “Hashtags like #FreePalestine and #GazaUnderAttack became tools of global solidarity, allowing people to share their perspectives and connect movements across borders.” York points out the democratizing power of social media in conflicts like Gaza, where grassroots campaigns reached global audiences. The platform used majorly during this time and even more now is “Twitter” newly called “x”. This is where parties and individuals especially could air their voices backed up with videos and pictures of the war. During the 2021 Sheikh Jarrah protests and Al-Aqsa Mosque clashes, activists used Twitter to share videos and updates as events unfolded. Journalists and citizens live-tweeted Israeli airstrikes in Gaza or rocket fire into Israeli cities. This act of utilizing social media platforms earned both parties in the wars support from different states in the international system. For example, during Israel’s military operations in Gaza, social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook became arenas for documenting human rights abuses, spreading awareness, and rallying

international support. According to scholar *Meedan al-Ghoul* “The conflict’s true victims found their voices on platforms where their stories could not be silenced.” Unlike previous times where there was no press freedom or freedom of people to talk and express their plight, social media has provided that podium where everyone and anyone can boldly say anything without being silenced and persecuted. This is to say that social media has provided a freedom of expression to people and this was evidently seen in the Gaza wars between Israel and Palestine. However, digital rights advocates have criticized platforms like Meta for disproportionately silencing pro-Palestinian voices through content moderation policies that favor powerful state actors. This digital censorship, she argues, disrupts the free flow of critical information and exacerbates existing power imbalances in the conflict.

Lastly, there are several escalations that took place after the intifadas and the Gaza wars, these were conflicts as we already know between the Palestinians and Israelis. The aim of this study seeks to examine these escalations briefly and most importantly, how social media has played a huge role in these events. And the first of those escalations, conflicts or clash is the 2017 - Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif Crisis. Israel installed metal detectors at the entrances to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound following a deadly attack on Israeli police and Palestinians viewed this as an infringement on their religious rights and sovereignty over a key Islamic holy site. This led to widespread protests and violent clashes in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, with several casualties. The crisis ended after Israel removed the metal detectors. Social media platforms, particularly Twitter and Facebook, were flooded with hashtags like #AlAqsaUnderAttack and #HandsOffAlAqsa.

Videos showing clashes, particularly at Al-Aqsa, went viral, igniting anger and solidarity across the Muslim world.

Misinformation also spread, exacerbating tensions by depicting events in exaggerated or distorted ways.

The second recorded escalations was the 2018 Protests of the Great March of Return. Gazans started holding weekly demonstrations close to the Israeli border, calling for an end to the closure and the right to return to ancestral territories. Journalists and medical personnel were among the many people killed when the Israeli army used live weapons. The main tool utilised by organisers was social media, with Telegram and WhatsApp being used to organise demonstrators. Images of horrific injuries and fatalities went viral, inspiring indignation and sorrow around the world. Pro-Israel activists and the Israeli government responded with their own story, accusing the demonstrations of being provocations staged by Hamas.

Another one is the 2019 Trade of Airstrikes and Rocket Fire. Israel targeted Islamic Jihad leader Baha Abu al-Ata in Gaza, leading to retaliatory rocket fire. The conflict lasted for several days, with widespread airstrikes. Both sides used social media to share footage of rocket launches and airstrikes, often to rally domestic support or sway international opinion. Palestinian activists highlighted civilian casualties, while Israeli accounts focused on Hamas's military actions and rocket threats.

Also, the 2021 May Conflict which was tagged “Operation Guardian of the Walls”. Tensions escalated over the eviction of Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah and

Israeli police actions at Al-Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan. Hamas launched rockets, and Israel responded with heavy airstrikes. Over 250 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed. The conflict marked a watershed moment for social media activism. TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter saw unprecedented use of hashtags like #SaveSheikhJarrah, which brought global attention to the evictions. Viral videos, such as families being forced from their homes or buildings collapsing from airstrikes, generated global outrage. Celebrities and influencers amplified the Palestinian cause, while others defended Israel, leading to heated online debates.

In 2022 there was the “Operation Dawn Breaking Dawn” where Israel launched a preemptive strike on Islamic Jihad in Gaza, citing imminent attacks. Over three days, 44 Palestinians were killed, including children. Rocket fire targeted Israeli cities in retaliation. Short-form platforms like TikTok and Instagram reels featured raw footage of destruction and grief, creating viral moments that shaped global perceptions. Hashtags such as #GazaUnderAttack trended worldwide, amplifying calls for ceasefire and humanitarian aid. Disinformation campaigns on both sides muddled the discourse, with false images and claims circulating widely.

Furthermore we have the ongoing West Bank violence since 2022, in which Israel has intensified military raids in the West Bank, while attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinian villages and retaliatory acts by Palestinian militants have increased. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook were used to document and share real-time updates from the ground, often bypassing traditional media filters. Videos of settler violence and military raids fueled anger among Palestinians and their supporters, while Israelis shared footage of attacks on their communities. Social media also became a battleground for disinformation, with both sides accusing the other of fabricating events.

Now in 2023 there was the Al-Aqsa Mosque Conflict during Ramadan, and it was recorded that Israeli police entered Al-Aqsa Mosque to remove what they called "agitators," leading to violent confrontations. Rocket fire from Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria followed, escalating tensions. Videos of Israeli police using stun grenades inside the mosque went viral, sparking outrage across the Muslim world. Social media amplified international calls for intervention, with hashtags like #FreePalestine trending globally. Israel's narrative, emphasizing the need to counter "violent extremists," struggled to counteract viral footage of the clashes.

