

## PALESTINIAN IDENTITY IN GLOBAL MEDIA: ANALYSING BBC AND GLOBAL NORTH INFLUENCE (2023-2024)

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to examine the construction of Palestinian identity in BBC media coverage of the Gaza genocide during 2023-2024, which forms part of the global discourse. The discourse presented indicates a bias from the Global North, focusing on power dominance. The research employs a qualitative approach supported by descriptive narrative literature, using primary data from BBC news reports and secondary data including journals, book chapters, reports, and official websites. The analysis reveals that BBC coverage creates a narrative that implicitly distorts the identity and cultural meaning of Gaza Palestine, and the editorial choices differ significantly from the factual realities on the ground. The convergence of narratives within BBC media reflects the dominance of Western power in the global center of influence. Therefore, a solution-oriented strategy is urgently needed through advocacy, norms, codes of ethics, awareness, and impartial professionalism to shape public perception, aiming for peace and humanity as the main objectives. Additionally, normative mechanisms and language review are critical factors representing the quality of narratives delivered to the public. This research contributes to a broader understanding of Western media through the lenses of constructivism and cultural convergence related to the identity and culture of Gaza Palestine.*

**Keywords:** *Palestinian identity, Gaza conflict, BBC media, Constructivism, Global North*

### INTRODUCTION

The genocide, colonization, and dehumanization of Palestinians by Israel have persisted for decades, dating back to territorial conflicts in 1948, and resurfaced prominently on October 7, 2023, following Hamas's attack on Israel. The history of the Palestinian-Israeli genocide traces back to the early 20th century when the Ottoman Empire was defeated by Britain during World War I, and Palestine came under British control. In 1917, the Balfour Declaration supported establishing a homeland for Jews in Palestine, leading to Jewish immigration from various countries. This influx heightened tensions between Jewish settlers and the Arab Palestinian community. Following World War II, the United Nations assumed control of Palestine, which Britain had governed, and adopted Resolution 181 in 1947, partitioning the area into two states, one for Palestinians and one for Jews. This partition was rejected by Palestinians, triggering the First Arab-Israeli War in 1948, resulting in Israel's victory and the displacement of Palestinians (Reyhan

Respati, 2023). The Gaza conflict encompasses multiple dimensions, including territorial, identity, religious, and political aspects. The Israeli government under Benjamin Netanyahu expressed intentions to control Gaza city and the entire Gaza Strip; however, on August 7, 2025, Netanyahu denied any permanent control plans in a security cabinet meeting. Several pro-Palestinian world leaders, including UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Finland's Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen, Sweden's Foreign Minister Maria Malmer Stenergard, Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Turkey, condemned Israel's plans (Tempo, 2025).

This issue cannot be separated from the role of international media in shaping global public perception. As transnational actors, international media operate across borders, moving from industrial to informational societies with global information flow and cultural exchange (Sherry Baker & Michael Perkins, 2003). Information consumed worldwide shapes public opinion and represents cultures or groups, especially during conflicts. Often, genocide and colonization framing focuses on factors external to the actual events, and frames used in conflict reporting are not equal in weight. Frames are often used as political manipulation tools to mobilize social control over publics, especially amid crises and conflict (Dr. Keerthana Thankachan, 2021). Media act as gatekeepers controlling access to information deemed fit for public consumption. Principle 9 of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)'s global ethics states: *"Journalists must ensure that the dissemination of information or opinions does not contribute to hatred or prejudice and must do their best to avoid facilitating discrimination based on factors such as geographical origin, social or ethnic group, race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability, political opinions, or other opinions"* (Merskin, 2020).

In this context, international media must consider diverse facts on the ground from photos, events, and reports. However, divergences exist in how Western and Eastern media cover the genocide in Gaza, with Western media often exhibiting bias due to strong alliances with Israel (Qostholani et al., 2025). During the 2023-2024 Palestinian-Israeli genocide, media narratives have tended to negate the cultural diversity of Palestine. According to (Walaa Dawoud Batat & Eman Ibrahim Elsayed, 2025), some media politicize Palestinian culture without providing it the same independent space as political issues. Cultural narratives fluctuate with political shifts, for example, the wave of normalization in the Arab world leads to neutral or diminished representations of Palestinian culture. Anti-Palestinian media, such as Zionist-supporting outlets, attempt to marginalize or distort Palestinian cultural dimensions, contributing to the Judaization and Israelization of Palestinian history and heritage. These outlets leverage extensive resources and control influential global media channels. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), as a prominent Western international media outlet, has been

criticized internationally for biased narratives in its Israeli-Palestinian conflict coverage.

