

# The Dehumanization of Palestinians: Foucauldian Analysis

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## **Abstract**

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially after October 7, 2023, has attracted significant attention from the international community. Although global sympathy for Palestinian victims is increasing, online spaces are also witnessing a rapid increase in hate speech by Israelis against Palestinians. This research aims to analyze how the Israeli government employs tactics of governmentality to produce and sustain social control, drawing on Michel Foucault's theoretical framework. Furthermore, this study examines the government's indoctrination efforts against Israelis, which culminates in the construction of a narrative of dehumanization and the cultivation of hatred against Palestinians. This study used a descriptive qualitative method and used a literature review for data collection. The findings show that the indoctrination carried out by Israel, built through the discourse of dehumanization of Palestine (the regime of truth), has succeeded in instilling hatred of Palestinians among Israelis. This indoctrination and discourse formation effort is carried out through a number of mechanisms, such as the conscription system, the instrument of nationalism, and the formation of a collective perception of Israel.

**Keywords:** *dehumanization, digital propaganda, governmentality, Israel-Palestine conflict, regime of truth*

## **Abstrak**

Konflik Israel-Palestina, khususnya setelah 7 Oktober 2023, telah menarik perhatian signifikan dari komunitas internasional. Meskipun simpati global terhadap korban Palestina meningkat, ruang daring juga menyaksikan peningkatan pesat ujaran kebencian oleh warga Israel terhadap Palestina. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana pemerintah Israel

memproduksi dan mempertahankan kontrol sosial melalui taktik-taktik *governmentality* dalam kerangka pemikiran Michel Foucault. Lebih lanjut, penelitian ini mengkaji upaya indoktrinasi pemerintah terhadap warga Israel, yang berpuncak pada pembangunan narasi dehumanisasi dan pemupukan kebencian kepada warga Palestina. Studi ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dan menggunakan tinjauan pustaka untuk pengumpulan data. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa indoktrinasi yang dilakukan oleh Israel, yang dibangun melalui wacana dehumanisasi Palestina (rezim kebenaran), berhasil menanamkan kebencian terhadap Palestina di kalangan warga Israel. Upaya indoktrinasi dan pembentukan wacana ini dilakukan melalui sejumlah mekanisme, seperti sistem wajib militer, instrumen nasionalisme, dan pembentukan persepsi kolektif Israel.

