DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

“*Day 3… Still alive ..*”

The Impact of Personalised Journalism in Modern Conflict Reporting

Benedetta Zirillo

Master’s Thesis in Media and Communication

Thesis:	30 hp
Program and/or course:	Master’s Programme in Political Communication/MK2502
Level:	Second Cycle
Term/year:	Fall/2024
Supervisor:	Dr. Nicklas Håkansson
Examiner:	xx

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the role of Palestinian war reporters during the Israel-Hamas conflict, particularly in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023, events, and how their use of social media, especially Instagram, has contributed to the reification of a multifaceted and passionate narration of the war, allowing the reporters to become central figures in the news narrative itself.

The research highlights how the evolving media landscape places new demands on journalists, who must navigate the dual pressures of advocacy and market forces while maintaining their professional credibility.

The advent of social media and phenomena such as personalisation has raised significant questions about objectivity and the ethical responsibilities of journalists, particularly when their work is consumed and shared across social media platforms. This study analyses the works of key Palestinian journalists using established theories of mediatisation and commodification in journalism. Additionally, it considers the implications of these trends for the broader field of journalism, particularly in the context of conflicts that attract significant global attention.

The material in this study includes detailed content analysis of social media posts and news reports from the selected journalists, alongside theoretical insights from prior research on personalised journalism and conflict reporting. The study found that the personal and emotionally charged narratives of these reporters significantly influenced both local and global perceptions of the conflict, suggesting that the future of conflict journalism may increasingly blur the lines between reporting and advocacy.

Ultimately, this thesis argues that while personalised journalism offers a powerful tool for engaging audiences and humanizing complex issues, it also presents challenges for maintaining journalistic independence and objectivity, especially when inserted in modern market dynamics. As the academic

understanding of these trends continues to develop, future research may provide further guidance on how journalists can balance these competing demands.

Word count: 19.703 (excluding abstract, reference list and appendix)

Keywords: Personalised journalism, conflict reporting, social media, Israel-Hamas conflict, Palestinian war reporters, mediatisation, commodification

Acknowledgments

In primis, I would like to formally thank my supervisor, Nicklas Håkansson, for his availability and support throughout the delineation and development of this research project.

In secundis, grazie alla mia famiglia, di sangue e no, che ogni giorno mi sta figurativamente accanto mentre mi aggiro negli angoli di questo grande mondo.

Grazie, Svezia, per avermi insegnato a ricercare stelline e uno sprazzo di cielo sereno anche nel più plumbeo e angoscioso dei cieli. Och för kladdkaka.

Table of contents

Abstract .....
Acknowledgments .....
Table of contents .....
1. Introduction 1
1.1 Research questions 5
2. Theoretical framework 7
2.1 Literature review 7
2.2 The mediatised public sphere 12
2.3 The modern political sphere 15
2.4 The personalised media sphere 17
2.5 Journalism as a discursive practice 18
2.6 Instagram's rise as a news platform 20
2.7 The commodification phenomenon 21
The personalisation of conflict journalism 24
2.8 The humanisation of conflict and conflict-reporters 26
2.9 The Israel-Gaza situation 28
Conclusion 31
3. Structure of the analysis and methodology 32
3.1 Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) 32
3.2 Units of analysis 34
3.3 The time scope 38
3.4 Sampling method 39
3.5 Data collection 39
3.6 Formulation of the protocol 40
3.7 Objectives of the study 41
3.8 Ethical considerations 42
4. Analysis 43
5. Results 44
5.1 The "journalist and victim dichotomy" 44
5.2 Visual storytelling 52
5.3 Conflict and thematic focus 56
5.3.1 Resistance and resilience 56
5.3.2 The human cost of conflict and the destruction of infrastructure 59
5.3.3 Community and solidarity 61
5.4 The commodification of the reports 64

6. Discussion and conclusion....69
Limitations of the study and possible future research....74
References....75
Appendix 1....84
Instagram posts....84
Web articles....139

1. Introduction

"*Day 3.. Still alive..*". The post is dated October 9, 2023, and this short and poignant caption accompanies an equally short and impactful video. In the foreground of the video is a girl, a young woman, possibly in her early twenties, with big brown eyes and brown hair. "Okay…" she starts speaking. " "All the neighbours, they just leave their doors open so you can just enter your neighbours' house, it's okay." she explains in fluent English as she walks around the house in question. "They have their windows down" , the girl shows the camera, slightly angling it away from her face. The neighbours she mentions are just out of frame, she says, huddling all together in the living room, as far away as they can get from the shuttered windows.

Suddenly, a series of bangs. The young woman stops talking, her hair moving slightly at the gusts of air caused by the airstrike. She stares at the window in front of her, which the viewer cannot see, her face a mask of shock and disbelief. "I was trying to explain things, but I think you can hear them now" she continues as outside, the sirens go off. She moves, mentions she needs to go check on her parents in the adjacent flat.

The video cuts off shortly after, pasted to a slightly shorter one giving some updates post-airstrike. The set up is the same as before: her face appears in the foreground as she talks to the camera, explains that the air has become unbreathable, thickened by debris, ashes and dust. She briefly switches on the external camera, shows the contaminated air and the foggy view from the balcony. "That's the view from the balcony…there is literally no view" is her last comment, before the recording ends.

This video was posted on Instagram on October 9, 2023, three days after the start of the Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip. The post's author's name was Plestia Alaqad, handle *@byplestia*, back then a 21-years-old media creator, later turned into a de-facto war reporter (Kaur, 2024), using her Instagram account to recount Gazans' daily life since the start of the Israeli invasion. Alaqad's first video was quickly followed by another one, published on the same day, an ensemble of clips gathered at the end of the day to

document the destruction. Again, Alaqad's face figures in the post's foreground and preview, the caption, although way more detailed than that of the first post, also written in fluent English. Another post the day after features her in her press garb.

A quick overview of her Instagram page seems to reveal a pattern: most of the video posts' previews show her face, spaced out by quick textual updates and other people's visual documentation of the situation.

Same date, another account, another video-post. The recording shows a bombed street, with destroyed buildings and burnt up vehicles. Out of frame, an alarm blares and people talk animatedly. The videographer is quiet as he moves, showing as much of the destruction as possible. "Walking through the rubbles" he says at one point, while he keeps advancing in the wreckage. The caption accompanying the post does not add much, stating "*No time for captions*".

The poster's name, this time, is Motaz Azaiza. Differently from Alaqad, Azaiza was already a photo-reporter prior to the beginning of the invasion. His Instagram account hosted a variety of photos depicting everyday life in the Strip, colourful, professional-looking snapshots of Gaza's citizens and streets next to more sombre ones showing torn houses and streets. Since October 7, 2023 however, the vibrant photos have all but disappeared. Now, Azaiza's profile looks strikingly similar to Plestia Alaqad's, his feed a patchwork of selfie-videos and citizen-supplied recordings of the strikes.

Alaqad and Azaiza were only two of the myriads of reporters and media-creators that, especially in the aftermath of October 7, took to social media to document the Strip's life under attack.

Palestinian journalists' reliance on less-than-orthodox news media and social networks has been extensively documented by media and journalism researchers alike (McLaughlin, 2016; Mann 2018; Fahmy et al., 2024), with a great focus being given to the asymmetry that characterises its combatants' military and media powers (McLaughlin, 2016; Mann, 2018). Nevertheless, it is important to further observe and document the evolution that their narrative-building processes have undergone in the last

few years, especially in light of some social media's constantly evolving and expanding influence as means of news-production and diffusion.

This research's purpose is to examine the role of Palestinian war reporters during the Israel-Hamas conflict, particularly focusing on their usage of social media, (such as Instagram), to shape conflict narratives. The study investigates the expanding phenomenon of *personalised journalism*. As the following chapters will explain, personalisation is generally defined as a process that allows the political weight of individual actors to increase over time, thus causing the relevance of the collective group (for example, a party or, in this case, a traditional news outlet) to decline (Rahat & Sheafer, 2007, as cited in Rahat & Kenig, 2018, p. 118). In the journalistic domain, this phenomenon has seemingly prompted reporters to place themselves within their news narratives, heightening their emotional and, at times, sensationalistic characters (Pantti, 2017).

The timespan analysed will specifically be the very beginning of this last outbreak, ranging from October to December 2023. As will be detailed later in the thesis, the focus on this particular conflict is primarily due to it representing an extreme case of the personalisation and commodification processes this analysis purports to observe and illustrate. Interest in this outbreak has only been escalated by the proliferation of figures such as citizen journalists and content creators, who seem to fill the informational gap previously delineated (Kaur, 2024). While, indeed, Palestinian reporters' reliance on alternative news sources and means of news-diffusion has previously been documented by extended research (McLaughlin, 2016; Mann, 2018), the new developments seem to have heightened the relevance of some features which make it the best example to observe the development of the aforementioned phenomena.

The research thus purports to specifically look at Instagram posts and traditional news reports from four key Palestinian journalists (Motaz Azaiza, Hind Khoudary, Bisan Owda, and Plestia Alaqad), who have gained prominence since the October 7, 2023, conflict escalation. These journalists appear to have oft used their figures as centrepieces in their reporting, merging their personal stories with broader news

coverage. By doing so, they have successfully fostered emotional engagement and attention with global audiences, challenging traditional journalistic norms of objectivity and impartiality.

These figures have seemingly taken on the mantle of the "advocate" journalist: they no longer limit themselves to observing and relaying what they witness but become emotionally and personally invested in the historical event they are sharing (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). In this, they perfectly fill the traditional mould of the advocate journalist; their reporting, however, shows a few specific features that merit further observation:

- The reporters are mostly freelancers and have heavily relied on social media (primarily Instagram) to share their pictures and news pieces since the start of the conflict, which larger and more established news media outlets have started to pick up. In this, they counterbalance the Western journalists traditionally embedded within the IDF (ergo the *Israel Defense Forces*).

- Their content appears to be highly personalised: in both the posts' captions and photos, the reporters appear at the very centre of the news, using their personal voices to openly share their opinions and experiences regarding the situation to garner attention for the conflict and humanise its victims (Kaur, 2024; Fadel, 2024). The journalist, in this case, has long ceased being an objective observer, there to witness and relay the events to allow the masses to form an opinion.

- As previously mentioned, most of the Palestinian side of the narrative lives and is perpetuated largely within the social media domain. Because of this and the characteristics enumerated above, most traditional tenets of war reporting do not apply: the journalists' independence from news outlets means they become the main (if not the only) source of their work's credibility and relevance.

In sum, this particular iteration of "interventionist" war reporters (as delineated by Thomas Hanitzsch and fellow researchers in the study "*Worlds of Journalism*", to be detailed in the theoretical background of this analysis) abundantly uses citizen-generated content to offer a narrative characterised by the

complete abandonment of objectivity, discarded to make space for strong and extremely heartfelt advocacy (Horoub, 2023; Fahmy et al., 2024). Continuous references to the journalists' central role and place in the conflict are reinforced through the use of their personal voices, used to mesh the narration of the daily atrocities with personal anecdotes and impressions. This high level of personalisation makes it so that when the journalists' reporting passes from social media to traditional media, it undergoes a certain process of "commodification". Acquiring a certain level of "celebrity status," the reporters become one with their reports; news outlets quote them as experts and witnesses, and they become talked *about* rather than being the ones to do the talking. This is increased by market forces' focus on sensationalism and human interest stories, which are renowned to be more easily marketable and saleable (Bruck & Allan, 1987).

The study's ultimate objective is to observe and illustrate how this blend of personalisation and mediatisation in conflict reporting influences the construction and dissemination of narratives in both social media and traditional media, and how it shapes public perceptions of the Israeli-Gaza conflict.

1.1 Research questions

The analysis predominantly proceeds from one research question, which is:

RQ: *To what extent does Palestinian reporters' coverage of the ongoing conflict appear to be "personalised"?*

This question may be articulated in simpler, more precise sub-questions, which are:

1. *Precisely, what elements of personalised reporting is it possible to find in the Instagram content shared by these reporters?*
2. *What distinct patterns of modern conflict reporting is it possible to surmise from the cumulative analysis of these elements?*

From this research question stems a hypothesis regarding personalised reporting's conceivable outcomes within the information and political landscapes. The latter part of this thesis will indeed strive to investigate the *commodification* of journalists' personal domain as a byproduct of the aforementioned personalisation process. In particular, the analysis will observe newsbeats centred on the specific reporters' figures to understand how traditional media's focus on the singular reporters' emotional and psychological spheres might result in these aspects' excessive instrumentalization and commercial exploitation. Following a thorough review of extant literature on the topic, the aim will be to accentuate the increasing utilisation of emotion-laden lexicon too describe precise people and episodes.

2. Theoretical framework

Answering the previously delineated questions might require, first, the clarification of some key concepts, vital to the thorough understanding of the phenomena under investigations. Thus, the following sections of this paper will proceed to give some theoretical background concerning notions such as the mediatisation of the public sphere, the evolution of personalisation and its influence on the information ecosystem, and the role of journalism in conflict and its recent developments. These concepts will be firstly introduced via a literature review, which will aid the systematic contextualisation and observation of the established literature. The synthesis of key studies will, in turn, permit the identification of recurring themes, methodological approaches, and gaps in the current understanding of how modern media have shaped the journalistic praxis.

2.1 Literature review

As was previously stated, the initial literature research purported to theoretically investigate and consolidate three main epistemological nodes: the mediatised and personalised public sphere, the evolution of journalism as a discursive practice in the era of social media, and the impact of these processes on the construction and diffusion of conflict narratives, with a special focus on the Gaza-Israel situation.

The literature analysed was primarily sourced using the search engine "Google Scholar", with additional inquiries being carried out on databases such as the University of Gothenburg's, JSTOR and Taylor & Francis's. The research employed a mixed approach, both inductive and deductive: proceeding from a predefined but flexible hypothesis, it aimed at answering fairly wide research questions such as "*What is mediatisation*?", "*What characterises the personalised media sphere*?" and "*What impact have modern media had on the development of conflict narration*?". Searches thus included the keywords "*mediatisation*", "*personalisation*", "*social media*", *"personalised reporting*".

The academic material thus obtained was ample both in size and scope, and it was analysed and

reduced through the lenses provided by two books, which were employed as source of the core theoretical concepts and guidelines. The two books in question were Altheide and Snow's "*Media Logic*" (1979) and McLaughlin's "*The War Correspondent*" (2016), chosen by virtue of their completeness and clear line of investigation of the phenomena. As both books resulted slightly dated, with Altheide's and Snow's being from 1979 and McLaughlin's from 2016, subsequent searches aimed at integrating the dataset with more up-to-date material. This round of research proffered articles such as Gómez-García et al.'s "*New Frontiers for Political Communication in Times of Spectacularization*" (2023) and Fahmy et al.'s "*Shattered lives, unbroken stories: journalists' perspectives from the frontlines of the Israel–Gaza war*" (2024). The final literature sample contained articles written during a period of time spanning the last six decades, from the 1970s to the 2020s, which well described the observed phenomena's inception and evolution. This sample was thereafter parted according to the above-cited epistemological nodes (the mediatised and personalised public sphere, the evolution of journalism as a discursive practice in the era of social media, and the impact of these processes on the construction and diffusion of conflict narratives), which maximised the conceptual clarity and utility of the final analysis.

Observations of the mediatised and personalised public sphere, in particular, were primarily based on the writings of Altheide & Snow (1979), Chadwick's *The Hybrid Media System* (2013), Esser & Strömbäck's *Mediatization of Politics* (2014), and Mazzoleni & Schultz's article *Mediatization of Politics: A Challenge for Democracy?* (1999). All of these publications share common theoretical traits, such as the notion of the public sphere as an arena influenced by a variety of players and factors, which is consequently subject to continuous change. The delineation of these changes, however, varies somewhat: Altheide & Snow, for instance, focused on the spectacularization of the political sphere, thus developing the "infotainment" theory; while Strömbäck & Esser's and Mazzoleni & Schultz's works align in their conceptualisations of mediatisation and media logic.

Research on journalistic scholarship, on the other hand, was based on the writings of Bossio, Pantti, and most notably, Hanitzsch et al.'s study *Worlds of Journalism*. This latter work provided a comprehensive

and extensive framework that proved vital in the subsequent analysis of modern Western journalism and its ethical and professional tenets. The study has thus far covered a period spanning more than fifteen years, being rolled out in multiple waves since 2007. Generally speaking, its developers have described the goal of the analysis to be that of "tracking the state of journalism around the world" with the intention of garnering a "longitudinal perspective" of the constantly evolving practice (*The Worlds of Journalism Study - Worlds of Journalism Study*, 2007). In order to grant the project's endurance and scientific validity, the founders set out to develop a basal methodological framework and key premises, to which the collaborating researchers had to adhere. These premises then functioned as the bases for detailed research protocols, field instructions and memos (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). The final methodological framework of the study thence comprised detailed coordination, a sampling process, a phase of data collection and one of data management, one of questionnaire development and an index construction (*ibid*.). Hanitzsch et al.'s overview was then completed via the integration of additional research by scholars such as Bakhshi et al., Vázquez-Herrero et al., Mellado & Hermida, and Bossio, amongst others.

Bakhshi et al. (2014) proved useful in the theoretical grounding of human faces' utility to garner audiences' attention and emotional engagement, specifically in the context of modern and mediatised journalistic practices. In their article "*Faces Engage Us*", the scholars detail the impact of human faces in Instagram photos on user engagement, highlighting that photo with faces are 38% more likely to receive likes and 32% more likely to receive comments, regardless of the number of faces, age, or gender. These findings were corroborated by Sontag's and Zelizer's assessments of images' value in increasing narratives' emotional impact and consequent reaction.

Vázquez-Herrero et al.'s article "*Ephemeral Journalism: News Distribution through Instagram Stories*" (2019) on the other hand provided solid theoretical basis for the analysis of Instagram as a platform of news-making and news distribution. Through content analysis of 17 online media, the study highlights the adaptation strategies media employ to leverage the ephemeral nature of Instagram Stories. It also highlights why Instagram is an important and special medium amongst other socials: through its mobile-first design and popularity amongst younger audiences, it offers unique opportunities for engaging users

with short, visual, and transient content, which aligns with modern mobile consumption habits. Instagram Stories specifically has resulted as the perfect breeding ground for the phenomenon of "ephemeral journalism", allows media to reach new audiences, maintain relevance, and experiment with innovative storytelling formats in a fast-paced digital media environment (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Vázquez-Herrero et al.'s investigation was integrated by the addition of Mellado & Hermida's "*A Conceptual Framework for Journalistic Identity on Social Media: How the Personal and Professional Contribute to Power and Profit*" (2022) and "*The Journalist on Social Media: Mapping the Promoter Celebrity and Joker Roles on Twitter and Instagram*" (2023). Both articles aptly examine the evolving role of journalists in the context of social media and how these platforms impact journalistic identity and performance, emphasising aspects such as the journalistic identity's commodification and the blurring of boundaries between the professional and personal dimensions.

Finally, the investigation of modern conflict journalism, particularly its manifestation in the Israel-Gaza conflict, was articulated according to the works of Bock (2011), McLaughlin (2016), Pantti (2017), Mann (2018), and Fahmy et al. (2024).

In "*Citizen Video Journalists and Authority in Narrative: Reviving the Role of the Witness*" Bock explores the evolving role of citizen video journalists and their impact on narrative authority in media. The article examines how ordinary people using video technology can challenge traditional media narratives and authority, arguing that these citizen journalists can offer unique perspectives and act as witnesses, thus reshaping how stories are told and received in the digital age. The relevance of Bock's conclusions on the praxis of citizen journalism and its inclusion in the global media scene has only been increased with expansion of non-traditional media narratives and platforms, which has born great implications on both media practices and the broader understanding of witness testimony in contemporary society.

Much like Hanitzsch et al.'s "*Worlds of Journalism*" for journalistic praxis, McLaughlin's "*The War Correspondent*" (2016) provided essential insights into the evolution of conflict reporting, tracing its development from its origins to the present day. However, while highly relevant and explanatory, McLaughlin's work showed some signs of becoming slightly outdated. To address this, more recent contributions—such as Pantti's "*The Personalisation of Conflict Reporting"* (2017), Mann's "*I Am Spartacus: Individualising Visual Media and Warfare"* (2018), and Fahmy et al.'s "*Shattered Lives, Unbroken Stories: Journalists' Perspectives From the Frontlines of the Israel–Gaza War"* (2024)—enriched the framework with a broader temporal perspective. Pantti's article, in particular, proved instrumental in analysing the content-sharing practices of personalized conflict reporters on their private social media platforms. Pantti observes how contemporary reporters have adopted a more personalized approach to conflict reporting, using intimate narratives to engage audiences by focusing on individual stories and emotional experiences (2017). Although this strategy may enhance the emotional resonance and relatability of conflict, Pantti and her peers also warn of the potential risk of oversimplifying complex issues (2017). Mann's and Fahmy et al.'s works, on the other hand, were pivotal in identifying similar patterns within the Israel-Gaza conflict. Mann's "*I Am Spartacus*" (2018) provided critical context on the role of technology in shaping the conflict, describing how both digital activists and the Israeli military have utilized technological advancements as warfare instruments. By emphasising the collective identity fostered in these digital movements, Mann's insights were particularly valuable for understanding the multifaceted nature of the enduring Israel-Palestine conflict.

Fahmy et al.'s "*Shattered Lives, Unbroken Stories: Journalists' Perspectives From the Frontlines of the Israel–Gaza War"* (2024) further deepened this understanding by offering a detailed account of journalists' lived experiences reporting from the frontlines of the Israel-Gaza war. Via the collection of first-hand accounts of the reporters' lived experiences, the paper underscores the physical and emotional toll of conflict reporting, shining a light on the balance the responsibility of bearing witness with personal vulnerabilities in a war zone. Fahmy's work complements the broader exploration of conflict

journalism by foregrounding the human element, enriching the narrative of how modern-day war correspondents endure and persevere in the face of overwhelming adversity.

The extensive analysis of the literature hitherto described provided a strong theoretical and empirical basis for the content analysis of Palestinian journalists' news-producing and sharing practices. Further readings on the phenomenon of *commodification*, seen it in its macro-dimension, together with the observation of the reporters' daily emotional content and interaction with their audiences, permitted the formulation of a hypothesis the final section of this paper will strive to illustrate.

2.2 The mediatised public sphere

Interactions amongst political actors, media and publics have long since occupied a central place in the development and analysis of society and its collective identity. From Ancient Greece, which saw the agora as the locus where discourse (and hence, power) was construed and perpetuated via the interaction of free citizens; to the modern day, where social media have mostly replaced the physical square as place of debate; the importance of the interplay between media, politics, and their publics has hardly ever been disputable. The first two decades of the XXI century have arguably brought forth some of the most important changes in the media and political fields.

In the media milieu, the greatest transformation has been the emergence and consolidation of social media as a source and place of debate of societal discourse and norms. The Internet's rise to the forefront of the public forum has, indeed, allowed older types of media to blend with their newer counterparts to develop novel types of news media and figures in a process termed "*hybridization*" (Chadwick, 2013). Furthermore, through a mechanism known as "mediatisation", media have increasingly consolidated their place in the public social sphere (Asp, 1986; Strömbäck, 2008, as cited in Esser & Strömbäck, 2014), and have affirmed themselves as the public sphere's vigilant gatekeepers (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

Strömbäck generally describes mediatisation as a long-term process via which the "*importance of the media and their spill-over effects on political processes, institutions, organisations and actors have increased*" (Asp, 1986; Mazzoleni, 2008b; Meyer, 2002; Strömbäck, 2008, 2011a, 2011b; Strömbäck & Esser, 2009; as cited in Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). As the scholars Mazzoleni and Schulz detail in their article "*Mediatisation of politics: a challenge for democracy?*", amongst the various effects of mediatization has been a major change of value orientations, and media logic seems today to regulate much of the public sphere's mechanisms and norms (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). In its endeavour to scientifically observe this new political agora, scholarship has delineated some of its key elements as follows: first, reality, for both the political elites and their citizenship, tends to only comprise events deemed *newsworthy*, meaning that possess "*news value*". Skimming every day's stream of occurrences, media actors operate a selection process that determines what events and actors deserve to appear on the public stage, earning attention and relevancy (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). These actors and events must possess a certain set of characteristics, such as proximity, immediacy, conflict, drama and a certain level of personalisation. From the emphasis placed on these attributes follows that the media-construed depiction of politics might appear quite distant from the citizens' daily life. Second, participation in the thus-construed agora is, in itself, highly mediatised: political actors and events only become *newsworthy* the moment the media declare them so, conferring them their roles and status. In doing so, media actors become the public forum's primary agenda-setting and agenda-building agents. (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). The third defining element concerns "media logic" (Altheide & Snow, 1979), meaning the frame of reference within which the media execute their regulatory role. This frame has, in recent times, become increasingly commercialised, its glossary merged with that of the advertising and show business domains. This integration has, in turn, resulted in the "spectacularization" of political communication and discourse. Practices normally utilised in the entertainment industry have progressively embedded themselves in the production and diffusion of political news, thus establishing a continuous process of mutual integration and adaptation, in which media and non-media actors co-exist and act according to the same logic. Through the spectacularization process, public sphere's performative and bureaucratic dimensions have fused together (Gómez-García et al., 2023), eventually creating what was later termed

an "*infotainment*", ergo a milieu in which "*practices derived from entertainment formats have increasingly become "folded" into the production of political news*" (Altheide & Snow, 1992, as cited in Chadwick, 2013). As Mazzoleni and Schulz summarise, "*the language of politics has been married with that of advertising, public relations, and show business. What is newsworthy, what hits the headlines, what counts in the public sphere or in the election campaign are communication skills, the style of addressing the public, the "look," the image, even the special effects: All are typical features of the language of commercial media*" (1999). Fourthly, this "spectacularization" has taken the shape of a symbiotic process, with each of its components influencing and being influenced by the others: fully immersed and integrated in the mediatised ecosystem, modern political actors now must be able to adapt their behaviours to the media's standards and requirements. It is only by constructing strategically planned out "mediated *personae*" that they are able to participate and shape the public forum, moulding public opinion and gaining their constituents' support. The notion of "*personae*" is here used in reference to Van Waarden and Kohlrausch's conceptualisation of political public identities as artful compositions resulting from the interplay of both different media and the politicians' figures (Van Waarden & Kohlrausch, 2021). In the new mediatised ecosystem, journalists, political figures, political aides and publishers all play a role on the public stage to answer their audiences' demand for sensational and conflictual news. Their *personae* are deeply intrenched and rooted in their respective fields: a *political persona*, for example, is someone who has become well-known for political reasons, and who has had, and continuous to have, a deeply mediated impact on politics (*ibid*.). It is also within these fields that the figures' public images are projected and assiduously shaped and re-negotiated through their interaction with the audiences (*ibid*.). The continuously evolving and obligatory character of this performance, in turn, imputes and perpetually strengthens media's legitimacy and centrality as a conduit of political development. Modern media, Mazzoleni and Schulz explain, tend to alternate between the powerful roles of the partisan or the watchdog, endorsing or opposing the elites to answer the masses' demands (1999). The societal developments so-far described have heralded the rise of a new political and communication habitat, characterised by trends such as individualisation, celebritization and, most importantly for the purposes of this analysis, personalisation (Van Waarden & Kohlrausch, 2021).

2.3 The modern political sphere

Processes such those so far described have long since become central to political communication research.

As has been observed by Chadwick, the mechanisms regulating the informational market have long since commenced a deep process of hybridization, and the advent of online media has all but propelled the passage between the older types of broadcast and the newer, unorthodox sorts of news platforms (Chadwick, 2013). Via the aforementioned symbiotic relations between the media and the political domains, this process has shaped the power relations amongst the various political and media actors, thus ultimately impacting the production and fruition of news. It has played an important part in allowing the emergence of certain social media sites as authoritative sources of news and public discourse, empowering their users to contest and take an active part in the development of the discourse itself and thus dramatically altering the habitual democratic process (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). Unlike their traditional counterparts, newer media outlets appear to be less easily tied down by conventional norms of competition, conflict, negotiation and interdependence. News-generating cycles have, therefore, become more complex and larger than ever before (Chadwick, 2013).

Indeed, as the new type of media extended its reach and consolidated its status, an increasing variety of people who did not classify as "professional" journalists started taking part in the news-making discursive process, dramatically altering the informational landscape.

Social media communication's horizontal nature has made it much more likely for news to spread across interpersonal networks ahead of official press releases, breaking online before being picked up by television and print journalists (Chadwick, 2013). Interactions with the audiences have now become one of the key elements of news- and discourse-making processes, and older media have begun adopting features that generally belonged to newer news organisations. Major tv networks are increasingly investing in constructing and maintaining a sophisticated web presence: their reporters have taken to individually releasing their scoops online prior to the official broadcasts; effectively transforming theirs

and their networks' online webpages in public hubs of debate (Chadwick, 2013). They are doing so by integrating their posts with chat rooms, stories with comments, message boards and, above all, citizen-generated visual and audio materials.

Older media's integration into the digital sphere has had multiple ramifications: Firstly, it has generated new environments where the citizens were able to join and engage in public debate and opinion-making. Secondly, it has allowed older media actors to directly provide and, at times, manage the so-formed loci for public debate; which in turn has ensured their continued presence and relevance in the public forum (Chadwick, 2013).

Just like the political forum, news cycles quickly have adopted and adapted to the new commercialised and spectacularized logic. As was previously mentioned, the new "*infotainment*" environment came with a revolutionised panoply of criteria and standards: differently from their traditional counterparts, the newer media (and their audiences) greatly valued immediacy, conflict, drama and participation (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). No longer confined to the role of spectators, the public also became an active contributor to the creation of narratives and discourse, which are mainly propagated through short-form contents to be consumed in mere minutes (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, amongst the recently emerged social trends is that of personalisation. Since its inception, the phenomenon has steadily established itself as one of the most influential modern trends, both in the political and in the communication spheres.

Despite the concept's popularity, its theoretical clarification has proven to be quite arduous, Generally speaking, however, it might be defined as a "*process in which the political weight of the individual actor in the political process increases over time, while the centrality of the political group (i.e., political party) declines*" (Rahat & Sheafer, 2007, as cited in Rahat & Kenig, 2018, p. 118). It is, ergo, a shift of boundaries and salience. In some conceptualisations, this shift can happen at the expense of parties, who cede ground to their single candidates; in others, it is between the public and the private. These studies

see the two phenomena as a binary reification of personalised politics, giving the first case the name of *individualisation*, whilst the second that of *privatisation* (Van Aelst et al., 2011).

Moreover, though many scholars agree on viewing the phenomenon as one "*as old as politics itself*"(Radunski, 1980, as cited Adam & Maier, 2010, p. 215), modern communication research generally defines it as "*a trend, a process of change over time*" (Van Aelst et al., 2011).

According to Rega and Bracciale (2018), the modern conception of personalisation is the result of a process that has allowed political actors and leaders to acquire a higher degree of political autonomy (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). This process, the researchers argue, has been set into motion by the emergence of modern social networks as a vital locus for the audiences' meaning-making and community-building processes; a development which, in turn, has greatly diminished the relevancy of older information systems (Rega & Bracciale, 2018).

That of the politicians, however, has hardly been the only traditional figure impacted by social media's affirmation as a source and host of societal discourse.

2.4 The personalised media sphere

With publishers, editors, journalists and political figures coming together to "orchestrate" newsworthy events and narratives, the presence of phenomena such as personalisation, spectacularization and celebritization has been all but amplified (Van Waarden & Kohlrausch, 2021). In response to the audiences' interest in dramatized and controversial events, furthermore, news outlets have increasingly engaged in "press wars" centred around key public figures, easily recognisable protagonists of the political pantomime (Van Waarden & Kohlrausch, 2021).

As the previous paragraphs have attempted to illustrate, the effects of these processes on the media sphere's institutions and professions have been varied and multifaceted.

In the journalistic sphere, the advent of social media, together with the affirmation of the aforementioned commercialised media logic, has greatly blurred the boundaries between the professional and personal dimensions of reporters' lives. The focus has shifted from the employers' institutional platforms to the employees' personal pages; and journalists' personal pages nowadays welcome, daily, thousands of news watchers eager to investigate and influence the narratives propagated by the traditional outlets by means of interacting commenting spaces and blogs (Chadwick, 2013).

The development of novel types of news spaces and figures has, in turn, brought about a deep transformation of journalistic practice and theory.

One of the cardinal principles of traditional journalism has been that of independence, which has long since allowed the profession to be seen as a valid and credible intermediary between countries' ruling elites and their constituencies, effectively declaring it a "Fourth Estate"(Hanitzsch et al.,2019). While this characterisation has historically hinged on a variety of factors, one of the most important ones has undoubtedly been the credibility of the journalists' employers themselves, be they printed or televised news media. This conceptualisation sees autonomy as granted to journalists by the news organisations where they work, themselves independent and separate from the state sovereign (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). It might thus be quite natural to see how the modern news media figures' and means' disenfranchisement from the traditional apparatus might constitute a reason for the crisis.

2.5 Journalism as a discursive practice

Both the practice and the academic field lack, at the moment, a universally agreed-upon definition of journalism and its practitioners (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). One of the most commonly shared views of it, however, posits it as a discursive practice and social institution that is continuously (re)created, (re)interpreted, appropriated and contested (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). Inside the news media ecosystem, this discursive cycle is articulated following a variety of shared values, ideologies and codes of conduct, which journalists use daily to negotiate their professional identities and function within the informational cycle. Most Western news economies tend to see the institution and practice of journalism as one of the

main pillars of a functioning participatory democracy, in which the media is granted complete independence and freedom, and journalists are thus able to act as representatives of the people's will vis-à-vis the ruling parties (Hanitzsch et al., 2019:4).

Social media's integration into the journalistic apparatus has had unprecedented consequences. Encouraging subjective voices and personal expression, social media logic has favoured the creation of a more pluralist information habitat (Pantti, 2017), an *infotainment* primarily driven by a commercialised media logic (Altheide & Snow, 1992, as cited in Chadwick, 2013). Differently from traditional news reporting, social media journalism makes ample use of emotional displays and personal opinions to garner emotional engagement, support and readership. The pursuit of this sort of engagement is increasingly compelling journalists to collapse the boundaries between their personal and professional personas, making use of their private lives to inspire participation and support for their professional feats (Olausson, 2017).

Viewing this "collapse" as a completely modern and new phenomenon, however, would be quite simplistic. As the study of journalistic practice has always evidenced, the interplay between the journalistic class and its readership has always played a major role in the profession's development and functioning; and journalists have always relied on their audience to gain evidence and insight into the events they reported and observed (Bossio & Sacco, 2017). Social media's entrance and normalisation into the information economy, though, seems to have skewed this balance, causing modern journalistic praxis to become more personal, both in its contents and its reporting modalities. Just like politics, journalism has also been affected by the dissemination of the personalisation phenomenon, and has been faced with the need to implement devices previously belonging to other social and economic domains (Bossio & Sacco, 2017).

Research on social media's impact on journalistic practices has, thus far, primarily focussed on specific fields of the information milieu that have more easily incorporated the new logic's emphasis on narrative's visual and emotional aspects (Mellado & Hermida, 2022). Indeed, research has demonstrated

that journalism areas focussing on topics like culture and lifestyle have abundantly prospered during the commercialisation process, their reporters smoothly adapting to the visual-based platforms (Mellado & Hermida,2022). Much, however, remains to be observed concerning how these transformations have and will go on to shape conflict reporting, both in its visual and textual forms (Pantti, 2017).

2.6 Instagram's rise as a news platform

Amongst the social media that have, in the past few years, come to occupy a central place in the development of newer media cycles are, undoubtedly, Instagram and X (also commonly known as Twitter) (Bossio, 2021).

Ever since its inception as a photo-sharing medium in 2010, Instagram has undoubtedly affirmed itself as one of the most influential and widely used social-networking media of our time. Today, with more than 2 million daily users, the app constitutes the world's third most used social medium (source: Statista). Its ever-growing relevance as an instrument of news production and diffusion, a role the app has acquired particularly in the last half-decade or so, has also been the subject of great academic scrutiny (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

The social medium's emphasis on narratives' visual aspects, alternative sources and prominent personalities, in particular, has established it as a pillar of the mediatised information environment (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2024). Instagram's peculiar cultural and technical affordances have made it into the perfect theatrical stage for contemporary media actors to enact practices such as self-branding and personalisation (Mellado & Hermida, 2023). The lack of clear boundaries between the professional and the personal dimensions, together with the platform's continuous evolution, have indeed secured its role as a powerful tool for news producers to interact with their sources and users, enhancing their visibility and experimenting with novel ways of storytelling (Bossio & Sacco, 2016). Tools such as the Stories, moreover, have turned Instagram into an important promoter of short-form content, easily consumed especially by the younger audiences (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). In their article "*Ephemeral Journalism: News Distribution Through Instagram Stories*",

the academics Vázquez-Herrero, Direito-Rebollal and López-García define this type of content as "*ephemeral*": it can be viewed and digested in the space of few seconds or minutes, and only for a set amount of times or for a specific amount of times (2019).

2.7 The commodification phenomenon

The general concept of "*commodification*" is far from a new addition to the modern market society lexicon. According to leading property theorist and law professor Margaret Jane Radin Generally speaking, "to commodify" generally means to assign an object a monetary value, thus turning it into an object for sale (Radin, 1996, as cited in Jackson, 2009). Though apparently straightforward both in conceptualisation and applicability, the notion becomes more complicated when analysed within the methodological spectrum comprising its various stages, from universal non-commodification to universal commodification. The latter end of this spectrum, in particular, sees commodification as applied to any and all goods and services, including personhood. Once commodified, the person becomes both a rational seller and a legitimate commodity, two categorisations that also extend to all of the person's attributes and characteristics, be they personal aesthetic traits, rational commitments or emotional relations (Radin, 1996, as cited in Jackson, 2009).

According to Radin, applying any of these two extremist views to multifaceted market environments such as the media one would be erroneous and unreasonable, as it would lead to the debasing of some values essential to personhood. Denying, however, the influence that market dynamics have come to exert on the development of modern media practices might result just as inaccurate.

Academics inquiry on the topic has largely focussed its attention on the macro-level, analysing how capitalistic market precepts have caused news to become a commodity, compromising its role as a pillar of modern public fora, where it allows citizens to make informed choices, subsequently contributing to the development of functional democratic processes (Jackson, 2009). Research has highlighted how media helps perpetuate and maintain capitalistic tenets and social relations, prioritising predictability and profitability over critical, investigative journalism (Bruck & Allan, 1987).

Though literature on the effects commodification might be due to have on the micro-level on the journalistic ecosystem is still in the early stages of development, academia has long since discussed the possible adverse implications that integrating emotions, particularly negative ones, might have on journalists operating in a market-oriented ecosystem (Sontag, 2003). The more or less graphic display seems to pose a particularly prickly dilemma, on both technical and moral grounds: though it might be an effective in the construction of captivating and impactful stories, it might also cause its spectators to become "desensitized", resulting in the unwanted diminishment of audiences' attention (Sontag, 2003). Moreover, scholars seem to agree that the transformations brought forward by market dynamics have greatly damaged journalism's moral social role, undermining journalists' ethical and public interest imperatives and leading to the heightened production of "junk journalism" as a way to appeal to the lowest common denominator and thrive in the modern media market (McManus, 1994, as cited in Jackson, 2009). News cycles' accruing demand for promptly delivered spectacles has encumbered reporters with the need to incessantly produce new content, often less thoroughly researched and more centred on their *personae* themselves (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). Following market's entrance in the personalised journalistic dimension, reporters' ideas and emotions, which had already proved useful in garnering the publics' attention and sympathies, has acquired a newly profitable economic nuance (Serrin, 2000). Commodified journalists' audiences are no longer spectators, more or less active participants in the news-making spectacularized process. They, instead, are reduced to consumers, their role determined by their ability and willingness to pay the journalists' personhood's monetary value.

Conclusions

Social media's rise in the public political and communication spheres has caused a variety of effects; and the academic field exploring them is a constantly expanding and evolving one. The increasing complexity of the public arena has only accrued their popularity, both as a medium and as a source of public discourse, which has made the exploration of the phenomena all the more compelling. Concepts such as Chadwick's hybridization and Altheide's media logic highlight the complexity of the new habitat the changes have brought about. These mechanisms' dominance over the public forum have led to a

personalised and *spectacularized* political narrative, which in turn has made the understanding and operationalising of these modern mechanisms all the more crucial. The evolving media environment demands that political actors and journalists adapt to new standards and engage with audiences in innovative ways. The integration of social media and market values into journalistic practices has further blurred the lines between professional and personal realms, fostering a more participatory and emotionally-driven news culture.

As this chapter set out to illustrate, research into this impact has made great progress since the media's insurgence in the past decade, laying down basic vital theories and investigating their effects on a variety of fields and professional figures that have easily integrated their principles. Much, however, is still to be observed in adjacent fields.

The personalisation of conflict journalism

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some areas of journalistic praxis had a seemingly easier time integrating a number of new norms and values imposed by the commercialisation phenomenon. This was, for example, the case for lifestyle, culture and leisure journalism, fields historically less protected from commercial pressures than other news beats (Solomon & Englis, 1994, as cited in Mellado & Hermida, 2022).

In the conflict reporting domain, however, personalisation and mediatisation remain very much ongoing processes, their effects yet to fully realise themselves. Nevertheless, it is impossible to deny the impact that social media's emphasis on visual storytelling has had on the practice, opening it up to "personal opinions and displays of emotion" (Pantti, 2017). This opening has, in turn, revived long-standing debates about the role that conflict reporters should play in the development of conflict narratives, and whether they should prioritise objectivity or advocacy when relating the events. Debates such as this have only become more heated in the last few years, with the advent of what has been termed "information warfare".

What was once considered a "deviation from the journalistic norm" (Pantti, 2017) has now become the norm: direct expressions of emotions and opinions seem to have perfectly embedded themselves in the praxis of conflict narration; the journalists' voices have become more subjective, their *personae* part of the events themselves. As research has previously found, the adoption of these personalised modi operandi has been primarily caused by the journalists' will to boost audience engagement or to bond with fellow journalists (Lasorsa et al., 2012; Pantti, 2017). Conflict reporters have, indeed, also begun to implement elements of the practice of "emotional journalism", introducing personal and impassioned narratives to attract their readers' attention and emotional response (Goutier et al., 2021), and thus create empathy and sympathy (Pantti, 2017).

Though the popularity of this reporting style has undoubtedly been accrued by the advent of social media, "emotional journalism" is all but a new phenomenon: in the 1990s, for example, the reporter Martin Bell first conceptualised what has come to be known as the "journalism of attachment" (McLaughlin, 2016). In stark contrast with the "journalism of objectivity", based on impartiality and abstinence from moral judgements, this new type of journalism was supposed to "care" and be "aware of the moral ground on which it operated", showing "commitment" and "emotional anguish" (McLaughlin, 2016). It should be noted, however, that deviances such as this one have historically been characterised by a specific geographical and temporal location: the "journalism of attachment", for example, happened to develop during the reporting of the Balkan wars and connecting civil conflicts in the 1990s (McLaughlin, 2016).

On social media networks such as Twitter and Instagram, endeavours to implement practices of "emotional journalism" have found expression in an increase in the use of emotive language, the sharing of personal life details and in the appearance of photographic content. This has resulted in a process of "individualisation" of both news production and consumption, which now allows individuals to express their interests in their surrounding events without the need to negotiate any sort of collective identity (Papacharissi, 2016). The reporters are hence able to enter an almost personal relationship with their readers, who come to think of them as friends or family members (Kaur, 2024).

Differently from the past, when the conflict reporter was almost exclusively a "*detached watchdog*", there to capture and recount the events, its modern manifestation has apparently adopted the archetype of the "*interventionist*" (Hanitzsch et al., 2019).

The study "*Worlds of Journalism*" defines the *interventionist* journalist as a figure prone to exert media functions such as advocacy for social change, the influencing of public opinion and of the political agenda, and the support of national development (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). This type of journalism is best incubated in conflictive and disrupted social contexts, where reporters are usually enabled to have a more proactive role in political discourse and opinion-formation processes. In fulfilling this role, they

no longer limit themselves to observe and recount, but rather become an integral element of what they are narrating, acting as campaigners or supporters of specific causes. Advocates generally fully identify with a precise group (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2016), and may at times collaborate with fellow members of such a group in the processes of news-making and diffusion. In some cases, they have been observed to develop "double loyalties", serving "*contradicting communities*" - the professional and the national, adhering to principles of objectivity and solidarity alternatively (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). In recent years, this sort of collaboration has, for example, come to be in the form of professional journalists sharing citizenry-contributed imagery from crisis events. The dissemination of user-generated material has been proven to foster audience engagement and support, complementing and at times challenging traditional media's narratives (Bock, 2011; Lewis, 2012).

It is important to note that, although they might act as facilitators of particular ideologies or developments, *interventionist* journalists actually inhabit another end of the spectrum compared to their *collaborative* colleagues. The difference between the two is mainly denoted by their relationship with authorities and the status quo: while reporters playing the *collaborative* role are, more often than not, supportive of the government and its policies; *interventionists* tendentially oppose the powers of the society they operate in, advocating for social change and reforms (Hanitzsch et al., 2019). Operating in conflict-ridden societies, these professionals rarely have any social harmony or national unity.

The highly personalised nature of modern reporting further facilitates the journalists' integration, as it permits the full reification of their personal "voices", further expanding their leeway in expressing personal opinions and impressions (Pantti, 2017).

2.8 The humanisation of conflict and conflict-reporters

The personalisation of conflict reporting has also had interesting effects on the portrayal of human suffering and loss. As detailed by Pantti in her article "*The personalisation of conflict reporting*", in which the academic analyses media coverage of the Ukrainian conflict, emotions' entry in the journalistic lexicon has had both positive and negative consequences for the humanisation of conflict

storytelling. Without traditional media's constraints detailing the content to be published, the reporters have indeed found themselves with the newfound ability to autonomously decide what to show their audiences. This has transformed them into their very own monitors and gate-keepers, often opting to simply refer to "sickening" images, too "grim" to post and consequently only included in their beats by way of attached external links. In their efforts to censor themselves and maintain a neutral tone, self-presenting journalists seem to thus perpetuate the "troublesome" nature of visually and publicly portraying human suffering (Pantti, 2017).

This, however, has not been the case for all journalists: while some of them have found a way around the self-censorship by focussing their attention on the mourning masses, whose depictions are generally less gruesome while retaining their evocative capacity; others have opted to instrumentalise the personalisation aspect of their praxis by inviting their audience "behind the scenes", including their thought-processes and impressions in their narration, fully shining a light on their own personal "selves".

Pantti's analysis of personalised conflict reporting seemingly renders a grim image of the newly constituted field, that appears unable to fully grasp the narrative's intricate facets. Nevertheless, as the academic herself is quick to specify, the restricted number of studies conducted so far makes it complicated to draw generalisable conclusions regarding the phenomenon; a matter complicated even further by the specific and peculiar nature of each conflict and reporter observed.

Research performed on the Israel-Palestine conflict has indeed illustrated the important role that personalised and visual narration carried out primarily through social media networks have had on the accurate portrayal of the Palestinian side of the war, contributing to the fair diffusion of news regarding both sides involved.

2.9 The Israel-Gaza situation

The conflict between Israel and Hamas has long since represented a complicated challenge for reporters manifestly trying to play the "detached watchdog" role. Ever since the war's first outbreak, journalists (especially Western ones) have indeed profoundly struggled to find a balanced narration for a conflict that has been anything but, especially in terms of military capability, political power and international sympathy (McLaughlin, 2016).

As researchers like McLaughlin have already illustrated, any analysis of the imbalance should undoubtedly proceed from an assessment of the players' military power. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies' "*Military Balance*" study, in 2023 Israel's active military personnel number amounted to a total of 169.500 units. Of these, around 126.000 soldiers were part of the Israel Defense Force army (which will be referred to with the abbreviation "IDF" from this point forward). On top of that, the country also had 400.000 reservists, of which 360.000 were mobilised after the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023 (“The Israel-Hamas Military Balance,” 2023).

An evaluation of Hamas's power conducted synchronously, on the other hand, estimated the forces to comprise between 15.000 and 40.000 personnel (International Institute For Strategic Studies, 2023).

Albeit it has been close to impossible to establish the precise extent of Hamas' weapon capability (a difficulty compounded by the organisation's close ties with the Islamic Jihad), research has oftentimes deemed it safe to consider its military capacity to be greatly inferior to that of its adversary (McLaughlin, 2016).

That of military brute force, however, is hardly the only field the aforementioned extends to. Mainstream media's reticence to reproduce any retelling other than the official Israeli one has, as a matter of fact, been largely documented (McLaughlin, 2016; Tasseron, 2021), and journalists have recurrently appeared unwilling to give an independent observation and critique of Israel's operations in the Gaza Strip (McLaughlin, 2016). Traditional media's coverage of the conflict, it has been argued, tends to

depict Palestinians as provocateurs and Israelis as defenders; insistently emphasises Israeli casualties over Palestinian ones; and tends to obscure both the imbalance between the two sides and the historical explanation for the conflict itself. Western journalists, in particular, appear to have struggled greatly with giving a clear and objective narration of the ongoing war (McLaughlin, 2016).

Attempts to delineate reasons behind these struggles have suggested that Western reporters might be more receptive to propaganda messages and images than their colleagues; they might also be more susceptible to Israel's propaganda and flak campaigns.

The advent of newer media networks has indeed constituted an opportunity, for Palestinian citizens, to balance the scales, turning to alternative sources via the Internet to discover new loci for information or discussion (McLaughlin, 2016). This, in turn, has permitted the creation and circulation of new discourse, incrementing international support for Palestinians and their plight. Palestinian journalists like Plestia Alaqad have openly declared the objective of their reporting to be that of "*humanising*" their fellow citizens, to "*show the world what the mainstream media is not showing*" (Fadel, 2024).

As Mann (2018) discusses in his "*I am Spartacus*" paper, the role of citizen journalism becomes particularly crucial in such contexts. Citizen journalists, often operating outside the constraints and biases of traditional media, can provide raw, unfiltered accounts of events, thus offering an alternative perspective that can challenge dominant narratives.

Ever since the last outbreak, on October 7, 2023, direct accounts from Palestinians, usually shared via their Instagram and Twitter pages, have become the most reliable medium to learn about the war and its effects. The importance of these unfiltered accounts has only been accrued by Israel's refusal to allow any independent press agency from the territory on the premise that it might not be possible to guarantee their safety (Kaur, 2024). The democratisation of information dissemination operated by Palestinian reporters and their civil contributors has, in these circumstances, enabled a more diverse and inclusive discourse, which is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the conflict.

Social media's growing relevance has also proven useful in levelling the military and political power imbalance between the two adversaries. Its co-option into the armed conflict, academics like Mann have argued, has allowed the abatement of Israeli soldiers' impunity as representatives of their State's authority, thus also diminishing Israel's political impunity itself (2018). The growing "individualisation" (defined here as the accruing focus of media attention on *"identifiable individuals*" (Mann, 2018) has indeed made it close to impossible for the IDF to avoid being documented and registered, transforming their *faces* in a new, veritable battleground. Mann's theory follows from a pre-established academic tradition that sees power as the ability to visualise a territory from the widest possible angle, while simultaneously limiting the subjects' capacity to see (Mirzoeff, 2011, as cited in Mann, 2018), and thus to fashion any sort of collective political identity. The power of authority, as this theory would have it, resides in its anonymity vis-à-vis the individualisation of its subjects.

The human face has long been a source of deep academic interest in a variety of disciplines. Research on its instrumentalization in the social media field has proven that photos depicting human faces experience a level of engagement much higher than their face-less counterparts (Bakhshi et al., 2014). In communication academia, the face has repeatedly been affirmed as a vital vehicle for communication and information, oftentimes utilised to evoke strong and immediate emotional responses and empathy (Sontag, 2003; Mann, 2018).

In summary, the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas presents a multifaceted challenge for journalists striving to maintain objectivity and balance. Traditional media coverage often fails to adequately represent the profound disparities in military power, political influence, and public perception. However, the rise of citizen journalism and the strategic use of personal narratives and faces in social media have introduced new dynamics into the reportage of the conflict. These personal accounts not only humanise the war's victims but also challenge prevailing narratives and power structures, providing a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the conflict. This shift underscores the critical role of new media in democratising information and fostering a more inclusive and accurate discourse.

Conclusion

The profession of the journalist is one in constant evolution, with an ever-changing nature that is only emphasised by its contextualisation in the conflict domain. The affirmation, in the news environment, of modern entities such as social media networks and citizen-journalists has only further complicated attempts to clearly study and categorise the field and its workings. The Israel-Hamas conflict, especially in its modern outbreaks, constitutes the perfect reification of the theoretical and practical complexities dominating the praxis in the modern day.

Utilising the theoretical concepts hitherto delineated, the upcoming analysis aims at illustrating, in a detailed manner, how some aspects of personalised social-media conflict reporting manifest themselves in the daily posts shared from the Gaza Strip.

3. Structure of the analysis and methodology

The analysis will be structured according to Altheide and Schneider's guidelines for ethnographic analysis of social media content (2017). As per instructions, the clarification of the research questions will thus be followed by the delineation of the unit of analysis. I will then proceed to draw up a research protocol and gather the data useful to the ends of the analysis hence planned.

3.1 Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA)

Altheide and Schneider's book "*Qualitative media analysis*" defines ethnographic research as a type of reflective analysis useful in delineating "patterns of human action" via the observation of key factors such as situations, settings, styles, images, meanings, and nuances (2017). Besides the identification of patterns, Altheide and Schneider argue, ECA is also preoccupied with understanding processes of meaning communication and proving theoretical relationships. Differently from its quantitative counterpart, ethnographic analysis mostly makes use of a circular method of data interpretation to form research protocols aimed at discovering and verifying usually pre-assumed starting points. While structured, these protocols will oftentimes be quite flexible, pliant to the researchers' need to revise them repeatedly in order not to forsake any discovery that might arise during the analysis. This sort of "structured flexibility" should function as the study's basis for reliability, capturing the nuances of qualitative data while ensuring that findings are consistently re-evaluated for accuracy to the sample material. The investigator is, nevertheless, continuously at the centre of the analysis itself, thoroughly engaged with the existing literature and in possession of a wealth of background information supposed to help them contextualise their findings (Altheide & Schneider, 2017). This study, in particular, builds on a range of existing research, such as works by McLaughlin, Mann, and Fahmy et al., and integrates it with frameworks from scholars such as Rahat and Sheafer.

Altheide and Schneider describe ethnographic research as articulated in the following steps (2017):

1. the formulation of research questions, allowing the clear identification of the issues to be investigated. This phase also includes the researcher's deep familiarisation with their background material and information sources.

2. The creation of a *research protocol*, informed by the researcher's familiarity with the background material. This protocol (or *data collection sheet*) should comprise a few items (variables) useful in the process of data collection. This first protocol should be tested on a first run of data collection, and adjusted according to its efficacy and applicability to the data sample.

3. Establishing a protocol should then be followed by the selection of a sampling strategy, aimed at "generalising" the researcher's findings to an entire population. In the field of ethnographic analysis, this sampling might usually be theoretical, based on the analyst's increasing understanding of the topic.

4. The sampling should then be utilised to collect the data. If appropriate, the scholar should use preset codes, storing the data thus collected with multiple descriptive examples. This data should be re-examined about halfway through the analysis, to permit the emergence of ulterior details and aspects missed by the initial protocol.

5. Following the data collection phase should be one of data *analysis*, complete with data coding and conceptual refinement. This phase should also comprise the writing of "mini-summaries" summing up the analysed items, and the comparison of key differences within each category. An example case should then be combined with each category.

6. Finally, the findings thus obtained should be integrated with the relevant theoretical concepts and the researcher's own interpretation.

3.2 Units of analysis

Given my research's focus on social media conflict reporting and its relations to traditional media, I will select Instagram posts and single news reports as units.

Because of the previously delineated ephemeral nature of Instagram Stories and the impossibility to retrieve most of them after a time period of twenty-four hours (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019), I decided to specifically target feed posts as the most enduring and stable form of unit of analysis. It is important to note, however, that the momentaneous visualisation of Stories as the conflict was first unfolding did contribute to my general understanding of the situation. Furthermore, one should not underestimate their role in the reporters' dialectical relationship and dialogue with their audiences.

The observation of single news reports as they appear in traditional media, on the other hand, should provide grounds for analysing the "commodification" part of the phenomenon, especially when considered in relation to the initial social media reports. Both Instagram posts and traditional media articles should be authored by or mention four reporters in particular: Motaz Azaiza, Hind Khoudary, Bisan Owda, and Plestia Alaqad. The reasons behind the specific selection of these four figures are as follows: firstly, all four are mostly freelancers and have heavily relied on social media (primarily Instagram) to share their pictures and news pieces since the start of the conflict, which larger and more established news media outlets have started to pick up. In this, they counterbalance the Western journalists traditionally embedded within the IDF forces (McLaughlin, 2016). They have all seen a tremendous increase in fame since the events of October 7th, and have effectively become pillars of the Palestinian news ecosystem during the conflict. Secondly, their content fits the description of "personalised reporting": in both the posts' captions and photos, the reporters appear at the very centre of the news, using their personal voices to openly share their opinions regarding the situation to garner attention for the conflict and humanise its victims (Fahmy et al., 2024). The journalist, in this case, has long ceased being an objective observer, there to witness and relay the events to allow the masses to form an opinion. They also tend to be the main source of their own work's credibility and relevance,

given their independence from most traditional news outlets. Thirdly, the diverse professional and academic backgrounds the four come from well display the varied nature of the informational ecosystem they inhabit. Indeed, while all four of them have come to refer to themselves (and be referred to, when interviewed or solely mentioned) as journalists whose main occupation is reporting on the Israeli-Gaza situation (Abruzzese et al., 2023), not all started out that way. Before October 2023, for example, Bisan Owda was mainly a video maker, mainly focused on promoting content creation as a tool to advance gender-equality policies (UN Women, 2023); while Plestia Alaqad was essentially a travel content creator, only occasionally engaging in freelance journalism (Abruzzese et al., 2023). Conversely, Azaiza was a photographer, though he had already gained some expertise in conflict reporting thanks to his coverage of the 2014 and 2021 aggressions (Abed, 2023). Khoudary was, in fact, the only "professional" journalist of the four, having previously collaborated with outlets such as The New Arab and the Middle East Eye (The New Arab Staff, 2024). In order for the analysis to be as widely understandable and available as possible, the observed units were primarily written or, at a minimum, translated in English.

The following section briefly introduces the four reporters the study set out to analyse.

Plestia Alaqad

Plestia Alaqad is a 22-year-old Palestinian journalist and activist from the Gaza Strip. At the time of writing, Alaqad resides in Beirut, where she is pursuing a Master's Degree at the American University of Beirut (Khoury, 2024). Before the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, Alaqad lived in Gaza, where she worked as a HR professional for a marketing agency (Khanwala, 2023). In her free time, Alaqad was a content creator and influencer: she used her personal Instagram profile to share snippets and excepts of everyday life in Gaza, to "*teach her followers that there was more to Gaza than conflict and destruction*" (Michaelson, 2023). Following the initial attack, Alaqad's page was one of the first to go viral, and she took to the social medium to share daily updates regarding the developing conflict and its victims. Unable to directly access the warzone, British and French television channels hired her to work as an on-field reporter, and the newly-instated journalist interwove official accounts with personal posts and appeals to the international audiences.

In the month following the start of the invasion, her Instagram profile gathered more than two million followers, a number that all but doubled by the end of November, when she was forced to evacuate and take residency in Australia (Woodward, 2023). Since her "forced move", as she refers to her evacuation from the Strip, Alaqad has become an increasingly relevant and outspoken advocate of the Palestinian cause.

Motaz Azaiza

Prior to the start of the conflict, Motaz Azaiza worked as a part-time producer for a U.N. agency (Al-Hlou, 2023). He was 24 years old and occupied his free time by sharing artfully curated snapshots of Gaza's streets and citizens with his 24.000 Instagram followers. Much like Alaqad, the young photographer wanted to share Gaza's beauty and culture with the rest of the world, as he, too, felt that traditional media focussed exceedingly on the Strip's more gruesome and war-related aspects (*ibid.*). Although his focus was primarily travel photography, he was not completely foreign to conflict reporting, as he had already gained some expertise in the field by covering the 2014 and 2021 aggressions (Abed, 2023). The explosion of the war, however, transformed him into a veritable war correspondent for the social media age (Al-Hlou, 2023). As of the present moment, Azaiza's followers number at 17.7 million.

During his time as a freelance on-site reporter within the Gaza Strip, his page alternated emotional appeals and messages with raw footage filmed selfie-style and graphic photos of bombed buildings and victims. Before evacuating to Qatar in December, Azaiza spent 107 days documenting the war, witnessing the death of countless friends and family members. Most of the gruesome events were documented by photos and videos, with some of them depicting the journalist's own traumatised and tear-stricken face (Begum, 2024). Following his evacuation, Azaiza has figured prominently amongst civil movements demanding a ceasefire and raising awareness for the Palestinian cause, visiting universities and international congresses (Miharia, 2024).