Presently, from 2023 to 2024 there has been the settlement-related violence and judicial protest. Amid Israel's domestic unrest over judicial reforms, violence in Palestinian territories has surged, with frequent clashes in the West Bank and attacks by settlers on Palestinian communities. Social media highlighted the intersection of Israel's internal divisions and the worsening Palestinian conflict. Videos of settler attacks circulated widely, often overshadowing other news. Online campaigns, both supporting and opposing the Israeli government, further polarized discourse on the conflict.

In conclusion, Social media has been transformingly important in the Arab-Israeli conflict, drastically changing how the war is seen, talked about, and responded upon. Social media highlights the risks of false information and public opinion manipulation even while it has democratized the flow of knowledge and let grassroots voices avoid

conventional media. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook have amplified voices from the ground, bringing real-time updates and personal stories to a global audience. They have mobilized activism, created new spaces for advocacy, and pressured international actors to respond. However, social media has also deepened polarization and misinformation, turning a deeply complex issue into a battleground for competing narratives. Algorithms prioritize emotionally charged content, often fueling divisive rhetoric and reinforcing echo chambers. Furthermore, accusations of censorship and biased content moderation highlight the challenges of ensuring fair representation in a highly sensitive and contentious arena. Social media highlights the risks of false information and public opinion manipulation even while it has democratized the flow of knowledge and let grassroots voices avoid conventional media. In the Arab-Israeli conflict, the dual-edged nature of these platforms demonstrates both their potential to foster global awareness and their ability to escalate tensions. Ultimately, social media has become a powerful, yet imperfect, tool that reflects the broader complexities of the conflict. Its influence will continue to grow, shaping narratives, mobilizing movements, and driving international engagement in one of the world's most enduring and polarizing struggles.

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Chapter three

In our world today, social media has been in constant use as a powerful tool for communication and connecting to people round the world. It definitely is always in use by organizations and firms for advertising and advancing businesses, building communities and most importantly sharing news and creating awareness. However, it has also brought a new dynamics to conflicts and wars, in that current conflicts and wars are influenced by social media as parties or stakeholders involved has wield social media as a powerful tool against their opponent and the arab Israeli conflict is a very good example of this. This chapter will Critically examine the use of social media by stakeholders during the course of the Arab Israeli conflict, i.e Israel, Palestine, international organizations etc.

Social media has become a pivotal tool for various stakeholders in the Arab-Israeli conflict, enabling the dissemination of narratives, mobilization of support, and shaping of global perceptions. Governments, political groups, activists, and citizens utilize platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to document events, promote ideologies, and influence international discourse. Additionally, these platforms give journalists, grassroots activists, and regular people a forum to discuss reality from the ground up, contradicting official narratives and bringing attention to infractions or abuses of human rights. Social media has helped Palestinians raise awareness of their plight, draw attention to the effects of occupation, and mobilise international

assistance. It serves as a tool for Israelis to defend their viewpoint on the conflict, raise national security issues, and respond to criticism. It makes it possible for solidarity movements and diaspora groups around the world to participate in the conversation, plan demonstrations, and exert pressure on decision-makers.

First, this chapter will critically examine how Israel used and is using social media and the first strategy employed according to *"Digital Militarism: Israel's Occupation in the Social Media Age"* by Adi Kuntsman and Rebecca L. Stein is how social media has been utilized as a tool of militarization and propaganda within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The authors focus on Israel's occupation and the role of digital platforms in reshaping public narratives, while also addressing counter-strategy. Social media platforms are integrated into Israel's military strategy, often referred to as "digital militarism". The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) use platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to promote their perspective on military actions, portraying them as defensive and necessary. This was seen during the 2014 Gaza War, the IDF live-tweeted operations, using hashtags like #ProtectiveEdge to frame their actions as defensive. Also the IDF posts in multiple languages, including English, Arabic, and Hebrew, to reach a global audience and counteract criticism. The IDF promotes soldiers to share personal anecdotes and images on their social media profiles, presenting themselves as approachable individuals rather than anonymous operatives. This relatable content typically includes soldiers participating in ordinary tasks or demonstrating acts of compassion during missions, aiming to humanize their image. For instance, soldiers sharing pictures with children or animals while on deployments.

Also, the Israeli government and IDF use infographics, videos, and animations to make complicated military and political situations easier to understand for people on social media. For example, they use maps to show how Hamas rockets move and videos to explain how the Iron Dome works. Social media posts focus on how Hamas rockets pose a danger to Israeli civilians, often sharing pictures of destroyed houses, shelters, or hurt kids to make people feel sorry for them. And to combat Palestinian activists' viral content, the Israeli government employs well-planned hashtag campaigns. Examples are campaigns like #IsraelUnderFire which illustrate damage caused by Palestinian rockets. Initiatives for fact-checking is that official accounts frequently refute viral material that presents Israel or the IDF in an unfavourable light, offering counterarguments to Palestinian assertions.

One strategy the government of Israel has been using since the rise of social media is digital Diplomacy and this is done through the foreign Ministry Social Media Presence. Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs engages with global audiences on platforms like Twitter to emphasize Israel's democratic values and security concerns. Influencing Western audiences, content is tailored to Western sensibilities, often portraying Israel as a bastion of democracy in a hostile region. This has also motivated public Participation as Israeli civilians are encouraged to join online campaigns by sharing content that supports military operations or counters Palestinian narratives. Social media groups and forums are used to consolidate support and distribute talking points.