**Kata kunci:** propaganda digital, pemerintahan, rezim kebenaran, konflik Israel-Palestina, dehumanisasi.

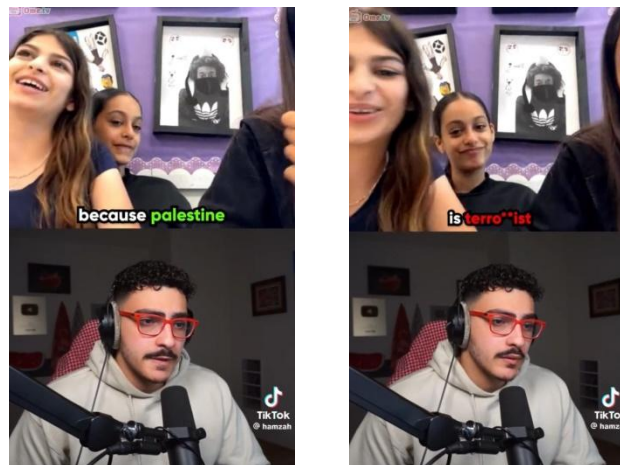
## Introduction

After the Hamas attack on Gaza on October 07, 2023, the Israeli government retaliated with the declaration of war, Operation Iron Sword, in the Gaza Strip, Palestine. Israel targeted attacks on various places, including buildings, hospitals, and settlements. After 49 days of fighting, Israel and Hamas agreed to a humanitarian pause. This humanitarian pause lasted for seven days (November 24, 2023-December 1, 2023). After the humanitarian pause, the fighting continued to get fiercer with casualties, especially the people of Gaza, Palestine (Nugroho, 2023). Israel said that the war with Hamas could be stopped if they managed to eradicate Hamas (Lesmana, 2024). According to data reported by the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza and quoted by Anadolu Agency (2025), as of early November 2025, the number of fatalities due to Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023, has reached around 65,283 people, while the number of injured was recorded at 166,575 people. The report confirmed that most of the victims were civilians, including women and children, with thousands more still declared missing under the rubble of buildings. Independent sources, including UN agencies and international humanitarian agencies, estimate that the figure is likely to be undercounted due to the large number of inaccessible areas and the disruption of the recording system caused by the destruction of infrastructure in Gaza (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 2025).

The Israeli–Palestinian conflict continues to attract extensive attention and sympathy from the international community. However, in the digital era, this sympathy has also been accompanied by an increase in online hostility. Many Israeli social media

users have taken advantage of moments of heightened tension to disseminate hate speech and share photos or videos that ridicule Palestinian victims. As Wulandari and Fazri (2024) observe, social media platforms have become powerful instruments in shaping and intensifying the conflict's digital dimension. Social media plays a central role in the diffusion of narratives, information, and opinions across transnational audiences. The circulation of such content influences how the general public interprets and responds to the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Sholehkatina et al., 2024). Within this dynamic, digital society itself emerges through continuous interaction among individuals across multiple online environments. According to Diyauddin (2022), these interactions serve as a key reference point for collective understanding and can even shape subsequent events and public behavior.

Furthermore, digital platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram have evolved from simple communication tools into arenas of ideological contestation. They now serve as spaces for broadcasting tension, disseminating conflicting information, constructing public opinion, and propagating hate speech (Pradita Sicca, 2021). The interplay between these digital platforms and political conflict demonstrates how technology mediates the production of truth and the normalization of hostility in contemporary information societies.



**Figure 1. Israeli teen says Palestinians are terrorists (Source: Tiktok @Hamzah)**

In addition to spreading hate speech on social media, the Israeli government carried out military attacks using a dehumanization strategy (Maharani & Amrullah, 2023). Israel uses a dehumanization discourse strategy because it considers other

people (Palestinians) as less human. The dehumanizing discourse indoctrinated by the Israeli government can bring Israeli citizens into humans who have no compassion. So that the Israeli government attacks inhumanely and has no remorse. The Israeli government also dehumanizes and legitimizes war crimes and the death of Palestinian civilians (Maharani & Amrullah 2023).

This research is significant because it highlights the dangers of state-led indoctrination and discourse formation conducted by the Israeli government, particularly through digital media platforms. Previous studies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have primarily focused on journalistic objectivity and human rights violations without deeply addressing how governmental discourse operates within the digital sphere. For example, Prawira et al. (2021) analyzed the objectivity of Indonesian media reporting on the Israel–Palestine conflict, while Wahidin and Wati (2024) emphasized the conflict as a form of human rights violation that has caused massive civilian casualties in both regions. However, existing research rarely explores how the Israeli government utilizes digital platforms to normalize hate speech and reproduce dehumanization narratives among its citizens. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by combining Foucault’s theory of governmentality with critical discourse analysis to investigate the Israeli government’s use of doctrinal power to shape public perception through digital communication. The novelty lies in examining dehumanization not merely as a psychological process but as a governmental tactic—a deliberate mechanism of social control that operates through online narratives, education, and military institutions. This approach integrates Foucault’s (1991) work on power and knowledge with recent discussions on digital governance and hate speech (Khosravinik & Esposito, 2018; Haslam, 2006), offering a fresh interdisciplinary lens that previous studies have not addressed.

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods to describe phenomena in the form of words by collecting data in the form of pictures and writings. The author uses secondary sources as reference material for research data whose sources come from literature such as books, journals, social media, theses, articles, and other supporting literature. In data collection techniques, the author uses documentation in the form of images as data and information used in research (Irawan, 2019). The research concept used by the author is the concept of governmentality and regime of truth in the Foucauldian tradition.