Given these issues, this article seeks to explore **how BBC constructs and represents Palestinian identity in its coverage of the 2023-2024 conflict?** Previous studies have primarily focused on framing analysis and media bias. This current study, however, concentrates on the representation of Palestinian identity through the lenses of constructivism and cultural homogenization concepts. The research aims to fill the gap concerning Palestinian identity representation by Western media through these paradigms, enriching the field of international relations with an integrative approach and offering strategic recommendations for this case.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The research conducted by Muwadhoful Akmal discusses Palestinian coverage using Robert N. Entman's framing analysis approach. It highlights how BBC News disseminates information under the influence of British constitutional power within the Western domain. Consequently, it suggests the possibility of "bias" phenomena in every BBC News report. For example, BBC coverage labels Hamas as terrorists, in line with the views of the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and other Western countries. Entman's framing analysis reveals that BBC tends to favor Israel while neglecting the Palestinian perspective. The presented reports indicate that BBC functions as an information provider that predominantly supports Western interests, even when reporting about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in ways inconsistent with ground realities. It seems as though BBC is tightly controlled and monitored by Western groups aligned with pro-Israel interests, with no indication of support for Palestine (Muwadhoful Akmal, 2024). This research performs an overall narrative analysis of news reports and focuses on framing theory by Entman. The gap aimed to be addressed by the author is to utilize a constructivist approach and Jan Nederveen Pieterse's cultural theory, focusing on media framing and the representation of Palestinian identity through BBC's reporting.

In contrast, (Mohd & Kasmani, 2025) provides a perspective related to the comparison of Al Jazeera and BBC News by analyzing several news articles from both media through a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. The BBC report creates a narrative that highlights Israeli casualties and portrays Hamas as the main aggressor. The choice of language, the framing of the victims, the asymmetrical representation made by the BBC contribute to legitimizing the actions of the Israeli military as defensive ones. Palestinian losses and perspectives are obscured, contributing to a more one-sided portrayal of the conflict, which can affect public perception by emphasizing Israel's suffering while downplaying the Palestinian

experience. Al Jazeera reports Israel as the dominant and controlling power. Compared to the BBC, Al Jazeera provides more perspective and historical background on the long-running conflict. The BBC's reportage during the early stages of the conflict was heavily biased against Israel, echoing long-standing criticism of its coverage of Israeli-Palestinian relations. The study, which will be written in bahasa, tries to explore more deeply the pattern of homogenization or cultural convergence through some special words in the diction of the BBC News related to the Gaza Genocide in the range of 2023-2024.

Analysis of BBC and Al Jazeera English (AJE) News conducted by (El Damanhoury et al., 2025), discusses several points related to these 2 media. The BBC tends to amplify the voices of official sources, especially from Israel, downplaying the political and historical context, linking Palestinians to militancy and violence, and questioning Palestinian victims. Al Jazeera gives more space to humanitarian organizations and Palestinian sources, making history of the conflict and blaming Israel for its policies. and its military actions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, but the English-language Al Jazeera sheds more light on the conflict than the Arabic-language Al Jazeera. The study used a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to compare coverage of Western and non-Western conflicts on two of the world's most visited English-language news sites. Unlike AJE, the BBC's coverage tends to refrain from bringing charges against Israel for committing "genocide", "ethnic cleansing", "terrorism", and "war crimes". The study contributed by examining media readings related to key events in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 136 articles to measure transitivity, intertextuality and lexical choice of CDA. The author tries to analyze in general from several examples of articles that focus on diction or words in BBC News and relate to Palestinian identity through Jan Naderveen Pieterse's cultural understanding.

## **1. Constructivism**

The core idea of social constructivism is that social reality does not solely consist of objectively observable facts but is instead constructed collaboratively by members of society. This construction is not an individual process but occurs through social interactions. In the context of media, constructivist theory explains that media are socially constructed, linked to how individuals use technology and social relationships to shape media use (Lara N Wolfers, 2024). Constructivists argue that agency and structure are mutually constituted, meaning structure influences agency and vice versa. Hence, meanings are not fixed but change over time depending on the ideas and beliefs held by actors. Reality is always in the process of construction, leaving room for change, with social norms being central to constructivism. Norm compliance follows a logic of appropriateness, where actors behave in certain ways because they believe such behavior to be proper

(Theys, 2018). International media like BBC, as a globally trusted source, greatly influence public perspectives. The discourse and meanings constructed by BBC bear social, identity, and power implications.