Furthermore, Psychological Operations and Cyber Warfare Targeting Opponents is one way the government of Israel or the IDF has employed during the course of the

Arab Israeli conflict. The IDF has reportedly used social media for psychological operations, such as spreading fear among Palestinian populations during military operations. Allegations exist of hacking Palestinian accounts or flooding social media platforms with pro-Israel content to suppress opposing views. It is worthy of stating also that utilising Social Media algorithms is one of Israel tactics by using hashtags, keywords, and trending topics, the Israeli government ensures its content gains maximum visibility. Algorithmic amplification i.e tailored posts to ensure Israel's narrative reaches targeted demographics, especially younger audiences in Western countries.

While the Israeli government and the IDF employ these strategies, there has been Allegations of prejudice and Censorship. Palestinian activists assert that platforms exhibit prejudice by favouring Israeli-aligned information while suppressing Palestinian content. Palestinians have come to believe this because of Israel's relationship with super powers such as the nited states of America. These strategies contribute to deepening divisions, creating echo chambers that reinforce existing biases.

Now, analyzing the social media strategies of another stakeholder which is the Palestine government and palestinians, this chapter also seeks to examine these various strategies employed. Alongside the Palestinian government, other activist groups, and various Arabic organizations have effectively utilized social media as a platform for advocacy, mobilization, and international outreach during the Arab-Israeli conflicts. One significant strategy is Grassroots activism and hashtag campaigns. This was during the second intifada and other escalations between Israel

and Palestine and the hashtags was to mobilize people. Palestinians share messages using hashtags like #FreePalestine, #SaveSheikhJarrah, and #GazaUnderAttack to spread their stories worldwide. These hashtags become popular during tense times, bringing focus to issues like being forced out of their homes or facing attacks by the military. For instance, the widely shared #SaveSheikhJarrah campaign in 2021 shed light on the evictions in East Jerusalem and sparked protests of support around the world. Local movements are spreading globally as activists use platforms like TikTok and Instagram to share real-time videos of protests, police actions, and damage from airstrikes. These visual posts connect with people around the world on an emotional level. And this is according to *Mona Baker's Narratives of Resistance: Social Media and the Palestinian Struggle*.

Also, citizen Journalism Unmediated Stories. Palestinian people use their phones to record and share their experiences, skipping traditional media channels that may not pay attention to their struggles. Social media platforms such as Facebook Live, Instagram Stories, and Twitter threads are used for quick news coverage. Citizen journalism aims to challenge the belief that Western media favors Israel by sharing unedited content directly from the source. A valid example is Videos showing police operations at Al-Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan in 2021 spread quickly on TikTok and Twitter, causing anger.

Palestinians also uses emotional Appeals and Visual Content and use of symbolic imagery. Palestinians most times share images of destroyed homes, displaced families, and children affected by violence to evoke empathy and mobilize international

support. These images are often accompanied by personal stories to humanize the conflict. This was highlighted in *Philip Seib's New Media and Conflict in the Middle East*. Videos and photos of protests or casualties are shared to inspire resistance and solidarity, often framing victims as martyrs of the Palestinian cause.

In the 21st century the use of social media took a new turn in the sense that Youth Engagement was the order of the day and platforms like TikTok and twitter became a hit with different participation by young people. TikTok was used as a significant platform for Palestinian youth, who use it to create short, impactful videos that gain traction quickly. And one way this played out was through videos of police confrontations and community solidarity actions during Ramadan 2021.

This went as far as social media influential figures with large followings are enlisted to promote Palestinian narratives, often sharing content or creating awareness campaigns. Some of these influencers are Mohammad el-Kurd, a 23-year-old poet, writer, and recently an influencer who has experienced losing his home in the Sheikh Jarrah district, has played a significant role in popularizing the hashtag #SaveSheikhJarrah. Since he started publicizing the issue on his social media, he “gained more than 180,000 Twitter followers and more than half a million on Instagram” (France24, Jerusalem (AFP), 2021). He and his sister, Muna El-Kurd, do not limit their online engagements to spreading the hashtag through tweets and Instagram posts as they both participate in live sessions on Instagram and attend

interviews to provide first-hand information from the occupied neighborhood (Holzman, 2021).

Recently, el-Kurd has 765,000 followers on Instagram, 249,500 on Twitter, and over 15,600 on Facebook. He is also popular because he works as a Palestine Correspondent for The Nation. Furthermore, he owns his website “mohammedelkurd.com” in which he uploads his articles concerning Sheikh Jarrah and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that he wrote for The Nation, The Guardian, and the Arab-language newspaper Mada Masr. Mohammed El-Kurd inspired other users, celebrities, politicians, and campaigns to share content on social media, mostly on Instagram and Twitter. Except for the previously mentioned hashtag, the posts include useful information that educates people about the situation in Sheikh Jarrah but also encourages them to take action in social media storms or protests that take place in real life. One of them, shared on March 13, 2021 on his Instagram informs about joining the social media storm on all social media platforms.

Another activist influencer, Mariam Barghouti, is also a writer, researcher, and journalist based in Palestine. She is followed by 50,100 people on Instagram, 77,800 on Twitter, and 2,290 on Facebook. Barghouti is known for sharing her personal opinion in a direct, non-neutral overtone pointing out the injustice and oppression Palestinians

have to live through. She is also the author of several political commentaries and articles on news platforms such as Al Jazeera English, The New York Times, TRT World, and The Guardian in which she shares the difficult experiences of Palestinians.