## The Production of Doctrine as Regime of Truth and Governmentality

In general terms, doctrine refers to a system of beliefs or principles that seeks to present the truth and guide behavior. Its meaning differs across disciplines. In political science, doctrine functions as a policy or principle established by the government in exercising power and organizing the state (Yulianto, 2023). It can also be viewed as teaching or dogma that shapes individuals' cognition and social practices (Kiswanto, 2023). Within governance, doctrine contributes to the creation of norms that may be formalized in legal decisions or statutory regulations, thus serving as an indirect source of law (Sofian, 2016).

From a Foucauldian perspective, doctrine is more than a collection of beliefs; it is a discursive mechanism that produces and sustains what Foucault (1980) calls a "regime of truth." A regime of truth refers to the ensemble of rules, institutions, and procedures that determine which statements are accepted as true and which are dismissed as false. Truth, in this view, is not universal or neutral—it is constructed through relations of power and knowledge. Doctrine, therefore, functions within a regime of truth by legitimizing specific ideas and marginalizing others. Political, legal, and military doctrines organize and circulate specific truths that align with the interests of dominant institutions, thus reinforcing existing power structures.

In the field of law, doctrine represents a mode of producing legal truth and authority. It determines the interpretive framework for judicial and legislative decisions (Kumparan, 2024). This process reflects what Foucault (1972) terms discursive formation—a system that governs the production, circulation, and regulation of statements within an institutional order. In the military, doctrine embodies strategic and tactical rationalities that define appropriate conduct in warfare and national defense (Ryan et al., 2013). These doctrines produce truth about security, threat, and national interest, thereby legitimizing the expansion of state power. Similarly, national defense doctrines construct a truth regime that identifies and categorizes threats—political, economic, technological, or ideological—thus sustaining the rationale for surveillance and control (Defense, 2014).

In the context of governmentality, Foucault (1991) expands the notion of power beyond domination to the "conduct of conduct," meaning the rationalities and techniques through which individuals and populations are governed. Doctrine, in this sense, becomes a technology of governmentality—a tool for managing how people think, behave, and relate to the state. Doctrines function as instruments that produce subjects who internalize state-sanctioned truths and norms. For example, legal doctrines govern citizens through the internalization of legality and justice, while

military doctrines govern through discipline, security, and obedience. Thus, doctrine operates not only through coercion but also through normalization, shaping the very conditions of freedom within which individuals act.

Discourse, as Rohana and Syamsuddin (2015) define, is a series of linguistic acts within social communication. However, Foucault (1978) redefines discourse as a productive system that constructs knowledge, subjectivity, and power relations. Discourse determines what can be said, who can speak, and under what authority. It establishes the limits of possible thought and action, creating subjects that embody the norms of their discursive formation. Through governmentality, discourses are used to manage populations by producing forms of knowledge—such as statistics, legal codes, and policies—that render individuals governable.

As Pradana et al. (2022) note, discourse cannot be separated from the interplay of knowledge and power. Governments, as dominant producers of discourse, construct regimes of truth that sustain authority and legitimacy. This aligns with Foucault's (1980) claim that each society has its regime of truth, produced and maintained through institutions such as law, media, education, and politics. Doctrines and discourses, therefore, are not neutral reflections of reality but are integral to the functioning of power—they shape what counts as accurate, who is governed, and how governing is justified.

Through Foucault's concepts of regimes of truth and governmentality, doctrine and discourse can be understood as interdependent technologies of power—doctrine establishes the framework through which truth is produced and legitimized. In contrast, discourse circulates and internalizes that truth within society. In the context of Israeli government policy, this dynamic is evident in the institutionalization of Zionist ideology within the national education curriculum, where students are taught to accept and internalize Zionism as an unquestionable truth. This process is reinforced through social media narratives, the cultivation of nationalism via mandatory military service, and discursive practices that dehumanize Palestinians, all of which function as mechanisms of control sanctioned and normalized by state policies. Ultimately, these practices exemplify how truth and knowledge production serve as instruments of governance and social regulation.