Adler states that constructivism views the material world as shaped and shaping human actions and interactions based on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of materiality. According to Alexander Wendt, behavior is influenced more by intersubjective meanings than by material structures. Collective meanings allow actors to acquire relatively stable understandings and expectations about their roles, which form the basis for defining interests in situational conceptualization. Identity develops and is maintained through interaction but also significantly shapes anarchy and security environments.

Kratochwil, another constructivist, emphasizes a conception of 'rationality' linked to common-sense understanding. Following Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action, 'rationality' is based on the use of terms. An action or belief is 'rational' if it makes sense for actors to behave accordingly, tied to normative considerations, such as agreeing within moral or normative frameworks. Rules and norms fundamentally influence but do not determine human behavior; thus, deliberation and interpretation require analysis. Social problems lack predetermined solutions, and social situations are indeterminate; analyses focus on how validity claims are decided through discourse.

Onuf supports this perspective, positing humans as inherently social creatures whose relations construct their social being. Through actions and speech, humans use the raw material of nature to shape the world. Constructivism asserts society and humans mutually construct each other in an ongoing two-way process. Onuf's rule conceptualization relies on speech acts 'actions in speaking that make others act' where language is performative, not merely descriptive. He categorizes speech acts as assertive, directive, and commissive, depending on how speakers intend to influence the world. Their success depends on recipient responses. Onuf interprets the world as socially and materially constructed, with no strict divide between the two, emphasizing the role of socially made realities. Appropriate linking of social and material is necessary to produce desired outcomes. His focus on language challenges positivist, empirical, and realist tendencies (Barros, 2006).

Alexander Wendt also frames constructivism as holism or structuralism, viewing social structures as exerting irreducible effects beyond agents and their interactions. These effects include the formation of identities and interests, conditioned by discursive formations via idea distribution systems and material power, thus not formed in a vacuum. Smits adds that culture is crucial for identity formation because it shapes individual identities. He further states that identity is formed through 'national character' as well as class and social status. The significance of identity provides principles for preserving cultural contexts, which

are necessary for identity maintenance (Erbaş, 2021).

## 2. Convergence

This concept is supported by Jan Nederveen Pieterse's theory of cultural convergence, which can be understood as a politics of assimilation with dominant groups serving as the cultural gravitational center. The convergence paradigm follows the theory of emanation convergence, wherein cultural expressions emerge from a higher numinous source analogous to Western imperialism and the civilizing mission, or the *missi civilisatrice* (white man's burden) which are variations of this perspective. Since decolonization, the principle of radiation from imperial centers has retained its structure but transformed its meaning from positive to negative, as reflected in dependency theory and critiques of cultural imperialism and Eurocentrism. Pieterse further explains that cultural mixing refers to integration politics without the need to relinquish distinct cultural identities, anticipating new patterns of cross-cultural diversity. This ongoing process continuously generates new similarities and new differences. Additionally, Pieterse identifies "McDonaldization" as a modern form of cultural universalism, a variant of classical universalism, modernization, and the global expansion of capitalist relations. It represents cultural imperialism as American media synchronize global cultures. Modernization and Americanization are considered updated forms of Westernization, where corporations succeed in representing "world products" only to the extent that they adapt to local cultures and markets.

Contemporary globalization is often equated with Westernization or Americanization in written form, fulfilling classical empire and modernization theses. According to the mixing approach, globalization is an open-ended process involving both easternization and westernization, with various internal influences or gaps (Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). In this context, BBC coverage can be interpreted as part of cultural convergence related to media. Dominant narratives and BBC's news culture assimilate Palestinian identity into a singular security threat narrative. This simplification reinforces BBC's authoritative position, seemingly dictating global perceptions regarding the Gaza genocide. The culture centered in one dominant position entails elements of imperialism.

According to (Godler et al., 2020), journalism practice heavily relies on testimony from human sources. Journalists often cannot access all information directly or fully verify it, hence they depend on information from sources such as public officials and professionals. This limitation causes epistemological challenges, as epistemologists note the difficulty for journalists to ascertain reporters' absolute intentions or truths, challenge scientific claims, or independently verify all facts. Social epistemologists argue that testimony is a valid and normal knowledge source in society since individuals rarely have direct access to all



knowledge and it is unrealistic to demand deep inquiry for every factual claim. Two main epistemological positions exist: reductionism, which demands independent verification before believing testimony; and non-reductionism, which accepts testimony as trustworthy by default unless strong doubts arise. Social epistemology provides a practical and normative framework to help journalists justify reliance on sources, including technology and social media, improving accuracy and credibility.

