

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

[Jamal Kanj](#)

20.11.2024

Western Media: Whitewashing Israeli Genocide and Manufacturing Consent



Image by Jakayla Toney.

A UN Special Committee has [characterized](#) Israel's war in Gaza as genocide, while Western "free" media has abandoned its ethical responsibility to cover and or report objectively on the conduct of Israel's wars in Gaza and Lebanon. Western corporate media outlets, without exception, acquiesced to Israeli directives barring reporters from entering Gaza. Journalists embedded with the Israeli army report only what Israel permits them to observe, creating a one-sided, heavily filtered narrative.

The programmed absence has deprived Western public of critical information to show what [UNICEF describes](#) as the most dangerous place in the world for children. Disregarding these realities, corporate Western media outlets often dehumanize

Palestinians, dismissing their grievance while overtly empathizing with the Israelis. Case in point, they extensively cover the relocation of hundreds of Israeli families, while offering little to no coverage on the [Scholasticide](#) of the 625,000 Palestinian children who are unable to attend school for a second year because Israel has damaged or [destroyed 85% of Gaza's schools](#). Similarly, they disregard [U.N. documented](#) Israel's use of "starvation as a weapon of war . . . destroying vital water, sanitation and food systems," and neglect the [plight of 90%](#) of Gaza's internally displaced population, many of whom have been forced to relocate [nine or ten times](#). In addition, the media's intentional omission of the [destruction of the entire higher education](#) system, with 100% of Gaza's 12 universities demolished, leaving 88,000 students unable to continue their studies.

Just as with the systematic destruction of Gaza's educational system, the "free" media has failed to critically report on Israel's deliberate strategy to [dismantle Gaza's healthcare](#) system. According to former [U.N. High Commissioner](#) for Human Rights Navi Pillay, this strategy involved "relentless and intentional attacks on medical personnel and facilities," including the killing, detention, and torture of medical staff as part of a "concerted policy to destroy Gaza's healthcare system." By the end of July 2024, the World Health Organization [reported](#) that Israel had conducted 498 raids on healthcare facilities. Out of Gaza's 36 hospitals, less than 16 are partially operational, leading to the near-total collapse of the healthcare system.

The managed "free" media deploys countless reporters in Tel Aviv to cover the effectiveness of Israel's Iron Dome missile system, yet no one on the ground investigates the [starvation in North Gaza](#) or even show the face of one of the approximately 16,800 murdered [children](#) or the anguish of over 17,000 children who have lost one or both parents. At the same time, the programmed media floods screens with images of a broken glass window in a "Jewish only" colony, but no cameras are allowed to capture the devastated [163,778](#), plus residential units in Gaza.

The so-called "free" Western media does not question or fact-check Israeli disinformation, *hasbara*, when American made jets [target schools](#) or demolish residential towers under the pretext of "command centers" inside these facilities. Worse yet, the media propagates a false narrative, portraying Israel's malevolent policies as acts of benevolence because they issue a [warning](#) ahead of bombing homes to smithereens, and then [murder civilians as they evacuate](#) under the same orders. Journalists ignore Palestinian voices pointing out that the wide scale destruction of homes, "safe shelters," and critical infrastructure is part of a calculated Israeli strategy to render Gaza uninhabitable and forcibly displace its residents.

Their reporting from afar, normalize Israeli violence and ethnic cleansing as they parrot Israeli Newspeak without scrutiny.

A glaring example of the media abdicating its objectivity is the case of Al-Shifa Hospital, where Israeli military officials showcased an elaborate 3D model purportedly depicting [a command center beneath the hospital](#). The Israeli disinformation was [echoed by U.S. President](#) Joe Biden and the White House, further amplifying the false Israeli narratives to an unsuspected public.

In November 2023, Al-Shifa Hospital was occupied by the Israeli army. Doctors were arrested, [several tortured to death](#) in Israeli custody, and the hospital was forced out of service. Western journalists, embedded with the Israeli military, joined the Israeli army to show the world what was claimed to be a military command center beneath the hospital. However, to uncover that the only underground edifices in the hospital's vast complex were originally [designed by Israeli architects](#) Gershon Zippor and Benjamin Idelson, and commissioned by the occupying Israeli Public Works Department in 1983.

The embedded Israeli propaganda tool, aka Western media, accompanied Israel's chief disinformation officer on a tour of Al-Shifa Hospital but left empty-handed, unable to find the flaunted "command control center" or any military facilities under the hospital. Human Rights Watch later concluded that the military raid at the hospital [constituted a war crime](#) after failing to provide evidence "to justify revoking the hospital's status as protected by the laws of war."

Rather than holding Israel accountable for destroying a major health facility, the embedded media continued to [market Israeli lies](#) to excuse violations of international law. The lack of critical reporting and fact-checking is a betrayal of the journalistic responsibilities, effectively serving as implicit approval or, at the very least, normalization of the Israeli war crimes.

Another case on how the media facilitates violence and aggression is the adoption of Israeli-nuanced jargons that desensitizes readers, and redirects focus. For instance, by framing Israel's wars against Palestinians in Gaza and the people of Lebanon as a war against "Hamas" or "Hezbollah," the media employs euphemisms that deflect Israeli responsibility for the broader impact of the war on innocent civilians. This framing whitewashes Israeli culpability for the [destruction of 80% of homes, 60%](#) of the hospitals, 85% of the schools, 100% of the universities, the displacement of 90% of the population, the razing of villages, and the starvation of children, portraying these atrocities as mere "collateral damage," or unintended victims in a crossfire.

Furthermore, Western media's dereliction in contextualizing Israeli violations of the international humanitarian law, the findings of the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court, leaves readers unaware of the legal ramifications and obscures accountability. In doing so, Western media becomes, wittingly or unwittingly, a complicit platform in Israeli *hasbara*.

Western media has even abandoned fellow local journalists who remained in Gaza and were purposely targeted by the Israeli army. Israel's assault on the truth, including attacks on [journalists and their families](#), is unprecedented in war zones. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Israel has murdered 137 [journalists and media workers](#), making it the deadliest since CPJ began collecting data in 1992.

Zionist *hasbara*, bolstered by a powerful media plutocracy and influential special interest groups in the West, has normalized Israeli lies and bias against Palestinians for over 76 years. This media-constructed narratives distorts public understanding, manipulates public discourse and shape policy debates. Inevitably, the systematic dissemination of misinformation shapes a one-dimensional view of the conflict, suppresses dissent, and position Western media as a key instrument in manufacturing consent for Israel's wars of genocide.

Jamal Kanj is the author of *Children of Catastrophe: Journey from a Palestinian Refugee Camp to America*, and other books. He writes frequently on Arab world issues for various national and international commentaries.

NOVEMBER 19, 2024