### **Israeli Sovereignty and Palestinian Existence**

Every country needs sovereignty recognized by the world, so it can govern its country in peace and regulate all matters related to it without interference from other

countries. State sovereignty is a symbol of power in the state (Arnaiz, 2022). Sovereignty is the supreme power under which there is a series of laws and rules that exist in a country. Sovereignty has an absolute nature, namely, the full power held by the government over its people. It is a form of government that defends and protects a country from threats from other countries (Darussalam & Indra, 2021). This power is exercised by the government to lead society and establish control and order through its tactics (Al Farauqi, 2022). The main purpose of the formation of a sovereign state is the welfare of its citizens and the establishment of beneficial cooperation with other countries (Arnaiz, 2022). This is what the Israeli government does in defending and claiming the sovereignty of its country.

Before the formation of the state of Israel, the Balfour Agreement was a very influential declaration for the Jewish people. This declaration was officially formed on November 2, 1917. This declaration was motivated by a British Jew who was credited for creating a weapon formula to help win the war. The content of this declaration states that the British government approves of the establishment of Jewish land in the Palestinian territories and strives to make this goal easy to achieve. The establishment of this declaration was happy news for the Jews, especially Zionists, because they could control the Palestinian territories. This declaration became the basis for international support so that the Jews could establish the state of Israel (Fakhrudin, 2019).

Thousands of Jews began to enter the Palestinian territories and succeeded in establishing a colony and base that aimed to control areas in Palestine and planned to make the area the state of Israel (Adhim & Yuliaty, 2021). The Jews who had occupied the Palestinian territories, they immediately made a proclamation aimed at forming a state (Fakhrudin, 2019). On May 14, 1948, the Jews declared that they had succeeded in establishing the state of Israel with its territorial boundaries. The day after, on May 15, 1928, the United States also recognized the de facto formation of the state of Israel, along with the Soviet Union, which recognized Israel's sovereignty de jure (Adhim & Yuliaty, 2021).

The Jews made their claim to land in Palestine based on four premises. First, God had promised the land to the Jewish patriarch Abraham. Second, the settled Jewish people had the right to develop the land. Third, the international community granted political sovereignty in Palestine to the Jews. Fourth, the territory had been captured in a defensive war. "Promised land" is a term used by the Jews to describe their promised homeland as a strong basis for their territorial claims in the land of Palestine (Sabry, 2010). Israel's claim to the city of Jerusalem as the capital includes Israeli sovereignty, especially since the establishment of Israel, the United States established an official embassy in Tel Aviv, which aims to establish a strong cooperative relationship with Israel

(Habibilah, 2022). This goal is Jewish sovereignty over all land, including the Palestinian territories, so that infrastructure development is strengthened by the Israeli government, so that this strategy can strengthen claims to areas considered by Israel (Al-Dajani, 2018).

After the establishment of the state of Israel, the Israeli government established an agency that represented the Jewish people. The agency was called the Jewish Agency. This agency is a consultation of the Jewish people while they occupy the Palestinian territories. It is also part of the Zionist organization and has its own military. As a government agency, the Jewish Agency began to carry out the doctrine that the territory they now successfully occupy is indeed the territory that has been determined for them (Islamiyah & Trilaksana, 2016). In addition, Israel considers that Palestine is the root of the problem and is not considered as a nation-state. At the same time, Israel is a democratic country surrounded by enemies and continuously fighting the Palestinian people (Akesseh, 2023).