Furthermore, (Larrondo Ureta & Peña Fernández, 2018) define media convergence as a gradual coordination phenomenon between two or more media, affecting newsroom dynamics, content production, and journalist profiles. Related to media convergence and participatory culture, Journalism 2.0 refers to using social platforms to produce, distribute, and share news content, enhancing interaction between media and audiences in social networks, blogs, microblogs, etc. In this sense, convergence relates to narrative meanings that can deviate from original contexts. Nonetheless, convergence also faces challenges including monopolies, ethics, and security, with technology playing a supplementary role that impacts social, cultural, and professional levels.

Mark Deuze adds that journalist behavior in media reporting is complex and cannot be fully explained by structural variables such as internal policies, routines, or individuals, but also by subjective variables tied to function, identity, culture, and professionalism. Participatory news sites based on cultural convergence tend to emerge from institutions or organizations with strong public service agendas or clear community ties, or are formed by commercial news organizations viewing comprehensive participatory journalism models as a competitive advantage in shrinking journalistic job markets, such as BBC, where local communities are encouraged to submit and discuss public interest information on main sites (Deuze, 2008).

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study is based on existing literature concerning BBC media discourse on the Gaza conflict from 2023 to 2024, employing a qualitative approach. After a broader review from an international relations perspective focusing on identity and culture in the globalization era, the author highlights constructivism and cultural convergence as theoretical frameworks guiding the analysis of Western media, specifically BBC. The framework is elaborated descriptively in a narrative form, supported by several empirical examples. The primary data source for this research consists of BBC's news reports on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Secondary data include supporting documents such as scholarly journals, book chapters, reports, official websites, and archives that comprehensively complement the study. Data

collection was conducted through observation of previous research regarding BBC's coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and related literature.

The data analysis employs international relations theory, particularly constructivism and cultural convergence concepts, to explore the meanings behind BBC news narratives as a main reference for the Global North, thereby examining the event from a wider vantage point.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Analysis of BBC Media Coverage on the Gaza Genocide (2023-2024)

Media plays a crucial role in highlighting events that significantly influence public perception through the framing of news coverage. The emergence of major media institutions shaping the international media landscape has increased the media's role in promoting ideas and garnering political support through their event coverage. As such, media becomes a vital tool used by states for propaganda and societal influence, especially when covering major events. Regarding the Palestinian struggle during the genocide reemerging in 2023, several studies indicate Western media bias in favor of Israel. Whenever Palestine becomes a headline, major Western media institutions shed their masks of professionalism and objectivity, appearing as Israel's war media.

One of the largest Western media sources is the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which broadcasts through various channels including radio, television, internet, and mobile platforms, serving as a global reference. Established in 1927, BBC is one of the most renowned media outlets across most Western and Northern European countries. The BBC founders viewed the institution as essential for cultivating an informed public opinion, vital for democracy, especially during uncertain times. Built on progressive beliefs of knowledgeable, courteous, and ambitious publics whose understanding and enjoyment of the world can deepen, the BBC was created to represent the nation both to itself and the world. Early BBC activity involved building international collaboration networks reflecting British values and contributing to the world, growing rapidly due to its commitment to the principle of reality as an "order of things independent of us," particularly independent of our will (Ibrahim, 2025). However, following the surge of genocide in Gaza over the past four years, the BBC has faced criticisms for clear bias favoring Israel during the aggression. Even before 2023, BBC had shown media bias favoring Israel, notably in 2021. This can be seen through the following headline:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-57066275>

Seen in the narrative, when referring to the destruction of one of the towers in Gaza, it does not directly mention who was responsible for its destruction, although it is later mentioned that the tower was destroyed by Israeli warplanes in the comments accompanying the video on the news (Abu Hashish et al., 2023). In this narrative



piece it is also more mentioned that the Israeli population seems to experience more suffering as a result of the war;

In the Tel Aviv suburb of Holon, a rocket hit a bus just after it had been evacuated. A girl of five and two women, one 50 and one 30, were injured.