In May 2021, during the intensified protests in Sheikh Jarrah, many social media accounts, including Barghouti's one, got suspended as they contain pictures and videos of the demonstrations. Since the journalist was reporting live from the West Bank to document Israeli aggression, her Twitter account got suddenly restricted. Barghouti sent a direct message to Motherboard, an online magazine, writing that Twitter asked her to delete some of her posts yet she did not know which ones. The message "@MariamBarghouti's account is temporarily unavailable because it violates the Twitter Media Policy" was appearing in place of her bio and many of her tweets (Maiberg & Cox, 2021). A Twitter spokesperson said that the suspension of her account was an error and they reversed the action, however, Twitter refused to explain what was the specific part of the company's terms of service Barghouti supposedly had infringed.

According to her, Twitter targeted her account because she has been visible on social media and it would not have happened if she did not gain that much attention. Before her account was

restricted, she posted a tweet that referred to the Israeli aggression toward Palestinians beginning

with the words: "I feel like I'm in a war zone in Beit Al"

Furthermore, it is worthy of stating that besides these major parties which is the Israel government, IDF, and Palestine governments etc. There are other notable parties and organization that are part of the ongoing Israel and Palestine conflicts and they are not exempted from using social media as a tool in the course of the Arab Israeli conflict.

The first and most notable of them all is “ Hamas”. Hamas, which is an acronym for Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyya (Islamic Resistance Movement), is a Palestinian Sunni-Islamic fundamentalist and nationalist organization. Founded in 1987 during the First Intifada, Hamas initially emerged as a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza. It has both a political and a military wing, the latter being the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Hamas seeks to end Israeli control over Palestinian territories and establish an Islamic state in historic Palestine. It frames its struggle as resistance against occupation and aims to use both armed and political means to achieve its goals. Hamas has been involved in numerous violent confrontations with Israel, including rocket attacks, suicide bombings, and tunnel-based incursions. It has played a significant role in the Gaza Wars (2008-09, 2012, 2014, 2021), contributing to prolonged cycles of violence. Hamas's refusal to recognize Israel and its adherence to armed resistance have complicated peace negotiations and strained relations within the Palestinian leadership.

Furthermore, Hamas and similar groups use social media to show their fight against Israel as part of a bigger struggle for freedom. They share videos of rocket launches, military parades, and clashes to show how strong and determined they are. For instance, Hamas shares videos of attacks on Israeli territories to gather support and

display their military strength. Also through the dissemination of ideological beliefs, social media platforms are used to attract supporters both domestically and abroad. Telegram and other messaging apps are popular for safely spreading propaganda. Worldwide Outreach was a goal of Hamas as militant organisations seek to win over audiences around the world by presenting their fight in terms of human rights and international law. Lastly, they use campaigns like #FreePalestine and hashtags to spread their message.

Another prominent body or organization that is involved in the ongoing Arab Israeli conflict from the late 19th century is Hezbollah. After Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, Hezbollah also referred to as the Party of God was founded. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran assists them. Hezbollah engages in social services, military operations, political activism, and belief dissemination. In Lebanon, it serves as both a paramilitary organisation and a political party. This organization called hezbollah sees itself as a group that fights against Israeli occupation, especially in southern Lebanon. They are against Israeli control in the area and aim to free all Arab lands under occupation, including Palestine. Also the group is against Western influence, especially American and Western actions in the Middle East. They see themselves as protectors of Arab independence, standing up against what they see as outside meddling. It is worthy to state that this organization operates schools, hospitals, and social programs, earning grassroots support in Lebanon's Shi'a communities.

Furthermore, Hezbollah uses its advanced media infrastructure, such as Al-Manar TV, to disseminate misinformation in an effort to boost supporter morale and weaken Israeli resolve. Its discourse presents Israel as a weak and illegitimate state and stresses resistance. And this has therefore made Hezbollah viewed by many Arabs as a symbol of resistance to Israel. However, the U.S., EU, and others have designated it a terrorist organisation because of its acts, which frequently worsen regional instability. It is worthy to state too that, Hezbollah's affiliation with Iran has positioned it alongside anti-Israel and anti-Western groups in the area, making it a significant role in the larger Middle Eastern power struggle.

There are non-governmental organizations that are involved in the war besides the listed ones above and one of them is 7amleh. 7amleh, the Arab Center for Social Media Advancement, is a non-profit organization that addresses projects and initiatives, which allow Palestinian and Arab communities to get involved with digital media campaigns concerning Palestinian rights (APC, 2022). Moreover, it helps activists, civil society organizations, and human rights defenders to receive training so that they can improve their online engagements and have a bigger impact on policies (7amleh, 2022). Its team is also responsible for initiating or supporting campaigns or virtual actions such as #FacebookCensorsPalestine during which they called for people to sign the petition to raise awareness of social media censorship. The initiative started when Emi Palmor, a director sitting on Facebook's Oversight Board who previously worked for the Israeli Ministry of Justice, censored the legitimate speech of Palestinian journalists and human rights defenders. 7amleh began

encouraging people to address the problem by offering various sample posts they could use to take part in this protest. In this case, the hashtags #DropEmiPalmor and #FacebookCensorsPalestine were used to promote the campaign through social media and gain the attention not only of users but also members of Facebook to make them take steps and solve

the issue (7amleh, 2020).

Another interesting project was launching a mini-site called “Google, Put Palestine on the Map” that collects “information on Google Maps’ discriminatory policies towards Palestinians and their impact and repercussions” (7amleh, 2018). Except for the key information, the link to learn more, and two short videos explaining the topic, 7amleh encourages users to support the

case in three ways: by sending an email to Google CEO, tweeting them, or signing and sharing the petition. After clicking on the second option, the minisite automatically transfers us to Twitter and provides a complete message to be posted with the hashtag #GoogleMapPalestine at the end.

