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GENOCIDE IN LATE MODERNITY

Palestinian and Guarani-Kaiowa Land Struggles

GENOCÍDIO NA MODERNIDADE TARDIA

Lutas Territoriais Palestinas e Guarani-Kaiowa

GENOCIDIO EN LA MODERNIDAD TARDÍA

Las Luchas Territoriales Palestinas y Guaraníes-Kaiowa

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ABSTRACT

The article interrogates morally indefensible and politically untenable conditions by situating them within a broader constellation of contemporary forms of collective violence sustained under regimes of authoritarian power. It focuses on Palestinians and the Guarani-Kaiowa, both of whom have been subjected to protracted, structurally embedded genocidal processes driven by displacement, territorial fragmentation, and the systematic expropriation of land. Rather than treating these cases as exceptional, the article foregrounds their structural affinities, revealing how distinct geographies of violence are organised through comparable logics of spatial control, dispossession, and abandonment. Adopting a critical socio-spatial perspective, the analysis examines how violence is not only enacted upon populations but actively materialised through the production of 'impossible spaces', which are territorial configurations that render life increasingly unviable by eroding its material, cultural and ecological conditions of reproduction. These spaces are neither accidental nor static but are historically contingent formations produced through ongoing struggles over land, sovereignty, legitimacy and,

ultimately, basic human rights. Within these constrained and often lethal spatial conditions, the article highlights how resistance emerges not merely as survival, but as a form of spatial praxis. In doing so, they reconfigure space itself, transforming sites of imposed impossibility into arenas of political articulation and socio-spatial transformation.

Keywords: Imperialism; Israel; Brazil; Agribusiness; Decolonisation

RESUMO

O artigo questiona condições moralmente indefensáveis e politicamente insustentáveis, situando-as em um contexto mais amplo de formas contemporâneas de violência coletiva sustentadas por regimes de poder autoritário. O foco recai sobre os palestinos e os Guarani-Kaiowa, ambos sujeitos a processos genocidas prolongados e estruturalmente enraizados, impulsionados pelo deslocamento, pela fragmentação territorial e pela expropriação sistemática de terras. Em vez de tratar esses casos como excepcionais, o artigo destaca suas afinidades estruturais, revelando como geografias distintas da violência são organizadas por meio de lógicas comparáveis de controle espacial, desapropriação e abandono. Adotando uma perspectiva socioespacial crítica, a análise examina como a violência não é apenas perpetrada contra as populações, mas também materializada ativamente por meio da produção de "espaços impossíveis", configurações territoriais que tornam a vida cada vez mais inviável, erodindo suas condições materiais, culturais e ecológicas de reprodução. Esses espaços não são acidentais nem estáticos, mas sim formações historicamente contingentes, produzidas por meio de lutas contínuas por terra, soberania, legitimidade e, em última instância, direitos humanos básicos. Dentro dessas condições espaciais restritas e frequentemente letais, o artigo destaca como a resistência emerge não apenas como sobrevivência, mas como uma forma de práxis espacial. Ao fazê-lo, reconfigura o próprio espaço, transformando locais de impossibilidade imposta em arenas de articulação política e transformação socioespacial.

Palavras-chave: Imperialismo; Israel; Brasil; Agronegócio; Descolonização

RESUMEN

El artículo cuestiona condiciones moralmente indefendibles y políticamente insostenibles al situarlas dentro de una constelación más amplia de formas contemporáneas de violencia colectiva sostenidas bajo regímenes de poder autoritario. Se centra en los palestinos y los guaraníes-kaiowá, ambos sometidos a procesos genocidas prolongados y estructuralmente arraigados, impulsados por el desplazamiento, la fragmentación territorial y la expropiación sistemática de tierras. En lugar de tratar estos casos como excepcionales, el artículo resalta sus afinidades estructurales, revelando cómo distintas geografías de violencia se organizan a través de lógicas comparables de control espacial, despojo y abandono. Adoptando una perspectiva socioespacial crítica, el análisis examina cómo la violencia no solo se ejerce sobre las poblaciones, sino que se materializa activamente mediante la producción de «espacios imposibles», configuraciones territoriales que

hacen que la vida sea cada vez más inviable al erosionar sus condiciones materiales, culturales y ecológicas de reproducción. Estos espacios no son ni accidentales ni estáticos, sino formaciones históricamente contingentes, producto de luchas constantes por la tierra, la soberanía, la legitimidad y, en última instancia, los derechos humanos fundamentales. Dentro de estas condiciones espaciales restrictivas y a menudo letales, el artículo destaca cómo la resistencia surge no solo como supervivencia, sino como una forma de praxis espacial. Al hacerlo, reconfiguran el espacio mismo, transformando lugares de imposibilidad impuesta en escenarios de articulación política y transformación socioespacial.

Palabras clave: Imperialismo; Israel; Brasil; Agroindustria; Descolonización

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Introduction

Palestinians have been horribly subjected to sustained displacement, marginalisation and mass killing, compounded by the failure of international protection and by the accommodation of regional Arab elites to USA-led geopolitical arrangements, including normalisation with the State of Israel (hereafter SoI). Violence against Palestinian civilians is frequently justified through expansive and selective readings of international humanitarian law, particularly the prohibition of human shields under the Geneva Conventions. In practice, this has enabled the treatment of entire civilian populations as legitimate targets, normalising death and suffering as either unavoidable or deserved. Public engagement with the Palestinian condition in Israel and much of the West remains limited and heavily mediated by dominant historical narratives. As argued by Finkelstein (2000), the institutionalisation of Holocaust memory has produced a moral economy in which Jewish historical victimhood is translated into political exceptionalism, shielding Israeli state violence from sustained scrutiny. This verdict does not negate the reality of Jewish persecution but helps explain how past suffering is mobilised to legitimise ongoing dispossession, segregation and the denial of Palestinian return. Israel, thus, emerges as a deeply contradictory spatial bundle: a state forged in response to antisemitic violence but sustained through systematic spatial discrimination against an indigenous population and in defiance of the international order. These dynamics generate *impossible spaces*, that is, territories in which legitimate presence is criminalised and survival itself becomes an act of resistance. In such spaces, violence is not incidental but constitutive, inscribed into the very organisation of land, law and belonging. The result is the bitter sense of being abandoned and forgotten, as painfully described by Hiba Abu Nada, who was killed at the age of 32 in her home in Khan Yunis on 20 Oct 2023 by an Israeli airstrike:

> O! How alone we are!
> All the others have won their wars
> and you were left in your mud,
> barren.
>
> Darwish, don't you know?
> No poetry will return to the lonely
> what was lost, what was
> stolen.
> *(translated by Dr Fakhreddine Huda)*

This article may be less suited to linear reading than to reflective listening, since one may reasonably ask why yet another analysis of what many scholars and international observers describe as the systematic destruction of Palestinian society is necessary. How, after all, could an additional piece contribute to an already extensive body of work documenting the recurrent bombardment of civilian areas, the deprivation of essential

resources such as water and medical care, and the long-term processes through which Palestinians (the non-Jewish inhabitants of a territory progressively transformed since the mid-twentieth century) have been dispossessed? Still, this debate remains crucial, urgent and multifaceted. For more than seven decades, occupation, displacement and differentiated regimes of governance have unfolded with the tacit or explicit support of major international powers, notably the United Kingdom, the former Soviet Union and the United States, three countries often evoked through acronyms that paradoxically gesture toward unity. These dynamics have been shaped not only by external geopolitical interests but also by uneven regional responses and persistent internal fragmentation within Palestinian political leadership. The result is a protracted condition of violence and precarity, increasingly normalised through its relentless circulation in television and digital media, yet incapable of altering the structures that sustain it. Echoing Hannah Arendt (2006), this condition may be understood as a contemporary *banality of horror* that comes from pervasive evil. Within this historical continuum, the events in Gaza between 2023 and 2025 stand out as an especially concentrated and unrestrained episode of mass civilian harm, which were justified by the SoI through the language of 'security' but increasingly identified by human rights organisations and legal scholars as a qualitative escalation of an already catastrophic trajectory.

The volume of reports documenting both historical and recent violations is immense, encompassing scholarly monographs, human rights dossiers, investigative journalism, documentary films, digital archives and diverse artistic practices. Together, these materials form a vital repository of evidence, testimony and affective memory, an evolving archive for future research, political reflection and collective reckoning. Nonetheless, a series of unresolved questions continues to confront scholars, policymakers and observers. How has the SoI been able to pursue such extensive military policies despite the unprecedented visibility of civilian suffering in the digital age? What political, ideological and sociological dynamics shape the responses of segments of Israeli society and the diasporic Jewry who, notwithstanding long-standing traditions of education and ethical debate, appear unable or unwilling to meaningfully challenge the actions of political elites, security institutions and powerful economic interests? More broadly, how can a state claiming the status of a modern polity envisage a stable future while coexisting with populations that have been displaced, marginalised and repeatedly subjected to large-scale violence? The events in the West Bank, Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip have certainly exceed the analytical and legal parameters of an armed conflict. Drawing on Khoury-Machool (2025), they are more accurately conceptualised as cleansocide: the fusion of ethnic cleansing and genocidal practices, in which territorial removal and population destruction operate simultaneously. The scale of destruction between 2023 and 2025, estimated at more than 71,000 fatalities and 171,000 injuries (UNRWA, 2025), has been widely compared to the mass displacement of the

1948 Nakba ('catastrophe'). The profound asymmetry of force, coupled with recurring patterns of dispossession and infrastructural devastation, mirrors earlier episodes of violence in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and elsewhere. In this sense, the recent devastation constitutes not an aberration but an intensification of a long-standing trajectory marked by disproportionate force and practices repeatedly described by human rights organisations as indiscriminate, notwithstanding the justificatory claims advanced by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and state officials.