In Tel Aviv itself, pedestrians ran for shelter and diners streamed out of restaurants while others flattened themselves on pavements as the sirens sounded, according to Reuters.

Ben Gurion Airport briefly halted flights and an energy pipeline between the cities of Eilat and Ashkelon was hit.

The rockets were launched after the destruction of the Hanadi Tower in Gaza, which houses an office used by the political leadership of Hamas.

Hours after the collapse, there were still no reports of casualties.

Furthermore, the following sentence reveals subtle differences in meaning: "Palestinian militants say they fired 130 missiles at the Israeli city of Tel Aviv after an Israeli air strike felled a tower block in the Gaza Strip."

1. The term "militant" refers to a non-state actor with negative connotations such as extremism, violence, and confrontation. Semantically, this word shifts the narrative from a resistance movement to an aggressive actor.
2. The word "felled" means "cut down," typically used for trees or people (Merriam-Webster, 2025b). A more accurate term would be "destroyed," which implies broader and more absolute destruction, rendering the target completely unusable (Merriam-Webster, 2025a)

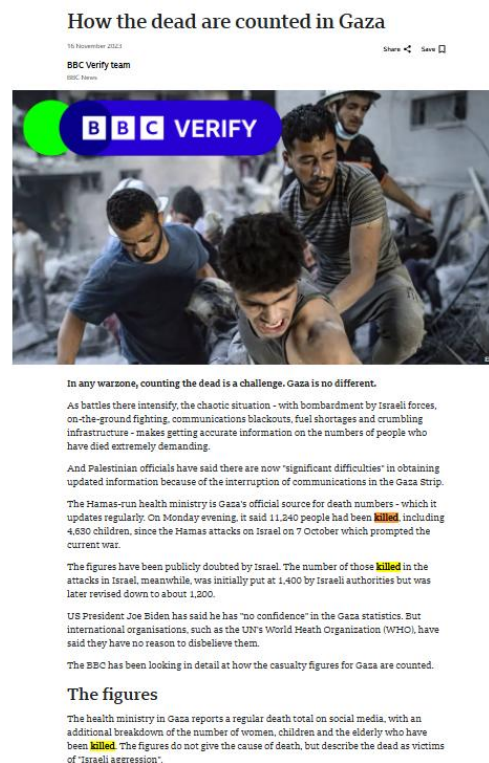
In BBC's usage on May 17, 2021, the editorial wording stated: "*In the early hours of Monday, Israel conducted dozens more air strikes on the Gaza Strip, after Palestinian militants fired barrages of rockets at southern Israeli cities... The conflict is now in its second week, with little sign of a ceasefire. Israel says most of those killed in Gaza are militants and that any civilian deaths are unintentional.*"

This phrasing suggests that the Israeli military's main targets are militants, which contrasts with on-the-ground realities involving massive destruction to civilian infrastructure, including homes, high-rise buildings, medical facilities, police stations, and other installations, with hundreds of Palestinian civilians killed and injured. Labeling Hamas as "militant" and stating they "control Gaza" constitutes a negative evaluation of Hamas and delegitimizes Palestinian actions, including resistance responses to Israeli attacks. Moreover, this narrative legitimizes Israeli military actions as necessary to eliminate the Palestinian threat by any means (Amer, 2022).

The Centre for Media Monitoring has also conducted several in-depth analyses published in a report regarding BBC coverage, with some key findings as follows:

- **Israeli Face:** Although Gaza has experienced 34 times more deaths than Israel since the war began, BBC published nearly an equal number of articles profiling personal and humanitarian stories about Israeli or specific Palestinian victims (279 for Palestinians vs. 201 for Israelis).
- **Palestinian Deaths Less Headlined:** BBC article headlines mention Palestinian casualties only twice as often as Israeli casualties, despite Gaza's death toll being 34 times higher.
- **Extreme Imbalance in Death Reporting:** BBC provides coverage of Israeli deaths 33 times more across all articles, and 19 times more on TV/radio broadcasts, when measured proportionally with the Gaza-Israel death ratio of 34:1.

Some analysis in 2023 are mentioned below:



<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67760523>

And also some narrative discourse of the article:

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67347201>

The term dead is often used with less specificity than murdered. Furthermore, the usage of these two terms tends to be contextually differential "killed" (Media, 2023) are more frequently applied when referring to Palestinians, whereas "murdered" is predominantly used in reference to Israelis. This distinction reflects

underlying discursive and political nuances in the portrayal of violence within this conflict.

