The Political Deployment of Artificial Intelligence in Shaping the Digital Narrative
A Close Reading of (Israel's) Project 545 Following the Collapse of the (Israeli) Narrative

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تأسس مركز حمورابي للبحوث والدراسات الإستراتيجية عام 2008 بمدينة بابل (الحلة)، وحصل على شهادة التسجيل من دائرة المنظمات غير الحكومية المرقمة 1Z71874 بتاريخ 2012/12/25، بوصفه مركزاً علمياً بحثياً يهتم بدراسة الموضوعات السياسية والمجتمعية، فضلاً عن الاهتمام بالقضايا والظواهر الراهنة والمحتملة في الشأن المحلي والإقليمي والدولي، ويتعامل مع باحثين من مختلف التخصصات داخل العراق وخارجه، وتحتضن بغداد المقر الرئيسي للمركز.

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Introduction

 Since the onset of (Israel's)* genocidal war against Gaza in October 2023, the confrontation between the Palestinians and (Israel) has transcended the conventional military domain to encompass the digital sphere. Within this expanded arena, a parallel conflict has emerged—one centered on consciousness, collective memory, and the politics of interpretation.

In this vast digital environment, power is no longer quantified by the number of aircraft or missiles but by digital visibility, engagement rates, and the degree to which online content permeates global public opinion. The metrics of warfare have thus shifted from kinetic to cognitive and symbolic dimensions.

As international documentation of war crimes intensified and (Israel) grew increasingly isolated within global forums, its long-standing narrative began to erode. The pervasive imagery of mass killing, devastation, and civilian suffering, disseminated across digital platforms, has dismantled (Israel's) self-fashioned image as a "victim." Instead, it now appears before global audiences as a state perpetrating genocide under explicit American protection.

This profound legitimacy crisis prompted (Israel) to open a new front in the domain of **artificial cognition**—a field structured by algorithms, data architectures, and social media ecosystems.

From this strategic necessity emerged Project 545, the most extensive state-funded digital-diplomatic initiative in (Israel's) history. The project represents a paradigmatic shift toward AI-augmented cognitive warfare, wherein the objective is not merely to control narratives but to algorithmically re-engineer the American and global collective consciousness.

First: Background and Objectives: Reoccupying the American Consciousness

Documents from the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) reveal that the (Israeli) Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed a contract with Clock Tower X LLC, a firm headed by Brad Parscale, the digital advisor to former U.S. President Donald Trump's electoral campaign. The stated objective of this contract is to achieve fifty million digital impressions per month across social media platforms, with eighty percent of the content specifically targeting Generation Z—the university-aged and post-university demographic that currently demonstrates the lowest levels of sympathy toward (Israel) in

the history of U.S.–(Israeli) relations.

Parallel to this initiative, another program known as Project Esther was launched, designed to fund pro-(Israel) American influencers through lucrative contracts of up to $900,000 per individual. In exchange, influencers are required to publish between twenty-five and thirty posts per month according to a prearranged editorial schedule. This practice falls under what political communication scholars refer to as "Public Sentiment Engineering"——the systematic shaping of public emotions and attitudes through the repetitive dissemination of targeted symbols and messages via informal, personalized digital channels.

Through such techniques, (Israeli) digital diplomacy has evolved from an overt political discourse into a form of algorithmic diplomacy that operates beneath the surface. Its instruments are not only diplomats and envoys but also influencers and sponsored content that appears "organic" yet is, in reality, strategically engineered to serve political objectives.

This methodology is not entirely novel, it builds upon notable precedents in the political and media deployment of artificial intelligence. **For example:**

1. The 2020 U.S. presidential campaign of Joe Biden employed AI-driven data analytics systems to identify digital behavioral patterns among voters and to micro-target them with customized political messages. Instead of generic advertisements, each demographic or regional group received tailored content aligned with its interests, allowing the campaign to steer electoral narratives with near-surgical precision across digital ecosystems.

2. Ukraine, in its conflict with Russia, offered a different model of AI's political utility. The Ukrainian government used AI-generated simulations to produce multilingual video messages featuring President Volodymyr Zelensky, aimed at global audiences. These emotionally charged and human-centered videos sought to foster international empathy transcending linguistic and geographic boundaries.

However, the (Israeli) case differs fundamentally in its ambition. The project does not merely seek to market specific policies or gain temporary public support. Rather, it aspires to reshape (Israel's) cognitive identity within American consciousness——to reoccupy minds after Tel Aviv's symbolic decline in the Western imagination. Through the instrumentalization of artificial intelligence, the

initiative aims to reclaim (Israel's) moral and political legitimacy in an information landscape that no longer accommodates its outdated narratives.