Hind Khoudary

As was mentioned in this section's introductory paragraph, Khoudary was, at the start of the invasion, the only "professional" journalist of the four, an assiduous collaborator of outlets such as The New Arab, the Middle East Eye and the Turkish news service Anadolu Agency (The New Arab Staff, 2024). Her reports were cited by The New York Times and NPR, her online presence on digital media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram already well-established before October 7th (*ibid.*). As the conflict developed, Khoudary commenced collaborating with the news outlet Al Jazeera, gaining relevancy for her unfiltered documentation of the uncertainties and fears faced by her and her colleagues; a personal account she entwines with captivating descriptions of her fellow citizens' everyday struggles and tales of resistance (Al-Hlou, 2023). Differently from the previous two journalists, Khoudary continues, to this day, to refuse evacuation, and keeps reporting from the city of Deir el-Balah (Al Jazeera, 2024). In her capacity as reporter still operating in the active warzone, she has been extremely outspoken about the dangers and problems posed by the continuous communication blackouts, and has been frequently interviewed regarding the challenges of being both a chronicler and witness of the unfolding events (Serhan, 2023).

Bisan Owda

Another reporter still living in the Gaza Strip is Bisan Owda. Known as "Hawawatia", "The Storyteller", Owda is a video-journalist currently collaborating with a variety of media outlets and news-pages to share quotidian video updates from within the warzone (The New Arab, 2024). In the months following the initial invasion, her Instagram page primarily went viral because of her poignant selfie-videos, which regaled the masses with unfiltered portrayals of life under siege (*ibid.*). Before October 2023, Owda's profile teemed with reels documenting the Strip's cultural heritage and vivacious and diverse community, which the creator produced and utilised in her advocacy efforts in the fields of human rights, climate change, and youth and women engagement. Her content discussed social issues and was aimed at the advancement of gender equality solutions and campaigns (UN Women, 2023). These historical tales and captivating narratives have, nevertheless, long since been replaced by grimmer and desolate

depictions of the ongoing conflict, all accompanied by the simultaneously hopeful and harrowing message "*It's Bisan, from Gaza, and I am still alive*" (The New Arab, 2024).

3.3 The time scope

Following Altheide and Schneider's recommendations (2017), the analysis sample's time limit will be delineated paying attention to the data's availability and density, together with its capability of rendering an accurate, if slightly limited, comprehension of the phenomenon being observed.

The posts observed were therefore mainly shared on the two months after the events of October 7th, 2023, day that marked the beginning of the Israeli military operation "Iron Sword" in response to Hamas's attack which had happened earlier that morning (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 2023). The restriction of the time scope to the months following the initial attack is primarily due to the following reasons: firstly, most reporters of those mentioned above experienced an exponential increase in their followers count precisely in that time period, which cemented them as reference points both for international news media and their global audiences (Mpoke Bigg, 2023; Kaur, 2024). Secondly, constricting the scope to that period should allow the final analysis to achieve the goal of being both specific and comprehensive enough, ensuring the study satisfied its principally illustrative scope without becoming too outstretched. The utilisation of a New York Times article titled "*Key moments in 2 months of war between Israel and Hamas"* allowed the individuation of the events relevant to the analysis. Published in December 2023, the article comprised an authoritative and concise enough summary of the events that had happened in the first two months of the yet-ongoing war. Moreover, although the newspaper itself has been harshly criticised by both sides with regards to its coverage and perceived bias, its historical legacy and relevance in the international arena arguably make it a pillar of modern Western investigative journalism.

Traditional media articles, on the other end, will be selected within a time period spanning from October 7th until April 2024. The selection of this time scope felt sufficient to provide enough news beats focussed on human-interest stories (ergo, focussed on the journalists' personal and emotional spheres)

and either directly or indirectly mentioning the reporters in question (via name or profession). In particular, the observation of such a prolonged time period afforded the chance to notice the transformation the journalists' figures underwent in the traditional media milieu.

3.4 Sampling method

The social media dataset will then be selected using the technique of *purposive* sampling, which allows to cover a particular time period electing data relevant to the scope and the aim of the research. As previously mentioned, posts will be picked within a time period ranging from October 7th to December 5th, with a special focus on the dates bearing direct developments on the battlegrounds in the Gazan geographical region and on the journalists under observation. President Biden's diplomatic visit to Israel will not, for example, constitute a selection criterion. At the same time, the constant interaction with the data might allow the inclusion of posts shared outside the initially selected days (an example of this might be Alaqad's first posts, which were published on October 9th but still related events that occurred on October 7th, 2023). The sample of traditional media articles, on the other hand, will be chosen according to the techniques of *cluster* and *theoretical* sampling: a *cluster* of data will be selected (in this case, news pieces mentioning the aforementioned journalists) and proceed to pick some of the articles thus selected to exemplify the point of my analysis. All articles thus picked, however, will appear in the Appendix attached to this study, along with my notes on each of the units.

3.5 Data collection

Instagram easily allows the visualisation of "older posts" stored in other users' profiles. The collection of these posts requires the researcher to scroll down the users' feeds and wait for the page to update said older posts, continuing to do so until the termination of the selected time window. The lack of previews depicting the posts' posting dates, and of a mechanism allowing the opening of all necessary posts at the same time, might make this quite a time-consuming process.

The posts thence collected are to be then analysed via the utilisation of a protocol aimed at identifying the content's main themes.

3.6 Formulation of the protocol

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a vital component of ethnographic is, as per Altheide's and Schneider's instructions, the formulation of a research protocol. The scholars define it as a "*list of questions, items, categories, or variables that guide data collection from documents*." (Altheide & Schneider, 2017), which permits the systematic but reflexive observation of the object of analysis. The variables of this protocol might be individuated either deductively or inductively. In the course of this specific research, the protocol's initial variables were deductively derived via a previous thorough literature review, and were tested out on a first "trial" analysis. In particular, categories were based on previous research focussed on the development of journalistic roles (Hanitzch et al., 2019) and of conflict journalism in the modern era (Mc Laughlin, 2016; Pantti, 2017); integrated with the analysis of more contemporary and topic-specific sources such as tv newsbeats and web news articles focussed on the conflict itself. In accordance with ECA's reflexive nature, variables were slightly modified along the course of the observation, which allowed them to be better applied to the analysis of the content. The sample of posts also underwent some modifications, and was altered to include some posts deemed to contain content relevant to the final analysis and closely related to those already selected in the first round of sampling.

The final, revised version of the research protocol presented as follows:

- *Event:* The outbreak of the last Israel-Hamas conflict
- *Time frame:* October 7th, 2023 - December 5th, 2023
- *Social media platform:* Instagram
- *Sources:* Instagram, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, the New Arab, CNN, NBC News, The New York Times, The World, Middle East Eye, UN News

- *Topic/focus:* Gaza, reporting of the Israel-Hamas war
- *Number of posts collected:* 117 Instagram posts, with an additional 14 articles proceeding from traditional news outlets
- *Search terms:* "Gaza", "survival", "Palestine", reporters' names
- *File format:* PDF file
- *Data:* Textual and photographic posts, screenshots of web news articles
- *Supplementary data:* screenshots and brief descriptions of video posts
- *Frame:* personalisation of conflict reporting
- *Themes:* mediatisation, personalisation, emotionalization, social media news ecosystems, journalists on Instagram, journalists' professional roles, destruction humanisation of conflict, journalistic practice on social media, commodification of conflict reporting, synecdoches
- *Perspective/view:* Pro-Palestine, strong Palestinian identity, personalised journalism
- *Language:* empathetic, emotional registers. Alternance of English and Arabic.

3.7 Objectives of the study

Aim of this analysis will thus be to illustrate some of the visual, textual and narratives elements that characterise both the personalisation and the commodification processes insofar as they have and continue to influence journalistic practices on social media. The investigation will principally focus on the themes figuring in war reporters' Instagram accounts during the most recent developments of the Israel-Hamas conflict. As this paper purports to argue, this last outbreak has generated an apt case study to analyse the evolution of the personalised conflict journalist, with the complete abandonment of objectivity and continuous references to the journalists' own central role and voice within the conflict. This high level of personalisation has made it so that when the journalists' reporting has been picked up

by traditional media, it has undergone a certain process of "commodification". Acquiring a certain level of "celebrity status," the reporters have become one with their reports; news outlets quoting them as experts and witnesses, and they have become talked about rather than being the ones to do the talking.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The correct execution of the research hitherto delineated requires, first, the clarification of some fundamental ethical considerations.

The first field in which ethical issues might arise is, evidently, the privacy one. As per Instagram's Terms of Use, the app does not, at present, require its users be notified of any academic research being conducted on publicly shared material (Source: Meta). This specific thesis, moreover, will be entirely based on content explicitly shared by reporters for informational and educational purposes, an intent the reporters observed have openly stated on multiple occasions (Fadel, 2024; Kaur, 2024; Mehdi, 2024). The not-for-profit nature of this study, moreover, might provide sufficient basis to avoid copyright or intellectual property rights infringements (Flick, 2013). It is, however, undoubtable that further analysis of the topic would require contacting the study's subjects to get their written and, most importantly, informed consent.

Despite these considerations, using this material in the ethnographic analysis may still present challenges, particularly due to the highly interpretative nature of the inquiry (Esin et al., 2014). The highly controversial and emotional character of the observed data, together with the writer's opinion on the general situation, risks creating biases in the interpretation of the journalists' posts and work as a whole. The execution of a more extensive inquiry, both in a temporal and a thematic sense, might aid in ensuring that the conflict is portrayed in a balanced and reliable manner, avoiding partial and partisan misrepresentations.

4. Analysis

The selected units of analysis first underwent a "trial test", which allowed the refinement of the initial protocol. As the observation of the material went on, newer categories "emerged" inductively, based both on the initial theoretically-based sampling and the more specific, purposely selected one later. The application of these categories made it possible to set down the coding scheme, which comprised themes such as the journalists' *personal impressions* and *anecdotes;* their *patriotism* and *personal tragedies*; their *self-presentation* (through photo and video-selfies); their *emotional expressions*; the identification of *specific conflict narratives* (focussed on resistance, the human cost, the infrastructure's destruction, community and solidarity); the emphasis on the *visual representation* of the conflict. Each of the reporters also seemed to focus on particular narrative topics: Owda's photos, videos and captions often aimed at highlighting the human cost of the conflict and civilians' struggles and resilience. Alaqad chose, instead, to share stories focused on survival and community solidarity, expressly aimed at humanising the Gazan population; while Azaiza's posts primarily used powerful images and first-hand accounts to show the destruction of Gaza's infrastructure, appealing for international attention. Khoudary's profile conversely offered an interesting mix of personal reflections and on-the-ground reporting, intimate portrayals blending with professional journalistic beats.

On the other hand, in order to investigate the commodification part of my analysis; the attention was focussed on news articles mentioning the journalists by name or by particular attributes, such as their nationality, their being Gazan residents, or their roles as victims and witnesses of the conflict.

Final results were then obtained through integration of these macro-themes with the theoretical framework previously acquired, as described by Altheide and Schneider (2017).

5. Results

The integration of the previously delineated variables with their relevant theoretical background permitted the emergence of three overarching macro-themes: "*journalist and victim dichotomy*", "*conflict and thematic focus*" and "*visual storytelling*".

The first theme, the "*journalist and victim dichotomy*" contained posts highlighting the journalists' subjective experiences and emotional expressions. These posts also tended to show a high degree of self-representation, with selfies and personal anecdotes taking centre stage to offer a deeply human and humanised perspective of the war.

"*Visual storytelling*", on the other hand, underlined the reporters' powerful usage of photographic and video material to shape their audiences' perceptions and emotional engagement.

Lastly, "*conflict and thematic focus*" encompassed the specific narratives on which the journalists decided to frame their retelling of the events, both through captions and photos or videos. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, these themes included, depending on the journalist: resistance, the conflict's human cost, community and solidarity and the landscape's destruction.

Together, these macro-themes provided a comprehensive lens through which the journalists' work could be understood, revealing how personal identity, thematic focus, and visual impact converged in their documentation of the conflict.

5.1 The "journalist and victim dichotomy"

As previously argued in the course of this analysis, social media journalism is modernly defined by its ample interweaving of personal and emotional elements into the fabric of the news report. Journalists operating in the modern social milieu are continuously encouraged, by the media's logic itself, to use their subjective voices, personal opinions and at times even their own faces to generate emotional engagement (Pantti, 2017).

The line between objectivity and subjectivity in the field of conflict reporting has historically been problematic, challenged time after time by different traditions, (an example of it being Bell's "journalism of attachment", doctrine according to which journalists were supposed to infuse their reporting with personal moral evaluations and perceptions (McLaughlin, 2016)). Social media's entrance in the war reporting ecosystem, however, has arguably given these "alternative" traditions a central place. This shift has been aided by news outlets' modern reticence to send their correspondents from one side of the globe to the other. With social media's favour of immediacy and rapidity, breaking news are indeed being received and diffused quicker than ever before, mostly from people already *in loco* utilising their own social networks, thus bypassing traditional production chains (McLaughin, 2016). This decline has made traditional practices of war reporting, with editors assigning correspondents to temporary assignments, quite inefficient. In the Israel-Hamas conflict, this trend has been compounded by Israel's refusal to allow any journalist not embedded within its forces into the Gaza Strip, adducing its refusal to the need to grant the reporters' safety while within the active war area (TOI Staff, 2024). Both changing times and necessity thus seem to have made local journalists and content creators the only source of news on the Gazan ground (Serhan, 2023).

Research has previously demonstrated local journalists' increased tendency to focus on conflicts' human tolls with respect to their international counterparts, abandoning criteria such as objectivity and impartiality in favour of advocacy (Fahmy et al., 2022, as cited in Fahmy et al., 2024). Alaqad, Azaiza, Khoudary and Owda's position within the modern information cycle, however, is further complicated by their dichotomous identity as both *victims* and *narrators* of the war, unwilling and unable to escape the dangerous and traumatic environment (Betz and Beighley, 2020, as cited in Fahmy et al., 2024). These tensions have inevitably woven themselves deeply into the fabric of their storytelling. In the words of Alaqad, her colleagues and her are not just "covering the news", they are "living it", and many of them have come to see their coverage of the war as "*a personal diary*", apt at sharing moments of suffering and loss with audiences of millions (Michaelson, 2023).

Factual descriptions of the events are hence mixed in with personal anecdotes and emotional accounts, describing both the events and the journalists' experiences of them.

The centring on the journalists' *personae* manifests itself both in a textual and visual way: videos of airstrikes are accompanied by personal comments that use either the singular or plural first persons "*I/we*" such as "*I still can't process what happened…*", "*I still don't know how I made it out alive*" (fig. 1) and "*we thought it was the end of the world!!!!!!*" (fig. 2).

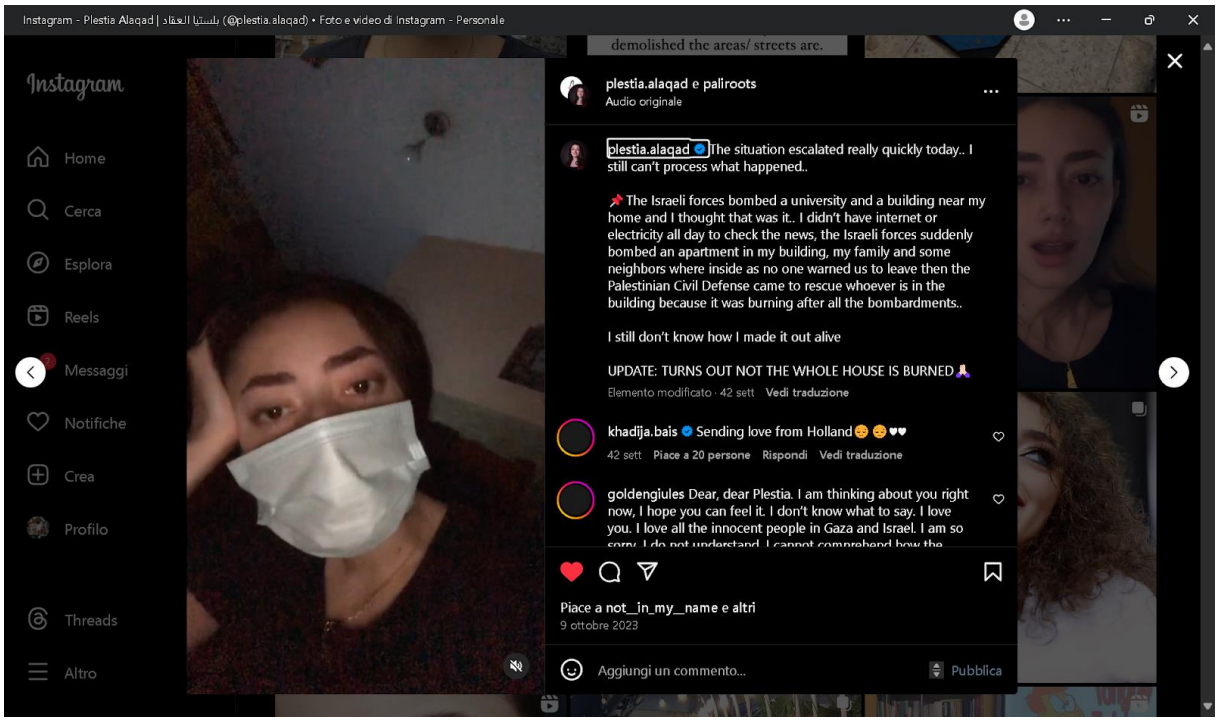


Figure 1

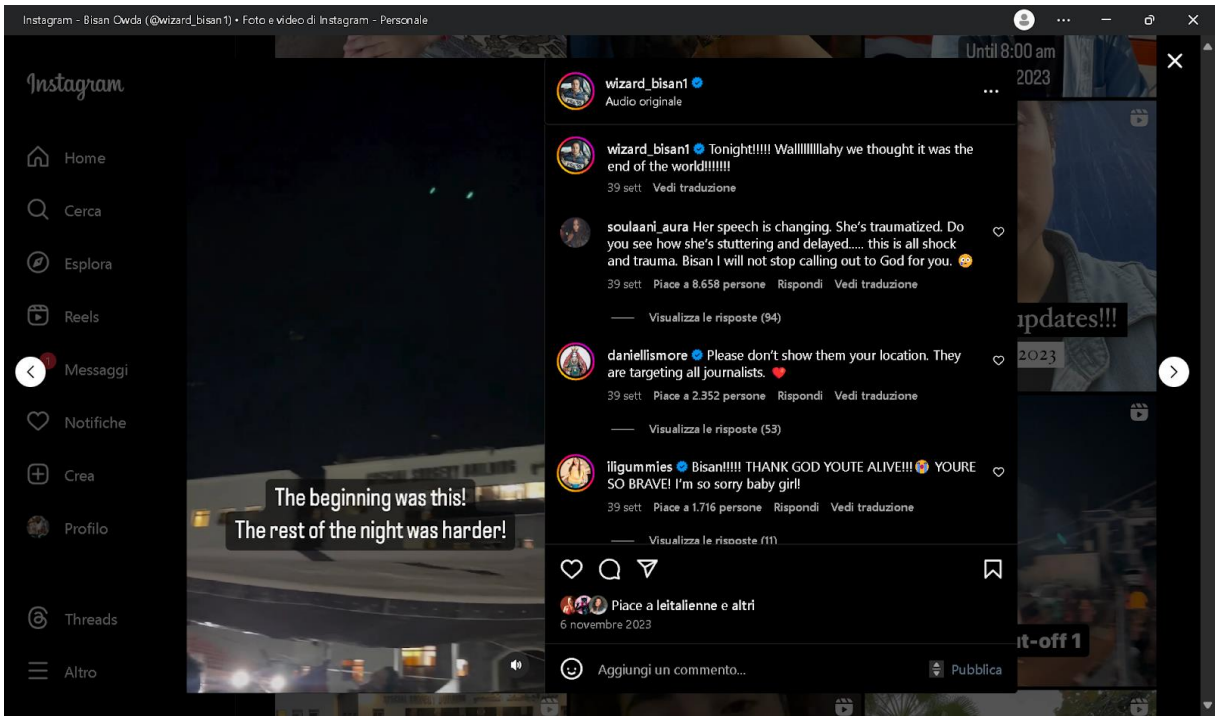


Figure 2

Other posts, on the other hand, read like a diary entry. In this post dated November 2nd, 2023, for example, Khoudary interlaces personal feelings and impressions ("*I miss my family*") with elements related to the professional dimension of her day (*"I reported the transfer of the Maternity Department from the Al Shifa Hospital to the Al Helou Hospital*"), ending her caption with an emotional "*I miss my family. Love, Hind*" (Fig. 3).

"Day 27.

We were running all day between explosions across the blockaded Strip.

Today our team member Ali transferred an injury to the hospital because there was no ambulances.

I learned that being human is the most important thing when you are reporting in the field.

I reported the transfer of the Maternity Department from Al Shifa Hospital to Al Helou Hospital.

I talked to females in the field - they told me they have zero privacy, no access to bathrooms, and they lack their basic needs.

We also discussed early delivery and miscarriages due to the violent terrifying bombing.

We also documented dozens of explosions.

I admire my team - we support each other.

Having a support system is very important in such circumstances.

Keep sharing Palestinian content, we are risking our lives to report.

I miss my family.

Love,

Hind"

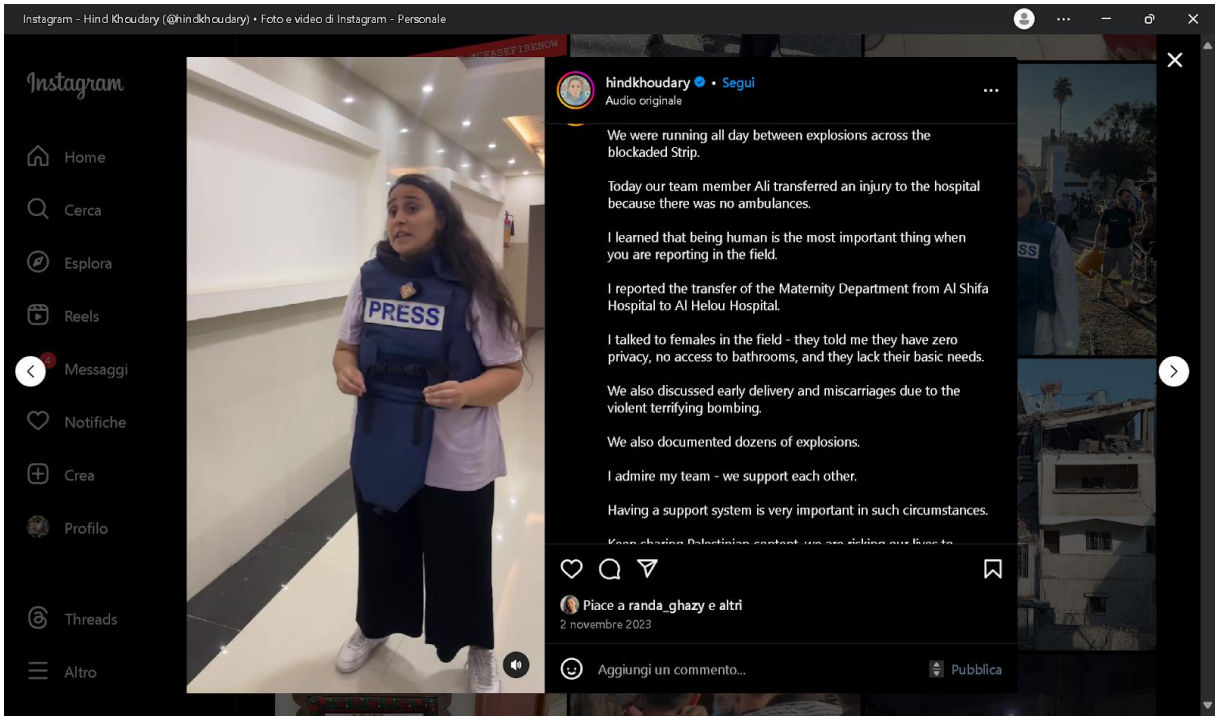


Figure 3

The audiences are invited into the reporters' worlds, and see the conflict through their eyes and experiences. News is delivered through the lens of the journalists' fears and helplessness, their personal stories a bridge the gap between audiences and the realities of war.

Visually, this is most evident in Azaiza's posts, which depict the photographer walking around through the Strip's destroyed streets.

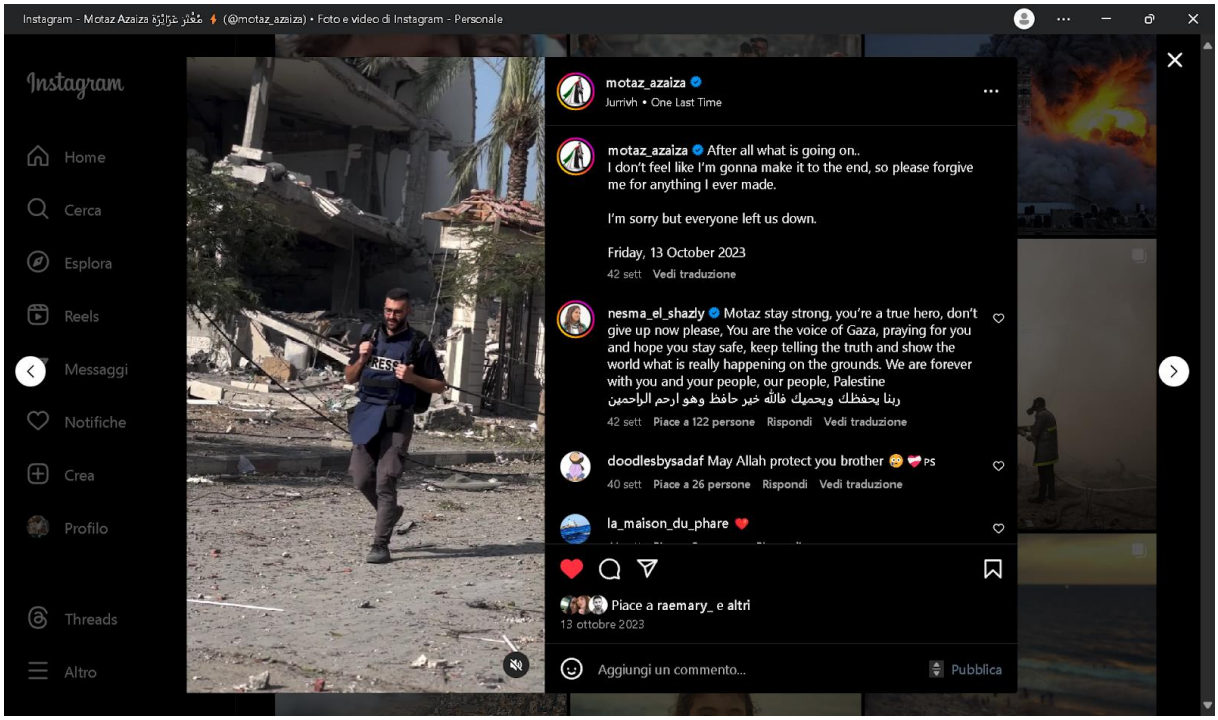


Figure 4

A general observation of the reporters' Instagram feeds also reveals the *face* as a primary vehicle of their personal and emotional appeals.

As was previously delineated in the course of this analysis, the *face* has long since established itself as a means of powerful emotional news-making. Images containing faces have been shown to receive significantly higher rates of engagement in the form of likes and comments on Instagram (Bakhshi et al., 2014). In the case of conflict reporting, posts depicting suffering have become useful in humanising abstract concepts such as war and violence and in compelling viewers to confront the vulnerability and mortality of the subjects (Zelizer, 2010). This attention might be both positive (and aid raising

awareness) and problematic (by unintentionally fostering superficial or voyeuristic engagement) (Sontag, 2003).

In Alaqad's, Azaiza's, Khoudary's and Owda's personal Instagram profiles, faces feature prominently: the reporters frequently put themselves in front of the camera to speak directly to their audiences, narrating the events (fig. 5) or asking for aid and support (fig. 6). Both their videos and captions are, primarily, in fluent English, which allows them to communicate directly with their international interlocutors.

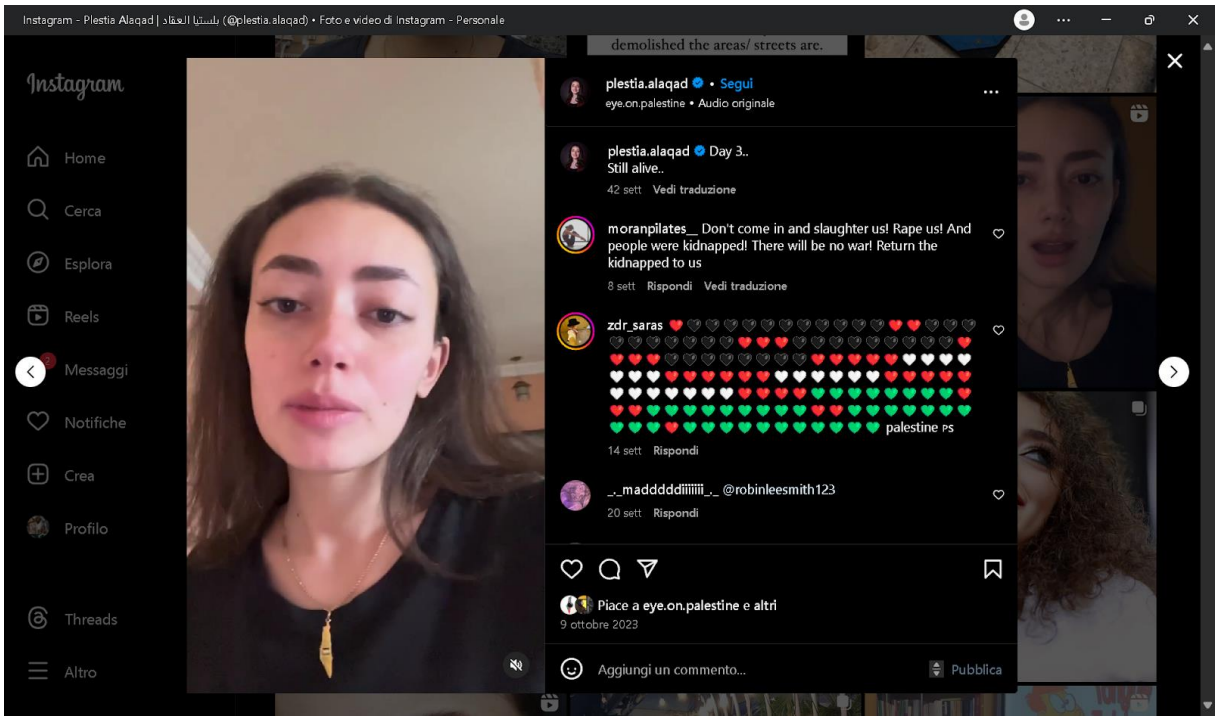


Figure 5

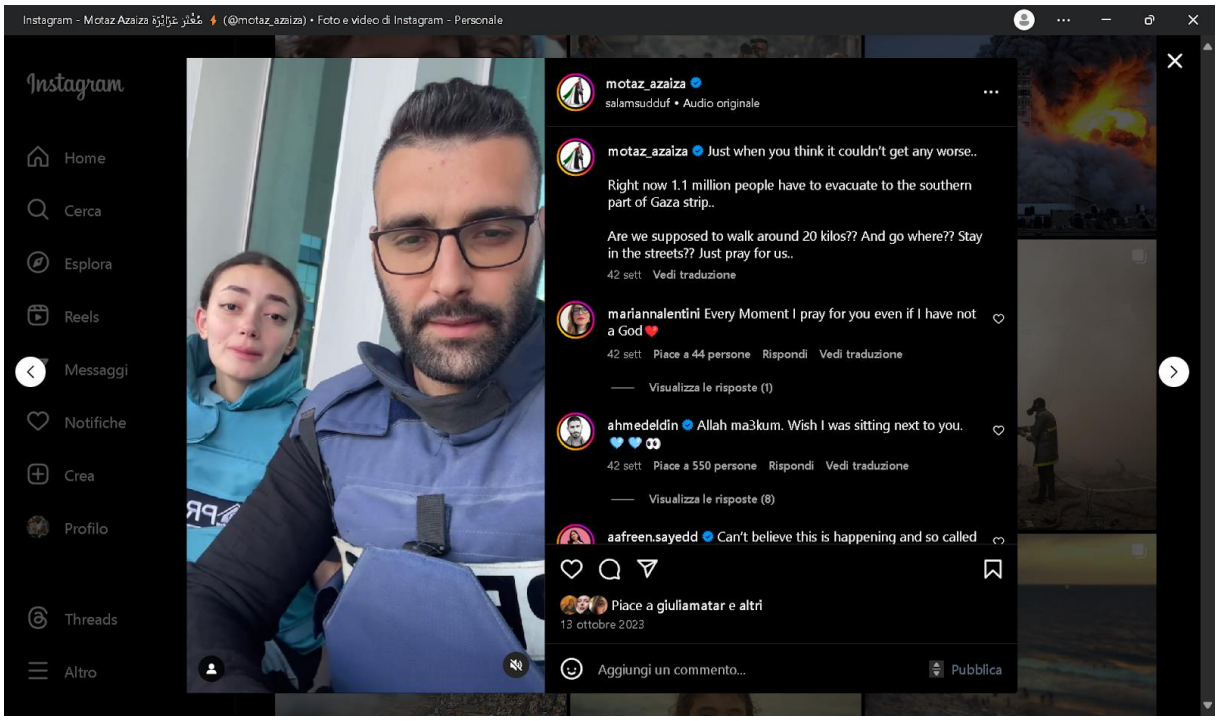


Figure 6

The assiduous exposure has allowed the four colleagues to establish strong emotional connections with their followers, who in turn have come to refer to them as "*family*", and worry about them during the conflict's multiple energy blackouts and bombardments (Kaur, 2024). The journalists' relevance has, at this point, grown parallel to that of their reports: as reported by the CNN, in case of a prolonged absence, their profiles are inundated with messages and threads discussing their physical and mental well-being and inquiring after the four's whereabouts (Kaur, 2024).

Conclusions

In conclusion, the intertwining of personal narratives with conflict reporting on social media platforms has transformed the role of journalists, blurring the lines between objective observers and engaged participants. The reporters' utilisation of their dual role as both victims and witnesses of the ongoing conflict has allowed them to forge deep emotional connections with their audiences, bringing the human toll of war into stark relief. However, as the second part of this analysis purports to illustrate, while these practices have undeniably raised awareness and empathy, they also risk commodifying

suffering, turning the journalists' personal and emotional experiences into content that can be consumed and, at times, exploited for engagement.

5.2 Visual storytelling

This new iteration of conflict reporting has prevalently evolved on social media platforms such as X and Instagram. The Palestinian reporters observed in this analysis, in particular, seem to have greatly benefitted off the app's emphasis on narrative visual aspects and alternative sources (Mellado & Hermida, 2023) to develop the personalised social and news-making networks hitherto described.

Research has repeatedly investigated images' power in the field of war reporting. Time and time again, academics have demonstrated their power in provoking moral reactions and sentiments of empathy, outrage or solidarity, thus accruing the audiences' emotional engagement and interest (Zelizer, 2010). Photos of victims and ruins today form a part of numerous users' news diets, produced and reproduced both by traditional and social media news cycles to fulfil the role of pieces of evidence or vehicles for particular interpretations and impactful representations, socio-political weapons perfect to garner support and notice (Papacharissi, 2012, as cited in Pantti, 2017). The careful selection of what to include and exclude in their frames allow journalists to guide their audiences towards specific interpretations of the conflict, emphasising vulnerability, innocence, community, resistance… By becoming part of conflict narratives, angles, lightning and composition cease being mere aesthetic choices, and become instead deliberate decisions that influence how stories are perceived. Visual framing is, in this case, a form of narrative construction, where the journalists control the focus and emotional tone of the content, ensuring that their intended message is effectively communicated (Lester, 1998).

The narration of the Israel-Hamas conflict has seen reporters largely utilise photographic material to relay both gruesome instances, such as airstrikes and bombings; and more tranquil glimpses into the Gaza daily life. By eliciting empathy or outrage, they aim to mobilise their audiences, encouraging them to take action, share the content, or simply become more informed about the realities of the conflict. The emotional impact of these visuals is further amplified by the Instagram's interactive nature, which makes

it possible for viewers to comment, share, and discuss the images, creating a dynamic and participatory form of storytelling (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Alaqad, for example, mainly shares content aimed at humanising the Gazan population and the conflict's victims, objective that on the visual level translates into the diffusion of "slice-of-life" pictures, accompanied by short but emotional descriptions of the food and water shortages (fig. 7).

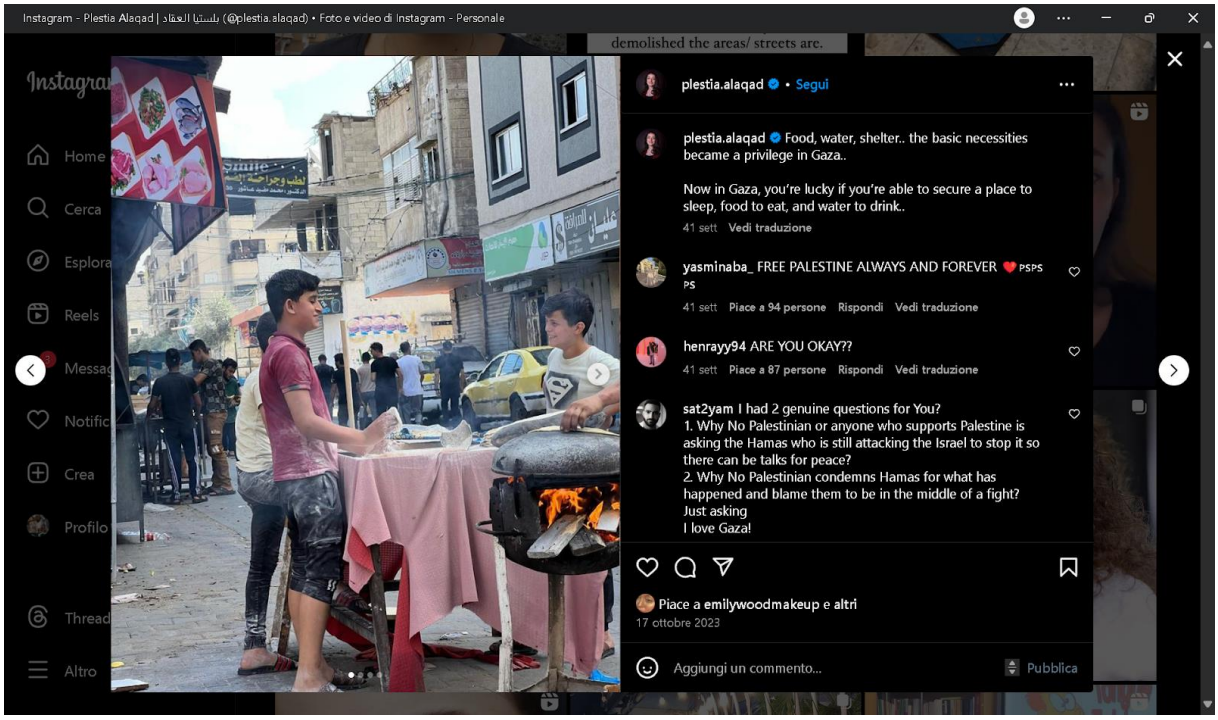


Figure 7

The visual aspect of storytelling becomes even more relevant on Azaiza's Instagram profile. Initially a photo reporter, Azaiza chiefly utilises his account to highlight the destruction of Gaza's infrastructure and its human cost, appealing for international attention. His photos comprise desolate aerial views of destroyed neighbourhoods (fig. 8) and close-ups of the strikes' survivors and victims (fig. 9). Unlike Khoudary, Alaqad and Owda, Azaiza's captions are brief and concise, presenting short emotional interrogatives ("*At least crying is better than no crying. You know what I mean?*") (fig. 9) or bare statements ("*No time for captions*") (fig. 8), letting the images' visual impact take centre stage.

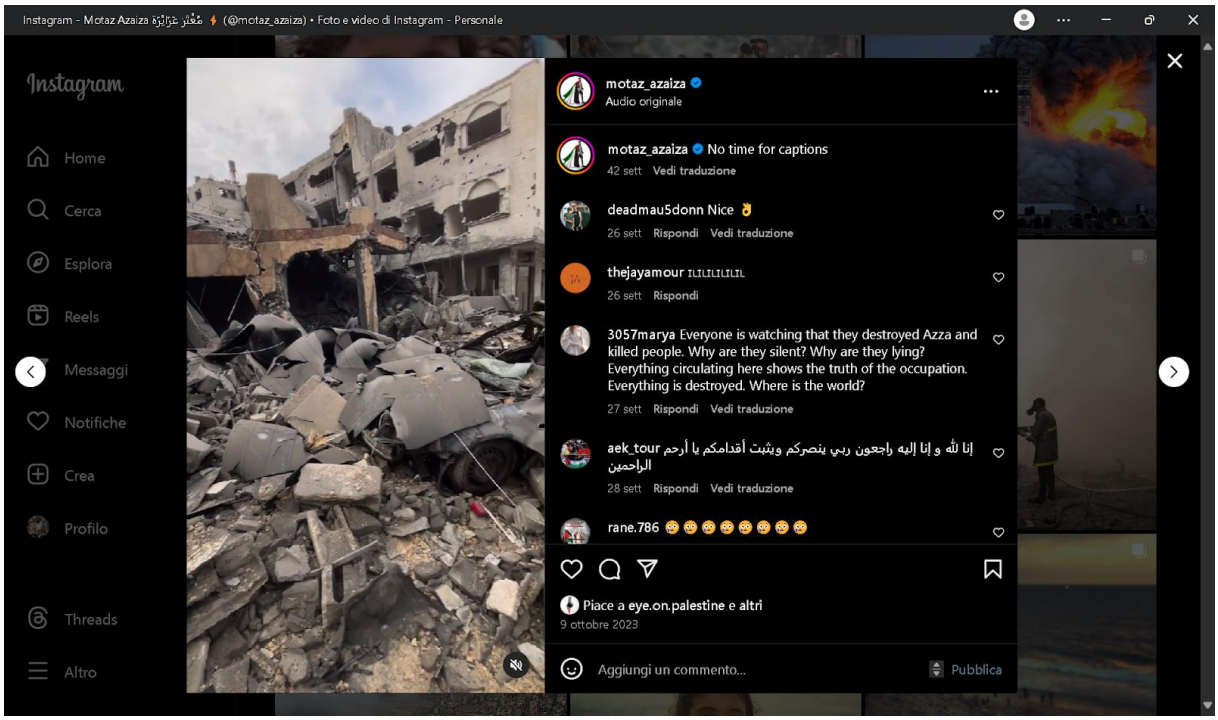


Figure 8

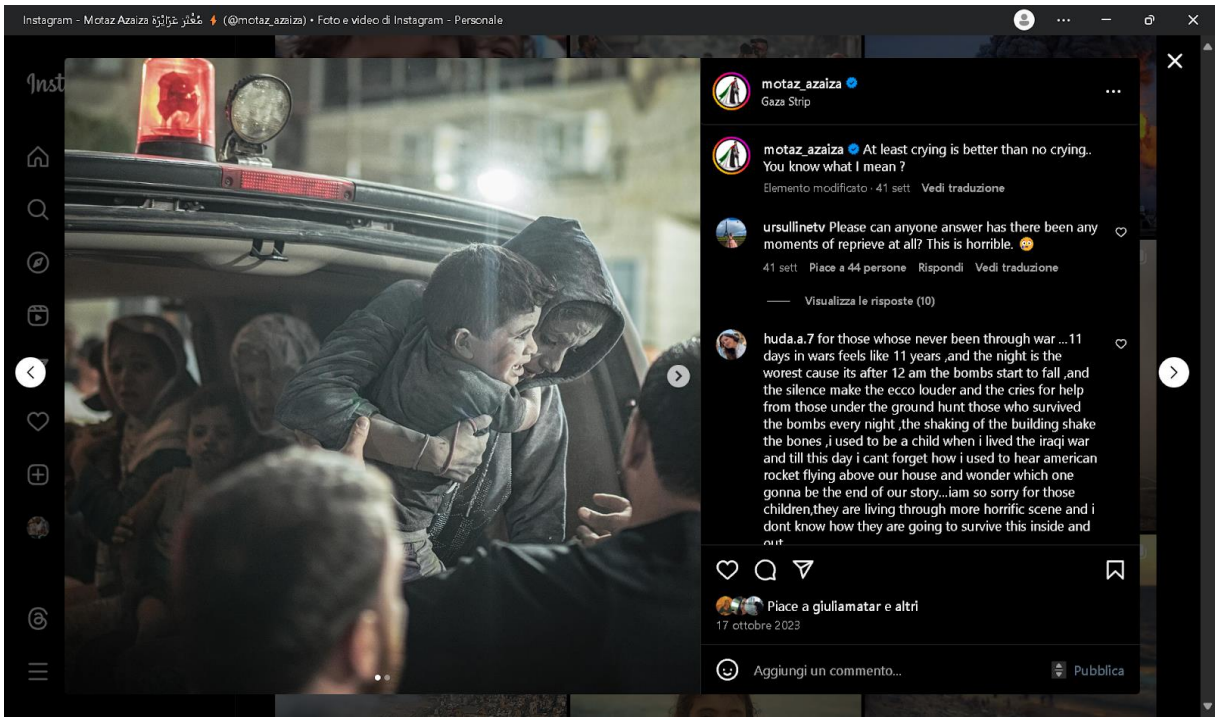


Figure 9

Though more rarely, the emphasis on the posts' visual aspects also appears on Khoudary personal profile: an example of this might be this post dated October, 27th, 2023, in which the journalist shows

herself, from the knees down, walking alongside a trail of blood drops inside the Al Shifa hospital (fig. 10). The caption is brief, consisting only of a few English lines that contextualise the post's clip: "*Blood is everywhere. I took this video yesterday night when I was walking through the corridors of the Al Shifa hospital. #gaza".* Khoudary, however, seems generally less inclined to share this type of content, instead preferring to insert English captions or audio description giving context and descriptions of the posts' subject matter.

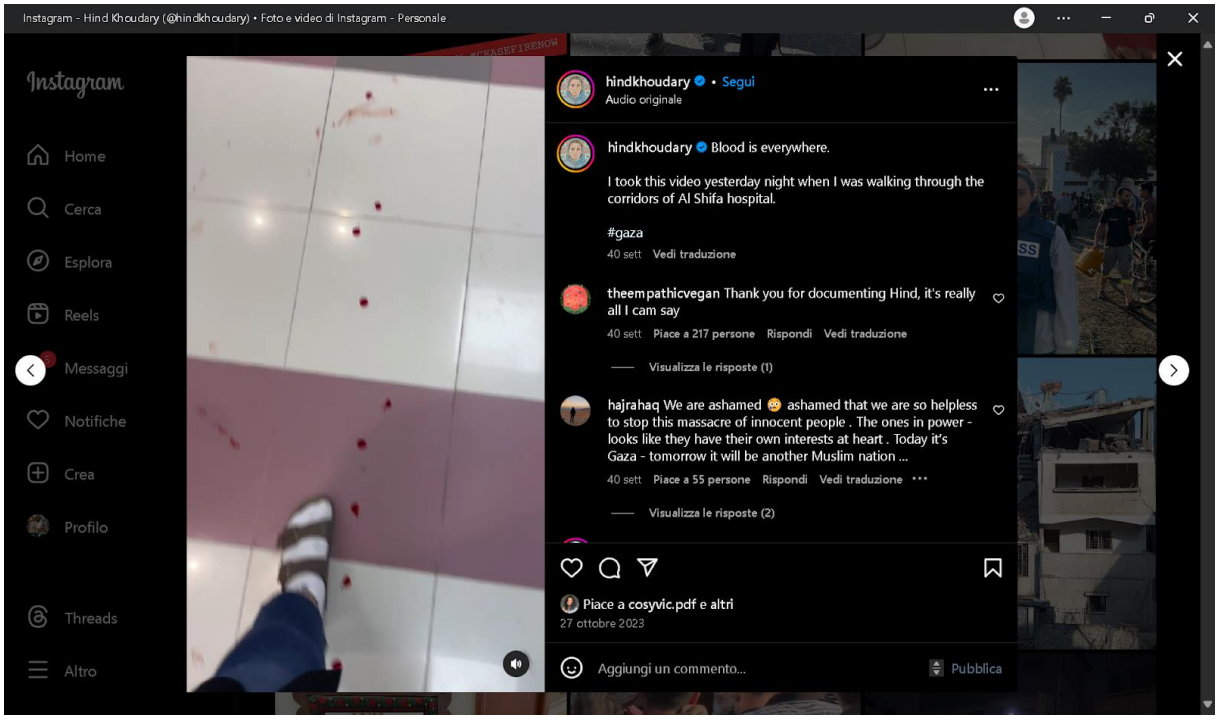


Figure 10

Conclusions

As has been stated in previous chapters of this analysis, social media's entrance in the realm of war reporting has profoundly reshaped how narratives around conflicts such as the Israel-Hamas one are constructed and consumed (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). The Palestinian reporters discussed in this chapter have aptly utilised the visual and narrative affordances these platforms offer to craft powerful

stories, able to resonate with global audiences. By carefully selecting and framing their images, they guide their viewers towards particular interpretations, eliciting emotional responses that range from empathy to outrage. The reporters' visual framing functions as a potent tool of narrative construction, transforming their images into deliberate choices aimed at communicating poignant and impactful messages. Whether through the humanising "slice-of-life" depictions shared by Alaqad, the stark portrayals of devastation by Azaiza, or the raw immediacy of Khoudary's posts, these reporters harness the power of visuals to shape public perception and ensure that the human cost of the conflict remains at the forefront of global consciousness. Their work exemplifies the crucial role that visual storytelling plays in modern conflict reporting, transforming abstract events into tangible, emotionally charged realities that demand attention and response.

5.3 Conflict and thematic focus

The observation of the reporters' dichotomous and visual storytelling illustrated some core stories and thematic elements frequently emphasised in their narration of the Israel-Hamas conflict. By delineating the "*conflict and thematic focus*" macro-theme, I thus purported to highlight how these journalists, through their posts, hone in on particular aspects of the conflict, strategically framing it by focussing on specific narratives that resonate deeply with their audiences and align their stories with wider socio-political discourses. Alaqad, Azaiza, Khoudary and Owda seem to particularly make use of four narrative threads: *resistance and resilience*, the *conflict's human cost* and the *destruction of infrastructure*, and Gazans' sense of *community and solidarity*.

5.3.1 Resistance and resilience

Via depictions of protests and stories of everyday survival, the "*resistance* and *resilience*" narrative highlights Palestinians' endeavours to resist oppression and despair. Part of this narrative is also the reporters' own self-presentation as both victims and spokespersons for their fellow Gazans, integrating their own work into the population's efforts to both survive and preserve its identity and unity. Posts belonging to this theme focus on daily routines and mundane moments. Owda, for example, makes large

use of Instagram's reel function to document her night routine (fig. 11) or showing how people were able to source electricity (fig. 12). Owda's entire profile, in fact, first became famous because of her catchphrase "*I am Bisan from Gaza and I am still alive*", a sentence with which the creator has started most videos since the inception of the war (Staff, 2023).

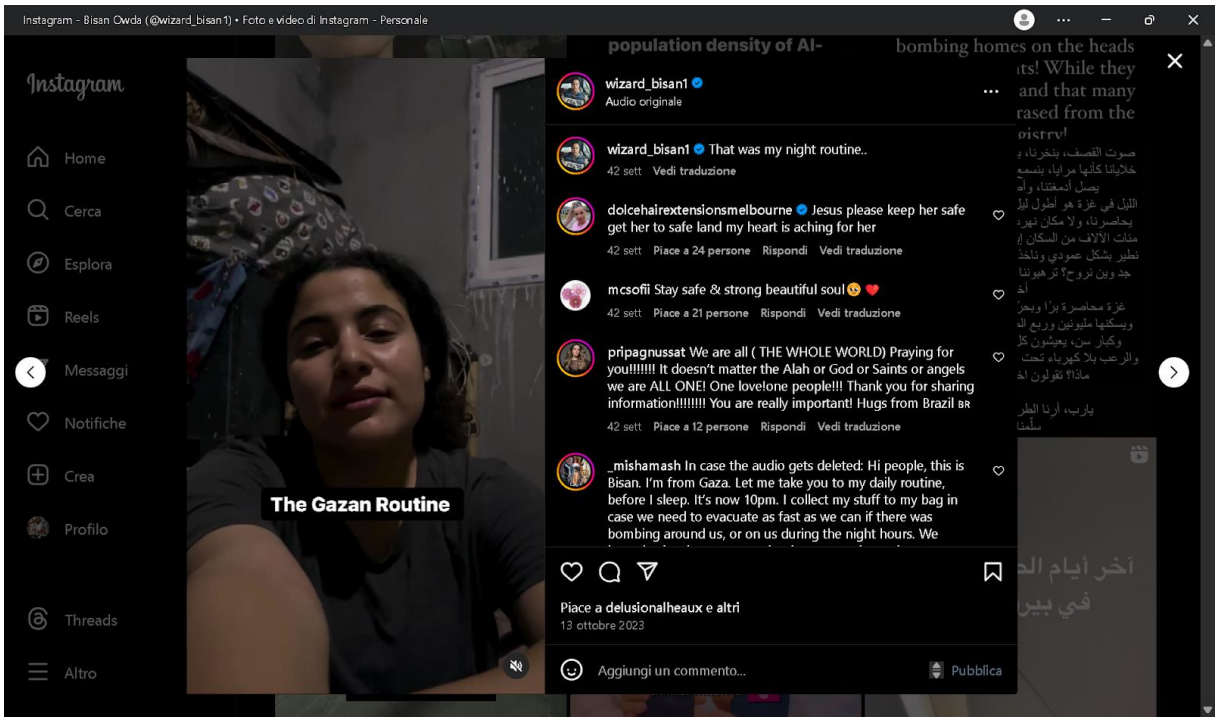


Figure 11

Khoudary, on the other hand, has taken to her platform to document moments of kindness and solidarity, such as the one occurred during her search for water, when a shop clerk offered her some from his own bottle, after having been unable to sell her any because of scarcity. A general overview of the four's profiles also shows a plurality of selfies, usually taken while wearing press vests and helmets, accompanied by heartfelt exhortations to keep talking about the conflict. On multiple occasions, the selfies were taken together with fellow Gazans or children, and the captions detailed some of the people's stories of loss and survival (fig. 13). All together, these posts helped build a counter-narrative of resistance and defiance against oppression and adversities, underscoring Gazans' sense of determination and acting as a symbol of national identity and communal solidarity.

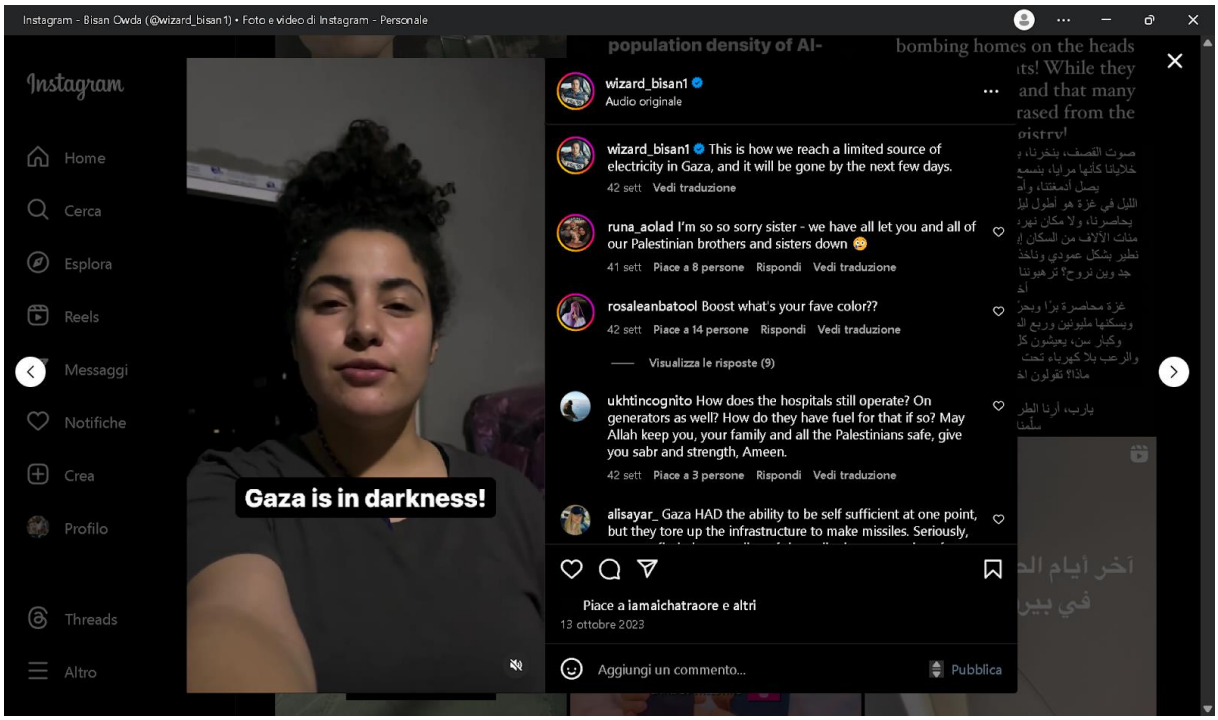


Figure 12

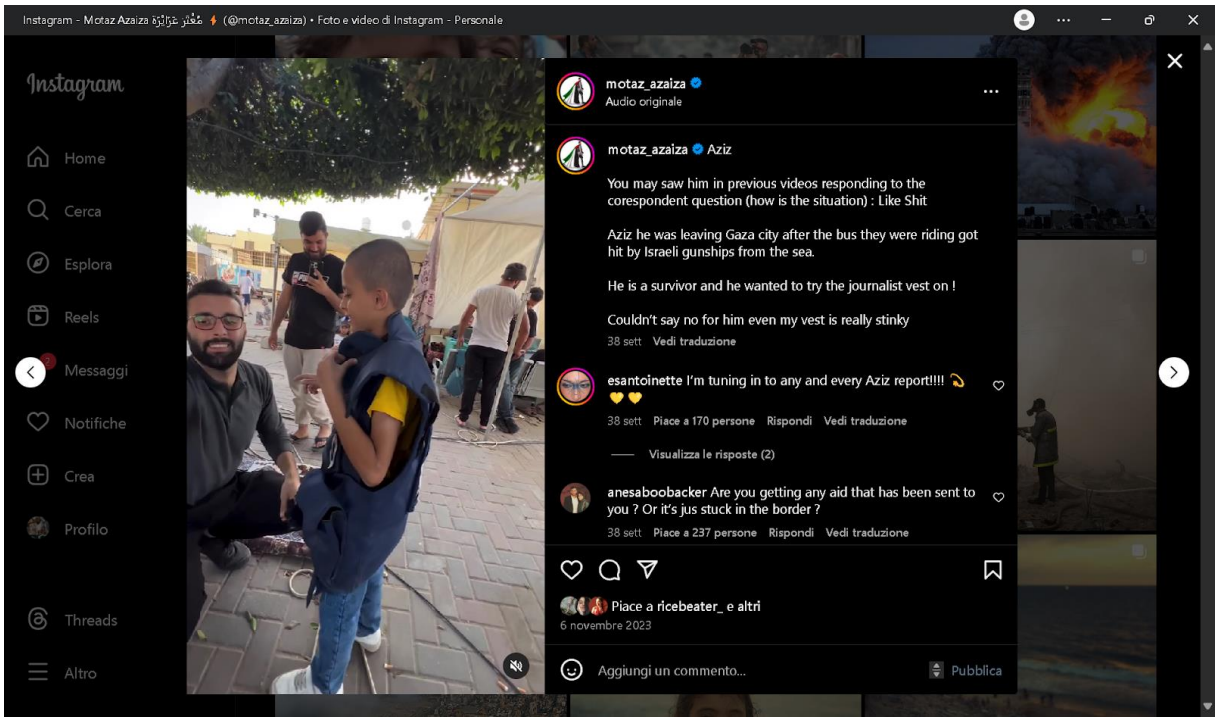


Figure 13

5.3.2 The human cost of conflict and the destruction of infrastructure

Another key narrative thread was the *human cost of the conflict*. The photographic documentation of destruction, lifeless bodies (fig. 14) and the destruction of homes and infrastructures, all enacted through graphic images of injuries (fig. 15), victims and mass funerals, all accompanied by emotionally-charged captions, contributed to the reporters' mission of humanising the statistics often cited in news reports, giving them a face and a voice. The accent on the human cost and the conflict's singular victims emphasises the deep suffering and tragedy experienced by individuals, evoking empathy and a sense of urgency; aiding the same process of humanisation of abstract concepts (such as war and violence) carried out by the *journalist-victim dichotomy* and *visual storytelling* macro-themes.