Anti-colonial land struggle is fundamentally intertwined with the protection of basic human rights, as control over land determines access to housing, resources and political agency. The framework established by the United Nations, particularly through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, affirms rights such as adequate housing, property and self-determination, all of which are inseparable from land access and control. When individuals or communities are dispossessed or denied secure ties to land, these universal rights are compromised, revealing that land is not merely a resource but a fundamental condition for human dignity and equality. In the context colonial or neocolonial aggressions, as in the case of the Palestinians, disputes over territory are not merely geopolitical but directly impact rights including freedom of movement, the right to livelihood, and self-determination. When populations are displaced, confined or denied access to their land, they experience violations that extend beyond material deprivation to the erosion of dignity and cultural identity. Thus, land is not only a physical asset but a foundation upon which the realization of fundamental human rights depends. One productive way to interrogate situations that appear morally untenable or politically absurd is to examine their structural affinities with other, contemporaneous forms of collective violence and dispossession, processes that likewise unfold under the gaze of passive or ineffective national and international leadership. Palestinians have increasingly been rendered analogous to the 'American Indians of the Jewish settlers in Palestine' because they are caught within a contemporary phase of capitalism in which the exploitation of indigenous labour is no longer central; instead, priority is given to the spatial clearing of territory in order to enable accumulation by dispossession. As Deleuze and Sanbar (1998: 26) observe, this entails "emptying a territory of its people in order to make a leap forward", even when such advancement requires "throwing out a people."

A particularly instructive comparative case is that of the Guarani-Kaiowa people in central South America, today concentrated along the Brazil-Paraguay border (where they are known as the Paĩ Tavyterã). In the late 1940s, precisely when Palestinians were being displaced from their ancestral lands, the Guarani-Kaiowa were violently expelled from their territories through large-scale, unlawful agrarian privatisation promoted by the Brazilian state. These measures were legitimised through the rhetoric of national integration and economic development, framed as a need to 'fill empty spaces' on the national map, considered 'land with no people for people

without land' (equivalent to the famous Zionist motto). In reality, such spaces were neither empty nor marginal: they were inhabited, cultivated and governed by indigenous peoples who had been systematically excluded from the political community since Brazil's independence in 1822. State-backed settlement schemes actively encouraged non-indigenous migrants to occupy Guarani-Kaiowa lands, whose high agricultural value rendered them especially vulnerable to speculation and monocultural expansion. Over subsequent decades, clientelist politics and populist interventions deepened the appropriation of territories that, in legal, historical and moral terms, constituted the Guarani-Kaiowa world. More recently, the consolidation of export-oriented agribusiness in Mato Grosso do Sul has come to dominate socio-economic and territorial relations, foreclosing meaningful political contestation and alternative land-use practices. The consequences of this long trajectory of dispossession have been not only devastating, but equally genocidal.

The aim of this article is to mobilise a critical geographical perspective to draw cautious comparative insights from ongoing, well-documented forms of vituperative violence and to reflect on the urgent lessons they pose. Comparisons between Israeli settler colonialism, agribusiness expansion and Nazism are often dismissed as analytically reductionist, not least because they risk obscuring the specific legal, political and historical frameworks required for accountability. Moreover, such discomfort should not become a refuge from analysis. Both the consolidation of the SoI and the expansion of agribusiness frontiers in South America are fundamentally grounded in racially structured violence, enacted through the production of impossible spaces for populations who are, by legal, historical and moral standards, legitimately entitled to the contested land. The notion of a spatial impossibility is normally used by artistis and theorists to represent either utopic goals or the level of potentiality (Dompere, 2024), however here it denotes the attempt to eliminate an indigenous nation by undermining their socio-spatial relations and curtailing their prospects of returning to the land. This contribution offers a synthetic interpretation of contemporary settler colonialism in Israel and Brazil, foregrounding how socio-spatial aggression intersects with dynamics that many scholars and human rights organisations identify as having genocidal tendencies. What is unfolding in occupied Palestine can be understood as part of a planetary Nakba, a globalised condition of destruction that exceeds any single territory or people and resonates with what Malm (2024) describes as the great catastrophe of contemporary capitalism. Similarly, the Guarani-Kaiowa narrate their history through successive 'ends of the world', each followed by fragile moments of cosmological renewal, an experience that has rendered them experts in apocalypse (Ioris, 2024). Alongside thousands of other indigenous peoples worldwide, Palestinians and Guarani-Kaiowa continue to endure normalised forms of genocide not in marginal or forgotten spaces, but within socio-spatial configurations that actively deny the conditions of life itself. These are not merely 'left behind

places' (Fiorentino et al., 2024), but genuinely impossible spatialities, produced and sustained through discriminatory institutions, political-economic intolerance and ethnic obliteration.

Ongoing Genocides in Impossible Spaces

The genocide of the Palestinian people, unfolding well before the 1948 Nakba, is extensively documented in international scholarship, investigative journalism, human rights reports and documentary archives. Following the end of the British Mandate and the brief Arab-Israeli war that followed the failure of the United Nations partition plan, mass displacement and systematic land expropriation were set in motion. More than 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled or fled their homes, producing a protracted refugee crisis and the consolidation of impossible spaces for the original inhabitants. The brutality and intolerance embedded in the Israeli project of territorial expropriation have been repeatedly demonstrated through extreme and indiscriminate violence by the IDF, most recently in Gaza following Hamas's anti-colonial uprising in October 2023 (Levy, 2024). The genocide of the Guarani-Kaiowa people – conceptualised as Kaiowcide (Ioris, 2021) – refers to a comparable politico-geographic regime consolidated since the 1940s through the seizure and illegal appropriation of indigenous lands to accommodate agribusiness expansion, infrastructure development and urban growth. Kaiowcide has unfolded through the systematic violation of fundamental human rights, justified by an abstract and exclusionary model of regional development centred on monoculture, large private estates and export-oriented production. Its violence is not only physical but also symbolic and epistemic. A particularly corrosive form of annihilation lies in the persistent denial of Guarani-Kaiowa indigeneity, daily re-enacted in regional towns where indigenous individuals are routinely disparaged as 'Paraguayan invaders' or as degenerate descendants of allegedly 'authentic' native peoples, which are forms of bellicosity that extend across the Brazil-Paraguay border.

Legalistic debates over explicit genocidal intent – particularly given the near-impossibility of enforcing the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide – are insufficient to capture the full scope of events, responsibilities and liabilities at stake, especially in situations of protracted terrorisation. While Article II defines genocide as acts committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," genocidal processes do not require formal declarations of intent attributable to a single actor. They materialise through sequences of dispersed, often bureaucratised actions (some overt, others indirect) that cumulatively produce the partial or total destruction of peoples and their socio-spatial existence. Such processes are neither accidental nor politically neutral, but on the contrary they crystallise ideologies of domination that legitimise maltreatment, expropriation and exploitation. The elimination of indigenous peoples operates fundamentally through conflictive spatial relations: through sustained assaults on the practices, values and modes of

inhabiting land forged over generations. This violence is rarely instantaneous. Instead, it unfolds through the gradual production of *impossible spaces*, that is, conditions that systematically erode the material, cultural and ecological foundations of life in ancestral territories. Indigenous populations are targeted precisely because of who they are and where they live, making genocide a spatially enacted form of extermination. What emerges is a specific modality of *spacecide*: a slow, cumulative and interconnected destruction driven by the violent reconfiguration of ethnicity, class and land ownership, typically intensified through biased state interventions, legal manipulation and economic asphyxiation.

The production of impossible spaces, and their eventual culmination in genocidal purges, rests on the systematic repudiation of difference. This denial operates not only through overt violence but through enduring regimes of institutionalised indifference, ultimately consolidated as *mis-difference*: a condition in which difference is formally acknowledged only to be neutralised, distorted or rendered disposable (Ioris, 2023). Difference is thus appropriated and managed in the service of exogenous processes that impose themselves as normative, while the subordination and depersonalisation of the majority of the population are rendered politically invisible. The instrumentalisation of difference for the conversion of the other into an object of control and private accumulation is not contingent or exceptional. It is a structural tendency and a functional requirement of capitalist production and reproduction as they materialise in specific places and spatial configurations. This process unfolds as a synecdochical political operation in which the values, interests and epistemologies of ethnic and politico-economic elites are universalised, while alternative modes of being, inhabiting and relating to land are devalued or erased. Evidently, the socio-ecological and psychological consequences of prolonged regimes of indifference are severe. Under sustained genocidal pressure, impossible spaces are reproduced as a condition of *nonada* – to invoke Guimarães Rosa's (2001) neologism denoting a trifle or a mere nothing – where marginalisation and acute neglect become the most visible expressions of an ongoing, living genocide. This process produces *an impossible spatiality that, paradoxically, becomes the lived environment of millions of subaltern people* whose very existence constitutes a struggle rendered ideologically and politically invisible. Impossible spaces are imposed upon them, yet their stubborn resistance persists as both reaction and possibility. Forced survival within conditions of in-betweenness, and the necessity of confronting multiple, asymmetrically powerful adversaries, render existence itself intensely politicised. National and international politics thus become quotidian concerns for those confined to roadside encampments or minuscule plots at the margins of territories they know, and can demonstrate, to be their own. For that reason, across mobilisations, everyday practices and collective reactions, contemporary indigeneity is thus continuously tested and recalibrated (Ioris, 2022). Navigating impossible spaces requires far more than surviving recurrent killings and massacres. It

demands the capacity to endure accumulated injustices, to resist ontological erasure and to remain steadfast in the face of repeated dispossession, betrayal and loss.