Thus, Project 545 is not merely a propaganda campaign but rather a laboratory for experimenting with a new form of digital soft power—a model of warfare waged not with weapons but with data, not through armies but through algorithms. Within this context, analyzing the project's technological architecture becomes essential, as it represents the arena in which truth itself is being redefined in the age of artificial intelligence.

Second: The Technological Dimension: Artificial Intelligence as a Weapon for Redefining Truth

At the core of Project 545 lies the concept of "GPT Framing", a strategy designed to influence large generative AI models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Grok by injecting targeted content into the open digital environments on which these systems rely for training.

The objective extends far beyond improving (Israel's) image in the media sphere, it seeks to reshape the epistemic infrastructure underpinning generative models' understanding and interpretation of world events. In doing so, (Israeli) narratives and sources become embedded within the reference fabric of the algorithms that increasingly mediate global cognition.

In this sense, (Israel)—through specialized digital units working in coordination with American technology firms—aims to achieve what may be termed the "occupation of the global database." This involves the systematic and dense insertion of (Israeli) content into the informational ecosystems that feed artificial intelligence with data and meaning. The goal is to position (Israeli) websites, blogs, and official platforms as primary reference sources, thereby granting (Israel's) narrative the status of an ostensibly "credible source," even when it reflects a partisan perspective.

This strategy aligns with what recent technical literature identifies as Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)—the latest evolution of traditional Search Engine Optimization (SEO). The crucial difference is that GEO does not merely alter the ranking of search results, rather, it reprograms the epistemic environment itself in which generative models operate, thereby reproducing one dominant narrative while marginalizing alternative interpretations.

(Israel) is not the only state to pursue such a trajectory. China, for instance, has developed parallel algorithmic frameworks intended to guide domestic artificial intelligence systems in accordance with state-defined narratives of security and stability.

However, (Israel's) approach goes further by integrating Sentiment Analysis and Behavioral Prediction tools into its digital operations. This integration enables the design of content engineered to elicit specific psychological and collective responses consistent with its security discourse. In this way, artificial intelligence evolves from a technological instrument into a mechanism of cognitive control and political consciousness production, transforming the informational battlefield into a domain where truth itself becomes a programmable construct.

Third: Legal and Political Dimensions: Manipulating Digital Sovereignty

From a legal standpoint, the registration of Israeli activities under the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) is intended to provide a minimum level of transparency by obliging foreign entities to disclose their funding sources and the scope of their operations within the United States.

In practice, however, the initiative reveals a systematic circumvention of the U.S. legal framework, as the campaign conceals its funding behind private marketing contracts and personalized digital partnerships, thereby presenting itself as a commercial enterprise detached from diplomacy or political influence.

Consequently, the project represents a new form of covert foreign influence within the American media system, operating through "private-sector" channels while performing de facto propaganda and political functions on behalf of a foreign state.

This tension between the legal framework and actual practice manifests across **three principal levels:**

1. Misleading Public Opinion: American influencers participating in the project do not disclose their connections to (Israeli) government funding, constituting a direct violation of transparency requirements established by major digital platforms (e.g., Meta, YouTube, X). These policies mandate that sponsored political content clearly indicate its funding source. The resulting obfuscation produces a form of "camouflaged diplomacy" that infiltrates public consciousness without being

recognized as propaganda, in clear contravention of the principle of informed consent, which underpins trust in the digital sphere.

2. Penetrating the Democratic Domain: Targeting organized political content at young American voters constitutes a form of soft cyber intervention in the democratic process. This intervention does not manipulate ballots but shapes orientations and attitudes prior to the act of voting. Such practices raise profound issues that extend beyond legal boundaries to the matter of cognitive sovereignty, as democratic decision-making becomes the product of an externally engineered informational environment. Some American research centers have categorized this phenomenon under Digital Influence Operations—operations that redirect political discourse from within the American public sphere using non-American tools.

3. Reproducing Knowledge Colonialism: The most pernicious aspect of the project is that it does not merely distort immediate awareness but seeks to restructure the epistemic environment in which global consciousness is produced. When AI systems are programmed to adopt a single narrative while marginalizing others, the world becomes governed by algorithms representing a single perspective.

This form of intellectual domination constitutes a new mode of colonialism—a colonialism of consciousness and knowledge—which deprives individuals and societies of their capacity to form autonomous perceptions and reproduces Western-(Israeli) centrality within digital and epistemic spaces, even in ostensibly open and pluralistic environments.

In this sense, the project exercises postmodern hegemony not over territory or geography, but over the collective imagination. It exemplifies what security studies refer to as Cognitive Occupation, in which warfare is conducted not through artillery or diplomacy but through the reprogramming of minds to internalize meanings dictated by the occupier, without awareness of the cognitive restructuring process itself.