Additionally, in the analysis of a BBC news headline from May 4, 2024:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cer3740ddj3o>



In news reports, Adnan Al-Bursh, a Palestinian doctor, was reported to have died in an Israeli prison in 2024. The BBC mentioned his suffering three times in its coverage, but this headline was not explicitly stated in the report (Monitoring, 2023). The first sentence also states:

*"A Palestinian doctor has died in an Israeli prison after more than four months in detention, Palestinian prisoner associations have said."*

The word 'died' indicates a natural death rather than an intentional killing. It is usually used in cases of accidents, natural disasters, and similar causes. The more precise term would be 'murdered,' but the tendency of BBC media appears to emphasize the word 'murdered' more in cases involving Israeli victims. The term 'murdered' refers to intentional killing planned and carried out by an individual or group (Skype, 2021).

There is something noteworthy in a BBC Media report from 2024 titled "Exterminate the beasts": How Israeli Settlers took revenge for a murder in the West Bank (Media, 2004). In this report, a case referring to an Israeli youth is described using the term **murdered**, while on the other hand, Palestinian youth are described as having died using the term **killed**. The term "murdered" appears 7 times in the report, whereas the term "killed" appears only 2 times. This clearly illustrates the controversial nature of BBC reporting compared to other media outlets.

Torched cars in the West Bank village of al-Mughayyir - settlers burned more than 20 homes and 100 cars during a weekend of attacks

At dawn on Friday 12 April, the Israeli teenager Benjamin Achimeir walked out from his settler outpost in the occupied West Bank, with a flock of sheep, and disappeared.

Achimeir, 14, had been living and working on a tiny farm outpost near his family's settlement, Malachei HaShalom - one of nearly 150 Israeli settlements in the West Bank regarded as illegal under international law.

The young teenager was **murdered** that morning out on the pasture, according to Israeli police, but it would be 24 hours before his body was found. When the flock of sheep returned to the farm without him, a massive search began, involving the Israeli police, military, air force, intelligence services and thousands of volunteers from the settler community.

For some, it was not enough. At 08:30 on Saturday, Elisha Yered, a former spokesman for MP Limor Son Har-Melech and extremist settler **suspected in the murder** of a Palestinian man last August, posted in a WhatsApp group for settlers.

"Shabbat Shalom, it's been nearly 24 hours of heavy suspicion that Benjamin was kidnapped from the pasture and still the obvious measures have not been taken," Yered wrote.

It'i'el

We need as many adults with vehicles as possible to come to the road by al-Mughayyir to pick up people running towards the road. There are a bunch of police chasing after them

16:02

By Saturday evening, after Achimeir's body had been found, two Palestinians had already been **killed** and at least 20 homes and more than 100 cars had been torched. But messages were still spreading in settler WhatsApp groups calling for revenge. Before the violence was over, two more Palestinian men would be **killed** in the village of Aqraba, 7km (4.3 miles) away from where Achimeir went missing.

Abdul Rahman Bani Fadel, 30, and Mohammad Bani Jamea, 21, were shot dead during an attack by dozens of settlers, many of them armed, just one mile from Gitit Junction - one of the meeting places marked with fire emojis on a settler WhatsApp group.

Video footage of the incident shows what appear to be IDF soldiers watching on as a large group of settlers, some armed, surround several Palestinian men from the village. "The settlers are looking for any reason to increase their aggression against us," said Fadel's older brother, Ahmed Maher. "And the death of Benjamin was a reason."

There are also two other BBC headlines that show a pro-Western bias, though these reports have since been removed:

- *What is happening in Israel and Gaza, and what is Hamas?*
- *Al-Shifa: What we know about Israel's raid on Gaza's main hospital*

The media monitoring center notes that news coverage of Palestinian deaths across mainstream British media (including the BBC) tends to use passive language, which removes the agent (Israel) and the action (shot, bombed, killed), differing from the much more emotive language used when covering Israeli deaths. Similar findings explain that BBC's reports since 2023 lack historical context and show differences in language use concerning Palestinian and Israeli victims, resulting in imbalance (Matthew Linares et al., 2025). According to researchers from the Glasgow Media Group, who analyzed BBC's reports on Gaza from October 7 to November 4, 2023, it was also found that:

Words such as 'murder', 'murderous', 'mass murder', 'brutal murder', and 'merciless murder' were used 52 times by journalists to refer to Israeli deaths but never in relation to Palestinian deaths. A similar pattern can be seen with terms like 'massacre', 'brutal massacre', and 'horrific massacre', which were used 35 times for Israeli deaths and not once for Palestinian ones (Des Freedman, 2024).