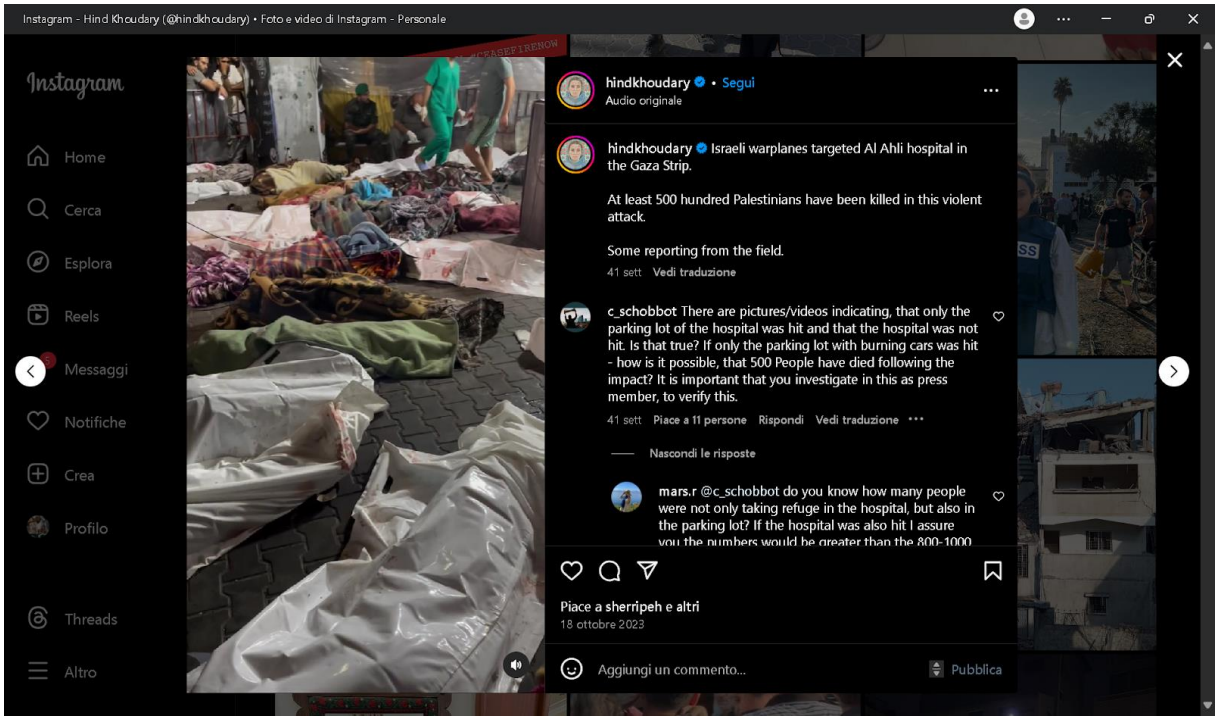


Figure 14

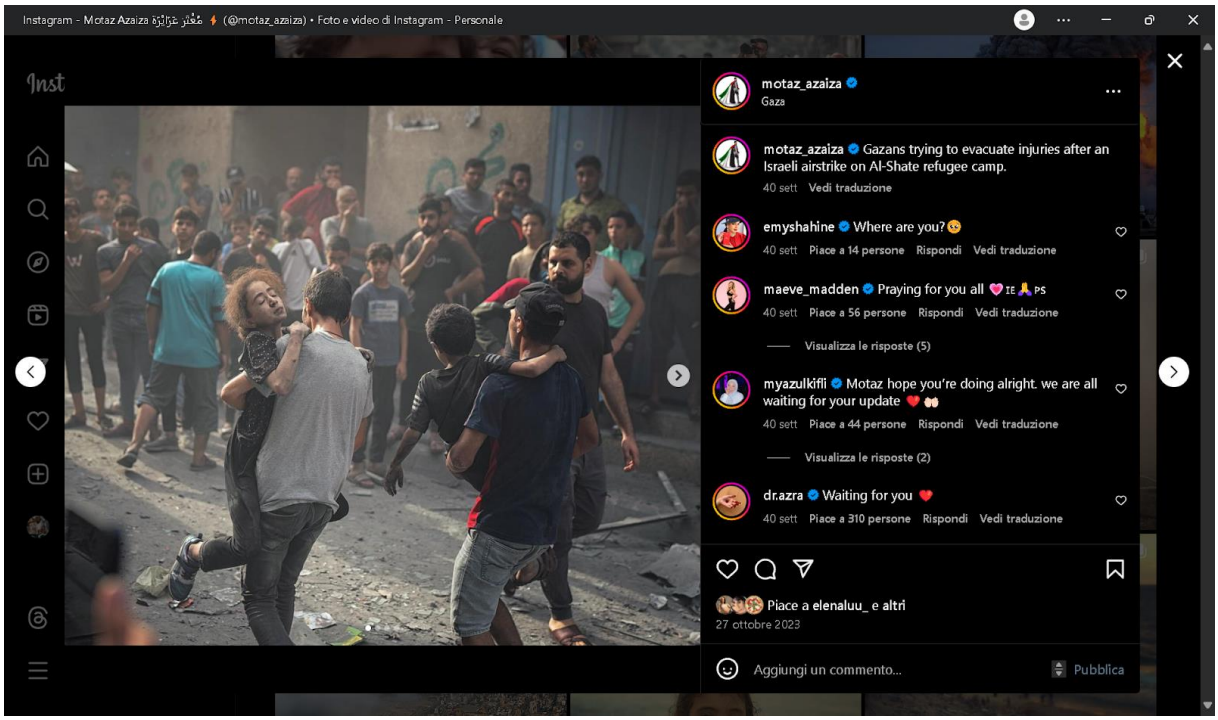


Figure 15

The impact of this thematic focus is compounded by some of the posts' attention on the *destruction of infrastructure* (fig. 16), via which reporters document the physical devastation the conflict has inflicted on the Strip's civil infrastructure. As opposed to the *human cost* lens, this focus invites the audiences to consider the war's long-term impact on Gaza's society, illustrating the conflict's possible future implications on the community's ability to survive and rebuild.

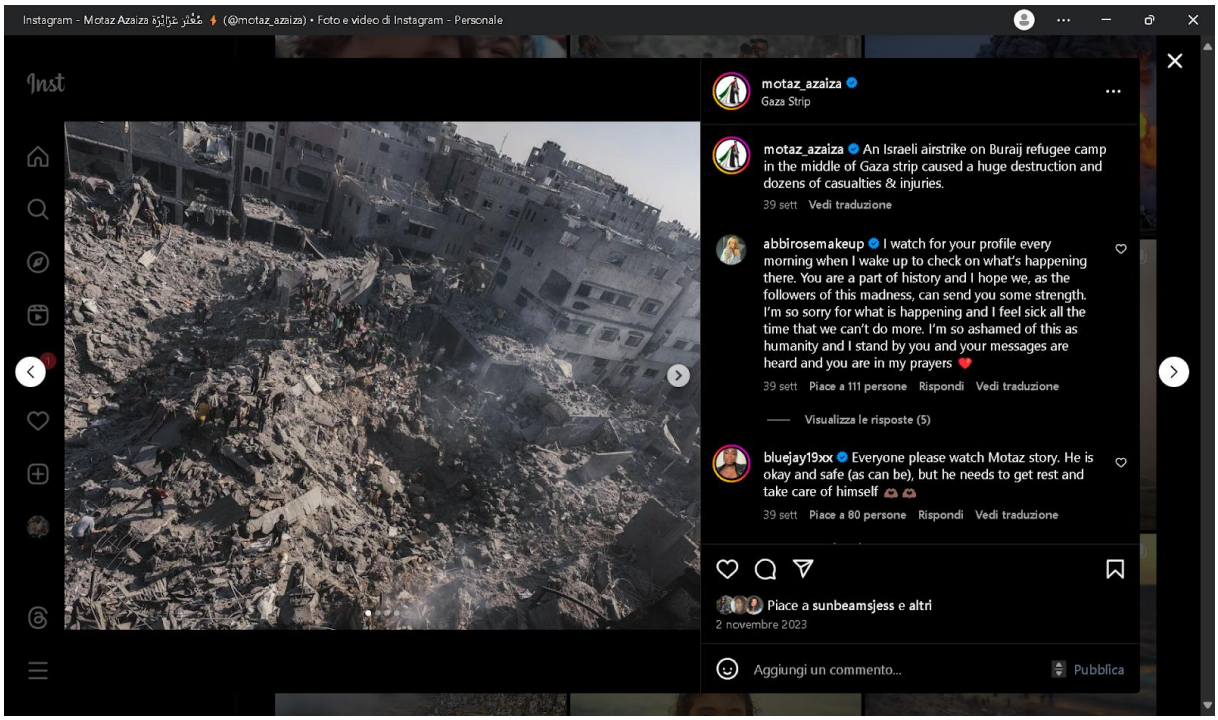


Figure 16

5.3.3 Community and solidarity

Fil rouge uniting all posts appears to be the theme of *community and solidarity*, which underscore the different ways in which the Palestinian communities come together to support one another. The portrayal of acts of mutual aid (such as the aforementioned interaction between Khoudary and the shop clerk), moments of communal mourning or families collectively searching for clothes and supplies amongst the rubble (fig. 17) all contribute to the construction and reproduction of senses of community bonds and unity while counter-acting feelings of isolation and despair.

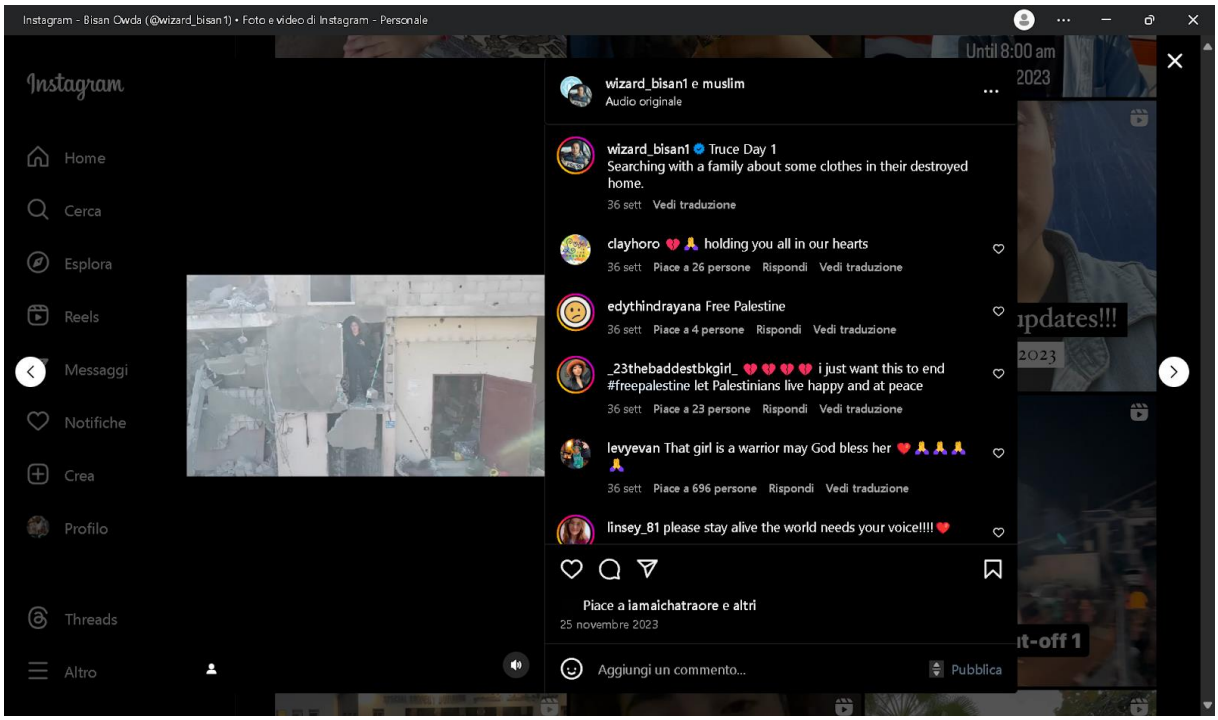


Figure 17

The senses of unity and collectivity encouraged by this narrative are further reinforced through the diffusion of content recorded prior to the start of the war, mostly centred on Palestinian traditions or cultural hotspots. Owda's background as a video-maker especially focussed on youth and women engagement and human rights has proven particularly useful in this endeavour, and she has frequently shared mini-documentaries narrating daily life and important cultural aspects of the Gaza Strip. Material shared within this narrative thread seems to be mostly aimed at fellow Arabic speakers, with English generally appearing in the form of subtitles or Instagram captions. The posts are also mostly made in collaboration with NGO's or Instagram pages preoccupied with the promulgation of content focussed on mass sensitization and mobilisation (fig. 18).



Figure 18

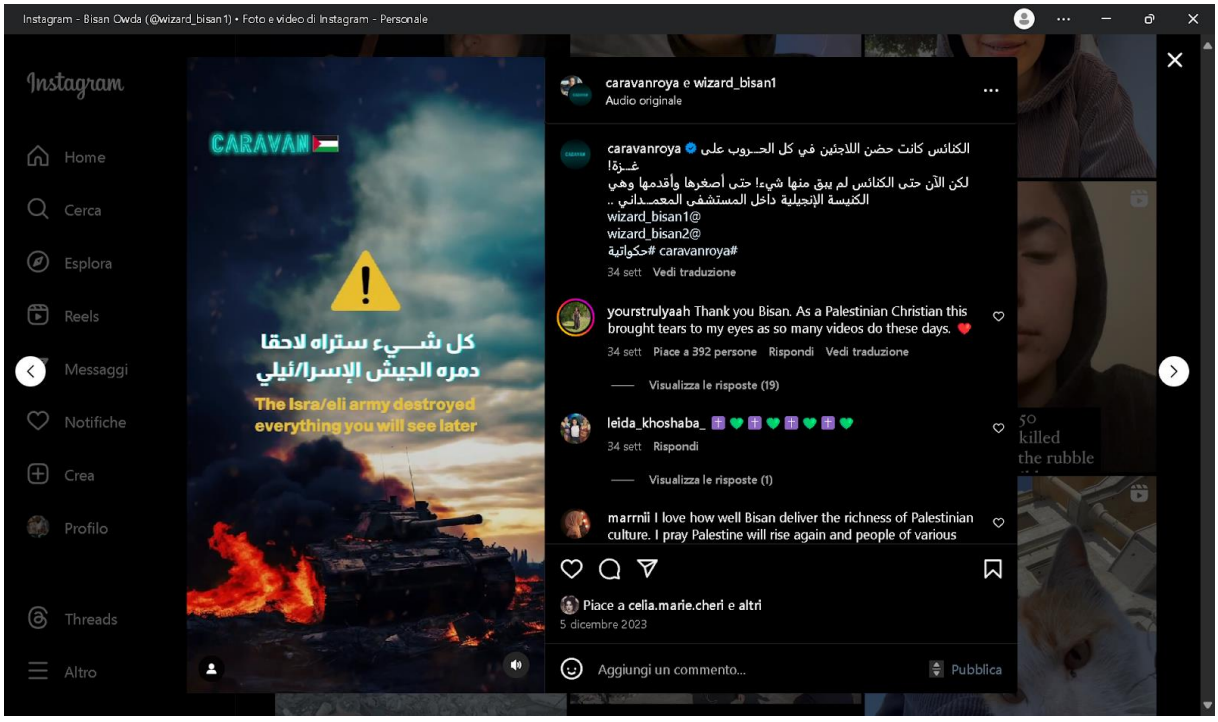


Figure 19

Conclusions

In conclusion, the analysis of the coverage of the Israel-Hamas conflict reveals deliberate and poignant thematic foci present in the narration of Palestinian people's lived experiences.

Utilising visual storytelling and personal narratives, the reporters document the harsh realities of life in Gaza while contributing to a wider discourse on identity, survival and collective solidarity. As noted at the inception of this chapter, Alaqad, Azaiza, Khoudary and Owda all seem to possess a slightly different approach to their reporting, likely due to their different backgrounds. Where Alaqad might elect to share more individual-focussed content, aimed at, per her own words, "*humanising Palestine*", and in this tangentially aligns with Owda's use of her Instagram profile as a public personal diary. The continuous interlacing of self-presentation and individual-centred reporting, in turn, reinforces the two's dichotomous identity as both victims and reporters of the ongoing conflict. Khoudary's use of her platform seems more targeted at completing her work and life as a professional journalist, inviting her audience behind the scenes of the news-making process. Conversely, Azaiza, presumably due to his background as a photographer and photo reporter, appears to greatly value the more visual affordances granted by Instagram's design and features.

In both textual and visual forms, the journalists' work serves as a testament to individual and communal resilience, while also acting as a counterbalance to more contextualised yet detached portrayals of the conflict.

5.4 The commodification of the reports

Be they more or less professional or diary-like in their narration style, posts like Owda's and Khoudary's have become, throughout the unravelling of the Israel-Hamas war, the main and almost only way for the international press to catch a glimpse into daily development on the Gazan ground. For both international audiences and press agencies, journalists like Azaiza and his colleagues have become a vital source of raw and unfiltered coverage of the Strip's bloodiest conflict to date (Abruzzese et al., 2023; Serhan,

2023). Their fates, however, seem to matter for reasons that lie outside their vital role as witnesses and broadcasters of the events: as was briefly mentioned in the "*journalist and victim dichotomy*" section of this analysis, the four reporters' highly personal accounts of the hostilities have amassed an exceptional number of followers, all highly invested in their paladins' mental and physical well-being. These readers consider them "family", refer to them by their first names, and may have notifications on for every time they post (Kaur, 2024). This dynamic, where personal narratives become a source of collective emotional engagement, reflects what Papacharissi (2016) describes as "affective publics"—communities formed through the sharing of sentiment-laden narratives that blur the lines between personal and public spheres. At every new bombardment, blackout or attack, comments pile up under the journalists' posts inquiring about the journalists' location and status, praying for their safety and survival. The transformation of their personal platforms into storytelling devices vital in the narration of the conflict has almost transformed Alaqad, Azaiza, Owda and Khoudary into narrative elements themselves the moment traditional media pick up their reports. They have hence become talked "*about*" rather than being the ones to do the talking. This dynamic has been further exacerbated by market forces, which prioritise sensationalism and human interest stories due to their higher marketability and commercial appeal (Bruck & Allan, 1987).

This part of the analysis was thus based on the observation of newsbeats and interviews primarily focussed on Alaqad's, Azaiza's, Owda's and Khoudary's *personae* and personal attributes, such as their nationality, their emotions or their lived experiences.

This "*The World"* web article dated October 10th, 2023 (fig. 20), for example, delineates Khoudary as a "Gaza resident", and delves deeply into her feelings regarding the first days of the war. Her testimony is compiled together with that of another witness inside Gaza, and it is relayed in the form of an interview centred on the bombardments' human and infrastructural toll. The article hones in on her emotions and personal tragedy, cementing her role as the primary focus. Answering questions regarding her family and friends, her ancestral home and her general mood, Khoudary describes a city in ruins, with families facing relentless airstrikes with no safe place to go (Hackel, 2023a).

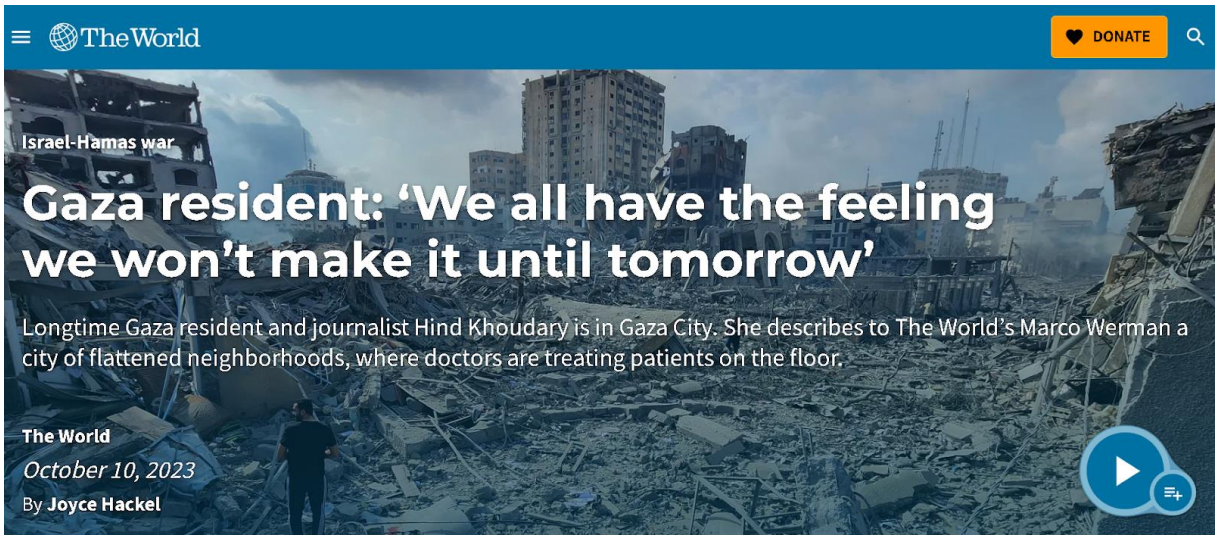


Figure 20

Numerous articles conversely only refer to the reporters by their nationality, titling their articles "*Palestinians share their lives in war-torn Gaza via TikTok, and Instagram*" (Kaur, 2024) or "*Palestinians in Gaza say Israeli bombardment feels like new 'Nakba'*" (Gebeily & Lubowicka, 2023) (fig. 21).



Figure 21

Others yet make use of metaphors and epithets: in the audio-version of the article cited earlier, for instance, Khoudary is introduced as a "*voice from Gaza*" (Hackel, 2023b). In this "*The New Arab*" piece (fig. 22), instead, Azaiza is presented as an "*unsung hero*" and "*Gaza's window to the world*" (Abed, 2023).

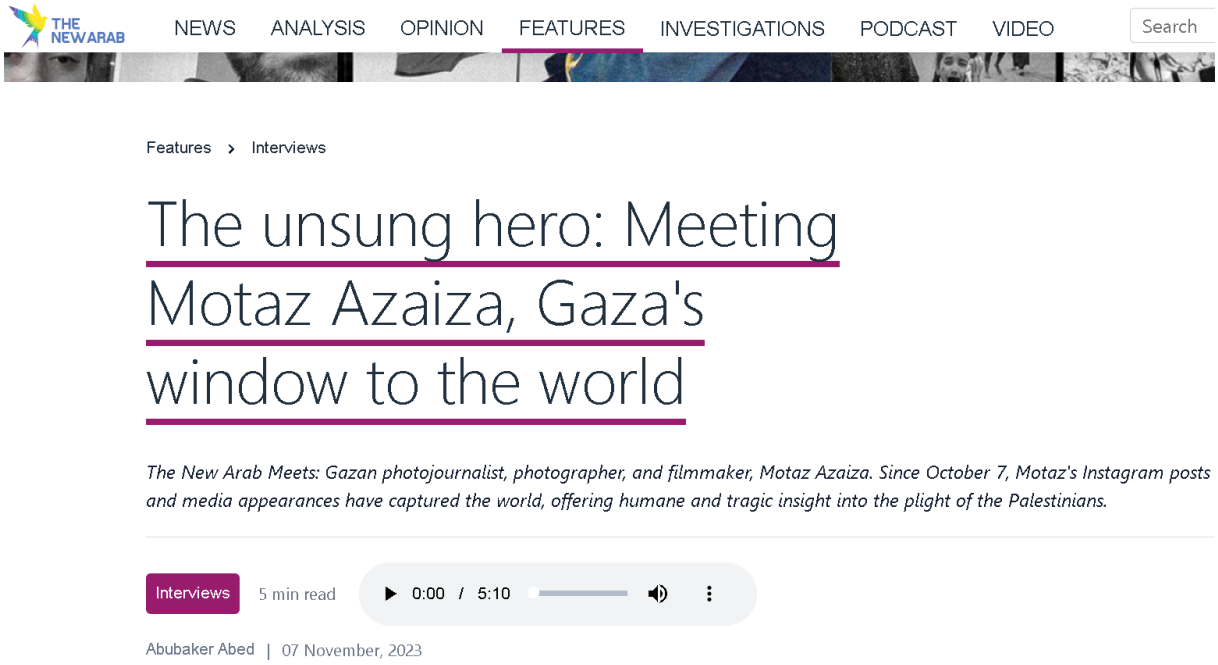


Figure 22

Likening Azaiza to a "*shining light of Palestinian resistance*" (Abed, 2023), Abed renders a moving and emotional picture of the photographer's work in the narration of the Israel-Hamas war. Once again, the article extensively describes Azaiza's frame of mind, making his impressions and memories of Gaza centrepieces of the entire composition. Descriptors of the journalist's mental status appear repeatedly throughout the piece: through "*horrified*" Motaz (whom the interviewer mentions directly by his first name), speaks "*with vigour*", proclaiming his determination to expose Israel's actions to the entire world (Abed, 2023).

Traditional media's portrayal of the reporters and their work has also been affected by the four's rise to fame and changing roles within the narrative structure. Both Alaqad and Azaiza, indeed, evacuated the

Gaza Strip respectively in November 2023 and January 2024. Since then, both journalists have solidified their role as activists and advocates for the Palestinian population, sharing their accounts and experiences to attract international attention and aid (Begum, 2024). Despite their exodus, their profiles still regularly broadcast citizen-supplied photos and videos of the Gazan ground, alternated with posts depicting the two's appearances at international conferences and forums.

Azaiza's, Alaqad's, Owda's and Khoudary's growing notoriety, moreover, traditional media have increasingly started to refer to them by their first names, further cementing their status as veritable icons and symbols within collective conscience (Mehdi, 2024). Titles have thus transformed from "*A Palestinian journalist shares her vision for a post war Gaza"* (NPR, 2024) to "*Plestia Alaqad on finding her voice, leaving Gaza, and humanising Palestine*" (Middle East Eye, 2024). Motaz's personal sphere seems to have garnered particular interest, expressed by titles such as "*Gaza photojournalist Motaz Azaiza still has hope in humanity*" (UN News, 2024) and "*Photojournalist Motaz Azaiza: 'The ghosts of Gaza follow me everywhere*" (Begum, 2024).

Conclusions

In conclusion, the evolving roles of journalists like Alaqad, Azaiza, Owda, and Khoudary in the Israel-Hamas war exemplify the profound shift in the digital age's processes of narrative creation and consumption. Their personal, emotion-laden accounts have not only provided the international press with vital, on-the-ground perspectives but have also transformed these reporters into central characters of the conflict's mythology. Their increasing visibility and the subsequent focus on their personal experiences have altered the traditional media's portrayal of these individuals, now celebrated as icons within the collective imagination. This phenomenon highlights the complex interplay between older and newer types of media, market forces, and public sentiment in shaping the narratives of contemporary conflicts, where the storytellers themselves become integral to the story being told.

6. Discussion and conclusion

This study set out with the aim of analysing, via the utilisation of Ethnographic Content Analysis, the impact that the advent of phenomena such as mediatisation and personalisation have had on the modern news media ecosystem. In particular, the analysis purported to illustrate the ways in which these dynamics have and continue to influence the narration of the Israel-Hamas conflict that erupted in the morning of October 7, 2023. It did so by posing the question "*To what extent does Palestinian reporters' coverage of the ongoing conflict appear to be "personalised"?.* This initial research question was subsequently split into two main sub-questions, which went as follows:

1. *Precisely, what elements of personalised reporting is it possible to find in the Instagram content shared by these reporters?*
2. *What distinct patterns of modern conflict reporting is it possible to surmise from the cumulative analysis of these elements?*

The investigation of these questions permitted the formulation of a final hypothesis related to one of personalisation's possible repercussions within the personalised information cycle, ergo the commodification of its actors' emotions and labour.

Individuating personalised reporting

The investigation initially proceeded from a thorough review of the existing research on the topic. Though still in its early stages, research on the most recent developments of conflict reporting has concluded that social media's embedding into journalistic praxis, along with the adoption of specific market values and dynamics, has contributed to the blurring of the lines between the professional and personal realms. The advent of digital media, with its emphasis on the visual and sensationalistic aspects of storytelling and narrative-building, has indeed greatly affected the information landscape. As has been underscored repeatedly throughout the course of this thesis, the new milieu fosters a more emotion-laden and participatory news culture, in which emotional appeals and opinions are used to construct

engaging and memorable stories. This more immediate and personal coverage style has prompted to increasingly obfuscate the boundaries between their narration and their personal impressions of the facts narrated, a collapse has all but been encouraged by the constantly-growing need for engagement and relevance in the digital space. This shift, which has permeated a great variety of journalistic areas of interest, contrasts sharply with the often more detached and editorially driven approach seen in traditional media.

Research on personalisation's impact on conflict reporting has, for now, greatly focussed on the roles of international correspondents and photo reporters, roles still anchored in values such as objectivity and impartiality. Evolving war techniques, however, appear poised to change this paradigm, giving more relevancy to figures such as on-site content creators and *advocate* journalists. The latter's evolution, in particular, has marked a meaningful departure from the *watchdog* archetype that has, until now, commanded academia's conception of the war reporter. As evidenced by studies such as Pantti's, Fahmy et al. 's and McLaughlin's, contemporary conflict war journalism is imbued in a kaleidoscopic and dynamic ecosystem of norms and practices in constant evolution. Advocate journalists are now oftentimes personalised ones, and will inject their professional storytelling with personal emotions and mythos. In the case of the Israel-Hamas war, this trend has proven useful in counter-balancing traditional media more detached and, sometimes, biassed coverage of the happenings. The four reporters here analysed have seemingly adopted personalised and individualised reporting modalities to address the gaps created by this shortcoming, utilising their platforms and their status as both witnesses and monitors to provide international audiences with alternative and complementary narratives. Both their reports and testimonies interlace emotions and personal anecdotes with impassioned but clear descriptions of the most recent developments, simultaneously demanding the outside world provide both empathy and accountability. The result is an emotion-laden narration that disregards objectivity and detachment in favour of advocacy and solidarity, wholly aimed at the humanisation and impactful depiction of its subjects and episodes. Their reports do seem, ultimately, to fit the "*personalised*" mould.

The commodification risk and its ethical implications

Whilst providing fertile ground for new forms of media chronicling, however, social media's advent in the information cycle has also heightened the relevancy of market norms in the cycle of news production and consumption. Journalists operating in the digital environment have to compete for relevancy in a way their traditional counterparts did not. This results in an incessant need to attract an increasing amount of engagement and clicks, which in turn reinforces the aforementioned collapse of boundaries between professional and personal.

Academia has long been concerned with the negative repercussions that the graphic depiction of violence and suffering might have on news' production and societal role, indicating how it might either lead to the public's desensitisation or development of voyeuristic inclinations. The emergence of advocate journalists such as Azaiza and colleagues, however, might introduce yet another level of difficulty in the study and evolution of modern journalistic praxis. Although the instrumentalization of their own feelings in the crafting of their reportage has undoubtedly proven useful and effective in attracting international support and engagement, the previously cited need to maintain this level of widespread relevancy might lead to their complete commodification, a hypothesis the concluding section of this thesis set out to illustrate. This commodification process could eventually bring deleterious effects for both the journalists' personal and professional selves, primarily affecting the quality and accuracy of their reporting, damaging their own ability to shape and influence public perception and thus promote their message. Research has already shown that social media's ever-growing presence in the information habitat, with their appreciation for emotionality and sensationalism, has, as a matter of fact, significantly augmented the market value of journalists' emotional labour and passion (Lindén et al., 2021). The ability to express and evoke empathy has ostensibly turned into a sort of "emotional capital", to be pawned off in exchange for readers' care and attention (*ibid.*). More recent research on the topic has highlight how passion has repetitively been turned into a "strategic resource for managers", particularly in the fields of lifestyle and advertising journalism (Pantti & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2021). The investment of the "emotional capital" mentioned earlier does not, scholars have

found, happen in a vacuum, but is instead greatly influenced by society's financial and societal logics (*ibid.*).

In the case of Azaiza, Alaqad, Khoudary and Owda, the utilisation of this capital has allowed the reporters to construct and reinforce an incredibly compelling and captivating narrative, which has yielded incredible results in keeping the global masses aware and informed of the situation within the Strip. Since October 7th, 2023, millions all around the world have followed the four's daily updates on the conflict's latest developments, engaging with their content both technologically and emotionally. This connection, however, does seem to have come at an expensive price: many of them have, indeed, already gone on record declaring themselves "*exhausted*" , thinking of each day as "*a question of life and death*" ("Gaza Journalists Both Witnesses and Victims of War," 2023). On an Instagram Story shared on February 25th, Azaiza accused "*everyone*" of not caring about him as a person or a Palestinian, instead only seeing and using him as "*content to get more reach*" (fig. 23).

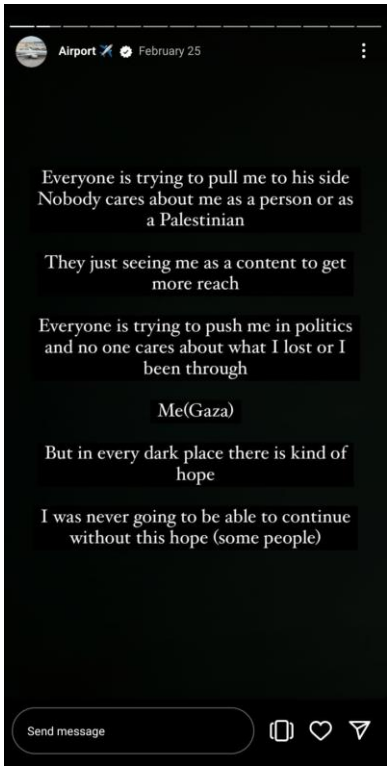


Figure 23

This Story came days after another one, shared instead on February 16th, in which the reporters declared he was unable to feel or eat anything and carry any normal conversations; symptoms he has, since them, explicitly ascribed to depression and PTSD in a variety of interviews (Saifi et al., 2024). Alaqad, conversely, has been described as under a sort of "*emotional anaesthesia*" (Khoury, 2024) when speaking about her life and experiences in Gaza prior to her evacuation.

Despite its detrimental repercussions, it would be impossible to deny the power that the instrumentalization of emotionality has yielded in the narration of the Israel-Hamas war. By sharing their fears, hopes and dreams, Alaqad, Azaiza, Khoudary and Owda have managed to form, around their *personae*, veritable online communities; a feat which has contributed to the conflict's continuous mediatic presence and relevance. Under their audiences' watchful eye, the four have broadcasted the war's palpable and intangible atrocities, interweaving official accounts with personal entries and passionate appeals. Whilst extremely effective, this artful storytelling seems to have had monumental consequences on the journalists' emotional and mental well-being. As social media-based, personalised reporting seems set to become a fundamental pièce of the modern media ecosystem, scholars and practitioners alike might soon be compelled to delve into the ethical dilemmas this emotional self-exploitation engenders. Although, as noted previously, academia has already investigated the consequences that this shift might have on macro-level, market dynamics (Jackson, 2009; Lindén et al., 2021; Pantti & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2021), much remains to be observed regarding the micro-, individual-based level.

By integrating insights from both the ECA methodology and further established theoretical frameworks, this study has provided a nuanced overview of how contemporary journalism both reflect and shape public perception while navigating challenges such as maintaining objectivity and engaging their audiences. The findings underscore the need to critically re-evaluate and assess journalistic practices in an era dominated by the collapse of boundaries between entertainment, information and personal narratives.

Limitations of the study and possible future research

While this study offers valuable insights into the shifting landscape of conflict reporting, several limitations must be acknowledged. These constraints, inherent to the research design and methodology, may impact the generalizability and depth of the findings. The acknowledgment of these limitations might open pathways for future research to build upon and refine the insights presented this far, ultimately providing a balanced perspective on the conclusions drawn.

The first limitation might be represented by the study's focus on a specific time period within the evolution of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Although this narrow focus allows for in-depth analysis, it also greatly limits the generalisability of the findings, which might prove to be inapplicable to other conflicts or wider media dynamics.

Newly developing phenomena such as media commodification and personalisation, moreover, might benefit from the execution of a more longitudinal analysis, carried out both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The mixed approach could well complement ECA's flexible nature, allowing for a structured mapping of the trends' casuistry and evolution.

The study also might also be said to present a subjective inclination, to be primarily ascribed to ECA’s immersive and interpretive nature. This bias might be mitigated via the usage of triangulation (either by having multiple investigators or by diversifying data sources) (Altheide & Schneider, 2017). The research’s purely illustrative objective, however, should prevent this nuance from invalidating its findings and conclusions.

Albeit this study's findings contribute to the current understanding of conflict reporting, they should be viewed as part of a continuous dialogue within the academic community. As academic inquiry into these topics continues to expand, future research may build upon and refine these insights, benefiting from the accruing body of knowledge and the development of new theoretical frameworks.

References

Abed, A. (2023, November 7). Motaz Azaiza: Gaza's window to the world. *The New Arab*. https://www.newarab.com/features/motaz-azaiza-gazas-window-world

Abruzzese, J., Ingram, D., & Salam, Y. (2023, November 3). On Instagram, Palestinian journalists and digital creators documenting Gaza strikes see surge in followers. *NBC News.* https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/social-media/instagram-palestinian-journalists-digital-creators-document-gaza-strik-rcna123067

Adam, S., & Maier, M. (2010). Personalization of Politics A Critical Review and Agenda for Research. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, *34*(1), 213–257. https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2010.11679101

Al Jazeera. (2024, August 26). UN aid operations halt in Gaza after Israeli evacuation orders: Official. *Al Jazeera*. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/26/un-aid-operations-halt-in-gaza-after-israeli-evacuation-orders-official

Al-Hlou, Y. (2023, November 9). The War in Gaza Is Also Unfolding on Instagram. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/09/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-war-instagram.html

Altheide, D. L., & Schneider, C. J. (2017). *Qualitative Media analysis*. Sage Publications, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452270043

Altheide, D. L., & Snow, R. P. (1979). *Media logic*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Bakhshi, S., Shamma, D. A., & Gilbert, E. (2014, April 26). *Faces engage us*. Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. https://doi.org/10.1145/2556288.2557403

Begum, T. (2024, February 16). Photojournalist Motaz Azaiza: 'The ghosts of Gaza follow me everywhere.' *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/feb/16/motaz-azaiza-interview-gaza-ghosts-photojournalist

Bock, M. A. (2011). Citizen video journalists and authority in narrative: Reviving the role of the witness. *Journalism, 13*(5), 639–653. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911421703

Boker, S. (2023, November 1). What It's Like Being a Journalist in Gaza Right Now. *VICE*. Retrieved January 22, 2024, from https://www.vice.com/en/article/y3wxwv/hamza-chalan-journalist-gaza-interview

Bossio, D. (2021). Journalists on Instagram: Presenting professional identity and role on image-focused social media. *Journalism Practice, 17*(8), 1773–1789. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.2001359

Bossio, D., & Sacco, V. (2016). From "Selfies" to breaking tweets. *Journalism Practice, 11*(5), 527–543. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1175314

Bruck, P. A., & Allan, S. (1987). The Commodification of Social Relations: television news and social intervention. *Journal of Communication Inquiry, 11*(2), 79–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/019685998701100206

Chadwick, A. (2013). *The hybrid media system*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199759477.001.0001

Esin, C., Fathi, M., & Squire, C. (2014). Narrative Analysis: the Constructionist approach. In *SAGE Publications, Inc. eBooks* (pp. 203–216). https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282243.n14

Esser, F., & Strömbäck, J. (2014). Mediatization of politics. In *Palgrave Macmillan UK eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137275844

Fadel, L. (2024, January 31). *A Palestinian journalist shares her vision for a postwar Gaza*. NPR Radio. Retrieved July 13, 2024, from https://www.npr.org/2024/01/31/1228067643/a-palestinian-journalist-shares-her-vision-for-a-post-war-gaza

Fahmy, S. S., Salama, M., & Alsaba, M. R. (2024). Shattered lives, unbroken stories: journalists' perspectives from the frontlines of the Israel–Gaza war. *Online Media and Global Communication*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1515/omgc-2024-0012

Flick, U. (2013). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. SAGE.

Gaza journalists both witnesses and victims of war. (2023, December 18). *France 24*. https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20231218-gaza-journalists-both-witnesses-and-victims-of-war

Gebeily, M., & Lubowicka, A. M. (2023, October 11). Palestinians in Gaza say Israeli bombardment feels like new "Nakba." *Reuters*. https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/palestinians-gaza-say-israeli-bombardment-feels-like-new-nakba-2023-10-10/

Gómez-García, S., Zamora, R., & Berrocal, S. (2023). New frontiers for political communication in times of spectacularization. *Media and Communication*, *11*(2), 109–112. https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i2.7069

Goutier, N., De Haan, Y., De Bruin, K., Lecheler, S., & Kruikemeier, S. (2021). From "Cool Observer" to "Emotional Participant": the practice of immersive journalism. *Journalism Studies*, *22*(12), 1648–1664. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2021.1956364

Hackel, J. (Ed.). (2023a, October 9). Israel-Hamas war: Voice from Gaza: "We have all the feeling won't make it until tomorrow." *The World*. https://theworld.org/segments/2024/04/04/israel-hamas-war-voice-from-gaza-we-have-all-the-feeling-wont-make-it-until-tomorrow

Hackel, J. (Ed.). (2023b, October 10). Gaza resident: “We all have the feeling we won’t make it until tomorrow” - The World from PRX. *The World*. https://theworld.org/stories/2023/10/10/voices-gaza-we-all-have-feeling-we-wont-make-it-til-tomorrow

Hanitzsch, T., Hanusch, F., Ramaprasad, J., & De Beer, A. (2019). Worlds of journalism. In *Columbia University Press eBooks*. Columbia University Press. https://doi.org/10.7312/hani18642

Hanitzsch, T., & Vos, T. P. (2016). Journalism beyond democracy: A new look into journalistic roles in political and everyday life. *Journalism*, *19*(2), 146–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916673386

Horoub, I. (2023). Understanding media empowerment: citizen journalism in Palestine. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, *10*(1). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-01526-z

Hoxha, A., & Hanitzsch, T. (2018). How conflict news comes into being: Reconstructing ‘reality’ through telling stories. *Media War & Conflict*, *11*(1), 46–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635217727313

International Institute For Strategic Studies. (2023). *The military balance 2023*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003400226

Jackson, P. T. (2009). News as a contested commodity: a clash of capitalist and journalistic imperatives. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, *24*(2–3), 146–163. https://doi.org/10.1080/08900520902905349

Kaur, H. (2024, January 19). Palestinians share their lives in war-torn Gaza via Tiktok, and Instagram. *CNN*. https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/19/world/palestinians-x-tiktok-instagram-gaza-cec

Khanwala, S. (2023, December 15). How Gaza War changed this 22-year-old Palestinian journalist's life. *Khaleeji Times*. https://www.khaleejtimes.com/long-reads/from-instagrammer-to-war-correspondent-how-gaza-crisis-changed-this-palestinians-life

Khoury, G. (2024, August 27). Plestia Alaqad: "It took a genocide in Gaza to make the world aware that we exist." *L'Orient - Le Jour*. https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1425145/plestia-alaqad-it-took-a-genocide-in-gaza-to-make-the-world-aware-that-we-exist.html

Lasorsa, D. L., Lewis, S. C., & Holton, A. E. (2012). NORMALIZING TWITTER. *Journalism Studies*, *13*(1), 19–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2011.571825

Lester, P. M. (1998). *Visual Communication: Images with Messages*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA70358705

Lewis, S. C. (2012). THE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL CONTROL AND OPEN PARTICIPATION. *Information, Communication & Society*, *15*(6), 836–866. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2012.674150

Lindén, C., Lehtisaari, K., Grönlund, M., & Villi, M. (2021). Journalistic Passion as Commodity: A Managerial perspective. *Journalism Studies*, *22*(12), 1701–1719. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2021.1911672

Mann, D. (2018). 'I Am Spartacus': individualising visual media and warfare. *Media Culture & Society*, *41*(1), 38–53. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718764805

Mazzoleni, G., & Schulz, W. (1999). "Mediatization" of politics: a challenge for democracy? *Political Communication*, *16*(3), 247–261. https://doi.org/10.1080/105846099198613

McChesney, R. W., & Pickard, V. W. (2011). *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn Out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and What Can Be Done to Fix It*.

https://experts.illinois.edu/en/publications/will-the-last-reporter-please-turn-out-the-lights-the-collapse-of

McLaughlin, G. (2016). *The War Correspondent - Second Edition*. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_605051

Mehdi, Z. (2024, February 16). Motaz, Bisan, Plestia: London iconifies journalists of Gaza. *The New Arab*. https://www.newarab.com/features/motaz-bisan-plestia-london-iconifies-journalists-gaza

Mellado, C., & Hermida, A. (2022). A Conceptual framework for journalistic identity on social media: How the personal and professional contribute to power and profit. *Digital Journalism*, *10*(2), 284–299. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1907203

Mellado, C., & Hermida, A. (2023). The journalist on social media: mapping the promoter, celebrity and joker roles on Twitter and Instagram. *Digital Journalism*, *12*(4), 494–515. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2151484

Michaelson, R. (2023, December 13). 'I'm not just covering the news – I'm living it': Gaza's citizen journalists chronicling life in war. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/dec/12/gaza-citizen-journalists-war-footage-israel

Miharia, A. (2024, April 5). Palestinian journalist speaks about first-hand coverage of Israel-Hamas war at panel - Washington Square News. *Washington Square News*. https://nyunews.com/news/2024/04/05/motaz-azaiza-conflict-photography-today/

Molyneux, L. (2015). What journalists retweet: Opinion, humor, and brand development on Twitter. *Journalism*, *16*(7), 920–935. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884914550135

Mpoke Bigg, M. (2023, December 7). Key moments in 2 months of war between Israel and Hamas. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/07/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-hamas-war-timeline.html

Pantti, M. (2017). The personalisation of conflict reporting. *Digital Journalism*, *7*(1), 124–145. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1399807

Pantti, M., & Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2021). Journalism and emotional work. *Journalism Studies*, *22*(12), 1567–1573. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2021.1977168

Papacharissi, Z. (2016). Affective publics and structures of storytelling: sentiment, events and mediality. *Information Communication & Society*, *19*(3), 307–324. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2015.1109697

Plestia Alaqad on finding her voice, leaving Gaza, and humanising Palestine (M. Hassan, Interviewer). (2024, March 30). In *Middle East Eye*. Middle East Eye. https://www.middleeasteye.net/live-blog/live-blog-update/plestia-alaqad-finding-her-voice-leaving-gaza-and-humanising-palestine

Rahat, G., & Kenig, O. (2018). From party politics to personalized politics? In *Oxford University Press eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198808008.001.0001

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. (2024). Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024. In *Reuters Institute*. https://doi.org/10.60625/risj-vy6n-4v57

Saifi, Z., Riddell, D., & Jenner, B. (2024, March 5). Why Motaz Azaiza, the Palestinian photographer who captured the war, chose to leave Gaza. *CNN*. https://edition.cnn.com/2024/03/01/world/why-motaz-azaiza-chose-to-leave-gaza-mime-intl/index.html

Serhan, Y. (2023, December 8). Palestinian journalists offer a rare glimpse into life in Gaza. but for how long? *TIME*. https://time.com/6343715/israel-hamas-war-journalists-gaza/

Serrin, W. (2000). The business of journalism : ten leading reporters and editors on the perils and pitfalls of the press. In *New Press eBooks*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA6182475X

Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the pain of others*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA73114900

Staff, N. A. (2023, December 3). Gaza journalists Motaz Azaiza, Bisan decry world's apathy. *The New Arab*. https://www.newarab.com/news/gaza-journalists-motaz-azaiza-bisan-decry-worlds-apathy

Tasseron, M. (2021). Reporting under the microscope in Israel-Palestine and South Africa. *Journalism Practice*, *17*(5), 970–990. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1966643

The Israel-Hamas military balance. (2023, October 22). *Al-Monitor: The Middle East's Leading Independent News Source Since 2012*. https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/10/israel-hamas-military-balance-0

The New Arab Staff. (2024, February 15). Gaza voices: Who is Bisan, Hind Khoudary, Motaz and Plestia? *The New Arab.* https://www.newarab.com/news/gaza-voices-who-bisan-hind-khoudary-motaz-and-plestia

The Worlds of Journalism Study - Worlds of Journalism Study. (2007). Worlds of Journalism Study. Retrieved January 5, 2024, from https://worldsofjournalism.org/

TOI Staff. (2024, January 10). High Court says Israel can keep barring foreign reporters from Gaza. *Times of Israel*. https://www.timesofisrael.com/high-court-says-israel-can-keep-barring-foreign-reporters-from-gaza/

UN News. (2024, April 5). Gaza photojournalist Motaz Azaiza still has hope in humanity. *UN News.* https://news.un.org/en/audio/2024/04/1148281

UN Women. (2023, August 28). *In the Words of Bisan Owda "Content Creation is an Effective Tool to Advance Gender Equality in Palestine."* UN Women – Palestine Country Office. Retrieved February 27, 2024, from https://palestine.unwomen.org/en/stories/in-the-words-of/2023/08/in-the-words-of-bisan-owda-content-creation-is-an-effective-tool-to-advance-gender-equality-in-palestine

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. (2023). *UNRWA Situation Report #1 on the Situation in the Gaza Strip*. UNRWA. Retrieved February 4, 2024, from https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-1-situation-gaza

Van Aelst, P., Sheafer, T., & Stanyer, J. (2011). The personalization of mediated political communication: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings. *Journalism: Theory, Practice & Criticism*, *13*(2), 203–220. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911427802

Van Waarden, B., & Kohlrausch, M. (2021). The Mediatization of Political Personae, 1880s–1930s. *Media History*, *28*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2021.2010526

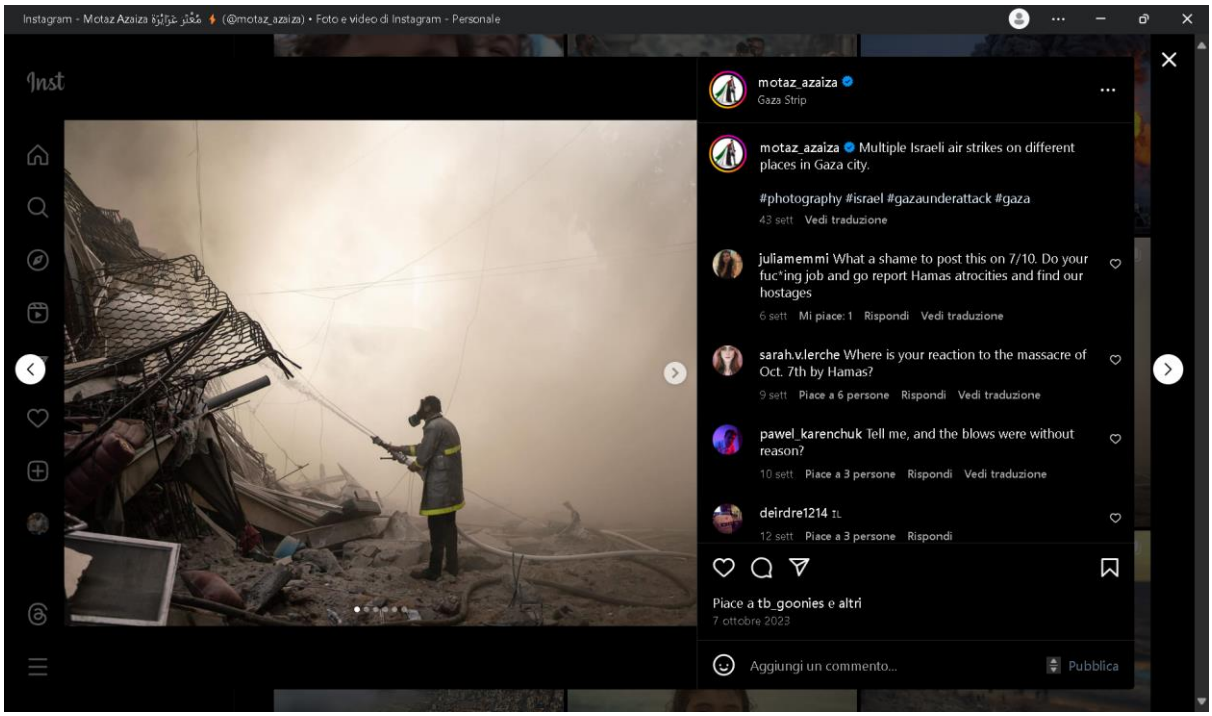
Vázquez-Herrero, J., Direito-Rebollal, S., & López-García, X. (2019). Ephemeral journalism: news distribution through Instagram Stories. *Social Media + Society*, *5*(4), 205630511988865. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119888657

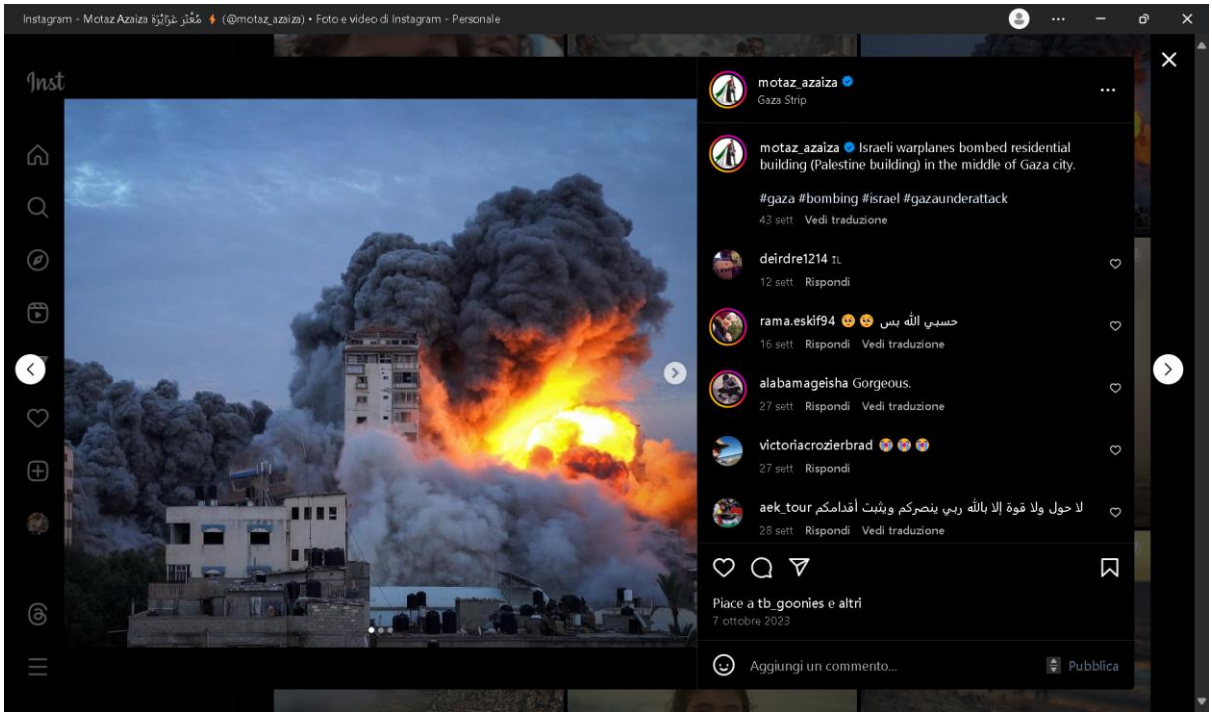
Woordward, A. (2023, November 22). Palestinian journalist Plestia Alaqad flees Gaza: 'I hope this nightmare ends.' *Independent*. https://www.yahoo.com/news/palestinian-journalist-plestia-alaqad-flees-190903312.htmlZelizer, B. (2010). *About to die: how news images move the public* (9th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Appendix 1

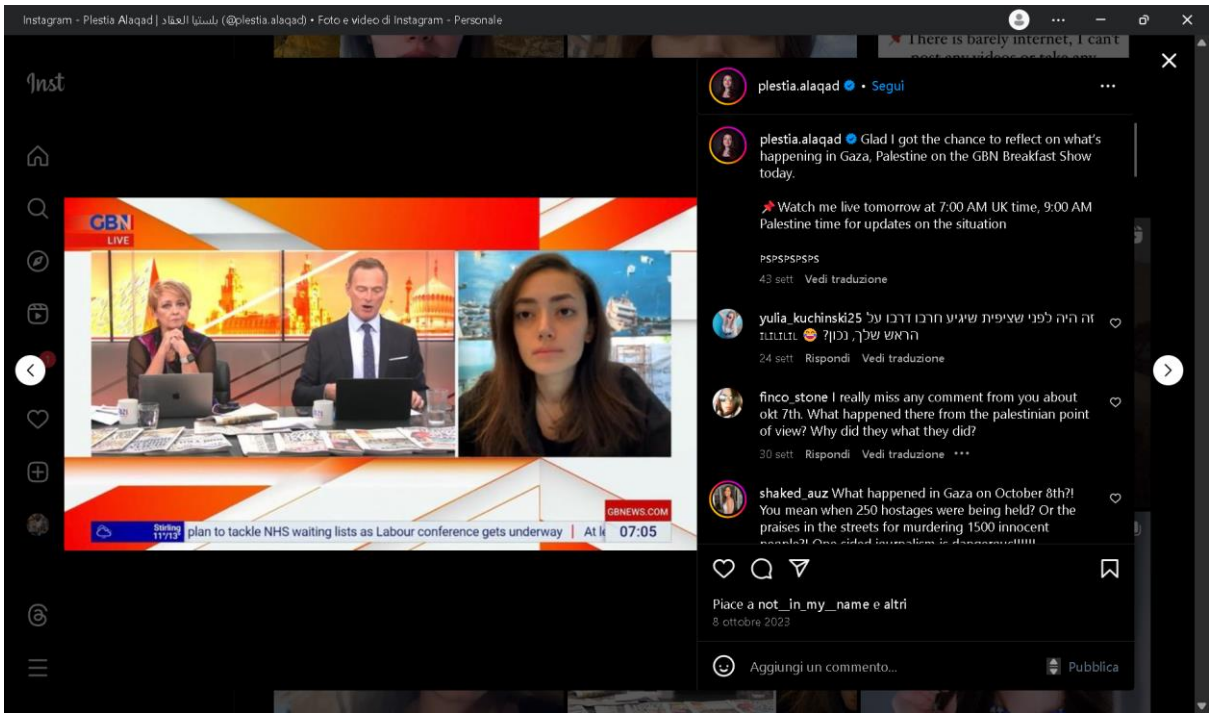
Instagram posts

October 7th
Azaiza shared photos depicting rubble and ruins. Captions were in English and provided some context for the events, though one presented a personal impression and described the landscape as a "ghost town"





nothing from Alaqad
but she went on air, with a live interview on "The GBN Breakfast Show" to "reflect on the events" on October 8th

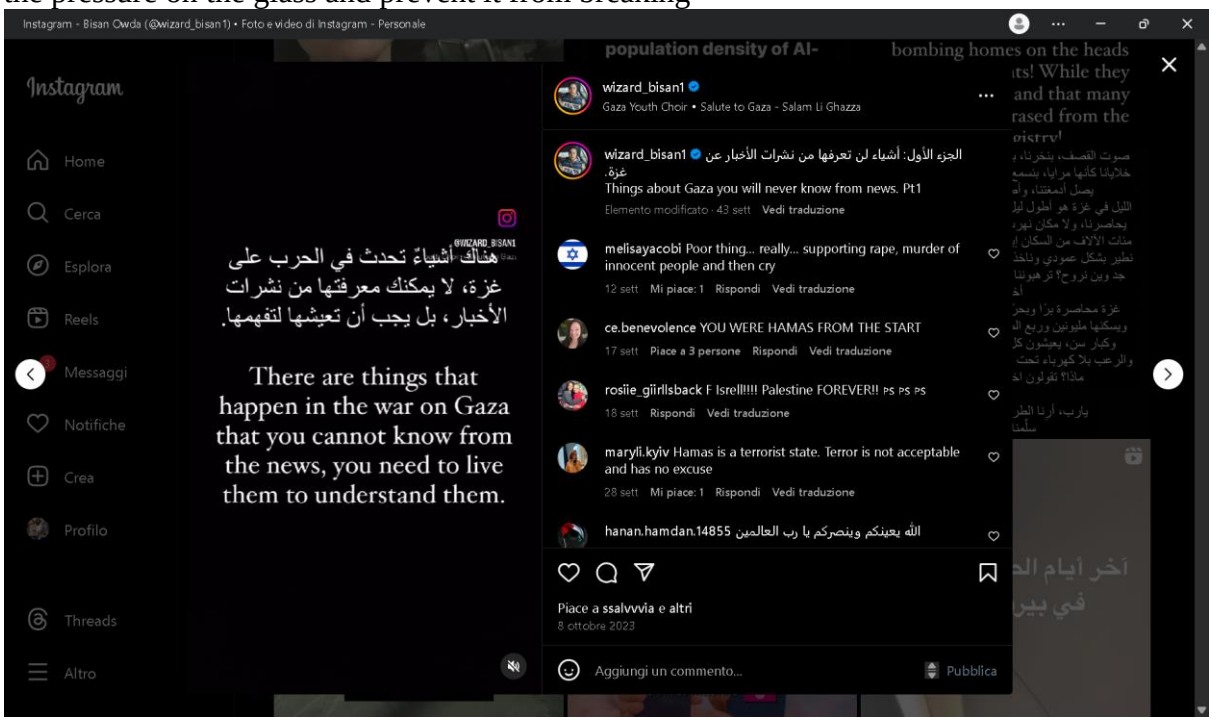


Owda posted nothing on October 7th, but went on to post several messages, both in text and slideshow form, on October 8th. All of them presented Arabic text, some were translated to English