This is the beginning of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. This conflict began in the early 20th century. Some areas, such as the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the eastern part of Jerusalem, were successfully controlled by Israel (Respati, 2023). In 1936-1939, the newly formed Arab National Committee called on Palestinians to agree to resistance in the form of boycotting Jewish products, not paying taxes, and going on a general strike. The resistance resulted in their homes being forcibly demolished and forced arrests as punishment for resistance (Alsaafin, 2023). The uprising continued led, by the Palestinian peasant resistance movement. On May 14, 1948, the Zionist military conducted a military operation called the Nakba or ethnic cleansing of Palestine. The military operation began to destroy Palestinian towns and villages to expand the area that would become new territory for the Zionist state (Alsaafin, 2023).

The Zionist movement that controlled the Palestinian territories left the Palestinians homeless and forced them to flee from their territory. After the many problems that existed, the Palestinians finally formed Hamas, which aims to fight Israel by using weapons. The incident triggered an ongoing armed uprising and caused damage to the Palestinian infrastructure and economy (Alsaafin, 2023). Hamas is a resistance movement that describes an attack as a response to what is referred to as decades of Israeli oppression, the killing of Palestinians, and the blockade of the Gaza Strip. The attacks carried out by Hamas are a reaction to what has been claimed as an Israeli attempt to take over the Al-Aqsa mosque complex in Jerusalem, as one of the holy sites for Muslims. Hamas also wants the release of thousands of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons (BBC, 2024).

For Hamas, the Israeli Zionist movement threatens the existence of Palestinians in the occupied territories. This movement is in the form of expansion of Jewish settlements, Israeli control over the Al-Aqsa mosque, and the Israeli blockade (siege) of Gaza, so Hamas carried out military resistance to Israel as an effort to oppose Israel. However, the Israeli government conducts a discourse in the form of dehumanization that aims to make the Palestinian people leave Palestine (Sabry, 2010). One of the efforts that must be made by the Palestinians in defending their land from Israel is by rebuilding damaged infrastructure and trying to carry out development in areas that are still empty and vulnerable to unilateral control by Israel. In addition, the remaining areas of Gaza and the West Bank will determine the existence of the Palestinian state in the future. Thus, Palestine must defend these two areas so that the existence of Palestine will not be lost (Kaslam, 2021). Existence is something that everyone must have. Factors that can help someone to exist include education, religion, politics, economics, and so on (Abdillah, 2017).



**Figure 2. Palestinian territory from time to time that Israel successfully controlled (Source: Detik.com, 2023)**

### **Doctrine and Discourse : Dehumanization and Domination of Palestinians**

Discourse in general is the language used daily in both oral and written form. Discourse is an utterance that has unity and context, for example, a speech script, a direct conversation, meeting notes, or a debate (Wekke, 2019). Discourse is a term that can accommodate a form cultural life in which there is criticism, a social practice that cannot be separated from elements of knowledge and power. In this case, the government, which is classified as a powerful group, can produce discourse that aligns with the process of operating discourse. Discourse in social practice has been used by the Israeli government when attacking Palestine, this social practice is in the form of dehumanizing discourse against Palestinians (Pradana et al., 2022).

Dehumanization is a behavior or process that devalues a person and sees another person not as a human being but as an object that lacks feelings and life. This can happen when someone is not considered important or worthy because they have certain differences. For example, race, skin color, social status, etc. (Pawestri, 2024). Basically, dehumanization is divided into two basic levels. The first level is to degrade the morality and character of the Palestinians, because the Palestinians have a deep hatred for the Jews, so that it cannot be separated from their identity as Palestinians. The second level of dehumanization serves to legitimize violence against Palestinians. Since Israel has assumed that Palestinians have no morality and character, it is easy for them to portray Palestinians as a group of irrational and inhumane people. Israel assumes that there is no other way for them to communicate with the Palestinians other than violence. Because that is the only communication they understand in order to communicate with the Palestinians. The violence is sponsored by Israeli forces or non-state actors such as Israeli settlers. The act is said to be the destruction of Palestinians for the attacks carried out by the Israeli government (Al-Dajani, 2018).