Currently, 7amleh is followed by over 8,840 people on Instagram, 6,300 on Twitter, and 5,860 on Facebook in the English version but over 30,700 in Arabic. As they prepare lots of useful reports, they are very often cited by other authors or organizations covering the Israeli- Palestinian conflict.

On the side of Israel, we have the “Standwithus” which is a nonprofit organization founded in 2001 and headquartered in Los Angeles that aims to support Israel and fight antisemitism as well as stand up to misinformation and hate speech. Similar to 7amleh, the campaign provides various programs and resources but also encourages users to take action through initiatives such as writing letters, joining rallies, or signing petitions.

However, compared to 7amleh, StandWithUs reaches more countries as it is an international organization having its offices in the US, Israel, the UK, Canada, and Brasil. Their work is mostly based on social media because it shares information and newsletters through the Internet (StandWithUs, 2022). StandWithUs has over 1.4 million followers on Facebook, more than 383,000 on Instagram, and around 168,400 on Twitter. With this impressive result, it is easier for them to

fight for public opinion, which, on the other hand, confirms the fact that the Israeli perspective dominates over the Palestinian one across the world. In terms of issues concerning the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, StandWithUs clearly defends Israel from criticism and blames Hamas for fueling the conflict. In its official statement from May 2021, the organization shared its point of view about “the Hamas-Israeli” conflict. Although it highlights that this crisis is a tragedy for both Israeli and Palestinian civilians and it opposes

the brutality of Arab and Jewish extremists, the majority of the text focuses on Israel being unjustly attacked by the rest of the world. For instance, they mention the social

media propaganda based on anti-Israeli and antisemitic online content that has been pushed by different

political movements. By writing that “there is never an excuse for promoting racist slurs on social media, assaulting Jews, or vandalizing Jewish communities” (StandWithUs, 2021), the organization seems to refuse the fact that the assaults and hate speech on the Internet touches

Palestinians as well. They understand that people are getting more interested in Palestinian narratives shared on social media as they believe in the right to free speech, however, they complain that too many users do not reach for educational resources and comment on the conflict

without basic knowledge. Therefore, StandWithUs claims that, ironically, they are also allowed to ignore international critics. As for the IDF’s actions, they say that “there is also strong evidence that the IDF consistently aimed at military targets and did not intentionally harm civilians” and it is their obligation to stop Hamas at all costs. Blaming Israel to be more powerful is, according to them, dishonest and morally bankrupt.

In conclusion, social media has transformed communication, information dissemination, and activism, and in the context of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, it has become a powerful tool for a variety of stakeholders, including governments, political groups, activists, non - governmental organizations and even ordinary citizens, to share their narratives, advocate for their causes, and mobilise support. Social media platforms have facilitated real-time updates, given voice to marginalised voices, and allowed audiences around the world to engage with and form opinions on the conflict. However, they have also been a double-edged sword, amplifying

misinformation, deepening polarisation, and complicating efforts to resolve the conflict, which will be further discussed in the next chapter.

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER FOUR

The use of social media for propaganda, misinformation and narrative control.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has long been shaped not only by military and political struggles but also by an intense battle over information, perception, and historical narratives. Both Israeli and Arab actors, governments, media outlets, and advocacy groups, have used propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control to influence public opinion, mobilize support, and justify actions. These tools have been deployed domestically to unite populations and internationally to shape diplomatic and media discourse.

Propaganda in this conflict often involves framing events, selective presentation of facts, emotional appeals, and demonization of the opposing side. Misinformation, including fabricated or distorted reports, spreads through traditional media and, increasingly, social media. Narrative control seeks to establish a dominant historical and political interpretation of the conflict, whether through education, diplomacy, or censorship. Over the decades, these tactics have contributed to deepening polarization, shaping international responses, and complicating peace efforts.

First, there are various definitions on propaganda, misinformation and narrative control but looking at some prominent individuals we could infer what propaganda is and how this played out in the Arab Israeli conflict. According to Harold Lasswell In his book *Propaganda Technique in the World War (1927)*, he define propaganda as “The management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols.” Lasswell explained that propaganda is used to shape public opinion and mobilize societies, especially during conflicts. He argued that it is a tool of political elites to

maintain control, influence populations, and justify actions in both domestic and international arenas. Also another scholar of international relations Edward Bernays, often called the "father of public relations," described propaganda in *Propaganda (1928)* as "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses." he argued that propaganda is a necessary tool in democratic societies where large populations must be guided toward specific ideas, behaviors, or policies. He believed that elites, such as politicians, businesses, and media, use propaganda to shape public opinion in a way that benefits their interests. He further emphasizes deliberate control of public perception through communication strategies, including media, advertising, and psychological tactics. While propaganda has negative connotations today, Bernays saw it as a neutral force that could be used for both good (e.g., public health campaigns) and manipulation (e.g., political deception).

In international relations, misinformation is commonly defined as false or inaccurate information that is shared without the intent to deceive. This distinguishes it from disinformation, which involves deliberate falsehoods spread with the intention to mislead. For instance, the United Nations clarifies that while misinformation refers to the accidental spread of inaccurate information, disinformation is not only inaccurate but also intends to deceive and is spread maliciously. A prominent international relations scholar John Mearsheimer, in his book *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics (2011)*, delves into the concept of deception in global politics. He categorizes various forms of falsehoods, including inter-state lies, fear-mongering, and strategic cover-ups. While Mearsheimer's primary focus is on deliberate deception (disinformation), his work provides a framework that helps distinguish between intentional and unintentional dissemination of false

information, thereby shedding light on the nuances between misinformation and disinformation. Understanding these distinctions is crucial in international relations, as the spread of false information, whether intentional or accidental, can significantly impact diplomatic relations, public opinion, and policy decisions.