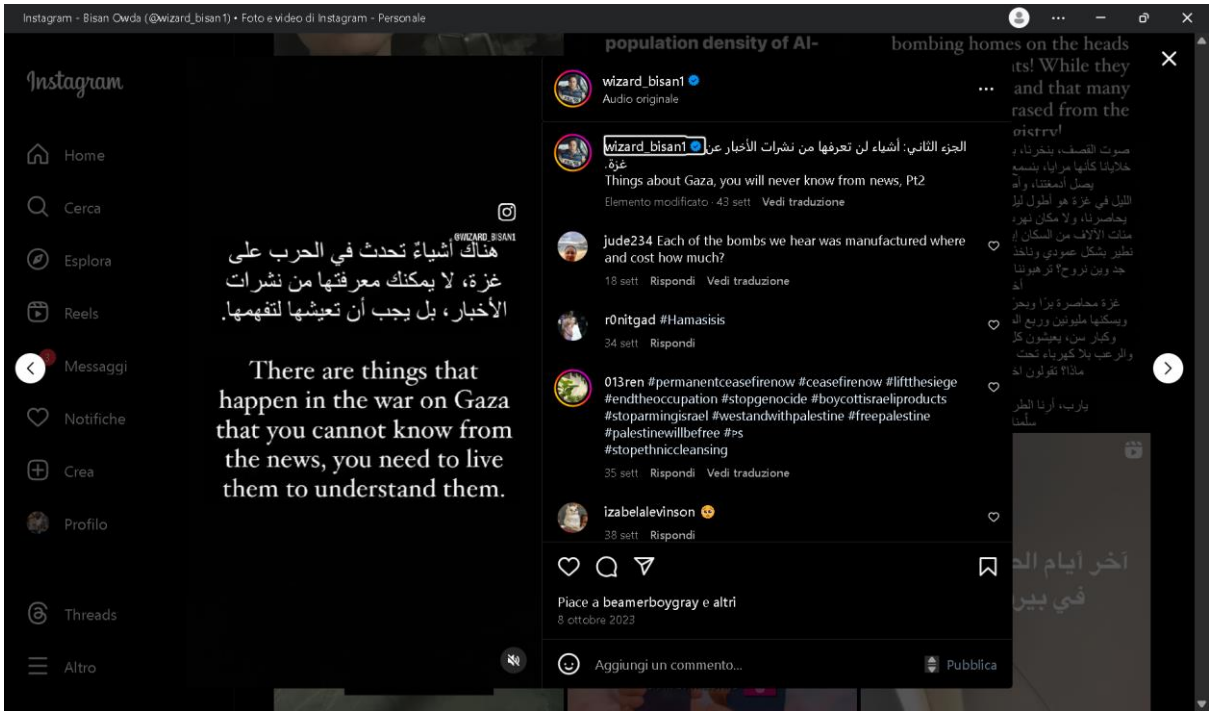


the slideshows were part of a series, titled "Things about Gaza you will never know from news". They were both in English and Arabic, and accompanied by a children's choir

signing a "Salute to Gaza" chant. All of them described personal episodes exemplifying the Gazans' living conditions, e.g. the technique of sleeping with the windows open to alleviate the pressure on the glass and prevent it from breaking



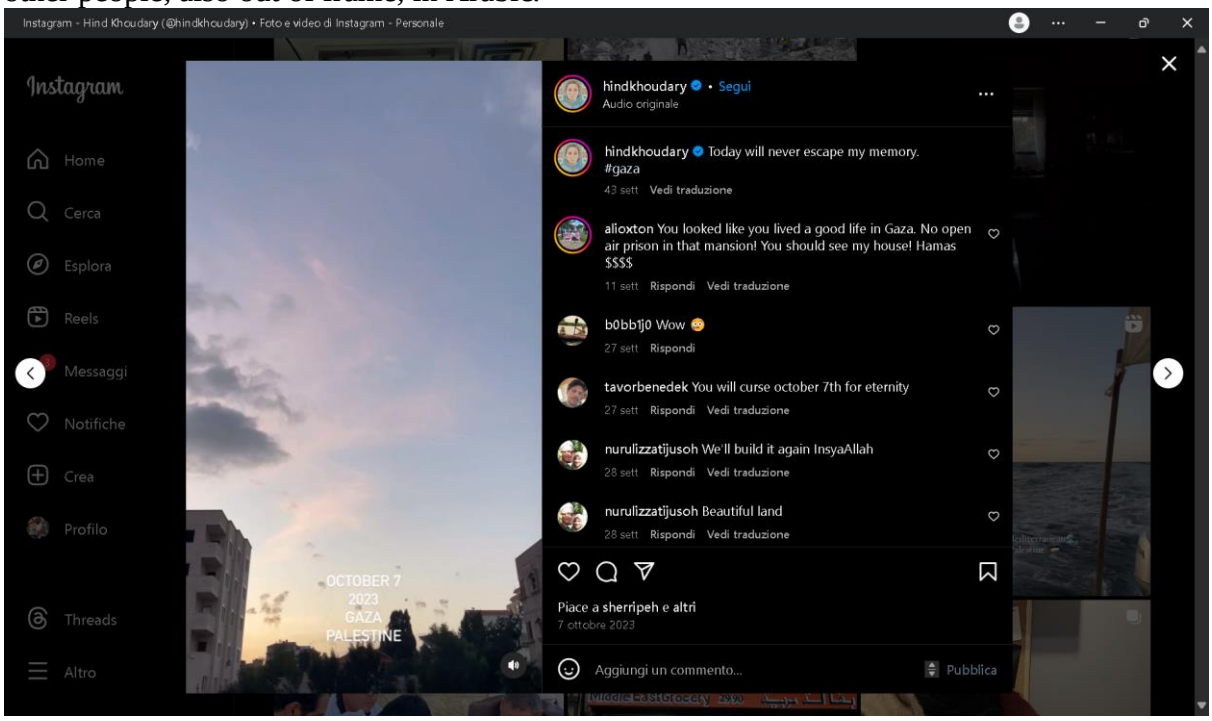
The second slideshow of the day was accompanied by a recording of bombardments

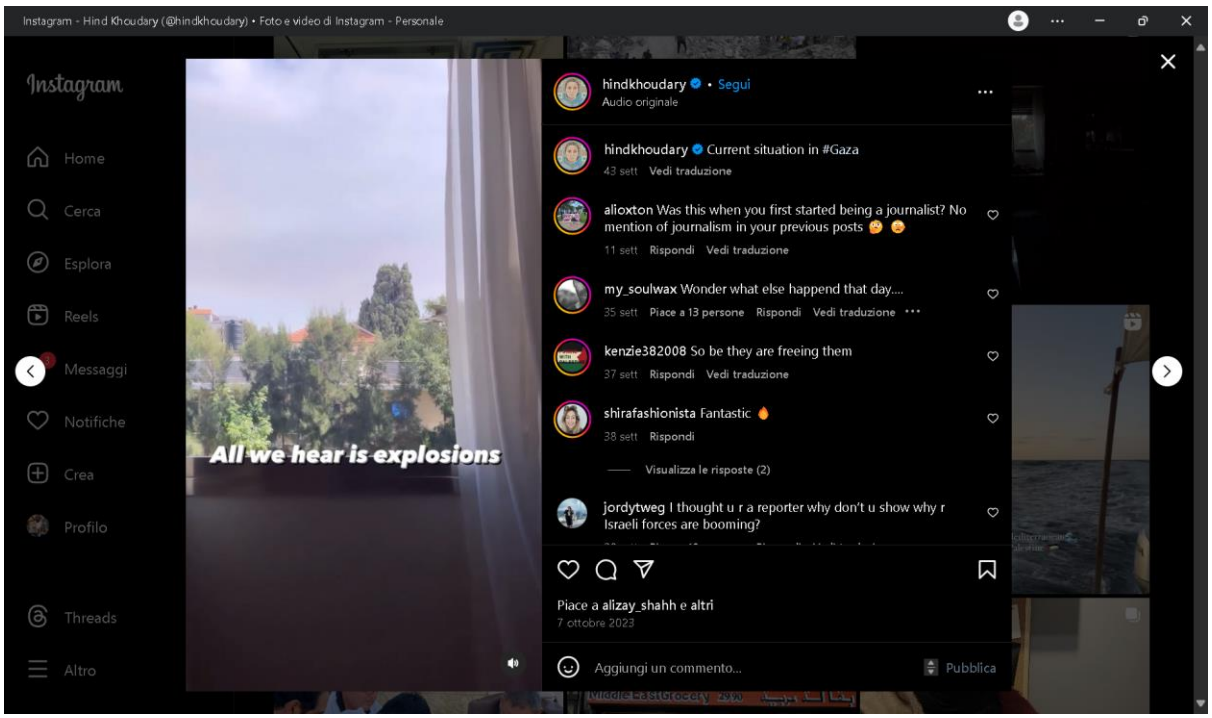


Khoudary first posted a very brief video-recording of the view outside (supposedly) her window, an urban scene of houses and trees, while bombs can be heard going off. The

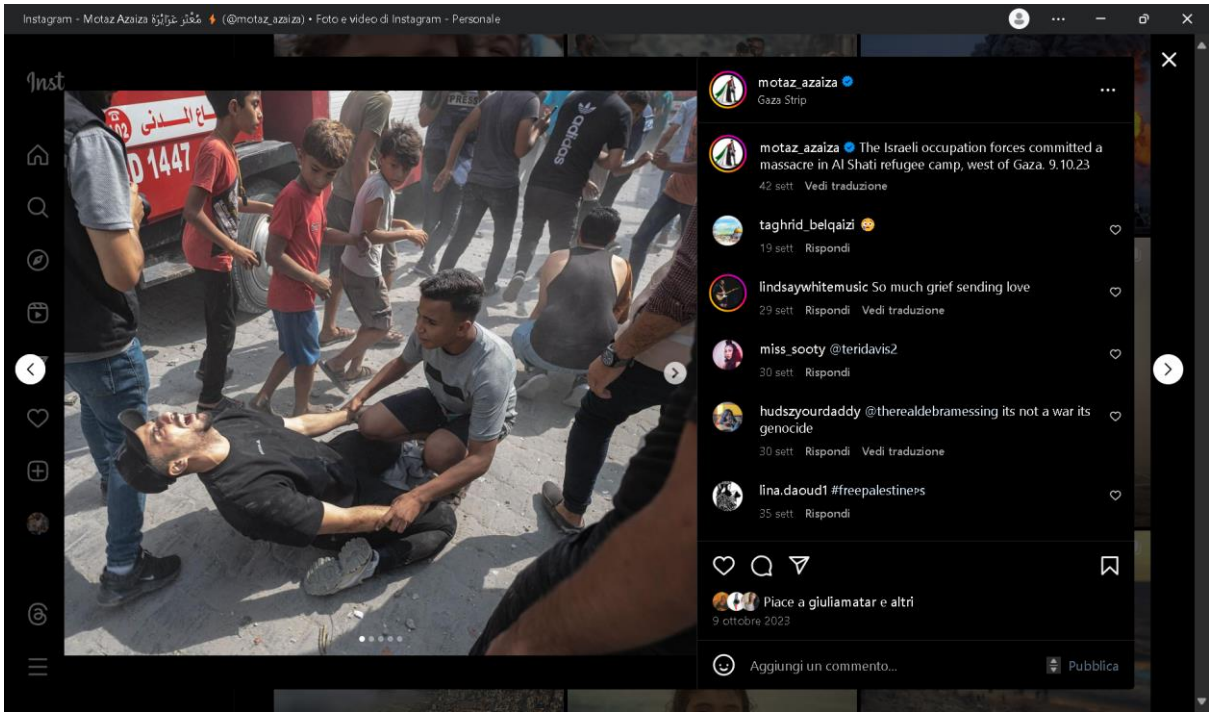
superimposed text and the caption are both in English, with one reading "All we hear is explosions" and the latter "Current situation in #Gaza"

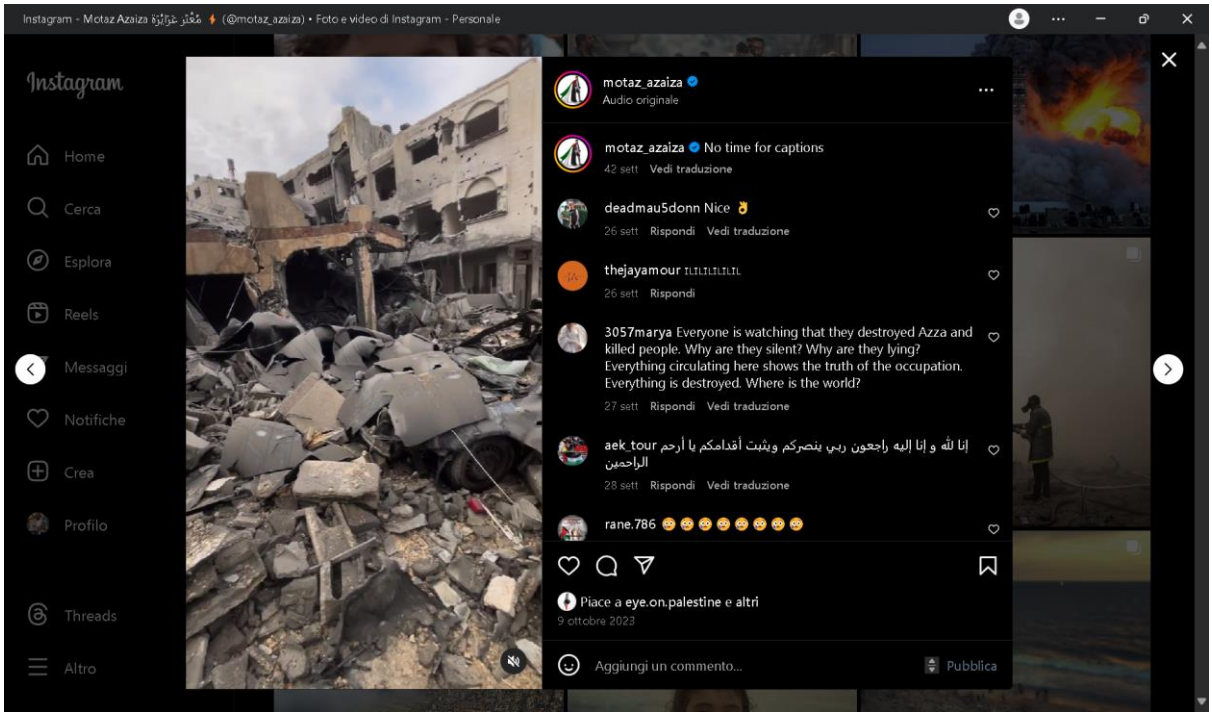
this first post was followed by a second video, this one a compilation of various clips depicting the entire day of October 7th. Once again, the post only presented a superimposed text and a caption, both in English. Hind (presumably) can be heard speaking out of frame to other people, also out of frame, in Arabic.

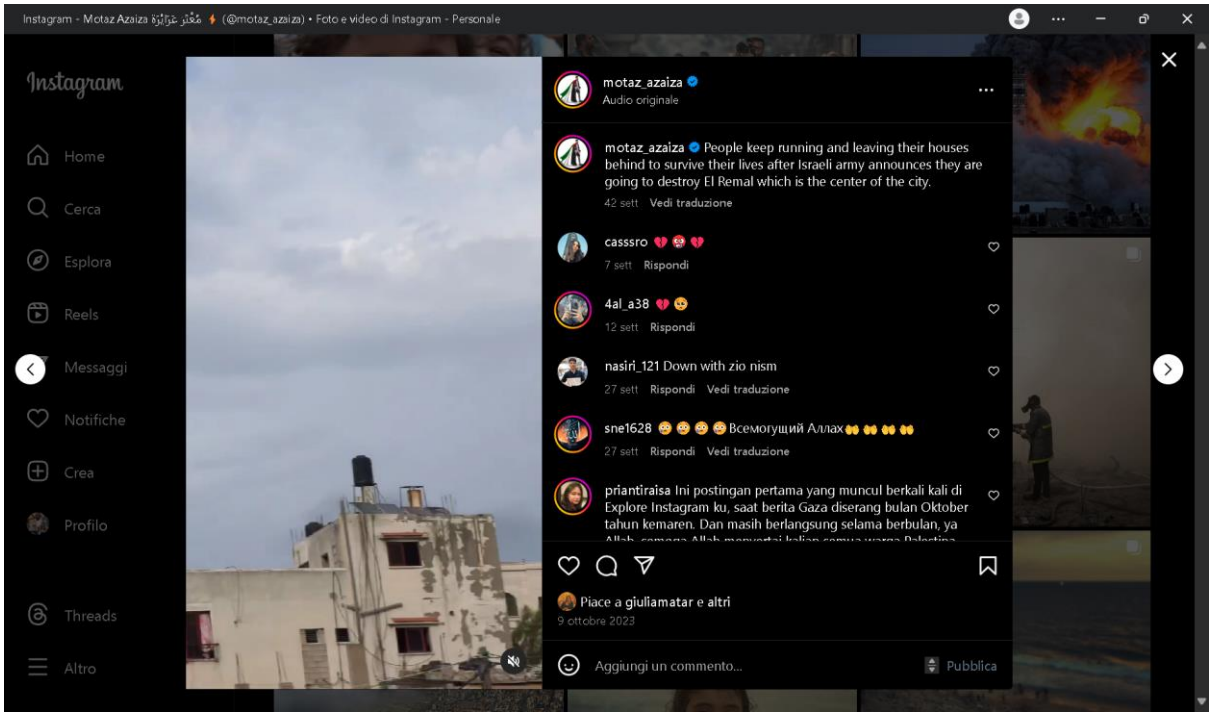


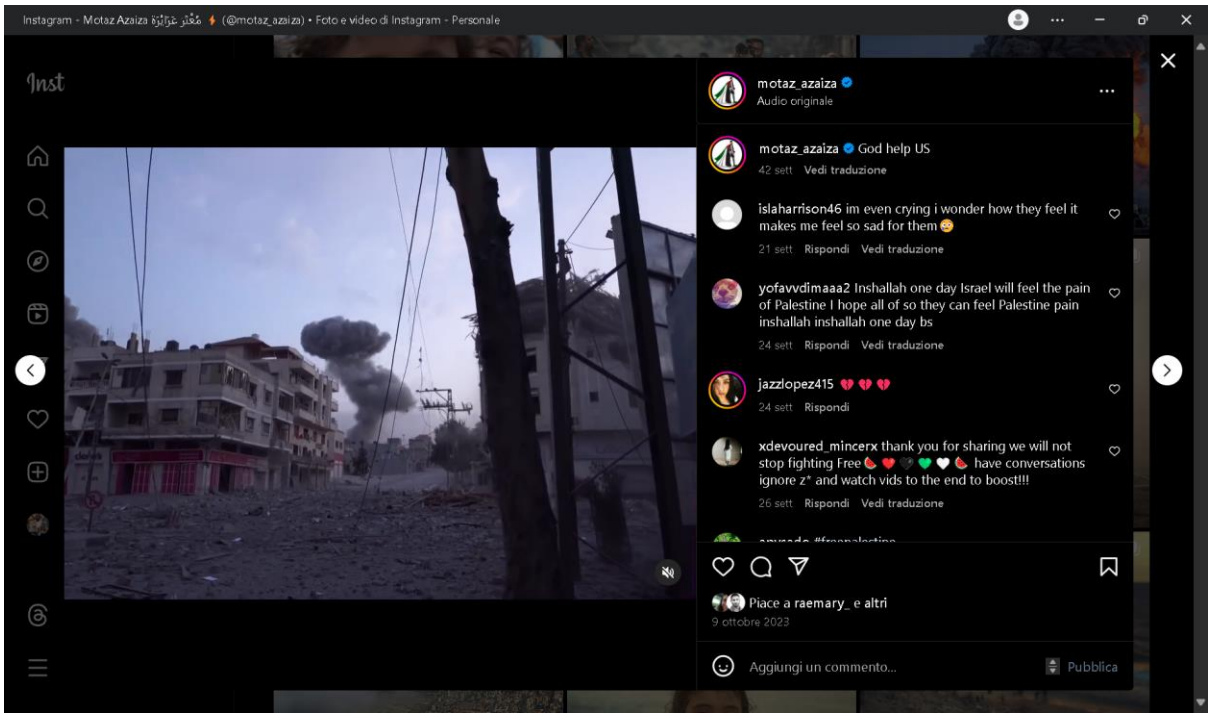


October 9th
Azaiza shared more photo and video material depicting the aftermath of the bombardments. Captions were in English.

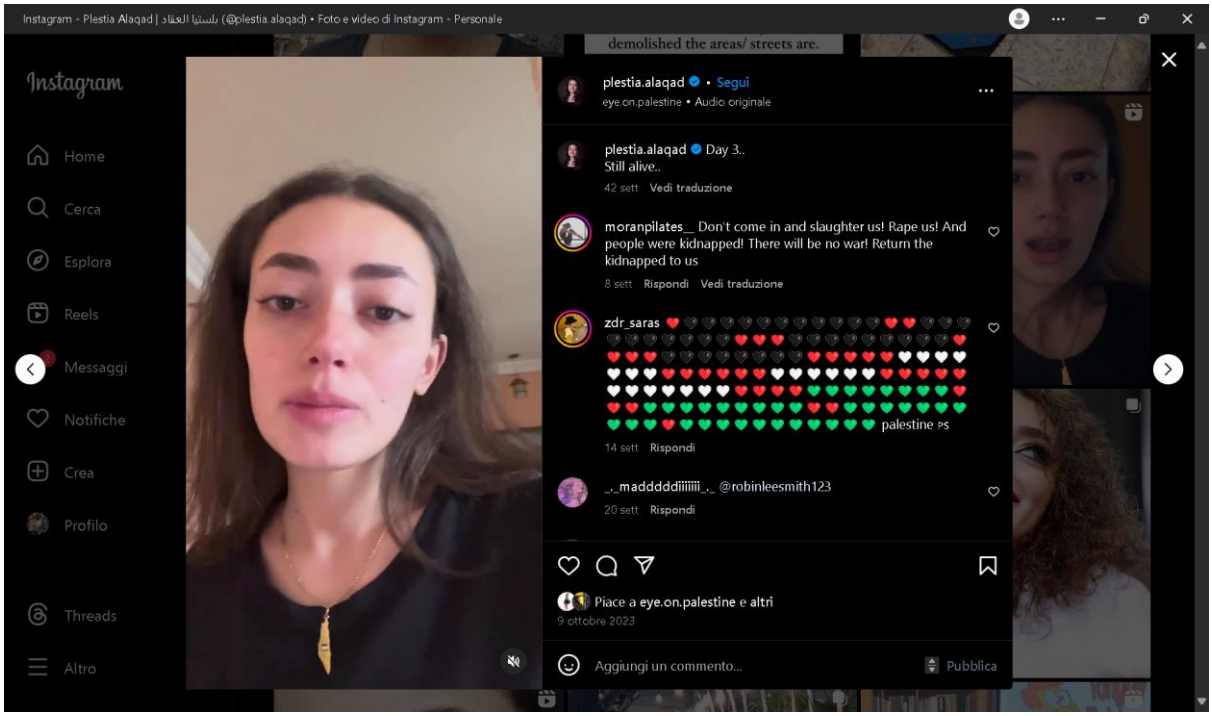




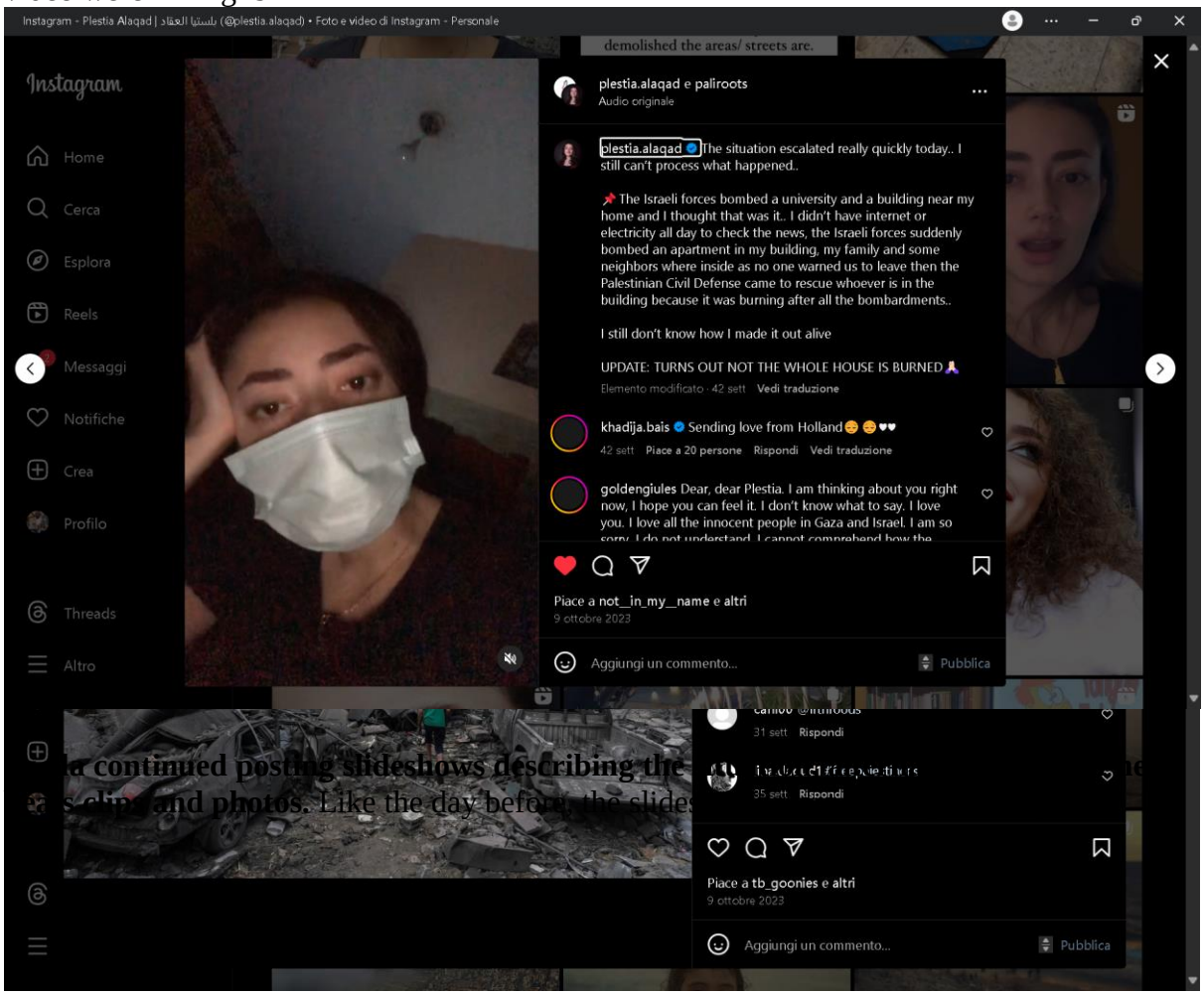

Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
motaz_azaiza
Audio originale
motaz_azaiza People keep running and leaving their houses behind to survive their lives after Israeli army announces they are going to destroy El Remal which is the center of the city.
42 sett Vedi traduzione
casssro
7 sett Rispondi
4al_a38
12 sett Rispondi
nasiri_121 Down with zio nism
27 sett Rispondi Vedi traduzione
sne1628 Всемогущий Аллах
27 sett Rispondi Vedi traduzione
priantiraisa Ini postingan pertama yang muncul berkali kali di Explore Instagram ku, saat berita Gaza diserang bulan Oktober tahun kemaren. Dan masih berlangsung selama berbulan, ya
Piace a giuliamatar e altri
9 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Inst
motaz_azaiza
Audio originale
motaz_azaiza God help US
42 sett Vedi traduzione
islaharrison46 im even crying i wonder how they feel it makes me feel so sad for them
21 sett Rispondi Vedi traduzione
yofavvdimaaa2 Inshallah one day Israel will feel the pain of Palestine I hope all of so they can feel Palestine pain inshallah inshallah one day bs
24 sett Rispondi Vedi traduzione
jazzlopez415
24 sett Rispondi
xdevoured_mincerx thank you for sharing we will not stop fighting Free have conversations ignore z* and watch vids to the end to boost!!!
26 sett Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a raemary_ e altri
9 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

Alaqad posted for the first time on the 9th, immediately going viral. The post was in the form of a selfie-video, with Alaqad appearing in the centre of the frame as airstrikes could be heard in the background. Video and captions were in English.



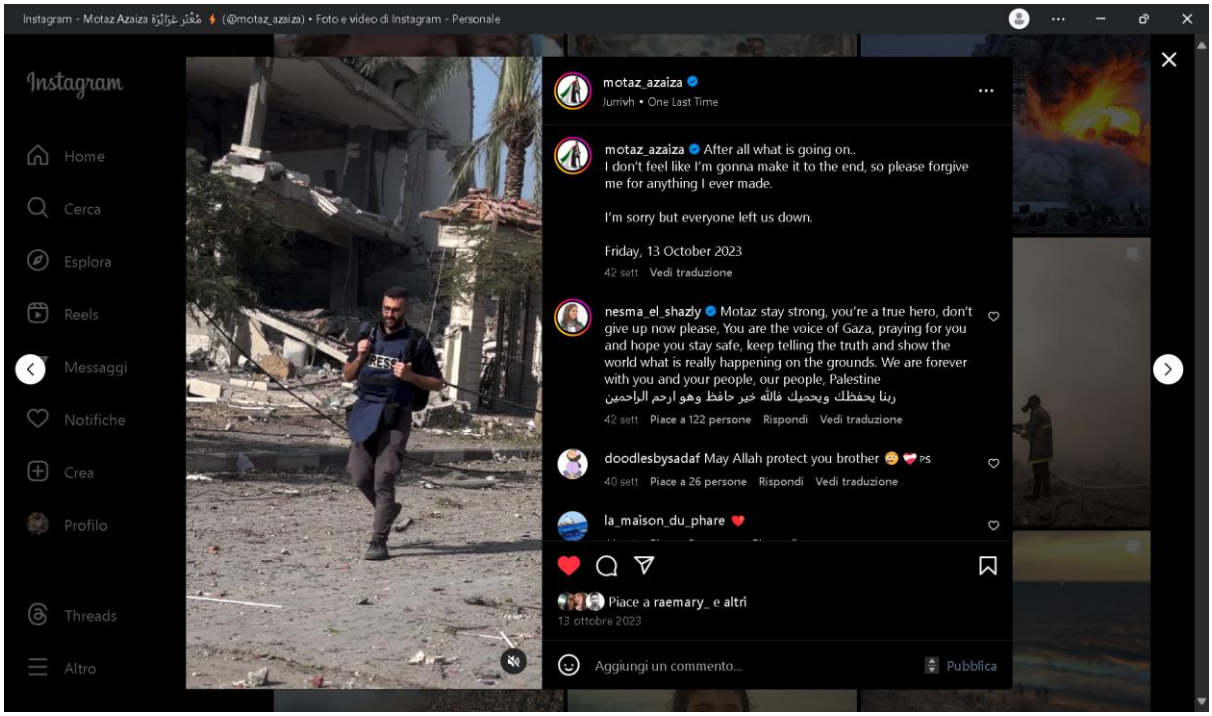
another video followed, giving updates at the end of the day. Once again, both captions and video were in English



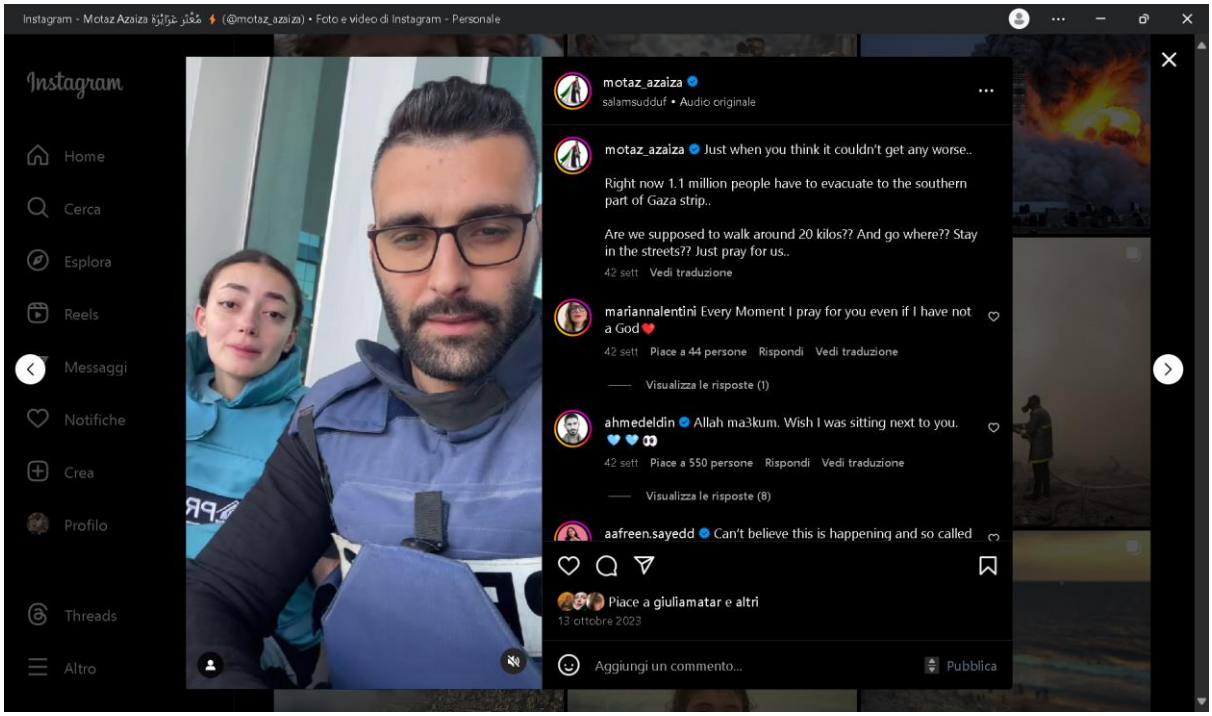
recordings of a children's choir and bombings, together with the original audio with some of the news beats shown

nothing from Khoudary

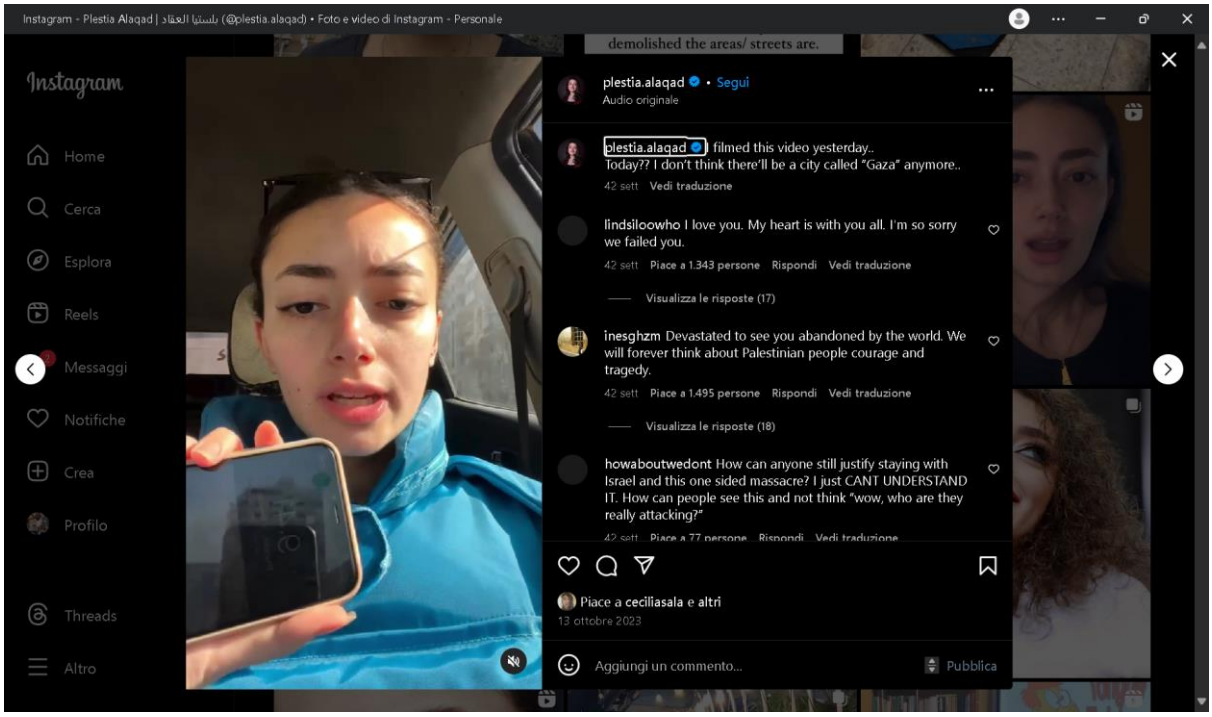
October 13th



Azaiza first shared a video showing himself walking amongst the rubble. Caption was in English, whilst the backing audio comprised a piano piece. **another video followed**, this one in collaboration with Alaqad, in which the two journalists made an appeal to "pray for Gaza"



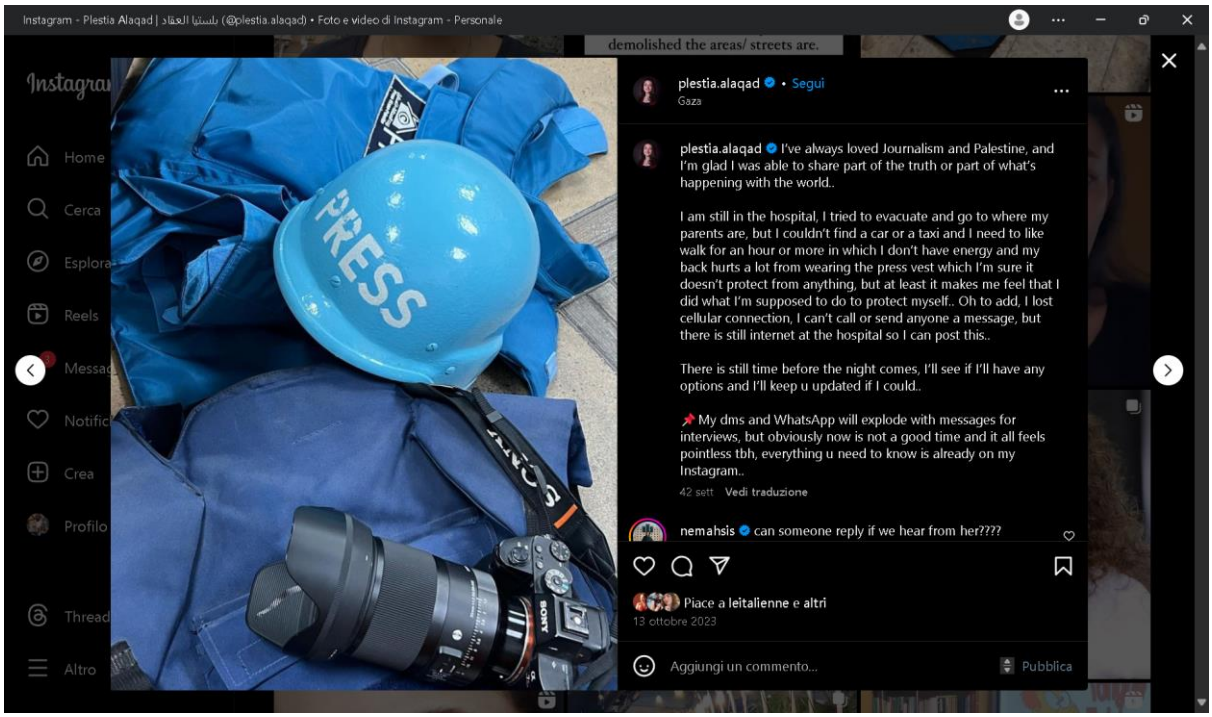
and described the evacuation order diffused by the Israeli army that day. Video and captions were in English.
Alaqad shared a video showing her crossing, by car, a Gazan street



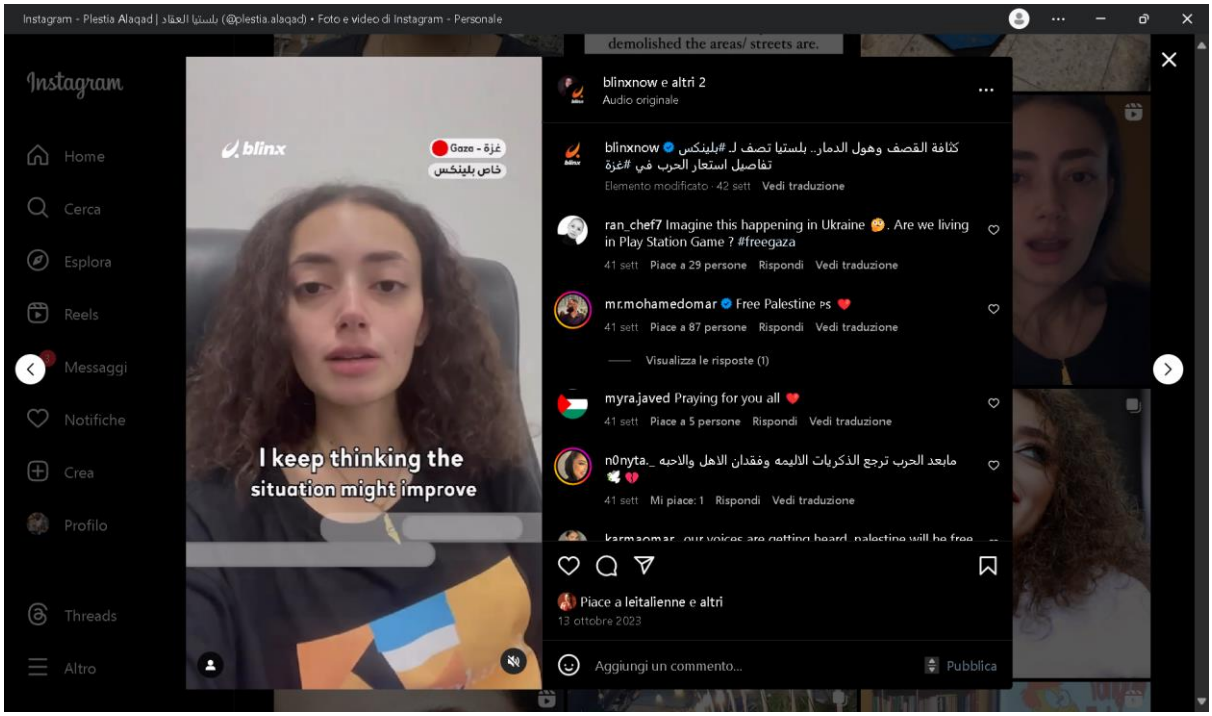
another post, on the same day, showed two children found, alone, in one of the hospitals, and inquired about the parents' whereabouts. The captions were in Arabic.



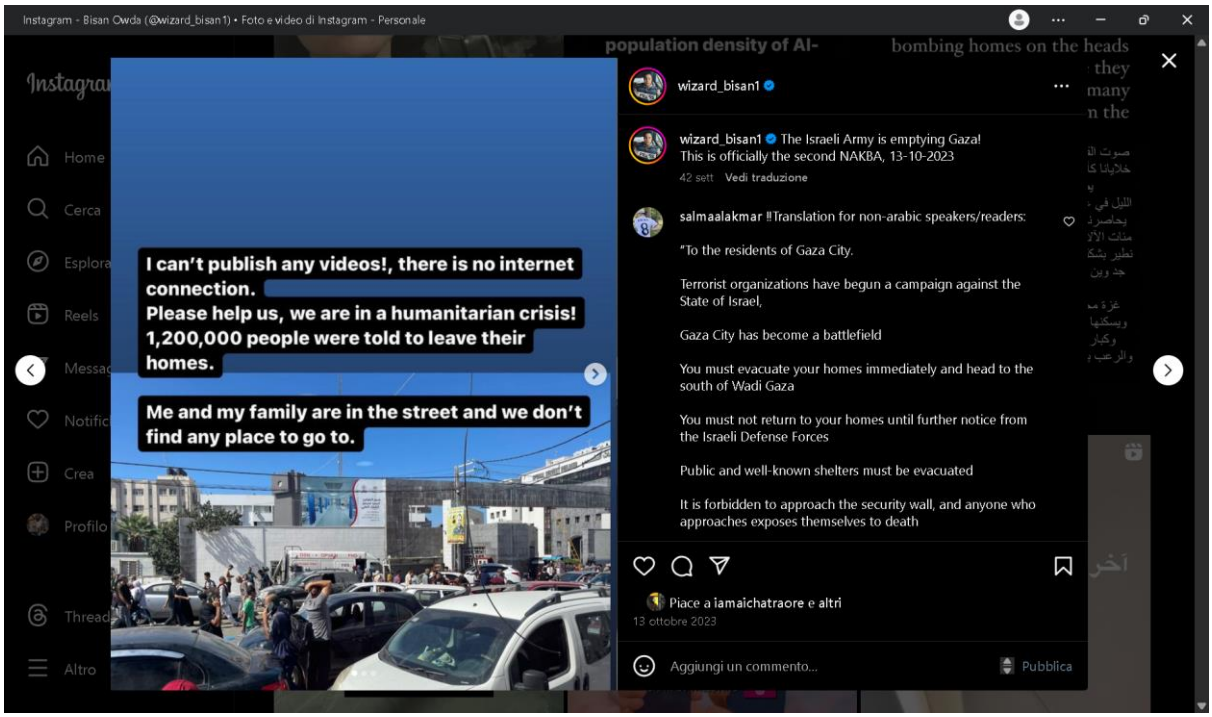
Alaqad's last post described her experience as a journalist trying to evacuate to the South of the Strip. Captions were in English.

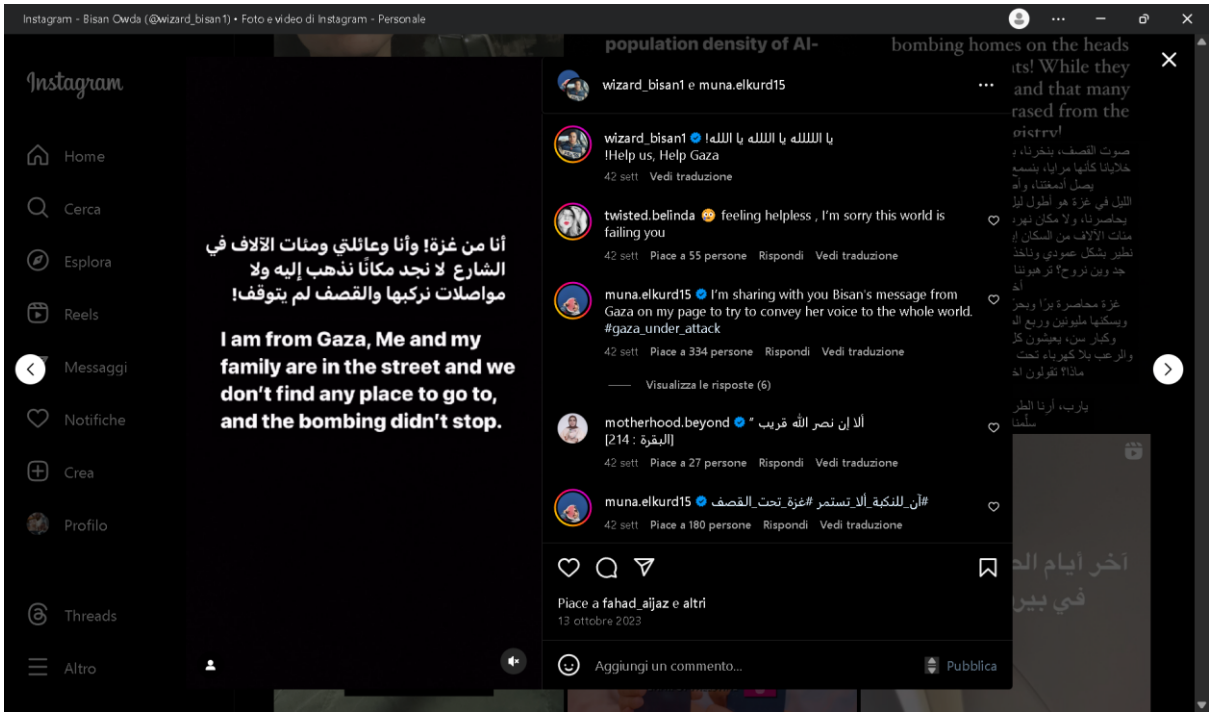


her last post comprised an interview in Arabic, subtitled in English.

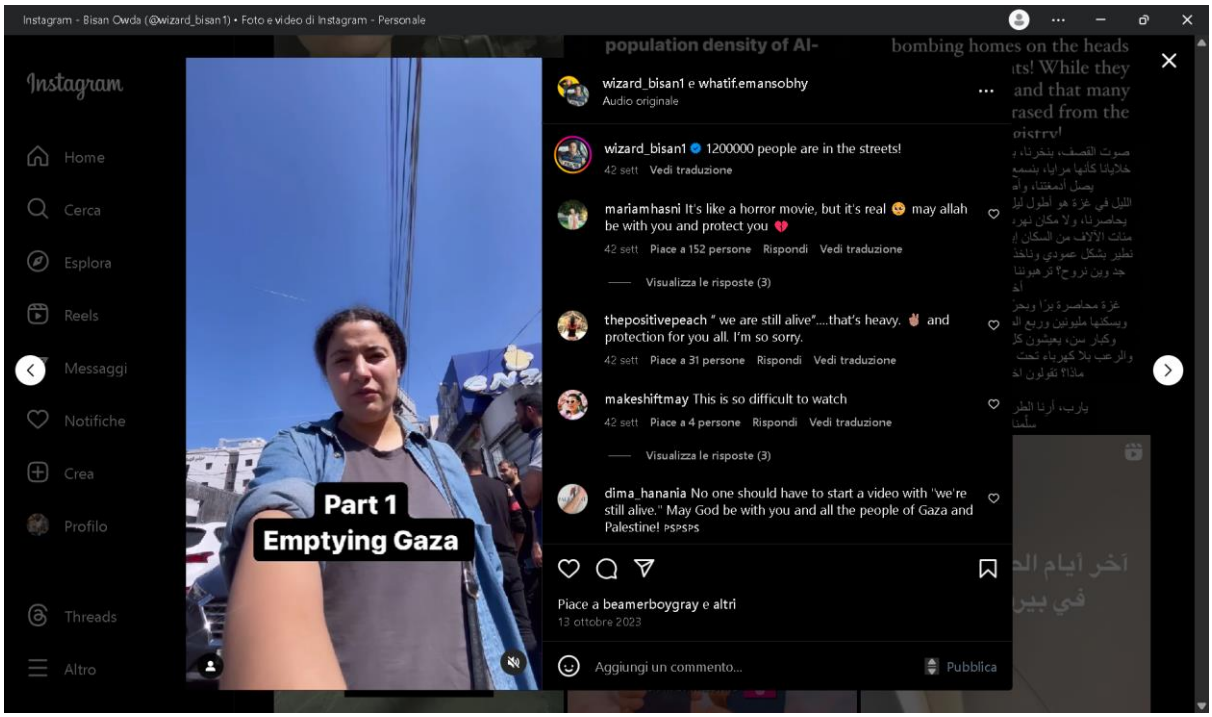


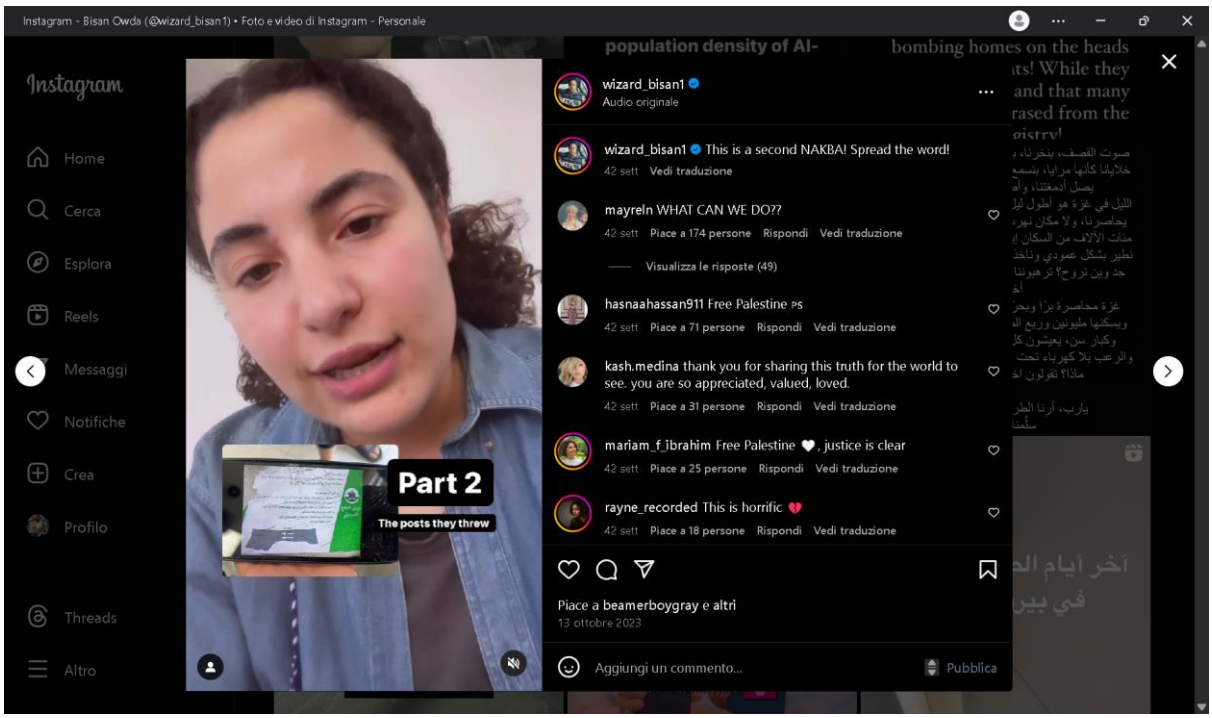
Owda shared various posts showing the leaflets ordering the evacuation to Southern Gaza and calling the event the "second NABKA" and an "ethnic cleansing". She also continued her "Things you will never know" series. In particular, she talked about her own family's struggle to find refuge, and accused the Israeli government of using intimidating tactics to get people to evacuate Southern Gaza


Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
I can't publish any videos!, there is no internet connection.
Please help us, we are in a humanitarian crisis! 1,200,000 people were told to leave their homes.
Me and my family are in the street and we don't find any place to go to.
wizard_bisan1
wizard_bisan1 The Israeli Army is emptying Gaza!
This is officially the second NAKBA, 13-10-2023
42 sett Vedi traduzione
salmaalakmar ‼Translation for non-arabic speakers/readers:
"To the residents of Gaza City.
Terrorist organizations have begun a campaign against the State of Israel,
Gaza City has become a battlefield
You must evacuate your homes immediately and head to the south of Wadi Gaza
You must not return to your homes until further notice from the Israeli Defense Forces
Public and well-known shelters must be evacuated
It is forbidden to approach the security wall, and anyone who approaches exposes themselves to death
Piace a iamaichatraore e altri
13 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

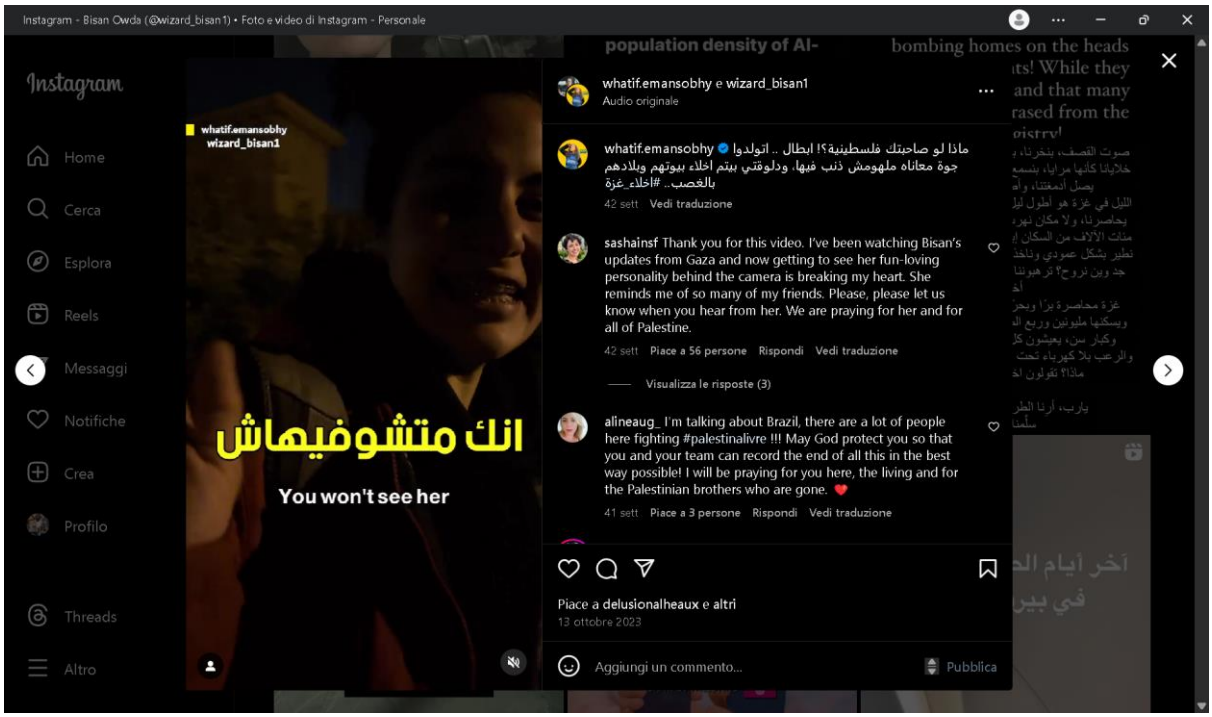

Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
أنا من غزة! وأنا وعائلتي ومئات الآلاف في الشارع لا نجد مكانًا نذهب إليه ولا مواصلات نركبها والقصف لم يتوقف!
I am from Gaza, Me and my family are in the street and we don't find any place to go to, and the bombing didn't stop.
wizard_bisan1 e muna.elkurd15
wizard_bisan1 يا الله يا الله يا الله!
!Help us, Help Gaza
42 sett Vedi traduzione
twisted.belinda feeling helpless , I'm sorry this world is failing you
42 sett Piace a 55 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
muna.elkurd15 I'm sharing with you Bisan's message from Gaza on my page to try to convey her voice to the whole world. #gaza_under_attack
42 sett Piace a 334 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (6)
motherhood.beyond ألا إن نصر الله قريب " [214 :البقرة]
42 sett Piace a 27 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
muna.elkurd15 #آن_للنكبة_ألا_تستمر #غزة_تحت_القصف
42 sett Piace a 180 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a fahad_aijaz e altri
13 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