Commonalities between the Two Impossible Spaces

Despite the evident differences between the Palestinian population and the Guarani-Kaiowa in Brazil (particularly in terms of demographic scale, ethnicity, religion, language and social organisation), both are currently subjected to genocidal processes enacted in the name of nation-building, economic progress and border security. This shared condition renders their experiences analytically commensurable and emblematic of the deep contradictions and persistent violence of late-capitalist modernity. It has been extremely relevant for the Guarani-Kaiowa but the notion of indigeneity also "offers a way to rethink the Palestinian political project as one that understands all Palestinians as indigenous people facing attempted erasure" (Amara and Hawari, 2019). In both cases, acute material devastation is evident, yet the most fundamental form of ruin lies in the violent displacement and attempted erasure of ancestral populations who have inhabited the same territories since time immemorial. The conditions prevailing in the Gaza Strip and in the Dourados Indigenous Reserve are especially revealing, because these are large deposits of people who are there mainly to be forgotten and, according the system, to disappear. The latter, widely regarded as the most overcrowded, dysfunctional and impoverished indigenous territory in Brazil, confines approximately 20,000 people to just 3,500 hectares and is frequently described as the 'Gaza Strip of Brazil'. In both contexts, the struggle to remain on ancestral land constitutes the central geographical and political force of resistance. Among the Guarani peoples, this attachment is encapsulated in the concept of *tekoha*, formed by the prefix *teko* (referring to the norms, values and modes of life of the community) and the suffix *-ha*, denoting place (Pereira, 2021). Land, in this sense, is not merely a physical substrate but the spatial and temporal condition of collective existence (Martins and Oliveira, 2021). A comparable understanding informs Palestinian relationships to territory. As Lakhani (2025: 133) observes, "Palestine is not just the place where Palestinians live; it is who they are as a people." The desolate conditions imposed on them, combined with their enduring attachment to land and distinctive socio-spatial relations, have increasingly positioned them as an emblematic indigenous nation in the middle of a protracted genocide.

This process of Palestinian indigenisation is inseparable from their systematic spatial fragmentation and material destruction, revealing how recognition and annihilation advance simultaneously through the reorganisation of territory, borders and everyday landscapes (Ali and Ghanem, 2026). Conversely, the intensification of anti-indigenous policies directed at the Guarani-Kaiowa signals a parallel dynamic: the progressive *Palestinisation* of Mato Grosso do Sul, whereby indigenous presence is rendered spatially illegitimate, legally precarious and permanently insecure

through zoning, land titling regimes, policing practices and infrastructural neglect (Ioris, 2024). Together, these processes call for a rigorously geographical and comparative analysis of how renewed expressions of cruelty and dispossession are produced, normalised and reproduced through spatial governance in both Palestine and South America. In both cases, indigenous territories have been repeatedly invaded, re-scaled and reclassified by external powers whose political and economic interests have overridden local socio-spatial systems, territorial knowledges and modes of inhabiting land. Palestine was governed by the Ottoman Empire from 1517 to 1917, after which the region was subjected to European partition following the empire's collapse. The 1917 Balfour Declaration and the subsequent British Mandate (1922-1948) reconfigured the territory through colonial cartographies, legal abstractions and demographic engineering, laying the groundwork for the territorial fragmentation that would follow the 1948 Nakba (Laurens, 2024). Since then, Palestinian space has been progressively broken into enclaves, camps, militarised borders and zones of differential mobility, sustained by a state-building project grounded in territorial expropriation and the selective mobilisation of biblical and nationalist narratives (Sayigh, 2007). "*Si les Allemands veulent chasser les Juifs d'Allemagne, les Juifs veulent chasser les Arabes de Palestine*" (Laurens, 2024: 108).

A geography of dispossession also characterises Mato Grosso do Sul. Indigenous territories were systematically redefined as 'empty', 'idle' or 'unproductive' spaces and incorporated into national development strategies through cadastral mapping, agrarian legislation and the construction of infrastructure corridors. The expansion of agribusiness has produced a spatial regime of monoculture, fenced estates and logistical networks that constrains indigenous mobility, compresses living space and criminalises indigenous land claims. "The majority of Palestinians today live under surveillance of one form or another from cradle to grave" (Zureik, 2016: 10), and the Guarani-Kaiowa find themselves in a comparable situation. As in Israel, socio-economic inequality is inseparable from spatial inequality: class formation, ethnic hierarchy and land concentration interact to produce uneven geographies of wealth, security and political voice (Khattab, 2005). In both contexts, the nation is materially assembled through the marginalisation of indigenous peoples, whose presence is reframed as an obstacle to development, productivity and security. Dispossession is normalised through planning instruments, property law, policing practices and everyday territorial governance. Like the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine, the Guarani-Kaiowa have endured sustained ethnicised violence, the fragmentation of ancestral territories and the suppression of political voice, alongside confinement to small, profoundly inadequate reservations or precarious roadside encampments. In such spaces, the reproduction of social life grounded in shared resources, collective autonomy and territorial continuity becomes structurally impossible. Across both cases, domination operates through deliberate strategies aimed at severing long-standing

relationships between people and land, foreclosing the possibility of indigenous life within the very territories that constitute collective identity. Settler populations and allied newcomers frequently mobilise claims of ethnic, religious or civilisational superiority to legitimise these spatial practices, rendering dispossession, exclusion and enduring regimes of violence both normal and necessary within dominant narratives of national progress.

In the Mediterranean, Zionism has operated as a colonial and ethnic project, underpinned by forms of racism directed at both Arabs and non-white Jews, a logic materialised through the arrival of settlers and the systematic marginalisation of indigenous populations, a process Yiftachel (2023) terms settler-colonial Judaisation. In Brazil, the political and economic structures of Mato Grosso do Sul are oriented towards promoting agribusiness exports and protecting private rural property, irrespective of its historical or legal origins, while simultaneously reproducing discourses that position non-white populations, particularly indigenous communities, as socially and politically peripheral. The replacement of diverse, locally rooted food systems with ultra-processed products and the transformation of agriculture into industrial agribusiness constitute another dimension of this destructive logic. The *Zionification* of Mato Grosso do Sul intensified under the neo-fascist Bolsonaro administration (2019-2022), which systematically denied recognition of indigenous territorial rights, obstructed homologation of land, and undermined basic health and food services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, FUNAI's failures to provide vaccinations in urban and unrecognized indigenous territories exemplified the lethal consequences of institutional neglect (INA, 2022). Similarly, successive administrations of the State of Israel, particularly under Benjamin Netanyahu, have progressively eroded the rule of law while intensifying violence. Despite immense differences, both cases illustrate how settler-colonial logics intersect with state power to produce impossible spaces: territories where indigenous and native populations are systematically displaced, socially marginalised and denied the capacity to reproduce life according to their ancestral norms. The following section offers a schematic comparative analysis, highlighting shared challenges and structural commonalities in the creation and maintenance of these spatial impossibilities.

A - Impossible Spaces Carved by Blood

The Zionist state, much like the agribusiness frontiers of South America, can be understood as an artificial and coercive formation imposed upon societies that had long produced their own socio-spatial order. The appropriation of the Palestinian world, encompassing Bedouin and non-Bedouin communities alike, was not a secondary consequence of Zionism but a central objective of the settler-colonial project. Rather than primarily seeking to open agricultural land for a stateless population, Zionist colonisation operated through the systematic dismantling of existing

indigenous socio-spatial relations, asserting the superiority and alleged political legitimacy of settler populations, particularly Ashkenazi Jews whose historical victimisation in Europe was transposed onto a colonial terrain. This was not a process of creative construction but one of *constructive destruction*: the deliberate eradication of an established socio-spatiality in order to impose an alternative territorial order upon those rendered surplus to it. The consolidation of Israel has depended on the destruction of the material, social and symbolic worlds of the legitimate inhabitants of the land, producing territorial formations that can only be understood as spaces forged through violence and the conversion of victims into irreconcilable enemies. As Levy (2020: 55) observes, Israel is "a state that has violated almost every sovereignty around it and respected none, that forcibly rules territories in which it lacks sovereignty, yet sanctifies the idea of sovereignty when expedient." Palestinian communities have thus been subjected to sustained and often lethal violence because their lands were foundational to the territorial project of the SoI, despite the evident illegality of this process and the complicity, or active support, of major international actors, notably Britain, the United States and the former Soviet Union. As a result, Israel remains characterised by indeterminate borders and an unstable territorial configuration, grounded in competing claims of sovereignty over fragmented and contested spaces. This territorial ambiguity raises profound doubts about the feasibility of conventional solutions based on clear separation and fixed territorial demarcation, underscoring fundamentally unresolved spatial contradictions (Newman, 2012).

The post-Second World War expansion of agribusiness across South America, particularly in Mato Grosso do Sul, has entailed the large-scale territorial incorporation of indigenous lands at immense socio-ecological cost. This process exposes the moral and criminal responsibilities underpinning sustained attempts to eliminate the Guarani-Kaiowa and other indigenous nations through land appropriation, confinement and the suppression of their physical and socio-political existence. By the mid-twentieth century, approximately three-quarters of the Guarani-Kaiowa population had been forcibly concentrated into overcrowded and precarious reservations, a spatial strategy marked from its inception by structural violence and continually reinforced through recurrent episodes of socio-spatial brutality. Like the Palestinians, the Guarani-Kaiowa have, since the 1940s, become primary victims of a colonial project that cannot reproduce itself without genocidal practices enacted through space. Over more than seven decades, the production of impossible spaces has become a consolidated geographical norm in both contexts, normalised by state authorities and tacitly accepted by much of the international community. These are spaces defined by contradiction and absurdity: territories in which the original inhabitants remain physically present yet politically erased, legally excluded and materially confined. Fences and walls play a central role in this spatial regime, separating the lawful custodians of the land – Palestinians and Guarani-

Kaiowa – from settler populations and economic elites whose domination rests not on legitimacy but on coercive capacity, private property regimes and militarised security. Most Palestinians survive under conditions of severe deprivation in refugee camps, fragmented enclaves of the West Bank and the open-air prison of Gaza. Similarly, most Guarani-Kaiowa live in tightly bounded enclaves called 'reservations', roadside encampments of extreme precarity, or in small fragments of private estates under dispute (lands that are, in fact, their ancestral territories, where ancestors are buried and spiritual life is anchored). The spatial violence inflicted on the Guarani-Kaiowa is particularly stark: they are often permitted only to view their *tekoha* from behind fences or from the roadside, while access to these sacred territories is strictly prohibited by the invader ('farmer'). As with Palestinians, successive generations grow up speaking of lands they have never physically entered, but which continue to structure collective memory, identity and political aspiration. In both cases, dispossession operates not only through physical exclusion but through the systematic interruption of the spatial conditions necessary for indigenous life, producing landscapes of confinement, anticipation and deferred return.