Dehumanization can be said to be an easy narrative, especially when the state that carries out the practice is an oppressor and also a colonizer. It can be said to be an essential element in maintaining the population according to the standards of international law, humanity, and justice that must be agreed upon. The reason why any attempt to humanize Palestinians is considered deadly is that it can result in the end of the Israeli occupation and the evacuation of Israeli settlements, or the granting of full and equal rights to Palestinians, both of which Israel does not do in its current political arrangement (Al-Dajani, 2018).

In attacking the Palestinians, Israel runs a discourse through a dehumanization strategy so that it can massacre all Palestinians. The dehumanization that has been indoctrinated in Israeli soldiers makes them have no compassion when attacking

Palestinians. They also use this strategy to leave no regrets when launching attacks on Palestinians. Israel considers that the dehumanization strategy that they use against the Palestinians is an appropriate action and what they do is in accordance with the laws of war. The Israeli government also denigrates Palestinians and claims that they are immoral. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Gaza is a “city of evil”. He also said that every Palestinian who still lives in Gaza is allowed as a legitimate target of attack. With this, the discourse of dehumanizing Palestinians carried out by the Israeli government has succeeded because, during the conflict, Israeli soldiers have attacked and massacred Palestinians without having the slightest compassion (Maharani & Amrullah, 2023). This dehumanization strategy has been carried out by the Israeli government to attack the Palestinians (Masyrofah, 2015).

In addition to the discourse of dehumanization, the Israeli government also carries out a discourse of domination over the Palestinian state. The existence of a discourse of domination carried out by the Israeli government in the form of territorial seizure that has been ongoing, and this is the basis for the existence of the discourse of domination (Dinanti dkk, 2021). Since Israel was officially established, Israel has implemented a policy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Currently, almost the entire Palestinian territory has been dominated by Israel (O’Dell, 2024).

The author will discuss the Israeli government’s efforts to indoctrinate its citizens, which are divided into several discussions, namely doctrinal efforts through ideology, fostering a sense of nationalism through conscription, and utilizing technological advances by using social media as further material for doctrinal efforts carried out through hate speech.

#### **a. *Zionism Doctrine Through Pedagogical Curriculum***

Governmentality operates most effectively when it infiltrates the formative mechanisms of subject formation—most notably, education. In Israel, the school system is not merely a site for transmitting civic knowledge but a crucial instrument for producing citizens who internalize the moral legitimacy of the state’s actions and the delegitimization of its Palestinian counterpart. As Foucault (1977) theorized in *Discipline and Punish*, disciplinary institutions such as schools are central to the modern state’s ability to produce “docile bodies”: individuals who conform to social norms not through coercion, but through self-regulation and internalized obedience.

Zionism is an extension of what the Jews have done. The emergence of the Zionist movement was motivated by social, economic, political, cultural, and religious rights when they were oppressed and forced to live in diaspora in several countries. Zionism has historical roots, both ideologically and politically. The fundamental goal of

Zionism is to incite Jews to return to Palestine and build a state on Palestinian land (Satrianingsih, 2016).

The ideology of Zionism is fundamental to the Jewish people. There are two doctrines related to the Zionist movement and religious movements, as well as efforts to colonize Palestine, namely, Israel is God's chosen nation and the land promised by God. These two doctrines are important ideologies for the Jewish people both theologically, historically, politically, and economically (Sabry, 2010).

The Israeli government succeeded in instilling Zionist ideology in Israeli citizens by adding the curriculum to the ongoing education system. The Israeli government requires all secondary students to take an online government propaganda course before they can choose to continue their education abroad. This propaganda course is meant to promote racist ideologies that aim to instill in the minds of students that Palestinians are people who like and deserve the violence perpetrated by the Israeli government. In this way, the Israeli government has taught their citizens to hate Palestinians and anyone who stands in solidarity with them against oppression (Winstanley, 2019).