-**Further videos** narrated the evacuation and showed the leaflets

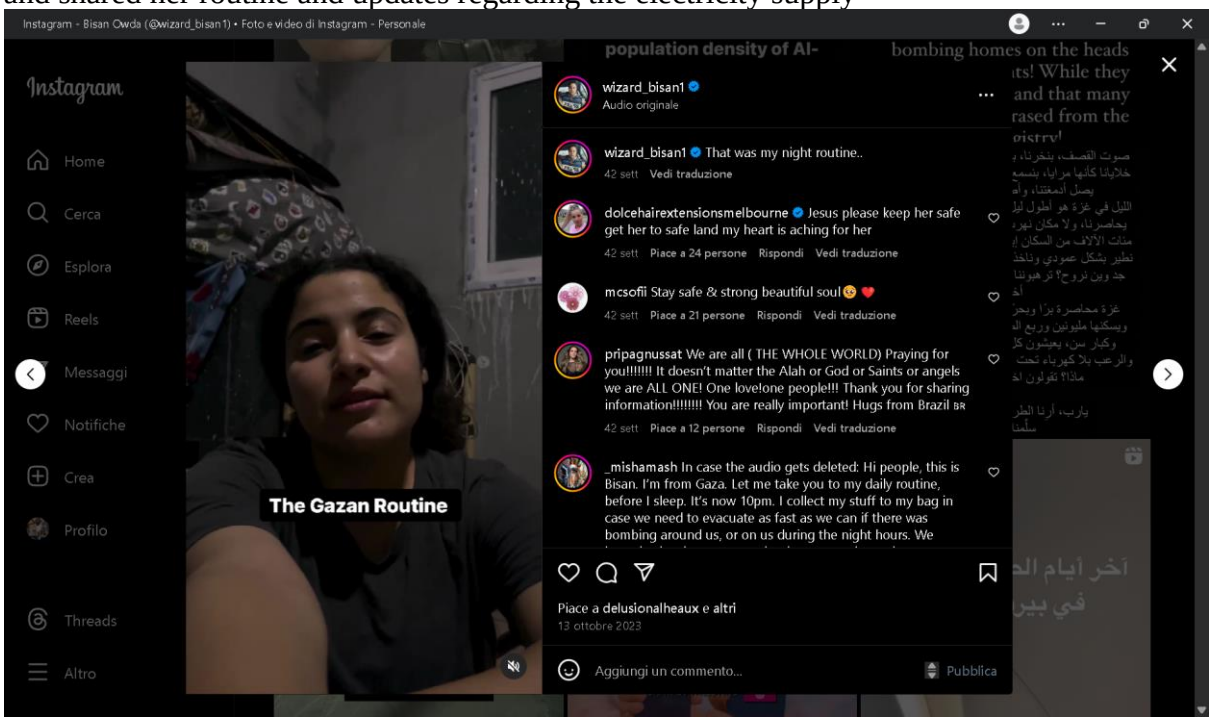


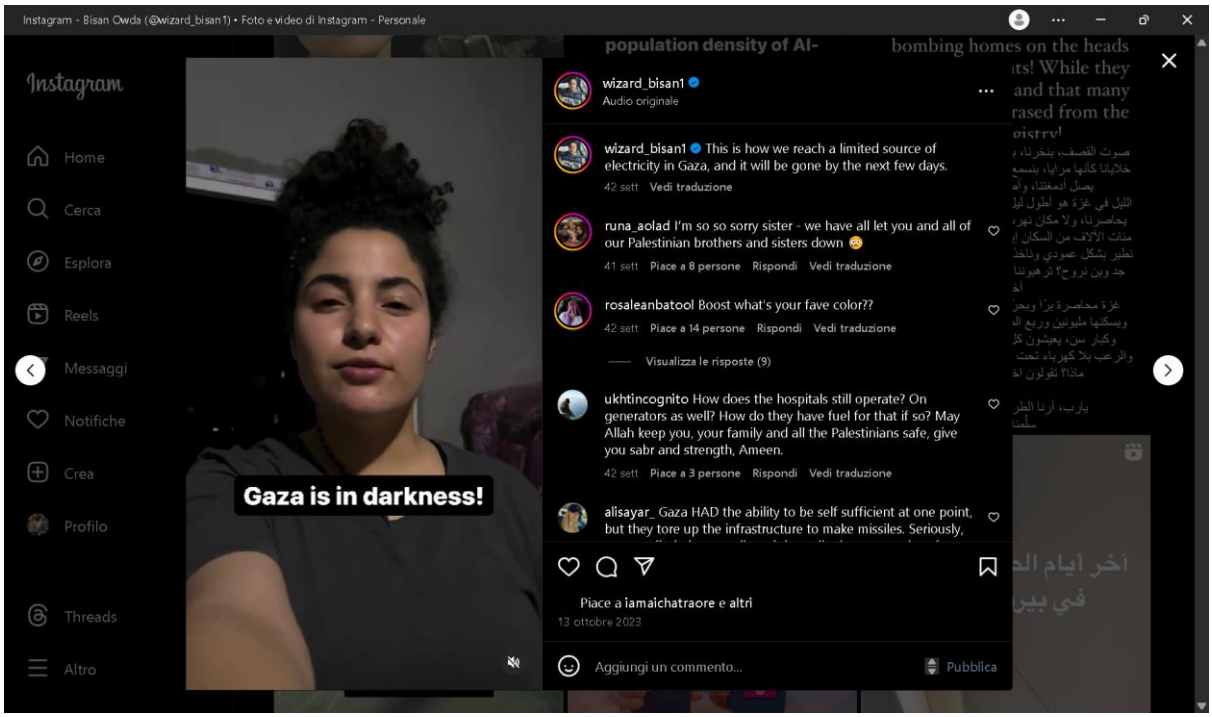


- she re-posted a reel of a fellow activist's page, narrating her life before the war

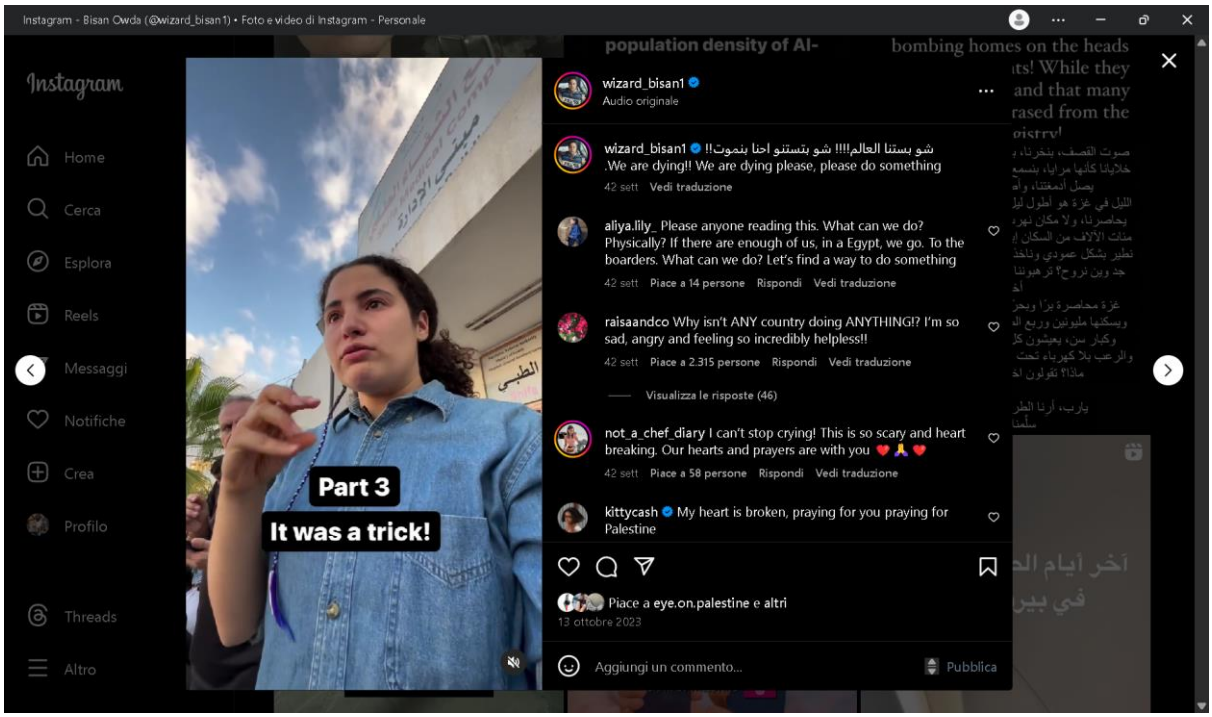


and shared her routine and updates regarding the electricity supply

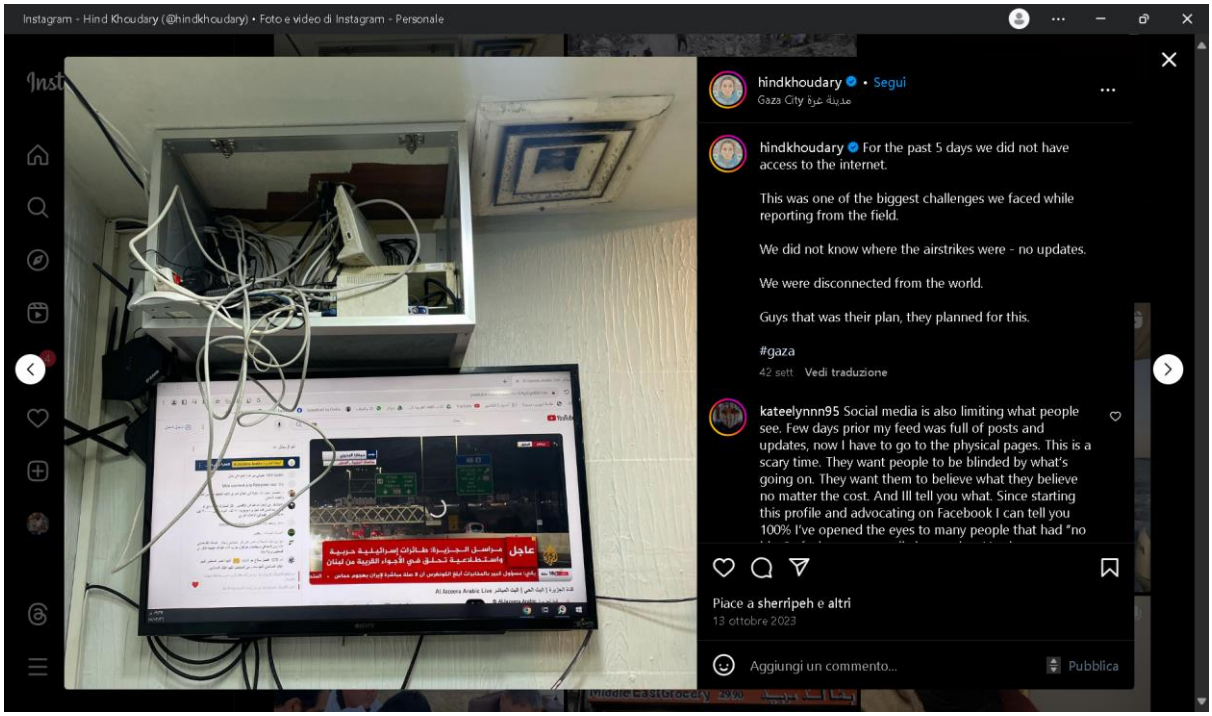




last video of the day called the evacuation a "trick" via which the Israeli army was able to target the designated safe route and kill "more than 150 people"

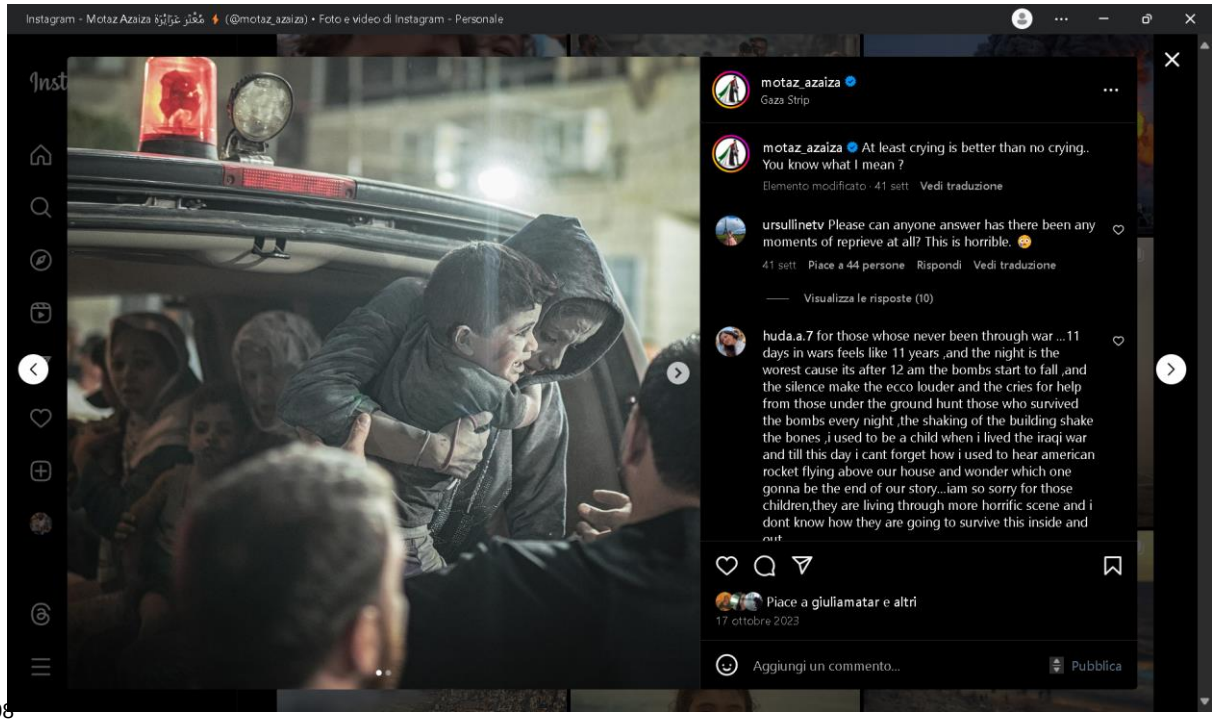


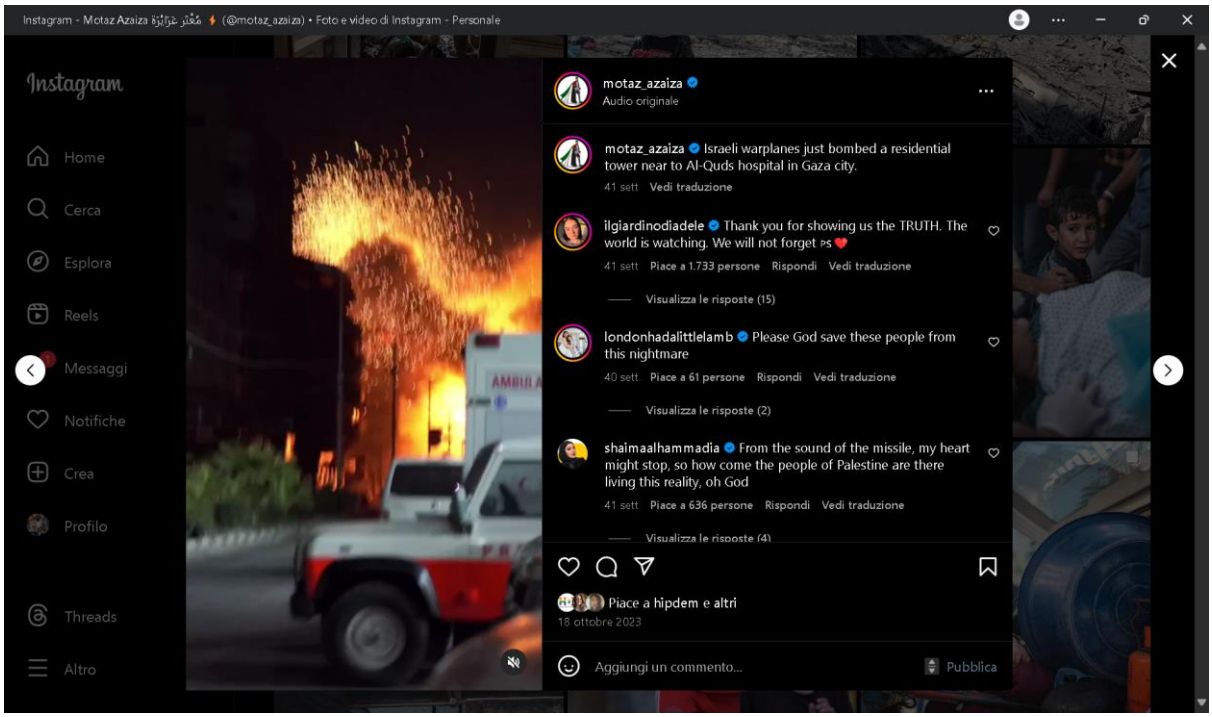
Khoudary shared a post documenting an Internet cut-off in the preceding days. Caption to the post was written in English, while the photo itself showed a screen opened on an Al-Jazeera Arabic newscast



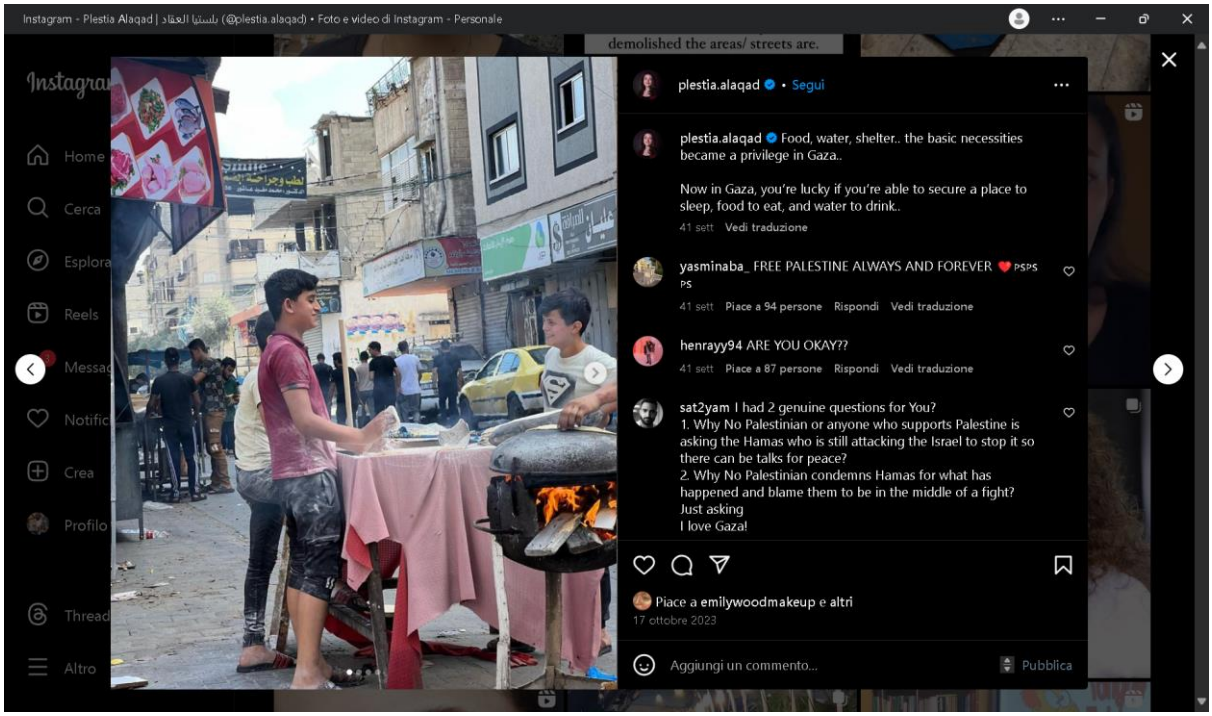
October 17th

Azaiza shared more photo and video material. Captions were in English.
shared on October 18th, a short video showing the bombing of a residential tower near the Al-Quds hospital

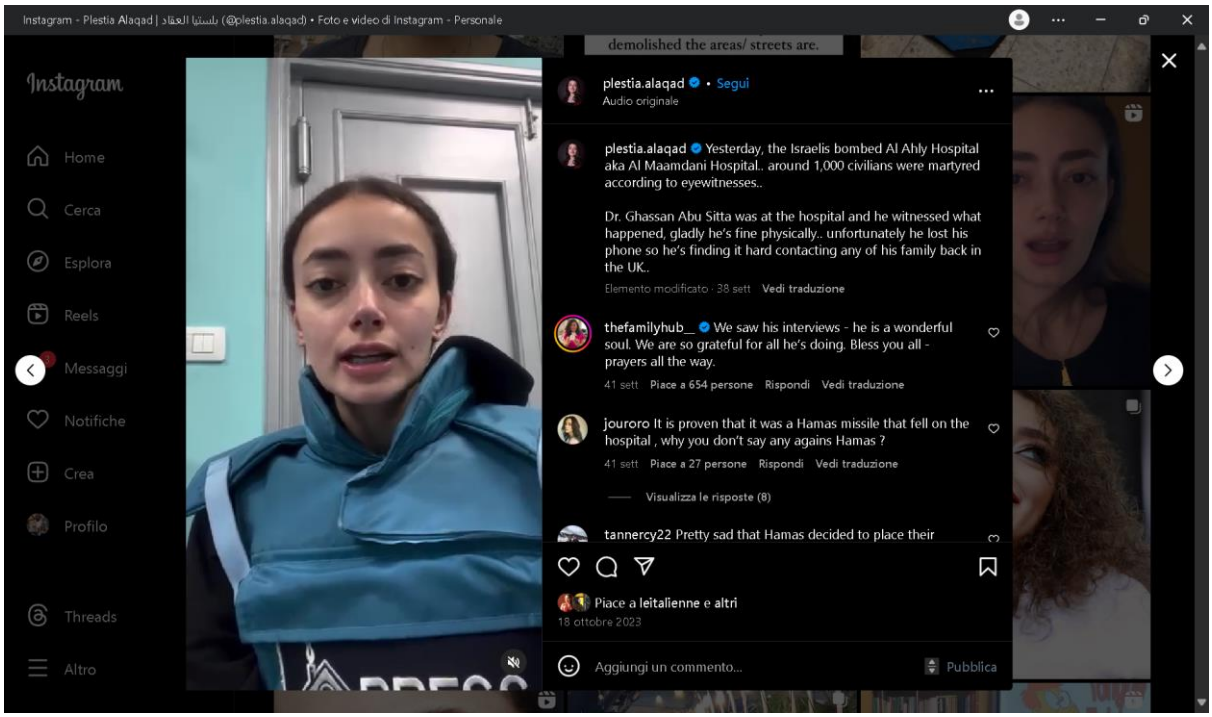


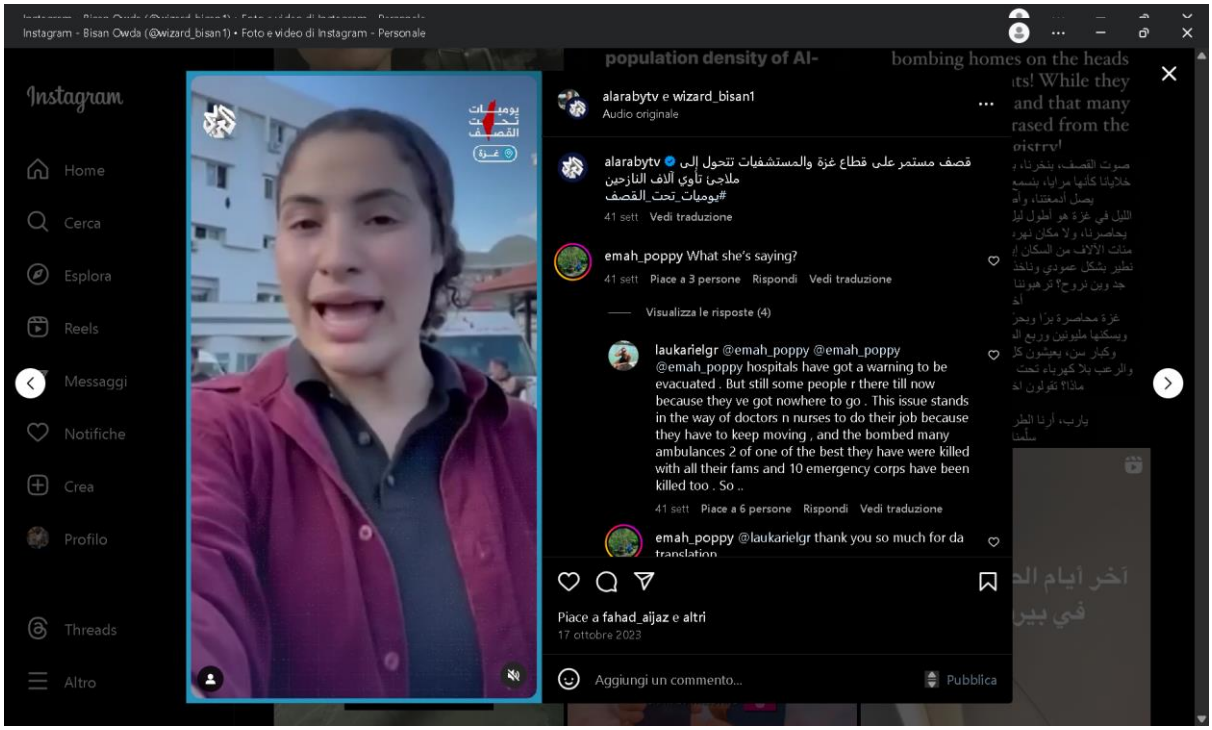


Alaqad shared a few photos showing lines for food and goods, to denounce the population's living conditions

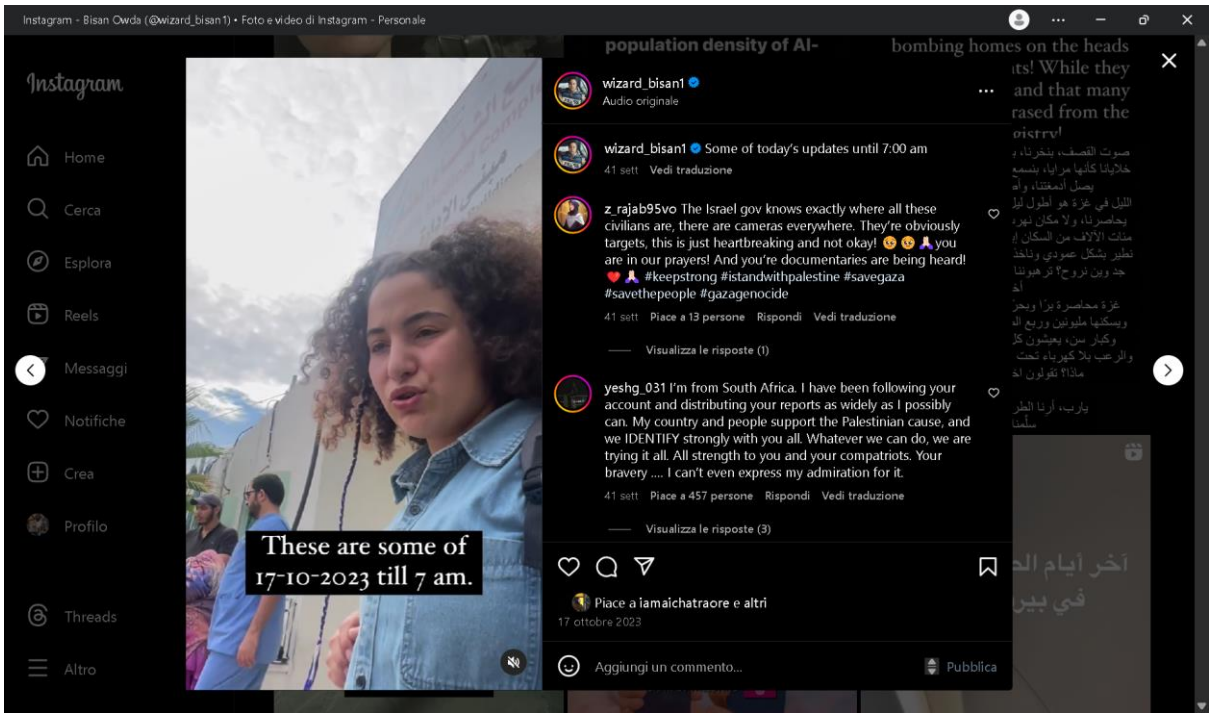


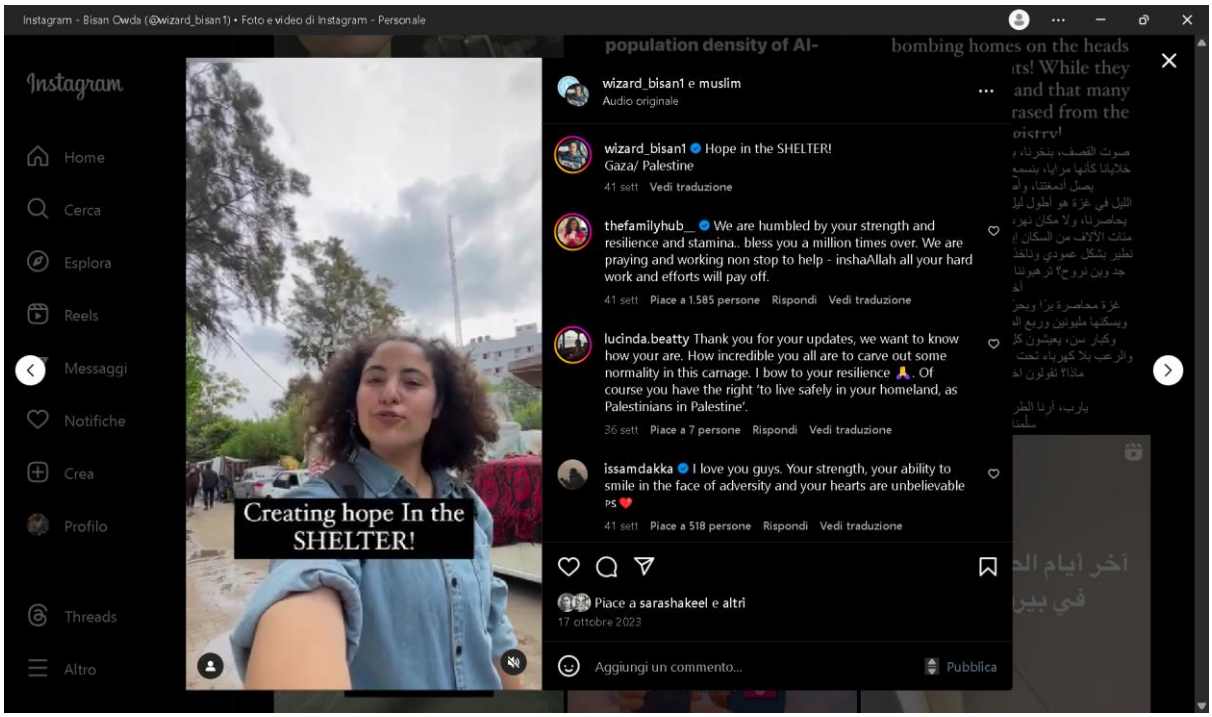
October 18th shared a video-interview to one of the Al Ahly hospital's doctors, detailing the bombing of the previous day

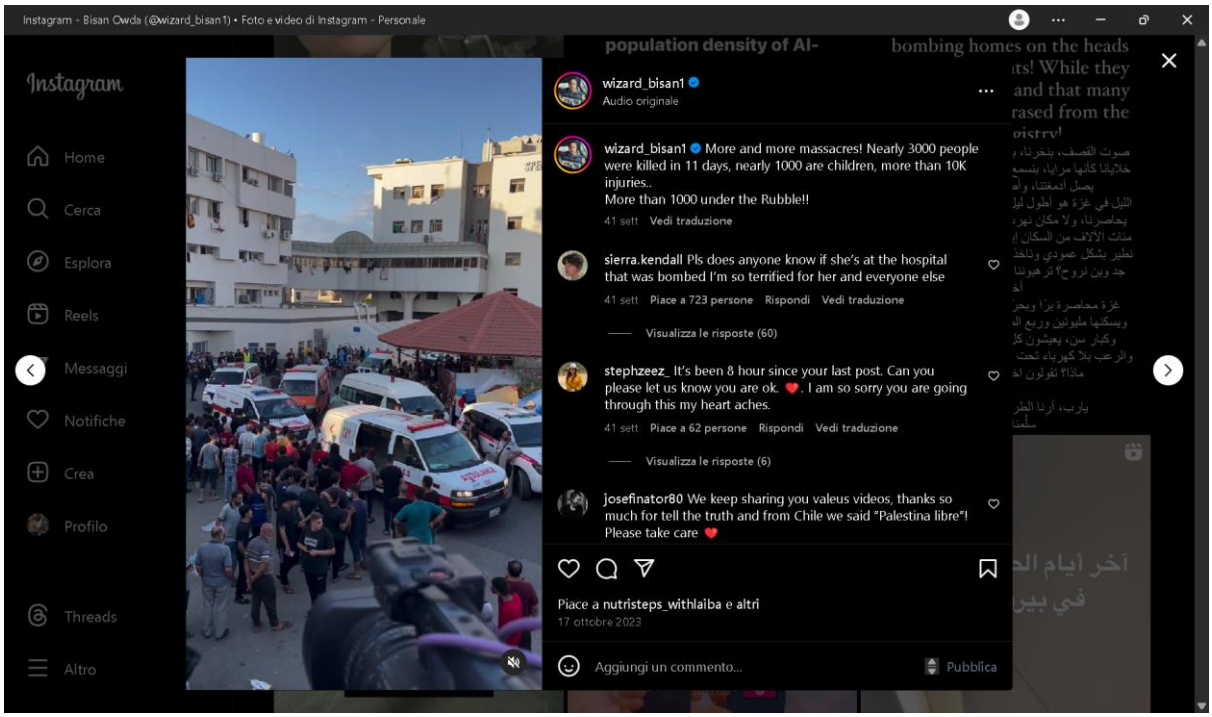




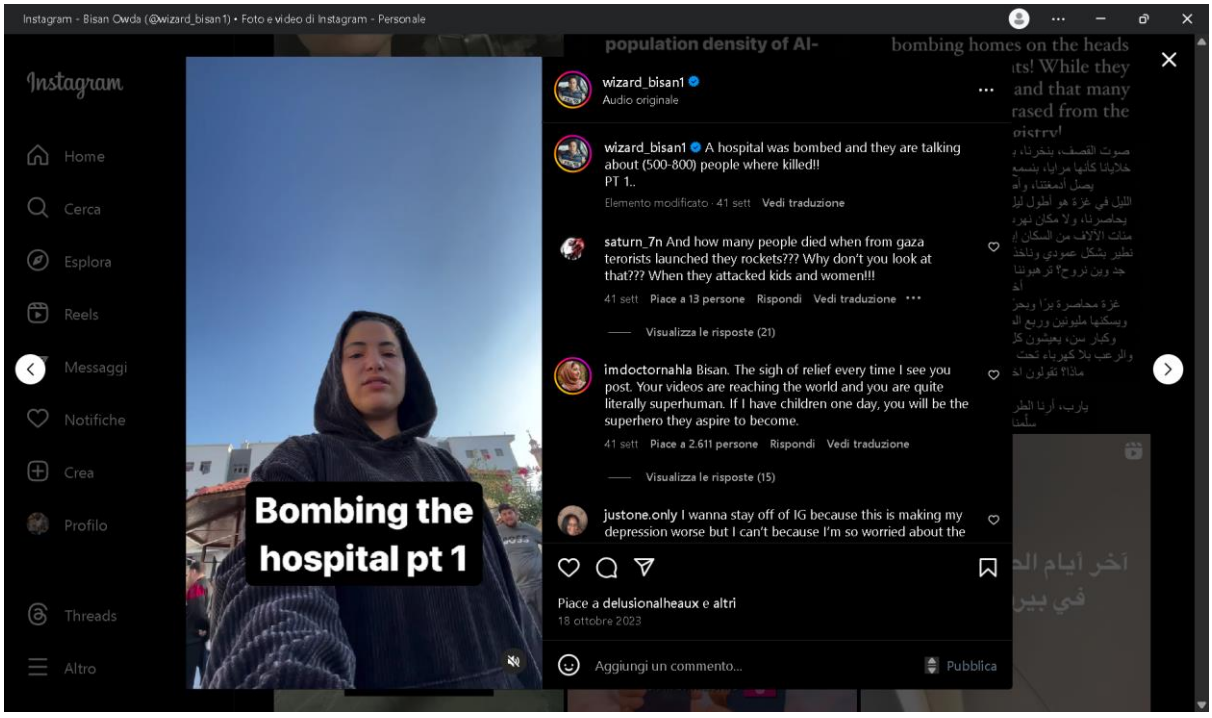
Owda figured in a couple of tv and audio beats, besides sharing some clips depicting her life and surroundings and the before of the hospital bombing. Two of the posts were entirely in Arabic, three in English

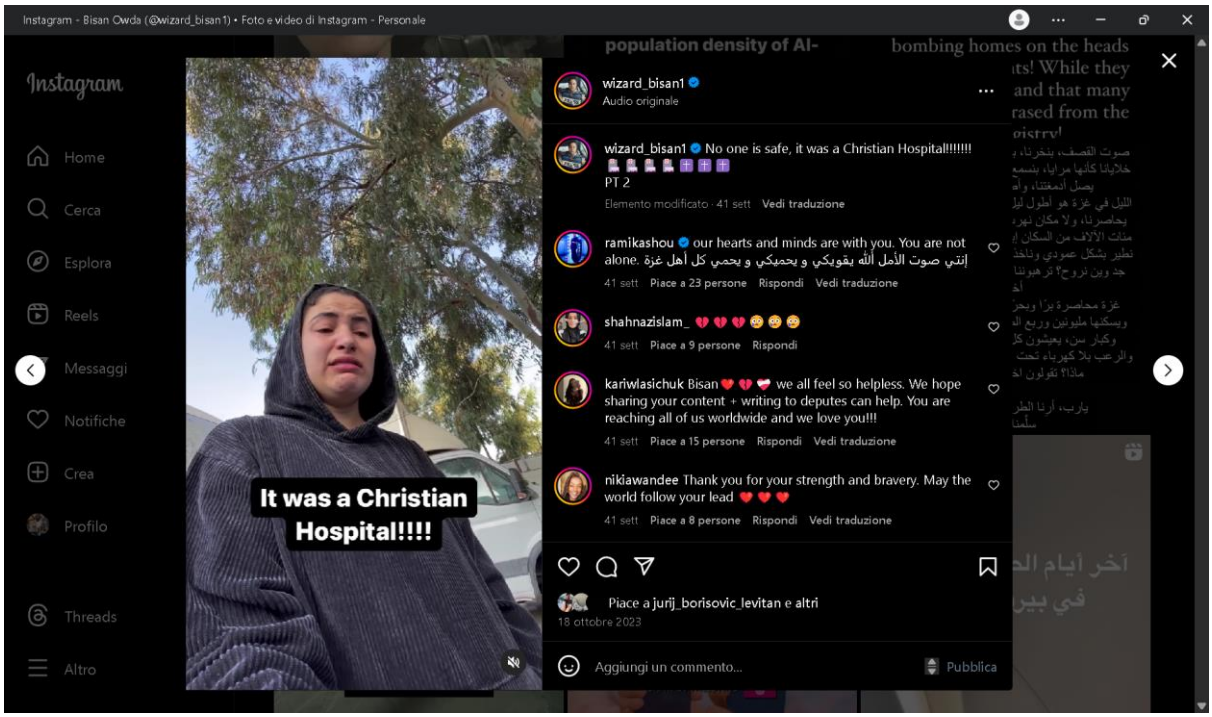

Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
These are some of 17-10-2023 till 7 am.
wizard_bisan1
Audio originale
wizard_bisan1 Some of today's updates until 7:00 am
41 sett Vedi traduzione
z_rajab95vo The Israel gov knows exactly where all these civilians are, there are cameras everywhere. They're obviously targets, this is just heartbreaking and not okay! you are in our prayers! And you're documentaries are being heard! #keepstrong #istandwithpalestine #savegaza #savethepeople #gazagenocide
41 sett Piace a 13 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (1)
yeshg_031 I'm from South Africa. I have been following your account and distributing your reports as widely as I possibly can. My country and people support the Palestinian cause, and we IDENTIFY strongly with you all. Whatever we can do, we are trying it all. All strength to you and your compatriots. Your bravery .... I can't even express my admiration for it.
41 sett Piace a 457 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (3)
Piace a iamaichatraore e altri
17 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
Creating hope In the SHELTER!
wizard_bisan1 e muslim
Audio originale
wizard_bisan1 Hope in the SHELTER! Gaza/ Palestine
41 sett Vedi traduzione
thefamilyhub__ We are humbled by your strength and resilience and stamina.. bless you a million times over. We are praying and working non stop to help - inshaAllah all your hard work and efforts will pay off.
41 sett Piace a 1.585 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
lucinda.beatty Thank you for your updates, we want to know how your are. How incredible you all are to carve out some normality in this carnage. I bow to your resilience . Of course you have the right 'to live safely in your homeland, as Palestinians in Palestine'.
36 sett Piace a 7 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
issamdakka I love you guys. Your strength, your ability to smile in the face of adversity and your hearts are unbelievable
PS
41 sett Piace a 518 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a sarashakeel e altri
17 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

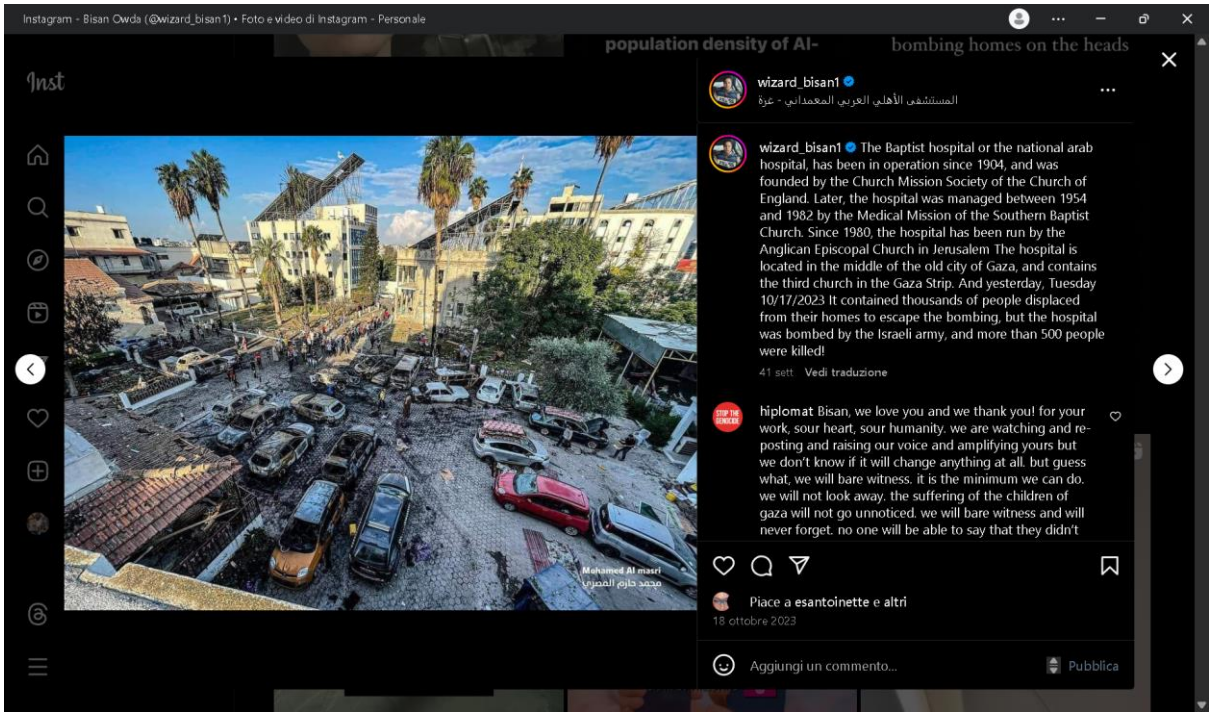


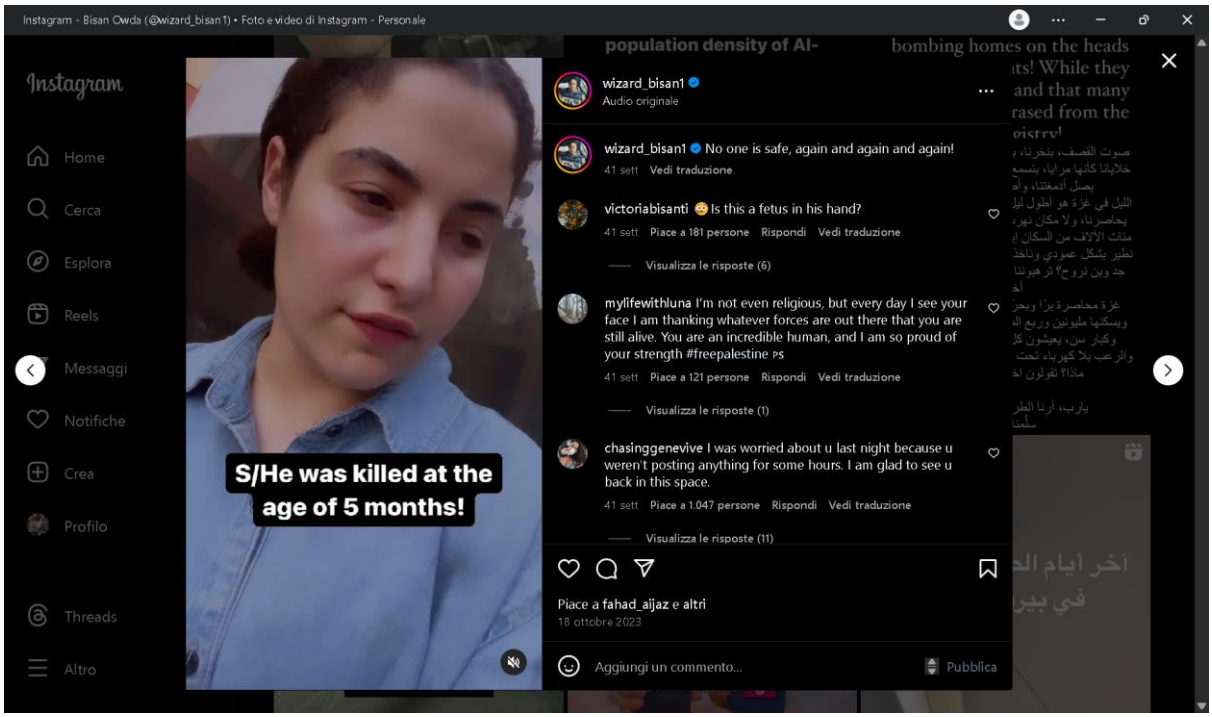
actual photos of the hospital attack were, however, shared the following day



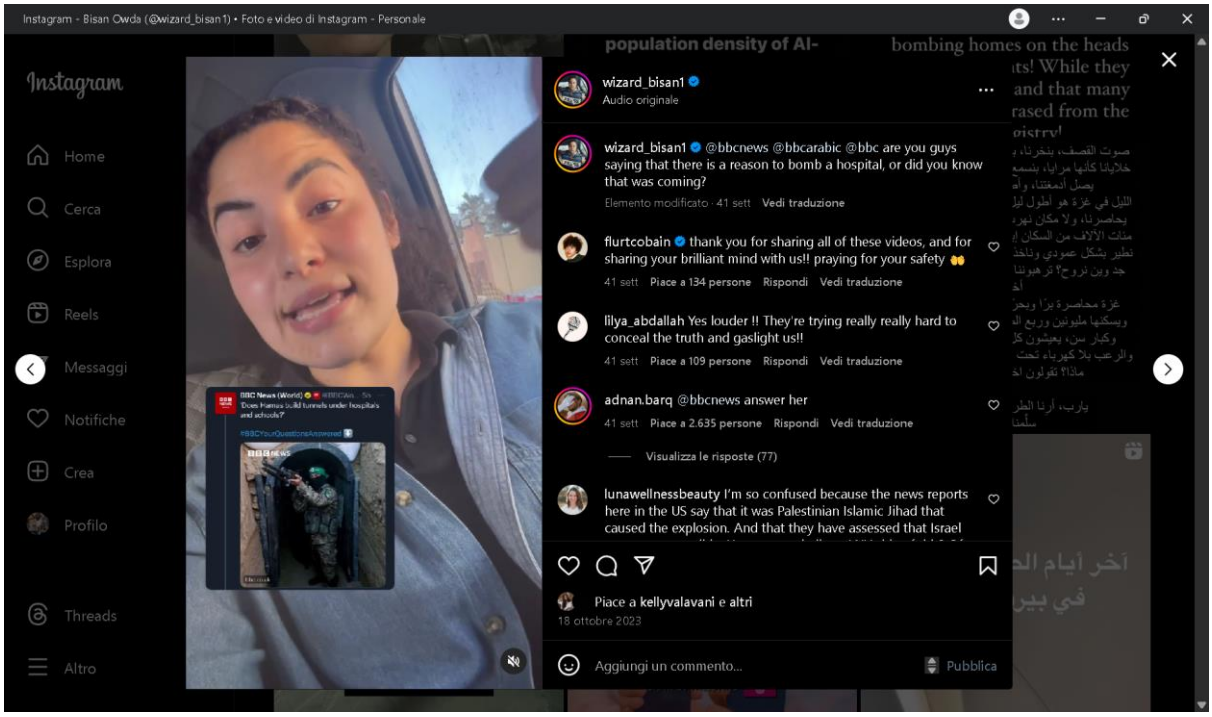


videos shared later also showed victims or survivors of the attacks mentioned in the previous posts

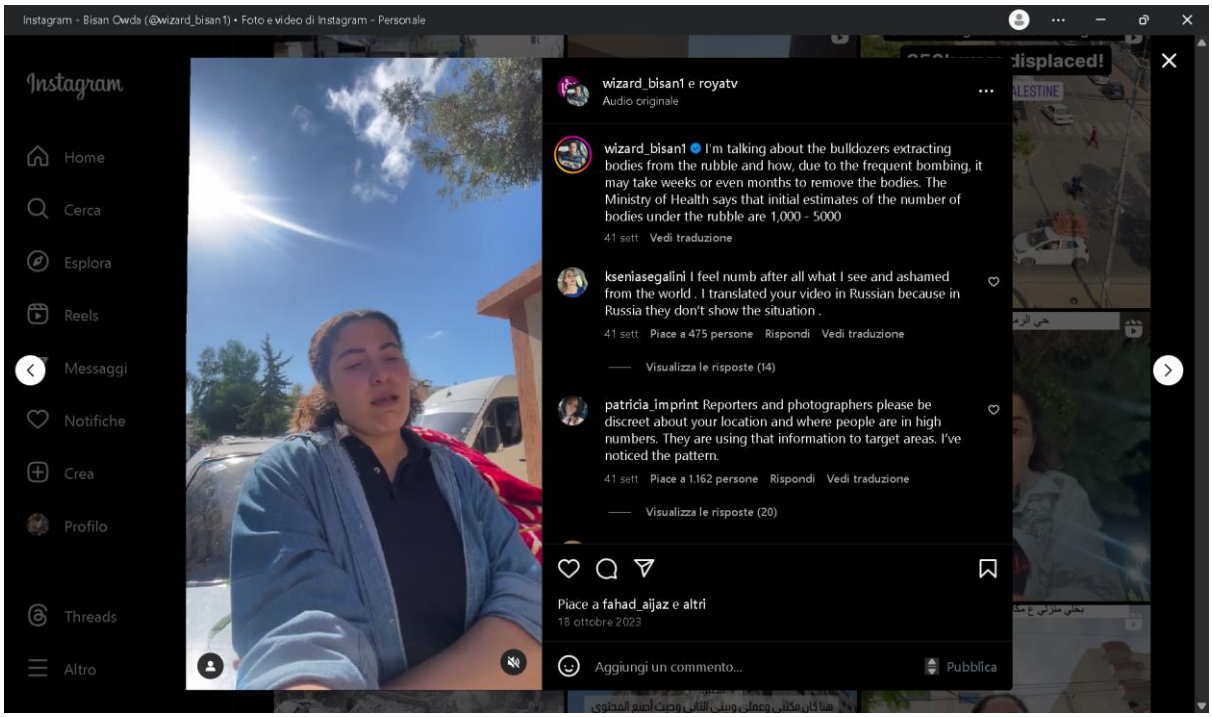




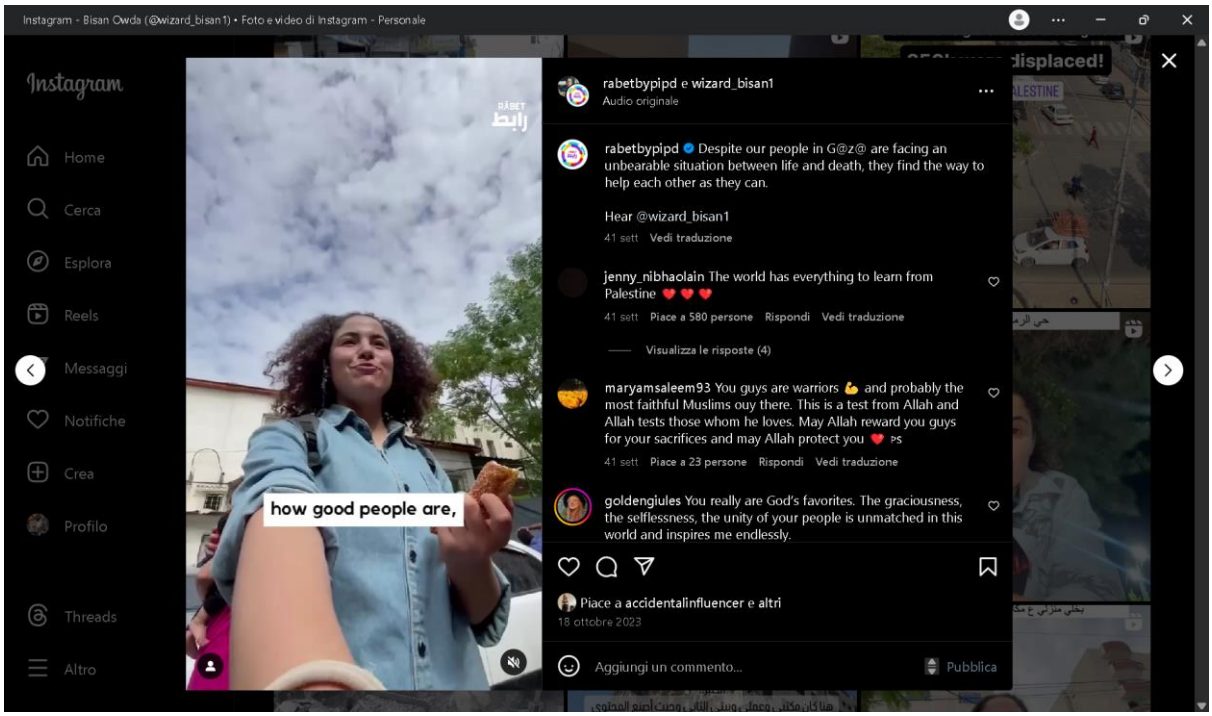
Owda also directly spoke to important news outlets such as the BBC, accusing them of being politically biassed in favour of the Israeli government



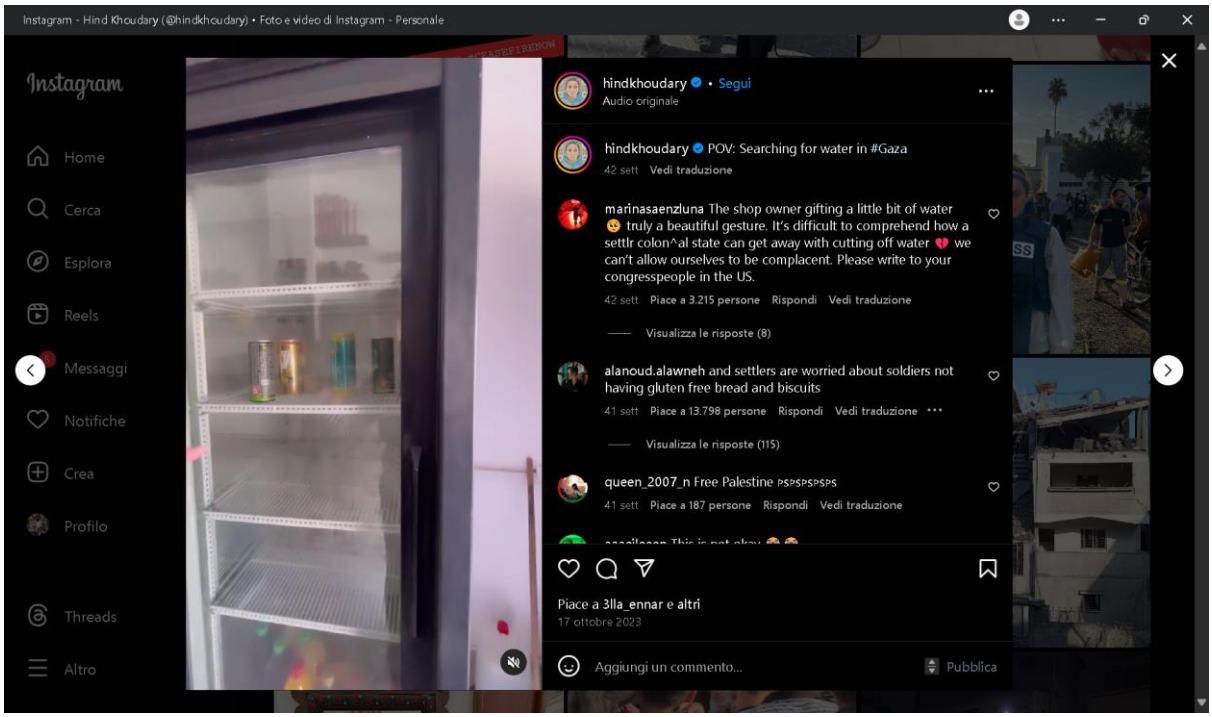
later in the day she shared videos in Arabic captioned in English, describing the attack's aftermath



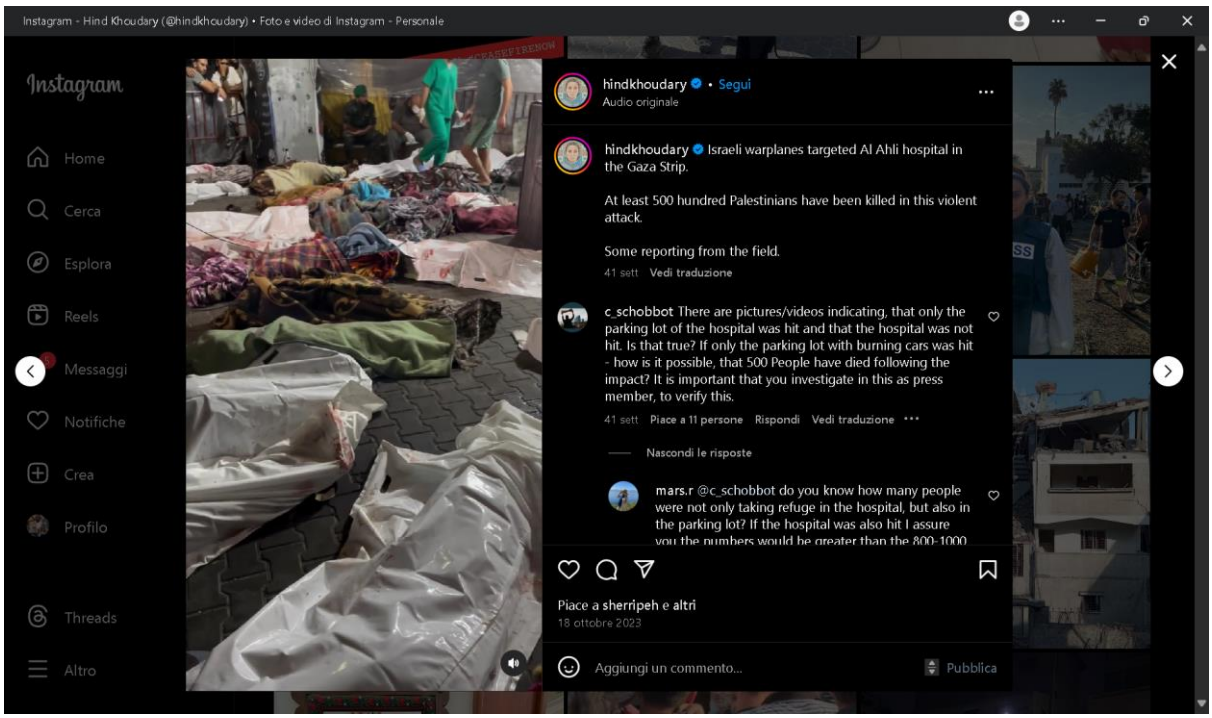
another video shared in collaboration with the aforementioned NGO showed a "slice of life", talking about people's solidarity in providing their neighbours with bread and food



Khoudary shared a video post composed by two clips depicting herself looking for water in two different Gazan supermarkets, to document the lack of basic goods. The video was in English, as was the accompanying caption

