


Yazar(lar) / Author(s)

Dr. Öğr. üyesi, Zeynep Zelal Kızılkaya 
Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi,
Gazetecilik Bölümü, Muş-Türkiye
e-posta: zz.dag@alparslan.edu.tr
(Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding author)

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Digital Activism in the Gaza War: Mirroring Israelis on Social Media

Abstract

Social media platforms, with their different ecosystems, offer their users various socio-technological environments and new communication experiences. Social media platforms, with their diverse ecosystems, offer users a variety of socio-technological environments and new communication experiences. These platforms allow users to engage in political activism and challenge hegemonic narratives. After October 7, 2023, as the Israeli attacks on Gaza turned into genocide, social media became an important arena of struggle. In this study, I aimed to examine how young Palestinian users subvert the perception of Israel's victimization on social media, focusing on the digital publications of Hamzah Sadaah and Bilal Nassar, who actively use the dialogic aspect of social media platforms for political activism. Using a digital ethnography approach, I watched the videos of the two activists hosting Israeli participants with the technique of non-participant observation and interpreted the data obtained through descriptive analysis to reveal the outlines of the Israeli participants' discourses. As a result, the activists made Israeli soldiers, youth and adults visible by hosting them on their platforms, making their war crimes and hate speech visible. They also used social media as a mirror, revealing a side of Israeli society that is ignored by mainstream Western media.

Keywords: Social Media, Digital Activism, Palestine, Digital Floating Homeland, Israel.

Gazze Savaşında Dijital Aktivizm: Sosyal Medyada İsraililere Ayna Tutmak

Öz

Sosyal medya platformları, farklı ekosistemleriyle kullanıcılarına çeşitli sosyo-teknolojik ortamlar ve yeni iletişim deneyimleri sunmaktadır. Bu platformlar kullanıcıların siyasi aktivizme katılmasına ve hegemonik anlatılara meydan okumasına olanak tanımaktadır. 7 Ekim 2023'ten sonra İsrail'in Gazze'ye yönelik saldırılarının soykırıma dönüşmesiyle birlikte sosyal medya önemli bir mücadele alanına dönüştü. Bu çalışmada, Filistinli genç kullanıcıların sosyal medyada İsrail'in mağduriyet algısını nasıl altüst ettiğini incelemeyi amaçladım. Bu doğrultuda sosyal medya platformlarının diyalogik yönünü siyasi aktivizm için aktif olarak kullanan Hamzah Sadaah ve Bilal Nassar'ın dijital platformlardaki yayınlarına odaklandım. Dijital etnografi yaklaşımıyla iki aktivistin İsraili katılımcıları konuk ettiği videoları katılımsız gözlem tekniğiyle izledim ve elde edilen verileri betimsel analizle yorumlayarak İsraili katılımcıların söylemlerindeki ana hatlarını ortaya çıkardım. Sonuç olarak, aktivistler, İsraili askerleri, gençleri ve yetişkinleri kendi platformlarında konuk ederek onların savaş suçlarını ve nefret söylemlerini görünür kılmıştır. Ayrıca sosyal medyayı bir ayna olarak kullanarak, ana akım Batı medyasında görmezden gelinen İsrail toplumunun bu yüzünü gözler önüne sermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Dijital Aktivizm, Filistin, Yüzen Dijital Vatan, İsrail.

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1. Introduction

For more than a year now, the world has been witnessing an Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. The genocide was launched after the violent offensive launched by Hamas on October 7 to break the siege of Gaza as the last act in a century-long national struggle against settler colonialism (Rashidi 2020; Wolfe, 2006). More than 40,000 civilians, including children and women, were killed; hundreds of thousands of civilians were injured and maimed; entire urban structures were destroyed. The case of genocide and war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza was brought to the International Court of Justice by South Africa on December 29. The Court's statement that there are serious presumptions that the crime of genocide has been committed and that violations have been committed did not stop the genocide. While Israel has continued its catastrophic violence, the moral superiority ascribed to Israel in the international arena has only begun to fade.

In modern wars, the media have been the most important tool for legitimizing not only military attacks but also civilian casualties. The information produced and disseminated by the Western mainstream media has treated civilian deaths differently. While presenting Israel as the victim of the Hamas attack on October 7, the Palestinian deaths caused by Israeli bombardments were reported without naming the perpetrator. Israelis, in the language of prominent newspapers, were violently "killed" while Palestinians were "dying". However, the mass media has not been the only tool through which people have disseminated news and informed themselves. Social media has become another battlefield. Israeli soldiers have been posting self-recorded videos on TikTok of shooting civilians, stealing their property, enjoying bombardments, and shooting civilians. Israeli social media users posted videos mocking the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza. The Tiktok has apparently become another warfront for Israel. At the same time, numerous accounts have attempted to draw attention to the genocide in the making. Palestinians in the diaspora in particular have tried to contribute to the struggle by publishing content in a variety of frameworks to counterbalance the pro-Israeli mass media. The platforms such as Meta and TikTok began to block the pro-Palestinian content and categorize it as terrorism.

Political activism by young users of Palestinian origin, reversing the content and discourse that argues for Israel's victimhood, was another significant aspect of the ongoing struggle on social media. This paper focuses on the political activism of Palestinian social media users during Israel's genocidal attacks on Gaza, who has been employing unusual methods and frames in their content. Social media can be used not only as a stage for users to present themselves, but also as a space for encounter, negotiation or reconstruction of reality. The efforts of activists of Palestinian origin to talk to and meet Israelis while Israel's attacks are still ongoing open up for discussion both the legitimacy of the attacks and Israelis' perceptions of themselves.

2. Digital Activism

Social movements are street movements that demand change to solve a social problem, inform the public, and raise awareness. Social movements need the media to create public opinion and gain support through their activism. Activism is a series of contentious performances in which ordinary people try to solve social problems through collective action (Chon and Park, 2020, p. 2), which vary according to the political environment or regime in which they take place and the technologies used (Özkula, 2021, p.64).

New media tools have attracted attention during protests such as the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and Gezi Park, where social media and political activism intertwined and fed off each other. Social media in particular proved to be a source of news and information for both activists and users for several reasons: the editorial dependence of traditional media led to both their distancing from political activism and the public's loss of trust in traditional media. In addition to that, social media is accessible to everyone, has no time constraints, is cheap and fast, and is based on interaction. Social media is but not only a source of information but it became a new public sphere where voices for political activism can be heard (Lievrouw, 2011, p. 53-54), political ideas and demands can be negotiated and contested.

As early as the 1990s, when we were witnessing the anti-globalization social movements and grassroots activism, Manuel Castells pointed to the crucial role of the Internet for social movements by drawing our attention to a more significant transformation beyond the dissemination of information: the Internet has transformed social opposition while at the same time transforming culture, economy, politics, and human and social relations (Castells, 2008, p. 89-91). With the digital revolution, the Internet, independent of geographical boundaries, has led to a redefinition of activism (Abbas et al., 2002, p.290). Social media, which emerged as a new public sphere for social movements, has led to new conceptualizations in the field of social and political activism, such as online activism, network activism, social media activism, internet activism, and hashtag activism (Özkula, 2021; Tufekci, 2013 and Tatarchevsiy, 2011). Digital activism, as a more comprehensive concept, refers to all activism that takes place in the digital sphere and is defined as political activism on internet-based networks (Vegh, 2003, p. 71-72). Digital activism can refer to political opposition, resistance, and rebellion, while it must be emphasized that political activism focuses on the practices themselves rather than a general ideological sense of opposition to the dominant power (Hands, 2011, p. 3).

