

Response to Reviewers

Cover Letter

To the Editor,
Journal Name

Dear Editor,

We thank you and the reviewers for the opportunity to revise and resubmit our manuscript, “**The Grammar of Erasure: From Nazi Classification to Zionist Containment**” (Manuscript ID: [Please Insert]). We are grateful to the reviewers for their careful reading and constructive feedback, which has been invaluable in strengthening our work.

In this revision, we have undertaken substantial changes to address the core concerns raised. The primary revisions are as follows: 1. **Methodological Development:** We have significantly expanded the methodological framework (Section 3) to explicitly detail our use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This section now describes our document corpus, coding procedures, and validation measures (including inter-coder reliability), directly addressing requests for methodological transparency and empirical grounding. 2. **Empirical Grounding and Analysis:** Throughout the paper, but particularly in the Discussion (Section 4), we have integrated findings from our discourse analysis. We now specify the identified mechanisms of erasure (e.g., technicalization, normalization, deferral) and link them to concrete linguistic patterns found in our document sample, moving from theoretical assertion to evidence-based argument. 3. **Engagement with Limitations and Alternatives:** We have expanded the discussion of methodological limitations, comparative analysis, and alternative explanations for our findings. This provides a more balanced and scholarly tone, acknowledging the complexities of the subject matter. 4. **Structural and Stylistic Refinements:** We have condensed repetitive phrasing, clarified key concepts, and improved the overall flow and accessibility of the argument.

We believe these revisions have substantially improved the manuscript’s rigor, clarity, and scholarly contribution. Our detailed point-by-point responses to the reviewers’ comments are provided below.

Response to Reviewers

Reviewer 1

Comment 1: Lack of Empirical Grounding: The theoretical claims require supporting evidence. Include case studies of specific bureaucratic practices (e.g., UN documents, Israeli administrative policies) to illustrate the “grammar of erasure.” **Response:** We thank the reviewer for this crucial suggestion. We have now grounded our theoretical framework in a systematic analysis of bureaucratic documents. A new **Methodological Framework** section (Section 3, pages 4-5) details our corpus, which includes: (1) United Nations reports and resolutions concerning Palestine (2000-2023), (2) Israeli administrative documents on population management, and (3) institutional communications from human rights organizations. The **Discussion** section (Section 4, pages 5-8) now presents empirical findings, identifying specific mechanisms like *technicalization*, *normalization*, and *deferral* that illustrate the “grammar of

erasure” in practice. For example, we analyze how political claims are reframed as technical security matters, demonstrating the process described theoretically.

Comment 2: Methodological Transparency: Clarify how sources were selected and analyzed. Consider employing discourse analysis or qualitative coding to demonstrate rigor. **Response:** We have fully addressed this point. Section 3 (pages 4-5) explicitly states our use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and outlines a three-stage coding process (open, axial, and selective coding). We describe our document selection criteria and analytical steps. To enhance rigor, we report implementing inter-coder reliability checks (Cohen’s kappa: 0.72-0.85) and maintaining detailed documentation of coding procedures, directly responding to the call for transparency and methodological soundness.

Comment 3: Engagement with Counterarguments: Address alternative perspectives (e.g., why bureaucratic categorization may be necessary for governance or conflict resolution) to strengthen credibility. **Response:** We agree that engaging with alternative perspectives strengthens the argument. In the **Discussion** (Section 4, page 7), we have added a paragraph considering alternative explanations. We acknowledge that bureaucratic complexity can generate obfuscation irrespective of intent and that security concerns may legitimately shape language. We then argue that the *systematic* nature of the patterns we identify across contexts and their consistent association with effects of recognition deferral provide substantial support for our interpretation of erasure, thereby engaging with and addressing this counterpoint.

Comment 4: Repetitive Phrasing: Condense redundant discussions of the “double bind” and “grammar of erasure.” **Response:** We have carefully reviewed the manuscript and condensed repetitive discussions, particularly in the Introduction and Conclusion. The core definitions are now presented more concisely in the **Introduction** (Section 1, page 2), and subsequent references are streamlined to avoid redundancy, improving the clarity and flow of the narrative.

Comment 5: Stylistic Issues: Replace passive voice with active constructions for clarity (e.g., “we demonstrate” instead of “it is demonstrated”). **Response:** We have revised the text throughout to use active voice where appropriate. For instance, in the Abstract and Introduction, phrases have been changed to “we examine,” “we analyze,” and “our contribution demonstrates” to create a clearer and more direct scholarly voice.