The public controversy surrounding BBC's reports was then denied by the BBC, which claims and insists it fulfills its responsibility as the most trusted and impartial news media (Athena Stavrou, 2024).

In September 2024, there were 1,500 news reports following a controversial allegation that some BBC correspondents had excused or downplayed Hamas activities. Additionally, 101 BBC staff criticized the BBC corporation for failing to meet editorial standards in its coverage. A small portion of the examples presented shows that the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), as an international media organization, has distorted the meaning of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict with a bias favoring Israel through the use of language convergent with Western narratives,

thus functioning as propaganda in shaping public perception. When language, framing, and editorial choices consistently support one side, the public loses access to the truth. Language usage reflects power and identity in social media narratives, such as the classification of groups as terrorists, marginalization, or subordinated identities.

According to a quote from (Al-Jazeera, 2024), the BBC was also accused by its own staff of lacking accurate, evidence-based journalism. A letter sent to the Director-General of broadcasters, Tim Davie, and CEO Deborah Turness on Friday, signed by more than 100 anonymous BBC staff and over 200 others from the media industry, as well as historians, actors, academics, and politicians, stated: *"The consequences of inadequate coverage are very significant. Every television report, article, and radio interview that fails to systematically challenge Israeli claims has degraded the humanity of the Palestinian people."*

The signatories called on the BBC to implement editorial commitments including:

- Reaffirming that Israel does not provide external journalists access to Gaza
- Clarifying when there is insufficient evidence to support Israeli claims
- Making clear where Israel is the perpetrator in article headlines
- Regularly including historical context before October 2023
- Firmly challenging Israeli government and military representatives in all interviews

This indicates that the BBC's actions strongly dominate the framing of public discourse.

BBC coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in 2023–2024 illustrates how mainstream Western media present a narrative of cultural homogenization that reduces Palestinian identity. For example, terms like 'brutal murder' are mostly applied to Israeli deaths rather than Palestinian ones. Other terms such as 'militants', 'rocket fire', 'defense' are used frequently, while words like 'occupation' or 'ethnic cleansing' are less commonly employed. Negative words like 'destruction,' 'horrific,' and 'shocking' also provoke strong reader reactions (Elvira Putri Anshary et al., 2024). This signals a narrowed representation that frames Palestine or Gaza primarily as a terrorism, security, or conflict issue, effectively erasing the cultural diversity, history, and humanity of Palestinian society. According to constructivist theory, identity is not static but shaped through norms, discourse, and media framing. Contemporary arenas of resistance culture and imperialism involve exchanges of meaning, language, representation, visuals, and related processes (Shadi Abu-Ayyash, 2024).

A report from the Centre for Media Monitoring analyzed 3,873 articles and 32,092 broadcast segments from October 7, 2023, to October 6, 2024, with an extensive case study continuing into 2025. During the analysis period, 42,010 Palestinians and 1,246 Israelis died, a ratio of 34:1 providing important context for



assessing BBC's impartiality (Centre For Media Monitoring, 2025). The report quoted former Conservative Party co-chair Baroness Sayeeda Warsi stating: *"This powerful research by the Centre for Media Monitoring exposes how, during Israel's war on Gaza, the BBC consistently prioritised Israeli pain and perspective, at the expense of Palestinian lives and voices... This is no cherry-picked critique. It is a comprehensive, evidence-based indictment that cannot be ignored. If the BBC is to maintain any claim to impartiality, it must now engage seriously with these findings and the recommendations that follow."*

It is important to consider that BBC's narratives reflect a homogenization that equates Palestinian identity to conflict and security issues, thus distorting the cultural and identity space of Palestinians with generalized terms. This has implications such as substantial framing effects on public sympathy, influencing public sentiment regarding factual events, and reflecting global digital dialogue during the conflict (Sara Nasereddin, 2024). BBC especially limits Palestinian representation to Hamas and Islamic militancy. The discourse tends to emphasise one side while relatively ignoring and diminishing the other side (Kareem El Damanhoury, 2025). The various reports indicate that the Global North wields dominant power in shaping public perception.