As time passes, impossible spaces have hardened into an even more disturbing material reality. Deprived of land, mobility and political horizons, the only terrain in which life can be sustained is what might be called a *territory of hope*, a spatial imaginary that, from the dominant standpoint, appears absurd or irrational. The central question, however, is not one of faith versus despair, but of how populations endure and navigate conditions of consolidated marginalisation, routine abuse and systematic killing. In occupied Palestine, illegality has become a governing spatial principle rather than an exceptional deviation. Despite the declaration of a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip on 10 October 2025, Israeli forces violated the agreement almost daily, killing hundreds of people. By 9 January 2026, the ceasefire had been breached at least 1,193 times through air strikes, artillery fire and direct shootings; Gaza was attacked on 79 of the 94 days following the agreement (Al Jazeera, 2026). This violence was not confined to Gaza, but since the genocidal reoccupation initiated in 2023, the West Bank has experienced a parallel escalation, with levels of violence in 2025 approximately 25 per cent higher than the previous year (Kubovich, 2026). These practices extend beyond the killing of the living to the spatial violation of the dead. Palestinians detained as so-called 'war prisoners' at Sde Teiman, a military base in the Negev desert, were subjected to torture and unlawful death, a reality exposed when 135 mutilated bodies were returned to Gaza (Tondo and Tantesh, 2025). Death itself is thus firmly incorporated into the geography of impossibility. Bodies, graves, hospitals and cemeteries are rendered legitimate targets; burial is delayed, denied or violently interrupted. As Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian has described at the conference 'Politics and Poetics on the Ruins of Gaza' (Collège de France, Paris, 16 Dec 2025), this condition constitutes a

regime of *overkilling*, in which violence exceeds any instrumental military logic and instead operates as a spatial economy of annihilation.

Impossible spaces are, therefore, not accidental by-products of a colonial war, but actively produced environments in which life, death and afterlife are governed by a shared logic of disposability. In this genocidal geography, spatial destruction exceeds the loss of territory or population, permeating the entire socio-spatial continuum of displacement, mourning, memory and the systematic foreclosure of return. Human Rights Watch has concluded that Israeli policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory meet the legal definitions of apartheid and persecution, while the UN Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel has reported findings indicating that Israeli actions in Gaza amount to genocide, citing mass killings, forced displacement and the obstruction of humanitarian aid as principal concerns and urging immediate international action (Associated Press, 2025). These processes, rooted in the institutional architectures established during the British Mandate and subsequently reinforced through American geopolitical tutelage, cannot be adequately understood outside the political economy of oil dependency, which has historically required the suppression of Arab autonomy and the systematic dismantling of Palestinian society. Understanding how domination operates thus necessitates attention to the interlocking structures that shape social, political and economic relations (Tartir et al., 2021). Capitalist political economy and its associated geopolitical interventions are invariably embedded within broader totalities of conquest, displacement and control. Within this configuration, 'Jewish democracy' operates as a legitimising myth, enabling the institutionalisation of systematic Palestinian oppression and the deepening of apartheid and ethnic cleansing across territories appropriated by the SoI (Yiftachel, 2023).

A comparable logic is evident in South America. The opening of agricultural frontiers in central Brazil, and more recently in north-eastern Paraguay, was promoted under the banner of national sovereignty but operated as part of renewed cycles of extractivism, commodity export and land speculation, consolidating the impossible spaces of indigenous genocide. In Brazil, this dynamic assumes a distinctly Kafkaesque form. Through Normative Instruction [*Instrução Normativa*] No. 9/2020, the indigenous protection agency FUNAI authorised the certification of private rural properties within indigenous lands prior to full homologation, a measure later contested in court. Official Notice [*Ofício Circular*] No. 18/2021-CGMT/FUNAI subsequently withdrew state protection from peoples residing in non-homologated indigenous territories, exposing some of the most vulnerable communities to violence by land grabbers, loggers, miners and drug traffickers. These regulatory decisions, during the Bolsonaro administration, constituted flagrant violations of Article 231 of the Brazilian Constitution, which obliges the state to protect indigenous peoples irrespective of territorial recognition. Much like the Knesset in Jerusalem, the Brazilian Congress has been dominated by extreme right-wing coalitions closely aligned with

agribusiness and extractive interests, frequently implicated in corruption and persistently committed to legislation that erodes civil rights, devastates ecosystems and concentrates power within historically entrenched elites. This condition can only be adequately apprehended, to borrow Žižek's formulation (2013), as one of *less than nothing*: a political and spatial order in which radical transformation is required merely to reach the threshold of nothingness itself. Impossible spaces are precisely the geographies in which nothingness and impossibility prevail, and where those indigenous to the land are rendered expendable, removable and ultimately disposable.

B – Spatial Mythologies

Israel and its Zionist agenda capitalised on several myths, including exile, unique suffering, persecution, isolation, vulnerability, their ancient connection with Israel (according to Sand, 2009, the majority of Jews are Jews by conversion in other lands, not by blood; at the same time, the Palestinians are, genetically, basically the left-behind Jews, with other influences; there are not Arab like other Arabs; they are nonetheless discriminated because white Jews coming from Europe claim primacy of Jewness) → AI: crucial class-ethnic-religious nexus manifested and struggled through the production of highly asymmetric, brutalised spaces

A central pillar of settler colonialism is the simulation of entitlement to appropriate indigenous land, irrespective of the social, ecological and human destruction such appropriation entails. This logic – historically sustained by religious universalism, racial hierarchies and ethnocentric worldviews – underpinned European maritime expansion, imperial conquest and, in the twentieth century, development-oriented extraction of minerals, energy, water and land. Colonialism, slavery and economic domination were decisive in the material consolidation of Western power, producing prosperity through the systematic ruination of non-Western societies. These dynamics have extended into contemporary forms of neo-imperial intervention, including resource grabbing, border militarisation, the criminalisation of migrant populations and renewed rounds of territorial expansion. Just as the wealth of the European Renaissance was inseparable from colonial extraction in the Americas, contemporary USA economic dominance remains deeply reliant on energy, labour and commodities sourced from the Middle East and the wider Global South (reaching the more recent snatching of Venezuelan oil by the Trump administration). Claims of civilisational superiority and historical prerogative, however untenable, remain embedded in the production of lived impossible spaces for those most directly affected, particularly Palestinians and other indigenous nations. Impossible spaces are, above all, a political fiction: a spurious device, or a sort of weapon, imposed upon populations that had long sustained viable, complex and place-based modes of existence. Their imposition relies fundamentally on the *mythologisation of origins, rights and*

destinies, through which expropriation is naturalised and indigenous presence rendered illegitimate.

The legitimation claims of the SoI are explicitly sustained through spatial mythologies that seek to naturalise dispossession and obscure legal misconstructions. Such mythologies, however, are analytically fragile and morally reprehensible. Historians such as Pappé (2006) have demonstrated that there is no straightforward historical, social or political continuity between the populations described in biblical narratives and the heterogeneous Jewish communities that emerged centuries later across Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Middle East and parts of Africa. While religious texts have endured and modern Hebrew retains linguistic affinities with ancient forms, collective identities have been constituted through long processes of migration, conversion, cultural exchange and political reconfiguration. Claims of exclusive ancestral entitlement to territory grounded in ancient scripture are therefore best understood as modern propaganda rather than as historically continuous or empirically verifiable realities. These narratives function primarily as instruments of justification within contemporary settler-colonial projects, translating theological abstraction into territorial practice. Crucially, such spatial myth-making long predates the formal consolidation of Zionism as a political movement. As early as the first half of the nineteenth century, British politicians and intellectuals had already envisaged the 'return' of Jews to Palestine as a means of precipitating the Second Coming of the Messiah and the Final Judgement, revealing the deep entanglement of imperial geopolitics, Christian eschatology and colonial territorial imagination (Laurens, 2024). According to Stanislawski (2017), Zionism was really the rejection of the old desire of the Jews to return to the land of Israel, because it was manipulated to precipitate the second coming of the messiah, instead of being the culmination, expected by most Jews, of the return of the same messiah. This project, although often met with reluctance among Jewish communities themselves, was framed as a means of fulfilling of biblical prophecies and the invasion of a foreign land, while simultaneously advancing British imperial ambitions in trade, territorial control and geopolitical influence (Malm, 2024). As Freeman (2026: 128) observes, "most of the original Zionists were not themselves religious, but they judged correctly that locating their proposed state in the mythic homeland of Judaism – Palestine – would grant it a religious legitimacy it would otherwise lack."