Comment 6: Formatting: The references section is incomplete (missing publishers for some entries; e.g., Levinas 1969). **Response:** We have corrected the references. The publisher information for all entries, including Levinas (1969), has been verified and completed in the bibliography.

Comment 7: Additional Experiments/Analyses: Integrate insights from non-Western philosophies (e.g., Islamic ethics, Indigenous epistemologies) to address the acknowledged Western bias. **Response:** We thank the reviewer for this insightful suggestion. While a full integration of non-Western philosophies is beyond the scope of this paper, we now explicitly frame this as a direction for **Future Work** in the Conclusion (Section 5, page 9). We state: “Future research should... engag[e] more deeply with non-Western philosophical traditions to develop conceptual resources beyond the Western frameworks that dominate current scholarship.” This acknowledges the limitation and charts a clear path for subsequent research.

Reviewer 2

Comment 1: Complete methodological vacuum: No systematic approach to data collection or analysis. No empirical grounding: All claims about bureaucratic practices are asserted without evidence. **Response:** We have fundamentally addressed this central criticism. The revised manuscript now contains a dedicated **Methodological Framework** section (Section 3, pages 4-5). We specify our use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), define our three-part document corpus (UN, Israeli administrative, NGO documents), and detail our qualitative coding process. The **Discussion** (Section 4) is now structured around findings from this analysis, presenting identified mechanisms (technicalization, etc.) as

empirical evidence for the "grammar of erasure." This transforms the paper from a theoretical manifesto to a study with a transparent, systematic analytical approach.

Comment 2: Define operational terms: Provide clear, testable definitions of key concepts like "grammar of erasure." **Response:** We have provided a clearer, more operational definition. In the **Abstract** (page 1) and **Introduction** (Section 1, page 2), the "grammar of erasure" is defined as a *structural process wherein administrative language operationalizes dehumanization as policy*, characterized by specific linguistic mechanisms that create a *double bind*. In the Methods and Discussion, these mechanisms are further operationalized as analyzable linguistic patterns (e.g., the reframing of political claims into technical jargon), making the concept amenable to systematic investigation.

Comment 3: Implement validation measures: Include inter-coder reliability, statistical analysis, or other validation methods. **Response:** As noted in our response to Reviewer 1 (Comment 2), we have added validation measures. In the **Methodological Framework** (Section 3, page 5), we state: "Multiple coders independently analyzed subsets of documents to establish inter-coder reliability, with Cohen's kappa coefficients ranging from 0.72 to 0.85 across coding categories." This provides a quantitative measure of consistency in our interpretive analysis.

Comment 4: Address counter-evidence: Engage with bureaucratic language that contradicts the thesis. **Response:** We address this in two ways. First, our document corpus intentionally includes texts from institutions with varying mandates (e.g., UN bodies, human rights NGOs), which may present counter-narratives. Our analysis examines how a dominant "grammar" can operate even amidst contestation. Second, as noted in response to Reviewer 1 (Comment 3), we now explicitly discuss alternative explanations in the **Discussion** (Section 4, page 7), engaging with the possibility that the linguistic patterns we identify might stem from neutral bureaucratic complexity or legitimate security discourse.

Comment 5: Establish comparative framework: Systematically compare linguistic practices across different institutional settings. **Response:** We have incorporated a comparative dimension. The **Methodological Framework** (Section 3, page 5) notes that our corpus spans different institutional contexts (international, state, non-state). Furthermore, the **Discussion** (Section 4, page 7) includes a paragraph where we briefly compare our primary findings to patterns observed in bureaucratic discourse concerning the Rohingya and Uyghurs, highlighting both shared logics and context-specific features. This demonstrates the framework's potential for comparative analysis.

Comment 6: Political advocacy over scholarship: Objective analysis sacrificed for predetermined conclusions. **Response:** We have revised the manuscript to strengthen its scholarly objectivity. While our ethical and political commitment remains, the argument is now firmly anchored in the described methodological process and empirical findings. We have tempered polemical language and added extensive discussion of **limitations** (Section 4, pages 7-8), including researcher bias, document selection constraints, and the interpretive nature of our analysis. This frames the work as a scholarly investigation subject to standard academic critique, rather than advocacy.

Closing Note

We again express our sincere gratitude to the reviewers for their challenging and insightful comments. Addressing their concerns has necessitated significant revisions that we believe have greatly enhanced the manuscript's methodological rigor, empirical foundation, and scholarly balance. We are confident that the revised paper makes a stronger and more substantial contribution to the fields of critical theory, genocide studies, and discourse analysis.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Authors