Peled-Elhanan's (2012) extensive semiotic analysis of Israeli textbooks demonstrates that Palestinians are systematically portrayed as culturally inferior, violent, and irrational—representations that serve as both pedagogical and political technologies. Maps in Israeli geography textbooks frequently omit Palestinian cities or depict Israel's borders as encompassing all territory west of the Jordan River, visually erasing the Palestinian presence. Similarly, history books describe wars as defensive struggles against "Arab aggression," thereby constructing a teleology of victimhood and moral righteousness. Through these visual and textual codes, the state's discourse of security and self-defense becomes embedded in the cognitive framework of young citizens before they encounter alternative narratives.

This pedagogical construction aligns with what Foucault (1980) called a regime of truth: a system in which certain statements about the past are rendered credible while others are marginalized or unspeakable. The 2020 Human Rights Watch report corroborates this dynamic, noting that official curricula omit or euphemize the Nakba, referring to it as an "Arab exodus" devoid of colonial or military causality. By removing the traumatic origin of Palestinian displacement, education becomes a mechanism of epistemic violence—a process Gayatri Spivak (1988) also identifies as the silencing of the subaltern through control of knowledge production. In this sense, Israeli schooling exemplifies what Foucault (1972) termed the "archaeology of knowledge," where the institutional organization of discourse determines what can be remembered, commemorated, or forgotten.

Moreover, education extends beyond the classroom into cultural and ideological socialization programs such as Masa Israel Journey, Birthright Israel, and military-oriented youth movements like Gadna. These initiatives, often supported by state ministries and diaspora organizations, provide immersive experiences designed to cultivate loyalty and emotional attachment to the Zionist project. The pedagogical logic here is profoundly biopolitical: the state invests in shaping not just the intellectual convictions of its citizens but also their affective and corporeal orientation toward national identity. Participants are taught that defending Israel is synonymous with defending life itself—thus naturalizing the coupling of nationalism and survival.

This is an exemplary case of what Foucault (1978) identifies as biopower: the power to “make live and let die.” The educational system, in collaboration with cultural institutions, teaches citizens to value Israeli lives as inherently worth protecting while rendering Palestinian suffering invisible or morally deserved. Through this process, the politics of security becomes internalized as a moral instinct rather than a contested ideology. The result is a deeply ingrained subjectivity that conflates patriotism with vigilance and ethical virtue with obedience to state narratives. Israeli parents also do doctrine to their children by giving an understanding that after the war between Israel and Palestine is over, they will immediately move to occupy the territory. This becomes a basic understanding for Israeli children that what the Israeli government is doing is right (Kharroub, 2023).



**Figure 3. Israeli children who say that Palestine is their land (Source: Instagram @abdullahoodmedia)**

**b. Doctrine Using Social Media**

A significant component of Israeli governmentality lies in the media's construction of Palestinians as perpetual threats. A 2022 analysis by 7amleh – The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media found that 80% of Hebrew-language media coverage of Palestinians employs negative framing, with frequent associations to terrorism or violence. According to Bar-Tal and Schnell (2013), Israeli national identity has been historically built upon the “ethos of conflict,” which normalizes a siege mentality.

State-affiliated and commercial media often reproduce governmental narratives that align with military objectives. During the 2023 Gaza offensive, the Israeli Ministry of Information coordinated with mainstream outlets to “frame” the war as an existential defense, while marginalizing Palestinian civilian suffering. This is a quintessential Foucauldian practice of discursive power: by controlling the field of representation, the state does not need to censor but rather curates what counts as truth (Foucault, 1980). For example, according to a Haaretz investigation (Dec 2023), the Israeli government provided daily press briefings to television networks emphasizing “ Hamas brutality” while forbidding journalists from entering Gaza without military supervision. Such discursive control constructs a “regime of truth” in which empathy toward Palestinians becomes politically deviant.

The Israeli government uses social media as a tool to indoctrinate its citizens. Social media is a tool that can influence society at large, in which there is freedom and initiative that can make readers experience dependence on the news. In this case, social media also plays a very large role in influencing the content that is disseminated. This is what is used by the Israeli government in carrying out doctrinal actions against its people through social media, and normalizing that doctrine in the form of hate speech is a natural thing to do (Goncing & Syahrul, 2021).