Digital activism varies according to and shaped by the characteristics of social networks and platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, X (Twitter), on the one hand, and the personal skills and tactics of users on the other. The users' preferred style and tools and the platforms' general characteristics can also shape each other, as the activism of young users on TikTok shows us: the language of the users and the general atmosphere of TikTok are both playful and humorous. Digital activism can be both limited to the digital public and organize offline mobilization, both of which can be less organized and less pre-planned than traditional activism (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p.741-742). Compared to traditional activism, digital activism has the advantages of being widespread, networked, immediate, direct and interactive (McCaughey and Ayers, 2003; Polletta, 2013), but also disadvantages such as low impact, political apathy and surveillance (Murdoch, 2009, p.13), conceptualized in the literature as clicktivism and lazy activism (Karpf, 2010, p. 5), articulating the criticism that digital activism does not adequately meet the demand for change in social issues. Online activism should not be overestimated if it does not create or interact with movement on the streets. Unless trust and coalitions are built and supported on the streets, it alone lacks the power to bring about social change that can continually challenge entrenched regimes or ruling parties. Although the Internet and digital technologies can hold ruling elites and governments accountable to the general public when there is a freedom that allows for social activism, the same tools can also enhance the surveillance and repressive capabilities of authoritarian states.

Digital activism involves various practices such as tweeting, writing political comments, expressing opinions, discussing, sharing and liking, developing and organizing online direct actions, hacktivism and civil disobedience, creating information and documents to defend a political issue. One of the most common online actions is the creation of hashtags to connect users and their materials. Through hashtags, political opposition is organized and online and/or offline activities are coordinated. drawing attention to a collective problem can also take place before, during or after a protest campaign launched to encourage online or offline opposition (Özkula, 2021, p. 68) and can take the form of "self-organized" (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012: 741) personalized online posts such as #MeToo or offline street protests such as #BlackLivesMatter. Sometimes individual actions and campaigns become sustainable movements through the creation of collective content. Hashtags can collectivize content and create digital public spaces by connecting users and circulating their content.

In these processes, identities are fragmented and reconstructed through both sharing and receiving the content that carries values. According to Jost et al. (2018), social media not only provide information that facilitates the mobilization of political activities, but also contribute to the dissemination of emotional messages through the circulation of contents and information. The circulation of content, and thus emotions, on social media can lead people to align with or alienate themselves from others and contribute to the creation of individual and collective bodies (Ahmed, 2004). Although activists are present in different places and at different times, their overall aim is to intervene in these circulations, to influence people's affective attitudes, to create public opinion and to change behavior.

In this article I will show how Collective bodies are created but also deconstructed by digital activism and the in the form of photos, political memes or videos with political parodies, banner ads, critical subversive manipulation of mainstream media content or cultural artifacts (Tang, 2013 and Lievrouw, 2011: 48-49).

3. Palestinian Struggle and Digital Activism

After the Hamas attack on October 7, Israel completely denied the people of Gaza access to basic humanitarian needs such as water and food, including electricity and the Internet. Israel also restricted access to Gaza for international news agencies in order to control the flow of news and information. The Western mainstream media and agencies, whose attitude cannot be reduced to the limited presence on the ground, for a long time assumed the role of reporting the information provided by Israel, which further increased the existing distrust in the Western mainstream media.

Despite the limitations of electricity and internet access, the people of Gaza, through local journalists, reporters and social media users, have directly shared Israel's crimes against humanity and genocide in Gaza with the world. While these posts once again highlighted the importance of social media and local news reporting, local journalists and reporters broadcasting from Gaza were strategically targeted by Israel, and 130 journalists and reporters were killed. While social media became the voice of the Palestinian people in this regard, pro-Palestinian content and accounts were blocked and censored by social media platforms. This revealed the function of social media algorithms in obscuring the truth. In its December 2023 report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) found that Meta, which manages Instagram and Facebook, systematically censors Palestine-related content on its social networks, and its content

moderation policies and systems have furthered the erasure of Palestinian suffering (HRW, 2023). Users and observers have reported that platforms such as Meta, Twitter, and TikTok are censoring pro-Palestinian content, attempting to deny Palestinians freedom of expression, and suppressing public opinion in favor of Palestine. In particular, Meta has been found to use shadow banning (Apodaca and Uzcátegui-Liggett, 2024), which defines a new form of censorship, a technique that prevents users from seeing the posts of other users they follow.

Palestinians have innovatively and effectively used the Internet and social media platforms to communicate, organize, interact, share information, receive support, strengthen their identity, and weaken the occupation. They have turned these platforms into a place where, as Hanine Shehadeh (2023), shows in her study "Palestine in the Cloud - The Construction of a Floating Digital Homeland," they are building their homeland in the face of occupation and the fragmentation of the territorial homeland. He borrows Haitian writer Danticat's concept of the "floating homeland" and transforms it into the "floating digital homeland" to think about the nation beyond territorial boundaries, its constructed and imagined nature, and "the possibilities of post-national imaginaries" (Shehadeh, 2023, p. 2).

The Palestinian national body has been fragmented into Palestinians in Israel (Israeli Arabs), Palestinians in the occupied territories, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and Palestinians in the diaspora. In 2000, when the Al Aqsa/Second Intifada erupted and the Oslo process completely failed, the Palestinian territories were totally fragmented into separate enclaves surrounded by walls and Jewish settlements (established by colonial settlers) and controlled by checkpoints and military surveillance (Weizman, 2007 ; Shehadeh, 2023, p.4). Israeli settler colonialism constantly seeks to erase any semblance of Palestinian political autonomy and identity with its memories that enable cultural continuity. Israel, with walls, checkpoints, and watchtowers, constant destruction of cultural artifacts and memory, attempts to prevent Palestinians from returning to and imagining their homeland. In such constant environment of fragmentation and erasure, the floating digital homeland enables Palestinians whose physical interaction is suspended to think of a unitary nation symbolically and allows to return the uprooted and assimilated Palestinians in Israel to the unity of the Palestinian body through new media. The Palestinian territories, which have been controlled by Israel and fragmented by settlers, are redefined by Palestinians who are using the internet and social media and building a digital homeland. This floating digital homeland allows for a virtual and digital reconceptualization of Palestine without borders while reshaping Palestinian self-identity. In the early years of the Internet, chat rooms connected Palestinians with each other in real time. Coming together in digital spaces enabled them to experience the Palestinian national body in a collective present in their forcibly fragmented physical presence. Websites, blogs, and social media offer them the possibility of imaginative re-indigenization, a collective consciousness, ways and tools to define their resistance according to their needs and aspirations, and deconstructing the settler-colonial history of Israel's legitimacy.

The floating digital homeland functions also as an archive and memory for Palestinians who have been reporting and documenting events occurring in Palestine simultaneously (Shehadeh, 2023, p. 5). Beginning with the Second Intifada, Palestinians and those who support the resistance have used social media platforms such as blogs and then YouTube and Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), and TikTok to produce and share information about Israel's systematic military attacks and settler-colonial practices through text, photos, and videos. Posts

on these platforms not only exposed Israel's settler-colonial practices but also mobilized local and international protests. New media has had a significant impact on Palestinian national identity construction and political activism. The images of Ahed Tamimi from the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh, which were among the viral videos on YouTube, for example, rose to an online symbol of Palestinian resistance through its wide circulation and an example of the display of anti-occupation attitude and practice on internet networks (Shehadeh, 2023, p. 9 and Dwonch, 2011). Another example of Palestinian digital activism is the deployment of hashtags on social media, which aim to draw attention to, inform about, educate on, and debunk colonial myths and turn such mainstream colonial narratives on their head. The hashtags #Palestine, #GazaAttack, #FreePalestine, #ShujaiyaMassacre, #SheikhJarrah, and #GreatReturnMarch do not just focus on the colonial myths but also convey the history of a homeland under settler colonialism and make the daily resistance to it visible.

