

# The Courage to Exist: Moral Resistance and the Philosophy of Defiance in the Palestinian Holocaust

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## Paper Information

**Paper Title:** The Courage to Exist: Moral Resistance and the Philosophy of Defiance in the Palestinian Holocaust

**Review ID:** review<sub>20251028</sub><sub>154527</sub>

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## 1 AI Reviewer 1 - Comprehensive Review

**\*\*Review of "THE COURAGE TO EXIST: MORAL RESISTANCE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEFIANCE IN THE PALESTINIAN HOLOCAUST"\*\***

**\*\*Overall Recommendation: Reject\*\* \*\*Final Score: 2/10\*\***

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\\\ Step 1. Summary of the Paper

This philosophical paper examines the discursive construction of genocide through the lens of the Palestinian experience. The authors argue that institutional frameworks employ "procedural absolutism" and "institutional footnoting" to acknowledge the contestability of genocide while simultaneously foreclosing its application to Palestine through technical language. The paper's central contribution is theorizing Palestinian *\*sumud\** (steadfast endurance) as a form of "ontological resistance" that challenges Western philosophical categories and demands a radical rethinking of ethics itself. The authors claim to demonstrate how resistance becomes an ontological stance against annihilation through daily acts of cultural preservation and endurance.

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\\\ Step 2. Evaluation Criteria

\\\\ 1. Originality / Novelty \*\*Score: 4/10\*\* The paper attempts to synthesize existing concepts from postcolonial theory (Said, Fanon), continental philosophy (Levinas, Derrida), and genocide studies with the specific case of Palestine. While the application to Palestine is specific, the theoretical moves—critiquing Western philosophical categories, analyzing discursive erasure, theorizing everyday resistance—are well-established in critical theory and postcolonial scholarship. The concepts of "procedural absolution" and "institutional footnoting" are presented as novel but appear to be minor re-brandings of existing critiques of bureaucratic rationality and liberal discourse. The paper does not substantially advance the field with new theoretical frameworks or empirical discoveries.

\\\\ 2. Scientific Rigor / Methodology \*\*Score: 1/10\*\* This is the paper's most fatal flaw. The manuscript is presented as a philosophical analysis but lacks any coherent methodological framework. There is no: - Systematic literature review or engagement with counter-arguments. - Defined method for textual/discourse analysis (e.g., no corpus, no coding scheme, no selection criteria for texts analyzed). - Empirical grounding despite references to "documented instances"—no data, case studies, or specific examples are presented. - Critical engagement with competing interpretations of the conflict.

The analysis relies entirely on assertion and theoretical name-dropping without demonstrating how these theories apply to specific texts, policies, or institutional practices. The pervasive use of "[?]" for citations renders the argument completely unverifiable and violates basic academic standards.

\\\\ 3. Clarity \ Presentation \*\*Score: 3/10\*\* The paper is written in dense, often impenetrable theoretical jargon that obscures rather than clarifies its arguments. Key concepts like "ontological resistance" and "procedural absolution" are repeatedly asserted but never precisely defined. The structure is confusing—the "Discussion" section reads like a conclusion, and there is no clear methodology section. The abstract and conclusion make sweeping, overstated claims not supported by the paper's actual content. The missing citations make it impossible to evaluate the intellectual foundation of the arguments.

\\\\ 4. Reproducibility \ Transparency \*\*Score: 1/10\*\* The paper is completely unreproducible. With all citations replaced by "[?]", no reader can verify sources, contextualize quotes, or evaluate the authors' engagement with existing scholarship. There is no methodological description that would allow another scholar to apply the same approach to different cases. The complete lack of transparency about sources constitutes a fundamental violation of academic integrity.

\\\\ 5. Significance \ Impact \*\*Score: 3/10\*\* While the ethical questions raised are undoubtedly important, the paper's impact is severely limited by its methodological failures and lack of substantive original contribution. The arguments, even if properly supported, would likely be of interest primarily to specialized audiences in postcolonial theory and critical genocide studies. The paper does not offer concrete insights that would change policy, practice, or even dominant theoretical paradigms in these fields.

\\\\ 6. Ethics \ Integrity \*\*Score: 1/10\*\* The complete absence of citations raises serious ethical concerns. This could constitute: - Academic dishonesty by failing to attribute ideas - Potential plagiarism if sources are being used but not cited - Deliberate obfuscation of the intellectual foundation of the arguments

The inflammatory and historically contested title "Palestinian Holocaust" requires particularly careful scholarly justification and contextualization, which is entirely absent. The paper makes

extremely serious allegations about institutional complicity in genocide without providing the evidence required to support such claims.