Hate speech perpetrated by Israelis on social media is an attempt to attack Palestinians. The Palestinian social media watchdog stated more than 19.000 cases of hate speech and incitement content were spread on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter). This includes various forms of harmful content, with 50% being hate speech, 30% being fake news supporting violence and incitement, 48% being news about politics, and 32% being posts containing racism, gender, and religious discrimination (Zuraya, 2023).



**Figure 4. Israeli mocking Palestinian people in Tiktok**

**(Source: Youtube Tribun Jateng, 2023)**

Figure 4 is one example of how Israeli social media users created and shared videos mocking the suffering of Palestinian people, by mimicking the hardships or suffering experienced by Gazans.

**c. *Cultivating a sense of Nationalism through Conscription***

Conscription is one of the efforts implemented by the government because the benefits received by the state society are large. In addition to aiming for national defense, conscription aims to make people have a strong spirit of nationalism. Potential state threats are not only through military means but also non-military means, so that citizens who have participated in conscription will be militarily trained to be able to support a stronger national defense (Susdarwono, 2020).

The Israeli government established a military body that aims to protect the state of Israel and increase its military strength to face enemies. The Israel Defense Force (IDF) is a military body that is directly supervised by the government. In this case, the Israeli government involves Israeli citizens to participate in military service because this activity is one of the strengths of the state of Israel. The purpose of the Israeli government in forming this body is to protect Israel and Israel's independence and ensure security for its citizens (Immanuel et al., 2024).

The Israeli government has legally stipulated that Israeli citizens are required to serve in the military after they have reached the age of 18, with a provision of 3 years of service for men and 2 years of service for women (Sorongan, 2024). The Israeli

government also makes a number of exceptions for its citizens not to participate in military service, including married women, women who have children, men who are pursuing religious studies, and those who are not physically and mentally healthy. The Israeli government also imposes sanctions on its citizens who deliberately avoid military service by being detained behind bars for 30 days (Salsabila, 2023). With conscription, the Israeli government instills a sense of nationalism in its citizens through an attitude of love for the country and a high awareness of defending the country. State defense is the attitude and behavior of a citizen who is imbued with love for his country. Conscription can instill and teach one to be willing to sacrifice and prioritize the interests of the nation (Noor, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the enduring conflict between Israel and Palestine illustrates how state power operates through Foucault's notion of governmentality—where control is maintained not solely through force, but through the normalization of ideology, discourse, and social mechanisms. The Israeli government employs various technologies of power, including the dissemination of Zionist doctrine within the education system, nationalist indoctrination through military conscription, and the use of media to perpetuate narratives of dehumanization toward Palestinians. These strategies serve to shape citizens' beliefs and behaviors, producing a collective consciousness that views state actions as necessary and legitimate. By embedding ideology into everyday life, the state ensures that its authority and territorial ambitions are sustained through internalized acceptance rather than overt coercion.

Furthermore, the institutionalization of Zionism as both doctrine and discourse functions as a central mechanism for legitimizing domination over Palestinian territories and identities. The portrayal of Palestinians as threats, combined with the normalization of military aggression and occupation, constructs a moral framework in which violence is rationalized as defense. This intertwining of ideology, nationalism, and governance reveals how power operates through the creation and maintenance of "truths" that shape social reality. Ultimately, the Israeli government's strategies demonstrate that modern forms of domination are not merely imposed through law or military force but through the subtle and pervasive shaping of knowledge, belief, and identity within society.

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#### *Social Media Link*

<https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSMgoQwFU/>

<https://youtu.be/hpqOKpHaSdU?si=ltJwIDsgdNs5pgvw>

[https://www.instagram.com/reel/DC5\\_eVAzw5C/?igsh=cHpxdGowZDBxbWp4](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DC5_eVAzw5C/?igsh=cHpxdGowZDBxbWp4)