Now discussing and defining narrative control is different, because this concept has no one particular definition and not many scholars of IR has works on. However, it is a concept that evidently plays out in relations between states and especially in war or conflict situations. A general definition is that narrative control refers to the deliberate shaping and management of stories or accounts to influence perceptions, construct identities, and guide actions within the global arena. Narratives help make sense and meaningfully order realities, forge collective identities, and create normative guidance along future trajectories. Few scholars have explored the concept of narrative power in international relations and for instance, a special issue in the journal *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* develops the concept of narrative power by focusing on East Asia, highlighting how storytelling shapes international dynamics. By controlling narratives, actors in international relations aim to establish a dominant interpretation of events, thereby influencing public opinion, policy decisions, and the behavior of other international actors.

Also, before we delve into the discussion of the different parties involved in the Arab Israeli conflict utilise propaganda, misinformation and narrative control, it is worthy to state the connection between these concepts. Propaganda, by its nature, often births misinformation and narrative control because it is designed to influence

perception, sometimes at the expense of objective truth. However, the extent to which this happens depends on the intent and methods used. Propaganda Creates a One-Sided View, i.e Propaganda aims to persuade, not necessarily to inform objectively. To achieve this, it selectively presents facts, omits inconvenient truths, or distorts reality, leading to misinformation. Once propaganda spreads, it often generates misinformation, incorrect or misleading information that is not always intentional. Supporters of a cause, influenced by propaganda, may unknowingly spread false claims. Example, during conflicts, exaggerated casualty figures or misattributed videos often go viral, creating misleading narratives. Propaganda doesn't just spread information, it shapes the entire way people understand history and events. Those who control narratives (governments, media, institutions) can set the dominant interpretation of events.

Furthermore, critical examinations and analysis have showed and proved that the ongoing Arab Israeli conflict is not without the use of these concepts as tools. Parties involved have employed the use of these concepts to turn the tides of the war in their favours. Besides the Arab Israeli conflict as our main focus, we have it recorded in history that this concepts has been actively used even in the first and second world, most especially the cold war. So we know by this, that these concepts are important in the aspect of war and conflict.

From earliest times when the arab Israeli conflict started, propaganda as always been used as a Political and Military Tool. Israeli propaganda often frames the conflict around self-defense, security, and historical legitimacy. Terms like "terrorism" and "defensive wars" are frequently used to justify military actions. On the other hand, Palestinian propaganda highlights themes of occupation, oppression, and resistance. The term "liberation struggle" is used to justify armed and non-violent resistance.

Both sides use historical framing—Israel emphasizes Jewish persecution and the Holocaust, while Palestinians emphasize the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948, when many were displaced. While Misinformation and Disinformation also played out through fake or misleading images, videos, and reports circulate on both sides, especially on social media. Israeli and Palestinian groups sometimes exaggerate or misrepresent casualty figures, attack motivations, or historical claims to rally international sympathy. For instance, false reports about attacks or misattributed images, like those images from Syria or Iraq presented as events in Gaza or Israel have been used to fuel outrage. In the aspect of Narrative Control, it is worthy of stating that it was geared towards the international community and not just domestic and regional sphere. This was actively seen in education and textbooks. Israeli and Palestinian educational materials present different versions of history, with each side portraying the other as the aggressor. Also the media was one of the main channel for this, not to mention different diplomatic practices that was used which was portrayed in Israel's investment in hasbara (public diplomacy) to counter criticism and present itself positively in global media. On the side of the Palestinian, they advocated for use of international forums like the UN to frame Israel as a colonial occupier violating human rights. European actors and states also got involved and used these concepts during the conflict. This is seen in western media often presenting Israel as a democratic state defending itself against terrorism. Arab media frequently highlights Israeli occupation and Palestinian suffering, sometimes downplaying attacks on Israeli civilians. These strategies reinforce entrenched narratives, making compromise harder. Also, International responses (e.g. US support for Israel or pro-Palestinian activism in Europe) are often shaped by how successfully each side controls the narrative. Social

media has intensified the battle of narratives, allowing unverified claims to spread rapidly and influence global opinions.

One prominent work that has sought to explain this is *In Industry of Lies: Media, Academia, and the Israeli-Arab Conflict (2017)*, Israeli journalist Ben-Dror Yemini examines what he perceives as widespread misinformation and bias against Israel propagated by media outlets and academic institutions. He contends that this "industry of lies" has led to a global misrepresentation of Israel, portraying it as the primary aggressor in the Israeli-Arab conflict. Yemini argues that such narratives not only distort the truth but also hinder peace efforts by empowering extremist elements rather than moderates interested in reconciliation. He emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between legitimate criticism of Israel and unfounded accusations that contribute to this misinformation landscape.

Also, Greg Shupak critically analyses popular media narratives about the Palestine-Israel conflict in his 2018 book *The Wrong Story: Palestine, Israel, and the Media*. He contends that the scenario is frequently portrayed in a skewed manner by major media outlets, which causes misunderstandings regarding the obligations and roles of the people involved. Shupak points out a number of significant errors in media coverage, in which some of them are equivalence of Victimhood. The media frequently depicts Israelis and Palestinians as equally harmed and accountable for the ongoing conflict. Shupak argues that the reality of occupation and power disparities are overlooked in this narrative. The second one is the portrayal of the Extremists vs. Moderates ideology. The narrative usually implies that both sides of the dispute are motivated by extremists, obscuring the structural problems and the effects of state

actors' policies. The last is Israeli Force Justification in the conflict. Israeli military actions are commonly depicted as acts of self-defense, while Palestinian resistance is often labeled as terrorism, neglecting the context of occupation and the right to self-determination. It is safe to say that the ongoing Arab Israeli conflict can be termed as a battle of narrative and which one is more prevalent.