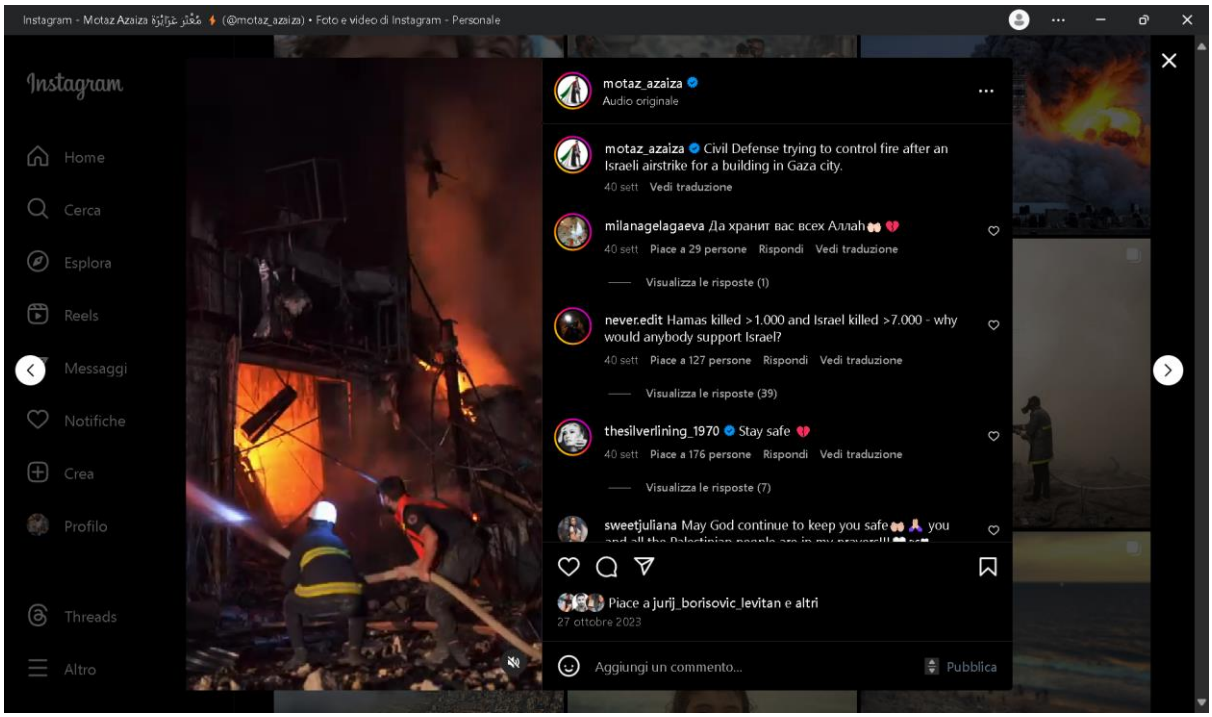


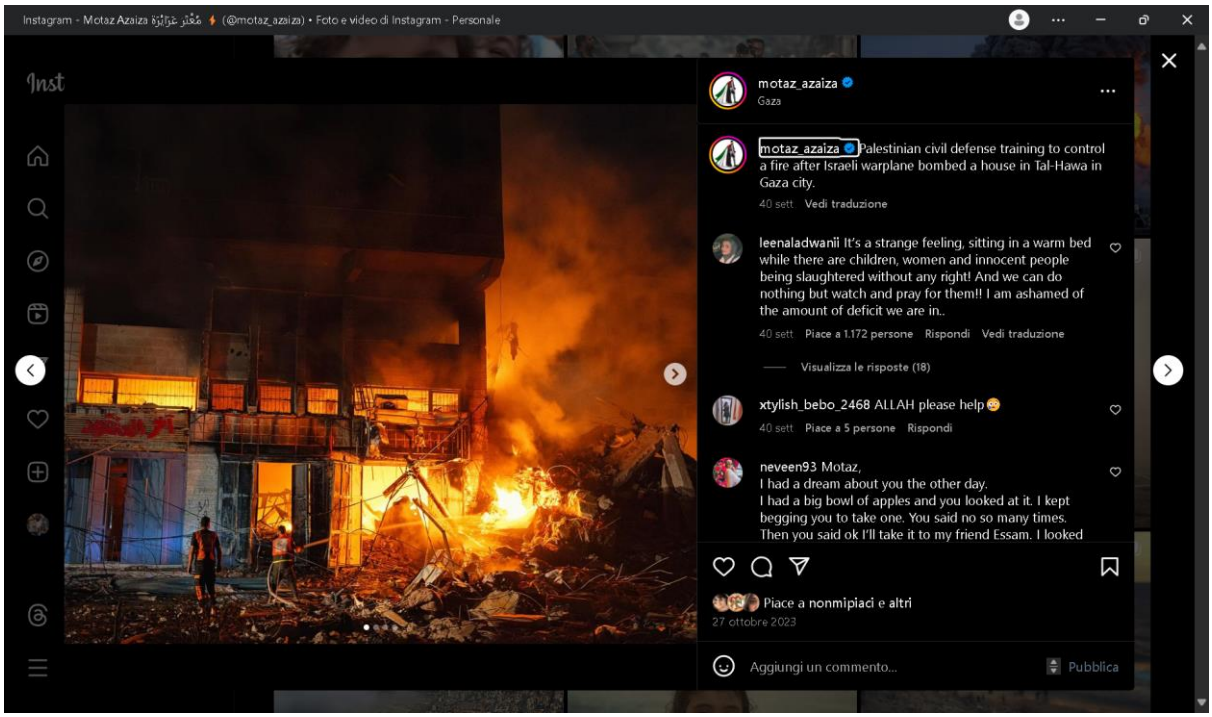
on **October 18th**, Khoudary also shared a post documenting the Al Ahli attack. The post was, once again, a compilation of various video clips showing the aftermath of the attack (mainly bodies and ruins), together with a frame of the hospital's church, turned into a shelter. Post was both recorded and captioned in English, though some of the clips contained dialogue in Arabic

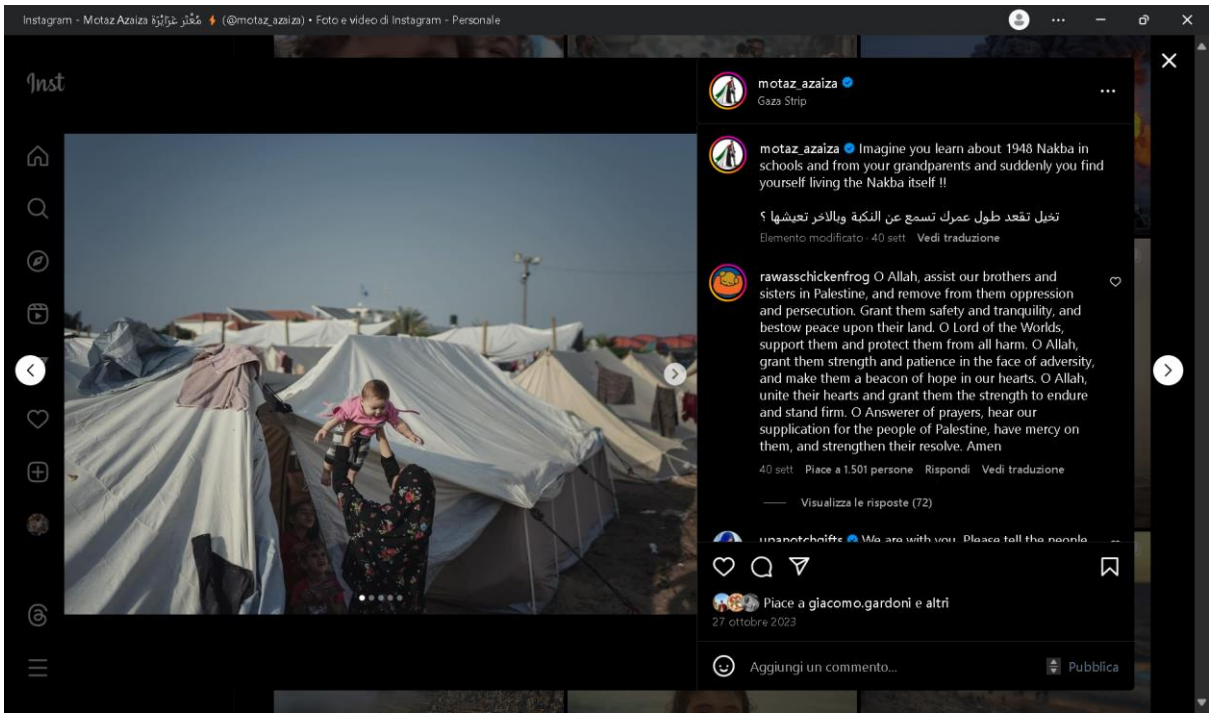


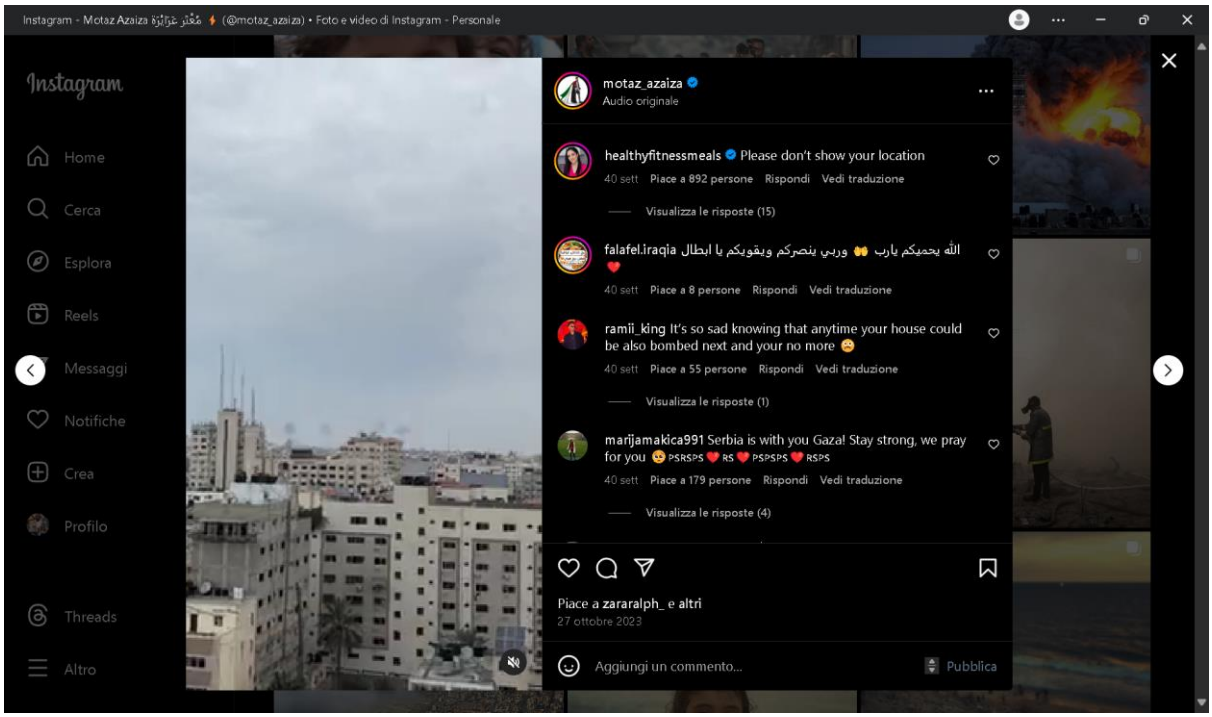
October 27th

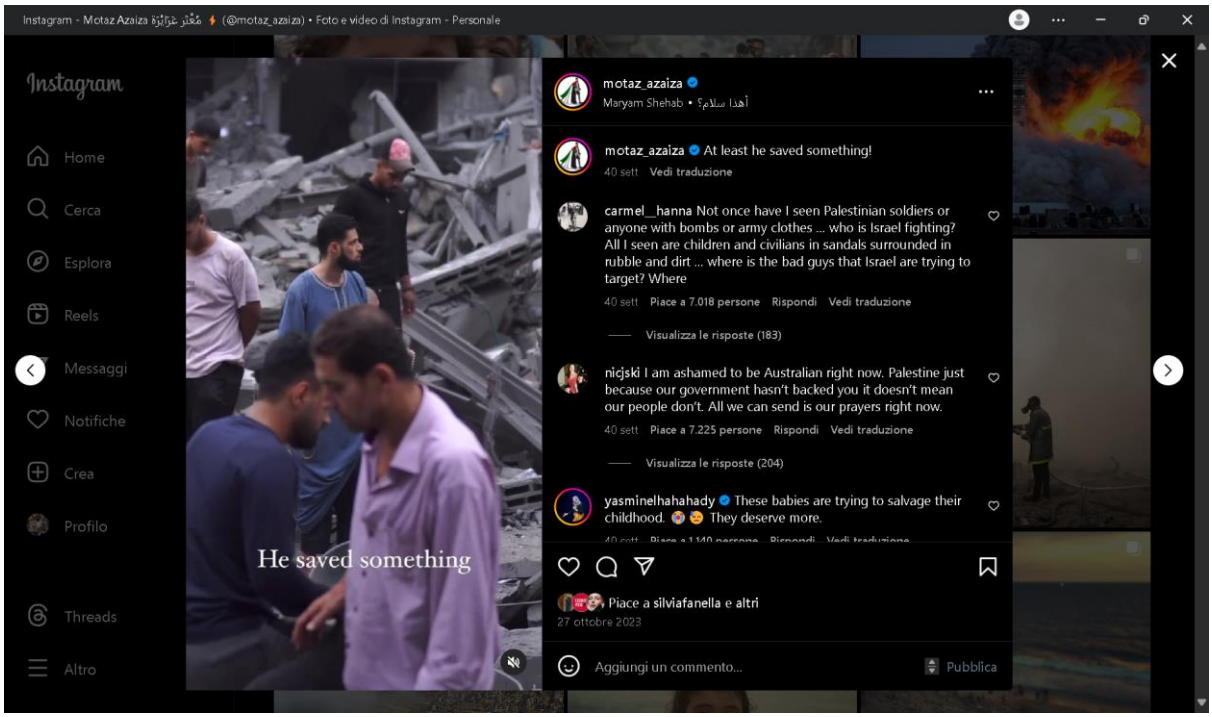
Azaiza shared photos and videos documenting airstrikes all throughout Gaza City. Captions, when present, were in English.

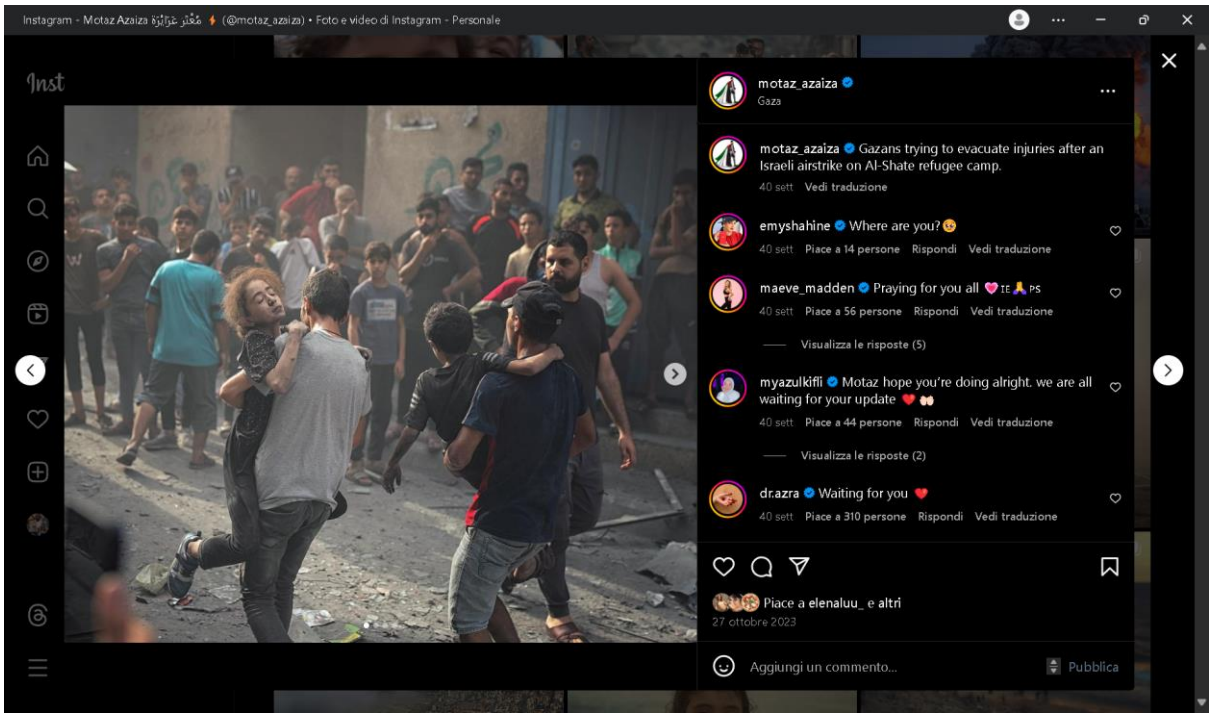





Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Inst
motaz_azaiza
Gaza Strip
motaz_azaiza Imagine you learn about 1948 Nakba in schools and from your grandparents and suddenly you find yourself living the Nakba itself !!
تخيل تقعد طول عمرك تسمع عن النكبة وبالاخر تعيشها ؟
Elemento modificato · 40 sett Vedi traduzione
rawasschickenfrog O Allah, assist our brothers and sisters in Palestine, and remove from them oppression and persecution. Grant them safety and tranquility, and bestow peace upon their land. O Lord of the Worlds, support them and protect them from all harm. O Allah, grant them strength and patience in the face of adversity, and make them a beacon of hope in our hearts. O Allah, unite their hearts and grant them the strength to endure and stand firm. O Answerer of prayers, hear our supplication for the people of Palestine, have mercy on them, and strengthen their resolve. Amen
40 sett Piace a 1.501 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (72)
Piace a giacomo.gardoni e altri
27 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
motaz_azaiza
Audio originale
healthyfitnessmeals Please don't show your location
40 sett Piace a 892 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (15)
falafel.iraqia الله يحميكم يارب وربي ينصركم ويقويكم يا ابطال
40 sett Piace a 8 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
ramii_king It's so sad knowing that anytime your house could be also bombed next and your no more
40 sett Piace a 55 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (1)
marijamakica991 Serbia is with you Gaza! Stay strong, we pray for you PSRSPS RS PSPSPS RSPS
40 sett Piace a 179 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (4)
Piace a zararalph_ e altri
27 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

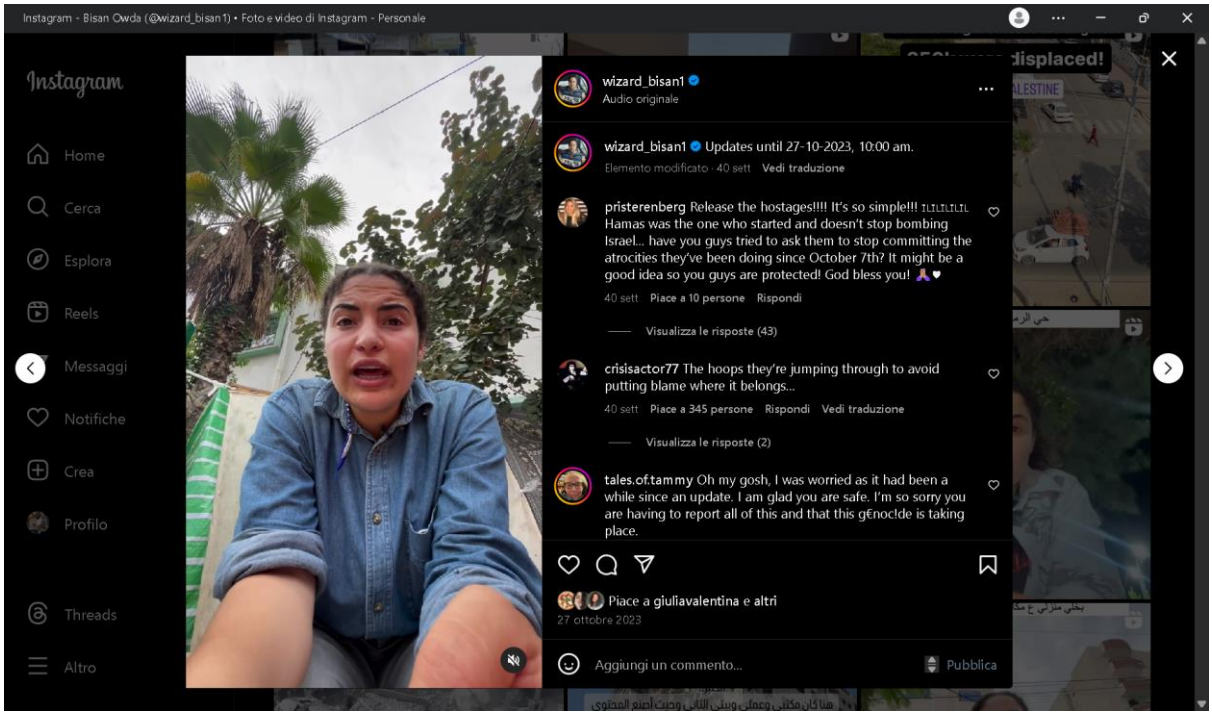

Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
He saved something
motaz_azaiza
Maryam Shehab • أهذا سلام؟
motaz_azaiza At least he saved something!
40 sett Vedi traduzione
carmel__hanna Not once have I seen Palestinian soldiers or anyone with bombs or army clothes ... who is Israel fighting? All I seen are children and civilians in sandals surrounded in rubble and dirt ... where is the bad guys that Israel are trying to target? Where
40 sett Piace a 7.018 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (183)
nicjski I am ashamed to be Australian right now. Palestine just because our government hasn't backed you it doesn't mean our people don't. All we can send is our prayers right now.
40 sett Piace a 7.225 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (204)
yasminelhahahady These babies are trying to salvage their childhood. They deserve more.
Piace a silviafanella e altri
27 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Motaz Azaiza مُعْتَز عَزَايْزَة (@motaz_azaiza) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Inst
motaz_azaiza
Gaza
motaz_azaiza Gazans trying to evacuate injuries after an Israeli airstrike on Al-Shate refugee camp.
40 sett Vedi traduzione
emyshahine Where are you?
40 sett Piace a 14 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
maeve_madden Praying for you all TE PS
40 sett Piace a 56 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (5)
myazulkiffi Motaz hope you're doing alright, we are all waiting for your update
40 sett Piace a 44 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (2)
dr.azra Waiting for you
40 sett Piace a 310 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a elenaluu_ e altri
27 ottobre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

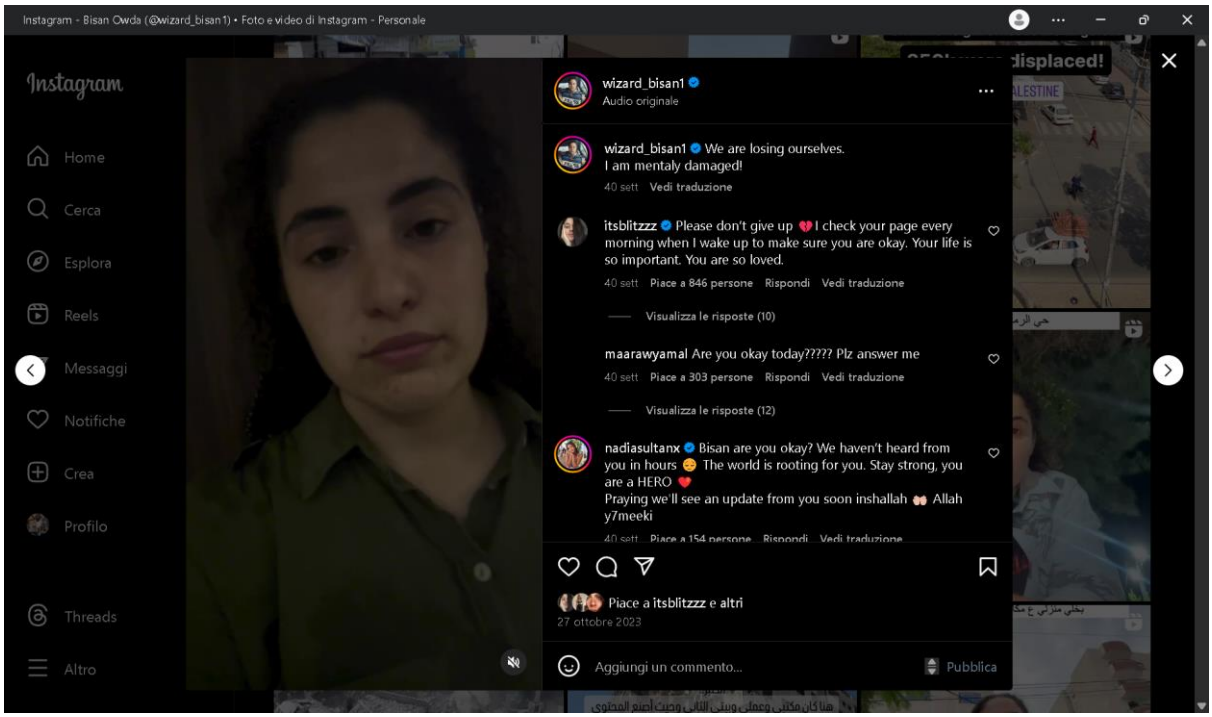
Alaqad posted a video interview of two kids calling for an end to the violence. It was both recorded and captioned in English



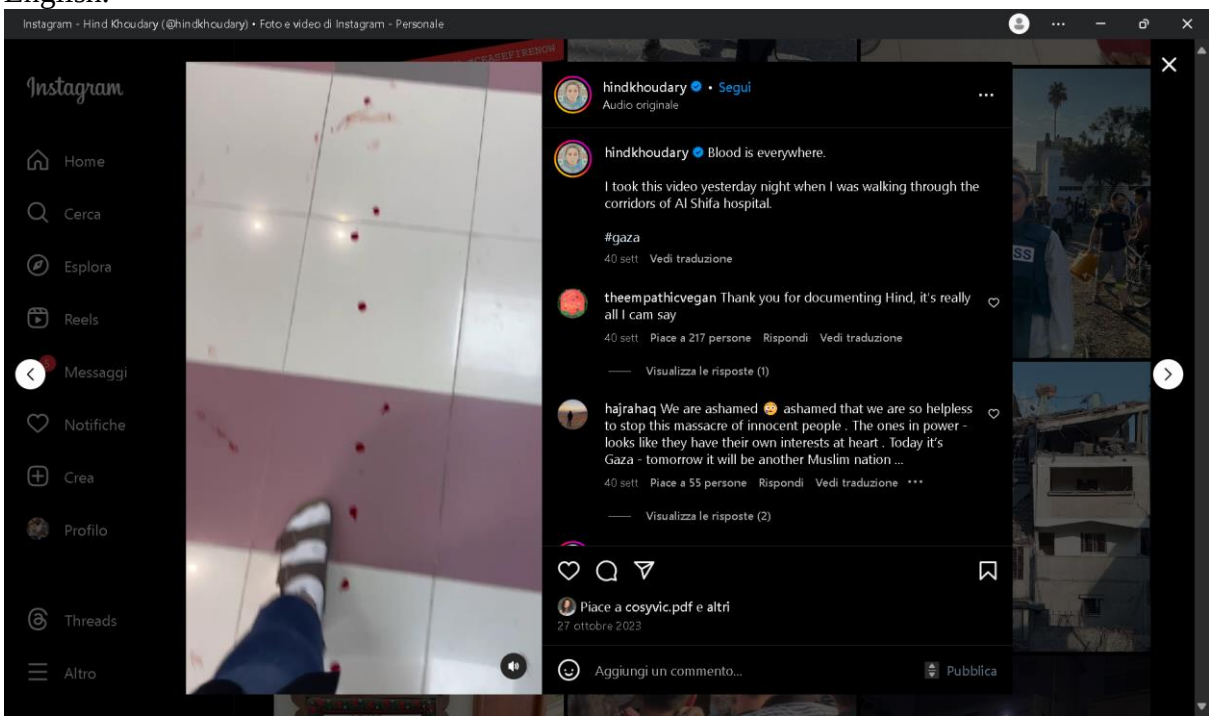
Owda shared an update, once again accusing Western journalists of biases and remarking the lack of safety permeating the entire Strip



a video shared later that night described Owda's declining living conditions and imploring to be "left alone". The video was filmed in English, with brief emotional interruption in Arabic

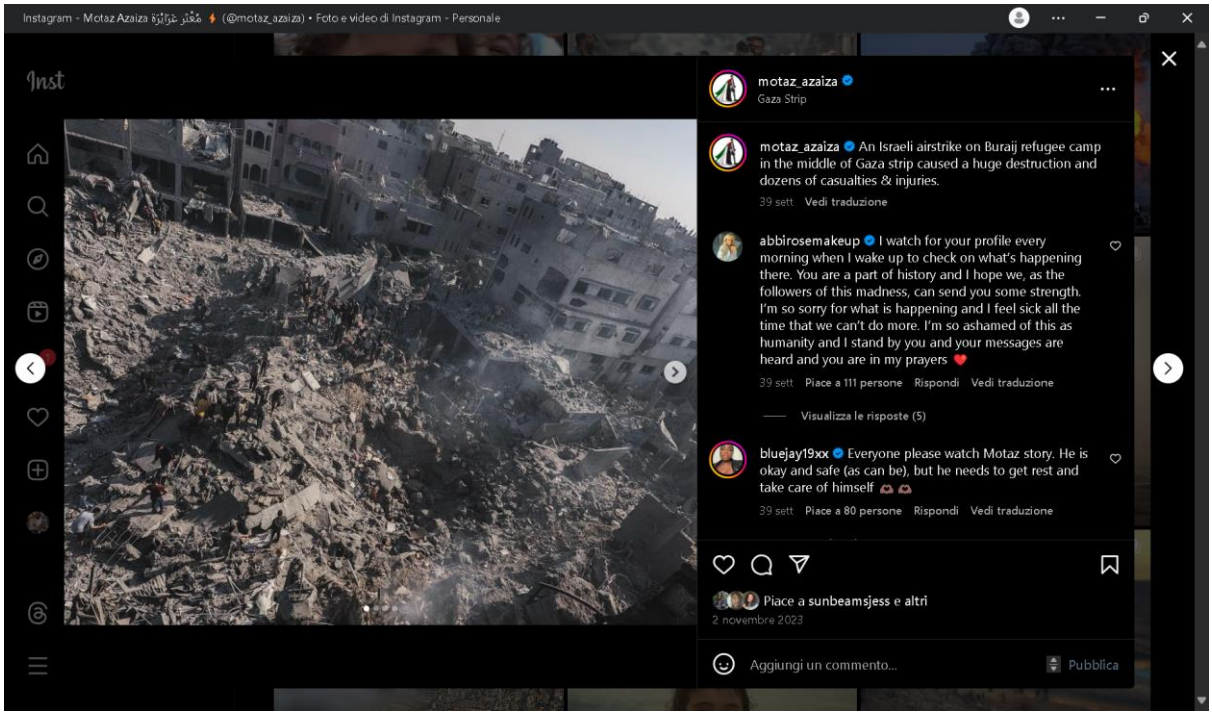


Khoudary only shared a video showing her, from the knees down, walking alongside a trail of blood drops inside the Al Shifa hospital. Khoudary herself was silent during the recording, though dialogue in Arabic could be heard in the background. The post was captioned in English.

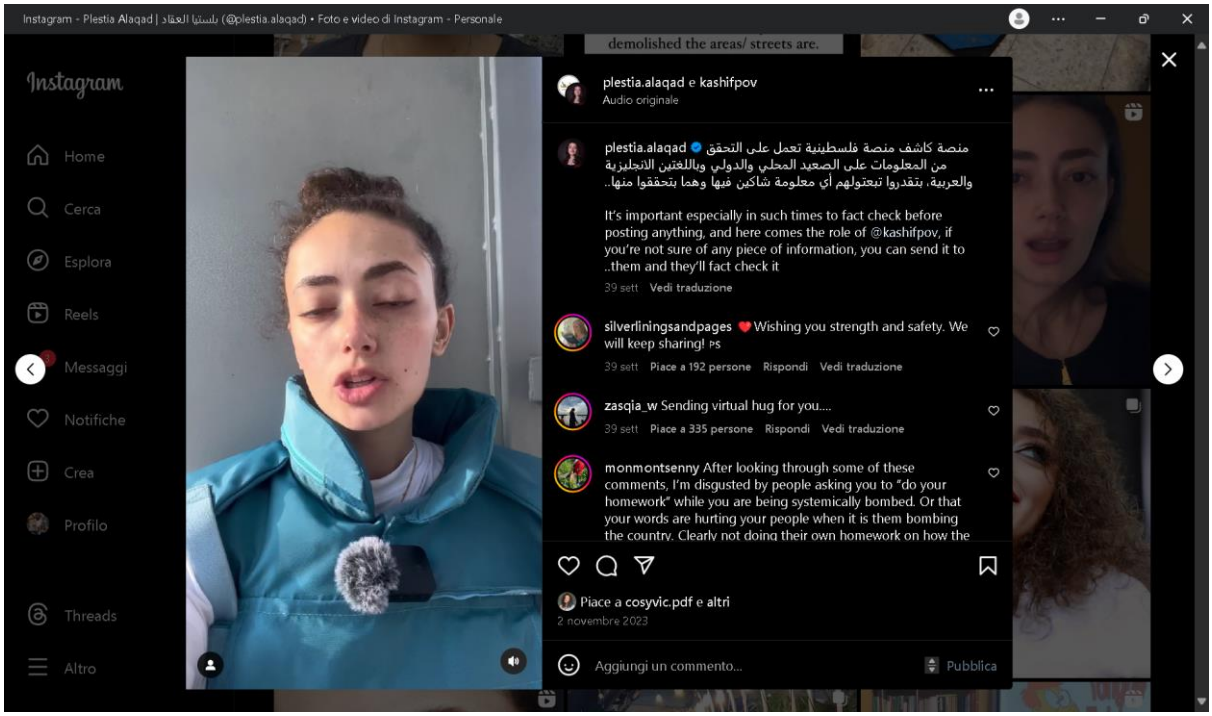


November 2nd
days after two Internet cut offs (as of October - beginning of November)

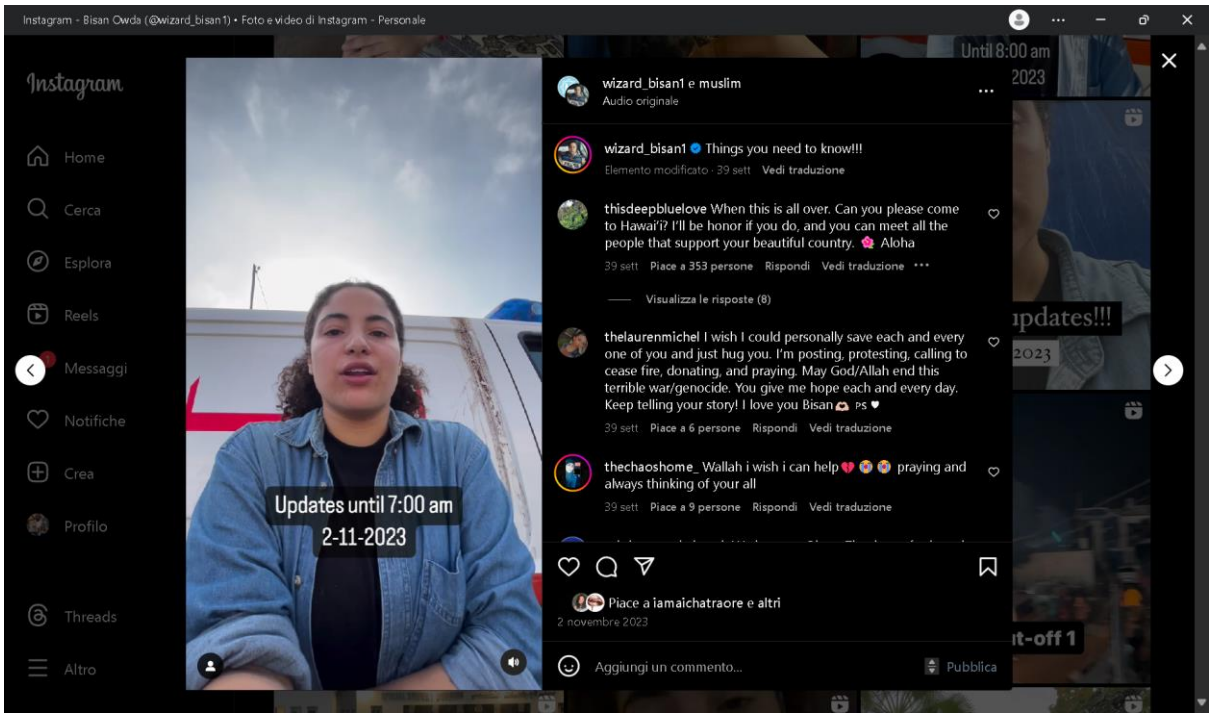
Azaiza shared photo evidence of the bombings of a refugee camp in the middle of the Strip



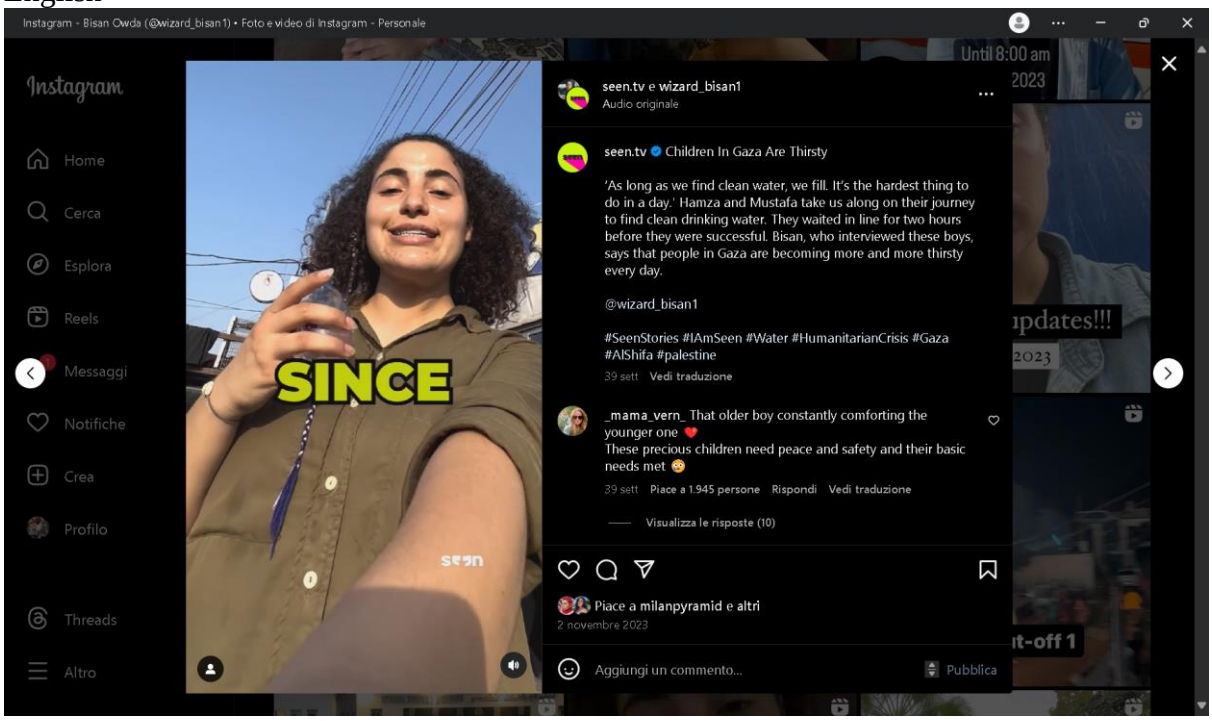
Alaqad posted a video, responding to some accuses of being inaccurate and not truthful in her reporting, inviting her followers to fact-check her posts. Video was recorded in Arabic, and captioned in both Arabic and English

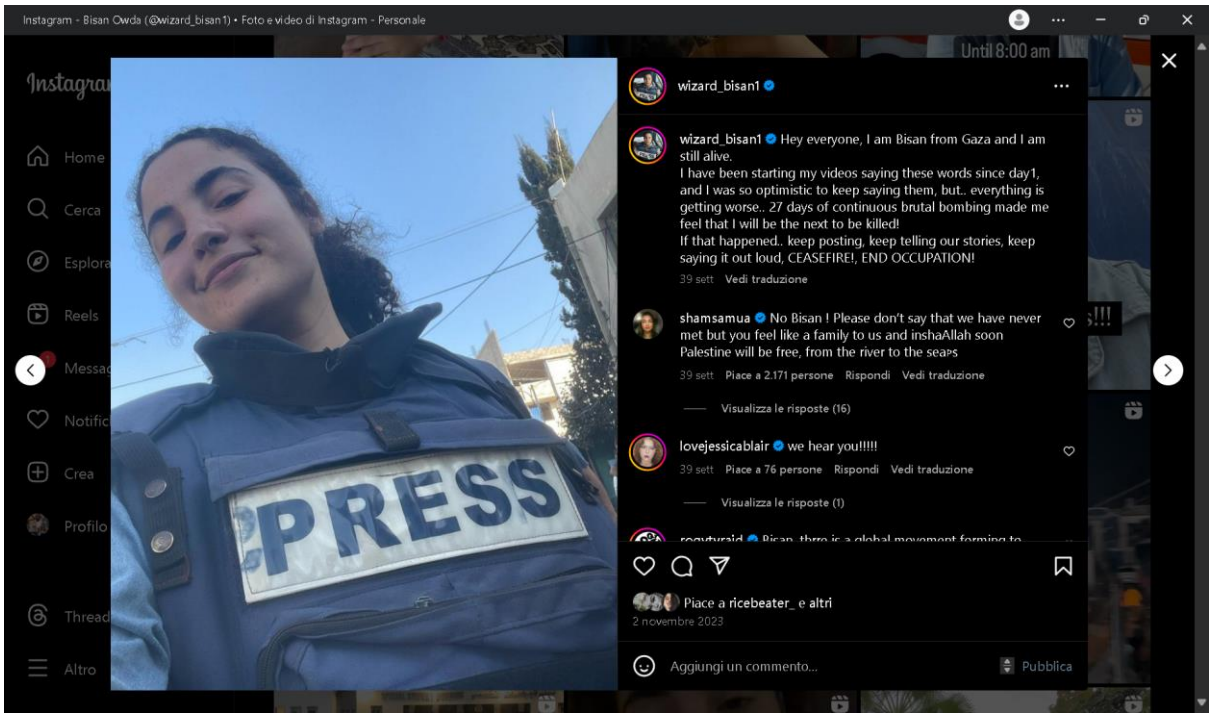


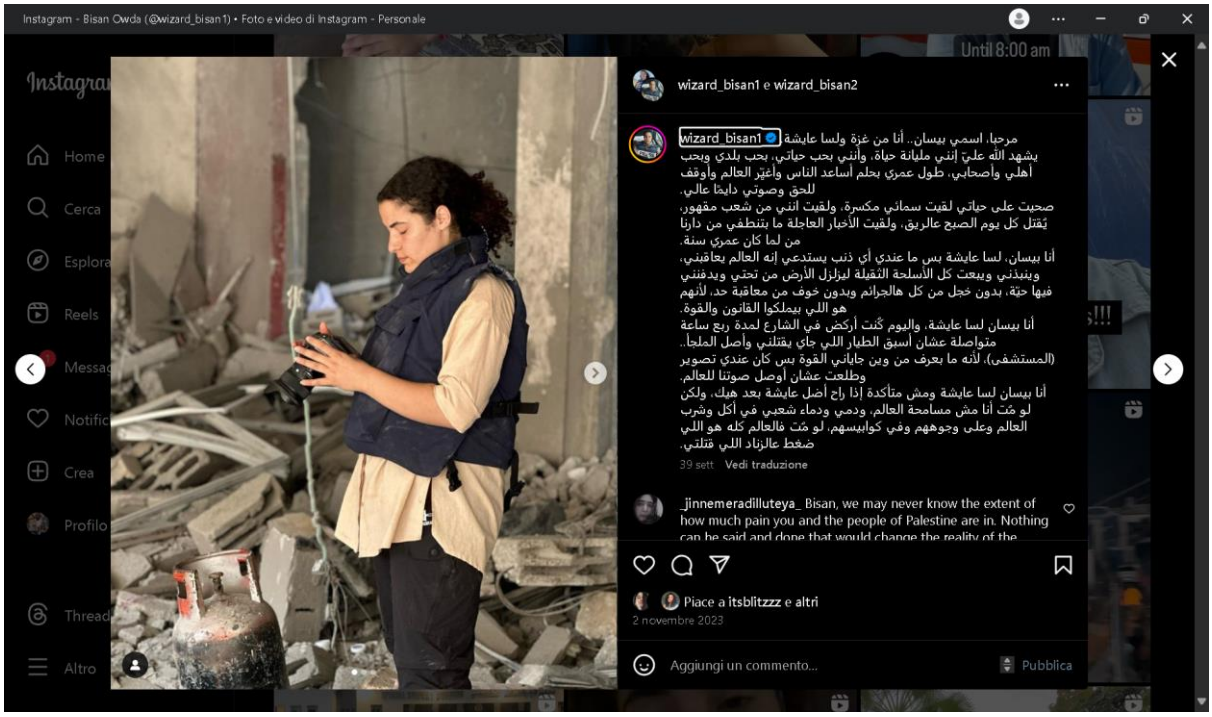
Owda's first post of the day gave updates about the death count and the attacks. Video was filmed in English



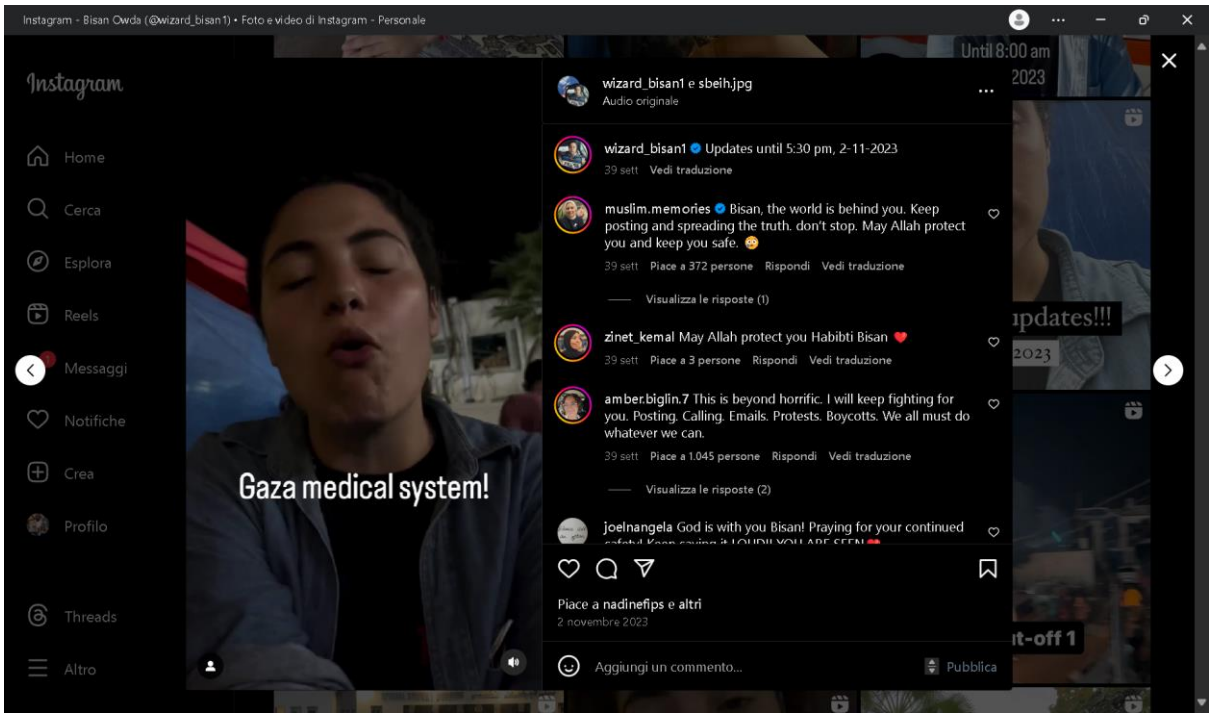
second video was filmed in collaboration with a video-maker page, and documented the water situation in the Strip. Video was filmed in English, with interviews in Arabic subtitled in English



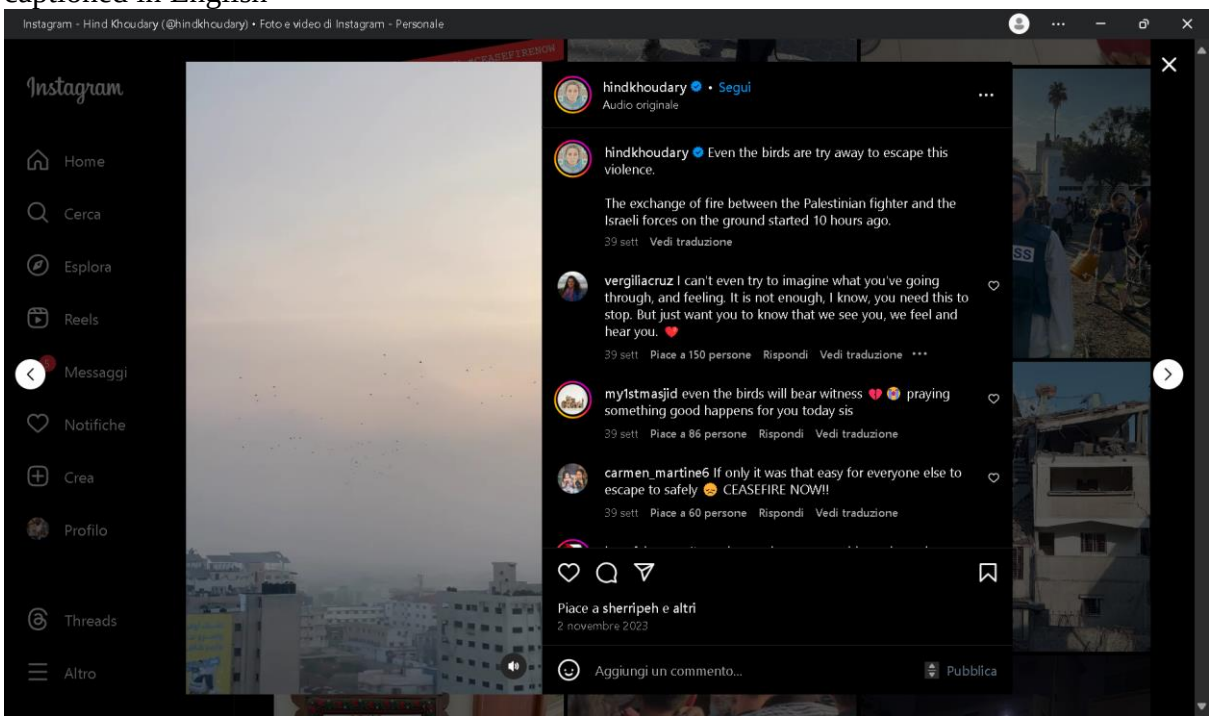




last video post of the day gave an update on the hospital situation

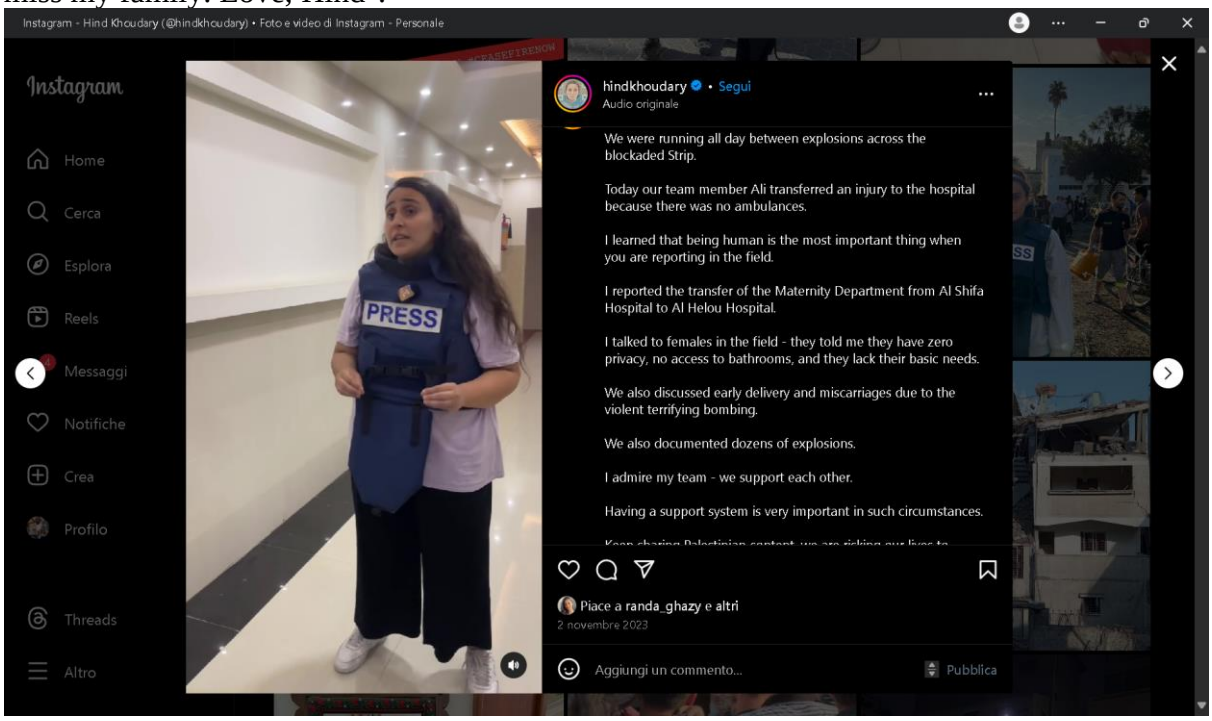


Khoudary's first post was a brief video, without any dialogue, which contained various clips showing the "exchange of fire between Palestinian fighter and Israeli forces". The videos were accompanied by their original audio recordings of the bombardments. Everything was captioned in English



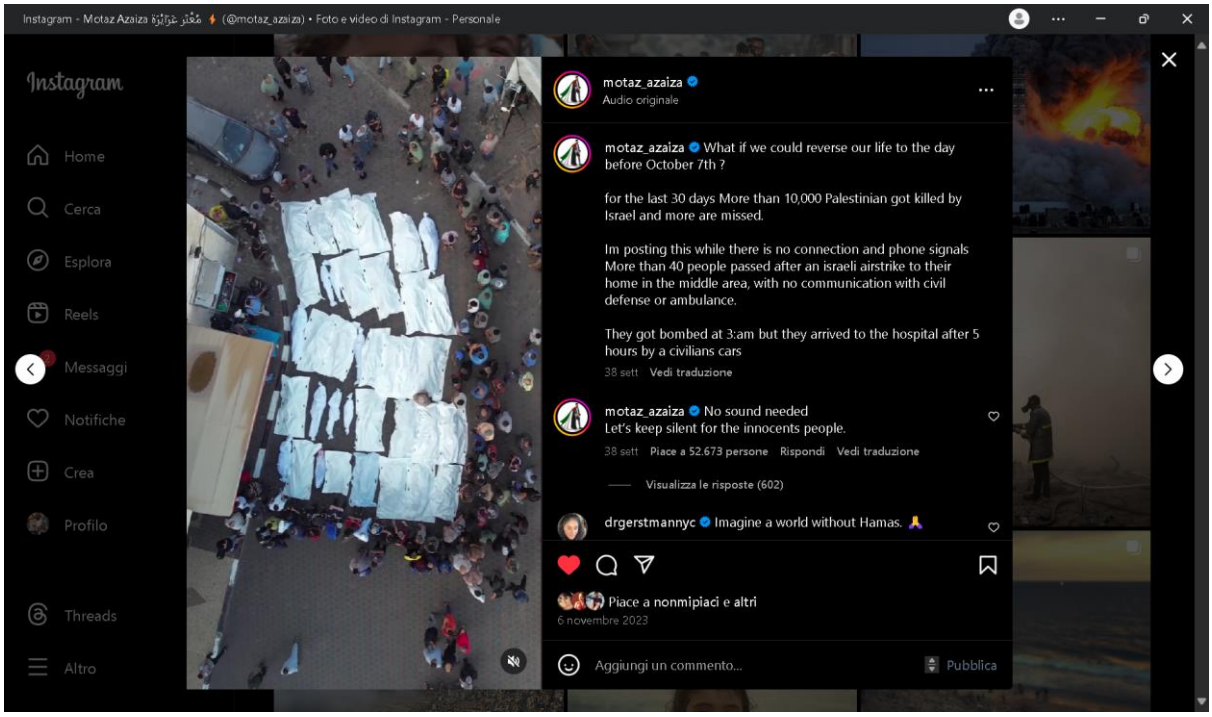
her second post was another compilation of brief clips, which showed in rapid explosions, the victim of one of them being transferred by an hospital to another by the journalists themselves, Khoudary reporting from inside the hospital and photographers photographing the Gazan skyline from inside a building in ruins. No video contained direct dialogue to the camera, though some clips did present speech in English or Arabic. The caption was English

and its conclusion read "Keep sharing Palestinian content, we are risking our lives to report. I miss my family. Love, Hind".