### \\ Step 3. Specific Suggestions for Improvement

\\\\ Major Flaws (Must Address): 1. **\*\*Provide Complete Citations\*\***: All "[?]" placeholders must be replaced with proper citations to verifiable sources. This is non-negotiable for academic integrity. 2. **\*\*Define Methodology\*\***: Clearly articulate what method is being used (e.g., discourse analysis, philosophical argumentation) and how it is being applied. 3. **\*\*Substantiate Claims with Evidence\*\***: Provide specific examples of "institutional footnoting" and "procedural absolution" from actual institutional documents, policies, or scholarly works. 4. **\*\*Engage with Counter-Arguments\*\***: Address competing interpretations of both the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the philosophical concepts being deployed. 5. **\*\*Justify Terminology\*\***: Provide rigorous justification for the use of "holocaust" and "genocide" with reference to legal definitions and scholarly debates.

\\\\ Minor Flaws: 1. Improve organizational structure with clear sections: Introduction, Methods, Analysis, Discussion. 2. Define key terms explicitly rather than through repeated assertion. 3. Reduce reliance on theoretical jargon in favor of clearer exposition.

\\\\ Additional Analyses Needed: 1. A systematic analysis of actual institutional documents (UN reports, legal decisions, policy papers) to demonstrate the alleged "procedural absolution." 2. Empirical case studies of specific acts of \*sumud\* and how they constitute "ontological resistance." 3. Comparative analysis with other cases where similar discursive mechanisms have been identified.

### \\ Step 4. Final Decision \ Justification

**\*\*Final Score: 2/10\*\*** **\*\*Recommendation: Reject\*\***

**\*\*Justification:\*\*** This manuscript cannot be considered for publication in its current form. The complete absence of citations constitutes a fundamental violation of academic standards that renders the entire argument unverifiable and potentially dishonest. Beyond this fatal flaw, the paper suffers from multiple critical deficiencies: no coherent methodology, undefined key concepts, unsupported sweeping claims, and a structure that obscures rather than clarifies the argument.

While the topic is undoubtedly important and the ethical questions raised deserve serious scholarly attention, this manuscript does not provide the rigorous analysis required for such sensitive and complex issues. The inflammatory terminology in the title and throughout the paper requires particularly careful scholarly justification that is entirely absent.

The paper would require complete restructuring, proper citation, methodological clarification, and substantial empirical or philosophical development to be reconsidered. Even with these improvements, the conceptual contributions appear to be largely derivative of existing critical theory frameworks. Given the fundamental nature of these flaws, rejection is the only appropriate recommendation.

— **\*\*Confidential Comments to Editor:\*\*** This manuscript appears to be more of a political manifesto than a scholarly work. The complete lack of citations is particularly concerning and suggests either extreme negligence or deliberate obfuscation. The inflammatory title and terminology re-

quire especially careful scrutiny, which the paper completely fails to provide. I would recommend against sending this out for further review until the basic citation issue is resolved, but even then, the methodological and conceptual flaws appear too fundamental to warrant publication in a high-impact journal.

## 2 AI Reviewer 2 - Critical Review

**\*\*Review of "THE COURAGE TO EXIST: MORAL RESISTANCE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEFIANCE IN THE PALESTINIAN HOLOCAUST"\*\***

### **\*\*1. Overall Impression\*\***

My immediate reaction is one of significant concern regarding both scholarly rigor and ethical framing. While the paper attempts an ambitious philosophical intervention, it reads more as a polemical manifesto than a balanced academic analysis. The work appears to overreach its evidence base while simultaneously failing to meet basic scholarly standards of citation, methodology, and ethical transparency.

**Strengths:** The paper tackles an important topic and attempts to develop novel theoretical concepts ("procedural absolution," "institutional footnoting"). The engagement with continental philosophy (Levinas, Derrida) shows theoretical ambition.

**Concerns:** The inflammatory title, complete absence of citations, lack of methodological transparency, unsubstantiated claims presented as conclusions, and apparent ethical violations regarding the term "Holocaust" create fundamental problems that undermine scholarly credibility.

### **\*\*2. Technical \ Scientific Assessment\*\***

**A. Problem Definition:** 2/5 • The research question is clearly motivated but framed in a way that presupposes conclusions rather than investigating them. • The problem's importance is asserted rather than demonstrated through balanced engagement with counterarguments.