Lastly, Propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control have played a crucial role in shaping the Arab-Israeli conflict, deepening divisions, and complicating peace efforts. And we have stated earlier that these tools influence public opinion, diplomatic relations, and the policies of both regional and global actors. Many prominent individuals and scholars are assertive about the fact that the use of propaganda, misinformation and narrative control has in many ways fuel the Arab Israeli conflict and made it an intractable conflict. This is because propaganda is used by both sides to justify actions, demonize the other, and rally support. This creates entrenched positions that make compromise difficult. Israel's Propaganda focuses on themes of self-defense, historical Jewish persecution, and terrorism threats. It portrays Israel as a democracy under siege, needing strong security measures. While palestinian/arab Propaganda highlights themes of occupation, apartheid, and ethnic cleansing. It portrays Palestinians as victims of Israeli aggression and colonialism. Let's us not also forget that both sides uses propaganda to justify violence, making mutual recognition and compromise harder. It radicalizes populations, reducing support for peace agreements that require concessions. Not to mention that Leaders who engage in peace talks risk being labeled as "traitors" due to narratives pushed by hardliners. This simply means that the use if these tools mitigate against the resolution of the conflict and the main reason why it has remain unresolved till today.

It is worthy of stating that misinformation also forming the basis of propaganda has mitigated against peace efforts and thereby escalating Tensions. Also, Misinformation (false or misleading information spread without intent to deceive) and disinformation (deliberate lies) contribute to confusion and hostility. For instance in the conflict, there are misinformation about attacks as such false claims about attacks, casualty figures, or intentions spread quickly on social media, fueling outrage before facts are verified. Misattributed footage from other conflicts (e.g., Syria, Iraq) is often circulated to provoke emotions and rally support. Most importantly there are distorted historical narratives. Both sides present selective histories that omit key facts, preventing a balanced understanding of the conflict. This therefore goes to say that misinformation undermines trust in negotiations by making each side believe the other is acting in bad faith. False reports of ceasefire violations can trigger renewed violence. And lastly,

International actors form policies based on biased or incorrect narratives, making diplomatic solutions harder.

Having discussed propaganda and misinformation as tools that mitigate against peace efforts and resolution of the conflict, let's also see how the parties involved use narrative control which in turn has prevented peaceful resolution of the conflict. Now, controlling the dominant narrative determines who is seen as the victim and who is the aggressor, influencing global opinion and policy. For example, Israel's "Security Narrative" which Frames military actions as necessary responses to terrorism, reinforcing international support. And palestinian "Occupation Narrative": Frames Israel as a colonial oppressor, appealing to human rights organizations and

international law. This shows us that narrative control makes it harder for neutral mediation to take place. It prevents populations from seeing the other side's perspective, reducing support for dialogue. And we have also stated earlier that leaders fear backlash if they stray from dominant narratives, limiting their ability to make peace deals.

In conclusion, throughout history, propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control have been central tools in conflicts, shaping public perception, mobilizing populations, and justifying policies. These tools do not merely serve as wartime tactics; they also extend into peacetime, influencing diplomatic efforts and the potential for long-term reconciliation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Arab-Israeli conflict, where competing narratives have fueled hostilities, justified violence, and undermined numerous attempts at peace. Propaganda is used to frame events in a way that garners domestic and international support. It creates an "us vs. them" mentality, portraying one's own side as morally justified while demonizing the opponent. Misinformation, whether accidental or intentional, distorts reality, making it harder to establish a common ground based on facts. Narrative control ensures that one version of history dominates, preventing alternative perspectives from being acknowledged.

In the Arab-Israeli conflict, these tools have been used by both sides to advance their agendas. Israeli narratives often emphasize national security, terrorism threats, and the necessity of military action. Palestinian narratives focus on occupation, resistance, and human rights violations. Both sides use media, education, and diplomacy to cement their versions of history, making mutual recognition and reconciliation

increasingly difficult. This shows that the impact of propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control on peace efforts has been profound and enduring. Ultimately, propaganda, misinformation, and narrative control are not just obstacles to peace, they are active weapons in conflict. Until both Israelis and Palestinians can move beyond entrenched narratives and engage with each other's historical truths, the conflict will continue to persist. Peace will not be achieved simply through diplomacy or political agreements; it will require a fundamental shift in how information is spread, how history is taught, and how narratives are shaped. Only by dismantling these tools of division can a sustainable and just resolution be reached.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The Arab-Israeli conflict, rooted in competing national aspirations and territorial disputes, dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tensions escalated with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, which Palestinians and Arab nations viewed as a catastrophe (Nakba) due to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of

Palestinians. Subsequent wars, including those in 1956, 1967, and 1973, further deepened hostilities. During the Cold War, global superpowers became key players in the conflict: the United States emerged as Israel's principal ally, while the Soviet Union supported various Arab states, reflecting broader ideological and strategic rivalries. Over time, the conflict evolved beyond military confrontations into a battle over narratives, where controlling public perception became essential for garnering international support.