Israel's Virtual Hasbara Organisation

The Palestinians' social media activism that keeps the spirit of resistance alive and fights Israel's propaganda is confronted by Israel's violent censorship policies, which can lead to the arrest of Palestinians engaging in political activism on social media (Monshipouri & Prompichai, 2018, p.52). Beyond attacking the individual Palestinian activists strategically, which has a long history, Israel's main digital counterpolitics emerged in a gradual shift between 2008 and 2012, in the wake of the 2006 Lebanon War and "Operation Cast Lead," the violent military assault on Gaza, two years later, both of which damaged Israel's international reputation. Miriam Aouragh (2016) calls this newly adapted method of digital diplomacy, utilizing also web 2.0 technologies, "hasbara 2.0," referring to the institution known as Hasbara. Hasbara, meaning in Hebrew "explanation," was established as a ministry in 1974. Hasbara bridges the gap between propaganda and sophisticated psychological operations, aiming on the one hand to obscure the brutal realities of colonial policies against the Palestinians and on the other hand to secure consent within Israel (Tüysüz, 2019, p.71). Even though formally abolished as a ministry, it continued to operate actively within various state institutions. The Coalition of Hasbara Volunteers (CoHaV) disseminates pro-Israel publications in print and broadcast media, public presentations, and research worldwide (Support David Miller, 2021, and WUJS, 2002). Its function took a digital turn: It was synchronized as an interactive online branch that came under a new command with a permanent team working in liaison with old cadres and a new command in liaison with international volunteers (Aouragh, 2016, p. 273-285).

In times of war, full-time social media operators of Hasbara work to legitimize the Israeli occupation and massacres. Aouragh traces the Hasbara volunteers' practices in the Netherlands during the 2014 Gaza offensive, who gathered on the Facebook group and the Twitter account "Holland4Israel," and utilized multiple virtual platforms to target pro-Palestinian activists. He claims that these digital volunteers do not interact randomly but rather build a communication strategy based on a well-crafted discourse. They manipulate facts and target pro-Palestinian accounts by making baseless accusations of anti-Semitism (Aouragh, 2016, p. 284). Palestinian and pro-Palestinian accounts, on the other hand, always try to spread their own discourse in their struggle with these actors and their systematic attacks, which are highlighted by social media algorithms and enjoy high visibility.

Pro-Palestinian Activism on TikTok

Before getting into the details of our cases, it is worth briefly mentioning activism on TikTok and its specificity, as it is our field of study. TikTok and similar platforms, with their different design features that facilitate replication and dissemination through design elements with which any video created on the platform has the potential to trigger the creation of another (Vijay and Gekker, 2021, p. 715), offer a segment of young users the opportunity to engage in digital activism with humor, parody, and game-like political participation. (İsmi yazılmalı-bir araştırmacıda ilk bahsettigimizde tüm ismini yazalım) Abbas et al. (2022), for example, analyzed three hashtags (#SaveSheikhJarrah, #SavePalestine, #FreePalestine) that went viral during the Sheikh Jarrah events in 2021 to show that TikTok's capabilities were used by young pro-Palestinian users for new forms of political activism. The interest of young users in engaging in fun/game-like politics (Cervi and Divon 2023) on TikTok allows for new forms of participatory action (Vijay and Gekker, 2021, p. 714) and enables the dissemination of political messages among young users who were not previously involved in political activism.

From the Israeli attack on Sheikh Jarrah in 2021 until October 7, 2023, Palestinian and pro-Palestinian accounts on TikTok put the crimes of oppression, killing, and displacement against Palestinians on the agenda through digital activism, with content they produced using the creative and entertaining character of TikTok, albeit videos with real footage. However, since October 7, the severity of Israeli violence in Gaza has gradually diluted and differentiated the entertaining nature of these accounts broadcasting from Gaza.

4. Method and Purpose

Social media platforms, as different ecosystems, offer new communication experiences to their users by providing different socio-technical environments. With these environments, social media maintains its significance in offering its users a chance to engage in political activism and to subvert hegemonic perceptions. By focusing on the posts of two Palestinian activist content producers, Hamzah Sadaah and Bilal Nassar (b fendyy), this study aims to understand how and with what tactics Palestinians used social media as a medium for political activism during the genocidal Israeli attacks on Gaza after October 7, 2023. The reason for choosing these two content producers is that they both use dialogue as their main format, social media as a space for encounter, and communication as a tool for unmasking and subverting dominant narratives in their digital activism

The study employs a qualitative research method to analyze the performances of two prominent Palestinian social media celebrity activists on digital platforms where they hosted Israeli participants as guests. Hamzah Sadaah's and Bilal Nassar's (b fendyy) videos (with high viewership) titled "Talking to Israelis" and "#fyp #funny #arabtok #comedy #arab" respectively were selected according to purposive sampling, in which the researcher first determines the samples he/she is interested in from the diversity in the universe (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008: 107) and then selects the sample that he/she considers best represents this diversity. The selected sample was analyzed according to the descriptive analysis model, which allows observing, recording, determining the relationships between events, and making generalizations, with a more descriptive aspect at the forefront. In descriptive analysis, the findings obtained from the data are summarized and the summaries are analyzed with the knowledge of the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008: 188-227). In this study, 20 videos were selected from YouTube and

TikTok videos titled "Speaking to Israelis about Palestine!" by Hamzah Sadaah and "#fyp #funny #arabtok #comedy #arab" by Bilal Nassar (bfendyy) and the contents were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive analysis method.

5. Findings and Analysis: Political Activism of Social Media Influencers of Palestinian Origin

Hamzah Saadah, born in the US in 2003, is a young Palestinian social media celebrity with more than 7 million followers on TikTok. He is especially popular on TikTok, but he also has YouTube and Instagram accounts. Saadah began producing content on social media at the age of 15, first known under the anonymous name AbsorberYT, and his content was initially aimed at his own age group. Saadah, who has amassed nearly a million followers by that age, mostly produced videos for entertainment purposes. Hamzah Saadah has gained recognition in games such as Minecraft and Fortnite under the nickname AbsorberYT. Prior to the attacks on Gaza, he had a playful style of broadcasting, trolling live guests and focusing on digital games. Until October 7, although he occasionally expressed his Palestinian identity, he did not produce politically charged content; however, after that date, he began to create content that addressed the Israeli attacks in Gaza.

Bilal Nassar, our second activist, was born and raised in the US, originally from Gaza. Before October 7, he was an unpopular content producer on TikTok, unlike Hamza Saadah. He broadcasts rap music and satirizes his own culture. Bilal's TikTok posts, especially in 2022, humorously describe the tensions between Arab and Palestinian youth and their families, and received few views at the time. After October 7, Bilal reached an audience of over 350,000 viewers, especially with his videos trolling Israeli soldiers, and became known on digital networks in Israel. As Bilal's sarcastic trolling videos have gone viral, his acting has improved. His performance includes a unique and remarkable style, whose language consists of a series of sarcastic words and theatrical facial expressions and gestures. This style, which increases Bilal's visibility, appears as a form of resistance that shatters the image of the sovereign

5.1. A Controversial Activist: Hamzah Saadah

Hamzah Saadah's first broadcast under the title " Speaking to Israelis about Palestine!" was with an Israeli soldier (Sammy Obeid, 2024). This conversation was recorded rather than broadcast live. Within the first hour of the broadcast of the one-minute recording, which includes statements by two Israeli soldiers that they killed Palestinians, reached 2 million viewers and was deleted by TikTok. Each time the video was shared under a different name, it was quickly removed. He continued to post content about Gaza at the risk of damaging his reputation and losing followers. Indeed, he lost some old followers after his first broadcast, but gained plenty of new ones.