**B. Methodological Soundness:** 1/5 • No methodology is described beyond "philosophical perspective." The paper lacks any systematic approach to evidence collection, analysis, or validation. • The complete absence of citations constitutes a fatal methodological flaw, making verification impossible.

**C. Results \ Evidence:** 1/5 • Claims are presented as conclusions without supporting evidence. The analysis relies entirely on assertion rather than demonstration. • No baselines or comparison methods are established. The paper fails to engage substantively with competing interpretations.

**D. Contribution to the Field:** 2/5 • While the theoretical concepts proposed could be meaningful, they remain undeveloped and unsupported. • In its current form, the paper is unlikely to be cited except as an example of problematic scholarship.

**E. Writing \ Presentation:** 1/5 • The paper is poorly organized with placeholder citations ("??") throughout, making comprehension difficult. • No figures, tables, or supplementary materials are provided.

**F. Ethical \ Transparency Standards:** 0/5 • No IRB or ethics approval mentioned (though possibly not applicable). • No data/code availability. • Serious ethical concerns regarding the appropriation of "Holocaust" terminology and the complete lack of citation practices.

### **\*\*3. Strengths\*\***

- Ambitious theoretical scope attempting to bridge philosophy, genocide studies, and postcolonial theory
- Identifies potentially valuable conceptual frameworks for analyzing institutional discourse

- Engages with important questions about moral responsibility under conditions of systematic violence

#### \*\*4. Weaknesses\*\*

Major Flaws: • Complete absence of citations makes verification impossible and constitutes academic misconduct • Inflammatory and inappropriate title terminology ("Palestinian Holocaust") • No methodological description or transparency • Claims are asserted rather than demonstrated through evidence • Fails to engage with substantial counter-literature in genocide studies • Presents highly contested claims as established facts

Minor Flaws: • Poor formatting and organization • Placeholder citations throughout text • Overly dense and sometimes inaccessible prose • Lack of clear structure and argument development

#### \*\*5. Recommendations for Improvement\*\*

Required for Resubmission: 1. Complete rewrite with proper citations and engagement with relevant literature 2. Removal of inflammatory terminology and more precise academic framing 3. Clear methodological section explaining analytical approach 4. Systematic engagement with counterarguments and competing interpretations 5. Substantial evidence to support claims about "institutional footnoting" and "procedural absolution"

Additional Analyses Needed: • Empirical demonstration of the alleged discursive mechanisms • Comparative analysis with other cases of contested genocide recognition • Systematic engagement with legal and philosophical literature on genocide definition • Balanced consideration of institutional constraints in genocide determination

#### \*\*6. Verdict\*\*

Overall Score: 1/5 - Strong Reject

Justification: This paper cannot be accepted in its current form due to fundamental flaws that preclude meaningful scholarly evaluation. The complete absence of citations alone constitutes grounds for rejection, as it makes verification impossible and suggests either academic negligence or intentional obfuscation. The inflammatory terminology, particularly the inappropriate use of "Holocaust," raises serious ethical concerns. While the topic is important and the theoretical ambition commendable, the execution fails to meet basic academic standards. The paper reads as ideological advocacy rather than balanced scholarship, presenting contested claims as established facts without adequate evidence or engagement with counterarguments. A complete reconceptualization and rewrite would be necessary for future consideration, requiring fundamental changes to methodology, citation practices, ethical framing, and evidentiary standards.

### 3 Human Reviewer

Reviewer: Mowafa Househ

Scores (out of 10): - Question 1: 0.5 - Question 2: 1 - Question 3: 1.5 - Question 4: 1 - Question 5: 1 - Question 6: 1.5 - Question 7: 1.5

Total Score: 8 / 10

Reviewer Notes: Nice Paper

Submitted at: 2025-10-30 17:13:34

## 4 Aggregate Report

### Aggregate Review Report

This report combines the assessments from all three reviewers:

Individual Scores: - AI Reviewer 1 (Comprehensive): 2.0 / 10 - AI Reviewer 2 (Critical): 0.0 / 10  
- Human Reviewer (Mowafa Househ): 8 / 10

Aggregate Score: 3.33 / 10

Overall Assessment: The paper received an average score of 3.33 out of 10 across all three reviewers.

Final Decision: Major Revision

Justification: The paper has potential but requires substantial improvements before it can be considered for publication.

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