Historically, information dissemination in the conflict relied on traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television. These mediums were often state-controlled or influenced by government policies, shaping public opinion both locally and internationally. For example, during the Six-Day War in 1967, global media coverage largely portrayed Israel as a small nation defending itself against hostile neighbors, reinforcing pro-Israel sentiments in the West, particularly in the United States. Conversely, Arab media framed the conflict as a struggle against colonialism and foreign occupation, seeking to unite the Arab world in support of Palestinian rights. However, the centralized nature of traditional media limited the diversity of voices and perspectives, often reducing complex realities into simplified narratives that aligned with political agendas.

The advent of the internet in the late 20th century and the rise of social media in the early 21st century revolutionized the way information is disseminated and consumed. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram have democratized communication, allowing individuals and grassroots movements to

share their stories directly with global audiences. This shift has significantly impacted the Arab-Israeli conflict, transforming it from a localized struggle into a global discourse where competing narratives vie for attention in real-time. Unlike traditional media, which is often subject to editorial control and government regulations, social media enables rapid, unfiltered communication, giving both Israelis and Palestinians a platform to present their perspectives and rally international support.

Social media has become a powerful tool for shaping public opinion and controlling narratives. Both Israeli and Palestinian groups use digital platforms to highlight their suffering and justify their actions, seeking to influence international perceptions. For example, during military escalations in Gaza, images and videos depicting civilian casualties are widely shared, evoking sympathy and outrage worldwide. However, the selective nature of these posts often omits the broader context, leading to a one-sided understanding of complex events. This battle over narratives is not limited to individuals; governments, political organizations, and advocacy groups also invest heavily in social media campaigns to advance their agendas. For instance, the Israeli government uses platforms like Twitter to promote its security narrative, emphasizing its right to self-defense, while Palestinian activists leverage hashtags like #FreePalestine to draw attention to the humanitarian impact of Israeli policies.

At the same time, social media has facilitated the spread of misinformation and propaganda, further complicating efforts to achieve mutual understanding. In the fast-paced digital environment, unverified content can quickly go viral, shaping public

opinion before the facts are established. Both sides have been accused of sharing misleading or out-of-context images to bolster their narratives. For example, during recent clashes in Jerusalem and Gaza, social media was flooded with claims and counterclaims, many of which were later debunked. However, the emotional impact of these posts often lingers, reinforcing existing biases and deepening the divide between supporters of each side. The global reach of social media also amplifies the conflict's impact, as misinformation spreads beyond the region, influencing public opinion in countries like the United States and European nations.

The role of global powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union (and later Russia), has also evolved with the advent of social media. During the Cold War, both superpowers relied on traditional media and diplomatic channels to shape perceptions of the conflict, aligning their narratives with broader geopolitical objectives. The United States, as Israel's primary ally, used its media influence to promote narratives emphasizing Israel's security needs and democratic values. In contrast, the Soviet Union supported Arab states, framing the conflict as a struggle against Western imperialism. Today, social media has altered this dynamic by enabling governments to engage directly with global audiences. The U.S. government and pro-Israel advocacy groups use social media to reinforce their support for Israel, while Palestinian activists leverage digital platforms to highlight human rights abuses and mobilize grassroots movements like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign. The rise of digital diplomacy has also allowed global powers to shape perceptions of the conflict without relying on traditional media, further complicating the information landscape.

Despite its negative effects, social media also offers opportunities for promoting dialogue and fostering mutual understanding. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter enable direct communication between Israelis and Palestinians, creating spaces where individuals can share their experiences and challenge stereotypes. Initiatives such as "Standing Together," a grassroots movement advocating for peace and equality, use social media to connect individuals from both sides and amplify voices calling for coexistence. These digital platforms have also empowered young people, who are often more open to dialogue and less bound by historical grievances, to challenge the dominant narratives that fuel the conflict. However, the potential of social media to promote peace is often undermined by algorithms that prioritize sensational and emotionally charged content, creating echo chambers where individuals are exposed only to information that reinforces their existing beliefs. This digital polarization makes it difficult to foster empathy and understanding, as users are rarely exposed to perspectives that challenge their worldview.

The role of social media companies in regulating content related to the Arab-Israeli conflict has also become a contentious issue. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter face accusations of bias and censorship, with both sides claiming that their voices are being silenced. Pro-Israel groups argue that social media platforms allow anti-Semitic content to proliferate, while Palestinian activists accuse these companies of suppressing content that highlights human rights abuses. This perceived bias undermines the credibility of social media as a space for open dialogue, reinforcing the belief that digital platforms are tools for advancing specific political agendas. The

lack of transparency and consistency in content moderation further complicates efforts to create a fair and balanced information environment, making it difficult for users to trust the information they encounter online.

To round it all up , the evolution of information dissemination from traditional media to social media has profoundly impacted the Arab-Israeli conflict, reshaping how narratives are constructed, shared, and consumed. Social media has democratized communication, giving both Israelis and Palestinians a platform to share their stories and advocate for their causes. However, it has also facilitated the spread of misinformation and propaganda, deepening polarization and complicating efforts to achieve mutual understanding. The involvement of global powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, has further shaped the digital information landscape, as governments and advocacy groups use social media to influence public opinion and advance their geopolitical objectives. Despite these challenges, social media also holds the potential to promote dialogue and foster empathy, creating spaces where individuals from both sides can connect and challenge the narratives that fuel the conflict. Moving forward, the key challenge will be to harness the positive potential of social media while mitigating its harmful effects. This requires greater accountability from both governments and social media companies, as well as a commitment from users to critically evaluate the information they encounter online. Ultimately, the path to peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict will depend not only on political negotiations but also on the narratives that shape public perceptions. By promoting accurate information, fostering empathy, and creating spaces for open dialogue, social media can play a crucial role in building a future where Israelis and Palestinians can coexist in peace and dignity.

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