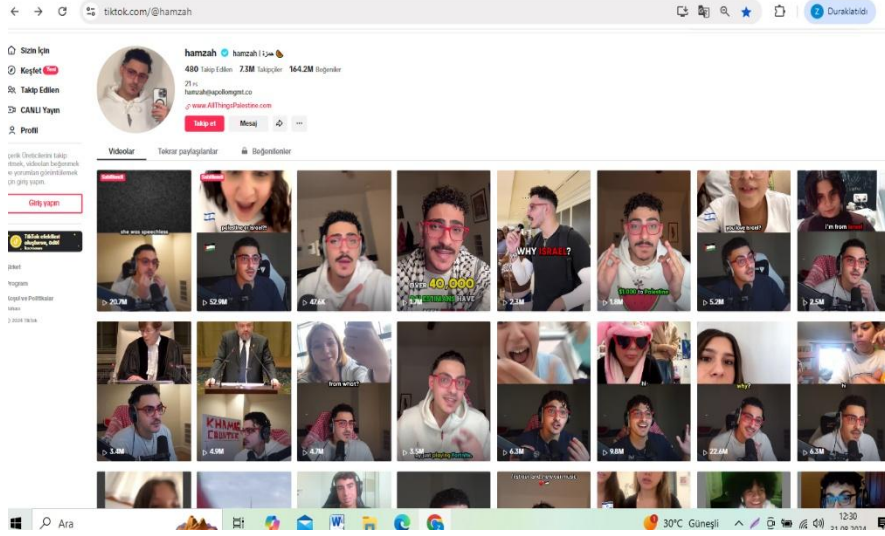


Fig. 1: hamzah (Source: TikTok, 2024)

When his broadcasts on the platforms are deleted or his accounts are closed, Hamzah Saadah connects with his followers on Ome.tv and starts broadcasting the conversations on TikTok, YouTube and Instagram. The broadcasts are sometimes blocked on TikTok. The live broadcasts of him talking to Israelis initially received few views, but later reached millions. The fact that he was portrayed as an anti-Semite in the Israeli media also contributed to this rapid increase in his viewers. Hamzah Saadah's broadcasts with the hashtags "Speaking to Israelis about Palestine!" and "Free Palestine" last between 1 and 4 hours. The broadcasts remain archived on YouTube and are available as 30-second broadcasts on TikTok. Shorter versions of the broadcasts are also available in the Reels section of YouTube. Short videos are watched by millions of people, especially on TikTok.

Hamzah Saadah's shows have hosted different people from around the world. The Israelis who participate in his show are not limited to a certain gender, profession or age. In this paper, the Israeli participants of Hamzah Saadah's broadcasts were analyzed in three categories: active soldiers, teenagers, and adults.

- *Talking to Soldiers*

The military style has gained a strong foothold in Israeli society, as evidenced by the hatred and incitement to murder in the latest program. But there are also videos of Hamzah speaking directly with active-duty soldiers. In one broadcast, as an Israeli soldier in military camouflage stands guard, Hamzah salutes and asks, "How many Palestinians have you killed? The Israeli soldier salutes and waves his hand at 20. Hamzah asks, "Is that true? The soldier replies, 'I don't know Palestinians, I know Hamas, there are no civilians in Gaza, they are all terrorists. There are no civilians in Gaza, they are all terrorists, is that what you are saying?' asks Hamzah and the Israeli soldier nods his head yes. "So the millions of children in Gaza are Hamas?" asks Hamzah. The soldier says yes and bites into his chocolate. Hamzah asks sadly, "How many children have you killed?" and the soldier leaves the show (Hamzah Saadah, 2024f). With more than 2.5 million views, this non-live broadcast is supported by large font subtitles for better understanding of the dialogue.

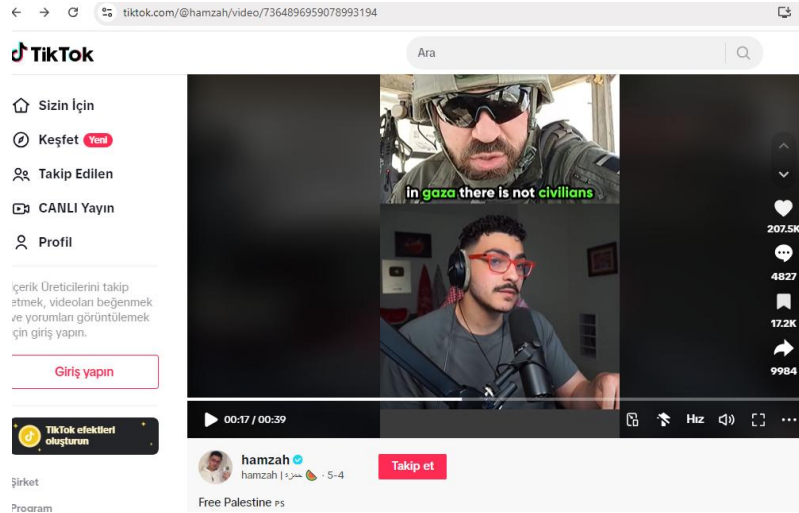


Fig. 2: Free Palestine! (Source: YouTube, 2024)

In another video, which has been viewed more than seven million times, Hamzah asks an armed Israeli soldier in camouflage broadcasting from his office, "Are you an IDF soldier?" The soldier answers "yes," and Hamzah asks, "Have you killed any Palestinians? When the soldier replies, "Not yet," Hamzah asks for confirmation "not yet?." The soldier answers "yes," and Hamzah asks in a sad tone, "30,000 Palestinians have been bombed in Gaza." The Israeli soldier replies that those killed were Hamas fighters. Hamzah asks, "Are 30,000 people from Hamas?" and "Are 10,000 children from Hamas?" and the answer is "yes". Hamzah introduces himself: "Do you know where I'm from? I'm Palestinian." The soldier says, "From where? I don't know Palestine, I only know Israel," and another soldier behind him says, "There is no Gaza, Gaza is Hamasistan." When Hamza asks, "What is Gaza?" another middle-aged soldier appears on the screen whom Hamza, a little sad, says, "Look, have you killed any Palestinians?" and he asks then the first soldier he spoke to "Can I talk to him?." The second soldier appears on the screen and answers Hamza's question by saying that he has not killed any Palestinians yet and that Gaza must be destroyed. Hamza asks again for confirmation, "You are going to destroy Gaza?" and the Israeli soldier adds, "and then Ramallah. Hamza said, "Really? Ramallah is next?" and the Israeli soldier adds, "No one can test us" (Hamzah Saadah, 2024g).

In these two videos, Hamzah exposes the war motivations of Israeli soldiers and reveals the army's rhetoric when attacking a densely populated civilian settlement center. Contrary to the discourse that Israel propagates in international community that its violence in Gaza is a War against Hamas, allegedly a terrorist group, it does not distinguish between civilians and militants and categorizes all civilians as enemies. The answer "not yet" to the question "Have you killed any Palestinians?" shows the determination that the soldiers go to Gaza to kill Palestinians, and the last statement that Gaza is "Hamasistan" indicates that they do not distinguish between civilians and military in their determination to kill. Israel's discourse on Gaza as a problem of Hamas is also exposed as rhetoric when the soldier says that they will continue with Ramallah, a city in the West Bank that is not governed by Hamas.

These are but just not rhetorics which can only be found among the military personal. They are highly in circulation in the society as the examples in the next section show, which were taken Hamzah's encounter with Israeli youth in his show.