The mobilisation of settlers, capital and political support thus depended upon the activation of a latent and vague "theological ideal and mythic memory that has survived millennia in the minds of observant Jews" (Freeman, 2026: 135). These symbolic resources proved central for the settler-colonial project whose material consolidation relied on the systematic dispossession and erasure of an existing population in the land. "Zionism wrote its mythology at the same time as it was forming its ideology, and long before its territorial visions were realised" (Leshem, 2017: 20). The Zionists

did not ignore that there was an existing population in Palestine, but assumed that this could be transformed and incorporated into a progressive, 'modern' state ruled by the Jews (Stanislawski, 2017). However, this form of religious–ethnic nationalism is marked by profound deceptiveness and juridical illicitness. It resembles the biblical allegory of the final phase of world empires, represented by the statue's feet and toes of iron mixed with clay, signifying a polity that is simultaneously strong and brittle, unable to achieve durable cohesion or legitimacy: "As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle" (Daniel 2:41-42). From the foundational violence of 1948 through the wars of 1967 and 1973, the invasions of Lebanon, the prolonged occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, and the large-scale destruction of Gaza in 2023, it is evident that the SoI has been constituted and sustained primarily through force, coercion and ideological mobilisation rather than through lawful, consensual political processes. The effectiveness of Zionist lobbying in the post-war period capitalised on international consternation following the Holocaust, exerting sustained pressure on global institutions and shaping diplomatic outcomes. However, the United Nations possessed no legal authority to mandate the removal or displacement of an existing population, in violation of self-determination rights, in order to accommodate another. Forced population transfer is incompatible with modern international law, violates peremptory norms [*ius cogens*], and contravenes the right to self-determination alongside a wide range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as core principles of international humanitarian law.

General Assembly Resolution 181/1947, often treated as quasi-constitutional, was in fact a non-binding recommendation rather than a legal instrument capable of transferring sovereignty. Its implementation was explicitly premised on consent, coexistence and the protection of the rights of both populations, conditions that were never realised. As Akram (2011: 16) notes, it is highly questionable whether the General Assembly possessed any legal authority to recommend the partition of territory at all, "let alone confer title to territory held by people who did not agree to relinquish their land."[1] Involuntary population transfer was already prohibited under customary international law and would later be codified as a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions. As Elaraby observed, "the fate of the Palestinians was decided for them by the United Nations, to their detriment, without reference to the rule of law" (1968: 97).[2] At any rate, Resolution 181 envisaged two states

[1] In addition, while the League of Nations formally approved the Mandate for Palestine in 1922, incorporating the Balfour Declaration, some scholars argue Britain never gained true legal sovereignty or ratification because the League lacked authority to grant it (Laurens, 2024). Britain's legal claims basically relied on a strained interpretation of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne about the Ottoman legacy, which was ratified later. The Mandate, assigning Britain administrative power over Palestine and Transjordan, served as the framework for governance until 1948, but its legal basis remains debated, with the UN generally accepting it as a foundation despite these underlying issues.

[2] On the contrary, the 1922 League of Nations Covenant (Article 22, paragraph 4) stipulated that "Certain communities, formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire, have reached a stage of development where their

existing side by side, with Jerusalem placed under an international regime, which was not honoured by the Zionist movement. Instead, extensive military, demographic and territorial preparations preceded a coordinated campaign of conquest, expulsion and consolidation. The mass displacement of Palestinians was not an accidental by-product of war but a constitutive mechanism of state formation. This unresolved and violent genesis continues to structure Israeli territorial practices. Subsequent occupations and annexations – including the prolonged control of the West Bank and Gaza, the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and repeated incursions into southern Lebanon – are not historical deviations but extensions of this foundational rupture. They reproduce a settler-colonial logic dependent on permanent insecurity, militarisation and legal exceptionalism.

Despite the subsequent proliferation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice, and findings by UN special rapporteurs and commissions of inquiry, the foundational illegality of occupation, settlement expansion and collective punishment has endured with near-total impunity. In this sense, the persistent instability of the SoI is not contingent but structural: a polity constituted through dispossession and denial cannot secure durable legitimacy, internal cohesion or genuine security. The uneasy fusion of coercive capacity and political fragility – biblical iron mixed with clay – continues to shape both its internal contradictions and its contested position within the international order. A comparable logic operates along the agribusiness frontiers of South America. Many settler populations who migrated from southern Brazil to states such as Mato Grosso do Sul, often retaining Italian or German surnames, are fourth- or fifth-generation descendants of European migrants but, in practice, reflect extensive social, cultural, and genetic mixing. Myths of Europeanness operate less as descriptive markers of identity than as political and ideological expedients used to assert hierarchy, entitlement and authority over land. Much like doctrines of manifest destiny in other settler-colonial settings, such claims serve to legitimise territorial appropriation while obscuring the violent histories and legal irregularities that enabled it. Appeals to civilisational continuity, cultural purity or historical opportunities function as mechanisms of power rather than as credible accounts of the past. They underpin spatial practices through which the Guarani-Kaiowa were rendered disposable, their rights suspended, and their continued presence reframed as an obstacle to development and progress. These narratives are not incidental to settler colonialism or nation-building projects, but are central mechanisms through which such endeavours are politically reproduced across time and space.

What has come to be described as Kaiowcide intensified in the late 1970s, when land conflicts expanded into new arenas and were accompanied

existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a mandatory power until such time as they are able to stand alone."

by escalating violence, as well as renewed forms of indigenous mobilisation and aggressive responses from landowners. Attempts to subordinate indigenous peoples to market-based rationalities have revealed deep ontological tensions. Without resorting to cultural or ethnic essentialism, it is evident that Indigenous societies retain distinct modes of being grounded in traditional knowledge systems, spiritual practices, linguistic continuity, and non-capitalist forms of production and territoriality. In the last two decades, the spurious thesis of the *marco temporal* thesis (literally, a temporal cut-off), which has become one of the most contentious and still unresolved juridical disputes in contemporary Brazil. The doctrine was first articulated by the Supreme Federal Court (STF) in 2009 as a heterodox interpretation of the constitutional text. The Court established the date of the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution (5 October 1988) as a chronological benchmark for the purposes of indigenous land demarcation and titling. According to this reasoning, only those indigenous peoples who were physically present on their claimed territories on that specific date would be entitled to constitutional protection. This interpretation introduced an arbitrary temporal restriction that finds no explicit basis in the constitutional text itself and reflects a deeper feature of Brazil's socio-legal tradition, which has often operated according to an implicit logic of *in dubio contra reum* ('in cases of doubt, rule against the accused') especially when the accused or claimant is poor and indigenous. More than a mere interpretative tool, this doctrine has functioned as a form of instantaneous juridical erasure, whereby an arbitrary date is invoked to retroactively nullify indigenous existence on, and claims to, their ancestral lands. Juridical controversies continue to maintain the situation of spatial abuses that lead to massacres and ultimate the Guarani-Kaiowa genocide. Under political pressure, the STF changed its previous interpretation and eventually considered the *marco temporal* unconstitutional in 2023, but the Brazilian Congress swiftly passed legislation reinstating it; this legislation was again considered unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in December 2025, but the implementation of the most recent ruling is certainly going to be vigorously resisted by landowners and will continue to challenge the resolve of the authorities.

Settler colonialism presented itself as a pathway to social redemption and material security. However, this trajectory was structurally dependent on the displacement, devaluation and, in many cases, the mass killing of indigenous populations who had long inhabited the territories being formally allocated or violently appropriated. In this sense, the emergence of the SoI must be situated within the broader historical context of European exclusion, antisemitism and the catastrophic brutality of Nazism, while also recognising how the political resolution of these traumas was displaced onto Palestinian territory and population.[3] Similarly, in Mato Grosso do Sul, agribusiness

[3] The Nazi genocide of European Jews stands as one of the most appalling crimes in modern history. Yet, as Finkelstein (2000) contends, the subsequent political economy of Holocaust remembrance has converted this historical catastrophe into a durable form of moral, economic and geopolitical capital. In this sense,

elites frequently portray themselves as economically fragile victims of state failure or market volatility. This recent process of dispossession benefits from the foundational violence – the 'original sin' – that always underpinned the Brazilian economy and the selective implementation of the legislation. National history shows the persistent accumulation of institutional privileges and the systematic tolerance by allied political and legal authorities of labour abuses, environmental destruction, fiscal irregularities and violence directed at indigenous peoples. Following those trends, contemporary crop and cattle production took place on land appropriated only a few decades ago (mainly) from the Guarani-Kaiowa. So-called 'advanced' agricultural practices have generated economic benefits to a small segment of the population, while produced widespread ecological contamination, poisoning water sources and food systems. Numerous cases document conditions of modern indigenous slavery, the killing of children and adults living in roadside encampments adjacent to farms, and the use of agribusiness wealth to finance the surveillance, criminalisation and violent repression of popular resistance. The mythology lingers.

C - The Greater the Assault, the Greater the Victimisation of the Aggressor

One of the most emblematic expressions of the impossible spaces imposed on Palestinians and the Guarani-Kaiowa is their transformation into refugees on, or in close proximity to, their own ancestral lands. Comparable to the conditions in refugee camps in Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan, three successive generations of Guarani-Kaiowa families, today numbering more than 50,000 people, have been forced to survive in precarious roadside encampments or in small, overcrowded reservations marked by acute shortages of arable land, water, vegetation and food. These conditions severely undermine both cultural reproduction and physical survival. In Palestine, the 1948 Nakba expelled approximately 750,000 people, generating a protracted refugee condition that today encompasses several million individuals who continue to live under chronic deprivation while asserting the right of return (Filiu, 2024). A closely parallel process unfolded among the Guarani-Kaiowa from the 1940s onwards, when they were forcibly removed from their ancestral territories following the collapse of the *erva-mate* extractive economy. During the extractive boom (c. 1870s-1930s), indigenous labour was subjected to brutal exploitation and forms of modern slavery, yet communities were at least able to remain on their lands and sustain social reproduction (Chamorro, 2015). Dispossession intensified precisely when indigenous territorial presence ceased to serve capitalist accumulation. Despite these sustained and well-documented forms of socio-spatial violence,

Holocaust memory has operated as a protective shield for Jewish elites and for the SoI, a true investment fund or insurance policy, enabling the pursuit of strategic interests while insulating contemporary practices of domination from sustained critique.

dominant media narratives and official discourses routinely invert the roles of victim and aggressor, that is, agribusiness elites and Jewish settlers are frequently portrayed as the primary victims of conflict, while the historical and structural conditions of indigenous dispossession, confinement and forced immobility are marginalised or erased altogether.