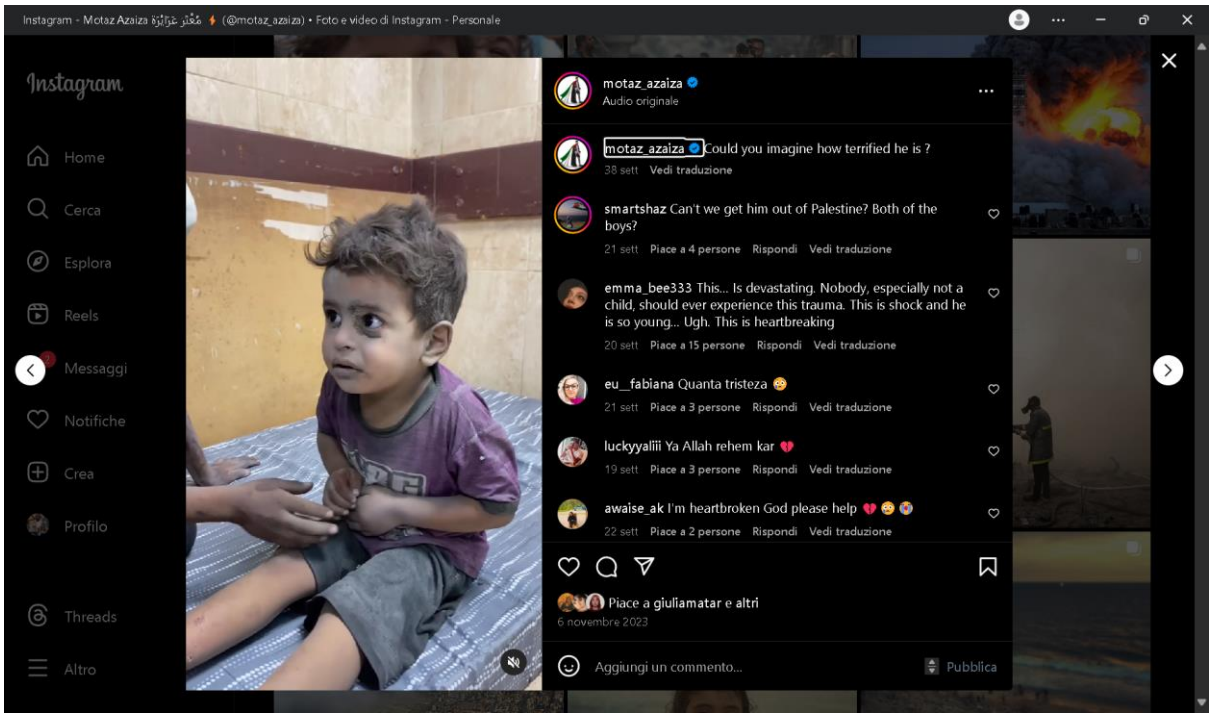


November 6th

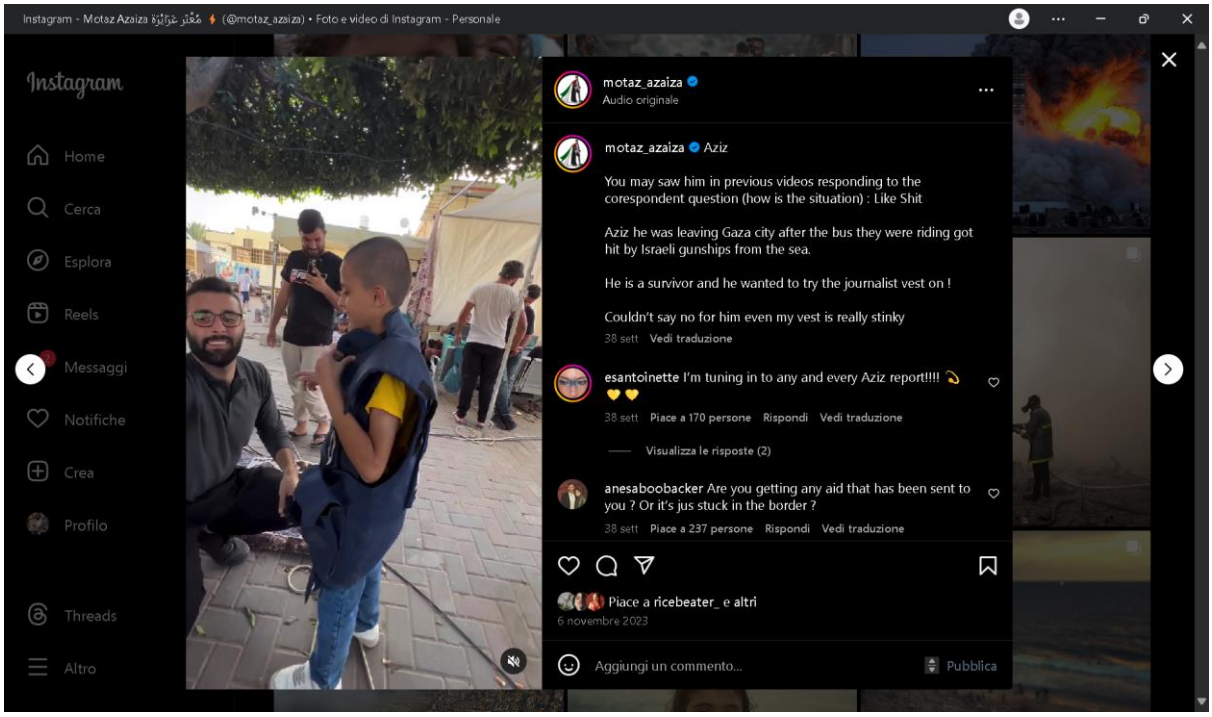
Azaiza posted a silent video showing an aerial view of the bodies of the victims of an aistrike



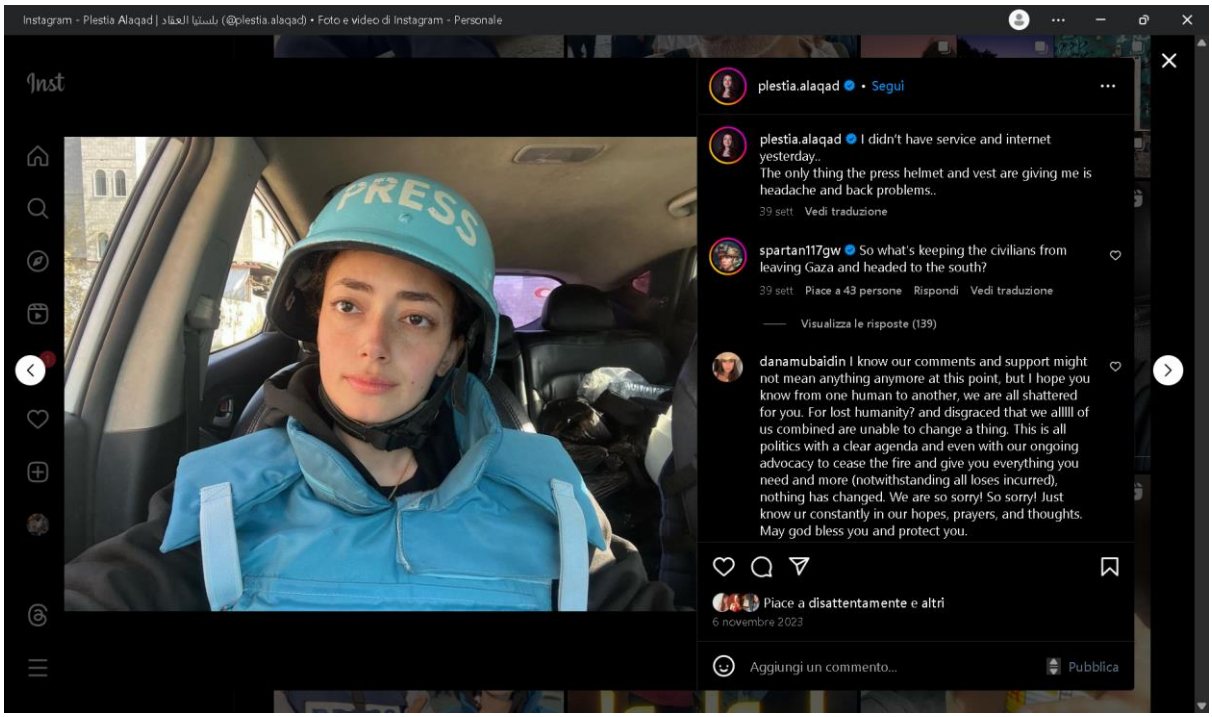
his second video showed a traumatised child being treated by medical personnel



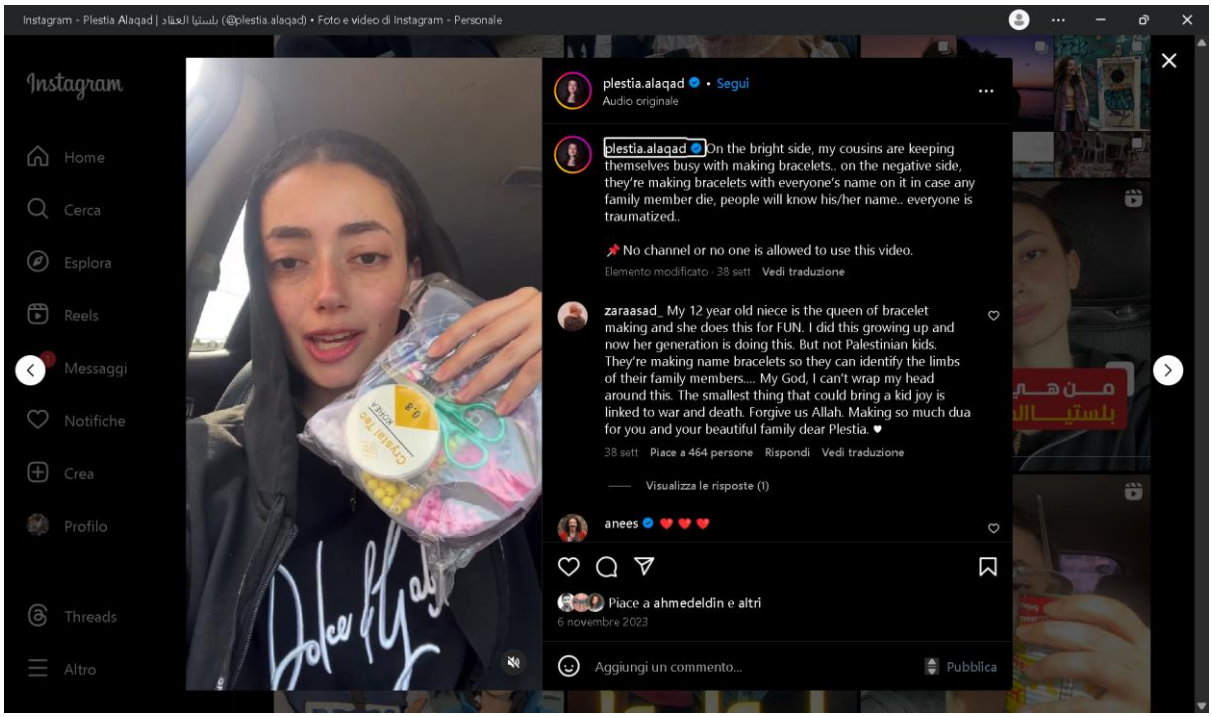
third video showed himself conversing with a child named Aziz, survivor of a marine attack, and joking around. Captions were in English



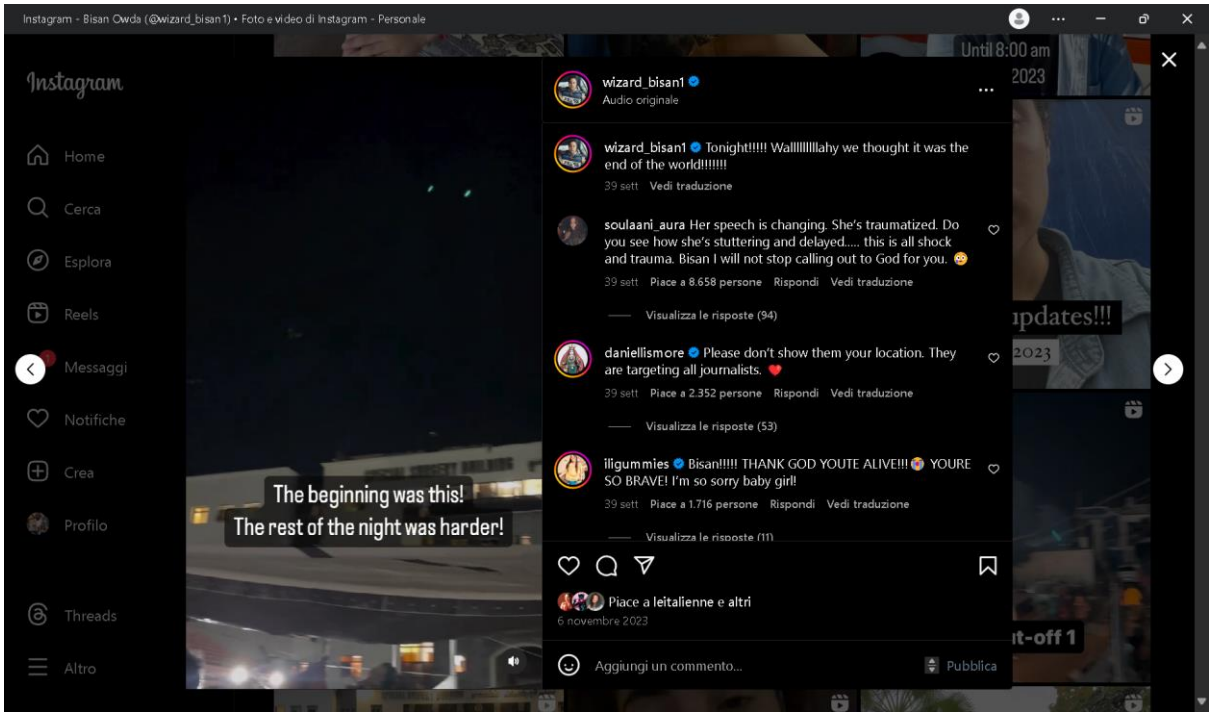
Alaqad

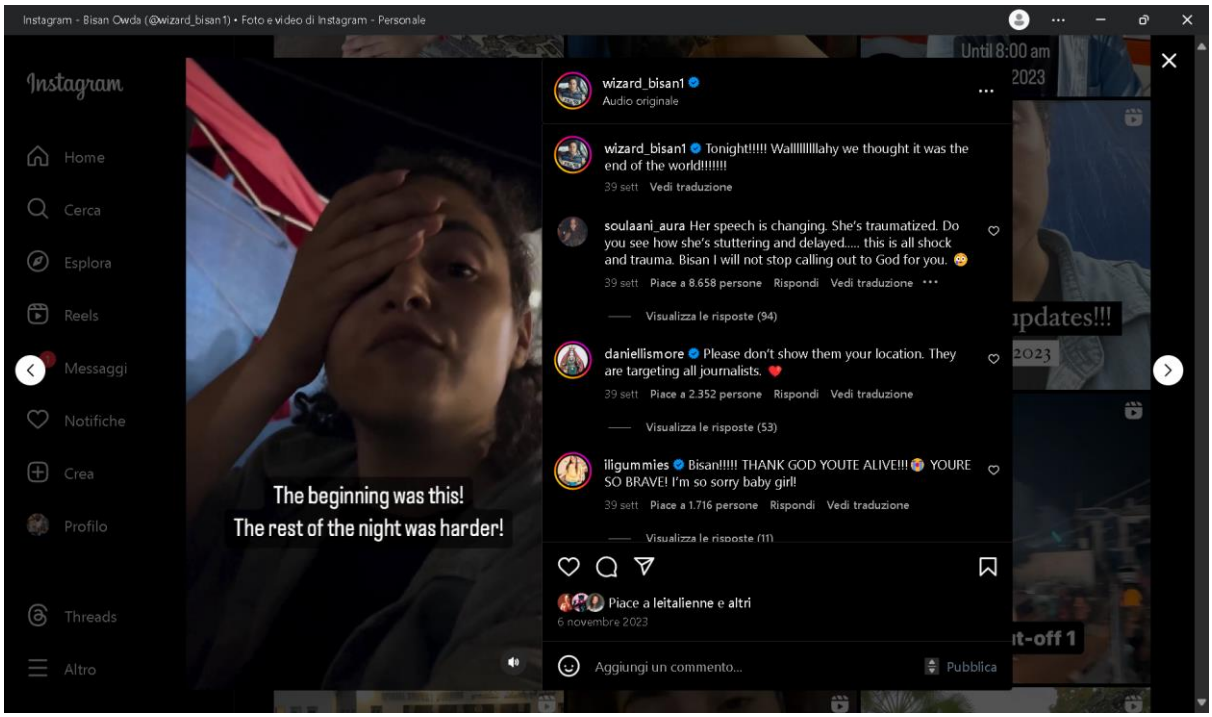

Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Inst
PRESS
plestia.alaqad • Segui
plestia.alaqad I didn't have service and internet yesterday..
The only thing the press helmet and vest are giving me is headache and back problems..
39 sett Vedi traduzione
spartan117gw So what's keeping the civilians from leaving Gaza and headed to the south?
39 sett Piace a 43 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (139)
danamubaidin I know our comments and support might not mean anything anymore at this point, but I hope you know from one human to another, we are all shattered for you. For lost humanity? and disgraced that we allllll of us combined are unable to change a thing. This is all politics with a clear agenda and even with our ongoing advocacy to cease the fire and give you everything you need and more (notwithstanding all loses incurred), nothing has changed. We are so sorry! So sorry! Just know ur constantly in our hopes, prayers, and thoughts. May god bless you and protect you.
Piace a disattentamente e altri
6 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
PRESS
plestia.alaqad • Segui
plestia.alaqad سموني نازح في بلدي..
..This picture was yesterday
39 sett Vedi traduzione
vladamua Every morning I wake up and check on you, Motaz and Bissan. I've never met you, but I care deeply about you all. We all care about you and about people of Palestine. I'm so sorry that the world is not doing enough to stop this.
38 sett Piace a 6.372 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (60)
istyle_events I commend your smile! Because that is the face of hope...no matter how tired you may feel. You are the face that's giving hope to millions...if not billions
38 sett Piace a 253 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (1)
afrinny The fact that you, Bissa and Mozam are being targeted by Israel shows just how powerful you all are and how much they hate what you are showing the world. We are praying for
Piace a ricebeater_ e altri
6 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

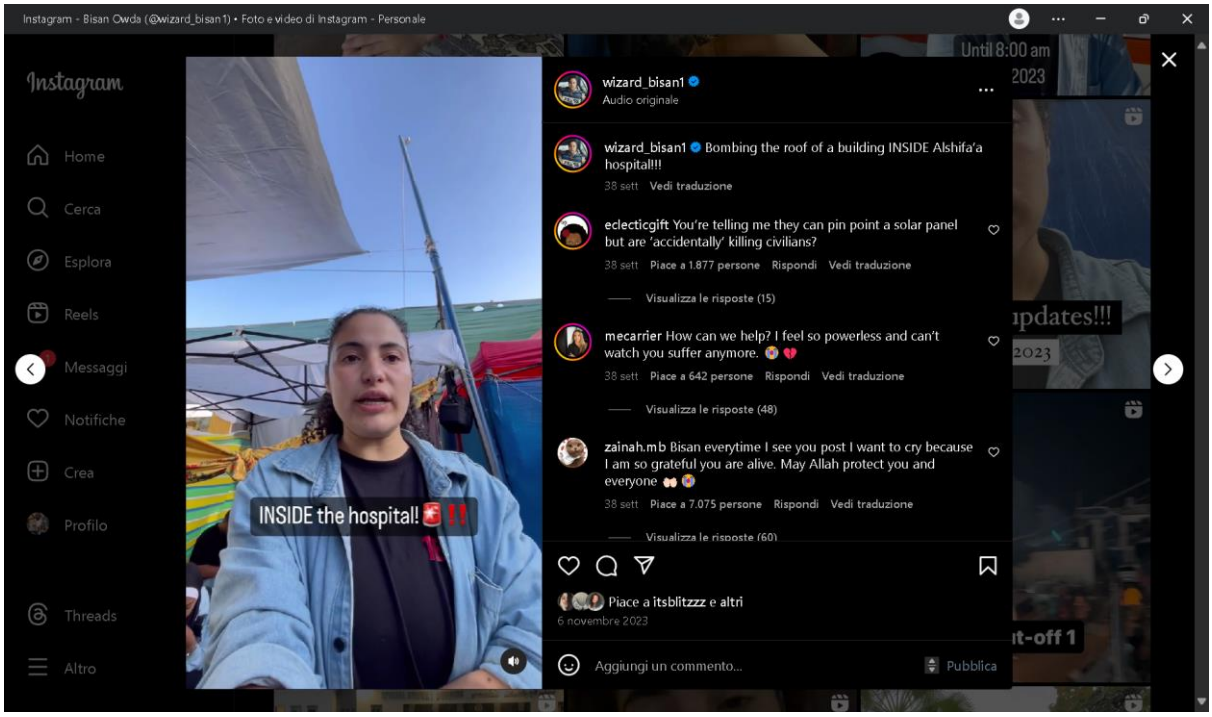


Owda shared a recording of the bombings happening near her encampment. The video contained a portion of recorded dialogue in Arabic, with updates being given in English.





"The sky is lightning in front of us"
the second video showed and described the bombing of the Al Shifa'a hospital. Updates were given in English

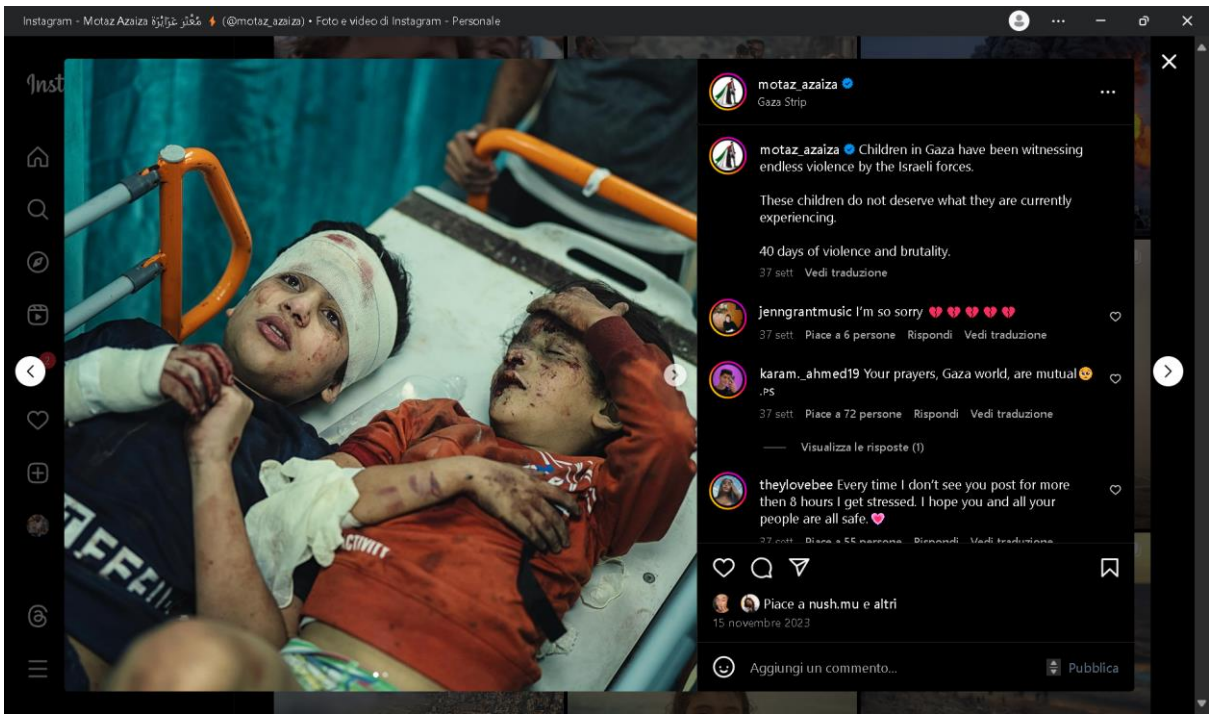


The victims' count was delivered the following day, via another short video in English, simply captioned with the number "1500"

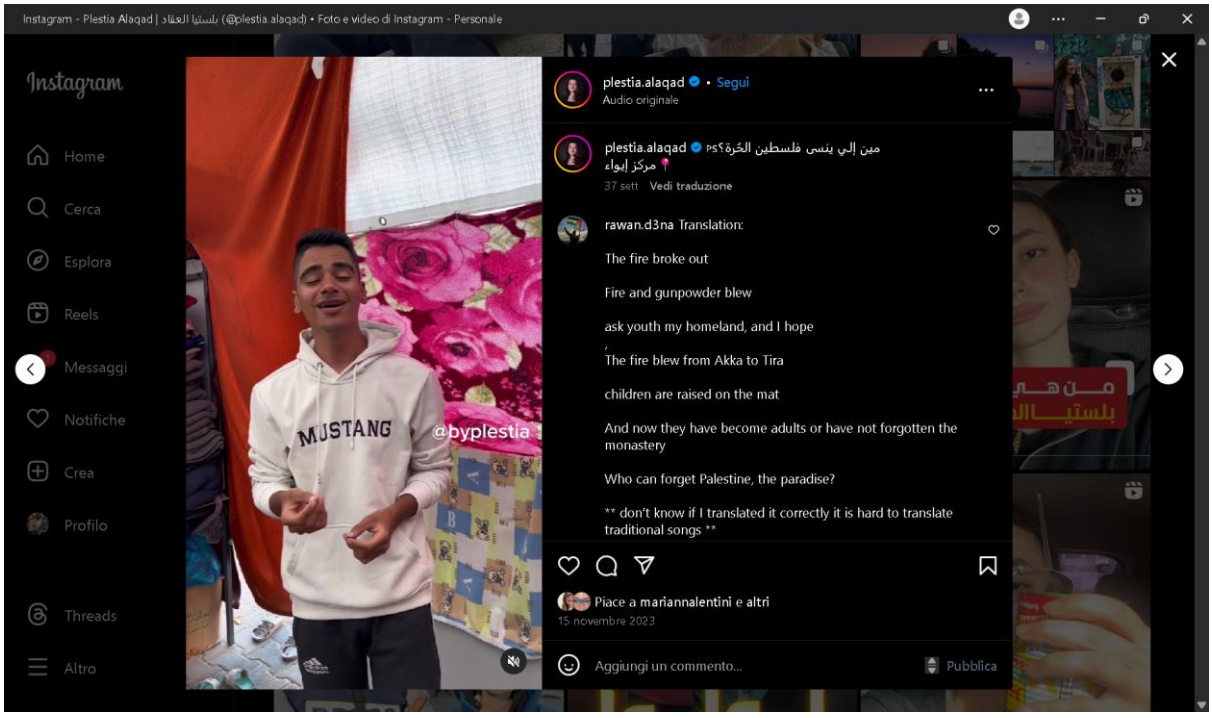
No posts from Khoudary

November 15th

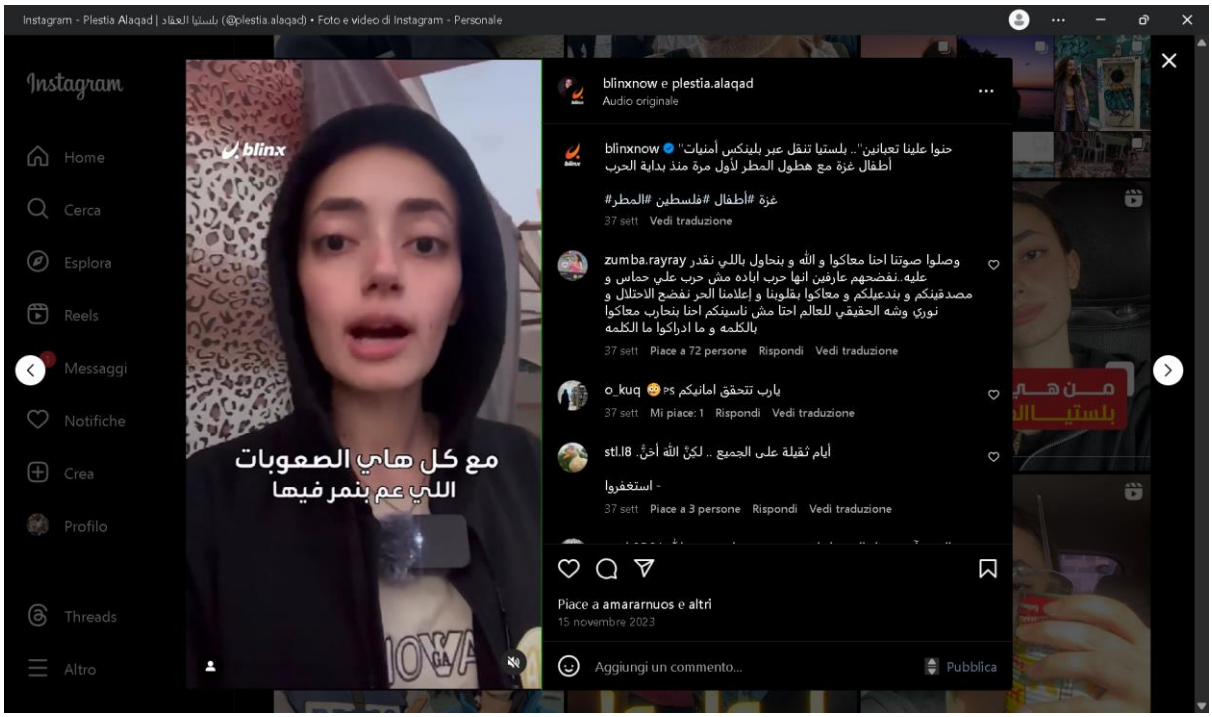
Azaiza



Alaqad

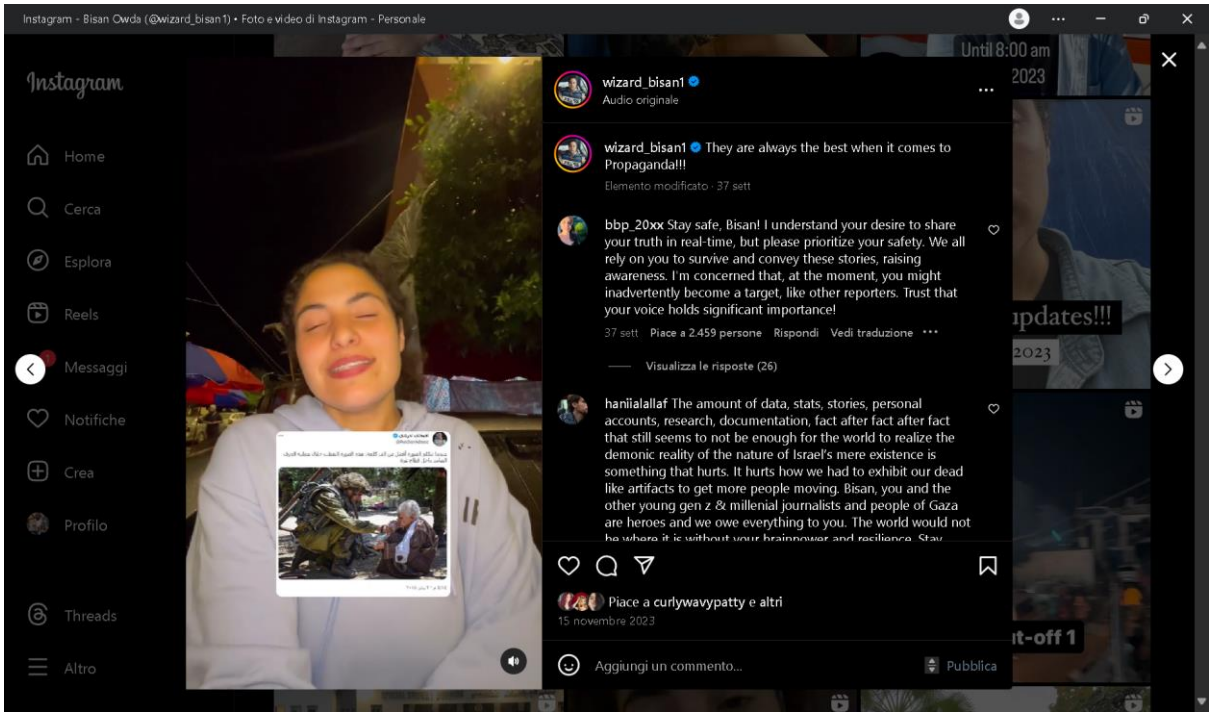



Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
plestia.alaqad • Segui
Audio originale
plestia.alaqad I just know where to go when I need positive energy❤️
37 sett Vedi traduzione
alainaappaloosa It is a miracle that this woman's birds have survived. It's a testament to the care and love that she has provided them with. Pet birds are extremely susceptible to changes in their environment, I know a woman whose birds died from the stress of moving to a new house. Every post I see about this lady and her birds is so deeply beautiful.
37 sett Piace a 39 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
rozanaalbanawi Woman can create magic from nothing. Allah gave us this ability... She has a cooking pot, a one-eyed cooking stove and the spirit of a Phoenix!
37 sett Piace a 1.072 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (8)
betul_fit Even during your hardest of times you bring happiness into my soul. The way this test has made your soul even more pure inspires me ❤️. May Allah give all of you
Piace a katiejanehughes e altri
15 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

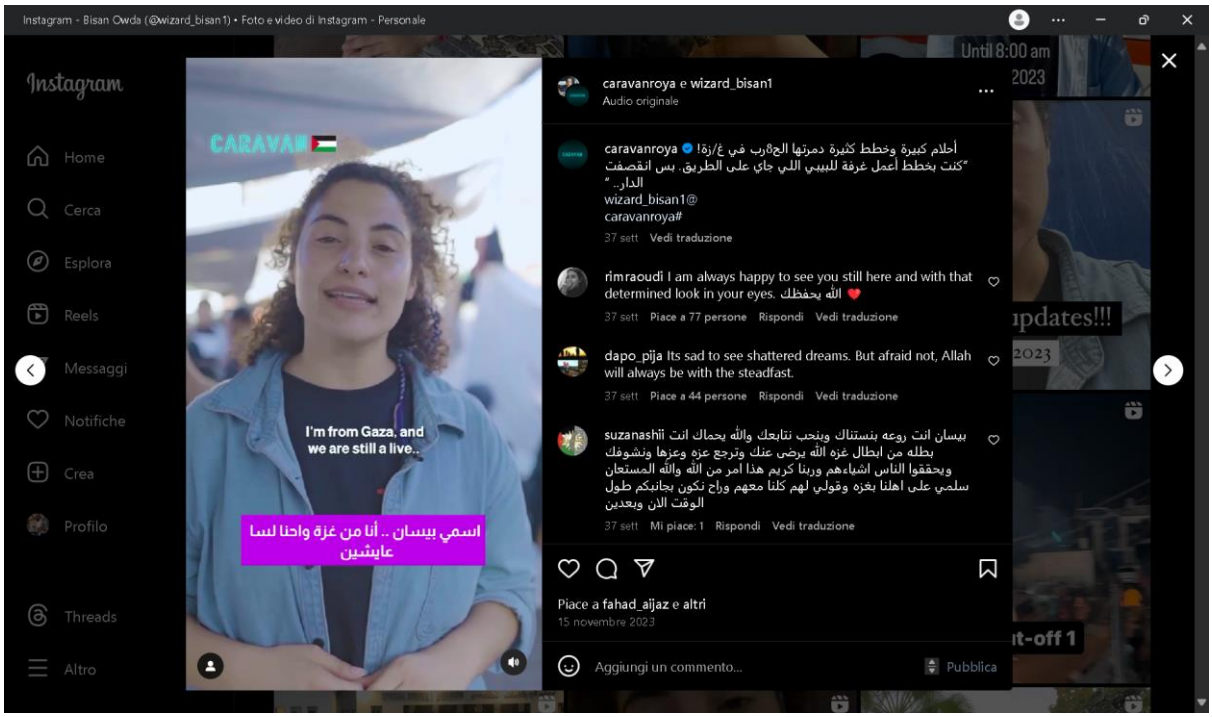

Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
blinx
مع كل هاي الصعوبات
اللي عم بنمر فيها
blinxnow e plestia.alaqad
Audio originale
blinxnow حنوا علينا تعباانين".. بلستيا تنقل عبر بلينكس أمنيات أطفال غزة مع هطول المطر لأول مرة منذ بداية الحرب
غزة #أطفال #فلسطين #المطر
37 sett Vedi traduzione
zumba.rayray وصلوا صوتنا احنا معاكوا و الله و بنحاول باللي نقدر عليه..نفضحهم عارفين انها حرب اباده مش حرب علي حماس و مصدقينكم و بندعيلكم و معاكوا بقلوبنا و إعلامنا الحر نفضح الاحتلال و نوري وشه الحقيقي للعالم احنا مش ناسينكم احنا بنحارب معاكوا بالكلمه و ما اذراكوا ما الكلمه
37 sett Piace a 72 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
o_kuq يارب تتحقق امانيكم PS
37 sett Mi piace: 1 Rispondi Vedi traduzione
stl.l8 أيام ثقيلة على الجميع .. لكنَّ اللهَ أحَنُّ.
استغفروا -
37 sett Piace a 3 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a amararnuos e altri
15 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica



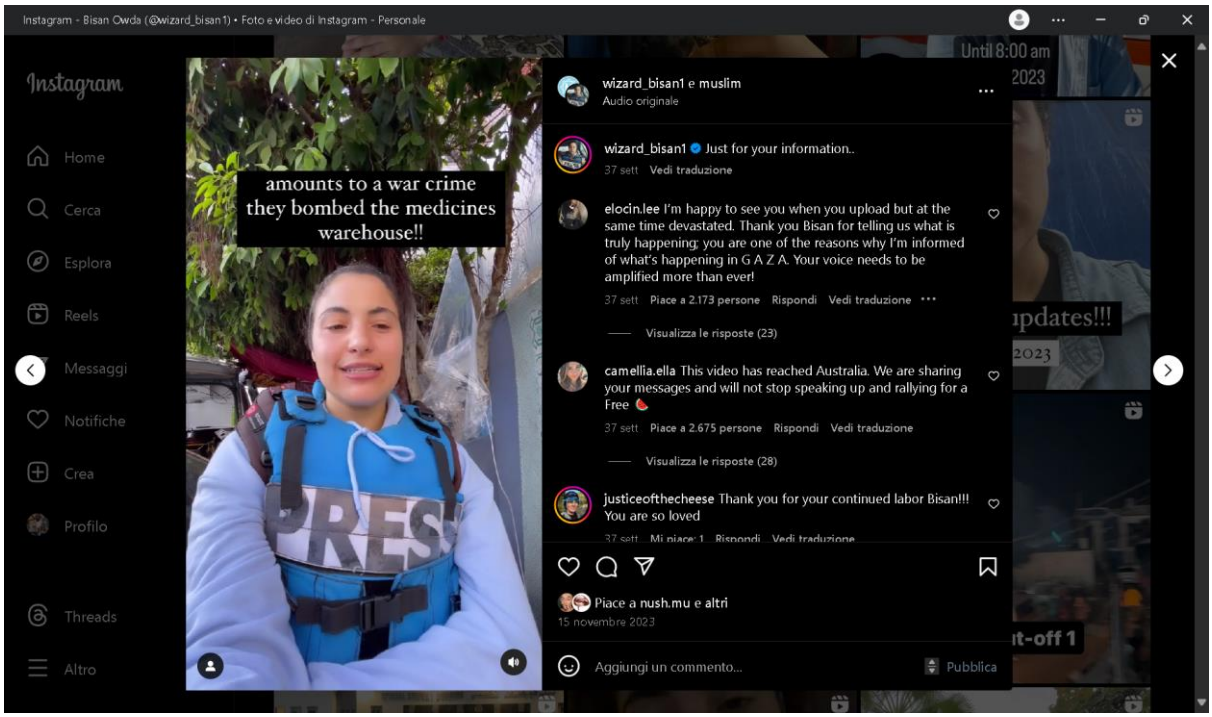
Owda decided to take to the social medium to give her followers some examples of Israeli propaganda



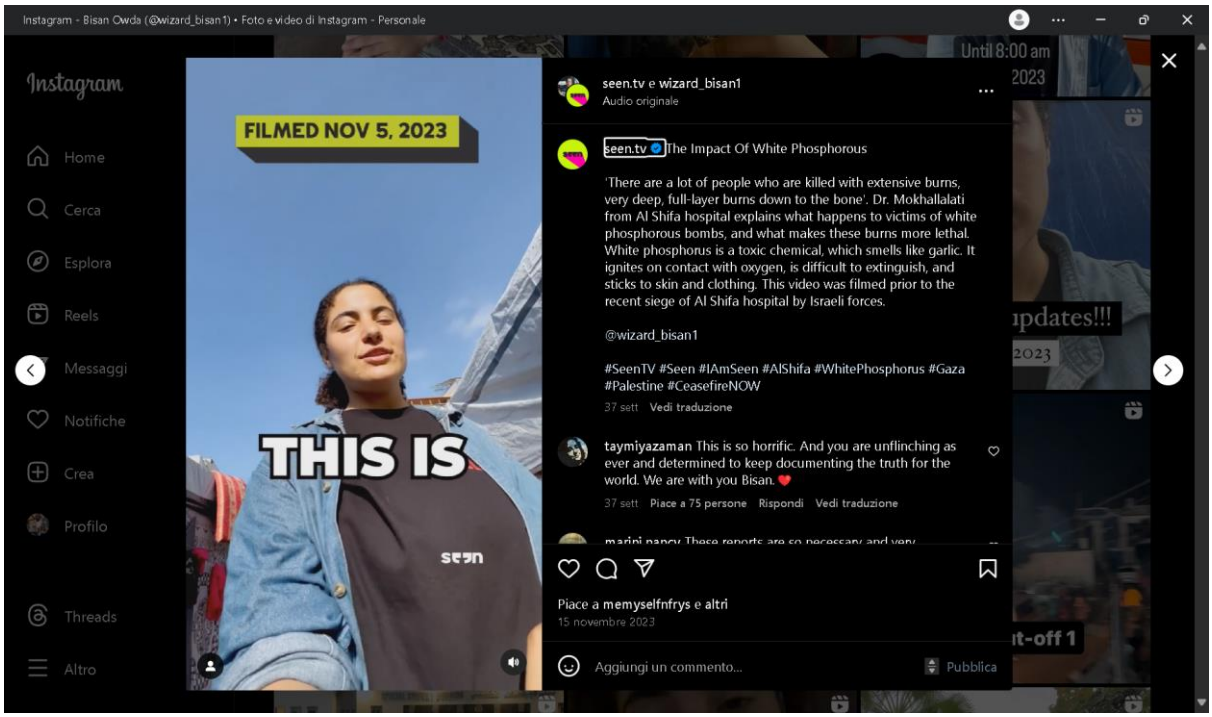
another video compiled civilians' interviews in Arabic, narrating their struggles and lives previous to the invasion

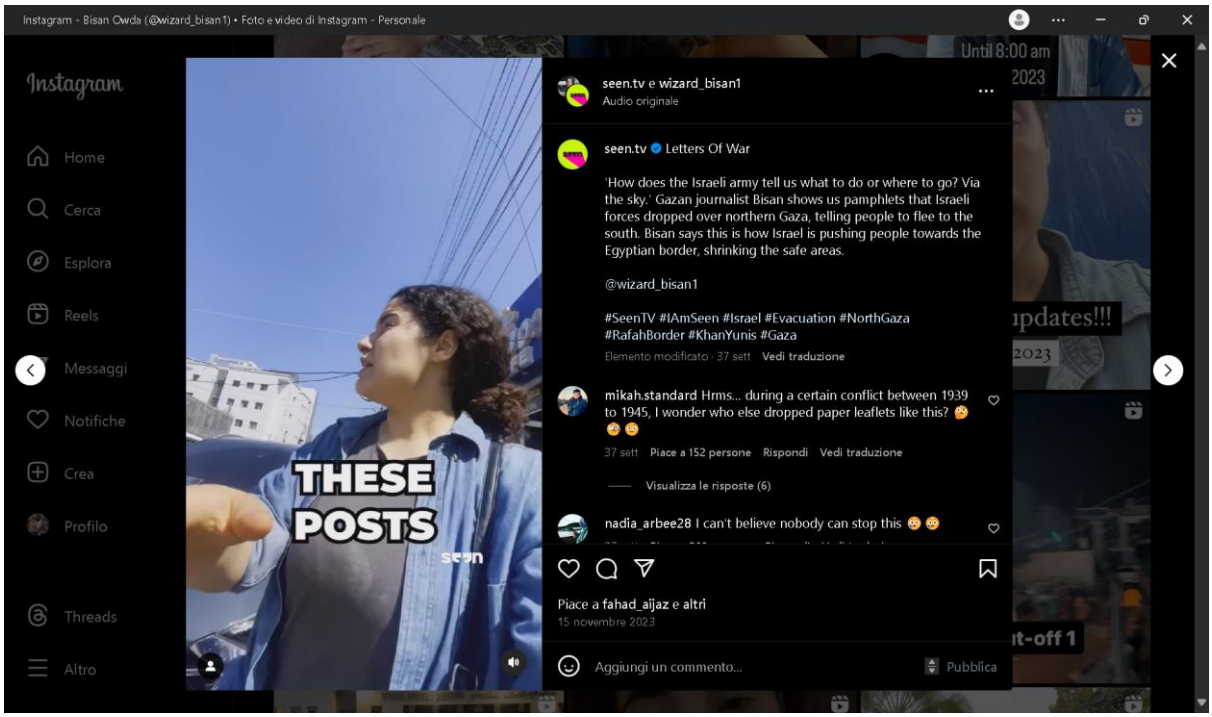


another video, in English, described the hospital attack as a "war crime"



a subsequent video contained interviews explaining the effects of white phosphorous on its victims, via interviews carried out at the Alshifa'a hospital prior to the attacks. Both intro and interviews were recorded in English



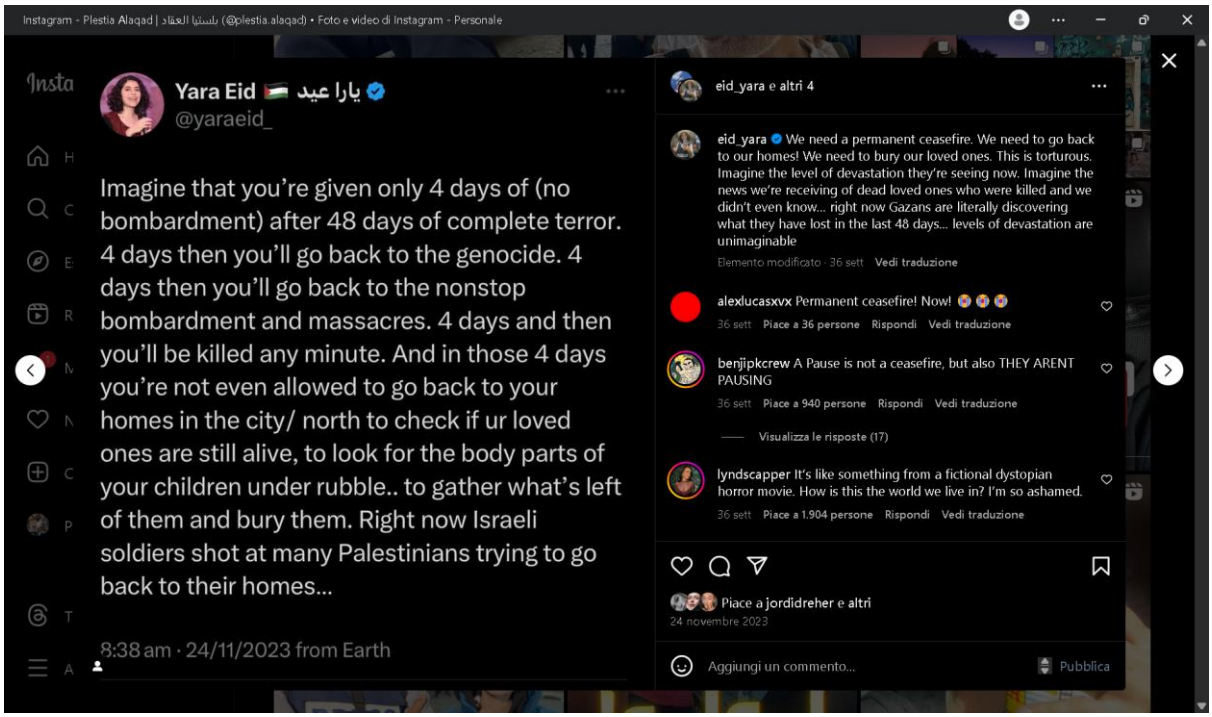


no posts from Khoudary

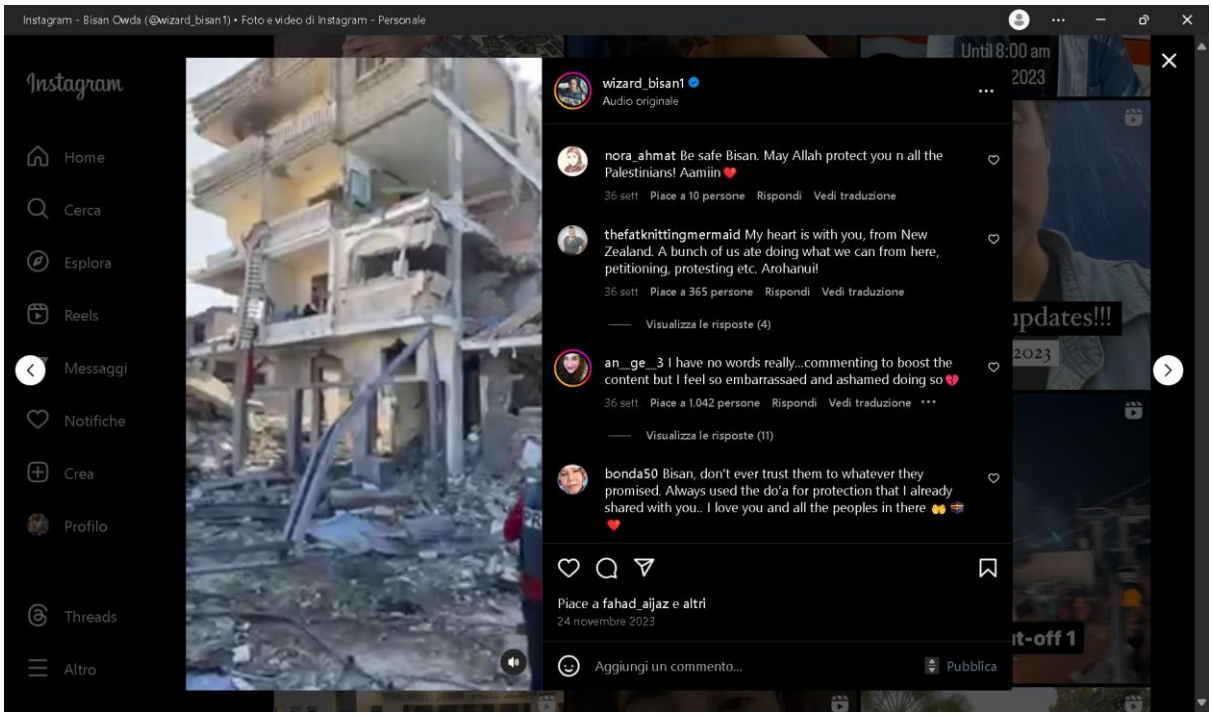
November 24th

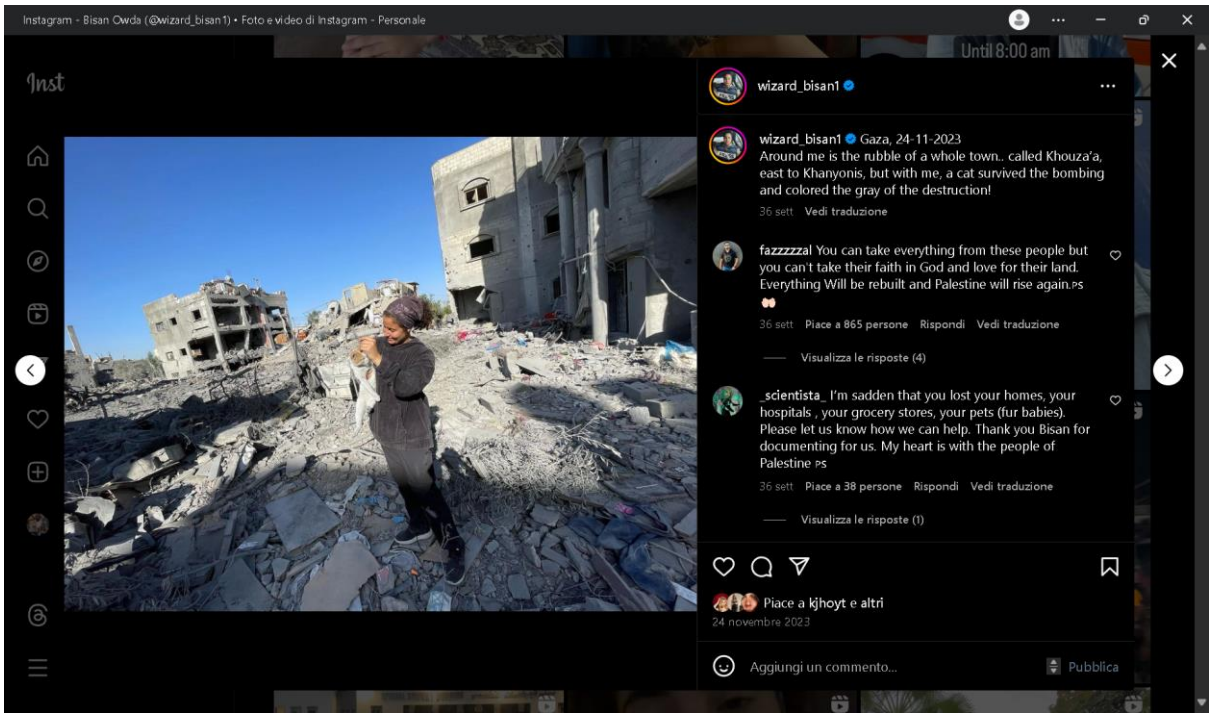
no posts from Azaiza

Alaqad reposted an X post containing a fellow journalist's appeal for a more permanent ceasefire. Both post and caption were in English

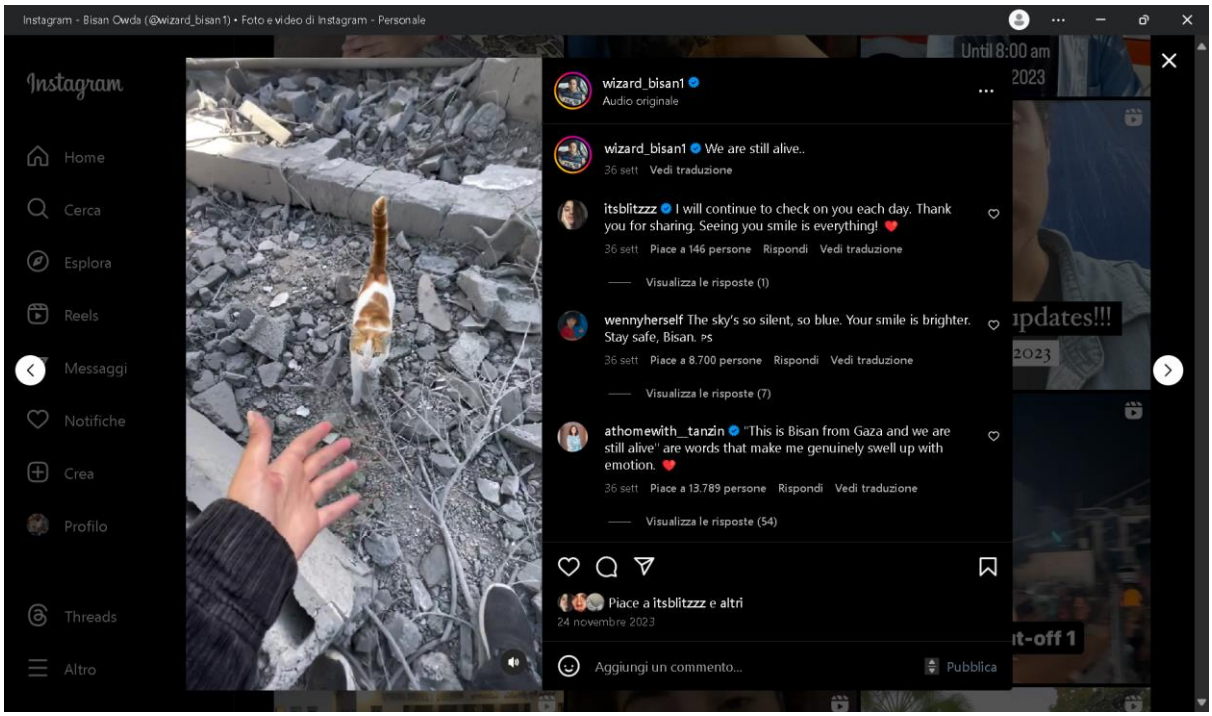


Owda shared a video showing rubble and ruins of a civilian house. In the beginning, Owda can be heard speaking Arabic to an interlocutor, with both being out of the frame. The video then cuts to a frame of her explaining the recording's content in English

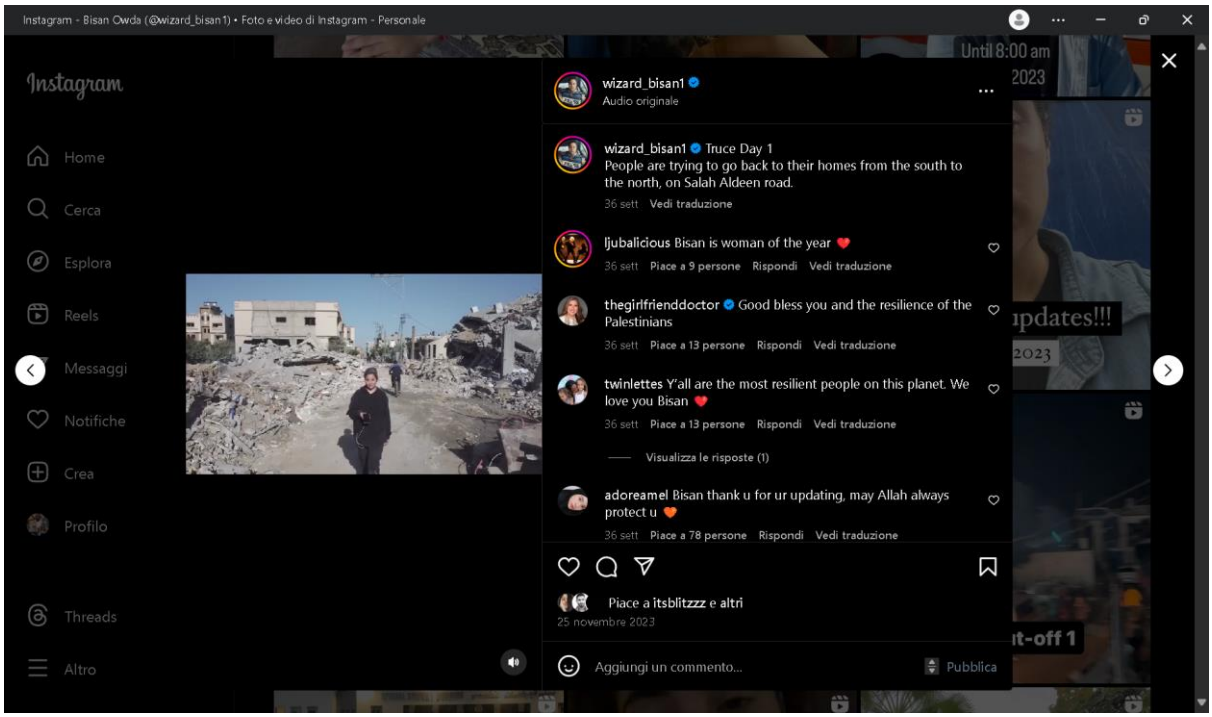


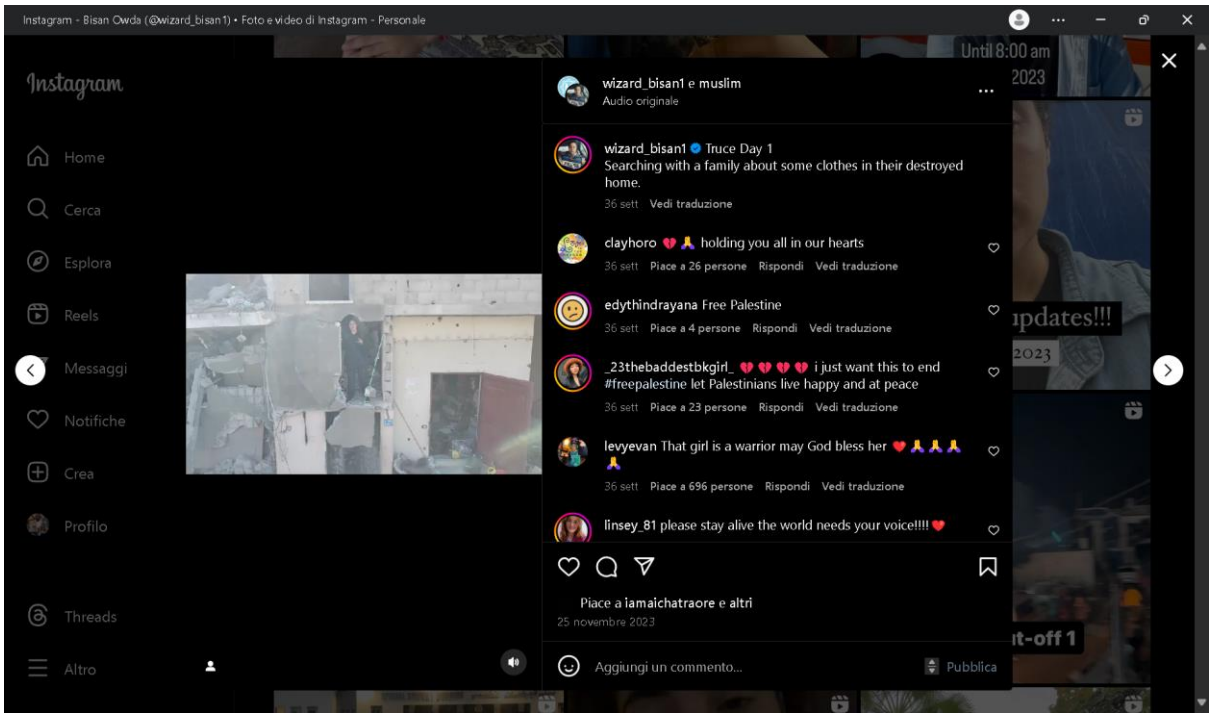


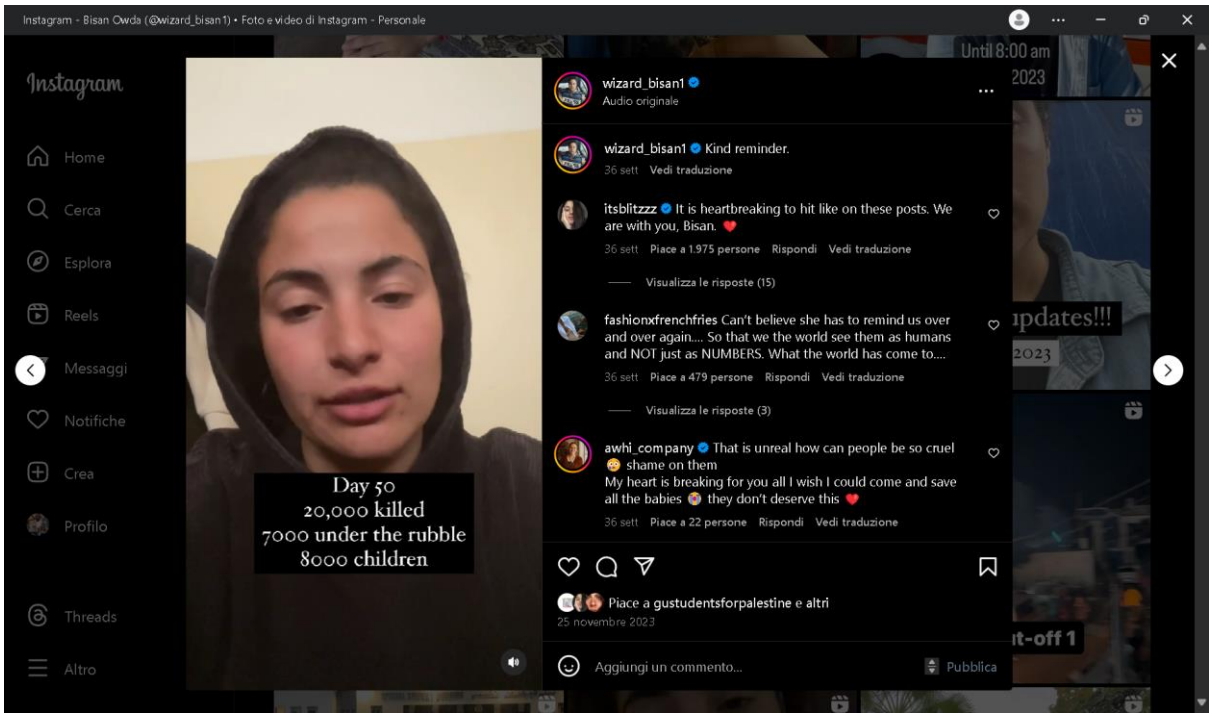
one last video shows a cat who has survived the bombing of its house. Owda nears it speaking Arabic, then turns the camera on herself and, speaking English, pronounces her catchphrase "This is Bisan, and we're still alive"



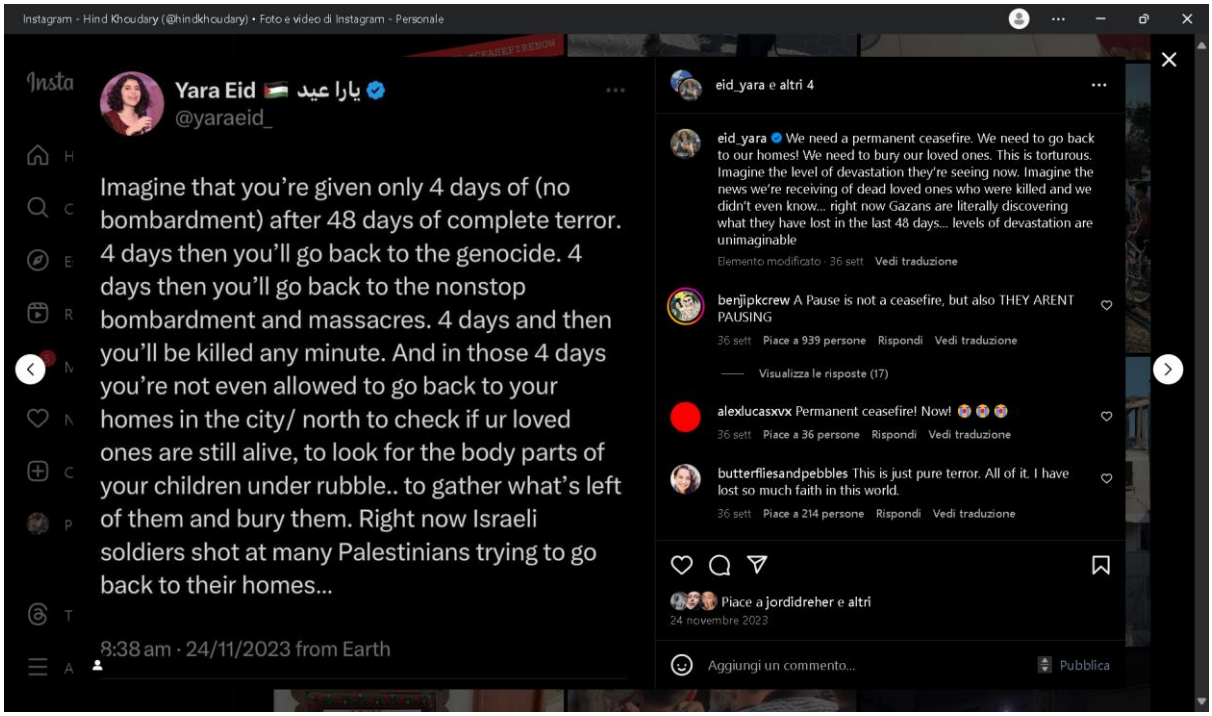
shared 4 posts on the first day of the alleged ceasefire


Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
wizard_bisan1
Audio originale
wizard_bisan1 Truce Day 1
People are trying to go back to their homes from the south to the north, on Salah Aldeen road.
36 sett Vedi traduzione
ljubalicious Bisan is woman of the year
36 sett Piace a 9 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
thegirlfrienddoctor Good bless you and the resilience of the Palestinians
36 sett Piace a 13 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
twinlettes Y'all are the most resilient people on this planet. We love you Bisan
36 sett Piace a 13 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (1)
adoreamel Bisan thank u for ur updating, may Allah always protect u
36 sett Piace a 78 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Piace a itsblitzzz e altri
25 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica
Until 8:00 am
2023
updates!!!
2023
t-off 1

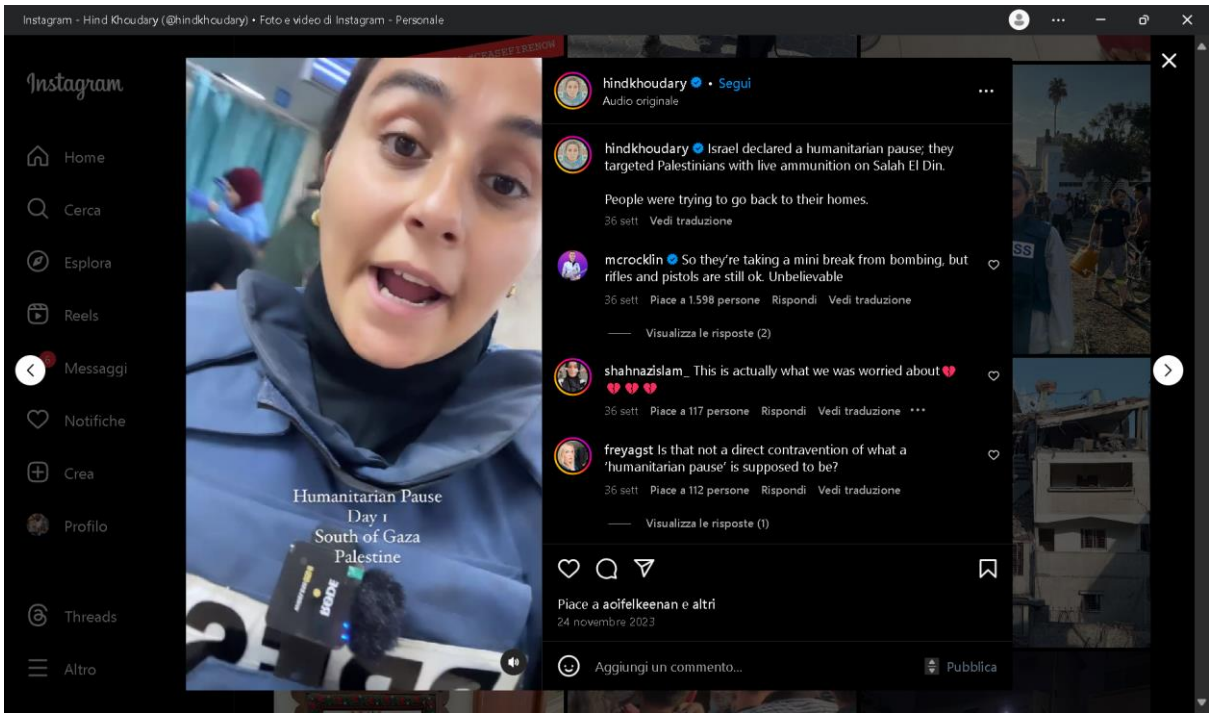

Instagram - Bisan Owda (@wizard_bisan1) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
wizard_bisan1 e muslim
Audio originale
wizard_bisan1 Truce Day 1
Searching with a family about some clothes in their destroyed home.
36 sett Vedi traduzione
clayhoro holding you all in our hearts
36 sett Piace a 26 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
edythindrayana Free Palestine
36 sett Piace a 4 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
23thebaddestbkgirl i just want this to end #freepalestine let Palestinians live happy and at peace
36 sett Piace a 23 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
levyevan That girl is a warrior may God bless her
36 sett Piace a 696 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
linsey_81 please stay alive the world needs your voice!!!!
Piace a iamaichatraore e altri
25 novembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica
Until 8:00 am
2023
updates!!!
2023
t-off 1



Khoudary also shared the same X post as Alaqad, containing an appeal to a more permanent ceasefire. Both screenshot and caption were in English



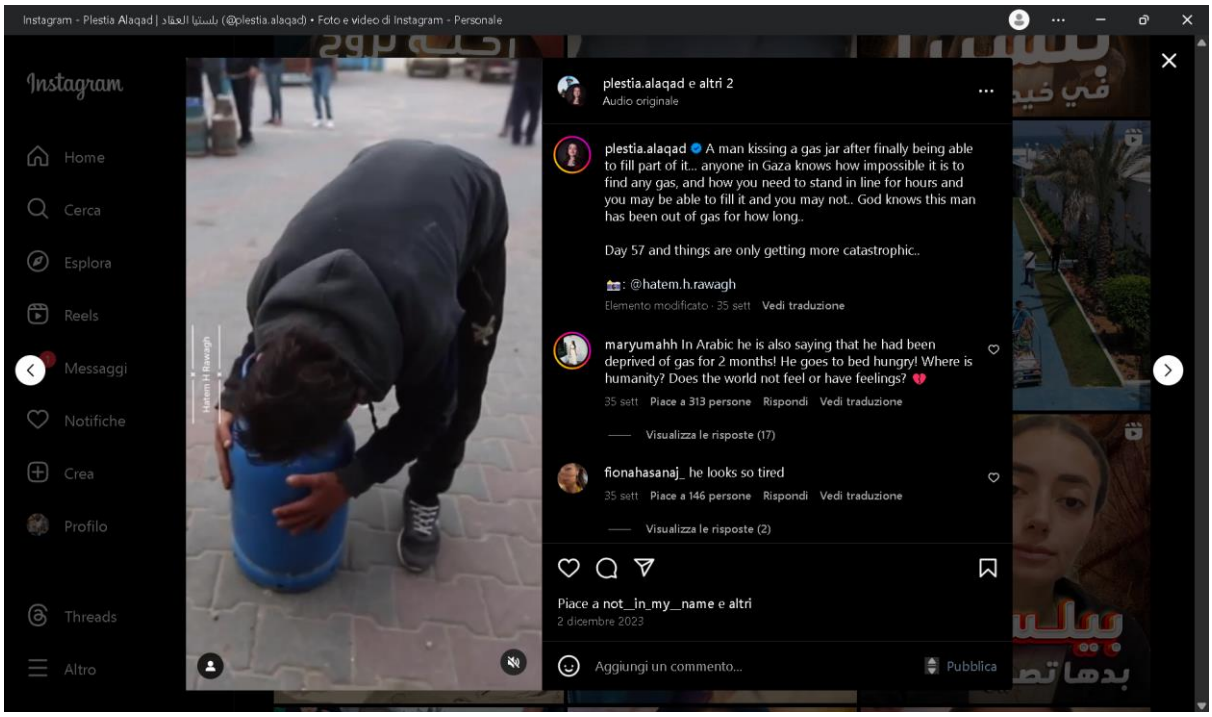
her second post of the day was a video containing several clips, all documenting the attacks perpetrated against Palestinians trying to cross from the South to the North of the Gaza Strip. The video started with Khoudary speaking directly to the camera, in English, explaining the situation, and was followed by brief clips showing the injured and the overall situation at the hospital. Caption was in English.