- *Talking to Adolescents*

The Israeli teenagers and young adults who participated in Hamzah's broadcast in the first period were mostly of school age and the majority were girls. These girls sometimes chanted "Free Israel!" or asked the question "Israel or Palestine? Palestine?" and insisted that Hamzah express his preference (Hamzah Saadah, 2023a). Male and female adolescents show a closed attitude to communicating with hate speech, which mostly includes swearing and insults. When Hamzah says that he is Palestinian and does not support the state of Israel, they may leave the program with swearing, insults, and threatening language.

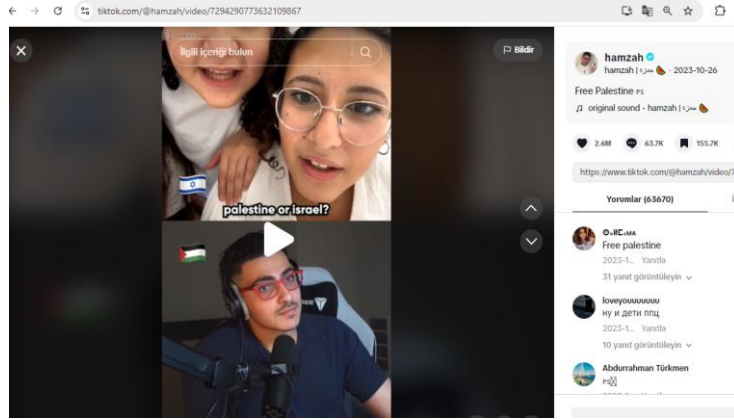


Fig. 3: hamzah (Source: TikTok, 2024)

Hamzah's targeted publicity in Israel is a major reason for the efforts of teenagers to appear on Hamzah's show and the angry criticism of Hamzah by Israeli adults. For example, in one video, after young Israeli girls greet Hamzah by saying, "You're famous on TikTok," Hamzah asks, "Am I famous in Israel?" and the girls answer yes. Hamzah asks what they think about the Palestinians, and one of the young girls in the room screams with hatred, "I hate them and I want them all dead; I will kill them all." When Hamzah asks the other girls, "Do you think like your friend?" the young girl cheerfully shouts, "Yes," and puts her hand to her throat, making a death sign (Hamzah Saadah, 2024a). The reason why these girls so easily express death and hatred in the public sphere can be traced back to their belief that they are both victims and morally superior, which is supported and nourished by the unconditional support of Western states and the propaganda of Western mainstream media and the work of apparatuses such as Hasbara. Under the influence of long Zionist indoctrination and contemporary propaganda that Palestinians hate Israelis, they think and act without empathy and interaction.

Hamzah Saadah's calm demeanor reveals the ideological factors behind the young people's hateful words. This leads them to ignore other people in the belief that they are victims and right. This is clearly reflected in a video of Hamzah confronting an angry Israeli youth (Hamzah Saadah, 2024b, over 2 million views).

The Israeli boy: You hate us, right.

Hamzah: I hate Israel and the Israeli government; I don't hate you.

The Israeli boy: You understand we have to fight back.

Hamza: so fight back who?

The Israeli booy: Hamas, we really didn't have a choice.

Hamzah: what about the kids in Gaza that were killed? The ten 10,000 in Gaza did you need to kill them?

The Israeli boy: this is actually not

Hamzah: I don't think you did, I don't think it needed to happen, I think, it's unnecessary killing, I think they're being killed because they are Palestinians. What's a kid gonna to do you? What's a 5-year gonna to do you?

The young Israeli statement that "we have no choice but to fight" is a reflection of Zionism's discourse of victimization and Israel's right to defend itself. This psychology of victimization legitimizes Israel's defense of its existence, while the dehumanization of Palestinians justifies any treatment of them. In this dialogue, Hamzah invites Israeli youth to empathize with and question the deaths of Palestinian children.

Hamza confronts his guests with the unthought aspects of their ideological positions and statements by responding with questions. For example, in a video featuring an Israeli girl with half of her face visible as a guest, the girl shouts "Free Israel!" after Hamzah greets her. Israeli teenagers who participate in the live broadcast entitled "Free Palestine" often express their discomfort with this slogan. Hamzah smiles and asks, "Free Israel from what?" The girl thinks for a moment, but leaves the show without answering (Hamzah Saadah, 2023b). The conversation reveals that a slogan like "free Israel" can only be a reactive statement. The fact that this Palestinian slogan is often used inverted by Israelis shows that Israeli youth still perceive themselves as victims. This perception functions to prevent them from questioning the Palestinian issue. A simple question like "free from what?" might be able to make the owner of the statement reflect on her own statement, even if only for a short moment. In another broadcast, a young Israeli girl comes on the air, she starts screaming and swearing and says, "I hate you so much. Then, after angrily saying, "You don't know the history of Palestine, you Google it," she starts insulting Hamzah in Hebrew, mockingly saying, "Free Palestine, you say. No! Free Israel!" When Hamzah interrupts her with the question "Free Israel from what?" the companions of the girl insult him by saying, "You are a liar." When Hamzah repeats the question, "Free Israel from what?" the Israeli girl who spoke first laughs and replies, "from Israel" (Hamzah Saadah, 2023c).

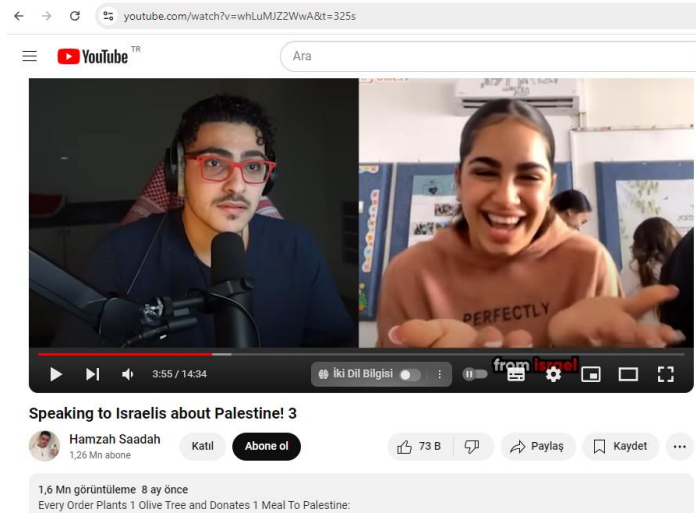


Fig. 4: Speaking to Israelis about Palestine 3 (Source: YouTube, 2024)

High interest in Hamzah's show and willingness to participate in it, even signs of high euphoria-like screaming and cheering (as in the case of the Israeli girl above), but at the same time showing hatred in their speech, may seem paradoxical. Screaming while participating in the broadcast indicates that they are excited to communicate with him. This situation could

characterize the star-fan relationship. Being famous on social media and having millions of followers can lead to a different behavior of teenagers towards a Palestinian. Hamzah's fame and status are also consistent with the admiring behavior of Israeli teenagers toward a celebrity. On the other hand, these teenagers are exposed to a systematic indoctrination by the school system (some young Israeli participants seem to be on school grounds) and the mass media. They seem far removed from a language of dialogue that includes negotiation and empathy, and do not hesitate to speak with anger and hatred toward Palestinians. Being in an encounter in a dialogical form and responded not with a naked language of hate seem to be a rare experience for them. This is one of the reasons why the format of the dialogue and the way in which Hamzah communicates play a significant role in his success.