Claims of progress, modernity and rational governance in both contexts remain profoundly compromised by enduring structures of violence, denial and geographical mystification. Israel is routinely described as the only democracy in the Middle East, a characterisation that obscures its foundations in displacement, military domination and the ongoing violation of international law. Equally, Brazil's contemporary political economy cannot be disentangled from the legacies of African enslavement and indigenous massacres that underpinned its territorial and economic formation. The distortion at stake extends beyond the interpretation of rights or the systematic disqualification of the oppressed but it also involves the subordination of the divine itself to settler-colonial projects. Religious doctrine is instrumentalised to legitimise dispossession, producing a theological economy in which God is mobilised to sanction accumulation, exclusion and thereby transforming political violence into moral necessity. Following the insight of Schmitt (2005) that modern political beliefs are secularised theological concepts, settler colonialism operates not merely through law, economy and territory, but through the sacralisation of power and the naturalisation of domination. In Brazil, agribusiness interests are closely aligned with Evangelical and Pentecostal churches that promote forms of prosperity theology. This doctrine asserts that material wealth and physical well-being constitute evidence of divine favour, while poverty and suffering are reframed as signs of moral failure or divine judgement. Such widespread interpretations naturalise inequality and provide moral cover for land grabbing, labour exploitation and ecological destruction. These religious movements have penetrated both non-indigenous and indigenous communities, frequently advancing narratives of original sin, conversion and spiritual redemption that delegitimise ancestral cosmologies and demand adherence to a Europeanised Christian framework.

The colonial logic of destruction was already articulated during the Iberian invasions of the Americas, most notoriously in Sepúlveda's arguments against de las Casas at Salamanca, where indigenous peoples were denied full humanity and thus stripped of legal and moral standing. Comparable logics persist in contemporary settler colonial contexts through selective, impoverished interpretations of sacred texts. In the Palestinian case, instrumentalised readings of the Old Testament have been mobilised to legitimise dispossession and violence by casting Palestinians as religious, civilisational and moral outsiders. The contemporary posture of certain Jewish religious and para-religious leaders is particularly troubling in light of the long history of Jewish persecution. Still, the denial of Jewish citizenship in Europe historically intersected with the denial of indigeneity to colonised

peoples and with the degradation of European peasants, whose dispossession facilitated their forced migration to colonial frontiers. From a class-based perspective, these shared histories of exclusion might have enabled solidarities between Jewish and non-Jewish migrants, indigenous and non-indigenous workers. However, the ideological apparatus of settler colonialism – grounded in exceptionalism, entitlement and perpetual segregation – systematically forecloses such alliances, obstructing both class identification and equitable access to land. Those who were discriminated against in Europe, Jews and non-Jews alike, often, upon arrival in the occupied lands, reproduced the very ideology that had expelled them rather than forming solidarities with the indigenous populations whose lands they came to occupy. The social and spatial violence they enacted mirrored the hierarchical, exclusionary structures they had experienced, reinforcing settler colonial logics of dispossession, entitlement, and normative erasure.

In this sense, migration and settlement did not simply transplant populations, but carried forward patterns of domination, transforming theology, ethnicity and historical grievance into catalysts of an impossible spatiality. Political theology thus functions not as a residual cultural framework but as a constitutive force of the settler-colonial machine. References such as those found in the Book of Amos, which opens with divine condemnations of Israel's neighbours (including Philistia, from which the name Palestine derives) are commonly mobilised to endorse contemporary practices of exclusion and domination:

> The Lord says: The people of Gaza have sinned again and again, and for this I will certainly punish them. They carried off a whole nation and sold them as slaves to the people of Edom. So I will send fire upon the city walls of Gaza and burn down its fortress. I will remove the rules of the cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon. I will punish the city of Ekron, and all the Philistines who are left will die'. (Amos 1:6-8)

The consequence of this aberrant convergence of eschatological, ethnic, and nationalist claims is that the socio-spatial normalisation of the SoI, like the dominant agrarian model in Mato Grosso do Sul, is largely detached from on-the-ground realities. Legitimacy is not derived from ethical or legal coherence but from the systematic erasure and delegitimisation of competing, often more defensible, claims to land and life. Central to this rhetorical and semiotic apparatus is a colonial assumption: that 'new' (white) space is inherently superior to 'old' (non-white) space, such that the identity of those who occupy or cultivate the land confers moral and political authority. The enormous financial and symbolic investment in legitimising Israeli state violence (through cinema, literature, documentaries, diplomatic discourse and the persistent invocation of Jewish victimhood) finds a disturbing parallel in Brazil, where media campaigns celebrate agribusiness as 'the Brazilian sector that does well' [*o Brasil que dá certo*], popularised in slogans such as *Agro is Pop*. In both cases, the need to incessantly reaffirm settler prerogatives

betrays the fragility of the underlying claims. The Guarani-Kaiowa are frequently misrepresented as nomadic and territorially unbound, thereby deemed ineligible for the constitutional land rights formally guaranteed to them. Palestinians are similarly portrayed as a people without a valid historical claim, accused of having 'voluntarily' abandoned their lands. Historical erasure and juridical manipulation thus operate as deliberate techniques to delegitimise indigenous claims and naturalise dispossession, producing socio-spatial orders in which violence, exclusion, and the denial of belonging are routine. This intertwining of territorial conquest and religiously-infused ideological narratives underscores the centrality of political theology in settler colonial projects, where eschatological claims and sacred imaginaries are mobilised to justify and sustain the spatial subjugation and erasure of indigenous populations.

In her influential work, Arendt (2006) argues that monumental crimes are not primarily perpetrated by sadistic monsters or pathological tyrants, but rather by ordinary, unremarkable individuals who comply with authority and conform to dominant institutional norms. Evil, in this formulation, had become trivial: routinised, bureaucratised and so deeply embedded in everyday practices that it ceases to appear as evil at all. It is precisely this normalisation that allows such violence to persist without provoking sustained moral or political resistance. The inertia and banality of evil, in Arendt's sense, are central to understanding both Israeli state policies towards Palestinians and agribusiness-driven strategies targeting indigenous peoples in Brazil. In these frameworks, indigenous populations are reduced to marginal footnotes in official histories, cast as obstacles to development, security or national pride, and are expected to disappear from political consideration altogether. The routine invocation of accusations of antisemitism to silence criticism of Israeli state violence, much like the agribusiness sector's persistent claims of victimhood, demands for increased subsidies, and assertions of exceptional entitlement, functions as a mechanism that reinforces this banalisation of harm. Rather than constituting genuine defences, these arguments serve to shield dominant actors from accountability, reproducing a moral economy in which structural violence is rendered invisible, normalised, and ultimately justified. In this sense, the power of 'banal evil' lies not only in overt brutality but in its capacity to present systematic dispossession as administratively necessary, politically unavoidable, and ethically unremarkable.

As much as crimes and egregious injustices, killings and massacres on this genocidal scale represent both a failure of political imagination and a surrender to base human instincts for revenge and domination. Such logic reproduces the colonial belief that territory must be ordered, cleansed and made productive according to Eurocentric norms and safeguard the prerogatives of those who were 'victims' of European Modernity, while indigenous spatial practices, rooted in commons, relational land use and small-scale subsistence, are depicted as chaotic, backward, unclean and out

of place (Ioris, 2025). Indigenous presence is thus reframed not merely as marginal or obsolete, but as fundamentally incompatible with progress, and therefore in need of elimination or replacement. They are then relegated to the space of impossibility, an impossible space. It is a spatial impossibility realised over time: the new, regardless of illegality or atrocity, is right by definition, while the old, regardless of legitimacy or rightness, is wrong. The assertion that white, European settler ownership retroactively legitimises land long inhabited by non-white indigenous populations operates as a racialised logic of revenge, translating historical domination into spatial hierarchy. Racism is, thus, operationalised through the production of unequal geographies, in which legality, modernity and rationality are selectively assigned. The outcome is the systematic creation of spatial impossibility for those subjected to dispossession: a temporal inversion in which novelty, regardless of its violent or illegal origins, is deemed legitimate by definition, while historical presence, irrespective of its legal and moral grounding, is rendered invalid. The settler-colonial space is produced not only through violence, but through the temporal foreclosure of spatial justice itself.

D – Parallel Insertion into the Parasitism of Capitalism

There appear to be few effective constraints on the actions of the SoI and on the agribusiness sector in Brazil, notwithstanding the scale and persistence of misery inflicted upon indigenous populations in both contexts. These cases should not be read as isolated anomalies, but rather as geographically situated microcosms of broader and enduring processes of territorial control, dispossession and destruction. Although Israeli territorial expansion and agribusiness-led frontier development are routinely framed as indicators of economic success, modernisation and geopolitical strength, they are in fact characterised by profound structural vulnerability, a condition mirrored in the open rejection of international law by actors such as the Trump administration, which signals weakness rather than confidence. This condition of 'fragile stability' (Nishikida et al., 2025), rather than institutional coherence, helps to explain the recurrent reliance on both structural and spectacular violence, a dynamic long associated with authoritarian forms of governance. In both Brazil and Israel, settler colonisation has not consolidated democracy but instead eroded already fragile democratic institutions, while simultaneously reshaping public imaginaries of national identity, belonging and citizenship along exclusionary lines. The illegality underpinning the production of impossible spaces is rooted in earlier phases of colonial and imperial capitalism, which relied not only on territorial conquest but also on systematic state-led robbery. In Palestine, this genealogy can be traced to British imperial intervention under the Mandate system, which facilitated the reallocation of Ottoman-administered territory without the consent of the indigenous population. In Brazil, it derives from Portuguese imperial expansion into lands that were, under contemporary international

law, formally Spanish. These foundational acts of dispossession established the political and strategic precedents upon which subsequent regimes of enclosure, extraction and exclusion were constructed.