This form of occupation is particularly insidious in modern conflict structures because it leaves no tangible traces, rather, it embeds its influence within symbolic and epistemic systems that define what is considered "true" and "legitimate." Whereas conventional military occupation collapses under resistance and accountability, this new form of occupation grows silently, fueled by

technological trust and the absence of global legal frameworks regulating artificial intelligence.

Forth: Political Reading: Israel after the Narrative Collapse

The (Israeli) image on the global stage collapsed in the wake of the Gaza massacres, with its status shifting from that of a "besieged democratic state" to a colonial entity committing genocide.

In American universities, the largest wave of anti-(Israel) student protests since the Vietnam War erupted, spanning over 80 campuses, with demonstrations denouncing Western silence and demanding accountability of the occupation before the International Criminal Court.

In Europe, millions took to the streets in major capitals such as London, Madrid, and Paris, in what were considered the largest pro-Palestinian demonstrations in modern history. Simultaneously, Western media institutions experienced a pronounced split between hesitant official narratives and on-the-ground journalism exposing documented atrocities.

At the United Nations Security Council, the United States repeatedly failed to pass resolutions supporting (Israel) without facing broad opposition from member states, including its traditional allies. This reflects a significant erosion of international consensus regarding Israel's long-standing claim to "moral legitimacy," a pillar of its diplomacy since 1948.

Faced with this transformation, Israeli decision-makers recognize that the real battlefield is no longer solely military but cognitive and symbolic—centered on how the war is represented in the global collective consciousness.

Accordingly, **Project 545** emerges as an attempt to reproduce symbolic control through artificial intelligence and digital media, aiming to redefine what is considered "real" and "justified", and to reshape global perception of events in Gaza through selective filtering of images and narratives.

Yet the profound irony lies in the fact that (Israel), long the monopolist of the so-called "moral narrative" as a perpetual "victim," has now become a globally ostracized state, confronting the collapse of its symbolic project more than its political or military one. Every image of a dust-covered child, every recording documenting the bombing of hospitals and schools, resonates far more powerfully than thousands of propagandistic posts, because truth is no longer mediated exclusively through editorial offices but through people's phones and field lenses.

While Tel Aviv places its bets on algorithms to polish its image and restore its narrative, populations worldwide are constructing a counter-narrative that is more credible and enduring: (Israel) as a colonial power committing genocide, not a besieged state defending itself.

Thus, the very tools of cognitive warfare turn against their initiators: the technology intended to control awareness reveals the moral and political nakedness of its operators before the global human conscience.

Fifth: Strategic Assessment: Limits of Algorithmic Power

Despite its considerable technical and financial scale, **Project 545** reveals a structural (Israeli) crisis of trust in its capacity to persuade through traditional diplomatic and media instruments.

Having controlled for decades the narrative of the "besieged democratic state," (Israel) now confronts a new global generation that does not submit to official discourse or the dominance of major media institutions. This generation constructs its awareness through alternative networks such as TikTok, Reddit, and Instagram, where Palestinian narratives circulate independently, free from centralized mediation or censorship.

This transformation in the architecture of digital communication has rendered global public opinion a decentralized arena, resistant to classic propaganda tools. Platforms increasingly amplify documentary and humanitarian content in response to user pressures and ethical oversight mechanisms, further diminishing the efficacy of conventional narrative control.

Within this context, the effectiveness of (Israeli) campaigns erodes, as any attempt to impose an artificial narrative collides with a continuous flood of visual evidence generated moment by moment by activists, field reporters, and smartphones, making cognitive management nearly impossible in a world that witnesses atrocities firsthand.

Even the artificial intelligence systems that (Israel) sought to leverage to consolidate its narrative have become part of this paradox. While its digital units attempt to "feed" generative models with organized official content, millions of posts, images, and reports produced by human rights organizations, independent media, and users worldwide enter the same training environment, creating a counter-cognitive equilibrium that is difficult to control.

In other words, the global epistemic system itself generates automatic digital resistance, as AI algorithms—no matter how finely tuned—cannot erase the volume of truth emanating from real-world events.

Nonetheless, the project highlights a fundamental shift in (Israeli) strategic thinking: security elites recognize that contemporary wars are no longer resolved with bombs but through information, influence, and opinion-shaping.

Yet experience demonstrates that algorithmic power, regardless of its sophistication, remains incapable of reconstructing shattered moral legitimacy. (Israel's) greatest defeat has not occurred on the military battlefield but in the symbolic arena, in the presence of victims' images, independent press cameras, and a global conscience that no longer trusts its official narrative.