The following case of an Israeli girl illustrates this combination of admiration, hatred, and justification of racist discourse, which has received more than five million views: A young Israeli girl joins the show without showing her face and discusses the concept of genocide. When Hamzah characterizes the Israeli attacks as genocide, the Israeli girl gets angry and says, "It's not genocide because for it to be genocide, you have to have genocidal intent." Hamzah asks, "Don't you?" to which the Israeli girl replies, "No." Hamzah reminds her of killing 10,000 children, to which she replies, "10,000 of them will grow up to be terrorists." As the discussion continues, the young girl cannot stand the argument and becomes angry with Hamzah, insulting him with "you have disgusting eyebrows" (Hamzah Saadah, 2024d). The death of children is justified by a racist discourse that has long been in circulation and that portrays children as potential threats. This discourse, however, is accompanied by personal, highly affective reactions.

During his broadcasts, Hamzah also meets an Israeli teenager, Adel, who says he wants to know the truth. In his first appearance, Adel says he agrees with the Palestinians. In his second appearance, he says that he has seen the documentary Tantura and read the books that Hamzah recommended to him in the previous program, and he criticizes the celebration of the founding of the state of Israel (Hamzah Saadah, 2024c).

In a broadcast with two young Israeli girls sunbathing, they say they know Hamzah from his time as AbsorberYT and ask him why he speaks to Israelis with English barriers, criticizing and accusing him of taking advantage of the handicap of Israelis who do not have sufficient English. Hamzah replied that he had also spoken to Israeli soldiers and that they had told him that they wanted to kill Palestinian children. The young Israeli woman states that she disagrees with the common belief that racism is taught in Israel, but in the dialogue that follows, the Israeli girl states that of the thirty thousand people killed in Gaza, twenty thousand were Hamas members (Hamzah Saadah, 2024e). This shows that she believes the generalized Israeli media argument that justifies civilian deaths.

In another video, as soon as Hamzah says hello, a young Israeli girl says, "You're from TikTok. I hate Palestinians and I want you and all Arabs to die. That's what's happening in Gaza right now. Gaza is in hell right now. Hamzah calmly replies, "Do you really believe that?" to which the Israeli girl laughs and says, "Yes, all Gazans are dead," and continues, "What do you want? It's really very, very funny. I am proud of my people. Hamzah replies, "That's not funny," and she goes off the air (Hamzah Saadah, 2023d).

- *Talking to Adults*

Sometimes adult men appear in Hamzah's videos. These adult men are usually angry and believe that Hamzah is trying to deceive Israeli children. In the first video we will describe an Israeli man in his 40s who is waiting in his house for his participation to Hamzah's broadcasting. As soon as Hamzah greets him, the Israeli man recognizes him and begins to shout insults in Hebrew. Hamzah calls for calm, but the Israeli says in broken English, "If you were with me, I would have beaten you," and continues to insult and curse. When Hamzah replies, "Dude, calm down," the man says, "No, calm down, I know where you are from, you are on TikTok, and you are a liar." Hamzah says, "Let me help you, take a deep breath." Throughout the dialogue, the Israeli tells Hamzah that he is an Arab and a terrorist, and when Hamzah asks, "Am I a terrorist?" he is told, "You are a terrorist." Hamzah asks, "Is terrorist equal to liar?" and the Israeli replies, "Yes." The Israeli then says that Hamzah is "worse than the Nazis." Hamzah asks, "Am I worse than the Nazis because I am Palestinian?" and finally Hamzah shouts, "Free Palestine! Throughout the video, which has been viewed over a million times, the Israeli adult continues with threats and insults, but Hamzah remains calm and ends the dialogue by saying, "May Allah show you the right path" (Hamzah Saadah, 2023e).

In another video, two girls seem surprised to appear on Hamzah's show while eating. When the older girl realizes she was on the air, she curses Hamzah in Hebrew. The other girl, whose English skills appear to be quite good, tells her to leave it to her, and then scolds Hamzah: "I saw you on TikTok; why are you spreading lies?" Hamzah asks what lie he is spreading, and the Israeli girl replies, "The war between Hamas and Israel, you have no right to say anything. Honestly, you don't even live here." Hamzah tries to explain that he is the child of a Palestinian family that Israel displaced." and then the girl's father joins the dialogue. The father accuses Hamzah of being pro-Hamas and anti-Semitic and says he does not want him to talk to the children. Hamzah accuses the father of lying to his children and of supporting the killing of Palestinian children (Hamzah Saadah, 2023f).

The father, worried about his children interacting with and being influenced by a Palestinian on social media, covers up the discussion with accusations of anti-Semitism. In these programs, we see that Israeli adults are not very open to talking to Palestinians, while teenagers and young people are more curious to meet Palestinians, their so-called enemies, especially on social media, but they maintain a dialogue by maintaining their position.

Adult Israelis who appear on Hamzah's show criticize Hamzah for speaking to and manipulating young people and invite him to speak to adults. Hamzah does indeed speak to Israelis on YouTube and Ome.tv for up to 4 hours, but as the show progresses it becomes clear that these adults, conditioned by Zionist ideology and knowing that they are live and being watched by millions of people, try to justify the official Israeli position and the war against civilians in a controlled manner, minimizing swearing or aggression. As the coverage increases, Israelis begin to speak more carefully on social media in order to gain the moral high ground. However, these conversations invariably end up lacking empathy and, with some exceptions, justifying the genocide in Gaza.

5.2. Trolling Activist: Bilal Nassar

Someone who does not know Bilal will not understand what he is saying at first, so this unpreparedness allows him to distract his audience with his sarcastic style. Bilal constructs an identity that trolls Israelis by using the name "Dalton Jamari the 4th" instead of his real name

and by saying that he is from Jameryville, Wisconsin, Kentucky. This name is adhered to by his followers. This American, Western masculine image allows him to be taken seriously by the Israeli participants at the beginning of the dialogue.

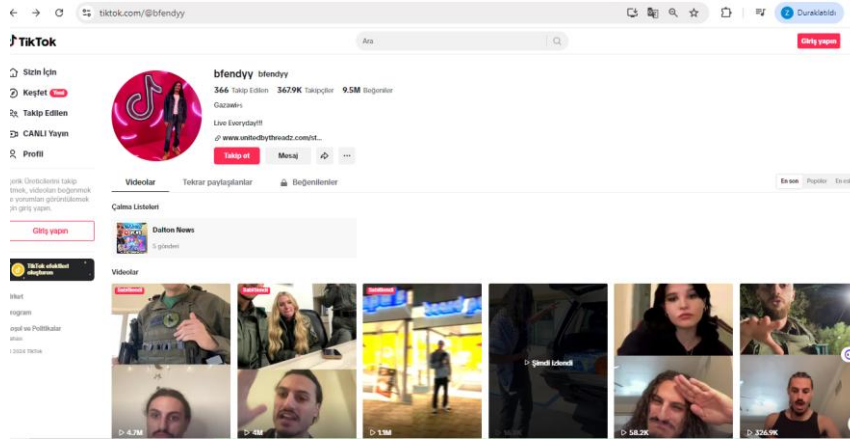


Fig. 5: bfendyy (Source: TikTok, 2024)

Another feature of his performance is the insertion of the phrase "We salute you in the Jahanum" between his speeches, especially when he salutes the soldiers. Bilal occasionally turns away from the screen and pretends to be talking to his mother, who is not visible on the screen, using the phrase 'mom'. In between his speeches, he uses phrases such as "andy mandy chicken blandy," which distracts the other person's attention. When talking about Palestine and the occupation, he repeats the words 'Shawarmamarination occupation' like a nursery rhyme. When talking to Israelis, he intersperses the words 'shanary gary' in the form of sobs. At the end of the videos, he reveals his real identity by saying "Ana Gazawi" (I am Gazan!) and explains that he is trolling Israelis.