## **2. Implications of Palestinian Identity in BBC Media Construction**

The framing by BBC media related to the Gaza genocide provides a strong illustration of the influence of numerous factors in journalism and media. This article highlights that a single word can describe identity, especially in media with a global reach. In this case, BBC constructs the cultural identity of Gaza Palestine and seemingly diminishes the evidence of the extremely fatal dehumanization event. This allows many individuals to view Palestine through a class narrative that portrays it as if it is dead, especially amid globalization and cultural diversity. The narrative construction of words and sentences shaped by BBC tends to portray and build a negative identity of Gaza Palestine. Batat (2025) mention that international media act as a mirror for society and a powerful tool for shaping identity, and in a social context as central and permanent in developing cultural identity. Media, in its various forms, provides diverse visual and auditory cultural content reflecting cultural heritage through customs and traditions, promoting understanding and pride in local culture. When this narrative becomes a continuous perpetuation, how will future generations understand the historical context, experiences, valuable lessons, cultural heritage, and identity of Gaza? The article also mentions the challenge media face in preserving cultural identity, one of which is globalization. With the advent of globalization, cultural identity can be influenced by promoting a global culture seemingly dictated by the West, which ultimately sacrifices local culture through media, reducing the focus on local culture.



The framing of Palestinian culture and identity distorted through BBC's framing construction reduces the complexity and essence of Palestinian cultural identity. It depicts Palestinians as criminalized by Western media, shaping public opinion and legitimizing Global North power. BBC's role becomes a form of power as a space for ideological domination and perception that is likely to alter institutional norms, the behavior of actors in international relations, and global civil society. Nevertheless, journalists and mass media are not free from agenda setting, institutional interests, news standards, editorial pressures, and the individual perceptions of journalists that drive such biases. Moreover, ideologically driven environmental construction from root causes is also a factor in BBC's reporting regarding the Gaza genocide. Genocide, colonization, and dehumanization in Palestine represent a real call on behalf of humanity without any pretext. When a narrative is reported and constructed by media, where editors and narrators are also humans, then conscience and awareness become important as a collective reminder, impartial with full responsibility, heart, and dedication for better action and a safer world. Many factors then cause identity and culture through BBC media discourse to become convergent and centered on one power dynamic, the Global North. As mentioned earlier, modernity currently appears centered on Americanization, modernization, and Westernization, all referring to the West and its allies. It requires follow-up in the form of response, diplomatic space, and shared concern in viewing this response.

## CONCLUSIONS

Where information is now important in a global world. BBC media coverage in the scope of 2023-2024 indicates a major change related to shaping public perception, shaping institutional norms, and becoming a center of information with the genocide that occurred in Gaza. The Media gives great influence related to its role in conveying accurate, clear, reliable information. Analysis of the BBC's coverage of the 2023-2024 Gaza Genocide shows the bias of the media and the powers of the global north in favor, this then distorts the identity of Gaza Palestinians. Various literature studies show that the discourse formed by the BBC has not been in accordance with the initial agreement regarding editorial commitments, as well as the facts that occur directly on the ground contrary to what is conveyed.

To form a solution strategy related to the phenomena that occur, a variety of multidimensional approaches are needed, some of these solutions have also been presented by CFMM Media, among others;

1. The importance of creating a framework of normative mechanisms related to contemporary media in the international sphere which regulates the ethics of

international media responsibility in narrating a news story and maintaining a common goal of peace.

2. The role of media and journalists is indispensable in the form of proportional and impartiality in accordance with existing circumstances
3. Narrative words and language in the form of discourse and sentences delivered must be clarified related to victims and perpetrators in identifying
4. The need for transparency and verification related to factual circumstances in accordance with the field, not exaggerating or reducing the essence of the intent according to the original circumstances
5. The need for total review before publication, in order to see if there is bias or not, and ensure the language used digest journalistic standards and quality terminology.
6. Consistent in identifying events and humanizing existing events evenly, and balancing the justification of challenges
7. The global community needs to be wiser in increasing media literacy so that it can see wisely related to framing
8. Strengthening cooperation between the media to present a collective narrative in which to place the interests that lead to positive and good goals.
9. Advocacy on local government governance to integrate the protection of Palestinian identity and culture in academic narratives and media literacy, as well as the provision of inclusive and comprehensive editing before finally being published in the global arena.

Efforts are not enough to answer the challenges and phenomena that occur. A strong determination is needed that is aligned with concrete actions in building a strategy for solving efforts in framing public perceptions regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in 2023-2024 which positions peace and humanity as the main goal.

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