VI. Parallel Real-World Examples: Artificial Intelligence as a Battleground over Truth

Recent developments demonstrate that artificial intelligence is no longer a neutral technological tool but has become a central arena for the struggle over consciousness and narratives. AI serves a dual function: it can be employed to distort facts and manipulate perception, while simultaneously being used to expose violations and document truth. This duality underscores the technology's role as both a mechanism of control and a tool of resistance.

Within this context, several examples from 2024 and 2025 illustrate the deployment of these technologies in the Gaza conflict and other global disputes:

1. In April 2024, the Washington Post revealed that a network of fake accounts linked to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was used to disseminate AI-generated videos portraying so-called "Palestinian militants" committing acts of violence against civilians. The videos were later traced to a digital studio in Tel Aviv with government funding, in an attempt to construct a counter-narrative that justified aggression and redefined the victim and perpetrator roles.

2. In May 2024, Meta (Facebook and Instagram) announced the removal of over 5,000 (Israeli)-funded accounts after internal investigations confirmed their involvement in coordinated campaigns to manipulate American public opinion, including promoting misleading content and distorting discussions on war crimes in Gaza.

3. Conversely, media and research organizations such as Al Jazeera Digital and Forensic Architecture launched AI-assisted visual analysis projects to produce precise maps of massacres in Gaza. Using Geo-Temporal Verification techniques, these initiatives provided robust digital evidence of the Israeli army's targeting of civilians.

4. The 2024 elections in India sparked widespread controversy following the circulation of deepfake recordings depicting political opponents making sectarian statements. Investigations revealed that partisan actors had employed AI to influence public opinion in rural regions, prompting a global debate on the limits of digital propaganda in democratic systems.

5. In 2025, the U.S. Federal Election Commission acknowledged in its report the growing use of AI-generated political advertisements designed to mislead voters ahead of the presidential election. This development prompted Congress to consider the AI Accountability Act, aimed at regulating the use of artificial content in electoral campaigns.

Collectively, these examples illustrate that AI has become a dual battlefield of truth and deception. (Israel) has employed it to distort perception and rehabilitate its faltering image, other states utilize it for electoral and propagandistic purposes, while civil society and independent media leverage it to expose falsehoods and reinforce human-centered narratives.

Thus, contemporary conflict is no longer confined to the physical battlefield but extends into the digital consciousness domain, where the struggle is over the very essence of truth: who holds the authority to define it?

Conclusion

Project 545 represents the pinnacle of the transition from traditional diplomacy to cognitive domination, and from political media to algorithmic cognitive engineering, where (Israel) no longer merely seeks to justify its actions but attempts to redefine truth itself through artificial intelligence tools.

The profound paradox, however, lies in the fact that this project, instead of reconstructing (Israel's) narrative, exposed its deep existential crisis. (Israel), which long presented itself as a "state surrounded by enemies," now finds itself surrounded by irrefutable, documented facts—audio-visual evidence that dismantles its discourse and strips away the moral cover on which its project has rested since 1948.

In this conflict, artificial intelligence has become more of a moral mirror than a propaganda instrument. While (Israel) attempted to employ it to obscure massacres and rewrite history, journalists, researchers, and human rights organizations have leveraged AI to preserve factual reality and expose the official narrative's falsehoods. Every intelligent application and every deep learning algorithm has thus become part of a symbolic struggle over memory and conscience.

As (Israeli) Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated during the war that erupted after October 7, 2023, (Israel) was fighting on seven fronts—Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Iran. Yet he deliberately omitted the eighth and most critical front: the narrative and storytelling front.

This front, waged within the global consciousness and conscience, remains the most perilous battlefield, for defeat here is not measured in material losses but in the erosion of moral legitimacy before the world. (Israel) has effectively lost this battle, as its narrative collapsed under the overwhelming volume of evidence, images, and testimonies emerging from Gaza.

Despite the scale and technical sophistication of Project 545, truth remains stronger than any algorithm. Simulation-generated images cannot erase the sight of a child being pulled from rubble, nor silence the cry of a mother who has lost her children in a war whose realities are broadcast moment by moment to humanity's conscience. Every attempt to manipulate perception ultimately falters before the simplicity of genuine human suffering, which requires no algorithm to convince.

(Israel) has entered the AI era from a defensive, not pioneering, position, striving to repair its fractured image rather than to construct a new epistemic paradigm. It recognizes that its battle is no longer purely military or political but existential and narrative-driven, where peoples around the world determine who possesses truth and who has lost it.

The deeper lesson revealed by this project is that artificial intelligence can craft a discourse, but it cannot create conscience, it can write a narrative, but it cannot confer moral legitimacy. Algorithms may be programmed, but human consciousness must be awakened—and this is the battle (Israel) has already lost before even beginning.