Bilal notes that he is sometimes criticized for not arguing with Israelis and not trying to convince them, and he explains that he has limits on what can and cannot be discussed: "You can talk about the genocide, but you cannot discuss it." He explains his orientation as follows: "I cannot allow them to justify the genocide. I'll troll them, expose them, and make you laugh, but you can't discuss the genocide" (Bilal Nassar, 2024a) He is trying to shatter the Zionist image of moral superiority and victimhood by inviting them to speak. He let them shatter it, indeed. This form of content continues the playful character of TikTok and points to the resistance aspect of humor that belittles the sovereign. The Israelis who participated in Bilal Nassar's broadcasts are analyzed in two groups: soldiers and adults.

- *Talking to Soldiers*

In one video we see an Israeli soldier on the front line with a rifle in his hand, to whom Bilal salutes in a mocking tone, "Thank you for your service to jeheynemm." The Israeli soldier asks, "Did you say jeheynemm, what do you mean by jeheynemm?" Bilal replies, "No, I did not say jeheynemm, I thanked you for your service." The Israeli soldier, who we learned was a border guard, says, "Let me show you what happened. Bilal says, "Mommy! He is showing me something, Mommy!" The Israeli soldier says he is at the Rafah border." Bilal says, "Rafah? Is it that close?" The Israeli soldier says, "Yes, 15 minutes." Bilal says "15 minutes walk, no problem, can you walk 15 minutes and go there and check on my family?" and explains that he is from Gaza. When the soldier et surprised, Bilal said, "Yes, they are in Rafah, but we don't know which

part they are in now. Because you keep harming them by constantly moving them." When the Israeli soldier tries to say something, Bilal says, "First, put your gun down, there is no one around you. Second, get water and food and bring it to my family, bring it to the other people there and leave the Palestinians alone." When the soldier wants to talk, Bilal says, "Mommy, he wants to talk to me, let me listen to your speech" and when the Israeli soldier starts to talk, he snores and does the line to go to sleep and then says sorry, wakes up and ends the video by saying, "You continue to do evil, straight to hell" (Bilal Nassar, 2024b).

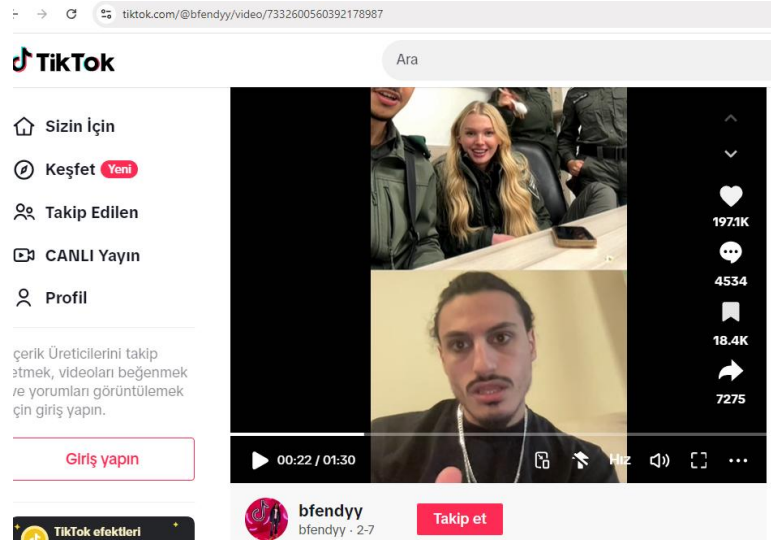


Fig.6: bfendyy (Source: TikTok, 2024)

Another video shows three female Israeli soldiers, one male, sitting in an office. The women look well-groomed, as if they have just come from the hair salon. One of the female soldiers in this video has long blonde hair, while the other has dark hair and wears makeup. Bilal, who goes by the name Dalton, energetically says "Soldier, IDF" and makes the kawabunga gesture with his hand as a greeting. Then he says: "Listen, I'm Dalton Jamari the 4th, I've seen all the videos between you and them, what do you call them Khimes, Khames?". The soldiers correct him, "Hamas." In the later part of this video where Bilal is trolling Israeli soldiers, he chants "cawa bangastal, free Palestine from the river to the sea." The female soldier gets surprised "from the river to the sea?" Bilal says "I am Palestinian" and winks. The female soldier asks where in Palestine he is from. Bilal says he is from Gaza. The male soldier states "We erased Gaza" and shows the delete key on the keyboard in front of him. Bilal repeats, "You erased it" (Bilal Nassar, 2024c).

In another video, at one point in the dialogue, the Israeli soldier says, "My best friend is in al-Khalil and he is now shooting them." When Bilal, who goes by the name Dalton, asks how many he has shot, the soldier says 12. When Bilal confirms, "He has killed 12 people, kids?" the soldier says, "No, just terrorists," arguing that all those killed were terrorists. Bilal goes, "Shaneri Gary, no way." and asks, "Is your friend in Gaza now?" The soldier says yes. He goes further with, "Can your friend control my family, I am from Gaza" (Bilal Nassar, 2024d).

Another example is the video where he talks to an Israeli soldier guarding the prisoners at the Rafah border. When Bilal asks why they blindfolded the prisoners, the Israeli soldier says that they took them as hostages and blindfolded them so that the Palestinians would not know which

way they had come and where they were (Bilal Nassar, 2024e). In these videos, Bilal also gets the soldiers to confess to the crimes they committed against the prisoners and other civilians.

- *Talking to Adults*

Bilal appears in a video with a curly wig on his head while talking to a young Israeli adult. In this video, Bilal says that his name is Jahsen McNill and that he saw the videos of what happened. He then says that a friend of his showed him a video yesterday and that he is very, very sad. He says that the video shows an Israeli child being attacked by a Palestinian dog. The Israeli confirms this and asks, "Did you hear about October 7th?" Bilal sarcastically says he did and asks, "Why did the Palestinian let the dog attack the poor boy? He had Down's syndrome, why did they do that?" The Israeli says, "Because Hamas is a terrorist organization... Hamas wants to kill all Jews, not just our country." Bilal gets the Israeli to confirm that he has seen the video, and then as they talk about it, he reveals the real story he reversed and starts telling the truth. "This is not good, I feel very sorry for this child, this child's name is Mohammed Bahar and he is in heaven now. He was Palestinian." The Israeli man insists on saying no. As Bilal speaks, the news from the BBC and other news channels on the attack appears on the screen. Bilal angrily says that he reversed the real story and the boy was not Israeli but Palestinian, repeating his name several times. The Israeli becomes aggressive and swears at this point. When Bilal finally says that he is also Palestinian, the Israeli asks Bilal to listen to him. Bilal says he is listening, and the Israeli swears when Bilal does the line about sleeping and snoring while he is talking. At the end of the video, news reports and photos of the murder of Muhammad Bahar appear (Bilal Nassar, 2024f).