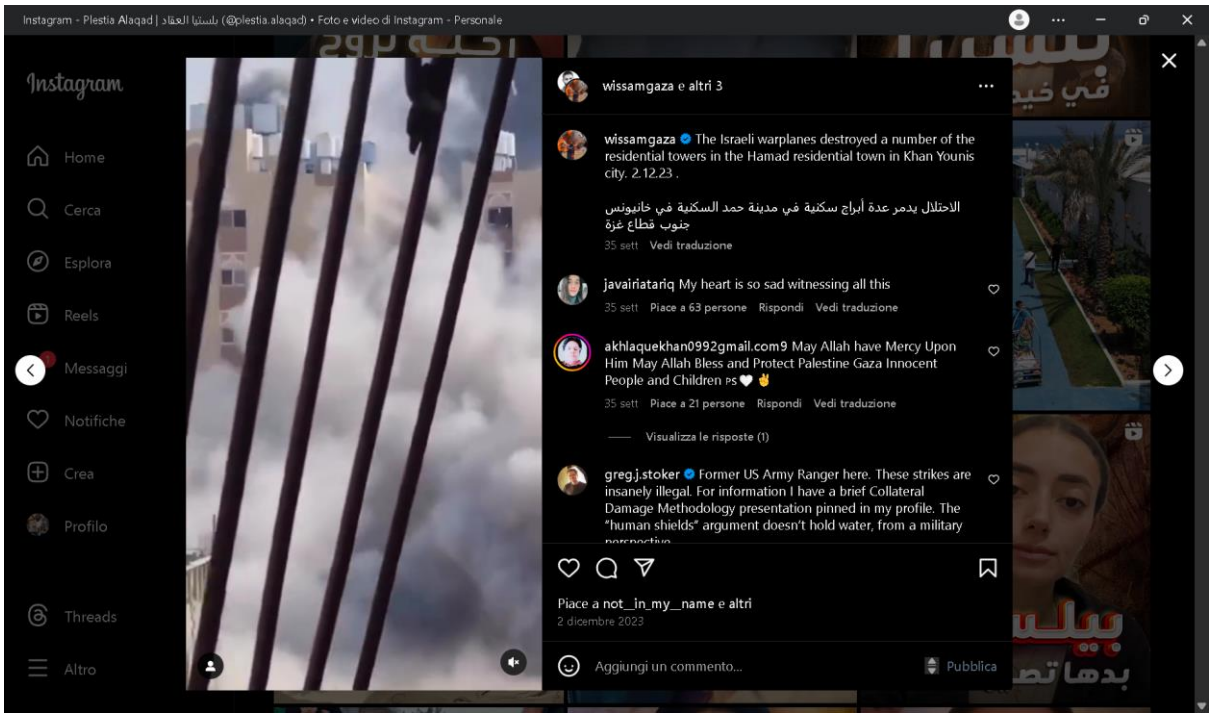


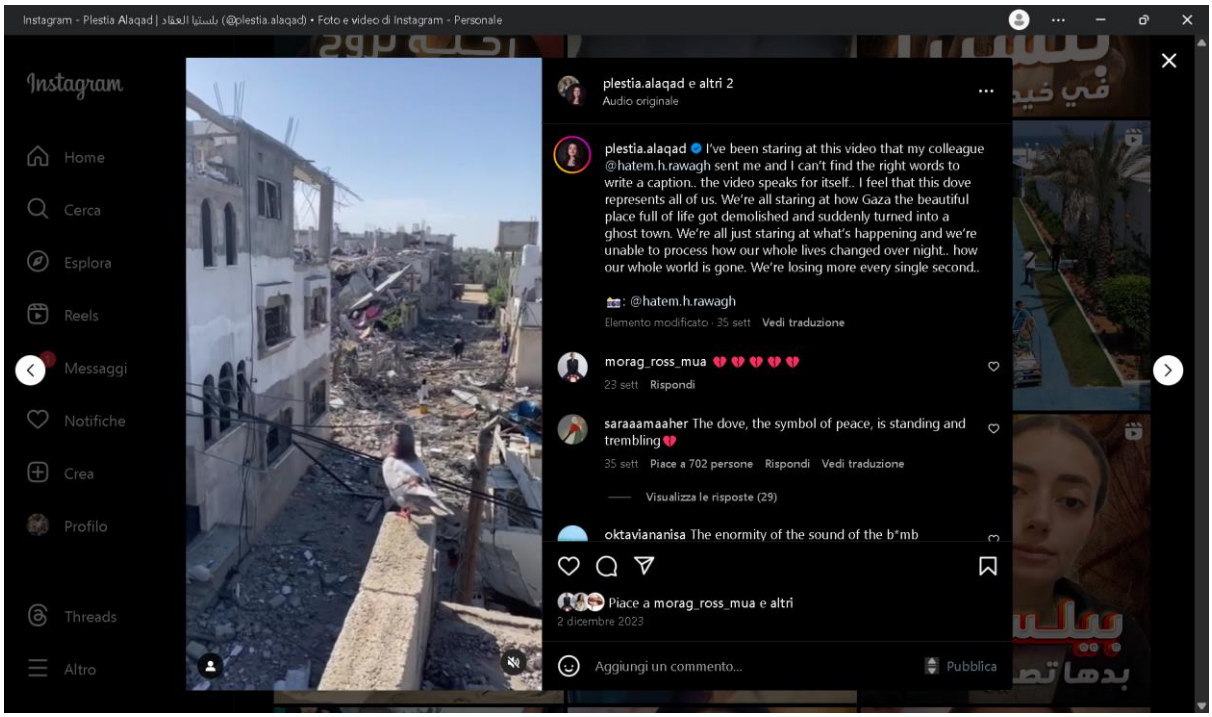
December 2nd

Azaiza posted an Instagram story, which was reposted and roughly translated by Alaqad on her feed (see below)

Alaqad




Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
wissamgaza e altri 3
wissamgaza The Israeli warplanes destroyed a number of the residential towers in the Hamad residential town in Khan Younis city. 2.12.23 .
الاحتلال يدمر عدة أبراج سكنية في مدينة حمد السكنية في خانيونس جنوب قطاع غزة
35 sett Vedi traduzione
javairiatariq My heart is so sad witnessing all this
35 sett Piace a 63 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
akhlaquekhan0992gmail.com9 May Allah have Mercy Upon Him May Allah Bless and Protect Palestine Gaza Innocent People and Children ps
35 sett Piace a 21 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (1)
greg.j.stoker Former US Army Ranger here. These strikes are insanely illegal. For information I have a brief Collateral Damage Methodology presentation pinned in my profile. The "human shields" argument doesn't hold water, from a military
Piace a not__in_my__name e altri
2 dicembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica


Instagram - Plestia Alaqad | بلستيا العقاد (@plestia.alaqad) • Foto e video di Instagram - Personale
Instagram
Home
Cerca
Esplora
Reels
Messaggi
Notifiche
Crea
Profilo
Threads
Altro
plestia.alaqad e altri 2
Audio originale
plestia.alaqad I've been staring at this video that my colleague @hatem.h.rawagh sent me and I can't find the right words to write a caption.. the video speaks for itself.. I feel that this dove represents all of us. We're all staring at how Gaza the beautiful place full of life got demolished and suddenly turned into a ghost town. We're all just staring at what's happening and we're unable to process how our whole lives changed over night.. how our whole world is gone. We're losing more every single second..
: @hatem.h.rawagh
Elemento modificato · 35 sett Vedi traduzione
morag_ross_mua
23 sett Rispondi
saraaamaaher The dove, the symbol of peace, is standing and trembling
35 sett Piace a 702 persone Rispondi Vedi traduzione
Visualizza le risposte (29)
oktaviananisa The enormity of the sound of the b*mb
Piace a morag_ross_mua e altri
2 dicembre 2023
Aggiungi un commento...
Pubblica

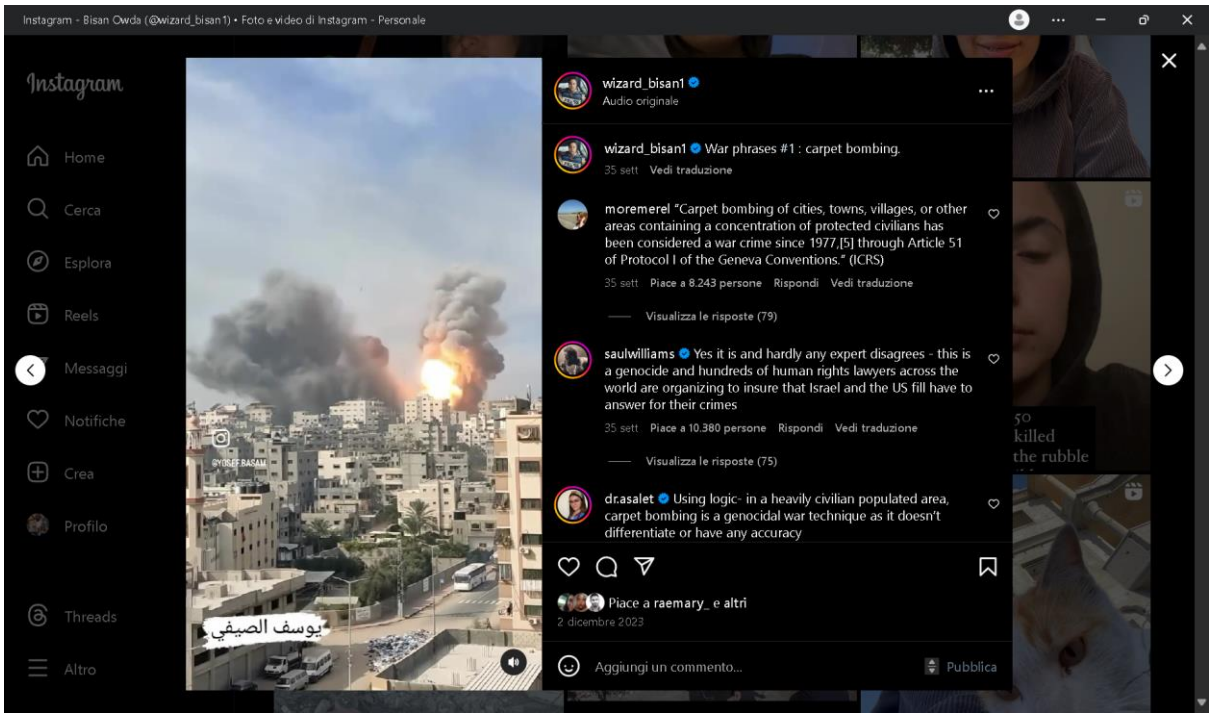




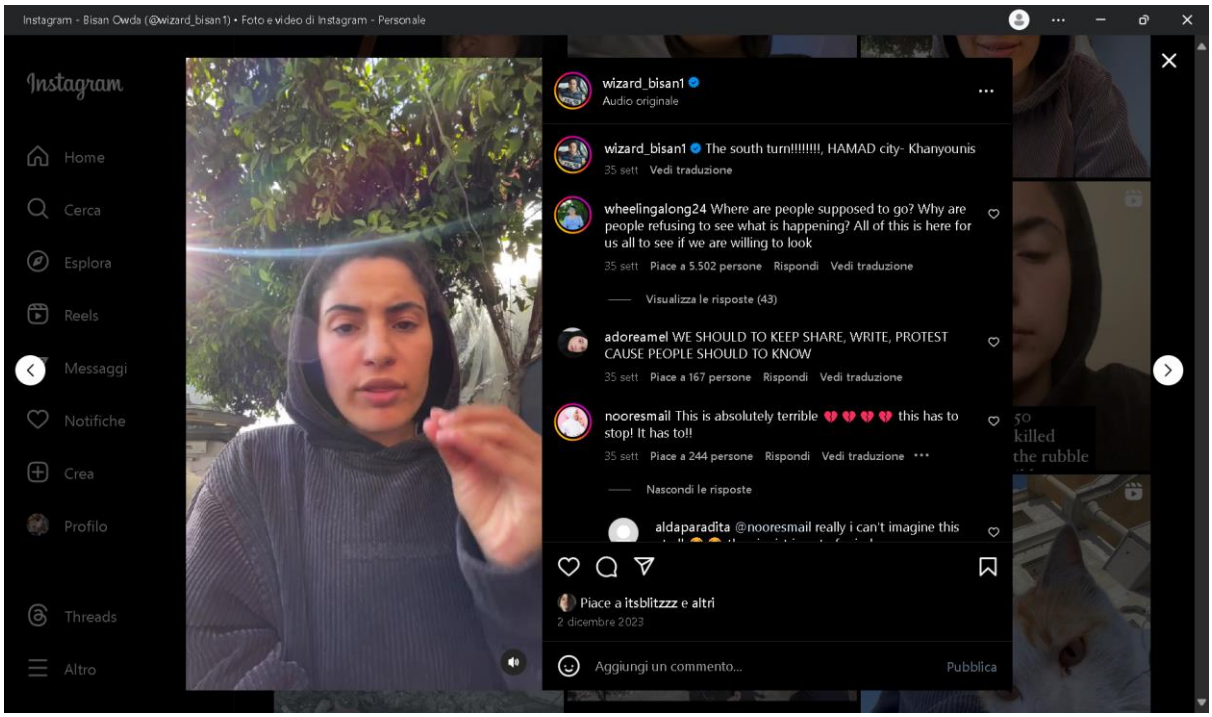
Owda shared video interviews in Arabic, subtitled in English, documenting displaced Gazans' living situation. Owda's intermissions in English provided some context as to the time and place of the interviews



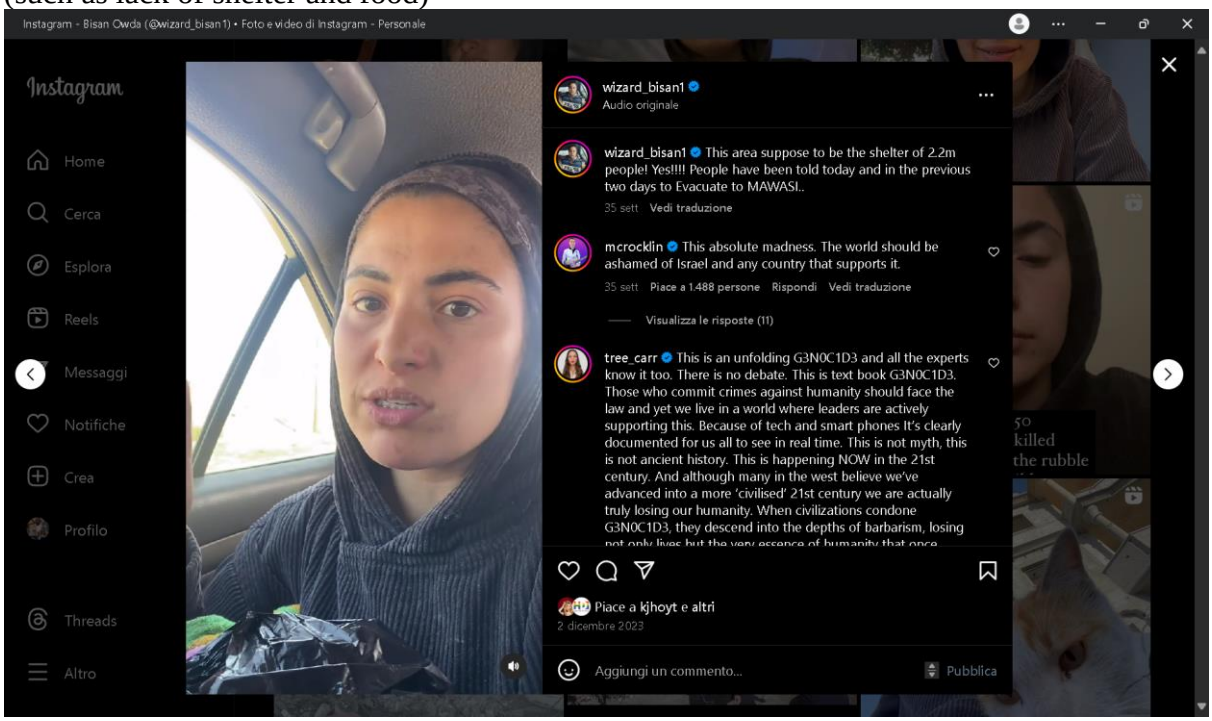
second video of the day depicted a "carpet bombing", followed by a short explanation in English as to what that was and entailed

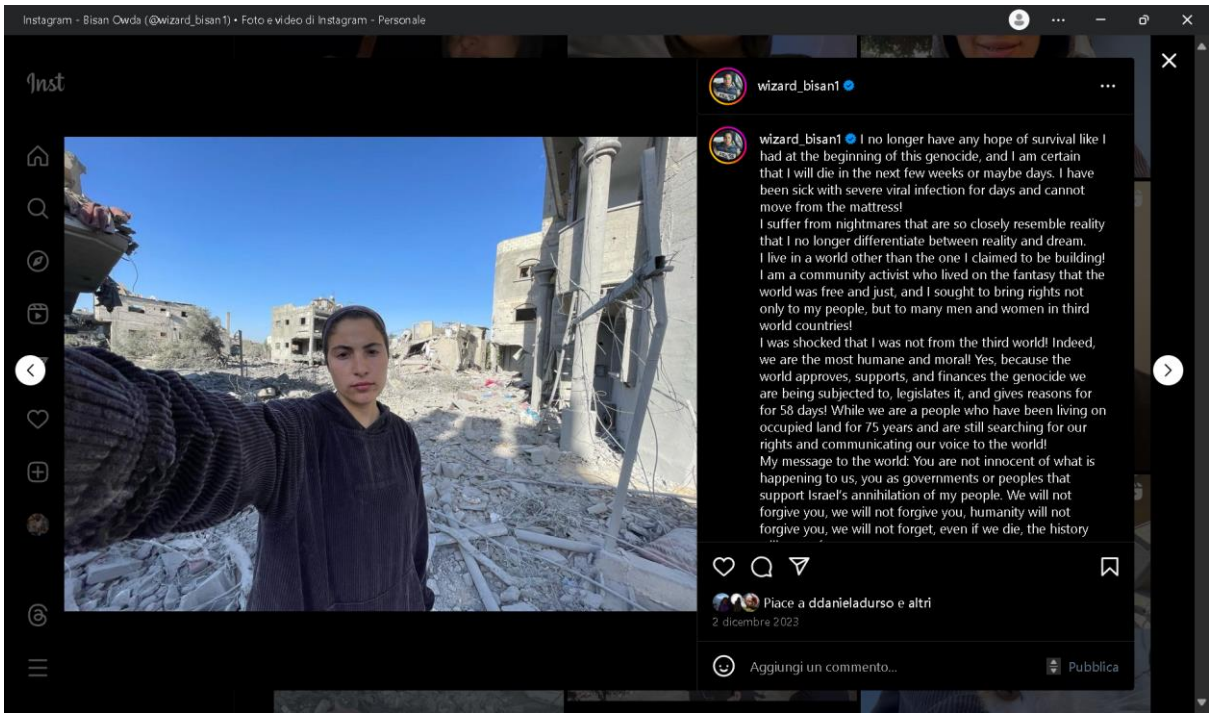


third video talked, in English, about the ordered evacuation of the South, giving geographical information on the designated area and its population

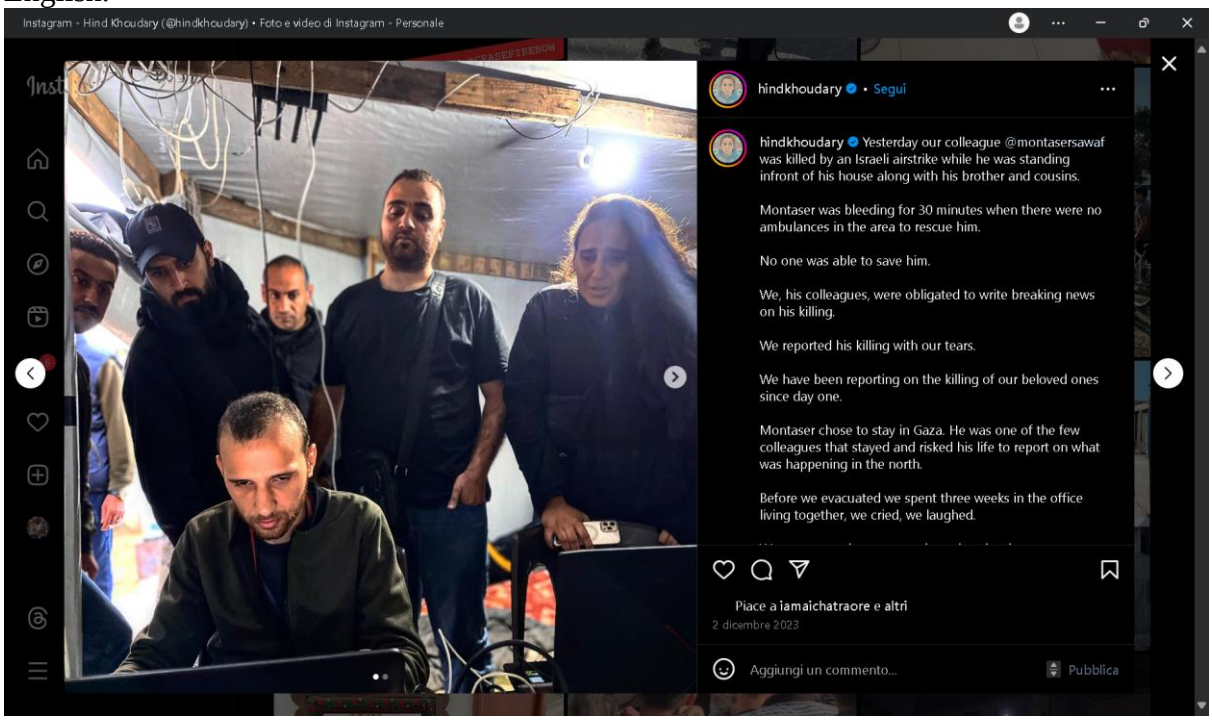


fourth video showed the designated refuge area, previewing the possible future hardships (such as lack of shelter and food)

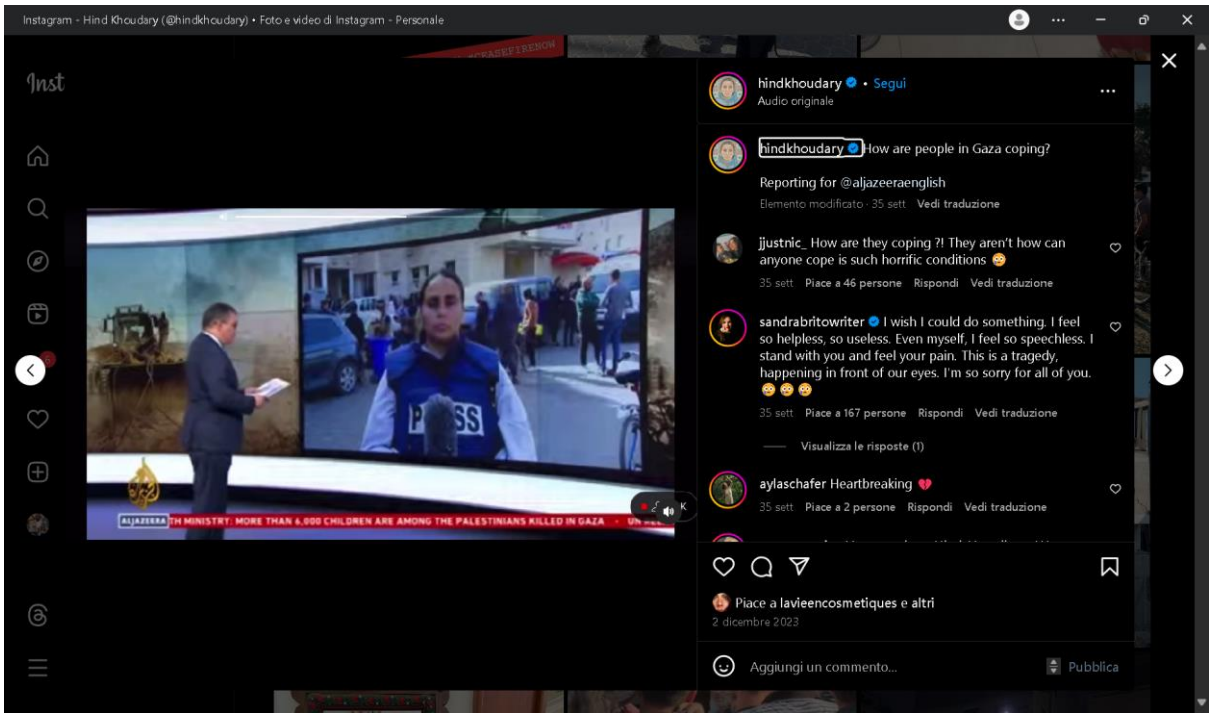




Khoudary shared the news of one of her colleagues' passing in Northern Gaza, together with a photo of the journalistic team writing the news beat documenting the death. Caption was in English.

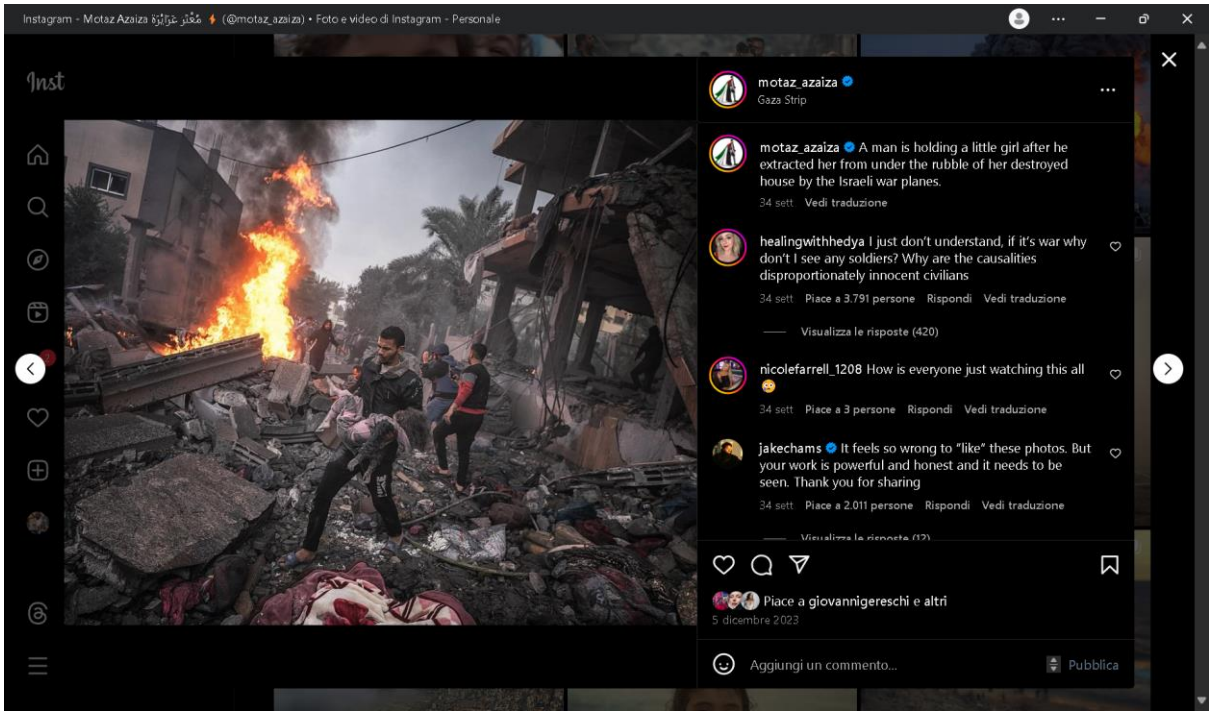


her second post was a video recording of one of her reports for Al Jazeera's tv English broadcast

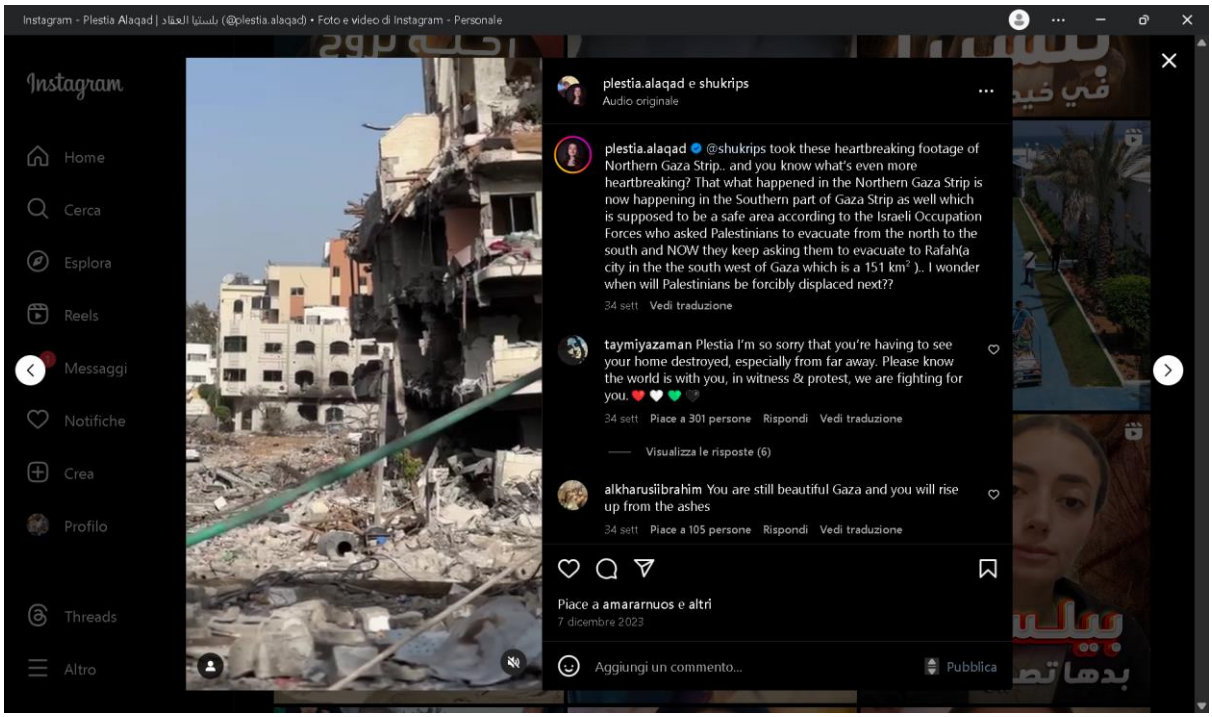


December 5th

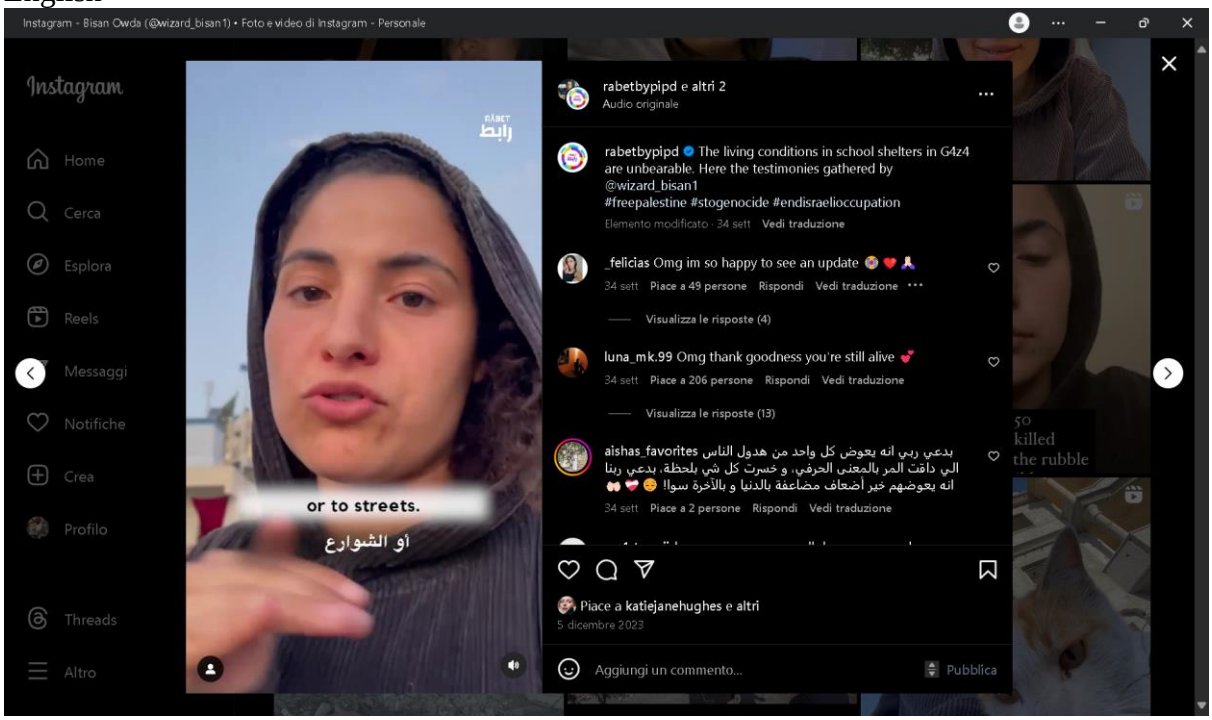
Azaiza



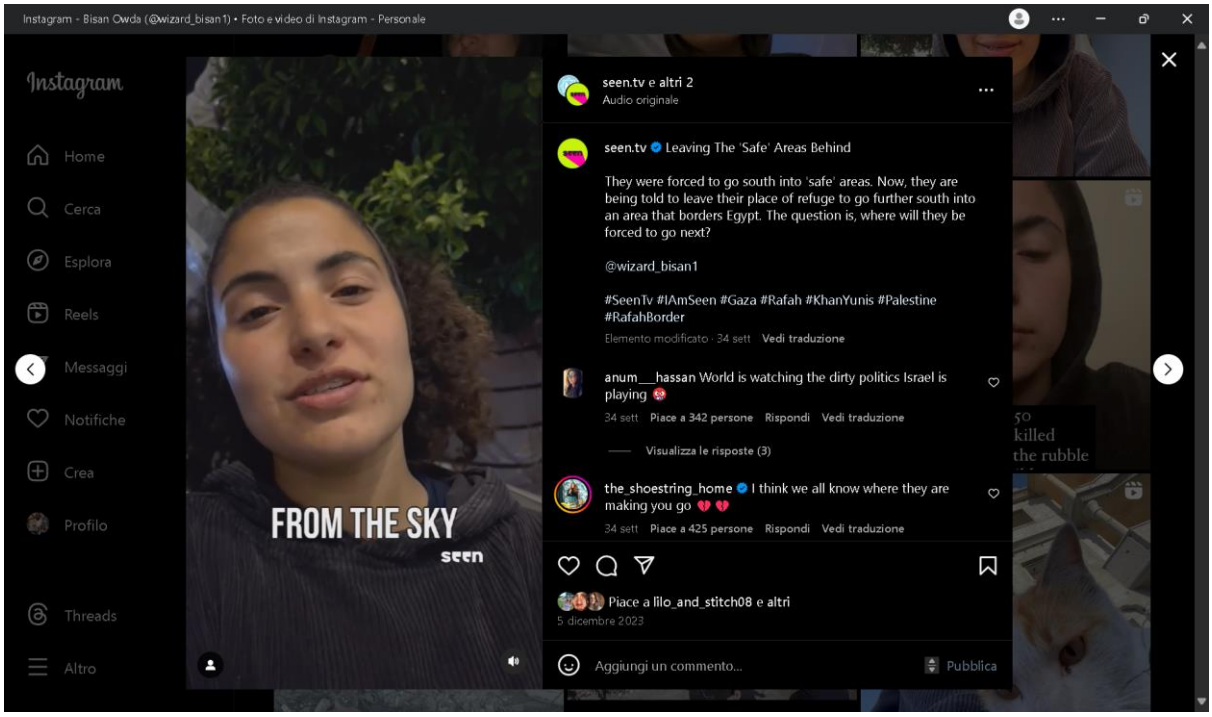
Alaqad posted nothing on December 5th
but she did post on December 7th, referencing the previous days' attacks



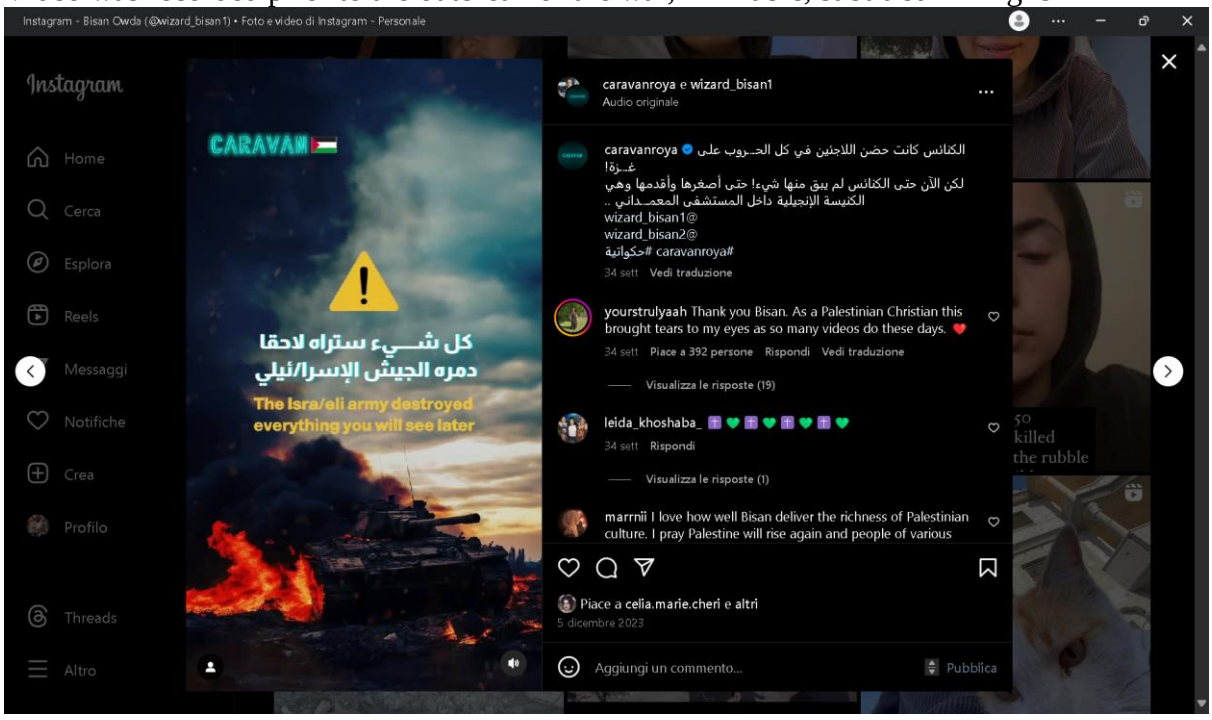
Owda still figured in an NGO's newscast regarding the Gazans' displacement. Once again, testimonies were compiled in Arabic, with intermissions explaining the situation in English



another video shot in English showed the dropping of more "letters from the sky" ordering evacuation to Rafah



another one: mini-documentary about Christianity in Gaza, preceded by a disclaimer highlighting how everything shown in it had already been destroyed by the Israeli army. Video was recorded prior to the outbreak of the war, in Arabic, subtitled in English



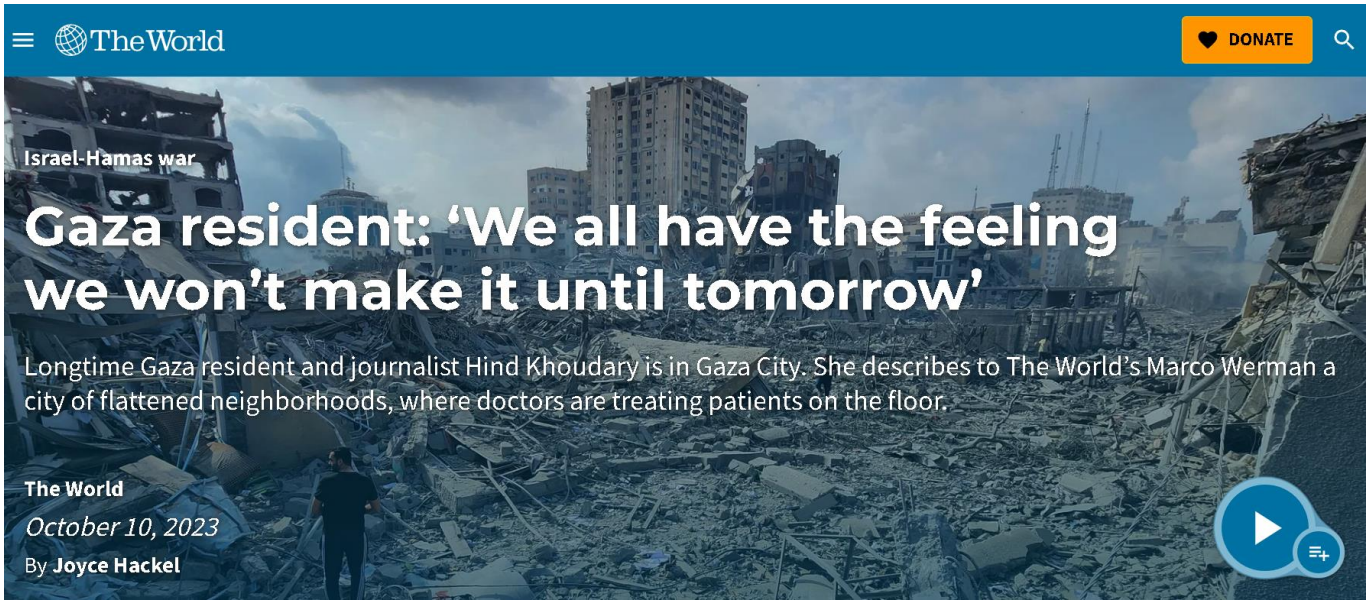
Khoudary shared a compilation of brief clips showing the situation inside a hospital in Deir El Balah. The video showed Khoudary speaking directly to the camera, in English, to give

context. Her explanations were briefly interrupted by clips showing injured and doctors at work. Caption was also in English



Web articles

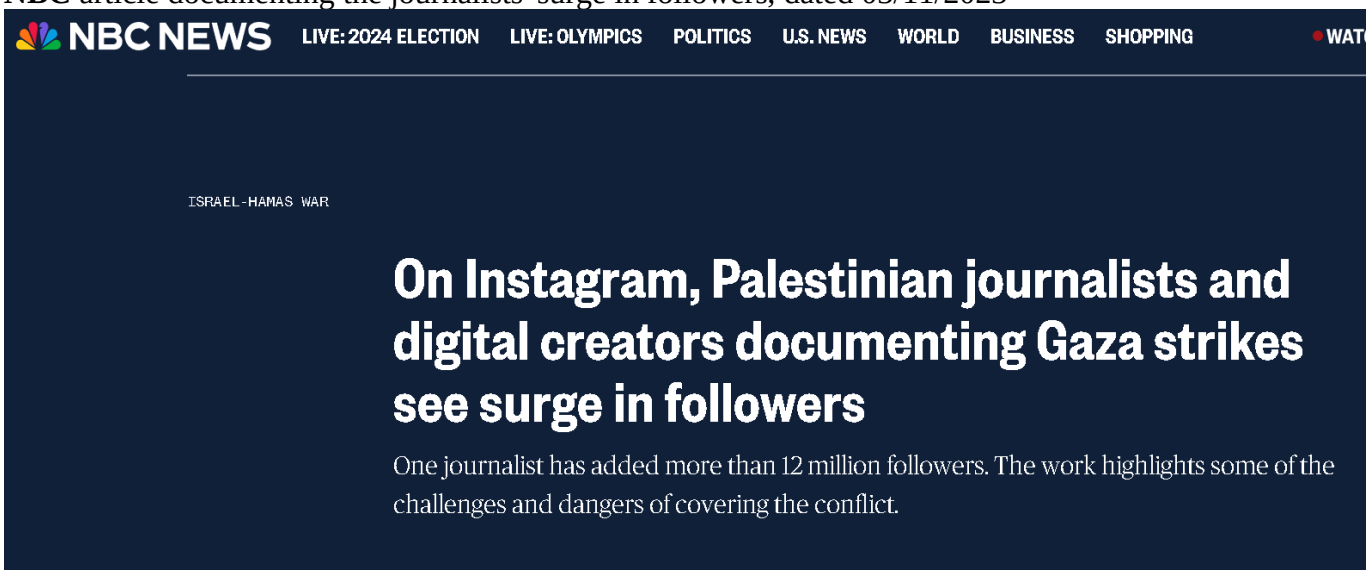
The World article using **Khoudary**'s account of the first days of the conflict, dated 10/10/2023



Reuters article detailing **Alaqad**'s first posts, dated 11/10/2023



NBC article documenting the journalists' surge in followers, dated 03/11/2023



"**The New Arab**" interview to **Motaz Azaiza**, dated 07/11/2023



Features › Interviews

The unsung hero: Meeting Motaz Azaiza, Gaza's window to the world

The New Arab Meets: Gazan photojournalist, photographer, and filmmaker, Motaz Azaiza. Since October 7, Motaz's Instagram posts and media appearances have captured the world, offering humane and tragic insight into the plight of the Palestinians.

Interviews 5 min read ▶ 0:00 / 5:10

Abubaker Abed | 07 November, 2023

"**The New York Times**" article documenting **Palestinians**' use of social media platforms, dated 09/11/2023



The War in Gaza Is Also Unfolding on Instagram

Trapped in the enclave, Palestinians on the social media platform are documenting and sharing their harrowing experiences of life under Israeli airstrikes and a ground invasion.

Share full article



The Guardian interview to **Alaqad** documenting her evolution from Instagrammer to reporter, dated 12/12/2023



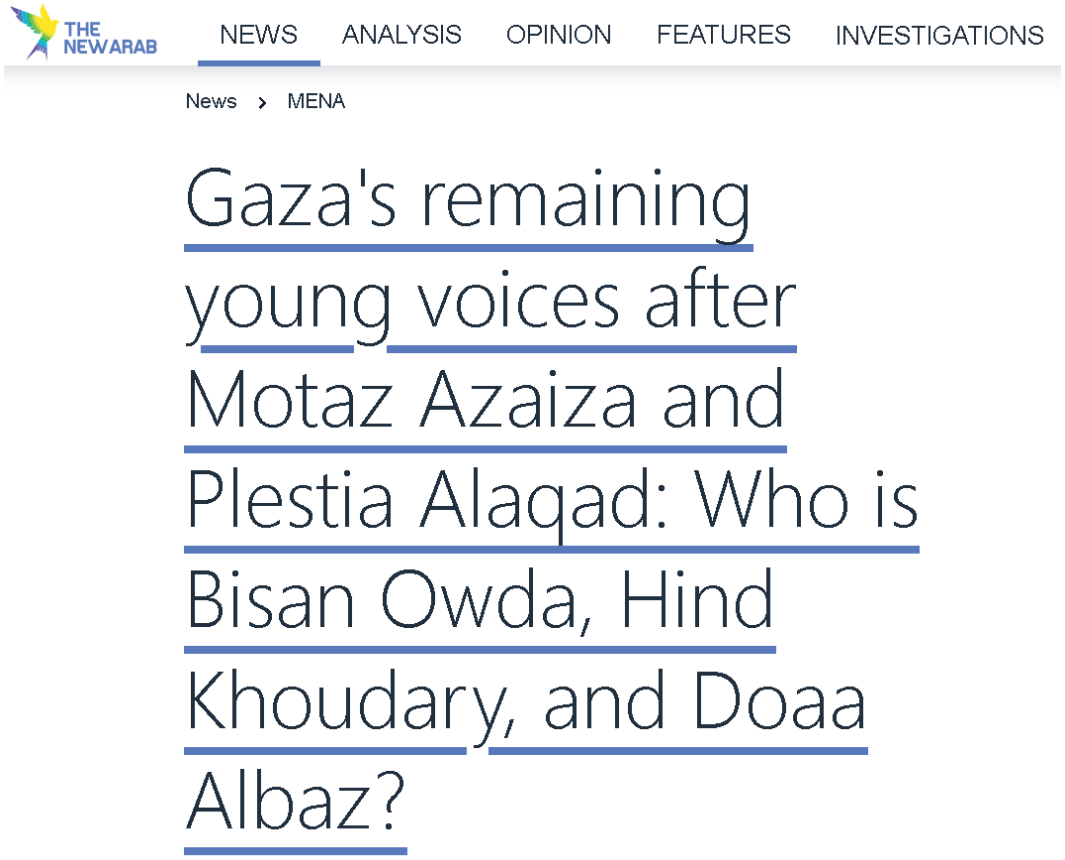
Al Jazeera's interview to **Motaz Azaiza,** dated 30/01/2024



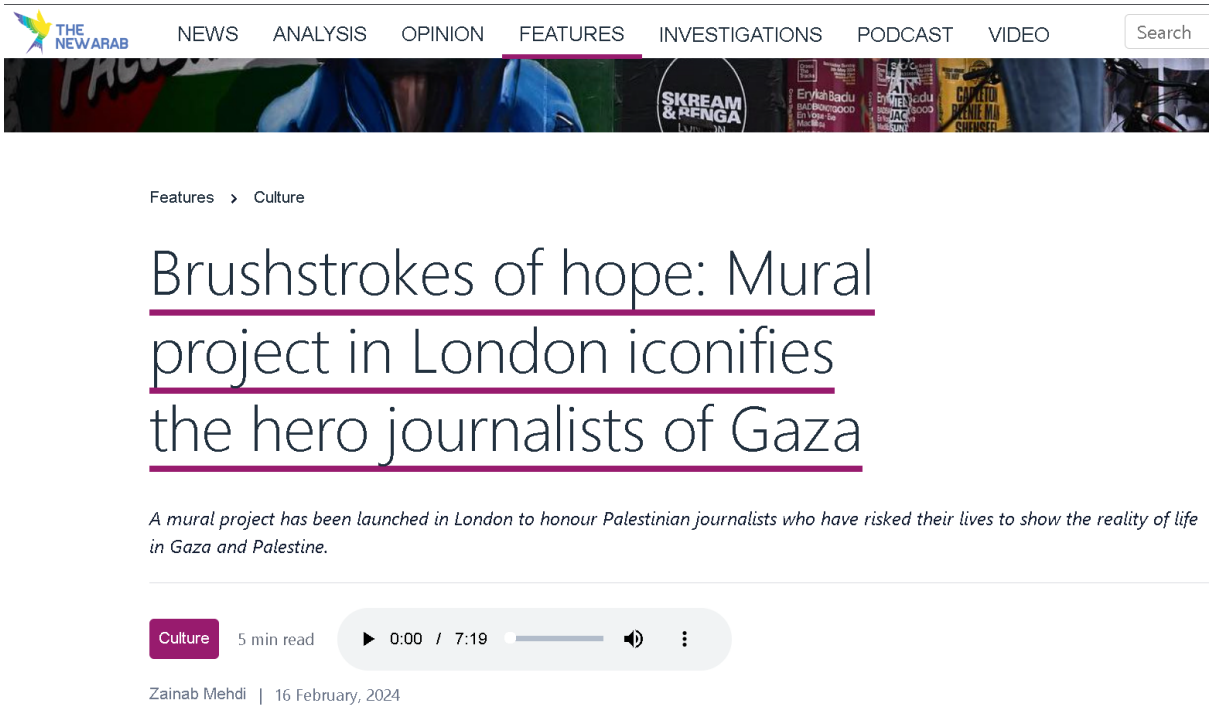
npr's radio interview to **Alaqad**, dated 31/01/2024



"**The New Arab**" article profiling "**Gaza's remaining young voices**", dated 15/02/2024



"**The New Arab**" article narrating the iconification of "**the hero journalists of Gaza**" in London dated 16/02/2024



CNN article documenting **Palestinians**' efforts to document the war on social networks, dated 19/02/2024



CNN article detailing **Azaiza**'s work documenting the conflict, dated 05/03/2024



Middle East Eye interview to **Alaqad** on her evacuation and her efforts to humanise the conflict's victims, dated 30/03/2024

This is an entry from: Israel-Palestine live: Biden urges Egypt, Qatar to press Hamas for hostage deal

Plestia Alaqad on finding her voice, leaving Gaza, and humanising Palestine

30 March 2024 15:15 GMT

UN News interview to **Azaiza** about his work in Gaza, his exile, and his hopes for the future, dated 05/04/2024

Gaza photojournalist Motaz Azaiza still has hope in humanity

5 April 2024 | UN Interviews