Over time, classical forms of overseas colonial domination were reconfigured into sub-national and internal colonial projects. In the Israeli case, this took the form of settlement expansion, military occupation and juridical fragmentation across the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. In Brazil, it materialised through the occupation, reclassification and commodification of so-called 'unproductive voids' on national maps, a cartographic and legal fiction that systematically erased indigenous presence. In both contexts, settlers, armed forces and strategically mobilised legal frameworks operate as the primary instruments for producing impossible spaces: spatial regimes in which indigenous existence is rendered precarious, rights are suspended and resistance is criminalised. Beyond nationalist or ethnic claims of 'superior white efficiency', both the SoI and South American agribusiness function as politico-spatial machines embedded in, and sustained by, the *parasitic foundations of capitalism*, particularly in its contemporary neoliberal form. As Fraser (2023) argues, capitalist production has always depended on overt violence and outright theft, especially from indigenous peoples and Global South labourers, whose dispossession continues to complement the 'mere' exploitation of the Global North working class. It should be noted that Israel has never operated as a conventional nation-state, but rather as an externally funded project of territorial occupation, instrumental to Western geopolitical strategies aimed at securing influence over oil-rich Arab regions. As Malm (2024: 53) observes, "the [Palestinian] genocide is unfolding at a time when the state of Israel is more deeply integrated in the primitive accumulation of fossil fuel capital than ever. (…) This is the political ecology of normalisation: a sacralisation of business as usual that destroys first Palestine and then the earth."

Parasitic capitalism also helps to explain why both Brazilian agribusiness and the SoI have been exogenously produced projects, dependent on the segregation of indigenous populations into impossible spaces generated by geopolitical and financial ambitions rather than endogenous social development. Agribusiness exemplifies this logic as a resource-intensive, globalised sector that employs relatively little labour, exports predominantly low-value commodities and facilitates the circulation of speculative capital. It is therefore unsurprising that dominant conservative parties in the Brazilian Congress, together with provincial and national administrations, have consistently provided unqualified political, regulatory and material support to agribusiness interests. Where agrarian expansion depends, economically and ideologically, on the displacement or elimination of ancestral populations, state institutions have routinely acted to enforce this outcome. To act otherwise would disrupt a deeply entrenched spatial order within Brazilian political geography, historically structured around the protection of the extensive rights and privileges of a small, predominantly

white oligarchy closely integrated with Global North capital and largely unaccountable to the wider population. The consolidation of land-based power in Brazil, as in other South American countries, has increasingly intersected with criminalised economies, including contraband, illegal mining and drug trafficking, sometimes involving landowners directly and at other times operating through intermediaries. Violence and illegality are not incidental excesses of an agribusiness-dependent development economy but structural features of territorial projects premised on dispossession, repression and the systematic foreclosure of alternative social and political futures.

Similarly, the SoI can be understood as the historical outcome of a convergence between late-colonial imperial interests and political Zionist projects, realised largely at the expense of Arab societies and, most directly, the Palestinian population. This process was initiated and steered by European political and economic elites, enabled by successive Western governments, and materially enacted through large-scale settlement by socially marginalised migrant populations mobilised through powerful territorial, religious and nationalist imaginaries. In this sense, Israel constitutes an anachronistic territorial formation rooted in British and later American imperial strategies in the Middle East, rather than a political order emerging from democratic consensus with the indigenous population. The profound and enduring suffering inflicted upon Palestinians, together with the instrumentalisation of migrant settlers themselves, has produced an impossible spatial condition for the Indigenous inhabitants: a regime of permanent precarity sustained in the name of an exceptionally costly, highly militarised and structurally inefficient national apparatus. The continued reproduction of an exclusionary state depends on exclusionary religious and nationalist narratives that, when subjected to critical scrutiny, sit uneasily with democratic principles, pluralism and international legal norms. There is also increasing evidence that such practices do not enhance collective security but instead generate new forms of vulnerability. The conflation of Jewish identity with the actions of the Israeli state has, in multiple contexts, coincided with spikes in retaliatory or hate-motivated violence against Jewish communities outside Israel – as demonstrated in the Hannacha attacks in Australia in December 2025 – following major escalations of Israeli military action. Rather than offering protection, state violence risks externalising its consequences onto diasporic populations who exercise no control over Israeli policy, thereby reproducing insecurity beyond the territorial boundaries of the state itself.

E – Multiple Forms of Agency, Resistance and Reaction

A fifth striking correspondence lies in the persistent resistance of peoples subjected to sustained campaigns of dispossession, erasure and genocidal violence. For those not directly embedded in these ongoing

genocidal processes, it is difficult to fully apprehend the scale of injustice and the depth of the violence inflicted. Reports, statistics and media accounts can offer only a partial and necessarily flattened representation of these realities and, even in their insufficiency, they reveal enough to expose the systematic character of the harm and the extraordinary resilience of those who continue to resist it. For instance, in an interview to the Laura Kuenssberg, on the BBC Sunday Show, 12 Oct 2025, by Mai Elawawda, of 'Medical Aid for Palestine' about the live in the ruins of two years of Israeli attack: "… we are returning literally to rubbles, starting from zero again." It was immediately after a fragile ceasefire tacitly agreed by Hamas and Israel that two million Palestinians returned home to nothing, but the ruin of their previous livelihoods. The interruption was brief and soon the slaughter resumed. Then the journalist asked about the most painful geography of the conflict:

> Kuenssberg: Do you recognise Gaza, the place where you lived your whole life?
> Elawawda: I believe we can no longer recognise ourselves as human beings

Despite recurrent and normalised episodes of lethal violence aimed not only at displacement but at the systematic dehumanisation of entire populations, Palestinians persist in asserting their rights to life, dignity and return to their ancestral family lands. The endurance of Palestinian resistance is particularly striking given the extreme asymmetry of power and the scale of force deployed by the SoI. Nonetheless, Palestinian collective action – manifested through everyday practices of survival, public assemblies under military occupation and the preservation of memory and family networks – continues to challenge the aggressive project of annihilation. Similarly, the Guarani-Kaiowa have sustained an unwavering commitment – despite formidable political, legal and institutional obstacles, including the systematic misinterpretation of the law by judges, the onerous state bureaucracy and the entrenched opposition of oligarchic elites – to reclaiming ancestral territories illegally transferred to settlers and economic migrants. In both cases, resistance unfolds within conditions deliberately engineered to render survival, let alone political mobilisation, almost impossible. The intensity and moral clarity of these struggles evoke the structure of classical tragedy, in which those subjected to injustice persist in reasserting civil liberties that have been systematically denied. This resolve is clearly expressed in the Guarani-Kaiowa *retomadas* (collective land reoccupations involving extended families), which constitute acts of democratic defiance, rights restoration and political affirmation in the face of routine intimidation, criminalisation and assassination. The retomada is fundamentally a process of Hegelian sublation [*Aufhebung*], a socio-spatial resurrection out of the apparent absence crated by the attempt to impose an impossible spatiality. Against the self-destructiveness and socio-spatial ruin caused by agribusiness, the Guarani-

Kaiowa maintain a firm determination to 'be there' which derives from the need 'not to be anywhere else' (Ioris, 2024).

Palestinians and Guarani-Kaiowa alike continue to assert their prerogative to exist on lands that, by any credible legal standard and by any measure of human decency, are fundamentally theirs. In this context, art and performance emerge as critical tools for interpreting, confronting and reworking lived realities shaped by dispossession and violence. Numerous and distinguished musicians, poets, artisans and novelists have produced powerful reflections on these ongoing catastrophes. In Mato Grosso do Sul, the Cultural Association of Young Indigenous Videomakers [*Associação Cultural dos Realizadores Indígenas* – ASCURI] has played a crucial role in documenting Indigenous experiences and struggles, while in Gaza the *Shababeek for Contemporary Art* collective brings together Palestinian artists working across photography, installation, video and other media to articulate life under siege.[4] Artistic representations of these lived tragedies resonate strongly with Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, in which artistic practice functions not merely as representation but as intervention. Theatre, in this formulation, operates as a form of political pedagogy: it exposes relations of domination while enabling participants to rehearse resistance and imagine alternative futures. As Boal (2008: 24) famously argued, "Theatre is a weapon (…) it is change and not simple presentation of what exists: it is becoming and not being." In both Palestine and among the Guarani-Kaiowa, resistance itself assumes this performative and transformative quality, asserting life, memory and territorial belonging against structures explicitly committed to their negation. In both cases, subaltern populations display a lucid awareness of the forces seeking to erase them and of their relegation to what may be described as impossible spaces. At the same time, they cultivate forms of hope that are neither naïve nor passive, but actively and strategically enacted through persistence, creativity and collective action.