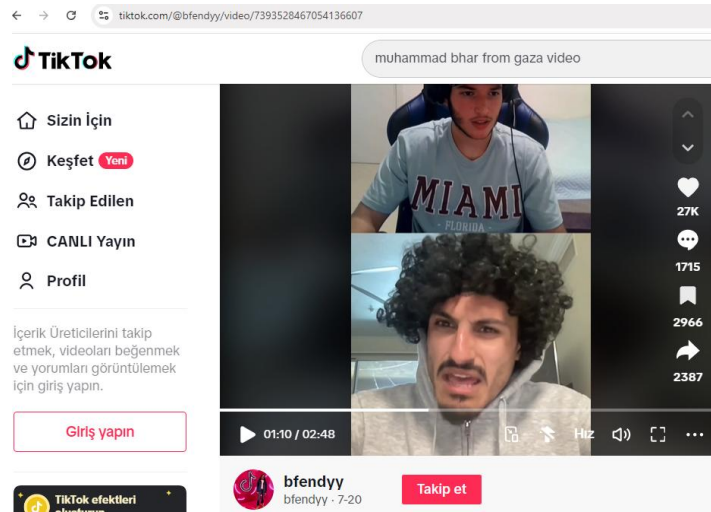


Fig.7. bfendyy (Source: TikTok, 2024)

An Israeli man in his 70s joins the show with Bilal, who again introduces himself as Dalton and says that he lives in the US, adding that he loves Jews. In the ensuing dialogue, Bilal asks, "Do you win?" and the man says, "Always." Bilal laughs, then the man says, "If your president doesn't hold our hand... your president holds our hand, he won't let us finish our work." Bilal asks, "How are you going to get rid of the Palestinians?" and the old Israeli man says, "You can't, they all have to be killed, there is no solution, they all have to be killed. Soon America will be dangerous for Muslims" (Bilal Nassar, 2024g).

Bilal makes visible the extent to which Israeli civilians support and justify war and genocide. He also shows that the alliance between Israel and Western states is the cause of war crimes: his

American white male image allows Israelis to talk to him freely. After these videos, Bilal, like Hamzah Saadah, became widely known and targeted in Israel.

6. Conclusion

Palestine's territorial fragmentation means that Palestinians live under different conditions, cultures, and legal and administrative policies. These differences, often accompanied by great hardship, differentiate their survival strategies and their relationship to Palestinian identity. The Internet and social media offer new opportunities to overcome these differences and to struggle together in a common imaginary of a homeland. Palestinians who cannot overcome the walls and checkpoints are using social media tools such as TikTok, YouTube and X (Twitter), starting with websites and blogs, to deconstruct the settler-colonial history and build the national body of Palestine through the "digital floating homeland".

Accounts that operate in the digital space and publish content that supports the Palestinian cause obviously face many obstacles. In addition to practices such as account deletion, content removal, terrorism stigmatization, and shadow banning, Israeli counter-activism through institutional structures such as hasbara also draws attention. The ownership and funding model of social media platforms also makes it easier for powerful states and capital groups to pressure opposition activist groups in this space. As Israel's attacks on Gaza continued, platforms such as Meta, X, and TikTok attempted to prevent the spread of anti-Israel information and content. However, the multiple structures of social media and the ongoing experimentation with user initiatives and new strategies partially undermine censorship.

This study focuses on and describes the experiences of two well-known digital activists of Palestinian origin who use direct encounters with Israelis in their broadcasts. In the aftermath of October 7, 2002, while the Israeli attacks were still ongoing, these public discussions revealed the prevalence of discourses in Israeli society that justify the aggression and genocidal massacre of civilians.

Despite their different styles of communication and performance, the two activists discussed in the study have published content by highlighting their Palestinian identity and the Israeli attacks that developed after October 7 and turned into a massacre of civilians. Their different personalities, comedian and gamer, were transformed into political activists in the process. As the attacks intensified, the two activists, as Palestinians in exile, tried to confront the colonizer, who has unrestricted access to the Internet in their war-torn country.

Hamzah Saadah's status as a Tiktok celebrity with over a million followers reverses the relationship of authority in the digital space. Israelis, who have a say in the lives of Palestinians and represent the sovereign, experience a form of communication and engagement in which a Palestinian social media celebrity decides when and how to talk about the Palestinian issue. Hamzah, with the power that comes from his fame, is put in the position of deciding how information about Palestine is produced and framed on the platform he broadcasts from. Israelis who desire to appear on Hamzah's show are motivated by the belief that Hamzah is lying about the issue, and are motivated to correct that lie at its source, to justify the actions of the State of Israel, or to claim that they are right. Israeli adults in particular tune in to say that Hamzah is confusing and manipulating children and teenagers by shouting the official Israeli state narrative. When Hamzah calls on Israelis to speak out and be visible, Israelis speak out aggressively. Israelis who think they are right and try to prove it by appearing on Hamzah's

program show a hateful, supremacist and racist face of Israeli society. Hamzah's calm and probing questions often cause the Israelis to become more aggressive and rarely probing.

Bilal, on the other hand, uses his lesser-known status at the beginning to establish a virtual American, Western male persona to establish dominance over the Israeli participants and give them the impression that they can speak freely. This leads them to reveal their crimes towards the end of the dialogue. However, at the end of the dialogue, when he introduces himself as a Palestinian, he uses his dominant position to launch attacks that indict the Israeli soldiers and undermine their claim to moral superiority. Bilal, unlike Hamzah, does not engage in debate with the Israelis, allowing them to speak freely about the attacks with the Western image he presents, and then tries to shock them by saying that he is Palestinian.

Both activists' publications are dominated by the soldiers' desire to be seen from the frontline. Believing that their actions are supported by the public, they prefer to engage in social media interaction and show themselves even in the midst of war. In these publications, both Israeli soldiers and teenagers display discourses that promote hatred and war crimes with the confidence of impunity and unquestionability. They often justify the deaths of civilians, claiming that the enemy community is being deservedly punished. The children killed are the future enemy.

Both activists speak to Israelis from within the Western world, the world dominated by the English language, so the audience of the official narrative of the Israelis participating in the broadcast is the Western world. Even the participants in Hamzah's broadcast, who are already known to be of Palestinian origin, are not trying to convince an Arab, but rather to challenge the narrative of an Arab positioned within the Western world, and to make their voices heard in the Western world by refuting the Arab they are dealing with. The general discourse of the Israelis participating in the shows reflects their assumption of the inequality of Palestinians as people and communities.

These videos also reveal the uneven impact of the war on the daily lives of Israelis and Palestinians. Young Israeli social media users can connect from anywhere; they try to justify their demands with constant access while applying makeup, eating, sunbathing, in the bedroom, on the front lines, everywhere. In contrast, the destruction of Palestinian daily life is expressed by the Israeli participants themselves. The Israelis show their comfortable lives while maintaining the narrative that they are victims and have been victimized. At the same time, they maintain the construction of Western public opinion, mostly European and American public opinion, that they are modern and civilized, real human beings so to speak, while comparing the Palestinians to a less than human status. In this way, they construct the difference between those who deserve to live and those who deserve to die. This is the contribution of the two Palestinian activists. With these broadcasts, they reverse the media-constructed status of Israelis as victims and moral superiors. Israelis are called upon to speak out about the genocide Israel is committing in Gaza. Activists and Israelis discuss the cause and scope of the attacks, the civilian-military distinction, the Palestinian right to life, and the crimes of war and genocide. As a result, Palestinian social media influencers living in the United States, away from their homeland, which they reconnected with during the attacks, began producing and sharing content that reversed Israel's government of the perceptions and emotions.

These activists invited Israelis into the digital public sphere and presented an image to the world community. Ultimately, the vast majority of Israeli society adheres to the official Israeli discourse and does not deviate from the narrative conveyed through the media and educational institutions. As a result, they do not see the Palestinians as equals and human beings, and are therefore not open to public negotiations with the Palestinians. The Palestinian exile activists discussed in this study reverses the relationship of sovereignty in digital space. Through the Israelis they broadcast, they seek to expose Israeli society's complicity with the state that commits crimes against humanity in Palestine. Through this activism, they demonstrate that the myth of a civilized, democratic, and human rights-respecting Israel and its army, set in opposition to the savage, anti-democratic, and non-human rights-respecting East, does not represent reality.

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