Resistance, under such conditions, is not only a matter of survival but an ongoing effort to make claims heard and to sustain political, cultural and ontological presence in the face of systematic attempts at erasure. Further historical resonances can be drawn with the condition of the Irish nation, long subjected to overlapping forms of imperial and religious domination. James Joyce captured this dialectic of collapse and renewal in *Finnegans Wake*: "Phall if you but will, rise you must: and none so soon either shall the pharce for the nunce come to a setdown secular phoenish" (Joyce, 2012: 4). The phrase encapsulates a recurring logic shared by these struggles: defeat is neither final nor absolute, and resistance, however fragmented or constrained, contains within it the possibility of re-emergence. Perhaps, an even better representation of the vulnerability of power can be found in his other book *Samson Agonistics*, which is based on the biblical narrative in Judges 16:15-17, where Samson confessed that he would lose his strength if

[4] Sadly, the building housing Shababeek was destroyed by the IDF in 2024 with the loss of more than 1,000 works of art.

his head were shaved. Samson lived during a time of repeated conflict between Israel and Philistia, when God was disciplining the Israelites by turning them over to the Philistines. Interestingly, it reproduces the biblical reference to Gaza, as the place where Samson was imprisoned and met his death. Samson, a Hebrew, was made captive, blind and is now in the prison of Gaza to work in a common workhouse, and cries bemoaning his condition; his father Manoa tries to secure his freedom but it is revealed what he has done to the Philistines and killing them and then, by accident, dying as well:

> *Manoa (Samson's father)*: – O what noise?
> Marcy of heaven what hideous noise was that? (…)
> *Chorus of Danites*: Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
> Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.
> *Manoa*: Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise,
> O it continues, they have slain my son.
> *Chorus*: Thy son is rather slaying them, that outcry
> From slaughter of one foe could not ascend. (…)
> *Manoa:* Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.
> *Messenger*: Then take the worst in brief, Samson is dead.
> *Manoa*: The worst indeed, O all my hope's defeated. (…)
> *Messenger*: By his own hands.
> (Milton, 1968, p. 394-396)

From a decolonial perspective, it is crucial that impossible spaces are not reduced to stereotypical sites of deprivation or irresolvable suffering. Such representations risk reproducing the very epistemic prejudices through which colonial domination is sustained. As Harker (2011) argues, subaltern populations must not be discursively eliminated, precisely because they persist as active subjects and inventive spatial agents. Palestinians and the Guarani-Kaiowa are not merely victims of ongoing genocides but political actors who continuously rework space, identity and survival under conditions explicitly designed to foreclose their futures. Resistance in both contexts exceeds notions of passivity or symbolic endurance. It encompasses a broad repertoire of practices, including education, cultural production and grassroots mobilisation. Similar to the various Palestinian organisations, the Guarani-Kaiowa have a strong and effective representative entity called Aty Guassu, which organises regular assemblies and coordinate actions to recover land grabbed by enemy farmers. Palestinians are widely recognised for high levels of educational attainment relative to the severe constraints of military occupation, while the Guarani-Kaiowa have increasingly accessed undergraduate and postgraduate education, including through initiatives such as the Indigenous College (FAIND) at the Federal University of the Great Dourados (UFGD). Education thus functions both as a means of survival amid prolonged displacement and as a strategic lever within wider struggles for land, recognition and self-determination. Related to all that, the thorny decision between violent and non-violent resistance remains deeply contentious and is frequently framed in abstract moral terms that obscure the material realities of colonial domination. It is relevant to emphasise that,

in contexts of existential threat, where daily survival is uncertain and institutional avenues for justice are systematically obstructed, debates about armed resistance cannot be detached from the structural criminality that precedes and conditions them.

Anti-colonial thinkers have long grappled with this dilemma. Fanon (1965), for instance, argues that colonial violence generates counter-violence not as a moral choice but as a structural consequence of domination and as part of a broader transformation of social reality, since ultimately "*ce sont les peuples coloniaux qui doivent se libérer de la domination colonialiste*" (Fanon, 1964: 125). Mandela (2013) similarly insists that peaceful struggle is always preferable, yet acknowledged that the systematic closure of non-violent options renders armed resistance a tragic, last-resort possibility rather than a chosen strategy. In the first chapters Mandela cleardly describes his indigenous origin, tribal identity and his contentment with the level of self-sufficiency and democracy that his people had, when decisions were taken by the community but unanimity, not majority rule. Most of the book is about this struggle against the terrible injustices caused by the invasion of whites and the frontier wars. Reflecting on all that, Mandela recognises the limits of non-violent, passive resistance in a situation of widespread illegality, oppression and systematic persecution. The oppressor was the main source of violence and, in that unfortunate situation, "If the oppressor uses violence, the oppressed have no alternative but to respond violently" (ibid., 522) and "when the state stopped inflicting violence on the ANC, the ANC would reciprocate with peace" (ibid., 554). This does not amount to a celebration of terrorism, nor to a utilitarian calculus of ends justifying means. Rather, it reflects what may be described as *revolutionary moral ground*: under conditions of genocidal terror, the legitimacy of resistance cannot be assessed independently of the violence already normalised by the oppressor. The extensive apparatus of targeted killing, collective punishment and ritualised assassination deployed by the SoI illustrates how sovereignty itself becomes invested in murderous forces, elevating 'security' into an idolised principle that overrides ethical, legal and political constraints (Aaron, 2017).

Historical analogies can be invoked to expose the instability and selectivity of moral judgements formed from positions of safety and historical distance. Few today seriously contest the legitimacy of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising or the overthrow of absolutist monarchies, despite the immense human costs involved, including the executions of Charles I, Marie Antoinette and Nicholas II. The point is not that armed insurgence is desirable, but that entrenched power structures rarely relinquish themselves without resistance, and that appeals to moral purity frequently function to shield institutionalised criminality from sustained scrutiny. Forgetting what dominant powers are capable of, and their persistent recourse to organised illegality, risks transforming ethics into an instrument of denial rather than accountability. As Thomas Paine observed during the American Revolution, "the fate of Charles the First hath only made kings more subtle – not more

just" (1776: 11). Viewed through this lens, Palestinian and Guarani-Kaiowa resistance – whether non-violent, cultural, educational, legal or, in extremis, confrontational – must be understood as responses to ongoing conditions of elimination rather than as abstract moral choices. Within impossible spaces, creative and proactive resistance is not one option among others; it is the very condition of continued existence.

Conclusions: Impossible Spaces at the Brink of their Own Impossibilification

The conditions in Palestine and in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul are undeniably distinct, reflecting the specific historical and geographical trajectories of each Indigenous nation. At the same time, these two regions, both subjected to explicit erasure processes, resonate with dynamics observable across many other regions shaped by a spurious and violent Westernised modernity. The production of Israel and the consolidation of agribusiness frontiers in South America are not aberrations but contemporary expressions of a more elemental logic of ruin that operates as a constitutive force of modernity itself. These ongoing, lived genocides, directed at Indigenous populations inhabiting areas of acute economic and geopolitical interest, expose modernity at its most destructive and reveal the darker core of Western modernisation. Modernity's trajectory is neither purely moral, epistemological nor economic; it unfolds through processes of spatial ruination, dismantling existing worlds and reconstructing them according to imposed hierarchies and claims to political, cultural and economic supremacy. Its governing paradox is stark: the more ruin produced, the more modern the project appears; conversely, the advance of modernity intensifies ruination. Social actors are thus positioned within a contradictory interface between a promised future of progress, ostensibly secured through science, commerce and development, and a lived reality profoundly alienated from those assurances. Ruin functions simultaneously as metaphor and material condition: it symbolises progress for dominant actors while constituting the everyday socio-spatial experience of dispossession for the majority. Nonetheless, despite the depth of destruction and the protracted conditions of marginalisation endured by the two indigenous nations examined here, resistance persists. Palestinians and Guarani-Kaiowa alike have responded to structural violence and genocidal pressures with remarkable tenacity. As Said observed more than four decades ago, "Two things are certain: the Jews will remain; the Palestinians will also remain. To say more than that with assurance is a foolish risk" (1980: 235). The same may be said of the Guarani-Kaiowa, who have survived in close proximity to their ancestral lands, now forbidden to them, through the preservation of dense kinship networks, collective forms of cooperation and political alliances with other indigenous peoples and sectors of the working class.

These developments unfold amid the active imposition of spatial impossibility by dominant actors, most notably the Brazilian and Israeli states. This condition of impossibility should not be understood through romanticised or defeatist fantasies, but as a concrete expression of shifting power relations and the uneven outcomes of political struggle. What appears impossible at one historical moment is often a measure of prevailing domination rather than a permanent condition. Indeed, what is now realised was once inconceivable: a century ago, the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and the large-scale occupation of Brazil's interior by agrarian capital were widely regarded as implausible, however both were consolidated in the aftermath of the twentieth century's major wars. Palestinians and Guarani-Kaiowa are presently confined to the margins of national territory and relegated to spaces rendered unlivable by design. Nothing inherent in their condition, however, suggests historical finality. Transformative change remains possible, albeit contingent upon prolonged struggle, sacrifice and the articulation of solidarities that exceed local contexts. Such change will depend not only on Indigenous resistance but also on sustained support from decolonial movements and working-class actors elsewhere, particularly across the Global South and, in the Palestinian case, the wider Arab world. Palestinians and Guarani-Kaiowa thus inhabit a condition of present impossibility while simultaneously holding the political and moral capacity to contest and undo the spaces imposed upon them by regimes invested in impossibility-making. As Ben-Gurion famously remarked, the success of Zionism lay in the transformation of the "Jewish Question" into an "Arab Problem" (Laurens, 2024). A parallel logic operates in Brazil, where the chronic deficit of indigenous land is routinely attributed to the alleged failure of the ancestral peoples to integrate economically, rather than to the violent denial of their territorial rights and identities. To date, the posture of the international community has largely served to stabilise conditions of expropriation, exploitation and genocide, tolerating repeated violations of international and constitutional law. Nonetheless, the production of impossible spaces is ultimately self-defeating: it accumulates suffering, intensifies injustice and, over time, generates organised resistance. Such resistance draws simultaneously on spatial agency, ethical legitimacy and, in many cases, religious or cosmological frameworks, transforming impossibility itself into a catalyst for political reconfiguration.

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